

TRANSMITTAL LETTER

May 8, 2002

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

Fellow Texans:

I am pleased to present my performance review of the Aransas County Independent School District (ACISD).

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

I have made a number of recommendations to improve ACISD's efficiency. I have also highlighted a number of "best practices" in district operations-model programs and services provided by the district's administrators, teachers and staff. This report outlines 114 detailed recommendations that could save ACISD nearly \$4.3 million over the next five years, while reinvesting more than \$392,000 to improve educational services and other operations. Net savings are estimated to reach more than \$3.9 million that the district can redirect into the classroom.

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

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

Sincerely,



Carole Keeton Rylander
Texas Comptroller

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In June 2001 the Comptroller announced her intent to conduct a review of the Aransas County Independent School District (ACISD) at the unanimous request of the ACISD board of trustees. SoCo Consulting, Inc. was awarded the \$100,000 contract for the review with ACISD agreeing to pay 25 percent of the cost or \$25,000. While ACISD is rated as a Recognized district by the Texas Education Agency (TEA), the board voiced its concern about the district's financial challenges.

Work began in Aransas County in October 2001. Based upon more than six months of work, this report identifies ACISD's exemplary programs and suggests concrete ways to improve district operations. If fully implemented, the Comptroller's 114 recommendations could result in net savings of more than \$3.9 million 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 52 cents of every education dollar is spent on instruction, Comptroller Rylander's goal is to drive more of every education dollar directly into the classroom. Comptroller Rylander also has ordered TSPR staff to share best practices and exemplary programs quickly and systematically with all the state's school districts and with anyone else who requests such information. Comptroller Rylander has directed TSPR to serve as a clearinghouse of the best ideas in Texas public education.

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

- Ensure students and teachers receive the support and resources necessary to succeed;
- Identify innovative ways to address the district's core management challenges;

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

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

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

TSPR in Aransas County

On October 15, 2001, TSPR began conducting on-site work in Aransas County. The Comptroller contracted with SoCo Consulting, Inc., an Austin-based firm to assist with the review. The review team interviewed district employees, school board members, parents, business leaders and community members and held a public forum in the cafeteria of the high school, on October 15, 2001 from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.

To obtain additional comments, the review team conducted small focus group sessions with teachers, principals, district employees and community members in Aransas County. The Comptroller's office also received letters and phone calls from a wide array of parents, teachers and community members. To ensure that all stakeholder groups had input, TSPR sent surveys to students, parents, teachers, campus and central administrators, and support staff.

A total of 702 respondents answered surveys: 82 administrative and support staff; 11 principals and assistant principals; 99 teachers; 338 students; and 172 parents completed written surveys as part of the review. Details from the surveys and public forum appear in **Appendices A through I**.

The review team also consulted two databases of comparative educational information maintained by the TEA - the Academic Excellence Indicator

System (AEIS) and the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS).

ACISD selected peer districts for comparisons based on similarities in student enrollment, student performance and community characteristics along with student demographics. The selected peer districts were Kerrville, Point Isabel, Tuloso-Midway, Flour Bluff and Gregory-Portland ISD's. TSPR also compared ACISD to district averages in TEA's Regional Education Service Center II (Region 2), to which ACISD belongs, and the state as a whole.

During its six-month review, TSPR developed recommendations to improve operations and save taxpayers nearly \$4.3 million by 2006-07. Cumulative net savings from all recommendations (savings minus recommended investments or expenditures) would reach more than \$3.9 million by 2006-07.

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

Acknowledgements

The Comptroller's office and SoCo Consulting, Inc. wish to express appreciation to the ACISD Board of Trustees, Superintendent Wayne Johnson, district employees, students, parents and community residents who helped during the review. Special thanks go to Barbara Henning and Jean Berry who arranged for office space, equipment and meeting rooms; organized the findings meeting; responded to data requests and accommodated the review team's needs.

Aransas County ISD

ACISD is located in the Coastal Bend region of Texas about 30 miles from Corpus Christi and serves the towns of Rockport and Fulton along with the majority of Aransas County. The district encompasses approximately 200 square miles. ACISD has a distinct economic split, with low-income families similar to that in many coastal communities coupled with a significant wealthy retirement base in Rockport. The main source of the district's property wealth comes from local housing, specifically the Key Allegro community.

In 2000-01, ACISD served 3,360 students in six schools: Rockport Elementary, Fulton Elementary, Little Bay Elementary and Live Oak Elementary; Rockport-Fulton Middle School and Rockport-Fulton High School. Students are 30.1 percent Hispanic, 62.3 percent Anglo, 2.4

percent African American and 5.2 percent other. About 48 percent of ACISD students are economically disadvantaged.

Exhibit 1 details the demographic characteristics of the ACISD and its peer school districts.

Exhibit 1
Demographic Characteristics of Students
ACISD vs. Peer Districts, Region 2 and State
2000-01

District	Student Enrollment	Racial/Ethnic Percentage				Percent Economically Disadvantaged
		African American	Hispanic	Anglo	Other	
Flour Bluff	5,002	6.7%	24.5%	63.9%	4.9%	43.3%
Kerrville	4,662	3.6%	34.5%	60.8%	1.1%	45.4%
Gregory-Portland	4,422	4.0%	37.9%	56.7%	1.5%	31.4%
Aransas County	3,360	2.4%	30.1%	62.3%	5.2%	48.1%
Tuloso-Midway	3,058	2.0%	53.3%	44.0%	0.6%	44.3%
Point Isabel	2,363	0.4%	83.5%	15.8%	0.3%	84.6%
Region 2	107,634	3.7%	66.3%	28.7%	1.3%	56.1%
State	4,059,619	14.4%	40.6%	42.0%	3.0%	49.3%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2000-01.

ACISD's overall Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) passing rate for all tests taken was 84.3 percent for 2000-01 compared with the state average of 82.1 percent. **Exhibit 2** shows the 2000-01 TAAS results in ACISD compared with the peer districts and the state.

Exhibit 2
TAAS Passing Rates
Reading, Mathematics, Writing and All Tests
ACISD vs. Peer Districts and State
2000-01

District	Reading	Mathematics	Writing	All Tests
Gregory-Portland	95.5%	96.5%	95.6%	92.1%
Kerrville	94.0%	95.6%	92.7%	89.5%
Tuloso-Midway	93.2%	93.5%	92.9%	88.1%
Point Isabel	91.5%	93.9%	93.5%	87.5%
Flour Bluff	92.8%	94.4%	89.0%	86.4%
Aransas County	91.9%	94.4%	86.6%	84.3%
State	88.9%	90.2%	87.9%	82.1%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2000-01.

The district's 2000-01 budgeted expenditures were \$25.2 million. In 2000-01, ACISD spent 49.6 cents of every dollar on instruction, below the state average of 52 cents.

ACISD is a small district that generates its greatest amount of funding from residential property taxes. In 2000-01, 70.5 percent of its taxable value was from residential property taxes. Compared to its peer districts ACISD has the second-lowest property tax rate and the third-highest taxable property value per pupil (**Exhibit 3**).

Exhibit 3
District Property Value per Pupil and Tax Rate
ACISD vs. Peer Districts, Region 2 and State
2000-01

District Name	Tax Rate	Property Value per Pupil
Tuloso-Midway	\$1.750	\$306,015
Kerrville	\$1.733	\$234,748
Gregory-Portland	\$1.639	\$172,317
Flour Bluff	\$1.526	\$164,697
Aransas County	\$1.490	\$279,177
Point Isabel	\$1.305	\$495,460
Region 2	\$1.521	\$168,813
State	\$1.475	\$215,232

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2000-01.

While ACISD is a Recognized district, it has financial challenges and is rapidly approaching Chapter 41 status when not only will state revenues drop off, but the district will begin to send tax dollars away as part of the state's "Robin Hood plan" of school finance. ACISD has faced a flat to declining student enrollment coupled with a dwindling fund balance. ACISD's greatest challenges include:

- Developing and implementing internal controls and operational procedures;
- Planning for and maintaining facilities;
- Preparing for possible loss of state funds as the district approaches Chapter 41 status.

Key Findings and Recommendations

Develop and Implement Internal Controls and Operational Procedures

- ***Prepare a complete set of financial reports for administrative staff and the board.*** The district does not use cash flow forecasts or financial modeling to evaluate whether the district is meeting its financial goals. When budgeted amounts are judged against projected amounts on a monthly basis, necessary adjustments can be identified and made in a timely manner.
- ***Ensure the proper department head reviews PEIMS data before it is submitted to TEA.*** During the review TSPR found numerous inconsistencies between data the district furnished the team and data reported to TEA through PEIMS. A number of district staff enter data into PEIMS, but key staff do not review the data prior to submission. A careful review of data prior to submission is critical ensuing proper funding for the district.
- ***Draft a written policy regarding accumulated sick time and personal time when employees leave or retire.*** The district does not have a board-approved policy to address what happens to accumulated sick leave, personal time or compensatory time earned when an employee retires or leaves the district. With a current district liability for leave balances exceeding \$1.7 million, it is important that both employees and the district clearly articulate rights and responsibilities.
- ***Conduct a salary and compensation study and create a salary schedule that is equitable for all employees and positions.*** The district does not have a formal salary schedule. Positions requiring

similar skills and qualifications are compensated at varying levels. A comprehensive study can identify pay inequities within the district so that personnel performing the same job duties are equally compensated.

- ***Review all real estate contracts and service contracts over a specified dollar amount or exceeding a one-year term.*** ACISD's contracts are not subject to a legal review to ensure that all terms and conditions are fair and equitable to the district. By using the district's legal counsel to review the terms and conditions of contracts, ACISD could ensure that service contracts benefit the district and hold vendors accountable for the timely delivery of high quality goods and services.
- ***Develop policies and procedures to control the district's workers' compensation claims.*** ACISD has no policies or procedures for reviewing the cause and cost of its workers' compensation claims. Workers' compensation insurance premiums have increased 138 percent in the past five years, while the cost of claims increased by nearly 80 percent. By adopting mechanisms for monitoring workers' compensation costs, ACISD can better control costs and save nearly \$85,000 annually beginning in 2004-05.
- ***Establish a policy for management of the general fund balance.*** ACISD's general fund balance has dropped from a high of \$3.6 million in 1997-98 to a low of \$1.6 million in 2000-01. Board members have not monitored the fund balance and have approved deficit spending. A policy would ensure the superintendent and the board are aware of the financial position of the district.
- ***Prepare a comprehensive disaster recovery plan.*** The district has a student-to-PC ratio of just over 3-to-1, but has no plan for recovering information in the result of a disaster. Computers and servers are not routinely backed up. Preparing a plan would help the district to quickly restore all its records and resume operations in a short period.

Plan for and Maintain Facilities

- ***Prepare a facilities master plan.*** The district does not have a facilities plan that details the actual cost of maintenance and future construction needs. Evaluating and carefully documenting current facility needs and conducting a demographic study of population trends could allow the district and community to work together to provide a high-quality educational environment for its students.

- ***Hire a qualified Facilities director.*** An on-site inspection of district facilities noted leaking roofs, damaged walls, pot holes in parking lots, broken water fountains, littered schools and unkept grounds. No one person is responsible for ensuring that maintenance is performed, schools are mopped and lawns are mowed. By hiring a qualified facilities director, the district can provide better oversight, eliminate two maintenance supervisory positions and save \$3,000 a year.
- ***Annually appraise property to ensure adequate insurance coverage.*** ACISD has not contracted for a property appraisal since 1997; therefore, property insurance coverage may be inadequate. The district recently built a new middle school and an addition to the high school, which has changed the value of the district's property. By contracting for a property appraisal, the district can revise its insurance coverage to better reflect the value of the property and guarantee adequate coverage.
- ***Close the warehouse and ship goods directly to schools.*** Inventory management practices in the warehouse are not in place or being followed. Maintenance workers often retrieve supplies without providing work orders. The entrance gate stays unlocked, even though the receiving clerks are often gone making deliveries to campuses. No inventory planning is done to determine stock order or reorder levels. By eliminating the central warehouse and shipping items directly to schools, ACISD could save nearly \$47,000 annually and improve overall controls.
- ***Repair safety and security equipment.*** Currently, two schools have alarm systems that are operational. Two schools have public address systems or panic buttons that are operational in each of the classrooms. With a working public address system, panic buttons and building alarm systems, district personnel would be able to alert all students and staff in an emergency.

Prepare for Possible Loss of State Funds as the District Approaches Chapter 41 Status

- ***Strategically plan for Chapter 41 status.*** ACISD does not have a strategic plan to forecast the possible loss of state funds should the district reach Chapter 41 status. In 2000-01, the district had a property wealth per student of \$279,177, and ACISD's appraised property value has been growing at an average of 7 percent per year while student enrollment has declined. Should property values per pupil exceed \$300,000, the district could enter into Chapter 41 status as soon as September 2003. The district would benefit from

developing a plan to deal with the financial implications of losing state revenues and the possibility of having to pay money to the state.

Exemplary Programs and Practices

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

- ***The superintendent prepares a monthly calendar of board events, outlining major board activities.*** The calendar of board events shows the board the main activities it is required to complete each month. The calendar helps the board know what to expect at any given time of year, ensures the board does not overlook any major responsibilities, helps prepare in advance for regular tasks, assists in scheduling work and ensures the board receives the regular information on district progress and operations.
- ***The ACISD Education Foundation provides grants for creative and innovative approaches to education.*** Aransas County business leaders and community members formed an education foundation to benefit the district through private grants and community involvement. The foundation provides private funds for educational programs and activities that either have not been funded or have been under-funded by the district's normal operating budget. These funds will be used to facilitate student achievement and skill development, to recognize and encourage staff excellence and to expand community involvement in education.
- ***While serving students of many languages and nationalities, few LEP students in ACISD are being exempted from the TAAS.*** ACISD serves students representing many nationalities and many languages, including Spanish, Vietnamese, Laotian, German, Japanese, Libyan and East Indian, however almost all of these students take the TAAS test. Districtwide, ACISD exempted 0.5 percent of its LEP students from taking the TAAS in 2000-01.
- ***Implementing a newspaper campaign that identifies delinquent taxpayers has increased tax collections.*** In May 2001, a resolution was passed by the ACISD Board of Trustees to allow the Aransas County Tax Assessor Collector to post an advertisement of the top

100 delinquent taxpayers. The district's law firm also sent letters to the past-due taxpayers warning them of the pending advertisement if their taxes were not paid. Forty written installment agreements were entered into with delinquent taxpayers as a result of the campaign boosting the amount of delinquent taxes collected for the district.

- ***ACISD has standardized information technology hardware and software.*** While making a significant investment in its network and communications infrastructure, ACISD has standardized its hardware and software to ensure it can provide good support to staff and management. Using this infrastructure, ACISD can transmit data at high speeds and is capable of delivering large volumes of data directly to any computer system anywhere in the district.
- ***The district reduced their transportation costs by leasing vehicles for its driver education program.*** ACISD leases two new minivans in their driver education program that would cost \$25,310 each to purchase excluding the cost of insurance and vehicle maintenance. The monthly lease is \$300 each, for a total cost of \$5,400. By leasing, the district gets the use of brand new vehicles each year, and returns them when the school year is over.
- ***The Human Resources Department advertises for open positions using the Internet and select nonprofit agencies to attract qualified applicants and save money.*** The district posts job openings on the Internet to save advertising expenditures. In previous years, the district posted job openings in various local papers and some of the major newspapers in the state, but ACISD found in recent years that advertising on the Internet and with select nonprofit groups saves money while bringing qualified applicants. In 1997-98, the district spent \$14,312 on advertising expenditures for vacant positions. In 2000-01, these expenditures were reduced to \$2,498.

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 114 ways to save ACISD nearly \$4.3 million in gross savings over a five-year period. Reinvestment opportunities will cost the district more than \$392,000 during the same time period. Full implementation of all recommendations in this report could produce net savings of more than \$3.9 million by 2006-07 (**Exhibit 4**).

Exhibit 4
Summary of Net Savings
TSPR Review of Aransas County Independent School District

Year	Total
2002-03 Initial Annual Net Savings	\$591,112
2003-04 Additional Annual Net Savings	\$731,305
2004-05 Additional Annual Net Savings	\$864,139
2005-06 Additional Annual Net Savings	\$912,540
2006-07 Additional Annual Net Savings	\$918,040
One Time Net (Costs)/Savings	(\$115,603)
TOTAL SAVINGS PROJECTED FOR 2002-2007	\$3,901,533

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

Exhibit 5
Summary of Costs and Savings by Recommendation

Recommendation	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	Total 5-Year (Costs) or Savings	One-Time (Costs) or Savings	
Chapter 1: District Organization and Management								
1	Hold six of the twelve regularly scheduled board meetings at the district's six schools. p. 31	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
2	Expand the existing board recommendation format and content to include more information about recommendations. p. 34	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
3	Prepare more detailed meeting minutes. p. 37	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
4	Encourage board members to take their required hours of training each year. p. 40	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
5	Reduce the number of positions reporting directly to the superintendent by consolidating some positions and reorganizing the reporting structure. p. 43	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

6	Implement a staffing allocation formula. p. 46	\$238,327	\$238,327	\$238,327	\$238,327	\$238,327	\$1,191,635	\$0
7	Track and report performance measures to management monthly and to the board annually. p. 47	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
8	Evaluate the legal-service contract every five years to ensure competitive pricing and a legal team experienced with school-district issues. p. 50	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
9	Review all real estate contracts and service contracts over a specified dollar amount or exceeding a one-year term. p. 51	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
10	Implement a planning process whereby the board sets the vision, mission and overall goals for the district while staff develops specific strategies for accomplishing the goals. p. 53	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
11	Annually evaluate attendance zones.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

	p. 55							
12	Develop a strategic plan to prepare for Chapter 41 status. p. 55	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
13	Establish a pilot volunteer program for the district. p. 58	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
14	Write a weekly or monthly column for the newspaper to inform the public of what is going on in the district. p. 58	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Total-Chapter 1	\$238,327	\$238,327	\$238,327	\$238,327	\$238,327	\$1,191,635	\$0
Chapter 2: Educational Service Delivery								
15	Develop and adopt a comprehensive curriculum management policy. p. 72	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
16	Revise the job descriptions of curriculum and instruction personnel to ensure that all job titles, qualifications, line and staff relationships and duties and responsibilities are clearly defined. p. 74	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
17	Develop a plan for creating a	\$0	(\$6,000)	(\$6,000)	(\$5,500)	\$0	(\$17,500)	\$0

	coordinated series of curriculum guides for all PK-12 subjects and courses. p. 79							
18	Develop plans for encouraging and preparing students to take college entrance examinations. p. 81	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
19	Train appropriate staff to provide services to gifted and talented students. p. 84	(\$1,650)	(\$1,650)	(\$1,650)	(\$1,650)	(\$1,650)	(\$8,250)	\$0
20	Develop a plan to comply with the state's requirement that the district identify gifted and talented students in all grades. p. 85	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
21	Update and upgrade the district's gifted and talented improvement plan. p. 86	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
22	Expand curricular options for gifted and talented students to earn TEA's exemplary rating. p. 88	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
23	Create a business advisory council to provide direction for the Career and Technology	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

	programs. p. 92							
24	Enhance campus improvement plans to meet state requirements governing compensatory fund management. p. 95	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
25	Standardize discipline procedures and consequences for violations at all district schools and provide the staff training needed to implement these procedures consistently. p. 102	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Total-Chapter 2	(\$1,650)	(\$7,650)	(\$7,650)	(\$7,150)	(\$1,650)	(\$25,750)	\$0
Chapter 3: Personnel Management								
26	Create a district telephone directory and place the directory on the district's Web site. p. 109	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
27	Export pertinent payroll data directly from the Region 2 payroll system into the Human Resource Department's Access database. p. 110	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
28	Rearrange the	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	

	nepotism policy for the district. p. 126							
34	Evaluate all non-certified employees once a year. p. 128	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
35	Track and report the employee turnover rate and reasons for leaving by department on a quarterly basis to identify trends and problems in employee retention. p. 132	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
36	Develop a comprehensive staff development plan that includes mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating ACISD's training programs. p. 135	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Total-Chapter 3	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Chapter 4: Facilities Use and Management

37	Hire a qualified facilities director to manage the facilities' custodial, maintenance, grounds and construction projects. p. 148	\$3,055	\$3,055	\$3,055	\$3,055	\$3,055	\$15,275	\$0
38	Determine accurate measurements of the district's	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

	facilities and grounds. p. 149							
39	Develop and follow a rotation schedule for future groundskeeping operations. p. 150	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
40	Implement cleanliness and maintenance standards for custodial, grounds and maintenance operations. p. 152	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
41	Assign maintenance personnel based on an acceptable staffing allocation formula. p. 153	\$87,861	\$87,861	\$87,861	\$87,861	\$87,861	\$439,305	\$0
42	Develop and follow a preventive maintenance program for the district. p. 154	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
43	Prepare a comprehensive deferred maintenance list annually by school and prioritize the work orders. p. 156	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
44	Develop and implement a standard work order process for all district personnel. p. 159	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

45	Develop standards for parts and equipment. p. 160	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
46	Create an equipment replacement plan for the district. p. 162	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$16,400)
47	Develop a planning methodology and prepare a facilities master plan which includes a demographic study. p. 164	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$28,000)
48	Establish a policy about the use of portables and eliminate the use of portables at under-used schools. p. 168	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
49	Establish and implement a new architect selection process for future projects. p. 169	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
50	Appoint a full-time energy manager. p. 171	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$3,590)
51	Create a districtwide energy management policy. p. 172	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
52	Implement a comprehensive energy management program. p. 177	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

	Total-Chapter 4	\$90,916	\$90,916	\$90,916	\$90,916	\$90,916	\$454,580	(\$47,990)
Chapter 5: Asset and Risk Management								
53	Create sound internal controls to ensure that district assets are safeguarded. p. 185	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
54	Develop an automated cash flow forecasting system to invest idle funds in higher-yielding securities. p. 187	\$4,320	\$4,320	\$4,320	\$4,320	\$4,320	\$21,600	\$0
55	Develop a procedure to ensure compliance with board-approved investment policies. p. 188	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
56	Develop procedures to regularly review petty cash and student activity funds to ensure their safekeeping. p. 189	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
57	Create an action plan to adopt the state health plan for 2002-03. p. 194	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
58	Annually contract for a property appraisal to ensure the district's insurance coverage is	(\$200)	(\$200)	(\$200)	(\$200)	(\$200)	(\$1,000)	\$0

	adequate to protect the district's property in the event of catastrophic loss. p. 195							
59	Develop policies and procedures to control the district's workers' compensation claims. p. 197	\$0	\$0	\$84,934	\$84,934	\$84,934	\$254,802	\$0
60	Implement a "return-to-work" program and fully educate all employees on its provisions. p. 198	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
61	Develop written fixed asset policies and procedures. p. 200	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Total-Chapter 5	\$4,120	\$4,120	\$89,054	\$89,054	\$89,054	\$275,402	\$0
Chapter 6: Financial Management								
62	Establish a policy for management of the general fund and require reports to the board. p. 207	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
63	Prepare a complete set of monthly financial reports for administrative staff and the board. p. 208	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
64	Revise the budget process to include campus and department	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

	management while incorporating program budgeting concepts. p. 212							
65	Develop a detailed written procedures manual for all Business Office processes. p. 216	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
66	Research automation options available for the payroll and accounts payable processes. p. 218	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
67	Develop an external auditor selection policy to ensure that Request for Proposals are issued at least every five years and are objectively evaluated. p. 220	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
68	Develop a tax collection policy and procedures manual that maximizes the timely and efficient collection of delinquent taxes within guidelines of state law. p. 223	\$104,527	\$209,054	\$209,054	\$209,054	\$209,054	\$940,743	\$0
	Total-Chapter 6	\$104,527	\$209,054	\$209,054	\$209,054	\$209,054	\$940,743	\$0
Chapter 7: Purchasing								

69	Revise the purchasing procedure manual and provide training to all district staff on purchasing policies, procedures and practices. p. 232	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
70	Implement an automated purchasing process for the Purchasing Department. p. 234	(\$6,372)	(\$6,372)	(\$6,372)	(\$6,372)	(\$6,372)	(\$31,860)	\$0
71	Sell all warehouse contents, ship all orders to the departments and schools and close the warehouse. p. 236	\$46,878	\$46,878	\$46,878	\$46,878	\$46,878	\$234,390	\$0
72	Standardize the textbook procedures at all schools. p. 239	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
73	Evaluate cost structure and determine ongoing effectiveness of operating a district Print Shop. p. 242	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Total-Chapter 7	\$40,506	\$40,506	\$40,506	\$40,506	\$40,506	\$202,530	\$0
Chapter 8: Computers and Technology								
74	Ensure the proper department head reviews PEIMS data before it is	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

	submitted to TEA. p. 250							
75	Develop and implement a staffing allocation methodology for technology. p. 253	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
76	Require a cost-benefit analysis and justification for each planning component before it is included in the adopted technology plan. p. 257	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
77	Write and implement technology policies and procedures. p. 258	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
78	Prepare a comprehensive disaster recovery plan and ensure that the district's administrative and instructional computer systems are backed up. p. 260	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
79	Automate the service order request within the district to allow technology users to submit requests electronically. p. 264	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Total-Chapter 8	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Chapter 9: Food Services

80	Write and implement written policies and procedures for all food service operations. p. 272	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
81	Install a point-of-sale system in district cafeterias. p. 273	\$0	(\$5,235)	(\$5,235)	(\$5,235)	(\$5,235)	(\$20,940)	(\$44,575)
82	Analyze and adjust meal prices annually to ensure that the district recovers costs. p. 277	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
83	Use industry staffing standards and staff cafeterias accordingly. p. 282	\$47,901	\$95,802	\$143,702	\$191,603	\$191,603	\$670,611	\$0
84	Use standard inventory management practices to reduce food costs. p. 283	\$62,766	\$62,766	\$62,766	\$62,766	\$62,766	\$313,830	\$0
85	Develop a cost-allocation system to allow the district to recover costs for utilities, custodial and maintenance services. p. 284	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
86	Develop strategies to ensure a fund balance for the Food Services Department. p. 285	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

87	Compile and distribute accurate, detailed and useful school-specific financial and performance reports for the board and cafeteria managers on a quarterly basis. p. 286	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
88	Develop strategies to increase meal participation. p. 290	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
89	Develop strategies to increase the identification of students eligible for free and reduced-price meal benefits. p. 294	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
90	Establish rules to control competitive food sales during cafeteria operating hours. p. 295	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
91	Consider developing an integrated plan for preventive maintenance and equipment replacement. p. 296	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Total-Chapter 9	\$110,667	\$153,333	\$201,233	\$249,134	\$249,134	\$963,501	(\$44,575)
Chapter 10: Transportation								
92	Develon or	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

	modify board-approved transportation policies. p. 305							
93	Assign responsibility of developing and updating bus driver files with current legal requirements to one department. p. 306	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
94	Evaluate bus driver turnover problem and formulate strategy to reduce turnover. p. 307	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
95	Develop a recognition program to reduce bus driver absenteeism. p. 309	(\$2,100)	(\$2,100)	(\$2,100)	(\$2,100)	(\$2,100)	(\$10,500)	\$0
96	Conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the trends in ridership, mileage, linear density and state funding in planning and budgeting for each new school year. p. 312	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
97	Implement a spare bus ratio policy. p. 315	\$10,812	\$10,812	\$10,812	\$10,812	\$10,812	\$54,060	\$11,760
98	Automate the routing process to maximize bus	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$5,000)

	capacity. p. 318							
99	Implement the inventory module of Edulog or ACT1000 to track and monitor inventory. p. 320	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$3,495)
100	Develop and implement a bus replacement program. p. 322	(\$34,369)	(\$34,369)	(\$34,369)	(\$34,369)	(\$34,369)	(\$171,845)	\$0
101	Equip bus drivers and monitors with the proper training necessary for discipline management. p. 324	(\$680)	(\$680)	(\$680)	(\$680)	(\$680)	(\$3,400)	\$0
	Total-Chapter 10	(\$26,337)	(\$26,337)	(\$26,337)	(\$26,337)	(\$26,337)	(\$131,685)	\$3,265
Chapter 11: Safety and Security								
102	Discontinue the practice of requiring police officers to accompany extracurricular out-of-town activity trips. p. 332	\$2,400	\$2,400	\$2,400	\$2,400	\$2,400	\$12,000	\$0
103	Prepare one parent-student handbook centrally and distribute it to school principals so that each school can customize the handbook to fill its particular needs. p. 333	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

104	Place the emergency procedures in a location that all staff and management can immediately locate. p. 335	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
105	Evaluate safety and security incident information and statistics in planning the district's short and long-term resources. p. 336	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
106	Repair safety and security equipment that is not in working condition and develop a plan to ensure equipment is repaired. p. 338	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
107	Complete a security threat assessment of each campus to enforce better physical security measures. p. 339	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
108	Establish districtwide badge system and enforce its use to improve security. p. 341	\$27,636	\$26,636	\$26,636	\$26,636	\$26,636	\$134,180	(\$21,698)
109	Take an inventory of alarm codes and master keys issued and develop a policy	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

	and procedure to control their issuance. p. 343							
110	Conduct a clean-up effort in the welding and woodshop areas, the maintenance areas and the grounds near the alternative education classrooms. p. 344	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
111	Install speed bumps at the same time that the student parking lot is paved to reduce speeding. p. 345	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$4,500)
112	Assign one person in the district to follow-up on community service sentences. p. 350	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
113	Increase the amount of time students have to change classes. p. 351	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
114	Provide continuing discipline management training for principals and teachers. p. 352	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$105)
	Total-Chapter 11	\$30,036	\$29,036	\$29,036	\$29,036	\$29,036	\$146,180	(\$26,303)
	Gross Savings	\$636,483	\$787,911	\$920,745	\$968,646	\$968,646	\$4,282,431	\$11,760

	Gross Costs	(\$45,371)	(\$56,606)	(\$56,606)	(\$56,106)	(\$50,606)	(\$265,295)	(\$127,363)
	Total	\$591,112	\$731,305	\$864,139	\$912,540	\$918,040	\$4,017,136	(\$115,603)

Total Savings	\$4,294,191
Total Costs	(\$392,658)
Grand Total	\$3,901,533

Chapter 1

DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

This chapter reviews Aransas County Independent School District's (ACISD) overall organization and management in four sections.

- A. Governance
- B. District Management
- C. Planning and Evaluation
- D. Community Involvement

The superintendent serves as the district's chief executive officer for a period set by a contract which is subject to renewal, non-renewal or dismissal. The superintendent recommends staffing and resources needed to operate the district and accomplish the board's goals and objectives. The superintendent also is responsible for reporting management information to the board and ensuring that the district is accountable for its performance against established goals.

While the school board is responsible for creating policy, the superintendent is responsible for carrying out policy. The superintendent works to manage the district in the most cost-effective and efficient manner possible. Section 11.201 of the Texas Education Code (TEC) states that the superintendent 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 the termination or suspension of staff members or the non-renewal of staff members' term contracts;
- Authority of day-to-day management of district operations;
- Responsibility for the preparation of district budgets;
- Responsibility for the preparation of policy recommendations for the board and implementation of adopted policies;
- Responsibility for the development of appropriate administrative regulations to implement board policies;
- Responsibility for leadership in attainment of student performance; and
- Responsibility for the 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."

Chapter 1

A. GOVERNANCE (PART 1)

School districts in Texas are governed by an elected Board of Trustees. Boards focus on the decision-making process, planning and providing resources for achieving goals. Board members can best perform these duties when they understand how their role is different from that of the superintendent.

ACISD's Board of Trustees consists of seven trustees, all elected at large. Trustees are elected to three-year terms on a rotating basis. **Exhibit 1-1** presents information on the board of trustees.

Exhibit 1-1
ACISD Board of Trustees
2001-02

Board Member	Title	Place	Term Expires	On Board Since	Occupation
Joe H. Livingston	President	6	2003	1997	Del Mar College Professor/Chairperson Industrial and Technical Education
Rusty Little	Vice President	5	2002	1999	Executive Construction of off-Shore Platforms
Julie Adams Pina	Secretary	1	2002	1999	Hospital administrator
Jack Chaney	Board Member	4	2004	2001	Self-employed
Jim Remley	Board Member	2	2002	1999	Insurance agent Self-employed
Sara Walvoord	Board Member	3	2002	2001	Professional educator
Jack W. Wright	Board Member	7	2004	2001	Vice president Charter Bank

Source: Aransas County Independent School District (ACISD) Board of Trustees, May 2001.

Regular board meetings are scheduled for the second Monday of every month and are being moved to the third Monday of each month. In addition, the board may hold special meetings whenever it deems necessary. Board meetings appear well organized and are conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order. Meetings are posted in compliance with the state law three business days before the board convenes. The board faxes the agenda to the local newspapers and the municipalities to keep the community informed of the upcoming meeting and the items to be discussed. The public can provide input at regular meetings during a public-comment session.

It is important that a superintendent works to help board members fulfill their duties by providing training opportunities and instituting procedures that facilitate effective board meetings, open communications and timely transfer of information. **Exhibit 1-2** details the duties the superintendent is responsible for within the district.

Exhibit 1-2
Superintendent Job Duties as Detailed by ACISD's Job Description

Section	Requirement
Primary Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act as chief executive administrator of the district responsible for the effective execution of policies adopted by the local board. Manage the administration of all district operations and assign personnel responsibilities.
Qualification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master's degree in educational administration. • Valid Texas superintendent certificate or other appropriate certification. • Exceptional communication, public relations and interpersonal skills. • Thorough knowledge of school law, finance, curriculum and instruction. • Five years leadership experience in school administration.
Instructional Duties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep informed about all aspects of the instructional program. • Work with the staff, board and community in

	<p>curriculum planning and recommend all curriculum guides.</p>
Morale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare reports and assist board in evaluating the effectiveness of programs. • Continuously focus on student growth and learning. • Demonstrate skill in anticipating, managing and resolving conflict. • Provide for two-way communication with district personnel.
Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement comprehensive planning process as required by Texas Education Code 21.938, pertaining to use of district-level decision process and school-based decision making. • Conduct periodic evaluation of all programs and operations to determine improvements needed. • Use collaborative decision process and problem-solving technique when appropriate. • Promote goal-oriented performance and support for those involved in achieving school performance objectives.
Personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommend number, types and organization of positions needed to carry out district functions effectively. • Promote a positive work environment and staff morale within the district. • Employ non-contractual personnel; recommend contractual personnel for employment; and assign and reassign all personnel. • Define the duties of all personnel. • Direct and supervise the staff evaluation program. • Suspend employees in accordance with appropriate policies; recommend contract renewal and non-renewal; dismiss non-contractual personnel; and recommend dismissal of contractual personnel. • Serve as liaison between the board and staff. • Develop and recommend pay systems and recommend pay increases or adjustments for personnel.
Administrative, Fiscal and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep informed of developments in state, federal and local laws and public policy affecting education.

Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop administrative procedures and regulations for the management of school operations. • Accurately prepare and submit in a timely manner any and all reports required by the board, the TEA and other federal and state agencies and any records subpoenaed by a court of law. • Prepare recommendations for the annual budget. • Ensure that funds are expended in accordance with the approved budget. • Direct and supervise all financial accounting. • Ensure that the school plant and facilities are properly maintained and that adequate provision is made for the safety of students, employees and other users of school facilities.
Administrative, Fiscal and Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor district property, casualty and workers' compensation loss experience.
Student Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommend and ensure equitable administration of student discipline policies across the district. • Work with staff, board and community in planning and implementing support services for students.
Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formulate, with the board, an annual professional development plan and assist the board in designing a process for evaluating superintendent performance. • Pursue professional development through reading, attending conferences and interacting with related agencies.
Community Relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement effective communication between the schools and community and promote community support and involvement with the schools. • Represent the district in activities involving other school systems, institutions, agencies and professional or community groups.
Board Relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare board agendas and meeting materials in cooperation with the board president. • Attend and participate in all board meetings except when excluded from closed meetings.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep the board informed on issues, needs and operations of the district. • Recommend policies on organization, finance, instructional programs, student matters, personnel, school plant and other functions of the district. • Exercise discretion and judgment in matters not covered by board policy. • Interpret board policies to the staff and community and implement them. • Communicate with the district's attorney on matters in litigation or potential litigation except as otherwise directed by the board.
Supervisory Duties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise general supervision of all schools in the district.

Source: ACISD Superintendent Job Description.

FINDING

In 1999-2000, the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) placed all ACISD policies online. Before putting the policies online, TASB conducted a comprehensive review of the district's policy manual to ensure the policies were up to date and in compliance with state law. Updates to existing policies were made and new policies were developed. A formal procedure to introduce new policies was established and communicated to staff. This new method alleviates the mechanical problem with maintaining multiple hard-copy manuals.

The online policy manual is available on ACISD's Web page and features key-word searches that enable anyone with Internet access to select and review all policies related to a particular subject or key word. Board members continue to approve policies before they are placed online. School administrators, the assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Administration, the superintendent and the district improvement committee members review local policies then present them to the board for approval. The board forwards adopted policies to TASB, which reviews them and places them online.

COMMENDATION

ACISD's online policy manual provides easy access to district policies and an efficient way to create and modify policies.

FINDING

The superintendent is preparing a written, annual calendar of board events to show the board the main activities it is required to complete each month. The board and administration will determine which month to perform the annual review and adoption of district goals. In the past, the district has used the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) and Texas Association of School Administrators (TASA) calendars.

The calendar will contain notations about what information and reports the board will receive each month, such as updates on district goal progress or results from the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) testing. It will also serve as a reminder for major district events. The calendar will help the board know what to expect at any given time of year, ensure the board does not overlook any major responsibilities, help the board prepare in advance for regular tasks, assist in the board schedule its work and ensure it receives the regular information on district progress and operations.

COMMENDATION

The ACISD superintendent is preparing a written calendar of board events, outlining major board activities by month.

FINDING

According to community leaders, ACISD receives minimal public input at its board meetings. During each regular board meeting, the public can sign up to address the board, and each person who signs up is allotted time.

Exhibit 1-3 lists all board meetings conducted during the 2000-01 school year, the type of meeting held and the public input received during those meetings.

**Exhibit 1-3
Board Meetings and Public Input Received**

Board Meeting	Day of the Week	Type of Board Meeting	Public Input Received
09/14/2000	2nd Thursday	Regular	Citizen expressed concern about ACISD employees.
10/09/2000	2nd Monday	Regular	None
11/13/2000	2nd Monday	Regular	Citizen expressed concern about the

			restroom conditions at Rockport Elementary. Another citizen wanted the board to look into why six bus drivers left ACISD in the last two weeks.
11/14/2000	2nd Tuesday	Special	None
11/20/2000	3rd Monday	Special	None
12/01/2000	1st Friday	Regular	Teacher wanted to make sure that replacement teachers being hired were fully qualified.
01/15/2001	3rd Monday	Regular	Citizen expressed concern about high school rodents and not enough maintenance staff.
01/22/2001	4th Monday	Special	None
02/12/2001	2nd Monday	Regular	None
03/19/2001	3rd Monday	Regular	Citizens discussed the school bully problem.
03/26/2001	4th Monday	Special	None
04/09/2001	2nd Monday	Regular	None
04/28/2001	4th Saturday	Regular	None
05/14/2001	2nd Monday	Regular	None
06/11/2001	2nd Monday	Regular	None
06/25/2001	4th Monday	Regular	None
07/23/2001	4th Monday	Regular	None
08/13/2001	2nd Monday	Regular	None
08/27/2001	4th Monday	Special	Public hearing to discuss the budget and the proposed tax rate. A few people commented, but nothing noted in the minutes.

Source: ACISD Board Meeting Minutes, 2000-01.

ACISD board policy states that "...audience participation at a board meeting is limited to the portion of the meeting designated for that purpose. At other times during a board meeting, the audience shall not enter into discussion or debate on matters being considered by the board, unless recognized by the presiding officer. No presentation shall exceed five minutes. Delegations of more than five persons shall appoint one

person to present their views before the board. At regular meetings, the board shall allot 30 minutes to hear persons who desire to make comments to the board. Persons who wish to participate in this portion of the meeting shall sign up with the presiding officer or designee before the meeting begins and shall specify the topic about which they wish to speak."

Board meetings are scheduled the second Monday of every month and are being moved to the third Monday of each month. However, many meetings held in 2000-01 were not held on the scheduled date. Not holding meetings at the scheduled time can result in the community not knowing when the meetings are being held and result in lower attendance.

Meetings are always convened in the boardroom in the central administration office located next to the high school. ACISD board policy states: "Unless otherwise provided in the notice for a meeting, board meetings shall be held at the administration building board room." Board policy allows a board meeting to be held at another location to improve community participation and attendance, but meetings are not held at any other locations in the county.

Exhibit 1-4 reveals survey responses of teachers, administrators, principals and parents that disagreed or strongly disagreed with the indicated statements.

**Exhibit 1-4
Survey Results About the ACISD Board**

Survey Questions	Agreement Selection	Teacher	Administrators	Principal	Parents	Average
The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.	Disagree or strongly disagree	10%	13%	9%	16%	12%
School board members listen to the opinions and	Disagree or strongly disagree	19%	22%	27%	19%	22%

desires of others.						
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Source: Texas School Performance Review (TSPR) surveys.

Many survey responses said that the board did not allow sufficient time for public input nor did the board listen to the opinions of others, and a significant number of responses showed no opinion on the statement. Forty percent of teachers and administrators, 46 percent of principals and 50 percent of parents gave either neutral or no response to the statement that the board allows sufficient time for public input. Twenty-seven percent of teachers, 37 percent of administrators and 44 percent of parents gave either neutral or no response to the statement that school board members listen to opinions of others.

Recommendation 1:

Hold six of the twelve regularly scheduled board meetings at the district's six schools.

Set a firm date for all board meetings and hold at least six of the meetings at the schools, rotating to a different school each time to encourage attendance, participation and interest in the local school. As the first agenda item, conduct a walking tour of the school showing its good points and the areas that need attention. During the tour, show where volunteers could be used, where in-kind donations would be helpful and where their tax dollars have improved the educational process for the students.

This process will demonstrate to the community that the district wants the community involved and knowledgeable about what is happening at the school district. It also will demonstrate to the local school staff that the board is both interested and informed about issues relating to their school.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The board president sets dates for the six school-located board meetings for the next school year.	June 2002
2.	The superintendent's secretary publishes the dates for the parents and the community on the school calendar.	June 2002
3.	The superintendent sets an agenda that includes a tour of the facilities highlighting the accomplishments of the students, school improvements, areas where volunteers needed and school improvement opportunities.	August 2002

4.	The superintendent's secretary notifies the media, the community groups and parents one month and again one week before the event to encourage attendance.	September 2002
5.	The respective school principal conducts the tour.	September 2002
6.	Board members assess the level of success and whether to continue school-based board meetings next year.	May 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Many board recommendations prepared by district management and included in the agenda packets do not contain enough information for a board member to make an informed business decision on behalf of the district.

The ACISD board policy states "Agendas for all meetings shall be sufficiently specific to inform the public of the subjects to be deliberated at the meeting, setting out any special or unusual matters to be considered or any matter in which the public has a particular interest."

The review team's analysis shows that the agenda contains item numbers and names, but not enough information about the actual board recommendations. When this happens, board members are left to take an educated guess, remain silent in order to not seem uninformed or engage in long discussions about the merit of the recommendation, unnecessarily extending board meetings. **Exhibit 1-5** assesses the adequacy of the information presented in the board recommendation document.

Exhibit 1-5 Board Recommendation Assessment

Suggested Agenda Information Packet Contents	ACISD Packet Contents	
	Adequate	Inadequate
Item number	X	
Item name	X	
Item description	X	
Requested action	X	

Cost-benefit analysis		• X None
Impact on planning documents		• X None
Impact on all budget funds		• X None
Start date		• X None
Assigned responsibility	X	

Source: ACISD Board agenda packets, 2000-01.

Chapter 1

A. GOVERNANCE (PART 2)

An example of this lack of information occurred in October 2001 when an interagency agreement was presented to the board for approval. This board recommendation lacked the information necessary for a board member to make an informed decision about the contract. **Exhibit 1-6** is an assessment of the interagency agreement recommendation presented during the October 2001 board meeting:

Exhibit 1-6
Head Start Interagency Agreement Board Recommendation
Assessment

Presented to the ACISD Board in October 2001		Questions Board Members Might Ask Based on the Information Presented to Them
Recommendation	"The Superintendent recommends that the Board approve an Interagency Agreement for providing services to Head Start children, with disabilities, in Aransas County, Rockport, Texas, for the 2001-2002 school year."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is the contract with?
Purpose	None provided.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the purpose of Head Start? • What is this contract for? • Why is ACISD participating? • What impact has it had in the past on our children? • What would happen if this program was not offered to our students? • Have

		<p>improvements been made since last year?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What problems did we experience last year?
Rationale	<p>"The board must ensure eligible children with disabilities receive a free appropriate public education, as required by law, in the least restrictive environment. The board must also ensure that there is a cooperative arrangement between the San Patricio County Community Action Agency/Head Start Program and the Aransas County ISD, and that each agency assumes responsibility to communicate with the other and share leadership responsibilities in order to ensure that available resources are utilized in the most effective manner, and that these cooperative arrangements are developed, implemented, and reviewed at least annually."</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The rationale is that the board must approve interagency agreements. • Explain why this particular vendor....No justification or explanation as to why the district is dealing with San Patricio County rather than Aransas County.
Impact	<p>"There is no impact to the general fund balance."</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many students? • How will they be identified? • What would happen to them if the district did not offer this program? • How much will this cost in local, state, federal or grant dollars? • Which fund will pay the expenses? • Will the district

		<p>have to pay any part of the expenses or contribute staff hours?</p>
<p>Roles and Responsibilities</p>	<p>None provided.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are ACISD's roles, responsibilities and deliverables? • What are San Patricio County's roles, responsibilities and deliverables? • Who will monitor the contract and vendor to ensure that the work is being performed to ACISD's standards and expectations? • What are ACISD's expectations?
<p>Discussion</p>	<p>"ACISD must comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), 34 F.F.R. 300, et al; Head Start must comply with the Head Start Program Performance Standards on Services for Children with Disabilities, 45 C.F.R. 1308, et al."</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is this a required program? • What in ACISD's makeup requires this program?
<p>Resource Person</p>	<p>"Ken Wagner"</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The person responsible for the overall project and managing the contract.
<p>Attachments</p>	<p>1. Federal Regulations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The resource

	<p>2. Head Start Program Performance Standards on Services for Children with DI</p> <p>3. Texas rules relating to sharing of information</p>	<p>person should take this information to the board meeting in case questions arise, but not distribute it to the members beforehand.</p>
Quantification	None provided.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No quantification. • No mention of the number students with disabilities who qualify for Head Start, workload impacts or what, if anything, will suffer.
Expected Results	None specified.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No statement as to what we expect the results of this program to be. • No stated baseline or measurements. • How does ACISD measure the success of this project?
Start/End Date	Start and end dates are implied through the school year.	
Report Results to Board	None requested by the board.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No indication if the board requires a report summarizing the results at the end of the year or at the time the

		agreement comes up for renewal.
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Source: ACISD board meeting packet, October 2000.

In conclusion, not enough information was provided for board members to make an informed decision, which is common.

Recommendation 2:

Expand the existing board recommendation format and content to include more information about recommendations.

Exhibit 1-7 shows a proposed format for board recommendations.

**Exhibit 1-7
Proposed Format of a Board Recommendation**

Board Recommendation
The Superintendent recommends that the board approve an interagency agreement for providing Head Start services to children with disabilities between ACISD and San Patricio County.
Rationale for Board Review/Approval
The board must approve all interagency agreements. This contract is an annual renewal with San Patricio County. ACISD has contracted with San Patricio County for the last ___ years for this service. Aransas County does not have the organization or the facility to provide the needed services. Nonetheless, we continue to dialogue with Aransas County to encourage them to provide this service so our tax dollars will remain within the county.
Definitions
Head Start is xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
Cost-Benefit Justification
<u>Requirements:</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are required by law, (citing), to provide _____ educational service to students with disabilities who qualify for the Head Start program.
<u>Population:</u>

- ACISD has ____ incoming students with disabilities who qualify for Head Start.

Costs to the district:

- To do this in-district, it would cost \$____ in Title __ funds and require ACISD to hire _____
- By using an outside provider, it costs the district \$_____ in Title ___ funds.
- ACISD monitoring time is \$_____
- The district is saving \$_____

Benefits to ACISD by using an outside provider are:

Roles & Responsibilities

San Patricio County:

- Develop a disabilities service plan providing strategies for meeting special needs of children with disabilities and their parents.

ACISD: Ensure that the plan contains the following:

- Procedures for timely screening;
- Procedures for making referrals to the LEA for evaluation;
- Assurances of accessibility of facilities; and
- Assurances for the use of special furniture, equipment and materials if needed;

Expected Results

- Student results:
- Teacher results:
- Academic achievement results:

Duration

Start date:

End date:

Report back to the board:

Fiscal Impact

Fiscal Impact	General Fund Impact	Other Fund(s) Impact
One-Time Costs		

Ongoing Costs		
One-Time Revenue Gains		
Ongoing Revenue Gains		
Net (Cost) or Gain to ACISD		

Source: SoCo Consulting, Inc.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The business manager designs a "Board Recommendation" packet, ensuring that necessary information is contained.	June 2002
2.	The business manager distributes recommendation format to the board members and the administrators for review and comment making the appropriate changes.	July 2002
3.	The superintendent implements the recommendation format with all managers.	August 2002
4.	The superintendent conducts follow-up after two meetings and asks board members if the information contained in the board recommendation is substantial enough for them to make informed board decisions.	October 2002 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The minutes prepared for ACISD board meetings do not fully document the board's decisions. Questions by board members that cannot be answered during the board meeting are not maintained in the minutes as an action list, a list of items that need follow-up action, for the superintendent and staff.

Board minutes are missing critical information necessary to understand how the board reaches its decisions. The minutes contain the date of the board meeting; the times of call-to-order and adjournment; agenda item titles and motions made, including the names of individuals making and seconding the motions; votes taken by the board as a whole; and the outcome of decisions or discussions. Minutes do not, however, describe the discussions about the agenda items. **Exhibit 1-8** assesses the adequacy of the existing board minutes.

**Exhibit 1-8
Board Meeting Minutes Content**

Board Meeting Minutes Documentation	Adequate	Inadequate
Date of the board meeting	X	
Board item number and name	X	
Description of the item		X
Action required	X	
Time of call to order and adjournment	X	
Motions made, including the names of individuals making and seconding the motion		X
Votes taken by each member, including yes, no and abstentions	X	
Detailed discussion giving a clear indication of the board's deliberations and the factors considered when making the decision		X
Follow-up action required		X

Source: ACISD board meeting minutes, 2001.

The review team listened to numerous board-meeting audiotapes to determine what information was reflected in the minutes, and no discussions were reflected. Two of the audiotapes were damaged and could not be accessed, resulting in no official record of the board's actions. The review team was not able to determine the board's discussion from the written minutes of any meeting conducted in the last fiscal year.

Meeting minutes should give a clear indication of the board's deliberations and what factors the board considered in its decisions. Any person should be able to read the minutes and discern the issues affecting a particular board decision. **Exhibit 1-9** presents examples of actual minutes from ACISD board meetings examined by the review team.

**Exhibit 1-9
Excerpts Taken from ACISD Board Minutes**

Board Agenda Item / Topic	Actual Recorded Minutes
May 14, 2001 Item Number: 3a.	"Motion was made by Wright, seconded by Chaney, duly put and carried. to approve item numbers 3a. 3b. 3c. 3e. 3f. and

3b, 3c, 3e, 3f, 3g Topic: Do not know unless I review the agenda packet	3g of the consent agenda as presented. Votes yes-6 (Livingston, Pina, Little, Remley, Chaney, Wright); votes no-0; votes abstained-1 (Hoekstra)."
July 23, 2001 Item Number: Topic: Do not know unless I review the agenda packet	"Motion was made by Remley, seconded by Wright, that the board give public notice of the naming of P. Wayne Johnson as finalist for possible employment as Superintendent of Arkansas County ISD to succeed Dr. Adrian B. Johnson following Dr. Johnson's resignation. All votes yes."
September 10, 2001 Item Number: 5 Topic: Health Insurance	"Received a lot of discussion with information being presented by Andy Ludeke. No action was taken. This item will be addressed at a meeting later this month."

Source: ACISD board meeting minutes, May 2000 through September 2001.

The Handbook of Educational Administration states that board actions are to contain "complete information as to each subject of the board's deliberations," and courts have said that board minutes constitute the only legal evidence of board action (Lewis v. Board of Education, 348 S.W. 2d 921 [Ky. 1961]. ACISD board policy states: "Board action shall be carefully recorded by the secretary or clerk; when approved, these minutes shall serve as the legal record of official board actions."

Recommendation 3:

Prepare more detailed meeting minutes.

Meetings provide a formal opportunity for the board to exchange information and views, discuss policy and make decisions. It is important for the board to record the minutes of these meetings, both as a confirmation of issues the board discussed and agreements it made, as well as to provide information for the community and those not in attendance.

Exhibit 1-10 is an example of a format that can be used to fully document minutes and the discussions that take place.

**Exhibit 1-10
Suggested Minutes**

Board Minutes for XX/XX/XX		
Item Number:	Topic:	
Item Description:		
Discussion:		
Motion:		
Motion by: _____ Seconded by: _____		
<i>Votes:</i>		
Livingston: ____; Pina: ____; Little: ____; Remley: ____; Chaney: ____; Wright: ____; Walvoord: ____		
<i>Vote Count:</i> YES votes: ____; NO votes: ____; Abstentions: ____		
<i>Follow-Up Action Items</i>		
Action Item	Assigned To	Return Date

Source: SoCo Consulting, Inc.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The board secretary uses the format suggested above to design a form for recording board-meeting minutes.	June 2002
2.	The board secretary starts recording and documenting minutes in the new format, paying special attention to recording discussion related to agenda items and listing all follow-up action required by staff to answer board-member requests or questions.	July 2002 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

ACISD board members are not fulfilling their continuing-education requirements established by law and are not making a report to the public about the board's continuing-education efforts.

ACISD board members are required by law to attend training about district operations. The Texas Education Code specifies: "A trustee must complete any training required by the State Board of Education." ACISD policy states that: "Each Trustee must complete any training required by the State Board of Education. *Education Code 11.159*". Board members are required to fulfill three different kinds of continuing education. These

three types are sometimes referred to as Tiers One, Two and Three. Tier One deals with the orientation sessions required for newly elected members and the Texas Education Code update after each legislative session for all board members. Tier Two deals with teamwork training for all board members and the superintendent to enhance the team's effectiveness. Tier Three specifies a certain number of discretionary hours for areas of need. **Exhibit 1-11** details the continuing education requirements for school board members.

Exhibit 1-11
Continuing Education Requirements for School Board Members

Type of Continuing Education	First-Year Board Member Requirements	Experienced Board Member Requirements	Provider
Local district orientation	Required within 60 days of election or appointment	Not required	Local district
Orientation to the Texas Education Code	3 hours	Not required	Education Service Center
Update to the Texas Education Code	After legislative session	After legislative session	Education Service Center
Team-building session/ assessment of continuing-education needs of the board-superintendent team	At least 3 hours	At least 3 hours	TEA-registered provider
Additional continuing education, based on assessed needs and the framework for governance leadership	At least 10 hours	At least 5 hours	TEA-registered provider
Total Minimum Number of Hours	16 hours plus local district orientation and TEC update	8 hours plus TEC update	

Source: Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) Leadership Team Services and TASB Web site at <www.tasb.org>.

Each year at the meeting at which the board would normally issue the call for the board election, the president of the board must announce publicly which members of the board have met their annual continuing-education obligation and which have not. This information must also be made available to the media. ACISD policy also states that: "Annually, at the meeting at which the call for election of board members is normally scheduled, the president shall announce the name of each board member who has completed the required continuing education, who has exceeded the required hours of continuing education, and who is deficient in the required continuing education. The president shall cause the minutes to reflect the information and shall make this information available to the local media." According to the board secretary and the audit team's review of the board minutes, this policy is not being followed.

Failure of one or more board members to comply with this rule can affect a district's accreditation status. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) may request evidence at any time of board-member compliance with the continuing education rule. **Exhibit 1-12** summarizes the number of continuing-education hours required of each board member, the number of hours taken in recent years and the resulting shortfalls.

Exhibit 1-12
Board Member Continuing-Education Requirements for 2001-02

ACISD Board Member	Required Annual Hours	Hours Earned 1999-2000	Hours Earned 2000-01	Partial Year Hours, 2001-02
Joe Livingston	8	1	3	0
Rusty Little	8	10	10.25	0
Julie Adams Pina	8	3	0	0
Jack Chaney	16	0	3	10.75
Jim Remley	8	12	0	0
Sara Walvoord	16	0	0	17.75
Jack Wright	16	0	6	15
Total	80	26	22.25	43.5
Excess (Deficiency) of Actual Compared to Required Hours		(54)	(57.75)	(36.5)

Source: ACISD superintendent's secretary records.

The Regional Education Service Center II (Region 2) sends flyers to ACISD announcing all upcoming continuing-education events in the region. The ACISD board secretary forwards the flyers to the board members for consideration.

Recommendation 4:

Encourage board members to take their required hours of training each year.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent personally notifies board members on a quarterly basis of the hours they have acquired and how many are needed by the end of the year.	November 2002 and Ongoing
2.	The superintendent forwards Region 2's TASB and other training announcements to each board member upon receipt.	September 2002
3.	The superintendent publicly announces the number of training hours taken by each board member compared to the required number of hours.	May 2003 and Annually Thereafter

FISCAL IMPACT This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 1

B. DISTRICT MANAGEMENT

While the board sets policy, the superintendent is responsible for carrying out that policy and managing the district in the most cost effective and efficient manner possible. The goal of administration must always be to help teachers instruct students by ensuring that every possible dollar and resource is directed to the classroom.

The superintendent uses various ways to stay attuned to what is happening in the district. On a daily basis, the superintendent meets with his two lead managers, the assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Administration and the business manager. The superintendent also meets with the district's leadership team every Tuesday morning, to fully communicate with his key managers and to help guide and prioritize their work. **Exhibit 1-13** shows how often the superintendent meets with school leaders.

Exhibit 1-13
Superintendent Cabinet and Leadership Team

Meeting	Meeting Frequency	Representatives Present
Central office leadership meeting	Daily as needed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Administration• Business manager
District management leadership meeting	Every Tuesday morning to mentor managers and discuss outstanding issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Administration• Business manager• School principals• Special education director• Technology supervisor• Energy management coordinator• Three facility supervisors• Transportation director (as needed)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food Services supervisor (as needed) • Chief of Police • HR coordinator • Testing and tech coordinator • Special programs coordinator • Athletic director
HR coordinator	Daily	2

Source: ACISD assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Administration interview, October 2001.

ACISD's organizational structure means that school leaders rely heavily on the superintendent for day-to-day operations. This has created difficulty for school leaders because there has been frequent turnover in the superintendent position in recent years. There have been 4 superintendents in the last seven years. The superintendents and their duration of service are summarized in **Exhibit 1-14**.

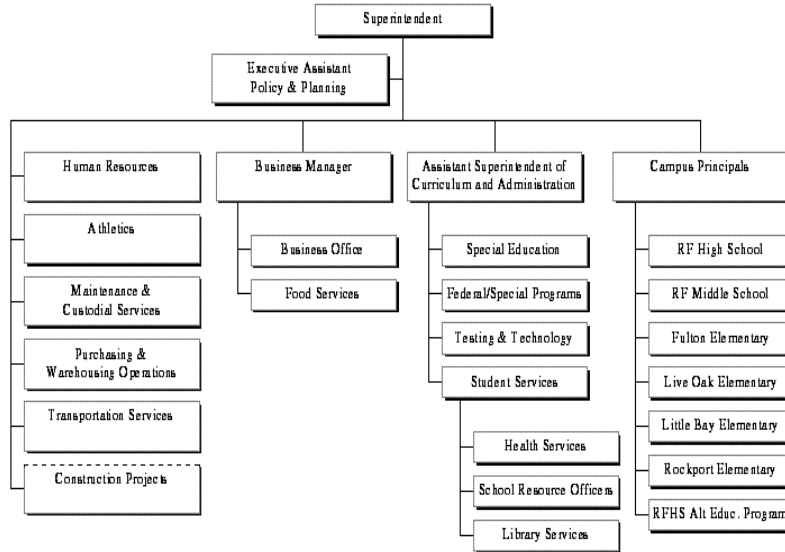
Exhibit 1-14
ACISD Superintendent Turnover

Superintendent Name	Duration as of 10/1/2001	Dates of Service	
		Start Date	End Date
Wayne Johnson	3 months	August 2001	Present
Dr. Adrian Johnson	2 years, 4 months	March 1999	July 2001
Norman Spears	4 years, 6 months	December 1994	June 1999
Karen Hall	7 years	1988	1994

Source: ACISD superintendent's secretary interview, October 2001.

Exhibit 1-15 depicts the organizational structure of the district.

Exhibit 1-15 ACISD Organizational Structure



Source: ACISD Human Resources Department, September 6, 2001.

FINDING

The present superintendent conducts management meetings to keep informed of all areas of the district, challenge people to work toward an ever-expanding vision and create a threat-free environment so that the creative talents and skills of each person are used to the best advantage. The superintendent is trying to incorporate functional areas that previously were excluded by including all departments in the meetings, which was not done in the past. One example is the ACISD Police Department, which has never been involved in staff meetings before and is now included.

COMMENDATION

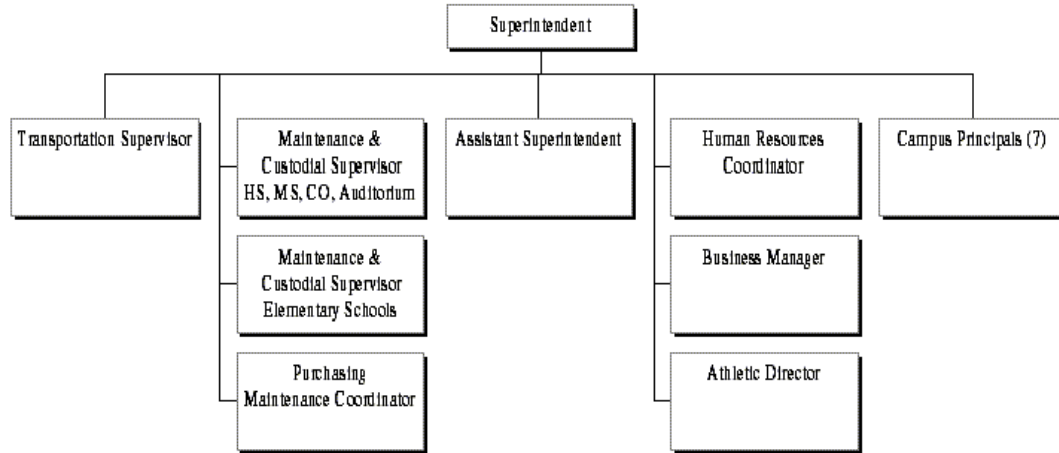
ACISD superintendent conducts regular cabinet and management meetings, including personnel from all areas of the district.

FINDING

Fifteen managers report directly to the superintendent. It is general management practice to have only 5 to 7 supervisors or managers reporting to a high-level manager.

According to the superintendent, he is supervising more than the standard number of personnel because the district does not have enough experienced and skilled managers to take over some of his supervisory duties. **Exhibit 1-16** shows who directly reports to the superintendent.

**Exhibit 1-16
Personnel Who Report Directly to the ACISD Superintendent**



Source: ACISD Organization chart, September 6, 2001.

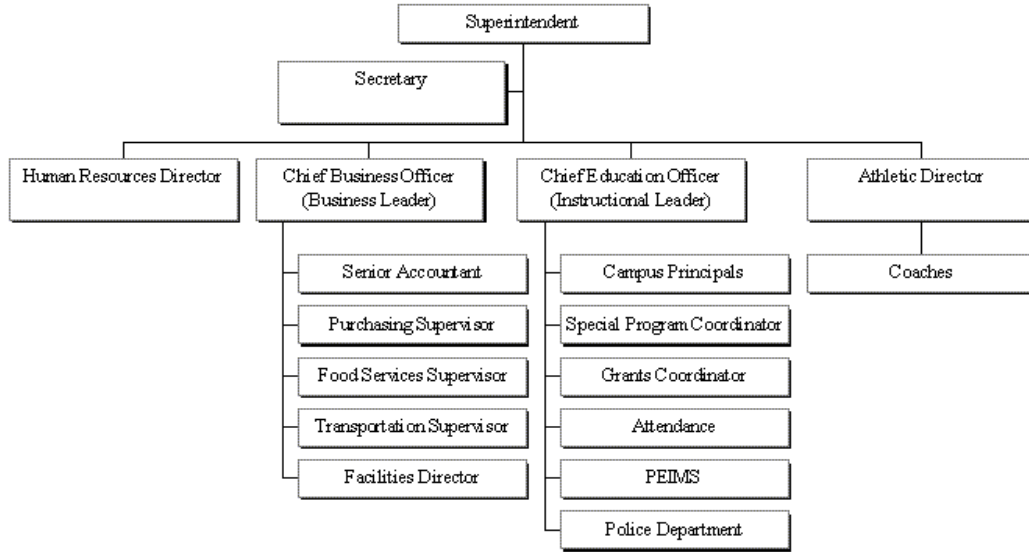
According to the superintendent, because of his broad span of control, the assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Administration is taking on some of the superintendent's administrative duties, meaning the assistant superintendent is spending too much time on administrative matters at the expense of curriculum and instruction. Both the superintendent and assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Administration expressed a desire to decrease the number of people who directly report to the superintendent.

Recommendation 5:

Reduce the number of positions reporting directly to the superintendent by consolidating some positions and reorganizing the reporting structure.

Exhibit 1-17 shows the review team's proposed organizational structure where more managers would report to a chief business leader and chief instructional leader, rather than directly to the superintendent.

**Exhibit 1-17
Proposed Organizational Structure**



Source: SoCo Consulting, Inc.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent reviews the current organization structure and devises a proposed organization structure.	June 2002
2.	The superintendent presents the new structure to the board for approval.	July 2002
3.	The superintendent discusses changes with all functional area managers and implements the new reporting structure.	August 2002
4.	The superintendent meets with functional area managers to discuss any concerns or questions about the new structure.	December 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

ACISD does not use a staffing formula at the school level.

According to the *Checklist of Standards for the Accreditation of Elementary Schools* published by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools' Commission on Elementary and Middle Schools, schools should provide a minimum of qualified school personnel as shown by the

following four charts. **Exhibit 1-18** addresses the minimum personnel requirements for staffing at the elementary schools.

Exhibit 1-18
Minimum Personnel Requirements for Elementary Schools

Enrollment	Principal	Professional, Administrative or Supervisory Assistants	Library, Media Specialists	Library/ Media Aide or Clerk	Secretaries or Clerks
1 - 263	0.5	0.0	0.5	0.0	0.5
264 - 439	1.0	0.0	1.0	0.0	1.0
449 - 659	1.0	0.0	1.0	0.5	1.0
660 - 879	1.0	0.5	1.0	1.0	1.5
880 - 1,099	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.5
1,100 - 1,319	1.0	1.5	1.0	1.0	2.0
1,320 +	1.0	2.0	1.0	1.0	2.0

Source: Checklist of Standards for the Accreditation of Elementary Schools 2001-02 Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

Exhibit 1-19 addresses staffing requirements for guidance services at the elementary schools.

Exhibit 1-19
Minimum Personnel Requirements for Guidance Services for Elementary Schools

Enrollment	Number of Counselors or School-Based Guidance Professionals
1 - 499	0.5
500 - 749	1.0
750 - 999	1.5
1,000 - 1,249	2.0
1,250 - 1,499	2.5

1,500 +	3.0
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Source: Checklist of Standards for the Accreditation of Elementary Schools 2001-2002 Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

Using the minimum staffing requirements guidelines published by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), ACISD is overstaffed at the elementary schools by 9 positions. Live Oak, Little Bay and Fulton elementary schools each have a full-time guidance counselor while SACS standards suggest only a half-time counselor for each school. SACS guidelines suggest Rockport elementary have a part-time library aide and the other elementary schools have no library aide, but there is one at each of the schools. Also, each of the elementary schools should have one clerk or secretary for a total of four, while the total count of secretaries and clerks at the elementary schools is twelve. The one position where the elementary schools are understaffed is librarians. The elementary schools share one librarian, while SACS standards suggest each should have a full-time librarian. **Exhibit 1-20** gives the minimum staffing requirements for elementary schools.

Exhibit 1-20
SACS Staffing Guidelines Compared to ACISD Actual Staff Counts at Elementary Schools

School	Comparison	Principal	Professional Administrative or Supervisory Assistants	Guidance Prof.	Library or Media Specialist	Library Aide or Clerk	Secretaries or Clerks	Total
Rockport Elementary	SACS Standard	1.0	0.0	1.0	1.0	0.5	1.0	
	ACISD staffing for 518 students	1.0	1.0	1.0	0	0.0	4.0	
Difference		0.0	(1.0)	0.0	1.0	0.5	(3.0)	(2.5)
Live Oak Elementary	SACS Standard	1.0	0.0	0.5	1.0	0.0	1.0	
	ACISD staffing for 338 students	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.0	0.0	3.0	
Difference		0.0	(1.0)	(0.5)	1.0	0.0	(2.0)	(2.5)

Little Bay Elementary	SACS Standard	1.0	0.0	0.5	1.0	0.0	1.0	
	ACISD staffing for 306 students	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.00	0.0	2.0	
Difference		0.0	(1.0)	(0.5)	1.0	0.0	(1.0)	(1.5)
Fulton Elementary	SACS Standard	1.0	0.0	.5	1.0	0.0	1.0	
	ACISD staffing for 380 students	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.0	0.0	3.0	
Difference		0.0	(1.0)	(0.5)	1.0	0.0	(2.0)	(2.5)
Total (more) or less		0.0	(4.0)	(1.5)	4.0	0.5	(8.0)	(9.0)

Source: Texas Education Agency (TEA) Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) data, 2000-01. Checklist of Standards for the Accreditation of Elementary Schools 2001-02 Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

Exhibit 1-21 shows the minimum staffing requirements for the secondary schools.

Exhibit 1-21
Minimum Personnel Requirements for Secondary Schools

Enrollment	Principal	Professional, Administrative or Supervisory Assistants	Guidance Professionals	Library, Media Specialists	Library, Media Aide or Clerk	Secretaries or Clerks
1 - 249	1.0	0.0	1.0	1.0	0.0	1.0
250 - 499	1.0	0.5	1.0	1.0	0.5	2.0
500 - 749	1.0	1.0	1.5	1.0	1.0	3.0
750 - 999	1.0	1.5	2.0	1.0	1.0	3.5
1,000 - 1,249	1.0	2.0	2.5	2.0	1.0	4.0
1,250 -	1.0	2.5	3.0	2.0	1.0	4.5

1,499						
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Source: Standards Checklist, Commission on Secondary and Middle Schools, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

According to the standards developed by SACS, ACISD secondary schools exceed the minimum requirements by 5.5 positions. The middle school and high school are overstaffed with assistant principals, curriculum coordinators and guidance professionals. **Exhibit 1-22** contrasts the SACS standard against the staffing at each school.

**Exhibit 1-22
SACS Staffing Guidelines Compared to ACISD Actual Staff Counts
at Secondary Schools**

School	Comparison	Principal	Professional Administrative or Supervisory Assistants	Guidance Prof.	Library or Media Specialist	Library Aide or Clerk	Secretaries or Clerks	Total
High School	SACS Standard	1.0	1.5	2.0	1.0	1.0	3.5	
	ACISD staffing for 991 students	1.0	4.0	3.5	1.0	1.0	3.0	
Difference		0.0	(2.5)	(1.5)	0.0	0.0	0.5	(3.5)
Middle School	SACS Standard	1.0	1.5	2.0	1.0	1.0	3.5	
	ACISD staffing for 833 students	1.0	3.0	2.0	1.0	1.0	4.0	
Difference		0.0	(1.5)	0.0	0.0	0.0	(0.5)	(2.0)
Total	0.0	(4.0)	(1.5)	0.0	0.0	0.0	(5.5)	

Source: Checklist of Standards for the Accreditation of Elementary Schools 2001-02 Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

In total, based on SACS's minimum standards, ACISD schools are overstaffed by 24.5 positions as summarized in **Exhibit 1-23**.

Exhibit 1-23
ACISD School Staffing Summary

Position	Overstaffing Count	Understaffing Count	Net
Assistant Principals and Curriculum Coordinators	(10.0)	0.0	(10.0)
Counselors	(3.0)	0.0	(3.0)
Secretaries & Clerks	(8.0)	0.0	(8.0)
Library Specialists	0.0	3.0	3.0
Library Clerks	(3.5)	0.0	(3.5)
Total	(24.5)	3.0	(21.5)

Source: Calculation based on ACISD positions.

Although ACISD is overstaffed with assistant principals and curriculum coordinators compared to SACS, the curriculum coordinators are providing a valuable service to the district.

Recommendation 6:

Implement a staffing allocation formula.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent declares a hiring freeze on all staff positions.	Immediately
2.	The assistant superintendent uses standard staffing allocation methodologies to analyze staffing levels.	June - July 2002
3.	The assistant superintendent discusses staffing levels with the superintendent.	June - July 2002
4.	The superintendent presents suggested staffing changes to the board.	July 2002
5.	The superintendent adjusts staffing levels where necessary.	August 2002
6.	The business manager adjusts the budget according to recommendations.	August 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

According to the industry guidelines, the district could reduce their school staff by 12.5 positions, leaving the curriculum coordinators in place. One assistant principal position, 8 secretarial and clerical positions, 3 counselor positions and 3.5 library aides could be terminated, while 3 librarians could be added.

The lowest assistant principal salary is \$40,000, the lowest clerical salary is \$12,735 and the lowest counselor salary is \$34,670. With benefits, these amount to \$47,246, \$18,142 and \$41,403 respectively. The highest ACISD librarian salary is \$47,963, while the highest library aide salary is \$19,189. With benefits, these amount to \$55,977 and \$25,619 respectively.

At the district's salaries, the savings would be \$47,246 for an assistant principal, \$145,136 for 8 secretaries (\$18,142 x 8), \$124,209 for 3 counselors (\$41,403 x 3) and \$89,667 for 3.5 library aides (\$25,619 x 3.5). The district would incur additional costs of \$167,931 for 3 librarians (\$55,977 x 3). This would result in an annual savings of \$238,327 (\$406,258 - \$167,931).

Recommendation	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Implement a staffing allocation formula.	\$238,327	\$238,327	\$238,327	\$238,327	\$238,327

FINDING

ACISD does not maintain, track or report any performance statistics to ensure that it is accomplishing what management wants and needs.

The district is not managed using performance measurements, which results in the district not knowing how well each area is performing and limiting its ability to give feedback to personnel to improve performance.

District operational services generally are responsible for the district's most severe day-to-day discrepancies. They also generate the most public comment. While these services are not directly related to teaching or learning, their absence makes it impossible for the primary function of the school, education, to continue. Because operational services are so important to the normal function of a school district and because the efficient operation of these services enables the educational process to proceed with the least distraction and disruption, the district must manage them carefully.

An effective performance measurement system helps people monitor, control, manage, track, diagnose, improve or plan some aspect of their work better. Having specific performance measures in place helps assure

that the right kind of behavior is rewarded. A district can use performance measures to solve problems and instigate improvement instead of to reward and punish.

Recommendation 7:

Track and report performance measures to management monthly and to the board annually.

Tracking and reporting performance measures to district administration and the board will allow ACISD to collect specific information and use that information to set and measure desired performance levels.

Exhibit 1-24 shows a list of desired performance measurements by department which could be routinely provided to the ACISD board and management.

**Exhibit 1-24
Sample Performance Measures**

Functional Area	Performance Measure
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work-order backlog • Percent of preventive maintenance performed on time • Driver absenteeism • Average route time in minutes • Riders per bus • Riders per route • Route miles per bus • Staff turnover • Number of buses in comparison to ridership and industry standards • Number of buses ten years or older • Number of buses with more than 100,000 miles • Number of buses with more than \$___ in maintenance costs for the previous year • Supply inventory turnover ratio • Cost per mile • Cost per rider • Cost to provide athletic extracurricular routes • Value of inventory on hand • Budget to actual expenditures • Accidents per 100,000 miles
Safety and Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of incidents reported by type and by school • Security cost for each student and by school

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security cost for each incident • Recidivism rate • Budget to actual expenditures • Overtime hours and dollars incurred • Sick days versus total days available to work • Cost for each student • Inspections conducted and violations noted
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ratio of students to instructional computers • Student test scores • Per-student expenditures by functional area • Administrative staff-to-student ratio • Teacher-to-student ratio • Amount of funds generated from community • Projected versus actual enrollment • Percent of parents attending parent-teacher conferences • Number of hours individuals have volunteered at the school • Student and teacher attendance
Human Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget to actual expenditures • Overtime hours and dollars incurred • Sick days versus total time allocated to work • Budget to actual expenditures • In-service days versus days on the job • Substitutes used and the costs of substitutes • In-service travel cost as a percentage of total payroll cost
Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost per square foot • Ratio of square feet to maintenance workers • Cost for each student • Cost for each acre • Work orders completed, hours accounted for and supplies applied to work orders • Work-order backlog by school and/or facility • Cost for each work order • Inspections conducted and violations noted • Cost per square foot • Ratio of square feet to custodian • Cost for each facility • Cost for each student • Inspections conducted and violations noted • Cost per acre

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ratio of square feet to groundskeeper • Cost for each student • Inspections conducted and violations noted • Utility cost for each square foot and by facility • Total utility cost for each square foot, by facility and by student • Telephone cost for each staff person • Cell phone cost for each staff person • Project estimate to actual comparison (time and dollars) • Punch lists outstanding • Insurance costs for each square foot
Food Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meals per labor hour by school • Meal participation rates by school • Commodity qualification and use • Inventory turns • Cost by square feet • Budget to actual expenditures • Cost for each meal and for each student • Budget to actual expenditures • Overtime hours and dollars incurred • Staff turnover versus total positions approved • Sick days versus total days needed • Accidents
Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ratio of students to instructional computers • Ratio of administrators to administrative computers • Ratio of total computers to technical support • Number and percentage of computers and printers more than five years old • Budget to actual expenditures • Overtime hours and dollars incurred • Cost for each student and cost for each computer • Cost for each service call • Staff turnover versus total positions approved • Sick days versus total days needed • Total service calls/work orders versus calls resolved • Total calls/work orders outstanding (backlog)

Source: SoCo Consulting, Inc.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	Functional area managers prepare the suggested format and content of performance report.	June 2002
2.	Functional area managers review the suggested report with the superintendent and chief financial officer and obtain approval.	July - August 2002
3.	The functional area managers start accumulating statistics.	September 2002 and Monthly Thereafter
4.	The functional area managers prepare and distribute the report to the superintendent and chief financial officer five days after each month's end.	September 2002 and Monthly Thereafter
5.	The superintendent and functional area managers present an annual report to the board.	May 2003 and Annually Thereafter

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

ACISD has been using the same law firm since 1977 without re-evaluating the service to ensure that the district is receiving the best service at the fairest price. The law firm of Gary, Thomason, Hall and Marks from Corpus Christi is ACISD's legal firm of record.

While competitive procurement is not required for legal services, as stated in Section 44.031(f) of the Texas Education Code, the district may want to ensure that it is getting the best value for the district's money and the most qualified attorney to handle the district's legal business by requesting proposals from other firms on a regular basis. Using some type of procedure to elicit information from potential candidates also will aid the board in determining whether the district's needs can best be met by a local attorney or firm or by an attorney or firm in another location.

Recommendation 8:

Evaluate the legal-service contract every five years to ensure competitive pricing and a legal team experienced with school-district issues.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The business manager prepares an RFP for legal services.	June 2002
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2.	The business manager and superintendent prepare evaluation criteria.	July 2002
3.	The business manager publishes and releases the RFP to firms in Aransas County, Corpus Christi and Austin.	August 2002
4.	The superintendent summarizes the data and makes a staff recommendation.	September 2002
5.	The superintendent prepares and presents a board recommendation to the board members.	October 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Legal contracts that the district enters into are not subject to a legal review to ensure that all terms and conditions are fair to the district. **Exhibit 1-25** highlights some of the issues of concern to the TPSR team.

**Exhibit 1-25
ACISD Contractual Terms**

Contractor	Contract Terms & Conditions
Cintas Corporation for uniform rental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "In the event of cancellation of this service agreement by the customer prior to the termination date, other than for failure of the company to perform under its guarantee, the customer will pay the greater of 50 percent of the weekly service charge a week for the unexpired term, or buyback all the garments and other products in inventory at the rates listed as replacement value." The RFP stated "This contract may be cancelled by ACISD by giving thirty (30) days written notice to the vendor." • "Upon each anniversary date of this agreement, the company will automatically increase the prices then in effect by the amount of the increase in the consumer price index for the previous twelve months or 5 percent." • "Upon execution, this contract may be extended for one (1) year period by mutual agreement by both parties. Cost increase, if any, shall not exceed ten (10) percent."

Real estate acquisition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear title was not secured when purchasing lots in the Denver Heights subdivision.
Coca-Cola	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Advertiser shall have the rights provided herein for a term of three (3) years, beginning, 2000 unless mutually extended by written Agreement of the parties or unless sooner terminated as provided therein." • "School may terminate this Agreement for non-performance by Advertiser after a thirty day (30) day written notice and an opportunity to cure."
Energy Management Company	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "If the Customer fails to make payments to CSI as set forth in Article 2, through no fault of CSI, CSI may, upon seven days' written notice to the Customer, terminate the Contract and recover from the Customer payment for all Work executed and for proven loss with respect to materials, equipment, tools, and machinery, including reasonable overhead, profit and damages applicable to the project."

Source: ACISD contracts.

The district has entered into some contracts that may be difficult to cancel should the district so choose. The terms and conditions are preferential to the vendor rather than the district.

Recommendation 9:

Review all real estate contracts and service contracts over a specified dollar amount or exceeding a one-year term.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The board develops policy to ensure that legal counsel reviews any contract for more than a certain dollar amount and ensures the best terms to the district.	June 2002
2.	The board adopts the policy.	July 2002
3.	The superintendent drafts a written procedure to detail the steps that must be taken if a contract is more than a certain dollar amount or exceeds one year in duration.	July 2002

4.	The superintendent e-mails the policy and the procedure to all staff.	July 2002
5.	The business manager starts sending contracts to legal counsel when appropriate.	August 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 1

C. PLANNING AND EVALUATION

State law requires districts to ensure that careful planning and evaluation occur at the school and district level. A district with a strategic plan that has received broad-based input and has well-defined goals will be better able to meet state standards with respect to academic excellence and achievement. Evaluation of a district's programs allows the board and administrators to gauge the success of each program by determining if key objectives and results obtained and if the benefits merit the costs incurred. The administration can then make planned changes to the district's programs based on those results.

Strategic planning helps a district identify its goals, develop specific activities to reach those goals, review progress toward goals and to adjust both the vision and the district's activities as needed.

ACISD prepares a District Improvement Plan and the corresponding Campus Improvement Plans. It has not, however, prepared a strategic plan for the district.

FINDING

The last time ACISD's board was involved in a strategic-planning process was 1995.

All planning since 1995 has been at the administrative and school levels starting with the District Improvement Plan (DIP), which provides master goals that are used to develop six Campus Improvement Plans (CIP). The District Improvement Plan is created by a team of 23 ACISD employees, four parents and community members and one principal called the District-Wide Education Improvement Committee. The committee surveys their members to determine what goals need to be addressed. The committee establishes both districtwide and school goals. The campus improvement plans are derived from the District Improvement Plan. Committees are formed at each school to develop the school-level plan.

The district does not have auxiliary operational plans for food services, transportation or safety and security. Nor does it have a master facilities plan to guide facility improvements within the district. An assessment of the ACISD planning process is summarized in **Exhibit 1-26**.

Exhibit 1-26 **ACISD Planning Assessment**

Planning Component	ACISD Prepares	ACISD Links to Other Plans	ACISD Links to the Budget
District strategic plan	NO	--	--
District improvement plan	X	NO	NO
Campus improvement plans	X	NO	NO
Technology plan	X	NO	NO
Master facilities plan	NO	--	--
Auxiliary plans	NO	--	--

Source: Interviews with ACISD administrators, October 2001.

ACISD's District Improvement and the Campus Improvement Plans do not list specific achievement targets, give sufficient data to justify costs, indicate specific staffing guidelines or implementation strategies, show how the plans relate to other plans such as technology, indicate responsibility assignments or give instructions on how to monitor. The plans also do not include information about auxiliary services within the district or specify a renewal process.

A strategic plan incorporates all of the individual types of plans into one long-range plan for the district. It sets long-term goals and broad direction for the district, looking at the entire educational system including the community.

Recommendation 10:

Implement a planning process whereby the board sets the vision, mission and overall goals for the district while staff develops specific strategies for accomplishing the goals.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent appoints a planning coordinator/facilitator.	June 2002
2.	The planning coordinator develops a strategic plan draft that includes the need for such a document, the beliefs and assumptions supporting the plan and the district's mission and strategic goals.	October 2002
3.	The planning coordinator develops an implementation plan in the form of the District Improvement Plan. the School Improvement	November 2002

	Plan, the functional area plans, the technology plan and the master facilities plan.	
4.	The planning coordinator monitors the plan and assesses both the plan and its elements. Periodically, the coordinator reports the results of the plan to management and the board.	December 2002
5.	The planning coordinator evaluates and adjusts the plan as needed.	December 2002 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Attendance zones were designed and established by the district's Transportation Department, rather than school-based teams, the district improvement committee or the superintendent and approved by the central office. The zones are not designed to balance the number of socio-economically disadvantaged students among the schools, and a disproportionate number of disadvantaged children attend Little Bay Elementary.

An attendance zone is a student's designated attendance area based on the legal residence of his/her parent or guardian. If the parent or guardian moves to a different attendance zone, the student should transfer to the appropriate school. For instance, all children within a certain area or attendance zone shall attend Fulton Elementary, while students in another attendance zone shall attend Little Bay Elementary.

The Texas Education Code (25.032) states: *"The board of trustees of a school district, the board of county school trustees, or the person acting for the board must make the decision concerning the assignment or transfer of a student on an individual basis and may not consider as a factor in its decision any matter relating to the national origin of the student or the student's ancestral language."*

ACISD board policy (FDB(1)) states: *"Students shall be assigned to the school in the attendance zone in which they reside. Transportation shall be provided between home and school." Policy goes on to state: "Students in grades K-6 who are attending a District school and move to another school attendance area during the year may continue to attend the school where they were initially enrolled for the remainder for the current year. Transportation shall be the responsibility of the parents."*

In 1999 when the new middle school was opened, grade 6 students were moved to the new middle school leaving the Little Bay facility expendable. There was discussion within the district to sell the Little Bay building. However, the principals recommended that Little Bay become an elementary school.

The Transportation Department was asked to designing and implementing the district's attendance zones based on its knowledge of where the students lived. At that time, no one considered whether the new zoning might create an unfair distribution of economically disadvantaged students. Instead, the Transportation Department put together the zones and the bus stops. As a result, students from the three main government housing projects in the district went to Little Bay, while many of the upper middle class students went to Fulton. According to the assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Administration, 76 percent of the students at Little Bay are disadvantaged.

The assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Administration has estimated that approximately 25 students are going to Fulton that are not in the Fulton attendance zone, nor have they applied for transfers. Seventeen of those students should be attending Little Bay Elementary, and eight should be at Live Oak.

Recommendation 11:

Annually evaluate attendance zones.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent clearly defines attendance zones and presents to the board for approval.	June 2002
2.	The superintendent creates clear and precise boundaries that are not bus-developed, but education-developed with transportation input.	July 2002
3.	The board develops a policy that deals with transfers in a logical manner.	August - September 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

ACISD has not written a strategic plan to help to forecast the possible loss of state funds should the district reach Chapter 41 status. A district reaches

Chapter 41 status becoming classified as a property wealthy district when its wealth per student exceeds \$300,000.

The district has been approaching Chapter 41 in recent years and in 2000-01 had a property wealth per pupil of \$279,177. ACISD's appraised property values grew by 25 percent between 1997-98 through 2000-01, or an average of 7 percent per year. Conversely, while appraisal values have grown student enrollment has been in a state of decline. The result is an increase each year in the amount of wealth per student. If these conditions persist, the district could enter Chapter 41 status as soon as September 2003, or earlier if student enrollment declines and property wealth increases. If the district's appraised property value continues to climb while student enrollment falls, the district could face classification as a property wealthy district resulting in a loss of state revenues. ACISD would then have to give back money to the state or to a property poor district.

Recommendation 12:

Develop a strategic plan to prepare for Chapter 41 status.

ACISD should prepare for the possibility of loss of state aid and revenues should the district become a property wealthy district in its long-term strategic planning process. The district not only will face a loss in state revenue but will have to give up money back to the state.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent creates a committee to research Chapter 41 of the Texas Education Code.	June 2002
2.	The committee develops a strategic plan with various scenarios and financial implications of Chapter 41.	June - August 2002
3.	The superintendent presents the Chapter 41 plan to the board for approval.	September 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 1

D. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Local school districts were established to be responsive to the needs of their community, which includes students, parents, non-parent residents and taxpayers. Similarly, if the community is to respond appropriately to the district's needs and concerns, it must be well informed about issues facing the district. For this reason, districts need mechanisms to disseminate information and to gather feedback from community members. Effective two-way communication enables school districts to win the confidence, support and involvement of their local communities. A part of effective communication is a partnership and outreach program.

Community involvement and public relations is an integral part of school management. At the heart of community involvement is action in the public interest.

A community involvement program is a planned and systematic and is designed to help improve the programs and services of the school. It relies on comprehensive two-way communications both internally and with the public, with a goal of stimulating a better understanding of the role, objectives, accomplishments and needs of the district. Educational community involvement programs help school leaders interpret public attitudes, identify and help shape policies and procedures in the public interest and involve and inform the public.

The purpose of reviewing the district's community involvement program is to determine if the program is achieving its intended results; to determine if the results are worth the time and money spent; and to show district administrators the value of the program.

ACISD's community involvement program, like those of many other smaller districts, must rely on a handful of people who perform a variety of community relations activities. The superintendent and the Board of Trustees play important roles in ACISD's community involvement program.

FINDING

By recently naming the ACISD superintendent to the chamber of commerce board, Aransas County has created a strong link between its community leaders and the school district. This is a unique opportunity for the superintendent to obtain input from community leaders on the status of the district and to use its resources to improve education opportunities for

its students. Similarly, the community's business leaders will have a great source of communication about the day-to-day operations of the district and what it needs and what problems it is experiencing.

COMMENDATION

The superintendent was named to the Chamber of Commerce board creating the basis for a strong relation between ACISD and the business community.

FINDING

Aransas County business leaders have come together to form an education foundation to support unique educational programs within ACISD. The ACISD Education Foundation is a 501 C(3) tax-exempt philanthropic organization of local citizens. The organization fosters creative and innovative approaches to education through private grants and involvement. As a result, it awards grants through a volunteer board of directors made up of business, community and educational leaders. The foundation benefits Aransas County ISD students and staff by supporting unique educational programs outside of the typical curriculum and encouraging staff excellence. The foundation also works to increase citizen involvement in educational activities in Aransas County ISD. Community members are coming together with ACISD administrators to increase citizen participation in the education process.

The foundation will provide private funds for educational programs and activities that either have not been funded or have been under-funded by the normal operating budget. These funds will be used to facilitate student achievement and skill development, to recognize and encourage staff excellence and to expand community involvement in education. As a result, the superintendent and assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Administration serve as secretary and vice president respectively of the foundation which includes numerous concerned community leaders.

COMMENDATION

The community recently created the ACISD Education Foundation to grant money for creative and innovative approaches to education.

FINDING

ACISD does not have a community involvement program to encourage citizens to volunteer in the district or at the school level, nor does it have much coordination of those who do volunteer. Several parents surveyed responded that they felt unwelcome in the schools when they attempted to

volunteer. Survey results show that most responders think that the district does not have enough volunteers to help with students and school programs as shown in **Exhibit 1-27**. The campuses were unable to provide the review team with a number of volunteers by school. While retirees are the largest population in Aransas County, no concentrated efforts exist to encourage retirees to participate in volunteer efforts.

Exhibit 1-27
ACISD Respondents With No Opinion or Disagreed With Survey Statement

	Parent	Teacher	Principal	Administrator
Schools have plenty of volunteers to help students and school programs.	60.5%	58.6%	72.8%	75.6%

Source: TSPR Surveys, October 2001.

Almost 60 percent of the teachers and more than 70 percent of principals and administrators surveyed feel that schools do not have enough volunteers to help students and school programs, or had no opinion on the statement.

Several parents who volunteer by helping students read stated that the district did not have a good training program for volunteers. Volunteers had no guidance on how to help students and, thus, did not feel like they were making a difference. Consequently, they quit after few volunteer efforts.

Marilyn Smith, former director of the Department of Service Learning of the U.S. Corporation for National Service, recommends districts provide leadership support in the form of clear policies and procedures, fiscal support, a clearly stated mission statement and plan and coordination with local, state and national volunteer resources and programs. She also recommends providing program leadership from a professional staff member, appropriate volunteer placement, volunteer orientation and training, onsite guidance and support for volunteers and annual orientation and training for those supervising volunteers. Finally, she recommends a regular evaluation for the volunteer program and the recognition of volunteers for their contributions to the school district.

None of these practices are being used by ACISD in managing its volunteer efforts with the Aransas County community.

Recommendation 13:

Establish a pilot volunteer program for the district.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The assistant superintendent directs each principal to take a school inventory of volunteer needs.	June 2002
2.	The principals turn the forms into the assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Administration for review.	July 2002
3.	The assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Administration analyzes the volunteer inventory forms and summarizes the results identifying the top three needs.	July 2002
4.	The assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Administration solicits six volunteers from the schools to serve on a Volunteer Improvement Committee, a subcommittee of the District Improvement Plan.	July 2002
5.	The assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Administration appoints spokespeople to address community groups.	August 2002
6.	The assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Administration tracks volunteer efforts and the volunteer retention rate.	September 2002 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

ACISD does not distribute a districtwide parent newsletter or write a regular newspaper column to keep parents and the community informed and involved in events related to the education process.

Several community leaders stated: "At one time, the district wrote a column for the newspaper. As a result, central office received so many telephone calls, that they discontinued this practice....imagine that?" Every community leader interviewed stated that communications from and to the district was a problem.

The district does have a Web site, <www.acisd.org>, where it posts information for the community, and each campus distributes newsletters, but the letters do not always make it home to the parents.

Recommendation 14:

Write a weekly or monthly column for the newspaper to inform the public of what is going on in the district.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent determines the focus for each month's newspaper column. The superintendent asks for volunteers from the district employees to write articles for the newspaper.	June 2002
2.	Members of the superintendent's manager meetings discuss during weekly meetings items that the public would be interested in reading.	June - August 2002
3.	The superintendent appoints one individual to write the articles.	August 2002
4.	The volunteer writer produces weekly articles and a set of questions and answers for staff to use when responding to telephone callers.	August 2002
5.	The volunteer writer submits drafts to the superintendent for review, and then the superintendent's secretary releases the final article to the newspaper.	June 2003
6.	The superintendent periodically discusses the results of the articles during the management meetings.	June 2003
7.	Members of superintendent management meetings determine if the effort has resulted in better communication flow to the community at the end of the year.	August 2003

FISCAL IMPACT This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 2

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

This chapter reviews the Aransas County Independent School District's (ACISD's) educational service delivery in seven sections.

- A. Student Performance and Instructional Delivery
- B. Gifted and Talented Education
- C. Career and Technology Education
- D. Compensatory Education/Dropout Prevention
- E. Bilingual Education/English as a Second Language
- F. Special Education
- G. Alternative Education

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

BACKGROUND

ACISD encompasses 280 square miles in Aransas County on the Texas Gulf coast. The district serves the communities of Holiday Beach, Lamar, Fulton, Rockport and the northern part of Aransas Pass. According to the Texas Education Agency's (TEA) Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS), ACISD served 3,360 students at six locations during 2000-01. **Exhibit 2-1** lists ACISD's schools by level and grades served, TEA's 2000-01 accountability rating for each and full-time equivalent (FTE) teachers at each school.

Exhibit 2-1
ACISD Schools by Grades Served
Total Teacher FTEs, Students and Accountability Ratings
2000-01

Name of School	Grade Level	Teachers	Students	Accountability Rating
Rockport Elementary	PK-1	35.0	513	Exemplary
Live Oak Elementary	2-5	30.3	338	Recognized
Fulton Elementary	2-5	30.8	379	Exemplary
Little Bay Elementary	2-5	24.7	306	Acceptable
Rocknort-Fulton Middle	6-8	63.6	833	Acceptable

School				
Rockport-Fulton High School	9-12	82.2	991	Recognized
Total		266.6	3,360	Recognized

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2000-01.

As shown in **Exhibit 2-2**, for three of the last five years, ACISD has received a Recognized rating from TEA.

Exhibit 2-2
ACISD Accountability Ratings
1996-97 through 2000-01

	2000-01	1999-2000	1998-99	1997-98	1996-97
District	Recognized	Recognized	Academically Acceptable	Recognized	Academically Acceptable
Campuses:					
Rockport-Fulton High School	Recognized	Exemplary	Acceptable	Acceptable	Low Performing
Rockport-Fulton Middle School	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Rockport Intermediate	N/A	Exemplary	Recognized	Acceptable	Recognized
Fulton Elementary	Exemplary	Recognized	Recognized	Exemplary	Recognized
Rockport Elementary	Exemplary	Recognized	Recognized	Exemplary	Recognized
Live Oak Elementary	Recognized	Recognized	Recognized	Recognized	Recognized
Little Bay Elementary	Acceptable	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

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

TEA provides information on the results of the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) as well as other demographic, staffing and financial data to school districts and the public annually through AEIS and the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS). Regional Education Service Center II (Region 2) provides the district with a variety of support services.

ACISD selected five Texas school districts to serve as its peer districts for comparative purposes: Flour Bluff, Gregory-Portland, Kerrville, Point Isabel and Tuloso-Midway. Compared with the state, all six districts have a lower percent of African American students; four have a lower percent of Hispanic students; and five have a higher percent of Anglo students. Compared with Region 2 averages, ACISD has a lower percent of African American and Hispanic students and a higher percent of Anglo and Other students (Asian/Pacific Islanders and Native Americans). ACISD's percent of economically disadvantaged students is second-highest among the peer districts, lower than the Region 2 average and about the same as the state average (**Exhibit 2-3**).

Exhibit 2-3
Demographic Characteristics of Students
ACISD vs. Peer Districts, Region 2 and State
2000-01

District	Student Enrollment	Ethnic Percent				Percent Economically Disadvantaged
		African American	Hispanic	Anglo	Other	
Aransas County	3,360	2.4%	30.1%	62.3%	5.2%	48.1%
Flour Bluff	5,002	6.7%	24.5%	63.9%	4.9%	43.3%
Gregory-Portland	4,422	4.0%	37.9%	56.7%	1.5%	31.4%
Kerrville	4,662	3.6%	34.5%	60.8%	1.1%	45.4%
Point Isabel	2,363	0.4%	83.5%	15.8%	0.3%	84.6%
Tuloso-Midway	3,058	2.0%	53.3%	44.0%	0.6%	44.3%
Region 2	107,634	3.7%	66.3%	28.7%	1.3%	56.1%
State	4,059,619	14.4%	40.6%	42.0%	3.0%	49.3%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2000-01.

In 2000-01, ACISD's percent of total staffing represented by teachers, professional support personnel and campus and central administration is lower than the statewide average, while the percent of educational aides and auxiliary workers is higher (**Exhibit 2-4**).

Exhibit 2-4
Staff Information
ACISD vs. State Averages
1996-97 and 2000-01

Category	ACISD					State
	1996-97	2000-01	Percent Point Change	1996-97	2000-01	Percent Point Change
Staff						
Teachers	47.3%	49.0%	1.7	51.9%	50.8%	(1.1)
Professional Support	5.2%	6.8%	1.6	6.7%	7.8%	1.1
Campus Administration	2.3%	2.4%	0.1	2.5%	2.6%	0.1
Central Administration	1.6%	0.6%	(1.0)	0.9%	0.8%	(0.1)
Educational Aides	15.4%	*12.7%	(2.7)	9.0%	10.2%	1.2
Auxiliary	28.3%	*28.6%	0.3	29.1%	27.8%	(1.3)
Race/Ethnicity (Teachers)						
African American	0.6%	1.5%	0.9	8.2%	8.8%	0.6
Hispanic	6.2%	6.6%	0.4	15.5%	17.1%	1.6
Anglo	93.2%	91.2%	(2.0)	75.6%	73.2%	(2.4)
Other	0.0%	0.8%	0.8	0.8%	0.9%	0.1

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

*Numbers were supplied by the district, because AEIS was incorrect.

In 2000-01, 23.1 percent of ACISD's teachers had five or fewer years of experience, compared with 20.9 percent in Flour Bluff, 22.7 percent in Point Isabel, 23.0 percent in Tuloso-Midway, 24.1 percent in Kerrville and 25.0 percent in Gregory-Portland. Three peer districts, Flour Bluff, Point Isabel and Tuloso-Midway had a slightly higher percent of teachers with six or more years of experience (**Exhibit 2-5**).

Exhibit 2-5
Number and Percent
Teachers' Years of Experience
ACISD vs. Peer Districts
2000-01

District	Beginning/ Percent	1-5 Years/ Percent	6-10 Years/ Percent	11-20 Years/ Percent	> 20 Years/ Percent	Percent > 6 Years Experience
Flour Bluff	7.7 2.4%	60.3 18.5%	62.2 19.1%	97.9 30.0%	98.3 30.1%	79.2%
Point Isabel	3.0 2.0%	31.0 20.7%	36.0 24.0%	49.0 32.7%	30.9 20.6%	77.3%
Tuloso-Midway	6.0 2.9%	42.1 20.1%	54.0 25.7%	55.0 26.2%	52.9 25.2%	77.1%
Aransas County	9.0 3.4%	52.5 19.7%	60.0 22.5%	89.5 33.6%	55.5 20.8%	76.9%
Kerrville	11.5 3.4%	69.0 20.7%	68.5 20.5%	104.6 31.4%	79.9 24.0%	75.9%
Gregory-Portland	7.8 2.8%	62.5 22.2%	53.0 18.8%	84.4 30.0%	74.0 26.3%	75.1%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2000-01.

None of ACISD's teachers have doctorate degrees, but its percent of teachers with masters degrees is highest among the peer districts and higher than the region and state averages (**Exhibit 2-6**).

Exhibit 2-6
Degree Status of Teachers
ACISD vs. Peer Districts, Region 2 and State
2000-01

District	No Degree	Bachelors Degree	Masters Degree	Doctorate Degree	Percent With Masters
----------	-----------	------------------	----------------	------------------	----------------------

					and Doctorate Degree
Aransas County	0.0%	67.4%	32.6%	0.0%	32.6%
Flour Bluff	0.9%	66.5%	31.7%	0.9%	32.6%
Tuloso-Midway	1.0%	69.5%	29.6%	0.0%	29.6%
Kerrville	0.6%	74.5%	24.6%	0.3%	24.9%
Gregory-Portland	0.0%	76.8%	22.8%	0.4%	23.2%
Point Isabel	0.0%	82.0%	17.3%	0.7%	18.0%
Region 2	0.9%	67.4%	31.3%	0.3%	31.6%
State	1.3%	74.7%	23.4%	0.5%	23.9%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2000-01.

ACISD's property values per pupil were third-highest among the peer districts in 2000-01 and higher than the Region 2 and state averages.

ACISD's percent of students passing all TAAS tests was lowest among the five peer districts but higher than the Region 2 and state averages (**Exhibit 2-7**).

Exhibit 2-7
District Property Value per Pupil and Percent of Students Passing TAAS
ACISD vs. Peer Districts, Region 2 and State
2000-01

District Name	Enrollment	Property Value per Pupil	Rank by Property Value	Percent of Students Passing All TAAS Tests	Rank by Performance on TAAS
Gregory-Portland	4,422	\$172,317	5	92.1%	1
Kerrville	4,662	\$234,748	4	89.5%	2
Tuloso-Midway	3,058	\$306,015	2	88.1%	3
Point Isabel	2,363	\$495,460	1	87.5%	4

Flour Bluff	5,002	\$164,697	6	86.4%	5
Aransas County	3,360	\$279,177	3	84.3%	6
Region 2	107,634	\$168,813	N/A	81.3%	N/A
State	4,059,619	\$215,232	N/A	82.1%	N/A

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2000-01.

AEIS provides information regarding the percent of students enrolled in various programs including regular education, bilingual education, English as a Second Language (ESL), career and technology education (CATE), gifted and talented (G/T) education and special education. Among the peer districts, ACISD had the highest percent of students enrolled in special education and the lowest percent in CATE programs. ACISD's percent of students enrolled in special education was slightly higher than the state average, and considerably lower in bilingual and ESL and CATE (**Exhibit 2-8**).

Exhibit 2-8
Student Enrollment by Program
ACISD, Peer Districts and State
2000-01

Program	Aransas County	Flour Bluff	Point Isabel	Gregory-Portland	Tuloso-Midway	Kerrville	State
Bilingual/ESL	4.5%	1.6%	21.0%	1.2%	3.1%	2.8%	12.6%
Career & Technology	12.1%	21.7%	19.4%	23.0%	19.0%	19.7%	18.9%
Gifted & Talented	7.5%	9.7%	7.1%	10.1%	2.7%	5.3%	8.4%
Special Education	13.9%	13.6%	11.4%	12.2%	9.7%	13.1%	11.9%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2000-01.

ACISD had a higher percent of teachers accounted for as regular education teachers than all but one of its peer districts (**Exhibit 2-9**).

Exhibit 2-9
Teachers by Program

**ACISD vs. Peer Districts and State
2000-01**

Program	Aransas County	Flour Bluff	Point Isabel	Gregory-Portland	Tuloso-Midway	Kerrville	State
Regular Education	80.4%	65.2%	60.2%	67.4%	78.4%	83.1%	70.4%
Bilingual/ESL	1.5%	0.9%	16.3%	0.6%	0.0%	2.8%	7.5%
Career & Technology	3.9%	4.6%	3.7%	4.8%	4.2%	1.8%	4.3%
Compensatory	0.8%	4.6%	1.9%	11.3%	2.7%	0.3%	3.3%
Gifted & Talented	1.2%	3.6%	3.1%	1.4%	3.0%	0.3%	2.2%
Special Education	8.9%	18.7%	11.9%	6.4%	7.5%	11.7%	9.9%
Other	3.3%	2.5%	2.8%	8.1%	4.1%	0.0%	2.4%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2000-01.

According to the 2000-01 AEIS report, ACISD's total budgeted instructional operating expenditures per student were highest among the peer districts, Region 2 and state averages. ACISD's percent of budgeted instructional expenditures were second-highest for compensatory education and lowest for CATE education (**Exhibit 2-10**).

**Exhibit 2-10
Budgeted Instructional Operating Expenditures by Program
ACISD vs. Peer Districts, Region 2 and State
2000-01**

District	Total Instructional Operating Expenditures per student*	Percent of Budgeted Instructional Operating Expenditures**					
		Regular Education	Gifted and Talented	Special Education	Career & Technology Education	Bilingual & ESL Education	Compensatory Education
Aransas County	\$3,771	69.3%	2.0%	10.9%	3.7%	1.7%	12.4%
Flour Bluff	\$3,490	73.9%	2.3%	14.4%	4.2%	0.2%	5.0%

Kerrville	\$3,352	73.9%	0.1%	13.9%	4.5%	2.7%	5.0%
Point Isabel	\$3,217	68.3%	0.7%	13.0%	4.6%	5.1%	8.2%
Gregory-Portland	\$3,170	62.2%	2.2%	8.3%	4.2%	4.4%	18.7%
Tuloso-Midway	\$3,022	76.7%	0.5%	10.8%	4.6%	0.3%	7.0%
Region 2	\$3,481	73.2%	1.7%	11.5%	4.3%	0.9%	8.3%
State	\$3,500	70.7%	1.8%	12.6%	4.1%	4.3%	6.6%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2000-01.

Note: Totals may not equal 100 percent due to rounding.

**Instruction (Functions 11, 95) and Instructional Leadership (Function 21).*

***Functions 11 and 95 only.*

Chapter 2

A. STUDENT PERFORMANCE AND INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY (PART 1)

School districts need sound systems for managing the instructional process. Administrators must ensure that the resources allocated to instructional programs produce continual improvements in student performance. This requires the continuing monitoring and evaluation of personnel and programs alike, as well as a comprehensive program for student assessment that accurately evaluates achievement across all content areas and grades.

The Texas Assessment of Academic Skills is a series of tests used to measure student performance. TAAS tests are administered in reading and mathematics in grades 3 through 8 and grade 10; in reading and mathematics in Spanish in grades 3 and 4; in writing in grades 4, 8 and 10; and in science and social studies in grade 8. End-of-course examinations are administered in Algebra I, Biology, English II and U.S. History. To graduate from a high school in Texas, a student must pass the TAAS exit-level examination, which is given for the first time in grade 10.

Although there have been fluctuations over the years, ACISD's overall pass rates rose over the six-year period from 1995-96 to 2000-01. The percent of students passing the TAAS reading test rose by more than 10 percentage points, from 81.5 to 91.9 percent. The increase was even greater in mathematics, from 78.8 percent passing in 1995-96 to 94.4 percent in 2000-01. Although ACISD's passing rate on the TAAS writing test remained relatively stable over the six-year period, the passing rate for all tests rose from 69.7 percent to 84.3 percent. ACISD's passing rates in 2000-01 exceeded state averages in all areas except writing (**Exhibit 2-11**).

Exhibit 2-11
TAAS Passing Rates
Reading, Mathematics, Writing and All Tests
ACISD vs. State
1995-96 through 2000-01

Year	Reading		Mathematics		Writing		All Tests	
	District	State	District	State	District	State	District	State
1995-96	81.5%	80.4%	78.8%	74.2%	86.5%	82.9%	69.7%	67.1%
1996-97	88.6%	84.0%	89.0%	80.1%	88.0%	85.3%	81.0%	73.2%

1997-98	91.0%	87.0%	90.6%	84.2%	92.0%	87.4%	84.0%	77.7%
1998-99	87.2%	86.5%	88.5%	85.7%	82.1%	88.2%	79.5%	78.3%
1999-2000	91.8%	87.4%	93.7%	87.4%	89.9%	88.2%	86.5%	79.9%
2000-01	91.9%	88.9%	94.4%	90.2%	86.6%	87.9%	84.3%	82.1%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 1995-96 through 2000-01.

The percentage of ACISD students passing all TAAS tests in 2000-01 was lowest among the peer districts but higher than the state average (**Exhibit 2-12**).

Exhibit 2-12
TAAS Passing Rates
Reading, Mathematics, Writing and All Tests
ACISD vs. Peer Districts and State
2000-01

District	Reading	Mathematics	Writing	All Tests
Gregory-Portland	95.5%	96.5%	95.6%	92.1%
Kerrville	94.0%	95.6%	92.7%	89.5%
Tuloso-Midway	93.2%	93.5%	92.9%	88.1%
Point Isabel	91.5%	93.9%	93.5%	87.5%
Flour Bluff	92.8%	94.4%	89.0%	86.4%
Aransas County	91.9%	94.4%	86.6%	84.3%
State	88.9%	90.2%	87.9%	82.1%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2000-01.

Texas' schedule for TAAS administration will change incrementally between 2000 and 2003. By 2003, TAAS will be administered in grades 9, 10 and 11. Reading and mathematics tests will be administered in grade 9, and the exit-level exam, which will include science, social studies, English language arts and mathematics, will be moved to grade 11. A science test will be added in grade 5.

Student performance on the TAAS is the primary factor in determining TEA's accountability ratings. Accountability standards for 2000-01 include four ratings for schools: exemplary, recognized, acceptable and low performing. To receive an exemplary rating, at least 90 percent of all students combined as well as 90 percent of each student group (African

American, Hispanic, Anglo and economically disadvantaged) must pass all TAAS subtests (reading, writing and mathematics). In addition, the annual dropout rate in grades 7-12 for all students and each student group cannot exceed 1 percent. To receive a rating of recognized or acceptable, passing rates must be at least 80 percent and 50 percent, respectively. The annual dropout rate cannot be greater than 3 percent to receive the recognized rating or greater than 5.5 percent to be rated as acceptable. A school is rated as low-performing if less than 50 percent of all students or any of the four student groups pass any of the subject-area tests or if the dropout rate exceeds 5.5 percent. As indicated in **Exhibit 2-13**, accountability ratings for ACISD schools improved between 1996-97 and 2000-01.

Exhibit 2-13
ACISD School Accountability Ratings
1996-97 through 2000-01

Accountability Rating	Number of Schools				
	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01
Exemplary	0	2	0	2	2
Recognized	4	1	4	3	2
Acceptable	1	3	2	1	2
Low-Performing	1	0	0	0	0

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

FINDING

ACISD principals have the choice to employ either an assistant principal or a curriculum facilitator and each school is authorized to hire one or more assistant principal positions. At all schools, the principals have either elected to employ a full or half-time curriculum facilitator. The district first used curriculum facilitators in 1995-96, one each at Rockport and Live Oak Elementary Schools and one at the intermediate school, now Little Bay Elementary. A curriculum facilitator was assigned to the district's three remaining schools, Fulton Elementary, the middle school and the high school, in 1996-97.

A curriculum facilitator's major responsibilities, according to the job description, include the following:

- Assist in developing curriculum guidelines and standards according to district policies and administrative procedures.

- Supervise campus implementation of instruction for planned learning outcomes designed for all students.
- Assess student needs to adjust the instructional program as needed to ensure acceleration, extension or remediation appropriate to all students.
- Supervise classroom instruction and management to promote an effective learning climate.
- Supervise the coordination of special programs with regular instruction to promote district goals and compliance with guidelines of special programs.
- Report the progress of instructional program and conduct surveys or prepare informal documents as needed to facilitate data-gathering for program evaluation.
- Analyze, evaluate and commend new programs to promote improvement in instruction.
- Assist in initiating change to improve the instructional program based on current research and TEA requirements.
- Serve in an advisory capacity in the development and implementation of the campus improvement plan.

To help ensure effective communications among the central office and the schools on curriculum matters, the curriculum facilitators meet once a week with the assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Administration and program coordinators, such as the coordinator of Federal Programs and the coordinator of Special Programs. **Exhibit 2-14** provides information regarding the topics discussed during these meetings.

Exhibit 2-14
Agenda Topics
Curriculum Facilitator Meetings
January-December 2001

Agenda Item	Item Listed on Agenda	
	Frequency	Percent of Total
Reading/literacy programs	13	26%
Testing and test-related	12	24%
Staff development	6	12%
Campus Improvement Plans	6	12%
Resources, supplies or budgeting	3	6%
State Compensatory Ed. or Title I	3	6%
DEC visit	1	2%

Planning timelines	1	2%
University Interscholastic League	1	2%
Other	4	8%
Total	50	100%

Source: ACISD, Curriculum Facilitator Meeting Agendas, January 19-December 1, 2001.

TSPR's review of agendas and minutes for 17 meetings conducted between January and December 2001 indicate that reading programs and initiatives were a topic of discussion 26 percent of the time, followed by testing and test-related items (24 percent) and staff training and campus improvement plans (12 percent each).

COMMENDATION

ACISD provides each school with a curriculum facilitator with various responsibilities related to the improvement of curriculum and instruction.

FINDING

ACISD's board policies do not provide schools with adequate direction on how to manage curriculum. The district contracts with Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) for its policy development. TASB codes all policies according to major areas of school district operations, including A: Basic District Foundations; B: Local Governance; C: Business and Support Services; D: Personnel; E: Instruction; F: Students; and G: Community and Governmental Relations. Any policy designated in the policy manual as (Legal) or an (Exhibit) is one developed by TASB to comply with various legal sources of authority defining local district governance. Local policies developed by or for the district to reflect decisions of the local Board of Trustees are designated as (Local). TASB issues policy updates to help ensure that the district's policies remain current. ACISD's policies are available online at the TASB Web site.

ACISD has eight policies concerning curriculum development:

- Policy EGA (Legal) Curriculum Development: Innovative and Magnet Programs
- Policy EHA (Legal) Curriculum Design: Basic Instructional Programs

- Policy EHAA (Legal) Basic Instructional Program: Required Instruction (All Levels)
- Policy EHAB (Legal) Basic Instructional Program: Required Instruction (Elementary)
- Policy EHAC (Legal) Basic Instructional Program: Required Instruction (Secondary)
- Policy EHAD (Legal) Basic Instructional Program: Elective Instruction
- Policy EHAD (Local) Basic Instructional Program: Elective Instruction
- Policy EHB (Legal) Curriculum Design: Special Programs

None of these policies, however, provide direction on how the district should manage its curriculum.

Well-written board policies help guarantee consistency among grades and among schools across the district. Strong policies related to curriculum management provide direction for the actions of staff and the use of available resources. They also should establish the processes for making decisions about the delivery of curriculum. Strong curriculum policies:

- define the curriculum;
- outline the curriculum development process;
- require written documents in all subject areas and courses;
- establish expectations that curriculum, instructional materials and assessment programs will be coordinated;
- provide for staff training; and
- link the budget process with curricular priorities.

Policies EHAA (Legal), EHAB (Legal), EHAC (Legal), EHAD (Legal) and EHAD (Local) adequately define ACISD's curriculum. The other elements mentioned above, however, are missing.

During the 1999-2000 school year, the Texas Curriculum Management Audit Center (TCMAC) of the Texas Association of School Administrators conducted a curriculum audit of Bastrop (BISD). The curriculum audit was "designed to reveal the extent to which officials and professional staff of a school district have developed and implemented a sound, valid and operational system of

curriculum management." It enabled the school district to make maximum use of its human and financial resources.

The audit was an independent examination of three data sources: documents, interviews and site

visits. The audit was to determine the extent to which BISD has implemented a relevant, quality curriculum for all students; to determine the quality of the management system used to implement the district's curriculum; to identify areas for improvement; and to enhance the district's focus on continuous improvement by providing an objective view of BISD operations.

The district's five-year plan spelled out expectations and procedures regarding the district's written curriculum (i.e., standards, objectives and student expectations), taught curriculum (i.e., the process by which teachers develop units of study, lesson plans and/or approaches for teaching the written curriculum) and tested curriculum (i.e., student performance assessment) in accordance with board policy.

The plan identified curriculum expectations; emphasized a consistent delivery of the curriculum across the district; identified data-driven assessment of student achievement, and outlined staff development needs. The plan also described the roles and responsibilities of each participant in the instructional process.

Recommendation 15:

Develop and adopt a comprehensive curriculum management policy.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Administration contacts TASB for information on districts with strong curriculum management policies.	June 2002
2.	The assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Administration assigns staff members to review model policies and adapt them for ACISD's use.	August 2002 - September 2002
3.	The assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Administration submits the proposed policies to the superintendent for review and approval.	October 2002
4.	The superintendent submits the policies to the board for review and approval.	November 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

ACISD's job descriptions for curriculum and instruction personnel contain certain irregularities that make employees' roles, duties and responsibilities in the organization unclear. ACISD provided TSPR with several district organizational charts, including one for the Division of Curriculum and Administration dated September 6, 2001. It also provided several undated copies for district schools as well as job descriptions for central office and school-based personnel with curriculum and instruction responsibilities.

Most of the job descriptions contained job titles, qualifications, the reporting line or chain of command and major responsibilities and duties. A few, however, appeared to be performance evaluations rather than job descriptions. In addition, the titles on a number of job descriptions were different from those on the organizational charts.

Due to the way in which two previous superintendents had organized the district, some positions in the organizational charts have no job descriptions; by the same token, some job descriptions provided did not match any positions on the charts. One position reports to more than one supervisor, creating a potential problem with supervision and evaluations. About half of the job descriptions dated from 1994, while the remainder were revised in 2001.

In 1996, TASB conducted a salary and compensation study of the district at ACISD's request and expense. The study recommended a number of changes to existing job descriptions, but the board voted against the changes.

Exhibit 2-15 summarizes TSPR's concerns with ACISD's job descriptions.

**Exhibit 2-15
Concerns Regarding ACISD Job Descriptions**

Position Title	Areas of Concern
Assistant principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No concerns.
Assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No concerns.
Counselor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No concerns.
Curriculum facilitator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job description undated.
Diagnostician	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflict between job description and

	<p>organizational chart regarding who supervises the position.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Last revision dated 9-94.
Director of Special Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No concerns.
Director of Special Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Position not included on organizational chart (position eliminated in 2001).
Principal (high school)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Last revision dated 12-94.
Library Services coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Last revision dated 9-94. • Conflict between job description and organizational chart regarding who supervises the position.
Licensed specialist in school psychology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Title different from that on organizational chart. • No responsibilities related to curriculum and instruction.
Principal (intermediate or elementary school)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Last revision dated 12-94.
Principal (middle school)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Last revision dated 12-94.
Special Programs coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsibilities assigned to another position. • No responsibilities related to curriculum and instruction.
Special Programs coordinator (Federal)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An evaluation document rather than a job description. • No responsibilities related to curriculum and instruction. • No direct supervisor shown on job description (says reports directly to superintendent).
Speech therapist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Last revision dated 12-94.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflict between job description and organizational chart regarding who supervises the position. • Two supervisors listed in job description for the position.
Superintendent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Last revision dated 12-94.
Supervisor of Health Services/secondary nurses, RN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Title different from that on organizational chart. • Last revision dated 12-94. • Conflict between job description and organizational chart regarding who supervises the position.
Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Last revision dated 12-94.
Technology Support supervisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No concerns.
Testing and Technology coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An evaluation document rather than a job description.
Vision impaired teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Last updated 10/99. • Conflict in title; called Vision Specialist.

Source: ACISD Job Descriptions, ACISD Organization Chart, September 6, 2001.

While no job description exists for the librarian position shown in the organizational chart, a job description exists for Library Services coordinator. The organization chart also shows a special education counselor position for which there is no job description, but administrators said the position was re-titled to behavioral specialist and a job description is currently in draft form.

New or revised organizational charts often require revisions to job descriptions, particularly when positions are added or deleted, to ensure that reporting lines and responsibilities remain clear. This task was not completed after ACISD's latest reorganization.

Job descriptions provide employees with clear direction regarding their function within the organization, their assigned duties and responsibilities, job titles, necessary qualifications and chain of command. The job descriptions of employees involved in creating, providing or monitoring curriculum should have references to these tasks in their job descriptions.

Recommendation 16:

Revise the job descriptions of curriculum and instruction personnel to ensure that all job titles, qualifications, line and staff relationships and duties and responsibilities are clearly defined.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Administration, in conjunction with the Human Resources coordinator, assigns one staff person per position to review and update the job descriptions of all curriculum and instruction-related positions.	July 2002
2.	The Human Resources coordinator submits the revised job descriptions to the superintendent for review.	November 2002
3.	The superintendent submits the revised job descriptions to the board for approval.	January 2003
4.	The superintendent ensures that the approved job descriptions are distributed to all staff members.	February 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

ACISD's curriculum guides are limited and do not provide district teachers with adequate direction.

Curriculum guides serve as work plans for teachers, identifying basic instructional resources and suggesting approaches for delivering instruction in the classroom. Guides being used in the district are listed in **Exhibit 2-16**.

Title of Guide	Currently Used By	Date Written	Date Revised
Integrated Curriculum in Math, Social Studies and Science, Grade 1	Rockport Elementary	1995	2001
Interdisciplinary Science 2-5	Live Oak Elementary	1995	Unknown
Interdisciplinary Social Studies 2-5	Live Oak Elementary	1995	Unknown
Math 2-5	Unknown	1989	Unknown
Math with Saxon Curriculum Guide 2-5	Live Oak Elementary	1996	Unknown
Reading 2-5	Unknown	1989	Unknown
Reading Curriculum Guide 2-5	Live Oak Elementary	1996	Unknown
Science 2-5	Unknown	1989	Unknown
Social Studies 2-5	Unknown	1989	Unknown
Writing 2-5	Unknown	1989	Unknown
Writing Guide 2-5	Live Oak Elementary	2000	N/A

Source: ACISD, Division of Curriculum and Administration.

Chapter 2

A. STUDENT PERFORMANCE AND INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY (PART 2)

According to ACISD, no guides are being used at the middle school or high school. In August 2001, however, Rockport-Fulton High School initiated a three-year curriculum writing project intended to:

- ensure that students are prepared for testing, college and the work force.
- ensure that ACISD's curriculum supports the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS).
- develop a curriculum that is horizontally and vertically aligned (the curriculum shows what will be taught at each individual grade level and as a student progresses through the grades) and accommodates individual teaching styles, in a format that can be updated easily.
- develop plans for entering the revised curriculum into TEKStar, a computer system developed and managed by a consortium of Regional Education Service Centers to assist districts in developing TEKS-based curriculum, by 2003-04.

This effort has emphasized the development of guides for core subjects such as math and reading as well as fine arts and career and technology education. Instructional staff will develop these guides using a specified format and one employee from each instructional department will coordinate data entry into TEKStar.

Five of 12 mathematics courses (41.7 percent) and five of 13 courses (38.5 percent) in science listed in the high school's 2001-02 course descriptions are not scheduled for revision in the three-year project. The current schedule for curriculum revision by course and year is listed in **Exhibit 2-17**.

Exhibit 2-17
ACISD Curriculum Guide Revision Schedule
2001-02 through 2003-04

Course	Year Guide to be Written		
	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
English			

All courses	X		
Mathematics			
Algebra I	X		
Algebra I Pre AP, GT	Not Listed on Schedule		
Calculus	X		
Pre-Calculus	X		
Pre-Calculus Pre AP, GT	Not Listed on Schedule		
AP Calculus AB, GT	Not Listed on Schedule		
SAT Preparation	X		
Geometry		X	
Geometry Pre AP, GT	Not Listed on Schedule		
Algebra II			X
Algebra II Pre AP, GT	Not Listed on Schedule		
Mathematical Models with Applications			X
Science			
Integrated Physics and Chemistry	X		
Biology I	X		
Chemistry	X		
Chemistry Pre AP, GT	Not Listed on Schedule		
Physics		X	
Physics Pre AP, GT	Not Listed on Schedule		
Biology Pre AP, GT	Not Listed on Schedule		
AP Biology			X
Principles of Technology			X
AP Dual Chemistry			X
Aquatic Science			X
Environmental Systems	Not Listed on Schedule		
Anatomy and Physiology Pre AP, GT	Not Listed on Schedule		
Social Studies			
U.S. History	X		

U.S. History, GT	Not Listed on Schedule		
World History		X	
World History Pre AP, GT	Not Listed on Schedule		
World Geography			X
World Geography Pre AP, GT	Not Listed on Schedule		
Government			X
Economics			X
AP Macro Economics	Not Listed on Schedule		
AP U.S. Government and Politics, GT	Not Listed on Schedule		
Sociology	Not Listed on Schedule		
Psychology	Not Listed on Schedule		
Peer Assistance Leadership (PAL)	Not Listed on Schedule		
Fine Arts			
Art I	X		
Ceramics II, III, IV		X	
Sculpture II, III, IV		X	X
Painting II, III, IV			X
Dance I	X		
Dance II*		X	
Dance III and IV			X
Theater Arts I	X		
Theater Arts II		X	
Technical Theater II		X	
Theater Arts III/IV			X
Technical Theater III/IV			X
Career and Technology - Business			
Beginning Accounting I	Not Listed on Schedule		
Accounting II	X		
Keyboarding	X		
Business Law	Not Listed on Schedule		

Business Computer Information Systems I	X		
Advanced Business Computer Information Systems I	Not Listed on Schedule		
Business Computer Information Systems II	X		
Business Support Systems		X	
Business Education Career Preparation I			X
Business Computer Programming I	X		
Business Image and Multimedia		X	
Web Mastering			X
Computer Science I Pre-AP	Not Listed on Schedule		
Computer Science II AP	Not Listed on Schedule		
Career Connections*			X
Career and Technology - Family and Consumer Science			
Personal and Family Development	X		
Family Health Needs	Not Listed on Schedule		
Child Development		X	
Preparation for Parenting	X		
Nutrition and Food Science	X		
Food Science and Technology		X	
Housing	Not Listed on Schedule		
Interior Design		X	
Home Economics Career Preparation I	Not Listed on Schedule		
Home Economics Career Preparation II	Not Listed on Schedule		
Career and Technology - Industrial Technology			
Technology Systems	Not Listed on Schedule		
Communication Graphics			X
Career and Technology - Trade and Industrial			
Introduction to Construction Trades	Not Listed on Schedule		
Introduction to Precision Metal Manufacturing	Not Listed on Schedule		
Precision Metals*		X	

Building Trades I	Not Listed on Schedule		
Building Trades II	Not Listed on Schedule		
Welding I	X		
Welding II	Not Listed on Schedule		
Internetworking Technology I	X		
Internetworking Technology II		X	
Internetworking Technology III			X
Internetworking Technology IV	Not Listed on Schedule		
Fundamentals of Criminal Law*		X	
Introduction to Criminal Justice	X		
Crime in America	Not Listed on Schedule		
Drafting I - Machine Drafting	X		
Drafting II - Architectural Drafting		X	

*Source: ACISD, Rockport-Fulton High School Course Description Manual 2001-02. *Not listed in course description manual.*

Teachers from grades 6-12 are meeting in vertical teams each month for each core subject to discuss what is being taught and fill in any gaps. Teachers in grades PK-5 and elementary and middle school teachers are not meeting as frequently, however. Curriculum facilitators from elementary campuses serving the same grade levels meet to discuss curriculum and staff development.

To provide direction for its teachers, ACISD has used timelines in each subject area since 1994. These timelines cite the knowledge or skill to be taught, the TAAS objective to be met and the six-week grading period in which the instruction is to take place. The district is revising the timelines to reflect the new Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) test objectives. The format being used for the timelines, however, lacks any assessment or evaluation process for determining the district or individual campus' success in meeting objectives.

Board-approved written curriculum guides help ensure appropriate coordination between what is taught within grades at different schools and among the various grades at schools throughout district. In the absence of authoritative guides for all subjects and courses, teachers must rely on their own resources in planning and delivering instruction. While their

teaching may be excellent, the district has no guarantee that it matches the district's instructional intent. Guides also provide a basis for uniform monitoring and evaluating student performance across the district.

Two Texas districts have developed processes for developing curriculum guides that can serve as models for ACISD. San Angelo ISD has provided extensive process training to teams composed of PK-12 teachers and administrators who drafted subject-area standards using TEKS and national standards. These guides covered core areas and incorporated content standards, assessments and teaching procedures. Laredo ISD has developed PK-12 academic standards for core areas and technology. Each subject area standard includes statements of understanding, essential questions to be asked, content standards, performance standards, assessment criteria, TEKS skills, TAAS objectives and curricular resources where appropriate.

Recommendation 17:

Develop a plan for creating a coordinated series of curriculum guides for all PK-12 subjects and courses.

Because ACISD's curriculum guides are mostly outdated or nonexistent, the district should make a major effort to develop guides that provide adequate and user-friendly direction in a format that is relatively easy and inexpensive to modify or update.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent assigns responsibility for curriculum guide development to the assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Administration.	June 2002
2.	The assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Administration contacts other districts and regional education service centers regarding the processes and procedures used to develop curriculum guides.	June 2002
3.	The assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Administration convenes a committee of teachers, administrators and support personnel to make recommendations for the development of curriculum guides.	September 2002
4.	The committee recommends a plan for the development of curriculum guides (with completion schedules coordinated with state textbook adoptions and cost estimates) to the superintendent for review and approval.	January 2003
5.	The superintendent submits the committee's recommendations to	February

	the board for approval and inclusion in the proposed 2003-04 budget.	2003
6.	The assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Administration implements the plan.	September 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

Assuming that the district has budgeted for the revision of those guides listed on the schedule, the cost for developing guides for the remaining 35 courses over a three-year period is estimated to be \$17,500 based upon a cost of \$500 per guide for extended days for teachers during the summer months and the cost of supplies and materials (\$500 per guide x 35 courses). Some guides may be developed in groups that could reduce this cost, while other guides may require more time and resources, consequently this is assumed to be an average cost. This estimate further assumes that 12 guides will be created in 2003-04 and 2004-05 (\$500 per guide x 12 course = \$6,000) and 11 in the fourth year (\$500 per guide x 11 courses = \$5,500).

Recommendation	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Develop a plan for creating a coordinated series of curriculum guides for all PK-12 subjects and courses.	\$0	(\$6,000)	(\$6,000)	(\$5,500)	\$0

FINDING

ACISD offers little assistance to students preparing for college entrance examinations. Other than providing information on examinations and helping with registration and other administrative tasks through its counselors' offices, the district takes no active role in assisting students in preparing for the College Board's Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT I) or American College Testing Program Assessment (ACT). The high school offered one SAT I Preparation class during the 2001-02 fall semester; 17 students enrolled.

SAT I is composed of two parts, verbal and math. The verbal portion focuses on critical reading. Students are required to read passages from the sciences, social sciences and humanities and to discuss the authors' points of view, techniques and logic. The math test requires students to apply problem-solving techniques and use math flexibly in thinking about solutions to new and different problems. The ACT examination includes 200+ multiple-choice questions covering English, mathematics, reading and science reasoning based on high school curriculum. It also includes an

interest inventory that provides information for career and educational planning.

For the class of 2000, ACISD's percent of students scoring at or above 1110 on SAT I or 24.0 on the ACT was fifth-lowest among the peer districts and higher than the Region 2 average but lower than the state average. ACISD's percent of students tested was lower than the Region 2 and state averages. The average SAT I score of ACISD students is the same as Region 2 but lower than the state. ACISD's average ACT scores were higher than the Region 2 average but lower than the state average (**Exhibit 2-18**).

Exhibit 2-18
SAT I and ACT Scores, Students Tested and Average SAT I and ACT Scores
ACISD vs. Peer Districts, Region 2 and State
Class of 2000

District	Percent of Students With SAT/ACT Scores At or Above 1110/24.0	Percent of Students Tested	Average SAT I Score	Average ACT Score
Kerrville	39.4%	70.0%	1058	21.8
Gregory-Portland	33.0%	83.1%	1016	20.2
Flour Bluff	31.8%	66.8%	1015	21.3
Tuloso-Midway	28.9%	57.3%	985	21.0
Aransas County	24.6%	53.6%	972	19.8
Point Isabel	10.6%	44.8%	912	19.3
Region 2	20.6%	62.8%	972	19.1
State	27.3%	62.2%	990	20.3

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2000-01.

As shown in **Exhibit 2-19**, the percent of ACISD students with SAT I or ACT scores at or above the TEA criterion rose from 18.3 percent in 1998 to 24.6 percent in 2000, while scores in Region 2 and the state remained relatively stable. ACISD's percent of students tested fell between 1998 and 2000, from 65.3 percent to 53.6 percent. Between 1998 and 2000, the

percent of students tested in Region 2 fell from 64 percent to 62.8 percent, while the statewide percent increased slightly, from 61.7 percent to 62.2 percent.

Exhibit 2-19
SAT I/ACT Scores and Students Tested
ACISD vs. Region 2 and State
Classes of 1998, 1999 and 2000

	Percent of Students with SAT I or ACT Scores At or Above Criterion			Percent of Students Tested		
	Class of 1998	Class of 1999	Class of 2000	Class of 1998	Class of 1999	Class of 2000
Aransas County	18.3%	16.1%	24.6%	65.3%	54.9%	53.6%
Region 2	20.8%	19.6%	20.6%	64.0%	63.7%	62.8%
State	27.2%	27.2%	27.3%	61.7%	61.8%	62.2%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 1998-99, 1999-2000 and 2000-01.

According to district personnel, the decline was in part caused because a number of students picked up registration materials for the SAT and ACT and either did not turn them in or failed to report for the examination as scheduled. Other districts use a variety of strategies to assist and encourage students to prepare for and take college entrance examinations, including:

- follow-up conferences by counselors with students who have registered or requested registration materials;
- meetings with students and parents to discuss opportunities for postsecondary education and provide assistance with financial aid;
- notices and reminders through campus or counselor newsletters of registration deadlines and test dates; and
- assistance such as SAT PrePacks and PrepCenter access, and SAT and ACT test preparation software.

In addition, a number of Texas districts participate in Texas Getting Academically Prepared (TGAP), a state project in cooperation with a U.S. Department of Education initiative to encourage secondary students to prepare themselves for college. TGAP offers students assistance in preparing for college entrance examinations. Alice ISD, Corpus Christi

ISD and Robstown ISD, all districts near ACISD, participate in the project.

Recommendation 18:

Develop plans for encouraging and preparing students to take college entrance examinations.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Administration assembles a group of site-based decision-making committee members, teachers, administrators and support staff to review information and programs available to encourage and prepare students to take college entrance examinations.	June 2002
2.	The group divides responsibilities and contacts the College Board, the American College Testing Program, regional education service centers, TEA and school districts with a high percent of students testing and scoring well on SAT and ACT tests to identify programs and practices that would assist ACISD students.	August 2002
3.	The committee offers the superintendent recommendations for encouraging students to take the SAT or ACT and assisting them with test preparation, along with proposed timelines and cost estimates for program implementation.	November 2002
4.	The superintendent submits a plan to the board for approval and assigns its implementation to the assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Administration.	January 2003
5.	The assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Administration begins implementing plan components that do not require new expenditures.	March 2003
6.	The superintendent includes any new program costs in the proposed 2003-04 budget and submits it to the board for approval.	March 2003
7.	The assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Administration begins implementing the plan components requiring new expenditures.	September 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 2

B. GIFTED AND TALENTED EDUCATION

Section 29.122 of the Texas Education Code (TEC) requires school districts to adopt a process for identifying and serving gifted and talented students and to establish programs for those students in each grade level. Section 29.123 requires the State Board of Education (SBOE) to develop and periodically update a state plan for educating gifted and talented students and to use it to measure districts' performance in providing services to these students. The SBOE plan, adopted in 1996 and revised in 2000, provides direction for improving existing services and creating additional curricular options for gifted students.

The Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students outlines accountability standards for state-mandated services for gifted/talented (G/T) students. The plan provides three performance ratings (acceptable, recognized and exemplary) in five program areas (student assessment, program design, curriculum and instruction, professional development and family-community involvement). Acceptable measures are those required by state law or rule. Recognized and exemplary measures are measures of superior performance.

TEA's Division of Accountability Evaluations conducts on-site district evaluations called District Effectiveness and Compliance (DEC) visits to monitor compliance with state and federal requirements for special programs. The indicators used by the on-site monitoring teams are those used as acceptable performance measures in the state plan. TEA conducted a DEC visit to ACISD in November 2000. Of 20 total indicators, the team selected 11 for on-site review and found all to comply with state requirements.

In 2000-01, ACISD's percent of total student enrollment in G/T programs was third-highest among the peer districts, slightly higher than the Region 2 average and lower than the statewide average. The district's percent of teaching staff assigned to G/T programs was second-lowest among the peers and lower than the Region 2 and state averages. ACISD's percent of instructional budget allocated to G/T programs was third-highest among the peer districts and higher than the Region 2 and state averages (**Exhibit 2-20**).

Exhibit 2-20
Percent of Students, Teachers and Budgeted Instructional
Operating Expenditures in Gifted/Talented Programs

**ACISD vs. Peer Districts, Region 2 and State
2000-01**

District	G/T Student Enrollment	G/T Teachers	G/T Budgeted Instructional Expenditures
Aransas County	7.5%	1.2%	2.0%
Flour Bluff	9.7%	3.6%	2.3%
Gregory-Portland	10.1%	1.4%	2.2%
Kerrville	5.3%	0.3%	0.1%
Point Isabel	7.1%	3.1%	0.7%
Tuloso-Midway	2.7%	3.0%	0.5%
Region 2	7.2%	1.9%	1.7%
State	8.4%	2.2%	1.8%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2000-01.

Between 1997-98 and 2000-01, ACISD's funds budgeted for gifted and talented programs rose by about the same percentage as all instructional operating expenses. Funds budgeted for all programs increased by 23.5 percent, from approximately \$19 million to \$23.4 million, while funds budgeted for the G/T program rose by 24.2 percent, from \$205,998 to \$255,919. During that period, total student enrollment in ACISD declined by 4.8 percent while enrollment in the G/T program fell by 3.8 percent. Expenditures per student for all programs rose by 29.7 percent, from \$5,374 to \$6,970, while G/T expenditures per student rose by 29.3 percent, from \$789 to \$1,020 (**Exhibit 2-21**).

**Exhibit 2-21
ACISD Budgeted Instructional Operating Expenditures
All Programs and Gifted and Talented Program
1997-98 and 2000-01**

Category	1997-98	2000-01	Increase/ (Decrease)
Expenditures, All Programs	\$18,969,159	\$23,420,198	23.5%
Student Enrollment	3,530	3,360	(4.8%)
Expenditures per Student Enrolled	\$5,374	\$6,970	29.7%
Expenditures, G/T Program	\$205,998	\$255,919	24.2%

G/T Enrollment	261	251	(3.8%)
Expenditure per G/T Student Enrolled	\$789	\$1,020	29.3%

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

FINDING

Some ACISD teachers, administrators and counselors do not have the professional growth training the state requires for instructing gifted and talented students. *The Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students* requires teachers providing instruction to gifted students to have a minimum of 30 initial clock hours and six additional hours annually of training specifically related to the instruction of gifted students. Administrators and counselors who have authority for decisions relating to the instruction of gifted students must have six hours of related training.

TSPR reviewed two documents prepared by ACISD personnel, an employee roster and a listing of staff that had completed either the 30-hour G/T certification or the six-hour administrator certificate. The review team used the two documents to determine who has completed the required training.

The number of ACISD professional staff with the required training varies among schools (Exhibit 2-22).

Exhibit 2-22
ACISD Professional Staff by School
With Gifted and Talented Professional Development Training

School	Number and Percent of School-Based Professional Staff With Gifted and Talented Training								
	Teachers of Non-Designated G/T, Honors, PreAP or AP Classes or Courses			Teachers of Designated G/T, Honors, PreAP or AP Classes or Courses			Principals and Counselors		
	Total Number	Number With Training	Percent With Training	Total Number	Number With Training	Percent With Training	Total Number	Number With Training	Percent With Training
High School	57.0	25.0	43.9%	19.0	19.0	100.0%	6	6	100.0%
Middle	51.5	10.0	19.4%	9.0	6.0	66.7%	3.0	3.0	100.0%

School									
Fulton Elementary	29.0	13.0	44.8%	1.0	1.0	100.0%	2.0	1.0	50.0%
Little Bay Elementary	22.5	7.0	31.1%	1.0	1.0	100.0%	2.0	1.0	50.0%
Live Oak Elementary	27.5	3.0	10.9%	1.0	1.0	100.0%	2.0	2.0	100.0%
Rockport Elementary	32.0	24.0	75.0%	25.0	22.0	88.0%	1.0	1.0	100.0%
District	219.5	82.0	37.4%	56.0	50.0	89.3%	16.0	14.0	87.5%

Source: ACISD, Human Resources, September 5 and 21, 2001 and Curriculum and Administration, Undated.

ACISD does not have special breakout classes for G/T students in grades K-2. Consequently, all teachers have not completed professional training for instructing gifted and talented students.

According to the district, most teachers at the district's PK-1 campus and grade 2 teachers at Fulton, Little Bay and Live Oak have completed the required G/T professional development training. At the secondary level, all but three of 28 teachers (10.7 percent) who teach honors, PreAP or AP courses have completed the required training. In addition, other campus personnel such as curriculum facilitators, science and computer lab teachers and librarians have not had G/T training.

Recommendation 19:

Train appropriate staff to provide services to gifted and talented students.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The coordinator of Special Programs identifies staff members who need the required 30-hour or six-hour training to deliver services to gifted and talented students.	September 2002
2.	The coordinator of Special Programs develops a schedule for conducting this training and ensures that appropriate staff members are enrolled.	September 2002
3.	The coordinator of Special Programs conducts the required	October 2002

	training.	and Ongoing
4.	The coordinator of Special Programs provides regularly scheduled training status reports to the assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Administration and the superintendent.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

According to ACISD, Region 2 provides training for teachers needing the 30-hour certification at no cost to the district. ACISD's coordinator of Special Programs also is qualified to provide this training as well as the six-hour update training for teachers. While most of this training can occur during teacher in-service training days, to be conservative, the cost estimate assumes that one substitute would be hired for one day of training for 30 teachers at \$55 per day, or an annual cost of \$1,650 (\$55 cost of substitutes X 30 teachers).

Recommendation	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Train appropriate staff to provide services to gifted and talented students.	(\$1,650)	(\$1,650)	(\$1,650)	(\$1,650)	(\$1,650)

FINDING

ACISD does not comply with state requirements for the identification of K-2 G/T students. In 1998-99, ACISD received a three-year waiver from TEA to delay the formal identification of students in grades K through 2. The application required the district to provide advanced-level learning opportunities to students in the grades covered by the waiver. It also required the district to provide students with unusual abilities with an ongoing curriculum in the four core content areas beyond the advanced-level learning opportunities.

In March 2001, TEA denied ACISD's request for a continuation of the waiver in part because the district failed to document that it had provided any advanced-level learning experiences for K-2 students during the previous waiver period.

Recommendation 20:

Develop a plan to comply with the state's requirement that the district identify gifted and talented students in all grades.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The coordinator of Special Programs and the assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Administration contact the Division for Advanced Academic Services, the Texas Association for the Gifted and Talented, TEA, and Region 2, asking them to recommend districts with well-designed plans for the identification of K-2 G/T students.	June 2002
2.	The coordinator of Special Programs reviews documents collected from school districts and other sources, develops a plan for G/T identification and submits it to the assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Administration for review and approval.	September - December 2002
3.	The assistant superintendent submits the plan to the superintendent for consideration and approval by the board.	February - March 2003
4.	The coordinator of Special Programs implements the plan and provides regularly scheduled reports on its success to the superintendent and board.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The district's multi-year planning document for its G/T program lacks sufficient detail to provide adequate direction for the program.

During 1998-99, a district committee of G/T teachers developed an improvement plan for the period 1999 through 2002. This plan addresses four of the five components included in the state plan for the education of gifted students: assessment, curriculum, program design and community involvement. Staff training, however, was not addressed. Under each component, the plan lists various activities to be completed during each year of a three-year period. The plan does not provide the names or titles of individuals responsible for each activity, any costs associated with the activities or the expected outcome of each. Moreover, the district does not have any information on the status of these activities.

A long-range planning document should be evaluated and revised regularly to ensure that its tasks, completion dates and areas of responsibility remain current and its resource requests realistic.

Recommendation 21:

Update and upgrade the district's gifted and talented improvement plan.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The coordinator of Special Programs recommends to the assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Administration a group of district staff members, parents and community members to update and upgrade the gifted and talented improvement plan.	June 2002
2.	The assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Administration submits the proposed committee roster to the superintendent for approval.	September 2002
3.	The committee updates the plan and submits it to the superintendent for review.	January 2003
4.	The superintendent submits the plan to the Board of Trustees for approval.	February 2003
5.	The coordinator of Special Programs monitors the plan and provides the superintendent and board with regularly scheduled status reports on its progress.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

ACISD's programs for gifted and talented students are limited. According to the *Texas State Plan for Education of Gifted/Talented Students*, the curricular and instructional needs of gifted and talented students require modifications to the regular school program. The plan outlines specific performance measures related to G/T curriculum and instruction required by state law or SBOE rule. The four required components for districts seeking status as a recognized or exemplary program are cited in **Exhibit 2-23**.

**Exhibit 2-23
Gifted and Talented Program Requirements
Acceptable, Recognized and Exemplary**

Component Required for Acceptable Status	Component Required for Recognized Status	Component Required for Exemplary Status
-------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------

<p>An array of appropriately challenging learning experience is offered emphasizing content from the four core academic areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities are provided for students to pursue areas of interest in selected disciplines through guided and independent research. • A comprehensive manual or program guide is provided describing all programs and services for G/T student in grades K-12. • Opportunities are provided for career and leadership assessment and training in areas of student strength. 	<p>Options are provided in intellectual, creative or artistic areas; leadership; and specific academic fields.</p>
<p>A continuum of learning experiences is provided leading to the development of advanced-level products or performances.</p>	<p>Students at all levels are involved in experiences resulting in development of advanced-level products or performances targeted to audiences outside the classroom.</p>	<p>Students in G/T programs for more than one year will develop advanced-level products evaluated by external evaluators knowledgeable about the area of the product.</p>
<p>Opportunities are provided for students to accelerate in areas of student strengths.</p>	<p>Flexible pacing is used allowing students to learn at the pace and level appropriate to their abilities and skills.</p>	<p>Scheduling modifications are used to meet the needs of individual students.</p>
<p>District and campus improvement plans include provisions related to the needs of gifted and talented students.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum is modified based on annual evaluations. • Resources and release time for staff are provided for curriculum development. • Guidelines are developed and used for evaluating resources and in selecting appropriate materials. 	<p>Collaboration occurs among appropriate staff in designing and evaluating curriculum for gifted and talented students.</p>

	Release time or contract extensions are provided to enable teachers at all levels to collaboratively develop services for gifted and talented students.	
	Student progress or performance is periodically assessed and communicated to parents.	Student performance is assessed by standards developed by experts in the areas served in the district's program.

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

ACISD developed its G/T program for grades 3-8 in 1982 and in 1990 expanded it to include grades 3-12. As noted above, the district has no formal G/T program for students at Rockport Elementary, the PK-1 campus. The district uses standardized tests, teacher-generated data and parent surveys at the end of grade 2 at the other elementary schools to establish eligibility for G/T services. A G/T teacher is assigned to each of the district's three elementary schools to serve grades 2-5. For students in grade 2, the G/T teacher provides 45 minutes of instruction daily to a pool of potentially gifted students, which are students that teachers have informally identified as gifted. Students identified as G/T in grades 3-5 are pulled out of the regular classroom for one to one-and-one-half-hours each day for G/T instruction focusing on mathematics; language arts, science and social studies are addressed through what the district calls curriculum extension, meaning that these students are given more variety and perhaps more advanced assignments. G/T students in grades 7-8 are served in Pre-Advanced Placement (Pre-AP classes in the core areas of English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies.) Students in grades 9-12 are served through Pre-AP and AP classes in core academic areas. Although district personnel have written a G/T elementary curriculum, it is not being used in grades 2-5. At the secondary level, the Pre-AP and AP curriculum serve as the G/T curriculum. The district does not require independent research or study of its G/T students, or modify their schedules to meet individual needs.

The Texas Association for the Gifted and Talented regularly works with districts that are considered Recognized or Exemplary, and provides opportunities for member districts to network among themselves to continually improve their G/T programs.

Recommendation 22:

Expand curricular options for gifted and talented students to earn TEA's exemplary rating.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The coordinator of Special Programs identifies district staff, parents and community members to serve on a committee to review options for expanding services to gifted and talented students.	June 2002
2.	The coordinator of Special Programs contacts districts with recognized and exemplary G/T programs and requests program descriptions from each.	June 2002
3.	The coordinator of Special Programs asks TEA to outline the process for achieving exemplary status.	June 2002
4.	The assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Administration submits the proposed committee to the superintendent for approval.	July 2002
5.	The committee reviews the programs and, working with the committee modifying the district's long-range plan, submits recommendations for enhancements to ACISD's program and a plan for achieving exemplary status to the superintendent.	March 2003
6.	The superintendent approves modifications to the district program and submits them, along with timelines and cost estimates, to the board for approval.	April 2003
7.	The superintendent includes appropriate costs for program modifications in the 2003-04 budget.	May 2003
8.	The coordinator of Special Programs administers modifications to the district program, monitors their implementation and provides regularly scheduled status reports to the superintendent and Board of Trustees.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 2

C. CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION

Section 29.181 of the Texas Education Code requires school districts to provide a curriculum that affords students opportunities "to master the basic skills and knowledge necessary for managing the dual roles of family member and wage earner; and gaining entry-level employment in a high-skill, high-wage job or continuing the student's education at the post-secondary level."

Section 74.3 of the Texas Administrative Code (TAC) requires districts to offer courses in Career and Technology Education (CATE) in at least three of the following eight areas:

- Agricultural Science and Technology Education
- Business Education
- Health Science Technology Education
- Family and Consumer Sciences Education/Home Economics
- Technology/Industrial Technology Education
- Marketing Education
- Trade and Industrial Education
- Career Orientation

ACISD offers CATE programs in business education, family and consumer sciences education, industrial technology education and trade and industrial education. In 2001-02, the district offered 42 courses in these four areas, six (14.3 percent) of which were not taught due to insufficient enrollment. The courses offered in each area are listed in **Exhibit 2-24**.

Exhibit 2-24
CATE Courses
2001-02

Course Title	Offered and Taught	Offered But Not Taught
Beginning Accounting I	X	
Accounting II		X
Keyboarding	X	
Career Connections	X	

Business Law		X
Business Computer Information Systems I	X	
Advanced Business Computer Information Systems I		X
Business Computer Information Systems II	X	
Advanced Business Computer Information Systems II		X
Business Support Systems	X	
Business Education Career Preparation I	X	
Business Computer Programming I	X	
Business Image and Multimedia	X	
Web Mastering	X	
Computer Science I Pre-AP	X	
Computer Science II AP	X	
Personal and Family Development	X	
Family Health Needs		X
Child Development	X*	
Preparation for Parenting	X	
Nutrition and Food Science	X	
Food Science and Technology	X	
Housing		X
Interior Design	X	
Home Economics Career Preparation I	X	
Home Economics Career Preparation II	X	
Technology Systems	X	
Communication Graphics	X	
Introduction to Construction Trades	X	
Introduction to Precision Metal Manufacturing	X	
Building Trades I	X	

Building Trades II	X	
Welding I	X	
Welding II	X	
Internetworking Technology I	X	
Internetworking Technology II	X	
Internetworking Technology III	X*	
Internetworking Technology IV	X*	
Introduction to Criminal Justice	X	
Crime in America	X	
Drafting I-Machine Drafting	X	
Drafting II-Architectural Drafting	X	

Source: ACISD, Division of Curriculum and Administration.

**No enrollment indicated on the Rockport-Fulton High School Master Schedule and Fall Class 2001-02.*

ACISD has a number of articulation agreements with area colleges that give its students opportunities to obtain college credit for work completed in high school. Tech Prep, career preparation, apprenticeship programs and, most recently, School to Careers are umbrella programs under which articulation agreements between school districts and post-secondary institutions can be developed. ACISD has agreements with Del Mar College and Coastal Bend College. The courses offered and colleges providing them are indicated in **Exhibit 2-25**.

Exhibit 2-25
ACISD Articulation Agreements
Del Mar College and Coastal Bend College
2001-02

Course Title	Del Mar College	Coastal Bend College
Accounting I and II	X	X
Child Development		X
Drafting I and II		X

Welding I and II		X
Law Enforcement/Criminal Justice	X	X
Business Support Systems	X	X
Keyboarding	X	X
Business Computer Information Systems I and II	X	X
Web Mastering	X	X
Computer Science I and II	X	X
Computer Programming I	X	X
Internetworking Technologies I, II, III and IV	X	X
Business Image and Multimedia		X
Introduction to Precision Metals		X

Source: ACISD, Rockport-Fulton High School Course Description Manual 2001-02.

FINDING

ACISD does not consult with area business leaders to determine the relevance of its CATE programs in preparing students for the workforce, nor does it have a five-year plan to provide direction for the CATE program. ACISD's percent of students enrolled in CATE programs is lowest among the peer districts and lower than the Region 2 and state averages. Its percent of teachers allocated to the program is third-lowest among the peers and again lower than the Region 2 and state averages. Its percent of total expenditures for CATE programs is lowest among the peer districts and lower than Region 2 and the state (**Exhibit 2-26**).

Exhibit 2-26
Number and Percent of Students, Teachers and Expenditures
ACISD CATE Programs
2000-01

District	Student Enrollment		Teachers		Expenditure	
	Number	Percent of Total	Number	Percent of Total	Amount	Percent of Total

Aransas County	405	12.1%	10.5	3.9%	\$460,070	3.7%
Flour Bluff	1,086	21.7%	14.9	4.6%	\$683,814	4.2%
Gregory-Portland	1,018	23.0%	13.4	4.8%	\$578,264	4.2%
Kerrville	918	19.7%	5.9	1.8%	\$674,051	4.5%
Point Isabel	459	19.4%	5.5	3.7%	\$343,495	4.6%
Tuloso-Midway	582	19.0%	8.9	4.2%	\$410,539	4.6%
Region 2	22,760	21.1%	355.6	4.8%	\$15,768,806	4.3%
State	768,200	18.9%	11,810.7	4.3%	\$566,681,113	4.1%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2000-01.

Many districts use business advisory committees to help them assess the relevance of their programs to area job markets and to assist with the preparation of long-range plans. Such advisory committees or councils can be organized at the school or district levels. Schools with large programs, particularly those at the high school level, often have CATE advisory committees that work closely with area and regional workforce development councils and post-secondary educational institutions. Many districts find such help valuable when they are formulating five-year or longer-range plans, because they provide much-needed input on workforce trends and standards against which local programming can be evaluated.

Recommendation 23:

Create a business advisory council to provide direction for the Career and Technology programs.

Once formed, this council should assist the district in developing and monitoring a five-year plan for its CATE Program.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The board, with assistance from the superintendent, assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Administration and department chairs for Career and Technology Education, designates a business advisory council that includes community	September 2002
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	members, business representatives and representatives from area colleges and universities and charges the council with developing a mission and goals for the council in relation to the district's CATE program.	
2.	The council meets to develop its mission and goals and presents them to the board for approval.	October - November 2002
3.	The council begins meeting regularly with district staff and developing plans and recommendations for evaluation and improvement of ACISD's CATE program.	December 2002
4.	The committee submits its recommendations to the administration and board for review and approval.	March 2003
5.	The assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Administration begins implementing the approved recommendations.	April 2003
6.	The assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Administration meets regularly with the council and makes regular status reports to the superintendent and the board.	April 2003 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 2

D. COMPENSATORY EDUCATION/DROPOUT PREVENTION

The federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended, provides funding for programs aimed at students who are failing to meet state performance standards. TEA sends these federal Title I funds to districts based on their number of economically disadvantaged students (those who are eligible for free or reduced-price lunches or breakfasts). The selection of students served, however, must be based on educational need, not economic status. Title I funds, moreover, must be used to supplement district programs; in other words, these funds must be used in addition to rather than in place of funds allocated for the regular education program. No more than 18 percent of the federal funds may be used to fund a disciplinary alternative education program unless TEA approves a waiver allowing it.

Students are eligible to receive services funded through compensatory education if they are under 21 years of age and at risk of dropping out of school and meet any of 13 other criteria, such as poor test performance or failure to be promoted; pregnancy or parenthood; or homelessness. Among its peer districts, ACISD had the second-highest compensatory fund allocation and the fourth-highest number of at-risk and economically disadvantaged students in 1999-2000 (**Exhibit 2-27**).

Exhibit 2-27
Compensatory Education Funds and Number of
At-Risk and Economically Disadvantaged Students
ACISD vs. Peer Districts
1999-2000

School	Compensatory Education Funds	Percent of Total Expenditures	At-Risk Students	Economically Disadvantaged Students
Aransas County	\$2,193,708	6.1%	1,373	1,782
Flour Bluff	\$1,181,322	3.3%	1,720	2,167
Gregory-Portland	\$2,631,016	9.9%	1,267	1,457
Kerrville	\$1,754,471	4.8%	1,439	2,233
Point Isabel	\$1,296,859	6.1%	1,378	1,903
Tuloso-Midway	\$927,353	3.5%	628	1,305

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 1999-2000.

FINDING

ACISD has initiated dropout prevention and recovery programs that have contributed to a low annual dropout rate of 0.4 percent in 2000-01. TEA requires districts to report information on students who leave school before graduation for use in determining district dropout rates. School districts also must develop comprehensive dropout prevention plans explaining how they will work to prevent students from dropping out of school.

ACISD provides special support for at-risk students and others who are not performing at grade level through programs aimed at bringing students up to grade level.

Fish Camp is designed to help students make the transition from middle to high school smoothly. It assists students in understanding school policies and the academic and non-academic opportunities available to them. A general educational development (GED) program is offered during mornings, afternoons and evenings to accommodate students who work or have children. A high school Credit Rescue program offers accelerated learning through self-paced, individualized instruction at an alternate location.

The district has also initiated the Striving to Ensure Personal Success (STEPS) Program for students with the highest probability of dropping out of school. STEPS provides an academic alternative for students. Students apply for the program and are selected for participation by a campus review committee. Students with a history of academic failure are considered first. Those selected must agree to meet attendance requirements, adhere to disciplinary policies and earn at least four credits per semester and eight credits per year. Instructional programming and scheduling are made flexible to meet individual student needs.

The district's annual dropout rate is less than 1 percent, the limit for being considered exemplary in TEA's accountability ratings (**Exhibit 2-28**).

Exhibit 2-28
Dropout Rates Grades 7-12
ACISD and State
1995-96 through 2000-01

Year	Aransas County	State
1995-96	0.6%	1.8%

1996-97	2.5%	1.8%
1997-98	1.7%	1.6%
1998-99	1.4%	1.6%
1999-2000	0.7%	1.6%
2000-01	0.4%	1.3%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 1995-96 through 2000-01.

COMMENDATION

The district's dropout prevention and recovery efforts have kept ACISD's dropout rates low.

FINDING

ACISD's district improvement plan (DIP) and the campus improvement plans (CIPs) lack sufficient detail to account for compensatory fund expenditures and do not include specific objectives for these programs. Texas law requires districts' district and campus improvement plans to justify their compensatory education expenditures. The district and campus plans should specify the goals and objectives of the various compensatory education strategies at each campus and identify their budget requirements, staffing formulas, curriculum strategies, specialized needs for supplies and equipment, special programs such as tutorials as well as other items and services.

None of the plans contain the detail required by state law and rule. For example, in one elementary CIP, the stated goal is "to improve standardized test scores," but the plan is silent on the objectives or strategies needed to accomplish this, particularly with regard to at-risk students. The plan also lacks any discussion of the resources needed to achieve this goal and contains too little detail regarding the criteria used to evaluate progress toward the goal. Additionally, the plans contain some conflicts in completion dates among various goals and objectives.

TEA's January 2001 DEC report on ACISD recommended that the DIP and CIPs be revised to include funding amounts and personnel full-time-equivalents (FTEs) associated with each of the improvement strategies they contain. The report also recommended that the plans "show the relationship between the funding sources, FTEs, and strategies, and identify the performance objectives."

In some districts, certain components of district and campus improvement plans are evaluated in a process similar to that used for competitive bids;

campuses submit competitive plans for special projects for budget approval. In these districts, central and campus managers and leadership and campus-based committees have broad discretion to design and implement compensatory education programs to serve the unique needs of students at each campus.

Recommendation 24:

Enhance campus improvement plans to meet state requirements governing compensatory fund management.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent and business manager provide principals the state requirements describing campus improvement plans.	June 2002
2.	The superintendent directs school principals to develop campus improvement plans that meet state mandates for compensatory funds.	July 2002
3.	The superintendent and principals jointly review each campus improvement plan to ensure that they meet financial requirements and include measurable objectives.	January 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 2

E. BILINGUAL EDUCATION/ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

Chapter 29 of the Texas Education Code requires all school districts with an enrollment of at least 20 limited English proficient (LEP) students in the same grade level to offer a bilingual or English as a Second Language (ESL) program. A LEP student is defined as one whose primary language is not English and whose English language proficiency limits his or her participation in an English-language academic environment.

Bilingual education uses two languages for instructional purposes, the student's native language and English. The amount of instruction in each language depends upon the student's level of proficiency in both languages and his or her level of academic achievement. Bilingual education must be provided in pre-kindergarten through the elementary grades, and bilingual education, instruction in ESL or other transitional language instruction approved by TEA must be provided in post-elementary grades through grade 8. For students in grades 9 through 12, only ESL instruction is required.

ESL instruction is designed to develop proficiency in the comprehension, speaking, reading and composition of both oral and written English. Depending on the student's language ability, the amount of time allotted to English instruction may vary from total immersion to instruction in a regular classroom in the elementary grades and from one to two periods of special instruction in grades 6-12. Because it has relatively few LEP students, ACISD does not provide a bilingual program. The district does offer ESL on all campuses.

In 2000-01, ACISD's ESL expenditures were fourth-highest among the peer districts and third-highest on a per-student basis. ACISD had the second-highest number of students in ESL programs (**Exhibit 2-29**).

Exhibit 2-29
ESL Expenditures
ACISD vs. Peer Districts
2000-01

District	Expenditure	Number of Students	Percent of Students	Expenditure per Student
Aransas County	\$209,092	150	4.5%	\$1,394

Flour Bluff	\$25,714	82	1.6%	\$314
Gregory-Portland	\$609,999	54	1.2%	\$11,296
Kerrville	\$411,962	129	2.8%	\$3,194
Point Isabel	\$377,902	497	21.0%	\$760
Tuloso-Midway	\$28,818	94	3.1%	\$307

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2000-01.

Exhibit 2-30 surveys ACISD's ESL expenditures over the last four years. Over this period, the number of ESL students rose by 9.5 percent while its expenditures increased by 8.3 percent, from \$192,947 to \$209,092. During the four-year period, per-student expenditures declined by 1.6 percent.

Exhibit 2-30
ACISD ESL Expenditures per Student
1997-98 through 2000-01

	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01
Total Expenditures	\$192,947	\$185,929	\$161,309	\$209,092
Percent Increase (Decrease)	-	(3.6%)	(13.2%)	29.6%
4-Year Increase (Decrease)	-	-	-	8.3%
Total Students Served	137	132	164	150
Percent Increase (Decrease)	-	(3.6%)	24.2%	(8.5%)
4-Year Increase (Decrease)	-	-	-	9.5%
Expenditures per Student	\$1,416	\$1,409	\$984	\$1,394
Percent Increase (Decrease)	-	(0.5%)	(30.2%)	41.7%
4-Year Increase (Decrease)	-	-	-	(1.6%)

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

FINDING

ACISD serves students representing many nationalities and speaking many languages, including Spanish, Vietnamese, Laotian, German, Japanese, Libyan and East Indian.

Under certain conditions, districts may exempt LEP students from TAAS. ACISD's 0.5 percent LEP exemption rate in 2000-01 was third-highest

among the peer districts, slightly higher than the Region 2 average and lower than the statewide rate (**Exhibit 2-31**).

Exhibit 2-31
Percent of Students Receiving TAAS LEP Exemption
ACISD vs. Peer Districts, Region 2 and State
2000-01

District	Percent of LEP Exempt Students
Point Isabel	5.5%
Flour Bluff	0.6%
Aransas County	0.5%
Kerrville	0.4%
Gregory-Portland	0.1%
Tuloso-Midway	0.1%
Region 2	0.3%
State	1.4%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2000-01.

Among ACISD schools, the percent of LEP students exempted from TAAS in 2000-01 ranged from zero at Rockport-Fulton High School to less than 1 percent at Little Bay Elementary. Districtwide, ACISD exempted only 0.5 percent of its students due to limited English proficiency (**Exhibit 2-32**).

Exhibit 2-32
Percent of Students Receiving TAAS LEP Exemption
By ACISD School
2000-01

Campus	2000-01
Rockport-Fulton High School	0.0%
Rockport-Fulton Middle School	0.6%
Rockport Elementary*	0.4%
Fulton Elementary	0.4%

Live Oak Elementary	0.4%
Little Bay Elementary	0.9%
District	0.5%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2000-01.

**Campuses with student populations not included in TAAS testing are paired with another school for reporting purposes.*

Rockport Elementary serves grades PK-1 only and was paired with Fulton Elementary.

COMMENDATION

While serving students of many languages and nationalities, few LEP students in ACISD are being exempted from the TAAS.

Chapter 2

F. SPECIAL EDUCATION

The federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires free and appropriate public education for all children with disabilities regardless of the severity of their handicaps. This law requires the district to develop an individualized education plan (IEP) for each child with a disability.

The law also requires school districts to educate students with disabilities in the "least restrictive environment." In 1997, the federal government re-authorized IDEA. The revised law states that the IEP must be clearly aligned with the education received by children in general classrooms and that districts must include regular education teachers in the IEP decision-making process. The law also requires the inclusion of students with disabilities in state and district assessment programs and in the reporting of performance goals.

To serve the multiple needs of all students with disabilities and comply with IDEA's requirements, an effective special education program should implement the following practices (derived from Public Law 101-15, the 1997 amendments to the Individual with Disabilities Education Act):

- *Pre-referral intervention in regular education.* When a student experiences academic problems in regular education, an intervention can and should occur to solve the problems. If steps taken to solve the problem do not produce results, the problem should be referred to special education staff.
- *Referral to special education for evaluation.* A referral to special education requires a written request supported by documentation. The referral information must include an explanation of steps that have been taken in regular education to address the student's problem before the referral.
- *Comprehensive, nondiscriminatory evaluation.* Once a student has been referred, the district must provide a comprehensive, nondiscriminatory evaluation, commonly called an assessment, within a prescribed amount of time.
- *Initial placement through an Admission, Review and Dismissal (ARD) committee meeting.* After the evaluation is complete, a meeting should be held to discuss the results of the evaluation, decide if the student qualifies for special education services in one of 12 federal special education categories, and, if so, develop a plan for the student's education.

- *Provision of educational services and supports according to a written Individualized Education Plan.* The IEP developed by the ARD committee should include specific classes the student will take, how much time will be spent in regular education and related needs like speech therapy or counseling.
- *Annual program review.* Each year after a student's initial qualification and placement, an ARD committee conducts a review to ensure the student's program is appropriate.
- *Three-year reevaluation.* Every three years, the student undergoes a comprehensive individual assessment. Another ARD committee meeting is held to discuss the results of the reevaluation and determine whether the student still qualifies for special education in the same category.
- *Dismissal from the special education program.* When a student no longer meets eligibility criteria, the student is dismissed from special education. The ARD committee must make this decision.

Students with disabilities who spend all of their classroom hours in a regular classroom are considered mainstreamed. As each student's needs require, additional instructional and related services are provided, including options for full-day services in special education settings. Students needing support in addition to the regular classroom setting can use the Content Mastery Center (CMC) classroom, where students can spend time in a self-paced setting. If a student's disability is so severe that he or she cannot receive a satisfactory education in a regular classroom, the student will be served in a separate, self-contained classroom.

In 2000-01, ACISD had the highest percent of special education students among the peer districts. The district's percent was also higher than Region 2 or state averages (**Exhibit 2-33**).

Exhibit 2-33
Percentage of Students Served in Special Education
ACISD vs. Peer Districts, Region 2 and State
2000-01

District	Percent Special Education Students
Aransas County	13.9%
Flour Bluff	13.6%
Kerrville	13.1%
Gregory-Portland	12.2%
Point Isabel	11.4%

Tuloso-Midway	9.7%
Region 2	13.6%
State	11.9%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2000-01.

In 2000-01, ACISD ARD committees made 117 referrals to special education from a total student enrollment of 3,360. Rockport Elementary, the district's early childhood center, had the highest percent of referrals followed by the three elementary schools serving grades 2-5, the middle school and the high school (**Exhibit 2-34**).

Exhibit 2-34
Special Education Referrals by School
2000-01

School	Enrollment	Number of Referrals	Percent Referrals of Enrollment	Percent Economically Disadvantaged
Rockport Elementary	513	35	6.8%	10.1%
Fulton Elementary	379	25	6.6%	18.5%
Little Bay Elementary	306	16	5.2%	14.4%
Live Oak Elementary	338	17	5.0%	15.9%
Rockport-Fulton Middle School	833	21	2.5%	22.5%
Rockport-Fulton High School	991	*	0.3%	16.7%
Total	3,360	117	3.5%	48.1%

Source: ACISD Special Education Office.

*Denotes less than five.

Exhibit 2-35 lists accountability ratings, percent of students taking the State Development Alternative Assessment (SDAA) and the percent exempted from all TAAS subtests for each ACISD campus. The SDAA is an alternative assessment for special education students receiving instruction below their grade level.

Exhibit 2-35
Special Education Students Served, Percent Taking SDAA
and Percent Exempted from TAAS
2000-01

School	Accountability Rating	Percent Taking SDAA	Percent Exempted from All TAAS Sub-tests
Rockport-Fulton High School	Recognized	0.0%	6.1%
Rockport-Fulton Middle School	Acceptable	9.4%	0.5%
Rockport Elementary	Exemplary	10.1%	0.7%
Fulton Elementary	Exemplary	10.1%	0.7%
Little Bay Elementary	Acceptable	12.1%	0.0%
Live Oak Elementary	Recognized	11.8%	0.0%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2000-01.

FINDING

ACISD has a prereferral process for identifying students who may need extra help or who may benefit from special education programs. The district's Child Study Team (CST) is designed to promote collaboration and creative problem-solving among parents, students and school personnel. The team works through a multi-level process that begins when a teacher refers a student to the counselor. The counselor meets with the team and makes recommendations for modifications in the classroom to try to help that student succeed. This requires teachers to collaborate with support staff and use classroom modifications to help the student before referring him or her to special education.

The CST is a multidisciplinary group of school resource employees, parents, classroom teachers and support specialists. The CST suggests strategies and supports for use in the classroom. The effectiveness of these strategies is documented and if students make sufficient progress, they are not referred for special services. If the student fails to make sufficient progress, the student is referred for special assessment as appropriate.

COMMENDATION

ACISD provides support services to students before referring them to special education.

FINDING

ACISD has taken steps to correct deficiencies concerning its special education programs noted in TEA's January 2001 DEC report. The report found that the district was not complying with state and federal requirements in 13 of 36 areas reviewed. A number of these issues concerned communication, records maintenance and the completion and submission of forms required by the state or federal government. To correct these deficiencies, the district purchased a software program to assist teachers, administrators and assessment personnel in completing the documentation required for the Admission, Review and Dismissal (ARD) process.

Special Education Manager is a program containing more than 100 forms meeting documentation requirements for special education students. The software includes an ARD committee meeting report template with associated supplements and an IEP component with nearly 1,200 goals and 13,000 related objectives. The program allows a teacher to test a student to determine critical areas of weakness, choose prerequisites from the curriculum and print out an IEP. It also includes eligibility reports and referral forms.

The software uses a database; information such as student number, address, school or grade, typically needs to be entered only once and it then will appear automatically on many of the forms. After a set of forms is signed it becomes a legal record and is locked and archived. This ensures that the forms stored in the computer match those in the students' files. The program also provides applications for specific special education programs. For example, the software automatically calculates four consecutive semesters of instructional arrangements for students as well as the number of students receiving speech therapy and prompts users to complete appropriate forms based on disability, age and educational placement.

COMMENDATION

ACISD has taken steps to correct deficiencies cited in TEA's most recent DEC visit.

Chapter 2

G. ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION

Section 11.252 of the Texas Education Code requires school districts to have a district improvement plan including provisions for discipline management. Chapter 37 of the code addresses discipline and law and order in Texas public schools. Section 37.008 requires districts to provide an alternative education program (AEP) as an alternative setting for behavioral management. An AEP must:

- be located in a setting other than a student's regular classroom;
- be situated on or off of a regular school campus;
- separate AEP students from those not assigned to the program;
- focus on language arts, mathematics, science, history and self-discipline;
- attend to students' educational and behavioral needs; and
- provide supervision and counseling.

A student may be served at an AEP located on his or her regular school campus or may be transferred to a different campus, a school-community guidance center or a community-based alternative school. Certified personnel must staff on-campus AEPs. Off-campus programs may use their choice of instructional personnel except for those serving students who receive special education or bilingual education services. Off-campus programs must be conducted in facilities separate from those serving regular education students. An AEP may not be held in the same room as an in-school suspension program or any other room containing students not assigned to the AEP. Districts may provide transportation services to and from school and allow students to engage in some activities with regular students, such as eating in the same cafeteria. Districts must develop local policies to explain how they will provide for students' educational needs and provide counseling services for students during their placement in an AEP.

ACISD has one alternative campus for grades 6 through 12 that separates middle school and high school students. Students move through the program by maintaining their academic coursework and earning points for acceptable classroom behavior. Students are made aware of behavioral expectations, and all begin their AEP placement at the same level. As they move through specified levels of academic performance and behavioral improvement, they can earn privileges.

FINDING

District personnel are applying discipline management techniques inconsistently. The ACISD 2000-01 Student Code of Conduct lists general misconduct violations for which disciplinary techniques can be applied, including disobeying rules on the buses, cheating or copying the work of another student, pulling a fire alarm, making false threats and possessing or using drugs. Some of the discipline management techniques available to teachers and principals include oral correction, timeouts, detention and loss of privileges.

AEP personnel indicate, however, that the middle and high school are not applying these techniques consistently. The district staff offered reasons for such inconsistencies, including the following:

- The current referral process is too lenient and permits referrals without adequate use of intermediate steps such as in-school suspensions.
- Teachers do not receive adequate discipline/classroom management training and are not encouraged to apply these techniques sufficiently before AEP placement is considered.
- The district does not formally monitor or account for the AEP referral process.

Most troubling, students who have committed the same offenses are being placed in AEP for different lengths of time.

Recommendation 25:

Standardize discipline procedures and consequences for violations at all district schools and provide the staff training needed to implement these procedures consistently.

Increased teacher training should accompany the standardized policies. The assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Administration and the director of Student Services with assistance from parents, teachers, students, principals, assistant principals and ACISD's attorney should develop, apply and monitor disciplinary guidelines and discipline management techniques.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Administration and the director of Student Services create a committee of parents, teachers, students, principals, assistant principals and ACISD's attorney to propose a standardized list of violations and disciplinary consequences for the entire district.	June 2002
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2.	The superintendent, principals and assistant principals review the list and provide suggestions for its improvement.	June 2002
3.	The director of Student Services and selected members of the committee revise the standardized list based on these suggestions and forward the final version to the assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Administration.	August 2002
4.	The assistant superintendent and then the superintendent review and approve the list and associated training and recommend its approval to the board.	September 2002
5.	The board reviews and approves the standardized list of violations and disciplinary consequences with any necessary changes and approves the associated training.	October 2002
6.	The director of Student Services incorporates the standardized list into the Student Code of Conduct.	November 2002
7.	All campuses conduct a districtwide effort to communicate the new information in the Student Code of Conduct.	January 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 3

PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

This chapter examines Aransas County Independent School District's (ACISD's) personnel management in four sections.

- A. Organization and Management
- B. Staff Patterns, Salaries and Benefits
- C. Recruitment and Hiring Activities
- D. Districtwide Employee Management

Personnel management includes staffing analysis, recruiting, hiring, salary and benefit administration, and performance evaluation. Effective personnel management requires compliance with equal employment opportunity statutes and other federal and state laws. Establishing fair and workable policies, procedures and training programs are important for recruiting and retaining competent staff.

BACKGROUND

Elementary and secondary education are labor-intensive undertakings; personnel costs consume approximately 80 percent of the average school district budget, making personnel management a major priority in any district. ACISD's Human Resources Department is responsible for coordinating the overall payroll expenditures for the district. These expenditures are outlined in **Exhibit 3-1** and show that for the 1999-2000 school year, the last full year that actual expenditures are available, payroll expenditures were comparable to ACISD's peer districts.

Exhibit 3-1
ACISD Actual Payroll Expenditures by Function Compared to Peer Districts
1999-2000

Function	Aransas County	Flour Bluff	Gregory-Portland	Kerrville	Point Isabel	Tuloso-Midway
Instruction	64.4%	66.5%	68.8%	69.0%	67.5%	65.5%
Instructional Resources and Media Services	1.2%	1.6%	1.3%	0.8%	1.8%	1.1%
Curriculum Development	3.6%	0.5%	1.1%	0.6%	1.9%	0.1%

and Instructional Staff Development						
Instructional Leadership	1.1%	2.4%	0.9%	3.2%	1.8%	2.0%
School Leadership	5.8%	5.5%	6.5%	5.0%	6.9%	7.3%
Guidance, Counseling and Evaluation Services	4.7%	4.4%	3.6%	5.0%	3.3%	4.7%
Social Work Services	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%
Health Services	0.9%	0.7%	1.5%	0.1%	0.3%	1.1%
Student Transportation	3.8%	2.6%	1.2%	0.6%	0.9%	3.2%
Food Services	2.7%	3.8%	3.3%	1.6%	1.7%	0.0%
Co-curricular/ Extracurricular Activities	1.9%	1.5%	1.9%	2.7%	3.1%	3.3%
General Administration	2.5%	2.7%	3.1%	1.9%	1.9%	3.7%
Plant Maintenance and Operations	6.9%	6.6%	6.2%	2.3%	3.0%	6.9%
Security and Monitoring Services	0.5%	0.3%	0.5%	6.0%	4.3%	0.0%
Data Processing Services	0.0%	0.7%	0.0%	0.7%	0.1%	0.0%
Community Services	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%	0.8%	0.0%
Facilities Acquisition	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	0.2%

and Construction						
Total Payroll Expenditures	\$18,628,660	\$24,189,680	\$19,147,528	\$22,870,717	\$11,595,627	\$14,613,150
Total General Fund Expenditures	\$22,025,364	\$28,808,063	\$22,368,893	\$26,059,433	\$15,630,680	\$17,345,307
Payroll as a Percent of Total Expenditures	84.6%	84.0%	85.6%	87.8%	74.2%	84.2%

Source: Texas Education Agency(TEA), Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS), 1999-2000.

Like most employers, ACISD must comply with a variety of state and federal laws that govern human resources management. These laws include the Fair Labor Standards Act, which governs wage and hour payments; the Americans with Disabilities Act, which states that an employer must provide reasonable accommodation to any employee or applicant for a position who has a disability without which they would be able to carry out the job's duties, and the Equal Employment Opportunity Act, which prevents employers from making hiring and termination decisions based on age, race, religion, gender or other non-performance related factors.

Chapter 3

A. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

The Human Resources coordinator and a secretary staff ACISD's Human Resources Department. The Human Resources coordinator reports directly to the superintendent.

ACISD Human Resources coordinator's responsibilities are shown in **Exhibit 3-2**.

Exhibit 3-2 ACISD Human Resources Coordinator's Responsibilities

Human Resources Coordinator
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assess and document teacher credentials.• Process issuance and renewal of state certificates and permits.• Create and revise job descriptions and evaluations.• Plan and recommend contract workdays for district calendar.• Review and distribute employee applications.• Assist principals and supervisors in selection of personnel.• Compile new employee recommendations with supporting documentation for board approval.• Compose and place job vacancy ads and job postings.• Supervise substitute teacher and adult education programs.• Administer Family Medical Leave Act leave program.• Assist in resolution of employee complaints and grievances.• Assist in Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Title IX and due process investigations.• Assist in creating, revising and implementing policies and procedures according to federal and state law.• Coordinate placement of student teachers.• Coordinate records management program.• Compile department budget information.• Assist in planning and executing annual Teacher of the Year award banquet.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Revise and issue <i>Employee & Substitute Handbook</i> on annual basis.• Revise and issue <i>Emergency Procedures Manual</i> on annual basis.• Issue <i>Letters of Reasonable Assurance</i> (assures employees that they are full-time employee despite the fact that they do not work during the summer and prevents them from filing for unemployment during the summer session) to support and substitute personnel annually.

- Revise and reprint professional and support job application forms as necessary.
- Maintain and update employee roster.
- Compile and maintain contract eligibility list for professional personnel.
- Prepare and distribute regular, dual, auxiliary and probationary contracts for all professional personnel annually and as needed throughout the school year.
- Process request of transfer forms annually.

Source: ACISD job descriptions, December 1994.

ACISD Human Resources secretary's responsibilities are shown in **Exhibit 3-3**.

Exhibit 3-3
ACISD Human Resources Secretary's Responsibilities

Human Resources Secretary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare correspondence, forms, memos, reports, etc. • Receive incoming calls; take reliable messages and route to appropriate staff. • Receive and file applications for employment. • Prepare, copy and distribute job vacancy listings to all campuses and coordinate with local newspapers, • Sort applications for specific job openings and copy for principals/supervisors. • Receive and sort department mail. • Maintain all substitute teacher forms and records. • Compile substitute teacher list and distribute to campuses on a weekly basis. • Prepare criminal history inquiries on all new employees and submit them to the Texas Department of Public Safety on a weekly basis. • Maintain all department files, including confidential personnel records in an accurate and complete manner. • Assist in record management program by preparing records for storage or destruction. • Purge applicant files annually. • Schedule appointments, interviews and meetings as necessary. • Maintain record of applicants considered for each job opening. • Maintain open records employee list (Public Information Act) and fulfill requests for listing of employees. • Prepare purchase orders and requisitions for the department. • Fulfill requests for copies of personnel records. • Handle advertising, registration, cash receipts, bank deposits and teacher

- payroll for adult education courses offered by the district.
- Assist in completing employee surveys as required.
- File published revisions and inserts to update policy and reference manual.
- Substitute for and/or assist the superintendent's executive assistant as needed.

Source: ACISD job descriptions, December 1994.

The Human Resource coordinator is a member of the Texas Association of School Personnel Administrators (TASPA), which is the only professional organization in Texas devoted solely to representing personnel and human resources administrators in public schools. The association publishes five newsletters and special reports a year on personnel issues and trends to keep members informed on what is happening in the profession. Through its committee structure TASPA represents the views and interests of members before the Texas Legislature, State Board of Educator Certification, State Board of Education and Texas Education Agency (TEA). To provide leadership in professional growth, the association sponsors two annual conferences for school personnel administrators and one for school support personnel. TASPA also co-sponsors a law conference with the Texas School Administrators Legal Digest and a school personnel administrators' academy together with the Texas Association of School Boards. At least one of the employees in the Human Resources Department attends TASPA's annual conference every year. The employees also attend training held at the Regional Education Service Center II (Region 2) two or three times a year.

The Human Resources Department budget and the cost per student and employee from 1999-2000 through 2001-02 are displayed in **Exhibit 3-4**. The Human Resources Department experienced fluctuations in expenditures with declining expenses projected for 2001-02.

Exhibit 3-4
Human Resources Department Budget
1999-2000 through 2001-02

	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02
Payroll and Benefits	\$52,620	\$77,465	\$76,000
Contracted Services	\$5,285	\$469	\$500
Supplies and Materials	\$2,380	\$1,398	\$1,000
Other Operating	\$14,560	\$5,533	\$6,000

Capital Outlay	\$1,160	\$500	\$0
Total	\$76,005	\$85,365	\$83,500
Total employees	542.2	544	549.3
Total Cost per Employee	\$140.18	\$156.92	\$152.01
Total Students	3,502	3,366	3,345
Total Cost per Student	\$21.70	\$25.36	\$24.96

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 1999-2000 through 2001-02.

FINDING

The Human Resources coordinator writes and distributes an employee handbook. The handbook is updated regularly as changes occur and employees are notified of the changes via interoffice mail. The handbook is provided to all new employees. Plans are underway to place the handbook online through the district's Website in 2003.

The handbook translates the board policies that relate to district staff into plain language. It summarizes payroll procedures, employee benefits, leave programs and other vital employee information and provides a quick reference guide for employees with questions about district policy.

Commendation

The district distributes an employee handbook that provides information and guidance about employment practices to all employees.

FINDING

The district does not have a comprehensive telephone directory that lists all employees by name or department; instead, each school publishes its own directory. This complicates the process of trying to locate an employee because it requires advance knowledge of where the employee works.

The South Texas Multi Regional Processing Center (STMRPC) payroll system maintained by Region 2 can download ACISD employees' names, positions and assigned departments using a Microsoft Excel, Word or Access. The district phone number for each employee would need to be entered into the form the first time the download is created. After the initial download, the district phone number would need to be added only

for new employees or for any employees that transferred to another department.

Recommendation 26:

Create a district telephone directory and place the directory on the district's Web site.

The phone list should be placed on the district's Web site in both alphabetical order and by department. The phone list should be updated each month after payroll processing is completed. Region 2 indicated they will train district employees to use the system at no cost, or will generate the records for the district for \$35 an hour.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Human Resources coordinator contacts the Region 2 technology representative and learns to export information from the system.	June 2002
2.	The Human Resource coordinator exports the employee data needed and the requested format for the telephone directory into Microsoft Excel, Word or Access.	July 2002
3.	The Human Resource coordinator verifies the data and format against the payroll records and adds district phone numbers for each employee.	July 2002
4.	The Human Resources coordinator works with the technology support technician to upload the data onto the district's Web site.	August 2002
5.	The technology support technician and the Human Resource coordinator set up a monthly process for updating the telephone directory after payroll is processed.	September 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The software systems used by Payroll and Human Resources are not integrated. The Human Resources Department uses an Access database to track employees, hire dates, termination dates, certifications, addresses and annual or hourly salaries. Payroll uses Region 2's STMRPC payroll processing system and database. The STMRPC system already contains most of the data Human Resources manually enters into its database. The STMRPC payroll system, however, does not contain teacher certification

information. Because the human resources database is often used as a reporting tool for district management, it is important that its information be accurate and current. Anytime that data is maintained on two systems, the danger exists for one or both systems to contain some inaccuracies.

Recommendation 27:

Export pertinent payroll data directly from the Region 2 payroll system into the Human Resource Department's Access database.

Data elements that need to be included in the export include the employee's name, address, hire date, termination date and annual and hourly salary. According to the Region 2, exports from STMRPC are easy to perform. Region 2 will provide free training to district employees on how to create the export routine or will create the export routine at Region 2 for \$35 an hour.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Human Resources coordinator contacts the STMRPC technology representative and learns how to export information from the system.	June 2002
2.	The Human Resources coordinator exports pertinent data from the STMRPC system and imports the information into the Access database on a monthly basis.	June 2002 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The district's personnel files are not complete and in some cases are inaccurate. In the past, keeping the district's personnel files organized, complete and up-to-date was not a priority for the district. However, the Human Resources Department has been trying to rectify this situation by reviewing each employee's file to ensure that all information is properly accounted for. TSPR reviewed 53 individual employee files that included 26 certified employees and 27 non-certified employees. The results of the review are shown in **Exhibit 3-5**.

**Exhibit 3-5
Summary of Information Contained in Personnel Files
Review Conducted October 2001**

	Percent Complete
Contract	96.2%
Application	94.3%
Service Record	92.2%
Letters of Assurance	63.0%
Public Access Form	92.5%
Drug Free Form	90.6%
Oath of Office	69.7%
Receipt of Employee Handbook	88.7%
I-9 (certification of citizenship/work status)	96.2%
Copy of Social Security Card	88.7%
Copy of Texas driver's license	90.6%
References Provided	86.8%
Transcripts	93.1%
Teachers Certificate	96.6%
Sexual Harassment Certification	32.1%
Notice of Workers' Compensation Coverage	58.5%
Receipt of Job Description	15.1%
Most Recent Evaluation Form	68.3%

Source: Review team record of audit of ACISD personnel filed, October 2001.

The review team found a large stack of teacher evaluation forms sitting on the shelf waiting to be filed in the employee folders. All of the evaluations had observation dates from the 1999-2000 school year. According to the Human Resources coordinator, the evaluations had just been forwarded to the Human Resources Department by the schools. These forms were more than a year old.

The Human Resources Department is responsible for maintaining efficient, accurate and up-to-date employee personnel files. An employee personnel file contains the employee's application for employment, appointment letters, contract, employee history form, references, personal data form, certificates of achievement, transcripts and correspondence.

The vault containing the personnel files is not routinely locked to prevent unauthorized employees from viewing confidential information. There are two vaults in the central administration building. One vault is in the business office area and contains business records, payroll records, the check-signing machine and blank check stock. The other vault can be entered from the main hallway in the central administration building. It contains the employee files and an assortment of older business records.

By law, some information contained in personnel records must be kept confidential while other portions of the record are public information. The inadvertent disclosure of confidential information could put the district at risk of a lawsuit, public embarrassment or the loss of employee confidence in the system. On the other hand, if certain information is requested that is a matter of public record, and the district withholds the information, the risk of lawsuit and public embarrassment are as great. Records management is a critical part of any personnel management function.

Recommendation 28:

Rearrange the vaults in central administration to secure personnel files and develop sound records management procedures.

The district must develop specifications for personnel data needs and perform an audit of all personnel files to ensure they contain all necessary information. After the audit is complete, the district should perform ongoing reviews to ensure files are continually kept up to date.

The vaults could also be rearranged so that one vault contains the personnel and payroll records and the other vault contains other information needed by the business office. In this way, the vault containing the personnel information could be kept locked and only authorized individuals would have access to the files.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the Human Resources coordinator to develop a checklist of required personnel records and makes plans to secure all personnel files.	June 2002
2.	The Human Resources coordinator performs an audit of all personnel files and records missing information.	July 2002
3.	The Human Resources coordinator prepares memos to specific employees requesting missing information.	September 2002
4.	The Human Resources coordinator establishes a procedure for the secretary to use to periodically review and update the	October 2002

personnel files.	
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FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 3

B. STAFF PATTERNS, SALARIES AND BENEFITS

The Human Resources Department must recruit and hire professional personnel and support staff in all departments and at all schools. **Exhibit 3-6** provides a breakdown of full-time equivalent (FTE) positions held by employees of the ACISD in the 2000-01 school year.

Exhibit 3-6
ACISD Full-Time Equivalent Employees by Job Category
2000-01

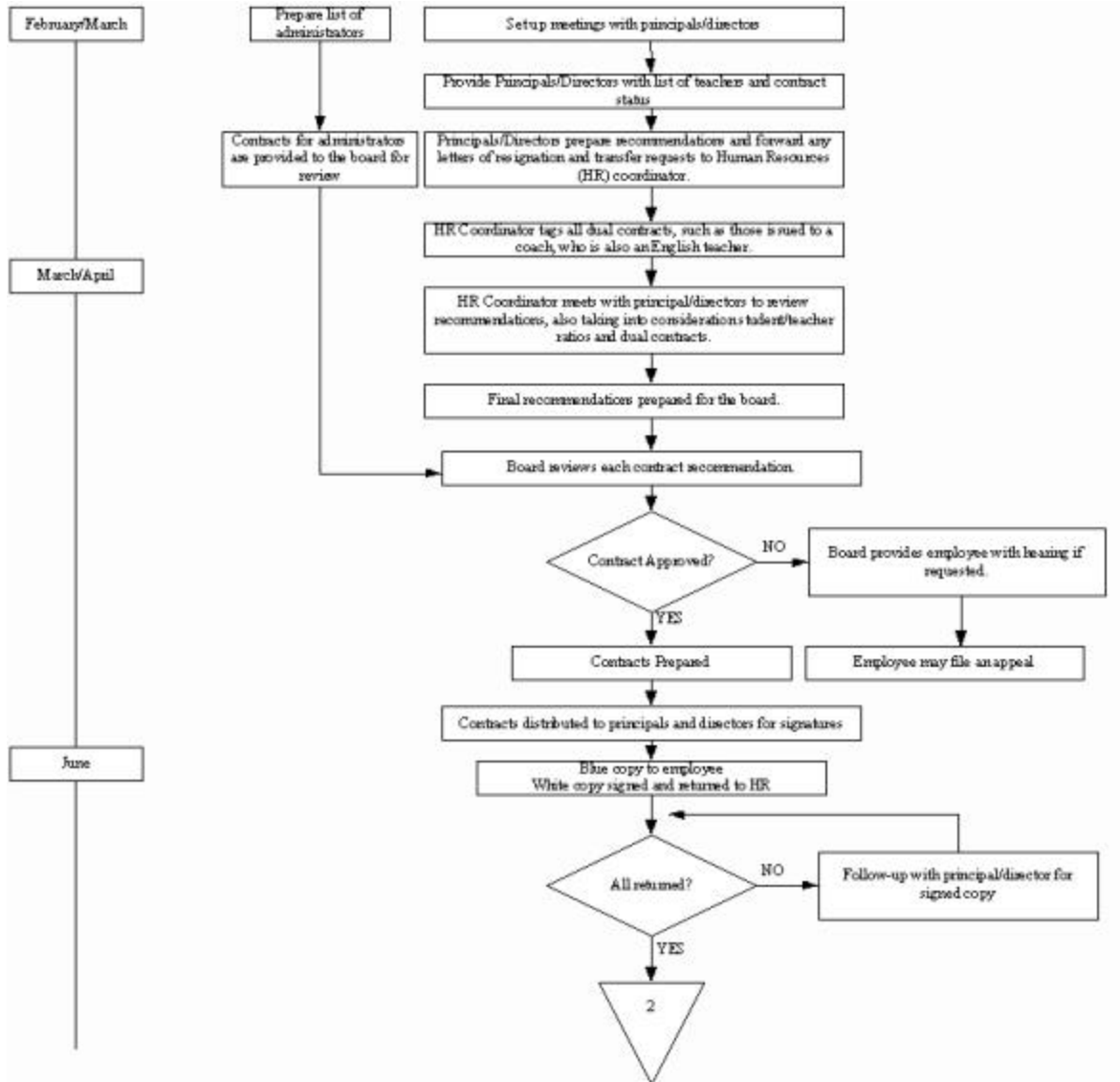
Category	Number of employees
Teachers	266.5
Central Administration	4.0
Campus Administration	12.0
Professional Support	37.0
Total Professional Staff	319.5
Educational Aides	1.0
Auxiliary Staff	223.5
Total Staff	544.0

Source: ACISD Staff Summary 2001-01.

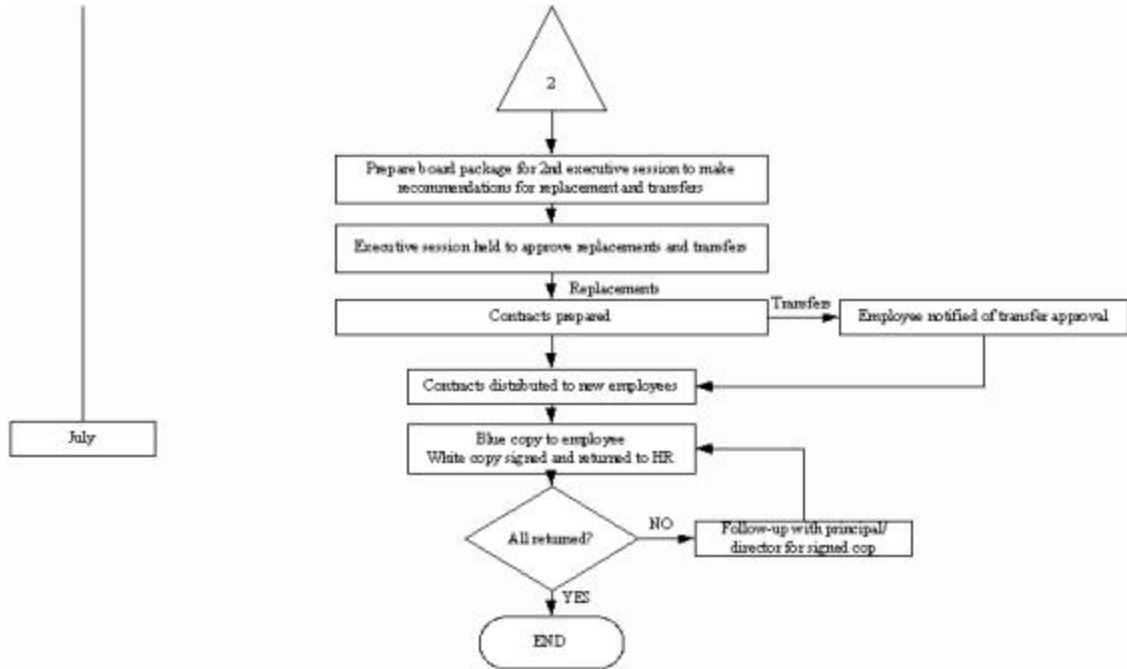
Registered nurses and full-time professional employees who are new to the district and employed in positions requiring certification by the State Board for Educator Certification must receive probationary contracts during their first year of employment. The probationary period for those employed by public schools for at least five of the eight years preceding employment with the district may not exceed one full school year. For those with less experience, the probationary period is three full school years, with an optional fourth full school year if the district has doubts about whether a term contract should be given. Generally, school principals and central office administrators are employed by one-year term contracts in their first year of service and by two-year term contracts thereafter, contingent upon performance.

The contract process for full-time, professional employees is shown in Exhibit 3-7.

Exhibit 3-7
Contract Renewal Process



**Exhibit 3-7 (continued)
Contract Renewal Process**



Source: ACISD Human Resources Department, October 2001.

Employees in professional and administrative positions that do not require certification, such as non-instructional administrators, are not subject to the procedures for non-renewal or termination of contract in the Texas Education Code. All paraprofessional and auxiliary employees, regardless of degree or certification, are employed at will and not by contract. Employment is not for any specified term and may be terminated at any time by either the employee or the district.

Exhibit 3-8 compares the ethnic backgrounds of teachers and students of ACISD and in the peer districts.

**Exhibit 3-8
ACISD Ethnicity of Teachers and in its Peer Districts
2000-01**

		Anglo	Hispanic	African American	Asian American	Native American
Aransas County	Student	62.3%	30.1%	2.3%	5.1%	0.1%
	Teacher	91.2%	6.6%	1.5%	0.8%	0.0%
Flour Bluff	Student	64.0%	24.5%	6.6%	3.7%	1.2%

	Teacher	89.0%	10.1%	0.6%	0.0%	0.3%
Gregory-Portland	Student	56.7%	37.9%	4.0%	1.1%	0.4%
	Teacher	83.7%	16.0%	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%
Kerrville	Student	60.8%	34.5%	3.6%	0.7%	0.4%
	Teacher	95.2%	4.2%	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%
Point Isabel	Student	15.8%	83.6%	0.4%	0.2%	0.1%
	Teacher	48.0%	52.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Tuloso-Midway	Student	44.1%	53.3%	2.0%	0.5%	0.1%
	Teacher	77.6%	21.9%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%
State	Student	42.0%	40.6%	14.4%	2.7%	0.3%
	Teacher	73.2%	17.1%	8.8%	0.6%	0.3%

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 2000-01.

The district uses substitutes to replace absent teachers. The Human Resources Department keeps a log of approved substitutes that is updated and distributed to the schools each week. When teachers notify the school administration that they will be absent, the school administration calls substitutes from the list created by the Human Resources Department. At the same time, an absence from duty form is prepared and submitted to the Payroll Department providing the information needed to pay the substitute.

Exhibit 3-9 displays the substitute pay scale for the 2001-02 school year.

**Exhibit 3-9
Substitute Teacher Pay Scale
2001-02**

Substitute Position	Daily Rate
Professional: With Teaching Certificate	\$55.00
Professional: With Out-of State Teaching Certificate	\$50.00
Professional: With College Degree (4-Year, Any Major)	\$50.00
Professional: With No College Degree	\$45.00
Paraprofessional Position Substitute: All	\$42.00

Source: ACISD Substitute Handbook, 2001-02.

Substitutes who teach four or more hours qualify for a full day's pay. Those who work less than four hours earn half of the daily rates. Substitutes who perform a continuous assignment in the same classroom for more than 10 consecutive working days receive an additional \$10 a day beginning on the eleventh day of their assignment. Total expenditures for substitutes during the 2000-01 school year were \$132,263, less than 1 percent of the district's total payroll expenditures.

Contract employees who perform extracurricular or supplemental duties may be paid a stipend in addition to their salary, according to the district's extra-duty pay schedule. Examples of employees who are paid stipends at ACISD include University Interscholastic League (UIL) coaches, athletic, band and cheerleader coaches and choir directors. In addition, department heads and club and class sponsors are paid stipends. Certain department coordinators, principals and central administrators also receive monthly stipends for cellular phone use and travel.

The district compensates overtime in accordance with federal wage and hour laws. Exempt employees are ineligible for overtime compensation. Nonexempt employees are entitled to overtime compensation for work performed with the prior approval of their supervisor. During the 1999-2000 school year, ACISD overtime costs were less than 1 percent of total payroll.

Overtime pay can also be paid to the employee through compensatory time off from work. Effective September 1, 2001, compensatory time earned by nonexempt employees may not accumulate beyond a maximum of 60 hours. Compensatory time must be used within the year it was earned and pay for all hours earned exceeding 60 hours will be paid to all employees at the end of the year if it is not used. Use of compensatory time may be at the employee's request or as determined by the employee's supervisor to protect the district's schedules and activities.

Generally, nonexempt maintenance, custodial, food service and transportation employees will be paid for overtime in direct pay and all other nonexempt employees will receive compensatory time off for overtime worked.

FINDING

The Human Resources Department has compiled a 13-page substitute handbook that is updated annually. It is given to everyone who submits a substitute teacher application. The handbook contains general information about the school, names and phone numbers of employees and school board members, school contacts, responsibilities of substitute teachers and the principal in charge, hints for success, driving directions to the schools,

a school calendar and substitute pay rates, periods and dates. If substitute teachers do not have a four-year college degree, they are required to attend Corpus Christi's Del Mar College substitute teacher workshops.

COMMENDATION

ACISD provides substitute teachers training and resources to help them to be more successful in the classroom.

FINDING

The district does not have a formal salary schedule for each position. The review team found considerable pay disparities in positions where employees possessed similar skills, qualifications and job histories. A production worker/cashier with two years seniority and a heavier workload earns \$3,000 less than a co-worker with essentially the same qualifications. Secretaries across departments are also paid differently. One secretary hired in 1997 earns less than secretaries hired more recently to perform comparable duties.

The district has a salary schedule for teachers although those with more than 20 years of experience 'top out' and cannot receive any further increases in their pay unless the state changes the teacher salary schedule.

ACISD's staff is paid comparably with peer districts (**Exhibit 3-10**). The teacher and professional staff salaries are most closely aligned with Kerrville, Tulosso-Midway and Gregory-Portland.

**Exhibit 3-10
ACISD and Peer District and State Salary Comparison
2000-01**

	Aransas County	Flour Bluff	Gregory Portland	Kerrville	Point Isabel	Tulosso- Midway	State
Teachers	\$36,811	\$38,159	\$36,902	\$36,700	\$39,917	\$36,564	\$38,361
Professional Support	\$43,896	\$44,301	\$43,669	\$42,750	\$51,225	\$44,284	\$45,562
School Administration	\$53,498	\$55,535	\$54,904	\$51,641	\$58,043	\$50,875	\$58,081
Central Administration	\$72,113	\$72,895	\$66,667	\$69,443	\$66,786	\$71,727	\$69,916

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 2000-01.

Exhibit 3-11 represents average teacher salaries in ACISD by years of experience and illustrates that average teacher's salary paid in ACISD dropped slightly in almost every category in 2000-01 after significant gains in 1998-99.

Exhibit 3-11
Average Teacher Salary by Years of Experience
1996-97 through 2000-01

	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01
0 years	\$22,023	\$23,370	\$23,304	\$26,362	\$26,439
1-5 years	\$23,816	\$25,133	\$25,778	\$28,995	\$28,628
6-10 years	\$29,234	\$30,546	\$31,092	\$34,234	\$33,722
11-20 years	\$34,997	\$37,130	\$37,456	\$40,891	\$40,558
More than 20 years	\$38,131	\$40,324	\$40,863	\$43,665	\$43,531

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

However, district pay is still comparable with peer districts in terms of salary paid for years of experience (**Exhibit 3-12**).

Exhibit 3-12
Average Salaries of Teachers by Years of Experience
ACISD and Peer Districts
2000-01

	Aransas County	Flour Bluff	Gregory-Portland	Kerrville	Point Isabel	Tuloso-Midway	Peer District Average
Beginning	\$26,439	\$27,884	\$28,368	\$22,637	\$28,302	\$26,966	\$26,831
1 - 5 Years	\$28,628	\$29,337	\$28,630	\$28,281	\$31,173	\$30,313	\$29,547
6 - 10 Years	\$33,722	\$33,403	\$33,029	\$33,456	\$37,727	\$33,037	\$34,130
11 - 20 Years	\$40,558	\$39,932	\$39,475	\$40,127	\$43,236	\$39,599	\$40,474
More than 20 Years	\$43,531	\$45,623	\$44,628	\$44,292	\$47,097	\$43,076	\$44,943

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 2000-01.

In addition to the state minimum salary schedule, the district pays a local supplement of \$2,000 a year to professional contract employees with bachelor's degrees and an additional \$800 a year (\$2,800 total) to professionals contract employees with master's degrees. District salaries are comparable to pay in peer districts, as shown in **Exhibit 3-13**.

Exhibit 3-13
Comparison of ACISD and Peer Districts Teachers Experience
2000-01

District	Beginning/ Percent	1-5 Years/ Percent	6-10 Years/ Percent	11-20 Years/ Percent	More than 20 Years/ Percent	Percent Greater than 6
Gregory-Portland	7.8 2.8%	62.5 22.2%	53.0 18.8%	84.4 30.0%	74.0 26.3%	75.1%
Kerrville	11.5 3.4%	69.0 20.7%	68.5 20.5%	104.6 31.4%	79.9 24.0%	75.9%
Aransas County	9.0 3.4%	52.5 19.7%	60.0 22.5%	89.5 33.6%	55.5 20.8%	76.9%
Tuloso-Midway	6.0 2.9%	42.1 20.1%	54.0 25.7%	55.0 26.2%	52.9 25.2%	77.1%
Point Isabel	3.0 2.0%	31.0 20.7%	36.0 24.0%	49.0 32.7%	30.9 20.6%	77.3%
Flour Bluff	7.7 2.4%	60.3 18.5%	62.2 19.1%	97.9 30.0%	98.3 30.1%	79.2%

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 2000-01.

The district awards longevity pay as an incentive for continuous service. Professionals with two or more years of continuous service receive a \$100 bonus each December for each year of service up to a maximum of \$500.

The Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) conducted a "Salary and Compensation Plan for All Personnel" at the district's request and expense in 1996. As part of the study, TASB recommended job description changes. The board, however, voted not to approve and implement TASB's recommendations.

The district has recognized and attempted to rectify auxiliary employee pay inequities and limitations. In the 2001-02 school year, the

superintendent requested that the board approve a 4 percent increase in the budget for auxiliary salaries. The funds were used to correct some pay inequities, but did not address all positions or all inequities.

The Human Resources Department has access to the Texas Teacher and Staff salary book produced by the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB). TASB as well as a number of private firms also will assist school districts to conduct a complete salary and compensation study and/or classification audit for a fee based upon the size of the district.

Recommendation 29:

Conduct a salary and compensation study and create a salary schedule that is equitable for all employees and positions.

Salaries and compensation needs to be compared to peer districts and with similar positions and positions with similar levels of responsibility and authority within the district.

Because the district already has access to the 1996 TASB Study, TSPR assumes that district personnel could follow the guidelines and conduct the study at no additional cost to the district.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent asks the Human Resources coordinator to explore options for conducting or updating the salary and compensation study.	June 2002
2.	The Human Resources coordinator, with assistance from appropriate staff, conducts the study and presents the results to the board for consideration.	August 2002
3.	The board uses the study to make budgetary decisions for the coming years.	August 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The district does not use a performance-based incentive plan. Instead, pay increases are routinely given to employees regardless of performance. Until 2001-02, the board approved and awarded across-the-board percentage raises to all employees. Granting across-the-board pay increases without regard to individual performance creates a situation

where exceptional performance is not rewarded and poor performance is not discouraged.

By using an innovative compensation strategy tied to performance, Spring Independent School District (SISD) reinforces the achievement of district priorities. The SISD board decides upon an amount that will be given as salary increases for the year and then sets aside two amounts within its budget: one for those employees on regular pay schedules and another for those in the performance-based pay plan. The district's administrative performance evaluation provides the basis for the performance-based pay plan and is used to determine salary rewards. Administrators complete an administrative work plan, indicating what they will do in a given year to help achieve district and school objectives. The work plan describes objectives for the administrator and performance criteria to be confirmed by each employee's supervisor. Supervisors measure how well administrators are accomplishing their objectives.

Teachers remain on the regular salary schedule until they reach the top step. After one year at the top step, the teacher moves to the performance-based plan. Principals consider each individual's performance independently when recommending salary increases. To be eligible for the maximum increase, the teacher must have an outstanding evaluation plus completion of 12 hours of approved staff development. The process of setting annual performance pay levels for all employees in the performance-based pay plan begins with a review by principals of personnel evaluations. Employees are ranked based on their evaluation and pay levels are suggested to the superintendent. The superintendent informs employees of pay raises.

Recommendation 30:

Create a performance-based incentive plan that rewards superior performance and provides incentives for poor performers to improve their work habits.

The district should explore using the Spring plan, or other plans that may better meet the needs of the district.

This estimate assumes that the plan will be developed so that some portion of board approved pay increases are set aside for purposes of rewarding exemplary performance, rather than budgeting new money to fund the incentives.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent appoints a committee chaired by the	June 2002
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	Human Resources coordinator to draft policies and procedures allowing performance-based pay increases.	
2.	The committee uses resources at the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) and from other school districts to determine how to implement a performance-based incentive plan.	June 2002
3.	The committee drafts policies and procedures for implementing a performance-based incentive plan using the templates obtained from TASB and other school districts as a guide.	July 2002
4.	The superintendent presents policies for board approval.	August 2002
5.	The Human Resource coordinator holds a training session for district management on the new system.	September 2002
6.	District management works with each employee to set goals as the basis for their evaluation.	September - December 2002
7.	The Human Resources coordinator works with the business manager and board to decide the percentage increases in salary that should be budgeted for employees receiving increases in salary due to above average performance ratings.	January - May 2003
8.	The superintendent and board approve the budget, which includes the performance increases.	June 2003
9.	Based on the total amount allocated to their department(s), school management determine the percentage that will be dedicated for performance-based increases.	August 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The district does not track the amount of compensatory time owed to employees as a liability of the district. Compensatory time is time off given to nonexempt workers, who are not paid for working overtime.

Effective September 1, 2001, the district prohibited nonexempt employees from carrying forward more than 60 hours of compensatory time at the end of the year. Generally, nonexempt maintenance, custodial, food service and transportation employees are paid for overtime while other

nonexempt employees receive compensatory time off for overtime worked.

District policy dictates that:

- employees can accumulate up to 60 hours of comp time;
- comp time must be used in the school year that it is earned;
- use of comp time may be at the employee's request with supervisor approval, as workload permits;
- an employee may be required to use comp time before using any other available paid leave (e.g., sick, personal, vacation); and
- weekly timesheets will be maintained on all nonexempt employees for wage and salary administration. The timesheets will record all overtime worked for direct pay or comp time.

Earned compensatory time of 60 hours or less can be rolled over to the next year. Terminated employees with earned compensatory time will be paid for the time they have earned.

The business office is responsible for tracking the amount of comp time earned by district employees. Each school and department is required to submit a record to the payroll clerk showing how much compensatory time each employee earned. However, not all departments submit reports and those that do omit the dollar value of compensatory time accruing for each employee. Employees in maintenance and custodial services at Rockport Elementary, Live Oak Elementary, Fulton Elementary, the high school and the middle school earned 483.75 hours of compensatory time. Central administration employees have accrued 151 hours of compensatory time.

Any compensatory hours accrued but unused at the end of the year becomes a financial liability of the district. If required to pay out compensatory time to employees it could cause an undue financial burden on the district.

Recommendation 31:

Track all compensatory time earned, and report it to the superintendent on a monthly basis.

The superintendent and all school principals and department managers should be provided with a report on a monthly basis detailing the amount owed to district employees for compensatory time by employee and by department. On an annual basis, the amount of compensatory time owed to employees should be entered as a liability on the district's financial statements.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the Human Resources coordinator and the business manager to coordinate the collection of the reports from the schools and departments on a monthly basis.	June 2002
2.	The Human Resources coordinator enters the compensatory time by employee by department or school into a spreadsheet.	June 2002
3.	The business manager directs the payroll clerk to calculate the compensatory amount owed to the employees using the spreadsheet created by the Human Resources coordinator.	June 2002
4.	The Human Resources coordinator reviews the report with the superintendent and forwards the report to school administration and department management on a monthly basis.	July 2002
5.	The business manager ensures that any compensatory time not taken at the end of the year is entered as a liability on the district's financial statements.	August 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Benefits

The district offers health coverage and life and accidental death and dismemberment coverage to its employees. The health coverage costs and the amount contributed to the coverage by the district are shown in **Exhibit 3-14**.

**Exhibit 3-14
Costs and Coverage of Employee Benefits
2001-02**

	Rate	Employer Contribution	Employee Contribution
Preferred Provider (PPO)			
Employee	\$369.04	\$280.00	\$89.04
Employee and Spouse	\$830.40	\$280.00	\$550.40
Employee and Children	\$738.14	\$280.00	\$458.14
Employee and Family	\$1,107.20	\$280.00	\$827.20
Select (HMO) Rates			

Employee	\$288.46	\$280.00	\$8.46
Employee and Spouse	\$649.08	\$280.00	\$369.08
Employee and Children	\$576.90	\$280.00	\$296.90
Employee and Family	\$865.44	\$280.00	\$585.44

Source: ACISD benefit information, 2001-02.

The district has signed up for the state insurance plan beginning in the 2002-03 school year. Further discussion of the health insurance can be found in Chapter 7 - Asset and Risk Management.

Under district policy, if an employee works a minimum of 20 hours a week, the employee is also entitled to a basic employer-paid term life and accidental death and dismemberment insurance policy for \$10,000 at a cost to the district of \$2.12 a month per employee. The employee can also opt to purchase a variety of other insurance programs at their own cost that are deducted from their paycheck, before taxes, through the district's Cafeteria plan. A typical cafeteria plan allows employees to "redirect" part of their salary to purchase benefits from a "menu" of benefits with pretax dollars.

The district offers state-provided personal leave, local sick leave and vacation leave for some year-round employees.

State law requires that all employees receive up to five days of paid personal leave a year. Employees earn about half a day a month of personal leave, up to the statutory limit of five days a year. There is no limit on the accumulation of state-provided personal leave and it can be transferred to other Texas school districts and is generally transferable to regional education service centers.

The district has limits on the amount of personal leave employees may take. Discretionary leave may not be taken for more than three consecutive workdays. An employee may not use more than five days of accumulated state personal leave in any one semester or more than 10 days of accumulated state personal leave in any year.

Employees who work 252 days a year accrue approximately one workday a month of paid vacation leave, up to a maximum of 10 days a year. Employees who work less than 252 days a year do not receive paid vacation leave. However, these employees get a day of unpaid leave between one school year and the next, usually between the end of June and the beginning of July for about 13 days. The length of this leave depends

on the number of days the employee is required to work during the school year and usually applies to employees who work 226 days a year.

Employees who work 4 hours or more per day are eligible to accrue sick leave. All eligible employees accrue approximately half of a workday a month of sick leave, up to a maximum of five days a school year. Local sick leave may accumulate with no limit from one year to the next, but it may not be transferred to other school districts. Sick leave may be used for:

- an employee illness;
- an illness in the employee's immediate family;
- a family emergency; and
- a death in the immediate family, though more than five days in a row cannot be taken.

A professional employee who has exhausted earned leave benefits may be permitted up to 20 days of extended sick leave for a personal illness or disability, including a pregnancy-related disability. The substitute's daily rate is deducted from the employee's pay during this time, whether or not a substitute is employed.

The district also offers a sick leave bank, which is established from voluntary donations of sick leave days by eligible employees who wish to assist other employees suffering from personal or family illnesses or disabilities. A sick leave bank may be used for a catastrophic, life-threatening illness, injury or disability of an employee or an employee's immediate family member. Conditions such as routine pregnancy, elective surgery or minor illness do not qualify. Employees suffering from complications arising from pregnancy are eligible.

Employees who have been employed by the district for at least one year and have worked at least 1,250 hours during that time are eligible for family and medical leave.

FINDING

The district does not have a board-approved policy governing accumulated sick time and personal time when an employee terminates employment or retires. The Human Resource coordinator reports the informal policy is that no leave time will be paid when an employee leaves the district or retires.

A review of the district's leave status report shows that district employees have accumulated 3,072 days of sick leave, 3,477.5 days of state leave, and 6,048.5 days of personal leave for a total of 12,598 days. State leave

includes all benefits provided to regular employees before May 30, 1995. This benefit has been discontinued, but previously accumulated state sick leave is available for use and can be transferred to other school districts in Texas.

The magnitude of the potential payout to district employees if all accumulated leave was distributed to employees can be calculated by taking the total number of days owed to district employees and multiplying it by an average daily salary of \$142:

$$12,598 \text{ days} \times \$142 \text{ average daily salary} = \$1,788,916$$

Common practices for handling unused leave time vary among school districts in Texas, according toTASB. In the absence of a board-approved policy, the district's informal practice could be subject to challenge and could open the district to a significant financial obligation.

Recommendation 32:

Draft a policy regarding accumulated sick time and personal time when employees retire or leave the district.

Once the policy is approved, it should be documented in the employee handbook.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the Human Resources coordinator to draft a policy for board approval addressing the issue of accumulated sick time and personal time and whether it is paid out or lost when an employee leaves the district or retires.	June 2002
2.	The superintendent approves the policy and presents it to the board for approval.	July 2002
3.	The Human Resources coordinator updates the employee manual and distributes updates to all staff.	August 2002

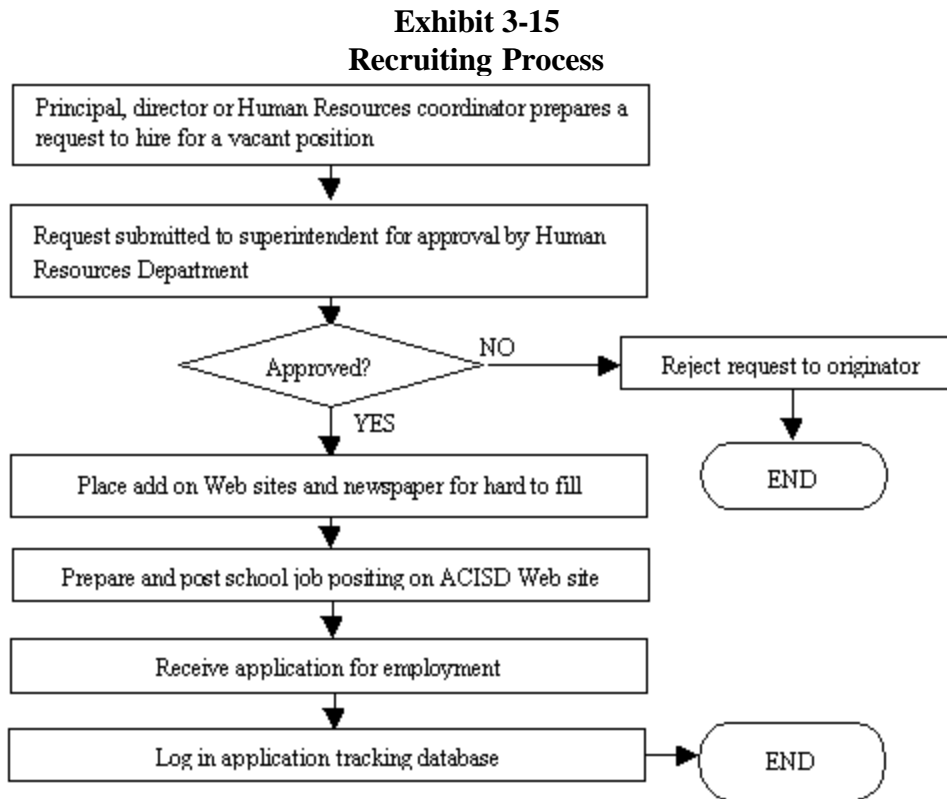
FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 3

C. RECRUITMENT AND HIRING ACTIVITIES

Competitive salaries and fringe benefits, such as retirement and health benefits, are keys to attracting and retaining highly qualified and competent employees. ACISD's Human Resources Department is responsible for recruiting teachers and support staff. The district does not have a documented recruiting plan or formal recruiting process due to the district's historically low turnover rate. However, the district is developing an online application on the ACISD Web site. ACISD's recruiting process is shown in **Exhibit 3-15**.



Source: ACISD Human Resources Department interviews, October 2001.

The Human Resource coordinator developed a working relationship with Texas A&M University -Corpus Christi that enables the district to recruit student teachers who need to fulfill their student teaching requirements. To assist in all recruitment efforts, the Human Resource coordinator has developed a brochure highlighting ACISD and the Rockport-Fulton area which is kept on file at Texas A&M and is distributed to interested student teachers.

Once applications for open positions are received or pulled from the applications on file, the Human Resources coordinator reviews them for qualifications and sends the top selections to the hiring supervisor. The hiring supervisor conducts the interviews and selects the final applicant. The hiring supervisor conducts reference checks on the applicant. If reference checks turn up good information, the hiring supervisor calls the Human Resources coordinator to discuss salary. The Human Resource coordinator conducts a criminal history check on all regular and substitute employees before the employee is hired. These checks are also made on school volunteers who work on a regular basis with students. The Texas Department of Public Safety provides instant feedback on the criminal history checks with an online account. If the check comes back clear, the hiring supervisor calls the applicant and offers employment. If the offer is accepted, the Payroll Department calls the auxiliary employees and sets up time to meet and complete payroll forms such as W-4s, I-9s, benefit forms, a Public Information Access Form, the notification of worker's compensation form and the drug-free schools and drug-free workplace requirement forms. For professional employees, the board must first approve their contract before they can be contacted by the Payroll Department. Once all forms are completed, the Payroll Department sets up the employee in the Service Center II payroll system. Auxiliary staff includes such employees as food service workers, cafeteria monitors, school crossing guards, security guards, clerks (such as attendance, purchasing, accounting, payroll, general office, file, mail), receptionists, secretaries, maintenance workers (bus, plant, etc.), groundskeepers, bus drivers, custodial staff, data processing key entry personnel, delivery personnel (mail, equipment, etc.), aides to the school nurse, and library aides.

According to the employee handbook, certain positions such as registered nurses, full-time professional employees new to the district and those requiring certification by the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) must receive probationary contracts during their first year of employment. The probationary period may not exceed one full year for those employed by public schools for at least five of the eight years preceding employment with the district. For those with less experience, the probationary period is three full school years, with an optional fourth if the district has doubts about a term contract. Generally, school principals and central office administrators have one-year term contracts during their first year of service and two-year term contracts thereafter, contingent upon performance.

FINDING

The district posts job openings on the Internet to save advertising expenditures. Previously, the district advertised for open positions in the

classifieds section of the newspaper but found that advertising on the Internet or with selected nonprofit agencies saves money and brings in qualified applicants.

The Web sites and media used by the district are shown in **Exhibit 3-16**.

Exhibit 3-16
Media Used to Advertise Job Vacancies
September 2001

Organization	Website
Texas High School Coaches Association	thsca@swbell.net
Texas Association of Secondary School Principals	tassp.org
Texas Association of School Administrators	tasamet.org
Texas State Soccer Association	Tssas.com
Texas Workforce Center	Hire.texas@twc.state.tx.us
National Recruitment Clearinghouse	Recruitingteachers.org
Texas Retired Officers Association	Troa.org/tops
Texas Association of School Personnel Administrators	Complete form
Regional Education Service Center II (Region 2)	Fax form
Texas Service Teacher Placement	Texserv.com
Texas Music Education Association	Complete form
Latin Placement Services	Complete form
Newspapers	
Rockport Pilot	
Herald	
Austin American-Statesman	
Corpus Christi Caller-Times	
San Antonio Express-News	

Source: ACISD Human Resources Department, October 2001.

However, advertisements for maintenance, transportation, food services and support personnel are still posted in the local newspapers if applications on file do not yield qualified applicants. For hard-to-fill

positions the district typically advertises in the Sunday papers in Austin, Corpus Christi and San Antonio. As of September 2001, the district had one hard-to-fill position vacant, a special education resources teacher at the middle school.

Exhibit 3-17 details the history of advertising expenditures.

Exhibit 3-17
Advertisement Expenditures for Vacant Positions

	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01
Newspaper Ads/Personnel Expenditures	\$14,312	\$15,328	\$6,382	\$2,498

Source: ACISD Human Resources Department, October 2001.

As shown, the district's expenditures for newspaper advertisements as steadily declined since 1998-99 because of this practice.

The Human Resources Department advertises for open positions using the Internet and select nonprofit agencies to attract qualified applicants saving the district as much as \$11,000 a year.

FINDING

The district does not have a nepotism policy. ACISD is the largest employer in Aransas County so it is not unusual to find several members of the same family employed by the district. Many districts have a policy stating when and under what conditions it is acceptable for members of the same family to be employed in the same district. For example, a wife supervising her husband or child may be less likely to treat them in the same way they might deal with other employees.

Although there are many instances of family members working in the district, a review of all district employees shows that there is no situation where the district could be harmed or an employee benefit from a family member also working in the district. This has been confirmed by the Human Resources coordinator, who has been closely monitoring the placement of family members as employees of the district. Nevertheless, the existence of a policy in many districts has acted as a deterrent when external or internal parties consider such relationships.

Recommendation 33:

Institute a formal nepotism policy for the district.

A suggested nepotism policy:

It is the policy of the district to seek the most qualified persons to fill its teaching, administrative and staff positions; however, effective from the date of this policy, members of the same family may not be appointed to faculty and staff positions in the same department. In addition, no family member may have direct or indirect supervision of the progress, performance, pay or welfare of another, and together they may not be involved with matters of financial controls and physical inventories of district properties.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the Human Resources coordinator to develop a nepotism policy.	June 2002
2.	The superintendent and the Human Resources coordinator present the policy to the board for approval.	July 2002
3.	When approved, the Human Resources coordinator updates the policies online and updates the employee handbook with the new policy information.	August 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 3

D. DISTRICTWIDE EMPLOYEE MANAGEMENT

Employee management includes employee evaluations, terminations, grievances and training.

Employee Evaluations

Beginning in the 1997-98 school year, the district had two choices in selecting a method for appraising teachers. They could either adopt the teacher-appraisal system recommended by the Texas commissioner of education, the Professional Development and Appraisal System (PDAS) or create their own teacher-appraisal system. The district adopted the PDAS.

Under the PDAS, each teacher must be appraised each school year. A teacher may be given advance notice of the date or time of an appraisal, but advance notice is not required. Whenever possible, an appraisal is based on the teacher's performance in fields and teaching assignments for which he or she is certified. The annual appraisal should include:

1. at least one classroom observation of a minimum of 45 minutes, with additional walk-throughs and observations conducted at the discretion of the appraiser. However, by mutual consent of the teacher and appraiser, the required minimum of 45 minutes of observation may be conducted in shorter time segments, so long as those time segments aggregate to at least 45 minutes;
2. a written summary of each observation, which should be given to teachers within 10 working days after the completion of an observation with pre- and post-observation conferences conducted at the request of the teacher or appraiser;
3. completion of Section I of the Teacher Self-Report Form should be presented to the principal:
 - a. within the first three weeks from the day of completion of the PDAS orientation;
 - b. within the first three weeks from the day of completion of the PDAS orientation, for teachers new to the PDAS; or
 - c. within the first three weeks of instruction in school years when the PDAS orientation is not required.
4. revision of Section I (if necessary) and completion of Sections II and III of the Teacher Self-Report Form that should be presented to the principal at least two weeks before the annual summative conference;

5. cumulative data about job-related teacher performance, in addition to formal classroom observations;
6. a written summative annual appraisal report; and
7. a summative annual conference.

The district is responsible for establishing a calendar for job appraisals. The appraisal period for each teacher must include the entire period of a teacher's contract.

The teacher appraisal process requires at least one appraiser. The teacher's supervisor conducts the teacher's appraisal and must hold a superintendent, principal, or supervisor certification, or must hold comparable certificates established by the SBEC.

According to district policies, administrators and other professionals must receive job performance evaluations at least once a year. The principal or supervisor must conduct evaluations of paraprofessionals and auxiliary employees.

FINDING

Employee evaluations for non-certified employees are not standardized and are not conducted annually. The review team checked the personnel files of 28 non-certified employees. More than half did not contain an employee evaluation. If the employee file contained an evaluation, it was more than one year old. The forms were also not standardized, meaning that the transportation department uses different forms than the maintenance department evaluation forms. The review team did not note any particular trends where one department was more consistently evaluating its employees and another was not.

Without an annual performance evaluation, employees are deprived of useful feedback and the opportunity to plan their professional development with their supervisor.

Recommendation 34:

Evaluate all non-certified employees once a year.

Administrative procedures should be developed that clearly outline the process for conducting appraisals, including the consequences of violating state law if appraisals are not performed. The procedure should specify a timeframe for the evaluation process, a deadline for submitting appraisals and the consequences of missing deadlines. The process should include sending reminders at least a week before the deadline. Supervisors should

be evaluated based upon their compliance with procedures for the appraisal of their employees.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the Human Resources coordinator to review and standardized the employee evaluations and develop procedures for conducting appraisals for non-certified employees.	June 2002
2.	The Human Resources coordinator drafts an evaluation procedure and seeks out a standardized form and format for all non-certified employee appraisals - leaving the actual elements to be evaluated within the form flexible for use by the appraising supervisors.	July 2002
3.	The Human Resources coordinator presents procedures and possible forms to the superintendent for review.	August 2002
4.	The superintendent and the Human Resources coordinator communicate the new procedures to district employees and management.	September 2002
5.	The Human Resources coordinator follows up with school and department management to ensure procedures are followed.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Employee Relations

Historically, the district has enjoyed a low turnover rate. During the 2000-01 school year, the turnover rate was 8.6 percent including eight employees who retired. As seen in **Exhibit 3-18**, no one school or department experienced an abnormally high rate of turnover.

**Exhibit 3-18
Terminations/Retirements by Department
2000-01**

Department	Number Terminated	Number Retired
Special Education - Elementary School	1	1
Teachers - Elementary School	9	3

Athletics - Elementary School	4	0
Elementary School Total	14	4
Special Education - Middle School	4	1
Teachers - Middle School	3	0
Middle School Total	7	1
Special Education - High School	0	0
Teachers - High School	7	1
Athletics - High School	2	0
High School Total	9	1
Administrators	2	0
Instructional Aides	2	0
Curriculum Facilitators	1	1
Cafeteria	2	0
Health Services	1	0
Transportation	1	1
Total Terminations/Retirements	39	8
Total Number of Employees	544	
Turnover Rate	8.6%	

Source: ACISD Human Resources Department terminations record, 2000-01.

Contract employees can resign without penalty at the end of any school year if written notice is received 45 days before the first day of instruction of the following school year. A written notice of resignation should be submitted to the superintendent. Contract employees can resign at any time with the approval of the board of trustees. Resignation without the consent of the board can result in disciplinary action by the SBEC.

Non-contract employees can resign their positions at any time. A written notice of resignation should be submitted to a supervisor and the Human Resources Department at least two weeks before the effective date. Employees are encouraged to include the reasons for leaving in the letter of resignation but are not required to do so.

Employees on probationary and term contracts can be dismissed during the school year or the district can opt not to renew an employee's contract at the end of the year, according to district policy. Contract employees dismissed during the school year, suspended without pay or subject to a reduction in force are entitled to receive notice of the recommended action, an explanation of the charges against them, if any, and an opportunity for a hearing. The timelines and procedures to be followed when a suspension, termination or non-renewal occurs will be provided when written notice is given to an employee.

Information on the timelines and procedures can be found in the policies that are provided to employees or in the policy manuals located in the Human Resources Department.

Non-contract employees are employed at will and can be dismissed without notice, a description of the reasons for dismissal or a hearing. The district acknowledges that it is unlawful to dismiss any employee for reasons of race, religion, sex, national origin, disability, military status, any other basis protected by law or in retaliation for the exercise of certain protected legal rights. Non-contract employees who are dismissed have the right to file a grievance.

The district has board-approved policies in place to govern employee complaints or grievances. The policy requires that an employee shall initiate a grievance according to the process outlined in **Exhibit 3-19**.

**Exhibit 3-19
Process to File a Grievance
2000-01**

Level	Process	Number of Days to Render Decision
1.	An employee who has a grievance shall request a conference with the principal or immediate supervisor by submitting the grievance in writing on a form provided by the district. The form must be filed within 15 days of the time the employee first knew or should have known of the event or series of events about which the employee is complaining.	The principal or supervisor shall hold the conference within seven days after receipt of the written request. The principal or supervisor shall have seven days following the conference within which to respond.
2.	If the outcome of the conference at Level One is not to the employee's satisfaction or if the time for a response has expired, the employee may request a conference with the	The superintendent or designee shall hold the conference within seven days after receiving the

	<p>superintendent or designee to discuss the grievance. The request shall be in writing on a form provided by the district and must be filed within seven days following receipt of a response or, if no response is received, within seven days of the response deadline.</p>	<p>written request. The superintendent or designee shall have seven days following the conference to respond.</p>
<p>3.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. If the outcome of the conference at Level Two is not to the employee's satisfaction or if the time for a response has expired, the employee may submit to the superintendent or designee a request to place the matter on the agenda of a future board meeting. The request shall be in writing on a form provided by the district and must be filed within seven days following receipt of a response or, if no response is received, within seven days of the response deadline. b. The superintendent or a designee shall inform the employee of the date, time and place of the meeting. c. The superintendent or a designee shall provide the board with copies of the employee's original grievance, all responses and any written documentation previously submitted by the employee and the administration. The board is not required to consider documentation not previously submitted or issues not previously presented. d. The presiding officer may set reasonable time limits. The board shall hear the grievance and may request a response from the administration. The district shall make an audiotape record of the Level Three proceeding before the board. 	<p>The board shall make and communicate its decision at any time up to and including the next regularly scheduled board meeting.</p>

Source: ACISD Board Policy, 2000-01.

The district grievance policy is mentioned in the employee handbook and a complete copy of the policy is in the appendix of the employee handbook. There have been no formal grievances filed in the district in the last two years.

The district tries to schedule exit interviews for all employees leaving the district whenever possible. Information on the continuation of benefits, release of information and procedures for requesting references are provided at that time. Employees leaving the district are asked to provide a forwarding address and phone number and to complete an exit report that provides the district with feedback on the employee's reasons for leaving the district.

All district property, including keys, books, property and equipment, must be returned upon termination of employment. The district can withhold the cost of any items not returned from the final paycheck.

The dismissal or resignation of a certified employee will be reported to the SBEC if there is reasonable evidence that the employee's conduct involves:

- any form of sexual or physical abuse of a minor or any other illegal conduct with a minor;
- the possession, transfer, sale or distribution of a controlled substance;
- the illegal transfer, appropriation or expenditure of school property or funds;
- an attempt by fraudulent or unauthorized means to obtain or alter any certificate or permit that would entitle the individual to a professional position or to receive additional compensation associated with a position; and
- committing a crime on school property or at a school-sponsored event.

FINDING

The district does not track and report the employee turnover rate and reasons for leaving by department to identify problems. Turnover is a measure of workforce stability, job satisfaction, and the adequacy of programs and incentives designed to retain qualified personnel. The turnover rate is the number of employees that leave employment divided by the total number of employees. If more employees begin leaving the department or school, a problem may exist with work conditions or with the management.

As noted in **Exhibit 3-20**, the teacher turnover rate in the district is historically low, but increased in 2000-01.

Exhibit 3-20
Turnover Rate for Teachers
1996-97 through 2000-01

	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	State 2000-01
Turnover Rate	16.3%	13.2%	14.3%	14.3%	16.6%	16.0%

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

The ACISD teacher turnover rate was comparable to that of its peer districts in 2000-01, as shown in **Exhibit 3-21**.

Exhibit 3-21
ACISD Turnover Rate for Teachers versus the Peer Districts
2000-01

	Aransas County	Flour Bluff	Gregory- Portland	Kerrville	Point Isabel	Tuloso- Midway
Turnover Rate	16.6%	13.7%	13.8%	16.3%	16.6%	21.3%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2000-01.

Tracking this rate and the reasons employees give for leaving the district on a quarterly basis and by department and school could help identify issues that affect employment before they become problems.

Recommendation 35:

Track and report the employee turnover rate and reasons for leaving by department on a quarterly basis to identify trends and problems in employee retention.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the Human Resources coordinator to document terminations by department quarterly and analyze trends.	June 2002
2.	The Human Resource coordinator and secretary prepare a tracking log for employee terminations that can be sorted by	July - August

	department and reason for leaving and puts procedures in place to obtain as much information as possible from terminating employees to add meaning to the data for reporting purposes.	2002
3.	The superintendent and the Human Resources coordinator begin monitoring turnover trends.	September 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Staff Development

Section 21.451 of the Texas Education Code (TEC) states the following regarding training requirements for school districts:

- staff development must be conducted in accordance with minimum standards;
 - must include technology training and training in conflict resolution and discipline strategies;
 - may include instruction as to what is permissible under law, including United States Supreme Court decisions in regard to prayer in public schools;
- staff development must be predominately school-based, related to objectives developed and approved by the school site-based decision-making committee (SBDM); and
- a school districts may use districtwide training developed and approved by the district-level planning and SBDM committee.

The TEC also states that school staff training may include activities that enable the school staff to:

- enhance existing skills;
- share effective strategies;
- discuss curricular and instructional issues;
- analyze student achievement results;
- consider ways to increase student achievement;
- study and conduct relevant research;
- practice new teaching methods;
- identify students' strengths and needs;
- implement site-based decision-making; and
- conduct action research.

These efforts may be conducted using study teams, individual research, peer coaching, workshops, seminars, conferences or other methods.

FINDING

ACISD's management of staff training is widely dispersed and lacks strong central coordination for strategic and resource planning, resulting in no clear evidence of similar goals across the district, in schools, and at team and individual staff development levels.

Schools and departments are responsible for their own training as part of their site-based decision-making program. Staff development is predominantly school-based, related toward achieving school performance objectives, and is developed and approved by district and school-level advisory committees. **Exhibit 3-22** provides the details for training scheduled for 2001-02.

**Exhibit 3-22
In-Service/Workshops Scheduled
2001-02**

Date Scheduled	Location	In-service/Workshop
August 6	Rockport Elementary	Responsiveness Classroom
August 8	Fulton Elementary	Responsiveness Classroom
August 9	Live Oak Elementary	Responsiveness Classroom
August 13	All Schools	New Teacher Orientation
	Little Bay Elementary	Responsiveness Classroom
	Middle School	WinSchool E-training
	High School	Bert Simmons Discipline Management
	Live Oak Elementary Little Bay Elementary Middle School High School Connections	WinSchool Autism In-service (Fulton Elementary invited) Connections Family Counseling Bert Simmons Discipline Management Special Ed/504 modification Strategies Organizational and Motivational Strategies
August 15	Live Oak Elementary	Nuts and Bolts Connection and Casa

		Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)and Timelines
	Fulton Elementary Middle School High School	WinSchool Timelines/Responsiveness Classroom Conflict Resolution and Discipline Management WinSchool
August 16	Rockport Elementary Little Bay Elementary Middle School	Creating a Vision of Literacy Instruction Library Connection WinSchool Balanced Literacy Components Beyond Teacher-Centered Classrooms
August 17	Fulton	Responsiveness Classroom Overview
August 28	Live Oak Elementary Middle School	Written Expression Library Resources PDAS Training
September 5	High School	Crisis Management
September 11	Live oak Elementary High School	Souping Up Saxon Win School Troubleshooting
September 14	Little Bay Elementary Fulton Elementary, Live Oak Elementary, Little Bay Elementary Middle School	Math TEKS/Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) (TRSI) Science - Inquiry Based Learning (TRSI) Balanced Literacy in the Classrooms Phase II Admissions Review and Dismissal (ARD)Training Timeline Revisions Technology Training Teaching Vocabulary for Application
September 25	Live Oak Elementary	Balanced Literacy
October 9	Live Oak Elementary	Thinking Strategies Across Curriculum
October 26	Fulton Elementary, Live Oak Elementary and Little Bay Elementary Middle School High School	Joshua Horton Vertical teaming/collaborative with High School Curriculum Revision and Writing

November 6	Live Oak Elementary	Benchmark I - Writing
November 13	Live Oak Elementary	Benchmark I - Math
November 14	Live Oak Elementary	Benchmark I - Reading
December 14	Live Oak Elementary	Test Results
December 18	Live Oak Elementary	Expectations and Plans for Semester II
April 22	High School	Gifted and Talented Update/Socratic Method Excel Teaching Model
April 27	Middle School	Campus Improvement Plan Development/Evaluation

Source: ACISD In-Service/Workshop Schedule, 2001-02.

Staff development and training is also addressed in the district improvement plan. An excerpt from the district improvement plan is shown in **Exhibit 3-23**.

Exhibit 3-23
ACISD District Improvement Plan
Staff Development Excerpt
2001-02

	District Actions Strategies/ Activities/ Initiatives	Responsibility	Timeline			Benchmark/ Criterion for Evaluation
			Begin	Mid- point	Finish	
1.	Sustain Crisis Management training for all district personnel through campus-based committees.	Assistant superintendent of operations; safety coordinator; principals; and supervisor of Health Services.	08/01	02/02	05/02	Sign-in sheets
2.	Offer training for an understanding of cultural diversity through	Assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Administration:	08/01	02/02	05/02	Sub-group TAAS scores

	multicultural strategies.	principals; curriculum facilitators; and teachers.				
3.	Implement a professional development program to train all personnel with a priority for school safety issues and first aid/CPR training.	ACISD staff	08/01	02/02	05/02	Certificates, sign-in sheets
4.	Develop and implement procedures to ensure campus staff development opportunities exist.	Assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Administration; coordinators; principals; and curriculum facilitators.	08/01	02/02	05/02	Sign-in sheets, Agendas, waivers

Source: ACISD District Improvement Plan, 2001-02.

Training in other departments is handled by the department manager and is approved during the budget process each year.

Model professional training programs identified by the U.S. Department of Education have gone far beyond providing good professional development workshops. They have made professional development a critical contributor to school performance and have clarified school educational goals, increased teacher accountability for linking classroom activity to student achievement and have significantly improved the process for selecting the types of professional development courses that teachers need to get results. The U.S. Department of Education outlined principles for high-quality professional development, including training that:

- focuses on teachers as central to student learning, yet includes all other members of the school community;
- focuses on individual, collegial, and organizational improvement;
- respects and nurtures the intellectual and leadership capacity of teachers, principals and others in the school community;
- reflects the best available research and practice in teaching, learning and leadership;

- enables teachers to develop further expertise in subject content, teaching strategies, uses of technologies and other essential elements in teaching to high standards;
- promotes continuous inquiry and improvement;
- is planned collaboratively by those who will participate in and facilitate that development;
- requires substantial time and other resources;
- is driven by a coherent long-term plan; and
- is evaluated based on its impact on teacher effectiveness and student learning and the assessment guides subsequent professional development efforts.

The frequent changes in district superintendents have contributed to inconsistent long-range plans and goals; each superintendent has had different approaches to curriculum development and the complementary training needed to support his or her initiatives. The lack of solid short- and long-term staff development-related strategies and initiatives results in fewer instances of collaboration and little direct information about the effectiveness of each of the offerings.

Recommendation 36:

Develop a comprehensive staff development plan that includes mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating ACISD's training programs.

The plan should include a process by which the district can monitor the implementation of the training, the success of training programs in meeting district and individual needs, and a feedback mechanism to the assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction to facilitate future program modifications.

Monitoring could occur in several ways, for example, during classroom observations related to annual evaluations. Alternatively, department/team leaders could discuss the results of training in meetings to identify what has been successful, what has not and why not.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Administration convenes a committee of principals and teachers to recommend what should be included in a district-wide plan on staff development.	September 2002
2.	The assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Administration drafts a plan based on committee input and submits it to the	November 2002

	superintendent for review and approval.	
3.	The superintendent submits the proposed plan to the Board of Trustees.	January 2003
4.	The assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Administration implements to district-wide plan for staff development.	March 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 4

FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

This chapter reviews the Aransas County Independent School District's (ACISD's) facilities use and management function in five sections.

- A. Organization and Management
- B. Facilities Planning
- C. Facilities Use
- D. Construction Project Management
- E. Energy Management

The physical appearance of the schools and district properties is often the only basis district residents have for evaluating education. Shoddy landscaping, dirty floors and walls and poorly maintained facilities suggest that children may also be receiving a poor education, whether or not it is true. While the buildings, land and equipment do not make the school, they have a decided impact on the day-to-day operations of the educational process. A well maintained school creates an image of caring and concern for a child's welfare.

Safe, clean, well-maintained schools enhance student achievement and teacher satisfaction and create community goodwill. Successful school districts realize strong community support is critical to the schools' growth and health.

A comprehensive facilities management program should coordinate all the district's physical resources and effectively integrate facilities planning into the district's strategic planning. Facilities staff should be involved in design and construction of schools and construction managers should understand operations and maintenance.

The purpose of maintenance and operations services is to keep the facilities clean and in good repair. The school district's operations staff seeks to keep the facilities as clean as possible, while the maintenance staff is responsible for keeping the buildings functioning. These services can include routine and emergency repairs, scheduled preventive

maintenance, painting and other work that provide the teaching staff a healthy environment that is in working order.

BACKGROUND

Nine ACISD facilities occupy 560,199 square feet of space on 170.5 acres of land. The facilities include: six schools, an administration building, a transportation barn and one maintenance facility. **Exhibit 4-1** details the school facilities.

**Exhibit 4-1
ACISD Schools**

Facility	Square Feet	Acreage	Year Built	Age	Portable Use	Renovation History
Rockport Early Childhood Center & Gym	46,228	8.2	1934	67	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1935- opened. • 1955- Added Red Wing, 10 classrooms. • 1966- Added 3 wings (White wing), 15 classrooms.
Rockport Early Childhood Center & Gym (continued)						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2000- Added new wing, 7 classrooms. • 2001- Replacing roof for \$100,000.
Live Oak Elementary School	51,040	13.8	1962	39	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1976-North wing, 12 classrooms. • 1988-2000 Added 12 portables or 24

						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> classrooms. 2000- Replaced one roof but not on main building.
Fulton Elementary	50,165	7.8	1957	44	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1985-Built new pad with library and cafeteria. 2000-2001 Undergoing asbestos cleanup for some time.
Little Bay Elementary	36,968	3.4	1988	13	3	
Rockport-Fulton Middle School	109,000	16.0	2000	1	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2000- Originally built.
Rockport-Fulton High School (includes auditorium)	257,160	46.2	1953	48	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1965-Built prefabricated trade. 1976-Built workshop and choir building and field house. 1998-Built additional wing of classrooms. 1999-Built high school weight gym. 2000- Renovated

						high school adding a new cafeteria, administrative wing, choir room and common area.
Totals square feet	550,561		Average Age	35.3		

Source: Aransas County Independent School District (ACISD), Maintenance and Custodial supervisors.

Exhibit 4-2 details the administrative facilities.

**Exhibit 4-2
ACISD Administrative Facilities**

Administrative Facility	Square Feet	Built	Portable Use	History
Central Office Building	6,038	1972-73	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First part was built in 1972-73. • Second part added in 1983. • 1999 Roof was resealed two years ago.
Transportation/Maintenance	3,600	1985-88 / 1953	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Old Bus barn. • Converted into office and warehouse.
Total	9,638			

Source: ACISD Maintenance and Custodial supervisors.

The maintenance, custodial and grounds staff totals 55.75 employees and had a budget of \$2,853,630 in 2000-01.

Chapter 4

A. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT (PART 1)

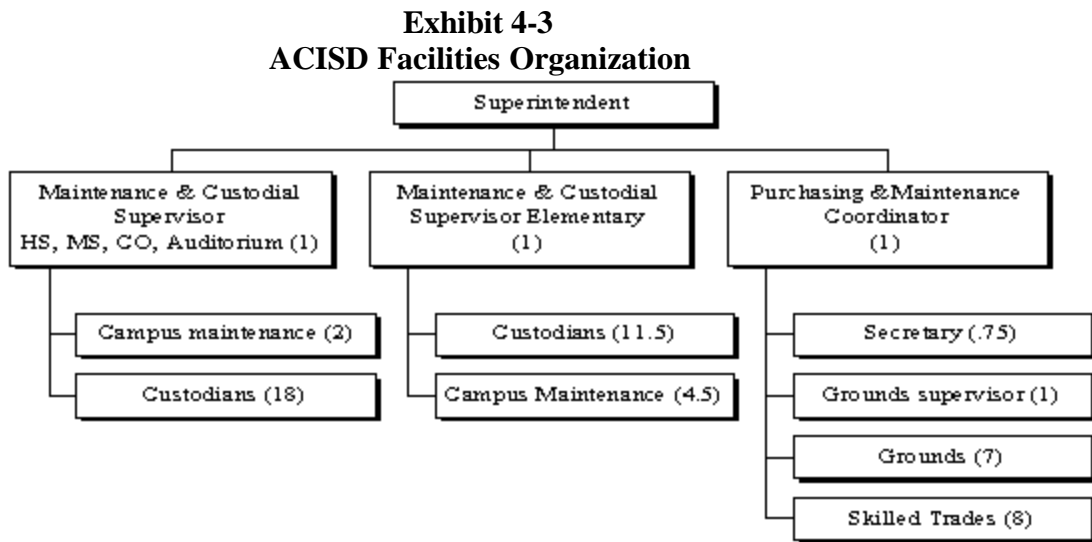
ACISD's facilities are managed through three separate departments:

Maintenance & Custodial Secondary Schools and Administrative Offices;
Maintenance & Custodians Elementary Schools; and Maintenance.

Three different supervisors report directly to the superintendent. Maintenance and Custodial functions have both custodial and maintenance staff who directly support the assigned schools. Maintenance, however, contains the grounds keepers and the skilled trades who provide support to the entire district. Skilled trades includes the carpenter, plumber, electrical and air conditioning employees.

ACISD employs 55.75 FTE's to support the facilities within the district. Custodial workers total 30.5 FTEs and 16.5 for total maintenance workers.

Exhibit 4-3 illustrates ACISD's Facilities organization.



Source: ACISD Facilities Organization Chart, September 2001.

Exhibit 4-4 details the specific responsibilities of each position within the Maintenance Department:

Exhibit 4-4 **Facility Employee Job Duties**

Facility Positions	Description of Duties
Supervisors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible for maintenance and custodial operations for the high school, middle school, central office and auditorium. • Responsible for maintenance and custodial operations for the elementary schools. • Responsible for purchasing and specialized maintenance support (electrician, plumber, carpenter, preventive maintenance, mechanic, energy management, AC technicians). • Receive and process work orders for repair and maintenance of buildings and grounds. • Serve as construction supervisor. • Prepare plans and specifications for contracted repair work and school improvements for submission to Business Office for bids. • Develop and maintain written departmental procedures for the maintenance, repair and security of all district buildings and equipment. • Assign work to maintenance personnel and oversee completion.
Custodians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and maintain a cleaning schedule to include the cleaning of floors, chalkboards, wastebaskets, windows, furniture, equipment, restrooms and the filling of tissue, paper towel and soap dispensers. • Keep the school building and grounds, including sidewalks, driveways, parking lots and student areas neat and clean. • Assume the responsibility for opening and closing the building each school day; establish procedures for locking, checking and safeguarding facilities. • Check daily to ensure that all exit doors are open and all panic bolts are working properly during the hours of building occupancy. • Observe and inform supervisor of safety hazards. • Comply with local laws and procedures for the storage and disposal of trash. • Make minor building repairs as needed and report major repairs needed to the principal. • Inspect machines and equipment for safety and efficiency. • Assist in maintaining an inventory of cleaning supplies and equipment; requisition additional supplies as needed. • Move furniture or equipment within the building as

	<p>directed by the principal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operate tools and equipment following established safety procedures and rules.
Grounds Keepers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mow and detail all school grounds and athletic fields. • Water grounds and apply fertilizer and herbicides. • Prepared athletic fields for games, including chalking the field. • Transport workers and equipment to work sites throughout the district. • Operate grounds equipment and tools following established safety procedures and rules. • Remove dirt, rubbish and refuse from schools. • Perform preventive maintenance and repairs on equipment. • Maintain equipment maintenance records. • Substitute for custodians as needed.
Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes both school-assigned maintenance personnel and central maintenance personnel such as electricians, plumbers, carpenters, preventive maintenance, mechanics, energy management and air conditioning technicians.
Secretary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare correspondence, forms and reports for the supervisor of maintenance. • Operate two-way radios and communicate with maintenance staff. • Receive incoming calls, take reliable messages and route to appropriate staff. • Assist in compiling information and preparing reports. • Prioritize and distribute work orders to maintenance personnel. • Prepare purchase orders and requisitions. • Compile, maintain and report time records of maintenance staff. • Assist with Control Systems International (CSI) (energy management system). • Order supplies.

Source: ACISD Job Descriptions for auxiliary staff, December 1994.

Custodians are trained by a central staff member in a prescribed method of cleaning.

The maintenance staff provides the necessary services to the local building principal beyond the normal scope of the work of custodians. These services include: routine and emergency repairs, scheduled preventive maintenance, major and minor renovations and updating of facilities for teaching needs such as installation of writing boards, shelving, new lighting and plumbing.

Requests for repair work or building improvements are channeled through the principal's office and forwarded to one of the two managers. These requests are prioritized and assigned to a crew for completion. Each crew documents to the central Maintenance Department that the work has been completed. In addition to requests from principals, the Maintenance Department initiates requests following inspection of the facilities.

FINDING

Three maintenance supervisors, not one, are responsible for ensuring that ACISD facilities are clean and maintained, costs are controlled or that construction projects are monitored and managed.

Instead, three different individuals - two Maintenance and Custodial supervisors and one Purchasing and Maintenance coordinator, manage the ACISD Maintenance Department. The superintendent spends between 10 and 20 hours a week on construction and facilities management issues because there is no one individual in the district skilled enough for handling maintenance issues.

Despite these efforts, the district's facilities are falling into disrepair. For example:

- Parking lots at several schools need resurfacing, resealing and leveling. Little maintenance on the lots has been performed in the last 15 years. The superintendent explained what he wanted to the ACISD Maintenance and Custodial supervisors and the Purchasing and Maintenance coordinator.
- The Purchasing and Maintenance coordinator prepared a request for proposal (RFP) that contained minimal information supplied by the maintenance supervisor. The RFP did not state the problems that needed to be resolved such as drainage and type of asphalt deterioration like potholes, base failures, raveling and "alligator" cracks. The RFP also did not require the contractor to submit three references to verify quality of work performed. Instead the request for proposal contained minimal information as shown below:

It is the intent of the Aransas County Independent School District to resurface and repair parking lots

on the following: Rockport Elementary school, Live Oak Elementary school, Little Bay Elementary school, Fulton Elementary school and high school campus.

Work to consist of:

- 1. Patch all holes with a 2-inch minimum asphalt.*
- 2. Level all areas of each parking lot.*
- 3. All areas swept and striped.*
- 4. Apply a seal coating.*
- 5. All construction debris to be hauled off.*
- 6. All adjacent grounds that are disturbed to be restored to original as possible.*
- 7. Any and all permits to be acquired by Contractor.*

The superintendent visited the location once the work was in process. Immediately, the superintendent realized that the contractor was not repairing the drainage problems or repairing the potholes in a professional manner and he asked the contractor to stop the repair work. The superintendent researched asphalt surfacing on the Internet and determined that the ACISD maintenance and purchasing staff was not knowledgeable in this area. Subsequently, the superintendent worked with the contractor on redoing his work to make it acceptable to the district. This effort resulted in higher than anticipated costs to the district, left some lots unpatched and certainly required the superintendent to step into a role of project manager since the district had no one experienced in this role.

- Three to four serious cracks are in the middle school walls and the slab in the high school commons area has spider cracks resulting in raised and cracked tile. These are both brand new facilities.
- Gas pipes at the middle school were installed without proper coating to prevent corrosion in the coastal region.

Exhibit 4-5 shows that ACISD spends \$848 for each student on its maintenance budget compared with its next closest peer, Flour Bluff, which spends \$716 for each student. ACISD pays \$208 more for each student than the state average and \$132 more for each student than its next closest peer district. ACISD spends a larger percentage of its overall budget on maintenance than its peers.

Exhibit 4-5
ACISD, Peer District and State Maintenance Comparison
2000-01

District	Number of Students	Maintenance Department Operating Budget	Percent of Total Budget	Cost For each Student
Aransas County	3,366	\$2,853,630	12.2%	\$848
Flour Bluff	5,014	\$3,589,772	12.2%	\$716
Tuloso-Midway	3,064	\$2,104,029	12.4%	\$687
Gregory-Portland	4,439	\$3,004,377	12.6%	\$677
Point Isabel	2,374	\$1,245,530	7.8%	\$525
Kerrville	4,662	\$2,264,232	9.4%	\$486
State	4,059,619	\$2,598,036,618	10.8%	\$640

Source: Texas Education Agency (TEA), Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS), 2000-01.

ACISD also spends more than the southwestern United States average cost for each student and cost per square foot, based on the 30th Annual Maintenance and Operations Cost Study conducted by American School and University. ACISD spends \$247 more per student and \$2 more a square foot than the industry averages as shown in **Exhibit 4-6**.

Exhibit 4-6
Cost For each Student and Square Foot Comparison
2000-01

Comparison Criteria	ACISD	ASU Maintenance and Operations Cost Study	Difference
Total maintenance costs for each student	\$849	\$602	\$247
Total maintenance costs per square foot	\$5	\$3	\$2
Square feet for each custodial worker*	18,990	21,445	(2,455)

Square feet for each maintenance worker*	38,634	60,582	(21,948)
Acres for each grounds worker*	17.0	15.0	2.0
Average custodial worker salary	\$17,517	\$16,095	\$1,422
Average maintenance worker salary	\$22,356	\$25,645	(\$3,289)
Average grounds worker salary	\$18,668	\$16,629	\$2,039

Source: American School & University's 30th Annual Maintenance and Operations Cost Study for Region 6 and the 2000-01 ACISD budget. ASU's Region 6 includes Arkansas, Texas, New Mexico, Louisiana and Oklahoma.

**Note: ACISD figures were calculated excluding supervisors.*

The district's Maintenance Department does not perform routine practices in order to control costs for the district including:

- regularly evaluating existing services to explore the feasibility of alternative methods of providing services, such as outside contracting and privatization;
- evaluating all contracted and/or privatized services to verify effectiveness and cost savings;
- maintaining a maintenance reserve fund to handle one-time expenditures necessary to support maintenance and custodial operations;
- regularly conducting cost comparisons to determine whether purchasing practices have minimized costs;
- considering equipment operating and maintenance costs when buying new equipment;
- developing replacement projections for plant and maintenance equipment; and
- implementing a preventive maintenance program to reduce long-term maintenance costs and service outages.

District staff is not effectively involved in the construction process, resulting in low quality deliverables and high costs to the district for rework or repairs.

According to a survey of teachers, more than half of them either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that the quality of new construction is excellent. This is summarized in **Exhibit 4-7**.

Exhibit 4-7
Percentage of Teachers who either disagreed or strongly disagreed

Survey Question	Percent
The quality of new construction is excellent	51.5%

Source: Texas School Performance Review (TSPR) Surveys.

The construction process lacks planning, direction and oversight. On recent construction projects, the district did not assign one experienced construction manager with the authority and responsibility to keep projects within budget and on schedule. The following are examples of the lack of oversight during the district's recent construction projects.

- ACISD did not ensure representation during the construction process. In-house inspection was not done to verify that the criterion written in the construction contract were being met. Generally, there are three systems used to assure quality construction: in-house staff, the contracted services of a clerk of the works, or an owner representative such as a construction management firm.
- The district does not conduct construction-phase monitoring. Construction-phase monitoring allows facility managers to catch mistakes and ensure that the proper materials have been delivered on schedule to the job location; the design specifications and manufacturer's shop drawings are accurate, are being properly executed and are in compliance with warranties; and that the contractor is installing the roof system correctly, following all design details, local code requirements and proper safety guidelines.
- The district did not seek independent cost estimates throughout all design phases. It also did not implement the four phases of design management: the schematic design, the preliminary design, the pre-final design and the final design to ensure that the architect was on target with the construction budget. Independent cost estimates developed at each design phase provide a check-and-balance system.
- ACISD did not use an interdisciplinary quality control process. During the final stage of planning, an outside firm did not proofread a set of construction documents, looking for errors, inconsistencies and omissions between the differing design disciplines.
- The district has not developed a district architectural and engineering instruction manual to ensure that every project has a detailed written design criteria. The criteria for what a district will

accept in each of the four design phases are defined in such a manual. This means the architect's application for payment is directly related to the completion of pre-established benchmarks and specifications.

- No process or procedures are in place to ensure standardization of materials. The district does not balance the price of new equipment and materials with the long-term maintainability of the product. The district does not participate in any quality engineering practices.
- The district's management program for construction/renovation did not include a complete review of all plans and specifications to ensure compliance with relevant local construction code requirements. The best example of this is the installation of gas lines at the middle school. These lines were within industry standards, but not for the coastal area and were installed without any coating to protect from corrosion on the coast. The HVAC system in the middle school is another example, as the units installed are not of adequate size for the area served. Some of the elementary schools have package air conditioning units on their roofs which do not have any kind of protective structure shielding them from coastal elements.
- There were no established procedures for monitoring the project budgets. The superintendent at the time reviewed the one-inch bill and usually approved it within 1-3 days without any in-depth analysis. No one was assigned to monitor contractor insurance coverage and all bonding requirements. Very minimal project progress reports containing budget, expenditures, encumbrances and balances were prepared and later presented to the board. The following is a summary of the construction draws for the middle school and high school commons project.

Exhibit 4-8 shows the construction draws from the middle school and high school construction project and the day the draw was submitted for payment versus the day the draw was actually paid. As shown, many invoices were processed in two to five days. ACISD's business manager said that no verification had been done before the current superintendent was hired.

Exhibit 4-8
Analysis of the Time in Which Construction Draws Were Approved

Superintendent	Draw Submitted	Draw Paid	Elapsed Time-Days	Draw Amount	Payment No.
AJ	1/17/01	4/6/01	79	\$492,921	24
AJ	12/31/00	1/23/01	23	\$349,092	23

AJ	12/8/00	12/13/00	5	\$209,512	22
AJ	11/20/00	11/22/00	2	\$262,691	21
AJ	10/5/00	10/10/00	5	\$269,753	20
AJ	9/13/00	9/19/00	6	\$435,457	19
AJ	8/29/00	8/30/00	1	\$647,860	18
AJ	7/18/00	7/21/00	3	\$795,648	17
AJ	6/14/00	6/16/00	2	\$684,966	16
AJ	5/9/00	5/11/00	2	\$1,030,987	15
AJ	4/5/00	4/17/00	12	\$778,210	14
AJ	3/7/00	3/23/00	16	\$1,132,998	13
AJ	2/7/00	2/10/00	3	\$595,240	12
NS	12/6/99	12/16/99	10	\$804,324	10
NS	11/3/99	11/12/99	9	\$628,967	9
NS	10/11/99	10/18/99	7	\$391,392	8
NS	9/2/99	9/14/99	12	\$785,831	7
NS	8/4/99	N/A	N/A	\$733,775	6
NS	7/7/99	N/A	N/A	\$428,339	5
NS	4/5/99	N/A	N/A	\$212,695	4
NS	5/6/99	N/A	N/A	\$303,247	3
NS	6/1/99	N/A	N/A	\$845,845	2
NS	3/26/99	3/31/99	5	\$408,487	1

Source: Analysis of ACISD construction documents, October 2001.

No established procedures exist for accepting completed facility projects which include approval by the construction supervisor, the architect, appropriate inspectors or the administration. No comprehensive monitoring of the timely completion of any "punch list" items was performed. No written procedures exist for holding a retainage until final acceptance of the project. The district has no strategies for actively managing contracts, especially of construction managers.

There are examples of deficient quality of construction and lack of oversight from recent expansion projects throughout the district:

- Gas piping was installed at the middle school without any coating to protect from corrosion.
- Many structural cracks exist in the tile at the high school's new commons area.
- The motorized bleachers in the middle school gym have been pulling away from the wall since they were installed.
- There are cracks in the new middle school floors.
- There are 3-4 serious wall cracks in the new middle school.
- The gym floor in the new middle school has been redone 3 times.
- The cement in the new middle school girls' and boys' physical education (PE) rooms has spider cracks.
- The high school roof leaks in the new commons area.
- Tile in the teachers' workroom had to be re-laid twice because it was crooked.
- The new middle school has a few roof leaks in the cafeteria and outside the library.
- The tile in the new high school commons area has now cracked a second time.
- Only 1 toilet/1 urinal was installed in each of the girls' and boys' PE locker rooms in the middle school.
- The parking lot of Fulton had to be redone because of the lack of quality and lack of supervision initially.
- Construction personnel from the contractor working on the bathrooms at Rockport Elementary have not been seen in a while.
- The installation of a middle school sprinkler system was not contracted, but should have been because it has been taking up a large amount of the plumber's time.

A number of school districts use a Facilities director with some or all of the following characteristics to perform those functions: some knowledge of the design work of architects or construction, planning knowledge or experience working with government agencies outside the school district, experience as a teacher or principal and the ability to work with large and diverse groups of people. According to the American Compensation Association, 1999-2000 Salary Budget Survey, Directors of Facility Planning average \$60,625, with average annual increases of 4.4 percent, which brings it to \$63,293 for 2000-01.

Recommendation 37:

Hire a qualified facilities director to manage the facilities' custodial, maintenance, grounds and construction projects.

A typical Facilities director manages an organization's maintenance activities related to its physical property. This person directs the provision

of building maintenance, operations and custodial functions, and also arranges and monitors renovation or new construction projects.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent and the Human Resources coordinator develop a job description for the Facilities director.	June 2002
2.	The superintendent presents it to the board for approval.	July 2002
3.	The Human Resources coordinator develops an advertisement for the Facilities director position and publishes it electronically.	July 2002
4.	The Human Resources coordinator develops screening criteria and an interview team, which includes community business leaders with construction experience.	July 2002
5.	The Human Resources coordinator receives and screens applications.	August 2002
6.	The Human Resources coordinator interviews and ranks candidates.	September 2002
7.	The Human Resources coordinator checks references.	September 2002
8.	The Human Resources coordinator extends offer.	September 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

A Facilities director is hired at the national average base salary for 1999-2000 of \$60,625 as reported by the American Compensation Association's 1999-2000 Salary Budget Survey, with the average annual increase of 4.4 percent for a total of \$63,293. The benefits for this position equal \$13,416 annually for a total cost of \$76,709.

The director would replace the two maintenance supervisors and assume the remaining maintenance duties from the Purchasing and Maintenance Coordinator, leaving this employee as a full-time Purchasing Coordinator. The two maintenance supervisors make \$33,420 and \$29,584; their payroll taxes are \$9,980 and their annual health and life insurance premiums are \$6,780. The resulting annual savings from these two maintenance supervisors is \$79,764. The net savings to the district is the \$76,709 cost of the Facilities director plus the \$79,764 savings from the maintenance supervisors, or \$3,055 annually.

Recommendation	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
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Hire a qualified facilities director to manage the facilities' custodial, maintenance, grounds and construction projects.	\$3,055	\$3,055	\$3,055	\$3,055	\$3,055
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FINDING

The Maintenance Department does not maintain accurate square footage and acreage records.

While the cornerstone of facilities maintenance and planning is having accurate records of square footage and acreage, there is no consensus on these statistics for the district. In conducting the performance review, the review team requested square footage and acreage in order to compute staffing requirements. The review team was given approximations for some numbers because the district did not know with certainty the actual numbers. Also, different people continuously reported different numbers to the review team. None of the amounts agreed and no consensus was reached on which numbers were correct.

Most staffing formulas use square footage or acreage to determine the optimal number of employees.

Recommendation 38:

Determine accurate measurements of the district's facilities and grounds.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Facilities director or someone designated by the superintendent takes measurements of all district facilities and grounds.	June 2002
2.	The Facilities director records the measurements on district maps and records.	July 2002
3.	The Facilities director keeps records updated as additions or renovations are made.	August 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The ACISD grounds are not well kept.

Upon inspection, the ACISD grounds were found to be mostly sand and full of stickers, ants and weeds, and the grounds behind the high school cafeteria were littered and weedy. The conditions at the elementary schools were especially noticeable, as the grounds looked like they had not been cared for and the weeds were overgrown. One internal courtyard area by the alternative education classrooms on the east side of the high school was overgrown with weeds and grass, covering the windows to the classrooms. There were also fire ant mounds on the grounds at Rockport Elementary.

The district has no set rotation schedule to maintain the district's grounds consistently, and considerably more time is spent on athletic facilities than the grounds.

Industry grounds standards are set based on the desired appearance, varying from a low standard of appearance to a high standard of appearance. For a medium standard, workers should trim trees and replace them selectively every one to three years; trim shrubs three to four times a year and selectively replace them every one to three years; mow grass as needed; use chemicals once a year or every two years; provide sanitation weekly; and limited extra services.

Recommendation 39:

Develop and follow a rotation schedule for future groundskeeping operations.

A rotation schedule is used to determine how to accomplish the grounds keeping work on all district facilities on a timely and consistent basis with the district's grounds keeping resources. This schedule should also include a preseason preparation schedule to ensure that repair parts is are ordered for equipment, machinery is rebuilt if needed and an inventory of spare parts on hand. These schedules are used to develop performance standards for holding the department accountable.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent and Facilities director decide on a standard of appearance for ACISD - high, medium or low.	June 2002
2.	The grounds foreman and Facilities director identify all necessary tasks to be performed, based on desired standard of appearance and categorize them into seasonal jobs.	June 2002
3.	The grounds foreman and Facilities director prioritize all jobs.	June 2002

4.	The groundskeepers clean up all grounds, including weeding, mowing, trimming limbs, cutting hedges.	July 2002 - August 2002
5.	The grounds foreman devises an efficient combination of people and equipment, with a schedule that will accomplish the most work in the time available.	August 2002
6.	The grounds foreman establishes a preseason preparation schedule.	August 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 4

A. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT (PART 2)

FINDING

ACISD does not use cleanliness standards to ensure clean facilities and measure its custodial performance, or standards to measure maintenance and grounds operations.

One method of accountability is following standards for each type of work performed. ACISD does not have standards for cleaning, grounds keeping or maintenance which ensure that the facilities are maintained to specific expectations and that the district is staffed appropriately. As a result, ACISD has dirty, unkempt facilities.

When the review team surveyed the schools, the middle school appeared not to have been cleaned for 3 to 4 days. A boys' restroom at Rockport elementary and one at Fulton elementary, near room 505, smelled strongly of urine. Most areas of the high school were unclean, with dirty floors and restrooms. The maintenance portables, woodshop and welding shop were all in poor condition.

Subsequent to the review team's onsite visit, the superintendent directed maintenance personnel to remove the junk, saying it presented a safety hazard and was an eyesore.

Many students, when surveyed, thought the facility conditions were unclean and unsanitary and do not reflect pride in their schools. Here are some examples of student comments:

"I feel that our school has some problems with cleanliness...and bathrooms in the older parts of the building are not acceptable."

"School should be kept in a better condition. It should be properly maintained and cleaned."

"...The school is never completely clean. Some classrooms do not get cleaned but once every few weeks."

"One problem I feel that we have in our school is about the restrooms. The bathrooms never work properly. No towels to dry our hands. The toilets are always overflowing. It is very unsanitary..."

"...Our school needs to be much cleaner, especially the bathrooms. It is sad when you are walking to class and the halls smell of urine!"

"I feel that the Jr. High part of the high school is in need of more sanitary up keeping."

"...The restrooms aren't clean enough to even use sometimes." "The biggest problem, I believe, is the smell of urine in our hallways. I do not think it is too much to ask to keep the smell of urine out of our school. It is ridiculous. There is no reason for our school to be so unclean that I have to smell urine on the way to class."

"The school is not clean at all. Sometimes I fear that it could be a health hazard."

Thirty-one percent of the teachers and eighteen percent of the administrators surveyed in ACISD did not consider schools clean and in interviews, community leaders expressed concern that there is not enough custodial help.

A standard of cleanliness must be appropriate to the area serviced. It must avoid over cleaning as well as under cleaning and should be based primarily on the service performed, frequency of the service, work skills and the habits of the occupants. Frequency determines how often a floor should be swept or scrubbed and how often light fixtures should be cleaned. Time standards should be based on the building (design, use, age, state of repair), custodial facilities, occupant demands and many other constraints.

Grounds standards are set based on the desired appearance and can be categorized into high, medium and low standards of appearance. For a high standard of appearance, workers would be required to trim or replace trees and shrubs as needed; mow grass as needed; use chemicals as needed; provide sanitation as needed; and provide extra services. For medium and low standards of appearance, workers would perform these same duties less frequently and with fewer extra services.

Maintenance standards vary for items or components and the district must decide what level of maintenance it can afford and is willing to undertake. Break-and-fix-it maintenance is a strategy for inexpensive, non-critical items where nothing is done until it breaks or a repair is made. Minor repairs include planned minor service or repair on an item and can be scheduled as part of the ongoing preventive maintenance effort. Finally, planned maintenance for no failures is an aggressive standard including

major overhaul and replacement of critical components. It includes close monitoring to avoid any downtime.

Recommendation 40:

Implement cleanliness and maintenance standards for custodial, grounds and maintenance operations.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Facilities director establishes cleaning standards.	June 2002
2.	The Facilities director trains staff.	June 2002
3.	The Facilities director performs routine inspections.	July 2002
4.	The Facilities director uses standards to evaluate performance of custodial staff.	July 2002

FISCAL IMPACT This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Maintenance staffing needs are not projected and allocated using standard industry formulas.

Exhibit 4-9 shows that the district is overstaffed by 1.4 workers based on a 40,000 square feet industry standard coverage.

**Exhibit 4-9
ACISD Maintenance Worker Staffing Analysis**

Work Category	Total Square Footage Maintained	ACISD Workers	Industry Standard Square Foot Coverage	ACISD Actual Square Foot Coverage	Number Staff Needed	Difference extra or (short)
Maintenance Worker	560,199	15.5	40,000	36,142	14.0	1.5

Source: ACISD staffing interview.

According to industry experts, the standard formula for determining the appropriate number of technicians for a facility ranges from 40,000 square feet for each skilled craftsman for old facilities to 60,000 square feet for new facilities. **Exhibit 4-10** uses industry standard coverage with adjustments made based on the age of the facilities.

Exhibit 4-10
Maintenance Staffing Based on Building Age

	Total Square Feet Maintained	ACISD Workers*	Industry Standard Coverage	ACISD Actual Coverage	Number Staff Needed	Difference extra or (short)
Older Facilities	404,593	11.5	40,000	35,182	10.1	1.4
Newer Facilities	155,606	4.0	60,000	38,902	2.6	1.4
Total	560,199	15.5			12.7	2.8

Source: ACISD Organization Chart, and interviews with ACISD Maintenance supervisors.

The average salary for maintenance and tradesmen is \$22,356 and with benefits is \$29,287.

Recommendation 41:

Assign maintenance personnel based on an acceptable staffing allocation formula.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Facilities director determines optimal maintenance staff for each building based on industry guidelines and staffing allocation formulas.	June 2002
2.	The Facilities director re-allocates existing staff.	July 2002
3.	The Facilities director reduces staff according to staffing formula.	July 2002 - August 2002
4.	The Facilities director budgets hereafter using staffing allocations.	September 2002

FISCAL IMPACT Based on industry staffing guidelines, the district can reduce its maintenance staff by three workers. At ACISD's average maintenance salary of \$22,356, with annual benefits of \$6,931, the cost savings would be \$29,287 for each employee or \$87,861 in total.

Recommendation	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Assign maintenance personnel based on an acceptable staffing allocation formula.	\$87,861	\$87,861	\$87,861	\$87,861	\$87,861

FINDING

The district does not have a preventive maintenance program.

Preventive maintenance is the periodic inspection, cleaning, adjustment and, where applicable, lubrication and working-component change out for finishes, building envelope and mechanical/electrical systems. Preventive maintenance occurs throughout the lifetime of a building and is required to keep systems in good working order and to avoid having to spend money on repairs.

Problems include broken water fountains in many of the schools because they have not been maintained and peeling paint at Rockport Elementary because it has not been painted in six years.

There is no preventive maintenance schedule for any items throughout the district except the replacement of air filters. Areas that should have preventive maintenance include HVAC systems, electrical/mechanical maintenance, energy systems, building automation systems, structural maintenance, grounds maintenance, high voltage maintenance, onsite supervision, fire/life safety, roofs, ceiling tiles and paint.

ACISD does not have a roof maintenance schedule. This is evidenced by the roof problems throughout the district as depicted in **Exhibit 4-11**.

**Exhibit 4-11
Summary of Roof Problems at Schools**

Rockport-Fulton High School
A roof on the east school of the High School that houses rooms 230-234 has many leaks.
The roof leaks in the High School boys' weight room and locker room.
Rockport Elementary

Rockport Elementary needs a new roof.
A hole in the ceiling exists behind the auditorium where the ceiling fell in.
The roof is leaking in the administrative office and the red wing which needs a new roof.
Little Bay Elementary
The roof is missing some pipe guards which prohibit leaves from entering the drains.
Live Oak Elementary
The roof leaks from the new spray roof. Screws were not covered. It was requested that central maintenance exercise the warranty for this last spring - but nothing has been done yet. It is costing the district to replace ceiling tiles.
Fulton Elementary
The library roof needs replacing.
The roof leaks next to the library.

Source: The review team observations.

Proactive and efficient management positively affects student and staff health, morale, safety and motivation. In a survey of more than 500 members of the International Facilities Management Association (IFMA), the top half of respondents save at least 26 percent on their maintenance costs compared to the total group. Their average cost was \$2.09 a square foot compared to \$1.57 a square foot. One of the many factors they credited with reducing their costs was a reduction in the number of breakdowns and unexpected failures. They noted that the cost of scheduled repairs was significantly less than the costs resulting from major breakdowns. This is testimony to what a preventive maintenance program can do for a school district's operations.

Recommendation 42:

Develop and follow a preventive maintenance program for the district.

The program should have support from the top down, including the superintendent, administrators, principals, educational staff and maintenance and operations personnel.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Facilities director selects items or components to be included in the planned maintenance program.	June 2002
2.	The board and superintendent develop policies on what level of maintenance effort the district can afford and is willing to undertake.	July 2002
3.	The Facilities director identifies components for planned maintenance, including the location and identification of each.	July 2002
4.	The Facilities director establishes planned maintenance.	July 2002
5.	The Facilities director implements and monitors the maintenance program.	September 2002
6.	The Facilities director makes adjustments as necessary.	October 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The district does not have a comprehensive list of deferred maintenance items.

Deferred maintenance includes items which have needed repair for some time. Although some personnel have lists of items that need to be repaired, there is no master deferred- maintenance list in existence and no work orders are issued for deferred maintenance items.

The major items identified are summarized in **Exhibit 4-12**, showing common issues by school. All of the schools have water fountains which do not work, as well as roofs that leak, including the brand new middle school. Many of the schools also have safety hazards and construction management issues.

Exhibit 4-12
Summary of Maintenance Problem Areas on ACISD Schools

	Rockport- Fulton HS	Rockport- Fulton MS	Rockport Elementary	Fulton Elementary	Live Oak Elementary	Little Bay Elementary
Water Fountains not working	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Roof Leaks	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Safety Hazards	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Asbestos	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No
Construction Management Issues	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
HVAC equipment not working	No	No	Yes	No	No	No

Source: SoCo Consulting, Inc. assessment.

One elementary school water fountain functioned by the elementary student reaching into the electrical unit and jiggling a piece of metal. The review team witnessed lines of students operating the fountain.

A 1998 Department of Education study of school districts in three states found a positive relationship between school condition and both student achievement and student behavior. A 1992 study found that students who attended schools in poor condition scored 5.5 percentage points below students who attended schools in fair condition and 11 percentage points below students who attended schools in excellent condition. Finally, a study of working conditions in urban schools concluded that physical conditions have direct positive and negative effects on teacher morale, sense of personal safety, feelings of effectiveness in the classroom and on the general learning environment.

Recommendation 43:

Prepare a comprehensive deferred maintenance list annually by school and prioritize the work orders.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Facilities director makes a comprehensive list by school and building of all repairs to be made.	June 2002
2.	The Facilities director determines what deferred maintenance items to outsource and what to handle internally. Perhaps outsource all water fountain repairs and replacements.	July 2002
3.	The maintenance secretary enters all items into Applied Computer Technologies 1000 (ACT1000) work order system	August 2002

	and issues work orders.	
4.	The Facilities director prioritizes work.	August 2002
5.	The Facilities director sets target dates for completion of items.	August 2002
6.	The Facilities director assigns to appropriate personnel.	August 2002
7.	The Facilities director assigns an expected completion date.	August 2002
8.	The Facilities director prints periodic reports from ACT1000 of outstanding work orders and follows up on open items.	September 2002
9.	The Facilities director incorporates the completion of items into maintenance personnel job evaluations.	September 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

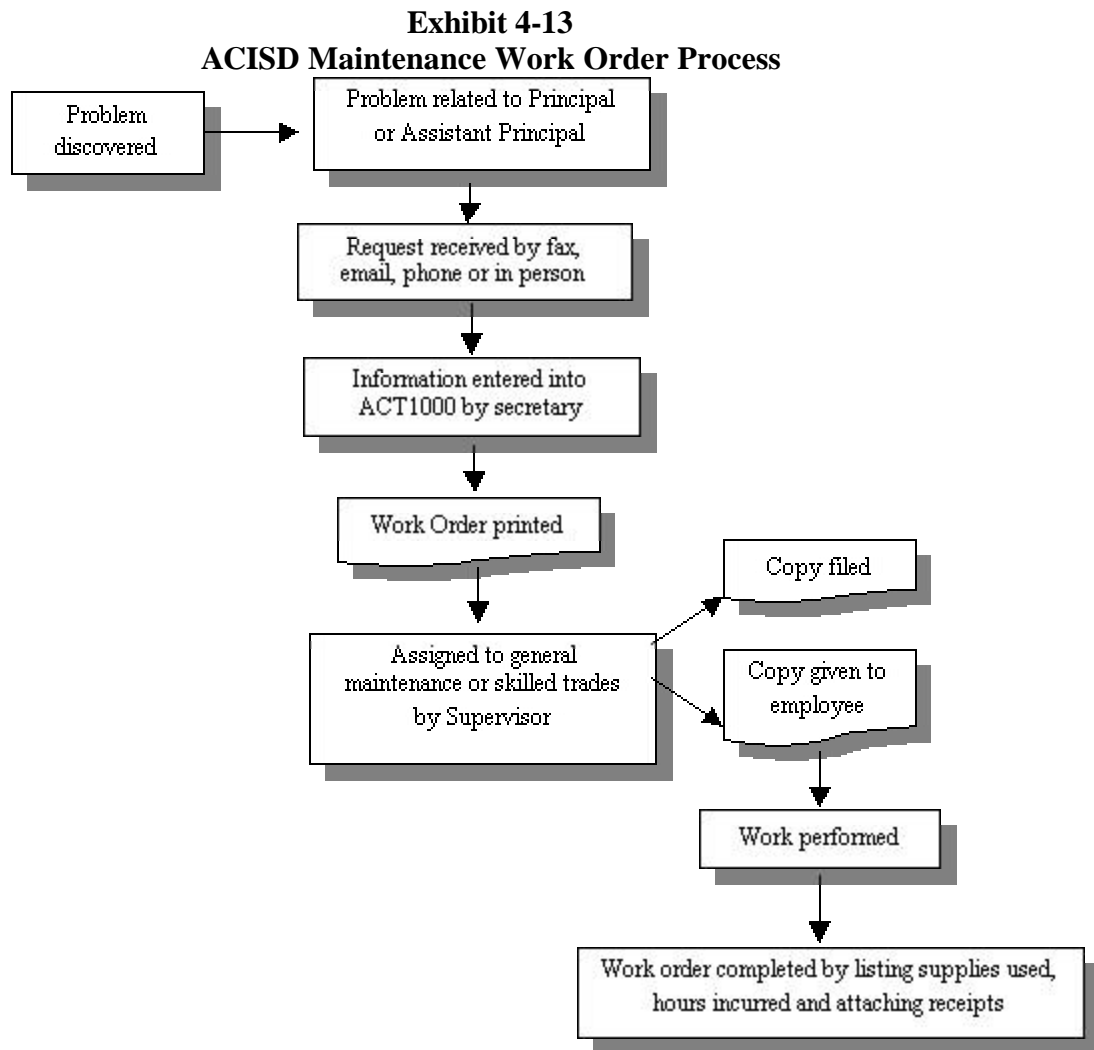
Work orders are not prioritized to ensure that critical repairs are made quickly nor are they being used to determine where preventive maintenance should be targeted. ACISD does not use work orders as criteria to identify equipment that needs to be replaced, resulting in a reactive environment, a lack of information for management and planning purposes and no accountability.

The work order information is entered into a maintenance management software system owned by the district, ACT1000. This system was designed exclusively for the unique needs of maintenance in colleges, universities and school districts. Its capabilities include work orders, preventive maintenance, custodial inventory, mechanical inventory, energy tracking, maintenance vehicle tracking, keys and locks and instructional supplies inventory. The work order module is the core of the system and allows the user to track all maintenance activity and costs. It also updates other modules, such as the mechanical inventory (as items are charged to work orders) or preventive maintenance, as work orders are completed. The work order module is comprehensive and allows the department to enter and print new work orders, print a pending work order report and list all materials used on work orders.

The work order can then be printed and assigned to the appropriate personnel, by the supervisor. A copy is generally filed, while a paper copy is given to the employee. When the work has been completed, the employee writes any supplies used and the labor hours. However, no costs are assigned to the work order.

When the district uses a computerized work order system, the date of the teacher's request and his or her specific needs are easily logged into the computer on a pre-printed form. With this documentation, the department can trace exactly when the request was made, if parts need to be ordered, projected arrival date for parts and completion. In addition, the teacher is sent a copy of the work order, showing the corrective action taken.

Exhibit 4-13 below outlines the ACISD work order process.



Source: Interview with ACISD Maintenance secretary, October 2001.

Although this is ACISD's process for all of Maintenance to follow, many of the work orders are not tracked using the ACT1000 system. Each supervisor has the option to track work orders however they choose. This makes it difficult to do any accurate analysis of work orders. In addition, there is no feedback in the normal work order process to the initial requestor, when a work order is completed.

Of the completed work orders from 2000-01, only about 75 percent were kept in ACT1000, assuming all of the manually- kept copies were provided and accounted for. This is shown in **Exhibit 4-14**.

**Exhibit 4-14
Analysis of Automated Work Orders**

	Number	Percent of Total
Number of manual work orders	334	24.9%
Number of automated work orders	1,010	75.1%
Total number of work orders	1,344	100.0%

Source: Analysis of ACISD work orders, 2000-01.

One of the supervisors noted that he has no way of knowing which work orders are outstanding, except for remembering which ones he handed out to his employees. The paper work order form itself does not have a place for the priority on the work order and there is no way to accumulate all of the work orders throughout the year to determine which areas seem to be the biggest problems in the district.

Automated work orders are assigned a priority level identifying the time in which the work order must be completed . While work order priority information exists in the maintenance database, ACT1000, priority levels do not appear on the present paper work orders used by some of the maintenance workers. Priority levels are depicted in **Exhibit 4-15**.

**Exhibit 4-15
Priority Levels in ACT1000**

Priority Levels	
1	Emergency (within 24 hours)
2	Priority (2 -4 days)
3	Standard (1 week)

4	Routine (1 month)
5	Holiday/Summer (during break period)
6	Date specified
7 or none	Other

Source: Interview with ACISD Maintenance secretary, October 2001.

The following summarizes those completed work orders that were actually entered into ACT1000 for the year 2000-01. Of those 1,010 completed work orders, 296 were deemed emergencies, almost 30 percent. Emergency work orders are those which need to be completed within 24 hours, as depicted in **Exhibit 4-16**.

**Exhibit 4-16
Work Order Analysis
2000-01**

	Count	Percent
Total work orders	1,010	100.0%
Emergency work orders	296	29.3%

Source: Analysis of ACISD work orders, 2000-01.

Of the total work orders tracked in ACT1000 for 2000-01, the greatest percentage of requests was for general maintenance followed by grounds and air conditioning. This is shown in **Exhibit 4-17**.

**Exhibit 4-17
Types of Completed Work-Orders
2000-01**

Type of Work Order	Priority Level							Total
	1	2	3	4	5	7	None	
General Maintenance	79	216	31	9	0	8	8	351
Grounds	9	99	8	0	0	16	1	133
Air conditioning	96	29	1	0	0	0	0	126
Electric	32	51	17	1	0	0	1	102
Plumbing	41	49	3	0	0	0	0	93

Carpenter	14	48	13	1	2	2	0	80
Keys and Locks	3	34	1	0	0	0	0	38
Pest Control	8	30	0	0	0	0	0	38
Mechanics	3	15	0	0	0	1	0	19
Painting	2	11	1	0	0	0	0	14
Shop Work	6	1	1	0	0	0	0	8
Safety	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	4
Refrigeration	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Cleaning	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Food Service	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Total work orders	296	588	76	11	2	27	10	1,010

Source: Analysis of ACISD work orders, 2000-01.

The ACT1000 software can be used uniformly throughout the Maintenance Department to track work orders, including preventive and deferred maintenance orders. Costs can also be assigned to work orders in ACT 1000, based on the supplies used and labor hours worked.

The outstanding work orders were provided for 2000-01 and 2001-02. Assuming these are inclusive, the number of outstanding work orders at 10/19/01, was 192. More than 35 percent were from the prior year as shown in **Exhibit 4-18**.

**Exhibit 4-18
Work Order Backlog**

	Number	Percentage
2000-01 Work Orders	68	35.4%
2001-02 Work Orders	124	64.6%
Total	192	100.0%

Source: Analysis of ACISD work orders, 2000-01.

Recommendation 44:

Develop and implement a standard work order process for all district personnel.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The computer technology specialists network ACT1000 for other users in the district, besides the Maintenance secretary.	June 2002
2.	The Facilities director develops standardized maintenance procedures for the entire Maintenance Department to follow.	July 2002
3.	The shipping and receiving clerk performs inventory count and enters inventories into ACT1000.	July 2002 - August 2002
4.	The Maintenance secretary develops standard reports with information on completed work orders, open work orders and high-priority work orders for management review.	June 2002 - July 2002
5.	The facilities director periodically follows up on open work orders and makes them a part of Maintenance Department evaluations and performance reviews.	August 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The district does not have standards for its parts and equipment that would help it keep costs to a minimum.

Standardized supplies and equipment can be helpful to a school district by facilitating the competitive bid process and avoiding special order items. Some additional benefits are:

- allowing lower costs from bids on large quantities of one item;
- reducing and facilitating repairs and replacements;
- reducing inventories and, thus, storage costs while at the same time increasing the amount of school funds available for other purposes;
- speeding up delivery of materials or equipment;
- reducing the number of materials or equipment for which specifications must be written; and
- reducing the work of the Purchasing Department, including record-keeping.

There are several examples in the district of items being purchased which are not the optimal equipment for the job, or the region. Gas lines were installed at the middle school with no coating to protect from corrosive elements of the coastal region. Some of the package A/C units on the roofs of some of the schools have no shroud covering them, also exposing them

to the corrosive elements of the coastal region. Water fountains are continually being replaced in the district, with no written specifications.

Recommendation 45:

Develop standards for parts and equipment.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Facilities director identifies parts that could benefit the district by standardizing.	June 2002
2.	The Facilities director researches requirements and costs and develop specifications.	July 2002
3.	The Facilities director meets with end users to reach agreement on the general ingredients and what the item needs to do under a set of circumstances.	August 2002
4.	The Maintenance and purchasing coordinator prepares bids.	August 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

There is no replacement program for equipment.

At the end of its useful life, each component of a building must be replaced. This is known as the renewal process. For example, the lifetime of a roof is approximately 20 years. School administrators can budget now for the next roof renewal cycle. Some other typical component lifetimes are: heating, ventilating and air conditioning systems-30 years; hot water heater-15 years; and vinyl flooring-12 years.

The concept of renewal is closely related to that of depreciation. In the private sector, buildings and equipment are permitted for tax reasons to depreciate every year and the amount of such depreciation is a tax-deductible expense. Theoretically, if this amount were re-invested in the building or equipment every year in a process of continuous renewal, the value of this property would be maintained at its initial level. Replacing major components prevents deterioration of other components, reduces routine-maintenance requirements and maintains a comfortable and functional learning environment.

Component renewal has been an area typically ignored by ACISD. A large number of each school's components must be replaced or given major overhauls. Since the lifetimes of most components can be estimated, it is an easy task to plan and budget for renewal many years in advance.

ACISD does not have any kind of replacement plan in place for its equipment, supported by many examples throughout the district:

- The backhoe is completely inoperable, according to the plumber and other maintenance personnel. The plumber rented a backhoe when the pump went out on the septic tank at Live Oak Elementary and he had to tie in to the sewer line on the north side of the school. The south side remains to be done.
- The Ditch Witch trencher is inoperable, with two sections remaining on the middle school sprinkler system.
- Custodians are not provided quality, commercial grade equipment to increase their productivity. For instance, they have no riding scrubbers or burnishers. They were recently short on vacuum cleaners and the PTO at Rockport elementary purchased some for them. Unfortunately, they were not commercial grade machines and do not pick up all the sand that is common in a coastal region.
- The maintenance staff and groundskeepers do not have the proper equipment to do their jobs because there is no plan for replacement when equipment is lost or broken. They are in need of chainsaws, lawn mowers, trailers and edgers.

When equipment is replaced, it is not standardized, nor is the equipment specific to the needs of coastline environmental elements and therefore, rusts or corrodes faster. This practice is costing the district in expensive replacements. Parts not standardized include HVAC units, gas piping, awnings of 16 gauge rather than anodized aluminum, metal doors and hardware, vacuum cleaners and water fountains.

Recommendation 46:

Create an equipment replacement plan for the district.

Exhibit 4-19 shows a sample analysis form for determining whether a piece of equipment should be replaced.

**Exhibit 4-19
Sample Equipment Replacement Analysis Form**

Equipment Replacement Analysis Form	
Existing Equipment:	_____
Purpose:	_____
Original Cost:	_____
Prior Year Maintenance Cost:	_____
Maintenance Costs to Date:	_____
Hazards presented:	_____
Outages experienced:	_____
Obsolete? Yes/No	_____
Replacement Cost:	_____
Fit district's standard equipment criteria? Yes/No	_____

Source: SoCo Consulting, Inc.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Facilities director obtains a list of all fixed assets and their service life.	June 2002
2.	The Facilities director tracks work order costs against items.	July 2002
3.	The Facilities director defines replacement criteria (age, repair costs to date, reliability, operating costs and obsolescence).	July 2002
4.	The Facilities director annually identifies replacement needs using a Sample Equipment Replacement Analysis form and submits to budget.	August 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

At a minimum, the district should replace the backhoe and the Ditch Witch. A backhoe loader ranges in price from \$5,600 to \$8,000. A small Ditch Witch walk-behind trencher costs approximately \$8,400.

Recommendation	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Create an equipment replacement plan for the district.	(\$16,400)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Chapter 4

B. FACILITIES PLANNING

Facility planning is a very significant activity for most districts. Planning for facilities based on student growth, programmatic needs and legislative requirements is essential to provide for student needs without overcrowding, use of substandard facilities or use of costly portable alternatives.

It is very important that the district, with community input, determine future facilities needs through a systematic evaluation of enrollment projections, capacity, budget realities, available alternatives and laws to develop a five-year facilities work plan. The facility planning document contains a set of proposed actions to provide housing for the district's students. The plan or program covers the work of several years and its span coincides with the time span of the district's strategic plan, technology plan, district improvement plan and the school improvement plans. Poor school facility planning may be costly and the consequences usually remain for the life of the building.

The completed program will consist of a number of different kinds of capital projects including: new school buildings, additions to existing schools, major renovations of older schools, the purchase of sites or buildings and major improvements to schools.

FINDING

ACISD has not prepared a master facilities plan that incorporates an updated demographic study and the district's strategic plan (vision statement, mission statement, philosophy, goals, program development, needs assessments, student enrollment projections, evaluation of existing facilities, financial needs and capital improvements) into one plan. No document was found and no staff person within the district was assigned the responsibility.

The basis for ACISD's facilities master planning document, the demographic study, has not been updated or adjusted annually to take into consideration demographic trends and events that may impact the projections thus negating the reliability of the information presented. ACISD has no factual basis on which to make facilities decisions. ACISD contracted with Population and Survey Analysts of College Station to prepare the "Projections of Student Population and Assessment of Facility Needs" document in April 1995. Since the creation, no reviews or updates have been made. The April 1995 plan opens with the following

statements: "In the last five years, mid-October enrollment in the Aransas County ISD increased approximately 4 percent per year - a total of 525 students. Further, the increases in government personnel and other projected employment increases could precipitate a 29 percent to 45 percent increase in student enrollment over the next ten years. This expected increase would require the Aransas County ISD to accommodate roughly 4,225 to 4,700 students by the end of that ten-year time period (rather than the 3,275 enrolled today). No single projection series will be completely accurate; however, the middle series (Scenario II) represents the "most likely" pattern, based on information available at this time...Scenario II prescribes a 51 percent growth in student population over a ten-year period, with the average growth per year ranging between 2.3 percent (Fall, 2003) and 2.5 percent (in Fall 1999) and 7.9 percent (Fall, 1996). This projection series describes the expected growth pattern and exceeds recent annual student increases by about 39 students for an average year."

The original plan concludes by projecting that student enrollment will grow by 18 percent for ACISD for fiscal years 1996-97 through 2000-01; when in reality it has declined by 2 percent for the past five years. **Exhibit 4-20** shows the actual growth rate experienced by school and by the district for the last five years. Five years ago, ACISD had 3,441 students and now has 3,366 students, representing a 2 percent a decline.

Exhibit 4-20
Student Enrollment by School
1996-97 through 2000-01

School	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	Percent Change
Rockport Early Childhood Center	564	623	626	592	518	(8.2%)
Fulton Elementary	387	536	491	485	380	(1.8%)
Little Bay Elementary	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	306	N/A
Live Oak Elementary	392	489	475	505	338	(13.8%)
Rockport-Fulton Middle School *	1,125	872	858	858	833	(2.6%)
Rockport-Fulton High School	973	1,038	1,043	1,062	991	1.8%
Actual Total	3,441	3,558	3,493	3,502	3,366	(2.2%)
Projected Total	3,773	4,036	4,209	4,360	4,468	18.42%

Difference	(332)	(478)	(716)	(858)	(1,102)	-
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Source: TEA PEIMS, 1996-97 through 2000-01 and "Projections of Student Population and Assessment of Facility Needs."

*Note: *Includes Rockport-Fulton Intermediate for 1996-97 through 1999-2000.*

A demographic study must be routinely updated to take into consideration new events and is only as good as the updated data.

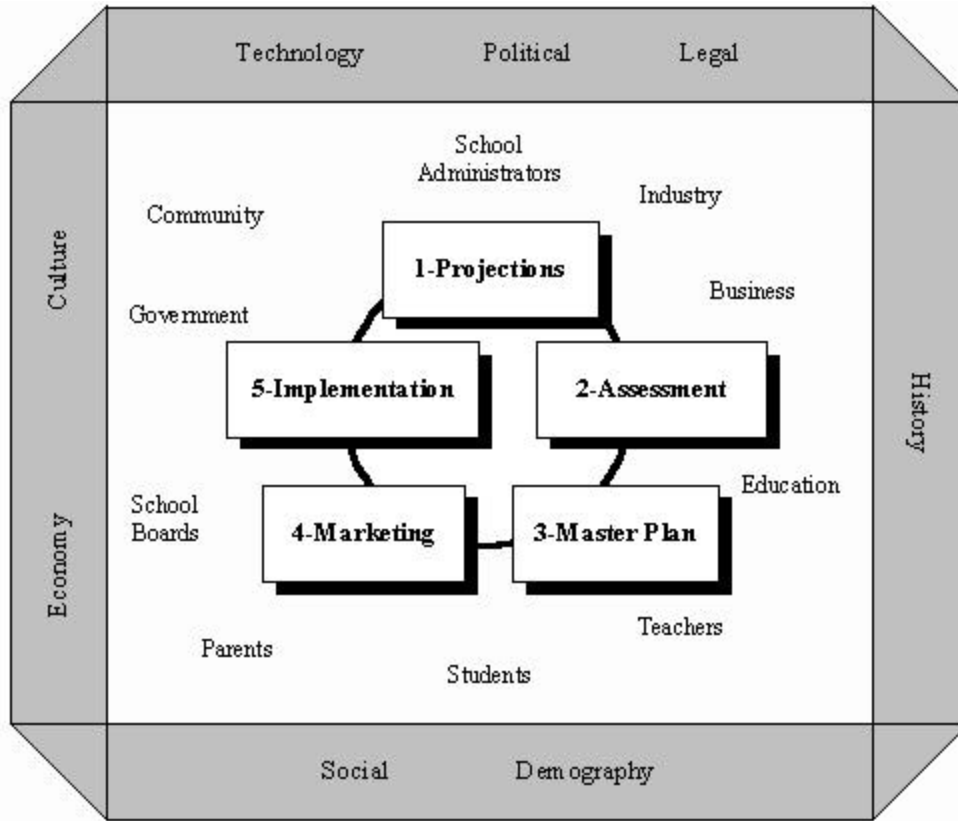
Population and Survey Analysts of College Station, Texas conducted the district's last demographic study.

Recommendation 47:

Develop a planning methodology and prepare a facilities master plan which includes a demographic study.

A sample facilities master plan is shown in **Exhibit 4-21**.

**Exhibit 4-21
Facilities Master Planning Process**



Source: SoCo Consulting, Inc.

The master plan should also include an updated demographic study. The importance of student enrollment projections in the planning process of a school district cannot be underestimated. Such data are necessary for all types of decisions including where and when new school buildings will be needed.

Population and Survey Analysts of College Station, Texas conducted the district's last demographic study. According to its president, they are the largest firm in the state doing demographic studies and they exclusively serve school districts. Based on their experience, a school district like ACISD with student enrollment growth rate below the 2 percent state average should update its study every 4 to 5 years, or more often if a district frequently changes boards or administrations. They recommend updating every year, or even twice a year, for high- growth districts.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Facilities director appraises the situation including	June 2002
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	gathering and compiling data and determining the district's needs, to be used in the planning process.	
2.	The Facilities director prioritizes the needs identified.	July 2002
3.	The Facilities director assesses which needs can be met with existing resources and what changes are needed to make that happen.	July 2002
4.	The Facilities director shows the community the options identified, which are then evaluated so one option can be selected.	August 2002
5.	The Facilities director prepares an action plan and hires staff, initiates capital projects, signs agreements or gets out publicity.	September 2002
6.	The Facilities director submits to the budget prioritization process a request for a demographic study.	September 2002
7.	The Facilities director obtains the demographic study.	October 2002
8.	The Facilities director evaluates the plan and the study annually.	May 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

Population and Survey Analysts of College Station, Texas, one of the leading providers of demographic information for school districts, estimates a cost of about \$28,000 for a school district the size of ACISD. The company also recommends the district should update its study every 4 to 5 years.

Recommendation	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Develop a planning methodology and prepare a facilities master plan which includes a demographic study.	(\$28,000)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Chapter 4

C. FACILITIES USE

According to industry standards, every square foot of indoor space on a school costs roughly \$3 a year to heat, light and maintain. Instructional space costs the same, whether it is used six hours a week or 30. Too many schools operate more space than needed for their programs, spending money that could be used for other purposes.

FINDING

Facility capacity is not managed, resulting in a large amount of unused or underused space and excess portables.

Districts may not enroll more than 22 students for each kindergarten through fourth grade level class according to the Texas Education Code, paragraph 25.112. **Exhibit 4-22** shows the square footage and enrollment for each school and the average square foot for each student. It also shows the total number of classrooms for each school and the number of classrooms not being used for instruction.

Exhibit 4-22
Average Square Footage in Classrooms at ACISD Schools

School	Total Square Feet (Excludes gyms)	Total Enrollment	Average Square Feet for each Student	Industry Standard Square Feet for each Student	More or (Less)
RF High School	257,160	991	260	178	82
Live Oak Elementary	51,040	338	151	120	31
Fulton Elementary	50,165	380	132	120	12
Little Bay Elementary	36,968	306	121	120	1
RF Middle School	109,000	833	131	142	(11)
Rocknort	46,228	518	89	120	(31)

Elementary					
Total	550,561	3,366	164		84

Source: ACISD facility schematics and "School Planning & Management."

Note: Web site www.spmmag.com/ConstRpts/1999/medians.html

Exhibit 4-23 shows the average classroom size by school.

**Exhibit 4-23
Average Class Size by School**

School	Total Enrollment for the School Level	Number Classrooms for each School*	Average Number of Students for each Classroom	Industry Maximum Students for each Class	More or (Less) than Industry Average
Fulton Elementary	380	37	10	22	(12)
Little Bay Elementary	306	24	13	22	(9)
Live Oak Elementary	338	33	10	22	(12)
Rockport Elementary	518	37	14	22	(8)
RF Middle School	833	59	14	22	(8)
RF High School	991	84	12	22	(10)
Total	3,366	274	12		(59)

Source: ACISD maintenance supervisor and "State of the States," www.reduceclasssizenow.org/state_of_the_states.htm

Note: *Being used for instruction - include music, art, choir, band and labs, and excludes cafeteria, gyms and library.

Exhibit 4-24 shows the number of total classrooms for each school and the number of classrooms that are being used for something other than

instruction. These rooms are being used as workrooms, storage rooms or for other uses.

**Exhibit 4-24
Unused Classrooms by School**

School	Total Number of Rooms Available for Instruction	Number of Rooms Used for Instruction*	Rooms Available for Instruction Being Used for Non-Instruction		
			Total	Permanent Building Classrooms	Portables
Fulton Elementary	44	37	7	6	1
Little Bay Elementary	26	24	2	1	1
Live Oak Elementary	42	33	9	2	7
Rockport Elementary	44	37	7	7	0
RF Middle School	64	59	5	5	0
RF High School	91	84	7	7	0
Total	311	274	37	28	9

Source: ACISD building schematics and interviews with Maintenance supervisors.

*Note: *Being used for instruction - include music, art, choir, band and labs, and exclude cafeteria, gyms and library.*

ACISD schools have a high number of portable classrooms, with 32 total buildings, housing 40 instructional spaces.

Portables and temporary classrooms are a common feature of American schools, but are usually erected to meet enrollment fluctuations or to house temporary programs. Nationally, the average square footage of portables is

10 percent of the total gross square footage at the elementary level and 5 percent at the high school and middle school level.

Thirteen percent of the instructional spaces being used by the district are in portable buildings, which is 3 percent more than the industry standard. If the industry standard were used, the district would have only 10 percent of its 311 instructional spaces, or 23 in portables. **Exhibit 4-25** shows the use of portable classrooms by school. Live Oak elementary has the most portables, as more than 35 percent of its instructional space consists of portable buildings. Fulton has more than 27 percent of its space in portables. Although the others are near the national averages, the district has no policy on the use, placement or removal of portable classrooms. Among other things, portable buildings are not on the district's energy management system, so their energy usage cannot be monitored as effectively as it can in the permanent structures.

Exhibit 4-25
ACISD Portable Building Use for Instructional Spaces

School Name	Total Instruction Spaces for the School	Instruction Spaces Housed in Portables	Percent of Instruction Spaces in Portables	Industry Standard (Percent/Numbers)	Difference Extra or (Under)
Live Oak Elementary	42	15	35.7%	10%/4	11
Fulton Elementary	44	12	27.3%	10%/4	8
Rockport Elementary	44	4	9.1%	10%/4	0
High School	91	7	7.7%	5%/5	2
Little Bay Elementary	26	2	7.7%	10%/3	(1)
Middle School	64	0	0.0%	5%/3	(3)
Total	311	40	12.9%	23	17

Source: ACISD building schematics and interviews with Maintenance supervisors.

In addition, there was a commitment by the previous superintendent that once the high school and middle school were completed, all portables at all the schools would be eliminated. As of October, 2001, there were still 32 portables being used across the district, housing 40 total instructional spaces.

Recommendation 48:

Establish a policy about the use of portables and eliminate the use of portables at under-used schools.

The policy should recognize the effects on the educational program and the possible overuse of common facilities (e.g., library, cafeteria or restrooms). The policy should also provide guidelines about placing, removing and disposing of portable classrooms.

Several options are available to the district in redistributing its students. One option, which the present superintendent is considering, is to close Rockport Elementary and convert Little Bay Elementary into pre-kindergarten and kindergarten, in turn converting Live Oak Elementary into first through third grades, Fulton Elementary into fourth and fifth grades and Rockport-Fulton Middle School into sixth through eighth grades. This option would need to be analyzed by the Transportation Department as well as the administration since it would require more buses traveling longer distances. The additional costs of transportation would need to be quantified and factored into any decision.

The second option is to close Rockport Elementary and use it for a facility and transportation barn, convert the transportation barn into a vocational education facility and split enrollment evenly among the remaining schools, with all elementary schools serving pre-kindergarten through fifth grade students.

A third option would be to eliminate all portables and redistribute students to other classrooms, keeping the existing schools and grade levels.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Facilities director gets accurate square footage numbers.	June 2002
2.	The Facilities director meets with school personnel, facilities staff and district administrative staff to prepare policy on portable classrooms, acquisition, usage and disposal.	July 2002 - October 2002
3.	The Facilities director submits the draft policy to the	November 2002

	superintendent for review.	
4.	The superintendent recommends the policy to the board.	December 2002
5.	The facilities personnel use the policy to guide decisions about the placement and removal of portable classrooms.	Ongoing beginning December 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 4

D. CONSTRUCTION PROJECT MANAGEMENT

When the school district has a capital project of any magnitude under construction, it needs to ensure it will be completed in an orderly and timely fashion with the assurance that all contractual documents and building specifications are met.

The only way to observe the quality of work in a construction project is continuous inspection. The periodic supervision and interpretation of the contract documents usually furnished by the architect does not normally provide the daily inspection necessary to protect the district's interests. Therefore, school districts often select someone well qualified to oversee the construction project and protect its interests by understanding the contract documents, being aware of the construction schedule, observing the work in progress, ensuring that the architect's representative is on the premises when required and seeing that all necessary inspections are completed.

FINDING

The district's architectural selection process is inadequate to ensure that a qualified person is selected for any major construction jobs.

ACISD has no formal architectural selection process. On past projects, architects have just submitted their resumes and proposals to the board. The results of this are many examples of architectural oversight from the district's recent construction and expansion projects. The middle school's gas pipes were not installed with the correct coating for a coastal environment, due to architectural oversight, and will have to be redone. In addition, heating and air conditioning units are undersized in the new middle school, PE rooms in the middle school were built with no water fountains and one toilet/one urinal and foam was installed instead of mortar on the east wing of the high school. Even though the district does not have any construction projects pending, it should have a process in place to keep past mistakes from being repeated. The superintendent is also considering several possible renovation projects like converting Rockport Elementary into an administration building and converting the existing administration building into educational facilities. These projects may require the use of architects.

The architect is one of the most important contributors in the planning/designing/constructing process for a new school building, addition to an existing building or a major renovation. This person actually

puts into form what the educators need and desire to house the stated educational program. As a result, considerable staff time and effort should be expended to secure the services of an architect who can serve the district well. Since architects tend to specialize, it is advisable to limit the choice of an architect from among those who have given special attention to school building planning and to select an architect whose services and school buildings have given satisfaction.

Recommendation 49:

Establish and implement a new architect selection process for future projects.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Facilities director identifies a pool of interested architects.	June 2002
2.	The Facilities director reviews materials sent by the architectural firms and completed questionnaires.	July 2002
3.	The Facilities director identifies five to ten firms that seem capable and interested and sends an additional questionnaire seeking further information, including names and addresses of former clients and facilities that can be visited.	July 2002
4.	The Facilities director chooses three firms and conducts an intensive background investigation of each by contacting former clients and colleagues and visiting facilities designed by the prospective firms.	August 2002
5.	The Facilities director holds interviews with the architects and their staff and visits their offices.	September 2002
6.	The Facilities director selects one firm and presents the candidate to the school board.	October 2002

FISCAL IMPACT This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 4

E. ENERGY MANAGEMENT

The energy problem is not an overwhelming crisis, but a new management challenge. School business officials have a critical need for technical assistance and information on saving energy and money on school utility bills.

Energy conservation in most school districts is not just a one-person responsibility or a one-time investment in hardware; energy conservation reaches virtually every level of a district and is affected by the attitudes and actions of each of its staff, as well as by the installation of energy conservation equipment.

An energy management system can be a very effective measure for reducing energy consumption. The energy management system can be used to monitor and control a building's or district's HVAC system, the major consumer of energy in academic buildings. A computerized energy management system (EMS) controls all key heating, ventilation, air conditioning and domestic water systems.

FINDING

ACISD uses electricity, natural gas and water as its sources of energy. **Exhibit 4-26** shows the suppliers, units of measure and total energy costs for 2000-01.

Exhibit 4-26
Energy Used by ACISD
2000-01

Type of Energy	Supplier	Unit of Measure	Cost
Electricity	Central Power and Light (CP&L)	Kilowatt hour (Kwh)	\$672,227
Water	City of Rockport	Hundred gallons	\$105,114
Natural gas	Aransas Natural Gas	Hundred cubic feet (Ccf)	\$42,053
Total			\$819,394

Source: ACISD General Ledger, 2000-01.

ACISD has been meeting with energy providers to discuss rate structures that will reduce its overall energy costs. One meeting resulted in a proposed price for each kilowatt of almost half of what the district is paying. The district has submitted a request for proposal to find the most competitive energy package.

Commendation

ACISD is requesting energy proposals in the deregulated electricity market in order to reduce its overall energy costs.

FINDING

ACISD has an energy management system but does not optimize the use of the system. The district purchased an energy management system, CSI, at a price of \$500,000 in 1998 to manage its energy usage. Phase I retrofitted the central and window AC units and the water heaters at the high school, old junior high and Little Bay, Rockport, Live Oak and Fulton Elementary schools. TAC (formerly Tour & Andersson Control), the company that installed CSI, is paid from the monthly energy savings. This contract will be paid over 10 years. Phase II was an installation contract for the new construction areas of the middle school and the high school commons area. ACISD paid to install the equipment in Phase II and obtain the energy savings from the system.

The ACISD board policy says that before entering into a contract for energy or water conservation measures, the board wants the cost savings projected by an offer reviewed by a licensed professional engineer who is not an officer or employee of an offeror for the contract under review. The district did not comply with its own policy, as no one other than the vendor reviewed the projected cost savings before the contract was signed.

For about eight months, there was no district employee capable of operating the system. Now, the district has temporarily assigned the energy management function to one of the computer technology personnel who has gained a basic knowledge of the system. The employee has trained the Maintenance air conditioning employee to take over the operation of the system and to be the district's oversight person for energy management. Only half of this employee's time is devoted to energy management, however, as the other half is spent doing air conditioning repair work for the Maintenance Department.

The documentation the district has for CSI is very basic and the personnel assigned to manage and oversee the unit has attended basic classes but needs to continue with more advanced classes.

System constraints have not been maintained in the last three years to reflect actual living conditions. Based on information from the energy personnel, it would take one person - concentrating on nothing else - an entire week to fix all of the system constraints. However, they believe this could save the district's energy consumption and cost. Also, some demand meters (i.e., middle school) do not react well when all the units come on at the same time. Energy personnel believe staggering the meters would relieve this problem.

Recommendation 50:

Appoint a full-time energy manager.

Appoint a person from the maintenance staff to manage energy operations in the district full-time. This person would need training on the energy management system installed by Control Systems International (CSI), now owned by TAC.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent appoints a new energy manager from existing qualified staff.	September 2002
2.	The superintendent sends appropriate personnel to software training classes, as well as an additional employee as backup.	October 2002
3.	The superintendent dedicates personnel resources to setting the proper parameters for the energy management system and staggering the meters.	October 2002
4.	The energy manager trains teachers and administrators on basic procedures for usage (see conservation section).	November 2002 - May 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

According to TAC, a typical training class is \$1,295. They recommend two to three classes for someone new to the system. All classes are held in their Carrollton, Texas office near Dallas. For two classes, the cost would be \$2,590. According to the company's website, www.tac-americas.com, several hotels are available nearby for \$50 to \$100 a night. Classes typically last from Monday to Friday, so a hotel would be necessary for five nights. At \$50 a night, the total hotel cost would be \$1,000 for 10 nights. The total for two classes would be \$2,590 plus \$1,000, or \$3,590.

ACISD has sufficient staff to perform this function, with the specified training. Savings from energy management would occur but are not

included in the fiscal impact because savings depend on which energy management strategies are adopted.

Recommendation	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Appoint a full-time energy manager.	(\$3,590)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

FINDING

ACISD's board has not formally expressed its commitment to energy conservation, except to the extent that the district may enter into a contract for energy or water conservation measures to reduce energy or water consumption.

A school board's commitment to energy conservation is a key link between the community and its school district. Traditionally, board policy is the district's guide, authorization and mandate. A strong board policy for energy conservation tells administrators, teachers and other staff that:

- this board and community believe in saving energy;
- this community views excessive energy use as wasted tax money; and
- this community wants the district to actively pursue reasonable ways to save energy.

The board policies do not contain any standards on recommended heating and cooling temperatures, lighting levels, hot water temperatures or each building's total energy consumption.

Recommendation 51:

Create a districtwide energy management policy.

ACISD has only one energy policy, which allows the district to enter into a contract for energy or water conservation measures to reduce consumption. **Exhibit 4-27** shows a sample energy policy.

**Exhibit 4-27
Sample Energy Policy**

Potential Policy Statement
Recognizing our responsibility as Trustees of the Independent School District, we believe that every effort should be made to conserve energy and our natural resources. We also believe that this commitment will be beneficial to our students

and taxpayers in prudent financial management and the saving of energy. The fulfillment of this policy is the joint responsibility of the trustees, administrators, teachers, students and the support personnel. Cooperation shall be experienced on all levels for the success of this policy. The district will maintain accurate records of energy consumption and cost of energy on a monthly basis. An energy audit will be conducted annually at each school and recommendations will be made for updating the energy program. Energy conservation guidelines and procedures will be reviewed and accepted or rejected by the Board of Trustees. Information will be furnished to the media on the goals and progress of the Energy Conservation Program. Progress reports on the results of the energy conservation measures shall be made to the Board of Trustees at least semi-annually.

Source: www.window.state.tx.us/tspr/energy/policy.html

Whatever the size of the district, the superintendent's commitment to energy management is essential. The superintendent and his staff are responsible for implementing the plan. It should include the following items:

- Goals and objectives;
- Management direction and personnel assignments;
- Resource allocation and control;
- Program monitoring and evaluation; and
- Periodic reporting to the board.

A sample of administrative regulations for a school energy conservation program is shown in **Exhibit 4-28**.

Exhibit 4-28
Sample of Energy Conservation Administrative Regulations

Commitment Statement
Declining levels of natural energy resources and the economic reality of increased costs of utility services mandate that an effective energy conservation program be adopted on an immediate and long-range basis for ACISD. Strong commitment and support will be expected from all school district administrators, staff and students.
Energy conservation program development, management and implementation will be as follows:
ACISD Energy Conservation Committee: The superintendent shall appoint this committee, limited in number for effective functioning, consisting of district staff and selected citizen members who have special expertise in this area. The purpose of the committee will be to assist in formulating and establishing immediate and

long-range program priorities and to review and evaluate progress. The committee shall meet at least quarterly.

Energy Conservation Administrative Team: This team will include the superintendent, a building principal, a business administrator, the Facilities director, a teacher, a maintenance or custodial staff member, a representative from food services, a representative from the PTO, a representative from a utility company, an engineer or architect and the Director of Transportation. Careful selection of persons sincerely interested in the project and willing to participate is essential. This team will be responsible for decision-making and employee adherence to policies and regulations. The team will set preliminary and continuing benchmarks, set priorities for action and evaluate the energy program's success. The team will be involved in budgetary and capital outlay priorities and will be the reporting unit to the School District Energy Conservation Committee on a semi-annual basis. Energy Management Officer: The Facilities director will assume responsibility as the Energy Management Officer. Responsibilities shall include:

- collecting utility consumption data for all buildings;
- completing energy audits for all district buildings;
- formulating energy conservation guidelines for buildings;
- assisting in implementation, recommending and/or providing cost data for mechanical/electrical equipment and building changes designed to conserve energy; and
- maintaining data showing results achieved in the energy conservation program.

The success of the program requires this position be assigned a manager's responsibility. The officer's appointment should be publicly announced and given both internal and external significance with duties and responsibilities clearly stated.

Source: <<http://www.window.state.tx.us/tspr/energy/policy.html>>

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The appointed energy management officer develops a policy that clearly states the district's commitment to a strong energy management program and presents it to the superintendent.	June 2002
2.	The superintendent presents policies to the board for approval.	July 2002
3.	The energy management officer carefully plans and develops energy use guidelines and monitoring procedures.	August 2002 - September 2002

4.	The energy management officer periodically follows up on reports and evaluates efforts to see that established energy usage guidelines are followed.	October 2002
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FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

ACISD does not measure, record and use energy consumption data to prevent mechanical or operational failures or to save energy throughout the district.

The district does not perform an energy analysis, including the annual energy use for each of its facilities. It also does not make comparisons between buildings in the district. ACISD does not analyze energy data to identify high-energy users nor does it circulate energy consumption data to appropriate individuals or departments to plan for future expenditures or pinpoint maintenance problems. Decision-makers need energy use information if they are to understand and participate in the energy conservation program. This information would also be helpful in determining equipment that should be replaced with more energy-efficient equipment.

Detailed monitoring of energy consumption at the building level produces the most effective conservation practices in small school districts, according to industry experts. Administrators who are comparing the efficiency of their operation with that of other districts are in a better position to recommend changes and improvements that will result in energy conservation. However, comparative data must first be available for the district to use.

Exhibit 4-29 shows the energy costs for ACISD for the last four years and its budget for the present fiscal year. Because the district does not analyze its energy usage and costs, it cannot determine if the 78 percent increase in its utility costs is due to increased usage or increased rates.

**Exhibit 4-29
Electric, Gas and Water Costs for ACISD
1997-98 through 2001-02 Budget**

Type of Energy	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	Change
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Electricity	\$432,635	\$506,984	\$529,227	\$672,227	\$776,566	79%
Natural Gas	\$26,499	\$12,262	\$10,105	\$42,053	\$60,276	127%
Water/Wastewater	\$76,198	\$87,323	\$87,754	\$105,114	\$115,995	52%
Total	\$535,332	\$606,569	\$627,086	\$819,394	\$952,837	78%
Number of Students	3,558	3,493	3,502	3,366	3,360	(6%)
Cost for each student	\$150	\$174	\$179	\$243	\$284	89%

Source: ACISD General Ledger, 1997-98 through 2001-02.

ACISD is spending \$29,000-\$45,000 more than schools in its region of the American School and University organization. The American School and University organization conducts an annual maintenance and operations cost study. A survey is distributed to the chief business officer of school districts with enrollment of more than 600 students. The questionnaire asks administrators to document various M&O costs. The survey results calculate medians by region. In this particular survey, Regional Education Service Center VI (Region 6) encompassed the states of Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas.

Exhibit 4-30 shows that ACISD is spending \$8.69 more for each student than its regional counterparts, or more than \$29,000 in additional expenditures; and eight cents more a square foot than the regional average, translating into \$45,066 in additional expenditures.

Exhibit 4-30
Utility Cost Comparison
1999-2000

Utility Cost Comparison	ACISD	Industry Study Regional Average	Difference	ACISD Student Enrollment and Square Footage	Additional Utility Expense Incurred by ACISD
Utility cost for each student	\$198.26	\$189.57	\$8.69	3,366	\$29,251
Utility cost a square foot	\$1.24	\$1.15	\$0.09	560,199	\$50,418

Source: 30th American School and University's Annual Maintenance and Operations Cost Study, www.asumag.com. ASU's Regional Education Service Center VI (Region 6) includes Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Arkansas and New Mexico. TEA PEIMS Data, 1999-2000.

ACISD spends \$694,304 annually for electricity, gas, water, telephones and fuel. For every 10 percent saved on energy by employing energy conservation measures, ACISD could realize \$69,000 in reduced expenditures. Comal Independent School District implemented an energy conservation program and reduced its costs to 54 cents for each square foot of energy. This is 46 cents below a national benchmark, saving the district \$600,000 annually. Comal employs a half-time energy manager to accomplish these savings.

Energy conservation is necessary to using fiscal resources most efficiently. As school buildings continue to age and levels of deferred maintenance are at an all-time high, the need to monitor energy consumption will continue. Energy conservation practices at ACISD are limited, as shown in examples noted by the review team during its two weeks in the district. These include:

- window air conditioning units with no relay switches;
- lights with no watt stoppers;
- vending machines that were lit 24 hours a day, using excessive energy;
- no automatic light turn-off in the Central Administration building and the A/C still set at 68 degrees at 5:00 p.m.;
- the high school boys' gym was very cold (A/C running full blast) and the door was ajar;
- A/C maintenance portables were freezing (A/C was running full blast) with no one in them;
- during walk-around of schools, many rooms were found with the A/C blasting and no one in the room;
- portables not on the energy management system;
- some of the window units were replaced with cheaper units, instead of consulting the A/C people who would have suggested a higher quality unit or refurbishing the old ones.

Although the administration has been focusing more of its attention on energy, more needs to be done in this area. The district has not committed to writing realistic energy-saving goals. It has not obtained support from the principals, teachers, students, cafeteria workers, facility managers and cleaning crews or linked its budget to its energy plan.

ACISD does not have a clear policy on temperature levels to notify both teachers and custodians of expected classroom temperatures leading to increased accountability and decreased controversy.

Standards do not exist for lighting, measured in foot-candles, which should be measured at the task or work level as depicted in **Exhibit 4-31**. The higher levels in the chart may be necessary in some areas in a room (i.e., near a blackboard) while in others, the lower end of the range may be adequate.

Exhibit 4-31
Standards for Illumination Levels in a School

Type of Space	Recommended Cooling Level Description	Standard
Auditorium	Assemblies; Stage/Exhibition; Social Activities	10-50 FC
Cafeteria		20-50 FC
Classrooms	General Use; Demonstration Area; Assemblies	30-50 FC*
Gymnasium	General exercise; exhibition/matches	20-30 FC
Gymnasium	Assemblies	60 FC**
Libraries		30-60 FC
Offices		30-50 FC
Services	Store Rooms	10 FC
Services	Toilets/Washrooms; Locker Rooms	10-30 FC
Vocational Ed***	Shops	30-50 FC
Vocational Ed	Drafting; Typing	40-60 FC

Source: "Part I - Conservation Guidelines," p. 8. School District Energy Manual (Association of School Business Officials International)

*Note: *75FC for children with limited vision.*

***Special lighting for sports contests only.*

****Task lighting should be used for visually difficult work.*

Recommendation 52:

Implement a comprehensive energy management program.

The program should include monitoring energy in all buildings with the Sample Energy Use Guide in **Exhibit 4-32**, using energy conservation throughout the district and using energy consumption data to plan for future expenditures and to pinpoint maintenance problems.

**Exhibit 4-32
Sample Energy Use Guide**

District Building Energy Use Guide	
Name of Building:	_____
Year Built:	_____ Grades Housed: _____
Capacity:	_____
Current Consumption - Conversion Functions	
# BTUs =KWH (Kilowatt Hour) x 3,413	
=MCF (Million cubic feet) x 1,030,000	
	Electricity KWH BTU cost Gas MCF BTU Cost Water Total
January	
February	
March	
April	
May	
June	
July	
August	
September	
October	
November	
December	

**Exhibit 4-32 (continued)
Sample Energy Use Guide**

Year-end Totals	
Building – Gross square feet _____	Consumption (BTU) per square ft. a year:
Appurtances – Gross square feet _____	Gas _____
Number of Pupils (FTE) _____	Electricity _____
Sq. Ft. Heated/Cooled by	
Gas _____	Consumption (BTU) for each pupil a year:
Sq. Ft Heated/Cooled by	Gas _____
Electricity _____	Electricity _____
Cost for each pupil a year:	
Gas _____	
Electricity _____	

Source: "Monitoring Energy Consumption The Energy Use Guide and Energy Use Index Program" by Dr. David S. Honeyman and Dr. R. Craig Wood. Maintenance & Operations and the School Business Administrator.

The district can do many kinds of analyses to determine if its energy costs are excessive - compare consumption with other districts, look at regional and national averages, compare consumption among buildings within the district, calculate simple paybacks to determine priorities for quick-fix and refit, evaluate program success by comparing year-to-year data among districts and by buildings, calculate costs avoided and energy saved and establish a basis for reports to the board. The district should also raise consciousness by publishing information for each building, sharing it with administrators, teachers, staff and students and by giving recognition for the greatest savings.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The energy management officer identifies all energy meters and assigns to the appropriate district building.	June 2002
2.	The business manager collects usage and cost information for electricity, water and gas for the last three years to compare with present and future energy use.	June 2002
3.	The energy management officer uses the District Building Energy Use Guide to record monthly energy usage and cost information.	July 2002
4.	The energy management officer uses the Energy Awareness checklist to make a checklist specific to ACISD, adding new items where appropriate.	July 2002
5.	The energy management officer discusses list with maintenance and custodial staff and makes teachers, administrators and other personnel aware of the items.	July 2002 - August 2002

6.	The energy management officer implements ideas.	September 2002
7.	The energy management officer follows up to see that ideas are being implemented.	October 2002

FISCAL IMPACT This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 5

ASSET AND RISK MANAGEMENT

This chapter reviews ACISD's asset and risk management functions in three sections.

- A. Cash and Investment Management
- B. Insurance Management
- C. Fixed Asset Management

Effective asset and risk management protects the district from unforeseen financial risks at a reasonable cost; maximizes the return on district investments, while safeguarding the district's cash and ensuring liquidity to meet fluctuating cash-flow demands; and accounts for fixed assets efficiently, while internal controls safeguard them against theft or misuse.

Chapter 5

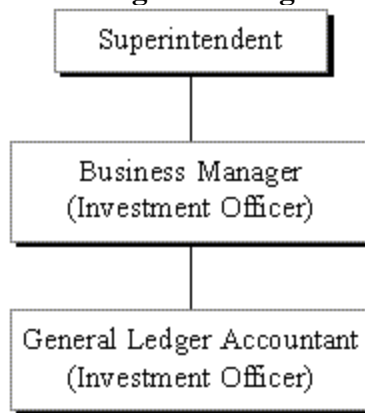
A. CASH AND INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT

Effective cash management programs provide competitive rates of return through various investment instruments; follow a comprehensive, board-approved written investment policy; and train personnel to become skilled in investment procedures and to stay abreast of current money markets.

Effective investment programs invest excess cash in accounts or instruments that become available in time to meet anticipated expenses. The program should invest all funds until they are needed to maximize interest earnings.

Exhibit 5-1 depicts ACISD's organizational structure for its cash management function.

Exhibit 5-1
Cash Management Organization



Source: ACISD Interviews with the business manager, October 2001.

Personnel in the district's Business Office perform cash management transactions in addition to their other duties. The roles and responsibilities for the business manager and general ledger accountant are shown in **Exhibit 5-2**.

Exhibit 5-2
Cash Management Roles and Responsibilities

Position	Roles and Responsibilities
----------	----------------------------

Business Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversee cash and investment management activities. • Prepare monthly reports for the board. • Handle bids and investments in securities. • Ensure that the district has appropriate financial policies. • Manage banking relationships.
General Ledger Accountant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage the daily activities of cash and investment management. • Invest idle funds. • Maximize interest earnings. • Maintain the safety and security of district funds. • Examine the prior day's banking activity daily. • Recommend a level for the daily cash balance.

Source: ACISD interviews with Business Office staff, October 2001.

ACISD has 10 bank accounts with its depository, the International Bank of Commerce (IBC), and invests idle funds with TexPool or in the MBIA Insurance Corporation. District deposits as of September 30, 2001 are shown in **Exhibit 5-3**.

Exhibit 5-3
ACISD Bank & Investment Accounts
As of September 30, 2001

Account Type	Balance
International Bank of Commerce (IBC)	
Budget	\$90,570
Cafeteria	\$14,265
Construction	\$1,876
Interest & Sinking	\$800
Local Maintenance	\$249,492
Operations	\$131,891
Payroll	\$362,259
Special Revenue	\$204,189

Athletic Budget	\$1,846
Misc. Activity	\$4,589
Total	\$1,061,777
TexPool	
Local Maintenance	\$1,721,376
Interest & Sinking	\$3,768
Total	\$1,725,144
MBIA	
Local Maintenance	\$490,572
Interest & Sinking	\$113,466
Construction	\$64,135
Total	\$668,173
Total Cash & Investments	\$3,455,094

Source: ACISD bank statements, September 30, 2001.

In June 2001, the district released a request for proposals (RFP) for a new banking contract for the two years beginning September 1, 2001 and ending August 31, 2003. The RFP was sent to all four local banks; the contract was awarded to IBC. The bank offers the district unlimited checking accounts with a variable rate of interest on the balance. The interest rate is equal to the 91 days U.S. T-Bill "asked" rate less 75 basis points, as published in the *Wall Street Journal* as of the first of each month and recalculated monthly thereafter. A basis point is one hundredth of a percent (0.01 percent). It is used to measure changes in or differences between yields or interest rates. On September 30, 2001, the district's accounts were earning 2.58 percent.

The bank requires the district to keep a balance of \$200,000 in its special revenue account at all times. In return, the district does not pay service charges for wire transfers, stop-payment orders, telephone transfers, cashier's checks or safekeeping services. The district pays only for deposit slips, printed checks and endorsement stamps, all of which are charged to the district at the bank's cost.

The bank, in turn, pledges that it retains securities to a maximum of \$5 million to protect the district's funds on deposit. This means that if the bank were to close down unexpectedly, the district would receive enough in securities to cover its deposits.

FINDING

ACISD's cash management lacks the internal controls it needs to reduce the likelihood of fraud or theft. The district's check-signing machine is located in its vault, with the signature plates always in the machine. All Business Office employees have access to the vault 24 hours a day, seven days a week, since they have keys to the building that houses the Business Office and the combination to open the vault. Check stock is kept in the vault or in employees' desks, making it possible for an employee to write unauthorized checks without detection.

Moreover, the district's general ledger accountant makes cash transfers between bank accounts, has access to check stock and reconciles all bank statements. These duties must be segregated among staff members who handle cash for proper internal control.

The Texas Education Agency's (TEA's) *Financial Accountability System Resource Guide* (FASRG) states that each school district should have an internal control structure that provides reasonable assurance that the district's assets are safeguarded from unauthorized use or disposition.

Recommendation 53:

Create sound internal controls to ensure that district assets are safeguarded.

The check-signing machines should have their signature plates removed. These plates should be locked up at all times. When checks are needed, the business manager should insert the plate and remove it again once the checks are signed.

All check stock should be stored in the vault in a locked file cabinet. The accounts payable clerk should retrieve the check stock only when it is needed. The business manager should keep a log for each check, detailing the date of issue, the recipient and the check number. Another person within the Business Office should be authorized to keep a backup set of keys to the file cabinet. The business manager should not have access to the keys to the file cabinet containing the check stock.

The business manager should change the combination to the vault. The business manager should open the vault every morning and lock it every evening. The superintendent or his designee should know the combination to the vault, but no one else. The business manager should designate an employee other than the general ledger accountant to perform bank reconciliations, since the accountant performs all bank transfers and can issue checks on district bank accounts.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the business manager to remove signature plates from the check-signing machine and lock them in her desk.	June 2002
2.	The superintendent directs the business manager to move all check stock from desk areas and lock it in a file cabinet in the vault. The business manager gives file-cabinet keys to the accounts payable clerk and a backup employee.	June 2002
3.	The superintendent directs the business manager to change the combination to the vault. The combination is given to the superintendent or his designee.	June 2002
4.	The business manager designates a Business Office employee to reconcile all district bank accounts.	June 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

ACISD is not maximizing its interest earnings. It is difficult to determine how much excess cash is not being used effectively, since the general ledger accountant does not forecast cash flow.

Instead, the general ledger accountant simply examines amounts left in the district's checking accounts each day, and compares them to the accounts payable and payroll checks that will be released. The general ledger accountant also examines incoming local fund deposits from the county tax assessor-collector. If the amounts remaining in the district's bank accounts seem too low or too high after this cursory examination, the general ledger accountant transfers cash to or from TexPool or MBIA.

TSPR's review of district business checking accounts from September 2000 through August 2001 showed an average ending balance of \$685,455, or \$485,455 less the \$200,000 balance the district is obliged to maintain. As of September 30, 2001, the TexPool interest rate was 3.47 percent, while IBC's rate was 2.58 percent.

Cash flow forecasting is identifying the amount of money available each day, month and year and then making decisions based on the information. Districts that successfully use cash flow projection reports estimate the amount of expected revenue from each funding source and the timing of those revenues, as well as the planned expenditures.

Midland ISD developed an automated cash flow forecasting system that allows cash managers to project cash needs closely. Excess funds are left in long-term investment accounts. Midland ISD has earned more than \$50,000 in additional interest since creating the system.

Recommendation 54:

Develop an automated cash flow forecasting system to invest idle funds in higher-yielding securities.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The business manager develops a cash flow forecasting spreadsheet and accompanying report.	July 2002
2.	The business manager or designee updates the spreadsheet on a monthly basis and invests excess cash in higher-yielding securities until needed.	September 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This estimate is based on the average balance for all district checking accounts for September 2000 through August 2001 multiplied by the difference in the interest rate between TexPool and IBC as of September 30, 2001. The average ending balance in district checking accounts less the compensating balance was \$485,455. The difference between IBC's interest rate and TexPool's interest rate was 0.89 percent (3.47 TexPool minus 2.58 IBC). Based on these figures, the district could earn \$4,320 in additional interest income annually (\$485,455 X .0089). If the district invests its excess funds in overnight certificates of deposit or other higher-yielding instruments, the interest earnings would be greater.

Recommendation	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Develop an automated cash flow forecasting system to invest idle funds in higher-yielding securities.	\$4,320	\$4,320	\$4,320	\$4,320	\$4,320

FINDING

ACISD is not following board-approved cash and investment policies. The district's investment policies and the district's actual actions are shown in **Exhibit 5-4**.

**Exhibit 5-4
Investment Policy Support**

Board Policy	TSPR Assessment
The investment committee shall be comprised of the board president or a designee, superintendent, business manager and a community member. They shall meet during the first two weeks of each quarter to identify investment strategies.	The general ledger accountant and the business manager are both designated investment officers for the district. No community member serves on the investment committee and the district's investment officers were not sure which board member was assigned to the investment committee. The investment committee does not meet during the first two weeks of every quarter.
The district shall have procedures to project cash flow requirements on a weekly, monthly and annual basis in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.	The district does not project cash flows.
The district shall prepare cash flow statements monthly for every designated fund.	The district does not prepare formal cash flow statements on a monthly basis.
The district will develop and document a system of internal controls that specifically designate who has authority to withdraw funds.	The Business Office has no documented procedures concerning internal controls or authority to withdraw funds. The board has specified who has check-signing authority and this documentation was provided to IBC when IBC was chosen to be the district's depository.

Source: ACISD board policy and interviews with Business Office staff, October 2001.

A school district board's policy and intent should be accompanied by written procedures that implement those directives and control risk. Administrative controls must ensure that all policies, rules and laws are being followed.

Ensuring that controls are in place and that district policy is carried out as intended will decrease a district's financial risks, protect the district from criticism, ensure that the district achieves the highest rate of return on its investments and enhance public trust.

Recommendation 55:

Develop a procedure to ensure compliance with board-approved investment policies.

Policy sets broad objectives and guidelines defining the board's intentions; procedures establish the steps needed to fulfill those intentions and ensure that no one deviates from the plan of action.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the business manager to review the district's investment policies and draft a procedures manual detailing how the district will comply with them.	June 2002
2.	The superintendent reviews the action plan.	June 2002
3.	The superintendent reviews the action plan with the board.	July 2002
4.	The business manager executes the action plan.	September 2002 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The Business Office does not regularly review and audit ACISD's student activity and petty cash funds. Petty cash is small amounts of cash maintained by a department on-site, not in a bank account, used to make miscellaneous small or emergency purchases. Student activity funds are bank accounts districts use to account for student-generated money, such as money spent on school vending machines. Principals are allowed to control and spend these funds as needed for the purposes for which they were generated, such as student clubs and groups. Districts generally maintain separate bank accounts for activity funds. Some districts centralize activity fund accounting in the district's finance or business office, while other districts permit the schools to account for these funds, as is the case at ACISD. All Texas school districts are required to include activity funds in an annual financial audit conducted by independent auditors.

At ACISD, each of the four elementary schools has an activity fund, while the middle school and high school each have two-one used to track money raised in fundraisers and the other used to track funds raised by student clubs. All eight of these checking accounts are held at IBC Bank. Cash

management processes are similar at each school. Two signatures are required on all checks; cash is locked up at night; and all accounts are reconciled within two months. Each month, the Business Office receives general ledger printouts, reports that show the types of transactions for each account, and bank reconciliations.

The district has three petty cashboxes at the Maintenance Department, Transportation Department and the front desk in the central office (**Exhibit 5-5**). The high school athletic office also has a checking account that is reimbursed through a funds transfer when receipts for expenditures are submitted to the Business Office.

**Exhibit 5-5
Petty Cash Accounts**

Department	General Ledger Balance as of October 22, 2001
Maintenance	\$200
Transportation	\$150
Central Office	\$750

Source: General ledger statement from Business Office, 2001-02.

TSPR audited the Transportation and central office petty cashboxes. The central office petty cashbox differed from the general ledger by \$50 and had been that way for quite some time, according to the Business Office. The Transportation petty cashbox differed from the general ledger by \$3.67. The Maintenance petty cash box could not be audited because the cash in the box was being delivered to the Business Office for reimbursement.

Without proper procedures to safeguard petty cash and student activity funds, the district has no guarantee that money given to school administration is safe from theft and mismanagement.

The FASRG contains an example of a manual designed to provide a set of standardized accounting guidelines and procedures for the administration of activity funds.

Recommendation 56:

Develop procedures to regularly review petty cash and student activity funds to ensure their safekeeping.

The district should follow the procedures for petty cash fund operations outlined in the FASRG.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the business manager to develop procedures for the management of petty cash and student activity funds, including a schedule specifying how often the Business Office will audit them.	June 2002
2.	The business manager develops these procedures and submits them to the superintendent for review.	June 2002
3.	The superintendent reviews the procedures.	June 2002
4.	The business manager ensures that they are followed.	August 2002 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 5

B. INSURANCE MANAGEMENT

Risk management is an essential part of school district operations. Rising costs for health, property and liability insurance coverage require administrators to maintain cost-containment programs. Successful risk management programs start with strong support from the governing board, superintendent and senior financial administrators. Sound risk management involves several activities:

- analyzing alternatives to insurance coverage such as self-insurance and other industry trends;
- analyzing insurance plans, including deductible amounts, co-insurance levels, and types of coverage provided;
- assessing hazards and creating programs to minimize exposure to potential losses; and
- continuously monitoring the district's compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

The Business Office manages the district's insurance coverage. The business manager oversees the process and a department clerk handles claims processing and all communication with the insurance companies. The district's insurance coverage is shown in **Exhibit 5-6**.

Exhibit 5-6
ACISD's Insurance Coverage
2001-02

Coverage	Effective/ Expiration Dates	Limits	Premium	Deductible Amount	Insurance Company
Auto Liability	10/01/01- 09/01/02	\$100,000 per person \$300,000 per accident	\$51,286	\$500	Texas Assn. of Public Schools
Auto Physical Damage	10/01/01 - 09/01/02	Scheduled vehicles	\$23,428	\$2,500	Allstate Insurance
Boiler & Machinery	10/01/01 - 10/01/02	\$10,000,000	\$3,386	\$1,000	Travelers
Building & Contents	10/01/01- 12/01/01	\$51,885,751	\$146,340	\$25,000	Allstate Insurance

Flood Coverage Administration Building	8/17/01 - 8/17/02	\$389,700 building \$63,800 contents	\$768	\$500	Bankers Insurance
Educators' Legal Liability	10/01/01 - 09/01/02	\$1,000,000 per claim and in the aggregate for the policy year	\$19,548	\$25,000	Texas Assn. of Public Schools
Flood Coverage Building A Classrooms: 2000 Highway 35 N. Bldg A.	08/28/01 - 08/28/02	\$389,700 building; \$0 contents	\$1,043	\$500	Bankers Insurance
Flood Coverage Building B Classrooms: 2000 Highway 35 N. Bldg B.	08/28/01 - 08/28/02	\$389,700 building; \$0 contents	\$1,043	\$500	Bankers Insurance
Flood Coverage High School Gym 1700 Omohundro	09/16/01 - 09/16/02	\$354,300 building; \$60,900 contents	\$731	\$500	Bankers Insurance
General Liability	10/01/01-09/01/02	\$1,000,000 per occurrence	\$7,867	\$1,000	Texas Assn. of Public Schools
Law Enforcement Liability	10/01/01-10/01/02	\$1,000,000 per occurrence \$2,000,000 annually	\$1,528	\$5,000	Scottsdale Indemnity Company
Storage Tank Systems	10/01/01 - 10/01/02	\$1,000,000	\$1,073	\$5,000	Zurich

Source: ACISD insurance policies, 2001-02.

ACISD sends out RFPs every June to ensure it receives the best coverage and price for its insurance coverage. The district's five-year loss history- the number and amount of claims paid by the insurance company on the district's behalf each year- is shown in **Exhibit 5-7**.

Exhibit 5-7
Five-Year Loss History by Coverage
1996-97 through 2000-01

Insurance Coverage	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01
Fleet - Comp & Liability	\$74,039(2)*	\$4,936(3)*	\$75,476(10)*	\$15,803(8)*	\$410(1)*
Property & Casualty	\$28,141(4)*	\$75,300(1)*	\$0	\$25,367(1)*	\$0
School Board Legal Liability	\$0	\$0	\$264,338(1)*	\$0	\$0

Source: ACISD details of losses incurred from Business Office, 1996-97 through 2000-01.

**Note: The total cost of all claims is included first. The number of claims filed is shown in parenthesis after the total cost of the claims.*

ACISD offers its employees health insurance, life and accidental death and dismemberment coverage. Health insurance coverage costs and the amount contributed to the coverage by the district are shown in **Exhibit 5-8**.

Exhibit 5-8
Costs and Coverage of Employee Benefits
2001-02

	Rate	Employer Contribution	Employee Contribution
Preferred Provider Organization (PPO)			
Employee	\$369.04	\$280.00	\$89.04
Employee and Spouse	\$830.40	\$280.00	\$550.40
Employee & Child(ren)	\$738.14	\$280.00	\$458.14
Employee and Family	\$1,107.20	\$280.00	\$827.20
Select (HMO) Rates			
Employee	\$288.46	\$280.00	\$8.46

Employee and Spouse	\$649.08	\$280.00	\$369.08
Employee & Child(ren)	\$576.90	\$280.00	\$296.90
Employee and Family	\$865.44	\$280.00	\$585.44

Source: ACISD benefit information, 2001-02.

The district has enrolled in the state insurance plan beginning in 2002-03. The district's present health plan coverage, obtained through United Healthcare, offers the following services to employees who opt for health maintenance organization (HMO) coverage (**Exhibit 5-9**).

Exhibit 5-9
Group HMO Health Plan Benefits
2001-02

Type of Benefit	Network Service Paid by Employee
Deductible	N/A
Coinsurance	80%
Out of pocket Maximum	\$2,000/\$4,000
Maximum Policy Benefit	Unlimited
Physician Office Services	\$20
Maternity Services (office visits)	\$20
Preventative Care	\$20
Eye Examinations (refraction exam every two years)	\$20
Allergy Services (injections only, no copayment)	\$0
Professional Services - Surgery/Medical	20%
Inpatient Hospital Services	20%
Emergency Care	\$50
Urgent Care	\$35
Outpatient Surgery/Diagnostic Service	20%
Outpatient Mental Health (limit 30 visits)	\$20 ind/\$10 group
Inpatient Mental Health (limit 30 days)	20%
Substance Abuse Services (limit three series)	20%

Home Health Agency Services	20%
Skilled Nursing Facility (limit 60 days)	20%
Hospice Care (limit 180 days)	0%
Ambulance Services	0%
Accident-related Dental services	20%
Prosthetic & DME (limit \$2,500)	20%
Outpatient Rehabilitation Services	\$20
Infertility Services	20%
TMJ	20%
Diabetes Treatment	20%
Osteoporosis Detection & Prevention	20%
Pharmacy	\$10 copayment - generic \$20 copayment - brand name \$30\$ copayment - non-preferred
Select Organ & Tissue Transplant	Same as any other illness

Source: ACISD summary of benefits, 2001-02.

Employees who opt for the preferred provider organization (PPO) plan, which gives its participants more flexibility in choosing their doctor, receive the services shown in **Exhibit 5-10**.

Exhibit 5-10
Group PPO Health Plan Benefits
2001-02

Type of Benefit	Network Service Paid by Employee	Non- Network Service Paid by Employee
Deductible	\$250/\$500	\$500/\$1,000
Coinsurance	90%	70%
Out-of-Pocket Maximum	\$2,000/\$4,000	\$4,000/\$6,000
Non-Notification Penalty	\$250	\$250
Maximum Policy Benefit	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000

Physician Services Office visits for routine care, diagnosis and treatment of an illness or injury; maternity care before and after birth. Other than the initial visit, pre & post partum care are inclusive to the surgical charge for delivery.	\$20 for each visit	30% after deductible
Preventive care Periodic checkups, well child care, immunizations, PAP tests, mammography and well woman care.	\$20 for each visit	30% after deductible
Inpatient hospital services Semi-private room and board charges, intensive care, cardiac care, well-baby care.	10% after deductible	30% after deductible
Emergency care Services administered for conditions meeting the definition of an emergency.	\$50 for each emergency visit for all medically necessary treatment.	
Surgery Anesthesia and use of an operating room or related facility in a hospital or authorized institution.	10% after deductible	30% after deductible
Lab and X-ray services Services at an independent (non-hospital-based) facility.	10% after deductible	30% after deductible
Mental health/ chemical dependency		
Inpatient (limit 30 days)	10% after deductible	30% after deductible
Outpatient Facility	10% after deductible	30% after deductible
Outpatient Office Visit	\$20	30% after deductible
Physical Therapy (limit 20 visits)		
Outpatient Facility	10% after deductible	30% after deductible
Outpatient Office Visit	\$20	30% after deductible
Home Health Care (limit 40 days)	10% after deductible	30% after deductible
Skilled Nursing Facility (limit 120 days)	10% after deductible	30% after deductible

Hospice Care	10% after deductible	30% after deductible
DME (\$50,000 lifetime limit)	10% after deductible	30% after deductible
Pharmacy	\$10 copayment-generic \$20 copayment-brand name \$30 copayment-non-preferred	\$10 copayment-generic \$20 copayment-brand name \$30 copayment-non-preferred
Select Organ & Tissue Transplant	Same as any other illness	

Source: ACISD summary of benefits, 2001-02.

More than 83 percent of the district's employees participated in the healthcare plan offered by the district during 2000-01.

The district also provides its employees with workers' compensation coverage. The Deep East Texas Self Insurance Fund will provide this coverage through August 31, 2004.

FINDING

Due to the high cost of employee health insurance, the ACISD board voted to become a part of the new statewide school employee health insurance plan in 2002-03. To date, however, the district has not established an action plan for the transition to the state plan.

The 2001 Texas Legislature established a statewide health insurance plan for teachers and other school district employees. School districts with 500 or fewer employees, a group including more than 80 percent of the state's districts, will be required to participate in the new state insurance plan beginning in fall 2002. Districts with between 501 and 1,000 employees may join the plan, but must make this decision before September 30, 2001. ACISD voted to join at its September 2001 board meeting. Districts with more than 1,000 employees may join in 2005, unless the Teacher Retirement System (TRS) Board, which will administer the plan, determines that an earlier opt-in is feasible. Districts that do not join the state insurance plan still will receive state support to continue their local insurance programs.

All full-time employees and those part-time employees who are members of TRS are automatically covered by the basic state plan. To obtain higher levels of coverage will require additional district and employee

contributions. To assist with these costs, the state will send each district \$75 a month for each covered employee and will give each employee an additional \$1,000 annually (\$83 a month) to pay for additional coverage or 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 a month for each employee. If they are not already making this effort, the state will help them pay the local share for the next six years. Then the state will end this aid. Districts contributing more than \$150 a month for each employee must use the difference between their present expenditure and the required \$150 a month minimum effort to provide additional insurance coverage or other employee compensation. ACISD already pays \$280 for each employee's health insurance costs. The district will have to continue to make this contribution toward each employee's total benefits.

All details of the plan will be subject to contract negotiations with health insurance providers and actuarial estimates, as well as TRS rules and guidelines.

ACISD has not determined how the excess contribution above \$150 for each employee will be allocated to district employees and has not created a plan of action.

Recommendation 57:

Create an action plan to adopt the state health plan for 2002-03.

ACISD's contribution is greater than the \$150 a month minimum effort provided by the state, so it must plan how the remaining \$130 will be spent to benefit its employees.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the Human Resources coordinator to plan for the district's approach to the new employee health coverage.	June 2002
2.	The Human Resources coordinator creates an action plan detailing how the program should be implemented.	June 2002
3.	The superintendent and Human Resources coordinator present the plan to the board for review and approval.	July 2002
4.	Upon approval, the Human Resources coordinator communicates the plan to all staff members.	August 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

ACISD does not annually hire a private appraisal firm to estimate the value of its buildings' contents. An annual appraisal ensures the district's property insurance is sufficient to replace the facilities' contents in the event of a catastrophic event, such as a fire or flood.

Before November 2001, the district did not have current information on the value of its property as they had not conducted a property appraisal since 1997. In November 2001, however, ACISD contracted with RCI Technologies, Inc. to perform a complete inventory of its property. The company agreed to perform an appraisal of the buildings' contents for an additional \$200.

Without current information on the replacement value of its property, it is difficult for the district to estimate the correct amount of insurance it should purchase.

Recommendation 58:

Annually contract for a property appraisal to ensure the district's insurance coverage is adequate to protect the district's property in the event of a catastrophic loss.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the business manager to continue to contract with RCI or a comparable firm to provide a property appraisal for all buildings' contents annually.	June 2002
2.	The business manager directs RCI to determine replacement costs for all buildings' contents.	August 2002
3.	The business manager distributes a request for proposals for property insurance coverage using the actual replacement costs of all buildings' contents.	September 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

The cost for an RCI property appraisal that can be used for insurance purposes is \$200 per year.

Recommendation	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Annually contract for a property appraisal to ensure the district's insurance coverage is adequate to protect the district's property in the event of a catastrophic loss.	(\$200)	(\$200)	(\$200)	(\$200)	(\$200)

FINDING

ACISD has no policies or procedures for reviewing the causes and costs of its workers' compensation claims. The Business Office oversees all insurance coverage and related claims. The office does not, however, review the district's loss history to track trends in claims filed by employees. The Business Office could not provide TSPR with a list of employees who had missed work due to workers' compensation claims. The last district safety training provided to employees took place in 1999.

The district's workers' compensation premiums have been increasing due to a similar increase in the number and costs of employee claims. The district's cost for workers' compensation premiums has increased steadily over the last five years, with a 138 percent increase from 1997-98 to 2001-02 (**Exhibit 5-11**). However, district staffing has grown slightly, about 2.6 percent from 1997-98 to 2001-02. The increase is almost entirely due to the rising cost of claims, which has increased nearly 79 percent from 1997-98 to 2000-01.

Exhibit 5-11
Five-Year Workers' Compensation Premiums
1997-98 through 2001-02

Year	Cost of Workers' Compensation Coverage	Total Staff	Total Claims Incurred
1997-98	\$101,814	535	\$93,268
1998-99	\$109,706	557	\$55,955
1999-2000	\$108,934	543	\$124,311
2000-01	\$224,157	544	\$166,586
2001-02	\$242,320	549	Year in progress
Average	\$157,386	546	\$110,030

Source: ACISD Business Office, 1997-98 through 2001-02.

ACISD board policies state that the district shall take every reasonable precaution to guarantee the safety of its students, employees, visitors and all others with whom it conducts business. The superintendent or a designee shall be responsible for developing and promoting a comprehensive safety program. The policies direct the district to do this by inspecting work areas and equipment; training front-line and supervisory staff; establishing safe work procedures and regulations; reporting, investigating and reviewing accidents; and promoting responsibility for district property on the part of students, employees, and the community. The policies also state that the superintendent or designee shall be responsible for the collection, storage and analysis of the relevant operational and historical data needed to develop sound procedures for a comprehensive safety program.

Wimberley Independent School District (WISD) has a comprehensive safety-training program that is monitored and coordinated by the district's assistant superintendent. The district's workers' compensation claims generally are low, and the district pays a competitive premium rate. WISD contracts with vendors to handle employee safety training and accident prevention for maintenance, custodial, food service and transportation workers. Vendors provide regular safety training targeted for areas subject to major claims, such as food service and maintenance. The district holds custodial safety, policy and training meetings at least monthly. Various safety trends and techniques are discussed at these meetings, which incorporate guest speakers, videos, safety demonstrations and question-and-answer sessions. For example, WISD conducted a safety session on chemical safety and restroom cleaning techniques. Employees were introduced to new chemicals and dispensing systems and were given the opportunity to ask questions about restroom cleaning procedures.

Recommendation 59:

Develop policies and procedures to control the district's workers' compensation claims.

The district should track the trends in employee claims to identify training that should be provided to its employees. Training in proper lifting techniques could reduce many injuries, while stressing the importance of notifying passers-by of newly mopped areas could reduce claims due to falls.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the business manager to develop policies and procedures to control the district's workers' compensation costs.	June 2002
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2.	The superintendent directs the business manager to contact the insurance provider and discuss safety training.	July 2002
3.	The insurance provider or a recommended vendor creates a safety-training program for the district.	August 2002 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

ACISD's workers' compensation premiums for the last five years were \$101,814, \$109,706, \$108,934, \$224,157 and \$242,320 respectively, which totals \$786,931. Thus, the five-year average premium payment was \$157,386 (\$786,931 divided by five).

TSPR conservatively estimates that an improved safety program could reduce the district's current premium payment to this average level (\$242,320 - \$157,386 = \$84,934).

The fiscal impact assumes that it would take approximately two years for an improved loss history to begin reducing the district's premiums. Therefore, the fiscal impact is shown beginning in the year 2004-05.

Recommendation	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Develop policies and procedures to control the district's workers' compensation claims.	\$0	\$0	\$84,934	\$84,934	\$84,934

FINDING

ACISD does not follow up with employees who miss work due to workers' compensation injuries to ensure that they return to work as soon as possible. The sooner such employees return to work, the sooner they will stop drawing workers' compensation and the lower the total claim-and, ultimately, the district's premium- will be.

ACISD's Human Resources coordinator tracks all employees who miss work due to work-related injuries to comply with the Federal Medical Leave Act. Five district employees who were injured during the 1999-2000 and 2000-01 school years had not returned to work as of October 2001. The Human Resources coordinator provided the review team with pertinent information on these cases. Their claims were still open and the carrier was still paying them lost wages. The Business Office, predictably, had no information on these cases.

Many employees who are injured at work can return to work in other positions. Other districts actively work with injured employees and have been able to reduce the total number of days of work missed.

Many Texas school districts have instituted early return-to-work policies. Socorro ISD (SISD), for instance, works with injured employees and their physicians to find alternative work they can perform until they heal sufficiently to resume their normal work duties. This program has dramatically lowered SISD's number of employee days lost to injuries.

Recommendation 60:

Implement a "return-to-work" program and fully educate all employees on its provisions.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Human Resources coordinator develops a policy and related procedures to work with injured employees and their physicians to find alternative work they can perform until they heal sufficiently to resume their normal work duties.	June 2002
2.	The board approves the return-to-work policy.	July 2002
3.	The Human Resources coordinator implements the policy and trains employees on the procedures that will be followed if they are injured on the job.	September 2002
4.	The Human Resources coordinator monitors the program to determine its effectiveness in reducing lost-time claim costs.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 5

C. FIXED ASSET MANAGEMENT

Proper care for and control of physical assets is important to the long-term financial health of any school district.

The business manager administers ACISD's fixed-asset program. The district's fixed asset inventory is shown in **Exhibit 5-12**.

Exhibit 5-12
ACISD's Fixed Assets as of October 2001

Land	Building	Construction In progress	Furniture D& Equipment	Capital DLeases	Total
\$1,289,429	\$14,992,111	\$15,520,093	\$8,169,381	\$1,209,799	\$41,180,813

Source: ACISD Business Office, October 2001.

ACISD contracted with RCI Technologies, Inc. to conduct a complete inventory of its fixed assets. This contract was entered into primarily to assign a value to all items worth more than \$500 so the district could begin depreciating the assets in compliance with new accounting requirements.

In June 1999, the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB), the entity that sets generally accepted accounting principle for governmental entities, issued *Statement 34, Basic Financial Statements and Management's Discussion and Analysis for State and Local Governments* (GASB 34). The statement was intended to help governments create more comprehensive annual reports. It established new financial reporting requirements for state and local governments, including requirements for capital assets. The state of Texas was required to implement GASB 34 on September 1, 2001. The Texas State Comptroller's office offers a *Capital Asset Guide* on its Web site to help Texas state agencies and local governments meet the new reporting requirements. GASB 34 changes many of the regulations and procedures for capital asset classification, classification thresholds and valuing assets.

ACISD's fixed asset process flow is shown in **Exhibit 5-13**.

Exhibit 5-13
Fixed Asset Process Flow
2001-02

Actor	Process	
School or Department	1.	Identifies desired item.
Accounts Payable	2.	Verifies funds are available in appropriate account.
Purchasing	3.	Orders item.
Central Receiving	4.	Receives item.
	5.	Determines whether it is a fixed asset by looking at account code and/or examining it to see if it meets fixed-asset definition.
	6.	Tags item with bar-code label and completes fixed-asset inventory form
	7.	Delivers item to school or department.
	8.	Sends paperwork to Accounts Payable.
Accounts Payable	9.	Pays for item once the following are received: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • purchase order; • receiving report; • invoice; • W 9 form (for new vendors); and, for items coded to a fixed-asset account, sends packet (check, invoice, receiving report and purchase order) to fixed assets.
Fixed Asset Clerk	10.	Logs item as a fixed asset.

Source: Review team's observations and interview with the Shipping and Receiving clerk, October 2001.

FINDING

ACISD does not have comprehensive fixed asset policies and procedures. The business office does not have any written policies and procedures that specify when to capitalize assets, what assets should not be capitalized, how to account for leased fixed assets or how to depreciate assets. The district uses the South Texas Multi Regional Processing Center (STMRPC) accounting system from the Regional Education Service Center II; this includes an inventory module, but does not integrate that

information with the rest of the accounting system. The module also cannot create reports by groups of assets or fixed asset totals by school. According to the business manager, the information in the inventory module is not up to date due to these limitations; therefore, the business office could provide no information to the review team about what fixed assets were owned by the district.

In October 2001, the district contracted with RCI Technologies, Inc. for 2001-02 to conduct a complete inventory of its fixed assets. The RCI contract includes an inventory tracking system that uses barcodes and a scanner to identify items. The company then will provide a list of any differences between the assets recorded in the inventory tracking system and the physical inventory. The business manager will distribute these lists to the personnel responsible for the inventory to research the discrepancies; after their examination, the tracking system will be updated accordingly. RCI's services, including a report on the replacement cost of all building contents, will cost the district about \$10,500; the annual updates to the inventory will cost an additional \$4,850 each year.

Adequate accounting procedures and records for fixed assets are essential to protect school property. In addition to safeguarding assets, an effective system designates responsibility for custody and proper use and provides data for financial control, financial reports and adequate insurance coverage. Security is of paramount importance. Any material change in the way in which the distribution or disposal of fixed assets are recorded should be decided by the school district's administration.

Recommendation 61:

Develop written fixed asset policies and procedures.

ACISD should write policies and procedures that specify when to capitalize assets, what assets should not be capitalized, how to account for leased fixed assets and how to depreciate assets. Policies and procedures also should address how and when inventory tags are to be affixed. Inventory records should be established for assets and a policy should specify which small assets should be inventoried and how often. New procedures also should address the addition and removal of assets from the inventory and what to do when district property is lost or stolen. To manage the fixed asset physical inventory, procedures should specify who is responsible for maintaining the inventory; how often physical inventories will be conducted; physical inventory reconciliations; and the retention of physical inventory records.

These procedures should be documented and distributed to all relevant personnel, including receiving personnel, school principals and department managers who are responsible for fixed assets in their area.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The business manager initiates the development of district fixed-asset policies and procedures, compiles and forwards them to the superintendent.	June 2002
2.	The superintendent approves the written fixed-asset policies and procedures and presents them to the board.	July 2002
3.	The board approves the written policies and procedures.	August 2002
4.	The business manager or a designee distributes the policies and procedures and communicates information about them to all personnel involved.	September 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 6

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

This chapter assesses Aransas County Independent School District's (ACISD's) financial management function in five sections:

- A. Fund Balance
- B. Planning and Budgeting
- C. Accounting, Internal Control and Payroll
- D. External Auditing
- E. Tax Collections

School districts must practice sound financial management to maximize limited resources and plan for future needs. Effective financial management ensures that internal controls are in place and operating as intended, technology is maximized to increase productivity and that reports are prepared timely and accurately.

BACKGROUND

School districts are required to manage their financial operations in conformity with the regulations and requirements established by federal and state laws, rules and regulations. The Texas Education Agency's (TEA's) Financial Accountability System Resources Guide (FASRG) outlines accounting and reporting requirements for Texas school districts. Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and the Governmental Accounting Standards Board guidelines also provide guidance for school districts' financial management activities. Texas school districts report their financial data to TEA, which compiles it in the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS).

ACISD receives revenue from local, state and federal sources. In 1999-2000, ACISD received 64.6 percent of its revenues from local property taxes, 34.8 percent from the state and 0.6 percent from federal sources. Because ACISD has higher than average property values, the district receives a greater percentage of its revenues from local funding, and its state funding is significantly below the state average as shown in **Exhibit 6-1**.

Exhibit 6-1
Actual Revenue Comparison - General Fund
Aransas County, Peer Districts and State Average
1999-2000

	Aransas	Flour	Gregory-	Kerrville	Point	Tulosa-	State
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	County	Bluff	Portland		Isabel	Midway	Average
Local & Intermediate	64.6%	44.0%	42.2%	62.2%	90.8%	84.3%	49.2%
State	34.8%	52.8%	57.4%	37.6%	8.7%	14.7%	49.5%
Federal	0.6%	3.2%	0.4%	0.2%	0.5%	1.0%	1.3%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 1999-2000.

Aransas County has very little taxable business property. When compared with the state averages as shown in **Exhibit 6-2**, Aransas County's taxable business property is nearly 22 percent less than the state average and the district has over 20 percent more in taxable residential property than the state average.

**Exhibit 6-2
Taxable Value by Category
2000-01**

Source	Aransas County	Flour Bluff	Gregory-Portland	Kerrville	Point Isabel	Tuloso-Midway	State
Business	17.1%	14.7%	43.2%	23.6%	19.8%	75.3%	39.0%
Residential	70.5%	74.6%	48.7%	63.2%	69.3%	17.0%	50.1%
Land	9.6%	9.2%	6.3%	11.1%	10.7%	7.0%	7.0%
Oil and Gas	1.6%	0.9%	1.4%	0.0%	0.1%	0.2%	2.9%
Other	1.2%	0.5%	0.4%	2.1%	0.2%	0.5%	1.1%

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

Exhibit 6-3 presents a summary of ACISD's state aid calculation for 2000-01. The legislative payment estimate is the state aid that was paid to the district based on estimated enrollment. The second column shows the actual amount that the district should have received.

**Exhibit 6-3
ACISD State Aid Calculation
2000-01**

Description	Legislative	Near-Final
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	Payment Estimate	Calculation
Regular education	\$9,040,869	\$8,058,445
Special education	\$2,137,921	\$1,550,031
Career and technology education	\$685,082	\$595,635
Gifted and talented education	\$59,437	\$52,156
Compensatory education	\$1,035,378	\$851,275
Bilingual education	\$41,612	\$38,566
Public education grant student allotment	\$0	\$0
New instructional facilities allotment	\$202,780	\$193,411
Transportation	\$302,142	\$453,049
Total Cost of Tier I	\$13,505,221	\$11,792,568
Less local share	\$7,193,577	\$7,353,202
Tier II	\$2,364,262	\$1,249,550
Technology allotment	\$106,484	\$92,948
Chapter 46 existing debt allotment	\$236,439	\$242,772
Chapter 46 IFA	\$0	\$0
Other programs	\$28,069	\$27,506
Total State Aid	\$9,046,898	\$6,052,142

Source: TEA, Summary of Finances, 2000-01.

Because student enrollment is declining and the state pays districts on the estimated average daily attendance of students, the district has set aside the overpayments already received from the state to return to the state during 2001-02. The 2001-02 summary of finance shows that the district will receive an additional \$2,686,256 for total funding of \$5,681,180. The district anticipates an overpayment in the 2001-02 school year of \$909,895 that will need to be set aside to refund the state during 2002-03.

The district's spending per student increased between 1997-98 and 1999-2000 by 13.2 percent as shown in **Exhibit 6-4**.

Exhibit 6-4
ACISD Actual Expenditures per Student - General Fund
1997-98 through 1999-2000

	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	Percent Change
Instructional	\$3,433	\$3,608	\$3,773	9.9%
Instructional & School Leadership	\$325	\$334	\$372	14.5%
Support Services, Student	\$662	\$758	\$855	29.2%
Administration	\$267	\$379	\$261	(2.2%)
Support Services, Non-student	\$706	\$921	\$787	11.5%
Ancillary Services	\$7	\$6	\$6	(14.3%)
Debt Service	\$13	\$40	\$63	384.6%
Capital Outlay	\$145	\$53	\$172	18.6%
Total Expenditures by Student	\$5,558	\$6,099	\$6,289	13.2%

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 1997-98 through 1999-2000.

Debt service and capital outlay expenditures have increased due to the construction of new facilities and extensive renovations to existing facilities.

Exhibit 6-5 compares key financial data for ACISD, peer districts and the state average.

**Exhibit 6-5
Key Financial Data - General Fund
2000-01**

District	Total Expenditures per Student	Instructional Expenditures per Student	Students per Employee	Students per Teacher
Aransas County	\$7,503	\$3,771	6.2	12.6
Point Isabel	\$7,297	\$3,217	7.5	15.8
Tuloso-Midway	\$6,377	\$3,022	7.8	14.6
Gregory-Portland	\$6,325	\$3,170	8.3	15.7
Flour Bluff	\$6,156	\$3,490	7.2	15.3
Kerrville	\$5,241	\$3,352	6.9	14.0
State	\$6,638	\$3,500	7.5	14.8

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2000-01.

When compared to the peer districts, ACISD has the lowest ratio of students per employee and students per teacher. This means that there are more teachers and staff employed per student than the other districts. It also has the highest total expenditures per student and the highest instructional expenditures per student.

Chapter 6

A. FUND BALANCE

School systems establish fund balances, or reserve balances, to function similarly to savings accounts. Fund balances serve as a source of funds in case of an emergency, a source of cash to pay bills in case the cash flow for expenditures is faster than the inflow of revenue or a place to build up savings to make large purchases not affordable within a single year such as facility improvements.

Exhibit 6-6 compares the district's enrollment, revenues and expenditures from 1997-98 through 2000-01. Over that period, the district's total enrollment dropped 4.7 percent while expenditures rose 11.9 percent.

Exhibit 6-6
Revenue and Expenditure Comparison - General Fund
1997-98 through 2000-01

	1997-98 Actual	1998-99 Actual	1999-2000 Actual	2000- 01Actual	Percent Change1997- 98 to 2000- 01
Enrollment	3,530	3,468	3,480	3,366	(4.7%)
Total Revenues and Other Resources	\$19,583,500	\$20,222,146	\$21,267,158	\$22,098,572	12.8%
Total Expenditures and Other Uses	\$19,846,168	\$21,311,610	\$22,025,411	\$22,216,606	11.9%
Excess (Deficiency)	(\$262,668)	(\$1,089,464)	(\$758,253)	(\$118,034)	55.1%

Source: ACISD, Annual Financial Reports, 1997-98 through 2000-01.

A review of the 2000-01 financial reports shows that the board approved a budget that would decrease the fund balance by \$265,000. The fund balance actually decreased by \$201,784 during the 2000-01 school year.

FINDING

The district's fund balance has decreased by almost 56.7 percent in the last three years. ACISD's fund balance has dropped from a high of \$3.6 million in 1997-98 to a low of \$1.6 million for year-end 2000-01 which will not cover one month's expenditures.

TEA's FASRG provides a computation of the optimum fund balance for a school district's general fund. A computation worksheet for an optimal general fund is a required schedule in the annual audit report. TEA recommends that the optimal fund balance be equal to the total reserved balance, total designated fund balance, an amount needed to cover Fall cash flow deficits in the general fund and one month of average cash disbursements during the regular (non-summer) school year. Reserved fund balances are those that are legally earmarked for specific future use, such as a reserve for encumbrances. Designated fund balances are those that are identified by the school district management to reflect tentative plans or commitments.

Exhibit 6-7 shows the ending general fund balance compared to the optimal fund balance as calculated annually by the external auditors.

**Exhibit 6-7
General Fund Balance
1997-98 through 2000-01**

	1997-98 Actual	1998-99 Actual	1999-2000 Actual	2000- 01Actual	Percent Change1997- 98 to 2000-01
General Fund Balance	\$3,616,838	\$2,527,374	\$1,769,121	\$1,567,337	(56.7%)
General Fund Optimum Fund Balance Calculation	\$2,410,877	\$2,465,261	\$2,015,711	\$1,950,157	(19.1%)
Excess (Deficit) Undesignated Unreserved General Fund Balance	\$1,205,961	\$62,113	(\$246,590)	(\$382,820)	(131.7%)

Source: ACISD Annual Financial Reports, 1997-98 through 2000-01.

The district's optimal fund balance calculation for the 2000-01 showed that the district was below the optimal level by \$382,820.

A number of variables contributed to the financial situation the district now faces. Board members have not monitored the fund balance while approving deficit spending. Deficit spending occurs when the district spends more than it collects in revenues. Each year, the board has approved spending from the fund balance to cover district expenses. The board historically has not reviewed its fund balance on a regular basis to recognize the impact that deficit spending was having on the district's financial reserves.

Recommendation 62:

Establish a policy for management of the general fund and require reports to the board.

This policy should establish goals concerning what the district's optimum fund balance should be at all times and a means of attaining and maintaining the desired fund balance level. The policy should provide the superintendent with clear directions on how to increase revenues or decrease expenditures in order to meet the district's fund balance goals. It should also require that every agenda item contain a fiscal impact statement that shows the impact of the recommendation on the district's fund balance.

One of the policy's essential elements should be a means of keeping the board informed about the fund balance's status. 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. Any significant events that have had a major impact on the fund balance during that month should be explained. This will ensure that the board and district administration are always aware of the district's financial position.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the business manager to draft a fund balance policy for the district's general fund.	May 2002
2.	The superintendent and the business manager present the policy to the board for approval.	June 2002
3.	The board approves the policy and directs the superintendent to implement it.	August 2002
4.	The business manager develops the required reports to submit to the board.	September 2002

5.	The business manager prepares the required reports and presents them to the board on a monthly basis.	Ongoing
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FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Board members do not receive adequate financial information in their board agenda packets.

The ACISD board receives a budget variance report by fund indicating how much each fund is under or over the board-approved budget, a list of all the checks paid by the district since the last board meeting and an abbreviated income and expense statement for the food services operations. The reports contain only actual recorded financial information and do not include any projections or discussion of why variances exist.

Financial reports provide management and the board with essential data showing the status of the district's financial accounts and the results of revenue collections and expenditures. To a certain extent, how well financial statements are organized and the timeliness of their preparation is an indication of the condition of the underlying accounting system and the competency of the staff.

Exhibit 6-8 presents financial reports that are routinely prepared by school districts and whether or not they are prepared for the ACISD board.

**Exhibit 6-8
Financial Reports**

Financial Statement	Provide to the Board	
	Yes	No
Comparative financial statements for each fund and account group: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balance sheet showing current balances compared with balances in the prior year • Statements comparing actual revenue to date with actual revenue in the prior year • Statements of changes in financial position 		X

Budget reports for each fund and account group: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statements comparing actual revenues and expenditures to date with budgeted revenues and expenditures to date including explanations for variances above 10 percent 		X
Year-end financial statements for funds and accounts groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balance sheet • Statement of revenue, expenditures and fund equity • Statement of changes in financial position • Combined financial statements 		X
Analysis of investments	X	
Detailed departmental or program expenditure reports		X
List of checks written during the month	X	
Copies of voided checks	X	
Enrollment growth and trend over the past five years		X
Comparison of district income to economic trends (tax status, state funding, etc.)		X
Breakdown of expenses		X
State of the operating reserves as compared to industrial standards and trend over the last five years		X

Source: ACISD board packet, 2000-01.

Recommendation 63:

Prepare a complete set of monthly financial reports for administrative staff and the board.

A complete set of financial statement will help management and the board better understand the district's fiscal position and will facilitate effective and timely decisions.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The business manager works with the Regional Education Service Center II (Region 2) to produce a complete set of financial reports automatically from the district's accounting	June 2002
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	system.	
2.	The business manager submits a draft set of monthly financial reports to management staff and the board for their review to determine if they meet their needs.	July 2002 - August 2002
3.	The business manager submits monthly reports to management staff and the board.	September 2002 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 6

B. PLANNING AND BUDGETING

Budget preparation and administration are important aspects of overall district operations. Providing adequate resources for programs within the restraints of available funding presents administrators with significant challenges. Sound budgeting practices benefit the district by:

- establishing a documented method for budget development, adoption and administration;
- providing administrative controls for expenditure of funds within approved allocations; and
- assuring campus and community involvement through a "bottom up" budget approach.

Several legal standards, including the Texas Education Code (TEC) and guidelines developed by TEA, provide guidance to school districts to follow in budget development and administration. Sections 44.002 through 44.006 of the TEC establish the legal basis for budget development in school districts. The following six items summarize the legal requirements from the code:

- The superintendent is the budget officer for the district and prepares or causes the budget to be prepared.
- The district budget must be prepared by a date set by the state board of education, currently August 20 (June 19 if the district uses a July 1 fiscal year start date).
- The president of the board of trustees must call a public meeting of the board of trustees, giving 10 days of public notice in a newspaper, for the adoption of the district budget. Any taxpayer in the district may attend and participate in the meeting.
- No funds may be spent in any manner other than as provided for in the adopted budget. The board does have the authority to amend the budget or adopt a supplementary emergency budget to cover unforeseen expenditures.
- The budget must be prepared in accordance with GAAP and state guidelines.
- The budget must be legally adopted before the tax rate's adoption. However, if a school district has a July 1st fiscal year start date, then a school district must not adopt a tax rate until after the district receives the certified appraisal roll for the district required by Section 26.01, Tax Code. Additionally, a school district must publish a revised notice and hold another public meeting before the district may adopt a tax rate that exceeds the following: (1) The

rate proposed in the notice prepared using the estimate; or (2) The district's rollback rate determined under Section 26.08, Tax Code, using the certified appraisal roll.

TEA has developed additional requirements for school district budget preparation. The budget must be adopted by the Board of Trustees, inclusive of amendments, no later than August 31 (June 30 if the district uses a July 1 start date). TEA uses minutes from district board meetings to record adoption of and amendments to the budget. Budgets for the general fund, the Food Service fund (whether accounted for in the general fund, a special revenue fund or enterprise fund) and the debt service fund must be included in the official district budget (legal or fiscal-year basis). These budgets must be prepared and approved at least at the fund and function levels to comply with the state's legal level of control mandates.

The officially adopted district budget, as amended, must be filed with TEA through PEIMS by the date prescribed in the annual system guidelines. Revenues, other sources, other uses and fund balances must be reported by fund, object (at the fourth level), fiscal year and amount. Expenditures must be reported by fund, function, object (at the second level), organization, fiscal year, program intent and amount.

A school district must amend the official budget before exceeding a functional expenditure category, i.e., instruction, administration, etc., in the total district budget. The annual financial and compliance report should reflect the amended budget amounts on the schedule comparing budgeted and actual amounts. The requirement for filing the amended budget with TEA is satisfied when the school district files its Annual Financial and Compliance Report.

In addition to state legal requirements, individual school districts may establish their own requirements for annual budget preparation. Local fiscal policies may dictate budgetary requirements that go beyond those required by the TEC and TEA. ACISD's budget development process begins in March of each year and extends until August when the budget is approved by the board. **Exhibit 6-9** shows ACISD's 2001-02 budget calendar.

**Exhibit 6-9
ACISD Budget Calendar
2001-02 School Year**

Date	Activity	Person Responsible
March 5	Review staffing needs with principals.	Administration

March 7	Review staffing needs with principals.	Administration
March 9	Formative evaluations of Campus Improvement Plans.	Campus SBDM Committee
March 9	Formative evaluations of Campus Improvement Plans.	Campus SBDM Committee
March 19	Teacher contracts approved.	Board
March 26	Superintendent's committee meets: Review budget process; personnel needs; and budget goals.	Administration
April 2	Send to campus /organizations; Base budget allocations and enrollment data. Capital improvement and capital assets needs: Needs assessment by SBDM.	Business Office Campus SBDM Committee
May	Mailing of notices or appraised value by chief appraiser.	Appraisal District
May 1	Due to Business Office: Base budgets 6200-6600; Capital Improvement Plans and assets; personnel assignments.	Campus
May 1	Preliminary property values. Budget review by DEIC.	DEIC Administration
May 4	Budget packages and staffing levels Reviewed by superintendent's committee.	Administration
May 14	Personnel requests approved.	Board
May 15	Deadline for submitting appraisal records to ARB	Property Owner
May 16	Assess capital needs.	Administration
May 21	Budget workshop with school trustees. Special Meeting, Superintendent's Committee meets: Review Capital Improvement Plan and assets; Review status of campus personnel; Federal budget application due in Business Office.	Board/ Administration Administration
May 28	Superintendent's Committee meets: Review projected revenue and expenditure budget; Review target tax rate; Review personnel needs: and	Administration

	New board member budget workshop (if needed).	
June 11	Budget workshop and regular board meeting; Review preliminary revenue and expense budget; Capital improvements/assets; Projected tax rate; and Review salary increases and adjustments.	Board Administration
June 18	Superintendent's Committee meets: Review staffing needs; review projected Budget; and Projected tax rate.	Administration
June 25	Possible special meeting for personnel.	Administration
July 16	Deadline for commissioner of education to send notice to districts required to equalize wealth.	Texas Education Agency
July 20	Deadline for ARB to approve appraisal records	Appraisal District
July 23	Board workshop and regular board meeting: Proposed 2001-02 revenue and expense budget; Review capital improvement and assets; and Projected tax rate	Board Administration
July 25	Certified property values	Appraisal District
August 3	Certification of anticipated collection rate by collector. Calculation of rollback tax rate. 72-hour notice for meeting (Open Meetings Notice).	County Tax Assessor Administration
August 15	"NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING TO DISCUSS BUDGET AND PROPOSED TAX RATE" published 10 to 30 days before public meeting.	Administration
August 24	72-hour for public meeting (Open Meeting Notice). 72-hour notice for meeting at which governing body will adopt tax rate.	Administration
August 27	Public meeting on budget and proposed tax rate. School board may adopt the budget and tax rate at the public meeting. Alternatively, the board may adopt the budget and wait to adopt the tax rate. If the board waits to adopt	Board/Administration Board

	<p>the tax rate, continue with the next step. Meeting to adopt tax rate. School districts subject to an equalized wealth notice must wait to adopt a tax rate until the commissioner of education certifies the wealth is equalized [Education Code Section 41.004©]. School district must adopt tax rate by September 30 or within 60 days of receiving certified appraisal roll.</p>	
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Source: ACISD budget planning calendar, 2001-02.

The business manager coordinates the district budgeting process. The budget planning process begins by determining the district's vision, mandates and objectives through the process of creating the district improvement plan and the campus improvement plans. The district attempts to monitor the plans success by data contained in the AEIS reports available from TEA and the annual financial audit. The results from these two reports are used to create strategies and implementation plans for subsequent budget years that are used to develop operational plans. Personnel and performance evaluations are used as feedback mechanisms that assist in revising the district's vision, mandates, objectives, strategies and implementation plans.

The district has been attempting to control expenditures by allocating fewer funds per students to the campuses as shown in **Exhibit 6-10**.

Exhibit 6-10
Base Budget Dollars per Student
1997-98 through 2001-02

Campus	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02
Rockport-Fulton High School	\$425	\$425	\$400	\$350	\$250
Rockport-Fulton Middle School	\$270	\$279	\$350	\$300	\$200
Live Oak Elementary	\$220	\$231	\$200	\$150	\$125
Fulton Elementary	\$210	\$210	\$200	\$150	\$125
Little Bay Elementary	\$210	\$210	\$200	\$150	\$125
Rockport Early Childhood Center	\$210	\$210	\$200	\$150	\$125

Source: ACISD Integrated Planning and Budgeting Packet, 1997-98 through 2001-02.

FINDING

The district's budgeting process lacks the detailed planning needed to adequately build a practical budget. The campuses have been included in the budgeting process indirectly through involvement in the development of the district improvement plan and the campus improvement plans. However, the improvement plans lack cost-benefit justifications and detailed budgets for recommendations. The improvement plans were presented to the board after the budget had been approved. Funding for improvements included in the improvement plans may not have been allocated in the budget.

The district improvement planning committee began work on the district's improvement plans in fall 2001. The goal for 2002-03 year is for the improvement plans to be approved and used as a basis for developing the budget in the 2002-03.

The district and campus improvement plans do not contain all the data needed to develop comprehensive budget needs of campuses and departments. Management staff members in departments stated that their input is not sought or required during the budget process. They are simply handed a budget that they are required to adhere to in the upcoming year.

There were 63 budget amendments presented to the board and approved during 2000-01. The high number of budget amendments could be an indication that department and campus management are not involved sufficiently in the budgeting process for reasonable budgets to be developed.

Recommendation 64:

Revise the budget process to include campus and department management while incorporating program budgeting concepts.

The district is in a transitional phase to include program budgets in its budgeting process using the district and campus improvement plans. This process should be broadened to also include program budgeting for the departments as well. Program budgeting's major advantage is its focus on long-range planning, and the district is more likely to reach its stated goals and objectives if this approach is used to develop its budgets.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The business manager revises the budget process to include requirements for department management and campus administration to prepare program budgets based on standard resource allocations per student and other specific guidelines.	June 2002
2.	The assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Administration reviews all decision packages and makes revisions.	June 2002
3.	The business manager and the superintendent review revised decision packages.	June 2002
4.	The business manager and the superintendent present the decision packages to the board at the budget workshops focusing on prioritization and funding of the decision packages.	June and July 2002
5.	The budget is presented to the board for approval in a formal board meeting.	August 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

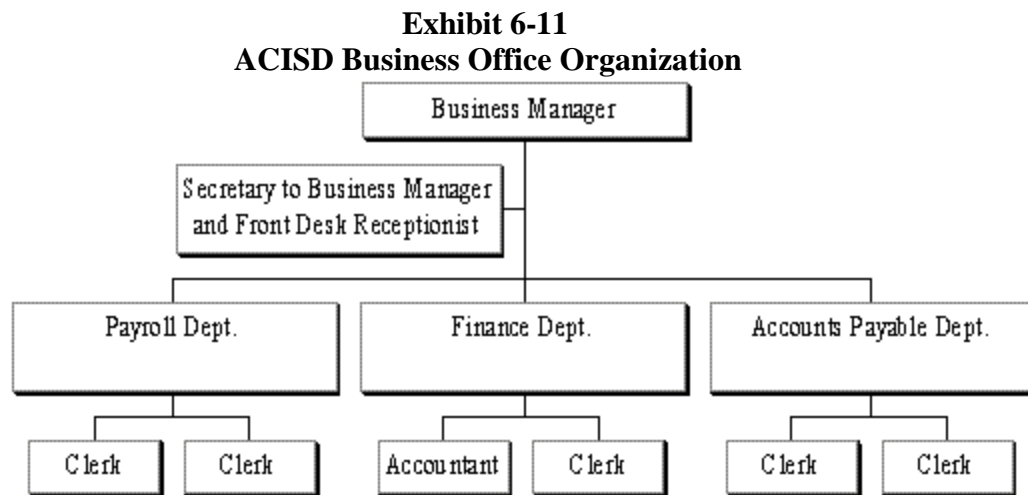
This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 6

C. ACCOUNTING, INTERNAL CONTROL AND PAYROLL

Financial management is most effective when a district properly aligns its business functions, operates with sound policies and procedures, establishes strong systems of internal controls and properly allocates staff resources to achieve the best results.

The responsibility for ACISD's financial management function rests with the business manager who reports to the superintendent. The business manager oversees the daily activities in accounting and budgeting. **Exhibit 6-11** shows the Business Office organization.



Source: ACISD Business Office, September 6, 2001.

Exhibit 6-12 shows the Business Office staff roles and responsibilities.

Exhibit 6-12
Business Office Staff Roles and Responsibilities

Business manager

- Coordinate Business Office functions, cafeteria operation, Maintenance and Transportation Departments of the district.
- Promote and support district goals as they apply to instructional improvement.
- Provide technical assistance for principals and supervisors regarding the financial/budgetary impact of curriculum development.

- Promote an open, collegial environment among staff and develops positive staff morale.
- Articulate vision of the Business Office.
- Ensure continuous renewal of policies and methods related to the finance/budgetary process and facilities planning.
- Coordinate the finance/budgetary process by providing undated information for administrators, supervisors and teachers.
- Direct the improvements of Business Office staffs' performance though a planned, professional development process.
- Delegate duties, responsibilities, functions and authority when appropriate.
- Provide assistance for cafeteria, transportation, maintenance and special program coordinators regarding finance/budgetary implications of program development and regulations.
- Communicate the human, material and fiscal resources needed to implement the Business Office's programs and services.
- Report to the superintendent on the status of support programs, personnel and facilities operations of the maintenance, transportation and cafeteria operations.
- Comply with district policies as well as state, federal laws and regulations in pursuing the mission of the Business Office.
- Demonstrate responsible fiscal control over assigned budgets and follow assigned budget procedures.
- Assist in completion of administrative reports or implementation of administrative procedures including the Annual Performance Report, special program applications and other pertinent financial reports.
- Assist the principal and staff in implementing appropriate strategies promoting positive student management.
- Collaborate with faculty and staff and encourage student/parents participation.
- Assist in the preparation of pamphlets, handbooks, newsletters and other written communications.
- Communicate district financial needs and programs to parents and to the community as appropriate.
- Participate in civic affairs that are appropriate for educational leaders.
- Formulate a professional development plan to improve professional performance using input from staff mentors and others in determining the content of the plan.
- Demonstrate behavior that is professional, ethical and responsible.

Finance accountant

- Reconcile all bank accounts.
- Receive incoming calls, answer questions regarding general ledger coding and direct calls to the proper party.
- Cross-train payroll employees.

- Act as investment officer for the district.
- Prepare and conduct all fund transfers.
- Reconcile all general ledger accounts.

Payroll clerk

- Prepare all payrolls including semi-monthly, monthly and special payrolls.
- Prepare payroll checks for all employees and distribute to campuses and departments.
- Prepare and send payroll reports and forms including Internal Revenue Service, Teachers Retirement System, Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA) and Medicare and workers compensation.
- Maintain physical and computerized files to include payroll records absent from duty reports and service records.
- Process all personnel action forms.
- Communicate with Human Resources Department, campus secretaries and employees to ensure accuracy of information reported; resolve payroll problems and inquiries.
- Respond to requests from financial institutions regarding verification of employment.
- Maintain confidentiality of information.

Accounts Payable clerk

- Confirm balances in accounts for all designated times.
- Enter accounting data into computerized accounts payable system.
- Keep records up to date.
- Maintain physical and computerized files to include office copies of checks, requisitions, invoices, purchase orders and insurance policies.
- Maintain vendor files and set up new accounts when changes occur.
- Conduct periodic checks of travel reports and food service orders.
- Prepare all necessary correspondence using typewriter or personal computer.
- Receive incoming calls, answer questions and direct calls to the proper party.

Source: ACISD's job descriptions, December 1994, Interviews with ACISD Business Office staff, October 2001.

Accounting and payroll are among the most important business functions performed by a school district. Although regulations such as the FASRG and other accounting standards exist, actual practices vary between school districts in the state.

Payroll Processing

Two payroll clerks, using the Region 2 South Texas Multi-Regional Processing Center (STMRPC) system, perform payroll processing for ACISD employees. All professional staff, paraprofessionals and administrators are paid once a month on the 21st. The maintenance and cafeteria workers are paid on the 15th and the last day of the month. In August 2001, it was decided to pay transportation employees on the 15th and the last day of the month as well but they are paid on a payroll separate from maintenance and cafeteria workers. They were formerly paid once a month. The district has requested Region 2 to combine the transportation employees payroll with the maintenance and cafeteria payroll, so instead of processing five payrolls a month, they will only process three payrolls each month.

Each year, the payroll clerks send payroll notice letters showing all pay dates and related cutoff dates for the next year to the campus administration and department managers. The campus administration and department managers are responsible for submitting hourly timesheets, overtime and absences to the payroll clerk in time for their employees' payroll to be processed accurately. The payroll clerks then create an Excel spreadsheet to summarize the payroll data. Using the spreadsheets, the payroll clerks key in all hourly time worked, overtime hours and leave days taken. They also process payments for substitute teachers. Stipends are entered manually to ensure the correct amounts are paid in the event that an employee terminates the duties associated with the stipend pay.

Once all data is entered, the payroll clerks run a test payroll routine. The payroll clerks use the reports from the test routine to ensure that all data was entered correctly. All payroll notes, absence reports and timesheets are compared to the reports to ensure accuracy. When all information is accurate, the actual payroll routine is run.

Payroll checks are printed at Region 2. When payroll deadlines are met, Region 2 delivers the checks to ACISD with regular Monday and Thursday deliveries. If the deadline is missed, then someone from the district drives to the center and picks up the checks. All checks are signed using the district's check-signing machine and placed in envelopes. Campus administration and department managers pick up checks on payday for delivery to employees.

The day before payroll checks are distributed, the total amount of the payroll is provided to the general ledger accountant, who transfers the money to the payroll bank account.

Accounts Payable Processing

The Accounts Payable clerk receives and processes invoices daily. All invoices for goods are verified by matching them to receiving documents, purchase orders and packing slips. Checks are issued on the 15th and last day of the month. Each invoice is entered into the STMRPC system after it is verified. An adding machine tape is run for each invoice showing the total amount for which checks should be issued. Once all invoices are entered into a system, a report is run from the system and compared to the adding machine tape to ensure all invoices amounts were entered correctly. Once everything is entered correctly, the check request is submitted for processing by Region 2. The checks are printed at Region 2 and delivered to the district. The Accounts Payable clerk runs the checks through the check-signing machine and then verifies that each check matches the invoice that it is paying. The invoice is then stamped "paid." The invoices are bound and placed in a cabinet awaiting approval by the board at the next board meeting. Once they are approved, they are filed.

FINDING

The district does not have detailed written procedures in place to enable it to effectively and efficiently manage its business operations. Handwritten notes are available in the Business Office that have not been updated since 1994. A 14-page Business Office Procedures Handbook is available but it is used more for staff outside the Business Office to understand how to order materials and merchandise and how to obtain reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses. The document is not a procedures manual documenting the detailed tasks that must be performed to process payroll, accounts payable, bank reconciliations or transferring funds.

Without written procedures, delays occur in performing important activities like payroll and accounts payable when key business office staff are unable to come to work for an extended period of time. Also, written procedures help ensure that proper controls are documented and communicated to staff to safeguard district assets, reduce training time for new employees, improve productivity, satisfy regulatory requirements, speed up decision-making, improve communication, eliminate confusion, develop management consensus, communicate management expectations and define employee tasks and responsibilities.

Recommendation 65:

Develop a detailed written procedures manual for all Business Office processes.

The Business Office should develop a detailed accounting and financial procedures manual that describes, in detail, the process steps for each function.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The business manager coordinates with each Business Office staff member to document existing procedures.	June 2002
2.	The business manager presents a draft of financial operating procedures to the superintendent for review.	June 2002
3.	The superintendent reviews and approves or amends the procedures as necessary.	July 2002
4.	The business manager assembles final procedures into a manual and makes it available to all Business Office staff.	August 2002
5.	The business manager updates the procedures annually.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The district's payroll and accounts payable functions are inefficient. Both processes are paper driven and require two full-time employees to administer each area. The district pays \$44,288 per year to use Region 2's STMRPC computer system. This system is not Windows-based nor does it include many of the latest time saving techniques available in other more up-to-date systems. Therefore, the payroll and accounts payable processes are time consuming and require an inordinate amount of staff time that could be used more productively in other areas.

Exhibit 6-13 shows the manual steps in the payroll process and how the process could be automated.

Exhibit 6-13 Payroll Process Automation Possibilities

Process Step	Automation Possibilities
The payroll clerks must review and record information from timesheets received from departments and campuses. The clerks must prepare an Excel worksheet to summarize the payroll information. They then enter compensatory hours; absent from duties hours; hours worked by employees for	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create an online form and place the form on the Network for each department to enter its department employee time. The time could then be uploaded into the payroll

athletics; and hours reported in the activity book for employees earning extra time for working school events.	system after the proper reviews have occurred.
The payroll clerks review the substitute employee list against the substitute pay worksheet to obtain the pay rates for each substitute teacher.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain substitute pay rates in the system. • Enhance the system to tie substitutes to the absent employee. The system could automatically pay the substitute and deduct pay for employees without leave balances.
The payroll clerks handwrite and calculate information that is already contained in the system. For example, the clerks write a fund transfer reconciliation showing payroll totals less any voided checks. The clerks then request two reports from the system and use the transfer reconciliation to write down a payroll recap. The recap is then used to prepare the Form 941 and the general journal entry needed to post the payroll.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create reports in the payroll system that can be used to complete the Form 941. • System should automatically create journal entries for payroll and related liabilities.

Source: Interviews with ACISD Payroll clerk, October 2001.

The accounts payable process requires the clerks to manually match invoices to receiving documents and purchase orders to ensure they all agree before paying the invoice. All payment information for the invoice must then be entered into the system. Integrated computer systems that share data allow this process to happen automatically so the purchase order can be converted to a receiving document and the receiving document can be converted to a payment document.

In-depth reviews of accounting processes can identify inefficient steps that slow down the processing of transactions and require unnecessary staff time. Steps that require the same data to be entered into the accounting system multiple times are inefficient and duplicative. Integrated systems can solve this issue by sharing data after it has been entered, thus eliminating the need to reenter the data. In turn, the amount of comparisons and reconciliations needed to produce reliable financial reports is reduced.

Recommendation 66:

Research automation options available for the payroll and accounts payable processes.

Region 2 is currently working toward an upgrade to its payroll module to make part of the processes Web-based and will implement several changes to enhance the entire accounting system's capabilities. The district pays for support and should actively work with Region 2 and request enhancements to the system.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the business manager to work with Region 2 and develop specifications and requirements to automate steps in the payroll and accounts payables processes and evaluate the cost versus obtaining a new system.	May 2002
2.	The business manager works with Region 2 and develops specifications and requirements to automate steps in the payroll and accounts payable processes.	June and July 2002
3.	The business manager works with Region 2 to revise contract for services, if necessary.	July 2002
4.	Region 2 works with the business manager and automates the payroll and accounts payable steps in the STMRPC accounting system.	August 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 6

D. EXTERNAL AUDITING

TEC 44.008 requires school districts to undergo an annual external audit of their financial statements. The code specifies that external audits must be prepared by a certified public accountant, and that the audit must comply with GAAP. External audits provide a review of the district's compliance with established standards and practices. External audits provide the following information:

- an annual financial and compliance report;
- an examination of the expenditure of federal funds (as applicable); and
- a report to management on internal accounting controls (as applicable).

The internal audit function supplements the work of the external auditor. The State Auditor's Office recommends districts with enrollment of 5,000 students or more have an internal audit function. The internal audit function examines specific areas to determine:

- the adequacy of internal controls;
- compliance with procedures, regulations, policies and applicable law; and
- efficiency and effectiveness of operations.

As ACISD has an enrollment below 5,000, it does not have an internal audit function and thus relies entirely upon its external auditor to provide it with independent assessments of its financial condition and related activities.

FINDING

The district has had the same external auditing firm for over 20 years. The district requested proposals for the 2000-01 audit but chose the same external auditing firm. The auditors will be paid \$12,500 for their services.

ACISD auditors have provided unqualified opinions on the district's financial reports for 1997-98, 1998-99 and 1999-2000. An unqualified audit opinion is one in which the auditor found no significant problems that would impact the accuracy of the financial statements. In other words, the district's annual financial report could be relied upon as being materially accurate.

The district's external auditors have not identified and brought to the district's attention a number of internal control issues. Management letters were provided to the district by its external auditors for the years 1995-96 to 1998-99 but no letter was provided for the 1999-2000 audit. The management letters did discuss various problems that were found in the district, however, they failed to note the following financial issues that are commonly noted in audit management letters of school district:

- Internal control weaknesses including: the cash management accountant can transfer funds between accounts, has access to check stock and the check signature machine and performs the bank reconciliations for all bank accounts; the check stock for the bank accounts is not secured and the check-signing machine has the signature plates in the machine at all times. All Business Office staff has access to the machine at all times; the Accounts Payable clerk is responsible for issuing purchase orders and has access to check stock and the check-signing machine; and the payroll clerks add new employees to the payroll system, add and change salaries and have access to payroll checks and the check-signing machine.
- Discussion of the serious deterioration in the district's fund balance. At the end of 1999-2000, the fund balance was not sufficient to even cover one month's operating expenditures. Although the report contained the calculation required by TEA to ensure that the fund balance was sufficient, there was no discussion in a management letter to draw the deficiency to the attention of the board.
- Absence of written and updated operating procedures detailing how to process payrolls, accounts payable checks or how to perform bank reconciliations.

These are issues that could be brought to the attention of the Board of Trustees so corrective action could be taken.

State and federal laws do not require a request for proposal (RFP) to be issued for audit services; however, good business practices require school districts to issue RFPs periodically as a matter of policy. RFPs for auditing services provide school districts the opportunity to assess and compare the expertise of audit firms and select the one that can provide them with the best professional service.

The district's long-standing relationship with its current auditors does not violate any laws or TEA guidelines but can create a perception in the public's mind that the auditors could lack independence. Auditing standards require auditors to maintain independence so that the public will know the auditor's opinions, conclusions, judgments and recommendations are impartial. The question of whether auditors should be rotated

periodically to ensure their independence is debated in the auditing profession. A higher quality service is normally received when school districts periodically allow qualified firms the opportunity to present their qualifications and expertise through a periodic RFP process.

FASRG prescribes a model audit RFP that is designed to provide both the district and the auditing firm the information necessary to understand and evaluate the services to be performed. The Government Finance Officers Association, a national organization that seeks to improve the quality of governmental accounting, auditing, and reporting has published the *Audit Management Handbook* to help governments procure quality audit services. The handbook suggests 24 steps to preparing an RFP that meets the needs of the governmental entity as well as the proposing firm.

Recommendation 67:

Develop an external auditor selection policy to ensure that Request for Proposals are issued at least every five years and are objectively evaluated.

The district should issue an RFP for auditing services at least every five years to widen its choices and allow other firms the opportunity to propose for the contract. By restricting its audit contract to the same audit firm year-after-year, the district may be denying itself the fresh perspective of other firms as well as the opportunity to obtain the same or better services at a reduced cost.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the business manager to draft a policy requiring a Request for Proposals to be issued for audit services every five years and the criteria that will be used for their evaluation.	June 2002
2.	The superintendent reviews and approves the draft of the policy.	June 2002
3.	The superintendent presents the policy to the board for approval.	July 2002
4.	The business manager begins the process to issue a Request for Proposals for audit services every five years in compliance with district policy.	Ongoing
5.	Business manager evaluates proposals for audit services are evaluated objectively and contracts issued to audit forms with the best qualifications.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 6

E. TAX COLLECTIONS

Assessing and collecting school district property taxes is an important function involving different entities with distinct responsibilities. School districts develop and adopt their tax rate while county appraisal districts appraise the value of property within the district. The tax rate that school districts adopt consists of two components: (1) a maintenance and operations component for meeting operating costs and (2) a debt service component to cover the costs of indebtedness. The combined rate is applied to the assessed property value to compute the district's total tax levy.

Property values are important determinates of school funding, not only at the local level, but at the state level as well. There is an inverse relationship between local property wealth and state aid. The greater the property wealth of the district, the greater the amount of revenue raised locally, but the lower the amount of state aid. **Exhibit 6-14** shows the property value per pupil for ACISD compared to the state.

Exhibit 6-14
Property Value per Pupil
2000-01

ACISD	State
\$279,177	\$215,232

Source: TEA, AEIS 2000-01.

The history of the district's property appraisals and tax rates is showing in **Exhibit 6-15**.

Exhibit 6-15
ACISD Tax Rates
1997-98 through 2000-01

Category	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	Percent Change 1997-98 to 2000-01
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Maintenance and operations tax rate	\$1.432	\$1.404	\$1.453	\$1.455	1.6%
Interest and sinking fund	\$0.000	\$0.146	\$0.077	\$0.035	100.0%
Total tax rate	\$1.432	\$1.550	\$1.530	\$1.490	4.1%
Total tax levy	\$11,296,716	\$12,955,963	\$13,609,723	\$14,775,792	30.8%
Appraised Value	\$788,711,598	\$835,868,602	\$886,626,877	\$991,663,916	25.7%

Source: ACISD Annual Financial Reports, 1997-98 through 2000-01.

Some districts collect their own property taxes, while others contract with other entities, such as the city or county. School districts often contract with an attorney to assist in collecting delinquent property taxes.

Efficient tax collection procedures provide immediate benefits to the district by increasing the cash flow into the district's bank accounts. Money is more readily available to pay for operating expenses and can be invested more quickly in longer-term investments to increase interest income.

ACISD contracts with the Aransas County Tax Assessor Collector for all collection services. The Tax Assessor Collector will be paid \$25,564 for the 2001-02 school year for collection services. The services include the collection of all taxes and the depositing of the taxes collected into the district's designated back accounts on a daily basis. The Tax Assessor Collector submits monthly status reports to the district on collection activities before each board meeting.

The Tax Assessor Collector in turn contracts with a law firm to collect delinquent taxes. A quarterly report is provided to the business manager by the law firm concerning progress made on collecting delinquent taxes.

FINDING

The Board of Trustees authorized Aransas County's Tax Assessor Collector to post delinquent taxpayers in the local newspaper. In May 2001, a resolution was passed by the Board of Trustees to allow the Aransas County Tax Assessor Collector the authority to post an advertisement of the top 100 delinquent taxpayers. The resolution agreed

that the Tax Assessor Collector would run two advertisements in the newspaper that read as follows:

WARNING NOTICE
Past due taxes owed to Aransas County Taxing Authorities

The Aransas County Tax Office on behalf of Itself and Aransas County ISD, Aransas County MUD #1, Aransas County ND #1, City of Fulton and City of Rockport will publish in _____ the names of individuals and businesses that are delinquent in their tax obligations as of __, 2001.

***PAY YOUR PAST DUE TAXES PRIOR TO _____,
2001 TO PREVENT YOUR NAME FROM APPEARING
ON THE PAST DUE LIST PUBLISHED IN THIS
PAPER.***

The law firm also sent letters to the past due taxpayers warning them of the pending advertisement that would appear if they did not pay their taxes. Forty written installment agreements were entered into with delinquent taxpayers as a direct result of this campaign.

COMMENDATION

Implementing a newspaper campaign that identifies delinquent taxpayers has increased delinquent tax collections.

FINDING

The district's tax collection rate is an average of 1.5 percent lower than the peer districts. **Exhibit 6-16** shows ACISD's tax collection rates.

Exhibit 6-16
ACISD Tax Collection Rates
1997-98 through 2000-01

Year	Tax Rates	Collection Rates	Tax Levy
1997-98	\$1.432	95.74%	\$11,296,716
1998-99	\$1.550	95.81%	\$12,955,563
1999-2000	\$1.530	95.91%	\$13,609,723

2000-01	\$1.490	96.22%	\$14,775,792
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Source: TEA, PEIMS, 1997-98 through 2000-01.

Exhibit 6-17 shows ACISD's tax collection rates compared to the peer districts. All of the peer districts have higher collection rates than ACISD.

Exhibit 6-17
Comparison of Delinquent Tax Collection Rates
ACISD and Selected Peer Districts
2000-01

Description	Aransas County	Flour Bluff	Tuloso-Midway	Gregory-Portland	Kerrville
Percent of Fiscal 2000 Taxes Collected as of August 31, 2001	96.2%	97.1%	98.0%	97.9%	96.6%
Delinquent Tax Accounts Receivable as of August 31, 2001	\$2,195,965	\$1,087,015	\$668,418	\$529,174	\$1,220,178
Fiscal Year 2000 Adjusted Tax Levy	\$13,936,908	\$12,381,250	\$16,148,903	\$12,516,952	\$19,230,725
Delinquent Tax Accounts Receivable as a Percent of Adjusted 2000 Tax Levy	15.8%	8.8%	4.1%	4.2%	6.3%

Source: ACISD, Flour Bluff Independent School District, Tuloso-Midway Independent School District,

Gregory-Portland Independent School District, Kerrville Independent School District, Financial Reports, 2000-01.

Although allowed by state law, no district policy exists to specify the district's position on initiating lawsuits for back taxes, and for dealing with foreclosures and the sale of delinquent properties. In the absence of such a policy, decisions that directly affect ACISD are, by default, left to the contracted attorney and the Aransas County Tax Assessor Collector.

Recommendation 68:

Develop a tax collection policy and procedures manual that maximizes the timely and efficient collection of delinquent taxes within the guidelines of state law.

The district should adopt policies and procedures that establish clearly defined guidelines and performance measures for the Aransas County Tax Collector and the delinquent tax attorney. These policies should thoroughly address procedures for seizing and handling the property of delinquent taxpayers, including properties that have been struck off the tax roles that were obtained by the district in lawsuit judgments. The policies also should address the potential impact of an aggressive collection program on poor and elderly homeowners.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The business manager meets with the Aransas County Tax Assessor Collector and delinquent tax attorney and develops a recommended tax collection policy and manual, which include guidelines for pre-judgment and post-judgment collection steps to be followed.	June 2002
2.	The business manager presents the new policy and procedures manual to the superintendent for review and approval.	June 2002
3.	The superintendent presents the new policy and procedures manual to the board for approval.	July 2002
4.	The business manager conveys the new policy and procedures manual to the Aransas County Tax Assessor Collector and the delinquent tax attorney for immediate implementation.	August 2002
5.	The business manager begins holding monthly collection meetings with the Tax Assessor Collector and the delinquent tax attorney to receive a progress report on delinquent tax collections. The results of these meetings should be reported to the superintendent and the board on a monthly basis.	September 2002 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

By implementing a delinquent tax collection policy and procedures, ACISD should be able to increase its tax collection rate from an actual fiscal 2000 rate of 96.2 percent to a target rate of 97.7 percent (the average of three of its higher performing peer districts, Flour Bluff, Tulosa-Midway and Gregory-Portland). The district's tax collection rate should increase by 1.5 percent and result in increased annual tax collections of \$209,054 ($\$13,936,908 \times 1.5$ percent). The district could achieve half of this goal in the first year, or \$104,527.

Recommendation	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Develop a tax collection policy and procedures manual that maximizes the timely and efficient collection of delinquent taxes within the guidelines of state law.	\$104,527	\$209,054	\$209,054	\$209,054	\$209,054

Chapter 7

PURCHASING

This chapter examines the Aransas County Independent School District (ACISD) Purchasing Department in four sections.

- A. Purchasing Operations
- B. Warehouse
- C. Textbooks
- D. Print Shop

Purchasing is one of the most highly specialized activities in school business administration. It includes activities related to obtaining materials, supplies and equipment that are required to operate schools and serve educational programs. Purchasing has become a major activity in educational resource management. This involves the expenditure of significant funds and requires adherence to principles and practices of sound management.

BACKGROUND

The Texas Education Code (TEC) has outlined the following competitive procurement methods for all school district purchases(**Exhibit 7-1**).

Exhibit 7-1
Competitive Procurement Methods

Method	Description
Competitive bidding	Requires that bids be evaluated and awarded based solely upon bid specifications, terms and conditions and bid prices.
Competitive sealed proposals	Requires the same terms and conditions as competitive bidding, but allows changes in the nature of a proposal and prices after proposal opening.
Request for proposals	Generates competitive sealed proposals, containing several key elements, including newspaper advertisements, notice to proposers, standard terms and conditions, special terms and conditions, scope of work.
Catalog purchase	Provides an alternative to other procurement methods for the acquisition of computer equipment, software and services only.
Interlocal contract	Provides a mechanism for agreements with other local governments, the state or a state agency to perform

	governmental functions and services.
Design/build contract	Outlines a method of project delivery in which the school district contracts with a single entity to take responsibility for both the design and construction of a project.
Job order contracts	Provides for the use of job order contracts for minor repairs and alterations.
Construction management contracts	Outlines the use of a contract to construct, rehabilitate, alter or repair facilities using a construction manager.
Reverse auction procedure	Outlines a bidding process that involves submission of bids by multiple suppliers, unknown to each other, in a manner that allows the suppliers to bid against each other.

Source: Texas Education Code (TEC), 2000.

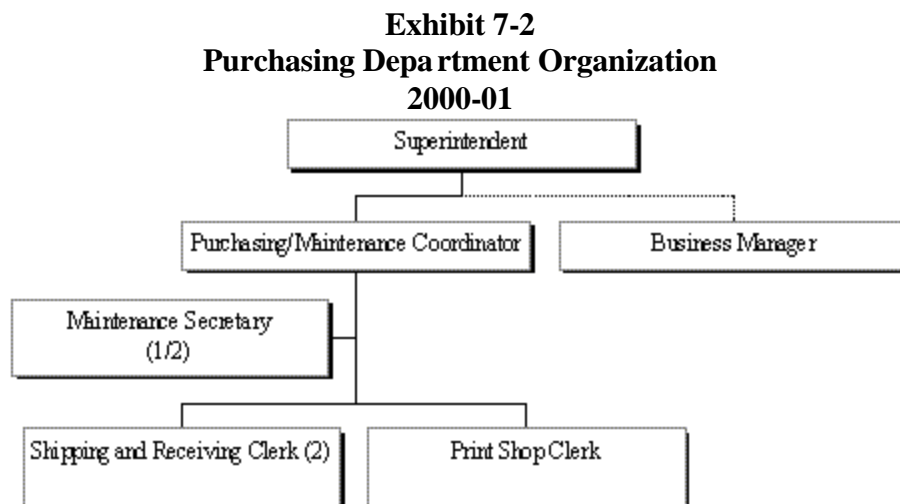
TEC also requires districts to give notice of bidding opportunities and allow a sufficient amount of time for prospective bidders to respond.

A sound purchasing system begins with sound policies implemented through systematic procedures. Careful planning, strong internal controls and cost-efficient practices such as bulk purchasing and price/bid solicitation provide the framework for the efficient procurement of goods and services.

Chapter 7

A. PURCHASING OPERATIONS

ACISD employs a Purchasing and Maintenance coordinator who is responsible for placing orders, while the schools or individual departments do much of the pricing and vendor searches. **Exhibit 7-2** displays the organization of the Purchasing Department. The business manager approves some purchase orders, so a dotted line is shown from the business manager to the superintendent to depict this informal approval process.



Source: ACISD Organization Chart, September 6, 2001.

The Purchasing and Maintenance coordinator also supervises the skilled trade and grounds personnel in the Maintenance Department.

The responsibilities of the Purchasing Department include, but are not limited to:

- Purchase, warehouse and distribute needed materials;
- Maintain a clean, safe and efficient storage warehousing facility;
- Meet all procurement regulations;
- Provide timely delivery services for warehoused supplies;
- Inventory all warehoused supplies;
- Efficiently manage resources;
- Fulfill special procurement needs of the district; and
- Meet space needs through maintaining an effective space utilization of available warehousing facilities, conducting needs

assessments for items in need of warehousing and maximizing overall utilization of resources.

Exhibit 7-3 illustrates the roles and responsibilities of key positions in each area of the Purchasing Department.

**Exhibit 7-3
Purchasing Department
Roles and Responsibilities**

Purchasing Management
<p>Purchasing and Maintenance coordinator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Initiate contact with vendors to check on supply and equipment availability, invoices, purchase orders and contracts.• Obtain and study comparative quotations.• Purchase supplies and equipment for the district by competitive bidding, informal quotations and negotiations following established district criteria and state purchasing rules.• Prepare bidding documents, including notice and instruction to bidders, specifications and proposal.• Work cooperatively with district personnel regarding specifications, pricing and shipping.• Develop and maintain vendor and bidder lists.• Detect and resolve problems with incorrect orders, invoices and shipments.• Maintain physical and computerized files of purchase orders and receiving reports.• Direct receiving and warehousing operations including distribution of supplies and equipment throughout the district and warehousing of custodial, electrical and plumbing supplies.• Supervise district mail service.• Operate district school store and maintain inventory of supplies.• Assist with the inventory and tagging of fixed assets.• Assume responsibility for disposal of surplus and salvage equipment; organize and conduct sales.• Prepare, review and revise job descriptions in Purchasing Department.• Recruit, train and supervise all warehouse personnel and make recommendations about the placement, assignment, retention, discipline and dismissal.• Evaluate job performance of employees to ensure effectiveness.
Warehouse Services
<p>Shipping and Receiving clerk (2)</p>

- Supervise distribution and storage of supplies and equipment including custodial, electrical and plumbing supplies.
- Supervise receipt of all shipments and process reports including receiving, discrepancy and damage reports using personal computer.
- Move inventory to various locations manually and by operating mechanical equipment, including forklift, pallet jack and handcart.
- Load and unload delivery truck by hand or by use of hand truck.
- Deliver mail, requisition supplies and items received at the warehouse to the proper school or department on a daily basis.

Print Shop

Print Shop clerk (1)

- Print forms requested by the district: NCR forms; handbooks (student, teacher, band, maintenance, transportation); school board packets; and breakfast and lunch menus.
- Log all jobs on computer.
- Maintain file of repetitive jobs.
- Assist with receipt of all shipments in receiving.
- Assist with the inventory and tagging of fixed assets.
- Supervise the disposal of surplus and salvage equipment; organize and conduct sales.
- Organize state-issued textbooks as they arrive.

Source: ACISD Job Descriptions, December 1994.

The Purchasing and Maintenance coordinator is a Certified School Business Official, a designation that is offered through the Texas Association of School Business Officials (TASBO). TASBO is an organization that educates its members in professional school business practices and serves as the recognized source of school business information.

The budget for the Purchasing Department is shown in **Exhibit 7-4**. The Purchasing and Maintenance coordinator's salary has been moved from the Purchasing Department to the Maintenance Department for 2001-02. If this had not occurred, the budget for the Purchasing Department would have remained consistent for the five years shown below.

Exhibit 7-4 Purchasing Department Budget 1997-98 through 2001-02

Expenditure	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02
Payroll	\$101,676	\$99,026	\$98,050	\$100,050	\$75,286*
Contracted services	\$500	\$21,400	\$14,800	\$29,033	\$27,220
Supplies and materials	\$5,405	\$2,200	\$1,025	\$0	\$1,000
Other operating expenses	\$2,305	\$7,546	\$9,621	\$7,622	\$5,300
Total	\$109,886	\$130,172	\$123,496	\$136,705	\$108,806

Source: Regional Education Service Center II (Region 2) accounting system general ledger printouts provided by the business manager.

**Note: In 2001-02, the Purchasing and Maintenance coordinator's salary has been moved to the Maintenance Department.*

ACISD spends more than \$2.4 million annually on purchased supplies and services as noted in **Exhibit 7-5**, but the district's 2000-01 overall expenditures are less than in prior years.

Exhibit 7-5
Annual Purchase Volume-General Fund
1996-97 through 2000-01

Year	Total Expenditures
1996-97	\$2,356,853
1997-98	\$3,066,719
1998-99	\$3,484,029
1999-2000	\$3,813,424
2000-01	\$2,443,357

Source: Region 2 accounting system general ledger printouts provided by the business manager, 1996-97 through 2000-01.

Note: Includes object codes for supplies and capital assets, but not construction.

In addition to state purchasing laws, board policy further requires that all purchases that cost or aggregate to a cost of \$10,000 or more per year must have board approval before a transaction can take place.

To prepare to make a purchase, the requisitioner reviews the state-approved vendor list for a vendor that can supply the goods or services required. The requisitioner manually prepares a paper-based purchase requisition and obtains approval for the purchase based on the district's purchasing authority list. Once the purchase requisition is approved, it is forwarded to the Purchasing and Maintenance coordinator. At that time, the Purchasing and Maintenance coordinator determines if bids must be obtained. If the purchase requires bids, the Purchasing and Maintenance coordinator prepares a request for proposal and places an advertisement in the newspaper to advertise the district's intention to accept bids. Once bids have been obtained, the vendor is selected and the order is placed. However, the district usually purchases goods from the state-approved vendor list or through its cooperative agreement with Region 2 and, therefore, bids are not often taken.

After the purchase requisition has been approved and the order is placed, the purchase requisition form is forwarded to the Accounts Payable clerk. The Accounts Payable clerk converts the purchase requisition to a purchase order when the order is entered into the South Texas Multi-Regional Processing Center (STMRPC) accounting system provided by Region 2. Once entered, the system encumbers the amount of the intended purchase. An encumbrance provides budgetary control by reserving a portion of an account's budget to cover the outstanding purchase order. The accounting system has an automated feature that alerts users from entering a purchase order if budget funds are not available.

The Accounts Payable clerk mails or faxes the original purchase order to the vendor, and sends a copy of the purchase order to the Purchasing Department and the department or school initiating the transaction. The Business Office also maintains a copy.

FINDING

The district does not have detailed purchasing procedures to guide and support district purchases. The district has a purchasing manual that was written and adopted in 1996. This document outlines the purchasing policies and identifies the purchasing methods, but does not provide detailed guidelines for how to execute the board-approved policies or when to use a specific method to ensure that the district is receiving the best value for its purchasing dollar. In addition, the document does not provide procedures for completing a purchase requisition or order. There is no documented approval structure or purchasing dollar thresholds

concerning when purchases must be presented for board approval; what employees have authorization to make purchases; or procedures for emergency purchases. For example, the business manager approves some purchase orders, while the Purchasing and Maintenance coordinator approves the others.

Board-approved purchasing policies state that the district may participate in a cooperative purchasing program or participate in the state vendor list offered by the Texas Building and Procurement Commission (TBPC). Districts that purchase goods and services by agreement with another local government or with the state or state agency satisfy the requirement to seek competitive bids for the purchase of goods and services. In practice, most of the purchases made by the district are made through either the Region 2 cooperative purchasing agreement or the state vendor list.

The board has delegated to the superintendent, or designee, the authority to determine the method of purchasing and to make budgeted purchases. However, any purchase that costs or aggregates to a cost of \$10,000 or more requires board approval before a transaction may take place.

The review team requested supporting documentation for selected purchases made in the last two years to determine whether the best value was obtained for the district and to ensure proper approvals were received from the board or the superintendent.

- In June 2000, the middle school principal purchased the WinSchool software system, which tracks grades and attendance, at a cost of \$27,094 a year. No documentation could be provided showing if the purchase was competitively bid or whether the purchase was made from the state-approved vendor list. Documentation on whether the superintendent and board approvals were received could not be provided.
- In June 2000, the district purchased a new telephone system at a cost of \$23,565 through the state-approved vendor list. Approval signatures were not documented and there was no evidence that the board approved the purchase.
- In August 2001, the decision was made to install a new sprinkler system in the middle school. Funds were moved from training and supplies budget areas within the middle school budget, and the supplies needed for the installation of the system by the school maintenance staff were purchased at a one-time cost of \$20,328. No documentation could be provided showing if the purchase was approved by the board and the superintendent. The purchase was made from the local lumber supply company without competitively bidding the purchase of the supplies.

TEA purchasing guidelines say that accurate record keeping and documentation should be a fundamental element of the procurement process. Precise and systematic record keeping and records management withstands the constant scrutiny of various interest groups including vendors, the general public and outside agencies, as well as internal groups that are the users or customers of the purchasing system. Records management should generally provide for the following:

- Flow and retention of forms including requisitions, purchase orders, petty cash and cash reimbursement receipts;
- Full documentation of all competitive procurements with comprehensive files containing specifications, competitive procurement advertisement, pre-competitive procurement conference minutes (as appropriate), competitive procurements submitted, competitive procurement tabulation, board minutes indicating competitive procurement awards (or a similar award notice) and related records;
- Full documentation of procurement procedures developed to obtain goods and services through competitive sealed proposals, design/build contracts and other procurement options; and
- Documentation of price quotations, whether these are informal quotations obtained by school district staff or formal quotations that are required for purchases costing between \$10,000 and \$25,000.

TEA's purchasing guidelines also recommend that every school district should have a written manual describing its purchasing policies and procedures. It should be designed to assist school level and department level personnel in the purchasing of supplies and services.

Recommendation 69:

Revise the purchasing procedure manual and provide training to all district staff on purchasing policies, procedures and practices.

The district's purchasing manual should address purchasing goals and objectives, statutes, regulations and board policies applicable to purchasing, purchasing authority, requisition and purchase order processing, competitive procurement requirements and procedures, vendor selection and relations, receiving, distribution and the disposal of obsolete and surplus property. Many manuals also discuss request for payment vouchers and repair and service of equipment.

Including examples of forms is helpful to users of the manual. These may include sample bids or proposals, purchase order forms, purchase

requisitions (if separate from the purchase order), receiving report, vendor performance evaluation forms and requests for payment voucher.

The business manager should conduct a training session with all staff involved in the purchasing process to ensure that the policies, procedures and practices are effectively communicated.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the business manager, or designee, to develop a comprehensive purchasing procedure manual including a record retention policy for all purchasing documentation.	June 2002
2.	The business manager, or designee, develops and documents the district's purchasing procedures.	July 2002
3.	The superintendent submits the purchasing procedures to the board.	August 2002
4.	The board reviews and approves the procedures.	September 2002
5.	The business manager, or designee, distributes the procedures and communicates procedures and policies to district staff.	October 2002
6.	The business manager, or designee, updates procedures annually and communicates the updates to administrators and management every year.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

ACISD's purchasing process is not automated, resulting in a time consuming, cumbersome and labor-intensive process. To requisition an item at ACISD, the following manual steps must be followed (**Exhibit 7-6**):

**Exhibit 7-6
Purchase Requisition Process**

Person Completing Task	Description of Steps
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Requisitioner Individual school or Department	1.	Manually writes the purchase requisition form (outside purchase order form), including name, department, vendor, address, account number, date, item number, quantity, catalog number, description and unit cost and calculate the total amount;
	2.	Completes purchase requisition form with fund, function, object and sub-object codes from the chart of accounts;
	3.	Forwards the purchase requisition to appropriate authority;
Approver	4.	Reviews the purchase requisition and requests any necessary changes;
	5.	Approves and signs purchase order;
	6.	Delivers form to Purchasing & Maintenance coordinator;
Purchasing & Maintenance coordinator	7.	Manually verifies vendor with approved vendor list;
	8.	Determines type of required purchasing method: quote, sealed bid or proposal;
	9.	Follows bidding process if necessary;
	10.	Submits purchase requisition to the Accounts Payable clerk;
Accounts Payable clerk	11.	Verifies that all approvals are received;
	12.	Verifies account number and fund balance of requesting school;
	13.	Returns to requisitioner in case of invalid account number or insufficient funds;
	14.	Enters purchase order into system and encumbers the funds; and
	15.	Distributes purchase order; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sends copy to originator; • Sends copy to receiving; • Sends purchase order via mail to vendor to place order; and • Files copy.

Source: ACISD Accounts Payable clerk and Purchasing Department interviews, October 2001.

The purchase requisitions are routed through interoffice mail to obtain the required approvals, which causes processing delays. No backup approvers have been designated, and purchase orders can sit idle until the approvals are obtained causing even further delays. Interoffice mail is used to route the purchase requisition to the Accounts Payable clerk for encumbrance. Funds are not encumbered until after the purchase order is entered, resulting in the possibility of budgeted funds being over expended since the purchase requisitions are not entered into the system in a timely manner.

Effective purchase order systems reduce processing time, which decreases delivery turnaround times. Management reports can be easily produced showing frequently purchased items, best pricing received and vendor performance. The bidding process can be completely automated, and comparison pricing can be achieved quickly and effectively. Such automated systems enhance accountability and help ensure the district receives the best value for its purchasing dollar.

The Texas Association of School Boards administers a BuyBoard online purchasing system. The BuyBoard uses Internet-based technologies to create a single source for products and awarded contract information. The BuyBoard, a secured Web site, allows members to make confident buying decisions and streamline the purchasing process. The simple format allows point-and-click access to detailed product descriptions, part numbers and images. All items and catalogs posted on the BuyBoard have been competitively bid and awarded by the BuyBoard's Board of Trustees based on Texas statutes. ACISD is currently a member and pays \$200 per year for this service, but are not using the service at this time.

Region 2 offers a purchase requisition system that is a module within the STMRPC accounting system already used by ACISD. ACISD is not using this module. The requisition module provides the ability to requisition, authorize, order and receive all items normally used by a school district. The requisition module interfaces with the finance module to reflect the credits and/or debits to the budget for each transaction. For example, when a purchase order is created, funds are encumbered from the account identified on the requisition screen. Once the item is received, funds are expended in the proper amounts. The advantage to the requisition module is that it automates much of the process, all financial transactions are accomplished automatically, requisition approvals are performed online and security can be implemented down to the user/school level. The cost

of the STMRPC requisitioning module is \$3,036 annually, while a license at a school site is \$556 annually.

Spring Independent School District (SISD) implemented an online purchase order system that eliminated the need for the Purchasing Department to input order information since each school and department enters all types of purchase orders directly. A purchase order data specialist prints purchase orders, obtains the signature of the director of Purchasing and distributes copies to the appropriate SISD offices and vendors. By using an online purchase order system, SISD reduces processing time and provides the district efficient service.

Recommendation 70:

Implement an automated purchasing process for the Purchasing Department.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The business manager, or designee, and the Testing and Technology Department work with system stakeholders in analyzing district requirements for an automated system.	June 2002
2.	The business manager, or designee, designates district employees to serve on an evaluation committee.	July 2002
3.	The evaluation committee evaluates the options, requests proposals from vendors in writing and may receive a presentation on the proposal from the bidder.	July 2002
4.	The evaluation committee makes a recommendation to the business manager, who negotiates a contract with the vendor.	August 2002
5.	The business manager, or designee, makes a recommendation to the superintendent.	September 2002
6.	The business manager, or designee, secures the automated system and, with the assistance of the Testing and Technology Department, installs it districtwide.	October 2002
7.	The business manager, or designee, conducts an orientation session with school principals, department managers and the business office staff to train them to use the new system and publishes documentation on how to use the system.	November 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

The cost to add the STMRPC requisitioning module is \$3,036 annually. The cost for each school site license is \$556. Each of the six schools would need a site license, for a total of \$3,336 annually (\$556 cost per license x six schools). The total annual cost would be \$6,372 (\$3,036 + \$3,336).

Recommendation	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Implement an automated purchasing process for the Purchasing Department.	(\$6,372)	(\$6,372)	(\$6,372)	(\$6,372)	(\$6,372)

Chapter 7

B. WAREHOUSE

An efficient warehouse operation should ensure that all purchases and deliveries to schools and departments are complete and timely; inventory levels are sufficient to meet requests for supplies; property and equipment are controlled and accounted for properly; and surplus or obsolete property is disposed of and removed from district records.

The district's warehouse is used to house copy paper, janitorial cleaning supplies and plumbing and electrical supplies used by the Maintenance Department. Items are requisitioned from the warehouse by submitting a work order. The warehouse also serves as the district's receiving and distribution center for all purchases and warehouse staff delivers district mail. Two shipping and receiving clerks staff the warehouse. The combined annual salary for both of the two clerks is \$34,615.

When items are purchased, a copy of the purchase order is forwarded to the warehouse to notify staff of the impending delivery. This copy of the purchase order is used to verify the contents of the order when it is received. The shipping and receiving clerk notes any discrepancies between what was ordered and what was received on the purchase order. The items are then marked with the name of the person requesting the order and delivered. The packing slip is attached to the purchase order and returned to the Accounts Payable clerk for payment.

Warehouse personnel use an inventory management system, Applied Computer Technologies 1000 (ACT 1000). Items purchased and received are entered into the system and items taken from the warehouse are transferred out of the system.

FINDING

The warehouse operation lacks inventory management practices. The warehouse has three rooms totaling approximately 1,000 square feet. One of the rooms contains copy paper, while another has shelving for the cleaning supplies. The third room has plumbing and electrical supplies. A large open gate provides entrance into all three rooms. This gate is not locked during the day even though the receiving clerks often leave the warehouse to make deliveries to schools. The bins holding the plumbing and electrical supplies are not accurately labeled, making it difficult to find items that are needed and in stock. The receiving clerk explained that many of the plumbing and electrical supplies were not used and it was

common for maintenance workers needing supplies to come in and take them without providing work orders.

The ACT 1000 system provides the capabilities to keep an accurate continuous inventory, however, the inventory in the system is not accurate. When physical inventory counts are done, the ACT 1000 inventory counts are simply adjusted to whatever the physical counts show. Obsolete inventory is not tracked and systematically disposed. Planning is not performed for what inventory needs to be stocked and in what quantity based on usage data. Reorder points, which the system is capable of running, are not established in the ACT 1000 system to trigger staff to reorder quantities that are being depleted and, due to the inaccuracy of the inventory-on-hand in the system, would be ineffective if used. Inventory held in the warehouse could be pilfered or wasted, and no controls are in place to track lost inventory and the cost resulting to the district.

Wimberley Independent School District (WISD) eliminated the central warehouse and ships supplies directly to schools rather than storing them in a central warehouse. Thus, WISD avoids the additional costs associated with operating a central warehouse, such as staffing and maintaining a warehouse facility.

Recommendation 71:

Sell all warehouse contents, ship all orders to the departments and schools and close the warehouse.

Procedures and policies for purchasing, accepting and routing payment requests to accounts payable should be developed by the business manager.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the business manager, or designee, to reduce the supply inventory levels by disposing of old and unused inventory.	June 2002
2.	The business manager, or designee, ensures that purchase orders are updated to show the school or department address for delivery.	July 2002
3.	The superintendent eliminates two shipping/receiving clerks pending board approval.	
4.	The business manager, or designee, trains staff at the schools and departments in coordinating the deliveries and routing the	September 2002

paperwork to accounts payable.	
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FISCAL IMPACT

Two shipping/receiving clerks' annual salary plus benefits could be saved annually by implementing just in time inventory procedures. The annual salary for two ACISD warehouse clerks is \$34,615. Benefits of \$5,483, including worker's compensation, unemployment insurance, Medicare, social security and retirement are calculated by multiplying the salary times the benefit rate of 15.84 percent (\$34,615 x 15.84 percent). In addition, total insurance cost is \$6,780 (\$282.50 per month x 12 months x two employees). The total annual savings is \$46,878 (\$34,615 salaries + \$5,483 benefits + \$6,780 insurance). Minimal revenue may be recovered by selling the warehouse contents, however, none is included in this fiscal impact.

Recommendation	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Sell all warehouse contents, ship all orders to the departments and schools and close the warehouse.	\$46,878	\$46,878	\$46,878	\$46,878	\$46,878

Chapter 7

C. TEXTBOOKS

TEA is responsible for selecting and purchasing most of the textbooks used in Texas school districts. Each year, TEA provides districts with a list of recommended textbooks, buys textbooks from publishers and lends them to districts. A district's established textbook adoption committee then selects the textbooks the district will order, following TEA guidelines. The decision to order is made at the local level and TEA does not monitor the use of textbooks.

The number of books allowed for each subject and grade level is based upon student enrollment information submitted to TEA through the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS). Annual orders for instructional materials are based on the maximum number of students enrolled in the district during the previous school year and/or registered to attend district schools during the next school year.

Annual textbook orders are due by April 1 of each year. Supplemental orders are submitted after the annual order and throughout the year. Districts are given the opportunity to report exceptions to the PEIMS data if district officials report the data are incorrect.

Each district is responsible for returning these borrowed textbooks to TEA. If textbooks are lost during the school year, either the district recovers its cost from the student, the student's parent or guardian or the district compensates the state for the loss.

The assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Administration is responsible for managing the textbooks in the district. The district places textbook orders annually April 1 for the coming school year using the TEA's Educational Materials (EMAT) online textbook requisition system. The district is entitled to order up to 100 percent of its maximum student enrollment for the grade or subject for which it is ordering student editions. A 10-percent overage in ordering is allowed by the state. If the school orders above that amount and does not return the books immediately, the district may be responsible for purchasing the books from the state. Therefore, the district's goal is to purchase enough books for enrolled students only and not more.

ACISD's textbook order is based on the highest level of enrollment for the preceding school year. When textbook shortages occur, orders are placed as requested by principals. New texts are delivered to the warehouse

where books are unpacked and inventoried during the summer in preparation for distribution at the beginning of the school year.

Textbooks ordered through TEA are the property of the state and the school board is the legal custodian of those textbooks. In ACISD, lost or damaged books must be reported to each school principal. The district requires that books damaged or lost by students be replaced at the parents' expense.

The review team administered surveys to students, parents, teachers, school administration and district administrators about the issuance and quality of textbooks. **Exhibit 7-7** shows that principals, teachers and parents agreed, or strongly agreed, that textbooks are delivered in a timely manner and in good condition, while campus and district administrative personnel and students show differing survey results.

Exhibit 7-7
Quality of Textbook Materials Survey Results
October 2001
Agree or Strongly Agree

Survey Statement	Principals	Administrative Personnel	Teachers	Parents	Students
Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	81.8%	52.4%	75.8%	86.7%	62.5%
Textbooks are in good shape.	90.9%	57.3%	77.8%	90.1%	26.1%

Source: TSPR surveys, October 2001.

The board appoints a textbook committee every December or January to review upcoming adoptions. The assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Administration holds a meeting with the textbook committee in late January to review recommendations from the committee about which books should be adopted. The recommendations are documented in a memorandum and sent to all school principals for their review and approval. When the recommendations are finalized, the newly adopted books are presented to the board for approval. The order is placed on the EMAT online ordering Web site. The books are received during the summer, counted, inventoried and delivered to each school. The school administrators are responsible for distributing newly adopted books and older books to the teachers each year. The teachers in turn distribute the books to the students. The students are responsible for the books during

the year, and must pay for any lost or damaged books. **Exhibit 7-8** shows the number of lost textbooks by school for 2000-01.

**Exhibit 7-8
Lost Textbooks by School
2000-01**

School	Total Amount		Forgiven		Paid/Not Paid Items		
	Number	Amount	Number	Amount	Number: Paid in Full/On Payment Plan	Amount Paid In Full	Amount on Payment Plan
Rockport-Fulton High School	255	\$11,453	11	\$436	Paid: 67 Payment Plan: 177	\$1,292	\$9,725
Rockport-Fulton Middle School	57	\$1,858	2	\$89	Paid: 14 Payment Plan: 41	\$428	\$1,341
Live Oak Elementary	10	\$298	6	\$192	Paid: 4 Payment Plan: 0	\$106	\$0
Fulton Elementary	21	\$433	7	\$161	Paid: 13 Payment Plan: 1	\$222	\$50
Little Bay Elementary	3	\$109	0	\$0	Paid: 3 Payment Plan: 0	\$109	\$0
Total	346	\$14,151	26	\$878	320	\$2,157	\$11,116

Source: ACISD, assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Administration, October 2001.

Many of the students or parents repay lost textbooks on a scheduled payment plan. The district regularly submits reminders to the students concerning their debts. Additionally, letters are prepared and sent to parents. The district does not allow students to receive schedules or locker assignments before the first day of class unless their debts are cleared. The

district plan is to require payment of debts before the graduation ceremony as the last effort to collect.

FINDING

There are no standardized textbook procedures for the schools to follow. Consequently, the safekeeping and organization of the textbooks at each school is haphazard.

Although the textbook adoption process is handled efficiently and effectively, the review team found problems with the textbook process at the school level. Books were not organized in the storage rooms. Plans were in place to become organized and centralized in the high school. The middle school does not pick up the books from the classrooms at the end of the year and centralize them for inventory and redistribution the following year. Tracking lost textbooks is done manually and differently at each school. Calculating the number and dollar amount of lost textbooks is difficult.

According to the district, there is also a problem collecting monies owed for lost textbooks from students, because students transfer or dropout. Since the law does not allow the district much leverage to recover debts owed for lost textbooks, losses do occur. The district must pay for lost textbooks that are not paid for by the student.

The goals for textbook processing as of October 2001, which were developed by the assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Administration, are as follows:

- Set up files and make plans for new textbook adoption for 2002-03.
- Revise forms for schools to use. For example, transfers of books from school to school.
- Update computerized inventory software. Currently, the district is waiting on the new software update.
- Write procedure manual for school use.
- Plan tour of school bookrooms.
- Revamp district textbook rooms to be user-friendlier.

A good textbook adoption process ensures that sufficient textbooks are available and minimizes losses. The district owns computerized inventory software to assist schools with inventorying the textbooks, but the software is not installed at the schools. The latest systems include bar coding software that greatly improve and ease the inventorying process. The district already uses bar codes to track library books.

Kenedy Independent School District's (KISD's) textbook coordinator developed a textbook manual that provides detailed guidance on how to manage the district's textbook needs. The manual allows the district to maintain compliance with applicable textbook rules and regulations. It allows anyone to find answers to questions in one easy-to-locate place. The manual contains all correspondence from TEA's textbook division; a requisition packet for the next school year; downloadable textbook materials such as questions and answers to commonly asked questions pertaining to out-of-adoption textbooks, surplus materials, and rules and regulations; instructions for supplemental requests for textbooks; and district policies and procedures, including the annual inventory procedures.

Recommendation 72:

Standardize the textbook procedures at all schools.

The procedures need to provide detailed guidance on how to track, distribute and inventory textbooks. Textbook storerooms should be organized to ensure books could be easily tracked and maintained. Lost textbooks should be monitored efficiently and effectively. Bar coding the textbooks should be considered, since the district owns bar coding software and hardware.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Administration to develop a standardized textbook procedure manual.	June 2002
2.	The assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Administration develops and documents the district's textbook procedures.	July 2002
3.	The assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Administration distributes the procedures and trains staff appropriately.	August 2002
4.	The assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Administration ensures procedures are followed and that the manual is updated annually.	August 2002 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 7

D. PRINT SHOP

The district's Print Shop provides printing and copying services to district personnel with a staff of one clerk. The number of prints and copies produced by the Print Shop range from 2.1 million in 1998-99 to 1.1 million in 2000-01, a nearly 50-percent reduction. The total number of documents produced represents all the items that are handled by the Print Shop. For example, one document may be five pages, so it is counted as one document in the row labeled "Total number of documents produced" with five copies counted in the row labeled "Number of copies" (**Exhibit 7-9**).

Exhibit 7-9
Print Shop Volume
1998-99 through 2000-01

	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	Percent Change 1998-99 to 2000-01
Number of copies	1,266,675	730,227	677,477	(46.5%)
Number of prints	839,937	792,112	425,026	(49.4%)
Total number of copies and prints	2,106,612	1,522,339	1,102,503	(47.7%)
Total number of documents produced	402,666	373,655	251,234	(37.6%)
Number of jobs	583	357	320	(45.1%)

Source: ACISD Print Shop monthly reports, 1998-99 through 2000-01.

The district does not operate the Print Shop as an internal service fund (ISF). ISFs are separate funds that allow districts to operate support functions, such as printing, like a business. To operate effectively, the department providing the service establishes charges for services that are paid by users to cover all operating expenses, such as per-copy charges or labor fees to set up a job. Fees cover all expenses, including labor, depreciation, supplies, materials, utilities, facilities use and maintenance on equipment.

The Print Shop operates the following equipment in its daily operations(**Exhibit 7-10**).

**Exhibit 7-10
Print Shop Equipment
October 2001**

	Model Year	Age in Years
Cannon IR 8500	2001	0
Risograph 3750	1997	4
Risograph 1510	1998	3
Maxxium Colater	1997	4
Paddywagon	1997	4
Paper cutter	1997	4
Martin Paper Jogger	1997	4
Martin 959 Auto fold Machine	1997	4
GBC Electric Image maker Combing Machine	1997	4

Source: Interview with ACISD Print Shop clerk, October 2001.

FINDING

The district has not evaluated the effectiveness of the Print Shop. The entire district is not using the Print Shop, making it inefficient. There is no policy requiring all print jobs to go through the Print Shop. During 2000-01, Print Shop services cost the district 21 cents a document for in-house printing services. However, as shown in **Exhibit 7-11**, there was a significant increase in the cost of a document in 2000-01 from 1999-2000.

**Exhibit 7-11
Statement of Expenses
1998-99 through 2000-01**

	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01
Payroll Costs	\$19,641	\$21,231	\$22,056
Supplies and materials	\$21,313	\$14,162	\$30,972
Total Expenses	\$40,954	\$35,393	\$53,028
Number of documents produced	402,666	373,655	251,234

Expenses per document produced	\$0.10	\$0.09	\$0.21
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Source: ACISD Print Shop monthly reports 1998-99 through 2000-01; ACISD Statement of expenses provided by the business manager, 1998-99 through 2000-01; ACISD Payroll Books, 1999-2000 through 2000-01.

Two factors contribute to the increase in costs, according to the Print Shop clerk. The district leased a new printer during 2000-01 that was more expensive and had more features than the previous copier. Upon review of all the copiers and printers available in the district, ACISD opted to lease a larger volume digital machine that all employees can access and print to from their workstation. Although all departments are using the printer, the work handled by the Print Shop was reduced because the Special Education Department no longer needed the forms that were previously printed by the Print Shop. Since the Print Shop was producing less, the cost to provide the services increased. Printing quality and service is not an issue in the district, based on the review team's interviews with users of the Print Shop services.

The review team requested quotes from third party vendors in the area to determine what they would charge to produce the documents for the district. The results of these surveys are documented in **Exhibit 7-12**.

**Exhibit 7-12
Third Party Vendor Charges**

Activity	What is Produced	How Often?	Number Produced	Rockport Printing		Sail Printing	
				Quote	Cost for each document	Quote	Cost for each document
Copying	Office Requests	One Time	2,400	\$156	\$0.07	\$156	\$0.07
	Application for Employment	Annually	800	\$118	\$0.15	\$140	\$0.18
Printing	2 Page NCRs	Every other month	1,500	\$180	\$0.12	\$186	\$0.12

	3 Page NCRs	Every other month	3,000	\$543	\$0.18	\$537	\$0.18
	4 Page NCRs	Every other month	1,500	\$386	\$0.26	\$428	\$0.28
	5 Page NCRs	Every three months	2,500	\$729	\$0.29	\$799	\$0.32
	Business Cards	When requested	500	\$64	\$0.13	\$62	\$0.12
Average price for each document					\$0.17		\$0.18

Source: ACISD Print Shop monthly reports 1998-99 through 2000-01, Email response to request for quote from Rockport Printing, Rockport Texas, October 2001. Email response to request for quote from Sail Printing, Rockport Texas, October 2001.

If the Print Shop produces more documents, it may save the district money to continue to operate the Print Shop, but if printing stays at the 2000-01 level, it may be more cost effective to outsource the district printing. The district has not analyzed the options.

By providing high quality services and products, the Fort Bend Independent School District Print Shop met district needs while charging competitive prices. The district adopted a policy mandating all requests for printing services be submitted to the Print Shop. This policy requires the Print Shop to evaluate prices and service capabilities before submission to a commercial printer. As a control to ensure compliance with the policy, buyers in the Purchasing Department review requisitions for service descriptions and forward printing services to the Print Shop.

Recommendation 73:

Evaluate cost structure and determine ongoing effectiveness of operating a district Print Shop.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent works with the Print Shop clerk to define what	June
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	constitutes a print job.	2002
2.	The superintendent directs school administration and department leaders to use the Print Shop for all print jobs.	June 2002
3.	The Print Shop clerk monitors the print jobs and prepares periodic reports to the business manager with data on the usage of the Print Shop.	July 2002
4.	The business manager monitors Print Shop operations and use, and analyzes costs and revenues and documents produced compared to local pricing.	Ongoing
5.	The business manager reports to the superintendent on Print Shop operations, use, costs and revenues, and ensures Print Shop operations continue to be cost effective when compared to outsourcing options.	Ongoing
6.	The Print Shop clerk conducts annual surveys of users of the services to ensure quality and performance is satisfactory.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 8

COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

This chapter reviews Aransas County Independent School District's (ACISD's) management and use of technology in four sections.

- A. Public Education Information Management System
- B. Organization, Staffing and Budgeting
- C. Policies, Procedures and Planning
- D. Infrastructure, Software, Hardware and Operations

BACKGROUND

ACISD's Testing and Technology Department is responsible for supporting 1,369 computers, 400 printers, 21 servers, 50 network switches and routers, six wireless communication links, hundreds of fiber and copper network drops and audio visual equipment. Each school and the administration office has a local area network (LAN) that connects to the district's wide area network (WAN). All locations have a fiber optic backbone, a network used to interconnect several networks together. There are computers in every classroom; computer labs in every school, and all district computers are connected to the district's network and the Internet

Exhibit 8-1 illustrates how many instructional computers are in the district and ACISD's student-to-computer ratio by school. The 1999-2000 national student-to-computer ratio was 4.9. Computer ratios range from a favorable 3.0 students for each computer in Wyoming to 7.2 students for each computer in California. ACISD compares favorably to national trends.

Exhibit 8-1
Student to Instructional Computer Ratio Comparisons
2000-01

District	Student Enrollment	Number of Computers	Ratio (Students/Computers)
Rockport-Fulton High School	991	259	3.83
Rockport-Fulton Middle School	833	150	5.55
Live Oak Elementary	338	142	2.38
Fulton Elementary	380	135	2.81
Little Bay Elementary	306	71	4.31
Rockport Childhood Center	518	154	3.36

Total	3,366	911	3.69
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Source: Texas Education Agency (TEA), Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS), 2000-01. ACISD Testing and Technology Department, December 2001.

Chapter 8

A. PUBLIC EDUCATION INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) uses the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) to collect data from each school district in the state to prepare comprehensive statewide reports. The Texas Education Code requires each school district to submit information to TEA using PEIMS and a uniform accounting system.

The information submitted each year covers many areas of public education, including student demographic and academic performance, personnel, financial, and organizational information. TEA produces a calendar every year that the district follows to electronically submit the required information. The calendar for submission of the data for the 2001-02 year is shown in **Exhibit 8-2**.

Exhibit 8-2
PEIMS Submission Calendar
2001-02

Period	Data Required	Data Use by TEA
Fall Submission	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Snapshot Data: This data reflects the status of the district on October 26, 2001.• Leaver Data: This data reflects graduates, dropouts and other school leavers identified during the 2000-01 school year.	Data is used to calculate compensatory entitlement, monitor special programs, report to the federal government, calculate retention, calculate basic profiles for Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) and perform desk audits.
Midyear Submission	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Actual audited financial data from the previous year.	Data is used to report to the state legislature, monitor special program expenditures, audit districts and perform desk audits.
Summer Submission	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student attendance data	Summer data are used to calculate Foundation School Program final

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course completion data • Discipline data 	allotments, calculate attendance and course completion, create a portion of the AEIS, augment the monitoring of special programs and perform desk audits.
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Source: TEA, PEIMS, Collection Schedule, 2001-02.

ACISD has designated a PEIMS coordinator to obtain, collate and submit the data to TEA by the required due dates. The PEIMS coordinator is a clerk position that reports to the WinSchool coordinator who reports directly to the superintendent. WinSchool is the student management accounting system that ACISD uses at each school to gather data on each student and their performance.

The PEIMS submission process consists of the following steps as detailed in **Exhibit 8-3**.

Exhibit 8-3
PEIMS Data Collection & Submission Process

Step	Responsibility	Action Taken	Product Produced
1.	PEIMS Coordinator	Sends requests for information to Special Program Directors.	
2.	PEIMS Coordinator	Prepares reports from data tracked on graduates and dropouts from the WinSchool system.	
3.	WinSchool Coordinator	Receives data from Special Program Directors. Enters into WinSchool system. Notifies PEIMS coordinator that data entry is complete.	Updated data in WinSchool
4.	PEIMS Coordinator	Produce WinSchool reports. Sends reports to Special Program Directors for review.	
5.	Special Program Directors	Review, mark-up changes and return to PEIMS Coordinator	
6.	PEIMS Coordinator	Make all requested changes Extract the data from WinSchool system. Verify completeness. Upload the data for each school to TEA. Receive e-mail from TEA when the file is accepted.	TEA Extract of Data for PEIMS

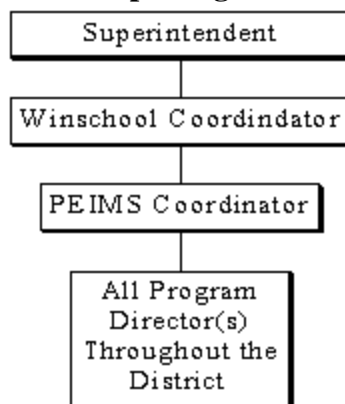
7.	PEIMS Coordinator	Pulls reports from the TEA website Balance against approved reports from ACISD program directors	
8.	PEIMS Coordinator	Pull the data from the TEA website Upload the TEA-accepted PEIMS data to the WinSchool system for each school	TEA Import of Data for PEIMS

Source: ACISD PEIMS coordinator, October 2001.

FINDING

Approximately 30 program directors throughout the district are responsible for approving PEIMS information for each school. The business manager and the Human Resources coordinator are not included in the approval process. **Exhibit 8-4** reflects the PEIMS reporting hierarchy within ACISD.

Exhibit 8-4
PEIMS Reporting Hierarchy



Source: Interviews with ACISD staff.

While the district was submitting the 2000-01 PEIMS data, the district classified 68 educational aides as auxiliary staff. The Human Resources coordinator did not review the staffing information before the submission and so was unable to identify and correct the error before the information was submitted to TEA.

School districts' accountability ratings and funding are based on the PEIMS data provided by the district. Peer district comparisons are made to determine if costs are in or out of line. Correct data submission for the PEIMS database is essential not only for funding purposes, but for the state's accountability system.

In most districts, the PEIMS submission process involves capturing and checking the data for accuracy before sending it to TEA. District PEIMS personnel routinely obtain authorizations from higher district authority to check data submissions for accuracy. Several people checking data for accuracy are more likely to catch errors involving simple mathematics, transpositions or irregularities of some sort. District staff said in interviews that the PEIMS information is not submitted and reviewed by the person responsible for the data before submission.

Recommendation 74:

Ensure the proper department head reviews PEIMS data before it is submitted to TEA.

The Human Resources coordinator should review all staffing data before it is submitted to TEA. The business manager should review all financial information. Principals should review all instruction-related data. A thorough internal review of all policies and procedures covering PEIMS data collection should be undertaken and steps implemented to ensure that employees take responsibility for the accuracy of the data. Checks and balances should be put in place to continually monitor the quality of the data reported to TEA.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Administration to review the PEIMS submission process and ensure that appropriate personnel approve the data.	June 2002
2.	The assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Administration trains each person in the process on what is required before each PEIMS submission.	July 2002
3.	The PEIMS coordinator implements the plan, and the assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Administration periodically monitors the process to ensure that the plan is being followed.	September 2002 and Ongoing

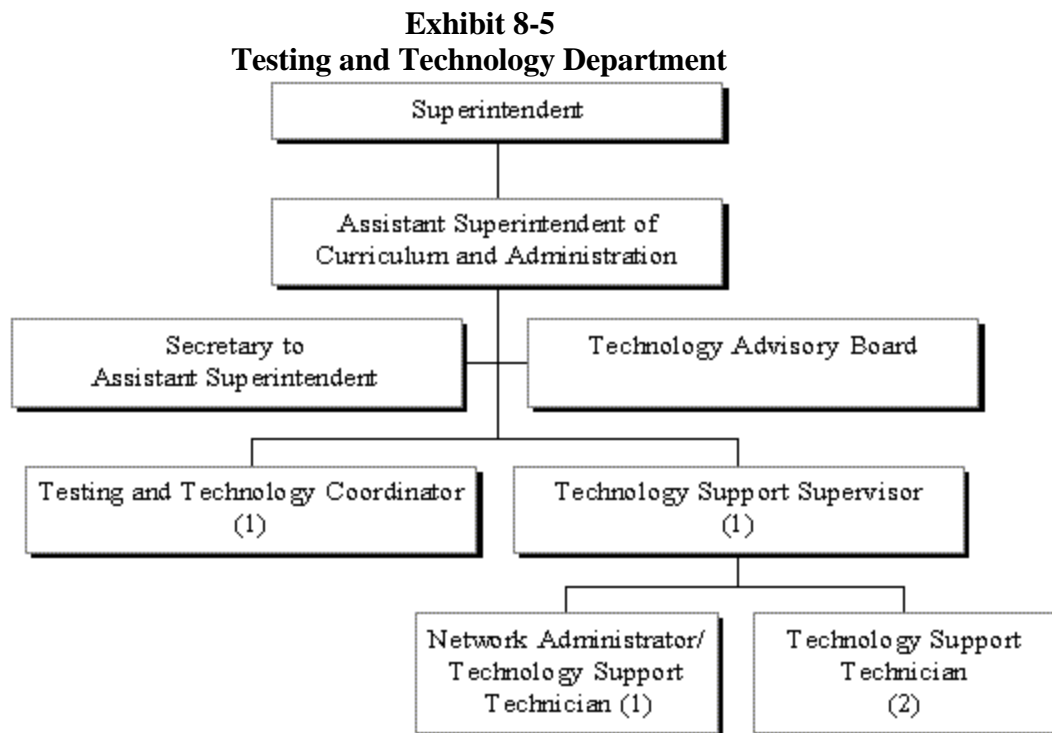
FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 8

B. ORGANIZATION, STAFFING AND BUDGETING

To achieve its technology-related goals, a school district must have an organizational structure that supports new technologies. The district's technology operations are centralized in its Testing and Technology Department. The Testing and Technology Department's organization is shown in **Exhibit 8-5**.



Source: ACISD Testing and Technology organizational chart, September 6, 2001.

The Testing and Technology support staff maintains existing technology, operates the district's network, provides users with options for purchasing technology. The staff also installs all technology equipment including the phone system and network cabling. They assist in troubleshooting, repairing and installing networks, computers, TVs, VCRs and overhead projectors. The team advises school personnel on purchasing equipment and software.

The Testing and Technology coordinator is responsible for writing all technology grants and for disaggregating all student test data by teacher,

class, grade and school. **Exhibit 8-6** shows the individual responsibilities and certifications of the Testing and Technology Department staff.

The Technology Advisory Board, consisting of personnel from all the schools, guides the Testing and Technology Department by providing input once a year to the technology needs of the schools and the requirements of the district from an educational perspective.

Exhibit 8-6
Testing and Technology Department Responsibilities and Certifications

Position	Certifications and Training	Roles and Responsibilities
Testing and Technology Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trained in: Copyright issues; TIFTech Policy and Leadership, Adapting Computers for the Handicapped; Computer Literacy; Region 2 Technology Grant Writing 	Coordinates all curriculum and instructional testing. Writes technology grants and collaborates with the other grant writers on technology needs. Coordinates the in-service requirements for teachers for technology competency. Ensures the software is properly licensed. Writes and distributes technology plans.
Technology Support Supervisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Texas Certified School Teacher: Electronics • A+ Certified Technician • Microsoft Certified Professional - Windows 95/98 • Panduit Certified Installer • Trained in Novell Netware 3, 4 and 5, Microsoft Windows NT 4.0 and Structured Wiring Systems 	Project manager for technology improvements. Responsible for directing the work of technicians. Coordinates telephone needs, wiring, network needs and prepares and assigns work orders.
Network Administrator/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certified Novell Netware 	Responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the district

<p>Technology Support Technician</p>	<p>Administrator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A+ Certified Technician • Network+ Certified • Panduit Certified Installer • Trained in Novell Netware 3, 4 and 5, Microsoft Windows NT 4.0, Structured Wiring Systems and PC Troubleshooting 	<p>network. Coordinates email. Handles computer problems. Assists in wiring and setup as needed.</p>
<p>Technology Support Technician</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A+ Certified Technician • Panduit Certified Installer • Experienced in Structured Wiring Systems, Netware, NT, Linux and AS/400 operating systems, Desktop Computer Troubleshooting, and Web Design 	<p>Responsible for the district's Web page and email. Handles problems with computer hardware and software. Assists in wiring and setup as needed.</p>
<p>Technology Support Technician</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A+ Certified Technician • Panduit Certified Installer • Experienced in Structured Wiring Systems, Telematics, Telecommunications Systems, Desktop Computer Troubleshooting 	<p>Responsible for the energy management software in the district. Dispatches air conditioner maintenance personnel to correct problems. Ensures software is programmed to meet the district's energy needs.</p>

Source: ACISD's Job Descriptions, December 1994, Interviews with Testing and Technology Department staff, October 2001.

FINDING

ACISD does not use a staffing formula to determine how many support staff the district needs to respond to "trouble calls" and to repair technology.

The Technology support supervisor writes all incoming trouble calls on a yellow legal pad. Each trouble call is either assigned to one of the technicians or the supervisor takes it. The Technology support supervisor tries to group the calls by school to ensure that the technicians' workloads are efficiently distributed. Once a problem is corrected, the Technology support supervisor is informed, and he crosses the problem off his list. As a result, ACISD cannot adequately track vendor performance, hardware performance, software performance, training issues, and technician efficiency and productivity. Most importantly, however, the district cannot project its staffing needs based on historical data.

The district's technology plan for 2001-2003 is being amended to budget for a five-person increase in staffing, which will cost \$100,000 in additional salary expenses. The amendment for additional staff, however, is not supported by a staffing formula to explain to decision-makers why five additional people are needed. There is no indication if the need for support has increased or if the number of computers has increased significantly.

Private industry estimates appropriate staffing levels in two ways. One is to calculate the staffing requirement based on the rate of processing support requests. Consider an example in which you have to estimate your staffing requirement for a forecasted workload of 300 support requests in a month. An examination of historical data shows that a technician can complete 10 requests a day. This calculation should also factor in sick, vacation and training days.

The second technique uses a slightly different approach. You must know the average time required to process a support request, and make some assumptions about the availability of an average technician. Then you can calculate the total labor time required, average availability for each technician, estimate the number of hours each day that technicians are expected to work on requests and the number of technicians needed.

Recommendation 75:

Develop and implement a staffing allocation methodology for technology.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Technology support supervisor selects the staffing method that	June
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	best suits the district's needs.	2002
2.	The Technology support supervisor makes the staffing formula recommendation to the assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Administration and the superintendent.	July 2002
3.	The superintendent approves the staff formula.	July 2002
4.	The Technology support supervisor and the assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Administration make budget recommendations based on the staffing formula.	August 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 8

C. POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND PLANNING

The Texas Education Code (TEC) requires school districts to prepare improvement plans that provide for integrating technology into instructional and administrative programs. The best plans contain clear objectives and actions. They assign individual responsibility for implementation and identify the milestones necessary to complete the projects. Planning on how to use new technologies is particularly important to education because of several factors.

Equity: Despite the best intentions, the level of technological resources available to each school in a district can vary. Unfortunately, poorly planned introductions of new technology can widen the gap between the "haves" and "have nots." Careful planning at the district level can ensure that all schools receive adequate, appropriate and consistent support; at the school level, it helps to guarantee that no child is excluded from the benefits of new technology.

Rapid Change: The pace of technological change continues to accelerate. If planning for the implementation of new technology does not allow for an adequate period of time (such as three to five years), the district risks failing to take full advantage of this rapid change.

Funding: Funding can be the greatest barrier to using technology effectively in the classroom. Unless planning addresses whether and how projects will be funded, limited funding can have a greater impact than it should.

Credibility: The public is anxious to see its tax dollars are well spent. Thorough planning makes it possible to demonstrate that proposed spending has been well thought out, acquisitions of technological resources have been carefully considered and every aspect of the implementation process is cost effective.

To implement information technology effectively in administrative offices or classrooms, a school district must have an extensive computer network connecting modern computers; comprehensive, administrative and instructional software and up-to-date operating systems; effective, ongoing training; adequate technical support and an ample professional staff capable of implementing and administering technology. Each component must be addressed in the district's technology plan.

ACISD has developed and approved a technology plan, detailing where the district wants to go with instructional and business technology from 2001-02 through 2002-03. **Exhibit 8-7** describes the needs identified in the plan and the programs that will be implemented to address these needs.

**Exhibit 8-7
ACISD Technology Plan Timeline**

Target Date	Event	Required Resources	Resources (Budget)
May 2002	Establish and maintain district technology budgets using a variety of resources (local, state and federal funds, grants, E-rate) to purchase hardware and software; continue to fund Internet access and T-1 lines for maintenance and upgrading existing equipment and any instructional technology used in the district.	\$100,000	Local/ State/ Federal Grants
September 2002	Acquire equipment and software for electronic management of textbooks and curriculum materials on all schools	\$20,000	Local Textbook Coordinator
September 2002	Provide district-wide identification cards for access to school, security, check out textbooks and library books, meal tickets.	\$30,000	Local Staff
February 2003	Upgrade the wiring of all schools and departments; provide hardware and bandwidth necessary to upgrade the ACISD wide area network for all technologies including distance learning, communications, data transfer and electronic delivery of instruction.	\$600,000	State/ Federal Grants Staff
May 2003	Ensure that appropriate site and district licenses are secured for all software.	\$10,000	Local/State Staff
September 2003	Increase the district's technology team to include a technology support supervisor, network administrator, secretary and five qualified technicians (one for each school) to provide adequate technology support and training for all students and staff.	\$100,000	Local/State Staff

September 2003	Provide all staff the opportunity to develop technology competencies as described in the ACISD Technology Competency Guidelines.	\$5,000	Local Staff
September 2003	Develop and implement an integrated technology curriculum from the TEKS that is vertically aligned and provides for formative and summative evaluation of student skills at regular intervals.	\$6,000	Local Staff
September 2003	Install technology in schools that will support distance learning.	\$100,000	Local/State Grants Staff
September 2003	Develop, implement and maintain a plan to ensure that all students have access to appropriately configured and maintained workstations that comply with the most available technologies and replaces or repositions obsolete technology.	\$40,000/yr.	Local/State Staff
December 2003	Install, maintain and upgrade computers with Internet access in classrooms and libraries as appropriate for instructional, management and administrative purposes.	\$60,000	Local/State Staff

Source: ACISD Technology Plan 2001-02 through 2002-03.

The technology plan identifies the district's technology needs and estimates how much this technology will cost. These needs and cost estimates are assessed against available district funds and potential additional funds to arrive at a budget of \$1,071,000 for the next two years. **Exhibit 8-8** summarizes the budget indicating by year how much will be spent in each of the three areas: instructional technology, business technology and support, maintenance and training.

Exhibit 8-8
Projected Technology Plan Expenditures
2001-02 through 2002-03

Technology Area	2001-02	2002-03	Total
Business Technology	\$0	\$0	\$0
Support, maintenance and training	\$130,000	\$810,000	\$940,000
Instructional Technology	\$20,000	\$111,000	\$131,000

Total	\$150,000	\$921,000	\$1,071,000
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Source: ACISD Technology Plan 2001-01 through 2002-03.

The Testing and Technology coordinator is responsible for pursuing technology grants for the district. **Exhibit 8-9** shows that ACISD has received technology grants totaling \$476,407 since 1998.

**Exhibit 8-9
Technology Grants Received**

Grant	Description	Date	Competitive (Y/N)	Recurring /One Time	Won (Y/N)	Written By	Amount Received
Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund Board (TIF) 3	Technology Infrastructure Advancement	August 1998	N	One Time	Y	ACISD	\$99,319
Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund Board (TIF) 6	Technology Infrastructure Advancement	August 1999	N	One Time	Y	ACISD	\$160,000
TIE 3	Professional Development	August 1999	Y	One Time	Y	ACISD/ Region 2	\$17,088
Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund Board (TIF) 9	Technology Infrastructure Advancement	May 2001	N	One Time	Y	ACISD	\$200,000
Total							\$476,407

Source: ACISD Technology Department.

ACISD received a grant funded by a program created by the Technology Integration in Education (TIE) initiative that actively promotes online curriculum delivery, distance learning, technology professional development and enhanced administrative support. This initiative is funded by the federal Technology Literacy Challenge Fund (TLCF) and administered under Public Law 103-382, Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), Title III, Part A. Subpart 2. Approximately \$33 million was available to school districts or cooperatives of districts in the form of competitive sub grants. The funds will help advance the national goals for technology in education as specified in the national, long-range technology plan. Section 3135 of the ESEA stated that special consideration was to be given to districts with a demonstrated need for

technology and with a percentage of students identified as economically disadvantaged.

ACISD was awarded part of this collaborative grant proposal with Regional Education Service Center II (Region 2) and other districts in the area. The grant has provided training for teachers to infuse technology into the curriculum. Teachers used laptop computers and participated in 15 days of training through distance classes in June 2000 at the Ingleside distance learning center. They are now completing projects and evaluation as required for the certification offered by this training. When their certification is complete, they will act as mentors on their school campuses to further integrate technology into the curriculum of the district.

In addition, ACISD received several Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund (TIF) grants. The TIF grant helps schools develop ways to integrate the Internet into school curriculum and instruction. In order to receive this grant, schools must submit an approved technology plan, create a technology task force, provide 10 percent in matching funds, purchase items from the TIF suggested configuration list, participate in the TIF Tech training program and build a homepage on the Internet. The TIF grant provides for state-of-the-art links to local area networks and wide area networks so that improved instructional and technological resources will be available to teachers and students.

FINDING

ACISD's technology plan is not supported by cost-benefit justification data to ensure that ACISD is spending its technology dollars on the right solutions. The technology planning process does not ensure that the items being planned or requested are fully supported by cost-justification data. Without this justification, district management cannot make informed decisions on whether the district can afford the technology now and in the future and whether or not the technology solution solves problems the district is facing.

Several items from the district's plan are highlighted in **Exhibit 8-10** to indicate how the costs of technology purchases have not been properly justified because essential questions have not been answered.

**Exhibit 8-10
Assessment of ACISD's Technology Plan**

ACISD's Technology Action	Assessment
Develop and implement an integrated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What students and teachers

<p>technology curriculum from the TEKS that is vertically aligned and provides for formative and summative evaluation of student skills at regular intervals.</p>	<p>will this impact?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What training will teachers need? Cost? • What results are anticipated? • What curriculum changes will be required? • Is this a stand-alone software system? • Does it need to integrate with Winschool? Will it integrate with Winschool?
<p>Upgrade the wiring of all schools and departments; provide hardware and bandwidth necessary to upgrade the ACISD wide are network for all technologies including distance learning, communications, data transfer, and electronic delivery.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why is this needed? • What is the industry standard? How far behind is the district? • What will this provide that is not already available? • Why is it important to the education of students? • Is this being updated only to support distance learning? • What will this cost? Can the costs be broken down by element of change?
<p>Install, maintain and upgrade computer with Internet access in classrooms and libraries as appropriate for instructional, management and administrative purposes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is the Internet used in the classes? How will it be used? • How many computers do not have access? • What is the hardware/software configuration needed to support Internet use? • What will it cost the district for each computer to upgrade? • What is being done to ensure that the district is buying computers to support the Internet use?

<p>Install technology on schools that will support distance learning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is distance learning? • Why is it important to ACISD students and the county to have distance learning? What in its makeup supports the need for distance learning? • What equipment, software and training are needed to start-up? On-going? • Who has successfully implemented distance learning? What results were achieved?
<p>Ensure that appropriate site and district licenses are secured for all software.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the penalty for not having a software license? • How many licenses is ACISD missing? • Why is this not part of the normal procurement process to ensure that a license is purchased? • How was the necessary budget calculated?

Source: Review of the District Technology Plan for 2001-03.

Recommendation 76:

Require a cost-benefit analysis and justification for each planning component before it is included in the adopted technology plan.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Administration along with the Technology Support supervisor and the Testing and Technology coordinator develop a format for developing the cost justification data.	June 2002
2.	The Testing and Technology coordinator and supervisor work with each member of the Technology Advisory Board to develop cost justification data for each request and incorporate the information into the planning process.	June - August 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The Testing and Technology Department does not have written policies and procedures to govern operations.

For example, due to a lack of board-approved technology purchasing policies and procedures, several of the district's technology purchases have been costly and ineffective. For example, the Transportation Department purchased the Edulog system in 1994 at a cost of \$15,000 to support its needs but has never used it. The ACT1000 inventory system purchased is not effectively used to meet the needs of users in the Maintenance, Purchasing and Warehouse Departments. One of the school principals purchased WinSchool, the school attendance and grade tracking software, without first determining how it would interface with the district financial system provided by Region 2.

Policies and procedures are the bedrock of effective technological change. The district needs clear policies and procedures directing the purchase of technology, the application of copyright laws, the control of software and hardware inventories and procedures for the installation of software and hardware.

Recommendation 77:

Write and implement technology policies and procedures.

The following are some examples of areas that technology policies and procedures should cover:

- What software may be installed;
- Equipment connections and how equipment should be replaced;
- How to use virus prevention software;
- Procedures to conduct mandatory backups to prevent the loss of data;
- Off-site storage requirements;
- Monitoring compliance with the district's acceptable use policy;
- Obtaining technical support;
- Technology staffing formulas;
- Software license requirements, misuse and documentation; and
- Procedures to assess needs before hardware and software are purchased.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the Testing and Technology coordinator to develop a policies and procedures manual.	June 2002
2.	The Testing and Technology coordinator and staff members meet and develop deadlines for completing the manual, review what has been accomplished thus far, and develop the tasks to be accomplished by the completion date.	June 2002
3.	Staff completes the manual.	July 2002
4.	The Testing and Technology coordinator presents the completed manual to the assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Administration for review and approval.	July 2002
5.	The assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Administration submits the policies to the superintendent and the board for approval.	August 2002
6.	With board approval, the Testing and Technology coordinator has the manual placed on the Web site.	September 2002
7.	The Testing and Technology coordinator sends an e-mail to the technology staff, school administrators and department managers notifying them of the manual's existence and how to access it.	October 2002
8.	The Testing and Technology coordinator reviews and updates the manual annually.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The district does not have a written disaster recovery plan. This is of specific concern due to the district's proximity to the Gulf of Mexico and the possibility of hurricanes.

Essential elements of a disaster recovery plan include appointing a disaster recovery team; compiling a list of persons to contact after a disaster and listing critical school functions, essential office equipment and required staffing levels needed immediately after a disaster.

A disaster recovery plan must include contingency and backup plans for information technology as described in **Exhibit 8-11**.

Exhibit 8-11
Summary of Key Disaster Recovery Plan Elements

Step	Details
Build the disaster recovery team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify a disaster recovery team that includes key policymakers, building management, end-users, key outside contractors and technical staff.
Obtain and/or approximate key information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an exhaustive list of critical activities performed within the district. • Develop an estimate of the minimum space and equipment necessary to restoring essential operations.
Obtain and/or approximate key information (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a timeframe for starting initial operations after a security incident. • Develop a list of key personnel and their responsibilities.
Perform and/or delegate key duties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an inventory of all assets, including data, software, hardware, documentation and supplies. • Set up a reciprocal agreement with comparable organizations to share each other's equipment or lease backup equipment to allow the district to operate critical functions in the event of a disaster. • Make plans to procure hardware, software and other equipment as necessary to ensure that critical operations are resumed as soon as possible. • Establish procedures for obtaining off-site backup records.
Perform and/or delegate key duties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locate support resources that might be needed (such as equipment repair, trucking, and cleaning companies). • Arrange with vendors to provide priority delivery for emergency orders. • Identify data recovery specialists and establish emergency agreements.
Specify details within the plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify individual roles and responsibilities by name and job title so that everyone knows exactly

	<p>what needs to be done.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define actions to be taken in advance of an occurrence or undesirable event. • Define actions to be taken at the onset of an undesirable event to limit damage, loss, and compromised data integrity. • Identify actions necessary to restore critical functions. • Define actions to be taken to re-establish normal operations.
Test the plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test the plan frequently and completely. • Analyze the results to improve the plan and identify further needs.
Deal with damage appropriately	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a disaster actually occurs, document all costs and videotape the damage. • Be prepared to overcome downtime on your own; insurance settlements can take time to resolve.
Consider other significant issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not make a plan unnecessarily complicated. • Make one individual responsible for maintaining the plan, but structure it so that others are authorized and prepared to implement it if needed. • Update the plan regularly and whenever changes are made to your system.

Source: Adapted from Tom Szuba's Technology and Security Task Force, National Forum on Education Statistics, "Safeguarding your Technology," November 18, 1998.

Recommendation 78:

Prepare a comprehensive disaster recovery plan and ensure that the district's administrative and instructional computer systems are backed up.

A comprehensive disaster recovery plan will help the district recover technology operations more quickly should a disaster occur. Obtaining and reviewing disaster recovery plans available from Region 2 and other school districts could speed the planning process.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent establishes a Disaster Recovery Team, composed of the assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Administration, the Testing and Technology Department staff and department representatives from the Business Office, Purchasing Department, Food Services Department, Maintenance Department and Transportation Department.	June 2002
2.	The Disaster Recovery Team develops the Disaster Recovery Plan.	July 2002
3.	The assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Administration presents the plan to the superintendent and board for approval.	August 2002
4.	The assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Administration communicates the plan to the appropriate personnel.	September 2002
5.	The Disaster Recovery Team runs a scheduled test of the plan.	September 2002
6.	The assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Administration reports the results to the superintendent and school board.	October 2002
7.	The Disaster Recovery Team monitors ongoing plan through review and testing, updating the plan as necessary.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 8

D. INFRASTRUCTURE, SOFTWARE, HARDWARE AND OPERATIONS

Of all technology resources, the infrastructure is one of the most important. If a sound infrastructure is in place, most users can contact people and obtain information throughout their organization and beyond, which makes it easier for them to do their jobs. Given the benefits that will accrue, many organizations are finding they must invest adequately in an infrastructure. This is particularly true in a school system, which typically has a central office and multiple school sites spread over a wide area.

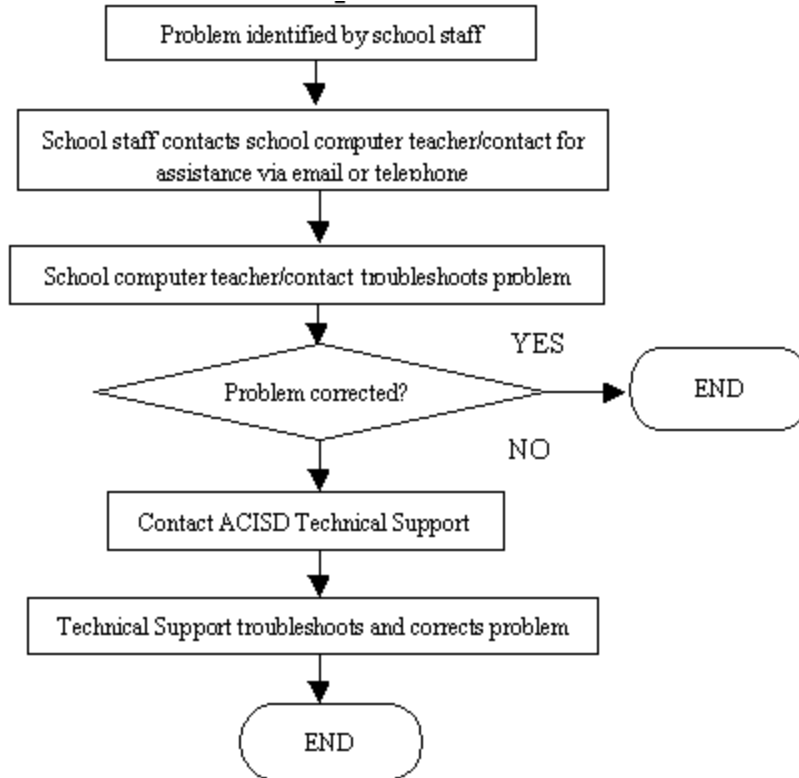
A review of equipment involves an analysis of the type of hardware resources available for staff, teacher and student use. While computers are the predominant resource, in the classroom, other relevant technologies include, but are not limited to, videodisc players, televisions and networking equipment.

Concerning computers used for instruction, it is important they have sufficient power and speed to support recently developed multimedia courseware and effective access to the Internet. It is also preferable that such computers are networked. Similarly, computers used for administrative purposes also need sufficient power and speed if they are to effectively use the more advanced software available for data storage, manipulation and analysis.

The school technology teachers and aides have extended their roles beyond computer lab management to troubleshooting and supporting lab-related resources and helping teachers integrate technology and curriculum.

Exhibit 8-12 shows the troubleshooting process described by the computer teachers and aides.

**Exhibit 8-12
Troubleshooting Process**



Source: Interview with various ACISD technology teachers and coordinators, October, 2001.

FINDING

While making a significant investment in its network and communications infrastructure, ACISD has standardized its hardware and software to ensure it can provide good support to staff and management.

Six years ago, the district began purchasing standardized Gateway desktop computers running Windows 95 or 98 and Microsoft Office Professional 97 or 2000. A few locations have Macintosh computers at the elementary schools.

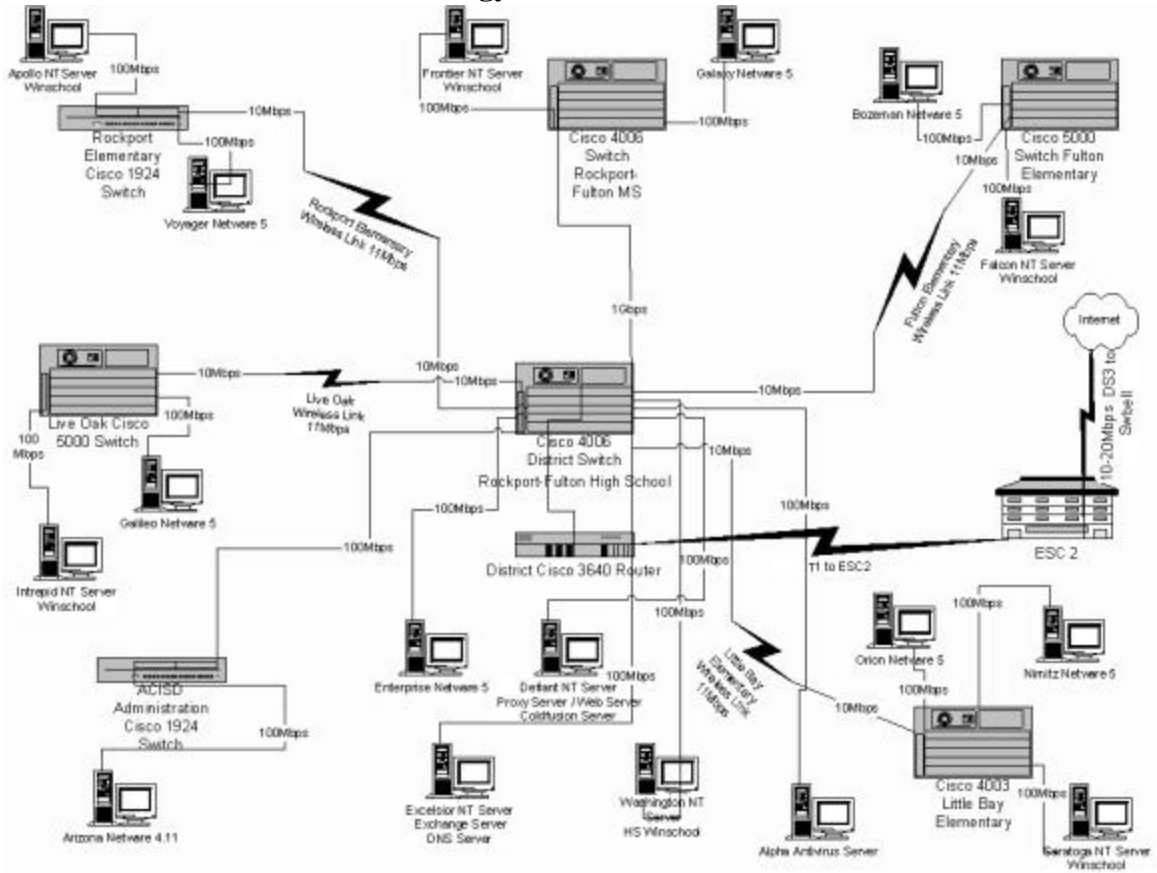
The WAN uses high-speed fiber optics and wireless technology to connect all locations. Four schools (Little Bay Elementary, Rockport Elementary, Fulton Elementary and Live Oak Elementary) connect to Rockport-Fulton High School using ten megabits a second (Mbps) wireless connections. The Rockport-Fulton Middle School connects to Rockport-Fulton High School using one billion bits a second (Gbps) fiber optics, and the

administration building connects to Rockport-Fulton High School using a 100Mbps fiber.

The district has standardized on Cisco Systems network switches, routers and wireless bridges for all network connectivity products. There are presently four network operating systems running within the district: Novell, NetWare 5, Windows NT Server 4.0 and Linux. NetWare is the primary network operating system for filing and printing. Windows NT supports the district's Exchange E-mail server and the proxy server. The Linux operating system is used for the library system Web pages.

ACISD's technology infrastructure is illustrated in **Exhibit 8-13**.

Exhibit 8-13
ACISD Technology Infrastructure



Source: ACISD Testing and Technology Department, October 2001.

Using this infrastructure, ACISD can transmit data at very high speeds and is capable of delivering virtually unlimited volumes of data directly to any computer system anywhere in the district. With the capacity available, ACISD can develop and deliver unprecedented educational capabilities, including distance learning, electronic textbooks, online homework

assignments, real-time communications (via voice, e-mail, and video conferencing) and more. In addition, a community network linking parents, teachers, students and administrators becomes a very real possibility.

COMMENDATION

ACISD has standardized hardware and software.

FINDING

The Testing and Technology Department does not issue work orders electronically for service outages and problems, which results in the department's inability to track work loads and historical costs, project staffing needs, monitor vendor performance, track hardware and software performance and identify training needs.

The Testing and Technology Department has Help Star software that enables the staff to enter service requests online and produce a work order for the technician. Help Star presently costs the district \$1,500 annually for maintenance support. The technicians told TSPR that the software will not work with the existing hardware, therefore, the software is not used. Instead, the technicians write down all requests from users on a yellow memo pad and simply cross off the request when it is resolved.

Typically, technical departments use help desk systems to generate reports to develop performance baselines, monitor performance and communicate work order status and service efficiency to district management and users. Historical service request data can be an invaluable tool for efficient and effective delivery of technology support services. For example, service request data can be used as a way to determine the training needs of district and school users by identifying trends in service request frequency and type. Service performance baselines and associated measurements can be used to determine service delivery efficiency and quality. The number of help desk calls can be used to staff the department efficiently.

Recommendation 79:

Automate the service order request within the district to allow technology users to submit requests electronically.

The Testing and Technology Department should implement procedures to ensure all work requested and performed by the staff is recorded as a work order. This system will allow the Testing and Technology Department to better determine its resource needs and manage its backlog of work. Work order response times should be tracked by technician and by type of

request so that the Testing and Technology Department can measure performance and increase customer satisfaction.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Technology support supervisor ensures that district-owned help desk software is working or purchases new software. He also develops procedures to record and complete all technical support work as a work order.	June 2002
2.	The Technology support supervisor analyzes work order response times and sets up reports to track performance measures monthly.	July 2002
3.	The Technology support supervisor reviews performance measures and develops annual target performance measures for the next five years.	July 2002
4.	The Technology support supervisor compares actual response times to established targets, evaluates causes for variances and takes corrective action.	August 2002
5.	The Technology support supervisor prepares standard reports to record and communicate the Testing and Technology Department activity to management.	September 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 9

FOOD SERVICES

This chapter reviews the Aransas County Independent School District's (ACISD) Food Services Department in four sections.

- A. Organization and Management
- B. Revenue and Cost Control
- C. Student Meal Participation
- D. Facilities and Equipment

A nutritious breakfast and lunch are critical to any child's ability to learn. School food service operations should strive to provide an appealing and nutritionally sound breakfast and lunch to students and to operate on a break-even basis.

BACKGROUND

ACISD participates in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program, which is regulated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and administered by Texas Education Agency (TEA). ACISD's board, administration, school principals and the district's Food Services Department share local responsibility for these programs.

As a participant in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program, the Food Services Department receives federal reimbursement funds and donated USDA food commodities for each meal served that meets federal requirements. The Food Services Department also prepares and serves a variety of a la carte food items. The sale of individual a la carte items, however, does not qualify as a reimbursable meal for the federal lunch and breakfast programs.

To receive federal reimbursement income, the district must offer free or reduced-price lunches to all identified eligible children. The meals served also must meet the federal "Dietary Guidelines for Americans," which recommend that no more than 30 percent of the meal's calories come from fat, with less than 10 percent from saturated fat. School lunches must provide one-third of the reference daily intake for protein, Vitamin A, Vitamin C, iron, calcium and calories. Within these requirements, the department must decide which foods are served and how they will be prepared. The USDA works with TEA and the Food Services Department to teach and motivate children to make healthy food choices.

ACISD's Food Services Department served more than 400,000 meals in the 2000-01 school year. Recent renovations have included a new central

kitchen, completed in August 2001 in the Rockport-Fulton High School, which prepares meals for the five other schools, Rockport-Fulton Middle School, Fulton Elementary, Live Oak Elementary, Little Bay Elementary and Rockport Elementary schools. The smaller kitchens at the elementary schools are not equipped to prepare their own meals. Beginning in the 2001-02 school year, the high school required all students to stay on school grounds during lunch for the first time. The high school and middle school also offer various a la carte items that can be purchased during lunch.

Exhibit 9-1 compares cafeteria spaces within the district.

**Exhibit 9-1
Food Services Department Space Analysis**

School	Square Feet Occupied by Food Services	Percent of Total School Square Footage	Students Enrolled by School
Rockport-Fulton High School	21,500	8.9%	991
Rockport-Fulton Middle School	5,122	4.7%	833
Live Oak Elementary	4,000	7.8%	380
Fulton Elementary	3,500	7.0%	306
Little Bay Elementary	2,475	6.7%	338
Rockport Early Childhood Center	3,528	7.6%	405

Source: Aransas County Independent School District (ACISD) Maintenance Department, October 2001.

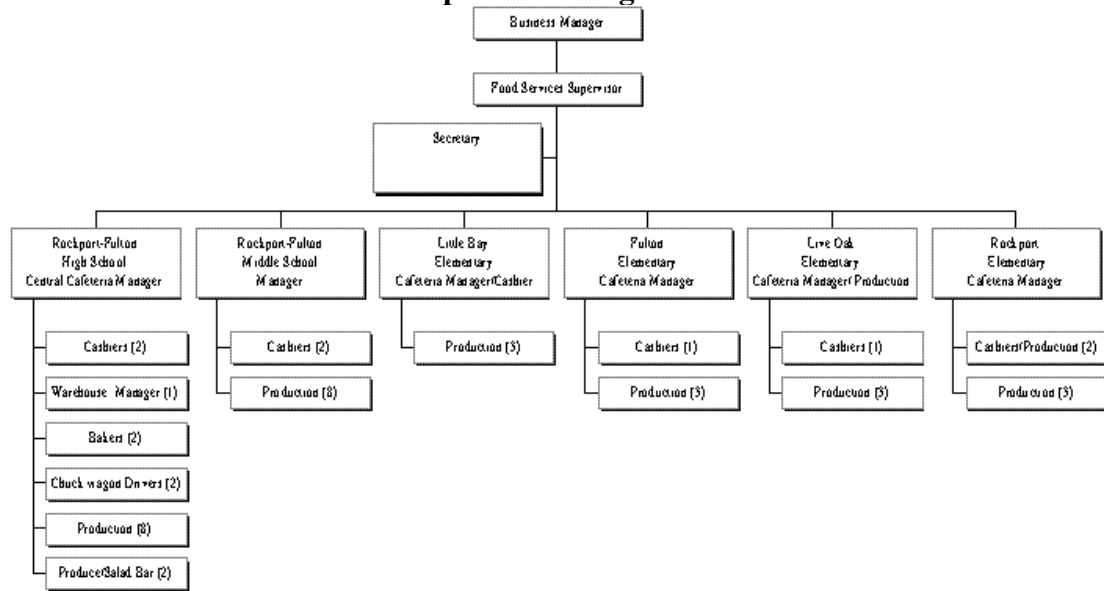
ACISD uses a combination of convenient processed foods and centralized production processes to prepare and serve meals. A convenience system uses food items that have been processed before being received at the school and may or may not require additional preparation before serving. Centralized production uses a centralized kitchen to prepare food in bulk and transport it to the other schools or "satellite" cafeterias within the school where the food is heated and served.

Chapter 9

A. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

The Food Services Department employs 48 people, operates six cafeterias and six kitchens, and serves six schools. The Food Services supervisor manages district food service operations and reports to ACISD's business manager. **Exhibit 9-2** depicts the Food Services organizational structure.

**Exhibit 9-2
Food Services Department Organization**



Source: ACISD Food Service Department, September 6, 2001.

Exhibit 9-3 lists bell schedules for breakfast and lunch periods at all ACISD schools.

**Exhibit 9-3
Breakfast and Lunch Service Times**

Campus	Breakfast Service		Lunch Service	
	Start Time	Stop Time	Start Time	Stop Time
Rockport-Fulton High School	6:50	7:25	11:10 12:05	11:40 12:35
Rockport-Fulton Middle School	6:50	7:25	11:10	12:40

Live Oak Elementary	7:30	8:00	11:00	12:15
Fulton Elementary	7:50	8:10	10:50	12:05
Little Bay Elementary	7:35	8:00	10:55	12:40
Rockport Early Childhood Center	7:50	8:25	10:45	12:35

Source: ACISD Food Services Department, October 2001.

Exhibit 9-4 describes the major job duties of Food Services Department supervisor and the cafeteria managers.

**Exhibit 9-4
Food Services Department Responsibilities and Duties**

Responsibilities and Duties
<p>Food Services supervisor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop menus for the district foodservice program that meet established nutritional requirements for students. • Work cooperatively with school principals to create permanent lunch schedules and resolve personnel issues. • Administer the food service budget and ensure that programs are cost-effective and managed prudently. • Compile budgets and cost estimates based on documented program needs. • Implement policies established by federal and state law and local board policy in the area of food service. • Compile maintain, file and present all reports, records and other documents required. • Assist with the development of a cost-efficient system for procurement of all food and other materials in line with federal and TEA standards. • Establish and direct the process for free and reduced-price lunch application and determine student eligibility following USDA and TEA guidelines for meal eligibility and reimbursement. • Ensure that security measures are taken to protect food, supplies and equipment. • Recommend policies to improve programs. • Prepare, review and revise job descriptions in Food Services Department. • Recruit, train and supervise all food service personnel and make recommendations concerning placement assignment, retention, discipline and dismissal. • Evaluate job performance of employees to ensure effectiveness. • Develop training options and improvement plans to ensure the best

operation in the area of food service.

Secretary

- Prepare correspondence, forms and reports for the supervisor of cafeterias using typewriter or personal computer.
- Receive incoming calls and take reliable messages and route to appropriate staff.
- Assist in compiling information to prepare various reports and bank deposits for the department.
- Assist in the review and approval of free and reduced-price meal applications.
- Maintain physical and computerized files including an inventory of commodities, records of meal transactions and records of free and reduced-price meal programs.
- Perform routine bookkeeping tasks, including simple arithmetic operations and organize invoices for payment.
- Make cash deposits for the department at local bank and obtain change as needed.
- Prepare menus and meal tickets and distribute to schools.

Cafeteria manager

- Produce and maintain work schedules and production records.
- Direct daily activities in the kitchen and cafeteria.
- Ensure the safety and quality of food according to policies, procedures and department requirements.
- Ensure that food items are stored in a safe environment.
- Maintain all serving schedules and ensure that all food items are served according to menu specifications defined by departmental policies and procedures.
- Establish and enforce standards of cleanliness, health and safety codes and regulations.
- Prepare breakfast and assist with daily food preparation.
- Ensure that appropriate quantities of food and supplies are available through daily orders.
- Oversee preparation and proper shipment of menu items and food supplies to be delivered for daily use.
- Cater and prepare specialty food items for central office and school organization activities.
- Supervise and train employees, promoting efficiency, morale and teamwork.
- Work with school principal to accommodate temporary schedule changes and special serving requirements and to resolve personnel problems.
- Secure cafeteria at the end of the day.

- Maintain a safe working environment.
- Perform preventive maintenance and report needed repairs on equipment within the central food service operation.
- Recommend replacement of existing equipment to meet needs of facility.

Chuck wagon driver

- Deliver meals and supplies to schools within required timeframe.
- Ensure that all items arrive at schools and are transferred from vehicle to designated areas in proper condition.
- Load and unload vehicle by hand or use of cart.
- Drive vehicle to various locations to obtain supplies, fresh produce and other foods for central cafeteria.
- Detect needed repairs on vehicle by following established inspection procedures.
- Maintain and clean food delivery vehicle.
- Maintain and clean outside delivery areas, freezers and storage areas.
- Detect and make minor repairs to equipments.
- Maintain personal hygiene.
- Work overtime as needed.

Food production assistant

- Assist in preparing quality food according to a planned menu of USDA commodity recipes.
- Store food items and supplies and maintain a clean and organized storage area.
- Care for and use equipment in a safe and efficient manner. Serve food according to meal schedules, departmental policies and procedures.
- Practice and promote portion control and proper use of leftovers.
- Clean food preparation equipment, utensils and areas.
- Follow established procedures to ensure standards of cleanliness, health and safety.
- Maintain personal appearance and hygiene.

Food production specialist

- Prepare quality food according to a planned menu of USDA commodity recipes.
- Care for and use equipment in a safe and efficient manner.
- Supervise the storage and care of food items and supplies and maintain a clean and organized work and storage area.
- Serve food according to meal schedules, departmental policies and procedures.

- Practice and promote portion control and proper use of leftovers.
- Operate and clean large kitchen equipment and food preparation areas.
- Maintain daily food preparation records.
- Order food and supplies from the central cafeteria for the area assigned on a weekly basis. Follow established procedures to ensure standards of cleanliness, health and safety.
- Maintain personal appearance and hygiene.

Cashier

- Operate cash register and collect money during scheduled mealtimes.
- Sell meal tickets and keep accurate records of use.
- Record meal transactions and prepare daily reports, including meal charges and number of free and reduced-price meals served.
- Balance cash received with daily lunch counts.
- Prepare cash deposits.
- Maintain roster of students to participate in the free and reduced-price lunch programs.
- Maintain required records including birthday count and student lunch forms.
- Maintain personal appearance and hygiene.

Source: ACISD job descriptions, December 1994.

The central kitchen receives and stores all deliveries of food. The central kitchen prepares food about three times a week. The chuck wagon drivers are responsible for delivering the food to the satellite schools where the food is heated, placed on trays and served. On the other two days of the week, all kitchens heat and serve frozen foods.

The Food Services supervisor, who has been with the district for 15 years, prepares school menus that are offered on a rotating basis every six weeks. Twice a month, the supervisor visits all cafeterias to ensure that the food served matches the menu; the food is served at the proper temperatures; students and staff enjoy the food; the operation meets preset time schedules; and kitchen facilities are sanitized properly.

The district is a member of a cooperative purchasing agreement offered by the Regional Education Service Center II (Region 2). This Multi-Regional Purchasing Cooperative is an administrative agency created in accordance with Section 791.001 of the Texas Government Code. The purpose of the cooperative is to obtain financial benefits and efficiencies by combining the purchasing power of its member districts. About 70 districts in the area participate in this program through an interlocal agreement with Region 2.

The Food Services supervisor attends monthly workshops at Region 2 to discuss product and vendor service, and Food Services Department staff attend workshops at the Region 2 every other summer to work toward improving their food service certification. Cafeteria workers can obtain certification from Level 1 - Apprentice all the way up to Level 7 - Administrator.

FINDING

The Food Services Department does not have written policies or procedures addressing the operation of its cafeterias. Training is difficult in the absence of written procedures. In districts that have multiple kitchens, documented policies and procedures assist in standardizing operations among kitchens.

Some of the key areas of food service operations that could be clarified by policies or procedures are:

Safety and Sanitation: Safety procedures addressing who to contact when a worker is injured and what to do in case of an emergency. In-service training concerning safety and sanitation.

Pricing: Policies outlining the district's method for setting prices and specifying how often the district will examine and update its meal and a la carte prices, as well as how staff members and students should be notified about price changes.

Facilities Management: Policies and procedures that address the extracurricular use of food service facilities and replacement policies and preventive maintenance schedules for equipment. Documented procedures to present the organization of the work order process.

Inventory Controls: Written policies and procedures addressing physical inventories, inventory rotation and disposal of obsolete, spoiled, damaged or slow-moving inventory.

Financial Management: Policies and procedures addressing the preparation of budgets, cash management, labor standards, application processing, the handling of credit sales and advance payments and the monitoring or reporting of revenues and expenditures. Procedures to document how to maintain meal participation and track related revenue while safeguarding cashier banks and the preparation of deposits.

Recommendation 80:

Write and implement written policies and procedures for all food service operations.

A policies and procedures manual and appropriate staff training would promote consistency in food service operations while providing guidance to food service employees.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the Food Services supervisor to develop a comprehensive food services policies and procedures manual.	June 2002
2.	The Food Services supervisor develops and documents these policies and procedures.	June and July 2002
3.	The superintendent reviews the manual.	July 2002
4.	The superintendent submits the manual to the board for approval.	August 2002
5.	The board reviews and approves the manual.	August 2002
6.	The Food Services supervisor reviews and distributes the manual to departmental staff.	September 2002
7.	The Food Services supervisor updates the manual annually.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The ACISD Food Services Department lacks the automation it needs to run its operation efficiently. The processes in the Food Services Department are very manual intensive. For example:

- Daily counts of regular, free and reduced-price meals served are completed using pencil and paper in the regular lunch lines.
- A cash box is used to collect money in regular food lines and at the snack bars, and all daily mathematical calculations from these lines are performed using pencil, paper and a calculator.
- The department does not have inventory software to assist it in tracking its inventory.
- Purchasing and receiving is done manually with handwritten purchase orders.

- Income statements are prepared using an Excel spreadsheet, but no automated financial statements are produced.

TSPR observed that free and reduced-price students must go through a specific line in the middle and high school cafeterias. The district is physically segregating the middle and high school students by the way of a single cashier set up to check out these students. However, all students may go through this line. The names of eligible students are listed on a roster; and as each student goes through the line and the cashier keeps a tally sheet to record free and reduced-price meals. The cashiers generally have memorized which students are eligible and place a tally mark on the sheet as each goes through the line. Even so, requiring these students to go to a single cashier helps to identify them to their peers.

Point-of-sale (POS) systems automatically and accurately track students' receipt of free, reduced- price and full-price meals and have been shown to increase student meal participation. They provide confidentiality so that eligible students are not differentiated and embarrassed. Some systems use a magnetized card imprinted with a student identification number; students simply swipe their cards through a reader. Other systems use a personalized identification number that students enter in an electronic keypad as they pass through the cafeteria line.

Accurate data is crucial to the Food Services Department and the district as a whole, since the number of students participating in the free and reduced-price meal program is used to calculate the district's number of economically disadvantaged students, which in turn is used in various state and federal aid programs. A POS system can streamline the district's efforts to meet reporting requirements, reduce labor hours and provide detailed reports on operating expenses. POS systems also provide convenient prepayment options, clear and accessible audit trails and automated reports including daily, weekly and monthly employee productivity reports.

Robstown Independent School District's (RISD's) Food Services Department uses a POS system to record sales transactions and track and report student and financial data. Elementary students have electronic swipe cards that are kept by their homeroom teachers. Teachers distribute the cards to students before the lunch period; the students swipe their cards through the card reader and student-meal participation is updated automatically. Students at the middle and high schools do not carry cards but use a keypad to input a pass code for their daily lunch meals. Each cafeteria generates daily cash reports detailing the number and type of sales made along with the amount of money collected. POS has helped RISD increase the accuracy of its tracking and reporting and safeguard student privacy.

Recommendation 81:

Install a point-of-sale system in district cafeterias.

The district should acquire of a POS system to track, monitor and report student participation in lunch and breakfast programs. The district should examine the types of POS systems available and the variety of software and option packages included with each. This information would allow ACISD to make an informed decision when budgeting for a new system.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Food Services supervisor works with the Technology and Testing Department to define the Food Services Department's requirements and research POS systems used in other districts.	June 2002
2.	The Food Services supervisor submits a proposal to acquire a POS system to the superintendent for approval.	July 2002
3.	The Food Services supervisor consults with the business manager to purchase the system.	September 2002
4.	The business manager contracts with a vendor for the system.	October 2002
5.	The vendor trains staff members and installs the system with assistance from the district's Technology and Testing Department.	December 2002
6.	The Food Services supervisor monitors the system.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

RISD's system cost \$44,575 including the hardware, software and one year of support. The cost of support for each year thereafter is estimated at \$5,235 annually.

Recommendation	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Install a point-of-sale system in district cafeterias.	(\$44,575)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Annual Maintenance	\$0	(\$5,235)	(\$5,235)	(\$5,235)	(\$5,235)
Total Net Savings (Costs)	(\$44,575)	(\$5,235)	(\$5,235)	(\$5,235)	(\$5,235)

Chapter 9

B. REVENUE AND COST CONTROL (PART 1)

One of the basic functions of the Food Services Department is revenue and cost management. **Exhibit 9-5** illustrates ACISD's reimbursement revenues due from the federal government, which compare closely to actual revenue received.

Exhibit 9-5
ACISD Reimbursed Revenues
2000-01

Meal	Number of Meals Served	Reimbursement Rate 2000-01	Total Expected Revenues	Actual Revenues
Lunch: full price	80,986	\$0.19	\$15,387	\$17,070
Lunch: reduced	21,915	\$1.62	\$35,502	\$35,935
Lunch: free	177,243	\$2.02	\$358,031	\$361,564
Breakfast: full price	14,137	\$0.21	\$2,969	\$3,051
Breakfast: reduced	9,044	\$0.82	\$7,416	\$7,567
Breakfast: free	105,089	\$1.12	\$117,700	\$118,727
Breakfast severe need reduced	9,044	\$0.21	\$1,899	\$1,939
Breakfast severe need free	105,089	\$0.21	\$22,069	\$22,262
Total	522,547		\$560,973	\$568,115

Source: Meals served - ACISD Daily Report 2000-01, reimbursement rates - TEA memo July 10, 2000.

During 1999-2000, however, ACISD's Food Services Department receives the second-lowest revenues per child among the peer districts (**Exhibit 9-6**).

Exhibit 9-6
Food Services Department Revenues
ACISD versus Peer Districts
1999-2000

	Kerrville	Aransas County	Gregory-Portland	Tuloso-Midway	Flour Bluff	Point Isabel
Local	\$500,417	\$335,352	\$760,236	\$490,125	\$867,264	\$21,380
State	\$15,682	\$11,222	\$13,646	\$9,026	\$18,179	\$11,786
Federal	\$724,788	\$586,066	\$493,612	\$485,586	\$813,266	\$830,567
Revenue	\$1,240,887	\$932,640	\$1,267,494	\$984,737	\$1,698,709	\$863,733
Enrollment	4,729	3,502	4,467	3,047	5,031	2,328
Revenue per Child	\$262.40	\$266.32	\$283.75	\$323.18	\$337.65	\$371.02

Source: Texas Education Agency (TEA), Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS), 1999-2000.

ACISD sells snacks in the a la carte lines in the high school and middle school (**Exhibit 9-7**).

Exhibit 9-7
A la Carte Accountability

Item	Cost	Price	Margin
Twix Candy Bar	\$0.38	\$0.65	41.5%
M & M's	\$0.39	\$0.65	40.0%
Peanut Butter M & M's	\$0.39	\$0.65	40.0%
Snickers	\$0.39	\$0.65	40.0%
Reese Cups	\$0.38	\$0.65	41.5%
Cookies and Cream	\$0.39	\$0.65	40.0%
Whatchamecallit	\$0.38	\$0.65	41.5%
Cheddar and Pepperoni Combo	\$0.41	\$0.65	36.9%
Al joy	\$0.38	\$0.65	41.5%
Fudge Brownies	\$0.15	\$0.35	57.1%

Nutty Bars	\$0.17	\$0.35	51.4%
Fall Party Cakes	\$0.15	\$0.35	57.1%

Source: ACISD Food Services Department, October 2001.

Exhibit 9-8 illustrates ACISD's budgeted expenditures for each student and expenditures per meal equivalent from 1996-97 through 2000-01.

Exhibit 9-8
ACISD Food Services Department Budgeted Expenditures
1996-97 through 2000-01

Expenditure	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	Five-year Change
Payroll	\$457,266	\$438,850	\$483,013	\$493,191	\$552,438	20.8%
Contracted services	\$14,100	\$6,600	\$9,600	\$9,000	\$9,500	(32.6%)
Supplies and materials	\$434,550	\$414,150	\$500,100	\$499,100	\$582,100	34.0%
Other operating expenses	\$3,500	\$4,600	\$4,200	\$3,400	\$6,750	92.9%
Capital outlay	\$1,000	\$12,000	\$0	\$2,000	\$8,500	750.0%
Total Expenditures	\$910,416	\$876,200	\$996,913	\$1,006,691	\$1,159,288	27.3%
Enrollment	3,441	3,558	3,493	3,502	3,366	(2.2%)
Cost for each Student	\$265	\$246	\$285	\$287	\$344	29.8%
Number of Meal Equivalents	354,682	364,265	357,268	352,618	322,901	(9.0%)
Cost for each Meal Equivalent	\$2.57	\$2.41	\$2.79	\$2.85	\$3.59	39.7%

Source: Meal Equivalents - ACISD Food Services Department 1996-97 through 1999-2000; TEA, PEIMS, 1996-97 through 2000-01.

Exhibit 9-9 compares ACISD's budgeted expenditures for 2000-01 with those of the peer districts and the state average. ACISD's expenditures were higher than the state average and higher than all but two of the peer districts.

Exhibit 9-9
Food Services Department Expenditure Comparison
ACISD, Peer Districts and State
2000-01

District	Students	Budgeted Expenditures	Cost for each Pupil
Kerrville	4,662	\$1,182,591	\$254
Gregory-Portland	4,439	\$1,377,970	\$310
Tuloso-Midway	3,064	\$998,994	\$326
Aransas County	3,366	\$1,159,288	\$344
Flour Bluff	5,014	\$1,846,093	\$368
Point Isabel	2,374	\$935,739	\$394
State	4,059,619	\$1,315,831,789	\$324

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 2000-01.

FINDING

ACISD's Food Services Department is operating at a loss despite a small price rate increase in 2000-01.

Exhibit 9-10 shows ACISD meal prices charged from 1996-97 to 2000-01. Breakfast meal prices were raised twice in the last five years. Student full-price lunches have remained constant while employee lunches increased by 50 cents in 1997-98.

Exhibit 9-10
ACISD Meal Prices
1996-97 through 2000-01

Meal Type	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01
Student paid breakfast	\$0.50	\$0.60	\$0.60	\$0.60	\$0.75
Student reduced-price breakfast	\$0.30	\$0.30	\$0.30	\$0.30	\$0.30

Employee breakfast	\$0.75	\$0.85	\$0.85	\$0.85	\$1.00
Student paid lunch (1-5)	\$1.00	\$1.25	\$1.25	\$1.25	\$1.25
Student paid lunch (6-12)	\$1.25	\$1.50	\$1.50	\$1.50	\$1.50
Student reduced-price lunch	\$0.40	\$0.40	\$0.40	\$0.40	\$0.40
Employee lunch	\$1.75	\$2.25	\$2.25	\$2.25	\$2.25

Source: ACISD Food Services Department 1996-97 through 2000-01.

TEA's *Administrator's Reference Manual for the Child Nutrition Programs* suggests that districts establish meal prices equal to the reimbursement amount received from the National School Lunch Program for free students. **Exhibit 9-11** compares current prices with these reimbursement rates.

**Exhibit 9-11
Federal Reimbursement Rates
2001-02**

Meal Category	Reimbursement for each meal	Price for each meal 2001-02	Difference
Free meals	\$2.09	\$0	\$2.09
Reduced-price meals	\$1.69	\$0.40	\$1.29
Paid meals	\$0.20	\$1.25	\$1.05
		\$1.50	\$1.30

Source: TEA, News for School Foodservice Professionals, Volume 10 Number 1, August 2001.

Successful school districts charge meal prices that recoup costs while still giving students a reasonable price.

Recommendation 82:

Analyze and adjust meal prices annually to ensure that the district recovers costs.

The Food Service supervisor should monitor meal prices for students paying full-price to ensure that costs are recovered.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Food Services supervisor compares meal prices with meal costs each year.	June 2002 and Ongoing
2.	The Food Services supervisor and the business manager decide whether meal prices should be increased.	July 2002 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

While ACISD has its own system to track meals per labor hour (MPLH) to document the amount of labor required to produce a given number of meals, the district does not match industry standards or use its own formula to effectively evaluate staffing levels in the cafeterias. The Food Services Department has more employees than it needs to prepare and serve the number of meals produced. The traditional method used to measure productivity in the food service industry is to compare meals served in a given period with the labor hours used to generate those meals. Food Services Department expenditures rose by \$57 or 20 percent per student between 1999-2000 and 2000-01, while student enrollment fell. Part of this increase appears to be due to overstaffing.

Standard food service management practices call for payroll costs including fringe benefits should be kept at or below 40 percent of revenue so that sufficient revenue exists to handle food costs and other expenses to ensure the program's financial viability. Food Services Department payroll costs in 1999-2000 were about 53 percent of revenue, or about 13 percent above the industry standard (**Exhibit 9-12**).

Exhibit 9-12
Payroll Costs as a Percent of Revenue
1997-98 through 1999-2000

Fiscal Year	Payroll Costs	Total Revenue	Payroll Costs/Revenue	Recommended Payroll Costs/Revenue	Variance () Industry Standard	Dollar Variance
1997-98	\$423,207	\$959,651	44.10%	40%	4.10	\$39,347
1998-99	\$476,654	\$965,264	49.38%	40%	9.38	\$90,548
1999-	\$493,924	\$932,640	52.96%	40%	12.96	\$120,868

2000						
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Source: TEA, PEIMS, 1997-98 through 1999-2000. Pannell-Martin, *School Foodservice Management for the 21st Century, Fifth Edition, 1999.*

Exhibit 9-13 shows the total labor hours used by the Food Services Department, while the district has 46 workers, some who work part-time, and the total labor hours is the equivalent of 36 full-time equivalent employees (FTEs).

Exhibit 9-13
Food Services Department Staff Hours
2000-01

School	Number of Working Days	Labor Hours Each Day	Total Salary	Labor Hours Each Year
Rockport-Fulton High School	180	120.5	\$167,927	21,690
Rockport-Fulton Middle School	180	54.0	\$66,303	9,720
Live Oak Elementary	180	31.0	\$44,731	5,580
Fulton Elementary	180	31.0	\$41,524	5,580
Little Bay Elementary	180	24.5	\$32,810	4,410
Rockport Early Childhood Center	180	30.5	\$40,689	5,490
Total				52,470
Number of annual labor hours for one full-time employee at eight hours per day				1,440
Total full-time equivalents (FTEs)				36

Source: ACISD Food Services Department, October 2001.

The traditional method for measuring productivity is to compare meals served in a given period with the labor hours used to generate those meals

in the same period. This productivity indicator is referred to as meals per labor hour (MPLH).

ACISD does have its own staffing standard. However, the district's calculation differs from the industry standard formula. For the purpose of this review, TSPR calculated ACISD's number of meals served using a standard industry methodology; each lunch served equals one meal, while three breakfasts equal one lunch. Therefore, to calculate a meal equivalent (MEQ), the review team divided the number of breakfasts served by three. Dollar sales for a la carte items also were divided by three, since industry standards equate \$3 in sales to one meal.

Exhibit 9-14 calculates meal equivalents (MEQ) served at ACISD during October 2000.

**Exhibit 9-14
Meal Equivalents
October 2000**

School	Lunch MEQ	Breakfast MEQ	A la Carte Sales MEQ	Total MEQ/ Month	Divided by the Number of Serving Days in October	Total MEQ/ Day
Rockport-Fulton High School	2,647	414	2,934	5,995	22	273
Rockport-Fulton Middle School	5,050	933	6,690	12,673	22	576
Live Oak Elementary	6,516	851	0	7,367	22	335
Fulton Elementary	7,119	954	0	8,073	22	367
Little Bay Elementary	5,850	856	0	6,706	22	305
Rockport Early Childhood Center	8,704	1,342	0	10,046	22	457
Total	35,886	5,350	9,624	50,860	22	2,312

Source: ACISD, National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs Daily Attendance Report, October 2001, and Food Services Department, October 2000.

The number of meal equivalents served per day then is used to determine the industry standard number of labor hours needed to prepare these meals. **Exhibit 9-15** shows industry standards for MPLH in a centralized kitchen production system. At ACISD, this applies to the total number of meal equivalents produced, since the central kitchen prepares all meals for the district.

Exhibit 9-15
Staffing Guidelines for Production of
Food for More Than One School

Number of Meal Equivalents for each day	MPLH and Number of Labor Hours For Bulk Cold Preparation System
200-500	25-30
501-1,000	30-35
1,000-2,000	50-55
2,001-3,000	65-75
3,001-5,000	75-85
5,001-10,000	110-130
10,001-20,000	150-160
20,001-30,000	160-175
30,001 up	175-195

Source: Pannell-Martin, School Foodservice Management for the 21st Century, Fifth Edition, 1999.

Chapter 9

B. REVENUE AND COST CONTROL (PART 2)

Exhibit 9-16 shows industry MPLH standards for a satellite production system, which at ACISD would include all cafeterias other than the central kitchen.

**Exhibit 9-16
Recommended Meals Per Labor Hour (MPLH)**

Number of Meal Equivalents	Meals Per Labor Hour (MPLH)	
	Conventional System	Convenience System
	Low/High	Low/High
Up to 100	8/10	10/12
101-150	9/11	11/13
151-200	10-11/12	12/14
251-300	13/15	15/16
301-400	14/16	16/18
401-500	14/17	18/19
501-600	15/17	18/19
601-700	16/18	19/20
701-800	17/19	20/22
801-900	18/20	21/23
901+	19/21	22/23

Source: Managing Child Nutrition Programs: Leadership for Excellence.

Exhibit 9-17 shows the number of labor hours actually needed using existing student participation rates.

**Exhibit 9-17
ACISD Meals Per Labor Hour (MPLH)
October 2000**

	Meal	Recommended	Recommended	Actual	Excessive
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	Equivalents Served for each Day	MPLH	Labor Hours a Day	Labor Hours a Day	Labor Hours a Day
Rockport-Fulton High School	2,313	65	35.6	120.5	84.9
Rockport-Fulton Middle School	576	15	38.4	54.0	15.6
Live-Oak Elementary	335	14	23.9	31.0	7.1
Fulton Elementary	367	14	26.2	31.0	4.8
Little Bay Elementary	305	14	21.8	24.5	2.7
Rockport Early Childhood Center	457	14	32.6	30.5	(2.1)
District Total	2,313*	-	178.5	291.5	113.0

Source: ACISD Food Services Department staffing pattern, October 2001.

**Note: All meals are prepared initially at the high school and then distributed to district schools the district total and the high school total are therefore the same.*

Exhibit 9-18 shows the cost of overstaffing, based on the recommended number of labor hours at optimal participation.

**Exhibit 9-18
Average Cost of Labor
1999-2000**

	Step	Result
1.	Total Salaries and Wages for School-Based Employees for Year:	\$372,660

2.	+ Fringe Benefits (Employers Share) for Year: Social Security \$24,536 Health & Life Insurance \$55,083 Retirement \$35,642 Worker's Compensation \$2,000 Unemployment Insurance \$2,000 Allowances \$600 Employee Benefits \$1,403	\$121,264
3.	Total Labor Cost for Year:	\$493,924
4.	Number Serving Days:	180
5.	Average Daily Labor Cost: Divide Total Labor Costs #3 by Number of Serving Days #4	\$2,744
6.	Number of Daily Labor Hours: (School-Based Employed)	291.5
7.	Average Hourly Labor Cost: Divide Total Average Daily Labor Costs #5 by Number of Daily Labor Hours #6.	\$9.42

Source: Calculation based on ACISD Food Services Department data.

ACISD calculates meals per labor hour annually. However, based on the existing staffing in the cafeterias, it does not appear that the district is using its calculation to staff the kitchens.

Recommendation 83:

Use industry staffing standards and staff cafeterias accordingly.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the Food Services supervisor to develop guidelines for measuring and monitoring MPLH.	June 2002
2.	The Food Services supervisor adjusts cafeteria staff hours.	July 2002
3.	The Food Services supervisor measures and monitors MPLH on an	August

ongoing basis.	2002
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FISCAL IMPACT

ACISD's Food Services Department is overstaffed by 20,340 hours per year. At an average hourly labor cost of \$9.42, the district can save \$191,603 (20,340 excess labor hours X \$9.42 average hourly labor cost) annually by adopting industry standards. Savings are calculated giving 25 percent growth per year.

Recommendation	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Use industry staffing standards and staff cafeterias accordingly.	\$47,901	\$95,802	\$143,702	\$191,603	\$191,603

FINDING

ACISD's food costs exceed industry standards due to the Food Services Department's lack of standard inventory management practices.

ACISD does not maintain an inventory of items on hand in the storeroom and does not perform monthly physical inventories counting the items on hand. The Food Services Department workers simply check shelves visually to determine how much to order; the department does not have established reorder points to automatically trigger orders.

Food costs normally should be kept at or below 40 percent of department revenue to ensure that payroll and other expenses can be met. ACISD's food costs across all schools in 1999-2000 have been at about 47 percent of revenue (**Exhibit 9-19**).

**Exhibit 9-19
Food Services Department Use of Revenue
1997-98 through 1999-2000**

Fiscal Year	Food Costs	Total Revenue	Food Costs/ Revenue	Recommended Food Costs/Revenue	Variance (+/-) Industry Standard	Dollar Variance
1997-98	\$469,763	\$959,651	48.95%	40%	8.95%	\$85,903
1998-99	\$472,224	\$965,264	48.92%	40%	8.92%	\$86,118

1999-2000	\$435,822	\$932,640	46.73%	40%	6.73%	\$62,766
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Source: TEA, PEIMS, 1997-98 through 1999-2000.

To contain food costs, many districts use less expensive ingredients; maintain effective portion control; reduce plate waste; issue separate contracts for specific food products, when it is cost-effective to do so; and enter into group purchasing cooperatives for commodities. In addition, districts can secure and track their inventories every month.

Recommendation 84:

Use standard inventory management practices to reduce food costs.

The Food Services Department should keep an inventory count of all items in its storerooms and reconcile the inventory on hand every month. The department also should track the cost of the foods it uses on a monthly basis, and any increases or decreases should be investigated.

Tracking food usage also would help the district establish stocking level reorder quantities making it easier to order in bulk.

In addition, the district should consider using the following ways of controlling food prices:

- Know what is in the storeroom and refrigerator, so that if items are taken, they will be missed.
- Do not give keys to delivery people; limit employee use keys to the storeroom and keep it locked.
- Do not open cases in a storeroom until they are ready for use.
- Request that employees do not bring large bags to work.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the Food Services supervisor to develop comprehensive inventory practices.	June 2002
2.	The Food Services supervisor develops and documents the Food Services Department's inventory practices.	July 2002
3.	The Food Services supervisor institutes new practices and trains departmental staff accordingly.	August 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

If ACISD could reduce its food costs to 40 percent of revenues, then its total food costs for the year could be calculated as \$932,640 in total revenue multiplied by 40 percent, or \$373,056 in food cost expenses. Actual 1999-2000 food costs were \$435,822. Deducting the calculated food costs of \$373,056 from the actual food costs of \$435,822 provides an estimated savings of \$62,766 a year.

Recommendation	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Use standard inventory management practices to reduce food costs.	\$62,766	\$62,766	\$62,766	\$62,766	\$62,766

FINDING

The Food Services Department is not charged for its utilities and custodial expenses. Federal guidelines stipulate that these charges can be paid from Food Services Department funds instead of the district's general fund, leaving more money in the general fund to use toward educational service delivery.

The Food Services Department could budget revenue to cover these expenses in addition to its direct expenses for labor and food. The costs of utilities, telephone, repairs and maintenance, custodial labor and supplies could be allocated to the food service operations based on the amount of district square footage it occupies. Allocations also could be made based on the department's share of district employment, or some combination of the two methods.

Recommendation 85:

Develop a cost-allocation system to allow the district to recover costs for utilities, custodial and maintenance services.

A cost-allocation model would help ensure that general revenues are not spent to supplement food service operations.

ACISD's cafeterias occupy a total of 40,125 square feet, 7.2 percent of the district's total 560,199 square feet.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The business manager determines the costs for utilities, custodial and maintenance costs and allocates them to the Food Services Department.	June 2002
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2.	The business manager documents procedures for the method used to perform these allocations.	July 2002
3.	The business manager makes overhead cost allocations to the Food Services Department on a monthly basis.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The Food Services Department has been operating at a deficit for three years. **Exhibit 9-20** is a profit-and-loss statement for Food Services Department's operations from 1996-97 through 1999-2000.

Exhibit 9-20
Food Service Profit and Loss
1996-97 through 1999-2000

	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Revenues	\$836,980	\$959,651	\$965,264	\$932,640
Payroll	\$415,995	\$423,207	\$476,654	\$493,924
Professional Services	\$17,127	\$5,731	\$3,973	\$3,394
Contracted Maintenance and Repair	\$3,602	\$3,061	\$4,281	\$3,302
Food	\$383,614	\$433,981	\$437,024	\$400,497
Non-Food	\$33,902	\$35,782	\$35,200	\$35,325
USDA Donated Commodities	\$45,289	\$46,648	\$48,491	\$49,833
General Supplies	\$59	\$40	\$7	\$23
Travel and Subsistence-Employee Only	\$1,186	\$1,278	\$580	\$1,168
Miscellaneous Operating Costs	\$1,305	\$1,117	\$1,730	\$5,719
Total Expenses	\$902,079	\$950,845	\$1,007,940	\$993,185
Profit (Loss)	(\$65,099)	\$8,806	(\$42,676)	(\$60,545)

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 1996-97 through 1999-2000.

The Food Services Department cost the district \$60,545 to operate in 1999-2000, not including allocations for rent, utilities and janitorial expenses. As of the end of the 2000-01 school year, the department had no fund balance.

Federal regulations limit schools' food service net cash resources to an amount not exceeding three months of average expenditures, except when major equipment purchases are planned. Since federal reimbursement may not be received for three to six weeks after the close of each month, a fund balance may be needed to meet payroll and pay vendors on a timely basis without financial assistance from the district's general fund.

When a school district food services department does not carry a fund balance, as in the case with ACISD's, it can try several ways of increasing its reserve funds, including:

- marketing strategies such as more menu options, increased serving sizes of fruits and vegetables and more a la carte items;
- expanding use of commodities;
- increased meal prices;
- increasing a la carte sales; and
- Adopt a policy about the loan of funds to the child nutrition program. It should be noted that a district must not obligate or use child nutrition funds for the purpose of non child nutrition programs.

Through careful planning and organization and sound financial management, the Fort Bend Independent School District (FBISD) food service department has generated a significant fund balance without increasing meal prices for ten years. The director of Child Nutrition has worked with cafeteria managers to maintain meal prices and increase meal participation through a closed-campus requirement, a variety of food items including salad bars, pizza and hamburgers, and small food counters in the cafeteria seating area to encourage quick sells.

Recommendation 86:

Develop strategies to ensure a fund balance for the Food Services Department.

By controlling its costs and increasing participation rates, the Food Services Department can bolster its fund balance.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The business manager and Food Services supervisor work with	June 2002
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	the cafeteria managers to develop a plan to build a fund balance by maintaining meal prices, increasing sales and lowering labor costs.	
2.	The business manager and the Food Services supervisor submit the plan to the superintendent for approval.	July 2002
3.	The Food Services supervisor informs cafeteria managers about the plan and guides its implementation.	August 2002
4.	The cafeteria managers submit monthly reports to the Food Service supervisor documenting student participation, food costs and all other expenditures.	August 2002
5.	The Food Services supervisor analyzes the school reports to determine whether the program is effective.	September 2002
6.	The business manager and the Food Services supervisor prepare reports to the superintendent and the board showing the department's financial status.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

ACISD's management does not hold the Food Services Department accountable for its performance. Although the business manager prepares an income statement for the board each month, the Food Services Department is not required to explain its financial results, variances or other issues. Individual cafeteria managers are not provided with profit-and-loss statements and thus they do not know whether their cafeterias are profitable. They are not held accountable for the financial operations of the Food Services Department at their schools. This lack of accountability contributed to the Food Services Department's lack of a fund balance as of the end of 2001 and the department's present lack of a plan for replacing the balance.

Food Service Management for the 21st Century recommends that districts provide five financial and operating reports to cafeteria managers so that they can monitor and evaluate their operations:

- Budget: spells out management's ideals, goals and objectives in financial terms;
- Profit-and-loss statement: a cumulative report showing how the operation has performed financially for a period;

- Balance sheet: provides a snapshot of how the operation is performing at a specific time, assesses what the operation is worth and describes its assets (facilities and equipment);
- Cash flow statement: shows the cash inflow and outflow for a period; and
- Performance ratios and trends, including: food cost as percentage of sales; labor cost as percentage of sales; meals per labor hour; break-even point; inventory turnover; and participation rates.

Recommendation 87:

Compile and distribute accurate, detailed and useful school-specific financial and performance reports for the board and cafeteria managers on a quarterly basis.

The business manager and the Food Services supervisor should produce in-depth analyses of the Food Services Department for the board and cafeteria managers. These reports should include a complete financial statement package, including a balance sheet, income statement, cash flow statement and budget-to-actual-variance report.

Other reports and analysis that should be conducted annually include an analysis of sources of revenue; participation rates and plans to increase participation rates; pricing analyses to determine if food service is recapturing its costs; meals per labor hour industry calculations compared to actual labor expenditures; and a break-even analysis of the operation as a whole.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the business manager and the Food Services supervisor to conduct an analysis of the Food Services Department and compile financial reports for the board quarterly.	June 2002
2.	The business manager and the Food Services supervisor produce monthly financial reports for each cafeteria manager showing results for each school.	July 2002
3.	The business manager and the Food Services supervisor produce other reports and analyses annually during the budget process and present them to the superintendent and the board.	August 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 9

C. STUDENT MEAL PARTICIPATION

Federal school meal programs began when the Child Nutrition Act of 1946 authorized the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). This federal assistance program operates in more than 97,700 public and nonprofit private schools and residential child care institutions. It provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free lunches to more than 27 million children each school day.

School districts and independent schools that take part in the lunch program receive cash subsidies and donated commodities from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) for each meal they serve. In return, they must serve lunches that meet federal requirements and must offer free or reduced-price lunches to eligible children.

Any child at a participating school may purchase a meal through the NSLP. Children from families with incomes at or below 130 percent of the poverty level are eligible for free meals. Those with incomes between 130 percent and 185 percent of the poverty level are eligible for reduced-price meals, for which students can be charged no more than 40 cents. (For the period July 1, 2001, through June 30, 2002, 130 percent of the poverty level is \$22,945 for a family of four; 185 percent is \$32,653.)

Children from families with incomes of more than 185 percent of poverty pay full price, though their meals are still subsidized to some extent. Local school authorities set their own prices for paid meals, but must operate their meal services as nonprofit programs.

ACISD participates in the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA's) Donated Commodities Distribution Program. Federal law grants schools participating in the National School Lunch Program and/or School Breakfast Program automatic eligibility for free and reduced-price breakfasts and lunches for certain children without additional application or eligibility determination. TEA provides each district with direct certification information on students who are certified eligible for the programs. The list is compiled using student demographic information from the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) data reports and the food stamp program. Children on TEA's list are eligible to receive free meals for the present school year without further application. TEA sends each district the student information file and detailed

instructions about how the file should be used and how to address exceptions.

Each district participating in the program annually must verify a 3 percent random sample of applications approved for benefits. Households whose children are directly certified through the PEIMS file are exempt from any verification requirements. Direct certification reduces a district's application process and its verification effort. TEA sends to each district the student information file and detailed instructions about how the file should be used and how to address exceptions.

Many ACISD students qualify for free and reduced-price meals; in the 2000-01 school year, about half of the student body was eligible. As in many other districts, a much larger percentage of ACISD's students participate in the lunch program than in the breakfast program, regardless of whether they are in the free and reduced-price program or pay full price for their meals.

FINDING

ACISD has low lunch participation in high school and middle school and low breakfast participation throughout the district. Low participation results in reduced federal revenue.

Industry standard expected participation rates are shown in **Exhibit 9-21**.

Exhibit 9-21
Expected Participation Rates
By Grade Level

Grade Level	Expected Participation Rate
Elementary School	70%
Middle School	60%
High School	50%

Source: Pannell, School Foodservice Management, 4th Edition, 1990.

ACISD's lunch participation rates vary from 13 percent to 91 percent (**Exhibit 9-22**). The high school's participation rate was low last year due to the district's open campus policy, which allowed students to leave school to eat lunch. The 2001-02 school year is the first year in which the high school requires its students to eat lunch in the cafeteria and not leave school grounds. Participation rates for the first full month of the closed

school policy, September 2001, showed a slight increase in high school participation from 13 percent to around 20 percent, a 7 percent increase.

Exhibit 9-22
ACISD Lunch Participation Rates versus Expected
October 2000

	ADA	ADP	Actual Participation Rate	Expected Participation Rate	Variance 0
Rockport-Fulton High School	935.8	120.3	13%	50%	(37%)
Rockport-Fulton Middle School	790.6	229.5	29%	60%	(31%)
Live Oak Elementary	326.8	296.2	91%	70%	21%
Fulton Elementary	371.0	323.6	87%	70%	17%
Little Bay Elementary	296.3	265.9	90%	70%	20%
Rockport Early Childhood Center	459.8	395.6	86%	70%	16%

Source: ACISD Food Services Department, National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs Daily Record, October 2000.

Breakfast participation rates vary from 6 to 40 percent among the six ACISD schools, as shown in **Exhibit 9-23**.

Exhibit 9-23
ACISD Breakfast Participation Rates versus Expected
October 2000

	ADA	ADP	Actual Participation Rate	Expected Participation Rate	Variance 0
Rockport-Fulton High School	935.8	56.5	6%	50%	(44%)
Rockport-Fulton Middle School	790.6	127.2	16%	60%	(44%)
Live Oak Elementary	326.8	116.1	36%	70%	(34%)
Fulton Elementary	371.0	130.1	35%	70%	(35%)

Little Bay Elementary	296.3	116.8	39%	70%	(31%)
Rockport Early Childhood Center	459.8	183.0	40%	70%	(30%)

Source: ACISD Food Services Department, National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs Daily Record, October 2000.

Exhibit 9-24 compares ACISD's meal participation rates with those of the peer districts. The chart displays the average daily attendance (ADA) in each district and the average daily participation (ADP) of students in breakfast and lunch. In 2000-01, ACISD had the third-lowest lunch participation rate and the fourth-lowest breakfast rate.

Exhibit 9-24
Daily Participation Rates
ACISD versus Peer Districts
2000-01

	Aransas County	Flour Bluff	Gregory Portland	Kerrville	Point Isabel	Tuloso-Midway
Lunch						
Average Daily Attendance (ADA)	3,180	4,706	4,420	4,483	2,331	2,983
Average Daily Participation (ADP)	1,563	3,024	2,139	2,306	1,834	1,283
ADP Percent of ADA	49.1%	64.3%	48.4%	51.4%	78.7%	43.0%
Breakfast						
Average Daily Attendance (ADA)	3,180	4,706	4,420	4,483	2,331	2,983
Average Daily Participation (ADP)	667	1,154	586	739	1,619	563
ADP Percent of ADA	21.0%	24.5%	13.3%	16.5%	69.5%	18.9%

Source: TEA, Child Nutrition Program District Profiles 2000-01, ACISD WinSchool coordinator, Average Daily Attendance WinSchool Reports 2000-01.

TSPR has identified a number of strategies that ACISD lacks that could increase participation.

- Work with the Transportation Department to ensure that students arrive at school in time to eat breakfast before class.
- Provide breakfasts in classrooms (with principal approval).
- Provide breakfast "grab bags" for middle and high school students.
- Increase menu selections.
- Increase the number and selection of a la carte items.
- Post menus on school "Bragger Boards."
- Announce menus every day during school announcements.
- Announce menus every day on local radio stations.
- Hold special promotional events at certain times of year, and periodic giveaways.
- Lock soft-drink machines during the lunch hour to prevent students from snacking on soda water instead of eating in the cafeteria.

Increased student meal participation increases federal reimbursements and ensures that more students receive the nutrition they need to perform well during the school day.

Recommendation 88:

Develop strategies to increase meal participation.

The Food Services Department should review its participation rates to identify schools that are performing below district averages. The Food Services supervisor then should offer assistance to these schools through newly developed programs to increase participation rates and generate additional revenue for the district.

ACISD could achieve a high school participation rate of about 50 percent by increasing participation by 7.5 percent a year over the next five years (**Exhibit 9-25**).

**Exhibit 9-25
Five-Year Plan**

	October 2000 Participation	Year 1 7.5%	Year 2 7.5%	Year 3 7.5%	Year 4 7.5%	Year 5 7.5%
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	Rate	Increase	Increase	Increase	Increase	Increase
Rockport-Fulton High School	13%	20.5%	28%	35.5%	43%	50.5%
Rockport-Fulton Middle School	29%	36.5%	44%	51.5%	59%	66.5%

Source: SoCo Consulting, Inc.

If this level of growth was achieved, ACISD could anticipate a total increase in revenues of \$298,881 over the next five years (**Exhibit 9-26**). The district can realize some additional revenues after subtracting the costs of preparing the additional meals.

**Exhibit 9-26
Projected Revenues**

Meal	Number of Meals Served	2000-01	Year 1		Year 2		Year 3		Year 4		Year 5	
			7.5% Increase	Increase in Revenue	7.5% Increase	Increase in Revenue	7.5% Increase	Increase in Revenue	7.5% Increase	Increase in Revenue	7.5% Increase	Increase in Revenue
Lunch: full price	80,986	\$0.19	87,060.0	\$1,154	93,589.4	\$1,241	100,608.7	\$1,334	108,154.3	\$1,434	116,265.9	\$1,541
Lunch: reduced	21,915	\$1.62	23,558.6	\$2,663	25,325.5	\$2,862	27,224.9	\$3,077	29,266.8	\$3,308	31,461.8	\$3,556
Lunch: free	177,243	\$2.02	190,536.2	\$26,852	204,826.4	\$28,866	220,188.4	\$31,031	236,702.6	\$33,359	254,455.2	\$35,860
Breakfast: full price	14,137	\$0.21	15,197.3	\$223	16,337.1	\$239	17,562.4	\$257	18,879.5	\$277	20,295.5	\$297
Breakfast: reduced	9,044	\$0.82	9,722.3	\$556	10,451.5	\$598	11,235.3	\$643	12,078.0	\$691	12,983.8	\$743
Breakfast : free	105,089	\$1.12	112,970.7	\$8,827	121,443.5	\$9,490	130,551.7	\$10,201	140,343.1	\$10,966	150,868.9	\$11,789
Breakfast: severe need reduced	9,044	\$1.03	9,722.3	\$699	10,451.5	\$751	11,235.3	\$807	12,078.0	\$868	12,983.8	\$933
Breakfast: severe need free	105,089	\$1.33	112,970.7	\$10,483	121,443.5	\$11,269	130,551.7	\$12,114	140,343.1	\$13,023	150,868.9	\$13,999
Total Anticipated Revenues	-	-	-	\$51,457	-	\$55,316	-	\$59,464	-	\$63,926	-	\$68,718

Source: SoCo Consulting, Inc.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Food Services supervisor issues a districtwide survey to students and parents to determine meal preferences.	June 2002
2.	The Food Services supervisor analyzes the survey results and makes changes to menus and recipes accordingly.	August 2002
3.	The Food Services supervisor adopts other practices designed to increase participation, including nutrition classes.	August 2002 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

ACISD does not actively encourage parents to complete eligibility forms for free and reduced-price meals.

The Food Services Department does not use advertising or incentive award programs and the principals and district administration do not play an active role in the identification of students eligible for free and reduced-price meals. Identifying those students who are eligible for free and reduced-price lunches and breakfasts through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Program is a tedious and time-consuming process. Some parents are reluctant to fill out the necessary forms. With some, parents it is a matter of pride; with others, a matter of literacy. Some students are hesitant to participate in the program, especially at the secondary levels, because they are embarrassed to be identified as poor.

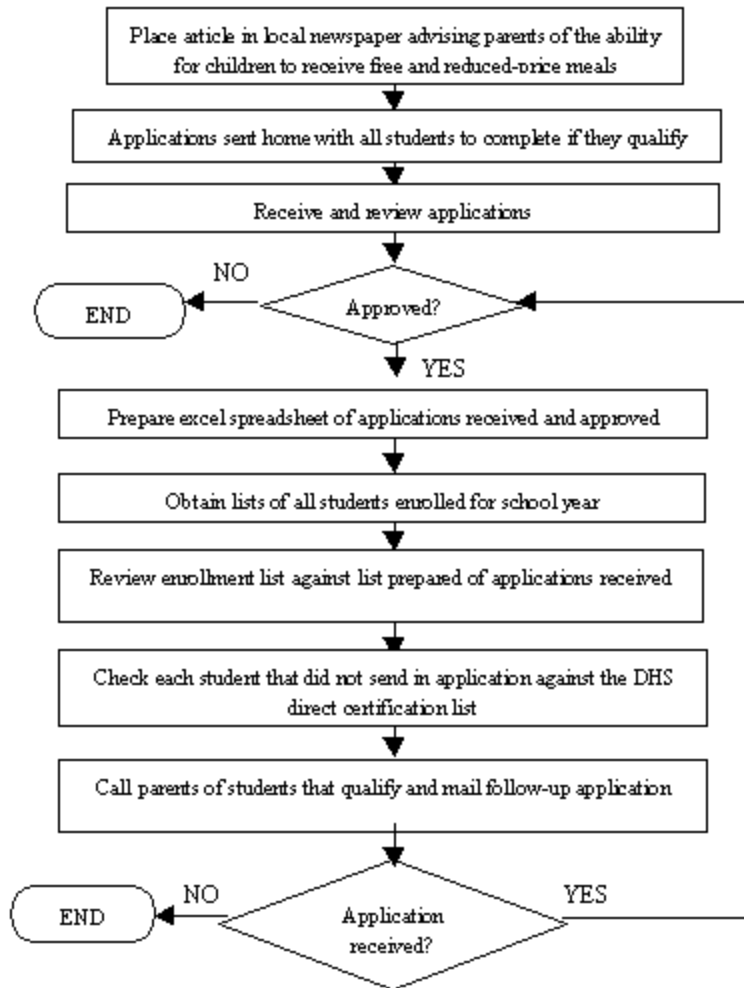
It is sometimes difficult to find time to pay much attention to these forms. What many school district officials forget is that federal Compensatory and Title I funding flows to a school district based on its number of economically disadvantaged students, and student disadvantage, in turn, is based on eligibility for the free and reduced-price lunch program. These funds are funneled to districts so that they can provide additional services to students at risk of dropping out of school. While not all economically disadvantaged students are considered at risk, the number of such students closely tracks the number of at-risk students. The federal government, therefore, uses this figure as its criteria.

In 2000-01, ACISD received \$851,370 in compensatory funds and \$721,803 in Title 1 federal funds-in all, \$859.66 for each student eligible for free and reduced-price meals.

While every school business official knows how important this funding is, few have become aggressively involved in assisting the Food Services Department staff and schools to streamline the application process, educate parents and students about the benefits of the program, or launch campaigns to encourage participation.

Exhibit 9-27 explains the process ACISD follows to identify students eligible for free and reduced-prices.

Exhibit 9-27
Process for Identifying Free- and Reduced-Price Eligible Students



Source: ACISD Food Services Department.

Parents must complete a separate form for each child in the program. Some school districts using a single family application to reduce the amount of labor and paperwork involved in the process. Other districts have also increased identification through the convenience of one application form for each family.

Some of the most successful programs use the following techniques:

Family identification. If a parent fills out a form for one child, all of the siblings in the same household are automatically qualified.

Direct certification. Some districts do not require families to complete an application for the federal free and reduced-price meal programs if they

are precertified as eligible by the Texas Department of Human Services through the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program;

Incentive awards. Some districts give prizes to students and parents for completing an eligibility application. Houston ISD placed all of its applicants' names in a drawing with the top prize a television. Some prizes were donated by local businesses, and others were purchased from the Food Services Department budget.

Advertising campaigns. Billboards, posters and flyers can publicize the free and reduced-price meal program and encourage participation.

School-based, at-risk budgeting. Under this strategy, principals are encouraged to be aggressive in qualifying eligible students because the district makes funding for at-risk programs in their school budgets dependent on their number of identified students. In the Texarkana ISD, for example, principals are motivated to identify every eligible child for the program because their schools' Compensatory and Title I budget is linked directly to the number of children identified in the program.

Parental assistance. All parents are given user-friendly forms and school-based assistance to complete them. This approach can be critical for non-English speaking or illiterate parents. El Paso ISD provides applications in both English and Spanish. Other districts make staff members available during registration and the first days of school to help parents read and complete paperwork.

Recommendation 89:

Develop strategies to increase the identification of students eligible for free and reduced-price meal benefits.

ACISD is experiencing declining enrollment. Therefore, it is critical to identify every student to maximize federal funding for the district.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent, principals and Food Services supervisor establish a marketing program to increase awareness of the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program and encourage students to apply for meal benefits.	June 2002
2.	The Food Services supervisor selects prizes to serve as incentive awards to students.	July 2002
3.	The superintendent, principals and Food Services supervisor provide staff members to assist parents in completing applications	August 2002

	during registration and to answer questions in person and by telephone in both English and Spanish.	
4.	The superintendent, principals and Food Services supervisor initiate a contest to award prizes for students submitting completed applications.	August 2002
5.	The superintendent, principals and Food Services supervisor evaluate the success of each year's campaign and revise the marketing plan as needed.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

ACISD operates a number of soda vending machine in its high school and middle school that are in use throughout the lunch hour and thus are in direct competition with the cafeterias. The vending machines have timers that can be set to allow purchases only during a set period of time. The review team, however, found that the timers are not used on the machines.

The TEA *Administrator's Reference Manual*, Section 16.1, states:

School districts must establish rules or regulations as necessary to control the sale of foods in competition with meals served less than the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs. Such rules and regulations shall prohibit the sale of foods of minimal nutritional value in the food service area during the breakfast and lunch periods. The restricted foods may be sold, at the discretion of local school officials, in other areas of the school throughout the school day.

Exhibit 9-28 shows the locations and types of vending machines at the ACISD schools.

**Exhibit 9-28
Examples of Vending
Machine Location and Type**

School	Location	Type
Rockport Fulton High School	Just outside cafeteria doors	1 soft drink machine
Rockport Fulton Middle School	Just outside cafeteria doors	1 soft drink machine

Source: TSPR review team.

Vending machines represent an obstacle to student participation in many districts' lunch programs. Some districts place vending machines containing competitive food items outside the cafeterias and make them available to students during meal periods. In ACISD, the Food Services Department does not control the vending machines. In both the high school and middle school, the vending machines operate during meal times. Students routinely purchase sodas from the vending machines rather than from the cafeteria.

Recommendation 90:

Establish rules to control competitive food sales during cafeteria operating hours.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Food Services supervisor and the principals meet to review the option of locking the vending machines during cafeteria operations.	June 2002
2.	The Food Services supervisor and the principals develop and implement new guidelines for vending machine operation.	June 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 9

D. FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

The types and amounts of equipment available to the Food Services Department can affect the types of foods that should be purchased. In some cases, it may be more economical to purchase an item already prepared than to purchase a piece of equipment needed to prepare it.

Many school districts still have food preparation equipment that was purchased during the 1960s, when the nation was building schools at a rapid rate and federal funds were available for such equipment. Much of the equipment bought in the 1960s had a lifespan of 25 to 30 years; today it is worn out, outdated and needs replacement.

ACISD has state-of-the-art kitchen facilities at Rockport-Fulton Middle School and Rockport Fulton High School. Both cafeterias opened in fall 2001. Most of the equipment in the elementary school cafeterias, however, is more than eight years old. Though usable, it is not maintained in a way that would prolong its useful life and is serviced only when it needs repair.

FINDING

The Food Services Department does not have a scheduled maintenance or replacement program to ensure that its equipment is maintained to extend its useful life and replaced when is no longer useful.

At present, ACISD replaces equipment on an "as needed" basis. The district has no plan in place to purchase capital equipment when its existing equipment needs to be updated. The Food Services Department lacks a plan for replacing equipment not categorized as capital. The district has no plan for proposed renovations, changes to operations or needs projected over time. A preventive maintenance and replacement plan would allow the district to make cost-effective decisions about equipment.

Routine checks or inspections of facilities help ensure sanitary, safe and efficient food services. Documentation of equipment repairs and costs help determine when a piece of equipment should be replaced. Regular maintenance can reduce the number of repairs and down time, increase the useful life of equipment and decrease costs associated with inoperative equipment.

TEA recommends a 10-year depreciation cycle and most districts in Texas have adopted a 10-to-12 year replacement cycle.

Recommendation 91:

Consider developing an integrated plan for preventive maintenance and equipment replacement.

The Maintenance Department should clean Food Services facilities and equipment routinely. School cafeteria personnel should be assigned responsibility for some routine equipment operational checks. The Maintenance Department should establish a system for routine maintenance. Some could be done when kitchens are closed during the summer.

The Food Services Department should complete a plan to address its capital replacement needs in the District Improvement Plan. Outdated equipment that operates ineffectively and inefficiently eventually should be replaced or repaired. A prioritized food services facilities master plan would help with the proper allocation of departmental resources.

Equipment repairs and upgrades would promote a more sanitary work environment and lower operating costs. A facilities master plan would serve as a blueprint for the district to follow in supplying the Food Services Department's needs.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Food Services supervisor meets with the Purchasing and Maintenance coordinator to identify the Food Services Department's maintenance needs.	June 2002
2.	The Purchasing and Maintenance coordinator works with Maintenance staff to evaluate the age and condition of existing equipment.	July 2002
3.	The Food Services supervisor and Purchasing and Maintenance coordinator draft a food services maintenance and replacement plan that could be incorporated into the district improvement plan.	August 2002
4.	The Food Services supervisor presents the proposed food services maintenance and replacement plan to the business manager for comments and approval.	August 2002
5.	The Food Services supervisor and the business manager present the food services maintenance and replacement plan to the superintendent for comments and review.	August 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 10

TRANSPORTATION

This chapter reviews the Aransas County Independent School District's (ACISD's) transportation functions in the following four sections.

- A. Organization and Staffing
- B. Routing and Scheduling
- C. Maintenance and Purchasing
- D. Safety

According to the Texas Department of Public Safety, the average number of students transported at public expense has risen from 1.09 million students in 1990-91 to 1.37 million students in 1999-2000, a 25.7 percent increase. During that same time, the number of buses increased by 19.1 percent, and the total mileage covered increased by 33.9 percent. As the number of children transported to public schools on buses increases, school district transportation operations and their safety, timeliness and efficiency will become increasingly important.

Through the Texas Education Code (TEC), school districts are authorized to establish and operate or contract with an outside company for an economical public transportation system. School districts may receive allotments of state Foundation School program funds for eligible student transportation.

BACKGROUND

ACISD has its own bus fleet, which it uses to transport students to and from school and extracurricular activities. Since transportation requires significant initial capital investments and annual maintenance expenditures as well as high safety standards, the efficiency and effectiveness of the district's operations has been evaluated.

Exhibit 10-1 provides a general overview of the district's transportation operations:

Exhibit 10-1
Overview of Transportation Operations in ACISD
2000-01

	ACISD
Number of buses	44

Annual budget	\$978,065
Annual Ridership	212,940
Buses driving routes each day	26
Miles driven per year	240,822
Regular routes driven per day	20
Full-time equivalent staff	20.94
Extracurricular Miles per Year	81,335

Source: Texas Education Agency (TEA), Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS), 2000-01 and Aransas County Independent School District (ACISD) data requests.

Exhibit 10-2 shows annual ACISD transportation expenditures from 1996-97 through 1999-2000, which increased more than 96 percent in that four-year period.

Exhibit 10-2
ACISD Transportation Expenditures
1996-97 through 1999-2000

Year	Expenditures	Percent Increase from Previous Year
1996-97	\$622,428	--
1997-98	\$792,254	27.3%
1998-99	\$1,070,881	35.2%
1999-2000	\$1,221,707	14.1%

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 1996-97 through 1999-2000.

ACISD's vehicle fleet totals 44 buses as depicted in **Exhibit 10-3**. The remainder of its fleet consists of a total of 32 trucks, trailers and vans.

Exhibit 10-3
ACISD Transportation Fleet 2000-01

Type of Vehicle	Total Number
Regular education buses	26

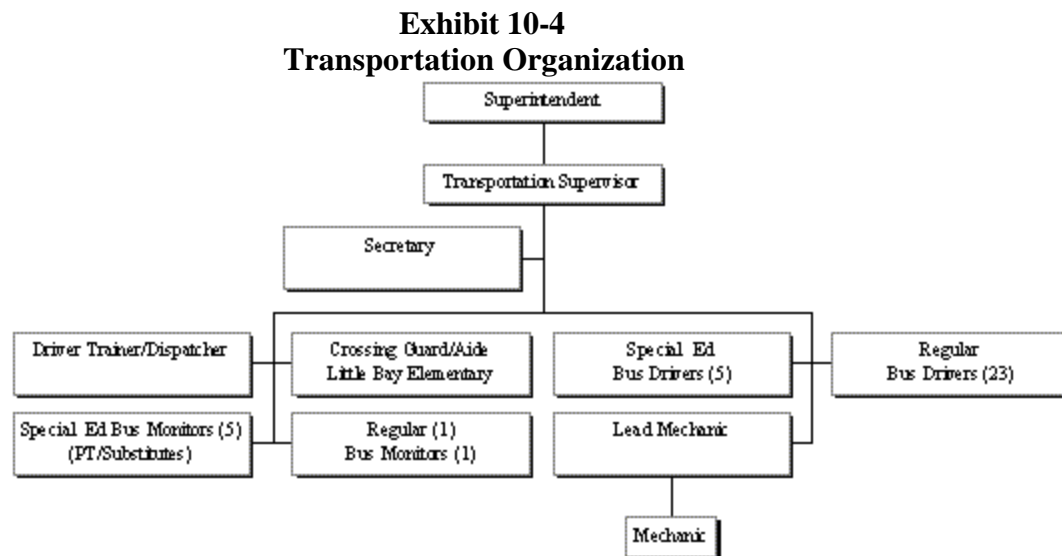
Spare regular education buses	6
Special education buses	6
Spare special education buses	2
Buses to be auctioned	4
Trucks & other vehicles	32
Total Fleet	76

Source: ACISD Transportation Department.

Chapter 10

A. ORGANIZATION AND STAFFING

The district maintains a Transportation Department that is responsible for maintaining the bus and vehicle fleet, operating the buses and planning and organizing routes. In addition, the department provides transportation resources for extracurricular activities. **Exhibit 10-4** shows the organization structure of the Transportation Department.



Source: ACISD Transportation organization chart, September 6, 2001.

The department is headed by a Transportation supervisor reporting directly to the superintendent of the district. Under his direction is a secretary, shared with the Maintenance Department and providing support for two hours each day, a dispatcher/trainer responsible for routing, trip planning and driver training and mechanics, bus drivers, monitors and a crossing guard.

The lead mechanic and mechanic are responsible for all of the preventive and regular maintenance on the district's bus and truck fleet, as well as substituting as drivers when needed. The district has 23 regular bus drivers and five special education bus drivers who drive all of the regular routes as well as extracurricular trips. Monitors ride on all special education buses and the afternoon elementary school regular routes to aid children transferring buses, and are responsible for disciplinary actions on their respective buses. The only crossing guard on the transportation staff works

at Little Bay Elementary. The other elementary schools rely on teachers or parents to volunteer as their crossing guards.

The Transportation supervisor has a wide variety of responsibilities. The supervisor prepares and updates bus routes and schedules for all schools in the district, compiles and administers the transportation budget and implements district student management policies. The supervisor also directs preventive maintenance and the repair operations of all district-owned vehicles, maintains safety standards in compliance with state, federal and insurance regulations and implements policies established by federal and state law, State Board of Education rules and local board transportation policy. The supervisor plans and coordinates transportation needs for extracurricular activities and recruits, hires, trains, supervises and evaluates all transportation personnel.

Bus driver duties include observing all traffic laws and safety regulations, following assigned routes and adhering to established district schedules, maintaining discipline and reporting student discipline problems to administration. Drivers must also drive buses for extracurricular activities, keep appropriate mileage, fuel and passenger records and report all accidents, damage, injuries and mechanical failures immediately. The bus monitors supervise students as they board and leave the buses, lift and carry disabled students on the special education buses and maintain discipline on buses.

The ACISD mechanics process vehicle repair requests and assign priority to work orders. They also evaluate mechanical problems in vehicles using diagnostic equipment, perform preventive maintenance procedures, perform state safety inspections, order and receive fuel and record usage and maintain the transportation inventory of supplies and parts. The Transportation secretary works part time in the department, when the secretary is not working in maintenance. The secretary is responsible for receiving incoming calls, compiling payroll timesheets for all transportation personnel, assisting schools in placing new students on buses, compiling information and preparing reports for the department and receiving and processing work orders. The district has a driver trainer/dispatcher whose primary responsibility is to train new drivers for the safe and efficient transportation of students. The secretary also coordinates assignments of bus drivers, routes, vehicles and substitute drivers for morning and afternoon shifts as well as coordinates extracurricular trips, updates district maps, substitutes for absent drivers, prepares data required to plan bus routes and posts route schedules.

FINDING

ACISD leases vehicles for its driver education program, instead of purchasing them. The district uses two new minivans in the program that would cost \$25,310 each to purchase. The lease agreement extends to the nine months during the school year. The monthly lease payment is \$300 per minivan, for an annual cost of \$2,700 each, or a total of \$5,400. Many districts follow a standard auto replacement policy and replace vehicles every six years. Using the cost of a minivan, the district would have to budget more than \$4,200 per year to replace each vehicle, or more than \$8,400 per year, excluding costs for maintenance, sales taxes and insurance. By leasing, the district gets the use of new vehicles for its driver education program each year while saving the district money through reduced transportation costs.

Commendation

The district reduces their transportation costs by leasing vehicles for its driver education program.

FINDING

ACISD does not have complete policies in place for its transportation operations.

Policies are high-level guidelines embracing an organization's general goals and acceptable procedures. They either guide the organization toward its overall goals or follow established laws and rules. Procedures, or a series of steps on how to accomplish specific tasks, are then created to carry out the organization's policies.

ACISD's board has adopted some standard policies related to the area of student transportation including the definition of a school bus and the authority of the district to operate an economical student transportation system and the district's entitlement to a state transportation allotment for providing services to students who live two or more miles from the school they attend. It is also ACISD policy to hire drivers who are certified by the Department of Public Safety and to meet or exceed the safety standards for school buses established by the Department of Public Safety, or be ineligible to receive the state funding allotment. The ACISD board policies also outline requirements for an outside transportation company, if the district should ever contract out its transportation services. The district has funding policies regarding receipt of additional state allotment for students living within two miles of school and subject to hazardous traffic conditions if they walked.

The board has defined hazardous conditions to be "*...where no walkway is provided and students must walk along or cross a freeway or expressway,*

an underpass, an overpass or a bridge, an uncontrolled major traffic artery, an industrial or commercial area, or another comparable condition." Some miscellaneous transportation policies allow parents to designate a child-care facility instead of the child's residence as the regular location for purposes of obtaining transportation; prohibit students from standing on a moving bus or passenger van; and make any person guilty of a misdemeanor if he or she intentionally disrupts, prevents or interferes with the lawful transportation of students to and from school or activities sponsored by a school, on a vehicle owned and/or operated by the district.

Although ACISD has many policies related to transportation, it lacks some important policies that are recommended by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and Texas Association of School Boards (TASB). For example, there are no policies specifying when an aide is required on the bus, the maximum length of time a regular/special education child should ride on the bus or appropriate student behavior. There is no clear policy on what behavior terminates a student's transportation privileges. There is also no policy addressing the buses' seating capacities, and there are no guidelines regarding when an external group wishes to charter a district bus. Finally, there is no mention of transporting special education students to and from locations where they receive special services, such as physical therapy.

Many school districts maintain comprehensive, up-to-date policy manuals including updates required by the TEC. El Paso ISD (EPISD) includes local policy updates after extensive review and approval by its education leadership team, the district's attorney and the school board. It also subscribes to the TASB's policy service to automatically receive policy updates. The EPISD board, unit administrators, the education leadership team and District Education Improvement Committee (DEIC) review all updates. Ysleta ISD expedites policy updates and revisions by using TASB's policy service to create its own policies. YISD's superintendent for human resources coordinates all updates to the policy manual and forwards them to the appropriate functional areas within the district that make revisions and return them to the associate superintendent to be placed in the policy manual.

Recommendation 92:

Develop or modify board-approved transportation policies.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Transportation supervisor reviews existing policies and determines which ones to update including the use of bus monitors, rider time on buses, contracting out school buses, busload capacity bus replacements and special education	June 2002 - August 2002
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	transportation.	
2.	The Transportation supervisor prepares drafts for each policy and follows the district's policy review and adoption process.	June 2002 - August 2002
3.	The superintendent presents the drafted policies to the board.	September 2002
4.	Once approved, the Transportation supervisor writes new procedures or modifies existing procedures to adapt to the new policy.	October 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Bus driver personnel records maintained by the Transportation department are not up-to-date.

The responsibility for maintaining the bus driver personnel files is unclear. Bus driver personnel records are kept in three different locations. For each driver, the criminal background check is kept in the Personnel department, the drug/alcohol testing documentation is kept in the business office, while other employee documentation is kept both in the Transportation department folder and the personnel folder. Bus driver documentation should include a copy of the class A or B drivers license, copy of an annual physical and vision examination, a copy of the training certificate and a copy of the annual drivers license check through the Department of Public Safety. The Transportation secretary works two hours per day in the Transportation Department and spends the majority of her time preparing bus driver payroll.

The review team conducted a random check of the Transportation department's personnel files that included 25 percent of bus drivers and 25 percent of coaches who are licensed to drive. Out of the 12 files reviewed, all 12 files were either incomplete or out-dated in one or more of the areas summarized in **Exhibit 10-5**.

**Exhibit 10-5
Summary of Personnel Checks**

	Files Not Compliant	Total Reviewed	Percentage Out of Compliance

Drivers license copy expired	5	12	42%
No physical/eye exam within last year	5	12	42%
Expired training certification	1	12	8%
No drivers license check within last year	5	12	42%
No criminal background check	4	12	33%

Source: Calculation based on ACISD Transportation Department, Personnel Department and Business office records.

Per the Texas Transportation Code, the district's drivers must meet certain requirements. Drivers must pass a physical examination annually, including an eye exam. In addition, each driver's driving record should be acceptable according to minimum standards adopted by the department and should be checked annually. Each driver must also be certified in school bus safety education every three years. Before any person can be employed as a driver transporting students, they must have a criminal background check. Any person convicted of a felony or misdemeanor involving moral turpitude may not be employed to drive a bus on which students are transported.

Recommendation 93:

Assign responsibility of developing and updating bus driver files with current legal requirements to one department.

Responsibility for drivers' personnel files should be placed in one department, to ensure the contents are kept current and meet all legal requirements. In addition, expiration and renewal dates for bus drivers should be calendared, so that files can be updated in a timely manner. Files should be reviewed to include driver's license expiration date, training certification expiration date, criminal background expiration date, health examination expiration date and driving record expiration date.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent assigns responsibility to one department/person, preferably the Human Resources coordinator.	June 2002
2.	The Human Resources coordinator and the Transportation supervisor make a list of all of the data that must be tracked.	July 2002
3.	The Human Resources coordinator works with the Regional	July 2002 -

	Education Service Center II (Region 2) information technology staff to determine if five date fields are open on the existing payroll database to be used for the above listed items, or determines other tracking methodology.	August 2002
4.	The Human Resource coordinator tracks bus driver personnel requirements and updates accordingly.	September 2002 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Bus driver turnover in ACISD was more than 28 percent for 2000-01, compared to the industry average of 15 percent. The high turnover results in high costs to the district for recruiting, hiring and training new bus drivers.

In the Annual School District Survey - 2000, conducted by *schoolbusfleet.com*, two thirds of respondents reported that their driver shortage was moderate, severe or desperate, and only a third said they had a mild shortage or none at all. Therefore, finding and keeping good drivers is one of the major issues facing school districts and transportation contractors today. An occupational outlook for school bus drivers in California showed annual turnover to be 10 to 19 percent. Counties near the Washington D.C. area have reported bus driver turnover of 20 percent, according to an article by *The Washington Post*. A South Carolina newspaper reported a 15 to 20 percent turnover rate among bus drivers.

Exhibit 10-6 shows the high turnover rate for the bus drivers in ACISD compared to the industry standard of 15 percent.

Exhibit 10-6
ACISD Bus Driver/Monitor Turnover Rate
For 1996-97 through 2000-01

	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	ACISD Average	Industry Average
Bus Drivers Turnover	11	7	7	10	8	9	N/A
Total Bus	28	25	28	28	28	27	N/A

Drivers							
Percentage	39%	28%	25%	36%	29%	33%	15%

Source: ACISD Transportation Department.

The district provides both written and on-the-road training for its new drivers as well as to any staff requesting the training. ACISD provides the approved school bus driver training course as administered by the U.S. Department of Transportation and specified in state regulations under Section 85.214 of the Texas Administrative Code. The Transportation supervisor monitors and administers the written portion of the training course, while the trainer/dispatcher administers on-the-road training for each student driver.

According to the Transportation department, one reason for ACISD's high turnover is that some people take bus driver jobs with the district as a stepping-stone to other higher paying jobs within the districts. This is because internal applicants have priority over outside applicants when a district job is posted. In a group interview of the bus drivers, however, salary was listed as the primary factor for turnover. Many people take jobs with the district in order to obtain their training and license and then leave to take jobs with commercial trucking companies or other districts. ACISD has provided paid training for new drivers but has not had any policy requiring a new driver to work a minimum amount of time in the district after receiving a license. One bus driver noted that he was the last driver left from a class of 10 drivers trained in the previous year.

Exhibit 10-7 shows an analysis of pay rates for ACISD bus drivers compared to region and industry averages. As depicted, ACISD pays its drivers almost \$2.00/hour below industry standard, and almost \$1.00/hour below the Region 2 average.

**Exhibit 10-7
ACISD Bus Driver Pay Rate Comparison**

District	Pay Rate per Hour
Industry Standard	\$10.76
Region 2 Average	\$9.95
Aransas County	\$9.05

Source: TEA, Annual School District Survey, 2000 and www.schoolbusfleet.com.

Recommendation 94:

Evaluate bus driver turnover problem and formulate strategy to reduce turnover.

The high bus turnover rate costs the district money. The district should evaluate this problem and look at alternatives to reduce bus driver turnover. ACISD should look at its bus driver compensation package compared to its region, industry averages and commercial trucking companies. They should consider how much is being paid for straight time and how much is being paid for time above the guaranteed minimum.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Transportation supervisor works with the Human Resources coordinator to analyze bus driver turnover, developing strategies to reduce bus driver turnover.	June 2002
2.	The Human Resources coordinator studies salaries to compare the district's bus driver pay rates to region, and industry averages.	July 2002 - August 2002
3.	The Transportation supervisor works with the Human Resources coordinator to evaluate bus drivers' pay rates to make them comparable to industry and peer guidelines.	September 2002
4.	The Human Resource coordinator develops a hiring agreement that requires drivers trained by the district to give a minimum commitment of service, and submits it to the superintendent and board for approval.	September 2002
5.	The Transportation supervisor monitors and tracks turnover to ensure that new programs are contributing to the retention of drivers.	October 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Excessive driver absences result in other transportation employees driving routes instead of performing their regular job duties. When excessive absences occur among bus drivers, the effects are felt on the entire Transportation Department, since drivers and monitors make up more than 60 percent of the total transportation staff.

The district's two mechanics, its dispatcher/trainer and its Transportation supervisor drive on a continual basis to cover the routes of absent bus drivers. Based on interviews with these employees, they are driving up to three times a week as depicted in **Exhibit 10-8**, which averages 1,120 hours per year.

Exhibit 10-8
Days Driven by Non-driver Staff
2000-01

Employee	Average times to drive per week	Number of Days in School Year	Average Days of Driving per Year	Hours per Day of Driving	Average Hours of Driving per Year
Transportation supervisor	3	177	105	4	420
Dispatcher/Trainer	3	177	105	4	420
Mechanic	2-3	177	70	4	280
Total			280		1,120

Source: Interviews with Transportation Department staff.

Although the mechanic and dispatcher's job descriptions include driving when needed, when the staff is driving routes on a continual basis, they are taking time away from other critical activities such as routing, evaluating and monitoring operations and maintaining the district's large fleet.

Many school districts offer financial incentives to drivers that have good attendance. Comal Independent School District pays all drivers who have not missed more than two days of work during the year a \$75 bonus at the end of the year to encourage attendance. Corpus Christi ISD implemented a "Zero Absence" incentive program for its drivers in August 1998. The program offers \$100 to drivers with no absences during the semester and is funded by using \$6,000 from the substitute driver budget. The district found that when the regular bus driver is present, transportation is safer and schedules and routes are more closely followed.

Recommendation 95:

Develop a recognition program to reduce bus driver absenteeism.

The Transportation Department could offer incentives to encourage driver attendance. The Transportation supervisor can find out what types of incentives would encourage attendance by talking with the drivers. Potential ideas include providing a bonus to all drivers for high attendance at the end of the year, offering a monthly award for drivers with perfect attendance, such as a drawing for a gift certificate to a local restaurant, or providing certificates, pins and other small rewards for perfect attendance.

The Transportation supervisor could document and track driver absences each month to look for trends and discuss problems with employees who have an unusually high number of absences. An acceptable absentee rate could be established, and the supervisor could make drivers and monitors aware of the department's progress in reaching the established goal.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Transportation supervisor reviews what other districts are doing to provide perfect attendance incentives and presents options to the Human Resources coordinator.	June 2002
2.	The Transportation supervisor discusses the incentive program with the Human Resources coordinator.	July 2002
3.	The Transportation supervisor and Human Resources coordinator develop the program and procedures and present to the superintendent for approval.	July 2002 - August 2002
4.	The Transportation supervisor and Human Resources coordinator implement the program.	September 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

Based on the \$75 bonus used by Comal ISD for any drivers not missing more than two days of work, the cost to ACISD for a similar award program would be a maximum of \$2,175 if all 28 drivers received a bonus.

Recommendation	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Develop a recognition program to reduce bus driver absenteeism.	(\$2,100)	(\$2,100)	(\$2,100)	(\$2,100)	(\$2,100)

FINDING

In the past, the district has not considered state funding a top priority when making major changes to its transportation operations.

School districts that choose to operate their own transportation systems may receive allotments of funds from the state in order to cover some of its transportation costs. The district must apply for the allotments, and the amount it receives in funding is based on formulas using the district's ridership and the miles the transportation system covers in its day-to-day operations. In addition, transportation allotments from the state vary according to the type of students transported. For instance, it will receive one amount for regular students and a different amount for special education or vocational students. Finally, some transportation costs do not receive state allotments, such as costs of extracurricular trips. Those are paid from a district's local funds.

The amount of money the district is allotted for transporting its regular students is based upon a formula called linear density. Per the Texas Education Code, this is the number of eligible riders transported daily divided by the number of miles covered. Districts are required to count the students riding its buses on the first Wednesday of each month. If school is not in session on that day, the count is taken on the next regular school day. Daily route miles are determined on the last full day the route was in operation for the school year and do not include deadhead mileage between the transportation barn and the first pickup stop.

Exhibit 10-9 summarizes ACISD's average daily ridership and mileage from 1996-97 through 2000-01 and its resulting linear density and total state funding allotment. Since the allotment from the state each year is based on the number of riders and mileage, a reduction in overall allotment must be attributed to a change in one of these two factors.

Exhibit 10-9
ACISD - Linear Density Calculation
1996-97 through 2000-01

	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	Percent Change from 1996-97 to 2000-01
Average Number of Regular Riders	1,928	2,087	1,999	1,365	1,183	(38.6%)
Approved Daily Route Miles*	1,282	1,272	1,367	841	1,338	4.4%

Linear Density	1.504	1.641	1.462	1.624	0.884	(41.2%)
State allotment/mile**	\$1.25	\$1.11	\$1.11	\$1.11	\$1.11	(11.2%)
Annual Mileage	230,771	228,936	246,096	151,299	240,822	4.4%
State Funding Allotment	\$288,464	\$254,119	\$273,167	\$167,942	\$267,312	(7.3%)
Percent Change from prior year	-	(11.9%)	7.5%	(38.5%)	59.2%	
Type of Routing System	2 run system	2 run system	2 run system	1 run system	2 run system	-

Source: TEA School Transportation Route Services Status report, 1996-97 through 2000-01.

**Total Annual Mileage divided by 180 days.*

***Uses the state allotment calculated from the prior year.*

As shown in **Exhibit 10-9**, the state funding allotment for ACISD decreased from 1998-99 to 1999-2000 and then increased almost back to the same level in 2000-01. The approved daily route miles also decreased from 1998-99 to 1999-2000 and returned to almost the identical level in 2000-01. This corresponded with the district's change from a two-run system to a one-run system, and then back to the two-run system. However, the overall state funding allotment still showed a decrease. This can be attributed to the decrease in the average number of regular riders from 1997-98 through 2000-01. Between 1998-99 and 1999-2000, the district saw a decrease of 634 riders in one year. This represented a 32 percent reduction. The following year, the ridership dropped again, by 182 or a little over 13 percent.

Therefore, while mileage has increased by more than 4 percent in a five-year period, ridership has decreased by almost 40 percent during the same time. Because there is not a one-to-one relationship between the rider/mileage ratio and the allotment rate per mile (instead, the ratio falls into a linear density range), the decrease in state allotment funding has been more than 7 percent from 1996-97 and 2000-01.

When Transportation Department employees were asked about the decrease in the district's linear density, they could only guess that it was due to the change from the two-run to one-run system and a decrease in overall ridership, but no analysis had been prepared to determine if this was actually the case.

The overall change in enrollment in ACISD has decreased, just as ridership on the buses has decreased. **Exhibit 10-10** shows that the overall decrease in enrollment from 1996-97 through 2000-01 has been more than 2 percent, which is significantly less than the district's decrease in ridership of almost 40 percent during that same time period.

Exhibit 10-10
Student Enrollment by School
1996-97 through 2000-01

School	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	Percent Change over Period
Rockport Elementary	564	623	626	592	518	(8.2%)
Fulton Elementary	387	536	491	485	380	(1.8%)
Little Bay Elementary	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	306	N/A
Live Oak Elementary	392	489	475	505	338	(13.8%)
RF Middle School *	1,125	872	858	858	833	(2.6%)
RF High School	973	1,038	1,043	1,062	991	1.8%
Total	3,441	3,558	3,493	3,502	3,366	(2.2%)

*Source: TEA, PEIMS, 1996-97 through 2000-01. *Includes Rockport-Fulton Intermediate School for 1996-97 through 1999-2000.*

Many school districts consider changes to a district's transportation operations such as attendance zones, facility changes or bell schedules when planning and budgeting overall funds each year.

Recommendation 96:

Conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the trends in ridership, mileage, linear density and state funding in planning and budgeting for each new school year.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Transportation supervisor analyzes trends in transportation ridership, mileage and funding and makes plans based on the trends.	June 2002
2.	The Transportation supervisor uses the analysis to prepare the transportation budget request.	July 2002 - August 2002
3.	The Transportation supervisor uses analysis to prepare the bus replacement schedule, staffing needs and route development.	July 2002 - August 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 10

B. ROUTING AND SCHEDULING

Routing and scheduling determines which buses will pick up students in a particular area of the district. In recent years, ACISD has changed its routing considerably. The following is a brief summary of the major changes to its routing system.

In 1999-2000, the district operated a one-run system. This means that the buses operated one run in the morning on various routes, picking up high school, middle school and elementary students on the same bus. Then, it operated one run in the evening on each of its routes to take students home. Because there were more students being transported at once, the district had to purchase an additional seven to eight buses. This system received a lot of parent complaints because young elementary students were riding with older middle and high school students, were hearing harsh language and witnessed inappropriate behaviors.

In 2000-01, the district decided to return to a two-run system. The elementary school students were picked up first and taken to school, and then the buses went back out on the same route to pick up middle and high school students, who started school an hour later. Thus, the buses had an hour lapse between their first and second runs. In the evening, elementary students were taken home first, then the buses returned to the middle and high school to pick up the remaining students. In this scenario, there were fewer students on each bus at any one time, and the district had extra buses.

During 2001-02, the district has kept its two-run system, but changed the students' school start times. High school and middle school students start, and 45 minutes later, the elementary school students start classes. Thus, the middle and high school students are picked up first in the morning and then the buses return to pick up elementary school students. In the evening, middle and high school students are taken home first. This change accommodates middle and high school students participating in extracurricular activities after school and eliminates younger students waiting for the bus in the dark early in the morning. Because the start time between the high school/middle school and the elementary schools was reduced to a forty-five minute interval from an hour interval the previous year, yet another change was made to the district's routing system. The district is having its buses swap routes, which simply means that one bus will pick up a route's high school and middle school students, while a different bus will return to pick up the same route's elementary school students. The original bus that picked up the middle and high school

students goes to a different route to pick up elementary students. This allows the Transportation Department to pair up a bus on a shorter route with one on a longer route, so that all buses will complete their routes in the allotted forty-five minute time interval, and the resulting mileage and operating times are evenly distributed between the buses and drivers.

FINDING

The district has more buses than it needs to cover its current daily routes.

ACISD operates buses on 20 different regular routes and five different special education routes each day. It also operates up to six other special routes during the day, such as a day care run that transports students between the county day care facilities and the district's elementary schools. However, since routes are scheduled at different times throughout the day, the number of buses needed to cover all routes is actually less than the total number of routes. **Exhibit 10-11** shows the total number of routes by type and the total number of buses needed to cover all of the routes.

**Exhibit 10-11
2001-02 Bus routes**

Type of Route	Total Number of Routes
Regular Education	20
Special Education	5
Other	6
Total routes	31
Less: Number of buses that can drive multiple routes	(4)
Number of buses needed to cover all routes	27

Source: ACISD Transportation Department.

The ACISD bus fleet consists of 44 buses, as shown in **Exhibit 10-12**.

**Exhibit 10-12
ACISD Bus Fleet**

Bus Usage (regular, special ed, spare, athletics)	Number of Buses
--------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------

Band Equipment Bus	1
Extra buses to be auctioned	4
Regular education buses	21
Total spare buses	6
Special education buses	6
Special education spare buses	2
Field trip buses	4
Grand Total Buses	44

Source: ACISD Transportation Department.

When ACISD went from its two-run routing system in 1998-99 to a one-run routing system in 1999-2000, it required more buses than what the district had. Therefore, the district had to purchase seven or eight new buses in order to transport elementary, middle and high school students all at the same time. Thus, when the district returned to its two-run routing system the very next year, it had too many buses. The district has sold a few buses, but it still has excess vehicles based on its present routing schedule and industry standards for surplus buses.

Based on the inventory above, the total number designated by the district as surplus, trip, extra to be auctioned or spare is 17. These comprise almost 40 percent of its total fleet, while the industry standard for surplus buses is 10 percent of the buses required on its regular routes.

Exhibit 10-13 shows the industry standards for buses and the district bus levels. Based on the 27 buses needed for its routes, the district would only need three spare buses, for a total fleet size of 30.

**Exhibit 10-13
Calculation of Bus Surplus by Type**

Type of Route	Number of Buses Needed	Industry Standard 10 Percent for Spare	Total Buses Needed	Present Fleet	Surplus Buses
Regular Education and Other	22	2	24	36	12
Special Education	5	1	6	8	2
Total buses needed	27	3	30	44	14

Source: ACISD Transportation Department.

The district has sold seven buses between 1998-99 and 2000-01 at an average price of \$840, as shown in **Exhibit 10-14**.

Exhibit 10-14
Surplus Bus Disposal
1998-99 through 2000-01

Bus #	Disposal Description	Original Cost	Recovered Dollars
19	1979 Chevrolet	\$14,525	\$125
20	1980 International	\$19,067	\$1,100
21	1980 International	\$19,067	\$1,000
22	1981 International	\$20,688	\$1,000
23	1981 International	\$20,688	\$1,250
24	1982 International	\$22,212	\$900
26	1983 International	\$21,899	\$503
Average	-	\$19,735	\$840

Source: ACISD Transportation Department.

Recommendation 97:

Implement a spare bus ratio policy.

Based on the fleet size of 44, ACISD has 14 more buses than are needed to cover the existing routes. Industry standards suggest using a bus fleet's age, mileage, maintenance costs and ownership in determining which buses to replace. Since ACISD does not track maintenance costs per bus, age, mileage and ownership should be used. More than 40 percent of ACISD's fleet is 10 years old, and more than 45 percent have over 150,000 miles.

ACISD owns most of its fleet, but leases some of its buses under lease-purchase agreements with Blue Bird Capital Corporation. The leases consist of five equal annual payments, ranging from \$9,689 to \$16,643 per year, with the right to purchase at the end of each lease term.

Fifteen of the buses in ACISD's fleet meet two of the three criteria, which include being older than 10 years, having mileage greater than 150,000

and being leased rather than owned. As already specified, the district needs six special education buses to meet its needs, while it has eight in its fleet. Three special education buses meet two of the three criteria for disposal - bus #4, 6 and 39. Of those three, bus numbers 4 and 39 are the oldest with the most miles.

Of the regular route buses, 12 meet two of the three criteria for disposal. These are number 25, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37 and 38. This is exactly the number of excess buses the district has on its regular and other routes.

As already stated, the district needs 27 buses to cover all of its regular, special education and other routes each day. However, the district has 28 regular and special education bus drivers. The average salary of a bus driver is \$9.05 an hour, or \$6,407 a year, with benefits of \$4,405 for a total of \$10,812 a year.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Transportation supervisor researches industry spare bus ratios and criteria and determines the optimal number of spare buses based on the criteria.	June 2002
2.	The Transportation supervisor presents the finding, criteria used and the suggested policy to the superintendent.	June 2002
3.	The superintendent presents the suggested policy to the board for approval.	July 2002
4.	The Transportation supervisor prepares and uses approved criteria to determine which excess buses to sell.	July 2002
5.	The Transportation supervisor researches the best method for selling excess buses.	August 2002
6.	The Transportation supervisor sells excess buses.	August 2002 - September 2002
7.	The Transportation supervisor performs annual analysis of vehicle fleet, based on age, maintenance costs and mileage.	September 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

Based on the buses that have been sold by the district in the last three years, the average sales price was \$840. For 14 buses, the district would realize one-time revenues of \$11,760. The average salary for a bus driver is \$9.05 per hour, or \$6,407 a year with annual benefits of \$4,405. The total salary and benefits for a driver is \$10,812.

Recommendation	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
One time savings by sale of 14 buses.	\$11,760	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Eliminate 1 driver.	\$10,812	\$10,812	\$10,812	\$10,812	\$10,812
Total (Cost)/Savings	\$22,572	\$10,812	\$10,812	\$10,812	\$10,812

FINDING

ACISD routing is inefficient and yields less than maximum capacity on buses, which results in the district having a larger fleet and more employees.

ACISD is operating regular bus routes that are inefficient, with buses being only partially filled. This practice is costly because more routes are required to transport the same number of students. This increases costs and reduces linear density and consequently state funding. **Exhibit 10-15** shows the buses operated on ACISD's middle and high school routes and whether they are operating more or less than the suggested capacity.

Exhibit 10-15
Seating Capacity Analysis by Bus
For the Middle and High School Routes

Bus #	Maximum Capacity*	Suggested Capacity**	Actual Capacity	Under (Over) Capacity
7	47	38	25	13
8	47	38	34	4
9	47	38	26	12
10	47	38	29	9
11	48	38	24	14
12	55	44	50	(6)
13	47	38	31	7
19	51	41	20	21
21	50	40	18	22
22	50	40	20	20
23	50	40	16	24
24	50	40	20	20

35	39	31	23	8
40	47	38	38	0
41	47	38	26	12
42	51	41	30	11
44	51	41	13	28
45	51	41	31	10
Total	875	703	474	229

Source: ACISD Transportation Department.

*Note: *Provided by ACISD - should be equal to the capacity from the bus manufacturer, and is assumed to be based on three students per seat.*

***Based on the 80 percent industry standard multiplied by the maximum capacity of the bus.*

Exhibit 10-16 shows the buses operated on the elementary school routes, as well as their maximum seating capacity for each (assuming three per seat for elementary school students). Of the 20 regular routes for the elementary school, 14 are significantly under-used.

Exhibit 10-16
Seating Capacity Analysis by Bus
For the Elementary Routes

Bus #	Maximum Capacity*	Suggested Capacity**	Actual Capacity	Under (Over) Capacity
7	71	57	26	31
8	71	57	16	41
10	71	57	50	7
11	72	58	9	49
12	83	66	59	7
13	71	57	49	8
14	71	57	29	28
19	77	62	52	10
21	75	60	25	35
22	75	60	23	37
23	75	60	12	48

24	75	60	24	36
33	71	57	36	21
35	59	47	30	17
40	71	57	46	11
41	71	57	42	15
42	77	62	43	19
44	77	62	25	37
Total	1,313	1,053	596	457

Source: ACISD Transportation Department.

*Note: *Provided by ACISD - should be equal to the capacity from the bus manufacturer, and is assumed to be based on three students per seat.*

***Based on the 80 percent industry standard multiplied by the maximum capacity of the bus.*

The buses on regular routes are not the only ones being used under the suggested capacity. Based on interviews with district personnel and concerned citizens, buses on extracurricular trips are not filled to suggested capacity, requiring more buses than necessary. For a typical weekend football game, a team of 60 is transported on two different buses, eight cheerleaders are riding on another bus while the band requires several more buses. Some districts use routing software to track maximum ridership levels and to prepare routing schedules.

Recommendation 98:

Automate the routing process to maximize bus capacity.

The district should research routing automation software on the market for smaller school districts. It should also contact Edulog, which makes routing software the district owns with the ability to track parts for vehicle repairs and fuel usage. The district may be able to update their existing software or purchasing new software from Edulog for smaller districts. According to Edulog, the district could continue using its present software, which may be difficult for smaller districts, or purchase its new software specifically designed for districts with less than 5,000 students. The software selected should include routing, scheduling and field trip capabilities.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Transportation supervisor works with the Technology and Testing Department to define requirements and research automated routing software used in other districts.	June - July 2002
2.	The Transportation supervisor submits a proposal to budget for automated routing software to the superintendent for approval.	July - August 2002
3.	The Transportation supervisor consults with the Purchasing Department to purchase the software.	September 2002
4.	The district contracts with a vendor for the software.	September 2002
5.	The vendor trains staff and implements the software with assistance from the district's Technology and Testing Department.	October 2002
6.	The Transportation supervisor monitors the software and documents the cost savings related to re-routing.	October 2002 - May 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

The district should realize cost savings by using an automated routing program. Edulog estimates a cost of \$5,000 to ACISD for their new software for smaller districts. Based on the district's size, the size of its fleet and the number of annual routes and mileage, the company also estimated the district could eliminate one to two buses.

Recommendation	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Automate the routing process to maximize bus capacity.	(\$5,000)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Chapter 10

C. MAINTENANCE AND PURCHASING

The goal of school bus maintenance is to keep the buses running efficiently and safely. If this is to be accomplished, maintenance must be considered as more than just fixing actual breakdowns. It should also consider a carefully conceived method of anticipating weaknesses and possible trouble spots and correcting them before breakdowns occur. No matter how skilled the supervisor is at overseeing the preventive maintenance program for the fleet, breakdowns will occur, major repairs will be required or the vehicle will have a flat tire. Finally, buses will age and need to be replaced. Maintenance records should be accumulated for each bus to assist in decisions of when to retire or refurbish buses.

FINDING

There is no documented value of the total transportation inventory and records of individual parts are not kept.

The maintenance bay is filled with tires and other parts that are not tracked. Since there is no documented inventory by part, there is no way to determine if items are missing. The best estimate of inventory is the amount of supplies used during the year.

The district spent \$135,000 on supplies in 1999-2000, or \$39 per student or \$1,753 per vehicle. The next closest peer district was Tulo-so-Midway, which spent \$26 per student on supplies, as shown by **Exhibit 10-17**.

Exhibit 10-17
Analysis of General Supply Operating Expenditures
1999-2000

Type of Expense	Aransas County	Flour Bluff	Gregory-Portland	Kerrville	Point Isabel	Tuloso-Midway
General Supplies	\$135,305	\$9,564	\$27,688	\$98,627	\$49,969	\$77,941
Student enrollment	3,502	5,031	4,467	4,729	2,328	3,047
Supplies per student	\$39	\$2	\$6	\$21	\$21	\$26

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 1999-2000.

In addition, when maintenance is performed on a bus or other vehicle, the type of service is recorded, but no value of parts is assigned to the vehicle, supporting a total maintenance cost per vehicle can be maintained.

Each mechanic owns his own small hand tools, but the school replaces them if they break. There is no inventory of these or any district-owned tools being used in the maintenance area.

The district purchased a routing and inventory management software called Edulog in 1995 but has never used it. The district also owns Applied Computer Technologies 1000 (ACT1000), a maintenance management system being used by the Maintenance Department that can track the transportation inventory, track fuel usage and trigger preventive maintenance for vehicles when vehicle mileage is input at fueling. The district already owns both of these systems. ACT1000 has already given the district a quote of \$3,000 to migrate to a client server and it estimates \$495 for an additional workstation license for the Transportation Department.

Recommendation 99:

Implement the inventory module of Edulog or ACT1000 to track and monitor inventory.

An adequate inventory control system for maintaining records of supplies and equipment is a necessity. Such systems should provide for the maximum utilization of materials and supplies, as well as avoid delaying or hampering repairs due to the lack of needed supplies. Public funds in the form of these equipment and supplies should be safeguarded.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Transportation supervisor with the help of the chief financial officer writes procedures to track and control inventory within the Transportation Department.	June 2002
2.	The mechanic and the Transportation supervisor perform an inventory count using the worksheets of the transportation bays and buildings.	June 2002
3.	The Testing and Technology Department works with outside software company to migrate the district to a client server.	July - August 2002
4.	The Testing and Technology Department purchase an additional workstation license for the Transportation Department.	September 2002
5.	The Transportation secretary enters the information in	October

ACT1000 or Edulog.	2002
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FISCAL IMPACT

The ACT1000 system is owned by Strategic Resource Solutions (SRS), and is being used by about 140 school districts in Texas. According to the Texas representative for SRS, it would cost ACISD about \$495 for an additional workstation license for a server, plus the cost to migrate the district to a client server. The proposal for the migration has already been given to the Maintenance Department by SRS and is approximately \$3,000. The migration itself is free, but the cost includes two days of onsite training since the networked version is a little different from the stand-alone system. The district already owns the Edulog system, also. It purchased Edulog for routing, but it also has components for tracking inventory.

Recommendation	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Implement the inventory module of Edulog or ACT1000 to track and monitor inventory.	(\$3,495)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

FINDING

ACISD does not have a bus replacement program. The district does not have any policy to ensure that buses are routinely replaced when they reach a certain age, mileage or when their maintenance costs per year are excessive.

Some factors to be considered in a bus replacement program are safety standards, size, engine type and the type of driving that will occur.

Exhibit 10-18 shows an assessment summary by age and mileage obtained from the fleet inventory. Almost 44 percent of the fleet is older than 10 years, and more than 45 percent have more than 150,000 miles.

**Exhibit 10-18
Fleet Assessment Summary by Age and Mileage**

Comparison	Amount	Percent
Total bus inventory	44	N/A
Number of buses 10 years old or older	19	43.2%
Number of buses with 150,000 or more miles	20	45.5%

Source: ACISD Transportation Department.

As of February 2002, the district has sold four buses since the review team's visit.

As **Exhibit 10-19** shows, the district does not consistently replace its buses. In addition, the district does not have any policies or procedures in place to determine the types of vehicles it needs. Thus, it cannot make purchase decisions that are the most efficient and effective for the district. Finally, when new buses are being purchased, there is no analysis of whether new buses or refurbished buses are the best option.

Exhibit 10-19
ACISD Summary of Bus Purchases
1987-2001

Year Purchased	Number of Buses Purchased		
	Regular	Special Education	Total
Before 1987	11	0	11
1987	3	0	3
1988	0	0	0
1989	0	0	0
1990	1	2	3
1991	1	1	2
1992	4	0	4
1993	1	0	1
1994	1	2	3
1995	2	0	2
1996	2	1	3
1997	0	0	0
1998	0	0	0
1999	4	2	6
2000	6	0	6
2001	0	0	0

Present Fleet Size	36	8	44
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Source: ACISD Transportation Department.

ACISD has also not established criteria or procedures for evaluating whether or not a bus should be sold. There are also no guidelines or analysis for determining the best disposal opportunity/price. A Florida school district uses the following guidelines for replacing its fleet: cars -six years or 72,000 miles; pick-up trucks -eight years or 100,000 miles; heavy trucks -12 years or 200,000 miles; and buses -12years or 200,000 miles.

Exhibit 10-20 shows the number of buses the district purchased during the last five years and the total costs.

**Exhibit 10-20
ACISD Bus Purchases 1996-97 through 2000-01**

Year	Number of Buses Purchased	Total Cost	Average Cost
1996-97	0	\$0	\$0
1997-98	0	\$0	\$0
1998-99	6	\$337,244	\$56,207
1999-2000	6	\$350,144	\$58,357
2000-01	0	\$0	\$0
Total	12	\$687,388	\$57,282

Source: ACISD Transportation Department.

Recommendation 100:

Develop and implement a bus replacement program.

The district should develop, adopt and include standard policy and subsequent procedures on bus and vehicle replacement. This should include a certain number of years, total mileage and maintenance costs. It also should develop criteria for selecting new buses.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Transportation supervisor identifies the criteria to review when trying to determine whether to retire an existing bus from service.	June 2002
2.	The Transportation supervisor, the mechanic and the Purchasing and Maintenance coordinator meet to define the standard requirements for buses to be used in the district.	July 2002
3.	The Transportation supervisor presents the replacement criteria and bus dispensing options to the chief financial officer and the superintendent for approval.	July 2002 - August 2002
4.	The superintendent either approves or asks for changes to the proposal.	August 2002
5.	The superintendent presents proposed policy to the board for approval.	September 2002
6.	The Transportation supervisor writes a procedure to implement the policy within the district and presents to the superintendent for approval.	September 2002
7.	The Transportation supervisor implements the practice.	October 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

The replacement schedule for the next five years would consist of 15 buses, three more than the 12 purchased by the district in the last five years. Three additional buses purchased at the district's 1996-97 through 2000-01 average price of \$57,282 would amount to an additional \$171,846 spread over the next five years.

Recommendation	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Develop and implement a bus replacement program.	(\$34,369)	(\$34,369)	(\$34,369)	(\$34,369)	(\$34,369)

Chapter 10

D. SAFETY

A school bus driver is responsible for the safety of all of the students on his or her bus at any time. This is no small task, as the driver has to maintain discipline and drive safely. The fact is driving a 40-foot-long bus with 50 energetic children along busy city and county roads is a very difficult job. It requires an individual with both excellent driving skills and the ability to deal effectively with student discipline issues.

ACISD has bus monitors on all of its special education buses to assist the driver with the children's special needs. In addition, ACISD has one bus monitor and some paraprofessionals that act as monitors on the afternoon routes of all the elementary runs. They ride along to assist the students with transfers and maintain order and discipline while the driver focuses on the road.

FINDING

Bus drivers are not adequately trained nor backed by the administration in discipline management and practices.

According to a survey conducted in ACISD, 21 percent of parents responding either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that bus drivers maintain discipline on the bus. In addition, during interviews, bus drivers expressed concerns over the lack of backing by administration and school leaders for their discipline efforts.

Most of the bus monitors are paraprofessionals employed at the elementary schools that are riding on the routes after their regular workday ends. Some of them receive overtime pay for being monitors. Some buses are equipped with surveillance cameras that do not work, and others were equipped with cameras in the past, but no longer have them.

ACISD has a procedure manual for its drivers and monitors, called Guidelines and Procedures for Bus Drivers and Monitors 2000-01, but it is not comprehensive. The manual does not have specific procedures for the drivers and monitors to follow in order to discipline a student who misbehaves on the bus. It only gives them general guidelines such as presenting a united front to the students and prohibiting them from using any form of physical punishment. According to interviews with transportation personnel, if a discipline incident does occur on a bus, the driver or monitor completes an incident form and then sends or takes the form to the assistant principal of the student's school. The assistant

principal then determines the outcome of the incident. Bus drivers are not required to hand-carry the incident form to the principal or assistant principal, but said they seem to have better luck with resolutions if they do hand-carry it to one of them.

In a survey and interview, bus drivers said they are not backed by the administration when a child misbehaved on their bus. If a parent calls to complain about an incident report, bus drivers said the administration typically sides with the student instead of the bus driver. A special education driver and monitor were assaulted last year and there were no repercussions by the district.

ACISD experiences a student discipline problem and uses monitors on its afternoon elementary routes to help drivers with discipline. Cameras are not used on buses and drivers are not being backed by the administration on student discipline.

Region 2 Education Service Center offers classes from the Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) for bus drivers in school bus discipline. The two-day course, "Non-Violent Crisis Intervention", is \$10 per person, which is the cost of the workbook. Region 2 also has a video series called "Positive Bus Discipline", which is available to districts free of charge.

Recommendation 101:

Equip bus drivers and monitors with the proper training necessary for discipline management.

The district can send all 34 of its drivers and monitors to the Region 2 "Non-Violent Crisis Intervention" two-day training course.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Transportation supervisor chooses whether to borrow discipline videos or contract with Region 2 to train all bus drivers in discipline management techniques, and budgets accordingly.	August 2002
2.	Bus drivers and monitors attend training.	September 2002
3.	The Transportation supervisor monitors and tracks bus discipline incidents to determine trends, problem spots and training needed.	October 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

Region 2 provides training from the Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) for bus drivers for \$10 per driver per class. For ACISD's 34 drivers and monitors, the cost would be $34 \times 2 \text{ classes} = \680 , including the initial class and one follow-up class each.

Recommendation	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Equip bus drivers and monitors with the proper training necessary for discipline management.	(\$680)	(\$680)	(\$680)	(\$680)	(\$680)

Chapter 11

SAFETY AND SECURITY

This chapter discusses the safety and security operations of Aransas County Independent School District (ACISD) in four sections.

- A. Organization and Staffing
- B. Management and Planning
- C. Operations
- D. Student Discipline Management

Children have a fundamental right to be free from harm as they try to learn, and teachers and other school employees deserve to feel the same sense of security.

Exhibit 11-1 summarizes major legislation on school safety and security passed by the Texas Legislature in its recent history. The most up to date legislation, House Bill 1088, which was effective on June 11, 2001, is most significant in light of the nation's recent events. It requires placing any student making either a false threat, of a fire alarm or bomb, or a terroristic threat in an alternative program.

Exhibit 11-1 **Major School Safety Initiatives of the Texas Legislature**

Legislation	Purpose
1993 Legislature	
House Bill 23	Requires information-sharing on student arrests for serious offenses between law enforcement and the schools; requires school principals to notify law enforcement if criminal activity occurs or is suspected of occurring on school.
Senate Resolution 879	Encourages collaboration between the Texas Education Agency and Department of Public Safety on recording criminal incidents in school.
House Bills 633 and 634	Outlines the jurisdiction of peace officers.
House Bill 2332	Authorizes the State Board of Education to establish special-purpose schools or districts for students whose needs are not met through regular schools.
Senate Bill 16	Defines drug-free zones for schools.
Senate Bill	Creates the safe schools checklist.

213	
Senate Bill 155	Creates the Texas Commission on Children and Youth.
1995 Legislature	
Senate Bill 1	Revises the Education Code and laws on safety and security in Texas schools.
1997 Legislature	
Senate Bill 133	Rewrites the safe schools provision of the Education Code.
1999 Legislature	
Senate Bill 260	Makes expulsion an option for public school student who assault a school employee or volunteer, without regard to whether or not it occurs on or off school property, rather than the previously mandated placement in an alternative education program.
Senate Bill 1724	Requires school improvement plans, which must contain goals and methods for violence prevention and intervention in schools. Districts must also report to parents and the community the number, rate and type of violent and criminal incidents occurring in each school as part of its annual report.
2001 Legislature	
House Bill 1088	Requires that a student who submits a false report, such as a fire alarm or bomb threat, or other terroristic threat be placed in an alternative education program.
Senate Bill 1196	Students with disabilities may not be confined in a locked box, locked closet, or other specially designed locked space as either a discipline-management practice or behavior-management technique.

Source: Texas Education Agency (TEA) and Texas Legislature Online.

The core elements of the review team's safety in schools framework are prevention, intervention and enforcement. These elements are outlined in its *Keeping Texas Children Safe in School*, which is based on the results of numerous district performance reviews. **Exhibit 11-2** identifies some of the suggested steps for each of the core elements:

Exhibit 11-2
Strategy for Safely in Schools

Keeping Texas Children Safe in Schools	
Prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know your goals and objectives: where your district is going, and what you want to accomplish.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish clear expectations for students, parents, teachers and administrators.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address warning signs before they turn into trouble.
Intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look for trouble before it finds you.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize trouble when you see it.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have individuals in the right place and at the right time to intervene.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a plan of action appropriate for the occasion and practice it.
Enforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leave no room for double standards.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that discipline management extends inside and outside the classroom.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternative programs are not just a matter of compliance with the law; they are many students' last chance at success.

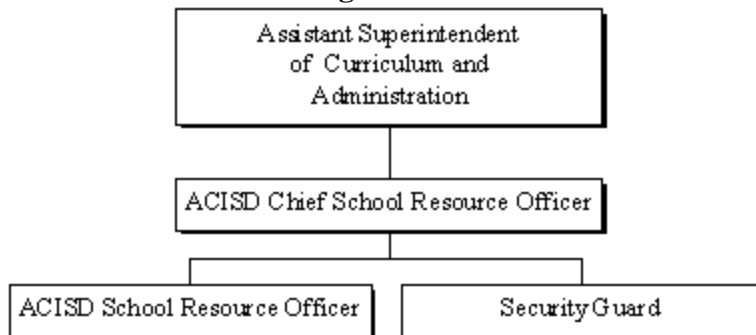
Source: Adapted from Texas School Performance Review's (TSPR) "Keeping Texas Children Safe in School."

Chapter 11

A. ORGANIZATION AND STAFFING

ACISD has its own school police force, which is led by a chief school resource officer who reports to the assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Administration and is primarily responsible for the high school. A second resource officer operates mainly on the middle school and elementary school campuses. The district also employs a security guard who reports to the chief resource office and patrols the high school parking lot and the surrounding school grounds. The district's police force has a good working relationship with the local police. It is not uncommon for the city's police force to check the locks on the school doors at night and contact one of the school district's police if they find them unlocked. In addition, drug search dogs from a tri-county team are loaned to the district monthly to conduct random searches of student backpacks and materials. **Exhibit 11-3** shows the district's Office of Safety and Security Services organization structure.

Exhibit 11-3
ACISD Office of Safety and Security Services
Organization



Source: Aransas County Independent School District (ACISD).

The primary roles and responsibilities of the ACISD police force are summarized in **Exhibit 11-4**.

Exhibit 11-4
ACISD Safety and Security Staff Roles and Responsibilities

Roles and Responsibilities
Chief school resource officer:

- Ensure enforcement of all laws including municipal ordinances, county ordinances and state laws within board policy and the jurisdiction of the district.
- Oversee the investigation of criminal activities that occur within the jurisdiction of the district or support other agencies conducting investigation.
- Direct the daily operations of the district police department to ensure effective law enforcement and coordinate the activities with other departmental directors and school principals.
- Work cooperatively with other staff to develop and implement security programs, gang- management plans and other safety programs.
- Investigate and make recommendations on all complaints and accusations made against district police officers or staff.
- Remain up to date with court rulings pertaining to police activity and ensure compliance of district police officers to minimize liability.
- Participate on committees and task forces as a district representative.
- Serve as district liaison to local law enforcement agencies and juvenile authorities.
- Develop procedures for the safe handling and use of firearms.
- Supervise and schedule police officers and staff assigned to department.
- Prepare, review and revise Police Department job descriptions.
- Develop training options and improvement plans.
- Evaluate job performance of employees to ensure effectiveness.
- Make sound recommendations relative to personnel selection, placement, transfer, retention and dismissal.
- Maintain property room for storage of weapons, contraband, etc., confiscated on district property.
- Ensure that department operations are cost effective and funds are well managed.
- Compile budgets and cost estimates based on documented department needs.
- Recommend policies to improve the department.
- Compile, maintain and file all reports, records and other documents required.
- Supervise and evaluate the performance of police officers, security guards and clerical staff.

School resource officer

- Patrol assigned school(s) and routes, walking or driving within district jurisdiction.
- Respond to all calls from schools concerning crises, accidents and reports of crime.
- Investigate all criminal offenses that occur within the jurisdiction of the

district.

- Collect and preserve evidence for criminal investigations including witness statements and physical evidence.
- Arrest perpetrators, file appropriate charges and ensure placement in jail or juvenile detention centers for law violations as necessary.
- Write effective, legal incident reports.
- Testify in court as needed.
- Work cooperatively with other police agencies to share information and provide other assistance.
- Assist in providing traffic control at athletic events, school closings or openings, or at any other time.
- Provide protection or escort district personnel as needed.
- Operate all equipment including firearms according to established safety procedures.
- Compile, maintain and file all reports, records and documents required, including affidavits for arrest, incident reports and activity reports.

Security guard

- Monitor student behavior and enforce school rules related to student conduct, vehicle operation and parking.
- Resolve conflict or confrontation between students and report disturbances to principal or assistant principal.
- Control traffic and parking on school grounds.
- Demonstrates knowledge of Student Code of Conduct.
- Conduct registration of student vehicles and maintain accurate records of registration.
- Work cooperatively with office personnel to inform students of problems with vehicles such as improperly parked, lights on, etc.
- Assist law enforcement personnel as needed.
- Notify Police, Fire Department or other appropriate authority of any situation requiring immediate attention.
- Give directions or act as a guide to authorized visitors.
- Demonstrates knowledge of up to date practices in traffic control.
- Provides escorts for authorized visitors.

Source: ACISD job descriptions, auxiliary positions, December 1994.

Each resource officer must have background checks before they are hired and they must be appropriately licensed to carry firearms. In addition, they must obtain continuing education every 24 months, approved by The Commission on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Education (TCLEOSE). TCLEOSE is a Texas agency established by statute that sets standards for law enforcement personnel. **Exhibit 11-5** summarizes the

district's safety and security personnel and their hiring and training requirements.

**Exhibit 11-5
ACISD Safety and Security Job Description Assessment**

Safety or Security Position	Hiring Requirements	Training Requirements
Chief school resource officer	Licensed by TCLEOSE Qualify semi-annually to carry firearms	TCLEOSE-approved training every 24 months in civil rights, racial sensitivity, cultural diversity, recognition of cases that involve child abuse, child neglect, family violence and sexual assault.
School resource officer	Licensed by TCLEOSE Qualify to carry firearms semi-annually	TCLEOSE-approved training every 24 months in civil rights, racial sensitivity, cultural diversity, recognition of cases that involve child abuse, child neglect, family violence and sexual assault.
Security guard	High School Diploma or GED	

Source: The Commission on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Education (TCLEOSE).

Exhibit 11-6 illustrates the responsibilities and jurisdictions of the ACISD police force compared to the Rockport Police Department as detailed in a board-adopted memorandum of understanding.

**Exhibit 11-6
ACISD Contracted Safety and Security Services
City of Rockport Police Department
Effective from 1-1-01 through 12-31-01**

ACISD Police Department Responsibilities	Rockport Police Department Responsibilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share concurrent jurisdiction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share concurrent jurisdiction.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary responsibility for law enforcement on all properties owned, leased or otherwise in the control of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary responsibility for law enforcement in all other areas within the

ACISD.	City of Rockport
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shall perform only those duties and enforce such law as may be determined by the ACISD Board of Trustees to protect the safety and welfare of ACISD students and employees and to protect and preserve ACISD property, which may include enforcement of State and Federal laws, and municipal ordinances. • Cooperate fully in investigations with the Rockport Police Department. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist in those cases where the ACISD Police Department determines that the Class C offense exceeds the limited resources of the ACISD Police Department. • Investigate and have primary control of all investigations relating to offenses reported to it by the ACISD Police Department for felony, class A and class B misdemeanor offenses.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACISD Police Department will assist the Rockport Police Department in all cases involving students, employees or property of the district where the City of Rockport Police Department has the primary responsibility for law enforcement. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate and work together to ensure a safe environment for all citizens of the City of Rockport. 	

Source: Board-adopted memorandum of understanding, January 1, 2001 through December 31, 2001.

FINDING

ACISD is paying stipends for security personnel to ride on out-of-town extracurricular athletic trips (**Exhibit 11-7**).

**Exhibit 11-7
Extra Duty Security Expenditures
1997-98 through 2001-02**

	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02 Budget
Extra Duty	\$0	\$300	\$10,890	\$7,460	\$9,000

Source: ACISD General Ledger.

Based on interviews with both security personnel and transportation personnel, security officers are riding on many of the district's field trip and extracurricular buses for safety, management and security. Before the bus drivers had cellular phones to use in case of emergencies, the officers would use their radios to call for help. The officers receive compensation in the form of a stipend of \$20 an hour for any trip more than two hours. The chief school resource officer averages about 60 hours a year accompanying students on out of town trips, mostly for football games. This amounts to approximately \$1,200 for each officer, and the district has two officers. This comes to \$2,400 for each year and is part of the district's total safety and security extra duty costs. The remainder of the extra duty costs consist of contracted police officers at home football games.

Recommendation 102:

Discontinue the practice of requiring police officers to accompany extracurricular out-of-town activity trips.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent informs the athletic director, chief school resource officer, transportation supervisor and the business manager of the procedural change.	June 2002
2.	The business manager adjusts the budget.	September 2002
3.	The transportation supervisor and chief school resource officer make procedural changes immediately.	October 2002

FISCAL IMPACT The district can save money by no longer requiring the school resource officers to accompany athletic teams on out-of-town trips. The savings is calculated by taking the average number of hours each year the officers spend on out-of-town trips, which was estimated by the chief school resource officer at 60 hours a year for each school resource officer. The district has two officers, which amounts to 120 hours a year at a stipend of \$20 an hour or a total of \$2,400 a year.

Recommendation	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
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Discontinue the practice of requiring police officers to accompany extracurricular out-of-town activity trips.	\$2,400	\$2,400	\$2,400	\$2,400	\$2,400
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Chapter 11

B. MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING

Senate Bill 1724 was passed by the 76th Texas Legislature in 1999 and requires districts to establish school improvement plans, which must contain goals for the prevention of violent incidents. Schools must also have many other elements in order to have a comprehensive safety plan. Properly functioning schools foster learning, safety and socially appropriate behaviors. They have a strong academic focus and support students achieving high standards, foster positive relationships between staff and students and promote meaningful community and parental involvement. Most effective prevention programs in schools address many factors and recognize safety and order are related to children's social, emotional and academic development. The following are just a few elements in a good comprehensive safety program:

- A focus on safety and orderly behavior in all schools and at all levels;
- Clear, enforceable rules and expectations for behavior and school performance;
- Clear statements of student and staff responsibilities;
- Professional development for teachers, staff and volunteers in all aspects of safety, supervision, classroom management and crisis intervention;
- Procedures for identifying and responding to the needs of at-risk and disruptive students; and
- Adequate adult supervision.

Weapons used in or around schools, bomb threats and fights, as well as natural disasters, accidents and potential suicides call for immediate action and long-term intervention. Planning reduces chaos and trauma for those involved.

FINDING

Each school prepares its own Parent-Student Handbook that varies substantially from the other schools, resulting in a duplication of effort.

The purpose of a parent-student handbook is to provide information on the background, structure and functions of the district and a resource for questions about the district. It also contains the Student Code of Conduct, which establishes what is expected of students.

While some of the handbooks are a result of duplicative efforts, not all schools are covering the same information. For instance, only four of the six schools' handbooks address communications between schools and home, two contain information on computer and network use agreements, two contain information on counseling services and five out of six contain information on attendance. In addition, only one school has information on drug-free schools, emergency drills, fund raising or safety. Two of the schools do not have statements about the student code of conduct. Only one school handbook addresses transportation, and one school omits any mention of visitor policies.

The Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) has made available on its Web site a Model Student Code of Conduct that is comprehensive and updated immediately when statutes change. ACISD, while a member of TASB, does not take advantage of the work already completed. This information could be copied and pasted into ACISD's Parent-Student Handbook annually.

Recommendation 103:

Prepare one parent-student handbook centrally and distribute it to school principals so that each school can customize the handbook to fill its particular needs.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The assistant superintendent drafts a comprehensive parent-student handbook that includes the TASB Model Student Code of Conduct as the base.	May 2002
2.	The assistant superintendent circulates the draft handbook for comments.	June 2002
3.	A Technology and Testing coordinator places the handbook on the Web server and provides access via the ACISD Web site.	July 2002
4.	The school principals customize the handbooks for each school.	August 2002
5.	The school principals publish the handbooks.	September 2002
6.	The school principals distribute handbooks.	October 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The district's crisis management plan is not readily accessible to staff.

ACISD and a consultant developed a crisis management plan to serve as a reference for school employees as they prepare for and respond to emergencies. The purpose of the manual is to provide personnel in the school district a better understanding of their authority and duties to protect the students entrusted to their care.

The plan, originally developed in 1995, is the responsibility of the assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Administration and should be updated annually. According to the assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Administration, the plan was just updated with a terrorism section. The consultants designed the plan for each school to customize it to their specific needs and situation. The high school recently updated its section for new renovations to the school, although those sections were not evident on review. While the plan has the following sections, each section is not separated by a divider to provide staff members with easy and quick access in a time of emergency: medical emergencies, violence and crime emergencies, shelter in place/evacuation emergencies, facility emergencies, weather emergencies and student welfare emergencies.

Crisis management is the process of preparing for, responding to and recovering from an emergency. It is a dynamic process requiring upper management support in order to be successful. While planning is critical to the process, it is not the only component of crisis management. Crisis management should also include training, conducting drills, testing equipment and coordinating activities. **Exhibit 11-8** highlights those procedures that could be included in a crisis management plan.

Exhibit 11-8 Components of a Crisis Management Plan

Evacuation procedures and other procedures to protect students and staff from harm. Schools should identify safe areas where students and staff can go in a crisis. Schools also should conduct evacuation drills.
An effective, foolproof communication system, with designated roles and responsibilities for all personnel to prevent confusion.
A process for notifying and securing immediate support from law enforcement officials and other relevant community agencies.
A process for notifying parents.
A procedure to communicate the need for staff support from other schools, if a serious incident should occur.

Source: Early Warning, Timely Response: A Guide to Safe Schools. US Department of Education, August 1998.

ACISD's crisis management plan has a page in the back for a distribution list. The list has not been completed with the names of those having a copy of the plan.

All school administrators are provided access to the plan via the ACISD computer network and are given a paper copy of the plan. The review team asked each principal for a copy of the plan. The principals could only obtain the computer plan, which in times of facility and weather emergencies may not be accessible. Three principals and the chief school resource officer could not locate their paper copy of the plan.

A risk manager for Victoria ISD notes that he likes to visit schools and conduct "pop quizzes" throughout the year. He will tell them they have just had a bomb threat and ask them what to do. This ensures they not only have a crisis manual, but that they know where it is and what to do when the time comes. Austin Independent School District (AISD) Risk Manager Scott Wyatt, who worked with TASB in developing the Association's *School Safety and Emergency Resource Manual*, cites smooth, effective communications as a top priority during a crisis. He believes the flip chart showing what to do in each emergency should be readily available in the central office of each school. This is in case the central office crisis team is at the location dealing with the situation and someone else is in the office giving out instructions.

Recommendation 104:

Place the emergency procedures in a location that all staff and management can immediately locate.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The assistant superintendent locates the emergency management plan at each school.	June 2002
2.	The assistant superintendent and each principal establish a readily accessible location at each school, like the central office, for the emergency management plan.	June 2002
3.	The principal labels the location.	June 2002
4.	The assistant superintendent periodically tests to see if the emergency management plan is accessible in the designated location.	September 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Statistics relating to safety and discipline are not analyzed to ensure that recurring incidents are identified and dealt with in a timely manner.

While incident and punishment data are captured for Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) reporting purposes, the district does not use the data to create a new plan of action based on the types of incidents that need special attention. For instance, data are not analyzed to determine if additional training is needed for students and/or teachers to resolve a recurring issue.

Safety and security data are not part of the strategic planning process and the district/school improvement plans. This results in no improvement plans for safety and security and there is no relationship between recurring incidents and the district's long-term plans. Schools do not track within the district for recidivism rates for the in-school suspension or other detention programs. Teachers, administrators and the community are not involved in planning safety or security programs and the district has no way to evaluate the effectiveness of its safety and security operations. No meaningful reports exist for the entire district to compare schools with peer groups or the state in order to improve the district's safety and security practices. Performance measures are not attached to any planning documents to ensure that goals and objectives are met.

Senate Bill 1724 passed by the 76th Texas Legislature in 1999 requires districts to establish school improvement plans, which must contain goals for the prevention of violent incidents. ACISD does not use incident statistics to plan for its allocation of resources nor develop its district and school improvement plans.

Recommendation 105:

Evaluate safety and security incident information and statistics in planning the district's short and long-term resources.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The assistant superintendent designs the format and content for the monthly report to show incident statistics for each school including month-by-month trends, types of incidents and incidents by school.	June 2002
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2.	The assistant superintendent publishes the report five days after the end of the month.	July 2002
3.	The assistant superintendent distributes a monthly report to the principals, the Transportation Department, the superintendent, the site-based decision-making team and the district and school improvement plan teams.	July 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 11

C. OPERATIONS

ACISD has undergone many changes in the past several years, and many of those changes have affected safety and security. For instance, the district constructed a new commons and cafeteria area in the high school and then closed the campus so students are no longer allowed to leave for lunch. Bell schedules were changed so that high school and middle school students are going to school earlier than the elementary students in 2001-02, rather than the elementary students starting earlier as they did the prior year. This means that the elementary students are no longer waiting for buses in the early morning hours when it is still dark outside. A new middle school was constructed, which has better security equipment than at the previous school.

FINDING

A new commons area and cafeteria was built in the high school. When completed, the district closed the campus so that students could not leave for lunch or any other reason. All students are required to eat lunch on campus. Before this plan was implemented, security and administrative personnel saw some students returning from lunch drunk, drugged or evidence of fights. District administration and security officers have seen fewer fights and fewer students intoxicated or on drugs, deeming the program successful.

Commendation

ACISD has enacted a closed campus at the High School whereby students cannot leave campus at any time during the course of a school day.

Closing campuses has been successful in keeping kids safer and away from drugs and alcohol during their lunch period.

FINDING

Security equipment is not working in all of the schools, leaving students and teachers vulnerable during emergency conditions.

Public address (PA) systems are designed to allow every area of a school to quickly alert the main office of any situation, and administration and security should be able to contact all classrooms. Panic buttons are personal alarm devices that send a loud piercing noise when activated

during an incident. Alarm systems warn the students and teachers when an evacuation of the building must take place.

During an interview of all of the school principals, a survey was taken to determine what safety and security equipment was working at each school, and these results were verified during tours of each school. **Exhibit 11-9** summarizes the results by school. As depicted, only two schools have alarm systems that are working and only two schools have public address systems or panic buttons that are working in each of the classrooms.

Exhibit 11-9
Evaluation of Security Equipment by Campus

	PA System Working in Each Classroom?	Panic Buttons Working in Each Classroom?	Building Alarm Working?
Fulton Elementary	No	Yes	No
Little Bay Elementary	No	Yes	No
Live Oak Elementary	Yes	Yes	No
Rockport Elementary	No	Yes	No
Rockport-Fulton MS	NO	Yes	Yes
Rockport-Fulton HS	Yes	No Not on west school grounds (30 classrooms)	Yes, except metal shop, field house and band hall

Source: Interview with campus principal, October 2001.

Without working public address systems, panic buttons and building alarm systems, district personnel are not able, without having to run from classroom to classroom, to alert all students and staff of emergency conditions.

Recommendation 106:

Repair safety and security equipment that is not in working condition and develop a plan to ensure equipment is repaired.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The maintenance and custodial supervisors make copies of the school floor plan maps.	June 2002
2.	The maintenance and custodial supervisors take a detailed inventory of the exact locations for safety and security equipment that is not functioning by marking on the floor plan maps the exact location of malfunctioning equipment and the problems associated with each location.	June 2002
3.	The maintenance and custodial supervisors prepare a purchase order to repair and warrant the work for all safety and security equipment and attach the documentation prepared in previous step.	July 2002
4.	The maintenance and purchasing coordinator obtains three bids from qualified security equipment repair services.	July 2002
5.	The maintenance and purchasing coordinator evaluates the bids based on price, when the work can be completed and their experience with this type and model of equipment.	July 2002
6.	The maintenance and purchasing coordinator awards the bid after consultation with the superintendent.	August - September 2002
7.	The maintenance and custodial supervisors appoint someone to monitor and manage the equipment repair process to the estimated completion date and quality expectations.	September 2002
8.	The maintenance and custodial supervisors and the principals test all repaired equipment to ensure that they are working according to ACISD expectations.	October 2002
9.	The maintenance and custodial supervisors pay the vendor when all work is completed and the systems are fully functioning and each school principal approves the work.	October 2002
10.	The maintenance and custodial supervisors run quarterly checks on each school to ensure all security equipment is working properly.	December 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Each school has many outside doors, and many of them are not secured with panic hardware that restricts access from the outside during the school day.

Access into ACISD schools is easy to obtain. The high school has twenty-six entrance doors to the school - each one is unlocked and accessible during the course of a school day. The review team was able to enter each school from a series of outside doors and walk unchallenged through most areas of the school building.

The doors are also often left unlocked in the evenings leaving valuable fixed assets at risk. The security officers noted that on average city police call once every two weeks to inform them that various school doors are left unlocked at night. Teachers, principals, parents and students all expressed concerns over safety hazards at each school.

In TSPR's *Keeping Texas Children Safe in School*, safe school districts "look for trouble" before it occurs. This "looking" involves recognizing the critical need to keep all but the main entrance door locked after the start of school and remedying the situation.

Fire and building codes require exit doors to be non-locking from the inside. They cannot require the use of a special key or tool to open. Panic hardware allows doors to be inaccessible from the outside, while still complying with fire codes that require doors that can be opened from the inside. There are many different panic hardware and door alarm products on the market. Each has its own specifications - some have deadlocking latches and deadbolts and some have alarms. They range in price from \$200 to \$400 each. For 26 doors in the high school, purchasing these products would amount to \$5,200 to \$10,400, without installation.

Recommendation 107:

Complete a security threat assessment of each campus to enforce better physical security measures.

Each principal, with the guidance of the ACISD Police Department, should complete a security threat assessment of their school. Each assessment should include a sliding scale rating of the various security issues such as ease of school entry on foot and by vehicle. Each assessment should include ideas for reducing security risks.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the chief school resource officer to develop a security threat assessment for the principals to use to evaluate security risks.	June 2002
2.	The chief school resource officer gives school principals the threat assessment and a schedule for school visits to review the assessment.	July 2002
3.	The chief school resource officer compiles the results of the threat assessments into one report, noting in particular the extent of any systemic security issues, such as doors open during the school day and estimates of cost and timeliness for correcting the problems.	August 2002 - September 2002
4.	The superintendent directs all principals to enforce better basic security measures, especially locking doors after the start of school.	September 2002
5.	The chief school resource officer commences a rotating schedule of intermittent, unannounced visits by an officer to verify the implementation of security measures and report each visit to the superintendent and the principal.	October 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The district's policy requiring visitors and vendors to sign in and wear identification badges is not enforced.

According to the district's own policies, all visitors to a school must first report to the school administrative office. There are no exceptions to this policy. This rule applies to all visitors including parents, board members, volunteers, social service workers, invited speakers, maintenance and repair persons not employed by the district, salespersons, representatives of the news media and former students. According to security personnel and school leaders, visitors and vendors are required to sign in.

However, while visiting the district's schools, none of these rules were enforced, except on one visit to the middle school and Live Oak Elementary where the review team was asked by the secretary to go to the office and sign in. Vendors and parents also entered the building from various doors and were not required to sign in with the administrative office. In addition, there is no sign in a prominent place at the high school to instruct outside visitors where to proceed. Finally, during a two-week

visit to the district, vendors were observed going in and out of all schools without wearing identification and without checking in at any offices.

In an effort to identify maintenance, transportation and food service workers to all other staff, ACISD started renting uniforms to provide quick identification of adults on schools. In January 2000, ACISD advertised a bid for the rental of uniforms in the *Rockport Pilot* and the *Corpus Christi Caller Times*. The bid was awarded to Cintas and presented to the board with the rationale that "the district must submit purchases of less than \$25,000 to Competitive Proposals." ACISD management signed a three-year contract with Cintas on April 25, 2000 to provide 11 uniform sets for each employee, clean the uniforms each week and provide replacements when needed. This contract automatically renews unless the district notifies the vendor within 60 days of the expiration with a five percent escalator, or increase. The district entered into this agreement because too many dress code violations were occurring and adults were present in schools without any clear way of knowing they were ACISD staff, presenting security issues. The district is incurring the cost shown in **Exhibit 11-10**.

Exhibit 11-10
ACISD Uniform Costs and Projected Costs

School Year	Costs through September 2001	Projected Annual Cost
2000-2001	\$36,399	\$36,399
2001-2002	\$7,409	\$29,636

Source: ACISD business manager.

Many school districts have implemented photo-identification badge systems for both students and employees. For example, the Killeen Independent School District adopted a badge system in 1998 for its students and employees. The student badge has a photograph and a bar code. All high school students receive them; the district is in the process of distributing them to all middle school students. The district does not plan to distribute ID cards to elementary students. The employee badge has a photograph, bar code and a magnetic stripe. All employees have them and the district plans to use them for documenting attendance at in-service training in the near future. For substitute teachers and visitors, the district uses numbered badges without pictures. Waco Independent School District also implemented a badge system in January 2000. Both districts implemented such systems primarily out of security concerns.

Recommendation 108:

Establish districtwide badge system and enforce its use to improve security.

While several months may be needed to implement such a system after all necessary equipment and materials have been purchased, the added security should outweigh the expense and effort. Once the badges are initially distributed, it should become the responsibility of the Human Resources Department to issue new or replacement badges to employees, while each school should be responsible for its own student badges.

Each school's visitor badges should be sequentially numbered and created in such a manner that it cannot be easily duplicated. All visitors should be required to provide identification, sign a log noting the badge number and leave their driver's license at the desk while attending to business within the school. This practice will better ensure that people will not walk off without returning their badges. Badges should be kept in an area not easily accessible to the public. Administrative buildings also should establish visitor procedures and badges. Teachers and staff should be instructed to stop anyone on school grounds without a visitor badge and direct them to the main office.

District officials have already identified that they would like to implement a \$30,000 district-wide card system for access to schools, security, checking out textbooks and library books and meal tickets and has incorporated this plan into its technology plan timeline. This recommendation could possibly be incorporated into the district-wide card system.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent appoints a team consisting of the principals, the Human Resource coordinator and the chief school resource officer to cooperatively implement a badge system.	September 2002
2.	The team identifies the criteria for selecting a badge system that is best for quickly identifying who is an employee, student or a visitor.	October 2002
3.	The team evaluates each badge system.	October 2002 - November 2002
4.	The team determines which badge system is best for the district.	August 2002
5.	The district purchases the selected system.	January 2003
6.	The Human Resource coordinator begins implementing the	February 2003

	badge system with central office employees.	
7.	The Human Resource coordinator and chief school resource officer develop both a badge system for visitors and substitute teachers and a school visitor procedure.	March 2003
8.	The principals and school staff implement the badge system for visitors and substitute teachers.	April 2003
9.	The principals and school staff begin implementing the badge system among school-based employees.	June 2003
10.	The principals and school staff begin implementing the badge system among students.	August 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

The major expense of the badge system is the initial outlay for equipment. The district will need an identification system including a camera, printer and computer. Killeen Independent School District (KISD) purchased its system for \$21,698 with an annual \$2,000 maintenance contract. Recurring expenses for cards and ribbons will cost about \$2,000 for the first year and \$1,000 every year thereafter. The district can realize a net savings by eliminating the use of uniforms.

Recommendation	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Purchase camera, printer, and computer.	(\$21,698)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Cost of annual maintenance contract, cards, and ribbons.	(\$2,000)	(\$3,000)	(\$3,000)	(\$3,000)	(\$3,000)
Eliminate the uniform rentals.	\$29,636	\$29,636	\$29,636	\$29,636	\$29,636
Total (Costs)/Savings	\$5,938	\$26,636	\$26,636	\$26,636	\$26,636

FINDING

Master keys and building alarm codes are not guarded and controlled. Keys and alarm codes to school buildings may or may not be issued to all staff that work at the school. Procedures vary from school to school and there is no written policy or procedure to monitor and control the issuance of keys and alarm codes.

For example, the gate to the transportation barn is locked in the evenings, but many people have keys to the lock, including all of the Transportation Department, Maintenance Department and the Security Department. The lock has not been changed in at least the last seven years. The

Transportation Department, which is located in a field next to the middle school, is where all of the school buses are parked. In addition, the district has two fuel pumps, one for regular gasoline and the other for diesel fuel, on the premises. According to the district these pumps are locked in the evening and the outside gate to the transportation area is locked, but many employees, and possibly former employees, have keys to this area. According to Transportation personnel, all Transportation employees, Maintenance employees and Security personnel have keys to the gate. No one could remember the last time the lock was changed on the gate. Keys are issued but not controlled. Therefore, no one knows who has keys to the different areas of the schools, including the transportation barn where the fuel pumps are located. This situation leaves valuable assets unprotected from theft or vandalism.

Recommendation 109:

Take an inventory of alarm codes and master keys issued and develop a policy and procedure to control their issuance.

The district should take an inventory of who has been issued alarm codes, master keys and room keys for all district facilities. Principals should be required to maintain and submit records of who has alarm access codes and keys to the ACISD Police Department annually. The district should also develop a general policy detailing who in a school should have a key and an alarm code and who should not.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent's secretary designs the inventory collection document.	June 2002
2.	The superintendent distributes the inventory form and an e-mail instructing the principals and administrators to develop a list of all alarm access codes in existence, all master keys in existence, the last time the master key was changed, and all other keys assigned to individuals.	July 2002
3.	The principals and administrators submit this list to the chief school resource officer and the superintendent.	July 2002
4.	The superintendent and the chief school resource officer develop a policy and procedure outlining who in a school should have an alarm code and a master key and who should not.	July 2002
5.	The chief school resource officer implements a key control and alarm access code control system.	August 2002 - September 2002

6.	Each principal and administrator in charge of a facility turns in the form to the chief school resource officer at the start of school.	October 2002
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FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Several areas of the schools were in disorderly condition, posing safety hazards for the students and employees.

During a walk-around inspection of the high school, some areas were messy and littered. These areas included two educational classroom settings, the welding shop, the wood shop and the maintenance work areas.

Students were noted in the welding area working while the instructor was not present. Students had to find the instructor when asked. In addition, a truck was parked in the front of the shop with a broken windshield with shards of glass hanging from it, and rusted equipment was lying on the ground. This area appeared hazardous to students and others who might be working in it, and was an eyesore to visitors of the school. The air conditioning maintenance area located in the middle of the school was in the same condition as the vocational education facility. An area next to the Alternative Education buildings on the east side of the high school was overgrown with weeds in front of windows, which could also be a safety hazard.

Subsequent to the review team's visit, the respected areas were cleaned as directed by the administration.

Recommendation 110:

Conduct a clean-up effort in the welding and woodshop areas, the maintenance areas and the grounds near the alternative education classrooms. The superintendent should hold the managers of those areas responsible for their appearance.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent notifies school personnel to mow all weeds and clean around the ACISD School.	June 2002
2.	The superintendent meets with the Maintenance and custodial	June

	supervisors, the welding instructor and the wood shop instructor to develop a plan to make the school presentable.	2002
3.	The superintendent or the chief school resource officer conducts routine inspections and writes up any non-compliance issues and submits to the appropriate party.	August 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Speeding in the student parking lot is a problem presenting a potential safety hazard.

According to the security guard, speeding is the biggest problem in the high school student parking lot. During the review team's visit, team members witnessed several incidents of students driving fast in the parking lot. Fortunately, no serious incidents have occurred to date.

Speed bumps are traffic management devices used for lowering the speed of motor vehicles without reducing access. The high school student parking lot is about 200 yards in length, according to the security guard. According to one company specializing in the manufacturer of rubber speed bumps, one speed bump every 200 to 300 feet is appropriate. Based on that estimate, it is estimated that 3 speed bumps are required for a parking lot this size. Asphalt speed bumps cost \$1,500 for each bump for a total of \$4,500 and rubber speed bumps cost approximately \$200 each for a total of \$600.

Therefore, speed bumps are one way the district can reduce the incidents of speeding in the high school parking lot.

Recommendation 111:

Install speed bumps at the same time that the student parking lot is paved to reduce speeding.

Asphalt speed bumps cost approximately \$1,000 to \$1,500 each. Rubber speed bumps cost approximately \$200 for a nine-foot speed bump. There are advantages and disadvantages that should be researched by ACISD personnel to ensure that the district is getting the right product for the right price. Consideration should be given to the coastal environmental conditions that may affect the life of the product. An additional consideration is the size of the speed bump.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The maintenance and custodial supervisors research Internet sites to determine the type and size of speed bumps needed.	June 2002
2.	The maintenance and custodial supervisors calculate the number of speed bumps needed based on the type and size recommended.	June 2002
3.	The maintenance and purchasing coordinator prepares specifications asking for references, the type of bumps being bid, installation timeline, guarantee for work and product and cost.	July 2002
4.	The maintenance and purchasing coordinator receives quotes or bids.	August 2002 - September 2002
5.	The maintenance and purchasing coordinator chooses quote and hires the contractor.	October 2002
6.	The maintenance and custodial supervisors identify a person to oversee the installation and acceptance of the speed bumps before any payment is disbursed to the contractor.	October 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

Based on the security guard's estimate of a 200-yard student parking lot, and the industry average of one speed bump every 200 to 300 feet, 3 speed bumps would be appropriate for ACISD's parking lot. Average costs for asphalt speed bumps are \$1,500 each, for a total one-time cost of \$4,500.

Recommendation	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Install speed bumps at the same time that the student parking lot is paved to reduce speeding.	(\$4,500)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Chapter 11

D. STUDENT DISCIPLINE MANAGEMENT

Psychologists have long said that children want to know their boundaries-- that they need fair and consistent guidance. Texas law requires each school district to prepare a Student Code of Conduct to give students clear standards of behavior.

Section 37.001 of the Texas Education Code instructs the district's school board, in consultation with the district's site-based decision-making committee, to adopt a Student Code of Conduct. This code must be prominently displayed at each school. It must specify the circumstances in which a student may be removed from a classroom, school or alternative program; specify conditions authorizing or requiring a principal or other administrators to transfer a student to an alternative education program; and list steps for student suspension.

Every Texas school district is required to create a foundation for student discipline through the adoption of a Student Code of Conduct establishing standards for student behavior.

The district's student code of conduct must:

- comply with the law;
- be crystal clear;
- be applied consistently; and
- ensure that everyone knows the rules.

The administrators, teachers, parents and community members of the district developed the Student Code of Conduct for ACISD. Sample responsibilities of each party as stated in the Student Code of Conduct are shown in **Exhibit 11-11**.

Exhibit 11-11 Responsibilities of Students, Parents and School Personnel at ACISD

Students
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attend all classes daily and on time.• Be prepared for each class with appropriate materials and assignments.• Be well groomed and dress appropriately.• Exhibit respect toward others.• Behave in a responsible manner at school, on school buses and at all school functions on or off school.

- Pay required fees.
- Obey all class, school and safety rules.
- Cooperate with staff in maintaining safety, order and discipline.

Parents

- Make every effort to provide for the physical needs of their child.
- Teach their child to respect authority, pay attention and obey rules.
- Assure their child attends school regularly and report and explain absences and tardiness to school personnel. Make every effort to provide for the physical needs of their child.
- Teach their child to respect authority, pay attention and obey rules.
- Be sure their child is appropriately dressed for school.
- Submit a signed statement that they received and reviewed the Student Code of Conduct and support school personnel in the enforcement of discipline imposed in accordance with school policy and the Student Code of Conduct.
- Bring to the attention of school personnel any concerns or conditions that may relate to the child's education or well being.
- Discuss report cards and assignments with their child and participate in conferences with school personnel about the child's progress, behavior and welfare.
- Control their child; a child's parent is legally responsible for property damage proximately caused by the negligent conduct of the child.
- Submit all required forms to the school administration office including the Acceptable Use Policy, Medical and Registration forms, Bus Transportation Rider Contract, and all other forms required by school policy or law.

Teachers and Other Certified Personnel

- Be knowledgeable of and uphold the Code of Conduct.
- Develop and communicate classroom rules and discipline management procedure.
- Remove from class a student who commits certain offenses.
- Maintain an orderly classroom.
- Establish rapport and an effective working relationship with parents.
- Report in writing to the principal any known violation of the Code of Conduct.
- Maintain confidentiality upon receipt of sensitive information.

Administrators

- Assure a safe and orderly climate for teaching and learning.
- Assume responsibility and leadership for discipline and for the evaluation of discipline management plan including implementation and enforcing

the Code of Conduct.

- Provide appropriate support for teachers who seek help with discipline management.
- Make a reasonable effort to secure a signed statement from parents acknowledging receipt of a copy of the Code of Conduct.
- Notify parents within 24 hours of a violation of the Code of Conduct by their child.
- Report certain offenses to law enforcement and the Texas Education Agency in accordance with TEC 37.001.

Source: ACISD Student Code of Conduct 2001.

The ACISD Student Code of Conduct divides offenses into five levels of categories. **Exhibit 11-12** depicts each level with examples of offenses and the consequences.

Exhibit 11-12
Categories of Offenses Outlined in ACISD's Student Code of Conduct
Assessment

Examples of Offenses	Consequences
LEVEL I: General Misconduct	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Missing detentions • Disruption of class • Leaving the classroom, building, grounds or activity without permission • Public display of affection • Failure to comply with lawful directives issued by school personnel • Posting or distributing unauthorized communicative materials at school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher/student/parent/administrator conference • Withdrawal of student privileges • In-school suspension (not to exceed 1 day) • Detention • Discipline card • Other disciplinary actions appropriate for the offense
LEVEL II: Serious Offenses	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of profane, obscene, racially or ethnically offensive languages and/ or 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exclusion from extracurricular activities • Corporal punishment

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> gestures to others • Failure to attend school, truancy, or violation of daytime curfew • Altering school documents or forgery of name • Defacing school property • Possession and/or use of tobacco product, lighter or matches • Possession of a nuisance item, laser pointer, or other object or substance that could cause bodily harm • Recklessness in an auto or illegal parking • Technology hacking or misuse of electronic communication and/or data management • Disruption of transportation • Failure to report to school personnel the knowledge of any event, or object that could cause bodily harm • Trespassing • Bullying, hazing and/or threatening to do bodily harm to another • Fighting • Sexual harassment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restoration and/or restitution as applicable • Referral to law enforcement personnel and/or citation • In-school suspension • Withdrawal of computer privileges • Revocation of parking privileges • Suspension from school • Removal from class • Confiscation of nuisance item • Physical restraint • DAEP placement • Referral to law enforcement
<p>LEVEL III: Behavior Subject to Removal to Alternative Education Program</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeated acts of disobedience or disorderly behavior which may prove to be detrimental to the school, and/or harmful to the health and safety of others • Interfering with school authorities or programs through boycotts or sit-ins • Theft, burglary, robbery or 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assigned school duties other than class tasks • Parent shadow • Alternative education placement • Expulsion from school

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> extortion • Failure to comply with assigned disciplinary consequences • Criminal mischief including vandalism • Sexual harassment • Bullying, hazing, and/or threatening to do bodily harm to another or to the property of another • Gang behavior • Possession of knife, fireworks, look-alike weapons or drug paraphernalia • Student is removed from class by a teacher for one of the discretionary removal reasons • Student is removed by a principal/designee because he/she reasonably believes the student's behavior is so unruly, disruptive, or abusive that it seriously interferes with instruction • Superintendent has a reasonable belief that the student has engaged in conduct defined as felony offense 	
<p>LEVEL IV: Offenses Subject to Expulsion</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engages in conduct that contains the element of the offense of retaliation against school employee • Commits the following on or within 300 feet of school property: felony; assault; terrorist threat; public lewdness; indecent exposure; glue; aerosol 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Placement in an Alternative Education Program • Expulsion

<p>paint, or volatile chemicals; sells, gives or delivers drugs; and sells, gives or delivers alcohol</p>	
<p>LEVEL V: Student Must Be Expelled</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses, possesses or exhibits a firearm, prohibited weapon, club or knife. • Aggravated assault • Sexual assault • Aggravated sexual assault • Arson • Murder • Indecency with child • Aggravated kidnapping • Drug and alcohol offenses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student must be expelled

Source: ACISD Student Code of Conduct, 2000-01.

FINDING

There is no one person in the district with the responsibility of monitoring whether or not students are carrying out required court sentences of community involvement.

ACISD's discipline process is outlined in **Appendix I**. Any student who violates the Student Code of Conduct or breaks a law is disciplined according to the steps in the appendix. Initially, a student who is involved in an incident is written up by a teacher or other authoritative personnel. The incident report is sent to the assistant principal. The assistant principal investigates the incident, so that each student receives due process. If the student is found to be guilty, the assistant principal may determine punishment; refer the incident to the district police or a Central Placement Committee. The Central Placement Committee consists of the principal of the Alternative Education Program, the superintendent or assistant superintendent and the assistant principal. If the committee decides to assess punishment, they can use a variety of disciplinary measures, from suspension to lunch detention or an Alternative Education Program (AEP).

If the incident is referred to school police, the police can dismiss the case, issue the student a citation or make an arrest if the incident is extreme. Citations can only be issued to students who are 10 years of age or older.

If a citation is issued, the student must appear in court. Middle school and elementary students are sent to the court of Judge Patrick Daly and high school students are sent to the court of Judge Martin DeLeon. The judge can issue a variety of sentences, including dismissal, a fine of \$1 - \$500, community service and detention programs. Community service seems to be a good idea, but there is no communication between the court and the district regarding community service sentences. Students can violate their probation or miss their community service and there is no one to follow up. Therefore, no deterrent exists for students who misbehave.

Recommendation 112:

Assign one person in the district to follow-up on community service sentences.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent, assistant superintendent, chief school resource officer and other school resource officers discuss candidates to be responsible for making sure students carry out their community service sentences.	June 2002
2.	The superintendent selects a candidate to monitor whether or not students are carrying out their community service sentences.	July 2002
3.	The assigned personnel begin to monitor students who were sentenced to community service.	August 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The time students are given to change classes has decreased significantly in the last few years, resulting in an increased number of tardies.

Exhibit 11-13 shows the number of tardies reported by the high school for the years 1999-2000 through 2001-02. The time given to students to change class has been reduced by half in the three year period; while the number of tardies has increased by more than 500 percent.

**Exhibit 11-13
R-F High School Tardy Analysis**

	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02*	Change
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Number of Tardies Reported	155	371	1,000	545%
Minutes between classes	10	7	5	(50%)

*Source: ACISD Conduct Reports and high school principal. *Annualized based on incidents to date of November 16, 2001.*

Statistics for 2001-02 were annualized based on the number of tardies occurring between August 20, 2001 and November 16, 2001. The number of tardies during that time was 350, which amounts to 1,000 in the school year when annualized. This number is more than six times the tardies in 1999-2000 and more than 2.5 times the tardies in 2000-01.

Student tardies are disruptive to the learning environment, and students who have never been in trouble before are being written up for tardies. In addition, the administration is spending more time on these tardies that could be spent on more serious issues.

One student surveyed said, "...Our passing periods should be longer. I have no time to go to my locker or even the bathroom between classes." Many other students had similar comments when surveyed. Here are some examples:

- "We should have longer passing periods. Five minutes is not enough. Some people have to go all the way across school, so they are tardy."
- "There isn't enough time to get from one school to another school without being tardy. If you don't have a hall pass, you get night school (2 hours of detention)."
- "Schedule needs to be altered. Five minutes is not enough time to go to a locker, restroom, water break and then walk clear across school. I seldom have tardies, but I have to carry all my books, with me, straining my back."

Recommendation 113:

Increase the amount of time students have to change classes.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	Principals, superintendent and transportation supervisor meet to discuss the bell schedules and its effect on other operations.	June 2002 - August 2002
2.	Principals change bell schedules to allow students more time to change classes.	September 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Little Bay Elementary has significantly more disciplinary incidents for each student than the other elementary schools in the district. **Exhibit 11-14** shows the number of incidents reported by each elementary school for 2000-01.

Exhibit 11-14
Summary of Incidents by Elementary School Campus
2000-01

	Rockport Elementary	Little Bay Elementary	Live Oak Elementary	Fulton Elementary
Incidents	330	721	87	87
Students	518	306	338	380
Incidents for each Student	0.64	2.36	0.26	0.23

Source: ACISD Conduct Reports, 2000-01.

Little Bay Elementary reported about 10 times more incidents for each student than Live Oak and Fulton elementary schools and about 4 times more incidents for each student than Rockport elementary in 2000-01.

Of the 721 incidents reported for Little Bay in 2000-01, two teachers comprised about 21 percent of the total referrals.

Behavior management and discipline courses are available through the Regional Education Service Center II (Region 2) for a minimal charge. A variety of different courses are offered, ranging from \$10 - \$35 for each person a day. Most of the courses last one day, from 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m., while a few may last two days.

Effective classroom teachers have classroom management skills. These skills can be developed through Region 2, which offers classes three to five times during the year, in addition to classes from the Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI), which it offers at least four times a year. Region 2 also offers behavior specialist training which is a three-year program for district teams. A team has anywhere from four to ten members and must

consist of an administrator, special education teacher and regular teacher. The teams meet about four times a year for training.

Recommendation 114:

Provide continuing discipline management training for principals and teachers.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The assistant superintendent determines if a discipline-management-training program is available from Region 2.	September 2002
2.	The assistant superintendent sends a list of available training to the teachers and allows them to choose.	September 2002
3.	Teachers attend discipline-management training.	September 2002 - October 2002
4.	The principal monitors the results by visiting the classroom setting and monitoring the incident reporting data.	November 2002 - May 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

The costs of classes at Region 2 range from \$10 - \$35. For two teachers and a principal at Little Bay Elementary, the cost would be \$35 times three, or \$105.

Recommendation	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Provide continuing discipline management training for principals and teachers.	(\$105)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Appendix A

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Appendix A

PUBLIC FORUM COMMENTS

As part of Aransas County Independent School District performance review, a public forum was held in the high school cafeteria on October 15. Members of the public were invited to record comments they have regarding the ACISD education system. Community members and school staff who participated in the public forums gave their comments about the 12 areas under review. These comments illustrated community perceptions of ACISD and do not necessarily reflect the findings or opinion of the Comptroller or review team. The comments have been edited for brevity and decorum. The following is a summary of comments received by focus area.

DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

- Site base does not communicate w/other individuals in the high school.
- More communication would be helpful.

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

- We seem to do a good job at the ends - AP/SP. Ed meeting needs of middle, curriculum may need changes.
- We have a number of graduates who have been very successful. We provide the opportunity and the guidelines, but not all students take advantage of them.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Parents and community very willing to help - district not always positive in receiving.
- As a CPA I volunteered my time to teach our outgoing seniors about their personal income taxes and was turned down.
- This year we are recruiting speakers from all career areas and have a list of parent volunteers - We hope to get more!

PERSONNEL

- Teachers are paid less than peer group.
- Recruitment is non-existent except at campus admin and above.

- We have a lot of good quality teachers at the high school. My daughters have gotten a good education. Teachers who care and who always go the "extra mile" for kids should be recognized.
- Far too many non-teaching staff (Teachers=TEA certified).
- No requirements for teachers to abide by state laws.
- No consequences for teachers and admin staff who don't perform.
- Eliminate out-of-town "Staff Development" trips.

FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

- Children are asked to use dirty facilities.
- Construction is started - then stopped before completion leaving unsafe areas for students and staff.
- There is little or no upkeep or daily cleaning of girl's gold gym.
- Girl's gym has only one toilet in dressing room.
- Need more in the area of cleaning the facilities (bathrooms, classrooms, drinking fountains).
- Need more working water fountains.
- Need more restroom facilities (working).
- Need more water fountains.

ASSET AND RISK MANAGEMENT

- Very little communication about ins. Plans until the last minute so employees have little or no input.
- We hope the State plan next year will be better than the insurance we have now-especially for families.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

- Taxes are too high for what I receive.
- Compared to other schools in our area, we spend more per student but receive less in areas of athletics, choir, etc.
- Need to spend more money on Tech Theater, band not athletics.
- Need optional R.O.T.C classes!!
- Internal Audit?

PURCHASING AND WAREHOUSING

- It is frustrating for employees to always have to buy from the approved list, even when sometimes we can purchase something elsewhere better and cheaper.

COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

- May not be taking advantage of all that is available.

- Computers need better and easier access to computer related materials.
- Business/Administrative technology classes.

FOOD SERVICES

- Food tastes good.
- Need more help.
- Quality of food served: mostly fried foods, no salad bar@ RF middle school.
- Food may not meet daily nutrition req.
- This food may be only some students receive.
- Need better food.
- Need better food service to decrease line size.
- Need better food service to decrease line size.
- Salad bar at the high school is excellent. Most food is good.

TRANSPORTATION

- Because of the size of the district, there seems to be some scheduling problems, timing of pickup for elementary and or secondary.
- Bus routes need to be posted (At school.)
- Need better buses.
- No complaints.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

- Policies are inconsistent from campus to campus.
- Safety NOT #1.
- "Whatever it takes" (Read with sarcasm).
- Dress code in high school not enforced.
- Focus is put on unenforceable rules, not the real issues (drugs, fighting, extortion, threats).
- I think most students do feel safe here! My daughter does.
- I'd be in favor of a uniform. It would simplify enforcing the dress code.

Appendix B

District Administrative and Support Staff Survey RESULTS

Aransas County Independent School District Management and Performance Review

n=82

Note: Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Demographic Data

1.	Gender (Optional)	No Response	Male	Female			
		3.7%	11%	85.4%			
2.	Ethnicity (Optional)	No Response	Anglo	African American	Hispanic	Asian	Other
		6.1%	68.3%	3.7%	14.6%	0%	7.3%
3.	How long have you been employed by Aransas County ISD?	No Response	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	20+ years
		1.2%	40.2%	25.6%	15.9%	7.3%	9.8%
4.	Are you a(n):	No Response	Administrator	Clerical Staffer	Support Staffer		
		0%	14.6%	24.4%	61%		
5.	How long have you been employed in this capacity by Aransas County ISD?	No Response	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	20+ years
		1.2%	48.8%	24.4%	12.2%	8.5%	4.9%

A. District Organization and Management

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
1.	The school board allows sufficient time	8.5%	37.8%	36.6%	11.0%	2.4%	3.7%

	for public input at meetings.						
2.	School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.	7.3%	34.1%	32.9%	18.3%	3.7%	3.7%
3.	The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	28.0%	42.7%	24.4%	1.2%	1.2%	2.4%
4.	The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	22.0%	31.7%	37.8%	3.7%	2.4%	2.4%
5.	Central administration is efficient.	6.1%	43.9%	23.2%	19.5%	3.7%	3.7%
6.	Central administration supports the educational process.	12.2%	47.6%	25.6%	11.0%	0.0%	3.7%
7.	The morale of central administration staff is good.	8.5%	40.2%	39.0%	6.1%	2.4%	3.7%

B. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
8.	Education is the main priority in our school district.	19.5%	42.7%	18.3%	14.6%	1.2%	3.7%
9.	Teachers are	14.6%	45.1%	28.0%	11.0%	0.0%	1.2%

	given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.						
10.	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	7.3%	45.1%	36.6%	7.3%	2.4%	1.2%
11.	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	1.2%	37.8%	39.0%	18.3%	2.4%	1.2%
12.	The district has effective educational programs for the following:						
	a) Reading	11.0%	53.7%	19.5%	12.2%	0.0%	3.7%
	b) Writing	6.1%	56.1%	22.0%	12.2%	0.0%	3.7%
	c) Mathematics	9.8%	58.5%	19.5%	8.5%	0.0%	3.7%
	d) Science	7.3%	59.8%	20.7%	7.3%	0.0%	4.9%
	e) English or Language Arts	11.0%	59.8%	19.5%	6.1%	0.0%	3.7%
	f) Computer Instruction	19.5%	53.7%	17.1%	7.3%	0.0%	2.4%
	g) Social Studies (history or geography)	8.5%	59.8%	20.7%	7.3%	0.0%	3.7%
	h) Fine Arts	9.8%	58.5%	24.4%	3.7%	0.0%	3.7%
	i) Physical Education	7.3%	63.4%	19.5%	7.3%	0.0%	2.4%
	j) Business Education	7.3%	40.2%	41.5%	8.5%	0.0%	2.4%

	k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	2.4%	40.2%	39.0%	15.9%	1.2%	1.2%
	l) Foreign Language	6.1%	50.0%	36.6%	2.4%	0.0%	4.9%
13.	The district has effective special programs for the following:						
	a) Library Service	11.0%	52.4%	29.3%	4.9%	0.0%	2.4%
	b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	8.5%	56.1%	22.0%	4.9%	4.9%	3.7%
	c) Special Education	11.0%	54.9%	18.3%	13.4%	0.0%	2.4%
	d) Head Start and Even Start programs	2.4%	40.2%	48.8%	6.1%	0.0%	2.4%
	e) Dyslexia program	6.1%	25.6%	56.1%	9.8%	0.0%	2.4%
	f) Student mentoring program	2.4%	37.8%	46.3%	11.0%	0.0%	2.4%
	g) Advanced placement program	7.3%	50.0%	39.0%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%
	h) Literacy program	3.7%	37.8%	48.8%	6.1%	0.0%	3.7%
	i) Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	1.2%	39.0%	41.5%	14.6%	2.4%	1.2%
	j) Summer school programs	4.9%	50.0%	34.1%	7.3%	1.2%	2.4%

	k) Alternative education programs	4.9%	48.8%	36.6%	4.9%	2.4%	2.4%
	l) "English as a second language" program	3.7%	58.5%	34.1%	0.0%	1.2%	2.4%
	m) Career counseling program	2.4%	37.8%	50.0%	7.3%	0.0%	2.4%
	n) College counseling program	2.4%	41.5%	46.3%	7.3%	0.0%	2.4%
	o) Counseling the parents of students	2.4%	36.6%	36.6%	17.1%	4.9%	2.4%
	p) Drop out prevention program	0.0%	37.8%	48.8%	11.0%	1.2%	1.2%
14.	Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	4.9%	30.5%	35.4%	20.7%	6.1%	2.4%
15.	Teacher turnover is low.	6.1%	29.3%	40.2%	19.5%	3.7%	1.2%
16.	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	2.4%	36.6%	41.5%	18.3%	0.0%	1.2%
17.	Teacher openings are filled quickly.	3.7%	37.8%	40.2%	15.9%	1.2%	1.2%
18.	Teachers are rewarded for superior performance.	1.2%	12.2%	45.1%	31.7%	7.3%	2.4%
19.	Teachers are counseled	2.4%	22.0%	56.1%	15.9%	2.4%	1.2%

	about less than satisfactory performance.						
20.	All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.	8.5%	46.3%	28.0%	13.4%	2.4%	1.2%
21.	The student-to-teacher ratio is reasonable.	3.7%	36.6%	28.0%	20.7%	8.5%	2.4%
22.	Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	14.6%	62.2%	19.5%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%
23.	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	8.5%	41.5%	37.8%	8.5%	2.4%	1.2%

C. Personnel

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
24.	District salaries are competitive with similar positions in the job market.	0.0%	22.0%	13.4%	32.9%	31.7%	0.0%
25.	The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.	2.4%	35.4%	24.4%	29.3%	8.5%	0.0%
26.	Temnorarv	4.9%	32.9%	42.7%	9.8%	8.5%	1.2%

	workers are rarely used.						
27.	The district successfully projects future staffing needs.	2.4%	26.8%	40.2%	22.0%	8.5%	0.0%
28.	The district has an effective employee recruitment program.	0.0%	19.5%	45.1%	23.2%	12.2%	0.0%
29.	The district operates an effective staff development program.	2.4%	45.1%	26.8%	11.0%	12.2%	2.4%
30.	District employees receive annual personnel evaluations.	7.3%	57.3%	20.7%	9.8%	3.7%	1.2%
31.	The district rewards competence and experience and spells out qualifications such as seniority and skill levels needed for promotion.	2.4%	18.3%	24.4%	37.8%	17.1%	0.0%
32.	Employees who perform below the standard of expectation are counseled appropriately and timely.	0.0%	17.1%	41.5%	25.6%	15.9%	0.0%
33.	The district	2.4%	24.4%	51.2%	11.0%	11.0%	0.0%

	has a fair and timely grievance process.						
34.	The district's health insurance package meets my needs.	3.7%	42.7%	14.6%	22.0%	17.1%	0.0%

D. Community Involvement

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
35.	The district regularly communicates with parents.	3.7%	50.0%	24.4%	11.0%	8.5%	2.4%
36.	The local television and radio stations regularly report school news and menus.	2.4%	22.0%	23.2%	34.1%	15.9%	2.4%
37.	Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.	1.2%	22.0%	31.7%	31.7%	12.2%	1.2%
38.	District facilities are open for community use.	0.0%	43.9%	34.1%	12.2%	7.3%	2.4%

E. Facilities Use and Management

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
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39.	Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff and the board provide input into facility planning.	1.2%	32.9%	34.1%	17.1%	11.0%	3.7%
40.	The architect and construction managers are selected objectively and impersonally.	0.0%	14.6%	64.6%	9.8%	7.3%	3.7%
41.	Schools are clean.	3.7%	56.1%	19.5%	15.9%	2.4%	2.4%
42.	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	1.2%	31.7%	17.1%	40.2%	7.3%	2.4%
43.	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	1.2%	31.7%	11.0%	35.4%	18.3%	2.4%
44.	Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	2.4%	51.2%	24.4%	11.0%	7.3%	3.7%

F. Financial Management

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
45.	Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and	2.4%	29.3%	51.2%	11.0%	2.4%	3.7%

	teachers.						
46.	Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	3.7%	24.4%	48.8%	18.3%	1.2%	3.7%
47.	The district's financial reports are easy to understand and read.	0.0%	26.8%	51.2%	14.6%	4.9%	2.4%
48.	Financial reports are made available to community members when asked.	3.7%	31.7%	56.1%	4.9%	1.2%	2.4%

G. Purchasing and Warehousing

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
49.	Purchasing gets me what I need when I need it.	1.2%	36.6%	29.3%	18.3%	12.2%	2.4%
50.	Purchasing acquires the highest quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.	2.4%	26.8%	40.2%	19.5%	9.8%	1.2%
51.	Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for the requestor.	0.0%	31.7%	43.9%	15.9%	6.1%	2.4%

52.	The district provides teachers and administrators an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment.	2.4%	24.4%	41.5%	25.6%	3.7%	2.4%
53.	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	2.4%	50.0%	34.1%	9.8%	1.2%	2.4%
54.	Textbooks are in good shape.	2.4%	54.9%	30.5%	8.5%	1.2%	2.4%
55.	The school library meets student needs for books and other resources for students.	8.5%	56.1%	26.8%	6.1%	0.0%	2.4%

H. Safety and Security

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
56.	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	3.7%	30.5%	28.0%	25.6%	11.0%	1.2%
57.	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	1.2%	7.3%	19.5%	47.6%	23.2%	1.2%
58.	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	1.2%	19.5%	14.6%	46.3%	17.1%	1.2%
59.	Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	15.9%	59.8%	18.3%	3.7%	0.0%	2.4%

60.	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	17.1%	42.7%	30.5%	4.9%	3.7%	1.2%
61.	A good working arrangement exists between local law enforcement and the district.	9.8%	61.0%	19.5%	7.3%	0.0%	2.4%
62.	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	4.9%	41.5%	23.2%	12.2%	15.9%	2.4%

I. Computers and Technology

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
63.	Students regularly use computers.	23.2%	48.8%	20.7%	3.7%	1.2%	2.4%
64.	Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	18.3%	53.7%	19.5%	6.1%	0.0%	2.4%
65.	Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	12.2%	48.8%	26.8%	8.5%	0.0%	3.7%
66.	Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	18.3%	53.7%	20.7%	2.4%	1.2%	3.7%

67.	The district meets students needs in computer fundamentals.	17.1%	51.2%	24.4%	4.9%	0.0%	2.4%
68.	The district meets students needs in advanced computer skills.	18.3%	39.0%	29.3%	11.0%	0.0%	2.4%
69.	Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	20.7%	51.2%	20.7%	2.4%	1.2%	3.7%

Appendix B

Additional Comments: District Administrative and Support Staff

- I would like to see an incentive for the support staff like the teachers get for service in the district.
- Many pertinent and perhaps more difficult direct or revealing questions were not asked.
- There were no questions considering support staff and I feel that they are not respected by the administration.
- I feel that there is a lot of room for improvement in our schools. Stop focusing on a few particular groups of students and focus on them overall as a group. My one son is a talented athlete and plays all the sports, but I feel too much emphasis is focused on athletic ability and not enough on academics. The pay overall stinks for all school employees with the exception of the "main people." Also, regarding dress code, we have one but it is not enforced. There are girls in school that wear shirts so low cut they are practically falling out of them! They discipline male students who wear ball caps, but allow students to walk around with an upside down cross and occult symbols on clothing. Go figure that one! I'm a graduate. I'm proud to be a parent of children who attend ACISD. But the morals of our students are on the decline and things will only get worse if rules that are written are not enforced! When I was in school you weren't allowed to hold hands, now they make out on the dance floor, with teachers just looking on! This info came from a teacher. We wonder why we have such a high teenage pregnancy rate in our schools.
- Too often I feel our district's focus is on money. Let up with cutting the budget. We have lost some valuable programs through this process as well as much needed classroom aides. Our teachers seem to be under constant stress. Thank God their love for the children and education surpasses everything.
- Aransas County ISD is a great school district. Its main goal is the success of all students. In years past, it seemed that this district was just standing still, but now we seem to really be on the move, progressing in the right direction. There is always room for improvement and the district knows that. Therefore, it is always striving toward being the best.
- If we are interested in saving money, why is this survey being done? It costs unnecessary money to print it and use postage to return it. The money could be used for better purposes. Every penny counts or so I am told.
- I am new in the school district and its policies and procedures. I was unable to answer most of the questions.

- We have a recognized district with two exemplary schools and two recognized. Our problem is not student performance but facility needs.
- Support staff salaries do not equal job experience and educational background. Some support staff members are not allowed to attend staff development workshops. I feel that salaries for the support staff are not equal with the school district and should be considered by board members. Perhaps in the next budget for the upcoming year, allow support staff to have better pay increases.
- ACISD is one of the lowest paying districts in our area. There are not enough aides on some of the campuses. Office personnel are having to cover classrooms. I feel that if I wanted to teach, I would have become a teacher. Yes, I could go elsewhere, but I already have several years with this district. The teachers take advantage of the office personnel and complain about not having enough time to teach - go figure.
- There should be more assistance for students in locating financial aid for college and a little more pay for paraprofessionals that have college hours.
- Transportation personnel do not get paid fair wages compared with other districts that get the same benefits such as medical and life insurance.
- Transportation employee's paychecks suffer because of mismanagement of funds by the past superintendent over \$1 million in the red for one year. The transportation supervisor is not qualified for the job. He gives no support to his employees. All driver problems are whitewashed so that he will not make waves for himself or have to make decisions. He is unable or unwilling to make decisions making it is a very unhappy environment.
- These students need more instruction in reading and writing.
- In reference to the no opinion answers: These are questions that cannot be answered by me since I have not been in the district very long.
- I feel ACISD is a very fine school district. My children receive a good education. We have caring teachers in every grade level. With our new school board members and our superintendent, I look forward to improvement in the morale of the teachers and staff.
- As we have a new superintendent, many of my opinions were for last year.
- I feel we are lacking in training both parents and students on the subject of student's conduct as passengers on our school buses. It is obvious that a large percentage of these student passengers are unaware that their unruliness creates a distraction for the driver and can result in accidents. I would suggest that the Aransas County ISD student safety manual and rider contract (an excellent

document) become the responsibility of the parent(s) or guardian to obtain from the school at time the student is registered. They should be required to read the manual and have the opportunity to ask questions. They should turn in the completed contract to a school official and have it forwarded to the transportation department with a request for transport.

- I was not aware for sure what school this was for so it is a generalization of all schools. I am not sure how the high school is run since I do not have children there.
- I believe the overall performance of ACISD is good for our students. This year I have seen great effort to improve.
- Politics are much involved in district decisions. Evidence is seen in staffing and expenditures.
- Teachers need a raise. Counselors should be on a different pay scale than teachers. Most districts pay a stipend plus teachers pay.
- Overall this is a very good school district. Students are usually happy about their teachers, classes, counselors, administrators and support staff. Most teachers are well trained and care about their students. Administrators listen to students, parents, teachers and support staff. They do their best to make decisions in the best interest of the students with a tight budget. Everyone gets frustrated as our budgets get cut more and more. Currently, no one at the high school has a department budget. We cannot buy anything unless it is on the approved list and those are not always the best practices.
- Our bus service changed this year and I believe that the children have to walk too far to a bus stop. My child's bus stop is so far from the house I cannot ever see her. I do not feel this is safe. Time should not be an issue in this matter as teachers and office workers have mentioned that the children arrive at school in the busses before staff has arrived to take care of them. I think the number of children using the bus system this year has fallen off because parents do not want their children to be waiting in an unsafe area for the bus to arrive.
- ACISD has an elementary school that received exemplary status last spring and yet very little was made of it.
- I have no information or experience with any area not marked. This school district is more concerned with appearances and keeping the parents sedated than ensuring that proper discipline and education is maintained. To get what you want, all you have to do is say, "I'll sue!"
- I believe this district is doing just fine. I do think that the Rockport/Fulton Middle School needs more secretarial help in the office area. They did have two women at the beginning of the year, but one quit. The lady that is in there now does a wonderful job,

but I believe she has a big load on her hands that can be very stressful for a person. I know because I used to be a secretary.

- I am a parent of 3 students also. I still feel that you offer special programs for needy families and programs for GT, but your teachers have become so inundated with students with discipline problems that they cannot spend quality time with your average students. I think we are so intent on making everyone equal that you only accomplish the dumping down of all. Take care of disciplinary problems in a more timely manner, put the burden back on parents, give the teachers what they need to teach to students who want to be in school and learn. Make your GT program a rounded program. Most kids that are in GT already know a lot of what the teachers are teaching in the regular class. They do not need a lot of paperwork. How easy it is to make the students hate math or any other subject by just doing Saxon math several chapters a day and telling the regular teacher she is NOT allowed to let the gifted student move ahead in the book. A good teacher is very capable of working with her students at different levels. TELL the junior high teachers that get students who are already in the 6th grade math books to get up and get busy and push these kids if they are willing and capable to get ahead. I do not hear of very many students at all having the time or knowledge to go ahead in high school with calculus or trig because they are bogged down in lower grades trying to take algebra. Let's get busy and provide courses and teachers willing to work with all kids at different levels. I'm very worried when my student's coach/teacher tells me he does not know how to teach a class of students on all levels of learning. What a shame for the students and teachers alike that he tells parents he is bored because he doesn't know how to teach him. Summer schools should be available for all students. Those that are trying to take advanced classes should have the opportunity to get the required half-year courses - government, health, etc. - out of the way during the summer. Fulton has an outstanding program that has to be constantly fought for. What the other schools have is not a rounded GT program, but a let's push faster through math and then hold them back in junior high. Many kids do not ever realize that they are in a GT class. It is just math and this is terrible.
- I would like to see more, or at least some, workshops offered to para-professionals - especially in the special education department - to better equip us to meet the needs of the student as well as the district. Also, better equipment and resources to use on our campus for special education.
- DAEP - alternative classes are not educating our students. They are being set up to fail once they are released from this program. They teach themselves out of modules. There's no teacher present in the

classroom. These students deserve to be held accountable for any violations they have chosen to do. As educators we have taken an oath to give all students a fair education. A book cannot teach a child. We do. We are not being fair to students in alternative classes. Some of these students can't read. How are they able to teach themselves? How are we helping them by not offering a licensed educator to teach them? We need to change the alternative program.

- Many teachers and members of the community feel that the only thing really taught is what is needed for the TAAS tests. This is limiting. Also - way too much Texas history.
- The district is well ahead of most districts in the state.

Appendix C

PRINCIPAL AND ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL Survey RESULTS

Aransas County Independent School District Management and Performance Review

n=11

Note: Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Demographic Data

1.	Gender (Optional)	No Response	Male	Female			
		0%	27.3%	72.7%			
2.	Ethnicity (Optional)	No Response	Anglo	African American	Hispanic	Asian	Other
		0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
3.	How long have you been employed by Aransas County ISD?	No Response	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	20+ years
		0%	36.4%	18.2%	27.3%	18.2%	0%
4.	What grades are taught in your school?	PK-Grade 1	Grades 2-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12		
		27.3%	27.3%	18.2%	27.3%		

A. District Organization and Management

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
1.	The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.	27.3%	45.5%	18.2%	9.1%	0.0%	0.0%
2.	School board members listen to the opinions	9.1%	54.5%	9.1%	27.3%	0.0%	0.0%

	and desires of others.						
3.	School board members understand their role as policymakers and stay out of the day-to-day management of the district.	0.0%	27.3%	27.3%	45.5%	0.0%	0.0%
4.	The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	45.5%	54.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
5.	The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager	36.4%	36.4%	27.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
6.	Central administration is efficient.	9.1%	54.5%	27.3%	9.1%	0.0%	0.0%
7.	Central administration supports the educational process.	18.2%	45.5%	18.2%	18.2%	0.0%	0.0%
8.	The morale of central administration staff is good.	27.3%	45.5%	27.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

B. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
9.	Education is	36.4%	36.4%	9.1%	18.2%	0.0%	0.0%

	the main priority in our school district.						
10.	Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.	27.3%	72.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
11.	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	18.2%	54.5%	9.1%	9.1%	9.1%	0.0%
12.	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	9.1%	36.4%	27.3%	27.3%	0.0%	0.0%
13.	The district provides curriculum guides for all grades and subjects.	9.1%	72.7%	0.0%	9.1%	9.1%	0.0%
14.	The curriculum guides are appropriately aligned and coordinated.	0.0%	72.7%	9.1%	18.2%	0.0%	0.0%
15.	The district's curriculum guides clearly outline what to teach and how to teach it.	0.0%	54.5%	27.3%	9.1%	9.1%	0.0%
16.	The district has effective educational programs for						

	the following:						
	a) Reading	0.0%	81.8%	9.1%	9.1%	0.0%	0.0%
	b) Writing	9.1%	72.7%	9.1%	9.1%	0.0%	0.0%
	c) Mathematics	27.3%	72.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	d) Science	18.2%	72.7%	0.0%	0.0%	9.1%	0.0%
	e) English or Language Arts	18.2%	81.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	f) Computer Instruction	54.5%	45.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	g) Social Studies (history or geography)	9.1%	72.7%	0.0%	0.0%	9.1%	9.1%
	h) Fine Arts	36.4%	54.5%	0.0%	9.1%	0.0%	0.0%
	i) Physical Education	18.2%	63.6%	0.0%	18.2%	0.0%	0.0%
	j) Business Education	18.2%	54.5%	27.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	18.2%	18.2%	45.5%	18.2%	0.0%	0.0%
	l) Foreign Language	9.1%	63.6%	18.2%	9.1%	0.0%	0.0%
17.	The district has effective special programs for the following:						
	a) Library Service	18.2%	54.5%	9.1%	18.2%	0.0%	0.0%
	b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	0.0%	90.9%	0.0%	0.0%	9.1%	0.0%
	c) Special	9.1%	90.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

	Education						
	d) Head Start and Even Start programs	9.1%	9.1%	81.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	e) Dyslexia program	9.1%	54.5%	27.3%	9.1%	0.0%	0.0%
	f) Student mentoring program	9.1%	36.4%	36.4%	18.2%	0.0%	0.0%
	g) Advanced placement program	18.2%	45.5%	27.3%	0.0%	9.1%	0.0%
	h) Literacy program	0.0%	72.7%	27.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	i) Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	18.2%	27.3%	36.4%	9.1%	9.1%	0.0%
	j) Summer school programs	0.0%	90.9%	9.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	k) Alternative education programs	0.0%	81.8%	18.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	l) "English as a second language" program	18.2%	72.7%	0.0%	9.1%	0.0%	0.0%
	m) Career counseling program	9.1%	0.0%	63.6%	18.2%	9.1%	0.0%
	n) College counseling program	18.2%	27.3%	36.4%	9.1%	9.1%	0.0%
	o) Counseling the parents of students	0.0%	45.5%	18.2%	27.3%	9.1%	0.0%
	p) Drop out prevention	9.1%	36.4%	27.3%	18.2%	9.1%	0.0%

	program						
18.	Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	0.0%	18.2%	36.4%	18.2%	27.3%	0.0%
19.	Teacher turnover is low.	9.1%	45.5%	9.1%	18.2%	18.2%	0.0%
20.	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	27.3%	54.5%	9.1%	9.1%	0.0%	0.0%
21.	Teachers are rewarded for superior performance.	0.0%	27.3%	9.1%	45.5%	18.2%	0.0%
22.	Teachers are counseled about less than satisfactory performance.	0.0%	63.6%	9.1%	18.2%	9.1%	0.0%
23.	All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.	18.2%	63.6%	0.0%	9.1%	9.1%	0.0%
24.	Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	63.6%	36.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
25.	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	27.3%	63.6%	0.0%	0.0%	9.1%	0.0%

C. Personnel

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
26.	District salaries are competitive with similar positions in the job market.	0.0%	36.4%	27.3%	27.3%	9.1%	0.0%
27.	The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.	0.0%	81.8%	9.1%	9.1%	0.0%	0.0%
28.	Temporary workers are rarely used.	0.0%	54.5%	18.2%	27.3%	0.0%	0.0%
29.	The district successfully projects future staffing needs.	0.0%	36.4%	9.1%	36.4%	18.2%	0.0%
30.	The district has an effective employee recruitment program.	0.0%	27.3%	36.4%	27.3%	9.1%	0.0%
31.	The district operates an effective staff development program.	9.1%	63.6%	9.1%	9.1%	9.1%	0.0%
32.	District employees receive annual personnel evaluations.	18.2%	81.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
33.	The district rewards competence and experience	9.1%	9.1%	18.2%	63.6%	0.0%	0.0%

	and spells out qualifications such as seniority and skill levels needed for promotion.						
34.	Employees who perform below the standard of expectation are counseled appropriately and timely.	9.1%	45.5%	9.1%	18.2%	18.2%	0.0%
35.	The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	9.1%	45.5%	36.4%	9.1%	0.0%	0.0%
36.	The district's health insurance package meets my needs.	0.0%	27.3%	27.3%	45.5%	0.0%	0.0%

D. Community Involvement

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
37.	The district regularly communicates with parents.	9.1%	63.6%	18.2%	9.1%	0.0%	0.0%
38.	Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.	0.0%	27.3%	27.3%	45.5%	0.0%	0.0%
39.	District facilities are	0.0%	81.8%	18.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

	open for community use.						
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E. Facilities Use and Management

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
40.	Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff and the board provide input into facility planning.	9.1%	45.5%	27.3%	9.1%	9.1%	0.0%
41.	Schools are clean.	9.1%	27.3%	9.1%	45.5%	9.1%	0.0%
42.	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	9.1%	9.1%	0.0%	36.4%	45.5%	0.0%
43.	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	0.0%	18.2%	0.0%	45.5%	36.4%	0.0%
44.	Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	0.0%	54.5%	9.1%	27.3%	9.1%	0.0%

F. Financial Management

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
45.	Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of	18.2%	63.6%	18.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

	principals and teachers.						
46.	Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	0.0%	36.4%	36.4%	27.3%	0.0%	0.0%
47.	Financial resources are allocated fairly and equitably at my school.	0.0%	63.6%	9.1%	18.2%	9.1%	0.0%

G. Purchasing and Warehousing

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
48.	Purchasing gets me what I need when I need it.	0.0%	45.5%	27.3%	18.2%	9.1%	0.0%
49.	Purchasing acquires high quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.	0.0%	27.3%	45.5%	27.3%	0.0%	0.0%
50.	Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for the requestor.	9.1%	45.5%	27.3%	9.1%	9.1%	0.0%
51.	The district provides teachers and administrators an easy-to-use standard list of	9.1%	45.5%	9.1%	27.3%	9.1%	0.0%

	supplies and equipment.						
52.	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	18.2%	63.6%	0.0%	18.2%	0.0%	0.0%
53.	Textbooks are in good shape.	9.1%	81.8%	9.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
54.	The school library meets student needs for books and other resources.	36.4%	45.5%	0.0%	18.2%	0.0%	0.0%

H. Food Services

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
55.	The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	36.4%	54.5%	9.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
56.	Food is served warm.	36.4%	54.5%	0.0%	9.1%	0.0%	0.0%
57.	Students have enough time to eat.	18.2%	54.5%	0.0%	9.1%	9.1%	9.1%
58.	Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.	45.5%	54.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
59.	Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	27.3%	45.5%	0.0%	27.3%	0.0%	0.0%
60.	Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	27.3%	72.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

61.	Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	45.5%	54.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
62.	Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	18.2%	72.7%	0.0%	9.1%	0.0%	0.0%

I. Transportation

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
63.	The drop-off zone at the school is safe.	18.2%	72.7%	0.0%	9.1%	0.0%	0.0%
64.	The district has a simple method to request buses for special events.	18.2%	54.5%	18.2%	0.0%	9.1%	0.0%
65.	Buses arrive and leave on time.	27.3%	63.6%	0.0%	9.1%	0.0%	0.0%
66.	Adding or modifying a route for a student is easy to accomplish.	0.0%	54.5%	36.4%	0.0%	9.1%	0.0%

J. Safety and Security

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
67.	Students feel safe and secure at school.	45.5%	45.5%	0.0%	9.1%	0.0%	0.0%
68.	School disturbances are infrequent.	36.4%	54.5%	0.0%	9.1%	0.0%	0.0%

69.	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	36.4%	45.5%	9.1%	9.1%	0.0%	0.0%
70.	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	0.0%	9.1%	36.4%	36.4%	18.2%	0.0%
71.	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	0.0%	36.4%	27.3%	27.3%	9.1%	0.0%
72.	Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	45.5%	36.4%	9.1%	9.1%	0.0%	0.0%
73.	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	45.5%	45.5%	0.0%	9.1%	0.0%	0.0%
74.	A good working arrangement exists between local law enforcement and the district.	18.2%	45.5%	18.2%	18.2%	0.0%	0.0%
75.	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	27.3%	54.5%	0.0%	18.2%	0.0%	0.0%
76.	Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	9.1%	45.5%	18.2%	18.2%	9.1%	0.0%

K. Computers and Technology

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
77.	Students regularly use computers.	81.8%	18.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
78.	Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	63.6%	36.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
79.	Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	72.7%	18.2%	0.0%	9.1%	0.0%	0.0%
80.	The district meets student needs in computer fundamentals.	81.8%	18.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
81.	The district meets student needs in advanced computer skills.	54.5%	27.3%	9.1%	9.1%	0.0%	0.0%
82.	Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	36.4%	63.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
83.	Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	63.6%	36.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Appendix C

Additional Comments:

- I think that drugs are a very big problem in our town which makes it very hard for our children to not be affected. In addition, I do not see much ambition in most of our students. They seem very content with just a high school education and nothing else. I do not know if it a school, or town mentality, I know the teachers work really hard to stop it, but it continues.
- Our district is a recognized district and our goal is to be exemplary. This goal is stressed to administration and staff sometimes to the point of being excessive. TAAS should not be our only goal. It should be a natural result of a well aligned, well taught curriculum and an intrinsically motivated desire to succeed.
- By making all schools equal does not always meet the needs of all students in the district. Some of our campuses have educational needs for our more at-risk students that other campuses whose students are not as at-risk. Fair is not always equal. Fair is what meets the needs of students.
- We have a very old facility with many upgrade needs especially science labs, electrical needs, plumbing needs, roofing and water faucets. However, despite the physical needs the quality of education provided surpasses any institution with similar architecture barriers (age) and demographics. A concern of mine would be that we do not address needs of teen parents and court ordered students to a GED program without necessary court support.
- I think academics are great at ACISD. However, I see some problems with maintenance. I have not had an intercom that works in my classroom for approximately a month. Maintenance was notified and came by and looked at it. They never returned. Our teachers bathroom was ripped up the week before school started for remodeling. Here it is six weeks later and it is still not finished. We have student bathrooms that were closed for remodeling since last school year. They are still not completed. Our school environment is very important and we only have one set of bathrooms for 12 first grade classes.
- I feel ACISD is doing an effective job of teaching the average student. At various campuses across the district programs and services are in place to help the at-risk students (Wilson Rdg., Title I programs). The GT programs are also varied across the district and could use some continuity but not diminish a strong program (ex: Fulton's GT program) for the sake of being the same. The balanced literacy strategies incorporated at Fulton Elementary

(second grade) have proven to be effective. The use of guided reading groups have provided opportunities for students to receive instruction at their level, ensuring students are successful and challenged. I would like to see these expanded throughout the district. Sometimes I feel the C.O. staff asks us to complete tasks that are not necessary. The district would benefit from additional certified librarians. The district has a Wilson Rdg. program in place for Dyslexic students; however, it is not at every campus and needs to be consistent throughout the district. The counselors do an outstanding job of working with about 2% of the parents. They need more time to be able to be counselors. We do not have a full time counselor at the PK-1st elementary campuses which houses 535 students. I would like the district to make an effective staff development plan (5 yr. timeline). Often we will have staff development in one area and there is not follow-up unless we make it happen on the campus level. Purchasing - if we have found an item we want to purchase from a non-approved vendor, the purchasing dept. does not help to find what we are looking for from another vendor.

Appendix D

TEACHER SURVEY RESULTS

Aransas County Independent School District Management and Performance Review

n=99

Note: Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Demographic Data

1.	Gender (Optional)	No Response	Male	Female				
		6.1%	16.2%	77.8%				
2.	Ethnicity (Optional)	No Response	Anglo	African American	Hispanic	Asian	Other	
		6.1%	84.8%	5.1%	2.0%	0%	2.0%	
3.	How long have you been employed by Aransas County ISD?	No Response	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	20+ years	
		1.0%	39.4%	24.2%	15.2%	8.1%	12.1%	
4.	What grade(s) do you teach this year (circle all that apply)?	PK	K	1	2	3	4	5
		0.4%	2.4%	1.2%	10.9%	10.5%	11.7%	11.7%
		6	7	8	9	10	11	12
		6.5%	6.5%	8.5%	7.3%	6.9%	7.3%	8.1%

A. District Organization and Management

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
1.	The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.	10.1%	39.4%	37.4%	9.1%	1.0%	3.0%
2.	School board	9.1%	44.4%	24.2%	17.2%	2.0%	3.0%

	members listen to the opinions and desires of others.						
3.	School board members work well with the superintendent.	12.1%	53.5%	30.3%	1.0%	0.0%	3.0%
4.	The school board has a good image in the community.	8.1%	42.4%	25.3%	19.2%	1.0%	4.0%
5.	The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	33.3%	42.4%	13.1%	7.1%	0.0%	4.0%
6.	The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	30.3%	38.4%	21.2%	5.1%	1.0%	4.0%
7.	Central administration is efficient.	9.1%	40.4%	12.1%	28.3%	7.1%	3.0%
8.	Central administration supports the educational process.	14.1%	52.5%	14.1%	13.1%	3.0%	3.0%
9.	The morale of central administration staff is good.	13.1%	38.4%	39.4%	4.0%	2.0%	3.0%

B. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
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10.	Education is the main priority in our school district.	26.3%	51.5%	2.0%	14.1%	3.0%	3.0%
11.	Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.	17.2%	61.6%	2.0%	12.1%	3.0%	4.0%
12.	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	13.1%	54.5%	17.2%	9.1%	1.0%	5.1%
13.	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	7.1%	33.3%	29.3%	19.2%	7.1%	4.0%
14.	The district provides curriculum guides for all grades and subjects.	13.1%	47.5%	14.1%	15.2%	6.1%	4.0%
15.	The curriculum guides are appropriately aligned and coordinated.	9.1%	41.4%	16.2%	22.2%	4.0%	7.1%
16.	The district's curriculum guides clearly outline what to teach and how to teach it.	12.1%	37.4%	18.2%	18.2%	8.1%	6.1%
17.	The district has effective educational						

	programs for the following:						
	a) Reading	18.2%	64.6%	3.0%	12.1%	0.0%	2.0%
	b) Writing	19.2%	61.6%	5.1%	11.1%	1.0%	2.0%
	c) Mathematics	22.2%	61.6%	5.1%	7.1%	2.0%	2.0%
	d) Science	18.2%	60.6%	9.1%	10.1%	0.0%	2.0%
	e) English or Language Arts	23.2%	63.6%	4.0%	5.1%	2.0%	2.0%
	f) Computer Instruction	30.3%	58.6%	5.1%	4.0%	0.0%	2.0%
	g) Social Studies (history or geography)	13.1%	68.7%	7.1%	7.1%	2.0%	2.0%
	h) Fine Arts	23.2%	63.6%	5.1%	4.0%	1.0%	3.0%
	i) Physical Education	22.2%	62.6%	6.1%	4.0%	2.0%	3.0%
	j) Business Education	8.1%	35.4%	46.5%	6.1%	1.0%	3.0%
	k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	7.1%	29.3%	38.4%	18.2%	4.0%	3.0%
	l) Foreign Language	7.1%	56.6%	27.3%	4.0%	0.0%	5.1%
18.	The district has effective special programs for the following:						
	a) Library Service	19.2%	55.6%	13.1%	10.1%	0.0%	2.0%
	b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	15.2%	63.6%	7.1%	9.1%	2.0%	3.0%

c) Special Education	18.2%	61.6%	4.0%	12.1%	2.0%	2.0%
d) Head Start and Even Start programs	5.1%	25.3%	59.6%	2.0%	2.0%	6.1%
e) Dyslexia program	9.1%	34.3%	42.4%	9.1%	2.0%	3.0%
f) Student mentoring program	4.0%	40.4%	34.3%	16.2%	3.0%	2.0%
g) Advanced placement program	11.1%	56.6%	23.2%	4.0%	1.0%	4.0%
h) Literacy program	6.1%	49.5%	31.3%	10.1%	1.0%	2.0%
i) Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	10.1%	42.4%	24.2%	15.2%	4.0%	4.0%
j) Summer school programs	9.1%	52.5%	22.2%	13.1%	0.0%	3.0%
k) Alternative education programs	5.1%	52.5%	23.2%	11.1%	3.0%	5.1%
l) "English as a second language" program	12.1%	46.5%	22.2%	12.1%	2.0%	5.1%
m) Career counseling program	2.0%	29.3%	51.5%	11.1%	2.0%	4.0%
n) College counseling program	6.1%	34.3%	44.4%	9.1%	2.0%	4.0%
o) Counseling the parents of students	6.1%	30.3%	35.4%	22.2%	1.0%	5.1%
n) Dron out	2.0%	33.3%	42.4%	17.2%	1.0%	4.0%

	prevention program						
19.	Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	4.0%	28.3%	27.3%	29.3%	8.1%	3.0%
20.	Teacher turnover is low.	9.1%	30.3%	23.2%	28.3%	5.1%	4.0%
21.	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	12.1%	51.5%	14.1%	16.2%	1.0%	5.1%
22.	Teacher openings are filled quickly.	8.1%	44.4%	19.2%	19.2%	6.1%	3.0%
23.	Teachers are rewarded for superior performance.	4.0%	28.3%	27.3%	29.3%	8.1%	3.0%
24.	Teachers are counseled about less than satisfactory performance.	9.1%	30.3%	23.2%	28.3%	5.1%	4.0%
25.	Teachers are knowledgeable in the subject areas they teach.	12.1%	51.5%	14.1%	16.2%	1.0%	5.1%
26.	All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.	8.1%	44.4%	19.2%	19.2%	6.1%	3.0%

27.	The student-to-teacher ratio is reasonable.	3.0%	7.1%	21.2%	43.4%	22.2%	3.0%
28.	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	2.0%	43.4%	29.3%	15.2%	6.1%	4.0%

C. Personnel

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
29.	District salaries are competitive with similar positions in the job market.	1.0%	25.3%	5.1%	45.5%	21.2%	2.0%
30.	The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.	4.0%	63.6%	11.1%	15.2%	3.0%	3.0%
31.	Temporary workers are rarely used.	2.0%	40.4%	27.3%	23.2%	4.0%	3.0%
32.	The district successfully projects future staffing needs.	2.0%	24.2%	28.3%	34.3%	9.1%	2.0%
33.	The district has an effective employee recruitment program.	3.0%	16.2%	43.4%	26.3%	8.1%	3.0%
34.	The district operates an effective staff development program.	9.1%	52.5%	16.2%	14.1%	5.1%	3.0%

35.	District employees receive annual personnel evaluations.	23.2%	69.7%	2.0%	4.0%	0.0%	1.0%
36.	The district rewards competence and experience and spells out qualifications such as seniority and skill levels needed for promotion.	3.0%	18.2%	21.2%	38.4%	16.2%	3.0%
37.	Employees who perform below the standard of expectation are counseled appropriately and timely.	2.0%	31.3%	41.4%	20.2%	3.0%	2.0%
38.	The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	2.0%	34.3%	53.5%	8.1%	1.0%	1.0%
39.	The district's health insurance package meets my needs.	3.0%	33.3%	8.1%	35.4%	19.2%	1.0%

D. Community Involvement

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
40.	The district regularly communicates	14.1%	61.6%	9.1%	11.1%	2.0%	2.0%

	with parents.						
41.	The local television and radio stations regularly report school news and menus.	2.0%	23.2%	19.2%	38.4%	12.1%	5.1%
42.	Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.	3.0%	36.4%	10.1%	37.4%	11.1%	2.0%
43.	District facilities are open for community use.	11.1%	64.6%	17.2%	5.1%	0.0%	2.0%

E. Facilities Use and Management

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
44.	The district plans facilities far enough in the future to support enrollment growth.	4.0%	26.3%	16.2%	37.4%	14.1%	2.0%
45.	Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff and the board provide input into facility planning.	3.0%	44.4%	24.2%	15.2%	10.1%	3.0%
46.	The architect and construction	1.0%	19.2%	46.5%	18.2%	12.1%	3.0%

	managers are selected objectively and impersonally.						
47.	The quality of new construction is excellent.	3.0%	24.2%	18.2%	27.3%	24.2%	3.0%
48.	Schools are clean.	8.1%	54.5%	4.0%	25.3%	6.1%	2.0%
49.	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	5.1%	33.3%	5.1%	33.3%	20.2%	3.0%
50.	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	6.1%	19.2%	8.1%	39.4%	24.2%	3.0%
51.	Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	7.1%	34.3%	17.2%	27.3%	12.1%	2.0%

F. Financial Management

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
52.	Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers.	5.1%	49.5%	23.2%	13.1%	7.1%	2.0%
53.	Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal	6.1%	45.5%	36.4%	8.1%	3.0%	1.0%

	management techniques.						
54.	Financial resources are allocated fairly and equitably at my school.	3.0%	41.4%	23.2%	23.2%	7.1%	2.0%

G. Purchasing and Warehousing

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
55.	Purchasing gets me what I need when I need it.	3.0%	28.3%	24.2%	34.3%	7.1%	3.0%
56.	Purchasing acquires the highest quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.	3.0%	29.3%	34.3%	24.2%	6.1%	3.0%
57.	Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for the requestor.	3.0%	33.3%	22.2%	31.3%	8.1%	2.0%
58.	Vendors are selected competitively.	3.0%	29.3%	50.5%	10.1%	4.0%	3.0%
59.	The district provides teachers and administrators an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment.	3.0%	42.4%	19.2%	26.3%	7.1%	2.0%
60.	Students are	10.1%	65.7%	9.1%	10.1%	3.0%	2.0%

	issued textbooks in a timely manner.						
61.	Textbooks are in good shape.	11.1%	66.7%	6.1%	9.1%	5.1%	2.0%
62.	The school library meets the student needs for books and other resources.	20.2%	59.6%	4.0%	12.1%	2.0%	2.0%

H. Food Services

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
63.	The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	10.1%	56.6%	14.1%	14.1%	3.0%	2.0%
64.	Food is served warm.	14.1%	67.7%	10.1%	4.0%	2.0%	2.0%
65.	Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.	15.2%	73.7%	5.1%	4.0%	0.0%	2.0%
66.	Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	8.1%	45.5%	10.1%	30.3%	5.1%	1.0%
67.	Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	13.1%	67.7%	9.1%	6.1%	3.0%	1.0%
68.	Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	15.2%	66.7%	7.1%	6.1%	4.0%	1.0%
69.	Cafeteria facilities are	23.2%	64.6%	9.1%	1.0%	0.0%	2.0%

	sanitary and neat.						
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I. Safety and Security

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
70.	School disturbances are infrequent.	15.2%	64.6%	4.0%	13.1%	0.0%	3.0%
71.	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	8.1%	45.5%	20.2%	22.2%	2.0%	2.0%
72.	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	2.0%	10.1%	16.2%	51.5%	18.2%	2.0%
73.	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	2.0%	21.2%	12.1%	57.6%	6.1%	1.0%
74.	Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	27.3%	63.6%	5.1%	2.0%	1.0%	1.0%
75.	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	27.3%	55.6%	10.1%	6.1%	0.0%	1.0%
76.	A good working arrangement exists between local law enforcement and the district.	25.3%	64.6%	6.1%	2.0%	1.0%	1.0%
77.	Students	13.1%	57.6%	10.1%	13.1%	4.0%	2.0%

	receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.						
78.	Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	5.1%	46.5%	15.2%	29.3%	2.0%	2.0%

J. Computers and Technology

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
79.	Students regularly use computers.	40.4%	50.5%	3.0%	4.0%	1.0%	1.0%
80.	Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	29.3%	40.4%	6.1%	19.2%	4.0%	1.0%
81.	Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	28.3%	59.6%	4.0%	6.1%	0.0%	2.0%
82.	Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	28.3%	57.6%	5.1%	6.1%	2.0%	1.0%
83.	The district meets student needs in classes in computer fundamentals.	32.3%	55.6%	6.0%	5.1%	0.0%	1.0%
84.	The district meets student needs in classes in	24.2%	41.4%	22.2%	10.1%	1.0%	1.0%

	advanced computer skills.						
85.	Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	39.4%	54.5%	2.0%	3.0%	0.0%	1.0%

Appendix D

Additional Comments: Teachers

- This district is trying very hard to provide quality education for each child.
- I feel this is an outstanding school. If my own children were still young, I would bring them here.
- Budget constraints over the past three years have seriously affected teachers and students negatively. Too much money is going out somewhere. Administrators have received pay increases every year while other salaried employees have not.
- Our leadership foundation is solid and fair. Maintenance at the district is a problem without leadership or unity as employees. The poorest I have ever been around. Maintenance programs could be dropped and no one would miss them.
- Administration has recommended and received salary increases every year. Teachers have remained the same for the last few years. It would be nice to be considered for an increase by the district. Smaller classes for elementary would be nice and better for kids. Some high school classes are too small and some are too large.
- District is top heavy in administration. Not enough maintenance people. High school does not have a working complete library yet. Computer labs were recently (6 weeks) set up. No teacher training on how we use the lab. High school administration is great for the first time.
- I have been in this district 11 years and have received 'exceeds expectations' on my appraisal for the last nine years. There has been no recognition, monetary or otherwise. In response to the questions on central administration, we have a new superintendent. Perhaps he will make a difference.
- Elementary mathematics program that the district has adopted is not adequate. Teachers are having to do double the work to find supplement materials. As a result, the TAAS scores have fallen.
- I feel Aransas County ISD is a very good school district as far as education of students is concerned. The students also have many opportunities for extracurricular activities such as sports, band choir and clubs. However, we are limited in supporting some student needs and enhancing personnel salaries and benefits because of our tax base (mostly residential property). My main area of concern is the seemingly high number of administrative personnel at the district and campus levels. There seems to be inordinate numbers for a district this size.

- The state should give this district enough money to build three new elementary schools and major renovations to the high school. It is a need, not a want.
- The middle school needs more access to T.V. learning in the classroom. So many programs could be used to enhance learning.
- We need more programs for at-risk students. We need adaptive PE for our special needs students. We need quality substitutes when we are at in-services. We need more special education in-services to help us work with special needs children.
- My comments on the performance: I have worked in various schools in other places and this county has one of the greatest schools. The teachers are kind, and respect religion and other concepts that are very important to my family. Continually there is vigilance and supervision of a high standard within and outside of the school. This highly motivates many of the children. Even more so, the principal attends to everyone with kindness and respect. Likewise, the secretaries and teachers are quick to attend to the needs of children.
- The special education department needs a standard policy across the district for creating IEPs and following through with instructors to meet IEPs. Materials for special education are sorely lacking and equipment is antiquated. Teachers have no basic rights in this district. Many have received no raises, other than state mandated while administrator salaries are increased every year. Teachers are not treated as professionals. When salaried employees are required to work a specific number of hours a week rather than working to complete the job is insulting. Some weeks I work 60 hours to do my job while others only require 30. I am expected to work 40 hours each week. Favoritism is apparent when coaches receive stipends for attending games, A-team members receive a stipend for attending meetings but DEIC members receive no stipend for attending meetings.
- Despite monetary and technological deficits in this district, many teachers are still able to get the essential knowledge and skills through to our students. Imagine that. We make due.
- ACISD has many teachers at or above the 20-year level. At that point we reach a plateau where we receive no increment in salary unless granted one by the state. This is my third year at this level with no increase in the near future unless we see a slight increase due to changes when we switch to the state insurance plan.
- Training is important for teachers. However, training that involves homework (2-3 hours per week or more) takes the teachers attention away from what the teacher should be doing - teaching students! Paraprofessionals should be fairly compensated for substituting (a substitute teacher's pay should be added to a regular

paraprofessionals salary). Teachers should not be signed up for more than one required training course per year. It is too much.

- I believe students are allowed to pass while putting forth very little effort. Most do no homework or at home study. As a teacher, I feel pressure to lower my standards. At the same time, I feel athletes are held to high expectations and are expected to do whatever it takes to win. I would like to see academics prioritized over athletics.
- Most educational needs of students of ACISD are met. I feel that compensatory reading and math should be back (put into effect again) in our middle school campuses. Too much money is being wasted in our district. I think the Xerox machines are abused and students should be using books and writing more. I feel too much pressure to have everything documented and taught at the same time. Let teachers teach and not document. Too much emphasis is on TAAS. It is not and will never be a learning process if we are dictated to. You will see less teachers due to such strict mandatory controls in paperwork. The old fashioned way we were raised was a better system than today (1950s-60s). Technology is not necessary for students to do their work. They need the basic reading writing and arithmetic. I have been teaching 15 years and each year is less instructional due to more demands on the classroom teacher. TEA and other controllers want everyone to be the same and not allow us the professional to make major decisions. I will get off my soapbox and stop. Maybe one day we will go back to the basics, too may electives are unnecessary, these should be for upper grades only.
- There is too much valuable instruction lost on TAAS focus. The state wastes money buying textbooks when the money should be spent elsewhere. For example, when state mandated reading adoption novels were needed in our school, the money was wasted on a reading series that sits on the shelf.
- Schools here do amazingly well considering the lack of economic support from the school board. The school board functions primarily as a consumer watchdog and does not seek to provide money for programs that are in the best interest of our students. However, the situation here in Rockport is unique with property values being high but with the district having a high percentage of students from low-income households.
- I wish instead of worrying about TAAS scores, I could just teach. We say 'kids first' and 'whatever it takes' yet we cut teams and put 27-30 kids in a class to cut costs. That is not teaching - it is babysitting. Kids in special education need to learn. There are no IEPs in the 'real world'.
- We use timelines instead of curriculum guides. The textbooks are used only as a resource. Even though we had input in the design of

our new middle school, the 'bottom line' won out and too many other people made final decisions that did not meet our needs! Our strength is technology. For a district of our size, I feel that we give our students sufficient experience with technology.

- ACISD has many caring teachers who do the best with what they have. Classrooms do not have the materials needed, programs do not receive equitable funding and some departments suffer from being over-staffed while others are understaffed. Perhaps our new superintendent and the commitment of his staff will be able to stabilize the teaching environment and budget pitfalls. We have good teachers. We lack funding.
- I have tried to be honest with my answers to your survey. I enjoy working here at ACISD and the overall morale of both teachers and students is good. We have some great kids here and some outstanding teachers. The pay could be better and our insurance needs could be met at a more reasonable rate.
- I think we are top heavy. Too many central office administrators for this size district. Even with so many administrators, teachers still carry the burden of curriculum development, creating timelines, etc. What are they doing to help us? Isn't that their job?
- I believe that our district is more interested in cutting costs than education. Student teacher ratios are high in regular education classes. Substitutes are not used unless hired by grant money. Teacher aides for special education are pulled and used as substitutes to save money. We are short handed in maintenance. Our school roof has leaked for two years and is causing mold and mildew to build up.
- Our campus achieved an exemplary status last year yet our budget was severely cut. We were allotted \$150.00 per teacher for 2001-2002 supplies - that is all! I asked for an updated world map that did not display the USSR and did not get it.
- I think there should be measures taken to keep students out of the classroom that distract others, take teaching/instructional time away from the teacher, are behavior problems and refuse to work.
2. Students are spending too much time in ISS because of the ZAP program. This is really difficult for the teacher because he/she spends extra time that they do not have preparing work for those students. The work the student does in ISS has to be worksheets that may or may not have to do with the lesson taught in the classroom. Kids in the classroom are not doing worksheets. My ISS students cannot do without the valuable instruction. Instruction takes place each day in the classroom. Students being put in ISS that are not behavior problems is getting further and further behind.
- I have felt very frustrated at the board's decision to cut our budget so drastically in the past two years. We have had to cut our

spending to the point where it has definitely lowered morale and hurt the students. We have been frustrated with leaky roofs, improper restroom facilities, poor cleaning of classrooms, chipping paint and filters not getting changed.

- You know I really appreciate being chosen to fill out this survey. It has made me stop and think about what a really great district we have. I have had to go back and change some of my answers. I have taken the hour from midnight till 1:00am to do this on October 2nd but it has been a really nice time of quiet reflection while my family and students are asleep. Some areas I wish I had some more qualifying information from upper campuses. Maybe I just need to become better acquainted with some of my upper level colleagues. I know we probably have some bugs to work out in our district but my, what a wonderful, group of board members, administrative staff, parents and students we have all pulling together to make Rockport-Fulton a better community to hail from. I shout 'Hooray' for ACISD and thank you for the opportunity to reflect. I have no opinion of how our pay scale ranks with similar job market positions because I feel I am so well taken care of and enjoy my job so much that pay is not a factor here. We would all enjoy more money - who wouldn't? However, I find it very easy to be a company person at ACISD. Children are our business and come first. We also provide the nutrition the students lack in my homes in our district which benefits them academically. In my opinion, we help provide a 'nest' of stability for not only our students but parents also. Many a parent has reaped the benefits of caring, encouraging and sympathetic if not empathetic teacher. I do not live in our district, my own children were raised two districts away from ACISD, but I feel that I am so well taken care of here where all my classroom and home (financial) needs are met, that seeking employment closer to or in the district which I live (which does pay more salary-wise) is not an option for me. More money? Sure! I would love it! Seek elsewhere? Forget it! - I am home.
- Too much emphasis is placed on social and athletic activities versus academic ones. Too much class time is lost during things like 'celibacy lectures', homecoming elections, school pictures, training for mentoring programs, pep rallies, class meetings, announcements, conferences with counselors and so on. The students here see academics not as the focus of their day but as a nuisance in the way of their focus.
- The employees of ACISD make the district a great place for kids even with the budget constraints of the last few years. The low salaries are not attracting qualified teachers. The community is very supportive when the football team is winning.
- I believe the education that students who graduated from ACISD are satisfactory. However, I do believe it is easy for our graduates

to enter the job market and I feel most of our graduates have difficulty managing their first couple of years in college. I feel there is more time and money spent on saying the correct things than in preparing our students for the next step in life. There is too much glitter in ACISD and not enough substance.

- For most children the educational performance in this district is terrific. The help the at risk student receives in the primary grades is marginal.
- Budget issues seem to dictate and dominate. This years budgets were cut. There was no salary increase. Insurance seems to be too high. At this point in my teaching career (20+ years experience) I have reached the top of the salary tree and have little hope of increasing my salary. Therefore, I am faced with the unfortunate choice of staying in teaching because it is what I like and do best or look elsewhere for a better paying job. Not a good choice!
- I am a new teacher (intern). I had no materials of curriculum for the whole first six weeks.
- We have had too many budget cuts lately. If this continues, the children will be the ones who suffer the most. Valuable special programs in reading would most likely be eliminated. I am especially concerned about a program we have that has been extremely effective in helping those having difficulty in reading. I would hate to see such programs eliminated because of a lack of funding.
- We need a better health plan. \$900 for a family is terrible.
- For the school years 1999-2000 and 2000-01 we had a smaller ratio of students per teacher enabling us to meet individual need very well. The smaller ratio was also helpful in high performance skills on the part of our students. It would be so advantageous if we could have smaller class sizes at the lower elementary levels yearly, Are there not grants already in place to accomplish lower class ratio of students per teacher?
- Administration continues to receive annual raises while teachers with twenty plus (20+) years experience are frozen until the rare event we get a state raise.
- I am concerned about the lack of funds. For the last two or three years, we have been told repeatedly that the school district is broke - we have no money. I want to know where the money is going! I have a feeling the money is going to administration. Every year the administration receives substantial raises. We are losing talented teachers to the neighboring districts because of our low salaries.
- Too much money allocated to athletics, too little for academics. Overstaffed at Central Administration office, salaries seem much too high for a school district this size. Middle School is understaffed as to certified teachers. There is a large% for special programs, which slights the average kids not in SE, GT, etc.

- I feel that ACISD has been a very progressive district in the past. This seems to be changing, however, when budget is becoming more and more of a concern. Gifted programs need to be enhanced at all levels, especially high school. Gifted students perform better in a block schedule, which was taken away. Students at a high school have little say in how their school is set up which leads to low moral among students. Girls' athletic facilities are far inferior to boys training facility is not shared.

Appendix E

STUDENT Survey RESULTS

Aransas County Independent School District Management and Performance Review

n=338

Note: Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Demographic Data

1.	Gender (Optional)	No Response	Male	Female			
		1.5%	54.4%	44.4%			
2.	Ethnicity (Optional)	No Response	Anglo	African American	Hispanic	Asian	Other
		4.1%	53.8%	3.3%	23.4%	8.9%	6.5%
3.	What is your classification?	No Response	Junior	Senior			
		0.9%	57.4%	41.7%			

A. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
1.	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	9.8%	60.9%	14.5%	11.8%	2.7%	0.3%
2.	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	7.4%	53.3%	25.7%	10.4%	2.7%	0.6%
3.	The district has effective educational programs for the following:						
	a) Reading	15.4%	61.2%	15.4%	7.7%	0.3%	0.0%
	b) Writing	21.0%	60.9%	12.1%	5.3%	0.6%	0.0%

	c) Mathematics	24.9%	57.4%	9.2%	7.4%	1.2%	0.0%
	d) Science	20.4%	56.2%	12.7%	8.3%	1.2%	1.2%
	e) English or Language Arts	28.4%	56.8%	8.3%	3.6%	2.1%	0.9%
	f) Computer Instruction	28.7%	53.8%	11.8%	4.4%	0.6%	0.6%
	g) Social Studies (history or geography)	23.1%	61.2%	9.8%	4.4%	1.5%	0.0%
	h) Fine Arts	26.3%	54.4%	13.9%	3.3%	1.5%	0.6%
	i) Physical Education	22.2%	49.4%	20.1%	6.5%	1.5%	0.3%
	j) Business Education	14.8%	45.3%	28.4%	8.3%	2.7%	0.6%
	k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	14.2%	37.6%	35.2%	9.5%	2.4%	1.2%
	l) Foreign Language	18.0%	54.7%	12.4%	8.9%	3.8%	2.1%
4.	The district has effective special programs for the following:						
	a) Library Service	13.6%	51.2%	27.8%	4.7%	2.1%	0.6%
	b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	19.2%	50.0%	21.3%	7.1%	1.8%	0.6%
	c) Special Education	8.9%	40.5%	44.7%	3.8%	1.5%	0.6%
	d) Student mentoring program	14.8%	51.2%	27.2%	5.0%	0.9%	0.9%
	e) Advanced placement program	28.7%	48.5%	18.6%	3.6%	0.0%	0.6%

	f) Career counseling program	13.0%	42.0%	29.9%	12.1%	2.7%	0.3%
	g) College counseling program	15.4%	42.0%	27.2%	13.0%	2.4%	0.0%
5.	Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	18.6%	44.4%	10.7%	16.3%	9.5%	0.6%
6.	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	15.1%	46.4%	16.3%	17.2%	4.4%	0.6%
7.	The district provides a high quality education.	10.1%	46.2%	24.6%	12.4%	6.2%	0.6%
8.	The district has high quality teachers.	9.2%	36.7%	27.8%	14.8%	10.9%	0.6%

B. Facilities Use and Management

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
9.	Schools are clean.	4.4%	34.0%	16.0%	29.3%	16.0%	0.3%
10.	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	3.3%	34.9%	22.8%	23.4%	15.1%	0.6%
11.	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	3.8%	20.7%	19.8%	33.7%	21.3%	0.6%
12.	Emergency maintenance is handled timely.	7.7%	33.1%	29.6%	18.9%	9.8%	0.9%

C. Purchasing

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
13.	There are enough textbooks in all my classes.	5.3%	38.5%	8.9%	29.9%	16.9%	0.6%
14.	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	8.9%	53.6%	16.3%	12.7%	8.0%	0.6%
15.	Textbooks are in good shape.	2.7%	23.4%	18.6%	33.7%	20.7%	0.9%
16.	The school library meets student needs for books and other resources.	15.1%	54.1%	14.5%	12.1%	3.6%	0.6%

D. Food Services

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
17.	The school breakfast program is available to all children.	17.2%	43.8%	30.5%	6.5%	1.8%	0.3%
18.	The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	2.7%	20.4%	24.6%	22.2%	29.6%	0.6%
19.	Food is served warm.	5.9%	44.7%	17.8%	18.3%	13.0%	0.3%
20.	Students have enough time to eat.	1.2%	15.7%	5.9%	20.7%	55.9%	0.6%

21.	Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	9.2%	53.8%	15.1%	10.1%	11.5%	0.3%
22.	Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	7.4%	21.9%	10.4%	26.9%	33.1%	0.3%
23.	Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	7.1%	46.4%	27.8%	12.1%	5.9%	0.6%
24.	Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	16.3%	45.9%	17.5%	11.5%	8.6%	0.3%

E. Transportation

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
26.	I regularly ride the bus.	3.8%	9.2%	28.4%	17.8%	40.2%	0.6%
27.	The bus driver maintains discipline on the bus.	2.1%	9.5%	71.9%	6.8%	8.6%	1.2%
28.	The length of my bus ride is reasonable.	3.3%	9.5%	73.1%	5.0%	7.4%	1.8%
29.	The drop-off zone at the school is safe.	4.7%	15.4%	71.3%	4.1%	3.0%	1.5%
30.	The bus stop near my house is safe.	3.6%	14.2%	70.4%	4.4%	5.6%	1.8%
31.	The bus stop is within walking distance from	5.9%	14.2%	70.4%	4.4%	3.6%	1.5%

	our home.						
32.	Buses arrive and leave on time.	1.8%	9.5%	73.4%	7.7%	6.2%	1.5%
33.	Buses arrive early enough for students to eat breakfast at school.	3.3%	10.1%	74.6%	5.6%	5.0%	1.5%
34.	Buses seldom break down.	3.0%	10.7%	68.0%	8.6%	8.3%	1.5%
35.	Buses are clean.	1.2%	10.4%	65.1%	9.2%	12.4%	1.8%
36.	Bus drivers allow students to sit down before taking off.	4.4%	12.7%	68.9%	6.2%	5.9%	1.8%

F. Safety and Security

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
37.	I feel safe and secure at school.	8.3%	55.6%	18.0%	11.2%	6.2%	0.6%
38.	School disturbances are infrequent.	5.3%	53.8%	23.7%	11.8%	4.1%	1.2%
39.	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	22.5%	46.2%	18.3%	8.6%	3.8%	0.6%
40.	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	5.0%	21.0%	22.2%	24.9%	26.9%	0.0%
41.	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	4.7%	29.3%	21.0%	28.7%	16.3%	0.0%
42.	Security	8.3%	41.7%	38.5%	6.2%	5.0%	0.3%

	personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.						
43.	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	3.0%	22.8%	32.5%	21.9%	19.5%	0.3%
44.	A good working arrangement exists between the local law enforcement and the district.	7.1%	39.6%	43.2%	6.2%	3.3%	0.6%
45.	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	5.0%	27.5%	26.0%	21.6%	19.5%	0.3%
46.	Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	3.0%	21.3%	38.5%	26.3%	10.1%	0.9%

G. Computers and Technology

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
47.	Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	13.0%	36.1%	8.9%	28.1%	13.6%	0.3%
48.	Teachers know how to use	10.4%	54.1%	16.3%	14.5%	4.7%	0.0%

	computers in the classroom.						
49.	Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	16.6%	60.9%	12.7%	6.2%	3.3%	0.3%
50.	The district offers enough classes in computer fundamentals.	13.6%	55.0%	18.9%	8.3%	3.8%	0.3%
51.	The district meets student needs in advanced computer skills.	16.9%	43.5%	25.7%	9.2%	4.1%	0.6%
52.	Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	20.7%	51.8%	9.8%	12.4%	5.0%	0.3%

Appendix E

Additional Comments:

- I don't think they do a good enough job. Everyone here at the school always has problems with one or more of the staff here. I don't think we need tickets or probation if we don't go to school. They should be happy if we even show up and something that we wear shouldn't be a reason. They need us to think we should be locked down, but I think we should be there for what we do.
- I don't think we should have homework. Teachers say not to bring our outside-of-school life to school, so why should we bring our school life home?
- The school here is more worried about how we look than our work in school. I don't see why wearing an earring is a distraction to my classmates or to the class. A friend told me this saying - Do you know when a teacher says don't bring your problems from home here, so why do we bring our problems from school home? This school doesn't know what it is doing.
- School is not too bad, but if this is of any value - block schedule and open campus would be of great value to the students.
- We need longer breaks between class because some people might have to go to the restroom and then to the locker and by the time they go to their locker the bell rings or they hold it then go to the class and the teacher won't let them go to the restroom. I think we really need a longer break between classes. Classes are fine - just that the classroom schools are too strict. Like with tardiness, if you get 2 or 3, you have to go to detention. They need to ease up for us.
- The school dress code is not enforced. A principal told me that my shirt was too short. I told him that he needed to go to all the other people who are wearing practically nothing
- Some teachers have no idea what they are doing.
- I think they should teach Russian and Chinese. They should open school campus.
- I think the off campus should come back because some of the students like to take a break from school at lunch.
- Too many important tests are crammed together like PSAT and TAAS. This makes it hard to keep up with class work because you have to go study something else. They should be a month apart so we only study one test at a time so that there is no confusion.
- Sometimes I disagree on things like dress code. For example, I know some shorts are short. But my definition of short is when you can see body parts.
- We should all have the same lunch together - no green or gold lunches.

- There is not enough variety of food for lunch. There is not enough time between classes.
- This school system cares more about dress code than education!
- The school needs to make education fun. The athletic program sucks. The coaches do not know what they are doing. I like sports, but the way they handle things is unprofessional. The restrooms need cleaning. We need better library books and wider variety. The school needs to remember the ART classes, better equipment and materials. I thought I was through with him. The school is uptight.
- The Rockport-Fulton High School does not have appropriate discipline management. It seems that this place is very prejudiced. If one white student and one Hispanic student are involved in a fight, they do not discipline the white child. This place is very bad.
- Need new principal.
- I think we the student body should not have to eat school food because it is cold and not very good. And I think we should get a longer lunchtime too. We should have some snack machines.
- I think we should have off campus to go out and eat better food.
- The nurse is really rude if you need to go home or don't feel too good. She will send you back to class and most of the time she isn't even there. The upperclassmen gets messed with, the freshman get away with everything (Dress code wise).
- I really don't like this school personally, but I guess I will have to deal with it. Students have to buy their Spanish books when the school should be paying for them.
- A math teacher repeatedly changes students' grades. He is a racist and there has been proof that he has lowered the grades of students he doesn't like, causing them to fail. There have been 3 accounts of this... and I didn't keep my work so they couldn't give me the grade I deserve. I believe actions should be taken against him, because this permanently affects students lives. It looks bad on college resumes.
- The time between classes is too short. Closed campus is not cool. We should have open campus again. Make time in between classes at least ten minutes.
- I believe that RFHS teaches kids their basics, or what they need to have a 9-5 job, but there have been students that have graduated from here with A's in the top 10% of their class - - but couldn't make it at college! They weren't Ivy League either. I feel that I won't be prepared for college because a lot of teachers don't care and just assign busy work so they can sit at their computers and play games. Or they care, but are very poor at making their points or getting things through. (Coaches are a joke.)
- The food is not good. We eat the same stuff every day and most of the time it is cold. Some teachers give us too much work like we

don't have a life and like we only have one class. It is mostly the English teachers that give us too much work.

- I think more money is spent on sports than anything in school. I also believe our school is cheap. The Spanish class has to pay \$7.50 for textbooks that the school should pay for. Peers are rude and don't really care about our problems.
- I feel we should have off-campus lunches because the food in the cafeteria is not good. I think we should have longer lunch periods and time to get between classes.
- We need a longer lunch period, because some athletes don't even get to eat. We should have open campus because some people get sick from eating at the cafeteria. Then if they don't get back on time, they should get detention. Our teachers are okay even though some of them just get onto us for no reason or give us tests when we don't even know.
- Would like open campus - its a small town. Do you really think one referral for let's say 5 tardies during a 6-week period deserves 2 hours after school (calling it night school)?
- I feel this school is better than my last one. It offers more classes to take and the staff and teachers are nice and willing to stay after and before school to help. But there are not enough textbooks to go around so that the students can take them home.
- I think this school needs to be cleaned better and brand new textbooks. And maybe some nice teachers. And 10 minute breaks between classes.
- I do not feel that during my senior year I should be separated from my friends and have to choose food I don't like during lunch. Seniors should be trusted enough to go off campus, and the lunch period should be longer and the food more abundant. Sometimes I am late for lunch from athletics and most of the good food is already gone.
- We should have more school lunch lines because it is hard to get your food and eat in 30 minutes. Need a longer lunch period and more time between classes. Need newer books. Sell food to students for less. New restrooms because it is really dirty.
- The other week there was a fight and none of the asst. principals were paying attention to what happened. Instead they look at what people wear constantly.
- Cool school, but needs to be cleaner.
- We don't have enough time in our classes to learn anything. I feel we should go back to 4 classes a day. I am not learning anything.
- I think the food in our lunch is pretty nasty and it is too expensive.
- We need longer passing periods. I have too many tardies, and it is not because I play around. We need open campus - cafeteria food gets old. We need a later time to start school.

- I think the school would be better if we didn't have to be here so early and had off campus lunch.
- Students should be allowed open campus for lunch and a longer passing period.
- We need off campus lunch or longer lunch periods, because there have been many times when I've not been able to eat lunch because the lines get too long.
- The educational program at RFHS is good. It is disappointing that we have closed campus and that our cafeteria is horrible. The fact that our campus has doubled in size and our passing periods were cut in half is ridiculous.
- We should have open campus again. I personally like to go home for lunch; it's a lot cheaper. And our passing periods should also be longer. I have no time to go to my locker or even the bathroom between classes. And also, my bus driver cusses at the students, has conferences off the bus while other students are on the bus. He is always yelling for no reason.
- We want open campus for lunch. The principal doesn't care about us... One good thing is our dress code. We get to wear street clothes. And teachers put in a good effort in their jobs - it is the principals that don't seem to care.
- We should have longer passing periods. Five minutes is not enough. Some people have to go all the way across campus, so they are tardy. The campus needs to be re-opened, because we have a new cafeteria, but the food is nasty and is still pretty expensive. And there is not enough room for everyone.
- We definitely need open campus again. I also don't like the fact that students have to pay for their own Spanish books.
- There is one certain principal who is always way too hard on us. I don't like the way the school locks us in. It makes me feel like I'm in a jail. Also, I think that we should have off campus for lunch at least 1 or 2 days out of the week. And 5 minutes is not long enough at all for our passing periods.
- The cafeteria is too crowded and the restrooms are not clean.
- I'm wondering if we will ever have open campus again, before I graduate from this school. We also need longer passing periods. 5 minutes is not enough time for me and other students to get to the locker and to their classes without getting a tardy and getting detention.
- I strongly disagree with the policy for no off campus lunch. I think we should have off campus lunch and combine both lunch times together.
- I liked this school year except for not being able to go home for lunch.
- It is one of the better schools in the district.
- We need more time between classes and we need open campus.

- I think that all seniors should have open campus.
- The food is really nasty and we don't have enough time to eat it. There isn't enough time to get from one campus to another campus without being tardy. If you don't have a hall pass, you get night school (2 hours of detention). Some students get in trouble for dress code violations while others get away with it continuously. We don't have enough textbooks and some people have to share. And we always run out of toilet paper.
- There is a problem with girls athletics not receiving the same amount of money as the guys. Our facilities are poor and ill maintained. Now that the district has closed campus, food has gotten more expensive so that we spend about the same money as we used to at restaurants. I feel that our computer systems are great and that several departments are superior to other districts. Yet there are little things that will make the school run better. 5 minutes between classes is not enough time when the weather is bad or you are injured. Accidents happen in the halls because they are overcrowded. The air conditioner doesn't work and is sitting uninstalled outside the girls weight room. We jump over wooden boxes while the boys have bought special ones that are rubber and something else so that they don't get hurt. 3 girls have been injured jumping over boxes including myself. It shouldn't have happened. But again, the reason we come to school is education and the education at RFHS is superior. Besides athletics, cafeteria and halls, I couldn't complain.
- I feel there is a strong difference between the advanced placement classes and regular. The regular classes don't learn anything really. The teachers are not teaching the regular students what they will need in college and they hardly do any work. I feel that in regular English they should have to write papers because they will have to do so in college. Also some teachers are disrespectful towards students and it seems as though the principals don't care. There is also a certain teacher that leaves and takes off 3 times a week, so the students aren't learning what they need to for class. I believe you shouldn't teach if you don't want to take the time.
- Overall the teachers at RFHS are friendly and good educators. Aside from the occasional few, like the Science Department, ACISD has good teachers. The only problem of concern to me is the cafeteria. Although nice, it is crowded therefore making time very difficult to manage. We are given 30-40 minutes. I still have to wait in line with 15 minutes of lunch left.
- Schedule needs to be altered. 5 minutes is not enough time to go to a locker, restroom, water break and then walk clear across campus. I seldom have tardies, but I have to carry all my books with me, straining my back. I do not agree with the D-hall after school detention. I received 2 hours of detention for getting help on my

algebra II HW, because I did not have a pass. Not every teacher will write a pass for every student.

- Lunchtime and passing periods are too short. I have to wake up at 4:30-5 in the morning in order to walk a half-mile down a dark dirt road to get my bus at 6:26. School starts at 7:30. I usually eat breakfast around 7, so I can't usually eat before going to school and by the time lunch starts (I have later lunch), I am extremely hungry. Once lunch starts, I can wait up to 15 minutes to get my food and we only get 30 minutes. Also, between classes 5 minutes is barely enough time to get to class, let alone our lockers.
- Too much construction. Books are old. Not everybody gets books. Some classes overcrowded. Food is bad. Halls too crowded, restrooms stink and are dirty. Drugs are bad. Vandalism often. Would like a Pepsi machine.
- Certain programs should be paid more attention to in our district and be treated equally. For example, the RFHS choir is treated very poorly and the band is praised. Also, our school needs to be much cleaner, especially the bathrooms. It is sad when you are walking to class and the halls smell of urine! More effort should be put into outside programs by the school.
- The food at this district is reasonable and our facilities clean, but both could be better. The school's interior is okay, but the outside could be in a better state. I mean, our school is 50-60 years old, and all they do is paint over it.
- This school is very old. My grandfather went here and that wasn't even the first year it opened. Instead of building a new cafeteria, we should build a new high school. And the middle school wasn't needed as bad as a high school. So I think our school district wasted money on a lot of things that were not really needed.
- School is cool!
- Girls are treated unfairly in our school. We never get charter busses and the boys always do. Our facilities are not equal to theirs. I also feel that if our administrators are going to come down on one person for the dress code, they better come down on everyone. Our passing periods are unacceptable. 5 minutes is not enough time to go to the bathroom and get your books. And staying 2 hours after school for a certain number of tardies is ridiculous.
- ACISD is all around a good district. I see nothing wrong with our district.
- Our food and cafeteria system could use some improvement.
- The main thing to me is long lines and cold food with not enough time to eat.
- I really don't have any complaints. I like this school district a lot. It's a great place to go to school.
- We need business-focused classes and teachers!

- Everything is pretty much okay here. We just need longer lunches and a better variety of food.
- Off campus lunch should be offered to some students (Seniors - or students with A averages) in order to cut down on the large crowds in the cafeteria.
- I believe that the school is a place where there is opportunity. It is up to the students if they want to learn. There are enough teachers and resources that may help a student in obtaining education.
- I like the school and the people here. I just don't like the fact that our school has no money. Of course, the football team has lots of money to spend on good dinners and a charter bus for every get-away game while the cheerleaders get stuck with school buses every away game. And our dinner if we get one, is from a fast food restaurant.
- I don't like about our 5 minute transportation to our other classes. There is no time to use the restroom or go to your locker. Carrying all our books gives us backaches, etc. And the lunch line is way too long with less time to eat.
- I feel that our school and educational services can be improved. I am not sure how, but it needs to be. Some things are good the way they are, like some of the teachers. Yet others do not teach well at all. I think the school board should look at some of the teachers and give them a second thought.
- Our five minute passing period is so wrong, because there is not enough time to get to one class on one side for the school to the other.
- The new principals of the school are making it more of a prison than a school. We are locked in if we are in the hall without a pass then we have to go to ISS and have a full day of makeup work. If you are tardy to a class you have to stay a minute after the bell, and then if you have to walk across campus you will be tardy again. And that will repeat for the whole day. Please do something.
- Some of the teachers (especially English) are great, but some teachers are inconsiderate and it seems like they don't care for our benefit.
- Last year I loved school, this year I hate school. No off campus lunch and 2 separate lunch periods! Lunch is supposed to be a break from classes and everyone is split up. That's stupid. And, the night school thing is down right retarded! And 5 minutes is not enough time to switch classes.
- Our teachers do not know how to teach us our material, and we don't learn anything.
- I think that some of the classrooms in the science halls need to be remolded. Also, the restrooms are not very clean. Water fountains near science hall need to be fixed.

- It's all right, teachers many times help many students with many problems, inside or outside of school.
- Only that our history teacher doesn't properly teach. He must be new.
- I think if the school boards told us that we would have Pizza Hut or Taco Bell in the cafeteria we would get. Lunch stinks because it is just like junior high. The prices are expensive and it's gross. You need to do something about the food.
- I believe the school is doing good it just has a few bugs but other than that it is great.
- At lunch we have to wait in line 15-20 minutes and then have to sit down and eat. There is no nurse at lunch because she has green lunch when I have gold. I think there should be 2 nurses.
- Students are too busy thinking about when the next time they'll get high, drunk, etc. It's pathetic.
- RFHS needs to be more easy on the students getting to class on time we get to get from onside to the other in 5 min.
- We need longer lunch so we can eat, and more time between periods to get to classes. You're a cutie!
- Well our school has a lot to work on really. The time we have in between classes is too short, and we do not have enough time to eat. Also, they need to choose substitutes more carefully.
- We don't have enough time to eat lunch. We also do not have time to walk from class at one end of the school to the other in 5 minutes. The prices are too high in the lunch line.
- Need more time for classroom assignments, need new books, need to improve cafeteria food.
- This year in Spanish 2 classes the students have to buy their workbooks for \$7.50. How can a school waste their money on stupid mats that say WATER? We know where the water is. They should be spending their money on stuff we need! Also, books are very scarce now and are in poor condition. We can't even take books home to do our work. We have to wait till the next day to do or finish our work. Also, every teacher assigns loads of homework keeping us up for about 4-5 hours after school. One thing is that the other people are in extra curricular activities not getting home until maybe 8:30, sometimes 9:00PM. Then we go home and do our homework until the wee hours of the morning. **LONGER PASSING PERIODS!**
- This year I am in Spanish 2 and we have to buy our workbooks with our own money. That is \$7.50 that I could spend on something else. Our school doesn't have money to buy Spanish books, but we can buy mats that go under the water fountains the say WATER. We know where the water is at, first they need to worry about our books before mats. It's enough that the taxes went up this year and we still have to pay even more to buy books.

Another thing they took away is our old campus lunchtime and make us eat in the cafeteria. We don't even have enough time to be eating in the amount that they give us. We shouldn't be rushed. And another thing is there aren't even enough tables for everybody to sit at. Also another thing, our school parking lot. They have us fenced in like we are in jail. We have all this money to buy fence, mats, and everything else. I just don't understand that they can't buy just a little Spanish book. Another thing is that we can't even go to the restroom when we need to and I have bladder problems.

- I think that the lunchtime should be longer. Because sometimes the athletics don't have time to eat because of the time limit we have to eat. Our school looks like the kids are in prison with all the fencing up and it does look really gay. The girls locker room has no AC and the boys weight room is in better shape than the girls. I have to pay for our books because the school has not enough money to pay for them. So we have to give the back at the end of the year. Even though we bought them. Today I was in the classroom before the bell had rung and the teacher said I was tardy. That was stupid. Sometimes are water fountains are broke and we can't get anything to drink. Some classes have ants and that needs to be fixed. We should have longer passing periods that why people are always tardy. Sorry that I have no time to finish.
- The school is spending their money on rugs and locking up our school like a prison. When we have to pay for Spanish books with our money. They make us run around the school in 5 minutes when we used to have 10 minutes. No time for lunch when you're in athletics. You get out of athletics 10 minutes late and when we try to get in lunch a few minutes early we get in trouble by the asst. principals. If we don't have a big yellow pass, we get night school, even if you're doing something for a teacher and they give you a pass, but not a yellow pass to school supplies, you get it. The school looks good, but on the side where we park it looks like the Huntsville Prison. When they spend money on things we don't need like mats.
- What happened to all the business classes? I want to major in the business field, but there are not classes for me to take here. When DECA (Distributed Education Clubs of America) was offered, students went to nationals for 22 years straight. Now there is nothing left for us business students.
- Some books are falling apart. And people write in the stalls in the girls restroom.
- As a student at RFHS, I DISAGREE that we should have to buy our own books because our school has no money, and at the end of the year they want us to give the books back after we paid \$7.00 for them.
- More time to eat lunch.

- Our student parking lot, there is a fence around and if something was to happen then we wouldn't be able to get out because the gates are closed. Also 30 minutes for lunch is not enough time to get your food and eat. It takes me 15-20 minutes to get my food and then I have 10 minutes to eat. We need more time.
- The school does not have a motor class. When I say motor I mean working on a car or truck learning how to work on them and check what is wrong with them.
- These surveys are stupid, just cuz the majority of students say on thing doesn't mean you are going to change anything.
- We need to evaluate our teachers in the classroom more often. Most of them do a good job, but some of them shouldn't be teaching.
- I think this survey is very good on opening things that have never been opened before.
- Some teachers are always pissed off because they're pregnant, so they take it out on the students. But the ones who are not pregnant are pretty fair.
- The school district wastes money on mats, but there isn't enough money for books.
- This school sucks because of many different things because half of the teachers smoke weed and they are all hypocrites telling us not to do drugs when they do them their self.
- The school is in poor condition and you need to do something about it.
- We start at 7:30 in the morning, the sun is not up yet. Almost everyone I know has their lowest grade in 1st period. We get 5 minutes passing period, I can't use the toilet during passing because I'll be late. And if I am late one of the asst. principals start trippin out and try to give me 2 hours of after school detention because I had to use the bathroom. So I waste my class time to relieve myself, I'm in Athletics before lunch so by the time I take a shower, put my clothes without drying and sprint to the cafeteria, half of the school is already in line in front of me. By the time I wait in line and get my food I have approximately 3 minutes to eat. Then the bell rings, I had probably eaten about 2 bites and another assistant principal is on my back trying to give me after school detention for 2 hours All because the campus is closed and we have 30 minutes to eat. If I don't eat, I can't work right. Plus I have football after school. If you come to get a book out of your locker during lunch, you get 2 hours of after school detention. With the 5 minute passing period, I can't make it from the cafeteria, to my locker and then to my next class. Our assistant principal, is real jerks. They are high school principals, yet their humor does not exceed another's height. One kid called him DILBERT. Dilbert is a

cartoon character that looks like him. The kid got 2 days of 2 hours of after school detention.

- I feel that the JR. HIGH part of the high school is in need of more sanitary up keeping. We have recently obtained water fountain mats in there, but yet our water fountains have poor functioning. My history class has old and crappy textbooks and I feel that the teaching of the regular history class should be more involved with the students and shouldn't just do bookwork because we don't learn the things if they aren't stressed enough. We need cable. We had a hard time watching the crash because we hadn't had the access to cable. We need a better selection of lunch or off-campus because it is too hectic. If we are ready to go to college, I think we can handle having off-campus lunch.
- The school is falling apart, not only physicals but mentally. The students are treated badly by their vice-principals. They who overacts in everything they do wrong and another who is the strict disciplinarian of the hallway. Also the school board messes up every chance they have. My freshman year we had block scheduling which was the best for people who have a lot of hard classes, so then the next year they decided HEY, LET'S GIVE THEM ALL 8 CLASSES AT THE SAME TIME and that is what led to the first and only C I have had in my life. Then they had open campus lunch, where we had an endless variation of food we choose. Now we have the delicious cafeteria food which only has a few good things and the rest tastes like sewage. I like how the Jr. High got brand new school and how we have schools that were made in the 1990's who knows there may be asbestos in the walls, the school doesn't care just as long as they save money. If the people could have choices they would say REVOLUTION NOW because we as students are sick and tired of getting messed over by the school board, and if they do one more thing to aggravate me, I will have to make a stand to the musses to speak for what they believe in and rage against this communist machine known as RFHS.
- I feel that our discipline program is too strict when it comes to minor things. The new vice principals treat us as if we're in junior high. For being in the hall without a pass you're assigned night school, AKA, two hours of copying papers word for word. I understand the principle of it all, but seriously, isn't that a little much? It's the little things that they get on to us about, stupid things. It just seems like there are better things for them to do that worry about us cutting in the lunch line or going to retrieve a book without a pass.
- The time period between classes are too short and the halls aren't big enough. There is one part of the hall that everyone goes through and it's just like a traffic jam. A lot of people don't get to

class on time. The restrooms aren't clean enough to even use sometimes. Lunch needs to be longer because a lot of students get out late and don't have time to finish their food. Thirty minutes isn't enough. Science classes need to be more active.

- I'm fairly pleased with our school. Sometimes things aren't the greatest, but for the most part it is because of the people who attend the school. The biggest problem, I believe, is the smell of urine in our hallways. I don't think it is too much to ask to keep the smell of urine out of our school. It's ridiculous. There is no reason for our school to be so unclean that I have to smell urine on the way to class. Another problem would be the passing periods. Doubling the campus size and cutting down on the passing period isn't very sensible. I am always late to my 3rd period class simply because it is too far to walk. Last, and certainly not least, is the fact that our school spent money on mats to go in front of the water fountain, yet our journalism dept. doesn't have enough money for working computers or cameras.
- Although I usually don't have trouble in school, there are a few things that make school less bearable than it should be. For instance, girls' athletics was moved to the old junior high facilities while the boys athletics get to use our new facilities. Because athletics is right before lunch, we don't always have time to shower and go to lunch on time. So, we decided it would be nice to eat in the locker room and bring our own lunch, but the principal would not let us after he found out that we were doing it. Also, our new vice principal is a little over-bearing about the dress code. A friend of mine was wearing a shirt that when she lifted her arms showed about an inch of her stomach. Nobody is distracted by this kind of thing, and he is only taking away from our school time by making a big deal out of something that no one else is bothered by. Another problem is that we are always lacking toilet paper in our bathrooms. Plus, the teachers are really strict about tardies when they just made our campus twice as big and cut the passing period in half. In general, most of our privileges were taken away, such as off campus lunch.
- It would be beneficial if every student were required to attend a study hall or tutorial period. Also, teachers need to be more observant in students cheating on tests, homework... There are too many coaches who are trying to teach class. Most of them are incompetent. The toilets in one of the girls restrooms are turned the wrong way and the floor is always flooded. One of the lunch ladies is really mean! Students should have a set of books at home and at school for an easier load on their backs. The school needs more fun events!
- The facilities are okay. You don't need a pretty school to have an education program that works. Like our athletics (girls). Our

facilities for girls sports are cut short a lot, but I think that makes us stronger and when we go out and do well it shows all the ones that do have great facilities that we can beat them even with what we got. As long as the students have the drive to become a better person, then all you need are teachers that give a little attention, not a beautiful school. We need internal beauty.

Appendix E

- The only problem I have is with the busses. They are sometimes late picking up the students. The children are not controlled properly, they scream, shout and fight freely. I do not have a pleasant ride to and from school.
- I think that some improvements could be made as far as the actual building, but for the most part we have good teachers and lots of opportunities that allow us to get the most out of high school. I think that we should have a longer lunch break, and should be allowed off campus and we should have more than a 5 minute passing period due to the size of the school and the number of students.
- This school seems more like a prison. Disciplinarians everywhere always watching you as if you have already done something wrong. Not enough time in between classes, 5 minutes not enough to get from one side of the school to the other. Cafeteria food is repetitive, often cold, and generally unappealing. Though there are a few items that are good (turkey). Campus still needs to be open and fences feel like prison. Finally, cafeteria food is over-priced - 50 cents for a chicken strip and \$1.25 for a slice of pizza. Give me a break. Bathrooms in the annex are disgusting, but the new cafeteria is nice. I like the principal and feel he is doing a good job, but the other disciplinarians are not. They are too confronting and it seems like they don't do anything. School parking lot is a joke, most of it isn't even paved.
- Personally, I don't really like our school. Partially because all the facilities, but a lot of it is the people, students and staff members. The vice principal seen to look past the more important things and they really pay attention to things like people being tardy and we only have 5 minutes to get across our huge campus. The school is not clean at all. Sometimes I fear that it could be a health hazard. The classes are okay, but they could be better. Overall, our school could surely use more improvements in all areas.
- No off campus lunch stinks, and 5 minute passing period can't make it - too short.
- Our lunch period is right after athletics so the coaches always hold us in late and we don't have time to take showers. By the time we get dressed we have about 5 minutes to get our food and eat. They need to change the schedule. They serve the same thing all of the time (it gets really old after 10 months of chicken tenders.)
- Whatever it takes (read with sarcasm).
- Thank you for giving me this survey. Our school isn't what it seems. It's not really in tiptop shape. In fact, its in no shape. We could definitely use a new high school and better supplies.

- Way too crowded. Our classes look poor, and it makes our school look bad.
- I don't think we have enough time between classes. I can't walk across the school from the furthest points east to west in 5 minutes. I can't even run or sprint because of the books on my back for the next class. I also have back problems because there is no time to go to my locker so I have to load up for 3-5 classes at a time. This takes away from my learning because my back is in a lot of pain. Other than that, most teachers are here in the morning or afternoon for tutorials.
- There is one big problem with our school it is that. So far it's only happened a couple of times is that our cafeteria did not make enough food. For the guys who are in athletics like one time they told me to wait aside and wait for the food to get finished cooking. Soon as it was she gave my food to another student who just walked up. Also our principle tells us seniors to hurry up when we get out of class at the end of school. When I'm at my locker trying to get all my homework he's sitting there looking at me, the whole time I was there, and there was other students running around.
- We have no time without stopping at our lockers to walk in the crowded hallways from English hall to the Spanish hall. It's ridiculous I have to keep a slight jog to make it to athletics. That concludes my point that we need more time between classes.
- I feel that our school is not bad, but it is not perfect either, Students are wild and can be very rude. Teachers put up with it and administrators do not take enough action! Some teachers, who remain nameless, do not do their job. I feel that our school has some problems with cleanliness, There is stuff I'm not sure what that is growing under the water fountains. And bathrooms in the older parts of the building are not acceptable. A lot of questions I answered I somewhat agreed on.
- We need open campus lunch again. I believe it is the privilege of at least seniors to have the responsibility, being in school for 4 years already, to be able to arrive back to school on time. There would be many benefits such as a smaller line at lunch, less people to watch, etc. I would really like to see off campus lunch return to RF High School before the year is up.
- The computer classes here stink! They need to teach more on the issue of trouble shooting software and not so much on how to type and draw on computers. I have grown up with a computer and I type around 50 words a minute. I don't want to draw on computers. I want to be able to fix it if it breaks. So I say we need more computer and hands on computer classes to make a bigger impact on the world. Just think, the next Bill Gates or Albert Einstein could come from Rockport-Fulton High School.

- The education program is ok at Rockport high, but I think there should be a little bit more time on homework or less homework because people have jobs, too. Not all parents can support their children. So I always find I don't have enough time for homework. That and the make-up work policies aren't good.
- Need teachers to be more lenient and nicer, not so uptight.
- We are high school students, yet we all feel like 4th graders. No off lunch campus or other people can't bring food to you - well that is stupid. Locking to student parking lot yeah no wonder we feel trapped. The teachers here can make you feel really low. Sometimes by calling us stupid and other things. This school has changed for the worse since I was here my freshman year.
- Our school restroom is dirty and stinks. In classes not everyone has their own books and if some do, they are damaged. When it rains, there's only one way to go and it is through the commons area and everyone is crowded there and we would be late or tardy for the class. Cafeteria food is the same and is served cold. The ladies should wear hairnets and gloves when serving.
- Our school (RFHS) is always worried about all the small stuff like tardies and cursing that all the bad things like drugs and weapons completely slip by. There are not enough tables in the lunchroom, people start fights over where to sit.
- I think that lunch should be extended 20 or so minutes for the athletes that get out late from athletics.
- The school is really not that bad, but it could be a lot better.
- Some teachers are not very good.
- The time for lunch period would be great if it was longer.
- I'm not from this town. I just moved here, three years ago. And I hate it. The school does not have good staff. The principals are inadequate and unreasonable. They do not try to get along with students are participate in school-related activities at all. Not all teachers are exceptional either. I think school also starts to early in the morning to learn correctly. My first three classes are all AP classes and it is hard for me to participate and stay active in class studies.
- As a whole it meets our educational needs. What it does not always meet is our moral needs. Many see the closing of the campus harsh and almost unusual punishment when there was really nothing exceptional wrong last year. The new cafeteria is less than perfect and many wish to spend their money on food worth it. As a last note, we have also had to personally buy some books this year, and this seems unfair.
- I feel that we need to get a new look for this school. Teachers don't know how to teach. They don't explain enough and out. It's hard to keep up with some subjects that teachers don't teach. Get some new teachers or teach the teachers, teach better.

- As much as I like the school. I think this school district should go back to its regular 4 block schedule. It makes it easier for students to have some in classes to work on homework especially when they have an after school job. Also, the school district is too strict this year, especially with dress codes. I see my friends wearing shirts that are appropriate and only about half an inch off the pants and the principal and vice prin. are all over them and other girls that wear even more obscene clothing do not get lectured at. Especially those that are participating in athletic activities.
- Our school is rundown in most parts of the building except for the new additions. We do not have water in some parts and on some days we have no water schoolwide. The maintenance program does not always fix problems in a timely manner. Sometimes it can take weeks before a classroom light is replaced leaving the students to work in the dark.
- I think teachers are doing their job of teaching us everything and preparing us for college, but our school definitely has its downfalls - 5 minutes to get from class to class is ridiculous. We end up having to carry all of our books throughout the whole day. Another thing is that being as we are juniors and seniors, we should at least have the freedom to go off-campus for lunch. We don't need to be penned up like animals in a cage. Which is what our school has done by fencing and locking up the entire school grounds. I feel like a prisoner at my own school.
- I believe our school is okay. It is not that exceptional, but it is not really bad. I believe teachers and staff provide for a friendly environment. The only thing that I would like to complain about is that some teachers are disorganized which in some ways has caused some problems.
- I think our school should open up the campus at lunch. And I think we should have cleaner restrooms, and that all the water fountains work and that they have cold water.
- The schools facilities are always down or are not ever working because they do not fix the problem right the first time. They just fix and it lasts for about a week and then it breaks again. In other words, be efficient. The discipline on the hall monitor/ pass rules and stuff are really harsh. We are not in junior high. I wish they wouldn't treat us like we are.
- I think for one our district spends too much money on athletics when we could be using that money for books or repairs in this school, or they could be using that money for new air conditioners or new equipment in the science labs. But other than that, our school is pretty decent.
- Our district is well enough to go to school in, but needs much improvement. When it comes to food and lunch, our school is in dire need of assistance.

- The school tries its best to educate everyone. Sometimes the resources at the schools are low and it is difficult to keep everyone happy.
- The parking lot needs to be paved. There's a strand of barbwire coming out of the ground at one part. There's too many ignorant coach teachers who don't know anything and can't teach. Tardies are at an all-time high and teachers don't care because they can't do anything about it. New students are hard to get to know because of how spread out the school is and the limited passing time.
- The asst. principals are over critical, the passing periods aren't adequate, there is no access to soda machines, the cafeteria steals our money by making us eat on campus, our vehicles are on lockdown, the bathrooms are regularly locked for no apparent reason, water fountains don't work, what's that funky smell out at the gazebo.
- Most of the teachers are qualified to teach their subject, but there are a few who are not qualified to teach at all. Some teachers don't care about any extra-curricular activities and pile on homework even when most students will have to do it at midnight. The school is never completely clean. Some classrooms do not get cleaned but once every few weeks.
- One problem I feel that we have in our school is about the restrooms. The bathrooms never work properly. No towels to dry our hands. The toilets are always overflowing. It is very unsanitary. I think the janitors are paid to make sure these problems are fixed, and they aren't here. On a good note, we have good teachers with the best hopes for us which makes it a pleasure to come to school.
- We do not have enough time for lunch!
- Being a student, athlete, as it may, I feel the need to share my concerns about equal learning opportunities. I feel it unfair to place us students who are in athletics in classes with coaches who will pass us so we can participate in performing in the art of athletics. A student who loves a challenge should not have to take these classes. Thanks.
- School should be kept in a better condition. It should be properly maintained and cleaned. Students should be allowed off-campus for lunch.
- On here, the only thing that I can complain about is the food service and quality of our food. It's such a big change to go from being able to eat out to cafeteria food. It's the same with all the fences and security. I feel as though I am being punished for something I didn't do.
- I moved here from Louisiana and I feel that this school does not challenge the students enough and there is not enough help with college preparation.

- There is not enough emphasis on the importance of the SAT. Although there are new prep classes, the school does not recognize it as it should.
- Not all teachers meet the needs of the students.
- During three years of my time in high school there was construction. A commons area which closed after school took 3 years to build. It was supposed to take one summer. That's what the students were told. Construction disturbed classes also. There isn't enough money in fine arts.
- (vice principal): whereas other principals strive to help the students and enforce the rules in a friendly manner, principal will targets particular students and uses humiliation to punish them. He looks for all the bad, never stopping to see the good. He needs to be spoken to about his attitude.
- Overall, the administration, teachers and counselors are always very helpful. I can go and ask teacher questions anytime and he always does his best to find out the answer quickly. The teachers are always willing to help when I have a problem on school/homework. The counselors help me every day to find new scholarships and are supportive of my college choice. Janitors do their job, but we need more of them to get this school cleaner. Also, we need more choices in the cafeteria.
- I think we have some excellent teachers here at RFHS, but they are not always given adequate resources to teach with and so our learning is hindered. I have also been very disappointed with the AP classes. The AP teachers' only goal is to have us cram for the AP test and that is it. I normally enjoy English and History classes, but last year they were uninteresting and I don't feel that I really learned from them.
- Our school is developing and the way its been changing every year is annoying. They need to find what works for everybody and quit making every class of students feel like guinea pigs. Lunch is too short and access to lockers are restricted. I don't understand.
- We have great teachers and are being taught well education. The school could be a little cleaner and take better care of the bathrooms.
- In ACISD, the majority of teachers care so much about the students, and are very supportive of them. But there are some who you can just tell that don't want to be here. Also, there are plenty of great courses given to prepare a student for college and suitable teachers teach those classes. One big problem with our school, though, is the passing periods between classes. I think they need to be lengthened a little.
- This school is the dirtiest place on the planet. It is completely unsanitary. We have been in school for 3 months and some of my classes haven't been swept once. It's gross. Lunch is out of control

with regards to standing in line. Some students don't get to finish eating. We need to open campus. There are always fights in the lunch hall. The faculty is great, but cleanliness and lunchtime need attention. And the school focuses way too much on athletics rather than education. Sometimes it's like our athletes get away with murder.

- As a senior, this year has been very disappointing for most. School was made to be very enjoyable for myself and my peers as a freshman with the block schedule, off-campus lunch, and a comfortable passing period time. Now not only do we have a shortened lunch period in a cafeteria that serves bad food, we also have a longer distance to walk to classes and a shortened time to do so. There are more tardies and higher levels of stress and frustration.
- This school had very poor Spanish teachers my freshman year and I didn't learn anything. The closed campus is really bad because we have to eat the sick cafeteria food, when last year we could eat anywhere. The new assistant principal is retarded he will make you stay after school for 2 hours for being in the hall at lunch.
- While I feel that I am in a decent school for what we have, I find some things seriously lacking. First off, the science department uses out of date or broken materials and classes often get in the way of one another. By this I mean that two courses that are very important are only offered during the same period. The situation in this school is seriously lacking. Trash builds up and maintenance is overlooked. The bathrooms are disgusting. I feel more work could be put into the fine arts programs like band and choir.
- One thing I am unhappy with is the change of schedule throughout the years. For example, we went from block scheduling to 8 period days to 7 period days. The constant changes create conflicts in your 4 year plan and therefore create problems when trying to take the required classes as well as the extra-curricular.
- I really recommend for you to give us more of lunchtime and some of time for between classes.
- We could use more funding in more subjects than just sports.
- I think that the educational programs that are available in our district are very well maintained, however there could be some work done in the vocational programs that are being offered. Rockport-Fulton High School has only one vocational class and that is a speech class. But students should have more opportunities to learn how to speak of what they think, especially with the national tragedy taking place in New York.
- The school system stinks. There isn't enough time for passing periods, lunch, and class time is short. Lunch is too long and the food stinks. There is no off-campus lunch. I am tardy every day after lunch and to third period. They made the school larger and

the passing period shorter. Everything is stupid. They give us night school for being in the hall during class without a pass. There isn't enough time to use the restroom between classes.

- I do enjoy coming to school. I feel that our needs as students are being met. Although, they should make a greater effort to talk about college and careers to the students their freshman year. Discipline is agreeable on this campus, although I do disagree with the way fights are handled. Overall this is a great school.
- I think that it is all right.
- As a whole, the district has a pretty good standard of education. But this year has been a total smack-down. Last year we had off-campus lunch and the administration wasn't that hard core that everyone just wanted to be bad. This year we all feel like we are in prison and quite frankly it stinks. It's our senior year and we are being denied of the privileges we had as freshmen.
- ACISD seems to be hampering our freedoms on every plane. Perhaps they simply want to make sure the discipline problem is reduced, however, by doing so they also limited the possibility for decent young men and women to develop.
- Some of the teachers still act like they are teaching 3rd grade and some just don't have any experience.
- Not all teachers get involved. Too many coaches as history, English and science teachers. I find the school handbook sexist when it comes to ear piercing and long hair.
- This year is my last year, but I feel like they are treating us like prisoners. We have to have a pass just to come to school early or leave early. The major thing is we only have 5 minutes between classes. The school is bigger so it is hard especially if you have a class on one side of the school and you have to go to the other. You can't even stop by your locker, and your books are so heavy. But we have to hold all of them if we don't want to be tardy. Also I feel bad for the students that don't even get to eat lunch because there is no time. I believe our school cares more about other things besides what the students feel.
- I wish we still had the DECA program, and all of the business courses that came with it.
- I really don't like the 5 minutes passing period but oh-well it is my last year here. All the teachers and principals and staff are very sweet people. It is okay going to school at 7:30.
- This is my last year and I finally get out of this town.
- The lunch food, cleanliness, and atmosphere have improved GREATLY this year, too bad we have not enough time to engulf our food before we are run out of the cafeteria for our next class. 5 min. passing periods are ridiculous; I have an awesome record with timeliness until this year. I'm about to have night school for

tardies!!! English teachers and AP classes are extremely on top of things and well organized.

- For one thing, in the past four years we have had three different principals, three different schedules, and pretty much have been toyed with. In other words high school here was fun but a challenge.
- Very happy other than some teachers treating seniors like 3rd graders.
- We have vice-principals that don't know how to use their power of discipline correctly.
- As far as I'm concerned education is fine but the discipline is a little extreme for being tardy, seeing how we haven't enough time between classes.
- Well I don't have a comment about this school, but over in the junior high there is a counselor. She had my mom come into her office and told her that she didn't think my brother needed to be in G.T. History or something like that. She said the teacher also agreed, she saw my brother's grade, he had a 90. She talked to the teacher, he disagreed and said yes fine in my class, because my brother wasn't tested for GT. She was trying to cover herself because they were being audited.
- We start school too early. It has affected my grades in most of my classes (especially in the morning). Need to go back to old schedule. This also made an increase in the number of students sleeping in class. Also 5 minutes is not enough time for a person to go to their lockers and for restrooms and still be on time. It is also not enough time to get from one side of the campus to another. This also needs to be fixed.
- I feel that ACISD this year has made some of the worst mistakes they ever had. Seniors lost lots of privileges and a lot of new staff is trying to change things too fast. Seriously, if I could switch schools I would.
- The education performance of ACISD is OK. Probably better than most of the schools in this area.
- Need a new shop for welding, not enough room for all the students and their projects.
- I just wish we could go off campus.
- I wish there were senior privileges.
- The entire system is completely messed up
- I wish we could go off campus. As a student of such high intelligence, I am revolted by our learning atmosphere. AH, YES.
- I feel that this school spends more time worrying about dress code and minor discipline problems than it does educating us. The school also must spend its money on something other than educating the students because the school never has paper and the teachers have to buy their own paper sometimes just to give a test.

I also feel that the advanced placements classes are feel like they should be regular classes, and the regular are babysitting classes for those who are discipline problems.

- I've only been in Rockport a couple of years, and it was in here in Rockport-Fulton HS where I learned English, so I can say that the school has a good teaching plan. But sometimes there are too many coaches teaching English, science and history. Personally, I think that keeps us behind in the class because the coaches (teachers) have to go away in tournaments and other activities. Please take this in consideration. It will improve the school.
- Myself, I don't think we have enough time between classes. I know the school has cut down on time between classes so people won't stop and talk, but I think it is the student's fault if they are late to class. We only have 5 minutes and for those students that actually used to go to their lockers so they didn't have to hurt themselves carrying books don't have enough time to go to their lockers.
- I really don't care for the 5 minute passing periods. And also the fence around the student parking lot it makes us feel sort of caged at sometimes. And school should be fun and food place to be, but if kids aren't having a good time then we just don't go. Or we could get a new security guard because the one we have now is either asleep or not paying attention to anything. And some of the teachers have some attitude thing going on with some kids and it makes us embarrassed or low when they put us down in class sometimes.
- The school spends too much time worrying about the way some, no all, students look and not enough on education.
- They push us to do our work. All classes feel like they are accelerated.
- I feel we need an open-minded administration about our problems that the students feel that needs to be taken.
- I think we should have off-campus the 2nd half of the year because I am in athletics and always get to lunch 15-20 minutes late because I have to take a shower and then still have to wait in line 10-15 minutes and don't have enough time to eat.
- Juniors and seniors should have off-campus lunch. The cafeteria is too small for everyone; there is not enough time for everyone to eat.
- The girls athletic facilities are bad! I am graduating, but I think it would be nice for the upcoming classes to have clean facilities, a better bigger weight room, and a bigger locker room.
- I feel the educational performance is okay at ACISD, but I think it could be a little better.
- We need more time between classes instead of 5 minutes. We need 6 or at least I do.

- I feel the needs of any student who seeks it will be met. This school has provided me with plenty of answers to problems I've had.
- Our education is good. It could be better in our school but we have teachers that came from the junior high school to a senior class and try to teach us like we are still in junior high. Then have some teachers who have a select few in the whole school that they just pick on all year. For instance, if you are in sports, don't go to that class.

Appendix F

PARENT Survey RESULTS

Aransas County Independent School District Management and Performance Review

n=172

Note: Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Demographic Data

1.	Gender (Optional)	No Response	Male	Female				
		5.8%	20.3%	73.8%				
2.	Ethnicity (Optional)	No Response	Anglo	African American	Hispanic	Asian	Other	
		7.6%	64.0%	1.7%	20.3%	1.2%	5.2%	
3.	How long have you lived in Aransas County ISD?	No Response	0-5 years	6-10 years	11 years or more			
		2.3%	32.0%	22.7%	43.0%			
4.	What grade level(s) does your child(ren) attend (circle all that apply)?	PK	K	1	2	3	4	5
		5.3%	5.6%	6.7%	6.7%	11.1%	14.0%	9.1%
		6	7	8	9	10	11	12
		8.8%	11.1%	5.0%	5.0%	4.1%	3.8%	3.8%

A. District Organization and Management

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
1.	The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.	6.4%	27.3%	48.8%	15.1%	1.2%	1.2%
2.	School board members listen	4.7%	32.6%	42.4%	16.3%	2.3%	1.7%

	to the opinions and desires of others.						
3.	The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	14.0%	44.8%	37.2%	2.9%	0.0%	1.2%
4.	The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	9.9%	40.1%	45.3%	3.5%	0.0%	1.2%

B. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
5.	The district provides a high quality of services.	9.3%	56.4%	18.0%	13.4%	0.6%	2.3%
6.	Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.	5.2%	43.0%	37.2%	9.9%	1.7%	2.9%
7.	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	9.9%	40.7%	35.5%	11.0%	1.7%	1.2%
8.	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	5.2%	37.2%	43.6%	12.2%	0.6%	1.2%

9.	The district has effective educational programs for the following:						
	a) Reading	19.2%	68.0%	5.8%	4.7%	1.2%	1.2%
	b) Writing	15.7%	65.7%	8.7%	7.0%	1.7%	1.2%
	c) Mathematics	19.8%	65.7%	7.0%	5.8%	0.6%	1.2%
	d) Science	15.7%	69.2%	8.7%	2.3%	1.2%	2.9%
	e) English or Language Arts	19.2%	68.0%	8.1%	2.9%	0.6%	1.2%
	f) Computer Instruction	18.6%	64.5%	9.3%	7.0%	0.0%	0.6%
	g) Social Studies (history or geography)	16.3%	63.4%	12.2%	7.0%	0.0%	1.2%
	h) Fine Arts	16.3%	58.7%	12.8%	10.5%	1.2%	0.6%
	i) Physical Education	18.0%	64.5%	8.1%	7.0%	1.7%	0.6%
	j) Business Education	11.0%	38.4%	40.7%	7.0%	1.2%	1.7%
	k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	9.3%	34.3%	41.3%	12.2%	1.2%	1.7%
	l) Foreign Language	7.0%	47.1%	34.3%	8.7%	1.7%	1.2%
10.	The district has effective special programs for the following:						
	a) Library Service	16.9%	58.1%	15.1%	8.7%	0.6%	0.6%
	b) Honors/Gifted	22.1%	52.3%	13.4%	9.3%	2.3%	0.6%

	and Talented Education						
	c) Special Education	14.5%	43.0%	33.7%	6.4%	2.3%	0.0%
	d) Head Start and Even Start programs	8.1%	36.6%	45.3%	7.6%	1.2%	1.2%
	e) Dyslexia program	3.5%	13.4%	65.7%	13.4%	1.7%	2.3%
	f) Student mentoring program	8.1%	30.2%	46.5%	11.6%	1.2%	2.3%
	g) Advanced placement program	11.6%	40.7%	38.4%	7.0%	0.6%	1.7%
	h) Literacy program	8.7%	35.5%	48.3%	4.7%	0.6%	2.3%
	i) Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	7.0%	20.9%	52.3%	12.8%	4.1%	2.9%
	j) Summer school programs	6.4%	44.2%	39.5%	5.8%	2.3%	1.7%
	k) Alternative education programs	7.0%	33.7%	48.8%	6.4%	2.3%	1.7%
	l) "English as a second language" program	6.4%	31.4%	52.9%	6.4%	2.3%	0.6%
	m) Career counseling program	5.8%	22.7%	55.2%	11.0%	3.5%	1.7%
	n) College counseling program	7.0%	25.0%	51.2%	10.5%	4.1%	2.3%
	o) Counseling the parents of	7.0%	27.9%	42.4%	13.4%	6.4%	2.9%

	students						
	p) Drop out prevention program	3.5%	16.3%	59.9%	9.9%	5.2%	5.2%
11.	Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	14.5%	32.6%	21.5%	18.0%	11.0%	2.3%
12.	Teacher turnover is low.	5.2%	39.5%	36.0%	12.8%	4.1%	2.3%
13.	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	9.3%	43.6%	26.2%	13.4%	5.8%	1.7%
14.	A substitute teacher rarely teaches my child.	8.7%	58.7%	9.9%	16.9%	3.5%	2.3%
15.	Teachers are knowledgeable in the subject areas they teach.	15.1%	63.4%	9.9%	7.6%	1.7%	2.3%
16.	All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.	16.3%	51.2%	15.7%	11.6%	4.1%	1.2%
17.	Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	25.0%	65.7%	3.5%	4.7%	0.6%	0.6%
18.	Classrooms are seldom left	20.9%	51.2%	21.5%	4.7%	0.0%	1.7%

	unattended.						
19.	The district provides a high quality education.	15.7%	59.3%	11.0%	12.2%	0.6%	1.2%
20.	The district has a high quality of teachers.	18.6%	52.3%	15.1%	10.5%	1.7%	1.7%

C. Community Involvement

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
21.	The district regularly communicates with parents.	12.8%	54.1%	12.2%	17.4%	2.9%	0.6%
22.	District facilities are open for community use.	10.5%	48.3%	30.8%	8.7%	1.2%	0.6%
23.	Schools have plenty of volunteers to help students and school programs.	2.9%	35.5%	25.6%	27.3%	7.6%	1.2%

D. Facilities Use and Management

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
24.	Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff, and the board provide input into facility	4.1%	39.5%	38.4%	14.5%	2.3%	1.2%

	planning.						
25.	Schools are clean.	16.3%	62.2%	4.7%	10.5%	5.2%	1.2%
26.	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	12.8%	47.1%	11.6%	17.4%	10.5%	0.6%
27.	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	8.1%	34.3%	22.7%	24.4%	9.9%	0.6%
28.	The district uses very few portable buildings.	4.1%	41.3%	14.0%	29.7%	11.0%	0.0%
29.	Emergency maintenance is handled expeditiously.	5.2%	35.5%	47.1%	10.5%	1.2%	0.6%

E. Asset and Risk Management

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
30.	My property tax bill is reasonable for the educational services delivered.	4.7%	33.1%	26.2%	22.7%	12.8%	0.6%
31.	Board members and administrators do a good job explaining the use of tax dollars.	2.9%	21.5%	32.6%	31.4%	9.3%	2.3%

F. Financial Management

	Survey	Strongly	Agree	No	Disagree	Strongly	No
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	Questions	Agree		Opinion		Disagree	Response
32.	Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers.	3.5%	23.8%	60.5%	9.3%	0.6%	2.3%
33.	Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	2.9%	24.4%	57.6%	11.0%	1.2%	2.9%
34.	The district's financial reports are easy to understand and read.	2.9%	22.1%	54.7%	12.2%	4.1%	4.1%
35.	Financial reports are made available to community members when asked.	2.9%	26.2%	61.6%	6.4%	0.6%	2.3%

G. Purchasing

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
36.	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	16.9%	69.8%	4.7%	7.0%	1.7%	0.0%
37.	Textbooks are in good shape.	15.7%	74.4%	4.7%	4.7%	0.6%	0.0%
38.	The school	19.2%	65.1%	8.7%	4.7%	1.7%	0.6%

	library 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	No Response
39.	My child regularly purchases his/her meal from the cafeteria.	27.9%	48.8%	5.2%	12.8%	5.2%	0.0%
40.	The school breakfast program is available to all children.	32.0%	56.4%	8.7%	2.3%	0.6%	0.0%
41.	The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	13.4%	45.9%	15.7%	15.1%	9.9%	0.0%
42.	Food is served warm.	16.9%	57.0%	15.1%	8.7%	2.3%	0.0%
43.	Students have enough time to eat.	11.6%	38.4%	2.9%	31.4%	15.7%	0.0%
44.	Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.	11.6%	74.4%	1.2%	8.1%	4.1%	0.6%
45.	Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	12.8%	43.0%	16.3%	17.4%	9.3%	1.2%
46.	Discipline and order are maintained in the school	16.9%	69.2%	8.1%	3.5%	1.7%	0.6%

	cafeteria.						
47.	Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	19.2%	61.0%	10.5%	7.0%	2.3%	0.0%
48.	Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	20.9%	68.0%	7.6%	2.9%	0.6%	0.0%

I. Transportation

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
49.	My child regularly rides the bus.	15.7%	35.5%	13.4%	13.4%	22.1%	0.0%
50.	The bus driver maintains discipline on the bus.	10.5%	28.5%	40.7%	12.8%	6.4%	1.2%
51.	The length of the student's bus ride is reasonable.	7.6%	41.9%	36.0%	6.4%	7.6%	0.6%
52.	The drop-off zone at the school is safe.	12.8%	51.7%	29.1%	2.3%	2.9%	1.2%
53.	The bus stop near my house is safe.	9.3%	45.9%	31.4%	5.8%	6.4%	1.2%
54.	The bus stop is within walking distance from our home.	14.5%	50.0%	29.1%	2.9%	2.3%	1.2%
55.	Buses arrive and depart on time.	6.4%	48.8%	35.5%	5.2%	2.9%	1.2%
56.	Buses arrive early enough	9.3%	46.5%	39.0%	1.7%	1.7%	1.7%

	for students to eat breakfast at school.						
57.	Buses seldom break down.	4.7%	43.0%	44.2%	4.1%	2.9%	1.2%
58.	Buses are clean.	6.4%	44.8%	42.4%	4.1%	1.2%	1.2%
59.	Bus drivers allow students to sit down before taking off.	11.0%	39.0%	37.8%	8.1%	2.9%	1.2%
60.	The district has a simple method to request buses for special events.	6.4%	29.1%	53.5%	4.1%	5.2%	1.7%

J. Safety and Security

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
61.	Students feel safe and secure at school.	15.7%	61.0%	7.0%	13.4%	2.3%	0.6%
62.	School disturbances are infrequent.	11.0%	62.8%	11.6%	11.6%	2.3%	0.6%
63.	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	9.3%	47.1%	22.1%	15.1%	5.8%	0.6%
64.	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	4.1%	26.2%	19.8%	33.7%	15.7%	0.6%
65.	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	4.7%	35.5%	22.1%	29.7%	8.1%	0.0%
66.	Security	15.1%	51.2%	29.7%	1.7%	1.7%	0.6%

	personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.						
67.	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	15.7%	50.6%	25.0%	4.1%	3.5%	1.2%
68.	A good working arrangement exists between the local law enforcement and the district.	21.5%	54.1%	20.3%	2.3%	0.6%	1.2%
69.	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	9.3%	57.0%	12.2%	12.8%	8.1%	0.6%
70.	Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	4.1%	40.7%	29.7%	18.0%	7.0%	0.6%

K. Computers and Technology

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
71.	Teachers know how to teach computer science and other technology-related courses.	9.3%	66.9%	19.8%	3.5%	0.0%	0.6%

72.	Computers are new enough to be useful to teach students.	11.6%	70.9%	12.8%	3.5%	0.0%	1.2%
73.	The district meets student needs in computer fundamentals.	11.0%	70.3%	9.3%	8.7%	0.0%	0.6%
74.	The district meets student needs in advanced computer skills.	8.1%	47.7%	29.1%	12.8%	1.2%	1.2%
75.	Students have easy access to the internet.	8.7%	62.2%	20.3%	5.8%	1.2%	1.7%

Appendix F

Additional Comments:

- Field trips in the elementary school leave a lot to be desired. Incentives leave a lot to be desired. Much is lacking in these two areas. I do not know if it is a lack of money, a lack of creativity or the lack of volunteers. In addition, the junk food served in the junior high bar is sad.
- The kids in high school that have problems should get more help. One boy missed three days in steps because he was with his girlfriend having his baby. He was dropped and was not let back in. Some kids need the schools help and need to work to support a child but the high school gives up on them. Bad deal.
- We have lived in Texas for one year. Compared to the education my children were receiving in Colorado, I believe their educational program here is substandard. I think this is due in a large part to severe restrictions placed on the educational staff by state pressure to perform on the TAAS. There is excessively much teaching to the test in this district and most others in the state. Creativity has been removed from the art of teaching and largely the joy of learning for the students has been lost.
- There should be better cooperation and communication between instructors in regards to extracurricular activities.
- I feel like the school district gets into family matters too much even though the student is off campus. I feel that what goes on outside school grounds should stay out of school. Things that happen while off grounds should not be anyone's business on school grounds. The buses should pick students up and drop them off at their front door on rainy days anywhere they live.
- In these days of children bringing guns, knives and other weapons to school, I feel that we need to crack down hard on school bullies and startup gangs so that all children feel safe, secure and unafraid to attend school. I would like to see tighter security measures at the schools. Our children are our future. I don't mind investing my taxes in their education, safety and guidance. I would like to see my taxes directed to providing well paid, well equipped professional teachers. I feel teachers in Texas are under paid.
- The information provided by this survey is based on only six weeks of our children attending ACISD schools as new residents of Rockport. There is much we need to learn about the ACISD school system.
- The district is top heavy with actual classroom teachers being a small portion of staff. There is also allot of wasted tax dollars. Football rules in money spent and time devoted. In reference to the

question regarding input to facility planning: There is input but it is rarely acted upon. Facilities are a major problem for the district lots of disrepair.

- Schools need to offer after school activities. School taxes are very high.
- I am very pleased with my child's education and the highly qualified teachers. The only thing is that we need more teachers so the children can have more quality time.
- I feel that a child's education should come before a new football stadium. Therefore I think that the school should emphasize education as a whole and not just for the older students. The elementary schools are in need of repair and they should have the learning tools necessary to teach them.
- Is this survey for the students or the parents? Some of these questions could only be answered if I were on campus and going to classes daily. As a working parent, I do not know some of these answers. Teachers salaries need to be looked at when administration and superintendent salaries are increased. It is not fair when higher ups keep getting pay increases and teachers do not have enough copy paper for computer class. Kids are now asked to bring approximately \$50.00 worth of school supplies, folders, paper towels, kleenex and then told not to put their names on the folders.
- Excellent at elementary level. I do have concerns. There are accounts of heavy drug use at the high school level and would like to see additional programs initiated to change this. My child looks forward to school each day.
- Things I have underlined are serious things (dyslexia, parents notified if a child is absent from school, food is served warm, student have enough time to eat) that should be looked at.
- In my opinion, I think you should ask the students these questions because they are the ones that are going to these schools, not the parents.
- The needs of the work bound students are not being met. Only one vague question addressed this huge issue while other questions seemed specific and even redundant. The career-technology area should not be the only vocational opportunities offered. We need to add additional skilled worker programs such as automotive but the taxpayers cannot afford it. State funding for ACISD must be increased so that facilities can be improved which will free up money that can be spent on programs.
- We need more bus monitors. I do not appreciate older kids in the buses using obscene language or physical violence on the bus. We also have wild dogs, insects that are dangerous for kids and the bus stop is not close and safe, especially in the dark morning hours. I also strongly oppose teaching math and science in the afternoon

when children are already tired. It should be in the early morning hours when they are fresh.

- I feel my children are receiving an excellent education in this school district.
- Believe the busing system could be better. Huntsville ISD uses a bus dock system. Believe all schools should be let out about the same time. It is possible with the Huntsville busing system. Elementary starts at 8:15am, junior high and high school starts at 7:30am. Impossible to get to work on time at 8am. Would it be possible to have a busing system similar to the Huntsville busing system?
- Since we moved here from Austin, I have found Little Bay Elementary to be a great little school for our oldest son. The O-T program is great. The teachers are wonderful. All of his teachers have been great. I am sorry the apathy of parents may be a negative factor in the children's education. The PE and music department needs help. Not enough room or equipment. It would be nice to have a better library too.
- Too much emphasis is put on TAAS.
- Need lockers. Kids are carrying backpacks that weigh half their body weight. More drug dogs.
- The general parent population truly would not effectively answer many of these questions without asking the school personnel. I feel my son's school cares deeply about their students and he is receiving a quality education. The building needs a face-lift. No portables. They need a gym and newer playground equipment. Also I feel the school needs to isolate and punish troublemakers and not the whole class. Very unfair.
- The transportation department needs to be better supervised. During bad weather last year and the school was closed, it was not on all local channels. I had to call the school. In addition, this year, I was told that I would have to take my children down the road to catch the bus when they have been picked up in front of my house for years. In addition, my sister's kids rode for one and a half hours after school just to get home.
- We are new to the public school system. My answers reflect only experiences that have directly included my children. Six weeks is a short period to make some of these evaluations. I hope my answers do not skew the statistics. We are well pleased with the school. Rockport-Fulton Middle School, the administration, staff, teachers and facility. My children are learning.
- State mandates such as 'Robin Hood' have reduced funding by state and increased local costs. Yet, the state sets the salary of 80% of budget employees (teachers). Also funding schools with ad valorem taxes causes a split in communities with large retired populations. Perhaps a sales tax funding approach is needed.

- They do OK. I think 7th graders need more computer time.
- I am very glad and proud to live in Aransas County. I think some of the teachers need to be evaluated as to positions. However, the majority is doing an excellent job. I attend all open houses, input from teachers, volunteer, attend board meetings and encourage excellence from my children. The use of computers is wonderful, yet teachers must realize not all families have computers in their homes. Therefore homework that needs to be done on a daily basis is not fair to under privileged students. Our local public library has one computer with Internet service that print and four that is for educational usage. The children who are disciplinary problems and have little respect and social skills need lots of encouragement. I truly believe their disciplinary actions disrupt others learning. The parents need to be aware then they need to attend several hours of school learning together with their child. It surely is not fair on teachers because their attitude undermine their abilities to control their classroom. Alternative actions should be followed through or those students should be taught a trade in which they can feel confident to earn a living later in life. Economics plays a hard role on everyone (either too much or too little) children need guidance, support and understanding. Teachers need backing up if they have tried to work with individual lets try to redirect student as soon as possible.
- My child was harassed last year so bad due to his disability he had to see a therapist twice a week. This was the second year which his life was threatened. The kids were never punished and their lives stayed the same all along. Home school seems to be the answer for kids with disabilities.
- Elementary school need to focus primarily on English, math, spelling, social studies and science. Computers are great but they should be incorporated with high grades such as sixth through twelfth. I am concerned with my child's spelling and her peers. Her writing will not pass or get her though future grades. Is she and others slipping through the system? Are they passing then to fail later in life?
- Closing the high school campus to off campus lunch is the best thing yet. Drugs are here in Rockport.
- I feel that the parents concerns are ignored and that the good of all the students is ignored in favor of the few in sports. In addition, the dress code is not enforced in any school from Pre-K to grade 12. Some schools hold events at times that are impossible for working parents to attend.
- Some teachers go that extra mile to assist students. I believe they listen to both sides to a story when one student has a problem with another. I disagree with older kids riding the same bus as elementary.

- My biggest complaint has been the level of skills my daughters have received in middle school athletics. They cut them from the team in the 7th and 8th grade because they do not have enough money to keep all who try out. Then they never learn the beginning fundamental skills properly. The ones who do make the team are not taught enough skills to effectively win games. Then we are constantly playing catch up to other school districts.
- Many of our local schools are extremely old and are badly in need of major repairs. Roof leaks and mold is apparent in at least two elementary schools. Many of ACISD's top quality teachers are looking for positions in other districts due to lack of salary increases. Property taxes have kept going up yet teacher salaries remain unchanged.
- Aransas County School District needs more security officers on the premises of the high school and middle school. There are only two officers for all of the school district. Also some of the assistant principals do not follow guidelines they enforce themselves. Sometimes assistant principals and principal are not aware of matters that they are required to know. On the other hand, they do not have time to approach or research matters they are in charge of.
- During school year 2000-01, my child attended Little Bay Elementary. There was no library available to use. There was no alternative offered. My child went to the public school library 2-3 times and was allowed to listen to a story and not allowed to check out books. The teachers even encouraged parents to take the children to the public library. There is no excuse for this. During the beginning of the above school year, math books took over two weeks to be distributed to this school alone. At the hearing for making the above school, the school board encouraged parents to attend and then cut off the parental speakers to vote. Speaking by parents was less than one percent. The decision for this school was a done deal. Little Bay Elementary School is a second-class school in all aspects. I have transferred my child as a result.
- My child was switched out of the class she was in during the first two weeks of school. I was never told why the change was made. This affected my child a lot.
- I feel my children are receiving an excellent education in this school district.
- Educational performance - excellent. However, we need more control on the bus. My children tell me that the children on the bus curse very loudly and the bus monitor and driver do nothing.
- They need some guidance.
- For the safety of the children and the bus drivers, there should be a supervisor on the bus at all times. It is a very tough job for the driver to keep his eyes on the rode as well as on the children. I

believe attention should be drawn to this problem before the chance gets worse.

- This survey may lead to ineffective decisions because several of the questions may not apply. Yet no column was made available for such answers. I may have an opinion yet it not be applicable to my particular situation or my child's situation.
- My biggest concern is the lack of new facilities in our school district. In Aransas County we have a high tax rate but I do not see new schools being built in our growing community. The elementary school my daughter attends was there when I attended 30+ years ago.
- I definitely believe too much money and emphasis is spent on sports. In addition, work missed when school is dismissed early due to sports related events needs to be made up.
- This town needs more vocational programs this is a small town and lots of kids cannot afford college! I think the schools are not clean, I mean bathrooms. There is no excuse to smell urine when you walk by a bathroom.
- I have found that the children will benefit extremely from a 30 minute outside break and small snack before going home. It helps dramatically with hyper children and most teachers enjoy the break as well. We have implemented this into our daycare routine and the benefits are enormous! It doesn't necessarily need to be outside either. Turn on a song and have the children get up and move around. They will be much calmer afterwards. I also believe that music on the busses needs to be monitored. My 9 year old and 6 year old came home singing lyrics to a song played on the radio it was nothing but rap and cussing. I do not allow my children to listen to this kind of music.
- I feel taxes are quite high for the education received.
- I feel all personnel should be better trained in dealing with special needs students from administration all the way down to bus drivers. This includes Special Ed. and 504 coordinators.
- The schools do not have enough money to help our students due to so many elderly homeowners not willing to pass tax increases for funding, high poverty percentage in city. Each school has to pay for school bus for field trips or children at times walk to places in town. Last year district would not pay for subs, children were separated to other teachers, no learning was accomplished from that. Parents should have been notified that no lessons were going to take place and advised to keep children home. Teachers do their best - districts job is to help them with all possible. I also believe that parents do not understand the importance of school, attendance, involvement.
- The condition of Rockport Elementary is sad. It is sorely in need of paint, repairs to bathrooms, walkways, the roof leaks badly, the

first grade has NO playground equipment. The cafeteria is a sad place to dine, too small. The gym has no air conditioning or electricity! The grounds need to be maintained better, maybe add a few trees for shade.

- My children come home and tell me there are many fights and drugs in our school. That the teachers are very hard to get along with. And that the food they eat is not worth eating. There is not enough time to eat. My son will stand in line and still not get to eat. This is a problem.
- Would like to see uniforms. School should call home the morning of an absence and increase parental involvement. More teaching materials for teachers. Last year if a teacher was absent, there was no sub. Called in - kids divided up to other rooms with no teaching for the day. Always room for improvement.
- I feel safe and secure raising my child in this community and school district. Two thumbs up to ACISD!
- Keep up the good work - always room for improvement!
- Note: this parent is a teacher also, and longtime resident. The district has many problems - mostly monetary. Because the district is considered to be a high economic school district, we are not allowed sufficient funds to meet the needs of the schools. There is not enough money to keep teachers happy. Many teachers - quality teachers - are leaving for other districts for better pay and better services. The district has even tried to save money by not allowing substitutes to be hired. The school I work at has two teacher restrooms. One was demolished for renovations the week before school started. It is still not complete. The teachers ate in the room where this restroom was located. There is now a commode and sink sitting in the middle of what was once our dining area! There is only one boys/girls restroom for over 200 1st grade students. The other has been under renovation for OVER 2 YEARS. 1st grade has a grant to allow for lower student/teacher ratio. This grant pays the salary of teachers so that enough can be hired to do this. Two years ago there were 19 teachers, class sizes were averaging 14 to 1. Now it is down to 12 teachers averaging 18 or 19 to 1. We are not being allowed to hire extra teachers. No explanations are forthcoming. I have taught here and lived here for most of my life. I have children who go to school here also. For the most part the district does a good job of taking care of its students. It does a lousy job of taking care of its teachers. Hence, many teachers are leaving for surrounding districts that pay more and have better facilities. I think often of leaving, but I would hate to leave the school that I love.
- I believe children need to be treated as children. Administration should have a stern control, but not treat children as if they were in

military school. Openness and kindness are the keys to our children's future.

- Overall the ACISD is doing a good job. However, there is much opportunity for improvement in the Special Education Program. The district does not provide adequate resources for educating students with learning disorders. Too often ARD teams support the use of medication, while not offering enough new technologies to address special needs. Special Education needs a higher priority, and the district needs an advocate to pursue that goal!
- Bullying is a problem. I think this school needs to do more for kids and work more with children that are struggling in Reading, Writing , not just pass them on. If they spent more money on education, then spend \$175,000 on bleachers for one side of the stadium. More kids, would benefit.
- I think y'all are doing a great job!
- There is a need to provide educational opportunities for NON college-bound students. Many Special Education students drop out when they get to high school. Currently no effort is made to get them back. We are lacking a vocational track for these students. Also - Rockport Elementary is still in disrepair. When it rains children get wet due to leaks in the roof and walkways.
- Special Education should be for just that. Kids that need special services that special education students need - and not for problem kids in the classroom! By doing this they take away from the special Ed classes and kids - and totally sends the wrong message to Sp Ed kids who lose out all together and to the goof - cornball around. They all lose!! This is not good tax money spending or allocation!
- Not enough busses to pick up students in Lamar and Holiday Beach. Students picked up WAY too early!
- High school needs more electives - more choices. Old junior high building needs to be demolished or used only for offices, not classrooms. Need better choir room. Need 3 lunches rather than 2 lunches to cut down line.
- Overall, I am pleased. I do think that Fulton has proven themselves by their TAAS scores for the past several years. So why do certain individuals want to change programs (ie GT) to that of other schools in the area when Fulton keeps proving themselves year after year? Also, I think the student to teacher ratio should be lowered thru fifth grade. There should be no more than 20 students to a class.
- I had to answer NO OPINION because I don't work at the schools or attend there. Most of these questions I felt could only be answered by persons with daily access to the facilities, staff, etc. The students or teachers know more about it than I ever would.

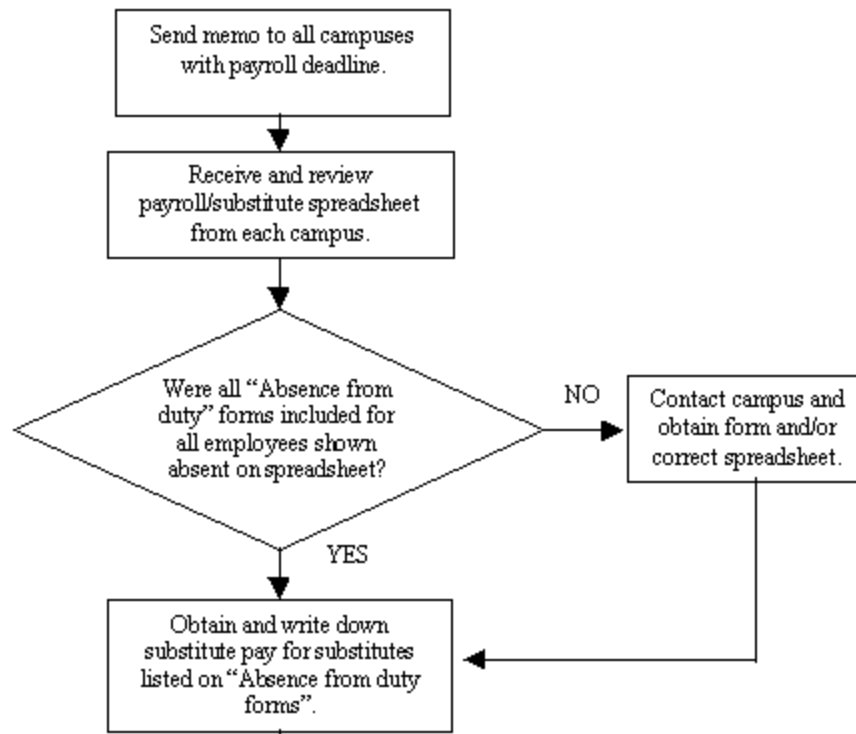
- My children are doing well at their school and I feel like they are getting a good education. This is only our second year at this school and I have had no problems with the school district. My only complaint is the bus does not pick up my children at our house. Their pickup is almost 1/4 mile from our house and during bad weather special arrangements must be made for them to get to the bus stop or home. Otherwise I am very satisfied with the district.

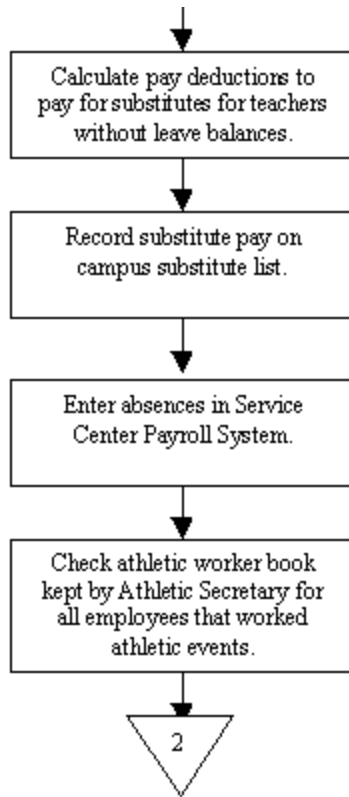
Appendix G

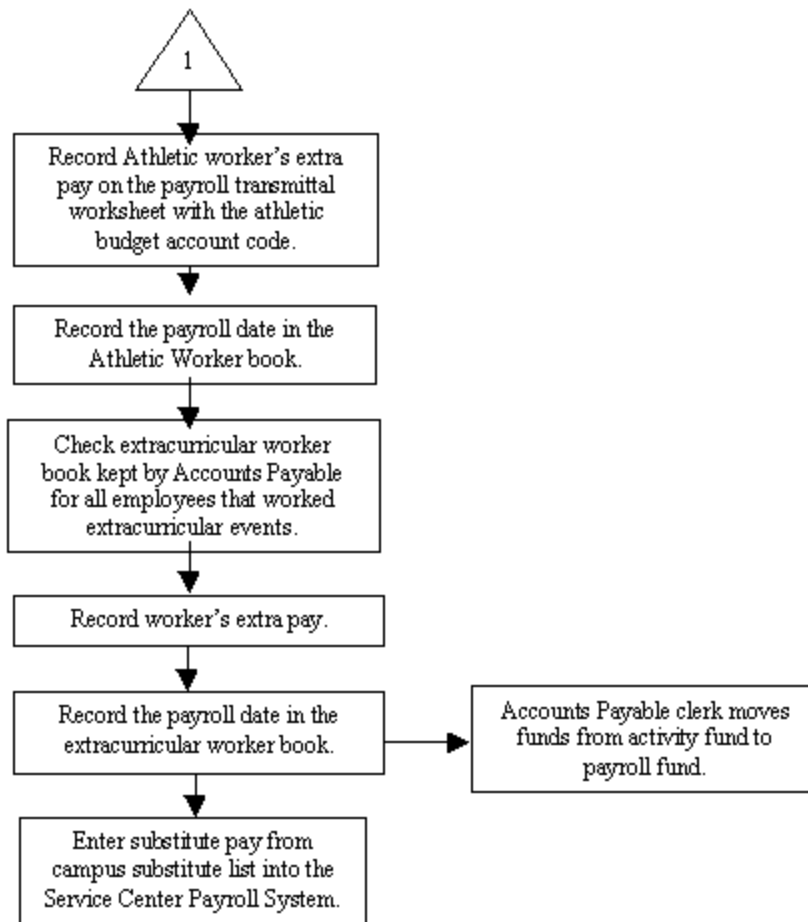
PAYROLL PROCESS

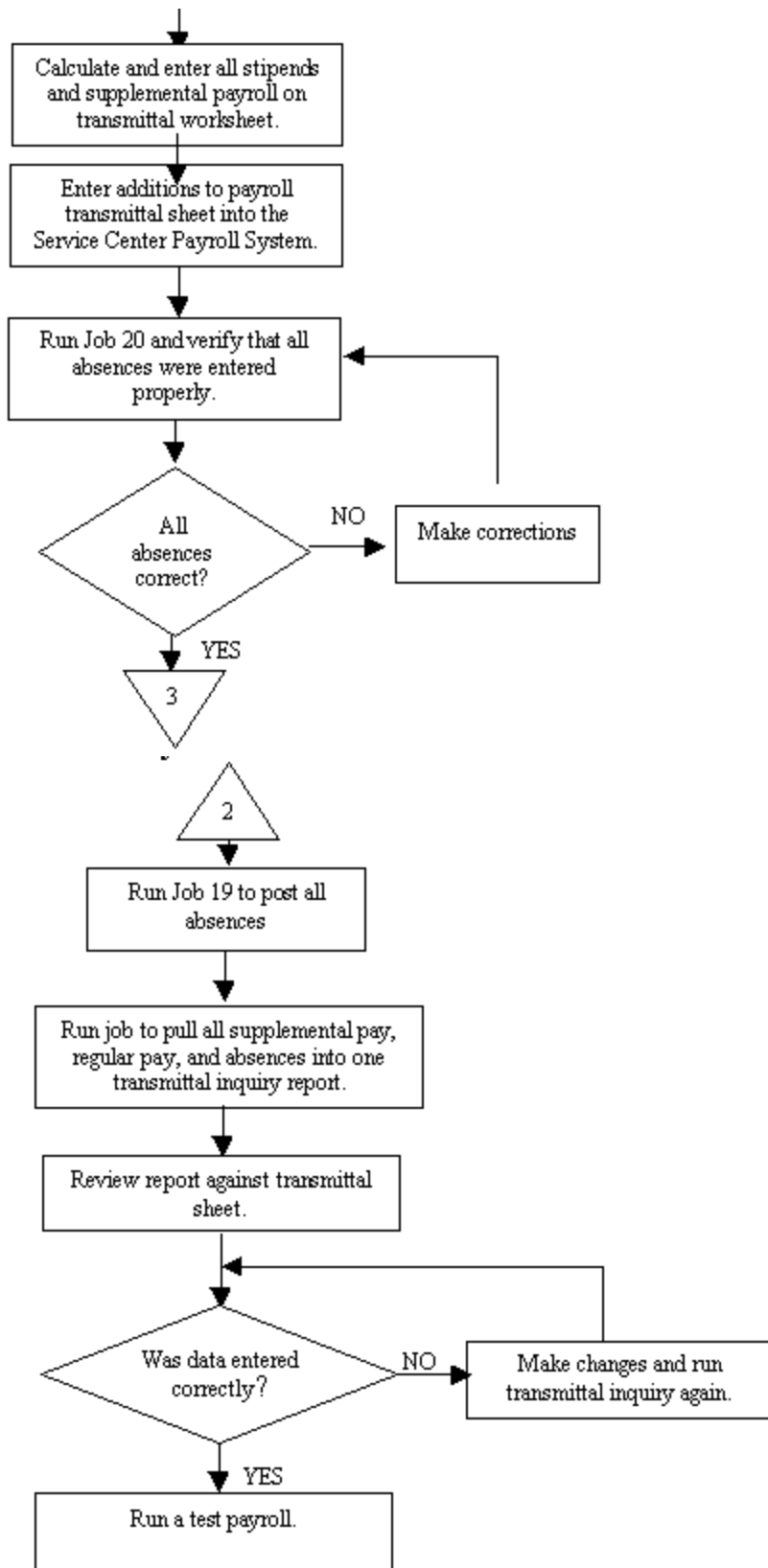
This appendix illustrates the detail of the payroll process.

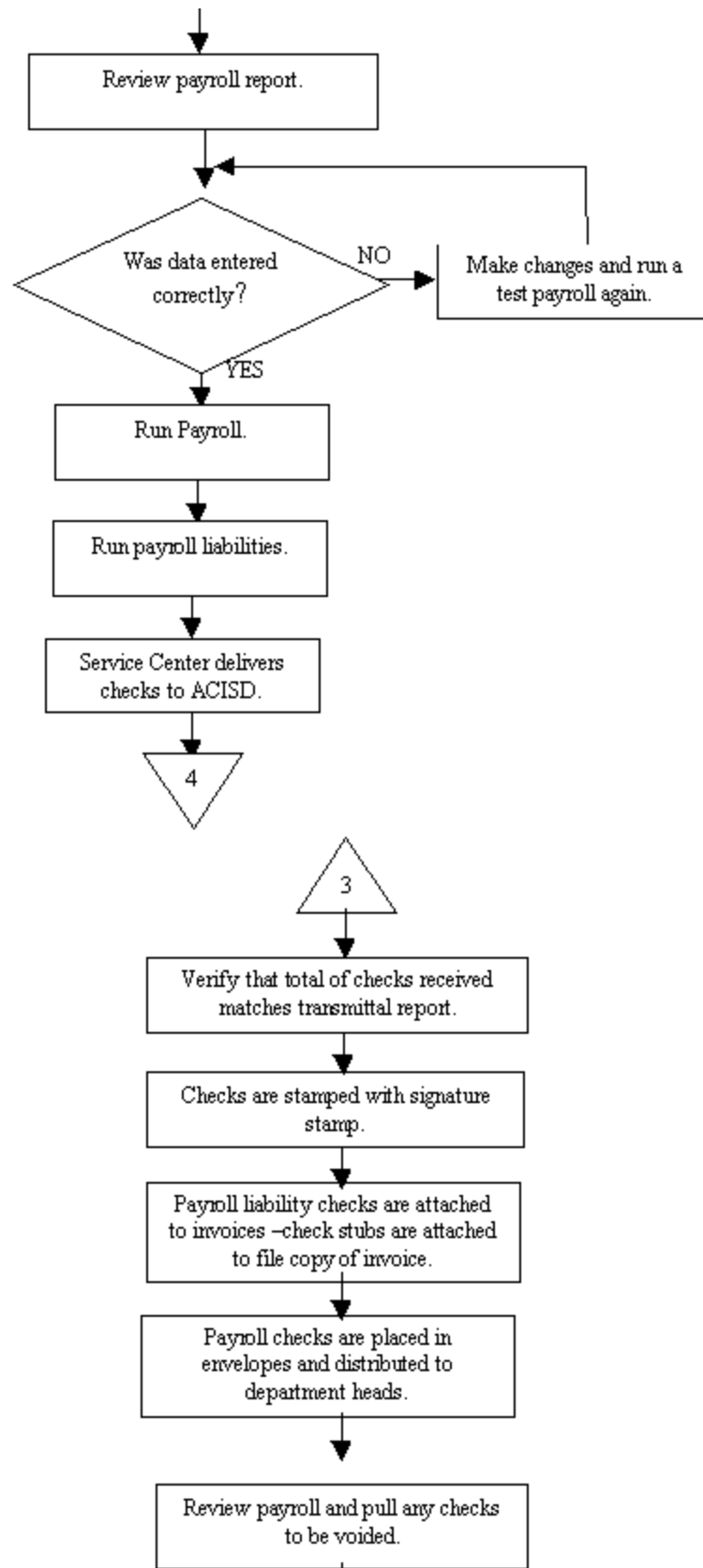
Exhibit G-1
Payroll Process

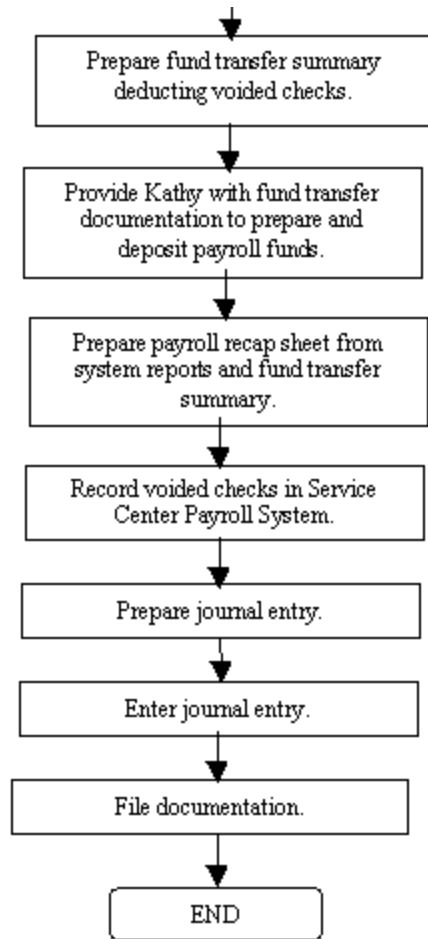












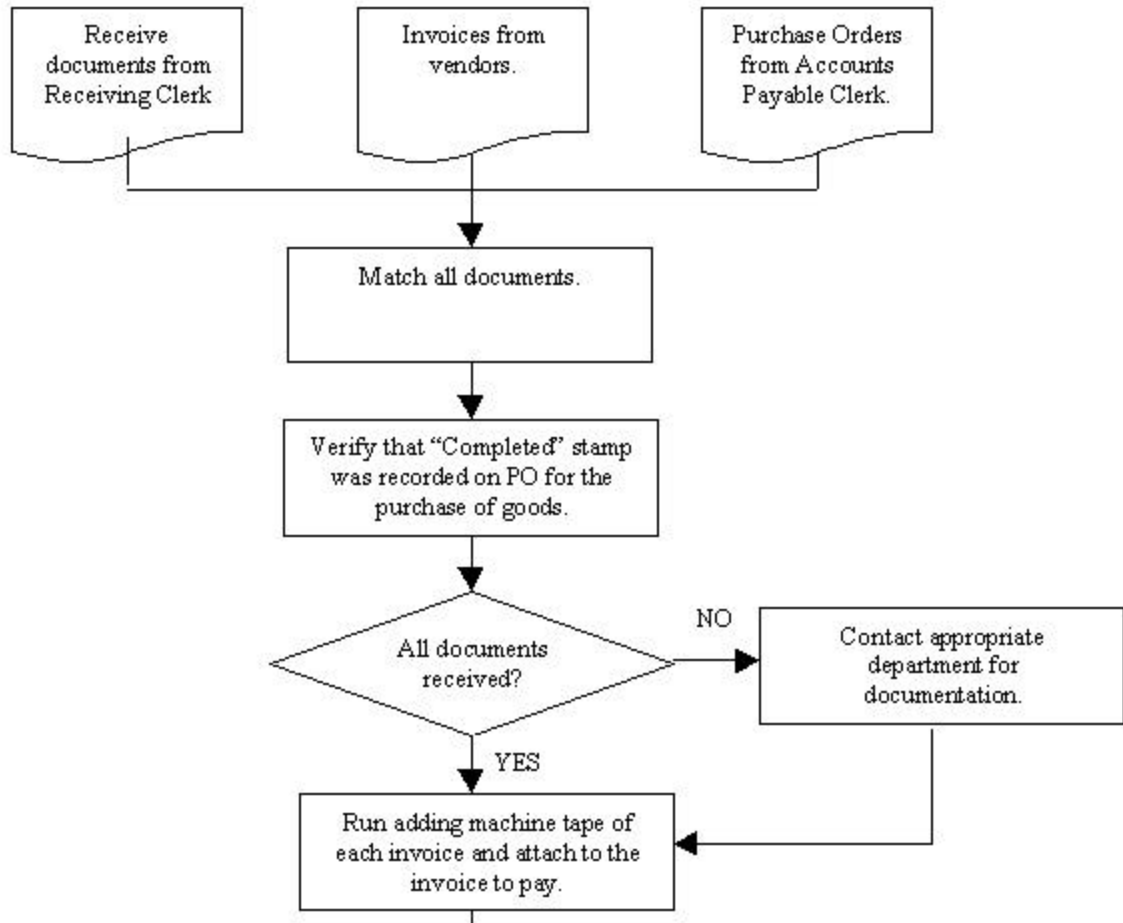
Source: ACISD Payroll Clerk.

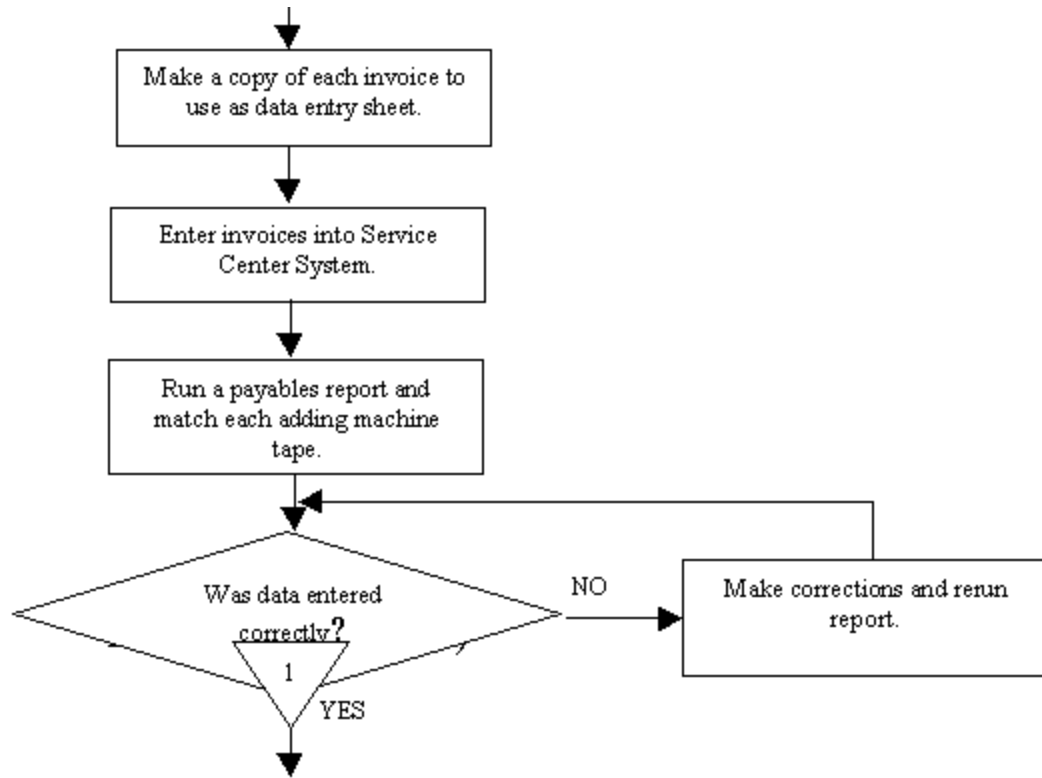
Appendix H

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE PROCESS

This appendix illustrates the detail of the accounts payable process.

Exhibit H-1
Accounts Payable Process





2

Submit job.

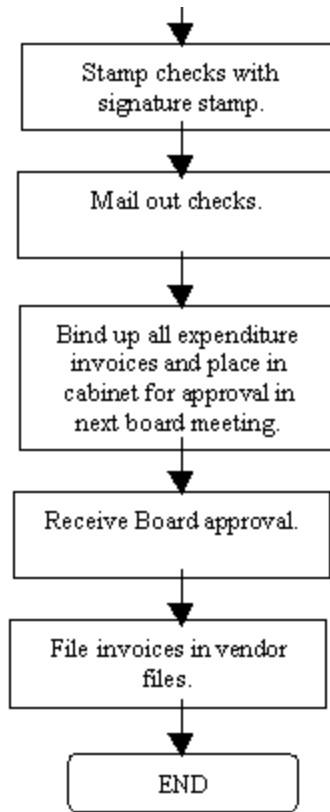
Receive checks from
Service Center.

Verify checks received
match transmittal report.

Stamp each invoice as
paid.

Place copies of checks in
vault with invoice copies
made for data entry.

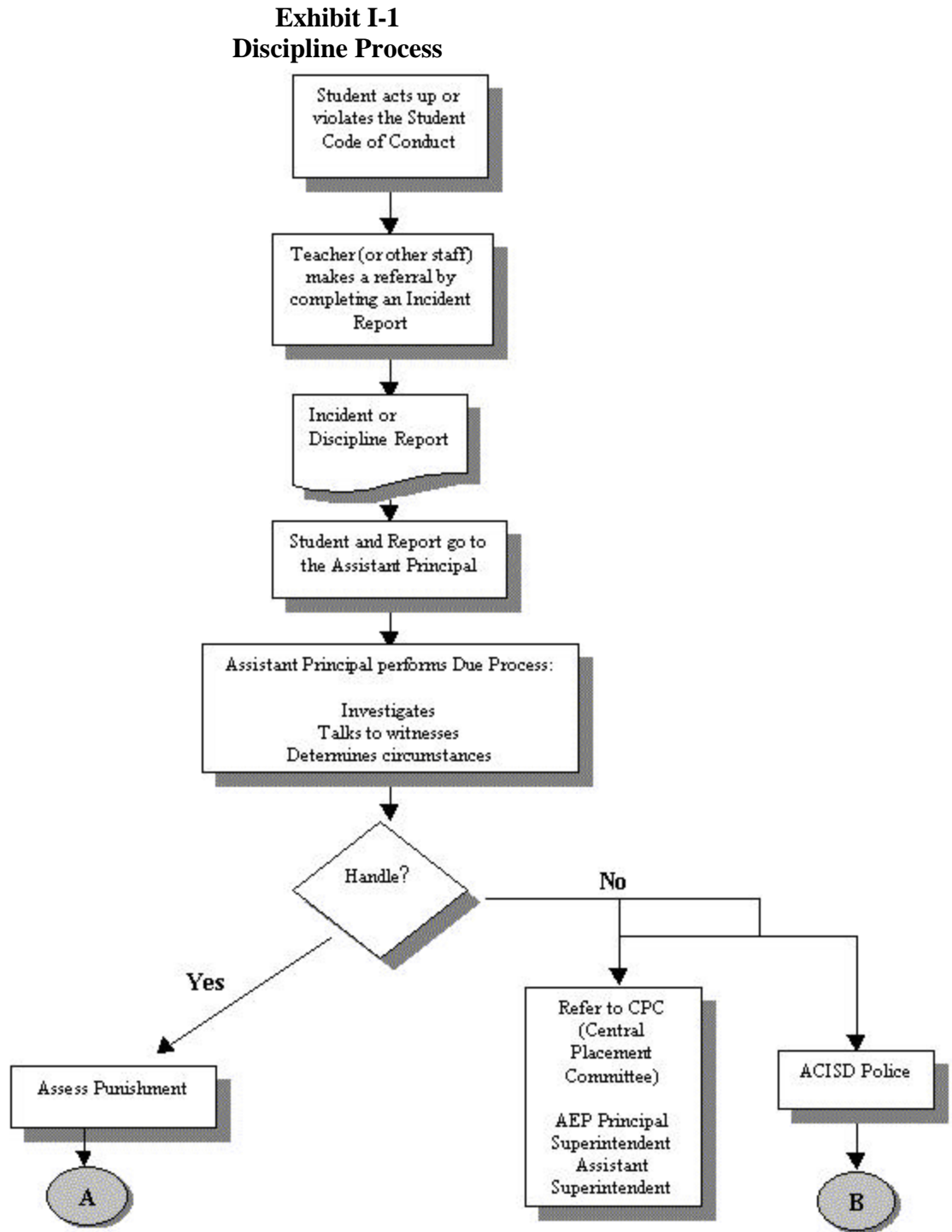
Verify vendor mailing
address with invoice
address and make any
changes.

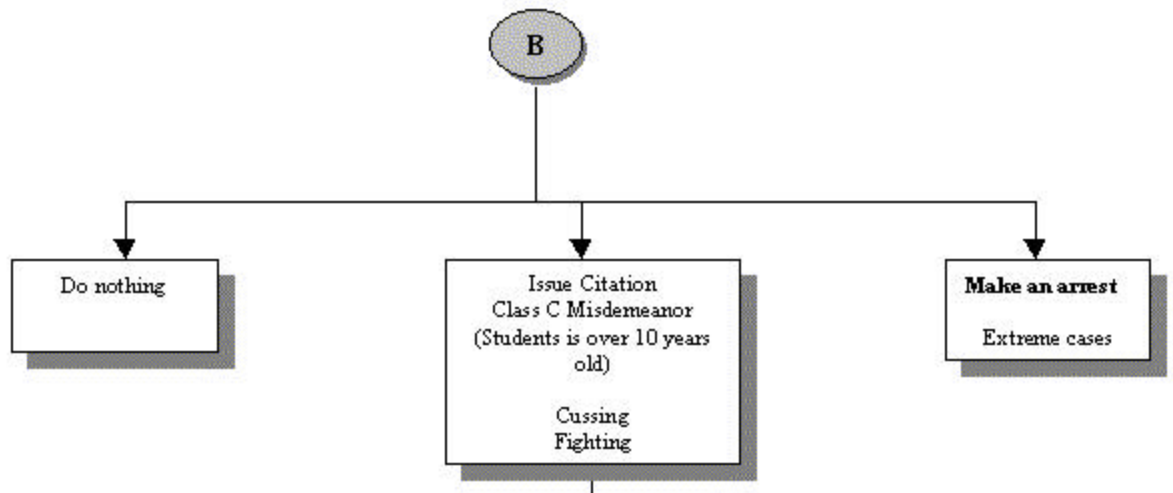
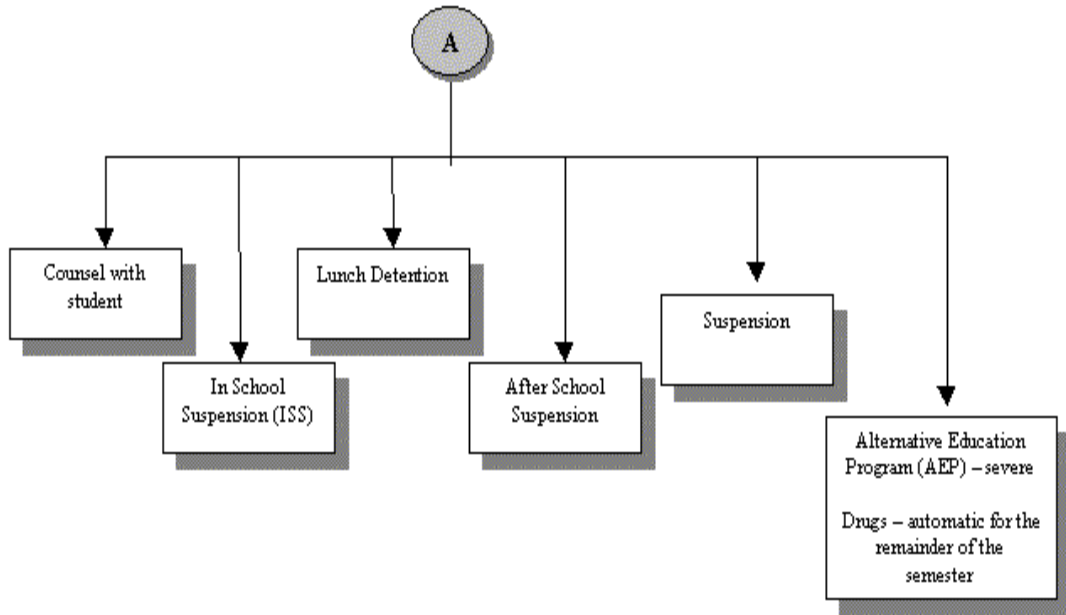


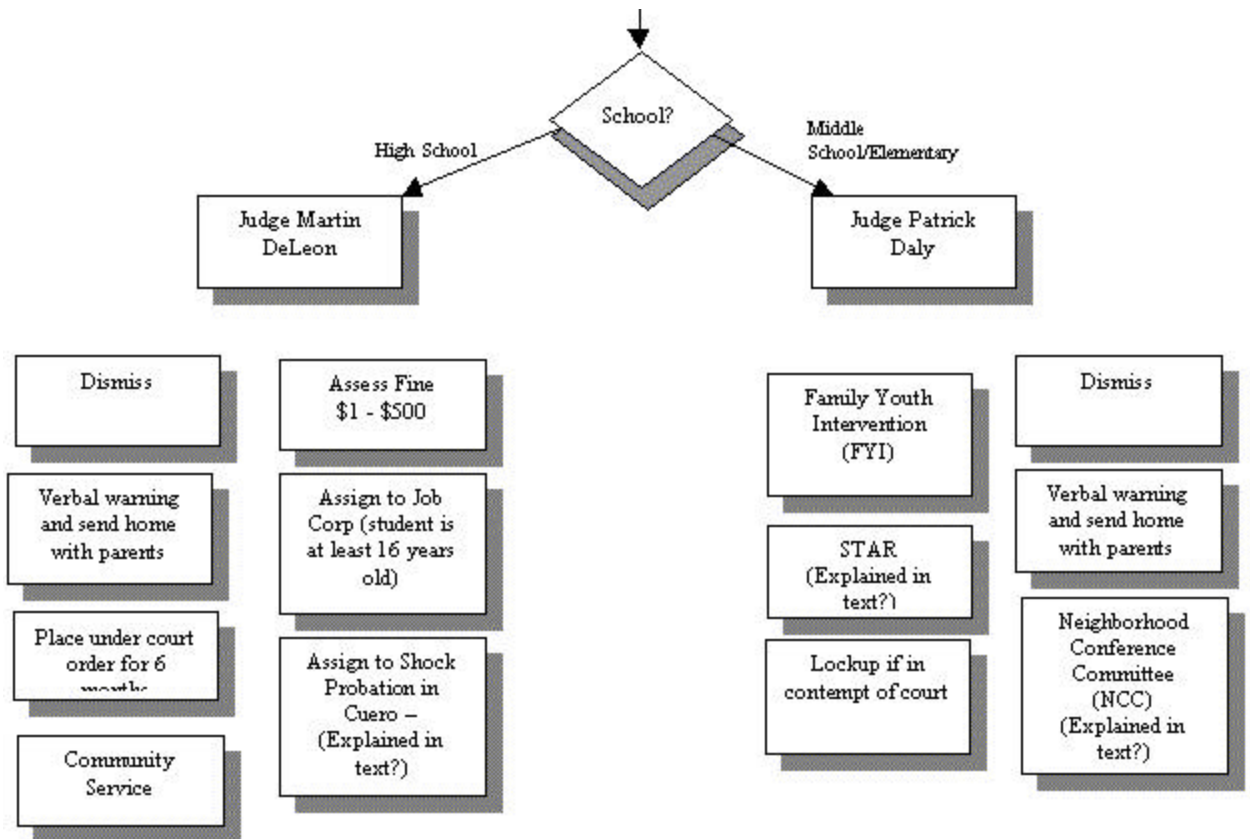
Source: ACISD Accounts Payable Clerk.

Appendix I DISCIPLINE PROCESS

Exhibit I-1 shows the ACISD discipline process.







Source: Interviews with the school resource officers and the assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Administration.