Lancaster Independent School District

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD

Robert E. Johnson Bldg.
1501 N. Congress Ave. - 5th Floor
Austin, TX 78701

512/463-1200
Fax: 512/475-2902
http://www.lbb.state.tx.us

June 30, 2005

Dr. Larry Lewis
Superintendent, Lancaster Independent School District

Dear Dr. Lewis:

The attached report reviews the management and performance of the Lancaster Independent School District's (LISD) educational, financial, and operational functions.

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

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

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

Respectfully submitted,

John O'Brien
Deputy Director
Legislative Budget Board

cc: Nanette Vick
    Edwin Kirkland
    R.E. Johnson
    Sue Mendoza
    Nina Mangrum
    Carolyn Morris
    Rick Glover

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
LANCASTER INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
MANAGEMENT AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Lancaster Independent School District's (LISD) school review report noted 14 accomplishments and made 97 findings/recommendations for improvement. The following is an Executive Summary of the significant accomplishments, findings, and recommendations that resulted from the review. A copy of the full report can be found at www.lbb.state.tx.us.

SIGNIFICANT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- The district combines implementing research-based initiatives, identifying grant funding for professional development, assigning accountability for curriculum efforts, and documenting districtwide changes in policies and procedures to address deficiencies in student achievement.

- By using collaborative service arrangements, ensuring instructional alignment with regular campuses, and providing instructional and behavioral research-based strategies, LISD efficiently and effectively provides disciplinary/alternative education program (DAEP) services to students.

- LISD has created and publishes parent guides to disseminate information about the state's required curriculum standards, the statewide assessment instrument, useful reference sites, and academic strategies to increase parental awareness and participation in homework and academic programs with their children.

- District administrators, with cooperation from the board, employed a variety of internal and external communication initiatives and outreach efforts to reestablish diminished district-community relations.

- The district uses an accountability process and detailed procedures to effectively manage campus and booster club fund-raising activities.

- LISD implemented a decentralized online purchasing system in 2003–04, provided by Regional Education Service Center X (Region 10), to increase purchasing efficiencies for staff districtwide.

- LISD uses a Parent Teacher Resource Center to provide teachers, staff, parents, volunteers, and community members with quality teaching and learning equipment and materials to promote student achievement.

- The district combines an annual two-day New Teacher Academy with detailed fact brochures, and scheduled community interactions to effectively orient its new teachers.

- LISD established an active educational foundation to provide funds for innovative teaching grants and scholarships for LISD educators.

SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS

- The district is missing the element of strategic planning and overall program evaluation in the Department of Teaching and Learning.

- District staff have not been consistently trained to fully collect, analyze, and use student performance data for teaching and curriculum adjustment and to implement districtwide test-taking strategies to improve student performance.

- LISD does not have established policies and procedures to reduce the loss of textbooks and provide options for replacement.

- LISD does not have a comprehensive plan addressing special education program deficiencies and reducing the number of students taking the state's alternative assessment instrument.

- The district does not have a comprehensive plan addressing Bilingual Education teacher shortages and overall program deficiencies or a defined procedures manual.

- The district does not have a strategic planning process, defined procedures, or assigned accountability to ensure overall coordination and completion of required improvement plans and a long-range strategic plan.

- LISD does not have adequate staff to facilitate technology integration into classroom instruction at all campuses according to locally established requirements and state technology recommendations.

- LISD has not met state and district goals of purchasing a computer for every four students nor developed a formal technology-related inventory process, which limits the opportunity for students to utilize technology in learning.

- The district's financial reporting process lacks summary or historical analyses, written explanations, and fails to provide the board with information in an easy to understand format.

▪ The district does not have an effective overall budget planning process that includes a budget calendar, a budget manual, and a mechanism to provide an audit trail to document the decisions that lead to the adopted budget.

▪ The district does not include various overhead costs associated with contract funds and related mechanical services such as the copier program or cell phone use in campus or department budgets.

▪ LISD's purchasing function is uncoordinated districtwide, resulting in unmonitored contracts, non-compliance with state purchasing rules, and uncoordinated use of purchasing cooperatives.

▪ Human Resources staff do not collect sufficient feedback or perform any data analysis to address historically high teacher turnover rates, which negatively affects student learning and increases teacher staffing costs.

▪ The district has not conducted energy audits or developed a districtwide energy management program, as outlined in its own board policy.

▪ Child Nutrition Department administration is not basing staffing decisions or productivity evaluations on available Meals Per Labor Hour (MPLH) calculations and reports available through existing electronic capabilities.

▪ The process for scheduling extracurricular trips is manual, inefficient, and not supported by detailed policies and procedures.

▪ LISD does not base police officer hiring decisions or deployment schedules on trend analysis or staffing formulas, reducing departmental overall effectiveness and resulting in significant overtime.

▪ LISD has not developed an annual end-of-year report that provides parents and community members with an overview of the district's accomplishments, specific student and staff information, financial data, and other related information to improve community support and advance district goals.

SIGNIFICANT RECOMMENDATIONS

▪ **Recommendation: Create and implement a Department of Teaching and Learning Strategic Plan including administrative leadership training and program evaluation schedules.** The district is missing the element of strategic planning and overall program evaluation in the Department of Teaching and Learning. In 2004–05, the district implemented many new research-based initiatives and is in the

process of addressing many program deficiencies identified by state or outside audits. However, the district has not formalized any process or schedule to conduct evaluations and needs assessments for all instructional programs. As a result, the district drafted an annual District Improvement Plan (DIP) on incomplete or unavailable data. The Department of Teaching and Learning also lacks complete districtwide curriculum goals, strategies, timelines, and staff with assigned accountability to oversee the implementation of goals. Key central and campus administrative staff also lack formal program evaluation, strategic planning, and professional development certifications necessary to effectively synthesize campus and departmental needs, goals, and instructional programs. By developing a departmental strategic plan including a program evaluation schedule and related training, the district institutionalizes staff accountability and coordinates the focus on identifying effective programs, addressing prioritized districtwide goals, and meeting more stringent state and federal student performance requirements.

▪ **Recommendation: Require Teaching and Learning staff and principals to attend data disaggregation training and include related test-taking strategies for students in instructional programs.** The district does not consistently use student performance analyses in its decisions to continue or discontinue instructional programs, require campus or district administrators to attend data disaggregation training, or provide related test-taking strategies aligned to identified areas of need for students. District administrators evaluated some federally governed programs and, in fall 2004, focused districtwide efforts on improving elementary Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) reading scores. However, the district has not created procedures for data collection and analysis of all programs to address measures and requirements in the state accountability system and the federal *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) Act. In 2004, the district did not meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) largely due to the participation and scores of students in a specific subgroup. Although available at no cost, the district did not send AYP data to Region 10 for review and analysis. By requiring all campus and district administrators to attend data disaggregation training and including test-taking strategies in the district's instructional program, administrators ensure that all program decisions are data-driven and match district, campus,

demographic group, and individual student needs.

- **Recommendation: Develop a manual and provide districtwide training on textbook inventory and loss procedures, perform scheduled textbook audits, and adopt policy to address textbook loss and replacement.** The district does not have written procedures in place to track textbooks, policy to provide options for replacement, or full use of its automated tracking system, resulting in lost textbooks and unnecessary costs. The district hired a textbook coordinator in 2003–04. When the coordinator arrived, there were no existing documented procedures or processes related to textbook accountability, no historical records available to use as base documents or to perform trend analysis, and a lack of coordination with the Business Office regarding replacements for lost textbooks in 2003–04, which resulted in replacements being paid for with funds not designated for textbooks. In addition, not all schools are using the automated textbook inventory system. During 2003–04, LISD lost nearly $27,000 worth of textbooks at the high school and more than $43,000 districtwide. Interviews with campus administrators and districtwide staff noted confusion about the entire textbook accountability process. In addition, the district does not attempt to replace lost textbooks with used textbooks. By documenting and combining the textbook accountability processes into an accessible and detailed manual, conducting training and periodic campus audits, the district should be able to identify problematic areas and implement strategies to reduce financial losses. Documented procedures should also facilitate transitions in the event of personnel change.

- **Recommendation: Revise, implement, and monitor a comprehensive strategic plan, update board policies, and require annual training for administrators and key personnel related to special education.** LISD does not have a comprehensive plan addressing special education program deficiencies and reducing the number of students taking the state's alternative assessment. This has resulted in ongoing program concerns including inconsistent pre-referral and program implementation, a lack of trained personnel and management, over-identification, and services provided in restrictive environments. Although NCLB regulations dictated a 1 percent state assessment exemption rate, the district exempted 3.1 percent of its overall student

population from the TAKS in 2003–04 while 5.8 percent took the state developed alternative assessment (SDAA). Comparatively, the state Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) exemption rate in 2003–04 was 2.1 percent and the percentage of students taking the SDAA was 5 percent. The district has initiated some new efforts in 2004–05 to address many historical special education-related problems identified in state compliance reviews and internal audits. However, in order for these efforts to be truly effective, the district should revise, implement, and monitor a comprehensive strategic plan for special education, including detailed strategies to address prioritized areas of need. The district should also focus on efforts to begin reducing the number of students either exempt from the TAKS or taking the state's alternative assessment. By addressing the areas of programmatic need on an annual basis and providing administrators and teachers with related training, the district should enhance overall services to students with special needs, provide necessary support to teachers and administrators, and begin to address necessary federal mandates increasing the number of students taking the statewide assessment.

- **Recommendation: Create and implement a board-approved Bilingual Education Program Plan including development of a detailed procedures manual, required annual training for administrators and key personnel, and quarterly progress and compliance monitoring.** The district did not develop a plan to address a shortage in certified bilingual teachers, provide required services for students in grades four and five, or formally request a state waiver regarding exemption from English as a Second Language (ESL)-certified teacher requirements. As a result, the district is not in compliance with state and federal Bilingual Education Program requirements. According to the superintendent and director of Special Programs, the district has requested waivers from TEA for approximately ten years to release the district from teacher certification requirements for this program. While the district identified the need to increase ESL services due to the increasing population of ESL students in its 2003–04 District Improvement Plan, in 2004–05, the district only offered services to students in grades one, two, and three. The district also identified but did not join a Region 10 bilingual education cooperative that provides administrators and teachers with assistance in program review and recruiting strategies. The district should offer ESL study sessions and

training, pay for associated certification testing fees, and work with local universities, Region 10, and TEA representatives to alleviate the shortage of bilingual/ESL teachers. With more ESL-certified teachers, the district will be able to offer the required ESL program at each grade level. Further, by researching and instituting an effective bilingual/ESL program, the district should improve instructional coordination and student performance.

- **Recommendation: Assign accountability for developing and implementing a strategic planning process to the superintendent's Leadership Team and adopt a long-range strategic plan.** While the district uses various committees to develop short-term or special projects, there is no process in place to ensure long-range strategic planning or written documentation of component elements occurs. Frequent leadership and administrative changes during the past five years have resulted in fragmented planning efforts, lack of planning documents, and no accountability measures to track incremental progress or ensure implementation of departmental, campus, or districtwide initiatives. The superintendent meets regularly with administrators to discuss immediate and future district needs; however, there is no documented planning process or assigned individual responsibility to coordinate and reconcile existing short-term documents or to enforce accountability for orally discussed plans. For example, the district effectively used a broad-based committee to plan, communicate, and disseminate information to help pass the 2004 $110 million bond package, yet there is no master facilities plan that includes all construction, renovation, and repair elements as outlined in the bond proposal. The Technology Department has the only written long-range departmental plan in the district, but it was not used to develop the budgeted technology figures projected in the bond proposal. The district did not finalize its 2004–05 District Improvement Plan, which is out of compliance with law. By documenting and using a planning process for developing a long-term strategic plan, the district institutionalizes a process and a resulting product that facilitate decisions based upon updated factual data as well as future projections and needs. In addition, a documented process should ensure consistent implementation of strategies and continued systematic reporting in the event of any personnel change. By assigning the superintendent's Leadership Team to this task, the district establishes the foundation for a comprehensive accountability system ensuring

that annual short- and long-term plans match and are in accordance with identified districtwide academic, operational, and financial goals.

- **Recommendation: Develop and assign technology coordinator roles at each LISD campus.** The Technology Department is not sufficiently staffed to perform instructional training and districtwide technology functions. By using existing professional resources, providing training and a stipend to designated instructional specialists for each campus, the district should be able to meet classroom, campus, and district instructional technology needs.

- **Recommendation: Implement a computer purchasing policy to achieve recommended computer levels for student use and create a formal technology-related inventory process.** While LISD has created an industry standard infrastructure, the district does not have a computer for every four students and has not developed a formal inventory process for technology to ensure compliance and accountability. In addition, the district does not purchase computers and related technology items through Region 10 though it is sometimes more cost-effective. Generally, there is only one computer in each classroom (for teacher use). According to the Texas STaR Charts and best practices at other school districts, schools should have one instructional multimedia computer with an Internet connection for every four students. This ratio should provide adequate computer access for learning technology-related skills. The district needs 376 additional computers to meet the one to four computers to student ratio. The district should establish a computer purchasing policy to acquire the computers. The computer purchasing policy should include timeline and costs for each of the next five years. By developing an inventory process to track these computers and other technology-related assets and replacing outdated equipment, the district ensures appropriate computer availability to students.

- **Recommendation: Develop a formal financial reporting structure with documented historical analysis and board reports prepared in accordance with Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) standards.** The district's financial reporting process lacks summary or historical analyses, written explanations, and fails to

provide the board with information in an easy to understand format. Some board members said they are unclear if they have an up-to-date picture of the district's financial status. Monthly financial reports for the board only contain information on the current year's General Fund and lack comparative historical analysis. The board revenue and expenditure budget reports provide detailed information comparing the revenues collected or expenditures incurred to date to the budget yet do not reference anticipated revenues or expenditures. These financial reports also fail to provide any reference to the fund balance, a key element regarding the district's overall fiscal soundness. LISD encountered its negative fund balance in 2002–03 partially due to the lack of attention to its fund balance. The chief financial officer should prepare a Comprehensive Annual Financial Report in accordance with GFOA standards, as well as monthly and quarterly board reports containing comparative actual and budgeted information with corresponding written analysis. By enhancing the structure of financial reports to include more stringent industry standards and summary and comparative analyses, administrators provide the board with a clear picture of the district's financial status and add internal mechanisms to enhance financial monitoring

▪ **Recommendation: Implement a formal budget planning process supported by board policy and develop a preparation manual with a budget calendar.** The district does not have an effective overall budget planning process, resulting in fragmented and uncoordinated budget planning activities. The district does not have a budget calendar and planning manual. During 2004–05, budget preparation was uncoordinated; campuses submitted budget requests through various non-standard ways such as memorandums or spreadsheets and frequently did not include cost impacts or budget categories. Budget planning also did not document budgeting decisions. By adopting board policy requiring a formal comprehensive district budget planning process that includes key elements such as a budget calendar, budget manual, detailed method for budget preparation and review, and opportunities for stakeholder input, the district will improve budget planning efficiency and allocation of resources.

▪ **Recommendation: Allocate operational costs for mechanical support services and contract funds to appropriate campus and**

departmental budgets. The chief financial officer does not initially set up accounts for contract funds and the related mechanical service programs that correspond to each department with an authorized contract fund budget. For example, LISD allocates all costs for copier and cell phone contracts to the Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation Department, yet other departments use the contract, resulting in inaccurate financial reporting within the district. In addition, there is no appropriate departmental budgetary management and accountability control for these funds. The chief financial officer should establish a copier internal service fund with budget allocations for copier use, including overhead costs, to schools and departments. The chief financial officer should allocate the cost of the cell phones directly to the departments or schools with cell phone users. By establishing financial controls that connect contract funds to all users, the district improves contract accountability, management, and reporting.

▪ **Recommendation: Implement a central purchasing oversight function in the Business Office and establish and fill a Purchasing coordinator position to provide this oversight.** The district does not have a comprehensive contract list, centrally located contract files, or a consistent contract monitoring process with accountability methods to document performance problems or issues of contract non–compliance. Departmental administrators have independently monitored some contracts and some associated contract terms, but not all contracts are efficiently managed. For example, the district has not reconciled copier invoices with contract terms. The chief financial officer should develop and assign the districtwide purchasing oversight function to a Purchasing coordinator in the Business Office to ensure accountability and coordination of district purchasing activities such as contract management, use of purchasing cooperatives, bid preparation, vendor relations, and compliance with purchasing policy. The chief financial officer and the director of Human Resources should update the Purchasing coordinator job description to include responsibility for districtwide purchasing oversight and key skills, experience, and knowledge of contract negotiations and management and district purchasing systems. By creating and filling a Purchasing coordinator position, assigning accountability for contract oversight, transferring all contract files to the

Purchasing Department, developing a comprehensive list, and including performance measures in new and renegotiated contracts, the district should strengthen central contract oversight, enhance contract and purchasing regulation compliance, and maintain copies of all legal documents.

■ **Recommendation: Analyze teacher exit interviews, prepare an annual teacher turnover report for the board, and conduct and analyze periodic teacher satisfaction surveys.** The HR Department does not collect sufficient feedback or perform data analysis to address historically high teacher turnover rates and its effect on student learning and increasing teacher staffing costs. Although the district has procedures and board policy regarding exit interview reports, HR staff inconsistently enforce the policy and do not use collected information to improve retention strategies. The HR director said teachers leave for higher salaries in other districts; however, the district has not used available state data on turnover rates to modify compensation strategies. According to TEA, LISD's teacher turnover rate was at least double the state average for the past 3 years: 39 percent in 2001–02, 34.5 percent in 2002–03, and 34.9 percent in 2003–04. The district turnover rates are higher than state averages for the past 12 years. By ensuring HR staff complete reports for all teachers leaving the district and periodically conducting an anonymous teacher survey to determine any reasons for low morale, the district should be able to develop effective strategies to reduce the high teacher turnover rate and improve teacher recruitment and retention.

■ **Recommendation: Implement a districtwide energy management and accounting program including associated training.** The district has not conducted energy audits or developed a districtwide energy management program as outlined in its own board policy. The district has specific board policy CD (LOCAL) and designates the director of Transportation, Custodial, and Maintenance with some energy management duties; however, these include some individual conservation training efforts but no aggressive focus on energy conversation or utility cost tracking. While the district spends an average of $.91 per square foot in utility costs based on 2004–05 data and in comparison to an industry standard of $1.00 per square foot, capturing and maintaining data during program implementation should help the district measure

energy efficiency cost-savings and success. The superintendent should work with the director of Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation to develop an energy management program and accounting practices in accordance with existing district policies and include administrative training on the program, policies, and respective campus responsibilities. The director of HR should include energy information in employee handbooks, orientation, and staff training sessions. By implementing this energy management and accounting program, training staff and administration, and monitoring utility and conservation efforts, the district should realize financial savings for possible reallocation to the classroom and increase conservation awareness.

■ **Recommendation: Expand productivity reporting and analysis to include Meals Per Labor Hour (MPLH) as a key indicator for staffing decisions and productivity evaluations.** The district does not analyze or regularly track MPLH to measure productivity, evaluate staffing levels, or provide budgetary requests for its Child Nutrition operations. While the district has the electronic reporting capability to produce MPLH calculations and reports, as of March 2005, the director of Food Services has only generated MPLH figures for a May 2004 end-of-the-year report presented to the board and key administrators. The director has inconsistently generated campus productivity reports, including number of meals served and revenues generated during 2004–05. However, these reports did not specifically address MPLH and were not used in staffing and production evaluations. By standardizing MPLH as a key performance measure for productivity and staffing allocations, the district can perform production trend analyses, project statistically based staffing needs for annual budget proposals, and increase overall campus and departmental efficiencies.

■ **Recommendation: Automate the system for extracurricular trip scheduling and billing and adopt related policies and procedures addressing drivers, fuel costs, and driver support.** The district does not have detailed transportation policies or associated procedures or an electronic monitoring mechanism addressing extracurricular driver scheduling, fuel consumption, and driver support. Although the district's transportation function is contracted to Dallas County Schools, the district maintains several drivers to accommodate extracurricular activities. The drivers receive $10 per hour,

which is significantly less than what the vendor charges. The district frequently pays designated drivers overtime, uses salaried personnel, or, on occasion, pays the contracted transportation vendor for drivers to accommodate extracurricular trips scheduled on short notice. During a sample five-month period from August 2004 through December 2004, the district paid nearly $7,500 for extracurricular drivers, much of which included paying drivers rates above the regular $10 hourly rate. Buses are also not consistently scheduled according to a timeline or routine procedures; manual requisitions are used. Teachers in focus groups complained about the inconsistency regarding the amount of time needed to reserve a bus and about the notification system. By automating the entire field trip system supported by detailed board policy and procedures, the district mitigates inconsistencies and institutes practices to regulate costs. Further by using existing district software to computerize scheduling, monitor expenses, and analyze collected data, the district should be able to reduce overtime costs and improve overall function scheduling and reporting districtwide.

- **Recommendation: Develop and adhere to annual staffing formulas and deployment schedules for police officers.** The district has more officers per student than all peers and some neighboring districts and is not basing staffing or deployment decisions on safety and security statistical analysis. In addition, all but one officer is assigned to a day shift leaving before-school hours at some schools unattended and resulting in significant overtime pay for coverage at evening sporting events. The chief of Police should review staffing levels as well as peer and industry suggestions and develop a staffing formula to assign police officers to shifts that most broadly cover the needs of the district, including early morning and evening hours. LISD should review officer deployment at least annually and compare it to detailed incident statistics by campus and time of day.

- **Recommendation: Develop and distribute an end-of-the year annual report to the community.** LISD has not developed an annual end-of-the-year report that provides parents and community members with an overview of the district's achievements and accomplishments, specific student and staff data, and other related information that would inform the community of how tax dollars are spent. The district's Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) report from TEA does not provide district data

to the community for the current school year. Department staff should design, develop, and distribute a report pamphlet or brochure that provides information about the district's achievements for the current year. The report should include items such as district goals, board members, student enrollment, schools, staff statistics, summary of test scores, student awards, new policy initiatives, district achievements, student awards, and other valuable information to sustain and promote stakeholder support and interest in schools. By providing this type of report with academic, program, and achievement details to parents and the community, the district promotes community partnerships and district goals.

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT LISD

- LISD is located on the southern city limits of Dallas and is served through Regional Education Service Center X (Region 10).

- District leadership has changed three times since 2000, with the current superintendent beginning employment in July 2004 and bringing a sense of stability and positive change according to board members, staff, and community members.

- With guidance from the Texas Education Agency (TEA), the district increased its fund balance from a negative 3.56 percent to 4.4 percent in 2003–04. The district's fund balance has fluctuated over the past 10 years, ranging from a high of 21.2 percent in 1997–98 to a low of negative 3.56 percent in 2002–03.

- Student enrollment growth is significant, with a projected 34 percent increase by 2008 to an approximate 7,000-student population. The district has experienced a 9.5 percent and a 10 percent annual enrollment growth in the last two years, respectively, and a 28 percent overall growth from 1993–94 to 2004–05. This does not include the influx of any new students from neighboring Wilmer-Hutchins ISD, which will further increase student enrollment.

- TEA has rated the district as *Academically Acceptable* since 1994.

- In 2003–04, 41 percent of LISD's students passed all tests on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), which is below the state average. According to preliminary 2004–05 results reported to the district, the number of students achieving commended performance increased. Preliminary overall scores, as expected by the district, are still below

state averages due to the implementation of many new instructional programs initially begun during 2004–05 and to student enrollment increases of 10 percent since 2003–04.

- The assistant superintendent left the district in April 2005 to become superintendent of Wilmer-Hutchins ISD in conjunction with a management team appointed by the state. The district is involved with discussions regarding many possible operational, financial, and/or instructional mergers between the two districts including immediately serving its students in 2005–06.

- In February 2004, for the first time in 20 years, the district passed a bond for $110 million for construction, renovation, technology upgrades, and land acquisition. In May 2005, the district completed construction and renovations efforts for J. D. Hall Rocky Crest— the disciplinary alternative education program—and the new administrative buildings, both included in Phase I developments. The athletic complex and stadium are scheduled for completion in fall 2005. A new high school is scheduled for completion in fall 2006. All projects slated for completion in 2009 are now scheduled for completion in 2006, three years ahead of schedule. None of the facilities' plans, however, projected the district's need to support additional students from Wilmer-Hutchins ISD. The district is discussing ways to address needed facilities with the state to enhance the educational opportunities for all students.

- The 2003 certified tax value for LISD available in summer 2004 was $1.0 billion; the district's property value per student was approximately $231,306. The 2005 projected tax value is $1.4 billion.

- LISD has a 2004–05 operating budget of nearly $30.7 million.

- Senator Robert Deuell, Senator Royce West, and Representative Helen Giddings represent the district.

2004–05 STUDENT DATA
- 5,203 total students
  - 76.0 percent African American
  - 18.0 percent Hispanic
  - 6.5 percent White
  - 0.6 percent Asian/Pacific Islander or Native American

  - 60.4 percent economically disadvantaged, compared to the state average of 52.8 percent.

2003–04 AUDITED FINANCIAL DATA
- total expenditures of nearly $33.6 million

- fund balance of nearly $1.1 million or 4.4 percent of total expenditures

- 607.6 total staff, 299.7 of which are teachers

- 2003 Total Tax Rate $1.65: $1.46 Maintenance & Operations, $0.19 Interest and Sinking Fund

2003–04 PERCENT SPENT ON INSTRUCTION
- LISD spent 50.5 percent of total annual actual expenditures on instruction, which is above the state average of 46.3 percent; using the same total annual actual operating expenditures and excluding bond indebtedness, the district spent 57.8 percent on instruction.

SCHOOLS
- The district consists of ten total campuses in 2004–05:
  - five elementary schools serving students in pre-Kindergarten through grade four;
  - one intermediate school for students in grades five and six;
  - one junior high school for students in grades seven and eight;
  - one high school separated into two campuses—one serving only students in ninth grade and the other serving students in tenth through twelfth grades; and
  - one disciplinary alternative education program campus.

SCHOOL REORGANIZATIONS
- To accommodate student enrollment growth and bond renovation and construction plans, the district reconfigured the use of its campuses for one year prior to completion of a new high school in fall 2006 according to the following plan for 2005–06:
  - one fourth grade center using the 2004–05 ninth grade high school campus;
  - five elementary schools including a combination of third grade students into three of the four schools;
  - one intermediate school for students in grade six;

- o one junior high school for students in grades seven and eight;

- o one high school serving all ninth through twelfth grade students; and

- o one disciplinary alternative education program campus.

- ▪ In 2006–07, the district plans to serve students using the following campus designations:

  - o six elementary schools serving students in pre-Kindergarten through grade five;

  - o one middle school serving students in grades six through eight;

  - o one new high school serving all ninth through twelfth grade students; and

  - o one disciplinary alternative education program.

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

At the end of the chapters, a page number reference identifies where additional general information for that chapter's topic is available. Each chapter concludes with a fiscal impact chart listing the chapter's recommendations and associated savings or costs for 2005–06 through 2009–10.

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

The following table summarizes the fiscal implications of all 97 recommendations contained in the report.

FISCAL IMPACT

	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09	2009–10	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) OR SAVINGS	ONE TIME (COSTS)
Gross Savings	$396,237	$426,003	$898,814	$421,263	$419,403	$2,561,720	$0
Gross Costs	($88,955)	($91,955)	($91,955)	($91,955)	($91,955)	($456,775)	($18,800)
Totals	$307,282	$334,048	$806,859	$329,308	$327,448	$2,104,945	($18,800)

Chapter 1

Educational Service Delivery

Lancaster Independent School District

Lancaster Independent School District (LISD) is located south of the Dallas city limits and serves 5,203 students in 2004–05. In 2003–04, the district served 4,700 students, including 314 limited English proficiency (LEP) students, 256 Gifted and Talented students, and 534 special education students. Fifty-three percent of LISD students, whom the district identified as economically disadvantaged, received free and reduced lunches in 2003–04.

LISD serves its students in ten campuses and programs. These include the high school divided into two campuses—a ninth grade and an upper level campus, one junior high school, one intermediate school, five elementary schools, and one disciplinary/alternative education program (DAEP). LISD students scored lower than the state average for 2003 and 2004 in all student subgroups for reading/English Language Arts, mathematics, and social studies. For 2004, the district received an overall state accountability rating of *Academically Acceptable*. Six schools received an *Academically Acceptable* rating and two schools received a *Recognized* rating. The district's DAEP will not receive an updated rating under the state's accountability rating system until 2005–06. The district also received a Gold Performance Acknowledgement for the number of students in the Class of 2003 graduating under the state's Recommended High School Program exceeding state averages. A director of Teaching and Learning provides leadership for the district's instructional programs.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- The district combines implementing research-based initiatives, identifying grant funding for professional development, assigning accountability for curriculum efforts, and documenting districtwide changes in policies and procedures to address deficiencies in student achievement.

- LISD has created and publishes parent guides to disseminate information about the state's required curriculum standards, the statewide assessment instrument, useful reference sites, and academic strategies to increase parental awareness and participation in homework and academic programs with their children.

- By using collaborative service arrangements, ensuring instructional alignment with regular campuses, and providing instructional and behavioral research-based strategies, LISD efficiently and effectively provides disciplinary/alternative education program (DAEP) services to students.

- LISD's athletic program provides initiatives with an academic foundation and a focus on sports to promote student achievement.

FINDINGS

- The district is missing the element of strategic planning and overall program evaluation in the Department of Teaching and Learning.

- While the district created curriculum guides and corresponding local assessments before the start of 2004–05, the district has not fully incorporated special population adaptions, added teachers to the Curriculum Committee, and updated review processes.

- The campus improvement planning process lacks some elements required in state law, full participation and coordination from the central administration, and research-based strategies addressing goals based on data analysis.

- Campus administrators do not consistently monitor teacher lesson plans and classroom instruction.

- District staff have not been consistently trained to fully collect, analyze, and use student performance data for teaching and curriculum adjustment and to implement districtwide test-taking strategies to improve student performance.

- LISD does not have established policies and procedures to reduce the loss of textbooks and provide options for replacement.

- The district does not have a documented student dropout prevention plan.

- LISD does not have a comprehensive plan addressing special education program deficiencies and reducing the number of students taking the state's alternative assessment instrument.

- The district does not have a comprehensive plan addressing bilingual education teacher shortages and bilingual program deficiencies or a defined procedures manual.

- While the district is making progress in improving Gifted and Talented (G/T) program offerings, LISD is not compliant with training requirements or overall program evaluation in accordance with state law.

- LISD has not fully expanded the overall Fine Arts Program to include emphasis on all areas based on student and parent interests and on availability of qualified teachers.

- While contracting for departmental oversight for the Guidance Program, the district does not emphasize academic scholarships, college counseling, and career counseling in district plans.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Recommendation 1 (p. 17): Create and implement a Department of Teaching and Learning Strategic Plan including administrative leadership training and program evaluation schedules.** The department should ensure that each staff member within the Department of Teaching and Learning provides input into the department plan on the goals, strategies, timelines, and monitoring guidelines for their respective programs. In addition, the district should ensure that assigned administrators participate in ongoing professional development related to identified goals and objectives in the District Improvement Plan (DIP). By developing a departmental strategic plan including a program evaluation schedule and related training, the district institutionalizes staff accountability and coordinates focus on identifying effective programs, addressing prioritized districtwide goals, and meeting more stringent state and federal student performance requirements.

- **Recommendation 2 (p. 18): Expand representation on the Curriculum Committee, update all curriculum guides according to a schedule, and include modifications for various learning levels.** The district should add a variety of stakeholders to the Curriculum Committee and institute a schedule to update and modify curriculum guides for students with diverse special needs. Including a wider diversity of teachers and professionals on the district's existing Curriculum Committee and broader learning style and level modifications in curriculum guide updates provides teachers and campus administrators with consistent, comprehensive, and adaptive tools to promote student success in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and on the TAKS.

  Recommendation 3 (p. 19): Develop and use a districtwide Campus Improvement Plan (CIP) template and state compliance checklist and ensure district administrative participation in CIP data analysis, inclusion of research-based strategies, and goal achievement. The district should modify the campus improvement planning process to include training for all site-based decision-

making teams, individualizing annual goals and objectives based on data analysis, and providing review comments to campus administrators from district administration before annual adoption. By providing training to site-based decision-making teams, customizing a district-developed template, and ensuring central administrative assistance in goal development and achievement using research-based strategies, the district should produce individualized CIPs that comply with federal mandates, match district goals, and annually address students' needs.

- **Recommendation 4 (p. 20): Create and implement a districtwide lesson plan policy and walk-through instrument and process.** The director of Teaching and Learning should ensure lesson planning relates to adopted standards, reflects the district's focus on improving student achievement, and uses data from available software and curriculum programs. By consistently using a standardized walk-through instrument and process, the district institutionalizes the process and provides teachers with timely, efficient, and effective feedback to tailor lessons to deficiencies in student achievement and simultaneously meet district objectives.

- **Recommendation 5 (p. 23): Require Teaching and Learning staff and principals to attend data disaggregation training and include related test-taking strategies for students in instructional programs.** The superintendent should require administrators to attend Academic Excellence Indicator System Indicator Training (AEIS-IT) training or related-data seminars such as those provided by Region 10. Additionally, the district should provide students with test-taking strategies to assist in improving performance on standardized tests. By requiring all campus and district administrators to attend data disaggregation training and including test-taking strategies in the district's instructional program, administrators ensure that all program decisions are data-driven and continue to match district, campus, demographic group, and individual student needs.

- **Recommendation 6 (p. 28): Develop a manual and provide districtwide training on textbook inventory and loss procedures, perform scheduled textbook audits, and adopt policy to address textbook loss and replacement.** LISD should reduce its loss of textbook funds by consistently implementing an

automated textbook inventory system, ensuring all campus administrators and the textbook coordinator receive appropriate training, and by purchasing used textbooks at a reduced rate when appropriate.

- **Recommendation 7 (p. 30): Create a dropout prevention and assistance plan coordinating related community and districtwide student services.** LISD should use a self-assessment instrument for dropout prevention as a basis for designing its districtwide plan. The director of Teaching and Learning should cooperate with the director of the disciplinary/alternative education program and the chief of Police to ensure collaboration of effort and provide comprehensive services to students to ensure the dropout rate remains low.

- **Recommendation 8 (p. 33): Revise, implement, and monitor a comprehensive strategic plan, update board policies, and require annual training for administrators and key personnel related to special education.** Given the district's 2004–05 attention to begin addressing historical programmatic deficiencies including administrative and staff turnover, over identification, and services provided in restrictive environments, LISD is moving in the right direction. However, in order for these efforts to be truly effective, the district should revise, implement, and monitor a comprehensive strategic plan for special education, including detailed strategies to address prioritized areas of need. The district should also focus on efforts to begin reducing the number of students either exempt from the TAKS or taking the state's alternative assessment. By addressing the areas of programmatic need on an annual basis and providing administrators and teachers with related training, the district should enhance overall services to students with special needs, provide necessary support to teachers and administrators, and begin to address necessary federal mandates increasing the number of students taking the statewide assessment.

- **Recommendation 9 (p. 35): Create and implement a board-approved Bilingual Education Program including development of a detailed procedures manual, required annual training for administrators and key personnel, and quarterly progress and compliance monitoring.** The district should immediately address the existing state non-compliance in the Bilingual Education program

and offer services to qualifying students in grades 4, 5, and 6 by adopting a policy addressing Bilingual Education, developing a procedural manual, and annually monitoring services and related student performance. Through these policy, procedural, and accountability initiatives, the district not only ensures compliance with law but also enhances services to students and supports their future academic success.

- **Recommendation 10 (p. 38): Provide in-house training, electronically monitor completed hours for all Gifted and Talented (G/T) teachers, and complete an annual program review.** The district should provide training, annually review the G/T program, and electronically monitor completed hours for all district teachers of record to ensure that highly qualified teachers are instructing LISD's G/T students. By closely monitoring the overall provision of program services including professional development requirements through annual District and Campus Improvement Plan updates, in-house training, and monthly electronic tracking efforts, the district not only complies with law but enhances services provided to students.

- **Recommendation 11 (p. 40): Increase the number of Fine Arts options based on student interest and existing teacher qualifications.** LISD should increase the number of Fine Arts options based on student enrollment, parent and student interest, and the availability of qualified teachers within the district. By offering a variety of options to students, the district continues to provide a well-rounded education and helps students gain valuable discipline, skills, and knowledge that contribute to school success.

- **Recommendation 12 (p. 41): Increase college and career counseling and provide assistance to students seeking scholarships.** LISD's Guidance Department staff should implement an aggressive career and college counseling program. By assisting students with scholarship applications and increasing career counseling, the district helps students be better prepared to achieve post-high school goals.

DETAILED ACCOMPLISHMENTS

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The district combines implementing research-based initiatives, identifying grant funding for professional development, assigning accountability for curriculum

efforts, and documenting districtwide changes in policies and procedures to address deficiencies in student achievement. The district assigned curriculum guide development and renovation to a newly hired director of Teaching and Learning in 2004–05. LISD's curriculum management initiatives monitor TEKS-based teaching and collect data on the subsequent correlation with student performance. The director of Teaching and Learning and departmental staff are beginning to document and monitor classroom curriculum consistency, ensure teachers adhere to the TEKS, and align curriculum and instruction with the TAKS.

The district's curriculum management system, Objective Alignment System in Schools (OASIS), is accessible on the Internet and helps teachers match lesson plans with the TEKS and align curriculum and instruction with the TAKS. This system contains a database of curriculum information vertically-aligned with TEKS for all subject areas in grades K–12 and TAKS in grades K–10 helping teachers and administrators consistently develop lessons and provide students with a sequence of skills necessary to move forward in subjects from grade to grade.

The director of Teaching and Learning also ensured all teachers participated in an outsourced three-day training, *Understanding the Depth and Complexity of the TEKS Standards*, to begin promoting curriculum consistency in the classroom.

Survey results confirm that the district provides teachers with appropriately aligned curriculum guides. More than 69 percent of the principals and assistant principals and more than 66 percent of the teachers either agree or strongly agree that the district appropriately aligns and coordinates its curriculum guides.

Exhibit 1–1 provides further examples that indicate administrative curriculum progress and recent accomplishments in improving instruction for students in the core subject areas.

By implementing a variety of research-based initiatives, seeking grant funding, assigning accountability for curriculum renovation to the director of Teaching and Learning, and documenting related changes in policies and procedures, the district is laying the foundation to address student achievement deficiencies.

PARENT GUIDES

LISD has created and publishes parent guides to disseminate information about the state's required curriculum standards, the statewide assessment instrument, useful reference sites, and academic strategies to increase parental awareness and

participation in homework and academic programs with their children. The detailed *Parents' Guides to the TEKS* for Pre-K through grade 12, include knowledge, tips, and resources in the four content area TEKS—reading/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.

The guides clearly explain a definition of the standards to parents, give specific examples of the standards, and give parents specific, grade-appropriate questions to ask their children. For example, the guide recommends the following for grade 8 Language Arts:

- parents ask questions such as, "Tell me one thing you learned today. Why is it important to learn that? What can you do to make your work better?"

- successful strategies for learning at home, including suggestions for getting a child to read, write, think, be organized, and assume responsibility for his/her own learning;

- resources for parents such as book titles that may interest children according to his/her age; and

- useful websites such as the *Texas Library Association*, *Smithsonian Institute*, Latino Reading sources, and others.

By creating grade-specific parent guides, the district encourages parent involvement and enhances communication regarding state standards.

DISCIPLINARY ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM

By using collaborative service arrangements, ensuring instructional alignment with regular campuses, and providing instructional and behavioral research-based strategies, LISD efficiently and effectively provides disciplinary alternative education program (DAEP) services to students. Although not documented through statistical correlation or program evaluation, district administrators and staff cite the provision of services through the program with a reduction in the number of students placed in the Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program (JJAEP) through Dallas County and virtual elimination of any instances of DAEP fights since 2001–02.

The DAEP moved to the J.D. Halling Learning Center at Rocky Crest in April 2005 from a temporary portable building on the Lancaster High School property. The district prioritized the program and included funds to build the center from the 2004 bond. In December 2004, the district served 33 students in grades 7 through 12 in the program. The district assigns one director of DAEP, four core

EXHIBIT 1–1
LISD
2003 AND 2004 ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN CORE SUBJECTS

<u>READING/LANGUAGE ARTS</u>
- Received Reading First Grant for K-3. Grant will fund supplies, materials, professional development, and one Voyager coach (literacy specialist) per campus.
- West Main, Rolling Hills, and LISD (grade 5) received the Rider 51 Grant from TEA. This grant funded materials for Voyager Passport Reading Intervention.
- Conducted a 2-day training for all K-3 principals, literacy specialists, and general education, special education, bilingual, and ESL teachers on the (Voyager) Universal Literacy System.
- Conducted a half-day training on Voyager Passport Reading Intervention Program for grade 4 teachers (West Main and Rolling Hills) and grade 5 language arts teachers.
- Implemented Voyager-Universal Literacy System on September 27.
- Developed a districtwide inventory system for all Voyager non-consumable materials for each elementary campus.
- Conducted "Family Reading and Math Nights" in October and November at each elementary, intermediate, and junior high school.
- Conducted weekly on-site visits with Voyager Coordinator and Voyager Field Support Technician to assist with initial implementation of the reading program.
- Administered Form A – Iowa Test Basic Skills (ITBS) for grades 1–3.
- Assessed all intermediate and junior high students for Campus Wide Reading Program – daily reading instruction for 45 minutes.
- Conducted Campus Wide Reading Inventory for high school students.
- Developed vertical teams for pre-Advanced Placement (AP) teachers to discuss curriculum alignment and instructional planning guides.
- Created Kilgo-Level of questions posters for high school English teachers.
- Provided Write Traits training for all teachers.

<u>MATHEMATICS</u>
- Implemented Growing with Mathematics for all Pre-K classrooms. Conducted training in August 2004.
- Implemented Every Day Calendar Math for all Pre-K–6 classrooms.
- Conducted weekly "Short Segments" to provide teachers with assistance with understanding the TEKS for each six weeks and to discuss and share teaching strategies.
- Continued to provide math manipulatives to all classrooms.
- Developed Math Enrichment (daily skill practice) curriculum for junior high teachers and students.
- Revised and implemented Regional Education Service Center IV Math Model instructional planning guide.
- Formed Math Clubs for grades 2–6.
- Provided a CD for grades 7–12 teachers with teacher resources including Instructional Guides, TEKS Study Guides, TEA Blueprint, and sample assessments.

<u>SCIENCE</u>
- Thirteen teachers attended the Conference for the Advancement of Science Teaching (CAST) in Corpus Christi, TX in November 2004. All teachers are responsible for conducting a 3.5-hour training during the summer. All LISD teachers teaching Pre-K–12 sciences completed state mandated safety training, Texas Science Safety Standards.
- Received TEXTEAMS Science Mentoring Academies Grant for High School Science Teachers from TEA and The University of Texas Dana Center.
- Seven high school biology and Integrated Physics and Chemistry teachers will begin the first of six staff development trainings, TEXTEAMS Science Mentoring Academies, at the University of North Texas, Denton, November 2004.
- Provided Elementary Science FOSS Kits—Interactive/hands-on-science investigation kit.
- Developed grade 10 and 11 TEKS Acceleration Guides— On Teaching, Re-teaching, Acceleration, and Comprehension (On TRAC).

<u>SOCIAL STUDIES</u>
- Provided TEKS Overview Guide for teachers. This guide provides teachers with TEKS clarifications, instructional considerations, and resources.
- Initiated Oral History Program that will address specific TEKS objectives.
- Created a gap alignment assessment.

NOTE: Subsequent to the review team's visit, the district furthered research-based strategies and teacher training in the area of mathematics.
SOURCE: LISD, Department of Teaching and Learning, 2004.

subject teachers, one special education teacher, one special education assistant, and one administrative assistant to serve students through the program.

The DAEP's vision statement is, "Every individual is important to us. Our goal is to reach each student where they are and bring them forward to a level of competence so that they may be productive in a social and educational environment." The district assigns students to the program for a minimum of 30 days to a maximum of 180 days with an average stay

of approximately 45 days. Before a student's attendance, the student and his or her parents/guardian must read and sign a contract specifying the rules for remaining in the program.

DAEP teachers regularly attend subject specialists' meetings at students' home schools to ensure that the DAEP curriculum aligns with the curriculum at the regular schools. In addition, DAEP staff use a research-based program called *A+nyWhere Learning System*, aligned with the TAKS and including an assessment of the students' strengths and deficiencies based on state and district standards. The program provides for technology and traditional classroom instruction based on each student's individual assessment.

DAEP staff enhance cost savings for the district by identifying and obtaining free program offerings social agencies' program offerings to enhance the DAEP students' social skills or address identified needs of the students. Since mid-year 2003–04, the program has been using an intervention specialist funded through the Texas Commission of Alcohol and Drug Abuse. During the same time, the Greater Dallas Council provided a variety of character education programs to students. When the intervention specialist is not working at the DAEP, he provides anger management and social skills training in other LISD schools. The district houses the intervention specialist at Lancaster Junior High School. Campus discipline records show there have been only two fights in five years of the DAEP operation.

Administrators and staff attribute fewer JJAEP placements over the past four years (2001–02 through 2004–05) to the success of the DAEP. **Exhibit 1–2** shows Lancaster ISD's number of JJAEP placements during that same time.

Survey results confirm the success of the DAEP program. More than 55 percent of the teachers, 76 percent of the principals and assistant principals, and

EXHIBIT 1–2
LISD JUVENILE JUSTICE ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PLACEMENTS 2001–02 THROUGH 2004–05

YEAR	NUMBER OF JJAEP PLACEMENTS	COST SAVINGS REPORTED BY LISD ONLY
2001–02	12	$73,440
2002–03	10	61,200
2003–04	9	55,080
2004–05	*	12,240
Total Savings	NA	$201,960

NOTE: denotes five or fewer not reported due to privacy reasons, and NA denotes not applicable.*
SOURCE: LISD, director of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program, 2004.

69 percent of the district administrative support staff agree or strongly agree that LISD has an effective disciplinary alternative education program. The district plans to continue collecting data to support recidivism rates, reductions in placements, and academic and behavioral success of students exiting from the DAEP.

According to the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE*), school districts across the country are turning to alternative education programs to deliver educational and other support services for students expelled or suspended from school. Some school districts are modifying existing programs to accommodate the larger numbers of students expelled for disruptive behaviors, while others, such as the program in Lancaster, are creating new programs, often in collaboration with social agencies or nonprofit service organizations. The programs typically differ from those provided in a traditional school in such dimensions as student-teacher ratios, curriculum presentation, program settings, school to community or workplace links, behavior modification emphasis, conflict resolution and anger management counseling, and availability of comprehensive support services.

The Lancaster DAEP fulfills the criteria as an effective alternative education program as outlined by the USDOE. The district combines research-based strategies, close communication between program staff and regular campus staff, behavior and character intervention, and community/business relationships to provide services to assigned students, resulting in successful transitions back to their home schools.

ATHLETIC PROGRAMS

LISD's athletic program provides initiatives with an academic foundation and a focus on sports to promote student achievement.

Exhibit 1–3 provides a listing of LISD sports, coaches allotted for each sport, and athletes participating in each sport for the 2004–05 school year. As shown, 16 sports are offered to students during the school year. A review of the athletic program records show equity among girls' and boys' sports with respect to offerings, funding, and appropriate staffing.

LISD implemented a unique program in 2004–05 in which students who score in the top 10 percent of their class act as peer tutors for athletes. Another athletic program recently implemented is the *Read to Growth Program,* which originated at Southwest Missouri State University. This program requires each varsity team athlete to visit an elementary school on a regular basis to read to younger students.

EXHIBIT 1–3
LISD ATHLETIC PROGRAM
2004–05

SPORT	NUMBER OF COACHES	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
Football	12	128
Basketball–Boys	4	90
Track–Boys	5	70
Track–Girls	5	56
Basketball–Girls	4	50
Baseball	3	45
Volleyball	3	39
Wrestling	2	38
Power-Lifting	2	30
Soccer–Boys	1	28
Soccer–Girls	2	22
Softball	2	20
Swimming	1	17
Golf - Boys/Girls	1	16
Tennis - Boys/Girls	1	16
Cross Country - Boys/Girls	2	*

*NOTE: * denotes five or fewer not reported due to privacy reasons.*
SOURCE: LISD, Athletic Department, 2004.

The program's purpose is to help build confidence and inspire younger students through open questions after each reading session. The athletes read to students in assigned classrooms at both West Main and Pleasant Run Elementary Schools. The class selects a book for the athlete to read and autograph. Teachers interviewed believe the program is successful and say the elementary students look forward to the athletes' visits.

The athletic and assistant athletic directors strongly adhere to the state policy of "no pass, no play." Each student participating in a sport must maintain a 73 percent or better average to be eligible to play. The district requires use of standardized grade sheet forms and athletic reinstatement forms for each sport. Students are responsible for ensuring teachers complete the appropriate forms for their weekly grades. Students must then give the sheets to their respective coaches on a weekly basis in order to play in any games scheduled for each week. Failure to return weekly forms results in students not permitted to play for the week. The district also requires athletes who are failing coursework to attend mandatory tutorials.

Through the combination of academically-oriented programs and adherence to state requirements for participation in extracurricular sports using standardized forms and student accountability, the district provides sport programs founded on the priorities of instruction.

DETAILED FINDINGS

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTIONAL PLANNING (REC. 1)

The district is missing the element of strategic planning and overall program evaluation in the Department of Teaching and Learning. In 2004–05, the district implemented many new research-based initiatives and is in the process of addressing many program deficiencies identified by state or outside audits. The district has not formalized a process or schedule to conduct evaluations and needs assessments for all instructional programs. The Department of Teaching and Learning lacks complete districtwide curriculum goals, strategies, timelines, and staff with assigned accountability to oversee the implementation of goals. Some departments, such as the Science Department, have well documented plans. No unifying document exists, however, to tie them to formal program evaluation. In addition, the district historically conducted little formal evaluation of existing programs beyond federal or state compliance requirements.

During the on-site review and as of May 2005, the board had not officially adopted the DIP. Some of the goals in the 2004–05 draft DIP address assigned areas of primary oversight for the Department of Teaching and Learning. For example, Goal One of the draft DIP states "each student will learn in a rigorous academic program that will achieve or exceed state and national standards and lead to academic excellence." However, in May 2005, 6.3 percent of the district's graduating seniors did not meet the state's passing standards established for exiting high school students. While the district provided the review team with manually completed forms for students, *Six-Weeks/Semester Failures and Interventions,* the information did not relate to detailed program implementation or include staff accountability to show a future trend of student success or failure.

Exhibit 1–4 shows an example of one of the LISD curriculum planning documents instituted after hiring the superintendent and formed under the current director of Teaching and Learning. The following is not part of a much larger plan for the department or does not include any mechanism linking accountability with actual program evaluation.

During 2004–05, the board received some updates from the director of Teaching and Learning and departmental staff on elementary students' reading progress. This effort is not yet institutionalized districtwide. The superintendent also requests elementary reading performance updates during administrative leadership meetings. However, there is

EXHIBIT 1–4
LISD
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR CURRICULUM REVIEW
2004–05

CURRICULUM REVIEW STRATEGIES	TIMELINE
Establish cadres (teachers, curriculum staff, and administrators) to review/revise district instructional programs/curriculum resource guides.	Spring 2004
Submit recommendations to Assistant Superintendent of Teaching & Learning.	Spring 2004
Conduct campus site visits to monitor the implementation of district curriculum/instructional programs.	Spring 2004
Provide feedback to central staff/campus administration.	Spring 2004
Review/revise curriculum guides.	June/July 2004
Implementation Phase I – OASIS Online Curriculum Management – Professional development for administrators and campus teams.	August 2004
Phase II – OASIS – Curriculum team will input district curriculum/resources for teachers on OASIS.	Fall 2004
Curriculum Checkpoint – Nine Week Benchmarks.	2004–05
Conduct two campus site visits to monitor and provide feedback.	Fall 2004/Spring 2005
Phase II – OASIS – District curriculum/resources available for teachers/staff.	January 2005
Teachers/Staff submit feedback forms for curriculum review to cadres.	May 2005
Cadres will meet to review/revise curriculum guides for 2005–06.	Summer 2005

SOURCE: LISD, Department of Technology and Learning, 2004.

no documentation to support achievement or change of the curriculum plan, or to review strategies and timelines listed in **Exhibit 1–4**. In addition, during interviews, staff verbalized a set of clear goals; yet, these goals remain undocumented. Administrators said they have not documented all districtwide objectives to allow fluidity or change of focus during the year and due to time constraints.

When addressing a myriad of changes in leadership, overall focus, and instructional programs, often administrators react to concerns and find it difficult to simultaneously include a preventive focus. Many districts address this concern by making the time to document goals and departmental direction allowing them to share concrete strategic plans with central and campus staff and community stakeholders. Frequently, these districts share identified goals, implementation strategies, accomplishment timelines, staff assigned responsibility for goal implementation, and a monitoring system to show concrete progress toward goals.

Strategic planning is the process of specifying an organization's objectives, developing policies and plans to achieve these objectives, and allocating resources to implement the plans. It is the highest level of managerial activity, and in most successful districts, each department head leads it. A plan provides overall direction to each staff member in the department. The purpose of the strategic plan is to ensure that the department staff is accountable and that are all working in accord toward the same goals. The implementation of a strategic plan places an organization in a position to fulfill its mission effectively and efficiently.

The district should create and implement a Department of Teaching and Learning Strategic Plan including administrative leadership training and program evaluation schedules. The department should ensure that each of its staff members provide input on the goals, strategies, timelines, and monitoring guidelines for their respective programs. The director of Teaching and Learning should include key personnel and specialists from Gifted and Talented, instructional technology, state testing, and core subject areas and programs. In addition, the district should ensure that assigned administrators participate in ongoing professional development related to identified District Improvement Plan (DIP) goals and research-based administrative leadership. By developing a departmental strategic plan including a program evaluation schedule and related training, the district institutionalizes staff accountability and coordinates focus on identifying effective programs, addressing prioritized districtwide goals, and meeting more stringent state and federal student performance requirements.

This fiscal impact includes estimated funds for immediate administrator training and professional development at a one-time cost of $10,000 and $2,500 annually thereafter.

CURRICULUM GUIDE COORDINATION (REC. 2)

While the district created curriculum guides and corresponding local assessments before the start of 2004–05, the district has not fully incorporated special population adaptions, added teachers to the Curriculum Committee, and updated review processes. The district has made substantial progress by creating or revising curriculum guides for core subject areas and corresponding local assessments,

but is not including teachers in its Curriculum Committee or including modifications and strategies to address students in special education, Gifted and Talented, or at-risk programs. The process of designing and distributing curriculum also lacks coherence to ensure that the district meets its goal of a "rigorous academic program that will achieve or exceed state and national standards and lead to academic excellence."

LISD has a Curriculum Committee composed of the director of Teaching and Learning and departmental coordinators. There are active committee members representing higher education, parents, community, and/or business partners. Since there are no teachers on the committee, feedback from teachers on the curriculum guides is sporadic. There is no formal method to allow teachers to let the central office know what is and is not working in the curriculum. Curriculum staff indicated they distributed feedback sheets during the 2004–05 but did not receive any tallied results. District administrators gave the review team a one-page form titled *Instructional Planning Guide Feedback Form.* However, the form is not available online or formally collected and reviewed. When asked for the feedback sheets, district staff could not find them.

A review of the curriculum guides shows that, with the exception of the social studies guides, the guides are up-to-date, in alignment with TEKS, and user-friendly. Curriculum staff prioritized development of the guides in early 2004–05. The district has not updated the social studies guide since 2002 and does not provide the necessary academic rigor. Teachers report the social studies guides are not user-friendly and "lack substance." All of the guides with the exception of social studies are located online, which is advantageous for teachers and school leaders.

While the majority of the guides are up-to-date, they lack modifications needed for students with special needs, those in G/T programs, and students identified at risk of failure. District staff state that the students' Individual Education Plans include curricular modifications. However, those plans are not as readily available as the curriculum guides and do not address global modifications. A review of state testing results for LISD shows these subgroups of students need strategies for increased academic student achievement.

In addition, the guides lack sufficient strategies to incorporate instructional technology into the curriculum. The guides list some websites for teacher use. These are a starting place to begin helping teachers integrate technology effectively into instruction.

TEA offers suggestions to districts regarding modifications for students in varying special programs. For example, under questions regarding G/T programs, TEA specifically lists one method of documenting differential instruction is putting it directly in curriculum guides or documents.

Best practices show that districts providing special education, gifted and talented, and at-risk modifications in curriculum guides assist teachers in adjusting instruction to meet the specific needs of each student. Districts that include a variety of teaching representatives on active curriculum committees, keep academic guides up-to-date and aligned with state standards, provide modifications for various levels of student learning, and incorporate strategies to use technology in instruction. These districts see resulting rigors in overall curriculum and improvements in student performance.

The Department of Teaching and Learning has made great strides in curriculum and instructional improvement in the past year and should continue to do so. It will take time to develop all of the key components of a strong curriculum and instructional unit.

The district should expand representation on the Curriculum Committee to include teachers, update all curriculum guides according to a schedule, and add enhancements for students in special populations and for instructional technology. In addition, the district should include strategies for technology integration and modifications for various learning levels in the guides to address the needs of students identified at-risk of dropping out of school and participating in special education or Gifted and Talented programs. Including a wider diversity of teachers and professionals on the district's existing Curriculum Committee and broader learning style and level modifications in curriculum guide updates provides teachers and campus administrators with consistent, comprehensive, and adaptive tools to promote student success in the TEKS and on the TAKS.

CAMPUS IMPROVEMENT PLAN (REC. 3)

The campus improvement planning process lacks some elements required in state law, full participation and coordination from the central administration, and research-based strategies addressing goals based on data analysis. The district adopted Campus Improvement Plans (CIPs) for all schools in 2004–05 as required by law. The director of Bilingual Education/Special Education and State and Federal Programs received initial oversight of this function in

2004–05. A review of each LISD CIP shows the following:

- a significant lack of parental involvement in the planning process;

- use of a variety of school templates with little consistency in the components and quality of the plans;

- frequent lack of data analysis, measurable goals, specific timelines, specific staff responsible for implementing identified strategies, and resources necessary to implement the plans;

- CIP development without involvement, review, or comment from many key central office staff in the Curriculum and Instruction Department limiting provision of districtwide services based on needs identified in CIPS;

- no feedback provided to staff from summer submission of annual CIPs by principals to the director of Bilingual/State and Federal Programs and the director of Teaching and Learning.

- Campus Improvement Plans are not available online and are not readily available for parents' review.

A review of Pleasant Run Elementary School's CIP shows that the plan has many of the important elements of an effective improvement plan including mission, vision, analysis of data, strategies based on a review of data, measurable goals, implementation strategies, and resources needed. However, Rosa Parks/Millbrook Elementary School's CIP was identical to that of Pleasant Run Elementary School with the exception of the committee members' names. The mission, vision, goals, objectives, evaluation methods, strategies, timelines, and resources needed are identical for 2004–05. Each school is unique and has unique needs for its students. **Exhibit 1–5** shows data reflecting the unique needs of Pleasant Run and Rosa

Parks/Millbrook Elementary Schools.

The data shown in **Exhibit 1–5** identifies that the educational strategies and needs for Rosa Parks/Millbrook Elementary School vary greatly from those at Pleasant Run Elementary School.

Exhibit 1–6 summarizes Texas Education Code §11.253 related to campus improvement planning.

Exhibit 1–7 shows an effective ten-step school improvement planning process used successfully in many school districts. Districts using such a process document and familiarize faculties at each school with the overall process, individual steps, and key actions necessary to achieve each step.

The district should modify the campus improvement planning process to include use and individualization of a template as well as a state compliance checklist. In addition, the district should ensure district administrators participate in CIP data analysis, inclusion of research-based strategies, and goal achievement through oversight and mandatory feedback to campus administrators and staff after CIP review.

Campus staff should analyze data by ethnicity and other specific factors and specifically target each demographic subcategory addressing students' needs to meet *NCLB* mandates requiring data analysis and prioritization of developed goals to address statistically identified challenges. By providing training to site-based decision-making teams, customizing a district-developed template, and ensuring central administrative assistance in goal development and achievement using research-based strategies, the district should produce individualized CIPs that comply with federal mandates, match district goals, and annually address students' needs.

CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION AND LESSON PLANS (REC. 4)

Campus administrators do not consistently monitor teacher lesson plans and classroom instruction. While

EXHIBIT 1–5
UNIQUE NEEDS OF PLEASANT RUN ELEMENTARY AND
ROSA PARKS/MILLBROOK ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

IMPROVEMENT COMPONENT	PLEASANT RUN ELEMENTARY	ROSA PARKS/MILLBROOK ELEMENTARY
2004 Campus Rating and Gold Performance Acknowlegements	*Recognized*; Commended in Reading/English Language Arts	*Academically Acceptable*
2004 TAKS All School Students (All Tests)	81 percent met standards	48 percent met standards
2004 TAKS African American (All Tests)	76 percent met standards	47 percent met standards
2004 TAKS Hispanic (All Tests)	94 percent met standards	60 percent met standards
2004 TAKS White (All Tests)	64 percent met standards	*
2004 TAKS Economically Disadvantaged (All Tests)	77 percent met standards	42 percent met standards
2004 TAKS Writing (All Students)	83 percent met standards	83 percent met standards
2004 TAKS Math (All Students)	87 percent met standards	72 percent met standards
2004 TAKS Reading (All Students)	90 percent met standards	73 percent met standards

NOTE:* denotes masked results due to student performance of five or fewer not reported for privacy reasons.
SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS), 2004.

EXHIBIT 1–6
TEXAS EDUCATION CODE §11.253
CAMPUS PLANNING AND SITE-BASED DECISION MAKING

11.253. CAMPUS PLANNING AND SITE-BASED DECISION-MAKING.

(a) Each school district shall 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 for all students.

(b) Each district's policy and procedures shall establish campus-level planning and decision-making committees as provided for through the procedures provided by Sections 11.251(b)-(e).

(c) Each school year, the principal of each school campus, with the assistance of the campus-level committee, shall develop, review, and revise the campus improvement plan for the purpose of improving student performance for all student populations, including students in special education programs under Subchapter A, Chapter 29, with respect to the academic excellence indicators adopted under Section 39.051 and any other appropriate performance measures for special needs populations.

(d) Each campus improvement plan must:

    (1) assess the academic achievement for each student in the school using the academic excellence indicator system as described by Section 39.051;

    (2) set the campus performance objectives based on the academic excellence indicator system, including objectives for special needs populations, including students in special education programs under Subchapter A, Chapter 29;

    (3) identify how the campus goals will be met for each student;

    (4) determine the resources needed to implement the plan;

    (5) identify staff needed to implement the plan;

    (6) set timelines for reaching the goals;

    (7) measure progress toward the performance objectives periodically to ensure that the plan is resulting in academic improvement;

    (8) include goals and methods for violence prevention and intervention on campus; and

    (9) provide for a program to encourage parental involvement at the campus.

(e) In accordance with the administrative procedures established under Section 11.251(b), the campus-level committee shall be involved in decisions in the areas of planning, budgeting, curriculum, staffing patterns, staff development, and school organization. The campus-level committee must approve the portions of the campus plan addressing campus staff development needs.

(f) This section does not create a new cause of action or require collective bargaining.

(g) Each campus-level committee shall hold at least one public meeting per year. The required meeting shall be held after receipt of the annual campus rating from the agency to discuss the performance of the campus and the campus performance objectives. District policy and campus procedures must be established to ensure that systematic communications measures are in place to periodically obtain broad-based community, parent, and staff input, and to provide information to those persons regarding the recommendations of the campus-level committees.

(h) A principal shall regularly consult the campus-level committee in the planning, operation, supervision, and evaluation of the campus educational program.

SOURCE: Texas Education Code, Section 11.253, 2005.

the district has made great strides in aligning and updating core subject curriculum, teachers are inconsistently implementing the curriculum in their classrooms. When the review team asked central office and school staff how they rate the quality of the curriculum, responses averaged a nine on a scale of one to 10. When asked to rate the implementation of curriculum, responses averaged a six.

A review of lesson plans in LISD schools and interviews with principals, department heads, and staff indicate that each school has its own expectations and forms for teacher lesson plans.

Some schools such as Lancaster High School use detailed forms for some, but not all, subjects as seen in **Exhibit 1–8**. The district expects teachers at Lancaster High School to turn in the plans weekly, and department heads monitor the completed plans. Administrators at LISD elementary schools use different lesson plan forms. During interviews, staff said they hope the continued implementation of the OASIS system will assist in remedying the lack of consistency in teachers' lesson plans.

The central office staff provided the review team with a *Classroom Visitation Form,* a central office form for administrators to use as they conduct "learning walks" (called "walk-throughs" in many districts), whereby administrators observe classroom teachers during actual instruction. **Exhibit 1-9** shows the district's form.

According to interviews, the learning walks are a tool the district uses to organize central office visits to schools and classrooms to collect evidence about how teachers' instruction affects student learning. The district also uses results of learning walks to monitor professional development needs. While central office staff state the form shown in **Exhibit 1-9** is the official form for learning walks, not all campus staff produced documentation identifying use of this form. In fact, the review team found five different walk-through forms in use districtwide.

Exhibit 1-10 shows the walk-though form used in Lancaster Junior High School. Each of the forms has individual merit, but there is no districtwide consistency in the expectations for learning walks.

EXHIBIT 1–7
SAMPLE TEN-STEP SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN MODEL BASED ON BEST PRACTICES

- **Understanding the Process**
  - Conduct a needs assessment to identify training or information the School Improvement Team and staff need;
  - Arrange and schedule appropriate training for and/or disseminate information to the School Improvement Team; and
  - Provide appropriate information and training to School Improvement Team and staff.
- **Analyzing the Data**
  - Work through "Analyzing Your Maryland School Performance Standards Reports, Proficiency Level and Partidipation Reports (MSPAP) Data" in the data section of the Maryland State Department of Education website;
  - Complete evidence of need summary sheets including an analysis of other data collected from each testing area; and
  - Prioritize list of questions generated by your team as data is studied.
- **Setting Priorities**
  - Identify priority needs to address in a schoolwide effort.
- **Clarifying the Problem**
  - Collect additional data about the instructional program based on priority questions;
  - Hypothesize root causes and contributing factors for why the data looks as it is;
  - Collect evidence to prove or disprove selected hypotheses; and
  - Identify a small number of high-impact causes to address in the school improvement plan.
- **Identifying the Goals**
  - Review district long-term goals;
  - Identify annual objectives for the new school improvement plan; and
  - Identify what evidence will be accepted as attainment of the objective.
- **Choosing Strategies**
  - Collect successful strategies data from high-achieving schools;
  - Review research-based strategies that address the problem;
  - Choose strategies to be implemented that address the problem;
  - Identify milestones for monitoring progress;
  - Identify activities that will support the strategy;
  - Identify people responsible for implementing strategies, collecting the assessment data, and monitoring overall progress; and
  - Identify staff development needed for staff to implement the strategy.
- **Implementing the Plan**
  - Map out calendar of activities; and
  - Develop a communication plan to ensure that all staff and stakeholders understand the school improvement plan and their role in attaining school goals.
- **Assessing the Results**
  - Systematically and regularly collect and analyze data to assess whether progress toward attainment of objectives is satisfactory.
- **Revising the Plan**
  - Decide whether revisions to the plan are needed; and
  - Communicate any revisions to the school community.
- **Managing Change**
  - Develop a plan for support staff in implementing changes and monitor the school community for its perceptions of staff and school progress toward attainment of school improvement goals.

NOTE: Created using a variety of district best practices.
SOURCE: MGT of America, Inc., 2004.

Many districts ensure lesson-planning relates to adopted standards and reflects particular focus on improving student achievement identified by both classroom assessments and formal assessments such as statewide testing instruments like the TAKS. Districts then design lesson-planning documents to support this intent permitting efficient and effective review and feedback by administrators or curriculum experts to teachers. The most effective school districts create and use a standardized lesson plan policy and set districtwide expectations for "walk-throughs."

TEA's website as well as The University of Texas' Dana Center's website publish links to lesson plan templates. **Exhibit 1-11** shows a sample procedure for lessons plans from the San Antonio Independent School District.

The district should create and implement a lesson plan policy and walk-through instrument and process. The director of Teaching and Learning should ensure lesson planning relates to adopted standards, reflects the district's focus on improving student achievement, and uses data from available software and curriculum programs. By consistently using a standardized walk-through instrument and process, the district institutionalizes the process and provides teachers with timely, efficient, and effective feedback to tailor lessons to deficiencies in student achievement and simultaneously meet district objectives.

EXHIBIT 1–8
LANCASTER HIGH SCHOOL EAST AND WEST
SAMPLE OF LESSON PLAN FORMS

MONDAY			
TEACHER'S NAME		SUBJECT	
Student Expectation	TEKS		Material
Sponge Activity (Warm-up)			
Activity 1	Teacher's Activity		
	Student's Guided Practice Activity	Student's Independent Practice Activity	Student's Extension Activity
	Evaluation/Assessment		Teacher's Reflection
Activity 2	Teacher's Activity		
	Student's Guided Practice Activity	Student's Independent Practice Activity	Student's Extension Activity
	Evaluation/Assessment		Teacher Reflection
Homework			
Long Term project			
Modifications			
TUESDAY			
Student Expectation	TEKS		Material
Sponge Activity (Warm-up)			
Activity 1	Teacher's Activity		
	Student's Guided Practice Activity	Student's Independent Practice Activity	Student's Extension Activity
	Evaluation/Assessment		Teacher's Reflection
Activity 2	Teacher's Activity		
	Student's Guided Practice Activity	Student's Independent Practice Activity	Student's Extension Activity
	Evaluation/Assessment		Teacher's Reflection
Homework			
Long Term project			
Modifications			
WEDNESDAY			
Student Expectation	TEKS		Material
Sponge Activity (Warm-up)			
Activity 1	Teacher's Activity		
	Student's Guided Practice Activity	Student's Independent Practice Activity	Student's Extension Activity
	Evaluation/Assessment		Teacher's Reflection
Activity 2	Teacher's Activity		
	Student's Guided Practice Activity	Student's Independent Practice Activity	Student's Extension Activity
	Evaluation/Assessment		Teacher's Reflection
Homework			
Long Term project			
Modifications			

SOURCE: LISD, Lancaster High School, 2004.

DATA-DRIVEN PROGRAM DECISIONS (REC. 5)

District staff have not been consistently trained and do not adequately collect, analyze, and use student performance data for teaching and curriculum adjustment, nor implement districtwide test-taking strategies to improve student performance. Training documents show that only two out of 10 principals have received Academic Excellence Indicator System Indicator Training (AEIS-IT) in 2002–03. While district staff state that all principals and administrative staff received AEIS-IT training in 2003–04, the district does not have complete documentation to this effect. In January 2005, the district provided an additional AEIS-IT training, but not all principals attended. Additionally, interview comments and a review of school program offerings show that LISD staff do not expose students to adequate test-taking strategies that often result after administrative AEIS data reviews identify low student performance on standardized tests.

EXHIBIT 1-9
LISD SAMPLE FORM
CLASSROOM VISITATION SUMMARY

Teacher		School	
Observer		Date	
Period/Time		Class/Subject	
Students on Roll		Students Present	

	APPROPRIATE	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	NOT APPLICABLE	NOT OBSERVER
The Lesson Plan/Cycle				
A. Lesson Plan Available/Current				
B. Objectives (TEKA/TAKS) Noted				
(Specific and Measurable)				
C. Learner-Centered Activities Noted				
Considerate of Learning Styles				
IEP Modifications/Accommodations				
D. Assignment Reinforce Learning				
E. Demonstration is Learner Centered				
F. Guided/Independent Practice Noted				
G. Lesson Closure Observed				
H. Appropriate Assessment(s) Referenced				
I. Materials/Resources Used				
Grade book				
A. Available/Current/Labeled				
Homework				
Class work				
Tests				
B. Averages				
C. Agrees with Lesson Plan				
D. Reteaching/Retesting Noted				
E. Progress Reports Folder				
Instructional Strategies				
A. Engage Students Actively				
B. Appropriate for Objectives/Skills/Grade Level Taught				
C. Connect Prior Learning				
D. Use Concept Question Board (K-6)				
E. Consist of Critical Thinking, Questioning, Extending and Problem-Solving				
F. Modifications/Accommodations Followed				
G. Technology Used				
Instructional Setting				
☐ A. Individual				
☐ B. Teacher-Directed				
☐ C. Whole Group				
☐ D. Cooperative Groups				

SOURCE: LISD, assistant superintendent's Office, 2004.

EXHIBIT 1-10
LANCASTER JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL
WALK-THROUGH FEEDBACK FORM

Teacher's Name _____ Date/Time of Walk-Through _____

Grade/Content Area _____ Appraiser's Name _____

Alignment of objectives to curriculum (local targets, TEKS, TAKS) (PDAS II – 5, VIII–1) ___ Yes ___ No

	Domain I: Active, Successful Student Participation	
	Engaged in learning	
	Successful in learning	
	Critical thinking/problem solving	
	Self-directed/self-initiated	
	Connects learning	
	Domain II: Learned-Centered Instruction	
	Goals and objectives	
	Learner-centered	
	Critical thinking/problem solving ___K ___ C ___ A ____A ____S ____E	
	Motivational strategies	
	Pacing/strategies	
	Pacing/sequencing	
	Value and importance	
	Appropriate questioning/inquiry	
	Use of technology	
	Domain III: Evaluation and Feedback	
	Monitored and assessed	
	Assessment and instruction aligned	
	Appropriate assessment	
	Learning is reinforced	
	Constructive feedback	
	Relearning and re-evaluation	
	Domain IV: Management, Time and Materials	
	Discipline procedures	
	Self-discipline/self-directed learning	
	Equitable teacher-student instruction	
	Expectations for behavior	
	Redirects off-task, inappropriate, disruptive behavior	
	Reinforces desired behavior	
	Equitable and varied characteristics	
	Manages time and materials	
	Domain V: Professional Communication	
	Written with students	
	Verbal/non-verbal with students	
	Encourages and supports reluctant students	

Additional space for comments on back, if needed.
This will be entered in your Local Campus Appraisal File. Please sign to verify that you have been notified of this documentation. Your signature acknowledges receipt of this information; it does not acknowledge that you necessarily agree. Please sign and return one copy to your appraiser.

_____   _____
Signature of Appraiser   Signature of Teacher/Date of Receipt

SOURCE: LISD, Lancaster Junior High School, 2004.

EXHIBIT 1-11
SAMPLE ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES
RELATED TO LESSON PLANS

TEACHER LESSON PLAN ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES
The following procedures shall be followed related to teacher lesson plans:
(1) Lesson plans serve two main purposes:
    a. Lesson plans guide instruction and reflect planning for instruction
    b. Lesson plans reflect professional decisions made by a teacher or group of teachers in translating state, district, and campus curriculum into an outline for instruction.
(2) Lesson plans are required and should be readily available.
(3) Lesson plans shall include the following components, and each component should reflect the students' abilities, needs, and other unique learning characteristics (examples may be obtained from principals for reference):
    a. Objectives;
    b. Learning activities;
    c. Resources;
    d. Assessment methods/strategies.
(4) In order to minimize paperwork, lesson plans may address the four components with references to specific documents, resources, and page numbers where appropriate.
(5) Plans for instruction shall be available for a substitute in a form that is readily usable by a substitute.
(6) The principal may periodically collect and review lesson plans. This process is not to interfere with instruction, and the principal must return the lesson plan needed for the day by the start of the school day.

SOURCE: San Antonio Independent School District, Procedures Manual, 2003.

LISD's overall 2003–04 TAKS scores show 41 percent of its students meeting the state standards, compared to 69 percent in Region 10 and 68 percent in the state. **Exhibits 1–12** through **1–14** show LISD's scores as compared with the state average on core subject TAKS results for 2002–03 and 2003–04.

As shown in these exhibits, results for LISD are as follows:

- students scored lower than the state average for both years in all subgroups for reading/English language arts, mathematics, and social studies;

- scores have improved from 2002–03 to 2003–04 in the percentage of students meeting the

standards for reading/English language arts, with the exception of the Anglo students who had the same percentages both years;

- scores have improved from 2002–03 to 2003–04 in the percentage of all students, African American students, Hispanic, and economically disadvantaged students meeting the standards for mathematics, with the exception of the Anglo students who declined by one percentage point; and

- scores have declined from 2002–03 to 2003–04 in the percentage of students meeting the standards for social studies, with the exception

EXHIBIT 1–12
LISD AND STATE
TAKS READING, ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS RESULTS
2002–03 AND 2003–04

READING/ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS	PERCENT MET STANDARD		
	STATE	LISD 2002–03	LISD 2003–04
All Students	85%	68%	72%
White	93%	83%	83%
African American	79%	66%	71%
Hispanic	79%	66%	73%
Economically Disadvantaged	78%	63%	69%

SOURCE: LISD, Department of Teaching and Learning, and Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2002–03 through 2003–04.

EXHIBIT 1–13
LISD AND STATE
TAKS MATHEMATICS RESULTS
2002–03 AND 2003–04

MATHEMATICS	PERCENT MET STANDARD		
	STATE	LISD 2002–03	LISD 2003–04
All Students	76%	46%	51%
White	86%	71%	70%
African American	62%	42%	48%
Hispanic	68%	47%	56%
Economically Disadvantaged	67%	44%	49%

SOURCE LISD, Department of Teaching and Learning, and Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2002–03 through 2003–04.

EXHIBIT 1–14
LISD AND STATE
TAKS SOCIAL STUDIES RESULTS
2002–03 AND 2003–04

SOCIAL STUDIES	PERCENT MET STANDARD		
	STATE	LISD 2002–03	LISD 2003–04
All Students	91%	80%	79%
White	96%	91%	93%
African American	86%	79%	78%
Hispanic	85%	78%	74%
Economically Disadvantaged	84%	75%	74%

SOURCE: LISD, Department of Teaching and Learning, and Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2002–03 through 2003–04.

of the Anglo students who improved by two percentage points.

In addition, in May 2005 the state released the number of seniors meeting passing standards on the TAKS. Six percent of LISD's seniors have not yet passed all parts of the TAKS exam that covers English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies required to graduate. Comparatively, 9 percent of the state's 226,964 high school seniors did not pass all tests taken. Among the student groups, 85 percent of African American students passed all test taken, as did 86 percent of Hispanic students, and 95 percent of Anglo students. The class of 2005 represents the first group required to pass the TAKS to graduate. Statewide, 21,198 seniors have not yet passed one or more of the four-part exit-level exams. Students can continue to take the TAKS even after they have completed their coursework and will receive diplomas whenever they pass these exams. July 12–15 is the next scheduled opportunity for students to take exit- level tests.

The state also released overall student passing information after two TAKS administrations. Overall passing rates for African American students increased from 64 percent to 77 percent, for Hispanic students from 74 percent to 85 percent, and for White students from 89 percent to 95 percent. Additionally, the state experienced an increase in the fifth-grade math passing rate.

Although the district said principals know how to analyze AEIS-IT data, a review of training documents shows that only two out of 10 principals have received AEIS-IT in 2004–05. The district does not require principals to formally attend this training. Peer districts DeSoto ISD, Red Oak ISD, and Terrell ISD require their principals to receive AEIS-IT training. Terrell ISD also trains all instructional facilitators on AEIS IT data disaggregation.

TEA's AEIS reports include a wide range of information on student performance statewide and in each school, district, and region available in the fall of each year. The performance indicators include the following:

- state-administered assessment performance by grade, by subject, and by all grades tested;

- state-developed Alternative Assessment performance;

- Student Success Initiative;

- attendance rate for the full year;

- dropout rate (by year);

- completion and dropout rates (4-year longitudinal);

- percentage of high school students completing an advanced course;

- percentage of graduates completing the Recommended High School Program;

- Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) examination results;

- TAAS/TASP equivalency rate; and

- SAT and ACT examinations—participation and results.

AEIS-IT training shows participants how to disaggregate AEIS student data on each of these indicators by ethnicity, sex, special education participation, low income status, and, beginning in 2002–03, limited English proficiency status. The AEIS reports also provide extensive information on school and district staff, finances, programs, and demographics.

A review of Region 10 documents show and interviews confirm that the administrators attending the AEIS-IT training requested use of simulated data as opposed to the district's actual TEA data for the training. District staff said they requested simulated data to only focus on use of the data disaggregation software. District records also show a decline in LISD's participation in Region 10's AEIS-IT training and other training during 2003–04 and 2004–05 even though the district pays for these services. Region 10 staff reported low LISD participation in training such as Math/Sciences Service Agreement, Reading, Language Arts and Social Studies Shared Service

Agreement, and instructional strategies for generalists.

Region 10 also offers districts assistance in reviewing and analyzing the district adequate yearly progress (AYP) data. However, LISD did not send its AYP data to Region 10 for review and analysis. The district did not make AYP in 2004 due to student performance in several demographic groups and did not attempt to petition TEA for a review of its rating. Region 10 provides early analysis of AYP data to assist districts in preparing and immediately implementing strategies to target areas of need identified through AEIS data review.

Region 10 offers, at no charge to LISD, an *NCLB Institute for Paraprofessionals*. Seven LISD paraprofessionals participated in the summer 2004 sessions, and one participated in the fall 2004 sessions.

After analyzing individual student data, some schools also provide training to teachers and students regarding strategies identified to assist students in improving their test-taking skills. For example, many successful districts will periodically review or have test-taking strategy booklets for students and parents. Examples of the type of strategies students learn in these programs include the following:

- Arrive early instead of barely on time, to be organized and ready instead of in a panic. Try to go into the test alert, calm instead of tense, and anxious.

- Regard a lapse of memory as perfectly normal. Do not let it throw you into a panic. If you block on answering one question, move ahead and return to it later.

- Make certain that you fully understand the test directions before attempting to solve any problems or answer any questions.

- Plan how you will use your time during the exam. Quickly look over the entire test and divide your available time as appropriate to the number and type of questions that you find. Then be careful to manage your time so you can answer all the questions.

- Read each question carefully and completely before marking or writing your answer. Re-read if you are at all confused.

- Ask your instructor for help in interpreting a test question that is unclear or ambiguous to you. He will probably want to clear up the misunderstanding for everybody if the question really is misleading or confusing.

- Be careful not to give any impression of cheating.

- Do not be disturbed about other students finishing before you do. Take your time, do not panic, and you will do much better on the test.

- If you have any time left over, edit, check, and proofread your answers. Use all the time available to eliminate careless errors and to improve your answers as much as possible.

Constant review of data ensures that districts judge program effectiveness and institute changes when necessary. Districts base goals and objectives in annual CIPs and DIPs on updated student performance results and identified areas of need. Successful districts require AEIS-IT or a similar data-disaggregating training program for all administrators to ensure that program decisions are in fact data-driven. In addition, districts that improve student achievement sometimes provide research-based test taking strategies in combination with data awareness to further assist students through testing periods.

Because the district has implemented a host of new programs and is promoting increased professional development efforts, it is important to stress the inclusion and prioritization of data disaggregation. Additionally, the district should also not expect scores to immediately improve after implementation of instructional programs and a lack of overall data collection and analysis. It is imperative that the district take advantage of all data review opportunities offered and services provided through Region 10.

The superintendent should require administrators to attend AEIS-IT training or related-data seminars such as those provided by Region 10. Additionally, the district should provide students with test-taking strategies to assist in improving performance on standardized tests. By requiring all campus and district administrators to attend data disaggregation training and including test-taking strategies in the district's instructional program, administrators ensure that all program decisions are data-driven and match district, campus, demographic group, and individual student needs.

TEXTBOOKS (REC. 6)

LISD does not have established policies and procedures to reduce the loss of textbooks and provide options for replacement. Interviews and a review of textbook records show that there is a lack of accounting of books in LISD, particularly at the secondary level. After the start of 2003–04, LISD hired a Textbook coordinator overseeing all textbook administration in the district and all coordination

efforts with TEA. The district also assigned duties to this position including overseeing the districts' media centers and serving as the media specialist for Lancaster High School. The new Textbook coordinator found no available records. Therefore, she has been unable to track records from the past several years.

Chapter 31 of the TEC contains the rules and regulations for acquiring and distributing state textbooks. Section 31.001 of the TEC states that "textbooks selected for use in public schools shall be furnished without cost to the students attending those schools."

The Textbook Administration Division of the TEA coordinates the review, adoption, purchase, and distribution of textbooks and other instructional materials. After adopting suggested textbooks each year, TEA produces and distributes a recommended text list, loans books to districts upon request, and

calculates the number of books allowed to each district based on enrollment data by subject and grade. School districts that require more textbooks than their enrollment data allows must purchase the additional books with district funds.

Exhibit 1-15 shows the number of lost LISD textbooks for 2003–04 as of December 2004. As shown, the high school recorded a total of $26,939 in lost books. Grades 7 and 8 recorded $7,010 in lost books. Grades 5 and 6 recorded $5,007 in losses; grades K-4 recorded losses of $4,506. The districtwide total for 2003–04 is $43,462. Lancaster Junior High has the strongest tracking and accounting system verified by the least number of lost texts (**Exhibit 1-15**).

LISD's textbook inventory and replacement process does not include an explanation or procedures identifying the existence and use of state funds in the district's textbook accounts for book purchases and

EXHIBIT 1-15
LISD
LOSS OF TEXTBOOKS
2003–04

LEVEL AND TITLE	NUMBER OF LOSSES	COST PER BOOK	TOTAL
High School Losses			
Algebra I	100	$42.00	$4,200.00
Algebra II	25	45.00	1,125.00
Geometry	103	42.00	4,326.00
Health	100	45.09	4,509.00
Timeless Voices 10th?	34	51.00	1,734.00
Timeless Voices 11th	75	52.25	3,918.75
Timeless Voices 12th	54	52.25	2,821.50
Timeless Voices 9th	59	51.00	3,009.00
Writing Grammar 9th	27	48.00	1,296.00
Subtotal			$26,939.25
7–8 Grades			
7th Grade Science	91	54.50	$4,959.50
7th Grade Grammar	16	43.25	692.00
8th Grade Literature	26	52.25	1,358.50
Subtotal			$7,010.00
5–6 Grades			
5th Grade Spelling	37	17.50	$647.50
5th Grade Language	23	38.00	874.00
5th Grade Math	34	36.00	1,224.00
5th Grade Science	19	34.50	655.50
5th Grade Horizons	7	46.25	323.75
6th Grade Grammar	7	40.75	740.75
6th Grade Literature	20	50.50	1,010.00
6th Grade Science	5	54.50	272.50
Subtotal			$5,006.75
K–4			
2nd Grade Language	26	28.25	$734.50
2nd Grade Science	12	35.50	426.00
3rd Grade Math	2	35.40	69.00
3rd Grade Math	32	28.15	900.00
3rd Grade Science	30	30.00	900.00
4th Grade Math	30	30.00	900.00
4th Grade Science	18	32.00	576.00
Subtotal			$4,505.50
Total			$43,461.50

SOURCE: LISD, District Textbook coordinator, 2004.

replacements. The media coordinator does not have access to these textbook accounting records according to interviews with staff. Some staff also said they thought previous staff did not appropriately use or code the funds to replace lost textbooks.

LISD has already tried the following practices to retrieve lost textbooks: 1) students cannot play in extra-curricular activities until books are turned in; and 2) students can work off their lost books by working with custodians, teachers, or other staff after school to pay off the cost of the books. LISD staff has access to an automated system called Textbook Inventory Program (TIP) to track and account for textbooks. However, not all schools are using it.

Other Texas school districts such as Brownsville ISD also use an automated system called the TIP, which tracks all textbooks issued by the textbook department to each school, in addition to having "campus" modules that allow each school to track textbooks issued to students. The TIP system includes a feature that allows the district to interface with the textbook division of TEA, allowing for the automatic transmission of annual and supplemental book orders and performing inventory checks. Brownsville ISD district policy does not require all schools to use the TIP system, but recommends it.

Other districts that are successful in controlling textbook loss implement processes such as the following:

- developing a textbook procedures manual;

- implementing an automated textbook inventory system so that textbooks can be tracked by school and by student;

- implementing procedures to handle the transfer of textbooks between schools;

- performing periodic audits of textbooks;

- replacing lost books by purchasing quality used textbooks from used textbook suppliers, which is known to save some districts 25 percent over the cost of new replacements; and

- establishing a policy for the collection of funds from parents when books are lost or damaged.

Some districts have alleviated the textbook loss issue by created a "textbook bank." Often parents will pay for a lost textbook, only to subsequently find the book the following year. The district takes these books and places them in the "bank." When a classroom needs additional books, the Textbook coordinator checks the bank before purchasing replacement books. If the bank contains the books needed, the district does not have to purchase replacements. Other districts have begun replacing

texts with used copies of the same title realizing savings on book purchases up to 50 percent.

One district, Granger ISD, has implemented a no-locker approach to assist in solving lost textbook issues. The district issues students one set of books to keep at home and then maintains a classroom set of books. The district found that not only are books returned at a higher rate at the end of the year, but also that they are returned from home in better conditions than when the district maintained lockers. Many of these districts implementing different forms of textbook loss reductions all share a documented procedures manual identifying exactly how campus administrators should track, monitor, and report textbook inventories. Additionally, these districts specifically address losses and ensure consistent implementation.

The district should gain control of textbook loss by developing a textbook inventory and tracking procedures manual, training district and campus administrators on the textbook inventory system, performing periodic audits of textbooks, and considering the replacement of lost books by purchasing quality used textbooks from used textbook suppliers when appropriate. LISD should be able to increase the effectiveness of its automated inventory system through consistent implementation at all campuses, and by instituting a scheduled inventory review or audit for schools with high rate of textbook loss.

This fiscal impact is estimated on a 25 percent reduction in funds expended for lost textbooks in 2003–04 ($43,462 x .25), resulting in approximate annual savings of $10,866 and five-year savings of $54,330.

DROPOUT PREVENTION (REC. 7)

The district does not have a documented dropout student prevention plan. While LISD's dropout rate is below most peers and the statewide average, the district also does not have a collaborative intradistrict and interagency plan to address dropout prevention. LISD has some key dropout prevention strategies in place such as the Delta Program, town hall meetings with parents, and conducting community walks to inform parents of district services and options. District administrators spoke of undocumented plans to expand services provided to students. The district also uses some police officers to provide talks and to interact with students regarding the benefits of staying in school. However, district police do not accompany assigned staff on home visits to truant students to help reinforce to parents that truancy is against the law.

Programs addressing risks for students who are economically disadvantaged sometimes also address issues related to dropout prevention. **Exhibit 1-16** shows the number of economically disadvantaged students in LISD, the peer districts, Region 10, and the state.

As shown, LISD has the third highest percentage of economically disadvantaged students with 55.1 percent; and a higher percentage of economically disadvantaged students than the Region 10 average (46.8 percent) and the statewide average (52.8 percent).

EXHIBIT 1-16
ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS
LISD, PEER DISTRICTS, REGION 10, AND STATE
2003–04

DISTRICT	ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED
Lancaster	55.1%
Sheldon	65.9%
Terrell	59.2%
DeSoto	36.8%
Red Oak	20.7%
Region 10	46.8%
State	52.8%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2003–04.

Exhibit 1-17 shows LISD and peer district information on dropouts for all students and by student subgroups for 2003–04. As can be seen, LISD and DeSoto ISD have identical rates, and LISD has a lower percentage of dropouts than Sheldon ISD does.

TEA prepares an annual report on dropouts in Texas public schools. This report includes state summaries of the annual dropout rate, longitudinal secondary school completion/student status rates, and state attrition rates.

The state reported 17,151 students or 0.9 percent out of 1,891,361 students who attended grades 7–12 in 2002–03 as dropping out of school. This was an increase of 3.2 percent in the number of dropouts from the previous year. Dropout rates for students who are African American and Hispanic remained above that for Anglo students statewide. The statewide annual dropout rate for grades 9–12 was 1.3 percent.

While LISD's dropout rate is below most peers and the statewide average, the district does not have a collaborative intradistrict and interagency plan to reduce the number of dropouts. The district has successfully focused efforts on students attending the DAEP program. This program has made progress in reducing the number of dropouts; however, there are no other documented, coordinated, or implemented dropout prevention efforts.

The 2003–04 School Report Card for LISD shows that in the Class of 2003, 92.3 percent of LISD students graduated and 0.8 percent received a General Education Degree (GED). Students scheduled to graduate who did not meet passing standards will not be able to receive diplomas until they either meet the passing standards in subsequent retests or take and pass a GED equivalency exam.

Survey results identify that more than half of teachers and district administrative and support staff think the district needs to improve the dropout prevention program. Seventy-six percent of teachers and 52 percent of the district administrative and support staff disagreed, strongly disagreed, or had no opinion when asked if LISD has an effective dropout prevention program.

Many other districts nationwide involve the campus police or resource officers in their dropout prevention plan. For example, in other districts an officer accompanies the person in charge of dropout prevention on home visits to truant students to help reinforce to parents that truancy is against the law.

Many districts nationwide successfully use the complete assessment instrument found at

EXHIBIT 1-17
CLASS OF 2003 ANNUAL DROPOUT RATE
GRADES 7–12 BY STUDENT GROUP
LISD AND PEER DISTRICT

SCHOOL DISTRICT	ALL STUDENTS			RATE BY STUDENT GROUP (%)			
	DROPOUTS	TOTAL	RATE (%)	AFRICAN AMERICAN	HISPANIC	WHITE	ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED
Lancaster	10	2,296	0.4	0.5	*	*	0.5
DeSoto	15	4,061	0.4	0.4	*	*	0.6
Red Oak	*	2,423	*	*	*	*	*
Sheldon	31	1,994	1.6	1.1	1.7	1.8	0.6
Terrell	*	2,216	*	*	*	*	*

NOTES: * denotes five or fewer not reported due to privacy reasons.
Class of 2003 is last available dropout data in 2003–04 published data. Class of 2004 data will be available in 2004–05 November publications.
SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, Annual Dropout Prevention Report for 2002–03 and AEIS, 2003–04.

http://www.kasa.org/KDPP_Strategies_Assessment.htm. **Exhibit 1-18** provides a detailed sample from this comprehensive tool that establishes 15 standards based on dropout prevention research. Following is a list of the 14 other standards:

- **Standard 1: Family Involvement** – Regardless of class, race, and socioeconomic background, most parents have access to social supports and resources that facilitate their child's achievement. An unbridgeable "gap" between school and home does not exist.

- **Standard 2: Early Childhood Education** – Effective prevention and intervention can make a difference. Formal early childhood programs (daycare, preschool, and nursery) are available in the community and in the schools.

- **Standard 3: Reading and Writing Programs** – Skills are developed in elementary and middle schools and remain a point of emphasis in secondary schools, particularly for at-risk students.

- **Standard 4: Mentoring/Tutoring** – A commitment exists to provide guidance and support to work with youth who need role models and a positive support system.

- **Standard 5: Service Learning** – Is used as a teaching methodology to engage youth in their schools and communities by applying their academic knowledge to solve community problems.

- **Standard 6: Alternative Schooling** – Educational opportunities for at-risk youth "inside the system" are valued and serve students with unique learning interests or disabilities, teenage parents, potential dropouts, violent individuals, or those in juvenile detention systems.

- **Standard 7: Out of School Enhancement** – Structured out-of-school experiences and the positive effects of such programs on academic success, social behavior, and opportunities for enrichment of students in at-risk situations are universal practices

- **Standard 8: Professional Development** – Effective and continual high-quality professional development is in place to prepare teachers to help students achieve higher standards.

- **Standard 9: Diverse Learning Styles and Multiple Intelligences** – Instruction includes a variety of activities and empowers all students, no matter what their learning style.

EXHIBIT 1-18
EXCERPT FROM A DROPOUT PREVENTION SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

Standard 11 – Individualized Learning: Recognized as an effective educational strategy for all students, especially for students who are risk of dropping out of school.
Individualized Learning Performance Indicators: Exercise: Identify the district and/or school(s) level of improvement needed for each performance indicator. Mark an **(x)** below the appropriate description that best reflects the degree of improvement needed.

INDIVIDUALIZED LEARNING PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	LITTLE	SOME	MODERATE	HIGH	VERY HIGH
11.a Practice a belief that all students can learn – if the conditions of learning are such that individual needs (economic/social backgrounds, learning styles, intellectual strengths) of students are met.					
11.b Individualized Education Programs (IEP) for special education students are used as a guide to support services for students with disabilities.					
11.c Consideration is given to the possibility of using individualized education plans with students in at-risk situations.					
11.d Strategies (i.e., mentoring/tutoring, academic interventions, counseling/social services, varying instructional strategies, alternative schools, instructional technologies) for individualizing students' learning experience are used in the classroom.					
11.e Explicit provisions (i.e., content emphasis, skill mastery, pacing, learning method, authentic assessment, cooperative learning, peer tutoring) for adapting the curriculum to student's particular abilities and needs exists for students who are at risk of dropping out.					

SOURCE: http://www.kasa.org/KDPP_Strategies_Assessment.htm

- **Standard 10: Instructional Technologies** – Technology is expanded in classrooms in ways to enhance student learning and increase opportunities for all students.

- **Standard 12: Systemic Renewal** – A coordinated effort is used to harness the forces that can bring about improvement in schools. The essential components of true systemic renewal are identified and examples of how stakeholders can collaborate effectively to ensure that all students can achieve success in school.

- **Standard 13: Community Collaboration** – The values and pitfalls of collaborative efforts to bring about change and a discussion about the key components of effective community collaboration take place.

- **Standard 14: Career Education and Workforce Readiness** – An appropriate blend of solid education competencies and career-based competencies exists to prepare students for the workforce.

- **Standard 15: Conflict Resolution and Violence Prevention** – Deals with issues of violence and conflict as factors that contribute to the school dropout problem through a comprehensive program for conflict resolution and violence prevention.

Another excellent source of information in developing a comprehensive prevention/support plan for students at risk of dropping out is the recent work conducted nationwide called *New Directions for Student Support*. This summit initiative began in October 2002 with three Regional Education Service Center meetings and four statewide summits (Minnesota, California, Indiana, and Wisconsin). Information on this initiative and other best practices related to student services are located at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu.

Many districts coordinate efforts between alternative, disciplinary alternative, dropout prevention, special education, and at-risk programs and services. Districts see overall improvements in student performance through implementation of dropout prevention measures.

The district should create a dropout prevention plan that coordinates related districtwide and community student services. This should include an assistance program to address such needs as students' academic, emotional, family, and/or chemical dependency issues. LISD should use a self-assessment instrument for dropout prevention as a basis for designing its districtwide plan. Once the

district approves and implements the plan, the district should establish a monitoring process to ensure the dropout rate remains low.

SPECIAL EDUCATION (REC. 8)

LISD does not have a comprehensive plan addressing special education program deficiencies and reducing the number of students taking the state's alternative assessment. This has resulted in ongoing program problems including inconsistent prereferral, inconsistent program implementation, and a lack of trained personnel and management. LISD has been plagued with numerous special education deficiencies as found in a review of internal district documents and interviews and in reviewing state special education audits and outside consultants' audits.

In addition, the district exempted 3.1 percent of its overall student population from the TAKS in 2003–04 while 5.8 percent took the state developed alternative assessment (SDAA). Comparatively, the state Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) exemption rate in 2003–04 was 2.1 percent and the percentage of students taking the SDAA was 5 percent. Federal *NCLB* regulations state that a district may only exempt 1 percent of its student population from statewide assessments. Texas, as a state, has engaged in numerous negotiations with the federal government regarding this issue in 2004–05 and made a statewide decision to waive this accountability requirement for all districts in hopes of reaching a comprise with officials from the U.S. Department of Education. In April 2005, the secretary of Education announced that districts might have an additional 3 percent in special education exemptions in 2005–06; however, federal officials did not sanction the state's decision to permit districts to go above the 1 percent testing requirement in 2004–05. Many states and districts are already formulating plans to address ways to increase student participation in statewide assessments and reduce special education-related exemptions.

LISD has 534 special education students as reported in PEIMS 2004–05. **Exhibit 1-19** shows the number of special education students in 2004–05 by ethnicity.

A review of state and independent consultant audits show that there are numerous special education issues including the following that the district has not completely addressed:

- a history of frequent change in special education leadership;

- a majority of principals lacking knowledge of the special education assessment process;

EXHIBIT 1-19
LISD PEIMS EDIT + REPORTS
DATA REVIEW
SPECIAL EDUCATION DISTRICT
EFFECTIVENESS
AND COMPLIANCE INDICATOR:
ETHNICITY
2004–05 FALL DATA COLLECTION

ETHNICITY	NON-SPECIAL EDUCATION	SPECIAL EDUCATION
All Students	4,668	534
Native American	8	*
Percent	0.2%	.2%
Asian	7	*
Percent	0.1%	.4%
African American	3,541	405
Percent	75.9%	75.8%
White	277	56
Percent	5.9%	10.5%

NOTE: * denotes five or fewer not reported due to privacy reasons.
SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, Public Education Information Management
        System (PEIMS), 2004.

- inconsistent implementation of referral committee procedures;

- a lack of measurable goals to move students with disabilities into higher levels of state assessment procedures to more closely meet federal *NCLB* requirements;

- inconsistent file maintenance including a lack of Individual Education Plans (IEPs) confidentiality logs and little documentation of state tests;

- little or no documentation of consistent use of curriculum to address IEP goals and lack of documentation of IEP goal progress;

- state-identified risk factors for restrictive placements. Subsequent to the review team's visit, the state removed the district from its list for violating the least restrictive environment.

- state-identified concern that the percentage of Anglo students in special education is higher than the percentage in the overall population;

- low TAKS performance for students in special education;

- a lack of special education students accessing the general curriculum according to staff interviews;

- high special education referrals in elementary schools resulting in do not qualify (DNQ) findings; and

- high turnover of special education teachers with 40 percent new in 2003–04.

A review of the *2004–05 Special Education Strategic Plan*, dated November 1, 2004, indicates a need for a

revised plan for improvement. The current plan has a list of five principles, a list of eight "formative impressions," and a chart of five priorities for 2004–05, which include the following:

- ensure compliance/promote quality;

- comprehensive assessments;

- make data-driven decisions;

- build capacity; and

- engage all stakeholders.

The plan lacks specific strategies, timelines, and staff responsible for implementing the strategies.

The director of Bilingual Education/Special Education and State and Federal Programs oversees the special education program although he does not have a background in this area. This is the director's first year of oversight of special education that includes the aforementioned historical obstacles. However, the director stated that he is committed to improving special education services evidenced by the immediate outside audit and resulting recommendations for program improvement in September 2004. Following are some of the key recommendations from the audit:

- edit the special education procedural guidelines to reflect the unique needs of LISD;

- hold principals responsible for the quality of instruction and the level of special education compliance at the campus level;

- include special education teachers in all TEKS-related instructional planning and training;

- assign diagnosticians to campuses on a scheduled basis so principals can plan their priorities and maintain ongoing knowledge about case management and assessment issues;

- provide greater access to the general curriculum and raise instructional expectations for special education students;

- provide more training in effective classroom management and scrutinize the practices that cause too many students with behavior problems to end up in the special education referral process (overidentification of special education students);

- establish some measurable goals to move more students with disabilities into higher levels of state assessments;

- provide training in confidentiality and other aspects of IEP management and develop a

random system of IEP review using a team of central and campus staff; and

- provide a structured report-writing format for assessment personnel.

Districts with effective special education programs have clear roadmaps or long-term strategic plans as their guide for improvement. Often these comprehensive strategic plans include specific goals based on data analysis, implementation strategies, timelines, individuals with assigned accountability for implementation, and a planned budget to ensure funds are adequate and available. Strategic plans in special education also frequently outline a district's policy on inclusive education. LISD does not have such a policy.

Exhibit 1-20 shows an effective example of a detailed inclusion policy adapted nationwide and abroad by districts formulating and revising special education inclusion policies and procedures.

Region 10 offers a variety of related training at no additional cost to the district. Because the state, as a whole, is negotiating compliance with federal regulations regarding exempting students from the TAKS, the district should also prioritize attention and training efforts on ways to increase the number of students in the special education program that take the TAKS each year. Currently, the target exemption rate in *NCLB* is 1 percent with an increase of 3 percent in 2005–06.

Given the multitude of issues with special education and the efforts made in the recent audit, LISD is moving in the right direction for improving its special education program.

However, in order for these efforts to be truly effective, the district should revise, implement, and monitor a comprehensive strategic plan for special education including documented and specific strategies to address key areas of need. The district should also ensure that administrators attend ongoing special education training particularly in the areas of identified need for the district and in areas pertinent to compliance with federal *NCLB* mandates. The district should focus on efforts to begin reducing the number of students either exempt from the TAKS or taking the state's alternative assessment. These efforts should change as identified areas of need change and support the required special services provided to identified students.

By addressing the areas of programmatic need on an annual basis and providing administrators and teachers with related training, the district should enhance overall services to students with special needs, provide necessary support to teachers and administrators, and begin to address necessary federal mandates.

BILINGUAL EDUCATION (REC. 9)

The district does not have a comprehensive plan addressing Bilingual Education teacher shortages and overall program deficiencies or a defined procedures manual. As a result, in 2004–05 the district is out of compliance with state law requiring either provision of services due to the number of identified students or a waiver addressing the issue due to a teacher shortage.

TEC Chapter 29 requires that all school districts with an enrollment of 20 or more limited English proficient (LEP) students in the same grade level offer BE, ESL, or an alternative program.

Exhibit 1-21 shows that LISD serves 81 out of 4,668 students in the Pre-K, Kindergarten, and grades 1, 2, and 3 bilingual classes. This is the first year of the program in the district because, according to interviews, the district has historically requested a waiver for nearly 10 years from provision of services through a formal program. In 2004–05, the district decided to cluster these classes for students in early grades at Houston Elementary School. Because this is the baseline or first year of the program, the district does not have data to determine the program's effectiveness. The district serves LEP students in grades 4–12 through ESL services only and does not comply with TEC Chapter 29 concerning offering grades 4, 5, and 6 bilingual programs.

District staff state that that their inability to hire the number of qualified teachers necessary to serve grades 4-6 impedes them from realizing compliance with TEC Chapter 29. The district does not have any type of documented teacher recruitment plan in place to assist in filling this need.

In 2004–05, the district has four state-certified, bilingual-endorsed teachers. However, the district did not apply for a waiver from TEA to address a teacher shortage, although administrators initially said the district had a state waiver for 2004–05. After repeated requests for copies of the waiver, the director of Bilingual Education/Special Education and State and Federal Programs said the district, in fact, did not apply for a waiver for 2004–05. The

district's Bilingual Program is, therefore, out of compliance with state law. After meetings with the review team, the director attended bilingual training through Region 10 in March and April 2005. The district also developed a goal of recruiting two additional bilingual teachers for 2005–06 to provide required services to students.

EXHIBIT 1-20
DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL, UNITED KINGDOM
INCLUSION POLICY

Principles

Inclusion is concerned with the learning, participation, and equal opportunities of all children and young people, all of who have a right to access to the curriculum. It has wider implications than the identification of children and young people with special educational needs. It could apply to any or all of the following:

- girls or boys where there are gender issues;
- minority ethnic and faith groups, travelers, asylum seekers and refugees;
- children who need support to learn English as an additional language (EAL);
- children with special educational needs including those considered to have emotional, behavioral or social difficulties;
- children with physical disabilities;
- children who may be gifted and talented;
- children in need including those in public care;
- other children, such as sick children, young carers, children from families under stress, pregnant school girls and teenage mothers, and children who are at risk of disaffection and exclusion from school; and
- children whose families may be seriously disadvantaged by poverty and/or rural isolation.

Promoting inclusion will help all children and young people to realize their potential in terms of achievement, learning through access to curricular and extra-curricular activities within schools and other settings where diversity is understood and valued such as Youth Centers, libraries and outdoor education centers.

From Principles to Practice

Inclusive principles highlight the importance of meeting the individual needs of all children and young people equally, whether they have identified "special needs" or not. Inclusive schools and settings are those that are dedicated to meeting the individual needs of each child. Inclusion is a process in which pupils, parents, teachers, and other agencies or departments work together in partnership to develop the application of its principles in each setting.

Implementation of the Inclusion Policy will require the continued commitment from Elected Members, Schools, Governors, the LEA, parents and pupils in order to:

1. Seek a greater understanding of inclusive education amongst stakeholders by:
   - working in partnership with parents/carers and multi-professional agencies;
   - promoting a wider understanding of disability equality issues;
   - promoting definitions of achievement to which all learners can realistically aspire;
   - ensuring that the language and images used to describe disaffected and/or disabled children and young people and/or those with other learning difficulties provide positive role models;
   - ensuring that all progress towards inclusive education is identified and reported regularly to the council and throughout all partner agencies; and
   - collecting and disseminating information on best practice and best value.

2. Enable all education settings and activities whether formal or informal to be fully accessible to all children and young people by:
   - continuing to implement a planned programme of site and buildings alterations;
   - ensuring accessible and appropriately presented information as required by the individual;
   - making transport available to and from school in line with the County Council's policies;
   - ensuring that all settings provide appropriate teaching methods which recognize a range of learning styles, providing training and support where necessary;
   - ensuring the full range of curricular and extra-curricular activities is accessible;
   - keeping the admissions policy under regular review to ensure that a disability experienced by a child or young person is not grounds for refusing admission; and
   - ultimately ensuring that inclusive education can be offered to any child or young person in his or her own community.

3. Ensuring early identification, assessment, support and review of the needs of all children and young people by:
   - ensuring flexible and prompt arrangements for identifying, reviewing and providing for all pupils' needs – whether temporary difficulties or setbacks, long term needs or serious incident or illness;
   - empowering children and young people by developing their communication skills so that their views and feelings may be heard; and
   - ensuring effective guidance for the education service in fulfilling the requirements of the Code of Practice (2001) for SEN; and
   - ensuring safe, reliable, and effective practices for communicating up-to-date information about children's needs.

EXHIBIT 1-20 (CONTINUED)
DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL, UNITED KINGDOM
INCLUSION POLICY

4. Ensuring access and smooth transition from home-based to pre-school and pre-school to reception/key stage 1, and through each key stage into further education, training, and work.

5. Promote partnerships with parents/carers and other stakeholders.

6. Ensure the effective use of resources towards prevention and early intervention by:
   • recognizing that adequate resourcing is the key to the confidence with which staff feel able to include disabled and disaffected learners;
   • channeling resources towards prevention and early intervention;
   • considering the best value to be provided by comparing inclusive mainstream options with specialist provision;
   • containing the need to allocate resources primarily through the statement of special educational need;
   • ensuring effective management of the assessment and review processes;
   • monitoring the effective and efficient use of school budgets for SEN;
   • seeking efficient use of resources through close partnership working;
   • undertaking regular best value reviews;
   • continually seeking new opportunities for increasing funding through the pursuit of excellence and relevant development projects;
   • working with the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership to promote the benefits of investing in work with young children;
   • working with the statutory and voluntary sector Youth Service to explore alternative intervention approaches to working with young people likely to be at particular risk of exclusion; and
   • supporting schools in developing opportunities for a range of accreditation and learning programmes, within mainstream, part-time access to other settings and through timely and effective transition planning.

7. Monitor appropriate indicators to measure the success of the inclusion policy.

8. Review the effectiveness and the fuller development of the inclusion policy by:
   • nominating the Inclusion Steering Group, which is made up of Governors; representatives from pre-school providers, mainstream and special schools, and parents; and Health and Social Services and LEA officers; including those from the Youth Service to regularly monitor progress; and
   • ensuring that the implementation of this policy fits within the context of the broader Equal Opportunities policy of the council and does not at any point detrimentally affect the learning entitlements of non-disaffected or non-disabled children and young people.

SOURCE: Devon County Council, United Kingdom, 2004.

EXHIBIT 1-21
LISD PEIMS EDIT+ REPORTS
DATA REVIEW
SPECIAL EDUCATION DISTRICT
EFFECTIVENESS AND
COMPLIANCE INDICATOR: LIMITED
ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (LEP)
2004 FALL DATA COLLECTION

STUDENT GROUP	NON-SPECIAL EDUCATION	SPECIAL EDUCATION
Total Student Population	4,668	534
LEP Student Population and Percent	314 6.7%	36 6.7%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS, 2004–05.

LISD does not have a strategic plan or a procedures' manual for its Bilingual Program. Staff responded that the district addresses bilingual issues as they arise.

Best practices used in other school districts to address the shortage of Bilingual education teachers include the following:

▪ **Establish collaboration with multiple agencies.** Research conducted since 2000 has clarified the need for interagency cooperation to maximize the impact of the limited resources available for bilingual staffing.

▪ **Develop a long-term strategy.** The changes in bilingual teacher staffing can come about only with a multiyear approach. Planning must occur to address future needs.

▪ **Increase bilingual in-service education.** Increasing research exists to support the need for teachers have the language and cultural competencies necessary to capture the attention and energy of a student population with growing numbers of language minorities.

- **Implement a system of compliance monitoring and technical assistance.** Successful districts develop a reliance on performance accountability. Administrators combine compliance monitoring with expert guidance to ensure they hire and deploy qualified teachers to serve students in LEP programs.

- **Consider recruiting Spanish-speaking teachers from Mexico.** Spurred by growth in the number of students identified as LEP and in response to federal and state mandates, many districts are undertaking strenuous efforts to recruit bilingual teachers. Districts such as Los Angeles and Chicago recruit Spanish-speaking teachers from Mexico. Some districts are looking to Puerto Rico for teachers because there are no immigration barriers. Some school districts, frustrated with the high cost and unpredictable results from outside recruiting, have started "grow your own" programs for bilingual professionals.

The district should create, implement, and monitor a board-approved comprehensive Bilingual Education Program plan including a detailed procedural manual to address LISD's teacher shortages and program deficiencies. The district should immediately assess and then address any issues of noncompliance. The district should particularly focus on provision of services for students in grades 4, 5, and 6 in 2005–06 through budgeted plans to recruit and hire two bilingual teachers. The district should also provide the board with scheduled updates regarding provision of services to students in the Bilingual Education/ English as a Second Language Program as a whole.

GIFTED AND TALENTED PROGRAM (REC. 10)

While the district is making progress in improving Gifted and Talented (G/T) program offerings, LISD is not compliant with training requirements or overall program evaluation in accordance with state law. According to law, [Texas Education Code (TEC) §7.027(b); Texas Administrative Code (TAC) 19 §89.5] the state plan shall serve as the basis for district accountability in providing services to G/T students. As such, the board has the primary responsibility to ensure the district complies with all requirements of state educational programs. G/T program evaluation is part of annual DIP and CIPs, and as such constitutes a form of program effectiveness review. However, because the board did not adopt the 2004–05 drafted DIP and several CIPs were not individualized, the district did not

completely perform an effectiveness review of the G/T program.

The *Texas State Plan for Gifted and Talented Students (TSP)* requires that any identified teacher of record teaching G/T students must complete the state-certified training. LISD has 184 staff members eligible for either the Gifted Endorsement Training or a minimum of 30 hours in the specific Gifted Modules.

The law also states that a regular classroom teacher must have the 30 hours of professional development in gifted education and an annual update of six hours of professional development if G/T students are served in the regular classroom. Only 76 of the district's staff members have some gifted training, while 148 of the 184 staff do not have all necessary training. However, 36 staff members (or 19.5 percent) meet the state training requirements.

Until 2004–05, the district required teachers to maintain their own professional development hours; however, in summer 2004, the district hired a coordinator under the direction of the Teaching and Learning Department to assist with professional development and tracking efforts. The district plans to automate this tracking after completing all moves to the new administrative building opened in May 2005.

In a September 17, 2004 memo from the director of Teaching and Learning, the district announced that it would award scholarships to cover expenses related to G/T certification. On November 29, 2004, the district notified one teacher from each campus of an award for tuition and books related to G/T training. Several district teachers attended training seminars in bilingual/Gifted and Talented education. The director of Teaching and Learning identified increased internal training and offerings for teachers as a priority for 2005–06.

Accomplishments in the 2004–05 LISD G/T Program include the following initiatives:

- For the first time, the district has a Gifted and Talented coordinator who possesses a doctorate in the field of education.

- The new coordinator initiated a K–12 districtwide enrichment program in 2004–05 founded in research and involving three levels of Gifted and Talented instruction.

- Rather than the traditional practice of using minimum or cut-off scores on the Kilgore Observation Inventory and/or other instruments for the identification of G/T students, the district's identification process includes student, parent, and or teacher

identification procedures as well as use of student portfolios.

Exhibit 1-22 shows the total number and percentage of LISD students by subpopulation identified as G/T according to district records for 2004–05. As shown, the percentage of the student body identified as G/T has fluctuated over the past four years from 2001–02 through 2004–05 and declined from 7.0 percent in 2001–02 to 4.9 percent in 2004–05.

The TEA website suggests districts providing G/T program services in the regular classroom consider whether or not a classroom teacher has the time and/or resources to provide instruction and guidance for G/T students at an appropriately challenging level. Campuses need to remember, according to TEA, that students served in the general classroom still need to work together with groups (minimum of 3) of G/T students, work independently, and work with other students during the school day and entire school year. These are topics addressed in certification and G/T professional development opportunities.

In addition, TEA answers many common G/T program questions such as those related to professional development requirements or board policy as noted on their website at www.tea.state.tx.us/gted/QAStaPla.hrml:

- *What if I hire a new teacher for the G/T program and do not have time to train him/her before his/her assignment to the program?* 19 TAC §89.2(2) TSP 4.1.2A enables districts to take up to one semester for a teacher to complete the 30-hour training. However, this should be used only in extenuating circumstances, such as the necessity of hiring a new teacher for the G/T program late in the summer or during the school year because no other trained teacher is available.

- *Who may offer the 30 hours of professional development required for G/T teachers?* Teachers may obtain the 30 hours from a variety of sources. Regional education service centers, local education agencies, university classes and institutes, and professional consultants are some of the resources available to educators. The Texas Association for the Gifted and Talented (TAGT) offers annual conferences where training may be obtained. It is a local school district decision as to who will provide the training for the district's teachers.

- *If districts serve high school G/T students through Advanced Placement (AP) courses and students who are not identified gifted are in the class, must the AP teacher differentiate the curriculum for the gifted students*? Yes. Teachers that are using flexible grouping for instruction and product development, giving choices in assignments, and establishing a student centered classroom with lots of student-to-student interaction are providing differentiated instruction. One of the reasons for requiring AP teachers to have professional development in nature and needs of G/T students and assessing student needs is so they will be able to recognize a need for differentiation and provide it as needed.

- *Can Pre-AP be used to serve G/T students?* Yes, but remember that Pre-AP is designed to increase the pool of students who will be successful in AP classes at the 11th and 12th grades. It is, therefore, a curriculum that is used to strengthen the educational program of all students in middle and high school. Following this philosophy, it would be necessary for a district to differentiate Pre-AP the way any general curriculum would be modified for G/T students.

EXHIBIT 1-22
LISD GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS BY ETHNICITY
2001–02 THROUGH 2004–05

ETHNICITY	SCHOOL YEAR			
	2001–02	**2002–03**	**2003–04**	**2004–05**
African American	141	153	159	168
White	72	102	63	47
Hispanic	24	28	32	39
Asian-Pacific Islander	6	6	*	*
American Indian	*	*	*	*
Total	**243**	**289**	**258**	**256**
Percentage of student body	7.0%	5.6%	5.0%	4.9%

NOTE: * denotes five or fewer not reported due to privacy reasons.
SOURCE: LISD, Department of Teaching and Learning, 2004.

- *Are the AP teachers required to have the 30 hours of training in gifted education? If yes, can their AP training count for it?* If AP classes serve as the mode of delivery for your services to G/T students, teachers should have the 30 hours of training in gifted education. A part of the College Board five-day summer institute training can count toward the curriculum and instruction component, but the teacher still needs approximately six hours each in the nature and needs of G/T students and assessing student needs training components.

School districts with strong G/T programs have the support of the board to ensure all teachers of record are appropriately trained to use the most effective teaching strategies to highly motivate and stimulate its students. Many districts electronically track training hours and notify teachers and principals when staff meet set requirements. These districts often address training requirements and overall provision of G/T services through annual program evaluation, since G/T services are addressed in District and Campus Improvement Plans.

The district should provide training, annually review the G/T program, and electronically monitor completed hours for all district teachers of record to ensure that highly qualified teachers are instructing LISD's G/T students. LISD should implement an in-house training program during assigned weekly after school training or during professional development days to ensure compliance with state G/T mandates.

As the district has the availability of four state-endorsed teachers qualified to provide the appropriate G/T training, this fiscal impact is estimated based on providing an annual stipend of $2,000 to these professionals. The district should use a train-the-trainers model and provide a $2,000 stipend plus 9 percent in benefits or $180 for a total of $2,180 per trainer annually. Estimates for the necessary training materials equal a one-time cost of $1,000. This fiscal impact therefore includes annual costs of $8,720 (4 x $2,180) to continuously provide train-the-trainer G/T services. Five-year stipend and benefit costs equal $43,600.

FINE ARTS PROGRAM (REC. 11)

LISD has not fully expanded the overall Fine Arts Program to include emphasis on all areas based on student and parent interests and on availability of qualified teachers. A review of Fine Arts courses shows the following campus-level information. At the high school, there are 13 music classes or periods. The district offers seven choir, six theatre,

seven art, six dance, and 10 Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) classes that fall under Fine Arts offerings. In the junior high school, there are four band, three choir, two art, and two dance classes.

Interviews with parents, staff, and students show that there is a desire to increase the Fine Arts offerings to include more theatre and visual arts opportunities for LISD students.

Data shows that the district is improving the Fine Arts Program since hiring the director of Fine Arts. For example, 120 LISD students have participated in University Interscholastic League (UIL) events for one year, and over the course of that year, they have increased their scores by one point—a marked accomplishment. In 2004–05, the director of Fine Arts also provided a two-day districtwide training for all Music Department staff to ensure the systematic implementation of an enhanced program to help students read music. The director of Fine Arts believes the arts are vital to a well-rounded education helping students gain valuable discipline, skills, and knowledge that contribute to overall school success.

Many districts offer a variety of Fne Arts options for students' participation. Denton ISD has a replicable Fine Arts Program based on the following principles:

- Research in multiple intelligences, the brain, and how the emotions strongly affect learning, supports hands-on, experiential learning through the arts.

- "The arts should be supported not only because research supports their value but also because they are as dynamic and broad-based as more widely accepted disciplines. They contribute to the development and enhancement of multiple neurobiological systems, including the cognition, emotional, immune, circulatory, and perceptual-motor systems. Ultimately, the arts can help make us better people." Eric Jensen, "Principal Leadership," Nov. 2001, Vol. 2, No. 3 (The Science of the Arts from *Arts With the Brain in Mind*).

- The arts help children better understand concepts measured on various tests. The arts help teach shapes, color recognition, size differentiation, letter and number recognition, mathematical concepts, phonic recognition, sequencing, following directions, hand-eye and motor coordination, and direction and location.

- The arts develop valued higher order and creative thinking skills, such as visual memory, various forms of communication, and the ability to compare and contrast, group and label,

explain cause and effect, assess significance, make predictions, and frame and test hypotheses.

- The arts improve many students' self-concepts and attitude towards school and, as a result, the students' attendance improves.

- The arts are vastly important to technology and multimedia production, as evidenced in their use in books, magazines, advertisements, television commercials, music videos, video games, and films such as *Gone with the Wind, ET, Star Wars, Toy Story, Titanic, The Perfect Storm, Harry Potter,* and *Lord of the Rings.*

Texas requires provision of Fine Arts through the enrichment curriculum as outlined in the TEKS. *NCLB* includes key provisions long sought by arts education advocates and marks a major victory for arts learning. This act includes a general definition of "core academic subjects," which includes the arts. The law states: "The term 'core academic subjects' means English, reading, or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history and geography. This means that whenever national education programs (such as teacher training, school reform, and technology programs) are targeted to 'core academic subjects,' the arts may be eligible to receive federal funds."

The district should increase the number of Fine Arts options based on student enrollment, parent and student interest, and the availability of qualified teachers within the district. LISD should strive for a balance in the five Fine Arts offerings. By offering a variety of options to students, the district continues to provide a well-rounded education and helps students gain valuable discipline, skills, and knowledge that contribute to school success.

GUIDANCE PROGRAM (REC. 12)

While contracting for departmental oversight for the Guidance Program, the district does not emphasize academic scholarships, college counseling, and career counseling in district plans. The district hired an outside consultant in spring 2004 to oversee the district's guidance initiatives provided by its 12 guidance counselors. The consultant reviewed the district's staffing guidelines, allocation of duties, procedures, training program, and provision of services. The district has not, however, included a review of post-graduation initiatives or scholarship/career award services and the related role of the district's guidance counselors.

The recent 2004–05 improvements in the LISD Guidance Program include the following:

- The 12 counselors meet once a month with the outside consultant for staff development and training.

- The district is implementing a coordinated districtwide character education program with specific activities established for the school year.

- To accurately monitor direct interaction time with students, in 2004–05 the district requires counselors to keep and submit counseling logs leading to improved accountability of the counselors' time.

- Overall, counselors spend more time in direct contact with students as opposed to other administrative duties. According to the district's guidance consultant, high school, junior high, and intermediate counselors spend approximately 75 percent of their time in direct contact with students, while elementary counselors spend approximately 90 percent of their time in direct contact with students.

- The 2003–04 LISD staff allocation formula document shows that the district adheres to industry-recommended ratio standards of 0 to 599 students per guidance counselor at the elementary level and 600 to 999 students per guidance counselor at the intermediate level.

Data shows that 71 out of 350 students in the district received a scholarship in 2004. Although requested by the review team, the district did not have the total amount of scholarships awarded to the 71 students in the class of 2004. The district implements some initiatives such as GoCenter and Gear Up grants. However, the district asked for assistance in improving initiatives in this area.

Student survey results show that 20 percent of the students disagree that the district has an effective career counseling program, 14 percent strongly disagree, and 35 percent have no opinion. When asked if the district has an effective college counseling program, 18 percent of the students disagree, and 16 percent have no opinion.

Exhibit 1-23 shows some resources guidance counselors use to assist students in seeking and winning scholarships. Many of these sites are specific to Texas students. Websites for each of these resources are found at: http://scholarships.callernetwork.com/links.htm.

After meeting with the review team, the district printed some resources for students and their parents in a districtwide newsletter and electronically added resources for students and parents via its website.

EXHIBIT 1-23
POTENTIAL RESOURCES FOR STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS

Texas Guaranteed Student Loan Corp. - "The Texas Guaranteed Student Loan Corporation (TG) is a public, nonprofit corporation that administers the Federal Family Education Loan Program (FFELP). Our vision is to be the premier source of information, financing, and assistance to help all families and students realize their educational and career dreams."

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board - This website has a wealth of information dealing with topics such as Admissions Requirements, Educational Opportunities - Degrees Offered, Cost of Education, Financial Aid for Texas Students, and much more.

Texas State Occupational Information Coordinating Committee - "The Texas SOICC is part of a federally mandated network which includes both a national organization (NOICC) and a SOICC in each state and territory in 1976."

Texas Tomorrow Fund - "Despite all the gloomy predictions about escalating college costs, there is hope for Texas families. It is called the Texas Tomorrow Fund, a prepaid college tuition program that allows you to pay tomorrow's college at today's prices. The Texas Tomorrow Fund provides coverage for tuition and required fees, no matter how much they increase over time."

1StopAid - "Welcome to 1StopAid, the first and only Web site to provide you with an easy to follow guide on what you should do to Prepare for College, an opportunity to Win a Scholarship, find Other Scholarships that may be available to you, and information on your options for Financing Your Education."

AnyCollege.Net - Free college search engine for prospective college students; apply online or submit application form.

Adventures in Education - " Adventures in Education, an award-winning site, is sponsored by the Texas Guaranteed Student Loan Corporation (TG)."

CollegeBound Network - "Dedicated to providing their visitors with first-hand college information from students who have experienced everything that they are about to encounter, the CollegeBound Network has a staff of "college correspondents" who regularly share their advice and insight."

College Board Online - "Locate scholarships, loans, internships, and other financial aid programs from non-college sources that match your education level, talents, and background. By completing the profile form the Scholarship Search will find potential opportunities from a database of more than 2,000 undergraduate scholarships, internships, and loan programs."

CollegeLink.com - "With over 900 college and university members, we are the world's leader in online applications. We also offer a full range of services to help you connect with the college that is right for you."

CollegeNET - "Launched in 1995, CollegeNET is the #1 portal for applying to college over the web. Not a diskette, CD, or download system, CollegeNET lets applicants complete, file, and pay for their admissions applications entirely through the internet."

CollegeQuest - "On a quest for the perfect college? Whether you are a high school junior or the proud parent of one, now you can find the college info that is important to you. Get hunting tips. Explore financial aid options. Even apply for college online."

College View - "Scholarships. Loans. Grants. Tuition. Money for college. Whatever you call it, paying for college is a major issue, but do not let "sticker shock" stop you from attending the school that is right for you. If you're looking for scholarships, loans, grants, or tuition money, you've come to the right place."

Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, Inc. - "The Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, Inc. (CBCF) was established in 1976 as a non-partisan, non-profit, public policy, research and educational institute. As envisioned by its founders, the CBCF's mission is to assist the leaders of today, while helping to prepare a new generation of leaders for the future."

FAFSA on the Web - "Establishing the FAFSA Web site shows that the Dept. of Education is current with available technology and is in touch with the people (students) most likely to make use of that technology... clear instructions on how to fill out the form, and great assistance without having to call customer service."

Gates Millennium Scholars - "The Gates Millennium Scholars initiative, funded by a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and administered by the United Negro College Fund and partners, is aimed at expanding access and opportunity to higher education to those citizens who will help reflect the diverse society in which we live."

Government Guide - "The federal government offers hundreds of Web sites with advice and information on paying for college. By answering a few questions, GOVERNMENT CHECKLIST can personalize a selection of the Web sites based on your individual needs."

Hispanic Financial Aid and Information Links - This web page provide a listing of many sources of scholarship and financial aid on the Web for Hispanics.

Minnie Stevens Piper Foundation - "The purpose for which it was formed is to support charitable, scientific, or educational undertakings by providing for, or contributing toward, the education of financially limited but worthy students, by assisting young men and women residents of Texas attending or wishing to attend colleges and universities in the state of Texas to complete their education and obtain degrees."

U.S. Department of Education - "The Department administers several major student aid programs, including Pell Grants and Stafford Loans, which provide over $42 billion a year to help millions of students pay for the costs of college. Whether you are ready to apply for financial aid or just interested in more information about the federal student aid programs, the starting point is... "

US News and World Report - At this website you can find a scholarship by using a Quick Search or Name search. You can also estimate the cost of college with this website's "Estimate your college costs" program.

Web U.S Community Colleges - "This page of UT Austin Web Central lists all Regional Education Service Center-accredited community colleges in the U.S. and provides links to those with a Web presence. (Please note: this list includes 2-year institutions and 2-year branch campuses of 4-year institutions, but not 4-year institutions offering associate degrees.)"

SOURCE: http://scholarships.callernetwork.com/links.htm

The district should increase college and career counseling initiatives by annually reviewing documented efforts included in the Guidance Program and tracking subsequent student awards. By assisting students with scholarship applications, increasing career counseling, and monitoring awards and post-graduation success, the district better prepares students for post-high school career and secondary education goals based on statistical analysis.

For more information on Chapter 1: Educational Service Delivery, see page 221 in the General Information section of the appendices.

FISCAL IMPACT

RECOMMENDATION	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09	2009–10	5-YEAR (COSTS) OR SAVINGS	ONE-TIME (COSTS)
1. Create and implement a Department of Teaching and Learning Strategic Plan including administrative leadership training and program evaluation schedules.	$0	($2,500)	($2,500)	($2,500)	($2,500)	($10,000)	($10,000)
2. Expand representation on the Curriculum Committee, update all curriculum guides according to a schedule, and include modifications for various learning levels.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
3. Develop and use a districtwide Campus Improvement Plan (CIP) template and state compliance checklist and ensure district administrative participation in CIP data analysis, inclusion of research-based strategies, and goal achievement.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
4. Create and implement a districtwide lesson plan policy and walk-though instrument and process.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
5. Require Teaching and Learning staff and principals to attend data disaggregation training and include related test-taking strategies for students in instructional programs.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
6. Develop a manual and provide districtwide training on textbook inventory and loss procedures, perform scheduled textbook audits, and adopt policy to address textbook loss and replacement.	$10,866	$10,866	$10, 866	$10,866	$10,866	$54,330	$0
7. Create a dropout prevention and assistance plan coordinating related community and districtwide student services.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0

FISCAL IMPACT (CONTINUED)

RECOMMENDATION	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09	2009–10	5-YEAR (COSTS) OR SAVINGS	ONE-TIME (COSTS)
8. Revise, implement, and monitor a comprehensive strategic plan, update board policies, and require annual training for administrators and key personnel related to special education.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
9. Create and implement a board-approved Bilingual Education Program plan including development of a detailed procedures manual, required annual training for administrators and key personnel, and quarterly progress and compliance monitoring.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
10. Provide in-house training, electronically monitor completed hours for all Gifted and Talented (G/T) teachers, and complete an annual program review.	($8,720)	($8,720)	($8,720)	($8,720)	($8,720)	($43,600)	($1,000)
11. Increase the number of Fine Arts options based on student interest and existing teacher qualifications.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
12. Increase college and career counseling and provide assistance to students seeking scholarships.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Chapter 1 Totals	$2,146	($354)	($354)	($354)	($354)	$730	($11,000)

Chapter 2

District Leadership, Organization,

and Management

Lancaster Independent School District

CHAPTER 2
DISTRICT LEADERSHIP, ORGANIZATION, AND MANAGEMENT

A seven member Board of Trustees elected from single-member districts governs the Lancaster Independent School District (LISD). All seven members serve three-year terms on a rotating basis. The superintendent provides administrative leadership for the district and campus staff, who serve 5,203 students at nine school sites in 2004–05. The current superintendent, hired in July 2003, is contracted for five years and oversees the daily district operations, which include construction and renovation projects, extensive technology upgrades, and land acquisitions as outlined in a historic $110 million bond passed by voters in February 2004. LISD, one of the oldest districts in Texas, celebrated its 100th anniversary on May 12, 2005.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- District administrators, with cooperation from the board, employed a variety of internal and external communication initiatives and outreach efforts to reestablish diminished district-community relations.

- The district uses leadership and management teams, scheduled meetings, and regular reporting mechanisms to effectively involve personnel in the decision-making process.

FINDINGS

- The *LISD Board of Trustees Code of Conduct and Standard Operation Procedures* do not provide procedures specifying delivery of the regular board meeting agenda and all supporting data to each member at least five business days before the meeting.

- LISD does not maintain a permanent electronic, indexed record of the board's regular meetings or systematic files of hard-copy records.

- The board has not established a regular work session schedule often resulting in prolonged meetings due to necessary information discussions.

- There is no centralized listing or identified procedure to easily locate and annually review the district's board policy manual, referenced documents, handbooks, or manuals.

- The board has not adopted a policy governing legal services that includes selecting, evaluating, and providing services for employees.

- The district does not have procedures or supporting policy to ensure annual review of its organizational structure and corresponding functions when reviewing staffing decisions and

creating the annual District Improvement Plan (DIP).

- The district does not have a strategic planning process, defined procedures, or assigned accountability to ensure overall coordination and completion of required improvement plans and a long-range strategic plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Recommendation 13 (p. 47): Amend and enforce board policy and administrative procedures to require delivery of board agendas, packets, and supplemental information at least five business days before regularly scheduled meetings.** As of April 2005, the district began developing and revising procedural steps required to process and to include supplemental information in board packets according to the current three-day requirement. The board should immediately amend existing policy and work with the superintendent to alter current procedures to reflect a change in delivery dates for board packets from three days to five business days before scheduled meetings. By revising this timeline, associated procedures, and existing board policy, the district increases the time that board members have to review necessary information to support decisions made during meetings. The district should also reduce the time currently devoted to immediate review and discussion of supplemental information provided either at board meetings or on the weekend before a Monday meeting.

- **Recommendation 14 (p. 48): Institute procedures to electronically maintain board agendas, supporting information, and minutes.** The superintendent's secretary/board administrative assistant should modify current procedures for agenda preparation to permit electronic storage of board agendas, packet information, and actual board minutes. The district should scan paper documents, such as copies of contracts that may be unavailable in an electronic format, onto a CD for inclusion with related board actions. By ensuring the superintendent's secretary/board administrative assistant electronically saves and retains this information, the district should reduce the amount of space needed to store board-related documents and provide a quick and efficient way for staff and community members to locate and review past board actions and related documents, contracts, and supporting materials.

- **Recommendation 15 (p. 49): Establish, implement, and publish a board work session schedule for each fiscal year.** The superintendent and board members should cooperate to develop an annual work session schedule that includes relevant professional development opportunities related to current issues, goals, and objectives. By creating and publishing a schedule showing dates and chosen presentation topics, the district ensures board members annually receive necessary training for changing districtwide priorities, allows ample time to schedule outside presenters, and promotes community support for district decisions by identifying provision of appropriate training.

- **Recommendation 16 (p. 50): Create a policy provision listing and annually updating existing procedural manuals and documents and institute corresponding electronic links in the board policy manual.** The superintendent should direct all departmental and campus administrators to identify and provide all existing procedural documents or manuals to the director of Human Resources. By centrally identifying and updating a list of all informative and procedural documents, the district provides a usable listing of documents not currently available. Additionally, by requiring compilation of this annual list and electronically linking these documents and materials in board policy already maintained on the district website, the district creates broad, immediate, and efficient access to materials previously available through certain departmental, district, and campus staff.

- **Recommendation 17 (p. 51): Develop and adopt board policy on legal services and implement corresponding procedures.** The district should develop a local policy on legal services, expanding on the current legal policy defining generic use of general counsel. By addressing legal issues such as selection of legal counsel, evaluation of legal services, and provision of legal services to employees through policy and procedures, the district defines parameters for potentially litigious situations that may arise in the future and ensures the board has institutionalized procedures related to legal services.

- **Recommendation 18 (p. 52): Annually review and adopt a district organizational plan in conjunction with adopted long-range strategic plans and the annual District Improvement Plan.** The Board of Trustees should review, revise, and approve an organizational plan submitted by the superintendent. This action should ensure the district annually realigns administrative responsibilities while effectively maintaining logical spans of control and in accordance with identified operational, programmatic, and financial needs and constraints.

- **Recommendation 19 (p. 55): Assign accountability for developing and implementing a strategic planning process to the superintendent's Leadership Team and adopt a long-range strategic plan.** The superintendent's Leadership Team should develop and begin a process to create a long-range strategic plan that integrates all other existing and approved plans, including the Technology Plan, the 2004 Bond Construction Plan, and annual Campus Improvement Plans (CIPs) and the DIP. By assigning accountability and following a defined process to integrate departmental, campus, and district needs into an overall planning document, the district can appropriately prioritize projects and programs and anticipate needed funds and resources.

DETAILED ACCOMPLISHMENTS

RENEWED COMMUNITY SUPPORT

District administrators, with cooperation from the board, employed a variety of internal and external communication initiatives and outreach efforts to reestablish diminished district-community relations. The district coordinated development of a bond package including use of a broad-based community and staff committee, disseminated information to the community, and encouraged voter participation. The district also initiated the following activities:

- conducting scheduled "community walks" through neighborhoods—weekend walks by the superintendent, board members, staff, and other individuals—with stops at homes asking residents about their local schools, programs, services for homeschoolers, and overall ideas for improvement;

- developing and using community "kits" for neighborhood walks including voter registrations, door-hanger comment cards, facilitating personal discussions with parents and students by using student rosters;

▪ recruiting Chamber oversight of the Business Partners in Education, the Texas Scholars Program, scholarship funds, and the Education Foundation;

▪ hosting an annual "State of the District" lunch in a school cafeteria giving Chamber and community members a chance to eat a regular meal, see student performances, and hear about district events;

▪ establishing effective communications with local government, including meetings with city officials to discuss joint use of property and facilities and additional issues of mutual concern;

▪ actively engaging with the local Chamber of Commerce and community organizations and churches;

▪ preparing and distributing weekly, monthly, and quarterly paper and electronic communications that provide the board, district employees, and other interested parties detailed information concerning student activities, accomplishments, trends, and departmental reports.

In response to growth projections and in an attempt to overcome a nearly 20-year reluctance from previous boards to address a bond initiative, the superintendent and staff prepared a two-phase facilities construction plan. The superintendent, board members, and personnel of LISD conducted information meetings, used community walks, and actively publicized the district's facilities needs. District administrators and board members credit these communicative efforts with the passage of the bond referendum by more than a 74 percent majority vote in February 2004. By institutionalizing both internal and external communication initiatives and outreach activities, the board and the superintendent established a means to ensure continued excellence and exponential growth in community relations and business support for district endeavors.

EFFECTIVE INVOLVEMENT OF PERSONNEL IN DECISION MAKING

The district uses leadership and management teams, scheduled meetings, and regular reporting mechanisms to effectively involve personnel in the decision-making process. The superintendent implemented a series of structured leadership groups to assist him in making decisions, for information dissemination, and for professional leadership development. His primary Leadership Team, or inner circle of executive leaders, is composed of three to five persons, depending on the major issues confronting LISD. This group meets on Wednesdays

and typically consists of the assistant superintendent, director of Teaching and Learning, and the chief financial officer with involvement of other district directors as needed.

A superintendent's Cabinet, comprised of the assistant superintendent and directors, meets the first and third Mondays to review the board meeting agenda and discuss other districtwide matters. On the third Wednesday of each month, the superintendent's Level Five Group, composed of district administrators and principals, convenes for a full-day forum with an instructional focus on teaching and learning through leadership development and related training. The members of this group also review important community initiatives and districtwide issues. The district schedules these forums on a rotating basis at different schools. Often, the superintendent and members of his Leadership Team meet with principals in various appropriate group configurations during the Level Five Group forums to address individualized or grade-level concerns.

Interviews with district staff and board members indicate that the superintendent maintains an open-door policy and is highly accessible to all stakeholders, placing emphasis on listening to and addressing concerns. The district uses written memorandums, email, and administrator/departmental staff meetings to communicate important decisions and other information resulting from these various leadership meetings. District and school administration interviews demonstrate that the staff has a clear understanding of the superintendent's expectations and district goals as well as a focus on growth management, fiscal integrity, and student achievement due to the implemented communication process.

DETAILED FINDINGS

BOARD OF TRUSTEES REGULAR MEETING AGENDAS AND PACKETS (REC. 13)

The *LISD Board of Trustees Code of Conduct and Standard Operation Procedures* do not provide procedures specifying delivery of the regular board meeting agenda and all supporting data to each member at least five business days before the meeting. According to board policy BE (LOCAL), the deadline for submitting items for inclusion on a board agenda is noon of the fifth calendar day before regularly scheduled meetings and the third calendar day before special meetings. The district's policy states that the agenda shall accompany the notice of the meeting. According to law, the district must give public notice of scheduled meetings and items on a

consent agenda 72 hours before a meeting. The district must also furnish the board with background material. Board policy however does not address a timeframe for providing background information concerning items on a consent agenda.

The superintendent's secretary/board administrative assistant prepares the monthly meeting agenda. Agenda information is due to the superintendent's secretary/board administrative assistant 12 calendar days before scheduled board meetings; however, this person often does not receive the information until after this deadline expires. After meetings with the district, the superintendent and the superintendent's secretary/board administrative assistant are ensuring that information necessary for the first agenda draft is received on time. The district currently schedules completion and delivery of this first agenda draft from eight to 10 days in advance of meetings. The completed final agenda with accumulated supporting information is prepared and delivered by the Friday before the Monday evening meetings, thus board members have only three days for review. Of those three days, two are weekend days, limiting the actual time available for members to seek clarification from staff if the need arises. A review of board meeting packets before March 2005 shows a consistent pattern identified by additional or supplemental information provided on the day of board meetings. Several board members indicated during interviews that this time sequence sometimes posed difficulties for them, particularly when they received information the day of a meeting. For example, in a December 2004 board meeting observed by the review team, the superintendent and construction manager asked the board to approve the acquisition of portable classrooms and authorize the superintendent to make additional portable purchases under certain approved circumstances. Staff presented the supporting student enrollment data at the board meeting, although it was not included in the regular agenda packet.

A review of documents for the first agenda draft provided by the superintendent's secretary/board administrative assistant shows that approximately 50 percent of the needed information is available at that time. Thus, the superintendent's secretary/board assistant must prepare and distribute a supplementary agenda packet that the board members receive the day of the meeting.

Failure to set and enforce specific procedures can result in board members receiving recommendations without all the necessary supporting information. This can have a further consequence of members not having adequate time to review recommendations. In some situations, such as delayed personnel actions, purchasing bids received after agenda deadlines, and

like matters, information may not be available at the time the agenda is developed and delivered to board members.

Many districts include supplemental information in board packets at least five business days before scheduled meetings through adopted and enforced policy and established procedures. These districts and organizations also include procedural exceptions for unavoidably delayed or emergency-related material. By detailing agenda and related information procedures supported by directive board policy, many board members in these districts have sufficient time to ask questions and receive answers about agenda-item questions before meetings. This enhances their potential ability to make informed decisions based on full review of supporting documentation. In addition, these requirements also effectively reduce the length of meetings by reducing corresponding discussions arising from receipt of last-minute information.

The district should amend and enforce existing policy and implement corresponding procedures requiring the preparation and delivery of the board meeting agenda and supporting information, other than for emergency items, at least five business days before the scheduled regular meeting. The board should instruct the superintendent to develop proposed procedures to ensure that the meeting agenda is prepared and ready for delivery to members as recommended before the meeting on the first Monday of each month. This should provide board members with time to adequately review all supplemental and/or supporting information necessary to make informed decisions at board meetings. The superintendent and the secretary/board administrative assistant should prepare a revised timeline for submitting agenda items and supplemental information at least ten days before the meeting. Only emergency items or information from sources that the district cannot control should be distributed to board members after the five-day deadline. This should provide the secretary/board administrative assistant adequate time to develop and distribute the agenda and related information packet five business days before the meeting.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES (REC. 14)

LISD does not maintain a permanent electronic, indexed record of the board's regular meetings or systematic files of hard-copy records. There is duplication of some records and no easy means for systematically locating information. The district maintains records of the meetings in three formats and secures them in a fireproof vault in the

superintendent's Office, in accordance with board policy BE (LOCAL). The formats include an audiotape, videotape, and a hard copy prepared by the superintendent's secretary/board administrative assistant. The district uses a three-ring binder to secure and store hard copy files, while the district stores audio and videotapes in a file cabinet. A visual inspection of the vault area shows volumes of information on shelves and a four-drawer file cabinet filled with tapes and no index identifying past board actions.

The superintendent's secretary/board administrative assistant prepares the agenda using a word processing document template. From this template she prints the agenda, prepares a worksheet for recording Board of Trustees' actions, and creates meeting minutes. Once completed, the template is cleared of information and used for the next meeting's data. After meetings with the district, personnel in the Technology Department updated agenda and board minutes previously unavailable for relevant documents from fall 2004 and winter 2005. As of May 1, 2005, all 2004–05 agendas and board meeting minutes were electronically accessible on the district's website through March 7, 2005.

Many districts place board-meeting agendas, minutes, and supporting information into an electronic format using readily available software such as Microsoft Word or Word Perfect, which are available in LISD. Using this type of software to create and store board information provides staff, board members, the community, and the public with the capability of easily accessing and searching through these documents. Often, districts scan hard-copy documents so that most supplementary agenda and background information can also be stored electronically. Staff then index and maintain items such as original resolutions, bonds, and other data that the district must maintain in paper files in a separate supplementary filing system. These processes effectively help administrators reduce the amount of paper and documents physically stored.

In addition, these districts reduce the amount of time required by administrative staff to maintain, update, and locate requested information pertaining to these files. Implementing these actions often reduces the required volume of future record storage space and facilitates searching for information on past board actions. Portable scanners, if needed, are often available to districts for less than $200 from local office supply or warehouse operations.

The district should immediately institute procedures to support phase-in of electronic maintenance for all board meeting agendas, supporting information, and all board minutes. The superintendent's

secretary/board administrative assistant should modify current procedures to include agenda preparation and final maintenance in an electronic format. The district should initially scan paper documents unavailable in an electronic format using existing district-owned equipment while the district purchases an additional scanner dedicated to this use. The district should then incorporate scanned data on a CD with other related board meeting and agenda data and stored in the fireproof vault along with any original, signed documents—such as contracts—that must be kept in original form. This should result in reducing the amount of space needed to store documents and provide ease of reviewing documents to locate past board actions by using the edit/find capabilities of the current word processing software.

Although the district has a scanner, the administration should ensure the superintendent's secretary/board administrative assistant has ready access to a portable scanner at her workstation dedicated to these tasks. This fiscal impact is estimated on a one-time purchase of a portable scanner for $200.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES WORK SESSIONS (REC. 15)

The board has not established a regular work session schedule often resulting in prolonged meetings due to necessary information discussions.

During the December 2004 regular meeting, the board agreed that they need work sessions in order to review important matters adequately and to effectively shorten regular meetings. During that meeting, for example, board members spent a large portion of time reviewing basic information about student enrollment projections and the need for temporary classrooms, and later by listening to comprehensive presentations on student achievement and the *Superintendent's Quarterly Report*. This was in addition to a full agenda of regular business matters. The meeting lasted approximately four hours, and administration shortened at least one report to the board because of the length of the meeting.

A review of past meeting agendas and minutes shows that the district developed a pattern of longer meetings. Among the common denominators are quarterly comprehensive reports provided by the superintendent detailing activity of each department and office, monthly reports provided by the construction management firm, and many reports providing supporting data for recommendations before the board. During the year there are discussions related to the budget, understanding fiscal reports, district growth and related facilities

issues, district staffing plan, status of goals and plans, and other topics.

Many districts schedule work sessions to address some of these same issues before a board has to make final decisions related to these topics. This use of work sessions for important issues also permits the board members more time to study and clearly understand the many matters brought to them for their consideration.

The district should establish and implement a board work session schedule for each fiscal year. The superintendent, in conjunction with the superintendent's secretary/board administrative assistant and the Human Resources director, should cooperatively develop a proposed schedule of work sessions, including proposed training sessions, for review and approval by the board. Once approved, the superintendent's secretary/board administrative assistant should ensure the schedule is posted. This action should result in shorter board meetings, support prior discussion, and full understanding of important matters in advance of regular meetings.

Since the district holds regular meetings on the first Monday of each month, the district could schedule the third Monday in the months of January through June and August through November for this purpose. This would also provide the board with up to 10 opportunities to hold important discussions. During the year, the board must address certain predictable topics and issues. These include district growth and related facilities issues, finances and budget development, district staffing plan, strategic plan development and update, progress reports on district goals' attainment, and other topics. The superintendent and board president can prepare a calendar of proposed work sessions to submit to the Board of Trustees for review, revision, and approval. This can be accomplished annually following the organizational meeting of the board.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES POLICY MANUAL AND REFERENCE MATERIALS (REC. 16)

There is no centralized listing or identified procedure to easily locate and annually review the district's board policy manual, referenced documents, handbooks, or manuals.

The policy manual, although electronically accessible on the district's website, contains a number of references to procedural documents, including curriculum, human resources, emergency procedures, and other topics related to policy implementation. These referenced materials are not all similarly available through related electronic links. Interviews revealed that personnel are unable to list and identify

all of the documents or necessary procedures to obtain requested materials and/or reference manuals and handbooks.

The review team was able to review many of these documents but was unable to identify a complete listing of all such materials. A central listing of all such documents was unavailable.

Procedural documents, when available, are maintained in loose leaf folders and other formats and are distributed to the schools and various departments of the district, while the policy manual is now available on the district's website. Procedural documents in some instances are not readily available to personnel or have been misplaced. Such was the case with some personnel handbooks and other procedural memorandums or documents.

Some school districts have included a provision to list important documents in board policy. Other school districts include corresponding electronic links facilitating efficient location of related materials, manuals, or documents. Combining these two actions represents a best practice that can increase employee efficiency in securing and using important documents.

Following is a contrived sample of such a provision listing procedural documents:

> BOARD OF EDUCATION AND SCHOOL DISTRICT PLANS AND PROCEDURES
>
> The Board of Education has plans, manuals, handbooks, and codes that outline procedures to be followed relative to stated topics. The plans, manuals, handbooks, and codes listed below may be adopted by reference as part of these policies when required by other Board of Trustees provisions, Texas laws, or other controlling requirements. These include, but are not limited to…

The sample policy then lists the titles of various documents and procedural manuals currently available. This list can become an important resource for board members and employees to understand the extent of activity and responsibilities involved in managing a complex organization. Additionally, this list can serve as a valuable resource in the orientation of new employees.

Exhibit 2-1 provides a partial listing of the types of documents often included in such a provision.

Mesquite Independent School District (MISD) has a comprehensive Policies and Procedures electronic listing and related link on the district website. The district classifies services into seven broad areas— Board of Trustees, Administrative Services,

EXHIBIT 2-1
SAMPLE LIST OF PROCEDURAL, OPERATIONAL, PLANNING, AND OTHER DOCUMENTS

<u>Administration</u>

Emergency Plan
Strategic Plan
Staff Development Plan
Safety Plan
School Internal Funds Management
Human Resources Management Plan
Capital Project Priority List
Transportation Procedures Manual
Child Nutrition Procedures

<u>Instructional & Student Services</u>

After-School Child Care Program Manual
Code of Student Conduct
Curriculum Guides and Plans
Testing Procedures Manual
Alternative Education Plan
Instructional Material Manual
Instructional Technology Plan
Limited-English Proficient LEP Plan
Manual for Admissions and Placement in Special Education Programs
Student Graduation Requirements
School Handbooks
School Health Procedures Manual
School Improvement Plans
Special Programs and Procedures Manual
Student Education Records Manual
Student Services Plan
Truancy Plan

SOURCE: MGT of America, Inc., January 2005.

Community Services, Business Services, Personnel Services, Instructional Services, and Student Services—and then details related polices and procedures through additional links and textual explanations. **Exhibit 2-2** lists an example from the MISD Policies and Procedures manual.

Regional Education Service Center III (Region 3), Victoria, uses this procedure, as does the Santa Rosa District School Board in Milton, Florida citing a general reduction in the number of paper documents that staff duplicate and distribute. Mesquite ISD and Region 3 maintain their respective websites and related links internally, while the Santa Rosa district outsources the process.

The district should create a policy provision listing existing procedural manuals and documents and provide access to selected procedural manuals and documents through a series of electronic links in the policy manual. The board should instruct the superintendent to develop the proposed listing of documents and following electronic access. The

director of Human Resources and the coordinator of Technology Services should work to create a central listing of documents within the district's policy manual to provide LISD with a compilation of important procedures and operation manuals, handbooks, and other documents.

After incorporating a centralized list within a policy provision, the district should electronically link each document as referenced in the policy manual. This should result in a usable listing of procedural manuals and, ultimately, more efficient access. Implementing the electronic links, over time, should result in cost and labor savings to the district by reducing the number of printed documents that staff must update and circulate. Calculating additional, potential savings is not practical since the district has not yet made determinations related to the various applicable documents.

LEGAL SERVICES POLICY (REC. 17)

The board has not adopted a policy governing legal services that includes selecting, evaluating, and providing services to employees.

Interviews with personnel and an examination of various records show that the district has not conducted evaluations of legal services; however, LISD's board used a process comparing services and cost proposals from several firms to select legal representation. At the time of the on-site review, the board and administration had no basis on which to determine effectiveness or adequacy of services as currently rendered. Interviews with most board members, district personnel, and principals reveal that there is a high level of satisfaction with current legal services.

Failure to have policies about these issues, however, can result in inconsistency in administering legal affairs. For example, if an employee in the proper fulfillment of their assigned responsibilities is alleged to display improper conduct, should the superintendent move to provide legal defense services? Often, effectively developed policy provides for this type of situation, mitigating unnecessary and/or emergency legal services.

Many districts have policy provisions addressing legal services for employees as well as for the board and the superintendent. **Exhibit 2-3** provides an example of a policy that addresses legal services for employees.

Districts often include policy provisions in the process to evaluate and select legal services. These policies directly address the board selection process and provision of services to employees. Districts subscribing to the Texas Association of School

EXHIBIT 2–2
MESQUITE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
SAMPLE FROM THE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

CLASSIFICATION CODE	GENERAL CATEGORY	SAMPLE DETAILS	
		SUBCODE	DESCRIPTION
100	Board of Trustees	101	Corporate Name of School District
		102	Membership of the Board
		103	Organizational Meeting of the Board
		104	Duties of Officers
		105	Duties of Officers
		106	Committees
		107	Board Meetings
		108	Quorum
		109	Order of Business
		110	Amendment of Rules
		111	Harmony with State Law
		112	Public Requests for Documents
		113	Performance Evaluation of Superintendent
		114	Compensation and Expenses for Board Members and Superintendent
		115	Ethics for School Board Members
		116	Training for School Board Members

SOURCE: Mesquite Independent School District website, Policy and Procedures Manual, March 2005.

EXHIBIT 2-3
SAMPLE POLICY
LEGAL SERVICES FOR EMPLOYEES

LEGAL SERVICES FOR EMPLOYEES BDD*

(1)   The Board of Trustees shall provide legal services for any district employee who is sued for any action arising out of or in the course of employment by the district.

(2)   Legal services for district employees shall be provided only upon the superintendent's determination that the employee was at the assigned place of duty and was not guilty of willful neglect of duty, gross negligence, or improper conduct.

NOTE: BDD is the generic code used by Texas Association of School Boards for legal services.
SOURCE: MGT of America, Inc., January 2005.

Boards (TASB) policy on line service receive annual updates including a variety of similar policy provisions. Districts make decisions about which policies to locally adopt.

The district should develop and adopt a board policy on legal services. The board should instruct the superintendent to develop a sample policy on legal services for its consideration. The superintendent should assign the task to the director of Human Resources. The director of Human Resources through the policy service contract with the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) should obtain sample polices related, minimally, to selecting and contracting with legal counsel, providing legal services to employees, and evaluating legal services. This policy should also ensure that the board has institutionalized procedures related to legal services. The director of Human Resources in coordination with the board attorney should develop the final proposed policy and submit it to the superintendent and Leadership Team for review, revision, and approval. The superintendent should submit the proposed policy to the board for their review, revision, and approval.

Due to the district's current subscription to TASB's policy service, there should not be a cost associated with implementing this recommendation.

DISTRICT ORGANIZATION (REC. 18)

The district does not have procedures or supporting policy to ensure annual review of its organizational structure and corresponding functions when reviewing staffing decisions and creating the annual District Improvement Plan (DIP). The superintendent created a flat organization structure requiring most department heads and directors to report directly to him after initially coming to the district. The superintendent implemented this structure to facilitate a smooth administrative transition and to help him immediately begin supervising daily operations in a district with financial and leadership challenges.

Exhibit 2-4 shows LISD's 2004–05 organization as of December 2004.

EXHIBIT 2-4
LISD DECEMBER 2004 ORGANIZATION

```
                           ┌──────────────────┐
                           │ Board of Trustees │
                           └──────────────────┘
            ┌──────────────────┬──────────────────┐
   ┌────────────────┐  ┌──────────────┐  ┌────────────────────┐
   │ Legal Services │  │ Superintendent │  │ Executive Assistant │
   └────────────────┘  └──────────────┘  └────────────────────┘
```

Director, Community Relations	Director, Teaching & Learning	Assistant Superintendent	Chief Financial Officer
Director, Human Resources	Coordinators (Gifted/Talented, Reading K-3, Writing, Science, Social Studies, & Testing) (6)	Secondary Principals (3)	Coordinator, PEIMS
Manager, Personnel	Specialists (Rdg K-8, Rdg 9–12, Math Pre-K–6, & Math 7–12)	Police Chief, LISD Police	Business Manager
Parent/Teacher Resource Center		Director, Maintenance, Custodial, & Transportation	Payroll Manager
Director, Fine Arts	Instructional Technology Coordinators (2)	Director, Athletics	Benefits & Insurance
Director, Bilingual/Special Education State & Federal Programs	* Guidance	Student-Parent Support Advocate	Director, Child Nutrition
District, Administrator Alternative Education		Director, Discipline Alternative Education Program	Elementary & Intermediate Principals (8)
Lead Nurse			Director, Technology, Coordinators, Technology
Coordinator, Special Education			Special Asst. to Superintendent, Construction
* Grants			

*Coordination or service that is fully or partially provided on an outsourced basis.
SOURCE: LISD, superintendent's Office and interviews, December 2004.

Exhibit 2-5 provides information related to the assignment of functional responsibilities among the various district departments and offices.

As shown, the following assignments appear to be inconsistent with the department's primary role:

- assigning the DIP and New Teacher Academy to Community Relations;

- assigning staff development to both Teaching and Learning and Human Resources departments;

- assigning CIPs to Bilingual/Special Education while the DIP is assigned to Community Relations;

- assigning the student/parent support advocate and Discipline Alternative Education Program to the assistant superintendent who has primary

EXHIBIT 2-5
LISD
ASSIGNMENT OF FUNCTIONS
DECEMBER 2004

```
                          ┌─────────────────────┐
                          │  Board of Trustees  │
                          └─────────────────────┘
        ┌──────────────────┬──────────┴──────────┬──────────────────┐
  ┌─────────────┐   ┌───────────────┐              ┌──────────────────────┐
  │Legal Services│   │ Superintendent│              │Executive Assistant   │
  └─────────────┘   └───────────────┘              └──────────────────────┘
```

Director, Community Relations	Director, Teaching & Learning	Assistant Superintendent	Special Assistant Bonding Elementary Principals Intermediate Principal Administrative Technology Grants Clearing House

Campus/Community Events
Partners in Education
Education Foundation
Fund Raising
District Improvement Plan
New Teacher Academy
Public Information

K-12 Curriculum
Testing (state)
Librarians
Staff Development
Gifted & Talented
Instructional Technology

Secondary Principals
Custodial Services
Transportation
Police Dept.
Student/Parent Support
Advocate
Student Services*
Discipline Alternative
Education Program

High School
Principals

Disciplinary/
Alternative Program

Director, Fine Arts
Director, Athletics

Director, Bilingual/State & Federal Programs

Director, Human Resources

Chief Financial Officer

Employment
Job Descriptions
Personnel Records
Policy
Employee Relations
Substitutes
Staff Development
Parent-Teacher
Resource Center

Bilingual/ESL
State/Federal Programs
Grants **
Campus Improvement Plans
Special Education
Nurses/Health
Migrant Education
At-Risk Program
Comp. Education
Diagnosticians
Guidance Counselors**

Purchasing
Payroll/Benefits
Accounts Payable &
Receivable
PEIMS
Child Nutrition
Maintenance
Risk Management
Accounting &
Financial
Management

Does not exist as a unified function.
**Coordination or service that is fully or partially provided on an outsourced basis.
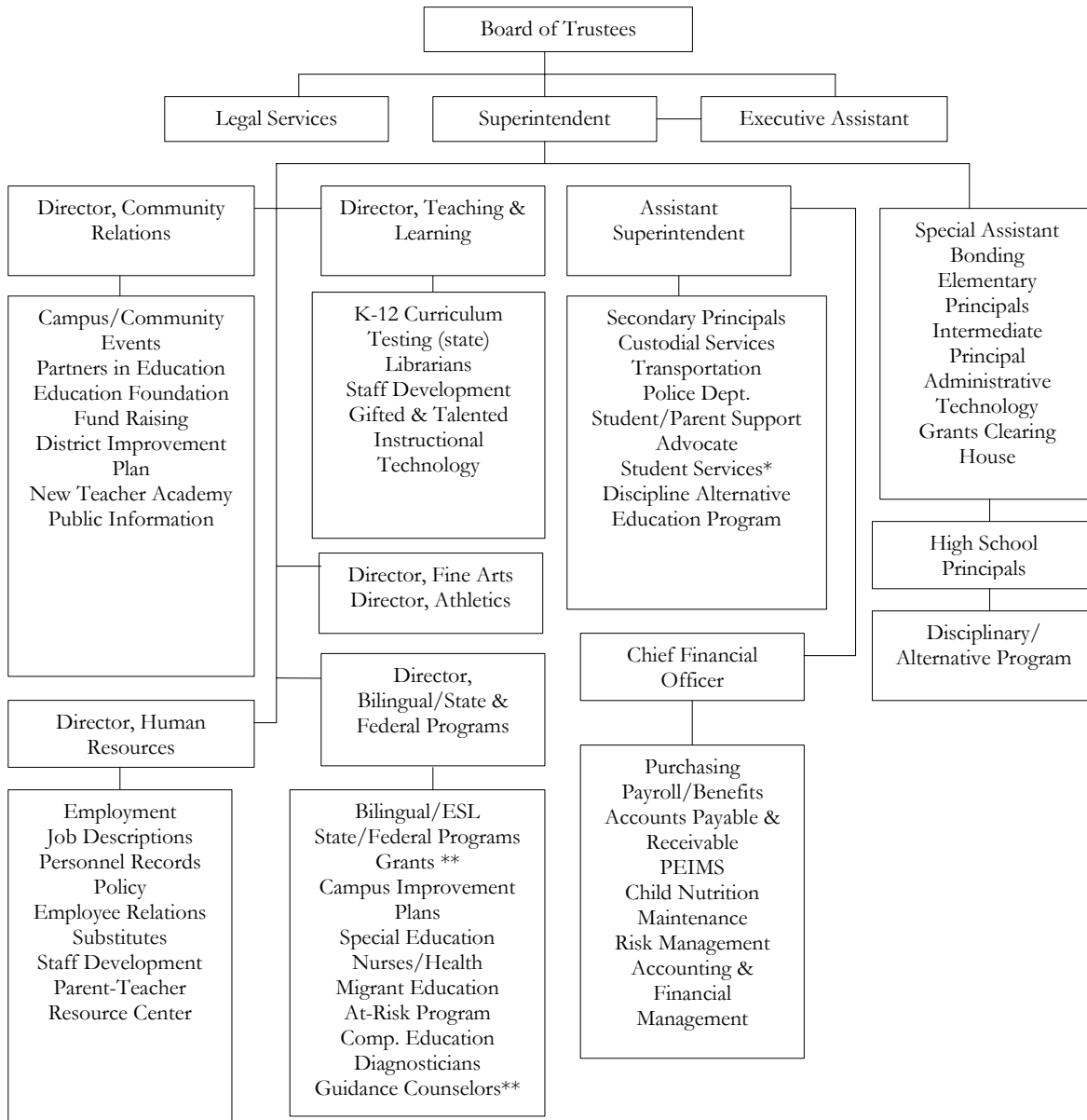*SOURCE: LISD, superintendent's Office, December 2004.*

functional responsibilities for facility services, transportation, and the Police Department; and

- placing Administrative Technology and the Grants Clearing House with the superintendent.

After meetings with the review team, the district immediately made organizational changes, including

eliminating one of two principals at the high school, hiring a new chief financial officer, and limiting direct principal reports to the superintendent to elementary principals. The district budgeted funds to hire a director of Purchasing assigned to the chief financial officer in 2005–06 and has further reduced the direct reporting structure of principals to the

superintendent for 2005–06 to administrators for the high school and the alternative school.

In May 2005, the assistant superintendent of LISD became superintendent of a neighboring district. Anticipating this change and in an effort to more logically align functions in accordance with district goals for the upcoming year, the district is reassigning the assistant superintendent's duties to the chief financial officer, the director of Bilingual, State, and Federal Programs, the director of Human Resources, and the director of Teaching and Learning.

The district is also reorganizing the functions of the director of Community Relations, the director of Human Resources, and the director of Bilingual, State, and Federal Programs. For example, in 2005–06, the director of Bilingual, State, and Federal Programs, who already oversees the development of CIPs, will assume the duties of initial coordination of the DIP as well as guidance duties. Due to 2005–06 prioritized middle and intermediate school goals, the director of Teaching and Learning will assume direct responsibility for principals at the 2005–06 fourth grade campus and the middle and intermediate schools.

The district is shifting responsibility for the Grants Clearing House from the superintendent to the new chief financial officer and consolidating staff development functions and coordination—including the New Teacher Academy—within the Human Resources Department. To align focus to both community/parent relations, the district is officially moving oversight of the Parent/Teacher Resource Center to the director of Community Involvement, who has unofficially assumed those duties since the start of 2004–05.

Not aligning functions or responsibilities before assigning them to staff can create a situation where employees cannot effectively carry out their appropriate tasks. They may have conflicting or seemingly more than one primary focus. This can inadvertently lead to inefficiencies. Dr. W. Edwards Deming, credited as the architect of Japan's economic restructuring after World War II, states that the system rather than the willing workers can be the cause of the problem. Districts often ensure that current organizational functions meet goals identified in annually developed DIPs and immediate administrative and budgetary needs. Often an updated organization plan in these districts consists of annual review of associated job descriptions and primary assigned functions as well as review of overall staffing decisions.

The district should annually review and adopt a district organizational plan in conjunction with adopted long-range strategic plans and the annual DIP. The district should shift assigned responsibility for coordinating and ensuring completion of the annual DIP and CIPs to one individual. To institutionalize the process and ensure that the district completes drafts of these documents and presents them to the superintendent and board for review and adoption in a timely fashion, the district should use a detailed checklist and present progress updates to the superintendent during scheduled administrative briefings and/or during Leadership Team meetings.

The board should review, revise, and approve an organizational plan submitted by the superintendent. This action should ensure the district annually realigns administrative responsibilities while effectively maintaining logical spans of control in accordance with identified operational, programmatic, and financial needs and constraints.

STRATEGIC PLAN (REC. 19)

The district does not have a strategic planning process, defined procedures, or assigned accountability to ensure overall coordination and completion of required improvement plans and a long-range strategic plan. The district has a draft District Improvement Plan designed primarily within timelines extending from August 2004 through August 2006, a two-year period. While the district produced annual CIPs, it did not formally adopt a DIP specifically for 2004–05. This two-year drafted DIP also does not constitute a long-range strategic plan for the district.

The district also has several departmental documents and the *Bond Construction Plan*, but does not link them in one strategic document. For example, the district developed and maintains a comprehensive Technology Plan on the LISD website. This is the only written long-range departmental plan, but it was not used to develop the budgeted technology figures projected in the bond proposal. Although approximately equal, there was no process to ensure these documents matched. The 2004–05 draft DIP includes an objective related to developing a facilities and technology task force to assist with successful completion of the bond program in 2006, but the draft DIP does not reference direct instructional support by technology. While staff stated the intention of having technology directly support instruction, the document does not indicate this.

The district effectively used a broad-based committee to plan, communicate, and disseminate information to help pass the 2004 $110 million bond

package, yet there is no master facilities plan that includes all construction, renovation, and repair elements as outlined in the bond proposal with future plans to address increases in student enrollment. The district did not finalize its 2004–05 DIP, which is out of compliance with law. If a strategic plan is not developed, there is the potential for failing to integrate important operating elements into essential planning documents designed to support the district's identified goals. Since hiring the new superintendent, the district has had to address immediate financial and facility concerns. According to the superintendent, LISD is now in the position to begin documenting strategic plans to fully guide all future planning, accountability, and budgeting endeavors.

A strategic planning document provides a basis for addressing long-term operations or goals as well as those identified for completion during shorter time spans. Many districts comply with law and annually develop a DIP. These districts then ensure those goals and other departmental plans match a broader strategic plan. Often these plans span a five-year period and systematically implement strategies designed to bring about important improvement over a loner time-period. Without this institutionalized commitment through both board approval and policy oversight, changes in leadership could result in a change in direction without a careful examination of the long-term strategies and their incremental effects.

Best practices, as stated by John E. Jones, Ph.D., and W. L. Bearley, Ed.D., in *Organizational Universe Systems* (1995), include the following elements:

- developing or reaffirming the purpose, mission, vision, and values statements of the senior-executive team and applying tests to the statements;

- communicating these documents downward at least two levels in a face-to-face manner;

- soliciting questions and suggestions for improvement, with senior executives presenting and listening;

- developing a document that spells out the purpose, mission, vision, and values of the entire organization;

- developing a communications plan that saturates the consciousness of everyone with a focus on the "what," "why," and "where" questions about the type of business or main organizational focus and future vision and goals—for example, What business are we in

and why? Where are we going? What do we stand for as an organization?

- using a culture survey to establish a baseline against which change can be compared;

- making changes in the information, accountability, and reward systems to ensure compliance (at least) and commitment and creativity (at best);

- developing supports for changed behavior (training, team-building, and so forth);

- holding goal-setting sessions in all organizational units represented at the executive level. Criteria for these goals include the following:

  o What do we hope to accomplish?

  o How does this relate to the vision of the organization?

  o How will we track progress, rather than how will we attain our goals?

  o How will we communicate goals to the senior-executive team with "signoffs"?

  o How will we learn from mistakes?

Document 1.H, Description of the Strategic Planning Process, which was provided to the review team, described the process as follows:

> *Committees were formed to assist with facilities planning, District Improvement Plans, and the bond election. From these committees, the goals and vision of the district were formed. The committees consisted of school employees, city employees, parents, and community members.*

This describes a process successfully employed to rapidly focus the district on a series of clearly identified needs and resulting in support for immediate remedies.

Effective organizations institutionalize planning and accountability processes and continuously adjust activities based on these results. The state's Regional Education Service Centers are employing the *Balanced Scorecard* to assess progress towards established goals. Representatives from Region 10 or the executive director of Region 3, a key participant in the *Balanced Scorecard* development and analysis of related data, provide information to interested administrators. Often committees that include broad-based representation from district personnel, administration, business, and community members perform strategic planning development. Districts frequently use existing planning documents from individual departments, campuses, and districtwide to develop long-range strategic plans. This facilitates an integration of school-level and districtwide

documented needs that result in a comprehensive accountability system.

The district should assign accountability for developing and implementing a strategic planning process to the superintendent's Leadership Team and adopt a long-range strategic plan. The superintendent's Leadership Team should develop and begin a process to create a long-range strategic plan that integrates all other existing and approved plans, including the Technology Plan, 2004 Bond Construction Plan, and annual Campus Improvement Plans (CIPs) and DIPs. The district should require an annual report designed as an accountability measure for identified strategic initiatives. This should also be incorporated into the revised processes and include defined procedures. A strategic planning document based on comprehensive analysis of immediate and future needs should assist the district when prioritizing

programs, establishing budget guidelines, facilities development, and matters related to improving student achievement. By assigning the superintendent's Leadership Team to this task, the district establishes the foundation for a comprehensive accountability system ensuring that annual short- and long-term plans match and are in accordance with identified districtwide academic, operational, and financial goals.

For more information on Chapter 2: District Leadership, Organization, and Management, see page 224 in the General Information section of the appendices.

FISCAL IMPACT

RECOMMENDATION	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09	2009–10	5-YEAR (COSTS) OR SAVINGS	ONE-TIME (COSTS)
13. Amend and enforce board policy and administrative procedures to require delivery of the board agendas, packets, and supplemental information at least five business days before regularly scheduled meetings.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
14. Institute procedures to electronically maintain board agendas, supporting information, and minutes.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	($200)
15. Establish, implement, and publish a board work session schedule for each fiscal year.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
16. Create a policy provision listing and annually updating existing procedural manuals and documents and institute corresponding electronic links in the board policy manual.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
17. Develop and adopt board policy on legal services and implement corresponding procedures.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0

FISCAL IMPACT (CONTINUED)

RECOMMENDATION	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09	2009–10	5-YEAR (COSTS) OR SAVINGS	ONE-TIME (COSTS)
18. Annually review and adopt a district organizational plan in conjunction with adopted long-range strategic plans and the annual District Improvement Plan.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
19. Assign accountability for developing and implementing a strategic planning process to the superintendent's Leadership Team and adopt a long-range strategic plan.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Chapter 2 Totals	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	($200)

Chapter 3

Information Technology

and Computers

Lancaster Independent School District

CHAPTER 3
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND COMPUTERS

The Lancaster Independent School District (LISD) Technology Department is responsible for maintaining and updating the technology infrastructure, standards, network security, and help desk operations. The department also provides instructional and administrative staff technology development and support and assists with the integration of technology into the classrooms. As stated on the LISD website, the goal of the Technology Department is "to provide quality staff development and support for LISD personnel in the areas of basic computer literacy, competencies in standardized district software, and model integration strategies to enhance instruction and productivity." The LISD Technology Department consists of a coordinator for technology services, a coordinator for elementary instructional technology, a coordinator for secondary instructional technology, three network technicians, and an administrative secretary.

FINDINGS

- The district does not have a process for the Technology Department to review District and Campus Improvement Plans to ensure compatibility with the existing technology infrastructure, standards, and long-range technology plan.

- LISD does not have adequate staff to facilitate technology integration into classroom instruction at all campuses according to locally established requirements and state technology recommendations.

- LISD does not have an accountability process for technology-related classroom training for instructional staff, which limits the district's ability to achieve its technology integration goals in teaching and learning.

- LISD has not met state and district goals of purchasing a computer for every four students nor developed a formal technology-related inventory process, which limits the opportunity for students to utilize technology in learning.

- LISD does not have an efficient process to create Human Resources departmental reports using its available management system and staff do not routinely attend system user group meetings.

- The district does not adequately monitor the acceptable technology-use policy to ensure that all staff sign required policy forms, which limits the ability of the district to address computer misuse.

- LISD does not have a process to track software licenses, which puts the district at risk for lapses in license renewals and increased related fees.

- The district does not have a process to track the quality of existing technology-related equipment, resulting in outdated or inefficient equipment not getting replaced when necessary.

- The Technology Department does not solicit customer feedback within the technology support request process, which limits the department's ability for informed continuous improvement in technology services.

- The district does not have established procedures for Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) student data submissions to the Texas Education Agency (TEA), hold regular PEIMS staff meetings, provide staff editing access to PEIMS, or require training for the PEIMS district coordinator, resulting in inconsistent PEIMS data submissions and reporting for the district.

- LISD does not have a written policy for technology-related purchases, and while the district uses state contractors for technology purchasing, it does not use other purchasing cooperatives offered by Region 10 to further achieve cost savings.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Recommendation 20 (p. 61): Require a Technology Department representative to be included in the development and review process of technology components of District and Campus Improvement Plans.** The district should require the Technology Department to ensure technology-related items in campus and district improvement plans are consistent and compatible with the current technology infrastructure, standards, and long-range technology plan. The Technology Department representative should be included in the planning committees to analyze the technological components and provide technical expertise in aligning components with district requirements. As a result, the district will ensure limited technology resources are utilized cost effectively to meet district and campus goals.

- **Recommendation 21 (p. 62): Develop and assign technology coordinator roles at each LISD campus.** LISD should select trained teachers or professionals from each campus to serve as the school's technology coordinator(s) and compensate each with a regular stipend. For the new technology coordinator role, the

Technology Department should develop a job description, provide training, detail work plans, implement an accountability process, and ensure staff in the Human Resources Department add the new responsibilities to the coordinator job descriptions. This should provide the additional support needed in each school within the district for meeting requests for assistance and goals for technology integration according to state requirements and district technology plans.

- **Recommendation 22 (p. 63): Create and implement an accountability process for staff technology training.** The Technology Department should implement an accountability process to ensure district staff receives appropriate training based on analysis of teacher and campus technology proficiency levels. The Technology Department should verify when staff attend training and develop corrective action plans when staff members are unable to achieve training goals. The district should make staff contract renewals dependent upon adequate progress in required technology training. This should enable staff to become more effective through the use of technology and advance the district's School Technology and Readiness (STaR) Chart state rating from "developing technology" to "advanced technology" in the key area of educator preparation and development. Teachers could learn to use multimedia skill sets in order to deliver instruction, manage classrooms, and perform administrative tasks, all of which are listed in the STaR Charts as identifiable skills required. By implementing a technology training accountability process, the district will ensure staff receives appropriate technology training when needed.

- **Recommendation 23 (p. 67): Implement a computer purchasing policy to achieve recommended computer levels for student use and create a formal technology-related inventory process.** Best practices, according to the Texas *Long-Range Plan for Technology 1996– 2010*, STaR Chart target technology goals, and other school districts, indicate that one computer should be accessible for every four students. The district should implement a computer purchasing policy to purchase additional computers to meet the one to four computer to student ratio for current students and student growth as it occurs. With this ratio, LISD students should have the needed computer access for learning technology-related skills. The district should develop a process to track these computers and other technology-

related assets in order to ensure the optimum number of computers are available to students, provide accurate asset information for assessment reporting, and equipment is available and not lost or stolen.

- **Recommendation 24 (p. 69): Create an efficient process to produce required Human Resource Department reports using the Personnel Information Management System (PIMS) and require one person to regularly attend PIMS user group meetings at Region X Education Service Center.** The Human Resource Department, with the assistance of the Technology Department staff, should create a set of standard reports based on a needs assessment, starting with those previously requested from management. This process should also require one person from Human Resources to attend PIMS user group meetings at Region 10 with other district administrative staff who attend regularly and not incur additional expenses. By fully utilizing the reporting capability of PIMS, the department will produce required reports efficiently and effectively.

- **Recommendation 25 (p. 69): Develop and establish a process to regularly monitor and enforce the acceptable technology-use policy.** LISD should require new and continuing employees to complete an acceptable technology-use policy form and submit it to the Technology Department. The Technology Department should maintain a list of employees with corresponding status of the receipt of forms. For employees who do not properly return their forms, the Technology Department should revoke their network access. By having an accountability process to monitor and enforce the policy, the district informs employees that there are consequences for any misuse of computers or other technology-related equipment and has verification that they were informed of this policy in case of employee discipline issues resulting from the misuse of technology.

- **Recommendation 26 (p. 70): Implement a licensed software inventory tracking process.** The software license inventory processes will provide the district with a mechanism to track licenses up for renewal prior to their expiration dates to allow the district to timely renew licenses for software in use and avoid penalties. While some vendors generate automatic invoices, others rely on customers such as school districts to initiate this renewal

process. The district should create a software license tracking report based on a trigger that can list those licenses that will expire within 120 days. The district should review the report on a monthly basis, and renew licenses reported as being up for renewal.

- **Recommendation 27 (p. 71): Review and evaluate existing technology-related equipment on an annual basis.** The district should conduct an annual review to evaluate technology-related equipment and assess if equipment has met or is close to meeting its life expectancy based on industry standards. Staff can then determine an equipment replacement schedule based on this review and assessment. This review and evaluation process should allow LISD to ensure technology-related equipment is running efficiently and provide technology needs assessment information for the long-range technology and budget plans.

- **Recommendation 28 (p. 71): Implement automated customer feedback steps within the technology-related support request process.** The Technology Department should automatically send feedback requests to customers when the department completes work requests. The department should compile completed feedback forms in a database and analyze results to determine how customers view their work in terms of timeliness, quality, and competency of technicians. Based on this analysis, the department should develop and implement follow-up action plans for the department's continuous improvement of technology services to increase customer satisfaction.

- **Recommendation 29 (p. 72): Develop and implement detailed Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) student data collection and submission procedures and ensure designated staff attends annual training and have editing access to relevant data.** The district PEIMS coordinator should develop and implement procedures to assist staff in the proper steps to take for PEIMS student data submission to help eliminate data entry inconsistencies. The coordinator should setup staff access to the Edit+™ application to allow for a more thorough way to correctly identify students and reduce error rates. The coordinator should hold district staff meetings to disseminate PEIMS user group meeting notes to provide a more thorough understanding of the process and resolution of PEIMS submission problems. The

PEIMS coordinator should attend PEIMS training to improve the skills needed to efficiently manage the PEIMS student data collection and reporting process. In addition, the coordinator should implement an escalation process to notify all senior administrators of PEIMS error rates for each submission to the region and state. If the district does not reduce error rates to acceptable levels for any given submission period, the coordinator should notify the Board of Trustees through monthly board reports. This process should ensure that the district places the proper importance on accurate PEIMS reporting.

- **Recommendation 30 (p. 73): Establish a technology-related purchasing policy and procedure that requires the Technology Department to identify and use the most cost-effective purchasing vendor for all technology-related purchases.** The district should establish a policy and process that requires the district to purchase more technology-related equipment and software at the lowest price by using the purchasing cooperatives available at Region 10 and through the Texas Cooperative Purchasing Network (TCPN). The district procedures should ensure purchases are compatible with current infrastructure, standards, and the curriculum integration plan of LISD.

DETAILED FINDINGS

TECHNOLOGY PLANNING (REC. 20)

The district does not have a process for the Technology Department to review District and Campus Improvement Plans to ensure compatibility with the existing technology infrastructure, standards, and long-range technology plan. The District Improvement Plan (DIP) is created by the district administration and Campus Improvement Plans (CIPs) are created by each school. Currently, only district administration directors review the DIP and CIPs. In addition, the district does not have a process to ensure alignment of the district long-range technology plan with the DIP and CIPs.

Without a process to include the Technology Department in reviewing the annual district and campus plans for compatibility in technology-related items may preclude the district from having cost-effective, practical, and technologically compatible DIPs and CIPs. Without compatibility assurance, the district may invest resources in technology that does not promote district and campus goals.

Generally, school districts have procedures to facilitate technical staff review of any improvement

plans that include technology-related items. The Santa Fe Trail School District in New Mexico, Syracuse City School District in New York, and Denver Public Schools in Colorado utilize technology staff to review improvement plans for their respective schools and districts. Santa Fe Trail School District has their Technology Committee review and verify that campus and district improvement plans are aligned with curriculum on an annual basis. Denver Public Schools has the Central Office Technology staff annually review campus and district improvement plans to insure compatibility to the district information technology infrastructure and technology plan. The technology review process in planning ensures compatibility with existing technology infrastructure and standards and existing long-range technology plans. In many districts, improvement plans frequently provide the district goals, performance objectives, summative evaluation, areas of need, actions to be implemented, needs assessment, responsible staff, student population, timelines, formative evaluation, and planning documentation. The districts usually include and align technology needs and resources with district goals in these plans. To facilitate compatibility with existing technology infrastructure and standards, districts often include the Technology Department director or coordinator assigned to individual campuses in a review process of annual DIPs and CIPs.

The district should require a representative from the LISD Technology Department to be included in the development and review process of the district long-range technology plan, DIPs, and CIPs to ensure their technology-related items are consistent and compatible with the current district technology infrastructure, standards, and long-range technology plans. The Technology Department representative should be included in district and campus planning committees. The representative should participate in the committees by comparing proposed technology components of DIP and CIPs with current district technology infrastructure and plans and making recommendations of how to best align technology resources to meet district and campus goals cost effectively.

ORGANIZATION AND STAFFING (REC. 21)

LISD does not have adequate staff to facilitate technology integration into classroom instruction at all campuses according to locally established requirements and state technology recommendations.

There are two districtwide Instructional Technology coordinators (Instructional Technology Unit), one for elementary and the other for secondary schools,

who facilitate the effective use of computers and other technology in instructional programs for LISD's nine school campuses. The district created these coordinator positions to help meet the Texas standards delineated on the School Technology and Readiness (STaR) Charts. As indicated in their position descriptions and corroborated through school review interviews, instructional coordinators assist in the development of short- and long-range plans for the integration of technology into the instructional program for the district's schools. They are charged with implementing and coordinating the district's technology staff development and training program.

The two Instructional coordinators' major responsibilities, in addition to staff training, include technology curriculum development, campus technical support, budget development, technology inventory, and related policy and report development. During 2004–05, the director of Teaching and Learning instructed the two coordinators to be on school campuses for one-half of each day to assist teachers in the classroom integration of technology. However, during interviews the coordinators said their administrative duties of reviewing STaR charts, determining staff development needs, creating ad hoc reports and PowerPoint presentations for district administration, preparing budgets, and providing technical assistance to district administration staff have prevented them from working for this amount of time on each campus. They estimate that in 2004–05 they have been spending approximately one-half day every other week at each of the campuses.

Beginning in October 2004, 13 teachers and professionals at each campus began an intensive year-long online technology training course. These individuals have already agreed to work with the Instructional coordinators to assist with professional development opportunities provided for other staff in fall 2005.

If the district does not increase its current available technology coordinator services to campuses, it will not ensure adequate progress in achieving STaR chart goals or district goals for technology integration in the classroom. The director of Teaching and Learning may continue to have unmet needs for daily coordinator assistance at campuses to help teachers integrate technology in their classroom. As a result, the district may not make adequate progress in advancing from its current "developing technology" level to the next "advanced technology" level in the two STaR chart key areas of teaching and learning and educator preparation and development.

Other school districts have successfully implemented programs that designate one individual, such as a technology professional or technology trained teacher, as the campus Technology coordinator at each campus to provide instructional technology training, integration, and support.

Austin ISD in Texas and Fairfax County Public Schools in Virginia have implemented this practice. The selected teacher from each campus is the focal point for technology-curriculum integration and often is responsible for evaluating assessment tools such as campus STaR charts in Texas with oversight and training by the district's Technology Department. For example, evaluations of STaR charts are provided to the Instructional Technology Unit to determine the appropriate training needed by a campus. Districts such as these then hold teachers and school administrators accountable for completing the required training. Once teachers complete this type of training, they implement learned techniques into their daily lesson plans. School administrators then review lesson plans to ensure technology is a part of the ongoing delivery of instruction. The Instructional Technology Unit and the Technology coordinator then assess integration of technology into daily lessons as a component of a teacher's annual evaluation process. Sometimes, campus Technology coordinators also participate in developing corrective action plans for teachers who need additional assistance with the integration of technology after annual evaluations.

The district should develop and assign a campus technology coordinator role to one teacher at each school campus beginning in 2005–06. The district should compensate each coordinator with an appropriate stipend. The district should designate a schedule that includes four hours per week for each coordinator to work on technology integration as provided by the existing two districtwide coordinators. The district technology coordinator should prepare detailed work plans with due dates by campus, performance measures aligned to the work plans, and appropriate training for each teacher selected for the coordinator positions. In addition, the district technology coordinator should create and implement an accountability process to monitor and evaluate each technology coordinator according to a semi-annual schedule during the first year and annually thereafter. The Technology Department should ensure the director of Human Resources adds these newly established responsibilities to each technology coordinator's position description. This recommendation should provide the additional support needed for each school within LISD to meet requests for assistance from the director of Teaching and Learning and goals for integrating technology in teaching and learning according to state requirements and district technology plans.

This fiscal impact is based upon providing an annual $1,000 stipend plus 9 percent benefits ($1,000 x .09 = $90) to each campus technology coordinator based on the individuals already in the year-long technology training. Therefore, beginning in 2005–06 and each year thereafter, stipends plus benefits for these positions are estimated at $14,170 (13 x $1,090) with a total five-year cost of $70,850 ($14,170 x 5).

STAFF DEVELOPMENT (REC. 22)

LISD does not have an accountability process for technology-related classroom training for instructional staff, which limits the district's ability to achieve its technology integration goals in teaching and learning.

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) created STaR Charts as a tool for technology planning, budgeting, and evaluating the integration of technology into curriculum and infrastructure. The charts are aligned with the state *Long-Range Plan for Technology 1996–2010 (LRPT)*. Currently, teachers are responsible for updating Teacher STaR Charts, and school administrators are responsible for updating their own Campus STaR Charts. The teacher chart correlates with the campus chart and has measures aligned with a variety of national and state technology guidelines. It provides a framework to gauge teacher preparation in equipping students with technology knowledge and skills. The campus chart measures the campus' status in reaching the goals of the state *LRPT* and federal *No Child Left Behind Act*. The chart produces a campus profile toward reaching these goals using the following four increasing levels of progress indicators: early, developing, advanced, and target. The district summary STaR Chart is the average of the district's campus STaR charts. As shown in **Exhibit 3-1**, the LISD STaR Chart district average for 2003–04 is at the "developing technology" level for three of the four key areas: Teaching and Learning, Educator Preparation and Development, and Administration and Support Services. The district average in the fourth key area of Infrastructure for Technology is at the "advanced technology" level for the same year. Instructional Technology staff reviews each completed campus and teacher STaR Chart and, based on the evaluation of all STaR charts submitted, recommends training by campus and position classification to meet staff needs; however, training is not mandated. There is no follow-up process in place to ensure that staff is taking the training recommended by the STaR Chart evaluations.

EXHIBIT 3-1
LISD STAR CHART
DISTRICT SUMMARY FOR 2003–04

Using the Texas STaR Chart, select the cells in each category that best describe your campus. Enter the corresponding number in the chart below using the scale.
1 = Early Tech   2 = Developing Tech 3 = Advanced Tech 4 = Target Tech

Key Area I: Teaching and Learning

A. Teacher role and Collaborative Learning	B. Patterns of Teacher Use	C. Frequency/ Design of Instructional Setting	D. Curriculum Areas	E. Technology Applications TEKS/ Assessment	F. Patterns of Student Use	*Total
2	2	2	2	2	2	12

Key Area II: Educator Preparation and Development

G. Content of Training	H. Capabilities of Educators	I. Leadership and Capabilities of Administrators	J. Models of Professional Development	K. Levels of Understanding and Patterns of Use	L. Technology Budget for Technology Professional Development	*Total
2	2	2	2	2	2	12

Key Area III: Administration and Support Services

M. Vision and Planning	N. Technical Support	O. Instructional and Administrative Staffing	P. Budget	Q. Funding	*Total
2	3	3	2	2	12

Key Area IV: Infrastructure for Technology

R. Students per Computer	S. Internet Access/ Connectivity Speed	T. District Learning	U. LAN/WAN	V. Other Technologies	*Total
3	4	2	3	3	14

Key Area Summary
Copy your Key Area total into the first column below and use the Key Area Range to indicate the Key Area rating for each category:

Key Area	*Key Area Total	Key Area STaR Classification

I.   Teaching and Learning   2   Developing
     (6–8 Early Tech   9–14 Developing Tech   15–20 Advanced Tech   21–24 Target Tech)

II. Educator Preparation and Development   12   Developing
     (6–8 Early Tech   9–14 Developing Tech   15–20 Advanced Tech   21–24 Target Tech)

III. Administration and Support Services   12   Developing
     (5–7 Early Tech   8–12 Developing Tech   13–17 Advanced Tech   18– 20 Target Tech)

III. Infrastructure for Technology   14   Advanced Tech
     (5–7 Early Tech   8–12 Developing Tech   13–17 Advanced Tech   18– 20 Target Tech)

Campus Name: _____   County/Campus Number:

_____
School Year: _____   Data Completion Date:

_____
Completed by: _____   E-mail:

_____

Please go to the online STaR Chart Assessment (www.tea.state.tx.us/technology/etac/txstar) to enter your results and print summary charts and graphs. Statewide aggregated data will be available in Spring 2005.

SOURCE: LISD, Technology Department, December 2004.

Technology-related training for LISD staff is categorized into six areas: Basic Microsoft Applications, Basic Technology Proficiency Testing, Classroom Integration, Teacher Productivity, District Administration Productivity, and Intel Teach to the Future (**Exhibit 3-2**). District staff provides technology training internally at the district. The current process does not provide a mechanism for the district to hold staff accountable for attending training. Although the district's STaR Charts will continue to identify necessary and suggested training, the Technology Department will be unable to ensure and verify whether staff attend training and

EXHIBIT 3-2
LISD TECHNOLOGY-RELATED TRAINING
2003–04 AND 2004–05

Basic Proficiency Classes/Competencies

These classes will provide district staff with basic computer literacy and basic knowledge of the software utilized in the district.

- Windows NT Basics
- Microsoft Word Basics
- Microsoft Excel Basics
- Microsoft Outlook Basics
- Microsoft PowerPoint

Basic Technology Proficiency Testing

It is the goal of the Lancaster Technology Department to provide staff development opportunities to insure teachers are computer literate and have basic proficiency skills. LISD staff will demonstrate competencies in the following technologies and applications as required by the LISD School Board.

1. Basic Computer Operation Systems - Windows NT 4.0
2. Basic Word Processing - Microsoft Word
3. Basic Spreadsheet - Microsoft Excel
4. Basic Multimedia- Microsoft PowerPoint
5. Basic Email - Microsoft Outlook

Teachers will be given a proficiency test in each area. Seventy percent is required to pass. Upon successful completion of the proficiency test, teachers will be given a login identification (ID) and access to the computer assigned to the classroom.

Teachers that complete any proficiency test with a score below 70 percent will be given opportunities to take basic classes to improve technology proficiency and then may retake the test.

Technology Opportunities

Classroom Integration Classes - These classes will provide teaching staff with strategies and methods to integrate technology into the curriculum as a means to enhance instruction.

- Word in the Classroom
- PowerPoint in the Classroom
- Excel in the Classroom
- Publisher in the Classroom
- Internet in the Classroom
- Inspiration in the Classroom
- Language Arts and Technology Integration
- Math and Technology Integration (SchoolKit Enactz)
- Science and Technology Integration (SchoolKit Enactz)
- Social Studies and Technology Integration (SchoolKit Enactz)
- Inspiration

Teacher Productivity Classes

These classes will provide teaching staff with strategies to improve productivity in creating lessons, lesson materials, and data management.

- Word Productivity in the Classroom
- PowerPoint Tricks and Tips
- Gradebooks and Merging
- Publisher Productivity
- Internet Resources
- Web-based Lessons
- Gradebook
- Inspiration

EXHIBIT 3-2 (CONTINUED)
LISD TECHNOLOGY-RELATED TRAINING
2003–04 AND 2004–05

Intermediate Level Classes

These classes will provide district staff with an intermediate-level knowledge of the district software for enhanced productivity.

- Word III - Special Features
- Excel - Special Formatting/Sorts/Filters
- Mail Merge with Word & Excel
- PowerPoint
- Internet Literacy
- Inspiration

Intel Teach to the Future Program

The Intel Teach to the Future program is a worldwide initiative to train teachers to effectively integrate the use of computer technology into the existing curriculum to improve student learning and achievement. This program is provided with support from Microsoft.

The training consists of forty hours of hands-on instruction delivered by means of ten curricular modules tailored to country, state, and district standards. Participating teachers in Intel Teach to the Future will receive the following:

- 40+ hours of technology training
- Opportunity to receive graduate credit from the University of North Texas
- Opportunity to purchase continuing education unit (CEU) credit
- Technology resources to use for lesson support
- Technology resources to use with students
- Gifted and Talented staff development hours

As a participant teacher you will learn how to integrate the following software:

- Microsoft Word
- Microsoft PowerPoint
- Microsoft Publisher
- Microsoft Excel
- Inspiration
- SchoolKit Enactz

Intel Teach to the Future classes will be offered during the fall semester. Classes will be held after school twice a week for ten weeks at the technology center.

SOURCE: LISD, Technology Department, Technology Handbook 2003.

consequently increase their current levels of proficiency in technology.

The Texas ePlan Assistance Guide—Technology Plan Review and the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (NCREL) provide a basis for the recommended training accountability process. The Texas Technology Plan Review states that professional development "should include observable and measurable strategies to ensure ongoing, sustained, and intensive, high quality professional development for teachers, principals, administrators, and school library media personnel." NCREL recommends that "teachers should integrate appropriate technology into curricular areas, develop objectives that describe appropriate technology goals, create lesson plans that incorporate authentic uses of technology, and develop proficiency in technology through professional development and collegial

support." The Oyster Bay East-Norwich Central School District of Long Island, New York, is one example of a best practice accountability process for technology training. This district was considered a STAR Technology Champion since it focuses on technology-related staff development by establishing collaborate relationships with peer teachers, providing techniques for integrating technology, and giving guidance on implementing scientifically based strategies. Oyster Bay implemented the program by observing and documenting teacher sessions once training was provided.

The Technology Department should create and implement an accountability process for technology training for LISD staff. Based on standards and best practice, the training accountability process should include an assessment of current staff technology skills, a plan with timeline to meet technology

proficiency goals, a process for evaluating proficiency and application of learned technology skills, and corrective action plans for staff not making adequate progress. Providing accountability for technology training should ensure staff would become more efficient through the use of technology. Teachers could learn to use multimedia skill sets in order to deliver instruction, manage classrooms, and perform administrative tasks, all of which are listed in STaR Charts as identifiable skills required. The district should require all teachers to attend training for the Basic Proficiency classes, which include Basic Microsoft Applications, Basic Technology Proficiency Testing, Classroom Integration, Teacher Productivity, and Intel Teach to the Future. All personnel should be required to use the skills learned and be regularly evaluated through classroom observations by the Instructional Technology Unit staff.

All LISD instructors should start classroom training in 2005–06. Instructors who are at the STaR Chart "Early" or "Developing Technology" levels should be required to take all of the Basic Proficiency courses at a pace of one per semester. Proficiency testing should follow each course taken. If staff do not pass at the 70 percent required score, they should repeat the course. Teachers at the higher end of the "Developing" level or at the "Advanced" level should be required to take classroom integration courses. Courses should be set at the pace of one per semester.

If teachers do not complete or pass the necessary training within one year, the district should develop corrective action plans that are signed by both staff and school administration. Teacher contract renewals should also be dependent on passing the appropriate courses within one year.

SYSTEMS INFRASTRUCTURE (REC. 23)

LISD has not met state and district goals of purchasing a computer for every four students nor developed a formal technology-related inventory process, which limits the opportunity for students to utilize technology in learning.

LISD has created an industry-standard connectivity infrastructure. The district has a Wide Area Network composed of ten sites connected with T1 lines and two sites connected with fiber optics. There are 12 Local Area Networks, and the Business and Student Services Offices are connected with three T1 lines to Region 10. The district is connected to the Internet with a DS3 line. All district facilities, classrooms, and libraries/media centers have Internet connectivity using filtered software. The district is in negotiations

to purchase switched-Ethernet service to upgrade the current T1 lines, which will speed processing time between locations and on the Internet.

Standardized software is also currently used throughout the district. Servers are standardized with the Windows 2000 operating system. The Exchange server is monitored by Group Shield software and backups are performed using Backup Exec Windows NT/2000. The district networks are monitored by IP Sentry network monitoring software and workstations run on the Windows NT4 and Windows 2000 operating systems. Workstation configuration is maintained with Script Logic.

Even though the district has industry-standard connectivity infrastructure and software, it does not have an adequate number of computers available for student use. The current district ratio is one computer to every six students. During the review team's on-site observations, there was generally only one computer in each classroom for the teacher's use. This was also corroborated in interviews with Technology staff. In addition, the review team discovered there were a limited number of computer labs available throughout the district. The district does not have an asset report identifying how many computer labs are in the schools nor do they capture the system information for each of these computers.

LISD has lists documenting computer equipment that lack important tracking information. The district has a list that provides the total number of computers by campus. The server list provides the make, model, district-provided server name, processor speed, number of processors, memory, hard drive capacity, and warranty information. The port layout and count list has the type of port and quantity of each. These lists lack tracking information such as the date of purchase, equipment classification, manufacturer, serial number, cost-depreciation, and current values. Further, the lists do not provide the necessary information to conduct an annual technology-related inventory. Currently these inventories are not conducted.

If connectivity infrastructure improvements continue to be the focal point of technology purchasing, the district may not be able to integrate technology into the classroom due to a low number of computers for student use. As a result, the district may not reach its goals to improve teaching and learning and student academic achievement. In particular, the district may not make adequate progress in the following two goals from its Long Range Technology Plan:

- Goal 1: Integrate seamless technology into all aspects of teaching and learning to improve student academic achievement.

- Goal 4: Create a technology infrastructure to provide equalization of resources and exceptional connectivity throughout the district network to improve teaching and learning and communications.

The lack of a formal technology-related inventory process that includes detailed inventory lists can leave the district without documentation or specific information to discover a loss or theft of equipment and pursue recourse. If this happens, LISD would have an increase in expenditures to replace the equipment. District staff identified $1,048 as the current cost per computer. If theft is involved, legal fees and insurance rate increases are also likely, thus having a negative financial impact on the district.

The LISD Long Range Technology Plan 2004–07 states the district should have one computer for every four students. The plan includes an objective to "Acquire workstations to meet the state technology equipment target for staff and students," with the following implementation strategy:

- Strategy 4.3.2: Increase the student-to-workstation ratio to a minimum of 4:1 by 2007 and 1:1 by 2010 to meet the state technology equipment target ratios.

The Texas Campus STaR Chart, which is aligned with the state *Long Range Plan for Technology 1996–2010* and federal *No Child Left Behind Act*, states the target or best practice is to have four or less students to one Internet-connected multimedia computer.

Other small school districts use a similar infrastructure but implement a purchasing policy to ensure that technology is available in each classroom with computers for teacher and student use. Focus in these districts is placed on purchasing adequate numbers of computers for students to improve their academic achievement. Many districts not only aggressively focus on computer purchases to meet goals but also ensure measures are in place to carefully inventory equipment.

Many districts base their technology inventory process on obtaining key information for generating asset and inventory tracking reports. The Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) established by the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) defines key information such as date of purchase, equipment classification, manufacturer, serial number, cost depreciation, and current value that should be included in asset reports. Often the district creates a simple tracking database using existing software applications such as Microsoft Excel or Access that lists equipment by type, manufacturer, serial number, campus, and room location or name. The Pittsburgh Public Schools in

Pennsylvania have a best practice technology inventory system that includes GAAP information in tracking and reporting. This district collects and reports the necessary information such as date of purchase, equipment classification, manufacturer, serial number, cost depreciation, and current values.

The district should implement a computer purchasing policy to purchase additional computers to meet the ratio of one computer for every four students and create a formal technology-related inventory process. Best practices, according to the Texas STaR Charts and other school districts, indicate that one computer should be accessible for every four students. With this ratio, LISD students should have the needed computer access for learning technology-related skills. The district should create a formal technology-related inventory process and prepare detailed asset reports based on GAAP information. Formal technology-related inventory processes should provide accountability by using detailed asset report information, including financial data, to conduct regularly scheduled inventories. The actual inventory should be conducted during the summer of 2005 and become an annual event. Inventory accountability ensures equipment is available and not lost or stolen. The inventory should provide the information required to identify and replace outdated equipment in order to ensure appropriate computer availability to students. Inventory tracking should also provide accurate asset information for financial and risk assessment reporting. A formal technology-related inventory process will enable the district to track these computers and other technology-related assets in order to ensure computers are available to students.

The fiscal impact is based upon purchasing additional student computers to provide one computer for every four students in LISD. The most current data available from the district states that LISD's 2004–05 total enrollment is 5,203. The number of computers needed to meet the ratio is 1,301 (5,203 divided by four equals 1,301). Currently, the district has 925 computers for students but needs 376 (1,301 minus 925) additional computers to meet the one-to-four ratio for the district's 5,203 students. The cost of a student computer based on the price provided by LISD Technology staff is $1,048. The district included budgeted funds for the purchase of 800 student computers in the 2004 bond package, which should be used to meet this one-to-four computer to student ratio. Technology staff can install the computers into classrooms as they are delivered according to the district technology plan and can perform the formal technology-related inventory process. The technology connectivity

infrastructure is already in place to accommodate this recommendation.

HUMAN RESOURCE REPORT PROCESS (REC. 24)

LISD does not have an efficient process to create Human Resources departmental reports using its available management system and staff do not routinely attend system user group meetings. This limits the district's ability to effectively utilize the Personnel Information Management System (PIMS) to meet its needs.

The Human Resources Department currently stores selected applicant information online with the use of an Internet-based PIMS through Region 10. LISD Human Resources staff pulls some data from PIMS using a query tool and then manually enters the data into a spreadsheet where additional district data reside. This manual process is done on a regular basis. Although there are data fields that LISD needs added to PIMS, according to staff interviews, departmental staff do not attend user group meetings to request those changes in a group setting or see if other school districts similarly need these changes. Region 10 uses feedback from user groups to make ongoing changes and upgrades to its application systems such as PIMS without cost to the user group but as a benefit to the system users. Because the district does not regularly participate in user groups to advance it data change requests, it would have to make change requests directly to Region 10, which would be at an additional cost for the district. As a result, LISD does not move forward on needed data change requests that would incur an addition district cost and does not get its reporting needs met.

If the district continues producing Human Resources reports under the current manual process, the potential for data input errors, backlogs on other administrative duties such as filing, and staff overtime is increased.

The district should make efficient use of staff experience and maximize the use of Region 10 PIMS services paid for by the district to meet its reporting needs. The department should create and implement an efficient process to produce Human Resource reports using the PIMS services and regularly require one staff person to attend system user group meetings at Region 10. LISD has an employee within Human Resources with previous mainframe programming experience who can assist in this project; however, this person is currently working as a secretary for the department. The district should implement a more effective process by using the assistance of the Technology Department staff and the programming skills of the Human Resource

employee to create automated reports using PIMS and Region 10 assistance. This can be accomplished by the department requesting that Region 10 provide LISD access to their district data in PIMS or create an extract file. The department should then download the extract from Region 10 into a newly created database using existing district software. Region 10 may charge a nominal fee for providing the data extract, but exact costs are not able to be determined. Another option is to have LISD write the data extracting program after Region 10 provides a data layout of the database tables where district data currently resides. The district already has the licensed software needed to create the reports. The department can then merge data currently available in spreadsheets into this file for a comprehensive and complete database for Human Resource's report generation. The department should create a set of standard reports based on previously requested data and report requests from the district administration and according to departmental needs. The department should require all Human Resources staff to be trained to create their own ad hoc reports using internal training currently provided by Technology staff.

The implementation timeline for this recommendation should be coordinated with Region 10's user training schedule so that it does not impede district data submissions to the state. The department's regular participation in PIMS user's groups and upgrade requests could provide Region 10 with a unique opportunity to better serve its customers. By using PIMS more effectively, the department will be able to generate required reports in less time and more effectively.

ACCEPTABLE TECHNOLOGY USE POLICY (REC. 25)

The district does not adequately monitor the acceptable technology-use policy to ensure that all staff sign required policy forms, which limits the ability of the district to address computer misuse.

While the district uses an interactive pop-up box regarding computer use and has server filters to block access on questionable websites, staff are also asked to sign acceptable use forms on an annual basis and submit their signed forms to the Technology Department. The Technology secretary retains the forms received. However, for 2004–05, the secretary found only two district administrative staff forms during the review team's visit. Staff interviews indicated that forms completed by district administration were kept on file in the district Administrative office; however, the district Administrative office was unaware of this process and did not have any signed forms on file. There is

no follow-up process in place to address noncompliance with the directive to annually sign and return acceptable use forms.

If the current practices continue, LISD may be prevented from taking action with staff who abuses the current technology use policies. In addition, technology integration throughout the district may be less than expected since there will be no repercussions or follow-up for staff not properly using the technology currently available to them.

Many districts monitor and enforce their acceptable technology-use policy. For example, North Andover Public Schools in Massachusetts uses a process to validate that all staff and students read, accept, and sign a form delineating terms and conditions for acceptable computer use. The administration sets up a temporary password for users until the form is completed and returned for processing and filing.

The district should develop and establish a process to monitor and enforce the acceptable technology use policy. A more effective way to manage policy forms for acceptable technology use is to have the Human Resources Office provide the forms to new and returning staff. Human Resources should include the form on their checklist for new and returning employees. If the employee does not have a properly completed acceptable technology use policy form on file, the district can take action to prevent new or returning employees from having access to the district's computer systems and could be added as a condition for payroll processing. Twelve-month employees could receive the form via electronic mail on an annual basis. These forms can be printed, signed, and submitted to the Technology Department through interoffice e-mail. The Technology secretary should create a list of these twelve-month employees through a payroll report to verify receipt of the signed forms from all staff. Access from the network should be revoked 30 days after an e-mail reminder is sent when forms have not been received within the 30 days. These forms can

continue to be the responsibility of the Technology secretary. This process should provide accountability for the acceptable use of technology-related equipment and further assist in the integration of technology into the classroom.

SOFTWARE TRACKING PROCESS (REC. 26)

LISD does not have a process to track software licenses, which puts the district at risk for lapses in license renewals and increased related fees.

LISD prepares a spreadsheet that contains the district identifiable number, the availability of the physical license, vendor, company name, software title, version, quantity of licenses, purchase order number, and other information that contains expiration dates. The software license with supporting documentation is kept in a binder by the Technology secretary and was verified by the review team. However, there are no procedures in place for the continued update of the spreadsheet to ensure expired licenses have been renewed and non-renewed software is deleted from computers or servers.

Exhibit 3-3 identifies the software currently licensed for use by the district. Three of the 23 software licenses on the inventory list have expired. SchoolKit expired on October 31, 2004, as stated on the documentation, but a purchase order has been issued to renew the license. The other two licenses were not renewed, yet the information was still listed on the current license inventory.

Without a sufficient process to identify pending expiration of software licenses, the district can be risking legal issues with software vendors, losing access to software support, or incurring costly upgrades that are generally free with current licensed copies.

A more efficient practice for licensed software lists is one in which the district incorporates an expiration

EXHIBIT 3-3
LISD LICENSED SOFTWARE FOR 2004

LICENSED SOFTWARE	
Systems Design, Inc. for Food Service	mCLASS™/Texas Primary Reading Inventory (TPRI)
CLASS for Special Education	Educational Fontware DNStyle for Instructional Service
Dallas County Schools Program for Transportation	Edline
A+, Success Maker (CCC)	AEIS IT
Imagination Station	Athena
SchoolKit	Professional Development Appraisal System (PDAS)
Educaide Access	Jackson GradeQuick
Inspiration	Blue Zone
Accelerated Reader	Textbook Inventory Program (TIP)
Math Flash	High School Tardy Program for Administrative Use
Rosetta Stone	
Mavis Beacon	

SOURCE: LISD, Technology Department, 2004.

column in a data file list with an alert trigger for 120 days prior to the expiration in order for the district to purchase the license renewal in a timely manner. The district can accomplish this by using a database file listing the existing licensed software used in the district. The district then incorporates a process to remove licenses no longer used in the district from the list and move them to a subsequent list. The district can use the subsequent list to ensure the deletion of unused software from servers or computers.

LISD should implement a licensed software inventory tracking process to track licenses up for renewal prior to their expiration dates. While some software vendors generate automatic invoices, others rely on customers such as school districts to initiate this renewal process. By implementing the tracking process, the district will be able to create reports based on a report trigger listing those licenses that will expire within 120 days. The district should review this report on a monthly basis and renew licenses up for renewal. The district should implement this recommendation using Technology staff and a listing of computer software currently licensed and installed throughout the district.

TRACKING TECHNOLOGY-RELATED EQUIPMENT (REC. 27)

The district does not have a process to track the quality of existing technology-related equipment, resulting in outdated or inefficient equipment not being replaced when necessary.

LISD has a server list that provides the make, model, district-provided server name, processor speed, number of processors, memory, hard drive capacity, and warranty information. The port layout and count has the type of port and quantity of each. However, the district does not have process to review the age or status of hardware currently being used in the district.

By not having a process to review existing conditions of major equipment or its components, LISD could have technology equipment fail, which may bring the district's technology capability to a standstill if the appropriate reserve equipment is not working as planned. If the district allows the main administrative server to be in place longer than its potential value without upgrades, it can possibly stop working with little or no warning, thereby hindering district activities and achievement of goals.

Other school districts use an annual review of all technology hardware and software to achieve educational goals. This type of review should be conducted in conjunction with the technology-related inventory. The Redwood Area School District

in Redwood Falls, Minnesota, reviews technology software and hardware on an annual basis to ensure that current technology is available to meet the district's yearly goals and plans. District technology reviews assess the age, model, and the adequacy of technology software and equipment and compare the equipment and software to what is currently available as an industry standard to further assist in reaching educational goals. Once a district decides to keep the equipment, a comment field is often added to the database to reevaluate specifics for a certain piece of equipment within a year. If a district decides to evaluate other options to replace equipment and budget is available, the district conducts a search for its replacement. Districts that complete such reviews are in a better position to reach their educational and technology integration goals.

LISD should review and evaluate existing technology-related equipment on an annual basis to mitigate malfunction risks and increase reliability. The district's annual review to evaluate technology-related equipment should allow staff to assess whether equipment has met or is close to meeting its life expectancy based on industry standards. Staff can then determine if equipment is losing efficiency, if equipment should be replaced within the year, or if it should be replaced in the near future. This process should allow LISD to ensure technology-related equipment is running efficiently. The district should conduct this review to provide technology needs assessment information for the technology and budget plans.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT AND HELP DESK OPERATIONS (REC. 28)

The Technology Department does not solicit customer feedback within the technology support request process, which limits the department's ability for informed continuous improvement in technology services.

LISD staff request technical support by sending an email request for services to the Technology Department. For each email request, the Technology Department has a system that automatically generates an email back to the requestor indicating that the department has received the request. Then the Technology departmental secretary forwards the email request to the appropriate technician or instructional coordinator to provide the requested services. Although the coordinator for technology services regularly reviews all requests for completion or scheduled responses for pending ones, the department does not have a subsequent mechanism for customer feedback as a part of its support process.

Without having feedback from customers, the Technology Department is not able to determine how customers view their work in terms of timeliness, quality, and competency of technicians.

Best practices for help desk operations have Technology Departments sending feedback requests to customers once the department closes a work order or help-desk request. The departments capture responses from surveys or other feedback mechanisms in a database and tracks them by date, technician, and customer satisfaction level by each question on the survey. The department then creates action plans to continually monitor and improve customer satisfaction. The Yakima School District in Yakima, Washington, uses email to solicit feedback from technology users when the technology staff provides assistance. The district monitors the feedback to continually improve the technology staff's services.

The LISD Technology Department should implement automated customer feedback steps within the technology-related support request process. The department should create a database for capturing data entered by customers through a feedback form that the department can attach to an automated email once the department closes a work order. The district should keep the feedback form questions to a maximum of ten and design them to cover the top technology service areas. The department should design the questions' response range from very satisfied to very unsatisfied. The department should capture a numeric conversion of these responses in the database. The department should include questions on its feedback form regarding promptness, politeness, and knowledge of the technician and should allow brief (240 maximum characters) customer suggestions in a comment area. By analyzing feedback, the department should be able to determine how customers view their work in terms of timeliness, quality, and competency of technicians. The department should then create and implement action plans to continually monitor and improve customer satisfaction based on their customer feedback analysis.

The district can implement this recommendation using Technology staff capability to create the database, develop a feedback form, and generate automated e-mails.

PEIMS DATA COLLECTION AND SUBMISSIONS (REC. 29)

The district does not have established procedures for PEIMS student data submissions to TEA, hold regular PEIMS staff meetings, provide staff editing access to PEIMS, or require training for the PEIMS district coordinator, resulting in inconsistent PEIMS data submissions and reporting for the district.

Region 10 provided current trend data on error rates for LISD, which is shown in **Exhibit 3-4**. LISD has been one of the top 25 highest error-producing districts processed through Region 10 during the past two years. The TEA error rate policy for the Person Identification Database (PID) being phased in over six years states that the district's student data submitted in 2005–06 must have 10 or fewer student records with PID errors or a PID error rate of 1.0 percent or lower. While LISD has consistently more than 10 errors, they are still below the 1.0 percent threshold. However, the district's error rate of more than 10 errors negatively impacts the quality of the district's PEIMS student data submissions.

The district PEIMS coordinator is the only person attending user group meetings at Region 10. The district saves on expenditures by having this practice, but the coordinator does not formally provide PEIMS information from the user group meetings to district personnel such as attendance clerks and registrars who enter student data for submissions.

Region 10 currently provides access to the state's database for search capabilities on student identifications through the Edit+™ application. EDIT+™ allows each user to validate and transfer data and generate PEIMS data reports. However, only the district PEIMS coordinator has access and is not allowing district personnel responsible for entering and submitting data the access to this application. When asked by the review team, district staff provided no reasons for this decision. This decision prevents staff with the responsibility for entering and submitting data from doing research to correct errors prior to submitting data to the state.

EXHIBIT 3-4
LISD PUBLIC EDUCTION INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (PEIMS) ERROR RATE 2002–03 AND 2003–04

PEIMS ERROR RATE							
2002–03				2003–04			
SUMMER		FALL		SUMMER		FALL	
Error Count	Error Percentage	Error Count	Error Percentage	Error Count	Error Percentage	Error Count	Error Percentage
40	0.79%	49	0.96%	33	0.60%	43	0.77%

SOURCE: Regional Education Service Center X, 2004.

If the current process continues, LISD will not likely decrease the number or percentage of errors during PEIMS submissions for student data. The district will have inconsistency among staff entering and submitting data to Region 10 and TEA because the district lacks written PEIMS student data submission procedures.

Many districts develop and use documented PEIMS procedures outlining data collection, review, verification and error correction, submission, and training requirements to improve efficiency in PEIMS data entry. In addition, districts implement a process for district PEIMS data submission staff to meet regularly for ongoing coordination and issue resolution. For example, Houston ISD has a procedure manual for district staff to follow for each of the different PEIMS data submissions. The manual contains directions and easy to follow steps for staff to complete queries and submissions timely and accurately. The manual provides a calendar for submissions, types of submissions, accuracy goals, along with posting, editing, and resubmission procedures. Houston ISD updates the manual on an annual basis.

The LISD PEIMS coordinator should develop PEIMS procedures that encompass all steps necessary to submit an error-free report, provide regular district PEIMS staff meetings to review procedures and address concerns, provide Region 10 user group meeting notes and updates to district PEIMS staff, and provide Edit+™ application training and access as necessary to staff entering student PEIMS data for error correction. The district can provide subsequent training for staff still unable to reduce errors during PEIMS submission.

In addition, the PEIMS coordinator should implement an escalation process to notify senior administrators of PEIMS error rates for each submission to Region 10 and state. If error rates are not reduced for any given submission period, the coordinator should notify the Board of Trustees through monthly board reports. This process should ensure that the district places the proper importance on accurate PEIMS reporting.

The district should implement a four-part strategy to improve PEIMS data submission quality. The first part is for the PEIMS district coordinator to attend additional PEIMS training. Region 10 offers three training courses for district PEIMS coordinators. The second part of this recommendation is for the PEIMS district coordinator to keep accurate notes during Region 10 user meetings to disseminate among staff within two days of user group meetings. These notes should elaborate on current information provided to staff by Region 10. Third, the PEIMS

coordinator should immediately complete the draft procedure manual for district staff regarding data entry and data submission. The draft should be reviewed during a meeting with all PEIMS staff to ensure that the process is correct and steps are understandable. Finally, the PEIMS coordinator should create user profiles for all staff responsible for entering and submitting data to have access to Edit+™. The coordinator should develop procedures to document each specific step so staff can research and correct errors prior to PEIMS submission to the region. The coordinator should provide access as soon as all procedures are written and reviewed by staff.

The district should implement all four parts of this recommendation by summer 2005. The district should set goals to reduce the number of errors by one-half during 2005–06. The district should provide subsequent training of staff not able to reduce errors and include this in the PEIMS process.

The fiscal impact is based upon the estimated $500 for travel expenses, determined through the district's financial records, for the PEIMS coordinator to attend the three Region 10 PEIMS courses. The coordinator can write procedures and hold meetings at the district office.

TECHNOLOGY ACQUISITION PRACTICES (REC. 30)

LISD does not have a written policy or procedure for technology-related purchases, and while the district uses state contractors for technology purchasing, it does not use other purchasing cooperatives offered by Region 10 to further achieve cost savings.

LISD has an informal, verbal process for sending purchase requests to the Technology Department for approval but lacks a formal process. The school review team validated the informal process during the on-site visit through review of selected transaction documentation with invoices from the transaction history report provided by LISD.

LISD is also a member of the Region 10 Purchasing Cooperative. The Region 10 purchasing representative reported to the review team that LISD did not make technology-related purchases from Region 10's Purchasing Cooperative either during the previous or current year. The review team also contacted the Texas Cooperative Purchasing Network (TCPN), and TCPN reported that LISD had not purchased any technology-related items during this same period.

Without a written policy to require and enforce technology purchase request review and approval

from the Technology Department, school district staff can possibly purchase hardware or software that is neither compatible, in accordance with the technology integration plan, nor cost-effective. If this does occur, vendors are not obligated to accept returned merchandise, especially software, and LISD would be purchasing equipment or software that is not usable.

If LISD purchases technology-related equipment or software without the cost-saving benefits of using a purchasing cooperative, the costs of the items will continue to be higher for the district. This is an inefficient way of purchasing, especially for technology-related hardware or software.

Other school districts develop policy and procedures to include the Technology Departments in the review and approval process for purchasing all technology-related equipment or software. This process ensures that items purchased are compatible with the current infrastructure and are in accordance with curriculum plans. For example, the Pittsburgh Public Schools District in Pennsylvania has policy and procedures that do not allow payment from the district for software or technology-related equipment without the written approval from the Technology Department.

Districts with best practices use purchasing cooperatives to buy technology-related hardware, software, and technology services to get the greatest value at the lowest cost. As indicated on the Region 10 Purchasing Cooperative website, purchasing cooperatives enable many school districts to save an average of ten percent or more, since these aggregate purchases are in quantities larger than those made by individual schools or single districts.

LISD should establish a written technology-related purchasing policy and procedure which requires the Technology Department to use a purchasing cooperative if district analysis indicates that the cooperative is more cost-efficient instead of only using state contracts for purchases. The district should develop a formal process with accountability for technology-related purchases by ensuring compatibility with current infrastructure, standards, and the curriculum integration plan of LISD. This newly established process should allow more technology-related equipment and software purchases at a reduced price by using a purchasing cooperative available at Region 10 and through TCPN.

This fiscal impact is based upon the estimated 10 percent savings that can be achieved by the district making technology purchases for the Technology Department and bond money through the Region 10

purchasing cooperative. Assuming LISD's 2004–05 proposed Technology budget of $244,630 can be projected for the next five years, a 10 percent annual savings of $24,463 ($244,630 x 10 percent = $24,463) can be achieved by the district making purchases through Region 10. The district's $4,753,909 bond money spending plan for technology, shown as **Exhibit 3-5**, could also benefit from using the purchasing cooperative. The one-time 10 percent cost savings for this money is $475,391 ($4,753,909 x 10 percent). Since bond project completion is three years ahead of schedule, the district should see these savings in 2007–08. This amounts to a total five-year savings of $597,706 ($24,463 for 2005–06 + $24,463 for 2006–07 + $24,463 and $475,391 for 2007–08 + $24,463 for 2008–09 + $24,463 for 2009–10).

EXHIBIT 3-5
LISD 2004 BOND PROPOSED INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SPENDING PLAN

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY COMPONENT	BUDGET
Cisco Phones VoIP Solution	$1,177,435
Opt-E-Man	
Board Room	48,724
Projector	
Sound System	
Wireless Access	
TV VCR DVD	
Screen Pulldown (Large)	
Altiris Management Suite	122,142
1300 Clients	
Computers	
Laptops Dell (450)	845,127
Student Computers (800)	838,248
Classroom Printers	76,000
Campus Network Printers	140,000
Symantec Suite	164,200
1300 Clients	
Software	
Student Information Services (Finance, Human Resources, Child Nutrition, etc.)	250,000
Education Learning System (Academic Software Package)	500,000
Basic Software	
Office	96,801
Server Licensing	6,101
Classroom Display Systems	
Projector and Mount	380,000
Screens (Pulldown)	40,000
Spare Bulbs	12,500
Staff Development Lab	
Computers	33,529
Furniture	9,600
Projector/Mount/Screen	3,500
Total	**$4,753,909**

NOTE: VOIP denotes Voice Over Internet Protocol.
SOURCE: LISD, Technology Department, 2004.

For more information on Chapter 3: Information Technology and Computers see page 227 in the General Information section in the Appendices.

FISCAL IMPACT

RECOMMENDATION	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09	2009–10	5-YEAR (COSTS) OR SAVINGS	ONE-TIME (COSTS)
20. Require a Technology Department representative to be included in the development and review process of technology components of District and Campus Improvement Plans.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
21. Develop and assign technology coordinator roles at each LISD campus.	($14,170)	($14,170)	($14,1700)	($14,170)	($14,170)	($70,850)	$0
22. Create and implement an accountability process for staff technology training.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
23. Implement a computer purchasing policy to achieve recommended computer levels for student use and create a formal technology-related inventory process.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
24. Create an efficient process to produce required Human Resource Department reports using the Personnel Information Management System (PIMS) and require one person to regularly attend PIMS user group meetings at Region X Education Service Center.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
25. Develop and establish a process to regularly monitor and enforce the acceptable technology-use policy.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
26. Implement a licensed software inventory tracking process.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
27. Review and evaluate existing technology-related equipment on an annual basis.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
28. Implement automated customer feedback steps within the technology-related support request process.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
29. Develop and implement detailed Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) student data collection and submission procedures and ensure designated staff attend annual training and have editing access to relevant data.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	($500)
30. Establish a technology-related purchasing policy and procedure that requires the Technology Department to identify and use the most cost-effective purchasing vendor for all technology-related purchases.	$24,463	$24,463	$499,854	$24,463	$24,463	$597,706	$0
Chapter 3 Totals	$10,293	$10,293	$485,684	$10,293	$10,293	$526,856	($500)

Chapter 4

Finance and Asset/

Risk Management

Lancaster Independent School District

CHAPTER 4
FINANCE AND ASSET/RISK MANAGEMENT

Lancaster Independent School District (LISD) assigns responsibility for all accounting related activities to the Business Office. These include payroll, accounts payable, financial reporting, purchasing, Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) reporting, coordination of employee benefits, and risk management activities. The chief financial officer heads the Business Office. He is responsible for development of the annual budget, which includes establishing revenue estimates and compiling budget information during the budget development process. There are a total of eight positions in the Business Office. The district outsources tax collection.

ACCOMPLISHMENT

▪ The district uses an accountability process and detailed procedures to effectively manage campus and booster club fund-raising activities.

FINDINGS

▪ The district's financial reporting process lacks summary or historical analyses, written explanations, and fails to provide the board with information in an easy to understand format.

▪ LISD has not documented a comprehensive, structured financial plan to meet long-range goals, established a consistent board policy addressing the fund balance, or coordinated its fiscal year with the start of its school year.

▪ The district does not have an effective overall budget planning process that includes a budget calendar, a budget manual, and a mechanism to provide an audit trail to document the decisions that lead to the adopted budget.

▪ The LISD budget document does not meet the requirements of current best practices for local governmental budget presentation.

▪ The Human Resources Department has no formal position control capability in place to ensure that campus and department staff comply with positions included in the budget.

▪ The chart of accounts contains a large number of unused account codes resulting from no scheduled review of active accounts.

▪ The district does not include various overhead costs associated with contract funds and related mechanical services such as the copier program or cell phone use in campus or department budgets.

▪ LISD currently uses two internal service funds that do not reflect the totals costs of provided services.

▪ There is no grants management board policy, internal procedure to coordinate and approve grant applications, or consistent reporting structure.

▪ LISD's financial procedures and investment strategies do not address maximizing investment opportunities for checking account balances or include corresponding information in investment reports to the board.

▪ The district's annual review of the investment policy and investment strategy does not include the percentage of resources invested as a critical performance evaluation of the investment program.

▪ LISD has no coordination of risk management activities, board reports on Workers' Compensation, or management procedures in place to support an ongoing employee safety program.

▪ LISD has not developed policies or procedures to support an ongoing fixed asset inventory process.

RECOMMENDATIONS

▪ **Recommendation 31 (p. 80): Develop a formal financial reporting structure with documented historical analysis and board reports prepared in accordance with Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) standards.** The chief financial officer and the superintendent should prepare a Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, as well as monthly and quarterly board reports containing comparative actual and budgeted information with corresponding written analysis and consistent with the guidelines recommended by the GFOA for a Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting. In addition, the chief financial officer should develop special financial reports as necessary, such as a formal report to document the causal factors and the solutions related to the difficult financial position faced by LISD in 2003. By enhancing the structure of financial reports to include more stringent industry standards and summary and comparative analyses, administrators provide the board with a clear picture of the district's financial status and add internal mechanisms to enhance financial monitoring.

▪ **Recommendation 32 (p. 83): Establish and annually update a long-range financial plan and amend existing board policy to address the level of fund balance in the General Fund.** The superintendent should ensure the

chief financial officer identifies the steps required to convert to a July–June fiscal year and achieve an undesignated/unreserved fund balance net of the resources provided by the Tax Anticipation Notes (TANs) at a level consistent with board directives. The superintendent and the chief financial officer should prepare and annually update a long-range financial plan that establishes specific financial goals for each year. By ensuring fiscal and academic goals coincide with a developed long-range financial plan and established district policy, the district incrementally addresses financial stability with the board, community, state, and industry.

- **Recommendation 33 (p. 88): Implement a formal budget planning process supported by board policy and develop a preparation manual with a budget calendar.** The chief financial officer should review materials available from national financial associations as well as other school districts in Texas and other states. By developing a budget planning process supported by board policy that meets state and industry standards, the district standardizes budget preparation methods and institutes financial accountability at the department and campus levels.

- **Recommendation 34 (p. 91): Design and annually update a budget document meeting state and industry standards including definition, mission, and key characteristics of the budget process.** The district should include the use of key performance and service delivery measures for each program as critical elements in the development of the new budget document. By designing and requiring districtwide use of a budget document that includes state and national requirements necessary to meet high financial recognition, the district standardizes document preparation in conjunction with identified processes, streamlines overall budget preparation, and increases accountability for supporting budget requests.

- **Recommendation 35 (p. 94): Integrate a position control review with the budget development process and annually reconcile to payroll records.** The chief financial officer and the director of Human Resources should work together to establish a process to ensure that the staffing within LISD is consistent with the positions authorized in the budget. This process should include procedures to document and approve any necessary changes made during

a school year. By reconciling payroll records for the district's employees with an annual review of positions according to submitted and historical budgets, the district maintains updated records by confirming board-approved positions and purging non-existent or eliminated positions.

- **Recommendation 36 (p. 95): Quarterly review and delete inactive accounts from the district's financial chart of accounts**. The chief financial officer and the Business manager should establish criteria to identify and complete inactive deletions from the chart of accounts and assign staff to conduct quarterly reviews and make the appropriate adjustments. By updating the chart of accounts through scheduled reviews, the district reduces the risk of using outdated information and streamlines the coding process.

- **Recommendation 37 (p. 95): Allocate operational costs for mechanical support services and contract funds to appropriate campus and departmental budgets.** The chief financial officer should establish a new Copier Internal Service Fund including associated overhead costs and allocate costs for copiers and cell phones to individual schools and departments. By allocating these and any additional mechanical support service costs to the appropriate campuses and departments, the district should increase the accuracy of submitted budgets.

- **Recommendation 38 (p. 97): Establish and monitor self-contained internal service funds and annually conduct cost-benefit analyses to determine program effectiveness and retention.** The chief financial officer should establish a process to evaluate activities of any services provided internally including those of the Print Shop and the Teachers' Resource Center. By establishing internal service funds, related budgets, and an on-going monitoring process, the district should be able to collect financial data to determine the cost-effectiveness and operational efficiencies of identified programs. The district should then be able to provide the board with substantial information to make operational adjustments or retention decisions.

- **Recommendation 39 (p. 100): Adopt grants management board policy and internal procedures including accountability, administrative training, reporting, and performance measures.** The district should develop procedures to provide guidelines and specific requirements for the grant application

process, establish a process for quarterly reporting programmatic and financial grant status to the board, and institute performance measures to evaluate overall grant solicitation and management. Additionally, reports should consistently provide administrators and the board with basic information such as beginning and current funds available, contact information, as well as any requirements for matching or in-kind resources from within the district.

- **Recommendation 40 (p. 101): Establish procedures to maximize investment earnings and develop a cash management report.** The chief financial officer should contact Regional Education Service Center X (Region 10) representatives for assistance and work with the Business manager to review historical activities in the operating checking account for at least one year before developing procedures to limit cash amounts in the operational checking account. By following established procedures to limit the amount of cash in this account, the chief financial officer should be able to design a more concise and informative investment report for the board.

- **Recommendation 41 (p. 104): Revise and implement investment procedures and policy to include a quarterly investment report and corresponding analysis to maximize return on available resources.** The chief financial officer should establish a process to measure the percentage of resources invested and draft a revision to policy CDA (LOCAL) for board review and adoption. By immediately collecting and compiling the necessary data to comparatively report the amount of invested resources to the amount available for investment, the district increases financial accountability and raises the potential to maximize investments through more frequent review and analysis.

- **Recommendation 42 (p. 104) Establish a safety and Workers' Compensation program and assign accountability for coordination of risk management functions.** The district should establish a formal safety and Workers' Compensation program and evaluate the various responsibilities for all employees within the Business Office. The chief financial officer and a staff member within the Business Office should gather management information, coordinate day-to-day activities, and contact insurance carriers. By coordinating safety and insurance programs and identifying accountability functions within the Business Office, the district

should be able to reduce overall costs associated with Worker's Compensation premiums and enhance safety awareness in the work environment for staff and administrators.

- **Recommendation 43 (p. 106): Install the fixed assets module of the district's financial system, establish consistent inventory procedures, and amend board policy to require an annual physical inventory.** The chief financial officer should work with representatives from Region 10 to complete installation of the fixed assets system and provide updated annual management training on the system to LISD staff. In addition, by expanding this aspect of the district's financial system, consistently adhering to inventory procedures, and requiring an annual physical inventory, the district maintains an accurate and updated list of its fixed assets for insurance purposes and mitigates the risk of loss.

DETAILED ACCOMPLISHMENT

IMPROVED CONTROLS OVER ACTIVITY FUNDS

The district uses an accountability process and detailed procedures to effectively manage campus and booster club fund-raising activities. The district established this process and developed these guidelines to establish internal controls over a process that is often problematic for school districts. Before 2004–05 when the director of Community Relations implemented these activities, the district did not have board-approved policy or internal administrative guidelines addressing fund-raising activities.

The director of Community Relations based LISD's activity fund procedures on the general guidelines provided by the University Interscholastic League (UIL). Included are specific guidelines for fund-raising activities, properly handling disbursements, collecting cash, completing approval forms, documenting deposits, and reporting a summary of sales. The board adopted policy GE (LOCAL), Relations with Parent Organizations, to define responsibilities and identify the role of the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and booster clubs in district-related activities. The director of Community Relations also prepares a semi-annual fund-raising report identifying the number of fund-raising events by school and the corresponding revenues received. By establishing and using board-supported policies, procedures, and a specific process to guide booster club and fund-raising activities, the district enhances related internal cash management controls, ensures financial consistency, and mitigates the potential risks of improperly handled accounts.

DETAILED FINDINGS

FINANCIAL REPORTING (REC. 31)

The district's financial reporting process lacks summary or historical analyses, written explanations, and fails to provide the board with information in an easy to understand format. Some board members said they are unclear if they have an up-to-date picture of the district's financial status. The monthly financial information provided to the board by the chief financial officer also includes an excessive amount of detailed financial information for the current year. These reports provide the appearance of providing an in-depth review of the financial condition of LISD, but they fail to provide a clear and concise picture of the district's financial status.

Included with the financial materials are the following:

- projected cash flow for the subsequent twelve-month period;

- General Fund comparison of revenue to official budget;

- General Fund expenditures and encumbrances, function/object code matrix;

- General Fund comparison of expenditures, encumbrances, and other uses to amended budget;

- General Fund expenditure budget, function/object code matrix;

- report of bank and investment balances;

- Lone Star Investment pool monthly report that identifies all transactions for the operating and debt service funds;

- TexPool participant statement that summarizes the activities for the month for four separate accounts; and

- Dallas County tax collection report, which includes a letter of certification from the Dallas County tax assessor.

The information provided represents an unstructured approach to interim financial reporting and does not provide the board with summary financial information that will enhance the board's understanding of the financial status of the district. The financial information in these reports includes information only for the General Fund and provides no comparative analysis because the information is based solely on current year activities to date. The revenue and expenditure budget reports provide information comparing the revenues collected or expenditures incurred to date to the budget. These

data alone do not provide an understanding of the financial position for LISD, as there is no reference to the anticipated revenues or expenditures. Revenue and expenditure information is of value only if put in the context of how the actual financial activities relate to the anticipated financial position at that exact time.

Exhibit 4-1 is a replica of the General Fund 2004–05 Comparison of Expenditures, Encumbrances, and Other Uses to Amended Budget. This report contains more information than is necessary to communicate the financial status of LISD to the board. This report is a companion to a similar report that provides a comparison of revenues to the district's official budget. These reports identify information in a format familiar to an accountant and provide a column identifying the percentage of funds expended to date. What is not provided is any mention of what was anticipated to be expended at the time of the report and how this will be a benefit or detriment to the district.

This financial report also fails to provide any reference to the fund balance, a key element regarding the district's overall fiscal soundness. LISD encountered its financial difficulties due partially to lack of attention to its fund balance. The materials provided in 2004–05 imply that the only significant financial information involves the General Fund. However, an additional financial shortcoming identified by the district's financial consultant was the financial management of the special revenue funds and the Child Nutrition Fund.

Financial reporting is a key element in the effective financial management of a school district. Effective financial reporting often consists of interim board reports from the chief financial officer on a monthly or quarterly basis, an audited annual financial report, and special reports addressing specific issues that may arise from time to time. Another key factor for effective financial reporting is presenting written analysis to highlight and accompany the significant factors or variances from the originally anticipated financial status.

One of the budget best practices identified by the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) includes the need for a government to evaluate its financial performance relative to the adopted budget. It specifically notes that, "It is essential that reports are prepared on a routine, widely-publicized basis. In addition to monitoring budget-to-actual results, reasons for deviations should be evaluated. These factors are important in assessing the significance of variations, including whether they are expected to be temporary or longer-term in duration."

EXHIBIT 4-1
LISD REPLICA OF GENERAL FUND COMPARISON
OCTOBER 31, 2004 COMPARISON OF EXPENDITURES, ENCUMBRANCES,
AND OTHER USES TO AMENDED BUDGET

FUNCTION CODE	DISTRICT OPERATIONS	EXPENDED	OUTSTANDING ENCUMBRANCES	DISBURSEMENTS, PAYABLES, ENCUMBRANCES	BUDGET	BALANCE	PERCENT EXPENDED
11	Instruction	$3,323,846	$71,698	$3,395,544	$16,050,313	$12,654,769	21%
12	Instr. Resources & Media Services	65,792	14,073	79,864	519,840	439,976	15%
13	Curriculum & Staff Development	11,153	53,090	64,243	168,909	104,666	38%
21	Instructional Leadership	95,416	993	96,409	552,804	456,395	17%
23	School Leadership	332,066	–	332,066	2,045,660	1,713,594	16%
31	Guidance Counseling & Evaluation	97,244	2,570	99,814	654,845	555,031	15%
32	Social Work Services	16,442	–	16,442	79,674	63,232	
33	Health Services	49,889	–	49,889	370,019	320,130	13%
34	Student Transportation	82,721	3,612	86,332	592,770	506,438	15%
36	Co-curricular/ Extracurricular Activities	116,356	48,054	164,410	681,597	517,187	24%
41	General Administration	285,060	11,040	296,100	1,719,698	1,423,598	17%
51	Plant Maintenance & Operation	829,234	42,652	871,886	5,056,587	4,184,701	17%
52	Security & Monitoring Services	84,491	209	84,700	347,528	262,828	24%
53	Data Processing Services	56,583	15,010	71,592	545,213	473,621	13%
71	Debt Services	115,997	–	115,997	1,239,420	1,123,423	9%
95	Intergovern- mental Services	29,042	–	29,042	30,000	958	97%
	Total	$5,591,332	$263,001	$5,854,330	$30,654,877	$24,800,547	19%

SOURCE: LISD, chief financial officer, December 2004.

Exhibit 4-2 shows one way of presenting revenue and expenditure information in a single report that compares the current year financial information with the same period for the prior year. Although not shown, some districts use an accompanying written analysis to provide an explanation for any significant differences between each year's data.

The provision of monthly financial information is helpful in decision-making. However, many governmental entities provide more formal quarterly financial reports as well as monthly financial reports that contain the following:

▪ introductory letter;

▪ written analysis of financial condition supported by graphs and financial schedules to support any discussion;

▪ financial statements for all significant funds; and

▪ specialty reports for all funds.

Information on the GFOA program is available from the GFOA website located at www.gfoa.org/forms. The website provides the checklist used by those who review the reports. A viewer can also access a list of all of the governmental entities that have prepared financial reports that meet GFOA requirements. Included on this list are 47 school districts from Texas, including Dallas ISD, Fort Worth ISD, Desoto ISD, Duncanville ISD, and Plano ISD.

Special financial reports should be required as necessary, such as the need for a formal report to document the causal factors and solutions involving the difficult financial position being faced by LISD in 2003.

EXHIBIT 4-2
SAMPLE MONTHLY REPORT
STATEMENT OF REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES
MONTH ENDING XXXXXXXXXX, XX, XXXX

REVENUES/EXPENDITURES	2003-04			2004-05		
	BUDGET	EXPENDED TO DATE	PERCENT TO DATE	BUDGET	EXPENDED TO DATE	PERCENT TO DATE
Beginning Fund Balance	$xxx,xxx	$xxx,xxx		$xxx,xxx	$xxx,xxx	
REVENUES						
Local Revenue						
Tax Revenue	xx,xxx,xxx	xxx,xxx	xx%	xx,xxx,xxx	xxx,xxx	xx%
Athletic Revenue	xx,xxx	xxx,xxx	xx%	xx,xxx	xxx,xxx	xx%
Interest Income	x,xxx	x,xxx	xx%	x,xxx	x,xxx	xx%
Vocational Ed Tuition	x,xxx	x,xxx,xxx	xx%	x,xxx	x,xxx,xxx	xx%
Other Local Revenue	xx,xxx	x,xxx,xxx	xx%	xx,xxx	x,xxx,xxx	xx%
Total Local Revenue	xxx,xxx	xxx,xxx	xx%	xxx,xxx	xxx,xxx	xx%
State Revenue	x,xxx,xxx	xx,xxx,xxx	xx%	x,xxx,xxx	xx,xxx,xxx	xx%
Federal Revenue						
SHARS/Medicaid	xxx,xxx	xxx,xxx	xx%	xxx,xxx	xxx,xxx	xx%
ROTC Revenue	x,xxx,xxx	x,xxx,xxx	xx%	x,xxx,xxx	x,xxx,xxx	xx%
Total Federal Revenue	x,xxx,xxx	x,xxx,xxx	xx%	x,xxx,xxx	x,xxx,xxx	xx%
Total Revenues	$xx,xxx,xxx	xx,xxx,xxx	xx%	xx,xxx,xxx	xx,xxx,xxx	xx%
EXPENDITURES						
Instruction	xx,xxx,xxx	xx,xxx,xxx	xx%	xx,xxx,xxx	xx,xxx,xxx	xx%
Instructional Resources	xxx,xxx	xx,xxx,xxx	xx%	xxx,xxx	xx,xxx,xxx	xx%
Curriculum/Staff Devel	xxx,xxx	xx,xxx,xxx	xx%	xxx,xxx	xx,xxx,xxx	xx%
Instructional Leadership	xxx,xxx	x,xxx,xxx	xx%	xxx,xxx	x,xxx,xxx	xx%
School Leadership	x,xxx,xxx	xx,xxx	xx%	x,xxx,xxx	xx,xxx	xx%
Guidance/Counseling	xxx,xxx	xx,xxx	xx%	xxx,xxx	xx,xxx	xx%
Social Work Services	xx,xxx	xx,xxx	xx%	xx,xxx	xx,xxx	xx%
Health Services	xxx,xxx	x,xxx,xxx	xx%	xxx,xxx	x,xxx,xxx	xx%
Student Transportation	xxx,xxx	xxx,xxx	xx%	xxx,xxx	xxx,xxx	xx%
Cocurricular/Extracurricular	xxx,xxx	xxx,xxx	xx%	xxx,xxx	xxx,xxx	xx%
General Administration	x,xxx,xxx	x,xxx,xxx	xx%	x,xxx,xxx	x,xxx,xxx	xx%
Maintenance & Operations	x,xxx,xxx	xxx,xxx	xx%	x,xxx,xxx	xxx,xxx	xx%
Security & Monitoring	xxx,xxx	x,xxx,xxx	xx%	xxx,xxx	x,xxx,xxx	xx%
Data Processing	xxx,xxx	xx,xxx,xxx	xx%	xxx,xxx	xx,xxx,xxx	xx%
Debt Service	x,xxx,xxx	xx,xxx	xx%	x,xxx,xxx	xx,xxx	
Intergovernmental Charges	xx,xxx	xx,xxx	xx%	xx,xxx	xx,xxx	xx%
Total Expenditures	xx,xxx,xxx	x,xxx,xxx		xx,xxx,xxx	x,xxx,xxx	
Ending Fund Balance	$x,xxx,xxx	$x,xxx,xxx	xx%	$x,xxx,xxx	$x,xxx,xxx	xx%

SOURCE: MGT of America, January 2005.

The chief financial officer in conjunction with the superintendent should develop a formal structure for financial reporting. The chief financial officer should prepare a Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, as well as monthly and quarterly board reports containing comparative actual and budgeted information with corresponding written analysis and consistent with the guidelines recommended by the GFOA for a Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting.

In addition, the chief financial officer should develop special financial reports as necessary, such as a formal report to document the causal factors and the solutions involving the difficult financial position faced by LISD in 2003. The chief financial officer should contact the finance officers of the Desoto and Duncanville Independent School Districts to

obtain copies of their sample Annual Financial Reports that meet GFOA guidelines. By enhancing the structure of financial reports to include more stringent industry standards and summary and comparative analyses, administrators provide the board with a clear picture of the district's financial status and add internal mechanisms to enhance financial monitoring.

This fiscal impact is based upon the application fee schedule required by GFOA for a nonmember governmental entity with revenues between $10 million and $50 million. An application for a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting submitted from GFOA with the aforementioned parameters costs $830. In addition, this fiscal impact includes a one-time cost for one day of assistance from the district's financial

consultant to develop the historical analysis and identify the necessary elements for the GFOA application at a daily rate of $600. Therefore, one time costs equal $600; annual costs equal $830 with five-year cost estimates equaling $4,150.

FINANCIAL PLANNING (REC. 32)

LISD has not documented a comprehensive, structured financial plan to meet long-range goals, established a consistent board policy addressing the fund balance, or coordinated its fiscal year with the start of its school year. While LISD has taken steps to correct a negative fund balance and has identified expenditures to help improve the student academic performance, administrators have not reconciled expenditures with projected fund balance goals through quantifiable steps. LISD also does not have board policy that fully addresses the issue of managing the fund balance in the General Fund. The district produced a copy of Policy CE (LOCAL), *Annual Operating Budget, Fund Balance Policy*, stating the following:

> "The District shall strive to maintain a yearly fund balance in which the undesignated/unreserved fund balance represents between 10 and 15 percent of the General Operating Fund Budget for the fiscal year. The total fund balance encompasses the undesignated/unreserved fund balance, the reserved fund balance, and the designated/unreserved fund balance."

However, the same policy listed on the district's website and last updated on November 12, 2001, is identified as the Annual Operating Budget. This policy addresses the fiscal year, budget planning, annual public meeting for the budget presentation, and information addressing budget amendments. It does not address the fund balance. If the LISD board adopted a policy on the level of fund balance, it is not included in the current policy manual that is online.

The policy provided indicates that LISD will "strive to maintain a yearly fund balance in which the undesignated/unreserved fund balance represents between 10 percent and 15 percent of the General Operating Fund Budget for the fiscal year." This is different than the goal expressed in the District Improvement Plan that calls for a fund balance of 15 percent of the general revenue and does not address the undesignated/unreserved issue.

LISD currently has an outstanding obligation to repay $2.5 million in tax anticipation notes (TANs) through 2007–08. When the resources obtained by the TANs are included in the fund balance calculation for the year ended August 31, 2004, LISD has a positive fund balance in the general fund of $1,793,742. When the obligation of $2.5 million is deducted, the fund balance is a negative $706,258. It is important to determine in any policy established by LISD which fund balance is being addressed and reported—that which takes the TANs into consideration or that which excludes the TANs.

The 2001–02 Annual Financial Report indicated expenditures in the General Fund exceeded revenues by $1,468,460, resulting in a negative fund balance of $884,338. The district received information that the negative fund balance in the General Fund was going to increase, as the financial picture for 2002–03 indicated expenditures were again going to exceed revenues. Selection of a new superintendent in spring 2003 led to a series of actions that allowed LISD to address the problem.

The superintendent met with Texas Education Agency's (TEA) associate commissioner for Finance and Compliance to discuss a financial plan of action for the district. The associate Commissioner suggested the district hire a consultant to help provide an in-depth review of the financial issues facing LISD.

The consultant retained by LISD in 2003 identified a number of factors impacting the district's financial position as indicated below:

- special education revenue overestimates;
- average daily attendance overestimates;
- student coding errors;
- overstaffing at the schools; and
- overspending at the campus and school level.

Working with the consultant, the district developed an action plan and reported the results to the board in May 2003. The results included the following:

- implementation of a school staffing formula based on the number of students by grade level for teachers and school size for positions such as assistant principals, librarians, and counselors;
- increased Average Daily Attendance;
- budget reductions across the district including control of copier costs;
- salary savings, to include elimination of the assistant superintendent position; and
- steps to establish a district education foundation.

The district conducted numerous other actions to improve efficiency including increased monitoring of

substitute expenditures and financial in-services for principals.

The district initially addressed the fund balance deficit by borrowing $3.5 million via the issuance of TANs. **Exhibit 4-3** reflects the maturity schedule for these notes.

The inclusion of the revenues received from the TANs with the financial records for LISD resulted in a positive fund balance of $1,141,084 on August 31, 2003, and $1,793,142 on August 31, 2004.

Although **Exhibit 4-3** identifies the first $1 million of the TANs as due in 2004, the district accrued it as an expenditure on the 2002–03 financial records, resulting in a remaining principal balance of $2.5 million still due. The district reported a 2003–04 expenditure of $674,000 for the principal and interest, leaving a balance due, including interest, on the TANs of $2,022,063 on August 31, 2004.

The end result of these activities is an estimated fund balance deficit (excluding the principal due on the tax anticipation notes) of $116,510 for the year ending August 31, 2004. The district reduced the deficit fund balance by $1,358,916 during 2003–04, although it was necessary to make a number of prior period adjustments against the fund balance totaling $1,807,309. The prior period adjustments resulted from an in-depth review of all balance sheet accounts in the General and special revenue funds, one of the key areas identified by the consultant. LISD budgeted $750,000 for the improvement of the fund balance during 2004–05.

The actions taken by LISD have had a positive impact on two key indicators of financial health: the Financial Integrity Rating System (FIRST), and the rating for the 2004 bonds issued by LISD.

- **FIRST Rating** - The FIRST process was initiated at the direction of the 77th Legislative Session to "develop and implement a financial accountability rating system for school systems in this state." There are four categories of achievement: Superior, Above Standard, Standard, and Substandard. LISD was identified as a district with substandard achievement for 2001–02. This rating was raised to an above standard achievement for 2002–03. As a result, the rating on the Financial Integrity Rating System (FIRST) improved from Substandard Achievement in 2001–02 to a rating of Above Standard Achievement in 2002–03.

- **Moody's Investor Service rating** - Prior to the actions taken by LISD to address the district's overall difficult financial situation, LISD had been placed on the Moody's Investors Service Watch List. Bond ratings are designed to grade bonds based upon the credit risk. A watch list is a classification indicating a rating is under review for possible change by the rating agency. This occurs for governmental entities with problematic financial and organizational circumstances. The watch list indicates to investors that the existing bond ratings may be lowered.

Being placed on a watch list was a significant issue for LISD, as they were authorized to issue $110 million in general obligation bonds by the electorate. The existing LISD bond rating was Baa, which is defined as "average creditworthiness relative to other U.S. municipal or tax-exempt issuers or issues." The next lower rating of Ba signifies "below average." The district mitigated a bond rating reduction to Ba based on a review by Moody's Investors Service. Bond ratings are important because they have an impact on the interest rates investors are willing to receive. A lowering of the bond rating would increase the interest costs paid by the district. Bond ratings also have an impact on the perceptions of management of a governmental entity.

It is recognized that the desirable FIRST rating would be "superior achievement," and the goal for future bond ratings would be to achieve an "A" rating. Given the starting point faced by LISD, the movement from the substandard FIRST rating and the retention of the Baa Moody's bond rating are significant achievements. Based on the actions taken thus far, LISD is in a position to achieve the desired

EXHIBIT 4-3
TAX ANTICIPATION NOTES SERIES 2003A AND 2003B
SCHEDULE OF LOAN PAYMENTS

FISCAL YEAR	PRINCIPAL	INTEREST	TOTAL REQUIREMENTS	BALANCE DUE
2004	$1,000,000	$106,328	$1,106,328	$2,500,000
2005	590,348	83,672	674,020	1,909,652
2006	612,872	61,149	674,021	1,296,780
2007	636,253	37,768	674,021	660,527
2008	660,527	13,494	674,021	0
Total	$3,500,000	$302,411	$3,802,411	$0

SOURCE: LISD, chief financial officer, Annual Financial Report, 2002–03.

higher ratings. However, the district has not documented a long-range financial plan to achieve this rating or formally adopted the 2004–05 annual District Improvement Plan (DIP), which lists some concrete financial goals.

The 2004–05 draft DIP addresses financial issues in Goal 4, which states: "Each student will attend school in LISD that is fiscally responsible for all stakeholders." Five objectives listed under this goal are as follows:

- LISD Fund Balance will be 15 percent of the general revenue in three years.

- Maintain a balanced budget through continued property value increases and additional revenue from business and commercial properties.

- Focus on instructional utilization of budget.

- Maintain efficient use of funds through partnerships and alternative revenue sources.

- Retire general fund debt.

Nine strategies, listed below, follow the objectives:

- Develop a comprehensive real estate plan and sell all properties deemed unnecessary by the district for future schools.

- Increase average daily attendance.

- Hire a district grant writer/coordinator.

- Expenditures are not to exceed revenue.

- Continue to offer competitive salaries to all staff.

- Instructional materials are aligned with TEKS and support district instructional goals.

- Provide a 28:1 student teacher ratio on secondary campuses grades 9-12.

- Provide a 25:1 student teacher ratio on campuses 5-8.

- Provide a 22:1 student teacher ratio on elementary campuses Pre-K through 4th grade.

The goals and objectives identified indicate a starting point for LISD to address the long-term financial issues. However, there is a lack of specificity in identifying achievement for these goals.

Exhibit 4-4 compares the existing teacher staffing level based on the formulas established for 2003–04 and those in the 2004–05 draft District Improvement Plan. From grades 5 through 8, the district plans to reduce class size by three students for grades 5 through 8 and by four students per class for grades 10 through 12. Using the November 10, 2004, enrollment information, converting to the new student teacher ratio will require 11.7 additional teaching positions. Based on the current annual teachers' salary included in the Academic Excellence Indicators System (AEIS) of $36,958 and an additional 9 percent for employee benefits, this equates to an additional annual cost to LISD of $471,325 [(11.7 teaching positions x $36,958 average salary) x .09 benefit rate].

Districts addressing prioritized financial and academic achievement goals often develop a long-range financial plan that identifies expected actions for each year matched to the projected financial results. The GFOA indicates that a best practice in public budgeting is to conduct long-range financial planning. GFOA states: "A government should have a financial planning process that assesses the long-term financial implications of current and proposed policies, programs, and assumptions and that develops appropriate strategies to achieve goals."

GFOA recommends the following when developing a long-range financial plan:

- governments should establish a formal policy on the required level of unreserved fund balance in the General Fund;

- the level of the unreserved fund balance should be based on specific circumstances faced by a governmental entity;

- the unreserved fund balance should be no less than 5 to 15 percent of regular General Fund operating revenues or no less than one to two

EXHIBIT 4-4
LISD TEACHER STAFFING FORMULA
COMPARISON OF 2003–04 FORMULA AND
DRAFT DISTRICT IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2004–05

GRADE LEVELS	2003–04 FORMULA	2004–05 DRAFT DISTRICT IMPROVEMENT PLAN
Pre-K	1 to 20	1 to 22
Grades K-4	1 to 22	1 to 22
Grades 5-6	1 to 28	1 to 25
Junior High	1 to 28	1 to 25
High School Grade 9	1 to 28	1 to 28
Grades 10-12	1 to 32	1 to 28

SOURCE: LISD, chief financial officer and superintendent's Office, December 2004.

months of regular General Fund operating expenditures; and

▪ governmental entities should apply stopgap measures within the context of long-term forecasting to avoid the risk of placing too much emphasis upon the level of unreserved fund balance at any one time.

GFOA also recommends that in establishing a policy governing the level of unreserved fund balance in the General Fund, a government should consider a variety of factors, including those listed:

▪ the predictability of revenues and the volatility of expenditures (i.e., higher levels of unreserved fund balance may be needed if significant revenue sources are subject to unpredictable fluctuations or if operating expenditures are highly volatile);

▪ the availability of resources in other funds as well as the potential drain upon General Fund resources from other funds (i.e., the availability of resources in other funds may reduce the amount of unreserved fund balance needed in the General Fund, just as deficits in other funds may require that a higher level of unreserved fund balance be maintained);

▪ liquidity (i.e., a disparity between when financial resources actually available to make payments and the average maturity of related liabilities may require that a higher level of resources be maintained); and

▪ designations (i.e., governments may wish to maintain higher levels of unreserved fund balance to compensate for any portion of unreserved fund balance already designated for a specific purpose).

Examples of other long-range strategic planning and related GFOA reports can be found on the GFOA website under *Best Budget Practices, Practice 9.1: Conduct Long-Range Financial Planning.*

The issue of fund balance is a criterion used in the classification of the *Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas* (FIRST). LISD does not fulfill the requirements associated with the following question identified on the FIRST report: "Was the total fund balance in the general fund more than 50 percent and less than 150 percent of optimum according to the fund balance and cash flow calculation worksheet in the annual financial report?" The content of this question is consistent with the factors discussed by GFOA.

Another issue involved with long-term financial planning involves the district's fiscal year. The use of

a September 1-August 31 fiscal year has been problematic for LISD. A major factor involving the current financial issues being faced by LISD involves the use of an account entitled "Deferred Expenditures." Deferred expenditures involve expenditures made by the schools during July and August for the following school year. These expenditures are made during the previous fiscal year, but are recorded as deferred and to be expensed during the following fiscal year. The majority of the $1,807,309 recorded as a prior period adjustment during 2003–04 involved the deferred expenditures in the General and special revenue funds that had not been recorded properly in prior periods. These transactions should have been recorded in prior periods and not adjusted at the beginning of the following fiscal year. This circumstance occurred because of the September-August fiscal year. By beginning the fiscal year at the same time school starts, materials purchased for the schools must take place during the July-August period, resulting in either reporting expenditures for the following fiscal year in the current year or identifying the expenditures as deferred and requiring an adjustment to the accounts after the current fiscal year has ended.

Texas Education Code §44.0011 states that, "The fiscal year of a school district begins on July 1 or September 1 of each year, as determined by the board of the district." This statute provides districts with the opportunity to change the fiscal year to July through June, one that more closely resembles the school year, creating a situation where any purchases for the following school year would be made during the same fiscal year, eliminating the need to record deferred expenditures or record expenditures for the following year in the financial records of the current year.

In the management letter accompanying the 2002–03 Annual Financial Report prepared by the auditing firm of Judd, Thomas, Smith, and Company, P.C., the district received the following fiscal year recommendation:

"The District should assess on an on-going basis, if or when it should make the decision to change its fiscal year end to June 30th. Although the change is optional, many of the major districts in the state, such as Dallas and Houston, have already made the change. Many of the new reporting requirements that TEA has implemented, such as electronic submissions of financial statements and FIRST ratings, are geared towards standardization and easier comparability of the financial health of school districts across the state. With larger districts

driving a trend towards the change, and many smaller districts following suit, it seems likely that TEA, in the interest of uniformity of financial data, will encourage or perhaps require a June 30th year-end in the near future."

A June 30th fiscal year-end benefits districts by allowing for a better alignment of expenditures within the intended budgeted year. In addition, it eases the workload in the Business Office that is associated with simultaneously closing out one school year while initiating the next.

Other benefits in addition to aligning the fiscal and academic years include the following:

- facilitating teacher retention and recruiting;

- improving campus involvement in budget process;

- improving accuracy of comparison data between campuses; and

- by conforming to major federal programs, which begin July 1, alleviating the requirement of maintaining grant records in two fiscal years.

The main drawback to a June 30th fiscal year-end is adoption of a budget without having a certified tax roll for the current year's tax levy; however, the Chief Appraiser has available estimates before this date. In fact, most budgets are developed in the spring using estimated data.

Besides the benefits identified by the auditor and the difficulties encountered with the deferred expenditure accounts, there is another potential benefit to changing the district's fiscal year. By converting to a July 1 fiscal year, the first year under the new fiscal year will contain only ten months, yet there will be 12 months of revenue from the major sources of property taxes and state revenue. This results in less expenditure during the transitional fiscal year, providing an opportunity to increase the fund balance. There would not be savings involving teachers' salaries, as the teachers will have fulfilled their contracts, and the amounts owed to them would have to be recorded in the current year. There are however, a number of expenditures including the

salaries and benefits for full-time employees who work 12 months. The normal operating costs associated with expenditure items such as utilities and supplies would also be recorded as expenditures for ten rather than 12 months.

Exhibit 4-5 identifies the projected impact on the general fund by recording ten months of salary instead of 12 months for the transition year to a July-June fiscal year. It also represents a conservative estimate of the projected fund balance increase, as it does not include any employee benefits or normal operating costs.

LISD would receive no gain from a cash flow perspective. The revenues and expenditures will continue as they had under the September -August fiscal year, and it will still be necessary for LISD to take other steps to increase its fund balance and improve cash flow throughout the year. For state reporting purposes, LISD would still be required to provide 12-month information during the transition period, but this will not affect the district's ability to enhance the fund balance.

Given the fact that there are a number of issues involved with the current and future financial position of LISD, a long-term financial plan that includes converting to a July – June fiscal year should be developed that identifies specific financial goals to be achieved each year. The goal should be to set a reasonable time in the future to:

- convert to a July – June fiscal year for the 2005–06 fiscal year;

- adopt board policy that will establish the unreserved fund balance at a level considered acceptable to the board;

- attain a superior rating for the FIRST Texas financial rating system; and

- attain a bond rating of "A" from Moody's Investors Service

The district should amend board policy addressing the level of General Fund balance. The superintendent and the chief financial officer should also prepare and annually update a long-range

EXHIBIT 4-5
ANALYSIS OF PAYROLL IMPACT ON CHANGE IN FISCAL YEAR

EXPENDITURE CATEGORY	2004–05 PAYROLL	2004–05 MONTHLY PAYROLL	TWO MONTHS OF PAYROLL
Instructional Administration	$2,002,360	$166,863	$333,727
Administration	1,044,398	87,033	174,066
Maintenance and Operations	2,067,474	172,290	344,579
Police Department	321,528	26,794	53,588
Technology	295,583	24,632	49,264
Total	$5,731,343	$477,612	$955,224

SOURCE: LISD, chief financial officer and Adopted Budget, 2004–05.

financial plan that establishes specific financial goals for each year. The superintendent should ensure the chief financial officer identifies the steps required to convert to a July – June fiscal year and achieve an undesignated/unreserved fund balance net of the resources provided by the Tax Anticipation Notes (TANs) at a level consistent with board directives. By ensuring fiscal and academic goals coincide with a developed long-range financial plan and established district policy, the district incrementally addresses financial stability with the board, community, state, and industry. Although the change of the fiscal year will have a positive benefit on the fund balance of LISD, there will be no real savings or additional costs involved.

BUDGET PLANNING PROCESS (REC. 33)

The district does not have an effective overall budget planning process that includes a budget calendar, a budget manual, and a mechanism to provide an audit trail to document the decisions that lead to the adopted budget.

The following materials requested by the review team were identified as not available:

- instructions provided to site-based decision-making committees for preparation of DIP, CIPS and campus budgets;

- previous year's budget planning document;

- description of software and planning tools used by the district for the budget planning process; and

- copy of guidelines or policies for performing budget revenue and expenditure projections.

The district provided a document entitled *Business Office Guidelines and Procedures* to support the request for the "Budget Planning Section of Policies and Procedures Manual." This document effectively provides information on various operating procedures involving such things as online purchase orders, deposits, and petty cash, but contains no reference to budget planning policies or procedures.

The request for a "list of staff typically involved in the budget process and their roles" resulted in a comment, "Budget Advisory Committee." Although not documented, staff and administrative interviews indicated that this committee meets from May through July and consists of the following members:

- superintendent

- assistant superintendent

- chief financial officer

- director of Personnel

- director of Teaching and Learning

- director of Bilingual Program

- director of Community Relations

- director of Fine Arts

- high school principal

- elementary principal

- two parents

- two students

This committee makes the final budget recommendations to the board. However, there is no formal documentation of the process undertaken by the committee to support these recommendations.

According to best practices, the first requirement for an effective budget planning process is to have board policies that clearly identify the roles of the participants and the expectations to be accomplished from the process.

LISD has two policies relating to the budget process:

- **CE Annual Operating Budget (LEGAL)** – This policy identifies legal requirements for the adoption of the budget and provides statutory references for each requirement. This provides the legal foundation for the development of budgets by school districts in the State of Texas.

- **CE Annual Operating Budget (LOCAL)** – This policy adopted by the board in November 2001 notes that "budget planning shall be an integral part of the overall program planning so that the budget effectively reflects the district's programs and activities and provides the resources to implement them." It references specific issues involving the availability of the proposed budget to the public and procedures for public input on the proposed budget or tax rate at the annual budget meeting, and addresses the ability for the board to amend the budget.

Policy CE (LOCAL) does address the fact that the budget process is an integral part of the overall program planning but does not provide specific direction regarding the planning process to include the role of any advisory committees, the need for a budget calendar, general direction regarding the content of the budget document, the need for the development of staffing formulas, and fiscal management goals.

The initial planning for a school district budget is typically based upon board policies, the overall goals and objectives of the organization, and the financial

limitations being faced by the district. LISD has a number of formal plans that were provided to the review team, which include the current Strategic Plan and a number of individual planning documents such as the Capital Improvement Plan and the Technology Plan. Each school also has a Campus Improvement Plan. Based upon the current budgetary planning activities, the review team could not determine if any of these planning documents have had an impact on budgetary decisions.

The absence of any formal budgetary planning documents has resulted in a disorganized and uncoordinated budget development and planning process. The lack of structure to the budget planning process is one of the elements associated with the current financial difficulties being faced by LISD.

In the *Financial Accountability System Resource Guide* prepared by the TEA, the budget process is identified as having three major phases: planning, preparation, and evaluation. In the preface to this document, planning is discussed as follows: "In school districts, the adoption of a budget implies that a set of decisions have been made by school board members and school district administrators that culminate in matching a school district's resources with its needs. As such, the budget is a product of the planning process."

In the GFOA publication, *Best Practices in Public Budgeting*, planning for the development of the annual budget includes "the need for a budget calendar, specific guidelines and instructions for each participant, a mechanism for coordinating the budget preparation and review, procedures to facilitate the budget review, discussion, modification, and adoption, and opportunities for stakeholder input."

A key element in best practices for the budget planning process is to have a budget manual, a budget calendar, and a mechanism to provide an "audit trail" to document the decisions that lead to the adopted budget. The budget allocation worksheets are provided to the schools and fixed amounts per student are allocated to the various programs/accounts. This process works for the elementary schools, but the secondary schools establish budgets by department, with the overall budget being summarized on a form similar to that used by the elementary schools.

During preparation of the 2004–05 budgets, some schools provided additional requests either through a separate memorandum or an additional spreadsheet. Lancaster Intermediate School requested the following in a separate memorandum:

- two additional staffing positions for homerooms;

- one additional 2 classroom portable;

- science lab to be housed in an additional portable;

- classroom for newly implemented dance class;

- additional materials for campuswide reading program;

- additional assistant principal;

- additional tables in cafeteria; and

- accessories for additional classrooms (classroom furniture, overhead projectors, computers for teachers).

There were no prices included with the items requested for Lancaster Intermediate School.

Lancaster High School requested the following additional items on a spreadsheet that included the various account codes:

- $3,500 for reading materials because of the creation of the 11th grade Reading Project;

- $500 for CD players, video, VCR, videos/tapes that go with the reading materials;

- $2,700 Additional buses for band travel;

- $3,000 Summer workshops for four directors;

- $15,000 New equipment for all three campuses as well as the upkeep of them (Equipment not identified);

- $2,000 to update the music library for all three campuses;

- $10,655 for more research materials needed for students;

- $12,000 for additional computers;

- $4,155 for additional film plus processing, yearbook ink paper;

- $4,816 Purchase of digital camera and photo negative scanner;

- $2,000 to attend super conference in the fall;

- $1,500 for UIL membership fees and district meet expenses;

- $3,592 for three squads in cheerleading travel;

- $3,500 for additional funds to pay judges for tryouts and for camp and letter jackets;

- $500 for upkeep and repair on radios;

- $2,500 for NASSP, TASSP, ASCD conventions, state meetings;

- $3,500 assistant principal expenses (3), dean of instruction expenses, training, TASSP, NASSP; and TAKS training.

A separate memorandum accompanied these requests asking for resources to supplement the four-year cost of $8,960 for cheerleading uniforms.

The special education budget identified the various account titles and expense account codes by function on a spreadsheet, while the budget request for the Athletic Department was contained in a memorandum that included detailed requests with account code numbers that was difficult to relate to the budget request.

Exhibit 4-6 represents an example of the difficulty in understanding how the budget for Lancaster High School was ultimately finalized. This exhibit includes the amounts originally entered on the worksheets and amounts that have been hand written on the departmental worksheets. In both cases, the total budget identified on the budget allocation worksheet is different than the total of both of the amounts on the departmental worksheets provided.

The worksheets used in the budget development process focus only on the budget being developed. There is no information that identifies past expenditures or anticipated expenditures for the current year. As a result, there is no history upon which the budget request can be based.

The *Financial Accountability System Resource Guide, Update 10.0 – January 2003, Section 2.7.2.1 Preparation of Budget Guidelines* prepared by TEA identifies the

following elements to be included in a Budget Manual:

- a budget transmittal letter from the superintendent;

- a budget memorandum or overview that explains the district budgeting philosophy and approach, outlines the budget development process, and references major assumptions and changes in the budgetary process from the previous year;

- fiscal limitations to be observed districtwide such as maintenance of service levels, specific percentage increases/decreases in resource allocations, and personnel hiring guidance;

- a budget calendar of critical dates for budget development;

- instructions concerning which expenditure items are to be budgeted at the campus level and what level of detail is required for submission;

- a copy of standard budget preparation worksheets, submission forms and/or diskettes; and

- a list of account codes necessary for the preparation of campus budgets.

Section 2.7.2.2 of the *Resource Guide* discusses the need for a budget calendar and includes a sample calendar. An important element of this process is an overview of the financial situation facing the district, the identification of the various steps in the process

EXHIBIT 4-6
LANCASTER HIGH SCHOOL
COMPARISON OF 2003–04 ORIGINAL BUDGET REQUEST AND ADJUSTED AMOUNTS

PROGRAMS	ORIGINAL REQUESTED AMOUNTS	ADJUSTED ACTUAL AMOUNTS
Drama	$2,655	$2,655
Mathematics	4,793	4,793
Arts	5,264	4,264
Science	23,168	19,168
Social Studies	4,720	4,720
Physical Education	2,686	1,686
Language Arts	6,525	5,525
Foreign Language	2,988	2,488
Choir	3,399	2,375
Journalism	9,152	8,152
ROTC	13,709	13,709
Drivers Education	2,708	1,805
High School Budget	37,291	21,139
Library Budget	24,765	29,778
High School Principal's Office	18,166	12,320
Graduation	14,824	14,824
Total	**176,813**	**149,401**
Amount on Budget Allocation Worksheet	(167,552)	(167,552)
Variance Over/(Under)	$9,261	($18,151)

SOURCE: LISD, chief financial officer, Lancaster High School Budget Worksheets, 2003–04.

that are identified in the budget development calendar, standard forms and processes to ensure that all operational units within the district understand the types of information required prior to initiation of the process, and a method for ultimately communicating to the district staff the rationale regarding the decisions that have led to the proposed budget document.

The district should develop a formal budget planning process that includes recommended revisions to current board policies, a budget preparation manual that incorporates the requirements identified in Sections 2.7.2.1 and 2.7.2.2 of the *Accountability System Resource Guide*, a budget calendar, specific instructions regarding the role of the schools and operating departments in the development of the budget, worksheets that include actual expenditures for the previous fiscal year, the budget for the current year, estimates of expenditures for the current year, budget requests for the following year, and a process for formally updating the budget requests on a regular basis until the final budget is completed.

There are numerous examples of budget planning provided by TEA and GFOA. The Legislative Budget Board also has a website that identifies educational entities in Texas with best practices in this area; some are United ISD, San Angelo ISD, and Alamo Community College.

The chief financial officer should review materials available from these agencies as well as other school districts in Texas or other states and develop the necessary budgetary planning documents and supporting policies that will meet the needs of the district. The chief financial officer should present a recommendation to the superintendent with the ultimate review and adoption of the appropriate policies by the board. By adopting board policy requiring a formal comprehensive district budget planning process that includes key elements such as a budget calendar, budget manual, detailed method for budget preparation and review, and opportunities for stakeholder input, the district will improve budget planning efficiency and allocation of resources.

PRESENTATION OF BUDGET (REC. 34)

The LISD budget document does not meet the requirements of current best practices for local governmental budget presentation.

The Proposed Budget provided to the review team contains information in a single column identifying the estimated revenues and the proposed expenditures; there is no comparison with prior periods. **Exhibit 4-7** is a replica of the first of three pages identifying funding sources for LISD. There is

EXHIBIT 4-7
LISD FUNDING SOURCES
REPLICA OF PAGE 1
2004–05 PROPOSED BUDGET DOCUMENT

FUNDING SOURCES	8/23/04 2004–05 Budget
Local Revenues:	
Local Taxes Current	$17,616,635
Local Taxes Delinquent With P & I	$600,000
Tuition	$90,000
Interest Earned	$18,000
Rental Fees and Miscellaneous	$70,000
Coca Cola Revenue	$20,000
Cedar Valley College	$7,200
Athletic Revenue	$80,000
Total Local Revenues	**$18,501,835**
State Revenue:	
State Aide Funding Formula Block Grant	$7,643,308
Special Education	$2,002,591
Career and Technology	$965,090
Gifted and Talented	$80,161
Compensatory Education	$1,102,394
Bilingual and ESL Education	$84,818
Existing Debt Allotment	$991,898
Technology	$146,445
Pre K and K Grant	$160,000
Total State Funding Formula	**$13,176,705**
Total Local and State	**$31,678,540**
Existing Debt Allotment	$991,898
Technology	$146,445
Pre K & K Grant	$160,000
Total to General Fund	**$30,380,197**
State Grants:	
Advanced Placement Grant*	$3,000
Optional Extended Year	$26,300
Accelerated Reading & Math	$231,329
Total State Grants	**$260,629**

SOURCE: LISD, chief financial officer, Proposed Budget Document, 2004–05.

no indication of the total revenues available, no summary information that matches the revenues and the expenditures, and there is no reference to the fund balance of any fund. [There is an asterisk next to the Advanced Placement Grant. However, the purpose of the asterisk is not referenced in the document.

Exhibit 4-8 is a replica of the first expenditure page in the Proposed Budget. General Fund expenditures are identified by function (i.e., Function 11 is Instruction). Total numbers of employees are identified in parentheses next to the 6100-payroll account. The number of employees identified with the payroll (teachers) is clearly for teachers, but just providing the number of employees for other functions fails to identify the types of positions included.

EXHIBIT 4-8
LISD EXPENDITURES
REPLICA OF PAGE 1
2004–05 BUDGET DOCUMENT

GENERAL FUND	
STATE & LOCAL FUNDED PROGRAM	199
2004–05	
EXPENDITURE RECAP	8/23/04
	BUDGET
11 INSTRUCTION (TEACHERS)	2004–2005
6100 PAYROLL (358 Employees)	$15,590,322
6200 PURC & CONTR SERV	$100,000
6300 SUPPLIES & MATERIALS	$400,000
6400 OTHER OPERATING EXPD	$40,000
6600 CAPITAL OUTLAY	$50,000
TOTAL FUNCTION 11	**$16,180,322**
12 INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCE (LIBRARY)	
6100 PAYROLL (9 Employees)	$422,840
6200 PURC & CONTR SERV	$5,000
6300 SUPPLIES & MATERIALS	$20,000
6400 OTHER OPERATING EXPD	$2,000
6600 CAPITAL OUTLAY	$70,000
TOTAL FUNCTION 12	**$519,840**
13 CURRICULUM & STAFF DEVELOPMENT	
6100 PAYROLL	$0
6200 PURC & CONTR SERV	$0
6300 SUPPLIES & MATERIALS	$150,000
6400 OTHER OPERATING EXPD	$0
6600 CAPITAL OUTLAY	$0
TOTAL FUNCTION 13	**$150,000**

SOURCE: LISD, chief financial officer, Proposed Budget, 2004–05.

There is no location in the document that identifies the total expenditures for the General Fund and no summary that identifies the beginning fund balance, estimated current revenues, expenditures, and ending fund balance.

The review team was told the proposed budget provided is the approved final budget and the word "approved" is written in the upper right hand corner of the cover page of the document.

GFOA and seven other state and local government associations created the National Advisory Council on State and Local Budgeting (NACSLB) in 1995 and charged it with developing a set of recommended practices in the area of state and local budgeting. The Council concluded its work in December 1997. The GFOA endorsed the work of the NACSLB, including the NACSLB's definition, mission, and key characteristics of the budget process as follows:

▪ **Definition of the Budget Process** – The budget process consists of activities that encompass the development, implementation, and evaluation of a plan for the provision of services and capital assets.

▪ **Mission of the Budget Process** – To help decision makers make informed choices about the provision of services and capital assets and to promote stakeholder participation in the process.

▪ **Key characteristics of the budget process** are identified as follows:

  o incorporates a long-term perspective;

  o establishes linkages to broad organizational goals;

  o focuses budget decisions on results and outcomes;

  o involves and promotes effective communication with stakeholders; and

  o provides incentives to government management and employees.

The NACSLB also states:

> "The key characteristics of good budgeting make it clear that the budget process is not simply an exercise in balancing revenues and expenditures one year at a time, but is strategic in nature, encompassing a multi-year financial and operating plan that allocates resources on the basis of identified goals. A good budget process moves beyond the traditional concept of line item expenditure control, providing incentives and flexibility to managers that can lead to improved program efficiency and effectiveness."

The budget materials incorporated in the 2004–05 LISD budget compare with the listed factors identified by NACSLB as follows:

- **Provides Long-term Perspective** – This document provides financial information for a single year. There is no discussion of the beginning and ending fund balances and there is no written material that identifies how the 2004–05 budget decisions will affect the long-term financial goals of LISD.

- **Establishes Linkages to Broad Organizational Goals** – The goals of the Board of Education are not addressed in any of the budget materials.

- **Focuses on Results and Outcomes** – The 2004–05 budget for LISD is essentially an accounting document. It is not a document designed to support a decision-making process. The document only identifies 2004–05 funds, account codes, and account titles. There is no information to indicate the expected results to be achieved from the adoption of the budget.

- **Involves and Promotes Effective Communication with Stakeholders** – The basic accounting materials included in the budget provide no information of substance to a third party that may be interested in understanding the structure of LISD or the methods used to allocate the available resources.

- **Provides Incentives to Government Management and Employees** – The current budget process includes no incentives for mangers to identify how current processes can be modified to reduce costs or improve services.

NACSLB states, "The mission of the budget process is to help decision makers to make informed choices about the provision of services and capital assets and to promote stakeholder participation in the process." The budget process and the resulting budget document provided by LISD do not provide the kind of information necessary to support informed choices.

GFOA has a Distinguished Budget Award Program that reflects the best practices regarding budget presentation for local governments. The award requires the following as a minimum for consideration:

THE BUDGET AS A POLICY DOCUMENT

- The document should include a coherent statement of long-term financial policies for an entity.

- The document should include a budget message that articulates priorities and issues for the budget for the new year. The message should describe significant changes in priorities from the current year and explain the factors that led to those changes.

THE BUDGET AS A FINANCIAL PLAN

- The document shall present a summary of major revenues and expenditures, as well as other financing sources and uses, to provide an overview of the total resources budgeted by the organization.

- The document shall include summaries of revenues and other financing sources, and of expenditures and other financing uses for the prior year actual, the current year budget and/or estimated current year actual, and proposed budget year.

- The document shall describe major revenue sources, explain the underlying assumptions for the revenue estimates, and discuss significant revenue trends.

- The document shall include projected changes in fund balances, as defined by the entity in the document, for appropriated governmental funds included in the budget presentation.

- The document shall include financial data on current debt obligations, describe the relationship between current debt levels and legal debt limits, and explain the effects of existing debt levels on current and future operations.

- The budget shall explain the basis of budgeting for all funds, whether cash, modified accrual, or some other statutory basis.

THE BUDGET AS AN OPERATIONS GUIDE

- The document shall describe activities, services or functions carried out by organizational units.

- The document shall include an organization chart(s) for the entire organization.

- A schedule or summary table of personnel or positions counts for prior, current and budgeted years shall be provided.

THE BUDGET AS A COMMUNICATION DEVICE

- The document shall describe the process for preparing, reviewing and adopting the budget for the coming fiscal year. It also should describe the procedures for amending the budget after adoption.

- Charts and graphs should be used, where appropriate, to highlight financial and statistical information. Narrative interpretation should be provided when the messages conveyed by the graphs are not self-evident.

- The document shall include a table of contents to make it easy to locate information in the document.

The district's budget document does not include any performance measures and associated information relating the budget to the level of service delivery and organizational performance. The GFOA recommended practice for measuring the cost of government states, "A key responsibility of state and local governments is to develop and manage programs, services, and their related resources as efficiently and effectively as possible and to communicate the results of these efforts to the stakeholders. Performance measurement when linked to the budget and strategic planning process can assess accomplishments on an organization wide basis." GFOA also recommends that "program and service performance measures be developed and used as an important component of long-term strategic planning and decision making which should be linked to governmental budgeting." Performance measures should include the following:

- be based on program goals and objectives that tie to a statement of program mission and purpose;

- measure program outcomes;

- provide for resource allocation comparisons over time;

- measure efficiency and effectiveness for continuous improvement;

- be verifiable, understandable, and timely;

- be consistent throughout the strategic plan, budget, accounting and reporting systems and to the extent practical, be consistent over time;

- be reported externally and internally;

- be monitored and used in managerial decision-making processes;

- be limited to a number and degree of complexity that can provide an efficient and meaningful way to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of key programs; and

- be designed in such a way to motivate staff at all levels to contribute toward organizational improvement.

The district should design a budget document that will meet the NACSLB definition, mission, and key characteristics of the budget process as well as fulfill the basic requirements of the GFOA Distinguished Budget Award Program. This should include the use of key performance and service delivery measures for each program as a critical element in the development of the new budget document.

The superintendent and the chief financial officer should review the materials in the TEA Financial Accountability System Resource Guide and contact some of the twelve school districts in Texas that have earned the GFOA Distinguished Budget Award to determine how to best approach the implementation of a budget development process that will provide the most appropriate budget presentation for LISD. The superintendent and the chief financial officer should also work with the principals and department heads to identify meaningful performance measures for inclusion in the budget document. Next, the district should develop procedures to gather the necessary information to accurately report on the performance measures identified.

HUMAN RESOURCE POSITION CONTROL (REC. 35)

The Human Resources Department has no formal position control capability in place to ensure that campus and department staff comply with positions included in the budget. A related issue is there is no detailed information included in any of the budget materials relating to the numbers of authorized positions by classification for each organizational entity within LISD.

The 2003–04 Budgeted Financial Data provided by TEA indicates that 80.63 percent of the total budget for LISD consists of payroll costs. This is clearly the major expenditure category for LISD and for all other school districts in Texas and nationwide. The budget is adopted based upon the staff authorized for each school and department. To effectively manage this significant expenditure category, many districts have a formal process to ensure that the staffing levels are consistent with the positions included in the budget.

The materials presented in the financial study overview to the board addressing causal factors for the financial difficulties being faced by LISD indicate that the district was overstaffed during the 2002–03 fiscal year, although the specific level of overstaffing is not identified. This issue has been addressed with the implementation of the staffing formula and a process that requires the approval of the director of Human Resources and the assistant superintendent for all positions within the district.

The implementation of the staffing formulas and the current staffing approval process reflect a significant improvement in the process for controlling staffing; however, without the support of a formal position control mechanism, there is still a potential for problems in this area. This is especially possible in the current environment with no formal documentation of the positions in the budget, and problems could also occur if there is a lack of effective communication between the director of Human Resources and the chief financial officer or if there is a change in personnel responsible for the staff management activities. Many districts use a formal position control system to minimize any problems in this area and force documentation for any staffing decisions that deviate from the number of positions authorized in the budget.

The day-to-day management of public sector budgets often focuses on disbursements for goods and services with the expectation that the resources expended for salaries and benefits is less of an issue if the proper amounts are budgeted for payroll expenditures. Many districts find it is not necessary to install a sophisticated system used by larger organizations that requires the assignment of position numbers and numerous forms and procedures. Many establish a simple system using the payroll system as the main source of information.

The district should establish a position control capability that is integrated with the budget development process to ensure that all full-time positions on the payroll are authorized in the budget. The chief financial officer and the director of Human Resources should work together to establish a process to ensure that the staffing within LISD is consistent with the positions authorized in the budget. This process should include procedures to document and approve any changes that may be necessary during the year.

CHART OF ACCOUNTS (REC. 36)
The chart of accounts contains a large number of unused account codes resulting from no scheduled review of active accounts. There are 551 accounts identified as having "no G/L record," "error suspect," or "no name provided." No G/L record

refers to the fact that there is no record of this account in the general ledger. Error suspect indicates there is no way to identify the title of the account, and it is probable that this account has been established in error. No name provided indicates that the account is unnamed. The chart of accounts for LISD contains over 3,300 separate accounts; thus the accounts identified represent 15 percent of the total accounts in the system. A large number of the 551 accounts are inactive.

Many districts maintain a chart of accounts containing only active accounts in order to minimize confusion and provide a basis for a more organized accounting system.

The district should review the entire chart of accounts on a quarterly basis and delete those accounts that are no longer active. The chief financial officer and the Business manager should establish criteria for the deletion of accounts from the chart of accounts and assign a staff member to review the chart of accounts and make the appropriate adjustments.

CONTRACT COST ALLOCATION (REC. 37)
The district does not include various overhead costs associated with contract funds and related mechanical services such as the copier program or cell phone use in campus or department budgets. This practice results in the inaccurate reporting of financial information to the state and creates a situation where the director of Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation has no management control over a significant portion of the departmental budget.

LISD paid a total of $262,393 for copier services during 2002–03, all of which was charged to the Department of Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation. The expenditures allocated to the plant maintenance and operations category reported by TEA in the standard reports for budgeted financial data and for actual financial data are overstated, while other cost centers are understated by the $262,393. Approximately 90 percent of the copies made at LISD are for instructional/school related purposes, yet the total copier costs are charged to the plant maintenance and operations category for state reporting purposes. This overstates the costs for plant maintenance and operations, where only 2 percent of the copies are made, and understates the costs for all other categories.

Exhibit 4-9 identifies the 2003–04 comparative per student budget information with the peer school districts. This exhibit indicates that LISD budgeted a much higher amount for plant maintenance and

EXHIBIT 4-9
2003–04 FINANCIAL DATA
BUDGETED OPERATING COSTS PER STUDENT
LISD AND PEER SCHOOL DISTRICTS

EXPENDITURE CATEGORIES	LANCASTER	DESOTO	RED OAK	TERRELL	SHELDON	AVERAGE
Membership	4,751	7,641	4,803	4,158	4,523	5,175
Instruction	$2,949	$3,587	$3,517	$3,537	$3,729	$3,464
Instructional Resource Media	81	85	128	133	80	101
Curriculum Staff Development	11	85	15	154	36	60
Instructional Leadership	96	101	95	65	123	96
School Leadership	429	444	407	504	343	425
Guidance Counseling Services	126	216	256	308	211	223
Social Work Services	0	35	0	32	6	15
Health Services	61	85	66	62	52	65
Total Student/Instructional	3,753	4,638	4,484	4,795	4,580	4,450
Transportation	90	67	183	274	386	200
Food	0	0	0	7	0	1
Co curricular	127	166	163	170	163	158
General Administration	283	345	176	336	358	300
Plant Maintenance/Operations	824	719	577	695	931	749
Security/Monitoring	83	24	49	59	89	61
Data Processing Services	117	88	27	80	32	69
Total Non-Instructional	1,524	1,409	1,175	1,621	1,959	1,538
Total Operating Costs	$5,277	$6,047	$5,659	$6,416	$6,539	$5,988

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, Budgeted Financial Data, 2003–04.

operations than all but one of the peer districts and considerably less per student for instructional and student-related activities.

Exhibit 4-10 identifies the comparative per student costs with the peer districts when the amounts are adjusted to identify the copier costs in the categories where the costs are incurred.

With this change, the district's cost per student for plant maintenance and operations becomes much closer to the five-district average. The total cost per student for non-instructional activities goes from being $11 dollars less than the average to $54 less than the average.

A related issue is that in 2004–05, the district assigned limitations on the number of copies allowed per school. The Business Office staff maintains this information where meter reading information is gathered monthly for control purposes.

The current arrangement provides no incentive for campus staff to make fewer copies than authorized. There is also no incentive for the central operating departments to make fewer copies, since they are not responsible for the associated costs.

In many organizations, a basic management principle is to place the resources in the hands of the decision makers. Effective organizations accomplish this with copier programs by allocating the budget for making copies to each campus and department. These administrators control the use of copiers via the budget allocation rather than monitoring monthly copier use.

Some districts allocate copier costs to the users by establishing an internal service fund. Internal service funds are a proprietary fund used to allocate central costs to users. Proprietary funds are established by governmental entities to segregate the activity to ensure that the cost of providing the service can be recovered from the users. Fees to the users are based on the full cost recovery of providing the service. The full cost of providing the service not only includes labor and materials, but also a proportional share of the capital costs of equipment consumed as well as other expenses such as utilities and general overhead.

If the consumer of the service is external to the government (i.e., the Child Nutrition Program for a school district), the proprietary fund is classified as an enterprise fund. If the consumer of the service is internal to the government (i.e., services such as printing and copiers, for schools and departments), it is classified as an internal service activity. These funds are organized to operate on a break-even basis. The management of copiers through the use of an internal service fund is an effective best practice approach for managing the costs for copying machines, and a program of this nature has been operating successfully for over 20 years in the Jefferson County School District in Colorado.

EXHIBIT 4-10
2003-04 BUDGETED FINANCIAL DATA
BUDGETED OPERATING COSTS PER STUDENT COMPARISON BETWEEN
LANCASTER WITH COPIER COSTS ADJUSTED AND
PEER SCHOOL DISTRICTS

EXPENDITURE CATEGORIES	LANCASTER	DESOTO	RED OAK	TERRELL	SHELDON	AVERAGE
Membership	4,751	7,641	4,803	4,158	4,523	5,175
Instruction (1)	$2,999	$3,587	$3,517	$3,537	$3,729	$3,474
Instructional Resource Media	81	85	128	133	80	101
Curriculum Staff Development	11	85	15	154	36	60
Instructional Leadership	96	101	95	65	123	96
School Leadership	429	444	407	504	343	425
Guidance Counseling Services	126	216	256	308	211	223
Social Work Services	0	35	0	32	6	15
Health Services	61	85	66	62	52	65
Total Student/Instructional	3,803	4,638	4,484	4,795	4,580	4,460
Transportation	90	67	183	274	386	200
Food	0	0	0	7	0	1
Co curricular	127	166	163	170	163	158
General Administration	283	345	176	336	358	300
Plant Maintenance/Operations (2)	774	719	577	695	931	739
Security/Monitoring	83	24	49	59	89	61
Data Processing Services	117	88	27	80	32	69
Total Non-Instructional	1,474	1,409	1,175	1,621	1,959	1,528
Total Operating Costs	$5,277	$6,047	$5,659	$6,416	$6,539	$5,988

(1) Added $50 per student for copier costs
(2) Deleted $50 per student for copier costs
SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, Budgeted Financial Data, 2003–04.

Such internal service funds control all copier expenses for a district. Districts also establish cost per copy rates based on the cost of running the program. The administrator of the program, generally the financial manager, bills campuses and departments monthly based on meter readings. Districts often assign codes effectively allocating costs to specific user programs within a campus or department. Some copier internal service funds also include procedures whereby Schools pay a premium rate for any copies in excess of authorized amounts.

The practice of charging the cost of all cell phones to the Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation Department also results in the inaccurate reporting of financial information to the state and creates a situation where the director of Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation has no management control over a portion of the departmental budget.

Exhibit 4-11 identifies where the 37 cell phones used by LISD are assigned. The total cost for the cell is included in the budget of the Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation Department. The only person in LISD who can authorize an employee to have access to a LISD owned cell phone is the superintendent.

Of the 37 cell phones in use by LISD, staff members in the Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation Department use nine, with the remainder distributed throughout the district. Thus, of the 37 cell phones

in use, nine are used by the Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation Department. The annual cost for these cell phones is $4,481 while representatives of other departments or the high school use the remaining 28 cell phones at a cost of $15,819.

The district should allocate operational costs for mechanical support services and contract funds to appropriate campus and departmental budgets. LISD should establish the copier program as an internal service fund for 2005–06 and allocate the budget for the use of copier machines to the schools and departments. The chief financial officer should establish a new Copier Internal Service Fund and include in this fund the various overhead costs associated with the operation of this program and prepare the 2005–06 budget to include the new internal service fund and the allocations of the costs for copiers and cell phones to the schools and departments. By establishing financial controls that connect contract funds to all users, the district improves contract accountability, management, and reporting.

INTERNAL SERVICE FUNDS
(REC. 38)

LISD currently uses two internal service funds that do not reflect the totals costs of provided services irrespective of any process or cost-benefit analysis related to program review. LISD has a Print Shop Fund that is established as part of the vocational program at the high school and a Teachers' Resource

EXHIBIT 4-11
LISD CELL PHONE USERS
JANUARY 2005

SCHOOL OR DEPARTMENT	NUMBER OF CELL PHONES	MONTHLY RATE	ANNUAL COST
Superintendent	1	$82.99	$995.88
Assistant Superintendent	1	82.99	995.88
Chief Financial Officer	1	66.39	796.68
Director of Maint., Cust., and Transp.	1	66.39	796.68
Director of Teaching and Learning	1	66.39	796.68
Director of Human Resources	1	41.49	497.88
Director of Fine Arts	1	41.49	497.88
Director of Billing/Spec Ed & Fed Programs	1	41.49	497.88
Director of Child Nutrition	1	41.49	497.88
Director of Community Relations	1	41.49	497.88
Parent Student Liaison	1	41.49	497.88
Construction Manager	1	41.49	497.88
Grounds Supervisor	1	41.49	497.88
Custodial Supervisor	1	41.49	497.88
High School West	3	41.49	1,493.64
Technology	5	41.49	2,489.40
Transportation	2	41.49	995.76
Police Department	9	41.49	4,480.92
Emergency Phones-Bus Drivers	4	41.19	1,977.12
Total	**37**	**$945.71**	**$20,299.56**

SOURCE: LISD chief financial officer, 2004.

Center Fund used to provide a central location for services to teachers.

The concept of the printing program is to combine the provision of printing services for LISD with the vocational education program at Lancaster High School. The students provide printing services for LISD while learning how to operate the printing equipment. The teacher is funded from instructional resources, and the current approach is to recover the costs of the materials and supplies used to generate the final product for the LISD customers. **Exhibit 4-12** identifies the financial statements for this fund for the period 1999–2000 through 2002–03.

The financial statements for this fund indicate a number of unusual items including those listed below:

▪ There were no revenues or expenditures for the 1999–2000 and 2000–01 fiscal years, yet the cash and deferred revenues accounts changed on the balance sheet.

▪ The deferred revenue accounts remained the same for three years.

▪ The accounts payable account remained the same for four years.

The balance sheet accounts are incorrect, and the fund is operating at a loss although the district has not identified the total costs associated with the program. The district established this fund to recover costs. However, unlike an internal service fund, the revenues for this fund do not cover all costs

associated with the program. The district mainly attempts to recover copier program costs for materials and supplies.

The August 2003 through February 2004 billing by Xerox indicated that the print shop used 974,882 copies during the billing period. To properly account for the services provided by this program, the depreciation for equipment should be recorded. Rent, utilities, indirect costs, and the copier costs identified with the copier usage should also be included. There are also two additional copiers being used by this program that are billed to the Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation Department. This effectively supports the vocational program at Lancaster High School, and if the intent is to recover the cost of operations, the program should be established as an internal service fund.

The Teachers' Resource Center Fund was established to provide a central location where teachers could come to develop materials to support classroom activities. The center provides services to support teacher classroom activities by providing materials such as nametags and different types of construction paper, and providing access to equipment such as a copier and laminating machines.

An employee from the Instruction Services Department manages this center. Teachers are charged for the materials they use.

Exhibit 4-13 identifies the financial statements for this fund for the period 1999–2000 through 2002–03.

EXHIBIT 4-12
PRINT SHOP FUND
FINANCIAL STATEMENT ANALYSIS
FOR FISCAL PERIODS 1999–2000 THROUGH 2002–03

REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03
Beginning Fund Balance	$0	$0	$0	($7,898)
Revenues	0	0	8,148	26,990
Expenditures	0	0	(16,046)	(24,451)
Net Profit (Loss)	0	0	(7,898)	2,539
Ending Fund Balance	**$0**	**$0**	**($7,898)**	**($5,359)**
BALANCE SHEET	**1999–2000**	**2000–01**	**2001–02**	**2002–03**
Assets				
Cash	$6,645	$11,509	$3,611	$6,150
Total Assets	6,645	11,509	3,611	6,150
Liabilities				
Accounts Payable	6,645	6,645	6,645	6,645
Deferred Revenues		4,864	4,864	4,864
Total Liabilities	6,645	11,509	11,509	11,509
Fund Balance	0	0	(7,898)	(5,359)
Total Liabilities and Fund Balance	**$6,645**	**$11,509**	**$3,611**	**$6,150**

SOURCE: LISD, Annual Financial Reports, 1999–2000 through 2002–03.

EXHIBIT 4-13
TEACHERS' RESOURCE CENTER FUND
FINANCIAL STATEMENT ANALYSIS
FOR FISCAL PERIODS 1999–2000 THROUGH 2002–03

REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03
Beginning Fund Balance	$0	$0	$0	($1,587)
Revenues	12,346	7,646	6,408	0
Expenditures	(12,346)	(7,646)	(7,995)	0
Net Profit (Loss)	0	0	(1,587)	0
Ending Fund Balance	**$0**	**$0**	**($1,587)**	**($1,587)**
BALANCE SHEET	**1999–2000**	**2000–01**	**2001–02**	**2002–03**
Assets				
Cash	$6,645	($42,600)	($44,187)	($44,444)
Due from Other Governments	0	34,410	0	34,410
Deferred Expenditures	0	8,190	42,600	8,447
Total Assets	**6,645**	**0**	**(1,587)**	**(1,587)**
Liabilities				
Accounts Payable	6,645	0	0	0
Deferred Revenues		0	0	0
Total Liabilities	6,645	0	0	0
Fund Balance	0	0	(1,587)	(1,587)
Total Liabilities and Fund Balance	**$6,645**	**$0**	**($1,587)**	**($1,587)**

SOURCE: LISD Annual Financial Reports, 1999–2000 through 2002–03.

The financial statements for this fund also indicate a number of unusual items including the following.

- For the periods 1999–2000 and 2000–01, revenues equal expenditures, with revenues for 1999–2000 and 2000–01 being $12,346 and $7,646, respectively.

- With modest revenues and expenditures, the cash balance changed from $6,645 in 1999–2000 to a negative balance of $42,600 for 2000–01.

- An amount of $34,410 was identified as due from other governments for 2000–01, and an

amount of $8,149 was identified as a deferred expenditure.

- The $34,410 due from other governments account disappeared and became part of the deferred expenditures account for 2001–02.

- The only year for which a net profit or loss is identified is 2001–02.

- The negative cash balance moves from $42,600 in 2000–01 to $44,187 in 2001–02, and finally to $44,444 in 2002–03.

- No activity is identified for 2002–03, and the $34,410 reappears as due from other funds.

As in the Print Shop Fund, the accounting for this fund has been unusual over the four-year period in question. Beyond the accounting errors, this fund has not effectively accounted for the recovery of costs.

The consultant retained by LISD to aid in resolving the district's financial issues has recommended eliminating the internal service funds because they both have negative balances and appear not to have been managed effectively. As noted, neither of these funds are true internal service funds. The total costs of operation are not charged against these funds. They are special revenue funds.

The district should establish annual cost-benefit analysis and program review for the internal service fund. Rather than eliminate these funds, the district should determine their value and, if deemed valuable, establish internal service funds. The chief financial officer should charge all related expenses to these funds, and establish billing rates established to recover these costs. The district can accomplish this by increasing the allocation of resources to the campuses/departments by an amount equal to the costs currently absorbed by these programs. This will give each campus and department increased resources to purchase the services. The district can then determine program success based on the amounts of services purchased.

LISD should evaluate the services provided by the Print Shop Fund and the Teachers' Resource Center Fund and establish them as true internal service funds. The chief financial officer should meet with the assistant superintendent to establish a process to evaluate the activities of the Print Shop and the Teachers' Resource Center and, establish budgets for these activities consistent with the operation of an internal service fund.

GRANTS MANAGEMENT (REC. 39)

There is no grants management board policy, internal procedure to coordinate and approve grant applications, or consistent reporting structure. The district does not have a supporting process for periodic reports to the board on the status of all grant activities. The district has a contract with a grant-writing consultant, and the portion of the contract related to reporting is general in nature, resulting in an unstructured process for the management of grants in LISD. The current services with the consultant are defined as "consultation for grant research, grant development and grant writing." Expected results or reporting expectations are not identified.

The grant consultant has identified over 70 grant opportunities; however, a number of these grants may not be deemed appropriate because of programmatic requirements or the need to provide administrative support to grants with very low dollar value.

The Grants Opportunities report and the "tickler file" provided by the consultant involve listings of all grants that have been identified by the consultant. There may be grants on this list that LISD would prefer not to seek, and the administration could be placed in a position of needing to deny a grant application appearing on the list.

The format for the information provided by the consultant for the various grants in these materials varies, making it difficult to identify key information such as application dates, grant amounts, phone numbers, and the like. Most grants are identified by the granting agency, followed by the deadline for filing, with the remainder of the materials describing the programs with dollar amounts included in the body of the materials. However, in some cases, the dollar amounts available are not identified. Web sites are included with each grant listing, but phone numbers and people to contact are not provided for all of the grants.

Grants are often seen as a panacea for financial problems and they can provide significant benefits to organizations. Many districts have an approval process for grants that addresses circumstances such as small dollar amount grants that may require more management time than the value to be received from the grant, requirements for matching funds, or grants to fund new programs that will ultimately need to be funded by the district.

Effective grant programs review grant proposals for the following:

- the impact the requested funds will have on students and support LISD goals;

- where the grant project will be located and a list of the personnel necessary to carry out the project;

- LISD in-kind contributions and other obligations associated with accepting the grant;

- what will occur with the program when funding is terminated;

- an objective and valid evaluation process that is aligned with the stated goals of the project; and

- demonstration that teachers, administrators, support personnel, students, and community members (if appropriate) have been involved in the planning process.

Effective grant review procedures include the requirement for all grants to be approved by the

grants coordinator (director of Community Relations) and the project budget needs to be established and integrated with the budget development process.

The current process for grant reporting has the director of Bilingual/Special Education State and Federal Programs providing an annual report regarding the budget and expenditures for the various title programs; however, there is no reporting process to communicate with the board on the status of all grant programs. An effective grant program utilizes a formal reporting process to ensure compliance with procedures and identifies issues as they occur, minimizing the potential for problems with the financial data to reoccur, and providing the board and the community with information that will identify the magnitude of the resources received by LISD from all grant sources.

The district should establish a board policy and internal procedures to provide guidelines and specific requirements to support the grant application process. These should also establish internal criteria for grants management to include DIP consistency and a process for quarterly board reporting. The district should also renegotiate a contract with the grants consultant and incorporate the new guidelines.

The chief financial officer and the director of Bilingual/Special Education State and Federal Programs should establish a data collection process and research the activities of other school districts. They should recommend board policy and implementation procedures that will ensure all grants received by LISD support the goals and objectives of the district and will provide value without creating unanticipated long-term costs. This policy should be supported with a formal quarterly report on all grants to the board.

CASH MANAGEMENT (REC. 40)

LISD's financial procedures and investment strategies do not address maximizing investment opportunities for checking account balances or include corresponding information in investment reports to the board.

The district carries large balances in the operating checking account that results in lost investment opportunities, and the cash management information reported to the board results in a number of official documents that are of little value for communicating the investment position of LISD.

The main deposits in the checking account represent the daily receipts and the state payments. Disbursement checks are written on Thursdays and mailed on Fridays, and wire transfers are made from this account to the payroll clearing account as necessary.

The month-end balances for the September 2003 through August 2004 time frame indicate balances ranging from $681,000 to $2.7 million. A review of the activity in this account for the month of May 2004 indicated an average balance of $1,085,063 for the month, with a high balance of $2,667,389 and a low balance of $845,818. If the low balance is representative of each month and this amount was maintained in the TexPool account using the average investment rate of 1.13305 percent for the period March through August 2004, the additional interest earnings for the year would have been $8,583. As interest rates rise, the potential earnings will increase. Interest rates have been increasing, as the rate for TexPool in December 2004 was 2.0685 percent. At this rate, the additional interest earnings would have been $17,500 over a twelve-month period.

The board receives nine pages of cash management information with the monthly financial report as follows:

- Projected Cash Flow for the subsequent twelve-month period (one page);

- Report of Bank and Investment Balances (one page);

- Lone Star Investment Pool Monthly Report that identifies all transactions for the Operating and Debt Service Funds (three pages); and

- TexPool Participant Statement that summarizes the activities for the month for four separate accounts (four pages).

The projected cash flow report provided to the board does not provide any comparative information. The result is a report that projects future cash flows with no reference to the original cash flow plan or recent updates to the plan. Thus, the board has no way of knowing if the cash flow projections are consistent with the original plan or if they are not, why this is so, and what actions may be required to address any variances in the plan.

A useful cash flow report can be depicted as a line graph that identifies the original cash flow projections and a line that depicts the actual cash flow to date with the most current projection for the remainder of the year.

The Report of Bank and Investment Balances is designed to comply with board Policy CDA (LEGAL), which requires a report no less than quarterly to be prepared by the investment officer. With the exception that there is no statement of compliance of the investment portfolio as it relates

to the district's investment policy, this report and the detailed reports address this requirement. A replica of this report is reflected in **Exhibit 4-14**.

The board has approved the following four investment pools:

- Lone Star Investment Pool operated by the Texas Association of School Boards (TASBO)

- TexPool operated by the State of Texas and managed by Lehman Brothers;

- TexStar managed by First Southwest Asset Management; and

- MBIA managed by Municipal Investors Services.

LISD currently has two accounts with the Lone Star Investment Pool: one for the General Fund and one for the Debt Service Fund. These accounts are used for receipting property tax revenues, which are deposited daily into the account from the Dallas County Tax Office. The information provided to the board is a copy of the statements provided to LISD. This information identifies the daily transactions, and the total amounts reconcile to the Bank and Investment Balances Report.

LISD uses the TexPool account as the main investment vehicle at this time because it has the most advantageous interest rates. There are four accounts in this pool with investments for the General Fund, Debt Service Fund, Lunchroom Fund and the Construction Fund. Individual statements for each account are provided to the board, and these statements provide the documentation for the information on the Bank and Investment Balances Report.

Although the detailed statements from the investment pools provide documentation to validate the amounts included on the Bank and Investment Balances Report and provide the information to comply with Policy CDA (Legal), which calls for a statement of the value of each invested asset at the beginning and end of the reporting period, it is cumbersome and could be presented more clearly with a different reporting format. The Bank and Investment Balances Report identifies only interest earned for the month of the report and does not provide year-to-date investment earnings.

As LISD begins to increase the fund balance in the General Fund, additional cash will be available to invest. To be in a position to maximize interest earnings now and in the future, LISD should develop

EXHIBIT 4-14
REPORT OF BANK AND INVESTMENT BALANCES

Approval _____
Date:_____

MEMORANDUM

November 1, 2004

SUBJECT: BANK AND INVESTMENT BALANCES

September 1, 2004 our cash balances were as follows:

CHECKING ACCOUNTS			INTEREST EARNED	
Operating	$2,769,435.41			
Payroll	$519,647.90			
Debt Service	$591.35			
Construction	$490,229.64			
Total Checking Accounts		$3,779,904.30		
INVESTMENT ACCOUNTS				
Lonestar LIQ.+-Oper	$261,256.28		$229.36	
Lonestar LIQ.+-Debt	$81,983.43		$1,119.90	
Total Lonestar Liq. Plus a/cs		$343,239.71 @1.37%		$1,349.26
	$77,897,274.8			
Texpool Construction Fund	1		$98,775.64	
Texpool-Lunchroom Fund	$506.66		$0.61	
Texpool-Interest and Sinking	$1,375,923.21		$567.87	
Texpool-Operating Fund	$2,799,566.97		$1,684.97	
Total Texpool Accounts		$82,073,271.65 @1.54%		$101,029.09
Total Cash Accounts		$86,196,415.66	Total Interest	$102,378.35

SOURCE: LISD, chief financial officer, 2004.

procedures to minimize the amount of resources in low or non-interest-bearing checking accounts.

The detail information is an effort on the part of LISD to provide the board with adequate information. The intent is laudable, but the additional seven pages of detail have the potential to add confusion rather than clarification. The board is a policymaking body, and the information they require needs to be clear and concise and reflect the cash position of LISD for the month in question. It is not necessary to provide them with the detailed statements unless requested, as has occurred in the past.

Exhibit 4-15 identifies a format that would meet the requirements of Policy CDA (Legal) and provide the necessary information to the board on a single page.

The district should establish internal procedures to maximize investment earnings by reducing the ongoing balances in the operating checking account and develop a three-page cash management report. The chief financial officer should work with the business manager to review the activities in the operating checking account for the past year and develop procedures to limit the amount of cash in this account, and should contact representatives of Region 10 to identify how other school districts in

Exhibit 4-15
SAMPLE BANK AND INVESTMENT BALANCES REPORT

LANCASTER INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
BANK AND INVESTMENT BALANCES REPORT
November 1, 2004

			INTEREST EARNED	
	BEGINNING BALANCE	ENDING BALANCE	CURRENT PERIOD	YEAR TO DATE
CHECKING ACCOUNTS				
Operating	$x,xxx,xxx	$x,xxx,xxx	$–	$–
Payroll	xxx,xxx	xxx,xxx	–	–
Debt Service	xxx,xxx	xxx,xxx	–	–
Construction	xxxxxx	xxxxxx	–	–
Total Checking Accounts	x,xxx,xxx	x,xxx,xxx	–	–
INVESTMENTS				
Operating Fund				
Lonestar	xxx,xxx	xxx,xxx	xxx	x,xxxx
Texpool	x,xxx,xxx	x,xxx,xxx	x,xxx	x,xxxx
Total Operating Fund	x,xxx,xxx	x,xxx,xxx	x,xxx	xx,xxx
Debt Service Fund				
Lonestar	$xx,xxx	$xx,xxx	x,xxx	xx,xxx
Lunchroom Fund				
Texpool	$xxx	$xxx	x	xx
Construction Fund				
Texpool	xx,xxx,xxx	xx,xxx,xxx	xxx,xxx	xxx,xxx
Interest and Sinking Fund				
Texpool	x,xxx,xxx	x,xxx,xxx	xxx	x,xxx
Total Investments	xx,xxx,xxx	xx,xxx,xxx	xxx,xxx	xxx,xxx
Total Cash and Investments	$xx,xxx,xxx	$xx,xxx,xxx	$xxx,xxx	$xxx,xxx
Interest Rates				
Lonestar	x.xx%	x.xx%		
Texpool	x.xx%	x.xx%		
Average Rate of Return			x.xx%	x.xx%

Approved by:
Date:

SOURCE: Created by MGT of America, 2005.

the region provide investment information. With this information, the chief financial officer should be able to design a more concise and informative investment report for the board.

Based on the May 2004 analysis and using the low balance of $845,818 and the TexPool rate of 2.0685 compounded annually for these fiscal calculations, the district should be able to earn an additional $17,500 annually. Interest rates are predicted to increase; thus, this amount should be even greater in future years under those circumstances.

INVESTMENT POLICY (REC. 41)

The district's annual review of the investment policy and investment strategy does not include the percentage of resources invested as a critical performance evaluation of the investment program. Policy CDA (LOCAL) includes the requirement for a portfolio report at the end of each year that includes a performance evaluation that relates the interest rates earned by LISD with specific federal investments and also includes a total yield for the preceding 12 months. While this report looks at interest rates and yields, it does not address the maximization of investable resources. Yields are important, however, and the failure to maximize the amount of resources invested will reduce the total investment earnings available to the district.

Analyzing the average daily total cash resources available each month and determining the percentage of resources that have been invested for that month can determine the measurement of investable resources.

The district should adopt revisions to Policy CDA (LOCAL) that include a quarterly investment report on the percentage of resources invested and the corresponding analysis of the maximization of investable resources. The chief financial officer should establish a process to measure the percentage of resources invested and draft a revision to Policy CDA (LOCAL) for board review.

The chief financial officer should contact Regional Education Service Center X (Region 10) representatives for assistance and work with the Business manager to review historical activities in the operating checking account for at least one year before developing procedures to limit cash amounts in the operational checking account. By following established procedures to limit the amount of cash in this account, the chief financial officer should be able to design a more concise and informative investment report for the board.

RISK MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES (REC. 42)

LISD has no coordination of risk management activities, board reports on Workers' Compensation, or management procedures in place to support an ongoing employee safety program. This has resulted in a lack of management oversight for Workers' Compensation, a lack of information involving the standard insurance coverage, high Workers' Compensation premiums, and no management procedures in place to support an ongoing employee safety program.

An employee in the Finance Office who is also responsible for employee benefits and preparing purchase orders, processes Workers' Compensation claims. In an individual effort, this employee obtained some safety videos during 2004–05 and provided them to the director of Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation for use with the employees in that department. This, however, was an informal process and was not part of a continuing safety awareness program for employees throughout the district. There is also no districtwide review of property and casualty claims.

Since 2002–03, LISD purchases Workers' Compensation insurance through the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) Risk Management Fund. The district experienced a slight reduction in premiums during this time from $431,942 in 2003–04 to $420,502 in 2004–05. To place this information in context, LISD has 596 employees, resulting in a total cost of $706 per employee for Workers' Compensation in 2004–05 ($420,502/596).

Exhibit 4-16 identifies the claims experience for LISD for 2002–03 and 2003–04. TASB has also provided information regarding the types of claims for fund year 2003. The Benefits clerk maintained this filed information, along with the information included in **Exhibit 4-16**; but the chief financial officer was unaware of the availability of this information. The risk associated with the various types of positions in an organization as well as the actual claims incurred provide the basis for Workers' Compensation premiums.

LISD's board policy CK (LOCAL), Safety Program/Risk Management, adopted in December 1991 states: "The Superintendent or designee shall be responsible for developing, implementing, and promoting a comprehensive safety program." It goes on to identify general areas of responsibility as follows:

▪ guidelines and procedures for responding to emergencies;

EXHIBIT 4-16
SUMMARY OF WORKERS' COMPENSATION CLAIMS
2002–03 AND 2003–04

	2002–03		2003–04	
EMPLOYEE LASSIFICATION	**NUMBER OF CLAIMS**	**COSTS INCURRED**	**NUMBER OF CLAIMS**	**COSTS INCURRED**
Professional/Clerical/Administrative	26	$59,978	16	$56,596
Custodial	7	3,755	10	47,913
Building Maintenance	7	129,737	6	34,017
Food Service	12	25,737	4	23,852
All Other	1	196	1	372
Total	53	$219,403	37	$162,750
Average Cost Per Claim		**$4,140**		**$4,399**

SOURCE: Texas Association of School Boards, Loss History Analysis by Occupation, August 31, 2004.

- program activities intended to reduce the frequency of accident and injury, including:

  o inspecting work areas and equipment;

  o training frontline and supervisory staff;

  o establishing safe work procedures and regulations;

  o reporting, investigating, and reviewing accidents; and

  o promoting responsibility for District property on the part of students, employees and the community.

- program activities intended to reduce the ultimate cost of accidents and injuries through investigation and documentation;

- program activities that identify and develop prudent methods of financing loss costs on an annual basis, including the purchase of commercial insurance, self insured retentions, and risk pooling;

- driver education programs when available;

- vehicle safety programs; and

- traffic safety programs and studies related to employees, students, and community.

Policy CK (LOCAL) provides the necessary board direction in the area of employee safety and loss control; however, there is currently no compliance with this policy. The only structured safety program that occurs at LISD at this time involves the training of custodians based on requirements from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). The district's Benefits clerk obtained three safety videos from TASB during 2004–05 and sent them to various departments in an individual effort to enhance safety prevention. There is, however, no on-going focus on employee safety.

There are many industry perspectives on the cause of employee accidents; some blame the personal characteristics of an employee while others point to a wider social, organizational, or technological environment. Those involved in the field of Workers' Compensation support prevention of a large percentage of on-the-job accidents. It is a matter of having the appropriate programs in place and managing an overall safety and Worker's Compensation program. A study undertaken by Dupont de Nemours in 1996 showed that unsafe acts underlie 96 percent of all accidents at work, while only 4 percent are related to technical causes.

Workers' Compensation premiums are related to the risks associated with the job, but a key element of the premium cost is the history of claims or the loss experience of the organization. Fewer and lower cost claims result in lower Workers' Compensation premiums. Safety programs that include ongoing employee training and data-driven management awareness help many districts reduce the number of claims and maintain the cost of Workers' Compensation insurance at a manageable level. These programs also benefit employees by helping them avoid possible injuries.

The TASB program offers numerous services that include the following:

- detail claim reports;

- claim severity reports;

- open claims reports;

- claims analysis per accident type;

- loss control manual;

- school safety and emergency response manual;

- safety manuals by employee type (administrative/instructional, food service, maintenance, and transportation; and

- safety videos.

The above services are available to all districts that provide Workers' Compensation coverage through the TASB Risk Management Fund.

In 1999–2000, the Jefferson County School District in Colorado, a district with over 9,000 employees and active safety programs, paid $720,362 in claims for a self-insured program, and $202,690 in administration costs for a total cost of $923,052. Using the conservative estimate of 9,000 employees, the average cost per employee was $103. **Exhibit 4-17** applies the U.S. Department of Labor's quarterly state and local government wages and salaries inflation adjustment to accelerate the $103 per employee paid for Workers' Compensation premiums in a larger district in 1999–2000. Using these calculations, the $103 increases to approximately $119 per employee. Similarly, using annual overall inflation adjustments from 2000 through 2004 increases the $103 to $114. Both adjusted premium amounts are still significantly lower than LISD's $706 premium per employee in 2004–05.

Many districts in Texas, similar to Jefferson County School District in Colorado, assign a staff member to coordinate with insurance carriers, oversee a safety program, and gather data to support overall program management. Some districts assign a risk manager these duties, other districts assign these roles to one or more financial staff.

The district should establish a formal LISD safety and Workers' Compensation program and evaluate the various responsibilities for all employees within the Business Office. This should allow the district to determine where to assign the additional responsibilities to support coordination of a risk management program. The function should also include gathering management information, coordinating day-to-day activities, and maintaining contact with the insurance carriers. The chief financial officer should also contact the TASB Risk Management Fund representative assigned to LISD and request help in establishing this program. The

board should also revise policy CK (LOCAL) to require an annual report on the status and activities of the Workers' Compensation program. The director of Human Resources should also work with the chief financial officer to appropriately reclassify and update current job descriptions to include any additional functions or responsibilities.

This fiscal impact is based on a $5,000 stipend and 9 percent benefits ($5,000 + $450 = $5,450). Because an effective safety program can result in savings in both direct dollars involving workers' compensation premiums and a reduction in lost employee time, the increased cost will be offset by a reduction in the cost of Workers' Compensation premiums.

The fiscal impact of implementing of a safety program is based on a conservative reduction in Workers' Compensation premium costs of at least 10 percent. Using the 2004–05 Workers' Compensation premium of $420,502, LISD could achieve premium savings of $42,050, resulting in estimated net annual savings of $36,600 ($42,050 – $5,450 stipend and benefits). Five- year savings should reach $183,000 (5 x $36,600).

FIXED ASSETS (REC. 43)

LISD has not developed policies or procedures to support an ongoing fixed asset inventory process and does not use the fixed assets module that is part of the financial system. The district identified the need to improve inventory controls as a result of its financial consultant services and in a list of "additional actions to improve fiscal efficiency." The district required principals and department heads to conduct a supply audit and an equipment inventory by the end of 2003–04.

Principals and department heads prepared these inventories in a variety of formats. However, most of them lacked dates and assigned dollar values for assets. The dollar value of the assets is important for property insurance purposes. Thus, LISD has the basis for an ongoing fixed assets inventory process, but the data currently available do not represent the

EXHIBIT 4-17
WORKERS' COMPENSATION PREMIUM PER EMPLOYEE INFLATION ADJUSTMENT
BASED UPON STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT WAGE AND SALARY ADJUSTMENTS
2000 SECOND QUARTER THROUGH 2005 FIRST QUARTER

FISCAL YEAR AND QUARTERLY TIME PERIOD	QUARTERLY INFLATION RATE	PREMIUM AMOUNT PER EMPLOYEE*
1999–2000 (2000 second quarter)	N/A (starting point)	$103
2000–2001 (2001 second quarter)	3.7%	107
2001–2002 (2002 second quarter)	3.2%	110
2002–2003 (2003 second quarter)	3.1%	114
2003–2004 (2004 second quarter)	1.9%	116
2004–2005 partial (2005 first quarter)	2.3%	$119

NOTE: Amounts rounded to next whole number.
SOURCE: United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics website, http://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/surveymost, 2005.

type of structured process necessary to maintain an effective process for the management of the fixed assets.

The state legally requires school districts to maintain an inventory of equipment with a value in excess of $5,000. In compliance with law, the district adopted board policy CFB (LOCAL), which states: "The capitalization threshold for purposes of classifying capital assets shall be $5,000." LISD has a set of complete inventories for each school and department including, but not limited to student furniture and technology equipment of a lesser value with the potential of being stolen.

LISD currently uses the accounting, payroll, and purchasing modules of the Regional Education Service Center X (Region 10). This system also has a fixed asset module available to LISD at no cost, as it is part of the financial system services that are already being contracted for by LISD. LISD has been in contact with Region 10 to install the fixed asset module of the finance system prior to the end of 2004–05.

The GFOA recommends, "every state and local government perform a physical inventory of its tangible capital assets, either simultaneously or on a rotating basis, so all of the government's tangible capital assets are physically accounted for at least every five years."

The district should install the fixed assets module of the Region 10 financial system, establish consistent inventory procedures documented in the *Business Office Procedures and Guidelines*, and revise board policy CFB (LOCAL) to require an annual inventory of tangible capital assets. The chief finance officer should also work with representatives from Region 10 to complete installation of the fixed assets system and train LISD staff on the management of the system.

For more information on Chapter 4: Finance and Asset/Risk Management, see page 230 in the General Information section of the appendices.

FISCAL IMPACT

RECOMMENDATION	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09	2009–10	5-YEAR (COSTS) OR SAVINGS	ONE-TIME (COSTS)
31. Develop a formal financial reporting structure with documented historical analysis and board reports prepared in accordance with Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) standards.	($830)	($830)	($830)	($830)	($830)	($4,150)	($600)
32. Establish and annually update a long-range financial plan and amend existing board policy to address the level of fund balance in the General Fund.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
33. Implement a formal budget planning process supported by board policy and develop a preparation manual with a budget calendar.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
34. Design and annually update a budget document meeting state and industry standards including definition, mission, and key characteristics of the budget process.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
35. Integrate a position control review with the budget development process and annually reconcile to payroll records.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
36. Quarterly review and delete inactive accounts from the district's financial chart of accounts.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
37. Allocate operational costs for mechanical support services and contract funds to appropriate campus and departmental budgets.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0

FISCAL IMPACT (CONTINUED)

RECOMMENDATION	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09	2009–10	5-YEAR (COSTS) OR SAVINGS	ONE-TIME (COSTS)
38. Establish and monitor self-contained internal service funds and annually conduct cost-benefit analyses to determine program effectiveness and retention.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
39. Adopt grants management board policy and internal procedures including accountability, administrative training, reporting, and performance measures.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
40. Establish procedures to maximize investment earnings and develop a cash management report.	$17,500	$17,500	$17,500	$17,500	$17,500	$87,500	$0
41. Revise and implement investment procedures and policy to include a quarterly investment report and corresponding analysis to maximize return on available resources.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
42. Establish a safety and Workers' Compensation program and assign accountability for coordination of risk management functions.	$36,600	$36,600	$36,600	$36,600	$36,600	$183,000	$0
43. Install the fixed assets module of the district's financial system, establish consistent inventory procedures, and amend board policy to require an annual physical inventory.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Chapter 4 Totals	$53,270	$53,270	$53,270	$53,270	$53,270	$266,350	($600)

Chapter 5

Purchasing
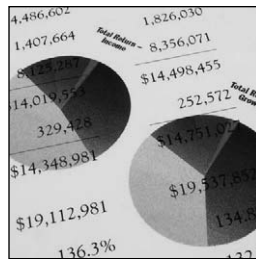
Lancaster Independent School District

CHAPTER 5
PURCHASING

The chief financial officer oversees the Lancaster Independent School District (LISD) Business Office that manages the purchasing activities for the district, including overseeing the purchasing system, preparing bids, and coordinating district involvement with various purchasing cooperatives. In 2003–04, Business Office staff implemented a decentralized online purchase order process and inquiry system to improve efficiency by allowing users to initiate and check status of their own purchase orders. The Employee Benefits/Purchasing Technician in the Business Office creates the purchase orders in the online system following the approval process, and distributes the resulting documents to vendors, schools, or departments. The district employed a Purchasing coordinator from October 2001 through July 2003 but currently does not have this position filled or budgeted.

ACCOMPLISHMENT
- LISD implemented a decentralized online purchasing system in 2003–04, provided by Regional Education Service Center X (Region 10), to increase purchasing efficiencies for staff districtwide.

FINDINGS
- LISD's purchasing function is uncoordinated districtwide, resulting in unmonitored contracts, non-compliance with state purchasing rules, and uncoordinated use of purchasing cooperatives.

- LISD's purchasing policies do not provide the necessary policy direction to support an effective purchasing process, resulting in unclear purchasing authority and process management and conflicts of interest.

- LISD does not have comprehensive purchasing operational guidelines, resulting in inconsistent purchasing and contract procurements within departments and schools.

- The district does not have a complete and current contract listing, centralized contract files, or a consistent contract management process to monitor contract performance, address contract noncompliance, and ensure cost-effectiveness.

RECOMMENDATIONS
- **Recommendation 44 (p. 111): Implement a central purchasing oversight function in the Business Office and establish and fill a Purchasing coordinator position to provide this oversight.** The purchasing oversight function will reduce reliance on fragmented departmental contract oversight and ensure districtwide contract compliance. The chief financial officer should develop and assign the

districtwide purchasing oversight function to a Purchasing coordinator in the Business Office to ensure accountability and coordination of district purchasing activities such as contract management, use of purchasing cooperatives, bid preparation, vendor relations, and compliance with purchasing policy. The Purchasing coordinator position should be established and filled in 2005–06. The chief financial officer and the director of Human Resources should update the Purchasing coordinator job description to include responsibility for districtwide purchasing oversight and key skills, experience, and knowledge of contract negotiations and management and district purchasing systems.

- **Recommendation 45 (p. 112): Review and revise all current purchasing policies to include detailed policy direction on purchasing authority, bidding procedures, and vendor relations.** The district should review best practices and standards in purchasing policies, especially those that include specific requirements for bidding procedures. Based on these reviews and information, the district should revise purchasing procedures and policies guiding vendor relations and add policies as necessary. By having updated purchasing policies, the district will improve consistency in district purchasing activities, ensure legal compliance, and improve vendor relations.

- **Recommendation 46 (p. 113): Establish a separate section in the *Business Office Guidelines and Procedures* for comprehensive purchasing procedures, including contract instructions, approved vendor lists, and supply catalog information.** The district should establish comprehensive purchasing procedures to increase the effectiveness of the purchasing process. The district should obtain model-purchasing manuals in use at other school districts and discuss the use of these manuals with their purchasing representatives. The district should use its existing automated purchasing system guidelines as a framework for developing its comprehensive purchasing procedures.

- **Recommendation 47 (p. 115): Establish a centralized contract management process in the Business Office and review existing contracts for cost-effectiveness.** The district should obtain original copies of contracts currently in place, establish a central contracts filing system, establish a calendar with contract

initiation and expiration dates, and establish vendor evaluation and contract performance monitoring. By implementing a centralized contract management process, the district will reduce reliance on fragmented departmental contract oversight and ensure districtwide contract compliance.

DETAILED ACCOMPLISHMENT

AUTOMATED PURCHASING SYSTEM

In 2003–04, LISD implemented a decentralized online purchasing request system to increase purchasing efficiencies for staff districtwide. The purchasing system is part of the computer mainframe applications package that LISD purchased for a flat fee from Region 10 through a computer Mainframe Processing Cooperative that the district has participated in since 1994–95. As part of the service, Region 10 provides purchasing system training to the district. During spring 2004, district employees involved in the purchasing process, both administrators and support staff, attended purchasing system training provided by Region 10.The system allows school and departmental staff to electronically enter purchase requisitions, which are then automatically forwarded to the appropriate administrator for approval. Prior to the automated system, staff had to manually complete five-part purchase orders and wait an average of a week to ten days to receive approval for any purchases.

After initial administrative approval for purchasing requests, the online system allows for electronic approvals, which quickens the purchasing process. Each day, the Employee Benefits/Purchasing technician in the Business Office prints copies of released purchase orders and mails them to the appropriate vendors unless presented at the time of purchase. The clerk sends a copy of released purchase orders to the requesting school or department and files a copy in the Business Office. System users can request the status of their purchase order online at all times. The chief financial officer reported that his office gets much fewer inquiries regarding the status of purchase orders since the purchasing system went online. The system also has the online capability to process received orders,

cancel purchase orders, enter direct payments, check the history of accounts and purchase orders, and conduct budget amendments and transfers.

LISD employees reported that the previous manual purchasing process did not efficiently meet their needs. Staff had to contact those involved in the approval process to determine the status of the purchase requisition and wait until the return of the hard copies of the purchase order to see whether the order had been placed, which sometimes took up to 10 days. The review team surveyed district administrative and support staff, principals and assistant principals, and teachers to assess user satisfaction levels with the new online purchasing system. In response to the statement, "Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for the requestor," more than 50 percent of principals and district administration and support staff and 36 percent of teachers either agreed or strongly agreed (**Exhibit 5-1**). Overall, the majority of respondent groups expressed some level of agreement that the purchasing systems were not cumbersome. However, the principals were more divided on the purchasing system than the other groups, with 50 percent agreeing that the systems were not cumbersome 42 percent disagreeing, and 8 percent with no opinion.

The chief financial officer implemented the online purchase request system for the district at no additional cost with Region 10 assistance. The system is a component of the mainframe business processing services that LISD purchases through annual flat-fees to Region 10's Mainframe Processing Cooperative. During spring 2004, all employees involved in the purchasing process, both administrators and support staff, attended training provided by Region 10. Region 10 provided manuals detailing implementation procedures and offered phone assistance for any questions during the first year of system implementation.

The online purchase request system increased purchasing process efficiencies by reducing the time spent processing purchasing documents and quickening the receipt of ordered products. The school review survey results show overall positive responses regarding the new online system.

EXHIBIT 5-1
PURCHASING SURVEY RESULTS
NOVEMBER 2004

PURCHASING PROCESSES ARE NOT CUMBERSOME FOR THE REQUESTOR.					
STAFF SURVEYED	**STRONGLY AGREE**	**AGREE**	**NO OPINION**	**DISAGREE**	**STRONGLY DISAGREE**
Administrative and Support Staff	2.38%	54.76%	23.81%	11.90%	7.14%
Principal and Assistant Principals	33.33%	16.67%	8.33%	16.67%	25.00%
Teachers	6.70%	28.71%	38.76%	15.31%	10.53%

NOTE: Percentages may not add to 100 percent due to "no responses" and rounding.
SOURCE: LISD, School Review Surveys, November 2004.

DETAILED FINDINGS

DISTRICTWIDE PURCHASING OVERSIGHT (REC. 44)

LISD's purchasing function is uncoordinated districtwide, resulting in unmonitored contracts, non-compliance with state purchasing rules, and uncoordinated use of purchasing cooperatives. A Purchasing coordinator has not been employed since July 2003 as part of an effort to reduce costs in the face of a district financial deficit. As a result, the district does not conduct routine centralized purchasing activities such as developing vendor and bid lists, regulating compliance with state purchasing rules, and coordinating with purchasing cooperatives. The chief financial officer has been performing some of these duties, such as developing bids and overseeing the purchasing process. However, due to other priorities, the chief financial officer did not have current vendor bid lists and the only coordination with purchasing cooperatives was to provide the schools with vendor catalogs. The chief financial officer's focus is on district financial issues and not addressing routine purchasing activities.

Most of the district's purchasing activities involve a process using catalogs for classroom materials and office supplies. These catalogs are from vendors participating in the various purchasing cooperatives that provide a fixed discount from the catalog price. This process, in conjunction with the new online purchasing system, decentralizes the purchase requisition and processing function. However, the district is not addressing certain centralized oversight purchasing activities such as vendor bid list maintenance and contract oversight. The district does not have procedures in place to develop competitive vendor bid lists or ensure copies of current contracts are available in the district. The district does not have a comprehensive contract list, centrally located contract files, or a consistent contract monitoring process with accountability methods to document performance problems or issues of contract non-compliance. The district could not provide copies of the current copier and Dallas County Schools transportation contracts. Varying departmental administrators have independently monitored some contracts and some associated contracts terms, yet all contracts are not efficiently managed. For example, the district has not reconciled copier invoices with contract terms. In addition, the district does not monitor whether contracts are being re-bid in a timely manner.

By not having a central purchasing oversight function in the Business Office, the district does not ensure districtwide accountability in purchasing. As a result, the district runs the risk of unmonitored

contracts not getting rebid in a timely manner and purchases not made in an economical and coordinated manner. In addition, the district would not be able to readily identify or address contract performance problems or issues of contract non-compliance.

A Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) publication entitled *Organizing the Public Purchasing Function: A Survey of Cities and Counties,* notes that: "A central purchasing authority has long been believed to ensure purchasing integrity, fix accountability, and provide for the efficient transition of goods and services between the supplier and the consumer." A central purchasing function is a best practice that ensures compliance with federal, state, and Board of Trustee requirements and ensures purchasing decisions are independent, closely monitored, and provide the lowest price based on the specifications provided. Often by designating a Purchasing director or coordinator, districts realize savings related to the Purchasing director's coordination of a more detailed bidding process or awareness of opportunities based on knowledge gained from interaction with other purchasing professionals or knowledge of the markets for various products.

The district should implement a central purchasing oversight function in the Business Office in accordance with best practice. The Business Office should ensure the implementation of a districtwide contract monitoring process with accountability methods to document and address performance problems, and reduce the reliance upon fragmented departmental purchasing and contracting oversight. The district should establish and fill a Purchasing coordinator position and assign districtwide purchasing oversight authority to the coordinator. The Purchasing coordinator should manage the various purchasing functions, including contract oversight, bid preparation, and vendor relations. The chief financial officer and the director of Human Resources should review the previous purchasing coordinator job description and make revisions to include responsibility for districtwide purchasing oversight. The qualifications listed in the job description for this position should be expanded to include experience in contract negotiations and management and knowledge of purchasing systems as well as other areas the district deems appropriate for effective district purchasing oversight. The position should be established and filled beginning in 2005–06. The individual selected should take steps to manage and oversee the various district purchasing activities for LISD. By designating districtwide oversight for purchasing to a Purchasing coordinator, the district should obtain a more

accountable, effective, and efficient purchasing system.

The salary level for a Purchasing coordinator is commensurate with the district Business manager's salary level, which is in the range of $35,000 to $45,000 per year. Using the mid-range of $40,000 along with an estimated benefits rate of 9 percent ($3,600), the estimated annual cost for this position is $43,600 ($40,000 plus $3,600) and five-year cost is $218,000 ($43,600 x 5 years).

PURCHASING POLICIES (REC. 45)

LISD's purchasing policies do not provide the necessary policy direction to support an effective purchasing process, resulting in unclear purchasing authority and process management and conflicts of interest.

LISD has four general purchasing policies and one policy included with the personnel policies addressing conflicts of interest, as follows:

- **CH (Legal) Purchasing and Acquisition -** Board Purchasing Policy. This policy states, "The board may adopt rules and procedures for the acquisition of goods and services." It further states that the board may delegate this authority to a designated person, representative, or committee. This is a detailed policy that reflects state statutes, identifies the methods of acquisition for purchases or contracts in excess of $25,000, and identifies considerations in the awarding of contracts and sole source purchases. It also indicates that "the purchasing system shall provide for purchase orders to be issued by the authority of the board and shall represent the only method by which district purchases are made."

- **CHD (Local) Purchasing and Acquisition -** Purchasing Procedures: Last updated 2/29/84. This policy emphasizes that purchases for LISD are to be based on price and quality and that the superintendent is ultimately responsible for the development and maintenance of an effective and efficient purchasing system.

- **CHE (Local) Purchasing and Acquisition -** Vendor Relations: Last updated 7/31/85. This policy indicates that vendors are not permitted to confer with students or employees during school hours without the prior approval of the principal and that no such persons are permitted to interrupt classes.

- **CHF (Legal) Purchasing and Acquisition -** Payment Procedures. This policy spells out the legal requirement for school districts to make payments within 30 days of receipt of the goods.

- **DBD (Legal) Employment Requirements and Restrictions** - Conflicts of Interest. This policy identifies areas of conflicts of interest and states: "A public servant who exercises discretion in connection with contracts, purchases, payments, claims, or other pecuniary transactions of the District commits a class A misdemeanor offense if he or she solicits, accepts, or agrees to accept any benefit for a person the public servant knows is interested in or likely to become interested in any such transactions."

Policy CH provides the foundation for purchasing policies, and Policy CHD indicates that the "Superintendent or designee shall administer a system for procurement and management of consumable materials and supplies used in the District to ensure that quantity purchases are made, resulting in savings to the District." Policy CHD, however, does not clearly identify who has the authority to make purchases nor does it identify the underlying purpose for the policy.

Often districts define specifics for districtwide purchasing authority such as direct staff assignment; directives to develop and implement procedural guidelines; and contract maintenance, review, and accountability-related directives. In addition, board policy frequently includes qualifying statements related to the purchasing function, such as:

- provide for the fair and equitable treatment of all persons involved in purchasing with the district;

- maximize the purchase value of district funds;

- follow the Board of Trustees' approved budget disbursement and expenditure authorization;

- codify and standardize the district's purchasing policies for orderly and efficient administration;

- provide safeguards for maintaining a purchasing system of quality and integrity;

- foster effective, broad-based competition.

Policy CH identifies the legal issues involving levels of expenditures required for bidding but does not provide information on how this process should be managed. Policy CH states that, "any purchase that costs or aggregates to a cost of $25,000 or more shall require Board approval." This does not define the methods for acquiring various goods or services or the levels of authority for approval. Most school districts organize this type of policy based upon the dollar amounts to be expended. For example, the Jefferson County School District in Colorado uses the following criteria:

- Request for Proposal: All requests must be approved by the director of Purchasing;

- $5,000 to $10,000: telephone, email, or facsimile quote as deemed appropriate by the director of Purchasing;

- $10,000 to $25,000: informal bid or proposal. Request must be approved by the director of Purchasing;

- $25,000 and above: formal bid or proposal. Request must be approved by the director of Purchasing;

- $100,000, up to $250,000: Award of bids, proposals, and/or contracts must be approved by the chief operating officer, chief academic officer, or the superintendent; and

- $250,000 and above: Award of bids, proposals, and/or contracts must be approved by the board.

Although the amount criteria for district expenditures may vary, this concept provides procedural clarification.

Policy CHE does not address the issue of gifts provided to employees by vendors such as goods, direct payment, and lunches. It also does not address the issue of any situations where an employee may have a business that provides a product or service that may be of interest to LISD. All of these issues involve the expectation that all purchases will be arms length transactions, and if certain exceptions are to be authorized, it is important that they be clearly identified in the policy. Policy DBD addresses these issues; however, this policy is located with the Employment Requirements and Restrictions section of the Policy Manual and is not reiterated in the context of purchase transactions. Policy CHE of the Dallas Independent School District (DISD) provides a best practice example of this type of policy for purchasing transactions.

It has been 20 years since the district updated its local purchasing policies for purchasing procedures and vendor relations. By not having updated policies, the district does not ensure districtwide implementation of current procurement practices. The lack of clear policy direction in the purchasing area can lead to inconsistencies in purchasing activities as well as result in vendor relation issues.

LISD should review and revise all current purchasing policies to provide detailed policy direction to address the issues of purchasing authority, bidding procedures, and vendor relations. The district should review purchasing policies on an ongoing basis to adapt to changing purchasing practices and address

problems that arise. The district should contact the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) and the Association of School Business Officials (ASBO) to review purchasing policies used by other school districts in Texas, especially those that involve specific requirements for bidding procedures. Based on this review, the district should revise policies CHD and CHE regarding purchasing procedures and vendor relations and establish additional policies as necessary.

The LISD purchasing policies should specify that the position specifically responsible for purchasing should have, at a minimum, the following responsibilities:

- serve as the purchasing official;

- establish and regularly update procedures to govern the district's purchasing functions;

- maintain records for all contracts;

- ensure compliance with Board of Trustees' policies and procedures governing the purchasing function.

The district purchasing policies should also address the following:

- provide for the fair and equitable treatment of all persons involved in purchasing with the district;

- maximize the purchase value of district funds;

- follow the Board of Trustees' approved budget disbursement and expenditure authorization;

- codify and standardize the district's purchasing policies for orderly and efficient administration;

- provide safeguards for maintaining a purchasing system of quality and integrity; and

- foster effective, broad based competition.

By having current purchasing policies, the district will ensure consistent district purchasing activities, reduce risks for conflicts of interest, and improve vendor relations.

PURCHASING OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES (REC. 46)

LISD does not have comprehensive purchasing operational guidelines, resulting in inconsistent purchasing and contract procurement within departments and schools. Without a comprehensive purchasing guideline, individuals in the schools and departments make decisions without having appropriate information to ensure that proper procedures are being followed.

The district publication *Business Office Guidelines and Procedures* provides guidelines on how to use the new online purchasing system and other business-related procedures, such as deposits, petty cash reimbursements, returned checks, and bulk mailing. However, there are no forms for supporting contract bids, information involving the need to justify the use of a sole source vendor, contracting instructions, travel expense procedures, or special requirements for capital outlay purchases.

The district's current bid purchasing process is informal and has the requestor send purchase requests to the chief financial officer to prepare a bid, or individual schools/departments to obtain quotes and include them on the purchase request. There are no formal procedures to identify when a formal bid should occur. Thus, the requestor makes the decision to bid the item or order it at the school or department at the time of the purchase. The district does not have specific procedures available to address this process.

LISD participates in purchasing cooperatives and has provided vendor catalogs for office supplies and classroom materials to the schools and departments but does not provide information on other vendor agreements and basic purchasing policies. **Exhibit 5-2** shows the survey results from district employees to the statement, "The district provides teachers and administrators an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment." Responses indicate that there are mixed opinions about the effectiveness of the information provided by the catalogs. As shown, 50 percent of the principals and assistant principals and 38 percent of the teachers disagree that the district provides an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment. The provision of more detailed information about the purchasing process and increased communication with staff regarding specific procedures should make purchasing activities easier and improve knowledge among stakeholders.

By not having a comprehensive purchasing procedures and documentation, the district does not ensure that purchasing decisions use the lowest price based on specifications and that product or vendor selection has been determined based on an objective and fair process.

In order to ensure that those in the organization involved in purchasing decisions comply with district purchasing policy, school districts develop comprehensive purchasing manuals to provide guidance in this area. There are numerous examples of purchasing manuals available from other school districts in Texas. For example, Cedar Hill Independent School District's purchasing manual is well organized and informative and includes detailed steps for employees to follow to ensure that staff involved in the purchasing process are trained and appropriately follow district policies and procedures. The manual provides staff with clear instructions involving all aspects of the purchasing process, mitigating the risk of error and maximizing the use of public funds. TASB also offers districts sample policy and procedural suggestions regarding purchasing policies. Representatives from Region 10 and other school districts are often good sources of information when districts are developing and/or revising purchasing procedures and sample board policy for presentation and districtwide adoption.

The district should establish a separate section in the *Business Office Guidelines and Procedures* to provide detailed information regarding purchasing policies and procedures and include approved vendor lists and supply catalog information to effectively support the district purchasing process. The district should contact TASB and other school districts to obtain sample purchasing manuals and discuss the use of these manuals with the purchasing representatives. LISD can use Cedar Hill Independent School District's purchasing manual format as a model for developing its purchasing manual. LISD already has an acceptable framework for the context of this information with the existing guidelines for the automated online purchasing system. By having purchasing guidelines, the district will help increase compliance with district policies and consistent implementation of purchasing procedures.

EXHIBIT 5-2
PURCHASING PROCESS SURVEY
NOVEMBER 2004

THE DISTRICT PROVIDES TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS AN EASY-TO-USE STANDARD LIST OF SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT.					
STAFF SURVEYED	**STRONGLY AGREE**	**AGREE**	**NO OPINION**	**DISAGREE**	**STRONGLY DISAGREE**
Administrative and Support Staff	4.88%	41.46%	29.27%	17.07%	7.32%
Principals and Assistant Principals	25.00%	0.00%	25.00%	41.76%	8.33%
Teachers	7.14%	26.19%	29.05%	21.90%	15.71%

NOTE: Percentages may not add to 100 percent due to "no responses" and rounding.
SOURCE: LISD, School Review Surveys, November 2004.

CONTRACT MANAGEMENT (REC. 47)

The district does not have a complete and current contract listing, centralized contract files, or a consistent contract management process to monitor contract performance, address contract noncompliance, and ensure cost-effectiveness. As a result, the district inconsistently manages contracts within departments, schools, and districtwide. The review team found district contracts that were expired, missing documentation, and unmonitored. For example, the district copier contract is not current, staff in the Transportation Department had difficulty locating the existing contract with Dallas County Schools (DCS), the cell phone contract is not available, the contract for drug sniffing dogs associated with the Safe and Drug Free Schools grant has not been competitively bid, and the district had not ensured the vending machine contractor was properly sending compensation per the contract.

LISD has numerous contracts for products and services, and staff members in various schools and departments are responsible for managing the day-to-day activities associated with these contracts; however, there is no central location where the original contracts are maintained and compliance with the contract agreement is monitored, and there is no method of ensuring that renewal and appropriate re-bidding action is taken on a timely basis.

The district copier contract is one example of the lack of contract monitoring in the district. The district has historical copier billing and contract documentation problems, has not assessed their copier needs, and subsequently either renegotiated or ensured the current contract adequately meets those identified operational and financial needs.

As of April 1, 2005, the district could not provide the review team with a copy of the current copier contract, had an invoice with different terms than the district contract, and had additional copiers not on the main contract agreement. The most current copier contract provided to the review team was the first page of a three-page contract dated February 23, 2001, which identifies 12 copiers and a monthly charge of $13,447 for a monthly pool allotment of 621,000 copies (a cost of $0.0216 per copy) for six years, March 2001 through February 2007. This document also identifies an additional cost of $0.015 for copies in excess of the monthly allotment. However, this does not correspond to the current copier service that the vendor provides to the district. Although the invoices indicated a contract revision, no district staff had nor provided documentation of the revision or information behind the reason for the revision. In addition, there was no documentation on the process used to select the vendor for the district's copier service.

A copier invoice dated February 22, 2004, has a different monthly pool allotment amount, allotment charge, and additional per copy charge than the copier contract provided by the district. This invoice for copier services to LISD identified 28 copiers with a monthly billing of $17,194.24 for a monthly pool allotment of 727,000 copies (a cost of $0.0237 per copy) and an additional $0.0089 per copy for copies in excess of the monthly pool allotment. The district could not provide an updated copy of the contract to the review team showing the new monthly pool billing allotment amount and additional per copy charge.

According to two separate invoices there are two additional copier machines used at the district not included in the main copier contract. The invoices show two separate "special use" machines used by the print shop and billed according to a "lease cost per copy plan." The monthly base charge for these machines totals $548. At the time of the onsite review, the district also could not provide contract or lease agreement details for these "special use" machine.

After hiring a new chief financial officer in April 2005 and after meetings with the review team, the district contacted the copier vendor to obtain current copies of the contract and critical information regarding lease agreement terms.

The district does not have a process in place to review and correct copier billing errors before making payment. A review of the February 22, 2004, copier invoice for the six-month period of August 2003 through January 2004 indicates discrepancies between the detailed meter readings and the invoice summary totals for the total number of copies made and total number of excess copies above the pool allotment. The vendor bases its billing method on a pool concept in which all copiers in the district can print up to a combined total of 727,000 copies per month for a fixed allotment price. The vendor stipulates semiannual meter readings and subsequently bills the district for any copies in excess of the authorized number of 4,362,000 (727,000 monthly allotment multiplied by six months) of copies per six-month period. However, a tabulation of the meter reading detail per copier machine that accompanied the February 22, 2004 invoice from the vendor indicates that 6,862,225 copies were made during this billing period, not 16,745,957 copies as listed on the invoice summary page (**Exhibit 5-3**). In addition, the invoice identified a total of 10,053,850 copies in excess of the allotted amount, whereas

EXHIBIT 5-3
ANALYSIS OF COPIER BILLING AUGUST 2003 THROUGH JANUARY 2004

LOCATION	BILLING PERIOD IDENTIFIED	UNIT	MONTHLY ESTIMATED/ COPIES	ENDING READING	BEGINNING READING	ACTUAL USAGE	6 MONTH ESTIMATED COPIES	(OVER) UNDER ESTIMATED
HIGH SCHOOL								
West Campus	6 Months	2	50,000	1,705,832	991,857	713,975	300,000	(413,975)
Career & Technology	12 Months	5	12,000	63,705	19,909	43,796	72,000	28,204
West Campus	6 Months	7	12,000	23,410	15,978	7,432	72,000	64,568
East Campus Work Room	12 Months	8	12,000	62,021	12,985	49,036	72,000	22,964
Registrar	12 Months	9	12,000	34,387	13,561	20,826	72,000	51,174
Front Office	12 Months	10	12,000	100,738	34,173	66,565	72,000	5,435
Counselors Office	12 Months	13	12,000	59,952	29,469	30,483	72,000	41,517
High School	6 Months	15	12,000	143,634	76,831	66,803	72,000	5,197
Work Room	12 Months	22	35,000	814,589	327,176	487,413	210,000	(277,413)
TOTAL HIGH SCHOOL			**169,000**	**3,008,268**	**1,521,939**	**1,486,329**	**1,014,000**	**(472,329)**
JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL (JHS)								
JHS	12 Months	1	50,000	2,195,447	884,774	1,310,673	300,000	(1,010,673)
JHS	12 Months	21	35,000	557,619	213,818	343,801	210,000	(133,801)
TOTAL JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL			**85,000**	**2,753,066**	**1,098,592**	**1,654,474**	**510,000**	**(1,144,474)**
INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL (IS)								
IS	6 Months	19	35,000	1,459,214	871,780	587,434	210,000	(377,434)
Principal's Office	6 Months	26	15,000	209,145	125,145	84,000	90,000	6,000
TOTAL INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL			**50,000**	**1,668,359**	**996,925**	**671,434**	**300,000**	**(371,434)**
Millbrook	12 Months	3	50,000	439,586	411,019	28,567	300,000	271,433
PLEASANT RUN								
Pleasant Run	6 Months	6	12,000	58,918	37,638	21,280	72,000	50,720
Pleasant Run	12 Months	20	35,000	486,486	342,768	143,718	210,000	66,282
PLEASANT RUN TOTAL			**47,000**	**545,404**	**380,406**	**164,998**	**282,000**	**117,002**
West Main	6 Months	16	40,000	943,619	677,739	265,880	240,000	(25,880)
ROLLING HILLS								
Rolling Hills	12 Months	17	50,000	962,802	362,802	600,000	300,000	(300,000)
Office	12 Months	25	15,000	141,174	93,790	47,384	90,000	42,616
ROLLING HILLS TOTAL			**65,000**	**1,103,976**	**456,592**	**647,384**	**390,000**	**(257,384)**
Houston	12 Months	24	25,000	520,122	204,863	315,259	150,000	(165,259)
Print Shop[1]	6 Months	4	50,000	5,241,439	4,266,557	974,882	300,000	(674,882)
SCHOOLS TOTAL			**581,000**	**16,223,839**	**10,014,632**	**6,209,207**	**3,486,000**	**(2,723,207)**
NON-INSTRUCTIONAL								
Service Center	12 Months	11	12,000	163,793	19,793	144,000	72,000	(72,000)
Alternative Center	12 Months	12	12,000	107,722	41,476	66,246	72,000	5,754
School District	6 Months	14	12,000	165,174	98,374	66,800	72,000	5,200
ADMINISTRATION								
First Floor	6 Months	18	35,000	446,099	388,867	57,232	210,000	152,768
First Floor	6 Months	23	35,000	650,656	425,753	224,903	210,000	(14,903)
Workroom	6 Months	27	20,000	163,873	110,181	53,692	120,000	66,308
TOTAL ADMINISTRATION			**90,000**	**1,260,628**	**924,801**	**335,827**	**540,000**	**204,173**
Resource Center	6 Months	28	20,000	171,125	130,980	40,145	120,000	79,855
NON-INSTRUCTIONAL TOTAL			**146,000**	**1,868,442**	**1,215,424**	**653,018**	**876,000**	**222,982**
TOTALS			**727,000**	**18,092,281**	**11,230,056**	**6,862,225**	**4,362,000**	**(2,500,225)**
TOTAL COPIES BILLED						**16,745,957**		
COPIES OVER BILLED						**9,883,732**		

NOTE: [1] denotes Vocational Program.
SOURCE: LISD, chief financial officer, Xerox invoice #800384716, February 22, 2004.

tabulation shows an excess of only 2,500,225 copies (**Exhibit 5-3**).

According to the tabulation in **Exhibit 5-3**, the February 22, 2004 invoice overcharged the district by $87,965.21 ($0.0089 multiplied by 9,883,732, the number of copies over the pool amount). The district disputed this invoice, and the vendor re-issued this invoice with a revised excess print charge of $479.27. Even though the chief financial officer and Business Office staff worked with the copier company to adjust the bill, district staff did not ensure that the invoice meter readings were corrected.

There are several unresolved billing issues relating to the February 22, 2004 invoice:

▪ There are differing billing periods identified for different machines. The billing period for 15 of the machines is identified as 12 months, while the billing period for the other 12 machines is six months. The contract states that billings are supposed to be based on six-month meter readings.

▪ The readings for three of the machines did not identify an ending reading but did include a total number of copies used. One machine identified an ending reading that was less than the beginning reading, and this number was the same as the number of copies identified for the measurement period. These readings are not an accurate reflection of copier usage.

▪ The actual readings on the documents supporting the invoice provided by the copier vendor indicate the total copies made during the period were 6,862,225, not 16,745,957. The meter readings for the individual machines do not support and reconcile with the summary meter reading charge on the invoice.

A review of the August 25, 2004, invoice for the following six-month period indicates similar types of billing problems. It is the responsibility of the vendor to provide accurate supporting materials for billings. It is up to LISD to have a process in place to validate the information on the invoices prior to making payment.

LISD also does not assess whether the copier contract is meeting district needs. However, the existing arrangement includes a stipulation in which the vendor bills the district an additional $0.0089 for each copy over the base number of copies listed. This means, on a cost per copy basis, LISD pays more for the number specified for pooled copies. This analysis is illustrated in **Exhibit 5-4**.

In 2004–05, LISD directed campus administrators to reduce the number of copies used in the classroom based on the assumption that if copies were being used in the classrooms, teaching was not occurring. This resulted in a fixed allocation of copies per month for each school. **Exhibit 5-5** identifies an estimated number of copies for a six-month period at 4,009,900 copies using the current number of copies allocated to the schools and the actual copies identified for the non-instructional areas for the period August 2003 through January 2004. This total district amount is 352,100 copies below the vendor contract copy allotment amount of 4,362,000 copies per six-month period. If the district stays within its contracted allocations, the full value of its contract allotment is reduced by $8,345 (352,000 copies at $0.0237 per copy). In addition, the cost per copy is also higher at $0.0257 ($103,164 divided by 4,009,900) than the contract negotiated rate of $0.0237. In order to get the most cost-effective copier service, many school districts conduct a copier needs assessment based on actual use, related policies, and program requirements to negotiate an optimal copier contract.

The vending machine contract is another example of the lack of contract monitoring in the district. The district executed a contract for exclusive promotional, advertising, and beverage availability rights to a vending machine contractor in December 1997; however, the vendor had not been paying the annual fee to LISD for over three years and failed to provide additional vending machines according to the contract agreement. The district hired a law firm to address the vendor's contract noncompliance. In this case, the contract is districtwide and not managed by an individual school or department. Had

EXHIBIT 5-4
ANALYSIS OF COST PER COPY FROM COPIER INVOICES
AUGUST 2003 THROUGH FEBRUARY 2004

BILLING CATEGORIES	NUMBER OF COPIES	AMOUNT DUE VENDOR	COST PER COPY
Base Copies Per Month for Pool	727,000	$17,194.24	$0.0237
Base Copies Per Six Months for Pool	4,362,000	103,165.00	0.0237
Additional Copies Used from Meter Readings Per Six Months	6,862,225	61,073.80	0.0089
Totals Copies	**11,224,225**	**$164,239.24**	**$0.0146**

SOURCE: *LISD, chief financial officer, Xerox Invoice #800384716, February 22, 2004.*

EXHIBIT 5-5
ESTIMATED COPIER USAGE BASED ON
CAMPUS ALLOTMENTS PROJECTED
OVER A SIX-MONTH PERIOD

SCHOOLS	SCHOOL COPY ALLOCATIONS
High School	150,000
Junior High School	60,000
Intermediate School	55,000
Rolling Hills	33,000
Rosa Parks/Millbrook	27,000
Houston	29,000
Pleasant Run	25,000
West Main	18,000
Monthly Allocation Total	397,000
Six Month Allocation Total	2,382,000
NON-INSTRUCTIONAL	ACTUAL COPY USAGE
Non-Instructional Six Months Usage	653,018
Print Shop Six Months Usage	974,882
Six Month Allocation Total	1,627,900
DISTRICT TOTALS	
Total Estimated Six Month Usage for District	4,009,900
Six Months Pool Allotment Per Copier Contract	4,362,000
Estimated Usage Below Contract Amount	352,100

SOURCE: LISD, chief financial officer, Campus Copier Allocations, September 11, 2003, and Xerox Invoice #800384716, February 22, 2004.

it been actively monitored by a central contract management function, noncompliance issues could have been avoided or remedied in a more timely fashion.

The vending machine contract with LISD annually provides 1,000 free cases of carbonated beverages for district employees at the administrative facility and boardroom but not to employees at other district locations, resulting in special benefits for some district employees and not others. The current contract states, "Additional annual support will be one-thousand cases (1,000) 12-ounce can drinks for district use." This creates an unfair situation in which certain district employees have access to free soft drinks, whereas employees at other district locations must purchase soft drinks from the vending machines on-site or provide their own. This is not a common business contracting practice at other school districts.

By not effectively managing its copier and vending machine contract, LISD does not ensure cost-effective and equitable contract services to the district.

School districts have been entering into contracts with soft drink vendors since the late 1990s to take advantage of the economies of scale and consistent contract management obtained by contracting with a single vendor. One of the first districts to enter into this type of agreement was the Jefferson County

School District in Colorado. The request for proposals for this agreement required a fixed dollar amount at the beginning of the contract, allowed the vendor to have a modest amount of advertising materials at athletic events, and provided for a standard commission for all machines placed in the district. This replaced the previous process where each school and central facility negotiated their own contracts, resulting in varying commission levels, and, in some cases, the potential for conflicts of interest and special benefits to certain groups of employees within the district. A key component of this contract was to ensure consistent treatment for all schools and facilities that had soft drink vending machines.

The district should establish a central contract management process and review existing contracts for cost-effectiveness. The district should ensure all contracts are coordinated and maintained in the Business Office. In all future contracts, the district should ensure that any new and renegotiated contracts have legal review before getting signed and that contract language includes termination clauses in the district's best interest. For any multi-year contract, the district should annually assess if the contract meets its needs. If not, the district should meet with the contract vendor to review and possibly renegotiate for improved contract terms. The district should review current contracts to identify and correct inequitable contract service provisions. The district should update current contracting policies to ensure equitable service delivery and apply them to all existing contracts. Contract policies used by other districts, such as Jefferson County School District in Colorado, can be used as a guide. The Business Office should work with vendors and staff at all schools and departments to obtain original copies of contracts currently in place, establish a central filing system for these contracts, and establish a calendar that identifies initiation and expiration contract dates. The district should review and revise current bill payment procedures to ensure contract billings are accurate and comply with contract terms. Procedures should include invoice calculation and data checks for correcting billing errors before invoices are paid.

The district should assess its copier needs based on current usage and campus allocations and seek to renegotiate its copier contract to obtain improved rates and terms. The district should obtain copies of all past and current copier contracts, a clear understanding of the "pool concept" billing, the factors that led to a change in the contract subsequent to the original agreement dated February 23, 2001, clarification as to why the meter readings of the machines provided with the billings fail to reconcile with the billing amounts, and why the

additional copiers being used in the Print Shop are not part of the master contract. The copier contract does not end until February 2007, but the district should review its overall copier machine needs by determining the current inventory of copiers, the capacity of the copiers, and the actual usage for the most recent 12-month period.

The district should seek to renegotiate a per-copy charge based on a district copier needs assessment and current market rates. As a basis for determining the fiscal impact, Jefferson County Colorado School District, which is larger than LISD, is charged $0.02 per copy. Based on this charge, the district should seek to obtain a per copy charge near $0.021. Assuming that LISD will use the number of copies in their current monthly allotment in the copier contract, the annual estimated savings is $63,685 (**Exhibit 5-6**).

LISD should also seek to amend its vending machine contract to eliminate the provision of free cases, increase the annual amount of the vending resources provided to LISD, and install vending machines in the administrative facility. Based on the pricing for soft drinks included in the existing agreement, the

commission per case for 12-ounce cans is estimated to be more than $5.20 or 39.4 percent at a vending price of $0.55 per can. The estimated total amount of revenue per case is $13.20 ($0.55 multiplied by 24 equals $13.20). Reducing this amount by the $5.20 provided in commissions results in the value of each case of soft drinks to be $8.00 ($13.20 minus $5.20 equals $8.00). Thus, the value of the 1,000 cases currently provided free of charge to LISD is $8,000. The installation of the vending machines and the associated commissions ($5.20 x 1,000 cans) would provide an additional $5,200 annually if 1,000 soft drinks were consumed at the administration facility. By amending the vending machine contract, LISD would annually increase revenues by $13,200 ($8,000 plus $5,200 equals $13,200) and ensure equal treatment for all district employees regarding access to vending machine contract services.

The total estimated annual savings for this recommendation is $76,885 ($63,685 copier contract savings plus $13,200 vending machine revenues) with a five-year savings of $384,425 ($76,885 x 5 years).

For more information on Chapter 5: Purchasing, see page 233 in the General Information section of the appendices.

EXHIBIT 5-6
CALCULATION OF ANNUAL ESTIMATED COPIER CHARGE SAVINGS
BASED ON MARKET RATES

COPIER BILLING	ANNUAL ESTIMATED COPIES	COST PER COPY	TOTAL COST CURRENT CONTRACT
Copier Billing	8,724,000	$0.0283	$246,889
Copier Billing Estimate with Market Rates	8,724,000	0.0210	183,204
Copier Billing Annual Estimated Savings			$63,685

SOURCE: LISD, chief financial officer, Xerox invoice #800384716, February 22, 2004.

FISCAL IMPACT

RECOMMENDATION	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09	2009–10	5-YEAR (COSTS) OR SAVINGS	ONE-TIME (COSTS)
44. Implement a central purchasing oversight function in the Business Office and establish and fill a Purchasing coordinator position to provide this oversight.	($43,600)	($43,600)	($43,600)	($43,600)	($43,600)	($218,000)	$0
45. Review and revise all current purchasing policies to include detailed policy direction on purchasing authority, bidding procedures, and vendor relations.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
46. Establish a separate section in the *Business Office Guidelines and Procedures* for comprehensive purchasing procedures, including contract instructions, approved vendor lists, and supply catalog information.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0

FISCAL IMPACT (CONTINUED)

RECOMMENDATION	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09	2009–10	5-YEAR (COSTS) OR SAVINGS	ONE-TIME (COSTS)
47. Establish a centralized contract management process in the Business Office and review existing contracts for cost-effectiveness.	$76,885	$76,885	$76,885	$76,885	$76,885	$384,425	$0
Chapter 5 Totals	$33,285	$33,285	$33,285	$33,285	$33,285	$166,425	$0

Chapter 6

Human Resources Management

Lancaster Independent School District

A director oversees the Human Resources (HR) Department of Lancaster Independent School District (LISD) with assistance from an HR manager and secretary in the administration of personnel services for 649 employees. The department is responsible for recruiting and retaining staff; posting and advertising job vacancies; processing new hires and substitutes; tracking employee qualifications, certifications, assignments, transfers, resignations, and retirements. In addition, the department develops and maintains job descriptions and personnel records; and handles employee complaints and grievances. HR works closely with staff in the Business Office in managing the district's compensation and benefits programs.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- The district provides employees the option of receiving the *Lancaster ISD Employee Handbook* either electronically or in hard copy to allow employees easy reference to essential employment policies, procedures, and forms when questions or issues arise.

- The district combines an annual two-day New Teacher Academy with detailed fact brochures, and scheduled community interactions to effectively orient its new teachers.

- LISD uses a Parent Teacher Resource Center to provide teachers, staff, parents, volunteers, and community members with quality teaching and learning equipment and materials to promote student achievement.

FINDINGS

- The HR Department has no strategic plan in place to identify short- or long-range HR goals, specific strategies to accomplish these goals, or a process in place to develop such a plan.

- LISD does not have a manual to ensure effective and efficient implementation of HR policies and procedures.

- Human Resources staff do not conduct regularly scheduled reviews of job descriptions to ensure that they are dated, accurately categorized, and reflect the actual duties of the position.

- The process of overseeing LISD personnel files in three separate district offices is inefficient and does not allow for adequate HR control and file maintenance.

- LISD does not require that a prospective job candidate apply online; thus, the district must still process hard copy applications, resulting in a time-consuming process.

- District job opportunities and job descriptions for teachers, administrators, and paraprofessionals are not consistently posted through a variety of venues including the district's website, internal publications, physical postings, or meeting announcements.

- HR does not fully utilize the Regional Education Service Center X (Region 10) Personnel Information Management System (PIMS) and has incorrect or missing personnel and payroll data in the system, thereby creating work overload situations and not providing quality information for the district to make well-informed decisions.

- HR does not collect sufficient feedback or perform any data analysis to address historically high teacher turnover rates, which negatively affects student learning and increases teacher staffing costs.

- The district does not have salary schedules for all categories of LISD employees, resulting in potential inequities among staff.

- While LISD currently provides an auto allowance as a benefit, the district does not have policy or procedures addressing accountability requirements and benefit rationale.

- LISD does not monitor and control excessive teacher absences, which negatively affects student learning and performance.

- LISD does not have a well-defined policy, process, or procedure in place for evaluating substitute teachers.

- LISD does not have a comprehensive staff development plan to efficiently provide ongoing staff development to all employees.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Recommendation 48 (p. 127): Develop a strategic planning process and comprehensive Human Resources Strategic Plan.** The superintendent should assign key staff such as the HR director, chief financial officer, and director of Teaching and Learning to develop and facilitate the HR strategic planning process and align it with other district planning processes. The process should include a schedule with planning activities and corresponding timeline with assigned participants. The plan itself should include the department's needs assessment, mission statement, goals, implementation strategies, a completion timeline, performance measures, and

assigned human and financial resources to implement the plan. HR should use the plan to improve service delivery and achieve goals for the district over the next five years.

- **Recommendation 49 (p. 128): Develop and maintain a Human Resources Personnel Procedures Manual.** The development of procedures should standardize HR personnel practices and provide documentation for consistent implementation of duties in the case of HR staff turnover or substitutions. HR should annually review and update procedures in the manual to capitalize on available technological advances and meet changing district needs.

- **Recommendation 50 (p. 129): Develop board policy and implement a process to regularly review and update all district job descriptions.** The HR director should develop a policy for review and adoption by the board and oversee a process to update job descriptions on at least a three-year cycle, with one-third of the job descriptions reviewed each year. The district should give supervisors the responsibility for reviewing and updating the job descriptions for staff under their supervision. Supervisors should date, sign, and return descriptions to HR for final review, filing, and updating the HR job description database. Up-to-date and accurate job descriptions serve as a basis for valid and effective annual evaluations and in defending any workers' compensation or civil lawsuits.

- **Recommendation 51 (p. 131): Centralize all employee personnel records, develop a district records-maintenance plan and control schedule, and hire a records clerk.** Once the HR office relocates to the new administration building, the district should transfer all district employee personnel records to HR. The HR director should oversee the development of a records maintenance plan with a records retention schedule. The HR director should hire a records clerk to implement the schedule and eliminate filing backlogs. By maintaining and annually updating employee files, the district will be complying with state law and board policy and performing its HR functions more efficiently and effectively.

- **Recommendation 52 (p. 132): Establish a process requiring all applicants to apply online.** LISD should establish an online job application process by working with Region 10 to modify its current professional online application system to allow other job applicant submissions, updating application instructions,

providing a computer in the HR reception area for applicants to access online services, and informing applicants of other available computers for online access. Implementing an online job application process will streamline HR application processing and reduce paperwork.

- **Recommendation 53 (p. 133): Establish and implement a procedure to internally expand job vacancy postings**. The HR director should establish a procedure ensuring staff is aware of district employment opportunities. The district should announce vacancies on the district's Intranet, at district and campus meetings, and in newsletters in addition to postings on the external and Region 10 websites. The director of HR should include information about the position, location, duty days, pay grade, qualifications, special knowledge and skills, experience, and major responsibilities and duties along with opening and closing dates. By internally expanding job postings and including all relevant information, the district enhances the potential applicant pool and ensures that qualified individuals already employed within the district are aware of vacancies.

- **Recommendation 54 (p. 134): Fully implement the Personnel Information Management System (PIMS) and establish a data quality review process.** LISD should fully implement the PIMS modules as a means to increase HR department employee efficiency, streamline records management, and improve data quality. The district should utilize Regional Education Service Center X (Region 10) services to facilitate the system's implementation and provide user training. By establishing a data quality review process, the district will ensure staff correct data processing and reporting discrepancies and system procedures are efficient and effective.

- **Recommendation 55 (p. 136): Analyze teacher exit interviews, prepare an annual teacher turnover report for the board, and conduct and analyze periodic teacher satisfaction surveys.** The district should place the teacher exit interview on the district Intranet website, analyze all teacher exit reports, and prepare an annual teacher turnover report to the board. The district should periodically survey teachers to determine their work satisfaction and design district strategies to reduce teacher turnover. The district should administer the survey online and design it so that each teacher participating in the survey remains anonymous.

The district should share results with the teachers. The district should choose teachers from each school to represent their peers at periodic meetings with the superintendent's executive staff to share concerns and establish strategies for improving the work environment. Further, principals should meet with teachers to develop action plans based on the results. The district can easily expand this practice to survey all employees. By ensuring HR staff complete reports for all teachers leaving the district and periodically conducting an anonymous teacher survey to determine any reasons for low morale, the district should be able to develop effective strategies to reduce the high teacher turnover rate and improve teacher recruitment and retention.

■ **Recommendation 56 (p. 139): Develop and implement salary schedules and a related procedural manual for all employee categories.** The district should ensure that all employee groups have an established salary schedule or are developing one for those categories of employees currently without a schedule. Further, the district should place all salary schedules, methodology, and guidelines together in a manual for easy distribution to employees and staff. By consistently using salary schedules and related procedures, the district establishes equity among the employee groups and assists the superintendent, the director of HR, and the board with planning efforts and allocating administrative and auxiliary salary increases.

■ **Recommendation 57 (p. 140): Establish an annual auto allowance board policy and related procedures.** The district should establish an annual auto allowance policy and related procedures that define the parameters for awarding and subsequently using the benefit.

■ **Recommendation 58 (p. 141): Review and revise the teacher leave policy.** The HR Department should review absentee reports, investigate reasons teachers are absent so frequently, and provide a detailed report to the superintendent and executive staff. HR should develop strategies for reducing the absentee rate for sickness and personal leave by at least 15 percent. The superintendent and executive staff should examine the number of days teachers are out of the classroom for school business (professional development) and place a limit on the number of days each teacher may take for school business, such as a limit of five days per school year. The district should set a policy for

the number of days in which the superintendent and/or school principals can grant for school business purposes.

■ **Recommendation 59 (p. 144): Develop a process and procedures for evaluating substitute teachers.** The director of HR should develop procedures requiring principals to evaluate substitutes. The district should require principals to file evaluations at the school and submit them to HR three times a year for review. The district should request substitutes to complete an evaluation of the school and submit it to the HR Department, which in turn should provide feedback to the principal.

■ **Recommendation 60 (p. 145): Develop a comprehensive, districtwide staff development plan.** The district should develop a comprehensive staff development plan to guide administrators in providing professional development to all employees. The plan should link the school district's priorities for instructional improvement with the opportunities provided in staff development. The plan should include a mission statement, goals, initiatives, strategies, and provisions for coordinating the staff development activities of the school district.

DETAILED ACCOMPLISHMENTS

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

The district provides employees the option of receiving the *Lancaster ISD Employee Handbook* either electronically or in hard copy to allow employees easy reference to essential employment policies, procedures, and forms when questions or issues arise. In addition, the handbook contains district transfer, employee complaint, and exit interview forms. **Exhibit 6-1** shows the contents of the handbook.

The handbook's purpose is to aid new and current employees in having a successful work experience in the district. However, the handbook is not a contract or substitute for the official district policy manual available on the district website under Board of Trustees.

The electronic handbook version is readily available on the district website under Job Opportunities. Before issuing handbooks, the HR Department has each employee complete a form indicating their version preference for obtaining the handbook, either electronically on the LISD website or as a hard copy.

A comprehensive and readily available employee handbook such as the one produced by LISD is an

EXHIBIT 6-1
LISD EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK EXCERPT

CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION OF CONTENTS
Introduction	Introduction to the use of the handbook.
Staff Directory	Administrative offices and departments.
Board Goals	Board of Trustee goals and members.
School Year Calendar	School calendar.
Employment	Employment policies such as job vacancies, contract and non-contract employment, credentials and records, criminal history records, searches, and alcohol and drug testing.
General Instructions	General instructions for teacher planning periods, supplementary duties, outside employment and tutoring, teacher appraisals, employee involvement, and staff development.
Compensation and Benefits	Compensation and benefits such as salaries, wages, and stipends; paychecks; automatic payroll deposit; payroll deductions; monthly pay schedule; overtime compensation; travel expense reimbursements; leave and absences; and workers' compensation benefits.
Employee Relations and Communications	Employee relations and communications to include recognition and appreciation, district communications, complaints and grievances, harassment, drug-abuse prevention, safety, visitors, copyrighted materials, pest control, media information, and textbooks.
General Procedures	General procedures covering bad weather closing, emergencies, safety procedures, threatening weather, purchasing procedures, personnel records, and building use.
Termination of Employment	Termination issues such as resignations, dismissals, exit procedures, and reports to the State Board for Educator Certification.
Student Issues	Student issues including student records, parent and student complaints, administering medication, student discipline, student attendance, and parent-teacher conferences.

NOTE: Only a partial listing of contents is included.
SOURCE: LISD, Employee Handbook, 2004–05.

important and effective way for districts to communicate with their employees. By providing the handbook either electronically or in hard copy, the district ensures ready access to essential employment information, policies, and forms to help each employee be successful while working in the district.

NEW TEACHER ORIENTATION

The district combines an annual two-day New Teacher Academy with detailed fact brochures, and scheduled community interactions to effectively orient its new teachers. The director of Community Relations organizes the academy with the assistance of the director of Human Resources, director of Teaching and Learning, and other key district administration personnel. Since new teachers have many different questions and new things to learn about district operations, the district designs the academy to take care of the new teachers' basic district information needs so they can then focus on being successful teachers.

In order to ensure new teachers attend the academy, before the academy is held, the director of Community Relations sends a welcome letter with the superintendent's signature to every new teacher explaining what to expect at the district and academy, when to report to the district, what to bring, and their schedule.

In 2004–05, the district began providing a *Back to School: New Teacher Academy* handout to each new teacher that included the following:

- schedule of events;

- campus orientation information;

- district directory of staff offices;

- school calendar;

- brief summary of several district policies;

- teacher salary schedule;

- monthly pay schedule;

- map of district facilities;

- members of the Board of Trustees and board goals;

- Lancaster area restaurants with map;

- information about the Parent Teacher Resource Center;

- A-to-Z guide of common acronyms for educators; and

- list of websites for educators.

Exhibit 6-2 shows a sample agenda of the various topics covered during new teacher orientation sessions. The orientation includes mini sessions for teachers to complete benefits and payroll business; learn more about child nutrition, local organizations, and the Parent Teacher Resource Center; and

EXHIBIT 6-2
2004–05 SCHEDULE FOR NEW TEACHER ACADEMY

DAY ONE			
TIME AND LOCATION	**TOPIC**	**GROUP**	**PRESENTER**
7:30 AM–8:30 AM	Continental Breakfast	All	
8:00 AM–8:45 AM Board Room	Greetings—Welcome to Lancaster ISD	All	Director of Community Relations Superintendent
8:45 AM–10:15 AM Board Room	The Lancaster ISD Instructional Environment and Expectations	All	Director of Teaching and Learning Director of Bilingual/State and Federal Programs
10:15 AM–10:30 AM	Break	All	
10:30 AM–11:30 AM Various Rooms	Curriculum—Instructional Expectations Mathematics Expectations Reading Expectations Reading Expectations Science Expectations Math Expectations Language Arts Expectations Social Studies Expectations Special Education Expectations Fine Arts Expectations (Select a group appropriate to grade levels or content)	Pre-K–4 Grades 5–6 (All) Grades 7–8 (All) Grades 9–12 Science Grades 9–12 Math Grades 9–12 Language Arts Grades 9–12 Social Studies K–12 Special Education Fine Arts Support Teachers	Lead Teacher or Coordinator
11:30 AM–12:45 PM	Lunch	All	
12:45 PM–1:15 PM Board Room	General Session on Business Office: Payroll and Benefits	All	Business Office
1:20 PM–2:15 PM Various Rooms	Curriculum—Instructional Expectations Reading Expectations Bilingual and English as a Second Language (ESL) Expectations Writing Expectations Technology Expectations Science Expectations Social Studies Expectations High School Language Arts Information Technology Expectations First Day of School/Classroom Management Technology Expectations	Pre-K–4 Bilingual/ESL Grades 7–8 Grades 5–6 Grades 5–8 Science Grades 5–8 Social Studies Grades 9–12 Language Arts Grades 9–12 Special Education K–6 and Support Teachers	Lead Teacher or Coordinator
2:15 PM–2:30 PM	Break	All	
2:30 PM–3:30 PM Various Rooms	Curriculum—Instructional Expectations Phonemic Awareness Training Science Expectations Social Studies Expectations Mathematics Expectations Writing Expectations Technology Expectations Technology Expectations Mathematics Expectations Reading Expectations Technology Expectations Technology Expectations (Select a group appropriate to grade levels or content)	Pre-K–2 Grades 3–4 Grades 5–6 Math Grades 5–6 Reading and Language Arts Grades 5–8 Science Grades 5–8 Social Studies Grades 7–8 Math Grades 9–12 Grades 9–12 Language Arts Special Education Support Teachers	Lead Teacher or Coordinator

EXHIBIT 6-2 (CONTINUED)
SCHEDULE FOR NEW TEACHER ACADEMY

DAY ONE			
TIME AND LOCATION	**TOPIC**	**GROUP**	**PRESENTER**
3:30 PM–5:00 PM Various Tables	Mini-Sessions—Taking Care of Business (An opportunity for teachers to complete business with the business office, technology, and participating organizations. Teachers visit each area to receive important information) Benefits Payroll Business Office—District Options Child Nutrition Organizations Parent Teacher Resource Center (PTRC) Technology Proficiency Test (Teacher must take test)		Director of Community Relations Benefits Manager Payroll Manager Business Office Representative Director of Child Nutrition Various PTRC Coordinator Technology Coordinators
DAY TWO			
7:30 AM–8:00 AM	Continental Breakfast		
8:00 AM–11:15 AM Board Room	Professional Development Appraisal System (PDAS) Training		Director of Human Resources Principals
11:30 AM–1:00 PM	Lunch—First Baptist Church of Lancaster Tour—Bus Tour of Lancaster		Director of Community Relations
1:00 PM–3:00 PM Board Room	PDAS Training		Director of Human Resources Principals
3:00 PM–3:15 PM	Break		
3:15 PM–4:45 PM Board Room	Texas Beginning Educators Support System		Director of Human Resources Director of Teaching and Learning

SOURCE: LISD, director of Community Relations, December 2004.

complete a technology proficiency test. The schedule also includes training for Professional Development Assessment System (PDAS) and the Texas Beginning Educator Support System (TxBESS).

During orientation, the director of Community Relations coordinates with the Chamber of Commerce, community organizations, and businesses to provide support to new teachers to help them start successfully. The Lancaster Outreach Center provides new teachers with a bag of groceries before their first paycheck and assistance with professional clothing. On the second day of the academy, a local church hosts a lunch for new teachers to welcome and express thanks for coming to teach the children of Lancaster. During a bus tour, new teachers learn about Lancaster and meet businesses and community organizations. The bus visits places such as Wal-Mart where employees come out, sing, and give supply items to teachers on the bus. When the bus stops at the Medical Center, the chief of staff and medical staff come out to meet the new teachers and give them medical supplies. The bus also stops at Cedar Valley College for course schedules, a local recreation center for fitness membership applications, and the library so new teachers can get a library card.

The district expects all new teachers to attend the academy to gain an understanding of the district's programs, policies, and practices. In 2004–05, the district used the academy to successfully orient approximately 150 new teachers.

The academy also provides new teachers with opportunities to make instructional connections by meeting with their mentors and lead teachers in the district. According to a review team survey in December 2004, more than 62 percent of surveyed teachers, 55 percent of surveyed district administration and support staff, and 61 percent of surveyed principals agreed to the statement, "The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees." These survey results reflect positively on the academy's effectiveness in helping new teachers launch successful teaching careers in the district. By combining scheduled interactions with local businesses, community members, and assigned mentors, providing brochures with answers to many basic questions about the district, and requiring attendance at a two-day intensive orientation academy, LISD provides new teachers with an effective network of resources designed to enhance the success of their first years of employment.

PARENT TEACHER RESOURCE CENTER

LISD uses a Parent Teacher Resource Center (PTRC) to provide teachers, staff, parents, volunteers, and community members with quality teaching and learning equipment and materials to promote student achievement.

The director of HR oversees the operation of the PTRC with assistance from a facilitator and a clerk. The PTRC operates on a non-profit basis with an annual budget of $13,000, excluding salaries. Funds remaining in the PTRC budget at the end of a school year accrue into the next year. The PTRC is in its sixth year of operation. It resides at the east campus of Lancaster High School. The center is equipped with a copying machine, laminators, computers, and teaching and learning supplies. Teachers, parents, employees, community members, churches, Girl Scouts, and any other local organization or group may use the center if they live and/or work in Lancaster. The center charges LISD employees or residents using the center a minimal fee for materials or supplies, but their use of the equipment at the center is free. For those living outside of Lancaster, the center charges them for materials and $2.50 per half hour for the use of equipment. Approximately 15 people use the center daily. The district often uses the center to conduct educational workshops with organizations such as Region 10. Principals and teachers can place a work order for supplies, banners, posters, and other products with the center. Each LISD school budget includes $20 to $40 per teacher for purchasing classroom supplies. The PTRC maintains records of those teachers who purchase supplies at the center and informs teachers when their allotment is depleted.

The PTRC is a single location with a wide variety of training opportunities, workshops, books and newsletters, resources, and equipment to enhance teaching and learning for all stakeholders. The center is an effective means to provide ongoing instructional support and development to LISD staff, parents, and community members.

DETAILED FINDINGS

STRATEGIC PLAN (REC. 48)

The HR Department has no strategic plan in place to identify short- or long-range HR goals, specific strategies to accomplish these goals, or a process in place to develop such a plan. For 2004-05, HR uses a two-page "Human Resource Goals" document that includes a mission statement, six annual goals, and some general strategies. A planning process has not been developed by the department whereby a time has been set aside to plan what HR hopes to accomplish, an assessment of what has occurred over the previous year, who is to be involved in the planning process, and how the HR plan aligns to district and campus goals.

The current HR document lists general strategies that HR will use to meet its six goals, but performance measures and specifics of how these goals will be achieved, by whom, and when, are missing. For example, the current document addresses the issue of increasing employee attendance by developing "a districtwide attendance incentive plan." However, supporting statistics identifying whether or not this is a pervasive problem, a completion timetable, plan details, and staff assigned to institute this plan, ensure its implementation, and monitor progress are lacking. The document does not prioritize the six goals and does not address planning and issues related to HR's delivery of services to the district for the next five years.

Another example of a goal that lacks specifics is to "improve efficiency and productivity in the Human Resources Department" One of the department's general strategies for accomplishing this goal is by managing and housing all LISD employee files within the department." There is no information outlining the steps necessary to accomplish this goal or identifying responsible staff or a completion date. The document does not address how this goal will improve efficiency. Another strategy to achieve the goal of improving HR efficiency and productivity is by purchasing HR management software/systems to provide the following functions: decrease paperwork; decrease misfiling; expedite filing; expedite requests to employee, open records, and data requests; coordinate personnel, benefits, and salaries to one software system; and maintain staff development records. However, the district currently pays for modules in a Personnel Information Management System (PIMS) from Region 10 that HR does not fully utilize. PIMS provides for the functions listed above and is fully integrated in one system with personnel, benefits, and salaries. HR does not provide a cost effectiveness study showing the value of purchasing an additional HR management software/system over fully utilizing the Region 10 PIMS that the district has already purchased.

Another goal is to "retain highly qualified instructional staff" by decreasing teacher turnover from 49 percent to 15 percent. The department will achieve this goal by "providing Texas Beginning Educator Support System for all teachers new to LISD; offering competitive salaries, benefits, longevity pay, annuities and insurance packages; and conveniently providing instructional resources at the Lancaster ISD PTRC." Again, the document does not include accountability specifics and a timetable

showing how this percentage will incrementally decrease over the next five years.

By not having a strategic planning process in place and developing a comprehensive strategic plan to guide the department in achieving its goals over the long term, the department risks not providing HR services in the most economical and effective manner. For example, if HR purchases an additional HR management software/system according to its "Human Resources Goals" document for 2004–05 without completing a strategic planning needs assessment and cost study, the district may be purchasing duplicate system capability already available to it through Region 10 and creating system incompatibilities with other departmental systems such as Payroll.

HR industry best practices identify development and use of a detailed strategic plan to guide the efforts of staff in achieving its mission and goals. Effectively managed HR Departments often prioritize and link identified short- and long-term goals, include performance measures, and assign staff for accountability purposes. Related details also address estimated funds necessary to complete these goals. Some HR Department staff conduct surveys and focus groups to obtain employee and administrative feedback regarding overall departmental provisions of services and possible ways for improvement. The HR strategic planning also needs to include a review process to align the plan with campus, district, and technology plans.

As an example of an HR strategic planning best practice, one goal might state that meaningful awards for performance be given to employees. Corresponding strategies to achieve this goal include the following:

- establish a committee to draft a research-based award system;

- use committee recommendations to the greatest degree to achieve the goal per administrative and board approval;

- assign specific staff to complete steps toward goal achievement and to provide the district with periodic progress reports;

- monitor and adjust activity plans as necessary, according to reports;

- budget expenditures directly to HR goals and priorities; and

- ensure accountability for goal achievement by assigning staff and defining performance measures and related consequences if targets are not met.

The district should establish a strategic planning process to develop, implement, and monitor progress of a detailed departmental strategic plan. To begin the process of developing such a plan, the superintendent should assign key staff such as the HR manager, the HR secretary, the PTRC facilitator, and several department directors (curriculum, finance, maintenance, or child nutrition) with the task of drafting a planning process aligned with existing district and campus improvement planning processes. The task force should develop a process schedule with planning activities, timeline, and persons involved.

The district should prepare a comprehensive Human Resources Strategic Plan providing for short- and long-range goals, strategies, and timelines for accomplishing goals. The planning process in developing a strategic plan should include an assessment of current office procedures and re-engineering to improve efficiencies utilizing current technology. In addition, there should be an assessment of information and reporting needs and an HR management information system to meet those needs, which may include more training or an addition of another staff member.

The district should use surveys and/or focus groups of administrators and other employees to learn and understand the priorities of employees in relationship to the HR Department and the services it provides. The plan itself should include the department's needs assessment, mission statement, goals, implementation strategies, a completion timeline, performance measures guiding implementation, assigned staff, and budgetary resources to implement the plan. The process should include a plan review to assure alignment with other relevant planning documents such as campus, district, and technology plans. The plan should guide the department in improving service delivery and achieving goals for LISD employees over the next five years.

HR PROCEDURES MANUAL (REC. 49)

LISD does not have a manual to ensure effective and efficient implementation of HR policies and procedures. Since the review team's visit, the district has made efforts to start the process but has not yet completed the manual. The district established an HR committee to develop the manual and would like to make the manual available on the district's Intranet website. HR does not have procedures related to the routine work of staff documented in one reference manual. The three staff members in the HR Department assist each other with duties and are knowledgeable about each other's positions; however, if any staff member is absent for a length of time or engaged in a special project, some crucial

day-to-day work is hampered and backlogged. When another staff member assists to eliminate the backlog, there are no reference guidelines for completing the work consistently between staff members, and methods may differ. HR has no accountability procedures or corrective measures to ensure consistent completion of shared tasks between staff members.

As student enrollment continues to grow and more employees are hired, HR staff workload will increase. Without an HR manual, effective cross-training to meet the increasing workload consistently according to HR policy is limited. With increasing workload and backlogs, HR runs a higher risk of staff working inconsistently without a procedures manual to standardize practices.

For many school district HR Departments, an HR manual provides standardized HR activity procedures, serves as a tool for training, minimizes staff errors, and allows for accountability. HR requires specific experience and institutional knowledge to maintain and keep current the manual and electronic personnel system used to maintain records of each employee. HR also requires standardized procedures for various important functions such as maintaining, processing, and tracking teacher certifications. Many districts utilize a written procedures manual with guidelines and, in many cases, step-by-step instructions for HR staff regarding:

- criteria for hiring and processing new employees and substitutes;

- personnel actions such as applications, assignments, transfers, exit interviews;

- orientation of new employees;

- facts about the equal employment opportunity laws and other legal requirements;

- performance appraisal tools;

- staff development; and

- procedures for maintaining personnel records and report generation.

Many HR Departments identify inefficiencies in using or carrying out particular procedures during the regular process of developing an HR strategic plan, which includes an assessment of current office procedures and re-engineering of current tasks to capitalize on available technological advances in automated information systems.

LISD should develop and maintain a *Personnel Procedures Manual* for HR staff to standardize district personnel practices. The district should review and

update the manual on a regular basis to capitalize on available technological advances in automated information systems available to the district through Region 10 and meet changing district needs. The development of the manual should also provide the benefit of compelling personnel staff to carefully review present practices and develop more efficient and effective practices.

The HR director should initiate and coordinate a process to develop an HR procedures manual. As part of the process, the facilitator and assistant of the PTRC center should be available to assist in developing the manual. The director, manager, and secretary should meet during the summer of 2005 to develop an outline of all HR procedures. Once a list is developed, each staff member should then take responsibility for writing up a designated number of procedures. The director should allow at least a month to write the procedures. Each detailed procedure should include a step-by-step process for performing the activity and should include a copy of all forms that relate to the activity. Once accomplished, the director should assemble the manual, editing and checking for accuracy. The HR director should review procedures to ensure the manual complies with current board purchasing policy and legal mandates. The PTRC staff can assist in editing and compiling the manual. The procedures should be posted on the district's Intranet website and maintained in a hardback binder with four or five copies made available—at least one for the desks of each HR staff member and the others in reserve for additional or temporary staff members. The manual should include the department's mission statement and goals. The district should have the procedures manual ready for use beginning August 2005. HR should review and update it annually.

JOB DESCRIPTIONS (REC. 50)

HR does not conduct regularly scheduled reviews of job descriptions to ensure that they are dated, accurately categorized, and reflect the actual duties of the position.

HR maintains job descriptions electronically and files each position under one of the following directories:

- Administration;

- Athletics;

- Child Nutrition;

- Coordinators;

- Elementary;

- Finance Office;

- Human Resources;

- Maintenance;

- Police;

- PTRC;

- Secondary;

- Special Program; and

- Technology.

The review team analyzed the district's job description database and found discrepancies, duplication, and missing information (**Exhibit 6-3**). In particular, the Health Clinic aide, director of Athletics, and director of HR are listed under two categories, which compounds any editing effort and increases the risk of update errors. There are no job descriptions for the custodian and PTRC clerical positions, which limits the ability of their supervisors conducting performance assessments. Several job descriptions do not have dates to reflect when the district created or last updated them, which prevents HR from assessing if these job descriptions are current.

Two job descriptions reviewed showed discrepancies in job titles, qualifications, descriptions, and/or duties. The PTRC facilitator has discrepancies between job title and duties. The position title for the staff member currently overseeing the PTRC center is "facilitator;" however, HR lists this position as

clerical in the HR salary database. Facilitator position qualifications require that the facilitator have a degree with an additional preferred qualification of having a valid teaching certificate. According to staff, the person filling the PTRC facilitator position is degreed although not teacher-certified. In addition, the duties of this position are evolving from clerical to facilitator.

The substitute coordinator is another position with discrepancies between listed and actual duties. The substitute coordinator's job description lists responsibilities that the staff member currently filling this position does not perform. The job description describes the district as using an automated substitute system; LISD does not use an automated system but hires an employee (the substitute coordinator) to call substitutes when a principal has a teacher out for the day. Further, the substitute coordinator does not maintain physical and computerized substitute records, including personnel files, which is one of the responsibilities listed in the job description. Instead of the coordinator, HR staff handles the applications for substituting, approval to substitute, background checks, substitute orientation, and maintenance of personnel files.

HR conducted a major revision of all job descriptions at the end of 2003 after the new superintendent came to LISD and created new positions in the central office. The director of HR

EXHIBIT 6-3
LISD JOB DESCRIPTION ANALYSIS

ANALYSIS FINDING	EXAMPLE
Multiple job descriptions for the same position are found under different categories or job titles in the electronic directory. An update problem can result when edit updates must be made to a job description with multiple entries. If there is no electronic linkage between entries, the staff member editing the job description may not update the additional entries or must find all the descriptions for that position under other categories or titles, which involves unnecessary time and effort.	• Athletic director and director of Athletics • Director of HR (under two categories) • Health Clinic aide (under two categories)
No job description available.	• Custodian • PTRC clerical
Date (created or revised) missing from job description.	• Assistant Superintendent of Administrative Services/Operations • Chief of Police • Maintenance/Transportation Secretary • Payroll Clerk • Plumber • Student/Parent Support Advocate
Evaluation documents filed under job descriptions.	• Assistant Superintendent of Administrative Services
Top heading (Lancaster Independent School District) missing from page.	• Assistant Superintendent of Administrative Services/Operations • Chief of Police • Maintenance/Transportation Secretary • Payroll Clerk • Plumber • Student/Parent Support Advocate

SOURCE: LISD, Human Resources Department, and MGT of America, Inc., December 2004.

coordinated the revision process and directed supervisors to create, review, and edit job descriptions for those persons under their supervision. Employees signed their revised or newly created job description, then retained a copy and returned a second copy to HR for filing. However, as noted in **Exhibit 6-3**, the HR database is not complete and updated. The database has positions without job descriptions and dates. The review team did not find evidence that HR had a process or procedure in place for periodic review and update of their job description database. However, the district's job description format includes all the necessary components to meet the district's HR needs. The district bases its format on a standard format developed by the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB).

Not having complete and updated job descriptions in HR that reflect an employee's actual duties prevents the district from holding the employee accountable for job performance. In addition, it reduces the ability of supervisors to conduct valid and effective employee performance appraisals.

School districts employing best practices have regular reviews of job descriptions to ensure that they accurately reflect the actual duties of that job and are properly dated and signed. Many districts have the HR director responsible for overseeing the process of updating job descriptions on at least a three-year cycle, with one-third of them reviewed each year.

The LISD director of HR should develop and establish a district job description updating board policy and process. In addition, district supervisors should assume the responsibility for updating job descriptions for their staff, and the director of HR should notify supervisors when their staff job descriptions come up for review. The director of HR should ensure that supervisors date, sign, and return their job descriptions to HR for final review and filing. The HR department should then categorize the descriptions for easy location, deleting duplicates and placing position descriptions no longer in use in a separate file. The director of HR should ensure that each current district position has a job description in which the district regularly updates in the HR job description database. The job description should serve as a basis for annual evaluations and in defending any workers' compensation or civil lawsuits.

PERSONNEL FILES AND RECORDS MAINTENANCE (REC. 51)

The process of overseeing LISD personnel files in three separate district offices is inefficient and does not allow for adequate HR control and file maintenance.

HR has not kept personnel record files current and overseen the maintenance of all district records as prescribed by Texas state law. Currently, employee personnel records are overseen and maintained by three separate offices in the district: HR, Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation, and Child Nutrition. HR maintains personnel records for professional staff (administrators, teachers, and other professional staff) as well as paraprofessionals (aides and clerical staff) in fireproof cabinets in HR. Once staff members resign, retire, or are terminated from the district, the employees' files are stored in a vault within the HR offices for several years and then boxed and transported to the district's Service Center for storage in archives. The office of the director of Maintenance and Transportation maintains and oversees the maintenance, custodians, and transportation employee files. The director of Child Nutrition maintains and oversees the Food Services employees' files. Even though HR is responsible for the hiring and processing of all district employees, it is not able to provide the storage space to maintain all district employee records in its current office site. The present arrangement of storing personnel files in three locations does not allow for adequate HR control over what is placed into an employee's file, when it is placed, or how the file is maintained.

Additionally, HR has not been able to keep current in the filing of personnel documents into professional staff personnel files in its office, nor has it been able to develop a record maintenance plan for personnel and other district records. The department consists of three staff members: the director, a manager in charge of certification, and a secretary. Other staff priorities often delay document filing. For instance, the department has not had time to file a copy of each employee's job description into the employee's personnel folder.

The district retains the following documents in an employee's personnel files:

- employee's service record;
- evaluations;
- previous employment documents;
- Texas certification;
- verification of completion of courses;
- certificates awarded;
- staff development courses completed;
- employment application;
- copy of social security card and driver's license;

- birth certificate;

- loyalty oath;

- high school/college transcripts;

- references;

- renewal letters;

- contracts;

- resumes;

- transfers;

- payroll information; and

- personnel forms.

The above file contents vary between professional staff and auxiliary staff depending on education and certification requirements. According to staff interviews, HR has difficulty auditing, purging, and appropriately filing old and new personnel files in a timely manner due to the large volume of documents filed in employees' personnel record folders and the current HR staffing level. The district does not have a records clerk with the responsibility to manage district records. In October 2004, the director of HR submitted a request to the superintendent asking for the addition of a records management officer position to HR to maintain personnel records and address the filing backlog. Currently, the district has not approved this position.

State law requires Texas school districts to maintain and annually update credentials, transcripts, and service records in an employee's file. The district must provide the original service record to the employee upon request when the employee departs from the district or send to the next employing school district if applicable. If provided to the employee upon termination from the school district, HR staff must maintain a copy in the district's files. For this reason alone, updating personnel files and the maintenance of records are important functions within HR. While the review team was on-site, a former employee requested his service record. Staff could not locate the box in archives in which the former employee's file was stored. Fortunately, the district was able to locate service information from archived payroll files. However, this example illustrates the importance of accurate filing, maintenance, and storage of records.

Texas Association of School Board's (TASB) Retention of Records, Retention Schedules, and LISD board policy CPC (LEGAL) and CPC (LOCAL) provide record retention requirements and policies. Local policy states, "The board shall designate an employee to act as the Records Management Officer for the District. The District

shall inform the director and librarian of the Texas State Library of the name of each successive holder of the office, within 30 days of the employee's taking office." In many districts, a records clerk assumes responsibility for establishing a continuing program for the management of all district records. The clerk or officer develops a records control schedule and responsibilities in accordance with district *Personnel Policy CPC-Office Management: Records Management Program*.

HR should centralize all employee records. HR plans to move to a new administration building when ready for occupancy in June 2005. The new office will have space available to house personnel records from all three offices in one area. The district should transfer all employee personnel records from the three offices into the HR office in the new administration building. HR should place all current files into fireproof cabinets and categorize them according to employee groups. HR should develop and implement a records retention schedule when employees resign, retire, or are terminated from the district. HR should box, carefully label, and send to archives those files no longer maintained in HR. In the future, HR should take under consideration scanning records into electronic files to reduce paperwork and staff efforts and time.

The director of HR should seek approval from the superintendent to hire an HR records clerk to ensure that personnel files are current and to oversee future record maintenance. The job description for the clerk's position should include maintaining personnel files, auditing and purging records, overseeing the security of files, accurately monitoring storage of old files, and handling requests for official district records (logging, retrieving, copying, and mailing). With the assistance of the HR staff, the HR director should coordinate the development of a district record maintenance plan with a control schedule in accordance with district policy. The HR director should assign implementation of the control schedule to the records clerk.

The fiscal impact is estimated on hiring a records clerk based on a beginning annual salary on the Paraprofessional Salary Schedule (Pay Grade 5 – 226 days) of $17,601, plus 9 percent in benefits ($1,584), for a total annual cost of $19,185 and five-year cost of $95,925.

APPLYING ONLINE (REC. 52)

LISD does not require that a prospective job candidate apply online; thus, the district must still process hard copy applications, resulting in a time-consuming process. The district gives professional job candidates the choice of applying online through

the district's website or submitting a hard copy application to the HR Department. The district does not provide non-professional and paraprofessional job candidates the option to apply online but requires them to submit a hard copy of their application to HR. HR does not enter submitted hard copy applications into the HR online system, but rather physically files them according to job category. For example, HR staff said they process approximately 25 percent of all professional applications by hand. Once HR processes and files applications, district staff provides names of these applicants to principals seeking to fill vacancies. Principals must examine these manually processed prospective candidate applications in person at the HR Department or through a request for a physical copy. However, principals can quickly view prospective teaching applications submitted electronically.

The district's website contains application and submission information as well as a listing of job opportunities. It has a link to an online application for a professional job applicant that was developed by the Information Services division of Region 10. This allows a prospective professional candidate to electronically submit an application and personnel data.

By not requiring all job applicants to apply online, HR must file and track hard copy applications and process the information contained in the application manually into the HR online system if the applicant is hired. This time-consuming process is unnecessary since the capability exists to handle all applications electronically.

School districts such as Austin, Dallas, Plano, and Ysleta require online job application submissions. Applications received online allow HR personnel to easily access applications for particular positions and to quickly and conveniently provide lists to principals or supervisors seeking to fill vacancies. This process also allows the principal or supervisor to immediately access the application directly online.

LISD should require all applicants for job positions to submit applications online. The district should work with Region 10 to modify the existing professional online job application to allow other job applicant submissions as well. The district should state this requirement in the instructions for completing an application. The district should make a computer available in the reception area of HR for those applicants who do not have access to online services. The district should also inform applicants that computers are available at the Parent Teacher Resource Center as well as in libraries.

VACANCY POSTINGS (REC. 53)

District job opportunities and job descriptions for teachers, administrators, and paraprofessionals are not consistently posted through a variety of venues including the district's website, internal publications, physical postings, or meeting announcements.

Vacancies are posted on the district's website, but, at the time of the onsite review, they only contained a position title. However, after the review team visit, HR posted job descriptions for vacancies on its website. Posting job descriptions on the website allows a person wishing to apply for a particular position to review the job description to obtain further details about the responsibilities associated with the job. The review team did not see vacancy postings for teachers, administrators, or paraprofessionals posted in any school, at the central office, at the PTRC, or in or near the HR Department.

The district provided to the review team a sample copy of a posting for a receptionist. However, the posting did not have an opening date, a closing date, or any other information as to how or to whom to apply. The vacancy posting used was simply a current job description with a few edits.

Not posting vacancies throughout the district prevents current employees from keeping informed about possible openings for which they may be interested in applying. Current employees often recommend someone they know who is highly qualified to apply for a position.

Many school districts openly post vacancies on both Internet and Intranet websites and in schools and facilities. Districts also announce vacancies at meetings and in newsletters. Keeping employees informed through job postings is an effective means for districts to communicate job openings to employees.

LISD should post job opportunities and job descriptions for vacant positions on the district's Intranet and Internet website and through a variety of districtwide venues to ensure that staff is aware of LISD employment opportunities. The district should also announce vacancies at district and campus meetings and newsletters. Once a vacancy occurs, the district should post a vacancy notice containing the position, location, duty days, pay grade, qualifications, special knowledge and skills, experience, major responsibilities and duties, and opening and closing dates in schools, the service center, the administration building, and other district facilities.

PERSONNEL INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (REC. 54)

HR does not fully utilize the Region 10 Personnel Information Management System (PIMS) and has incorrect or missing personnel and payroll data in the system, thereby creating work overload situations and not providing quality information for the district to make well-informed decisions. In the process of analyzing data, the review team discovered several instances of inconsistent data reporting, data that was incorrect or not available for review, or data not reconciling with Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) reports.

In 2000, the district subscribed to Region 10's Information Management System at an annual cost of $109,000, but LISD's HR Department has not fully utilized the personnel modules as designed since that time. The system has finance, risk management, and other modules used by the district. Region 10 reported to the review team that the district does not fully utilize the system, attend trainings, nor regularly participate in system user groups. Other districts in Region 10 are using the system effectively, including Lewisville, Grand Prairie, Duncanville, Wilmer-Hutchins, Greenville, and Wiley.

The review team examined the district's reporting of teacher turnover rates, number of teachers, substitute qualifications, and teacher certifications for data quality and integrity. In determining LISD teacher turnover, HR staff provided a printout of teachers who left the district for the past three years (2001–02, 2002–03, and 2003–04). HR manually counted the teachers who left and calculated a turnover rate using 300 teachers as the number employed districtwide each year. In comparison to other growing districts, it is unlikely that the number of teachers in LISD remained the same each of those three years. Thus, HR calculated an imprecise turnover rate for 2001–02, 2002–03, and 2003–04.

For campus turnover calculations, HR staff used the total number of teachers in the district rather than the number of teachers at each campus. This resulted in a skewed reflection of the turnover rate by campus.

The review team calculated teacher turnover rates using reported data. The Finance Department provided a Windows Excel file containing a database of teachers who had resigned, retired, or been terminated over the past three years to the review team. The team used this database to calculate the district turnover rate for the three years. However, since the number of teachers who had retired was low, the team asked HR to verify the number of retired teachers. HR found the number of retirees reported in the database was incorrect (the actual

number of retirements was higher than reported) and corrected it. Using the corrected numbers and accessing Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) reports from the Texas Education Agency (TEA) for the total number of teachers per year, the review team calculated the teacher turnover for 2001–02, 2002–03, and 2003–04. The district's PEIMS reporting system provides these figures to TEA. The coordinator of PEIMS gathers personnel data from HR to make the required reports to TEA. The coordinator asks HR to verify the data before its submission to TEA.

Once the turnover rate was determined, the review team made a cross check against the turnover rate provided by TEA in AEIS. The AEIS turnover rates did not mirror those calculated by the review team using data provided by the district. The review team could not determine which data was correct between the data provided by LISD and the data provided to TEA through PEIMS reporting. **Exhibit 6-4** shows the results of both calculations. As shown in the exhibit, each year's turnover rate is off by anywhere from four to ten percentage points.

EXHIBIT 6-4
COMPARISON OF TURNOVER RATES AEIS DATA AND DISTRICT DATA 2001–02 THROUGH 2003–04

DATA SOURCE	TURNOVER RATE		
	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
AEIS Data	39.0%	34.5%	34.9%
LISD Data	32.2%	30.1%	45.3%
Percentage Point Difference Over/(Under)	6.8	4.4	(10.4)

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) 2001–02 through 2003–04, and LISD, Human Resources and Finance Departments, December 2004.

The review team discovered an inconsistency in the total number of teachers currently in the district. A Windows Excel file (database) from Finance of all employees currently on the payroll (December 2004) shows that there are 326 teachers teaching in 2004–05. However, when the number of teachers teaching at each individual campus (January 2005) was provided by HR for the same year, the total number of teachers was much higher than 326. **Exhibit 6-5** provides a comparison of these numbers. As shown, according to HR data, there are 15 more teachers than reported in the database provided by Finance.

When further examining the employee salary database provided by the district, the review team found and corrected errors. The district recorded a few teachers as elementary teachers but were in fact secondary teachers. The district also inaccurately reported the campus location of several teachers.

EXHIBIT 6-5
COMPARISON OF NUMBER OF LISD TEACHERS BY CAMPUS
FOR ACADEMIC YEAR 2004–05

CAMPUS	DATA SOURCES		
	HUMAN RESOURCES[1]	SALARY DATABASE[2]	HUMAN RESOURCES OVER/(UNDER) DIFFERENCE FROM SALARY DATABASE
Lancaster High School – East and West Campuses	95	90	5
Lancaster Junior High	51	48	3
Lancaster Intermediate School	44	44	0
Disciplinary/Alternative Education Center	6	5	1
Houston Elementary	27	24	3
Rosa Parks/Millbrook Elementary	29	33	(4)
Pleasant Run Elementary	27	26	1
Rolling Hills Elementary	39	36	3
West Main Elementary	23	20	3
Total Teachers	**341**	**326**	**15**

NOTES: [1] denotes number of teachers at each campus provided by Human Resources Department.
[2] denotes review team count of teachers provided in a salary database from Payroll Department.
SOURCE: LISD, Human Resources and Payroll Departments, December 2004 and January 2005.

The district was unable to provide two other reports requested by the review team for detailed analysis of teacher turnover and information about substitutes. The team could not conduct an analysis of teacher turnover rates per campus for the past three school years since the district was unable to provide the total number of teachers at each campus for each of the three years. Further, in analyzing the number of teachers absent from the classroom, the review team was interested in the number of substitutes that are degreed. LISD does not require that a person be degreed in order to substitute. HR could not determine, of the 226 names on the substitute list, the number of substitutes that are degreed without going through each application. HR does not collect degree information in a database for substitutes.

HR Department staff provided data to the review team using Ultraquest reports from PIMS provided by Region 10. The applications that are available to LISD through the system include payroll information needed to process payroll, online checks, and direct deposits; and personnel information needed to record employee demographic data, certification information, Department of Public Safety security checks, and automatic transfer of applicant data into the system. While the district has this service available for data reporting, HR indicated that the system is not user-friendly, as many principals and secretaries are not using the system to its fullest and that training to run Ultraquest reports is lacking.

Detailed certification information is not on the system because the HR department has not had the workers to input all the required information into the system. Thus, detailed certification data is missing from many Personnel System records. HR maintains all certification information in a separate Windows software package, and runs reports from this source rather than the Personnel System.

Region 10 holds five user meetings annually for Finance and HR staff in the region. Region 10 intends the meetings to be for staff to discuss issues and needs of districts. According to Region 10 staff, the district can gain much by attending meetings where Region 10 staff explain new applications and answer questions. Many of the new applications are free to the district. Each year Region 10 provides more applications to the system; currently, the region is working on adding more certification reporting capabilities. However, Region 10 staff report that often no one representing LISD is present at its user meetings. Although Region 10 staff sends minutes of the meetings to districts, the minutes have limited meeting details. However, Region 10 indicated that LISD remains in contact with them by phone with questions or system problems.

Accurate personnel data reporting to the board, superintendent, staff, and community is necessary for the successful operation of the district. Districts that can easily and accurately pull up current and historical data for analysis have in place systems that allow accurate reporting for well-informed decision-making.

LISD should fully implement the Personnel Information Management System components as a means to increase employee efficiency, streamline records management, and improve personnel data quality. The personnel component provides three important modules: an applicant process; position management, including controls; and an employee module. Additionally, Region 10 offers system application interface personnel who develop, schedule, and deliver training; provide extensive application documentation; and assist district personnel with on-site visits, phone, email, and other communications as needed. Region 10 also provides ad hoc report programming to meet particular

district system needs. The district should provide ongoing system training as needed to staff using the system. If some of the programs that HR staff and principals are using are not user friendly, then HR should work with Region 10 to find solutions and to see that software applications apply to HR's needs. At least one HR staff member should regularly attended Region 10 user meetings.

The district should develop a review process for HR data processing to ensure district personnel data is accurate, consistent, and timely reported. If data from PEIMS, PIMS, or other reports does not reflect accurate or consistent numbers, the district should find out why and make corrections. When the district pulls together PEIMS data, it should recheck reports provided to the PEIMS coordinator for accuracy against district personnel databases and reports. During the implementation stage, HR should use all current HR data processing procedures until the district is satisfied that the newly implemented Personnel System components are performing as designed and HR staff is fully proficient in their use.

TEACHER TURNOVER (REC. 55)

Human Resources staff do not collect sufficient feedback or perform any data analysis to address historically high teacher turnover rates, which negatively affects student learning and increases teacher staffing costs.

Exhibit 6-6 shows the reason and turnover rate of LISD teachers over the past three years (2001–02 through 2003–04) and related information. The exhibit shows that teacher turnover has increased from 32.2 percent in 2001–02 to 45.3 percent in 2003–04. A drop of over two percentage points is shown from 2001–02 to 2002–03, but the turnover rate rose 15.2 points in 2003–04 to a turnover rate of

45.3 percent.

The number of teachers leaving the district rose 37 percent from 2001–02 to 2003–04. Nearly half of the 300 teachers left the district in 2003–04. Although this year marked the first year of a change in leadership, the turnover rate has historically remained high over the past three years—more than 30 percent.

Exhibit 6-7 shows turnover data reported to and published by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) for the same years. TEA data shows higher turnover rates in 2001–02 (39 %) and 2002–03 (34.5%), but a lower rate in 2003–04 (34.9%). Since TEA does not collect or publish the number of teachers according to retirements, resignations, and terminations, the review team used turnover rates shown in **Exhibit 6-6**. However, a comparison between these turnover rates shows a difference although both are based on figures provided by LISD.

Exhibit 6-8 provides teacher turnover information for each campus. The number of teachers at each campus for 2001–02 was not available and thus the turnover rates for 2001–02 could not be determined.

Turnover rates increased considerably for all campuses from 2002–03 to 2003–04. The largest increases in turnover rates were at Lancaster High School, Lancaster Intermediate School, and West Main Elementary—an increase of 20 or more percentage points for each campus. The high school lost 26 out of 101 teachers in 2002–03 and 43 out of 92 in 2003–04. The intermediate school lost five out of 35 teachers in 2002–03 and 16 out of 38 in 2003–04. West Main Elementary went from a loss of five teachers in 2002–03 to a loss of 12 in 2003–04.

Three campuses show turnover rates of 37 percent or above for 2002–03: Rosa Parks/Millbrook

EXHIBIT 6-6
LISD TEACHER TURNOVER REASONS AND RATES
2001–02 through 2003–04

	2001–02		2002–03		2003–04	
REASON FOR LEAVING	**NUMBER**	**PERCENT**	**NUMBER**	**PERCENT**	**NUMBER**	**PERCENT**
Retirement	0	0.0%	2	0.7%	8	2.7%
Resignations and Terminations	99	32.2%	90	29.4%	128	42.0%
Total Turnover	99	32.2%	92	30.1%	136	45.3%
Total Teachers in District	307		306		300	

SOURCE: LISD, Human Resources Department - Number of Retirements, Resignations, and Terminations, 2004;and Texas Education Agency, AEIS - Number of Teachers, 2001–02 through 2003–04.

EXHIBIT 6-7
LISD TEACHER TURNOVER RATES
AS REPORTED BY THE TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY
2001–02 THROUGH 2003–04

TURNOVER RATE		
2001–02	**2002–03**	**2003–04**
39.0%	34.5%	34.9%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2001–02 through 2003–04.

EXHIBIT 6-8
LISD TEACHER TURNOVER
BY CAMPUS

CAMPUS	2001–02		2002–03			2003–04		
	NUMBER TEACHERS LEAVING[1]	SCHOOL TURNOVER RATE	NUMBER TEACHERS[2]	NUMBER TEACHERS LEAVING	SCHOOL TURNOVER RATE[3]	NUMBER TEACHERS	NUMBER TEACHERS LEAVING	SCHOOL TURNOVER RATE
Lancaster High School (West and East)	35	*	101	26	25.7%	92	43	46.7%
Lancaster Junior High	20	*	52	21	40.4%	48	23	47.9%
Lancaster Intermediate School	10	*	35	5	14.3%	38	16	42.1%
Houston Elementary	0	*	20	4	20.0%	21	8	38.1%
Pleasant Run Elementary	3	*	23	6	26.1%	28	7	25.0%
Rolling Hills Elementary	13	*	35	13	37.1%	33	16	48.5%
Rosa Parks/Millbrook Elementary	9	*	24	10	41.7%	25	11	44.0%
West Main Elementary	9	*	20	5	25.0%	20	12	60.0%
Total Number of District Terminations	99	*	*	90	*	*	136	*
Total Number & Turnover Rate of Teachers in District per PEIMS	*	*	310	*	29.0%	305	*	44.6%
Total Number and Turnover Rate of Teachers in District per AEIS[4]	*	*	306	*	29.4%	300	*	45.3%

NOTES:[1] denotes LISD, Human Resources Department - number of teachers leaving LISD - 2001–02 through 2003–04.
[2] denotes Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) data for number of teachers at each campus for 2002–03 and 2003–04.
[3] denotes school turnover rate equals number of teacher leaving divided by number of teachers.
[4] denotes Texas Education Agency (TEA), Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) - total number of teachers in the district for 2002–03 and 2003–04.
NOTE 1: The number of teachers leaving the school district at the Alternative Education Center during the three years is not included in the above exhibit because of the low number of teachers and those who left each year.
NOTE 2: PEIMS and AEIS teacher totals per campus and district are not consistent as reported by district.
N/A - Campus turnover rates could not be calculated due to unavailable data.
NOTE: * denotes- Not applicable.
SOURCE: LISD, Human Resources Department, January 2005.

Elementary with a turnover rate of 41.7 percent, Lancaster Junior High with 40.4 percent, and Rolling Hills with 37.1 percent. Lancaster Intermediate showed the lowest turnover with 14.3 percent. The remaining schools all have turnover rates of anywhere between 20 percent and 30 percent.

During 2003–04, the rates are exceedingly high, with six of the eight elementary and secondary schools showing turnover rates between 42 percent and 60 percent. All of these schools lost nearly half of their teachers. West Main Elementary lost 12 of its 20 teachers for a turnover rate of 60 percent. Rolling Hills Elementary and Lancaster Junior High lost nearly half of their teachers, with turnover rates of approximately 49 percent and 48 percent, respectively. Pleasant Run Elementary had the lowest turnover rate at 25 percent.

The high school lost 35 teachers in 2001–02 but only 26 in 2002–03. Lancaster Intermediate and West Main Elementary also lost fewer teachers in 2002–03 than in 2001–02. Lancaster Intermediate went from a loss of 10 in 2001–02 to a loss of 5 teachers in

2002–03, and West Main had a loss of 9 teachers in 2001–02 to a loss of 5 in 2002–03. The remaining campuses lost more teachers in 2002–03 than in 2001–02.

While the teacher turnover rates are high over the past three years, those shown in 2003–04 are especially high. Principals at campuses with large numbers of teachers leaving each year should be particularly concerned about the causes for so many departures.

Exhibit 6-9 shows the district and total teaching experience of teachers. Only 24 teachers currently in the district have over 10 years of LISD experience, but that number increases to 80 when including total teaching experience. The task facing the district is to retain these experienced teachers and lower the teacher turnover rate.

The high teacher turnover concerns district administrators and teachers alike. In a survey, the review team asked principals/assistant principals, administrative and support staff, and teachers to

EXHIBIT 6-9
LISD TEACHERS
YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

YEARS	NUMBER OF TEACHERS WITH LISD TEACHING EXPERIENCE	NUMBER OF TEACHERS WITH TOTAL TEACHING EXPERIENCE
0–5	274	198
6–10	28	48
11–15	11	29
16–20	7	28
21–25	1	9
25+	5	14

SOURCE: LISD, Human Resources and Finance, December 2004.

respond to the statement "teacher turnover is low." The results are as follows:

- 92.3 percent of principals/assistant principals disagreed with the statement;

- 69 percent of district administrators and support staff disagreed; and

- 66.8 percent of teachers disagreed.

Exhibit 6-10 compares LISD teacher turnover with four peer districts. As shown, Lancaster has the highest teacher turnover of the five districts for all three years shown.

LISD provides an exit interview form to departing employees that HR monitors; however, departing teachers often do not fill out the interview form or if they do, they do not provide precise reasons why they are leaving. Although board policy requires individual exit interview reports, HR staff inconsistently enforces the policy and does not use collected information to improve retention strategies. Thus, the tracking of reasons teachers leave is not always a complete picture.

High teacher turnover rate adversely affects teaching and learning at LISD, especially with as much teacher turnover the district experienced over the past three

EXHIBIT 6-10
TEACHER TURNOVER
PEER SCHOOL DISTRICTS

SCHOOL DISTRICT	2001–02		2002–03		2003–04	
	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT
LISD						
Retirement	0	0	2	0.7%	8	2.7%
Resignations	99	32.2%	90	29.4%	126	42.0%
Terminations	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	0.7%
Total	99	32.2%	92	30.1%	136	45.3%
Total Teachers in District	307		306		300	
DeSoto ISD						
Retirement	5	1.0%	9	1.8%	8	1.5%
Resignations	126	25.2%	135	26.3%	134	25.9%
Terminations	0	0.0%	2	0.4%	2	0.4%
Total	131	26.2%	146	28.4%	144	27.9%
Total Teachers in District	500		514		517	
Red Oak ISD						
Retirement	3	1.0%	10	3.3%	6	1.9%
Resignations	44	14.9%	40	13.1%	27	8.8%
Terminations	1	0.3%	1	0.3%	0	0.0%
Total	48	16.2%	51	16.7%	33	10.7%
Total Teachers in District	296		306		308	
Sheldon ISD						
Retirement	10	3.5%	6	2.1%	17	6.1%
Resignations	25	8.7%	25	8.9%	47	16.8%
Terminations	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Total	35	12.2%	31	11.0%	64	22.9%
Total Teachers in District	288		282		279	
Terrell ISD						
Retirement	14	4.6%	6	2.0%	6	2.0%
Resignations	69	22.8%	72	23.5%	79	26.4%
Terminations	0	0.0%	1	0.3%	2	0.7%
Total	83	27.5%	79	25.7%	87	29.1%
Total Teachers in District	302		307		299	

SOURCE: LISD, Human Resources Department, and Texas Education Agency, AEIS for 2001–02 through 2003–04.

years. The impact of cost and inefficiency to the district is high. The district incurs higher costs associated with recruiting, hiring, and mentoring new replacement teachers. High teacher turnover negatively affects teaching and learning in schools as students lose the continuity and coherence of the school's curriculum. The district is likely to replace experienced teachers who leave with beginning teachers.

Many districts monitor why teachers leave through such instruments as exit interviews as the first step in taking measures and developing incentives to improve teacher retention. Other school districts also monitor teacher satisfaction through surveys. Districts base strategies to retain teachers on improving teacher satisfaction with their work environment. Killeen ISD conducts workplace audits to improve work environment of its employees, and as a result, it reduced teacher turnover rate and improved job satisfaction for all employees. Improving retention rates help to reduce the district's cost in recruiting and training staff replacements.

LISD should place the exit interview on the Intranet with a method to allow the departing teacher to remain anonymous. HR should analyze all exit reports and prepare an annual teacher turnover report for the board. In addition, the district should periodically survey teachers to determine work satisfaction. The district should administer the survey online and design it so that each teacher participating in the survey remains anonymous. Teachers are more likely to share their concerns, issues, problems, and dissatisfactions if the district assures that it will not identify or retaliate against them. The district should share the results with all the teachers. The district should chose representative teachers from each school to attend periodic meetings with the superintendent's executive staff to share concerns and establish strategies for improving the work environment. Further, principals should meet with teachers to develop action plans based on the results. The district could expand this practice to survey all employees and improve recruitment and retention rates for the district as a whole.

SALARY SCHEDULES (REC. 56)

The district does not have salary schedules for all categories of LISD employees, resulting in potential inequities among staff. The salary schedule for teachers and paraprofessionals is well established. The teacher salary schedule, which includes librarians, nurses, diagnosticians, and speech therapists, clearly outlines the salary steps (years of experience) for salary increases, including a daily rate and annual salaries depending on the number of days worked. Teachers, with a few exceptions, are on a 187-day work schedule. The teacher salary schedule allows for annual salaries for workdays of 197 (elementary counselors), 202 (some grandfathered teaching positions), 207 (elementary, intermediate, and junior high principals and counselors), 220 (high school counselors), and 226 (high school principals). The state minimum salary is also included on the schedule. The district awards teachers an additional $500 for master's degrees and $1,000 for doctoral degrees. The schedule also shows step increments dependent on the number of years taught. A teacher without any experience is paid $36,750 for 187 workdays. For paraprofessionals, pay grades ranging from one through seven are provided with each pay grade showing a daily rate and the annual pay for 187, 197, 207, and 226 workdays for each year of experience up to 33-plus years.

The salary schedule for administrators, maintenance, custodial, transportation, and child nutrition workers is not well developed. The salary schedule does not show a minimum, mid-point, or maximum salary range but instead lists the various hourly and annual salaries for each maintenance or child nutrition employee.

Exhibit 6-11 provides an example of the Child Nutrition employee salary schedule. The review team recreated this exhibit from a hard copy and an e-mail salary schedule provided by the district. The schedule lacks organization according to salary ranges or work experience. **Exhibit 6-11** shows that the minimum hourly salary for a food service worker is estimated at approximately $6.49, the mid-range at $9.28, and the maximum at $12.04.

The salary schedule for administrators and professional staff is from a salary survey table in which the district participated for the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB). While the survey form (a table) provides minimum and maximum ranges for central office administrators and campus staff, the table also includes salaries for librarians, counselors, and nurses. The titles used in the survey are not the same position titles used in the district. The table is not a salary schedule for professional support or administrators but rather a part of a salary survey.

Without defined auxiliary (maintenance, custodial, transportation, and food service workers) and administrator salary schedules, some employees may perceive that certain groups of employees are receiving a higher percentage increase than others. Other employees may become frustrated when they are unclear about how the district allots salaries. This situation can negatively affect the workplace environment.

EXHIBIT 6-11
LISD 2004–05 SALARY SCHEDULE
FOOD SERVICES

HOURLY	ANNUAL SALARY[1]	HOURLY	ANNUAL SALARY
$7.14	$9,746.10	$8.80	$12,012.00
7.45	10,169.25	9.28	12,667.20
7.14	9,746.10	7.80	10,647.00
6.49	8,858.85	11.50	15,697.50
10.02	13,677.30	8.60	11,739.00
6.89	9,404.85	7.93	10,824.45
11.74	16,025.10	8.80	12,012.00
11.35	15,492.75	7.80	10,647.00
8.80	12,012.00	7.14	9,746.10
7.10	9,691.50	7.80	10,647.00
6.49	8,858.85	7.14	9,746.10
9.03	12,325.95	9.91	13,527.15
11.34	15,479.10	7.80	10,647.00
7.81	10,660.65	7.14	9,746.10
12.04	16,434.60	7.25	9,896.25
6.49	8,858.85	7.80	10,647.00
7.25	9,896.25	9.01	12,298.65
8.78	11,984.70	8.23	11,233.95
9.11	12,435.15	7.25	9,896.25
12.34	16,844.10	6.49	8,858.85
7.14	9,746.10	6.49	8,858.85
7.14	9,746.10	11.34	15,479.10
9.33	12,735.45	8.33	11,370.45
9.81	13,390.65	7.25	9,896.25
6.49	8,858.85	6.49	8,858.85
7.14	9,746.10	7.14	9,746.10
10.88	14,851.20	6.49	8,858.85
6.49	8,858.85	7.14	9,746.10

NOTE: [1] denotes annual salary calculations = hourly rate x 7 hours per day x 195 days.
SOURCE: LISD, Human Resources and Finance Departments, December 2004.

Many districts with best practices have salary schedules that clearly state pay rates and salary ranges for all employees. An effective practice used by some school districts includes a manual that clearly outlines the methodology and guidelines for establishing salaries, salary schedules for all employees, supplementary pay schedules, and any other information pertinent to pay.

LISD should develop salary schedules for administrators, maintenance, custodial, transportation, and child nutrition workers and develop procedures for implementation. Developing a salary schedule for all employees would not only create equity among all employee groups but should also assist the superintendent, Human Resources, and the board with planning and allocating administrative and auxiliary salary increases. Further, the district should combine all salary schedules, methodologies, and guidelines in a manual for easy distribution to employees and staff.

AUTO ALLOWANCE (REC. 57)
While LISD currently provides an auto allowance as a benefit, the district does not have policy or procedures addressing accountability requirements and benefit rationale. The district provides a monthly auto allowance to 19 staff members (mostly administrators) for fuel and personal auto use for travel within the district and/or outside of the district.

Exhibit 6-12 provides a list of staff with the annual allowance that each receives. The district pays allowances in monthly increments at an annual cost of more than $26,700. According to interviews, staff receive this benefit whether or not its use is for fuel. No travel logs or receipts are required, resulting in little accountability for these funds.

The district does not have a supplementary pay schedule available that details what particular positions receive stipends or supplementary pay, nor is there a documented rationale for the stipend or benefit assignments. The district has no procedures that indicate which staff members are to receive this benefit.

By not having an auto allowance policy or procedure, the district does not provide justification for its assignment or convey parameters regarding its use.

EXHIBIT 6-12
SUPPLEMENTARY PAY
AUTO ALLOWANCE
2004–05

STAFF POSITIONS	ANNUAL ALLOWANCE
Assistant Superintendent	$2,400
Directors	
Human Resources	1,200
Fine Arts	1,200
Bilingual	1,200
Athletics	2,400
Public Relations	1,200
Child Nutrition Program	1,000
Chief Financial Officer	2,400
Supervisor – Food Services	720
Coordinators	
Writing	750
Elementary Instruction	900
Secondary Instruction	900
Student/Parent Support Advocate	1,200
Technician – Technology	500
Athletics – High School	2,400
Special Education Teacher – High School	750
Nurse – High School	850
Maintenance	
Worker	2,400
Police Chief	2,400
Total	**$26,770**

SOURCE: LISD, Human Resources Department, December 2004.

Many districts have an auto allowance board policy to provide the rationale and parameters for receiving the benefit. The districts also implement procedures requiring submission of travel logs and fuel receipts to document auto usage. Often staff in these districts assigned to more than one campus receive fuel and mileage reimbursement according to state parameters. They must submit the appropriate documentation to receive reimbursement.

The district should examine the annual auto allowance benefit and update related board policy to include accountability requirements and rationale for assigning the benefit. If the district intends to reimburse particular staff for travel by car, the district should develop a procedure for reimbursements requiring receipts, so that it can maintain accountability. The district should compensate those staff that must travel frequently on in-district school business or out of the district. However, the district should base the reimbursement on mileage logs or fuel receipts from the employee for accountability.

TEACHERS ABSENT FROM DUTY (REC. 58)

LISD does not monitor or control excessive teacher absences, which negatively affects student learning and performance. Substitutes in the classroom interrupt the continuity of teaching and learning in the district. Further, the district must ensure enough substitutes are hired and trained to fill positions vacated for one or more days. The cost for a non-degreed substitute is $60 per day. The cost of a degreed substitute is $65 per day or $110 per day for 10 days or more if certified and $100 a day if not certified. However, the district does not require degreed substitute teachers in the classroom.

LISD allots teachers 10 days of leave each year: five personal days and five sick leave days. Teachers are also granted leave if they are absent from the classroom due to school business such as national or state conferences and to attend district sessions, workshops, and seminars delivered by nationally recognized educators invited to LISD to deliver training. The number of days a teacher can be absent from the classroom for school business leave is not set in policy.

LISD provided a printout of all district employees absent from duty over the past two school years (2002–03 and 2003–04) and for September 1 through December 9, 2004. The district did not identify employees listed on the printout by position. Thus, in order to identify teachers, each employee on the list needed to be cross-referenced with an employee database of names and district positions. Such an employee database was not available for cross-referencing for the 2002–03 and 2003–04 school years. However, a database was available for the current school year. The review team identified teachers by cross-referencing names on the September 1 through December 9, 2004, printout of absences. The teachers were hand counted and summarized for this period.

Exhibit 6-13 provides the results per campus. For the period September 1 through December 9, teachers were absent for 1,598.5 days; on average, approximately 25 teachers were absent per day from the classroom. The schools with the highest percentage of teachers absent per day were Rolling Hills Elementary at 11.9 percent, Rosa Parks/Millbrook Elementary with 8.4 percent, Lancaster Jr. High with 7.3 percent, and Lancaster High School with 7.0 percent. Houston Elementary had almost 7 percent absent per day. Nearly half of the absences (787) recorded were due to teachers out of the classroom because of school business.

These numbers indicate the cost of placing a substitute in the room for the teacher and the affect this has on student learning. These totals are only for 65 days out of 187 that teachers are on duty. The numbers do not account for those absences in August of 2004 when school began (17 days) or the days following December 9 (105).

Regarding teachers out due to school business, the district does not set in policy the number of days permitted for school business but the superintendent and/or school principal grants and approves leave for school business purposes. The district may excuse a teacher to attend national and state conferences or sponsored professional development activities inside or outside of the district. Professional development is very important and is a priority for many school districts across the country; however, the district must consider the costs associated with this type of leave.

Referring back to **Exhibit 6-13**, teachers were out of the classroom for school business (professional development) for 787 days from September 1 through December 9, 2004 (65 teacher duty days). The school business leave days are likely to increase substantially over the remaining 105 days of the school year if the 65 days are any indication. These totals do not include absences in August during the three weeks teachers were on duty (17 days). Two hundred eighty-nine (289 out of 326) teachers were out for one day or more on school business during the period from September 1, through December 9, 2004. Of those teachers, 41 were absent from the classroom for five days or more for school business during that period. Two hundred forty eight (248) teachers were absent for school business for one to four days. Thirty-seven (37) teachers had not taken any days for school business during this period.

The number of teacher leave days that annually accumulate in the district for personal, sick, and school business is high, requiring high utilization of substitutes. The district's use of substitutes without degrees who may not be prepared sufficiently can have a negative affect on the quality of learning.

Some school districts encountering large teacher absentee rates implement incentives, such as stipends or awards, for reducing teacher leave. United ISD in Texas provides $500 per school year to a teacher with perfect attendance.

LISD should review and revise the teacher leave policy by examining ways in which it can reduce the number of teachers absent per year due to sickness, personal leave, and school business. To reduce the number of sick or personal days, the district should conduct an analysis to determine why teachers are so frequently absent for sickness or personal leave. The district should compare why some teachers are absent regularly while others rarely miss to find out if high absenteeism is due to stress, working conditions, ongoing illnesses, or an entitlement that teachers feel they deserve. The district should also consider implementing incentives for perfect attendance, such as a stipend for perfect attendance. A reduction in the cost of providing substitute teachers could assist in providing monetary awards or other types of recognition. LISD should be able to locate a sponsor for some incentives, given the excellent community relationships developed over the past year and a half. Not many public or private work sectors have as high an absentee rate as found in school districts. Such absenteeism due to sickness or personal leave would be discouraged in many workplaces.

To reduce the number of days teachers are out due to school business, the district should place a limit on the number of days of leave it allows each teacher for school business. The district should set in policy the number of days which the superintendent and/or school principals can grant for school business purposes. In addition, the superintendent and his

EXHIBIT 6-13
TEACHER LEAVE BY CAMPUS
SEPTEMBER 1 THROUGH DECEMBER 9, 2004

CAMPUS	SICK	PERSONAL	SCHOOL BUSINESS [1]	JURY DUTY	TOTAL TEACHERS ON LEAVE	NUMBER TEACHERS ABSENT PER DAY [2]	PERCENT TEACHERS ABSENT PER DAY [3]	NUMBER TEACHERS
Lancaster High School	91.5	84.0	235.5	1.0	412.0	6.3	7.0%	90
Lancaster Jr. High School	66.5	58.5	102.5	0.0	227.5	3.5	7.3%	48
Lancaster Alternative School	10.5	3.5	2.0	0.0	16.0	0.2	4.9%	5
Lancaster Intermediate	77.0	33.0	87.5	0.0	197.5	3.0	6.9%	44
Houston Elementary	26.0	16.0	50.5	4.0	96.5	1.5	6.2%	24
Pleasant Run Elementary	31.0	23.0	50.5	4.0	108.5	1.7	6.4%	26
Rolling Hills Elementary	113.5	53.5	110.0	1.0	278.0	4.3	11.9%	36
Rosa Parks/Millbrook Elementary	44.5	34.5	101.0	0.0	180.0	2.8	8.4%	33
West Main Elementary	21.0	12.0	47.5	2.0	82.5	1.3	6.3%	20
Total	481.5	318.0	787.0	12.0	1,598.5	24.6	7.5%	326

NOTES: [1] denotes teachers absent from classroom for professional development.
: [2] denotes total teachers on leave from September 1 through December. To determine the number of teachers on leave per day, the number of teachers on leave (absent) was divided by 65, the number of days teachers were on duty from September 1 through December 9. Thus, as an example, Lancaster High School had 412.0 teachers on leave from September 1 through December 9 divided by 65 days (the number of days teachers were on duty from September 1 through December 9), which equals 6.3 teachers per day for that period.
[3] denotes percent of teachers absent per day equals number of teachers absent per day divided by number of teachers.
SOURCE: LISD, Human Resources Department, December 2004.

executive staff should examine the annual number of days teachers are out of the classroom for professional development and develop strategies for reducing the days, such as limiting the number of days each teacher is allowed leave for school business. The district should consider a limit of five days per school year for each teacher.

The review team bases cost savings associated with reducing teachers out on leave due to sickness, personal reasons, or school business on the following analysis:

REDUCING THE NUMBER OF DAYS TAKEN FOR SICK OR PERSONAL LEAVE

The district should develop strategies to reduce the number of days teachers take for sick or personal leave resulting in financial savings.

For the period of September 1 through December 9, 2004 (65 teacher duty days), there were 481.5 sick leave absences and 319.0 personal leave absences for 800.5 leave days for that period. Since the exact total of all absences for 2004–05 is not known as yet, the review team made a projection about the number of absences that will occur in 2004–05. With 800.5 absences over 65 school days (September 1 through December 9), an estimated 12 teachers are absent per day. The review team projects 2,244 leave days in 2004–05 by taking 12 and multiplying it by the 187 teacher duty days for the school year.

Using this projected number of days absent (2,244) for 2004–05 and reducing the number by 15 percent would result in 337 fewer absentee days for teachers in 2005–06. Taking the 337 days times $60 a day for a substitute, the amount saved the first year would amount to $20,220 ($337 days x $60). For the next four school years, the same calculation would apply, always basing the goal on a 15 percent reduction on the days teachers were absent the previous year.

In the second year, after reducing the 2,244 days by 337, or the first year's 15 percent reduction, the result is 1,907. Multiplying that amount by 15 percent to achieve the annual reduction in number of days is 286. That amount multiplied by $60 equals $17,160. This pattern continues each year with the number of days in year three equaling 243 (savings of $14,560); the number of days in year four equaling 207 (savings of $12,420); and the number of days in year five equaling 176 (savings of $10,560).

The amount saved could be higher, depending on the total sick and personal leave days actually taken for 2004–05 and whether the substitute employed is nondegreed ($60), degreed ($65), or on a long-term assignment at $110. However, savings conservatively do not consider this.

REDUCING THE NUMBER OF DAYS TAKEN FOR SCHOOL BUSINESS

A five-day limit on the number of days each teacher is allowed school business leave would save the district $36,840 annually. The savings projected are as follows:

- The 787 leave days taken from September 1 through December 9, 2004, divided by the number of days teachers were on duty from September 1 through December 9 (65 days), results in approximately 12 teachers on leave per day.

- Projecting that 12 teachers are on business leave for 187 duty days for the school year, by the end of the year, 2,244 leave days will have accumulated.

- If each teacher (326 teachers) were limited to 5 days per year for business leave, the total number of leave days would equal 1,630.

- Taking the projected number of 2,244 leave days minus the 1,630 days if the district puts a limit of 5 days on teachers, the district would eliminate 614 leave days.

- Multiplying the 614 leave days saved by $60, the cost to the district to hire substitutes, would amount to $36,840.

Over a five-year period, the district should realize a cost saving of $184,200 ($36,840 x 5) by reducing the number of days taken for school business.

Exhibit 6-14 details the annual and five-year fiscal savings related to the reduction in absentee days.

The total annual cost savings for the next five years is as follows:

- 2005–06 savings of $57,060 ($20,220 absenteeism savings plus $36,840 business leave savings),

- 2006–07 savings of $54,000 ($17,160 plus $36,840),

- 2007–08 savings of $51,420 ($14,580 plus $36,840),

- 2008–09 savings of $49,260 ($12,420 plus $36,840), and

- 2009–10 savings of $47,400 ($10,560 plus $36,840).

The total five years cost savings is $259,140 ($57,060 + $54,000 + $51,420 + $49,260+ $47,400) for reducing absenteeism and business leave.

EXHIBIT 6-14
PROPOSED COST SAVINGS BY REDUCING ABSENTEEISM

YEAR	CALCULATION	SAVINGS
2005–06	Using total days absent in 2004–05 as a basis: 2,244 days absent times 15% equals 337-day reduction times $60.	$20,220
2006–07	Previous year's total of 1,907 days absent times 15% equals 286-day reduction times $60.	17,160
2007–08	Previous year's total of 1,621 days absent times 15% equals 243-day reduction times $60.	14,580
2008–09	Previous year's total of 1,378 days absent times 15% equals 207-day reduction times $60.	12,420
2009–10	Previous year's total of 1,171 days absent times 15% equals 176-day reduction times $60.	10,560
Total		$74,940

SOURCE: LIS, Human Resources Department, December 2004.

SUBSTITUTE EVALUATIONS
(REC. 59)

LISD does not have a well-defined policy, process, or procedure in place for evaluating substitute teachers.

The district has an evaluation instrument for evaluating substitutes; however, principals often do not fill out the form. The evaluation, if completed, is to be filed at the school and may be reviewed by the director of HR at the end of the school year. According to staff, HR has no record that the forms are actually completed. Usually, if a substitute is not working out well or performs poorly, the principal will report such to the director of HR, and the director will then decide whether the substitute may continue.

In order to substitute at LISD, an applicant must have at least a high school diploma. The district maintains an active substitute list of approximately 226 names, 12 of which are certified as teachers. Of the 226 substitutes, the district was unable to provide the number of those who are degreed and those who are not. Substitutes are required to attend a three-hour Substitute Teacher Orientation and are paid $60 per day if nondegreed and $65 per day if degreed/certified. Substitute pay compares favorably with five other area school districts as shown in **Exhibit 6-15**. If a substitute serves for a teacher longer than 10 days, the district pays the substitute $110 a day if Texas-certified and $100 a day if not certified. A substitute coordinator, working out of her home, is responsible for obtaining substitutes for teachers.

The district asks substitutes to complete an informal evaluation of their school assignment, after which they leave with the principal. The district asks the substitute to evaluate the following:

- office staff provided the substitute with a complete schedule for the day and any special instructions;

EXHIBIT 6-15
COMPARATIVE SUBSTITUTE PAY

DISTRICT	NON-DEGREED	DEGREED/ CERTIFIED
Lancaster	$60	$65
Cedar Hill	60	*
DeSoto	68	*
Duncanville	60	*
Ennis	60	60
Red Oak	50	65

NOTE: * denotes data unavailable.
SOURCE: LISD, Human Resources Department, "Comparative Substitute Pay Analysis," December 2004.

- the regular teacher left provisions for legible lesson plans, seating charts, materials, special instructions, and noted students to assist substitute;

- other teachers provided friendly and helpful assistance;

- students in the class were generally respectful, responsive, and helpful; and

- facilities were clean and generally in good condition.

The forms to evaluate substitutes and the substitutes' evaluation of their assignments are useful sources of information to the district and to principals. Since substitutes are not required to be degreed, the lack of information from principals results in ineffective orientation and training of substitutes. As noted earlier in this chapter, many teachers are out of class due to professional development, and well-trained substitutes are imperative. Further, since HR has the responsibility for hiring substitutes, the inability of HR to know which substitutes are effective in particular schools or classrooms prevents targeted training during orientation. The district's lack of principal feedback in determining problems that substitutes encounter prevents school management and central office administrators from being informed.

The district should develop a process and procedures for evaluating substitutes. The director of HR should

develop a process and procedures requiring principals to evaluate substitutes. The principals should file evaluations at the school and submit them to HR three times a year for review. The district should request substitutes to complete an evaluation of the school and submit it to the HR Department, which in turn should provide feedback to the principal. The procedures should include requirements for filling out the evaluations and filing of the documents and when staff should submit completed evaluations to Human Resources, as well as how Human Resources will use these evaluations in the training provided to substitutes.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT (REC. 60)

LISD does not have a comprehensive staff development plan to efficiently provide ongoing staff development to all employees.

Before the current school year, the district did not have a staff member serving as coordinator of all staff development activities offered to teachers or other employees. The district offered activities in a piecemeal fashion without any one person coordinating the efforts. The district offered teachers professional development activities through the schools or workshops by the Teaching and Learning Department. The HR Department provided staff development activities for all employees.

The district appointed a coordinator in August 2004 to oversee the coordination of all staff development activities, but the district had no comprehensive plan to guide the efficient provision of staff development to all LISD employees. The office is under the direction of the Department of Teaching and Learning. It is currently located in the Lancaster Junior High School, but the district plans to move it into the new administration building. The director of HR will continue to plan and offer training for all employees similar to training offered in the past on topics such as sexual harassment, district policy, the Fair Labor Act, and Code of Ethics. A calendar of all staff development activities for 2005–06 is in development, and all employees will receive a copy.

The new office will undertake the tracking of professional development hours as well. In 1999, the State Board for Educator Certification began to issue standard teaching certificates that are renewable every five years. This standard certificate replaces the provisional and professional lifetime certificate and has continuing education requirements as a condition for renewal. The provisional and professional lifetime certificates board issued before 1999 are valid for the life of the individual unless board suspended or revoked. Classroom teachers are required to complete at least 150 clock hours of

continuing professional education during the five-year renewal period. Before this year, teachers were required to maintain their own professional development hours, whether through sessions at the district or through other means such as university courses. Now the professional development office will track these hours using the Microsoft Access software program. The district is hoping to purchase specific software for such tracking as soon as funds become available. In addition, the district intends to allow teachers to enroll in training sessions online.

Some of the district professional development activities include the following:

- districtwide staff development for teachers, principals, clerical staff, counselors, nurses, maintenance, and child nutrition staff at the beginning of the school year during four days before students arrive;

- scheduled day in January for staff development initiatives (students are not in attendance);

- individual schools that plan half-day staff development sessions throughout the school year;

- summer program of 21 hours scheduled for the first time in June 2005 after the school year ends—teachers, while not required to take the sessions, will be required to make up those hours during the year;

- emphasis on Gifted and Talented (G/T) training—also planned for the summer program so that new requirements for G/T teachers can be met;

- two-hour after-school monthly session on curriculum design and planning;

- Texas Beginning Educators Support System (TxBESS) mentorship program for approximately 79 new teachers; and

- future training based on student test data and TEA or legislative requirements.

Exhibit 6-16 provides a sample of the district's proposed staff development needs for 2004–05 for the different groups of employees. This needs assessment was based on an electronic survey conducted by the Technology Department for staff development at the end of 2003–04.

In order to effectively deliver quality professional development to staff, many districts develop a comprehensive plan to clarify its mission, set its goals, coordinate and evaluate its efforts, set timelines, and designate staff to carry out goals. As part of the comprehensive plan, the district's Office

EXHIBIT 6-16
PROPOSED STAFF DEVELOPMENT NEEDS

EMPLOYEE GROUP OR TRAINING	STAFF DEVELOPMENT NEEDS
General–All Staff	Due Processes (grievances) Abuse Training Sexual Harassment
Instructional Staff	Instructional leadership development Grade-Level Cadres Classroom management
Support Staff	PEIMS – attendance clerk Substitute training Nurse training
Counselors	Abuse Identification Capturing Kids Hearts Teen Leadership
Administrative Training	Site-based management Campus Improvement Plan Technology
Secondary	Content Areas Academic Decathlon Tardy Program (campus)
Gifted and Talented Training	Differentiation Higher Order Thinking Assessment and Identification Awareness
Fine Arts K–12	Music – Foundations of Rhythm – K–12 Art Theatre Arts
Reading/Language Arts	Junior Great Books programs Winston Grammar – 4th and 5th grade program Phonics
Librarians	Reading Integration Write Traits Technology/Media–Help teachers with integration/technology needs/basic help desk intervention
Mathematics	Every Day Counts – new teachers Math Manipulatives Integration Problem-Solving Strategies
Science	Curriculum development Safety training Lab expectations
Social Studies	Curriculum Integration of social studies in the elementary curriculum
Technology	Gradebooks – all levels Report Cards – elementary Office staff training
Special Education	Achievement gaps Autism Pre-school Specialist
Athletics/Health/P.E.	Health Education – Sex Education piece from the Cadre UIL Rules/Expectations Technology
Paraprofessionals	Social skills training Customer Service (Media, front office interactions, phone)

SOURCE: LISD, Department of Teaching and Learning, December 2004.

of Professional Development serves as a clearinghouse for all activities planned throughout the school district and develops a comprehensive guide to activities that take place. A process for evaluating staff development programs and activities can determine the affect of these activities on job performance and school improvement.

When developing a plan, districts analyze several needs such as staff and how they will be involved, equipment and supplies on hand or that will need to be purchased, and money that is available or where it can be obtained (grants). Once these are analyzed and the plan is developed, the roles and responsibilities of the Professional Development Office are formally communicated to the school system and in particular to the departments, schools, and units involved in staff development. Scheduling events and avoiding duplication of services forms an

integral part of this office as well as placing controls on offerings to make sure that they are in harmony with efficient and effective staff development practices and are aligned with the school district's goals and strategies. The comprehensive plan incorporates all of these activities in order to avoid duplication and provide coordination of efforts.

LISD should develop a comprehensive, districtwide staff development plan. The plan should link the school system's priorities for instructional

improvement with the opportunities provided in staff development. The plan should include a mission statement, goals, initiatives, strategies, and provisions for directing and tying together the staff development activities of the school district.

For more information on Chapter 6: Human Resources Management, see page 234 in the General Information section of the appendices.

FISCAL IMPACT

RECOMMENDATION	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09	2009–10	5-YEAR (COSTS) OR SAVINGS	ONE-TIME (COSTS)
48. Develop a strategic planning process and comprehensive Human Resources Strategic Plan.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
49. Develop and maintain a Human Resources Personnel Procedures Manual.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
50. Develop board policy and implement a process to regularly review and update all district job descriptions.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
51. Centralize all employee personnel records, develop a district records-maintenance plan and control schedule, and hire a records clerk.	($19,185)	($19,185)	($19,185)	($19,185)	($19,185)	($95,925)	$0
52. Establish a process requiring all applicants to apply online.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
53. Establish and implement a procedure to internally expand job vacancy postings.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
54. Fully implement the Personnel Information Management System (PIMS) and establish a data quality review process.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
55. Analyze teacher exit interviews, prepare an annual teacher turnover report for the board, and conduct and analyze periodic teacher satisfaction surveys.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
56. Develop and implement salary schedules and a related procedural manual for all employee categories.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
57. Establish an annual auto allowance board policy and related procedures.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
58. Review and revise the teacher leave policy.	$57,060	$54,000	$51,420	$49,260	$47,400	$259,140	$0
59. Develop a process and procedures for evaluating substitute teachers.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
60. Develop a comprehensive, districtwide staff development plan.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Chapter 6 Totals	$37,875	$34,815	$32,235	$30,075	$28,215	$163,215	$0

Chapter 7

Facilities Construction, Use,

and Management

Lancaster Independent School District

CHAPTER 7
FACILITIES CONSTRUCTION, USE, AND MANAGEMENT

In 2004–05, Lancaster Independent School District (LISD) serves its 5,203 student population, administration, and staff in five elementary schools, one intermediate school, one junior high school, and one high school split into two campus buildings— one for ninth grade students and one for the remaining secondary students. The district also maintains 12 portable buildings largely used for classroom space. A director of Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation heads the department that oversees facilities, grounds, and transportation services.

According to the district's 2004–05 Staff Handbook, Lancaster Independent School District (LISD) considers itself to be "the last frontier for South Dallas County." As such, the district is in the middle of construction and renovation efforts funded by a $110 million bond passed in February 2004. As part of Phase I of a two-part construction bond program, the district dedicated the J.D. Hall Learning Center at Rocky Crest that houses the disciplinary and alternative education programs and a new administrative center in May 2005 at its 100-year celebration. The district also expects completion of an athletic facility in summer 2005 and an elementary and high school in 2006. No major bond for construction and renovation received voter approval in LISD for 20 years before this bond election. According to interviews and district documents, facilities development is, therefore, a priority for the Lancaster Board of Trustees, its administration, and the community.

ACCOMPLISHMENT

▪ LISD applies a comprehensive staffing model, uses team-building activities, and schedules communication/training meetings to efficiently staff the Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation Department and effectively maintain a high employee performance level.

FINDINGS

▪ Although the district developed a bond facilities plan, LISD has no long-range facilities document incorporating student enrollment projections, bond documents, current facilities data, and districtwide goals.

▪ Internal management practices and procedures are incomplete, as is external oversight for construction projects.

▪ LISD maintenance software forms do not track expenditures, and departmental staff does not complete all manual work orders and project-related filing and data analysis.

▪ LISD has no comprehensive districtwide preventive maintenance (PM) or minor maintenance program.

▪ The district has not conducted energy audits or developed a districtwide energy management program, as outlined in its own board policy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

▪ **Recommendation 61 (p. 152): Develop, annually review, and update a Ten-Year Facilities Master Plan.** The board should instruct the superintendent—in conjunction with the director of Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation—to develop a Ten-Year Facilities Master Plan, and annually review and update the document. By including enrollment projections, annual facility and building equipment conditions, technology and support needs, and overall districtwide goals into a long-range plan, the district provides the board and the community with a complete listing of identified facility needs and the time to prioritize projects and budget for the necessary fiscal resources.

▪ **Recommendation 62 (p. 153): Develop, approve, and implement a procedures manual for the Construction Department and appoint a Citizen's Oversight Committee.** The special assistant to the superintendent for construction should expedite the development of an internal management practices and procedures manual for the Construction Department. Developing and using these procedural documents should assure the board and other stakeholders that the district has appropriate guidance for project planning and implementation during current and future construction and renovation projects. In addition, by assigning accountability for monitoring bond construction and renovation programs to a Citizen's Oversight Committee, the district adds a measure of external control during times of construction and renovation.

▪ **Recommendation 63 (p. 154): Upgrade the Maintenance Office technology support system.** By upgrading the Maintenance Office's technology support system, the district should increase departmental efficiency, streamline paperwork, and capture data for evaluations, budgets, and planning decisions. These upgrades should include specific provisions for tracking the number of parts used and related expenditures, enhanced features to monitor the

number of hours complete to streamline the Maintenance Department's processing of work orders, tracking expenditures, and providing important data for budget and planning purposes. Additionally, provisions should be included for training secretarial and office manager personnel in the technology applications to ensure maximum efficiency and effectiveness.

- **Recommendation 64 (p. 155): Develop and implement a preventive maintenance and minor maintenance program with scheduled progress reports.** The director of Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation should ensure that identified potential custodial and/or maintenance personnel receive training in specific routine preventive maintenance functions and minor maintenance activities. The district should provide each trained employee the necessary tools to complete these activities and a secured location for storing tools and required parts. Each six months, the director should present a progress report to the superintendent and the Leadership Team that includes specific indicators of overall success/value to support future decisions regarding the cost-effectiveness and efficiency of the program.

- **Recommendation 65 (p. 155): Implement a districtwide energy management and accounting program including associated training.** The superintendent should work with the director of Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation to develop an energy management program and accounting practices in accordance with existing district policies and include administrative training on the program, policies, and respective campus responsibilities. The director of HR should include energy information in employee handbooks, orientation, and staff training sessions. The district should include energy management orientation in videotapes of regular orientation programs in the event new employees begin their respective jobs after completion of scheduled orientation session. By implementing this program, training the staff and administration, and monitoring a documented energy management program, the district should realize financial savings for possible reallocation to the classroom and increase conservation awareness.

DETAILED ACCOMPLISHMENT

CUSTODIAL SERVICES

LISD applies a comprehensive staffing model, uses team-building activities, and schedules communication/training meetings to efficiently staff the Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation Department and effectively maintain a high employee performance level. During interviews and on responses to review surveys, administrators and staff rated facilities and grounds' services at the district and campus levels as excellent.

Custodial personnel typically work an eight-hour shift, either day or night, with appropriate breaks for meals and rest. The district uses two floater positions, one on the day shift and one on the night shift, to cover absent employees or vacant positions. The district assigns two supervisors, one during the day and one during the night, to provide employee oversight, training assistance, supply orders, facility inspections, and employee performance evaluations. The supervisors report directly to the director of the Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation Department and are readily available when employees have questions or need assistance. The supervisors routinely conduct inspections using a standardized Custodial Building Inspection Form to record observations.

The review team inspected student and adult restroom facilities, floors, windows and sills, waste and storage areas, water fountains, grounds and fencing, as well as other areas in the district's facilities. With minor exceptions, areas were clean and free of debris, flooring—new and old—was clean and appropriately finished, and restroom areas were sanitized and generally free of graffiti. The review team also found ground areas and fencing clear, and trees and shrubs trimmed. In response to surveys distributed by the review team, 75 percent of responding teachers, 76 percent of responding district administrative and support staff, and 83 percent of responding school principals and assistant principals strongly agree or agree with the statement, "*Schools are clean.*"

To enhance employee productivity and promote departmental camaraderie, the staff routinely gathers for holiday luncheons and summer recreational meetings. In addition, the director of Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation presents periodic awards to staff for outstanding job performance. According to interviews, the staff views the awards, whether certificates or small tokens of appreciation, as motivational instruments. Staff in this department also routinely conduct safety training and have meetings to discuss areas of concern.

The director of Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation uses the Association of Higher Education Facilities Officers or "APPA" staffing method rather than the industry standard model for assigning custodians to schools. The generally accepted industry standard is one custodian for 19,000 square feet, plus an additional 0.5 employee for elementary schools, 0.75 for middle or junior high schools, and 1.0 for high schools. The district applies the complex APPA custodial service staffing method because it does not simply divide overall square footage by the number of employees. The staffing method includes standards and three associated rules as follows:

- Customer Service Levels or Appearance Levels: The appearance or customer service level will suffer if staff decrease cleaning frequency;

- Standard Spaces: Not all spaces are the same. Different types of areas require different types and amounts of cleaning; and

- Cleanable Square Feet (CSF) per worker: Districts may make comparisons against this latter standard.

These standards result in a Basic Staffing Guide the district then applies to determine custodial service assignments for each facility. The first rule, Customer Service Levels or Appearance Levels, fixes the level of acceptable customer service. There are five defined levels within this rule: Level 1 – Orderly Spotlessness; Level 2 – Ordinary Tidiness; Level 3 – Casual Inattention; Level 4 – Moderate Dinginess; and Level 5 – Unkempt Neglect.

The final FTE custodial staffing formula involves a calculation based on the number of professional staff, students, square feet of floor space, and a constant number adjusted for the type of facility— high school, junior high school, elementary school, or service facility.

Exhibit 7-1 shows LISD's schools, facility square footage, acreage, number of assigned full-time equivalent (FTE) custodial positions. The exhibit also shows the application of the current APPA staffing formula and the resulting assignment of FTE per square feet.

Differences for elementary schools range from 12,750 square feet for Rolling Hills Elementary to 13,476 square feet for Pleasant Run Elementary for each eight-hour position. As shown, Lancaster Junior High School has a ratio of one position for each 13,000 square feet. Lancaster High School West campus has a ratio of one position for 22,895 square feet, while the Lancaster High School East campus has a ratio of one to 31,848 square feet. As can be seen, staffing among the schools varies.

Exhibit 7-2 provides the number of FTE positions that generally accepted industry standards recommend.

Overall, LISD staffs custodial operations with 3.2 FTEs fewer than the industry standard recommends and yet, according to both administration and staff, provides excellent services.

By combining a rigorous staffing formula with scheduled training, meetings, and morale incentives, the district efficiently and effectively provides custodial services enhancing the learning environment for students and the working environment for staff.

EXHIBIT 7-1
LISD SCHOOL FACILITIES

SCHOOLS	NUMBER OF PORTABLES	SQUARE FOOTAGE	ACRES	FULL-TIME-EQUIVALENT (FTE) CUSTODIANS	SQUARE FEET PER FTE CUSTODIAN
Lancaster High School – West	0	228,948	35.0	10.0	22,895
Lancaster High School – East	0	95,544	15.0	3.0	31,848
Lancaster Junior High School	0	78,000	33.36	6.0	13,000
Lancaster Intermediate School	3	75,573	20.00	5.0	15,115
Houston Elementary	3	37,580	10.00	2.5	15,032
Rosa Parks/Millbrook Elementary	2	55,072	9.14	4.0	13,768
Pleasant Run Elementary	1	33,691	10.00	2.5	13,476
Rolling Hills Elementary	0	51,000	12.00	4.0	12,750
West Main Elementary	1	34,622	8.40	2.5	13,849
Total	**10***	**690,030**	**152.90**	**39.5**	**17,469**

NOTE: Five portables are double classrooms, and the district assigns one additional portable to J. D. Hall Alternative Center Rocky Crest.
SOURCE: LISD, Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation Department, January 2005.

EXHIBIT 7-2
LISD CUSTODIAL STAFFING COMPARED WITH INDUSTRY STANDARDS

SCHOOLS	TOTAL SQUARE FOOTAGE	ASSIGNED FULL-TIME (FTE) CUSTODIANS	INDUSTRY STANDARD FULL-TIME (FTE) EQUIVALENT	ABOVE/(BELOW) INDUSTRY STANDARD
Lancaster High School – West	228,948	10.0	13.0	(3.0)
Lancaster High School – East	95,544	3.0	6.0	(3.0)
Lancaster Junior High School	78,000	6.0	5.0	1.0
Lancaster Intermediate School	75,573	5.0	4.5	0.5
Houston Elementary	37,580	2.5	2.5	NA
Rosa Parks/Millbrook Elementary	55,072	4.0	3.5	0.5
Pleasant Run Elementary	33,691	2.5	2.5	NA
Rolling Hills Elementary	51,000	4.0	3.2	0.8
West Main Elementary	34,622	2.5	2.5	NA
Total	690,030	39.5	42.7	(3.2)

NOTE: NA denotes not applicable.
SOURCE: LISD, Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation Department, January 2005.

DETAILED FINDINGS

TEN-YEAR FACILITIES MASTER PLAN (REC. 61)

Although the district developed a bond facilities plan, LISD has no long-range facilities document incorporating student enrollment projections, bond documents, current facilities data, and districtwide goals. Although the district has not experienced major renovations in 15 years, since the 1989 construction of Rolling Hills Elementary, student enrollment is increasing.

Exhibit 7-3, shows student enrollment projections by grade level groupings for 2004–05 through the 2008–09 school years developed for Lancaster ISD by the firm, Population & Survey Analysts of College Station, Texas. As can be seen, the district projects an enrollment increase of 1,245 students, representing a 24 percent growth rate over five years. During the on-site visit, the superintendent reported that current year enrollment growth is already ahead of the 2003–04 increases. As a result, the district added 11 single and double portable classrooms before the implementation of the first phase of the February 2004 bond initiative.

In response to the growth projections, the superintendent and staff prepared a two-phase facilities construction plan driving the $110 million bond. The review team surveyed teachers and asked them to respond to the statement, "*The district plans facilities far enough in the future to support enrollment growth.*" Fifty-six percent of the respondents stated they agree or strongly agree, 18.2 percent have no opinion, and 25 percent disagree or strongly disagree.

Exhibit 7-4 shows the major project categories and estimated costs.

Based on this information, the Lancaster ISD staff prepared a comprehensive Master Plan and Existing Facilities Report. While this provides the district with a basis to complete the bond program, it does not fully provide the district with long-range facilities needs.

The district uses the 2004–05 draft District Improvement Plan (DIP), a needs assessment from the construction firm, and some documents developed before bond passage as its immediate plan for facilities improvements. The LISD board placed bond issues before Lancaster voters in 1905, 1931, 1960, 1973, 1984, and then twenty years later when community voters passed the $110 million bond package in February 2004. Administration, board members, and staff said community approval of the bond is a catalyst for change, improving education for LISD's students by ensuring availability of state-of-the-art facilities, technology, and other support equipment.

EXHIBIT 7-3
LISD FIVE-YEAR STUDENT ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS
BY GRADE LEVEL GROUPINGS
2004–05 THROUGH 2008–09

GRADE LEVEL GROUPING	2004–05	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09	TOTAL INCREASE
EE & Pre-K	239	251	263	276	290	51
K–4	1,700	1,791	1,888	1,990	2,081	381
5–6	730	760	818	859	904	174
7–8	904	919	945	984	1,052	148
9–12	1,523	1,678	1,820	1,916	2,014	491
Total	5,096	5,399	5,734	6,025	6,341	1,245

SOURCE: LISD, Office of Special Assistant to the Superintendent for Construction, December 2004, and Population & Survey Analysts, College Station, Texas, December 2004.

EXHIBIT 7-4
LISD BOND FACILITIES PLAN
DECEMBER 2003

PROJECT	PHASE	ESTIMATED COST (MILLIONS)
Lancaster High – New Construction Replacement Facility	1	$65.0
West High Campus – Renovation	1	8.0
Rocky Crest Alternative – Renovation	1	1.5
Lancaster ISD Administrative Offices – Renovate Old School Facility	1	3.0
Land Purchase and Other Improvements	1	2.5
Total Phase 1		**$80.0**
Lancaster Elementary – New School	2	9.5
Technology Upgrades	2	5.0
Rosa Parks/Millbrook Elementary – Renovation	2	1.2
Pleasant Run Elementary – Renovation and New Gym	2	3.6
Rolling Hills Elementary – Renovation	2	0.4
West Main Elementary – Renovation and New Gym	2	3.5
Junior High – Convert to Middle School	2	1.5
Intermediate School – Renovate to Elementary School	2	2.0
East Campus High School – Renovate to Elementary School	2	2.2
Phase 2 Bond Program Costs	2	1.1
Total Phase 2		**$30.0**
Total Estimated Bond Program Cost		**$110.0**

SOURCE: LISD, Office of Special Assistant to the Superintendent for Construction, December 2004.

Many school districts and other organizations minimally develop, review, and amend five-year plans. Some districts experiencing fast student growth create ten-year plans. Often districts assess the age and condition of each facility's HVAC system, roof, electrical, and other components as a part of this planning process. Creating and incorporating such a facilities plan into an overall strategic document, provides district administrators and boards with the necessary information and documentation to understand conditions and needs, prioritize projects, and make informed budgetary decisions.

The LISD board should instruct the superintendent to develop, annually review, and update a Ten-Year Facilities Master Plan. The plan should incorporate an analysis of existing facilities' conditions with emphasis on HVAC systems, roofs, plumbing, and electrical service. The district should include data from the student-enrollment projection studies and the bond master planning report as essential elements of a long-range facilities master plan.

The district should also include projected costs for all improvements, additions, new facilities, furnishings, instructional equipment, technology, and other instructional and support media. By including enrollment projections, annual facility and building equipment conditions, and overall districtwide goals into a long-range plan, the district provides the board and the community with a complete listing of identified facility needs and the time to prioritize projects and budget for the necessary fiscal resources.

FACILITIES CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT (REC. 62)

Internal management practices and procedures are incomplete, as is external oversight for construction projects. The district does not have an independent accountability function or detailed construction management procedures to ensure completion of construction and renovation projects within budget and according to voter-approved bond plans. The board has adopted policies to guide the selection of facilities construction management firms and establish related agreements, change orders, and purchasing procedures. In June 2004 at the start of the Phase I bond construction projects, the district hired a special assistant to the superintendent for construction (construction manager). The construction manager provides monthly progress reports to the board at scheduled meetings and began but did not finish procedural documents.

In addition, Objective Four of the 2004–05 draft DIP states that the district will appoint a Citizen's Oversight Committee to monitor and revise, if necessary, processes related to the construction bond program. However, as of May 2005, the district had not adopted the 2004–05 DIP including the Citizen's Oversight Committee or required the construction manager to complete detailed procedures. When asked about the Citizen's Oversight Committee during meetings with the review team, staff said the objective was included in the development stage of the document but did not apply because the plan did not receive board approval. Some staff and a board member expressed concern about how to ensure renovation and construction projects proceed as

outlined to the community before the bond election. Several staff mentioned the lack of a Citizen's Oversight Committee.

The special assistant to the superintendent, employed in June 2004, began developing procedural documents but did not complete them. In April 2005, the district added a website link allowing users to view daily progress at all Phase I construction sites. Although uncorroborated, the district also posted a bond update on its website that includes the information listed in **Exhibit 7-5**.

Many districts establish a community or stakeholder oversight committee including members from city councils or active business members as an external control measure during times of construction and renovation. Many districts also complete procedural documents for construction and renovation administration processes before beginning actual projects.

While the district is taking steps in the right direction, the superintendent and the board should jointly appoint a Citizen's Oversight Committee comprised of a broad stakeholder group. The administration should consider input regarding membership from city officials, the Chamber of Commerce, business and community representatives, and other entities that actively supported passage of the bond issue. The superintendent should establish a series of operating guidelines and establish the functions of a committee chair before appointing the Oversight Committee. Once appointed, the board president and superintendent should meet with the Oversight Committee to review their responsibilities, operating protocol, and assign the special assistant to the superintendent for construction as a day-to-day liaison.

The superintendent should also ensure the complete development and approval of an internal

management practices and procedures manual for the Construction Department. The special assistant to the superintendent for Construction should spearhead these efforts in conjunction with the superintendent, chief financial officer, and the director of Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation. In addition, the special assistant to the superintendent of Construction should maintain and update these procedures, and the director of HR should add this accountability function to the appropriate job description for use in annual performance reviews. Expediting completion of these procedural documents should permit the special assistant to the superintendent for Construction to oversee and manage his responsibilities in accordance with agreed-upon practices. This should also provide assurances to the board and community stakeholders that the district is employing effective standard operating procedures.

MAINTENANCE OFFICE TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT (REC. 63)

LISD maintenance software forms do not track expenditures, and departmental staff does not complete all manual work orders and project-related filing and data analysis. Consequently, the department does not maximize its planning processes, produce usable cost reports and maintain current inventory records. In addition, the district manually tracks work orders, projects, and related expenditures. The staff places all project-related materials in a hardcopy file folder as time permits. During interviews by the review team, the staff said the department only nominally accomplishes tracking its activities and expenditures due to diverse duties, and it is difficult to use the data to evaluate maintenance activity or project materials and budget needs.

EXHIBIT 7–5
LISD APRIL 2005 BOND PROGRAM UPDATE PUBLICATION

Bond Expenditures
Phase I Bond expenditures are within the budget approved by the Board of Trustees in October 2004, therefore *there* **is no deficit** in the Bond Program.

The 2004 construction market experienced an unforeseen increase in material costs of nearly 25% from January 2004 to September 2004. LISD is approaching Phase II with caution in relation to the construction market.

Phase I Project Status:
J. D. Hall at Rocky Crest Renovation—Complete
Administration Building Renovation—Complete
New High School—Complete Fall 2006
High School Stadium & Athletic Complex—Complete Fall 2005

Timeline and Schedule
Due to an unprecedented rate of growth in the Lancaster Community, completion dates for Phase II construction projects has been accelerated. Contract documents for Phase II are currently being developed.

All projects at the High School Complex began simultaneously in August 2004. The reason the Athletic Complex will be completed first is the construction time required is **9 months** and the new high school construction time required is **24 months** to complete.

SOURCE: http://www.lancasterisd.org, April 2005.

The director of Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation and one secretary staff the department. In addition to handling maintenance, custodial, and transportation services, the district also assigns emergency management, telephone services, and other responsibilities to the director. The director and the departmental secretary use word processing software to track maintenance or custodial projects.

Some districts similar in size to LISD capitalize on their technology capabilities to develop systems that reduce paperwork handling and processing, produce usable cost reports, and electronically maintain inventory records. There is a variety of available computerized maintenance management applications. Many districts use software packages that provide a range of service options including functions to track expenses, utilities, locks/keys, and preventive maintenance schedules.

The district should upgrade the Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation Department technology support system because LISD's size does not warrant the addition of personnel in comparison with districts of similar size. However, the district's bond issue already includes $5 million for administrative and instructional technology upgrades. These upgrades should include provisions to streamline the Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation Department's work order processing and related tracking of expenditures.

Additionally, the district should include provisions for training secretarial and office manager personnel in the technology applications to ensure maximum efficiency and effectiveness. By enhancing available software applications, the district provides important data to the Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation Department administration for important analysis, budget, and planning purposes.

PREVENTIVE AND MINOR MAINTENANCE PROGRAM (REC. 64)

LISD has no comprehensive districtwide preventive maintenance (PM) or minor maintenance program. The director of Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation assigns one employee PM responsibilities involving heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems and exhaust fans. This position is also responsible for various safety inspections including those for fire extinguishers and alarms. The PM responsibilities, however, do not extend to lighting, electrical, and plumbing systems resulting in reactionary responses to problems in these areas. To address some PM concerns, the district included monies in its bond program for renovation efforts.

Some school districts have trained selected building custodians in minor maintenance repairs and PM activities. These activities include but are not limited to replacing light ballasts, tightening bolts and screws on furniture, doors, and other equipment, and servicing air conditioning and heating equipment filters. These districts typically provide each trained employee with the necessary tools as well as a secured storage location.

Often investing funds into PM activities lessens reactive funding for emergency repairs or funding regular maintenance activities with bond funds, which results in higher costs.

Exhibit 7-6 outlines a sample preventive maintenance program that provides suggested information related to common maintenance tasks.

The district should develop and implement a preventive maintenance and minor maintenance program with scheduled progress reports. By implementing a minor maintenance and PM program, the district should realize reductions in minor repairs, increased equipment longevity, and staffing efficiencies. The director should identify potential custodial and/or maintenance personnel for training in specific, routine PM and minor maintenance activities such as replacing light ballasts, tightening bolts and screws on furniture, doors, and other equipment, servicing HVAC equipment filters, and other related tasks. The district should complete training in a train-the-trainer fashion by current maintenance staff while performing on-the-job activities. The district should provide each trained employee the necessary tools and a secured location for storing tools and required parts and filters. The district should also include specific indicators of program success or value in development of program evaluation parameters. Each six months, the director should present a progress report to the superintendent, Leadership Team, and the board detailing identified and projected cost savings.

This fiscal implication consists of $150 to purchase the tools to complete preventive maintenance activities for one custodian for each of the district's ten schools/campuses. This equates to a one-time cost of $1,500 (10 x $150). In addition, the district should allocate an additional $50 per year per custodian for necessary tool upgrades or replacements, equaling $500 (10 x $50) in annual expenditures beginning in 2006–07.

ENERGY MANAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTING (REC. 65)

The district has not conducted energy audits or developed a districtwide energy management program as outlined in its own board policy. Board

EXHIBIT 7-6
A SAMPLE PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE PROGRAM

AREA	COMPONENT	INSPECTION AND REPAIR (3–6 MONTH INTERVALS)	INSPECTION AND REPAIR (ANNUALLY)	INSPECTION AND REPAIR (2–5 YEAR INTERVALS)	INSPECTION AND REPLACEMENT (7–10 YEAR INTERVALS)	INSPECTION AND REPLACEMENT (12–15 YEARS)
Exterior	Roof		X	X		X
	Roof Drainage		X	X		
	Windows and Glass		X	X	X	
	Masonry		X	X		
	Foundations		X			X
	Joints and Sealants		X		X	
Equipment	Belts and Filters	X				
	Motors and Fans	X		X		X
	Pipes and Fittings	X			X	
	Ductwork		X		X	
	Electrical Controls		X		X	
	Heating Equipment	X			X	
	Air Conditioning Equipment	X			X	
Interior	Doors and Hardware		X			X
	Wall Finishes		X			X
	Floor Finishes		X		X	
Site	Parking and Walks		X	X		
	Drainage		X	X		
	Landscaping	X			X	
	Play Equipment		X		X	

SOURCE: McConnell, Jones, Lanier and Murphy, 2004.

policy CL (LOCAL), Buildings, Grounds, And Equipment Management, "…directs the Superintendent and/or designee to develop short and long range plans to bring about energy conservation in the areas of facilities management and transportation as well as to develop a curriculum that deals with energy awareness and conservation. Fulfillment of this policy is the joint responsibility of the Trustees, administrators, teachers, students, and support personnel."

The director of Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation and special assistant to the superintendent for Construction have incorporated energy management specifications into the district's new construction plans for bond-funded facilities. The district assigned oversight of the energy management function to the director of Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation who, according to interviews, conducts some individual meetings with various employees regarding energy management. The district does not conduct these efforts, however, according to any schedule or identified procedures. The district has also not conducted an energy audit. As a result, the district does not have baseline or other data for comparison purposes to use in planning and preparing energy management initiatives.

Administrators said that principals and department heads instruct staff to turn lights off, adjust non-programmable thermostats at the end of each day,

and turn off thermostats during weekends. The district did not provide evidence showing each new employee receives an orientation to an energy management program or receives training related to assigned responsibilities.

The district hired a new chief financial officer in May 2005 who compiled a list of the district's utility expenses for 2004–05 upon request. The district purchases electric services from TXU Energy, gas services from TXU Energy through January 2005 and Atmos Energy beginning in February 2005, and water from the City of Lancaster. The district changed gas providers because of a corporate buy-out. Following is a listing of the electrical, gas, and water payments for August 2004 through May 2005 (**Exhibit 7-7**).

Total electric and gas utilities for August 2004 through part of May 2005 equal $563,857. Water costs equal $89,158 for August 2004 through May 2005. Total utilities for this time equal $653,015. Using LISD's 2004–05 square footage of 690,030, the utility cost per square foot is $0.95.

LISD included the installation of an energy efficient device, Cohesive Autometric, for HVAC, lighting, and exhaust fan controls through part of its Phase I bond program. District personnel have also met with representatives from a similar company to obtain additional information for future retrofits. Many districts compile their own baseline data from existing and historical utility records. In addition,

EXHIBIT 7-7
LISD UTILITIES' EXPENSES
AUGUST 2004 THROUGH MAY 2005

UTILITY DESCRIPTION	BEGINNING COVERAGE MONTH	ENDING COVERAGE MONTH	AMOUNT PAID
TXU Energy–Electric	August 9, 2004	September 8, 2004	$125,338.94
	August 9, 2004	September 8, 2004	431.07
	September 8, 2004	October 7, 2004	68,007.15
	September 8, 2004	October 7, 2004	741.53
	September 22, 2004	October 21, 2004	192.43
	October 7, 2004	November 5, 2004	331.88
	October 7, 2004	November 5, 2004	60,383.97
	November 4, 2004	December 6, 2004	1,237.61
	November 5, 2004	December 7, 2004	487.60
	November 5, 2004	December 7, 2004	331.88
	November 5, 2004	December 7, 2004	47,117.39
	December 7, 2004	January 7, 2005	331.88
	December 7, 2004	January 7, 2005	660.13
	December 7, 2004	January 7, 2005	44,929.79
	January 7, 2005	February 4, 2005	961.47
	January 7, 2005	February 4, 2005	49,705.76
	February 4, 2005	March 8, 2005	860.28
	February 4, 2005	March 8, 2005	53,389.48
	March 8, 2005	April 7, 2005	331.88
	March 8, 2005	April 7, 2005	48,409.52
	April 7, 2005	May 6, 2005	691.55
Subtotal			**$504,873.19**
TXU Energy–Gas	August 6, 2004	September 7, 2004	263.18
	August 21, 2004	September 22, 2004	1,169.95
	August 23, 2004	September 23, 2004	97.94
	September 8, 2004	October 7, 2004	376.08
	September 23, 2004	October 22, 2004	1,735.23
	October 2, 2004	November 19, 2004	4,094.17
	November 5, 2004	December 7, 2004	1,144.71
	November 22, 2004	December 21, 2004	11,445.43
	December 7, 2004	January 7, 2005	844.78
	December 20, 2004	January 20, 2005	14,161.99
Subtotal			**$35,333.46**
Atmos Energy–Gas	January 6, 2005	February 3, 2005	702.72
	January 20, 2005	February 17, 2005	3,952.81
	January 21, 2005	February 21, 2005	5,857.03
	February 4, 2005	March 8, 2005	531.97
	February 17, 2005	March 21, 2005	8,301.13
	March 8, 2005	April 7, 2005	346.16
	March 21, 2005	April 21, 2005	3,282.03
	March 22, 2005	April 22, 2005	343.13
	April 6, 1005	May 5, 2005	96.01
	April 7, 2005	May 6, 2005	237.62
Subtotal			**$23,650.61**

SOURCE: LISD, chief financial officer, May 2005.

many public and cooperative utilities companies provide preliminary energy audits as a service provided upon request.

School districts in the state and around the country are implementing simple and innovative ways to conserve energy. Energy "accounting" as defined in California is a system to record, manage, and report energy consumption on a regular basis. Similar to the necessity of financial accounting in financial management, energy accounting is also imperative to districts in energy management programs. Here,

districts establish baseline data using utilities and establish monthly, quarterly, and annual costs for each facility and then as a whole. An energy manager then uses this data to track the success of implemented energy-saving measures. Many national districts list energy saving measures and report energy saving organizational tips on such websites as School Facilities.com.

Lowering the heat by 1° F will save 3 percent of the energy necessary to heat that space. For each hour a window is open, $.50 in energy goes out. Turning off

the lights in a classroom for one hour per day has the potential to save $30 in electricity costs per year. Multiplied by 100 classrooms, that equals $3,000 per year.

The Legislative Budget Board provides electronic access to a report identifying ten ways to cut energy costs and a list of effective energy management programs used by statewide school districts on its website located at http://www.lbb.state.tx.us/TSPR/Other/Energy_ Efficient/Energy_Efficient.pdf. The State Energy Conservation Office (SECO) offers suggestions for no-cost energy conservation actions. Many Internet-based energy-management firms publish client testimonials and free information related to the company, its client base, and energy tips. A sample of this type of information is located at http://www.energyeducation.com/energy_education _conservation_school_funding_results.

Many Texas school districts are aggressively pursuing reductions in energy costs through continuous energy management programs. These often include facility retrofits, new construction standards, partial facility closings, altered operational hours during summer months, and student-oriented lessons and projects. Wylie ISD established new utility baseline data in 2003–04 and uses an internet-based company at an annual cost of $700 for utility tracking, report generation, and facility analysis related to energy management. The district has an aggressive program that includes monthly monitoring of campus and overall utility costs per square foot and tiered-energy savings. Due to fiscal energy savings captured in 2004–05, the district plans to open a new school in 2005–06 with either no or a minimal increase in the district's projected new budget. Wylie ISD is located in Region 10 and has an enrollment of slightly more than 6,100 students. In addition, the district realized more energy savings during summer months from maintaining standard utility practices on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 9:00 each morning until noon each day than it realized by closing selected buildings for the months of June and July. Rather than have to turn on utilities during down times due to maintenance or meetings, the district now schedules any repairs, renovations, teacher workdays, professional development opportunities, and custodial services during the schedules days and times. According to district administrators, this practice also services to mitigate problems associated with humidity and mold.

Leander ISD is beginning the fifth summer of an energy management program that includes altered operational hours and closed facilities for a nine-week period. The district, that started with approximately 12,000 students in 2001 and serving approximately 20,000 students in 2005, saved more than $600,000 during the summers of 2003 and 2004. The district projects 2005 summer savings to exceed $400,000. Leander ISD's energy manager reported this amount as approximately 50 percent of that district's overall electricity costs during the summer months of June and July.

Combining student programs, retrofit activities including geothermal heat pumps, employee awareness efforts, and its summer program, Leander ISD reduced its overall energy costs from $1.15 per square foot in 2001–02 to approximately $0.82 in 2004–05. A part of an effective energy management program relies on constant consumption management as well as proper orientation and training of all employees in their specific roles. Leander aggressively pursues both, using an energy management company at an annual cost of approximately $1,000 for help in monitoring and report generation, and staff and administrative training annually, ensuring everyone knows their identified roles and potential effect in the district's overall energy management plan. The district's monitoring and management services include increases in overall square footage, important to the district due to fast student enrollment growth, and consumption rate increases. These factors allow the district to compare savings year to year. Leander has 18 of only 37 total Texas schools designated by the Environmental Protection Agency as an *EnergyStar* school.

Other districts report similar savings. Plano ISD achieved nearly $7.5 million in savings from an aggressive energy management program over a four and a half year period. Ponca City School District (PCSD) in Ponca City, Oklahoma, comprises 12 schools enrolling approximately 5,500 students, comparable to LISD in many respects. PCSD operates a two-part energy management plan. The first part includes specific energy management controls from common manufacturers that permit district personnel to monitor and chart information related to temperatures in classrooms, walk-in freezers, and coolers. The second part of the program involves staff training in energy management strategies, administrative data analysis, and routine building inspections. PCSD saved approximately $1.2 million in energy expenditures from 1997 through 2002, or average annual savings of approximately $192,000 because of its energy management program.

LISD should immediately contact some districts successfully implementing energy management programs and simultaneously implement a districtwide energy management and accounting program itself supported through board policy. The

program should include the immediate compilation of baseline data assembled from existing and historical utility records. Preliminary energy audits are typically a service rendered by public and cooperative utilities companies. The district can accomplish an orientation to energy management by creating an information or simple fact sheet explaining the energy management program and its benefits. The district should then include this information in the employee handbook and on the district's website. This information should include the specific tasks and activities of each employee in support of effective energy management. The district should incorporate this information into the existing new employee orientation program delivered by the Human Resources Department.

The district should ensure that new substitute teachers receive this information through orientation and training sessions. The district should also prepare a videotape of the regular orientation program to consistently use with new personnel employed but not involved in the regularly scheduled orientation program.

Savings for this fiscal impact are conservatively estimated using a 5 percent reduction in overall utility costs based on $653,015 paid between August 2004 and May 2005, or $32,651 annually (0.05 x $653,015). Conservatively, the district should realize half of these savings in the first year due to initial implementation of all aspects of the program. First year savings should equal $16,325 ($653,015 x .025).

The district should immediately purchase energy management services and implement an aggressive first year effort estimated at costs of $5,000. With an aggressive summer program similar to that of Wylie ISD or Leander ISD, LISD should be able to achieve additional savings. To be conservative and recognizing the district returned to a five-day week in the summer of 2005, this fiscal impact estimate does not include additional summer savings.

For more information on Chapter 7: Facilities Construction, Use, and Management, see page 235 in the General Information section of the appendices.

FISCAL IMPACT

RECOMMENDATION	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09	2009–10	5-YEAR (COSTS) OR SAVINGS	ONE-TIME (COSTS)
61. Develop, annually review, and update a Ten-Year Facilities Master Plan.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
62. Develop, approve, and implement a procedures manual for the Construction Department and appoint a Citizen's Oversight Committee.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
63. Upgrade the Maintenance Office technology support system.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	($0)
64. Develop and implement a preventive maintenance and minor maintenance program with scheduled progress reports.	$0	($500)	($500)	($500)	($500)	($2,000)	($1,500)
65. Implement a districtwide energy management and accounting program including associated training.	$16,325	$32,651	$32,651	$32,651	$32,651	$146,929	($5,000)
Chapter 7 Totals	$16,325	$32,151	$32,151	$32,151	$32,151	$144,929	($6,500)

Chapter 8

Child Nutrition

Lancaster Independent School District

CHAPTER 8
CHILD NUTRITION

The director of Child Nutrition oversees Lancaster Independent School District's (LISD) Child Nutrition Department. The department employs a Child Nutrition supervisor, nine campus managers, and 41 workers. Staff prepare and serve traditional-meal menus for breakfast and lunch throughout the district in accordance with regulations in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and the School Breakfast Program (SBP). Student participation rates have remained consistent from 2001–02 through 2003–04. Federal revenues have increased for the district since 2001, state revenue increased from 2001 to 2002 yet dropped slightly in 2003, and local revenues have increased in 2003 after a reduction in 2002 from the previous year. Overall, the enterprise fund balance for the Child Nutrition Department has continually dropped since 2000–01. The district is constructing new and renovating existing cafeterias and purchasing related equipment with funds from a $110 million bond passed in February 2004.

FINDINGS

- The Child Nutrition Department does not develop or document short- or long-term plans based on identified goals, objectives, strategies, associated budgeted funds, and performance measures.

- The district does not have board-approved policy to ensure the Child Nutrition fund balance adheres to state recommendations.

- Child Nutrition Department administration is not basing staffing decisions or productivity evaluations on available Meals Per Labor Hour (MPLH) calculations and reports available through existing electronic capabilities.

- Profit and Loss (P and L) statements and reports on student participation rates are not available by campus on a monthly or annual basis.

- LISD does not have an aggressive program to identify student eligibility for free and reduced-price meals.

- LISD does not have a process to correct problems cited on local Department of Health Inspection reports, nor does the district conduct unannounced internal inspections.

- The district does not require internal training for cafeteria line staff or require Food Service certification for the Child Nutrition director.

- LISD does not consistently enforce the cash deposit process in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles.

- The district does not differentiate catering services financial data from the general Child Nutrition financial data or review data to determine whether the program is self-funding.

- Employee evaluation forms provide for subjective, rather than objective, performance reviews.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Recommendation 66 (p. 163): Develop and implement short-and long-term Child Nutrition management plans and associated procedures.** The Child Nutrition Department has experienced frequent leadership change, has not completely addressed local Department of Health violations, is not fully capturing actual revenues and expenditures, and is experiencing continuous reductions in student participation and fund balance. By immediately completing an internal needs assessment and developing short- and long-term management plans based on documented goals, objectives, strategies, budget projections, performance measures, and associated procedures, the district can identify inefficient management practices and initiate strategies to realize immediate and future operational and cost efficiencies.

- **Recommendation 67 (p. 165): Create board policy requiring adherence to state-recommended thresholds for the Child Nutrition Fund balance.** The Child Nutrition Fund balance declined by $135,599, or 33.7 percent, since 1999-2000, which is below the Texas Education Agency's (TEA) recommended threshold of three months of operating expenditures. Projections using the same rate of expenditures exceeding revenues show the district operating completely at a loss by the end of 2006–07. The district should ensure that all Child Nutrition budgets are complete and based on revenues exceeding expenditures only until the fund balance reaches the recommended three months' worth of expenditures. By developing a policy to ensure administrators adhere to TEA threshold recommendations for the Child Nutrition fund balance, the district can take necessary measures to ensure the Child Nutrition Program is self-funding and operates within established financial guidelines. In addition, the district offsets the risk of having to fund program expenditures from the General Fund balance, which would potentially take resources otherwise available for classroom use.

- **Recommendation 68 (p. 166): Expand productivity reporting and analysis to include Meals Per Labor Hour as a key indicator for staffing decisions and productivity evaluations.** The director of Child Nutrition should generate monthly, quarterly, and annual Meals Per Labor Hour (MPLH) reports for each campus and districtwide using existing report capabilities. By standardizing MPLH as a key performance measure for productivity and as a criterion in staffing allocations, the district can perform production trend analyses, project statistically based staffing needs for annual budget proposals, and increase overall campus and departmental efficiencies.

- **Recommendation 69 (p. 167): Develop districtwide and campus Child Nutrition Profit and Loss statements and student participation reports on a monthly basis.** Profit and Loss (P and L) statements provide managers with information about the viability of their respective operations. The director of Child Nutrition should develop and consistently implement a series of P and L statements and supporting detailed reports monthly through monitoring the Child Nutrition Fund Balance and participation rates. By consistently reviewing the profitability of campus operations in relationship to participation fluctuations, the district can conduct accurate trend analyses, identify internal best practices, and immediately implement financial and production strategies to address participation concerns.

- **Recommendation 70 (p. 168): Implement a multi-tiered free and reduced-price eligibility identification process and streamline application processing.** While the district has an application that qualifies all siblings in one family, Child Nutrition staff has not initiated any additional efforts during the year to ensure all qualified students are participating in the program. In addition, the district uses two administrative clerks to perform some overlapping duties when processing applications. By using a variety of enrollment campaigns to inform parents and students of the benefits of participation in the free and reduced-price meal program, the district can increase student applications. The district can also streamline the application process by moving to an electronic application and transferring all application duties to one clerk.

- **Recommendation 71 (p. 169): Develop and implement corrective action plans and procedures based on local Department of Health citations and conduct unannounced internal inspections.** The district should conduct unannounced internal inspections of all cafeterias and kitchens to continually focus staff attention on food safety and sanitation. In addition, the district should develop procedures detailing the necessary steps for corrective action plans based on local Department of Health citations. By routinely monitoring safety and sanitation operations in campus cafeterias and kitchens and using a corrective action plan to address identified violations, the district ensures increased compliance with health regulations.

- **Recommendation 72 (p. 169): Require annual safety and sanitation training for all Child Nutrition staff and certification for the director.** The district should hold annual training for new and returning employees during in-service days and through a variety of available training resources. Resources include videotapes from Regional Education Service Center X (Region 10), safety videotapes from the Texas Association of School Boards, and internal train-the-trainers workshops conducted after designated personnel attend training offsite. By implementing a mandatory training program for Child Nutrition staff and requiring Child Nutrition certification for the director including annual re-certification hours, the district can enhance overall departmental safety and sanitation operations and performance.

- **Recommendation 73 (p. 170): Implement a Child Nutrition cash deposit process according to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles.** By requiring Child Nutrition administrators and employees to adhere to a cash deposit process based on Generally Accepted Accounting Principles, the district reduces risks associated with the collection of cash at school cafeterias.

- **Recommendation 74 (p. 170): Create separate account codes to differentiate catering financial data from general Child Nutrition Department financial data and set catering event pricing to recover district costs.** The district cannot determine the profitability of its catering program because it commingles associated financial data with that of the Child Nutrition Department. The district should create an account code that differentiates catering revenues and expenditures from the

general Child Nutrition accounts before the start of 2005–06. Pricing for catered events should minimally include the cost of food preparation, labor, supplies, and equipment use to help the district recover internal expenditures and begin to operate a profitable catering service. By separately identifying and tracking catering financial data and by gradually including all preparation and use costs into an event pricing schedule, the district can clearly evaluate the annual profitability and benefits of the program and make informed decisions about continuing the program and ensuring that set pricing is enough to recover costs.

▪ **Recommendation 75 (p. 171): Include department-specific performance objectives in Child Nutrition employee evaluations.** The director of Child Nutrition should work with the director of Human Resources to modify existing Child Nutrition employee evaluations. By including department-specific performance measures in these evaluations, the district should focus attention on productivity and workload and provide relevant data to employees to enhance overall department operations.

DETAILED FINDINGS

CHILD NUTRITION DEPARTMENT MANAGEMENT (REC. 66)

The Child Nutrition Department does not develop or document short- or long-term plans based on identified goals, objectives, strategies, associated budgeted funds, and performance measures. The district has generic policies about the Child Nutrition program that cover purchasing, facilities, equipment, management, and community relations. These policies are consistent with state and federal guidelines, but the district does not tailor them to meet the specific needs of the district. In addition, there are no formal procedures available to put policies into action. The director has the capabilities for a MPLH report but does not run it consistently.

The district also receives detailed transaction reports on revenue and expenditures from the Finance Office but does not use them to develop financial or operational goals and performance measures for the department.

The Child Nutrition Fund balance declined by $135,599, or 33.7 percent, since 1999-2000, which is below TEA's recommended threshold of three months of operating expenditures. **Exhibit 8-1** shows that LISD revenue totals are lower than revenues for DeSoto, Red Oak, and Sheldon Independent School Districts and above revenues for Terrell ISD during 2002–03.

An absence of planning documents has resulted in new management having to discover efficiencies and inefficiencies in a reactionary method. This lack of documentation has also meant that management cannot review historical procedures or determine whether the department historically defined, prioritized, or met goals. Without efficient and effective operational management in the Child Nutrition Department, the district could continue to lose money in this area based on too many staff, high expenses, and the reduction in student participation rates. All of these factors contribute to lower reimbursement funds that can then lead to using more of the General Fund to offset losses. The district may also find its kitchens closed because it lacks corrective action plans for health inspection citations. It may deplete its enterprise fund, since planning tools and procedures are not in place to operate child nutrition services efficiently and effectively.

Exhibit 8-2 shows a list of practices used by management in many food service departments to ensure efficiency and effectiveness.

Many Child Nutrition Departments develop and consistently monitor planning documents with goals, objectives, strategies, budgets, and written procedures. Planning documents are effective tools to manage such operations by providing specific and measurable departmental goals. Goals are attainable

EXHIBIT 8-1
ACTUAL CHILD NUTRITION REVENUE FINANCIAL INFORMATION
FEDERAL F33 REPORTS FROM 2001 THROUGH 2003

DISTRICT	2003			2002			2001		
	LOCAL	STATE	FEDERAL	LOCAL	STATE	FEDERAL	LOCAL	STATE	FEDERAL
Lancaster ISD	$558,446	$14,821	$818,766	$505,372	$15,965	$706,259	$521,126	$15,610	$645,455
DeSoto ISD	1,417,392	25,819	961,435	1,376,750	24,270	825,564	1,289,249	23,582	695,446
Red Oak ISD	847,667	15,021	376,997	884,871	15,352	321,099	862,405	14,698	288,946
Sheldon ISD	521,306	13,862	968,445	534,744	13,201	840,231	478,706	14,498	772,841
Terrell ISD	408,656	38,558	1,009,992	339,346	15,616	955,669	403,890	15,333	940,664

NOTE: Data from the Texas Education Agency F33 Report is district-level reporting to the federal government.
SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, F33-Library, 2004.

EXHIBIT 8-2
SAMPLE CHILD NUTRITION DEPARTMENT GOALS AND RELATED STRATEGIES

GOALS	RELATED STRATEGIES
Employ qualified staff with experience managing a profitable school district food service operation that demonstrates proficiency:	• show a clear direction of and control over resources and services through effective program management; • establish a written mission statement and strategic plan to include long-range goals, short-term objectives and priorities, and plans of action with timelines and resources allocated to achieve goals; and • create comprehensive written policies and procedures for all personnel.
Identify and address barriers for student participation in free or reduced-priced meals:	• distribute educational materials to parents, students, and staff that promote school nutrition; • establish procedures to control meals and snacks that compete with district operations; • establish procedures to offer a variety of a la carte alternatives; and • solicit feedback from parents, students, and staff through surveys to identify barriers to food service program participation.
Establish cost-efficiencies based on benchmarks:	• establish goals based on MPLH industry standards and strategies to reach these goals; • establish best practice procedures to aggressively identify and enroll students eligible for free or reduced meal prices; • communicate procedures and goals to all child nutrition staff throughout a district; and • communicate the importance of meal reimbursement rates based on student participation.
Regularly monitor and evaluate the food services operations to increase revenue and reduce expenditures based on best practices:	• measure, report, and evaluate productivity monthly using MPLH standards; • evaluate staff wages, salaries, and benefits annually based on benchmark data and comparable positions within the district; • measure, report, and evaluate student participation rates compared to best practices; • analyze internal service delivery as compared to the cost/benefits of available alternatives such as outsourcing; and • evaluate the cost effectiveness of breakfast, lunch, and snack prices.
Maintain financial accountability:	• develop planning documents, such as goals, objectives, strategies, and aligned budgets with scheduled monitoring and evaluation procedures; • develop and practice generally accepted accounting principles; • develop monthly financial and student participation reports by campus or individual food service preparation sites; • charge all applicable indirect costs to the food service operation; • provide an accountability instrument to identify why students are/are not participating in the food services program; • regularly evaluate and improve purchasing practices; • establish effective inventory procedures; and • establish an efficient equipment replacement policy and offset costs using enterprise funds when appropriate.
Prepare and serve nutritional meals with minimal waste while ensuring a safe and sanitary environment:	• develop a guiding process and provide staff training on food safety, sanitation, proper food storage and handling, communication, customer service, and recognized dietary guidelines including meal portions; • develop a process to meet national and/or state nutritional guidelines; • develop procedures to minimize the amount of leftovers; and • follow state and local safety and environmental health practices and regulations through established accountability and performance measures.

SOURCE: MGT of America, 2004.

by incorporating objectives and strategies into budgets. These departments often use written operational procedures to institutionalize effective management practices if leadership changes. Procedures include all aspects of child nutrition including safety, sanitation, security, food preparation, kitchen preparation, equipment use, point-of-sale (cash register) use, bank deposits, reconciliation of deposits, budget development, purchasing, nutritional menu selection, and pricing. Procedures also include relevant perspectives from both district and kitchen staff. These tools provide district administrators the opportunity for consistently monitoring monthly budgets, comparing goals with results attained, and adjusting strategies to reach stated goals. Properly written procedures also allow Food Service and Child Nutrition Departments to maximize federal and state reimbursements by

ensuring staff follows proper meal preparation, serving, safety, sanitation, nutritional content, and costing processes.

The superintendent should instruct the director of Child Nutrition to work with cafeteria managers and the chief financial officer to develop short-and long-term management plans with goals, objectives, strategies, budget, and written procedures for the Child Nutrition Department that are consistent with districtwide objectives. One specific goal for Child Nutrition in LISD should be to increase revenues in line with peer districts with similar demographics, eligibility criteria, and student enrollment. After approval by the superintendent and the board, the director of Child Nutrition should assign documented monitoring tasks to cafeteria managers and include review of all reports during scheduled manager meetings and in director meetings with the superintendent.

CHILD NUTRITION FUND BALANCE POLICIES (REC. 67)

The district does not have a board-approved policy to ensure the Child Nutrition fund balance adheres to state recommendations. The Enterprise or Child Nutrition Fund balance declined by $135,599, 33.7 percent, since 1999-2000. In addition, the Child Nutrition Fund balance is below TEA's suggested threshold of three months operating expenditures. As shown in **Exhibit 8-3**, the balance has continued to drop each year. This is due to expenditures exceeding revenue. In addition, Child Nutrition expenditures do not include the proportionate share of indirect costs for utilities needed to operate districtwide kitchens further increasing departmental expenses.

Exhibit 8–4 compares the LISD Child Nutrition expenditure recap for 2002–03 with 2003–04 and shows the district's 2004–05 budgeted expenditures.

The following figures, however, do not match those provided

Based upon a comparison of expenditures from 2002–03, the budgeted figures for 2004–05 in payroll reflect a 10 percent increase. 2004–05 budgeted amounts in supplies and materials are 36 percent more than expenditures in 2002–03, and 75 percent more for capital outlay to reflect kitchen renovations and additions.

If this cycle of expenditures exceeding revenues continues, the district may deplete its Child Nutrition Fund balance by the end of 2006–07. When Food Service or Child Nutrition Programs run at a loss, administrators must cover expenses through a district's General Fund, which can take dollars away from classroom instruction.

According to Section 1.3.2.4 of TEA's *Financial Accountability System Resource Guide,* the fund balance target for the Child Nutrition Program is at most equal to three months of operating expenditures. Districts must use the Child Nutrition Fund balance exclusively for allowable Child Nutrition Program purposes such as major equipment purchases for new or existing kitchen facilities. The three-month maximum requirement is the result of a provision of the National School Lunch Program Act, which requires participating schools to operate a non-profit food service program. Schools that exceed the threshold have the option of reducing the balance by increasing the quality of meals, reducing meal prices, or purchasing and maintaining adequate and necessary supplies, services, and equipment used in storing, preparing, and serving meals to children. Schools that do not comply with this requirement may not be eligible to participate in the National School Lunch Program.

To address problems arising from Child Nutrition Fund balances, either above or below recommended

EXHIBIT 8-3
CHILD NUTRITION/ENTERPRISE FUNDS
1999–2000 THROUGH 2002–03

	SPECIAL REVENUE 1999–2000	ENTERPRISE FUND		
		2000–01	2001–02	2002–03
Revenues				
Local	$518,115	$521,126	$503,372	$558,446
State	13,391	15,610	15,965	14,821
Federal	655,402	718,168	706,259	818,766
Total	**$1,186,908**	**$1,254,904**	**$1,225,596**	**$1,392,033**
Expenditures				
Total	**$1,125,273**	**$1,265,726**	**$1,352,292**	**$1,392,114**
Revenue Over (Under) Expenditures	$61,635	($10,822)	($126,696)	($81)
Beginning Fund Balance/Total Net Assets*	340,752	402,387	391,565	266,869
Ending Fund Balance/Total Net Assets	**$402,387**	**$391,565**	**$264,869**	**$266,788**

* Beginning Total Net Assets for 2002–03 reflect a district adjustment.
SOURCE: LISD, chief financial officer, 2004.

EXHIBIT 8–4
CHILD NUTRITION EXPENDITURE RECAP AND BUDGETED TOTALS
2002–03 THROUGH 2004–05

EXPENDITURE RECAP FOR 2002–03 AND 2003–04, AND 2004–05 PROJECTIONS			
35 CAFETERIA	**2002–03**	**2003–04**	**2004–05**
6100 Payroll	$706,255	$757,142	$777,000
6200 Purchase & Contract Services	48,500	48,500	51,000
6300 Supplies & Materials	640,669	687,246	868,245
6400 Other Operating Expenditures	7,000	7,000	8,000
6600 Capital Outlay	20,00	20,000	35,000
TOTAL FUNCTION 35	**$1,422,424**	**$1,519,888**	**$1,739,245**
TOTAL CHILD NUTRITION EXPENDITURES	**$1,422,424**	**$1,519,888**	**$1,739,245**
CHILD NUTRITION REVENUES			
National School Lunch Program	$644,253	$752,036	$864,905
National School Breakfast Program	128,262	148,606	148,606
State Matching	17,000	15,000	15,000
Commodities	91,169	67,946	72,045
Local Revenues	541,740	536,300	638,689
TOTAL REVENUES	**$1,422, 424**	**$1,519,888**	**$1,739,245**

SOURCE: LISD, Child Nutrition Department, 2004.

thresholds, some districts adopt a policy to ensure administrators closely monitor associated expenditures and revenues and regularly report to boards on policy implementation. Often, these districts use related policy to ensure that Child Nutrition Programs correctly complete and submit budgets with all associated and allowable costs.

The district should adopt a board policy to ensure that Child Nutrition fund balances adhere to the maximum threshold recommended by TEA. The director of Child Nutrition and the chief financial officer should ensure that associated Child Nutrition budgets are complete and revenues should exceed expenditures only until the fund balance reaches the three months' worth of expenditures. The district should also have a budget and spending plan in place to increase revenues by expenditures to cover capital outlay purchases on an annual basis along with three months of operational costs.

PRODUCTIVITY AND STAFFING
(REC. 68)
Child Nutrition Department administration is not basing staffing decisions or productivity evaluations on available Meals Per Labor Hour (MPLH) calculations and reports available through existing electronic capabilities. The 2004–05 budget for cafeteria staff is $777,000, which is 45 percent of the operating budget for the Child Nutrition Department. Districtwide and campus MPLH rates are below benchmark levels of 16-20 MPLH, resulting in higher costs for Child Nutrition services. MPLH calculations measure the average number of

full meals and meal equivalents served divided by the number of employee hours worked. MPLH calculations provide a way to determine the level of efficiency in meal delivery: the higher the MPLH, the more efficient the provision of meals. While the district has the electronic reporting capability to produce MPLH calculations and reports, as of March 2005, the director of Child Nutrition had only used those capabilities in a May 2004 end-of-year report presented to the board and key administrators.

MPLH calculations during a sample period in October 2004 ranged from a low of 10.53 MPLH at West Main Elementary to a high of 20.46 MPLH at Rolling Hills Elementary. Many districts use this reporting period as a beginning benchmark since August does not consist of a full month of school and September often fluctuates due to student enrollment changes and late receipt of completed applications for free and reduced-price meals.

LISD's average for the October 2004 period was 15.40 MPLH with its 41 workers, and nine managers. A Child Nutrition Department employee generally earns an average of $7.14 per hour and works 30 hours per week for 10 months a year. The schools consistently below industry standards according to the October 2004 benchmark data included Lancaster High School, Pleasant Run Elementary School, and West Main Elementary School. Child Nutrition operations at Houston Elementary School Lancaster Intermediate School, and Rosa Parks Elementary School met the standards during this time. In addition, the director has inconsistently generated campus productivity reports that include

number of meals served and revenues generated during 2004–05. However, these reports did not specifically address MPLH and the district did not use them as factors in ongoing staffing and production evaluations.

Using 2004–05 budgeted amounts and a 40 percent staffing target rate, LISD is spending more than $81,302 annually above that target.

Many districts address MPLH fluctuations, particularly those below industry standards, through an increase in meal delivery or staffing allocation adjustments. Some districts use 40 percent of budgeted expenditures as a target labor rate and 36 percent as a target rate for food costs. Management in these Food Service and Child Nutrition departments frequently complete production trend analyses and project staffing needs for annual budget proposals.

Districts continuously monitoring MPLH and using targeted staffing percentages to assist in identifying and reaching expenditure goals often maintain adequate Child Nutrition fund balances to cover all operating costs. These districts mitigate the risk of having to use district General Revenue funds for related expenses. Administrators can then address identified challenges in a timely fashion to realize an increase in departmental efficiencies. In addition, Child Nutrition administrators in these districts regularly provide the superintendent and the board with scheduled district and campus MPLH and production updates. These departmental administrators base staffing decisions and productivity evaluations on MPLH calculations.

The district should expand productivity reporting and analysis to include MPLH as a key indicator for staffing decisions and productivity evaluations. The director of Child Nutrition should monitor campus and districtwide MPLH calculations and provide the superintendent and board with monthly production reports. The district should analyze these reports, reduce staff in schools falling below the industry-suggested MPLH range, and continue to monitor campus and district rates until it reaches the target range. By standardizing MPLH as a key performance measure for productivity and as a criterion in staffing allocations, the district can perform production trend analyses, project statistically-based staffing needs for annual budget proposals, and increase overall campus and departmental efficiencies.

This fiscal impact is estimated on a reduction of three of a total of 41 Child Nutrition staff to minimally reach district and campus MPLH rates in the range of 16 to 20 based upon average productivity rates generated in October 2004. An employee earning an average of $7.14 per hour x 30 hours per week x 4 weeks per month x 10 months equals an annual salary of $8,568 plus 9 percent benefits of $771 ($8,568 x 0.09), or a yearly total of $9,339. Annual savings realized from a reduction of three employees earning the same salary with the same benefits is $28,017 ($9,339 x 3). Five-year savings equal $140,085.

DISTRICTWIDE CAMPUS-LEVEL REPORTS (REC. 69)

Profit and Loss (P and L) statements and reports on student participation rates are not available by campus on a monthly or annual basis. Current reports only provide partial pictures of the total Child Nutrition delivery service and do not allow LISD administrators to analyze strengths, weaknesses, or trends by campus or by meal. The districtwide monthly total meal revenue report is the only report currently available in 2004–05 except for a daily campus snapshot picture.

Exhibit 8-5 shows the districtwide participation rate for free and reduced-price meals. The district increased the participation rate for free lunches between 2001–02 and 2003–04, while the participation rate for reduced-price lunches declined.

The current P and L statements provided to the director of Child Nutrition do not include indirect costs such as gas, electric, and water. The district only prepares the statements annually on a districtwide basis and not for each individual campus. Not having both direct and indirect costs per campus reported on a regular basis limits the manager's ability to make informed decisions for each campus.

Many districts use software packages developed specifically for Food Service and Child Nutrition operations. These packages generally include a

EXHIBIT 8-5
DISTRICTWIDE PARTICIPATION TREND
2001–02 THROUGH 2003–04

2001–02			2002–03			2003–04		
AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCE	**FREE MEALS**	**REDUCED-PRICE MEALS**	**AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCE**	**FREE MEALS**	**REDUCED-PRICE MEALS**	**AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCE**	**FREE MEALS**	**REDUCED-PRICE MEALS**
3,965	1,559	555	4,230	1,659	504	4,300	1,784	496

SOURCE: LISD, Child Nutrition Department, 2004.

variety of reporting options for districtwide and campus administration. Districts often use P and L statements that include direct and indirect costs on a monthly basis for monitoring and analysis. P and L statements, if allocated at the appropriate level, provide managers with information about how well their operation is running. Best practices indicate that revenue offsets all expenditures with ongoing monitoring and adjustments. Expenditures generally included in a monthly P and L statement are food, labor (salary, health insurance, workers' compensation, and other benefits), non-food supplies, equipment, indirect costs for utilities, maintenance, repairs, purchasing, and central office support.

Breakeven reports provide supporting documentation for the P&L statements. The breakeven reports by meal allow staff to identify expensive and profitable meal production costs. They also assist managers and departmental administrators in the budget process for menu planning. Including fund balance information in administrative financial statements also help directors identify funds to update Child Nutrition equipment as they become available.

Campus participation reports often include student participation rates for free and reduced meals, average daily attendance for the campus, revenue collected, and reimbursements received. This enables districts to accurately monitor campus operations and make decisions based on campus-level data. As a best practice, the Child Nutrition administration then shares this report with all cafeteria managers to assist in analysis and ensuing discussions for improvement.

The director of Food Services in South San Antonio Independent School District (SSAISD) developed a user-friendly spreadsheet profit and loss model with five linked worksheets. SSAISD's point of sale system did not have a financial reporting module, and reports were difficult to extract. The model includes the following: a meals and claim spreadsheet that includes a MPLH analysis, a monthly profit and loss calculation by cafeteria, a summary of year-to-date profit and loss, a department recap summarizing information for the board, and a department budget summary. It takes the director about 1.5 hours per month to update labor, food, and meal counts from tracking sheets. From automatic calculations, the director monitors revenues and expenditures, validates monthly NSLP and SBP

The district should develop and immediately begin using comprehensive P and L statements as well as campus breakeven and student participation reports. The chief financial officer should assist the director of Child Nutrition in defining the parameters and

data for inclusion in these statements and reports. The district should contact other Food Service operations to obtain sample statements and reports to assist the director of Child Nutrition in these efforts.

PROGRAMS IDENTIFYING STUDENTS FOR FREE/REDUCED-PRICE MEALS (REC. 70)

LISD does not have an aggressive program to identify student eligibility for free and reduced-price meals. Campus administrators include applications for free and reduced-price meals in student enrollment packages distributed to both new and returning students. Parents return completed applications either to campus administrators or to district administration. In 2003–04, the district received a total of $1,043,618 in revenues from students identified as eligible for free and reduced-price meals each month.

The district currently processes collected applications but does not engage in other activities to pursue students who might be eligible for free or reduced-priced meals. The Child Nutrition Department uses its two clerks to process completed applications by hand. During the year, the district does not redistribute forms, contact potentially eligible families, or have an electronic version of the form available on the district's website.

By not using multiple avenues to increase numbers of students applying for free and reduced-price meals, the department does not maximize student participation in the programs.

Many districts use a multi-tiered approach to increase student applications for free and reduced-price meals. This approach often includes initial inclusion of eligibility applications in student registration packets and several campaigns conducted during the year assisting parents in completing applications or determining eligibility status. Many districts with the available technology provide electronic access to eligibility applications and track family registrations from year to year. Some districts electronically track participation in free and reduced-price meal programs and proactively contact parents each year to verify eligibility status if they do not receive new applications. Other districts set up booths or have appropriate administrators at back-to-school nights and other parent events to promote completion of eligibility applications. These districts also stress privacy and confidentiality during this process as part of the marketing campaign to increase participation, especially among high school students. Districts often see an increase in overall participation rates resulting from their efforts.

LISD should implement a multi-tiered approach to increase student applications for free and reduced-price meals. The estimated fiscal impact consists of a 10 percent increase in overall participation using existing resources. The district should be able to realize $104,362 ($1,043,618 x 10 percent) in increased revenues annually based on the district's 2003–04 total reimbursement of $1,043,618.

INSPECTION PROCESS (REC. 71)

LISD does not have a process to correct problems cited on local Department of Health Inspection reports, nor does the district conduct unannounced internal inspections. The director of Child Nutrition is a former health inspector and was aware of prior campus citations. However, there is no current process to evaluate reports and subsequently create and implement corrective action plans to resolve official citations. During September 28, 2004, Houston Elementary School received citations from the local Department of Health detailing numerous safety and sanitation violations including an uncovered overhead light, visible dust on a vent near food preparation/serving areas, openly stored personal items, a broken backboard, and a warming oven with a broken seal.

While on-site, the review team visited the campus and found the district had not corrected most of the citation items. The district also had not developed plans to address necessary corrective actions. While staff relocated personal items to a locked closet, dust was still visible on the vent, the overhead light was still not covered, plans were not available to replace the double sink with a three-partition sink, the backboard had not been replaced, and the seal was still broken on the warming oven where the staff continued to warm pending lunches.

According to staff interviews, the district also does not conduct unannounced inspections by internal staff. Without these types of inspections, the district does not know or cannot adequately ensure compliance with health and safety regulations unless an inspector visits from the local Department of Health. If the district does not resolve the current situation, LISD's school cafeterias may face detrimental actions by the local Department of Health. Another potential consequence might involve spreading illness to students and child nutrition employees, especially if the staff do not keep the warming oven at the proper temperature due to the broken seal.

Best practices used in other school districts include procedures to ensure implementation and compliance with corrective action plans developed from local Department of Health citations and

related findings. In addition, many districts incorporate unscheduled internal inspections to see if kitchens and cafeterias comply with appropriate health regulations on any given day. Internal and unannounced inspections keep cafeteria managers and departmental directors in these districts continually focused on food safety and sanitation.

LISD should document procedures and implement corrective action plans based on local Department of Health citations and conduct unannounced internal inspections. The director of Child Nutrition should conduct these internal inspections because of his experience and skills as a previous health inspector. The director of Child Nutrition, however, should document and institutionalize the inspection process to ensure procedural continuation and consistency in the event of administrative absence and/or turnover. Through these efforts, the district should improve scores on future local Department of Health inspections and ensure continued departmental focus on food safety and sanitation efforts.

STAFF TRAINING (REC. 72)

The district does not require internal training for cafeteria line staff or require Food Service certification for the Child Nutrition director.

Currently, district administration staff and cafeteria managers attend mandatory safety and sanitation training annually and have attended refresher training on updates to the Child Nutrition application process, dealing with difficult employees, production records, and anger management. The district does not require either internal or external training for line food server and food preparation staff.

Child Nutrition staff need safety and sanitation training to understand their role in delivering child nutrition meals safely. Without the continued reinforcement of training, the consequences could result in contamination of food, injuries, or worse, which could prove to be a financial burden on the district.

The current director of Child Nutrition has professional experience in school administration but has not previously managed Food Service operations. Region 10 provides training for child nutrition administrators and managers, but LISD does not currently require this of its Child Nutrition director. The cost for travel for training to the Regional Education Service Center is approximately $500 per trip based on data provided by the district.

Region 10 offers courses based on target audience. It targets Level III and Level IV courses at managers and administrators. Topics include: Basic Management Functions; Equipment Use and

Maintenance; Food Buying Guide; Food Habits and Dietary Standards; Important Nutrients; Leadership Skills; Work Simplification; Cost Control; Managing Employees; Nutrition in the Life Cycle; Record Keeping; and Selecting, Receiving, and Storage.

After meetings with the review team, the director of Child Nutrition began taking certification courses in spring 2005 through Region 10.

LISD should require mandatory safety and sanitation training program for all child nutrition staff and require certification of the director of Child Nutrition. LISD should contact Region 10 representatives to obtain videotapes of training tracks for sanitation and safety to provide internal training to staff. By using available training resources and providing in-house professional development, the district eliminates travel costs associated with sending the entire Child Nutrition Department for training.

The director should continue taking appropriate courses for certification and provide train-the-trainer courses to cafeteria managers using information learned in these classes. By requiring the director and managers to annually attend relevant training in Child Nutrition management and operations, the district establishes performance accountability and ensures the department meets federal and state requirements while operating a more efficient department.

This fiscal impact is based on data provided by the district for registration and travel expenses for three certification/re-certification courses and trips to Region 10. The director of Child Nutrition should obtain training videotapes and provide train-the-trainer services for internal staff at no additional cost. Adhering to state parameters, each trip costs approximately $500. The cost of three training trips per year equals $1,500 ($500 x 3) for a five-year cost of $7,500.

CASH DEPOSIT PROCESS (REC. 73)
LISD does not consistently enforce the cash deposit process in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles. An August 16, 2004, memorandum states two individuals must count and initial all deposit slips. Currently, cafeteria workers count daily cash collections, complete a deposit slip, take the money to the administration office in a sealed bag, and place it with others grouped for daily deposit. The district keeps two copies of each deposit slip—one in the cafeteria and one in the administration office. In the event of a bank discrepancy between the amount on the deposit slip and the amount in the bag, the bank reseals the bag and returns it to the district's administrative office. At that point, cafeteria staff retrieves the bag and

repeats the cash deposit process with an amended deposit slip. The district does not individually bond cafeteria employees delivering money. However, the district does have risk insurance covering potential loss of funds.

Random analysis of this cash deposit process using campus data from November 2004 shows only several deposit slips with two sets of initials. On request during a visit to the same campus, staff only had one deposit slip and matching point-of-sale report for November 2004. The review team noticed cafeteria staff did not file reports in an organized manner, placing some reports with other papers and objects in a box. The manager said staff balances deposit slips to point-of-sale figures on the screen each day. However, there was no documentation available to verify this daily reconciliation.

This lack of control for cash processing can lead to potential financial risks. There is the opportunity for theft or embezzlement without proper controls. Though this is highly unlikely for the staff at LISD, the potential is there for such a risk.

Districts lower their financial risk by having a fully documented cash deposit process according to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles. Districts incorporate this process by developing and enforcing procedures requiring matched point-of-sale reports stapled to daily deposit slips previously reviewed and initialed by two employees. Administrators ensure cafeteria managers file reconciliation reports and deposit slips in an organized manner, and they notify cafeteria managers of discrepancies in writing. Implementing these principles ensures dual control over all cash transactions.

The district should immediately implement a cash deposit process according to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles to reduce potential risks associated with the collection of cash at school cafeterias. The chief financial officer should work with the director of Child Nutrition to develop updated procedures, including having two employees review and initial all deposit slips and attaching a reconciled point-of-sale report verifying the deposit amount.

CATERING (REC. 74)
The district does not differentiate catering services financial data from the general Child Nutrition financial data or review data to determine whether the catering program is self-funding. The district combines revenues and expenditures associated with catering services into the overall department accounting categories. As a result, the director of Child Nutrition and the chief financial officer cannot determine whether revenues offset catering costs.

The current accounting practice also does not allow LISD to evaluate the effectiveness and profitability of the catering program. The district is not able to determine whether the catering function of Child Nutrition is providing additional revenue or is creating additional expenses, which is not a generally accepted practice. The only invoices currently attributable to catering services are for sandwiches and breakfast items. The district does not have any other historical data for revenues or expenditures for any catered events.

Event prices by many profitable catering services include calculations for the costs of food preparation, labor, supplies, and equipment use. Often, catering administrators develop a preliminary budget that takes into account labor, food costs, and anticipated revenues. Often, administrators include the same formulas and guiding principles used for staffing and food costs in a general Child Nutrition program in auxiliary catering services. Using these types of industry best practices provides districts with the proper budget, revenue, and expense data needed to properly manage a catering service.

LISD's chief financial officer and director of Child Nutrition should create separate accounting codes for catering to differentiate revenues and expenditures from the general Child Nutrition Fund data. In addition, the catering service should set a budget according to industry standards, such as budgeting up to 40 percent of anticipated revenue towards labor costs and 36 percent towards food costs.

EVALUATION FORMS (REC. 75)

Employee evaluation forms provide for subjective, rather than objective, performance reviews. The current forms allow the supervisor to evaluate staff by circling numbers corresponding to ratings from excellent to unsatisfactory, including not applicable. Employees receive ratings for attendance, punctuality, skills required, quality and quantity of work, initiative, enthusiasm, cooperation, adaptability, poise and self-control, and friendliness and warmth. Administrators can make comments on strengths, areas of improvement, and suggested improvement plans for low ratings.

While Child Nutrition can grade on quantity and quality of work, there are no clear objectives for promoting departmental goals such as increasing MPLH and decreasing expenses.

Many effective employee evaluations include objective performance measures aligned with key campus and departmental performance objectives. This provides more meaningful employee evaluations, as shown in **Exhibit 8-6**, designed specifically for Child Nutrition staff. The sample evaluation highlights performance measures such as productivity and workload. This feedback assists with evaluation and equitable workload distribution among staff and provides more efficient and effective service delivery, including overall reductions in expenses.

The district should include department-specific performance objectives in Child Nutrition employee evaluations. The director of Child Nutrition should work with the director of Human Resources to modify existing Child Nutrition employee evaluations. By including department-specific performance measures in these evaluations, the district should focus attention on productivity and workload and provide relevant data to employees to enhance overall department operations.

EXHIBIT 8-6
SAMPLE CHILD NUTRITION EMPLOYEE EVALUATION FORM

Employee's Name: _____

Name of Evaluator: _____   Date: _____

I.   Organization and Planning

EVALUATION OF PERFORMANCE	BELOW EXPECTATIONS	MEETS EXPECTATIONS	EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS
A. Is punctual.			
B. Utilizes work time efficiently.			
C. Performs assigned duties accurately within deadlines.			
D. Demonstrates initiative provides good judgment, and solutions.			
E. Performs other duties as directed.			
Comments:			

II.   Interpersonal Relations and Communication

EVALUATION OF PERFORMANCE	BELOW EXPECTATIONS	MEETS EXPECTATIONS	EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS
A. Demonstrates courtesy and professionalism in all communications.			
B. Maintains appropriate and effective communications with co-workers, teachers, administration, students, parents, and the general public.			
Comments:			

III.   Professional Responsibilities/Qualities

EVALUATION OF PERFORMANCE	BELOW EXPECTATIONS	MEETS EXPECTATIONS	EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS
A. Maintains effective working relationships with other employees; works effectively as a team member; maintains positive attitude.			
B. Demonstrates willingness to pursue professional development, training, and growth opportunities.			
C. Observes and promotes a safe and sanitary environment.			
D. Demonstrates flexibility in work assignments and schedule; is available for altered work schedules.			
E. Adheres to and promotes of the school district.			
Comments:			

IV.   Food Service Functions

EVALUATION OF PERFORMANCE	BELOW EXPECTATIONS	MEETS EXPECTATIONS	EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS
A. Stores food in designated areas, according to temperature requirement.			
B. Accurately records items used.			
C. Prepares food according to standardized recipes and established food preparation procedures.			
D. Courteously serves food to students with accuracy and speed while adhering to portion control, safety, and appearance standards.			
E. Follows established sanitary techniques while preparing and serving food and while handling clean utensils.			
F. Maintains kitchen work areas, equipment, and utensils in clean and orderly condition requirements and food spoilage guidelines.			
G. Inspects dishes for cleanliness, chips, cracks, and so forth, and stores in the appropriate location			
H. Accepts payment for food using cash register or other means as directed by food service manager.			
I. Adheres to uniform and personal hygiene requirements..			
Comments:			

_____   _____
Signatures of Evaluator and Employee.

SOURCE: MGT of America, Inc., 2005.

FISCAL IMPACT

RECOMMENDATION	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09	2009–10	5-YEAR (COSTS) OR SAVINGS	ONE-TIME (COSTS)
66. Develop and implement short-and long-term Child Nutrition management plans and associated procedures.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
67. Create board policy requiring adherence to state-recommended thresholds for the Child Nutrition Fund balance.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
68. Expand productivity reporting and analysis to include Meals Per Labor Hour (MPLH) as a key indicator for staffing decisions and productivity evaluations.	$28,017	$28,017	$28,017	$28,017	$28,107	$140,085	$0
69. Develop districtwide and campus Child Nutrition Profit and Loss statements and student participation reports on a monthly basis.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
70. Implement a multi-tiered free and reduced-price eligibility identification process and streamline application processing.	$104,362	$104,362	$104,362	$104,362	$104,362	$521,810	$0
71. Develop and implement corrective action plans and procedures based on Health Department citations and conduct unannounced internal inspections.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
72. Require annual safety and sanitation training for all Child Nutrition staff and certification for the director.	($1,500)	($1,500)	($1,500)	($1,500)	($1,500)	($7,500)	$0
73. Implement a Child Nutrition cash deposit process according to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
74. Create separate account codes to differentiate catering financial data from general Child Nutrition Department financial data and set catering event pricing to recover district costs.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
75. Include department-specific performance objectives in Child Nutrition employee evaluations.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Chapter 8 Totals	$130,879	$130,879	$130,879	$130,879	$130,879	$654,395	$0

Chapter 9

Transportation

Lancaster Independent School District

CHAPTER 9
TRANSPORTATION

Lancaster Independent School District (LISD) provides all regular route transportation services for students through an interlocal agreement with Dallas County Schools (DCS). Both DCS and LISD operate special education routes, while LISD operates its own extracurricular transportation. For 2004–05, DCS operates 19 routes per day, carrying a total of 1,666 students to and from school on regular daily runs within a 29.2 square mile area. The district does not designate any routes as hazardous and consequently does not provide any transportation to students living within two miles of their respective schools. LISD operates numerous additional bus trips for athletic, educational, and extracurricular programs. DCS also operates six special education routes, transporting a total of 66 students per day.

LISD buses operate on a schedule to support staggered bell times and permitting each bus to make multiple runs. Elementary and intermediate schools begin at 7:45AM, the junior high at 8:45AM, and the high school at 9:00AM. In the afternoon, the elementary and intermediate schools end at 2:45PM, while the junior high and high school end at 4:00PM.

The district's Transportation supervisor reports to the director of the Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation Department. The supervisor manages two full-time mechanics and 10 part-time bus drivers. Regular route drivers are employees of DCS.

FINDINGS
- LISD is not enforcing assigned accountability using performance measures to manage student transportation services.

- LISD does not regularly examine its bus routes or student ridership or maintain accurate route descriptions and corresponding data.

- The district lacks key policies related to transportation fleet size, bus replacement, maximum driving hours for bus drivers, and maximum student ride times.

- The process for scheduling field trips is manual, inefficient, and not supported by detailed policies and procedures.

- LISD does not collect, analyze, and report on districtwide bus incident and referral data.

- Neither DCS nor LISD is providing adequate student behavior management training to bus drivers as outlined in board policy or annual evaluations for bus drivers.

- LISD does not conduct nor require board-supported annual bus evacuation drills with students.

RECOMMENDATIONS
- **Recommendation 76 (p. 176): Develop and implement key transportation performance measures and annually seek competitive bids for regular route transportation.** As with any contracted service, LISD should ensure that it is receiving the best possible price and the best possible services by developing and implementing key performance indicators. By assessing contracted transportation services using performance measures and annually reviewing the cost-effectiveness and efficiencies of provided services, the district encourages competitive rates while maintaining a high level of service.

- **Recommendation 77 (p. 179): Review routes and ridership annually and continuously update regular route descriptions.** The district should regularly review routes and levels of student ridership to ensure it is maximizing its linear density and receiving the best possible routing services from its outsourced vendor. In addition, the district should maintain current transportation base data including student names, addresses, route descriptions and assignments, attending schools, and appropriate grade levels to ensure it has accurate routing information at any point in time. By obtaining this data at the beginning of each year and ensuring that updates continuously occur, the district not only has an accurate picture of its own routes but ensures that its vendor, in the event of outsourced services, also has the most current data necessary to optimize routes and reimbursement rates.

- **Recommendation 78 (p. 182): Adopt transportation policies in the areas of bus replacement, the maximum number of hours a driver may work, and maximum student ride times.** The Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation Department director and the Transportation supervisor should draft detailed policies addressing bus purchases or replacements according to a schedule, driver schedules, and student ride times for board review and approval. By detailing board policies, the district begins to institutionalize accountability for departmental management and lay the foundation for budgetary constraints related to transportation.

- **Recommendation 79 (p. 183): Automate the system for extracurricular scheduling and billing and adopt related policies and procedures addressing drivers, fuel costs, and driver support.** The Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation Department should computerize the scheduling and reimbursement processes for field trips using an inexpensive software solution and adopt policies and accompanying procedures to standardize all related processes. Policies and detailed procedures should address driver certifications, development of formulas to match driver needs to demands, fuel conservation, and driver support mechanisms. By automating the entire field trip system supported by detailed board policy and procedures, the district mitigates inconsistencies and institutes practices to regulate costs.

- **Recommendation 80 (p. 188): Collect, analyze, and publish longitudinal bus incident and referral data by type, route, school, and district levels and annually report results to the board.** The Transportation supervisor should collect incident and referral data and analyze it monthly to identify any trends or problems. By preparing an annual report for administrative and board review, the district achieves analysis of bus discipline incidents and the resulting disciplinary actions while addressing any systemic problems.

- **Recommendation 81 (p. 189): Provide regular training on bus discipline management in accordance with board policy and conduct annual driver evaluations.** LISD should provide regular training and updates based on statistical analysis and according to board policy on bus discipline management and conduct annual bus driver evaluations. By instituting a regular schedule of discipline management training and performance evaluations based on supervisor ride-alongs and analyses of incidents by bus and route, the district encourages best practices and consistency while providing safe services to students.

- **Recommendation 82 (p. 191): Require and practice bus evacuation drills supported through board policy.** The Transportation supervisor should schedule, coordinate, and supervise at least one of the two bus evacuation drills for all regular route student riders. All extracurricular drivers should participate in at least one drill per year as well. By conducting these scheduled emergency practice activities, the district enhances the likelihood that both drivers and students are prepared in the event of an emergency.

DETAILED FINDINGS

TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT (REC. 76)

LISD is not enforcing assigned accountability or performance measures to manage student transportation services. The district has an interlocal agreement with DCS to provide outsourced transportation, yet no one internally is managing the contract by annually ensuring that the existing interlocal agreement provides the best services to the district at a competitive price. The district incorrectly recorded and calculated its total transportation costs related to the agreement, which has been in place since 1964. According to departmental administrators and staff, the district historically has not had a clear picture of transportation costs, or focused on transportation cost-effectiveness or efficiencies.

LISD, according to departmental administrators and staff, has not historically negotiated the cost and services it receives, as the district has not competitively bid the contract. It has also not monitored the terms outlined in the agreement. On request, the district only produced copies of the interlocal agreements signed in 1994 and 2001. The 2001 agreement is still active and in force between DCS and LISD. On comparison, the agreements were largely the same, with some minor language changes.

The key portions of the interlocal agreement are as follows:

- DCS will provide regular route transportation at an annual cost based on operational cost less state revenue and DCS contribution;

- DCS will provide an estimated operational cost no later than May of each year for the following school year, and LISD will pay these costs in 10 equal installments;

- DCS will provide extracurricular transportation when requested and will bill separately for this service;

- DCS will determine annually whether new bus purchases are required and will notify LISD of any necessary purchases for the next school year;

- If necessary, DCS and LISD will equally share bus purchase costs;

▪ DCS will provide bus monitors as requested by LISD and will bill separately for this service;

▪ DCS is responsible for employing, assigning, and dismissing all drivers;

▪ DCS will ensure all drivers are certified in accordance with the standards and qualifications required by law; and

▪ DCS will obtain sufficient motor vehicle liability insurance, naming LISD as an additional insured on the policy.

DCS is not a school district serving its own students but rather a governmental agency serving the 15 independent school districts in Dallas County in various functional areas, including transportation. In addition to LISD, DCS provides transportation and vehicle maintenance services to nine other school districts in the area.

Based on 2003–04 AEIS data, LISD spends just 0.8 percent of its budget on regular student transportation functions, a total of $252,423. However, the district did not report the entire cost of regular transportation as required by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). Instead, it recorded the amount it paid directly to DCS only, rather than the amount paid to DCS plus the state reimbursement DCS received on behalf of LISD. These two figures, plus some portion of the salaries of LISD transportation management, more closely represents the true cost of regular route transportation

Exhibit 9-1 shows the amounts LISD and the peer districts reported in Function 34, regular transportation, to TEA for the Academic Excellence Information System (AEIS) reports, as well as two estimates of the actual cost of the LISD regular transportation. Based on district documents and budgets, regular route transportation cost the district nearly $655,489 in 2003–04. DCS provided cost reports for 2003–04 that showed a total operations cost of $876,049 on behalf of LISD. The district received state reimbursement, LISD payments, and a DCS contribution of approximately $200,000 to fund these expenses. Using the figure of $876,049, a more accurate cost for regular transportation is 2.6 percent of the total budget.

Exhibit 9-2 shows the operating expenses DCS reported to TEA and LISD for the district's routes. As the exhibit shows, there have been both high and low variations and a wide range of percent changes in the costs DCS reported to LISD for 2001–02 through 2003–04. There has also been considerable

EXHIBIT 9-1
TRANSPORTATION SPENDING
LISD, PEERS, AND STATE
2003–04

DISTRICT	TOTAL SPENT ON TRANSPORTATION	PERCENT OF DISTRICT BUDGET
Lancaster, as reported in AEIS	$252,423	0.8%
Lancaster, based on district documents*	655,489	2.0%
Lancaster, based on DCS cost reports	876,049	2.6%
Red Oak ISD	1,043, 106	3.2%
Sheldon ISD	1,775,571	4.7%
Terrell ISD	1,107,842	3.2%
Peer District Average	1,441,707	3.7%
State	$808,000,464	2.4%

NOTES: *Includes amount district directly paid to Dallas County Schools (DCS) and an estimate of the state reimbursement paid to DCS for LISD transportation.
Excludes DeSoto ISD in peer comparisons due to incomplete information.
SOURCES: Texas Education Agency, Academic Excellence Information System (AEIS), 2003–04; LISD, Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation Department budget documents, December 2004; and DCS, January 2005.

EXHIBIT 9-2
DALLAS COUNTY SCHOOLS
EXPENDITURES FOR LISD ROUTE TRANSPORTATION
2001–02 THROUGH 2003–04

CATEGORY	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	PERCENT VARIATION BETWEEN HIGH AND LOW FIGURES	PERCENT CHANGE FROM 2001–02 THROUGH 2003–04
Salaries	$458,115	$641,317	$566,605	40%	24%
Contracted Services	24,266	29,275	34,404	42%	42%
Supplies	67,202	86,404	86,199	29%	28%
Other Operating	16,658	34,526	24,771	107%	49%
Capital Outlay	97,828	84,527	47,084	108%	(52%)
Total Expenses	$664,069	$876,049	$759,064	32%	14%
Total Miles Driven	**$188,640**	**$245,898**	**$232,860**	**30%**	24%

SOURCES: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2001–02 through 2003–04; LISD, Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation Department, December 2004; and Dallas County Schools, January 2005.

variation in the mileage driven on behalf of LISD during the same period. DCS stated the reason for the large increase in mileage from 2001–02 to 2002–03 was an increase of more than 50,000 miles for regular routes excluding mileage from special education routes.

When district administrators questioned DCS on this trend in 2004–05, they found that DCS was adding additional buses to routes, although the original route buses were not overcrowded. In addition, DCS was running routes for several force transfer routes.

In 2003–04, the district also did not ensure that DCS effectively scheduled routes to pick up students closest to the bus service center first. Instead, DCS completed routes picking up students farthest away from the bus service center first and then, working backwards, continued picking up students closer to the service center. This process resulted in greater deadhead mileage—bus mileage accumulated with no students on a bus—than if DCS picked up students closest to the service center and worked outward. The Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation Department director and Transportation supervisor worked with DCS in 2004–05 to change this process. As a result, administrators from DCS confirmed the cooperation and said they will not charge as many deadhead miles to the district for 2004–05.

On results from surveys administered by the review team, 27 percent of principals and assistant principals disagree or strongly disagree with the statement, "Adding or modifying a route for a student is easy to accomplish." Similarly, 16.5 percent of students and 13.0 percent of parents surveyed disagree or strongly disagree that "Buses arrive early enough for students to eat breakfast at school." In addition, 20.5 percent of students and 15.0 percent of parents disagree or strongly disagree that buses arrive and depart on time. Adjusting routes and arrival times is an ongoing process in any school district. In interviews with the review team, school administrators said that the process has improved with the arrival of the new Transportation supervisor; however, route adjustments remain a difficult task. The Transportation supervisor said that working with DCS on such issues has improved during 2003–04, and the district would like to continue to improve cooperative efforts.

DCS and LISD share the cost of new bus purchases for regular route use. The district's interlocal agreement with DCS does not specifically state that LISD will receive one bus retired from regular route service each year, but district staff said that is supposed to be the arrangement. LISD uses retired buses to provide extracurricular transportation. However, LISD did not receive any retired buses in

2002–03 and 2003–04. The Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation Department director and the Transportation supervisor said they do not believe previous Transportation administrators monitored or fully enforced the contract. They pursued the issue in 2004–05, and after research and negotiations, the district received 10 retired buses from DCS. These buses are all 1994 models and require partial roof replacements before the district can put them into service. LISD mechanics said these buses arrived with no maintenance logs or other information that would be helpful in determining maintenance needs.

Many districts use indicators to assess ongoing performance in key management areas. Performance indicators allow departments of transportation to track service quality and make adjustments where required. Transportation administrators document improvements in performance to demonstrate progress. Accurate and timely performance indicators help management allocate available funds to the most critical needs. They also provide assurances to the Board of Trustees and the public that the department providing transportation is using its resources in the best possible manner. When all or part of the transportation function is outsourced, assessing performance with these indicators also ensures that the district is receiving the best possible service from the outside provider. Regularly seeking competitive bids for outsourced services also gives a current contractor a strong incentive to provide good value and gives the contracting district the opportunity to find a better value. Requests for transportation services are often set for a specified time, typically five years. With the implementation of a new contract with an outside vendor, districts ensure inclusion and adherence to regular performance assessments.

Exhibit 9-3 lists common transportation performance indicators used by many districts to ensure their transportation functions are safe, reliable, cost effective, and cost efficient.

The district should seek competitive bids for regular route transportation to ensure it is receiving the best possible service for the best possible price. The Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation director and Transportation supervisor should cooperatively develop and implement a set of contract performance measures. LISD should require that the contractor maintain all data in a readily available format and provide regular updates. The data should support the performance indicators LISD selects, as well as documentation of actual operating costs, reimbursements from the state, liability insurance, driver certifications and evaluations, and efforts at optimal routing. The resulting contract may include

EXHIBIT 9-3
OVERVIEW OF STANDARD TRANSPORTATION PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

PERFORMANCE AREA	*PERFORMANCE INDICATOR*
Safety	• accidents per 100,000 miles • incidents per 100,000 miles • number of first, second, and third student discipline referrals
Cost Efficiency	• operation cost per route mile • annual operation costs per route • linear density and subsequent state reimbursement
Cost Effectiveness	• on-time performance • open routes due to unfilled positions • driver absentee rate • average rider trip time in minutes • average bus occupancy
Maintenance Performance	• miles between road calls
Customer Satisfaction	• percentage of eligible students transported • level of student and parent satisfaction with transportation

SOURCE: MGT of America, December 2004.

many of the key elements of the current contract with DCS, such as sharing the cost of new buses, maintaining required insurances, and employing certified drivers. However, it is not sufficient for LISD to require these elements; it must also actively monitor the contractor to ensure it is providing the required services.

As with any contracted service, LISD should ensure that it is receiving the best possible price and the best possible services by developing and implementing key performance indicators. By assessing contracted transportation services using performance measures and annually reviewing the cost-effectiveness and efficiencies of provided services, the district encourages competitive rates while maintaining a high level of service.

ROUTES AND RIDERSHIP (REC. 77)

LISD does not regularly examine its bus routes or student ridership or maintain accurate route descriptions and corresponding data. The district also does not maintain a complete listing of all students assigned to each route and is not providing updating information to DCS. As a result, the district has not verified whether it is receiving the maximum level of state reimbursement for which it is eligible.

TEA requires transportation providers to submit *Transportation Route Services* and *Transportation Operations Reports* each year. DCS submits consolidated reports for all the districts it serves. Texas school districts receive state funding for transportation based on their linear density, as determined from the data in these reports. Linear density is the ratio of two numbers, annual ridership and annual miles. The first number, annual ridership, is the sum of the average number of eligible riders on a route who live outside two miles of their assigned school or who live on designated hazardous routes, multiplied by the total number of days transported. The result of that calculation is then divided by total annual miles, which is the sum of eligible daily miles outside two miles of an assigned school by route multiplied by the total number of days operated. TEA has defined seven linear density groups. The state allocates per-mile reimbursements based on a district's group.

Exhibit 9-4 shows the seven categories as defined by TEA. School districts receive more in state reimbursements as their linear density increases. Often this positive correlation encourages districts to design efficient routes using full buses. To increase linear density, a district must reduce its route mileage and/or increase the number of student riders.

EXHIBIT 9-4
STATE LINEAR DENSITY REIMBURSEMENT FOR REGULAR BUS ROUTES
2003–04

CATEGORY	LINEAR DENSITY RANGE	REIMBURSEMENT PER MILE
1	0.000–0.399	$0.68
2	0.400–0.649	0.79
3	0.650–0.899	0.88
4	0.900–1.149	0.97
5	1.150–1.649	1.11
6	1.650–2.399	1.25
7	2.400–9.999	1.43

SOURCE: Texas Education Code, Article III, Section 1, May 20, 2001.

Reimbursable miles are those miles driven on routes with students on board. Deadhead miles, or miles driven without students on board, and maintenance miles, also driven without students, are not reimbursable. TEA evaluates its group assignments every two years by recalculating linear densities.

DCS uses a reimbursement rate of $1.25 per mile for LISD routes to determine the district's portion of the state revenues, placing it in the second highest linear density bands. However, based on figures reported by DCS reported figures, the district's effective allotment rate is $0.97, placing it in the middle linear density band. Effectively, DCS is providing transportation services at a low linear density but is allocating state revenue to LISD operations at a higher linear density.

Exhibit 9-5 shows the percent of students bused in LISD and the peer districts, as well as the number of riders per route mile. Both calculations offer some insight into whether a district is offering effective and efficient transportation. LISD does not have the highest percentage of student ridership in the peer district comparison.

District geography also affects ridership. For example, in a largely urban district with sidewalks and a majority of students residing within two miles of school, ridership may be low. In a rural, sparsely populated district, ridership may be high.

LISD Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation Department staff have not analyzed the district's ridership statistics either longitudinally or in comparison to its peers. LISD is also not currently assessing student satisfaction with its bus services.

Calculations for linear density do not include students who live within two miles of their schools but receive bus transportation, unless they live along a route designated by the district's board as being too hazardous for the students to walk. For example, if a student must cross a major road without a crossing signal, a hazardous condition exists. School districts may apply to TEA for additional reimbursement funds of up to 10 percent of their regular

transportation allotment for busing students on designated hazardous routes. Districts count students living on designated hazardous routes in the same manner as students who live more than two miles away. They also include these students in linear density calculations. As of 2004–05, LISD has not designated any routes as hazardous.

LISD is also not ensuring that DCS uses available computerized systems to review and optimize district routes. During interviews, LISD Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation Department staff said they believe that DCS maintains route descriptions, although the district does not have any accurate copies of them. In 2003–04, however, Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation Department staff did not provide DCS with a database of student names, residences, ages, corresponding schools, and grade levels as required by the interlocal agreement with the district. Correspondingly, when LISD received copies of the regular routes from DCS on August 11, 2004, five days before the start of school on August 16, 2004, staff determined the routes were not accurate. Also as a result of the district not meeting its obligation to provide initial student data to the service provider, the 2004–05 submission of data prior to the start of the 2004–05 school year were not in accordance with the two-week notice as outlined in the interlocal agreement. After meetings with the review team, LISD Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation Department staff plan to provide the required student and route data to DCS for 2005–06.

After district staff determined the route descriptions were incorrect, the staff requested updated descriptions, received new ones, and determined those were also incomplete. DCS staff maintained they were attempting to update the district's routes with their own historical data because they never received base transportation data from LISD staff.

On request, DCS provided software-generated route printouts, written reports from bus drivers listing the names and grades of students on each bus run, and written route verification sheets from bus drivers.

EXHIBIT 9-5
AVERAGE DAILY RIDERSHIP AND RIDERS PER ROUTE MILE
LISD AND PEER COMPARISONS
2002–03

SCHOOL DISTRICT	AVERAGE DAILY RIDERSHIP	TOTAL STUDENTS	PERCENT OF STUDENTS BUSED	TOTAL ROUTE MILES	RIDERS/ ROUTE MILE*
Lancaster ISD	1,666	4,318	39%	193,032	0.64
DeSoto ISD	NA	7,584	NA	NA	NA
Red Oak ISD	1,532	4,811	32%	252,933	0.92
Sheldon ISD	NA	4,177	NA	NA	NA
Terrell ISD	2,262	4,228	54%	281,340	0.69

NOTES: NA denotes data unavailable or not reported for DeSoto and Sheldon ISDs.
        * denotes calculations based upon a 180-day school year.
SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, School Transportation Route Services Status Reports, 2002–03.

DCS is using a software system to maintain the routes for LISD that electronically combines student addresses, road maps, geographic data, and other transportation data. However, in more than a dozen instances, the DCS software-generated record differed from physical records generated by the driver throughout 2004–05. For eight routes, DCS provided driver verification sheets from 2002–03. **Exhibit 9-6** outlines the differences found just between the system-generated reports and the recent driver verifications.

LISD is not providing DCS with a student database. DCS is therefore not electronically inputting student names and addresses into the software system. Instead, DCS relies on drivers to provide a list of student riders. Thus, the vendor is tracking students that happen to ride a particular bus on a given day, rather than planning routes around and controlling access of students based on their addresses.

Principals, teachers, and drivers said during school review on-site visits that they are unsure of which students are assigned to which buses and corresponding routes. Teachers reported that there have been several incidents of a young student accidentally getting on the wrong bus and then not knowing where he/she lived. Drivers reported that they suspect they are transporting students they should not, but do not know for sure, since they are operating from lists created with old data. They stated that the students are also aware of the days when the district officially counts ridership. Drivers stated that some students who are not supposed to be riding the bus consequently avoid detection by not riding the bus on those days. In addition, drivers

reported that not knowing who should be riding on a bus sometimes creates discipline problems. The review team found evidence of this practice during onsite work. While riding one afternoon bus route, the school review team witnessed a fight break out at a bus stop immediately after the bus dropped off students. The driver and Transportation supervisor immediately responded, and LISD Police officers were on the scene within a few minutes to handle the situation. However, the district confirmed that one of the students was not a designated rider.

Texas Education Agency (TEA) requires districts to maintain an official turn-by-turn round-trip route description for each reported route that documents eligible total daily mileage. Many districts maintain updated ridership lists in conjunction with route descriptions. Many districts use computerized routing software to analyze and optimize routes. Through analysis, many districts identify reasons for low ridership and take corrective actions accordingly. Many districts increase state reimbursement through these reviews and make programmatic changes such as those listed below:

- reducing route mileage;

- increasing student ridership;

- designating board-approved hazardous routes according to state definitions to provide transportation and claim savings for students living with two miles of school; and,

- using routing software to optimize routes.

EXHIBIT 9-6
COMPARISON OF DALLAS COUNTY SCHOOLS REGULAR ROUTE DESCRIPTIONS AND BUS DRIVER ROUTE VERIFICATION SHEETS
2004–05

ROUTE	DALLAS COUNTY SCHOOLS EDULOG ROUTE DESCRIPTION	DRIVER DESCRIPTION
2	First pickup at 7:17 AM Seven stops Oak and Masonic as 6th stop	First pickup at 8:00 AM Eight stops Oak and Masonic as 5th stop
4	First pickup at 8:01 AM Two stops on Parkerville Road Crepe Myrtle and Bald Cypress as 11th stop	First pickup at 7:40 AM One stop on Parkerville Road Crepe Myrtle and Bald Cypress as 9th stop
6	First pickup at 7:20 AM Southridge and Meadowcreek as 3rd stop	First pickup at 8:00 AM Southridge and Meadowcreek as 2nd stop
8	First pickup at 7:15 AM Nine stops	First pickup at 8:00 AM Seven stops
10	First pickup at 7:14 AM Meadow Lark and Lomita as 1st stop	First pickup at 6:45 AM Meadow Lark and Lomita as 4th stop
11	First pickup at 7:11 AM Bald Cypress and Crepe Myrtle as 6th stop River Bend as 1st stop	First pickup at 7:50 AM Bald Cypress and Crepe Myrtle as 2nd stop Riverbend as last stop
14	Six stops	10 stops
14 (2nd route)	Bald Cypress and Crepe Myrtle as 4th stop	Bald Cypress and Crepe Myrtle as 3rd stop

SOURCE: Dallas County Schools, January 2005.

The district should regularly review routes and levels of student ridership to ensure it is maximizing linear density and receiving the best possible services from its outsourced vendor. In addition, the district should maintain current transportation base data including student names, addresses, route descriptions and assignments, attending schools, and appropriate grade levels to ensure accurate routing information at any point in time. By maintaining this data at the beginning of each year and ensuring that updates continuously occur, the district not only has an accurate picture of its own routes but ensures that its vendor, in the event of outsourced services, also has the most current data necessary to optimize routes and reimbursement rates. Working with the outside contractor, the Transportation supervisor should review routes for efficiency, assess student satisfaction and ridership levels, and determine whether or not routes are optimally designed as well as in accordance with state requirements. With only 29.2 square miles in the service area, the district should be able to achieve one of the highest linear density bands.

This fiscal impact cannot be determined due to the cost methodology used by the contracted vendor. The current DCS operation places the LISD linear density at a reimbursement rate of $0.97 per mile; however, DCS allows a reimbursement rate of $1.25 per mile in determining the final cost to LISD. As mentioned, if LISD began immediately operating its own routes in the exact manner as DCS, its state reimbursement would have been approximately $48,000 less in 2003–04. Regular review of routes and ridership should effectively lead to higher linear density.

TRANSPORTATION POLICIES
(REC. 78)
The district lacks key policies related to transportation fleet size, bus replacement, maximum driving hours for bus drivers, and maximum student ride times.

Despite having an aged fleet with buses from nine to 24 years old and facing certain student growth in the near future, LISD has no bus replacement policy for its extracurricular buses, nor has the district determined the optimum fleet size for its current and future needs. A bus replacement policy ensures a younger average fleet, with a corresponding reduction in maintenance requirements and operating costs. A regular replacement/retirement schedule smoothes financial requirements for the district as well; it is easier for a district to plan to purchase a set number of buses each year than it is to have to absorb the cost for many new buses in one single year. **Exhibit 9-7** lists the current LISD fleet.

EXHIBIT 9-7
LISD BUS FLEET

MODEL YEAR	AGE IN YEARS	NUMBER OF BUSES
1979	24	1
1980	23	2
1981	22	1
1982	21	1
1983	20	5*
1984	19	2
1988	15	4
1994	9	11
Average Age/Total Number of Buses	15	27

NOTE: *The district uses one for cargo delivery only.
SOURCE: LISD Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation Department, December 2004.

Ten of the buses are more than 20 years old. The average district bus is slightly more than 15 years old.

Despite the recent addition of 10 1994-model buses from DCS, the district has not made any decisions regarding elimination of older buses from its fleet. In reviewing fuel purchase records, the mileage on some of the buses from 15 to 24 years in age still in use declined by more than two miles per gallon from 2002 to 2004. Even with additional maintenance, older buses are generally less fuel-efficient than newer ones. Many districts use a fleet plan and replacement policy to guide decisions for older bus elimination and cost effectiveness of routes.

Approximately half of the extracurricular drivers for LISD also drive regular routes for other districts. This puts LISD in the situation of possibly utilizing fatigued drivers, creating a dangerous situation. Several studies around the nation have shown that drivers exhibit a marked decrease in ability after being awake for 13 hours, whether they have been driving the majority of that time or not. Currently, the district does not track the total driving hours for its extracurricular drivers, so the risk to the district is unknown.

Finally, the district has no policy on maximum student ride times. DCS does not have an official policy itself but tries to keep ride times to less than one hour. Based on the data provided by DCS and actual ride times experienced by the review team during onsite visits, it is likely that most LISD students ride less than one hour.

Some districts adopt policy or include information in driver job descriptions limiting a driver from extracurricular trips if the driver has already worked a full-time shift. Since the vast majority of extracurricular trips occur after school and into the evening, it is possible that a driver holding a full-time job could be behind the wheel during an extracurricular trip more than 13 hours after awakening. Having a policy provides guidance to

these districts. Many of these same districts adopt detailed Transportation policies that address student ride times, hazardous route designation, and transportation management with either internal or outsourced entities.

The district should adopt transportation policies in the areas of bus replacement, the maximum number of hours a driver may work, and maximum student ride times. Given the compact nature of the Lancaster area, however, it might be feasible to establish a lower threshold, thereby increasing parent and student satisfaction. The Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation director and the Transportation supervisor should draft policies on these issues for the approval of the superintendent and the board. By drafting and adopting detailed transportation policies, the district institutionalizes guidelines to effectively manage the provision of transportation services and sets parameters to develop departmental performance measures.

EXTRACURRICULAR TRIP SCHEDULING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES (REC. 79)

The process for scheduling extracurricular trips is manual, inefficient, and not supported by detailed policies and procedures. The district does not specifically address the use of drivers, cost containment in fuel consumption, and driver support for long trips in relation to extracurricular trips. As a result, the field trip scheduling process is labor-intensive, the department incurs unnecessary overtime for drivers, fuel consumption is increasing, and support for drivers on long trips is inconsistent.

The district does not have enough drivers to meet current and projected extracurricular transportation requests and is paying unnecessary overtime to extracurricular drivers or is using non-bus drivers at higher hourly overtime salary costs. On occasion, the district has also used drivers contracted from DCS or other outside contractors to provide extracurricular services at a higher cost than it pays its own drivers. For 2004–05 through December 17, 2004, the Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation Department spent $14,895 in overtime, of which the director identified $14,626 as being due to or in support of extracurricular transportation. Yet, in a December 2004 board report, the district listed an accomplishment for the department citing timely provision of transportation services for extracurricular activities.

To request extracurricular transportation for a field trip, a teacher must complete a three-part paper bus-requisition form and submit it to the principal for an approval signature and budget code. Once approved,

the teacher retains one copy and the campus routes two copies to the Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation Department. The Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation secretary reviews extracurricular requests and will schedule a bus and driver if they are available. When the driver makes the trip, he fills out a form with speedometer readings, start and end times, and the sponsor's signature. The secretary then calculates how much is due and submits the paperwork with the appropriate budget codes to the Central Office for debit and credit.

Teachers in the school review focus group reported dissatisfaction with the current process. They noted that the lead-time necessary to request a bus can vary from one week to more than one month, depending on the time of year. During focus groups teachers also said that while scheduling is ostensibly on a first-come, first-served basis, there was a perception that sports teams sometimes receive scheduling priority before academic trips. Teachers said that once they have submitted their paperwork to the principal, they are not notified whether a trip has been approved or disapproved but must continually check with the Transportation, Maintenance, and Custodial secretary regarding the status of their trip request.

The Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation Department director, Transportation supervisor, Maintenance assistant, and school administrators mentioned during interviews that an electronic approval, scheduling and billing system could be implemented on the district's existing network. All of the persons involved in scheduling a field trip have daily access to email. The district also has an online facilities reservation system and an online work order form for maintenance requests. District staff said they already discussed the possibility of implementing an online trip request for initial use during 2005–06.

All of the LISD extracurricular drivers are paid $10 per hour and on average do not work enough hours for LISD to qualify for overtime on any one trip. On days when the district is short of drivers, some extracurricular drivers will make multiple trips and qualify for overtime at $15 per hour. The district also regularly uses mechanics and maintenance staff to drive extracurricular buses, often on short notice and usually at significant overtime rates. Because they have full-time jobs with the district, mechanics and maintenance staff often earn overtime pay for these trips. LISD mechanics earn an average of $22.50 per hour with an overtime rate of $33.75 per hour. One mechanic runs a route every day, transporting two students approximately six miles one-way. The district created this special route due to parent complaints. Driving this and other routes takes this

mechanic away from his regular duties. When the extracurricular driving responsibilities occur outside of normal work hours for the mechanics, such as on nights and weekends, they also earn overtime pay.

During interviews, some administrators said that certain groups have been able to request specific district employees to work overtime driving for extracurricular trips, resulting in a trip cost that is significantly higher than the $10 per hour an extracurricular driver would earn.

The district is also spending extracurricular funds driving the band to the stadium for home football games. Because there is limited parking at the stadium, LISD decided to bus the band from the high school. Typically, the band requests five buses to make the trip of less than two miles. The district then pays drivers to wait until the end of the football game to transport the band back to the high school.

In extreme cases, the district will contract with DCS to provide extracurricular transportation at rates that far exceed the regular LISD rates. DCS charges a $50 minimum for extracurricular trips and then $25 per hour after two hours. For trips cancelled at the school the day of planned departure, DCS charges $50. For other cancellations with less than 24 hours' notice, DCS charges $25. In 2003–04, LISD paid DCS to provide 33 field trips. The district also paid another outside contractor to provide four additional trips.

Exhibit 9-8 provides examples from selected extracurricular trip reports from August through December 2004. The short-distance trips listed are for transporting the band to the LISD stadium and back. The last column in the exhibit shows what the cost would be if the district used an extracurricular driver at the regular rate of $10 per hour.

Wherever possible, efficiently run districts seek to eliminate excessive overtime payments, particularly where the overtime results in a much higher hourly cost than employing additional workers at a lower wage. Addressing such individualized issues as short-range extracurricular transportation in policy and supporting procedures allows districts to reduce overtime and effectively reduce overall expenses by discontinuing or altering provision of services.

The district should adopt a policy limiting field trip drivers to those specifically identified as extracurricular drivers and to selected district personnel, such as sports coaches with appropriate driving certifications. LISD should also hire more extracurricular drivers to meet demands after conducting an annual review of extracurricular requests. The district should no longer use other maintenance staff to provide bus transportation, as

their hourly rates are greater than the hourly rates of bus drivers. The district should also eliminate the use of outside providers of extracurricular transportation for the same reason. The district should no longer allow anyone to request non-bus drivers to provide extracurricular transportation. The district should only seek an outside contractor for extracurricular transportation in highly unusual situations.

The district also should find alternate solutions to transport the band to the stadium. The district could choose to discontinue the service. Alternatively, it could decide to operate a true shuttle service, with one driver and one bus making multiple runs between the high school and the stadium to transport the band. After the game, the district could rely on parents to transport students home or could provide return shuttle service to the high school. Since drivers have a three-hour minimum when they provide extracurricular transportation, this would more fully use one or two drivers and save district funds overall.

To meet its fuel requirements for other than regular route transportation, which DCS pays, LISD signed an agreement with the City of Lancaster in November 2000 for the purchase of regular and diesel fuel. The city maintains fuel pumps and provides the district with fuel cards. At the pump, drivers must enter the mileage of the vehicle. If they enter an unreasonable mileage, the pump will not work. Some of the cards are set to dispense only a certain number of gallons as a theft deterrent. Each month, the city provides the district with a report detailing the gallons pumped for each vehicle, the miles each vehicle traveled, the miles per gallon per vehicle, the total gallons pumped, and the cost. The Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation Department reviews the statements, pays the total bill, and requests reimbursement from the appropriate district accounts, such as the Police Department, Athletic Department, or Food Services Department. As part of this agreement, the district pays the city a service fee of $0.05 per gallon.

Exhibit 9-9 shows the district's fuel usage for the last half of 2002 through November 2004. The cost per gallon of fuel has increased significantly in this period; therefore, the basis of this analysis resides on the number of gallons purchased rather than the final cost. As the exhibit shows, the district purchased significantly more gallons of fuel in August through November 2004 than during the same periods in 2002 or 2003. According to district staff, an increase in the size of the band, which requires more buses for each trip, is the main cause for this increase in purchases. According to staff, the band is in higher demand for business and community events. This

EXHIBIT 9-8
LISD SAMPLE OF SPENDING ON EXTRACURRICULAR TRANSPORTATION
AUGUST–DECEMBER 2004

DATE	DRIVER	MILES	HOURS	DRIVER PAY	ALTERNATIVE MINIMUM COST
8/14/2004	Maintenance Worker A	6	4.00	$103.04	$40.00
8/28/2004	Bus Drivers, Trip Canceled (2)	–	6.00	30.00	60.00
8/28/2004	Bus Driver	11	5.50	55.00	55.00
8/28/2004	Bus Driver on Overtime	8	5.50	82.50	55.00
8/28/2004	Maintenance Worker A	10	6.00	154.56	60.00
8/28/2004	Maintenance Worker B	2	3.00	113.10	30.00
9/3/2004	Bus Driver on Overtime	7	5.25	78.75	52.50
9/3/2004	Bus Drivers (6)	39	28.00	280.00	280.00
9/3/2004	Maintenance Worker A	5	6.25	161.00	62.50
9/10/2004	Maintenance Worker A	5	7.75	197.64	77.50
9/10/2004	Maintenance Worker B	46	6.00	226.20	60.00
9/17/2004	Bus Drivers (6)	46	33.00	330.00	330.00
9/17/2004	Maintenance Worker A	5	6.75	173.88	67.50
9/24/2004	Maintenance Worker A	186	12.25	306.97	122.50
9/24/2004	Maintenance Worker B	177	11.50	408.40	115.00
9/24/2004	Bus Driver on Overtime	188	12.00	180.00	120.00
9/30/2004	Bus Driver, Trip Canceled	–	3.00	30.00	30.00
9/30/2004	Bus Drivers (5)	30	12.75	127.50	127.50
9/30/2004	Maintenance Worker A	5	5.15	124.50	51.50
9/30/2004	Maintenance Worker C	19	5.50	117.87	55.00
10/1/2004	Bus Driver on Overtime	8	3.00	45.00	30.00
10/1/2004	Bus Drivers (6)	52	24.75	247.50	247.50
10/1/2004	Maintenance Worker A	9	6.50	167.44	65.00
10/1/2004	Maintenance Worker C	14	7.50	160.73	75.00
10/2/2004	Maintenance Worker A	42	11.75	302.68	117.50
10/8/2004	Bus Driver, Trip Canceled	–	3.00	30.00	30.00
10/8/2004	Maintenance Worker A	20	7.15	186.76	71.50
10/8/2004	Maintenance Worker C	3	3.00	30.00	30.00
10/9/2004	Maintenance Worker A	10	6.15	161.00	61.50
10/15/2004	Bus Driver on Overtime	7	5.50	117.86	55.00
10/15/2004	Bus Drivers (4)	25	22.75	227.50	227.50
10/22/2004	Maintenance Worker A	150	9.00	163.12	90.00
10/23/2004	Maintenance Worker A	24	10.00	257.60	100.00
10/29/2004	Bus Drivers (3)	22	15.25	152.50	152.50
10/29/2004	Maintenance Worker A	6	7.50	191.05	75.00
11/5/2004	Bus Driver, Trip Canceled	–	3.00	30.00	30.00
11/5/2004	Bus Driver	121	8.50	127.50	85.00
11/5/2004	Maintenance Worker A	121	9.75	238.28	97.50
11/6/2004	Maintenance Worker A	30	3.75	96.60	37.50
11/7/2004	Maintenance Worker A	49	8.25	212.52	82.50
11/13/2004	Maintenance Worker A	52	7.50	193.20	75.00
11/13/2004	Maintenance Worker B	10	3.00	113.10	30.00
11/15/2004	Bus Driver, Trip Canceled	–	3.00	30.00	30.00
11/17/2004	Maintenance Worker A	45	5.75	98.73	57.50
11/18/2004	Maintenance Worker A	65	9.25	184.58	92.50
12/4/2004	Maintenance Worker A	10	3.00	77.28	30.00
12/4/2004	Maintenance Worker A	33	7.00	180.32	70.00
12/9/2004	Maintenance Worker A	10	6.00	154.56	60.00
	Total			$7,458.32	$4,057.00

SOURCE: LISD, Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation Department, January 2005.

also increases the number of band trips and corresponding fuel usage.

Review of fuel purchase records identified most of the increase occurred in fuel purchases for LISD's extracurricular buses. **Exhibit 9-10** breaks out the fuel usage for just the extracurricular buses for the months of August through November in 2002 through 2004. With the exception of November, extracurricular fuel usage increased significantly during this period.

EXHIBIT 9-9
LISD FUEL USAGE EXCLUDING REGULAR TRANSPORTATION
2002 THROUGH 2004

PURCHASES	MONTH											
	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
2002												
Total Gas Purchases	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	$2,390	$2,326	$2,489	$1,883	$1,763
Service Fee	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	104	101	108	82	77
Gallons Purchased	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	1,716	1,352	2,079	2,022	2,164	1,637	1,533
2003												
Total Gas Purchases	$2,261	$2,390	$3,085	$3,097	$2,268	$2,306	$2,306	$2,279	$3,398	$3,101	$1,876	$2,240
Service Fee	98	92	113	119	95	92	92	83	132	125	76	90
Gallons Purchased	1,966	1,839	2,252	2,383	1,890	1,845	1,845	1,651	2,646	2,494	1,519	1,800
2004												
Total Gas Purchases	$2,412	$2,714	$3,522	$3,677	$3,664	$3,004	$2,640	$3,596	$4,773	$5,083	$3,878	NA
Service Fee	94	97	118	116	104	97	82	111	145	141	104	NA
Gallons Purchased	1,889	1,944	2,362	2,327	2,087	1,943	1,640	2,218	2,893	2,824	2,084	NA
Average Gallons Used, 2002 and 2003*	1,966	1,839	2,252	2,383	1,890	1,780	1,599	1,865	2,334	2,329	1,578	NA
Percent Change in Gallons Used from 2002 and 2003 average to 2004*	(4%)	6%	5%	(2%)	10%	9%	3%	19%	24%	21%	32%	NA

NOTES: * denotes comparison of 2003 data only for January through May.
      NA denotes not available.
SOURCE: LISD, Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation Department, December 2004.

EXHIBIT 9-10
LISD FUEL USAGE FOR EXTRACURRICULAR BUSES
2002 THROUGH 2004

YEAR	GALLONS PURCHASED			
	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV
2002	716	720	663	473
2003	397	1,074	829	478
2004	1,365	1,236	613	937
% Change from Average of 2002 and 2003	145%	38%	-18%	97%

SOURCE: LISD, Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation Department, December 2004.

In November 2002, the City of Lancaster charged the district a blended rate of $1.15 per gallon for either diesel or unleaded fuel. In November 2004, the city charged a blended rate of $1.85 per gallon. For the partial year of August through November 2004, the district spent $7,059 in fuel for extracurricular trips. In this same period, the Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation Department provided 386 extracurricular trips, an average of 21 per week. In 2003–04, the district provided 880 field trips in 41 weeks, an average of 21

trips per week. This total included 396 trips for athletics, 193 field trips, and 190 trips for Fine Arts (including band, cheerleaders, drill team, majorettes, and flag team).

The Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation Department charges schools $1 per mile for extracurricular trips to cover the fuel and maintenance costs, plus the actual cost of the driver. The extracurricular buses currently average five to seven miles per gallon, yielding a fuel cost of $0.26 to

$0.37 per mile from the $1 charge. The rest of the $1 covers maintenance and repair costs for the bus. The Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation Department does not technically lose money providing extracurricular transportation; the $1 per mile fee comes from school and district budget lines. Ultimately, however, extracurricular transportation funds come from the district's total General Fund balance, and excess expenditures in this category mean reduced funds for other categories.

Currently, bus fuel for extracurricular activity comprises approximately 40 percent of the district's total fuel costs. Extrapolating the January through November 2004 data to a full year, the district spent $42,500 on fuel in 2004. The portion spent on bus fuel is approximately $17,000.

In the area of long field trips, extracurricular drivers in the focus group expressed concern that the district guideline for meal reimbursement is inadequate. The current district policy is that drivers are eligible for meal reimbursement only when the trip exceeds 50 miles. Otherwise, drivers must pay for the meals themselves. This policy does not take into consideration the length of time a driver may work. With this policy, a driver could pick up students at a school, drive them 50 miles in about an hour, and immediately meet the criteria for meal reimbursement. A better policy would reimburse drivers for meals when a trip exceeds a certain amount of time. For some lengthy band trips, the band will provide meals to the bus drivers at no cost to the drivers.

In past years, district budgets and expenditures for meals for drivers have varied widely. **Exhibit 9-11** shows the amounts budgeted and expended from the drivers' meals budget line item for the past four years and a portion of 2004–05. As the exhibit shows, LISD has budgeted a disproportionately higher amount than expended over the past several years. The amount spent from this line item in 2003–04 is likely an accounting error.

The October 2004 *State of Texas Travel Allowance Guide* outlines when meals are reimbursable for state employees. For travel within Texas, employees are eligible for meal reimbursement when their travel exceeds six hours, with a maximum reimbursement of $25 per day.

With policy to guide the selection and number of extracurricular trips, some districts work to contain fuel consumption costs by reviewing departmental and overall fuel purchases. They often eliminate some trips without adverse effect on the educational process. Other districts seek funding from booster clubs and parents to offset at least a portion of related transportation costs.

The district should adopt board policies and procedures for containing its fuel costs. It should review its rationale for each extracurricular trip and eliminate trips where possible. For required trips, the district should seek funding support from booster clubs to offset at least a portion of transportation costs. The Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation Department should adopt policies and procedures to better support extracurricular drivers on long trips. The department should adopt a bus driver meal reimbursement policy based on the time length of the trip, not the road length.

Dallas ISD has developed an Internet-based computer scheduling system to handle all field trip transportation functions. The Transportation Requisition Input Process System (TRIPS) application allows principals and teachers to make reservations online. Dallas ISD also uses the TRIPS application to process online billing and payments. Finally, users generate reports at several different levels.

In a district using an internet-based computer field trip scheduling system, the teacher requesting a field trip accesses, completes, and forwards a form on the district's network via email. The receiving principal then electronically approves the trip and sends it via email to the Transportation Department. With this information, staff in the Transportation Department schedule the trip and notify the teacher and the principal of the arrangements via email. After the trip is over, the Transportation Department determines the cost and sends the bill via email to the principal and the Central Office for appropriate account debits and credits.

In summary, the district should automate its field trip scheduling system and adopt extracurricular policies in the areas of who may drive for extracurricular trips, policies and procedures for containing fuel costs, and supporting drivers on long trips. The

EXHIBIT 9-11
LISD BUDGETED AMOUNTS AND EXPENDITURES
FOR EXTRACURRICULAR BUS DRIVERS MEALS

MEALS FOR DRIVERS	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05 (AS OF 10/27/04)
Budgeted	$473	$287	$600	$1,000	$5,000
Expended	80	198	262	4,280	0

SOURCE: LISD, chief financial officer, General Ledger Accounts documentation, December 2004.

Transportation supervisor should contact Dallas ISD and other districts using automated systems to determine the best application for LISD. The district should seek an inexpensive software solution to automate the field trip scheduling and reimbursement process. The Transportation supervisor should identify the best system and receive approval to implement it for 2005–06.

This fiscal impact is based on hiring additional part-time extracurricular drivers and conservatively budgeting an estimated $5,000 for a one-time purchase of field trip scheduling software. By hiring additional extracurricular drivers, the district should also eliminate overtime payments to non-drivers. Because the district pays extracurricular drivers only when they drive, the district will incur no additional cost in expanding its pool of bus drivers. The district should save the difference between overtime costs and extracurricular bus driver hourly rates as highlighted in **Exhibit 9-8**. Because August and December are partial months, the fiscal estimate only uses four months as the period of overtime payments based on data in the exhibit, an average of $1,865 per month ($7,458 / 4 months). The annual overtime amount would be $16,785 ($1,865 x 9 months) minus projected costs at $10 per hour ($4,057 / 4 months = $1,014 per month, or $9,126 per year) per the exhibit. The district could save approximately $7,659 in overtime payments per year.

The district could realize additional savings by more efficiently providing extracurricular transportation to the LISD stadium and restricting the use of DCS drivers for any extracurricular trips. No additional savings, however, are conservatively calculated on these potential savings.

By adopting a policy to guide cost containment of fuel consumption, LISD should also be able to reduce fuel usage for extracurricular transportation by 15 percent, through a combination of reductions in consumption and outside funding. Currently, bus fuel comprises approximately 40 percent of the district's total fuel costs. Extrapolating the January through November 2004 data to a full year, the district spent $42,500 on fuel in 2004. The portion spent on bus fuel is approximately $17,000; a 15 percent savings would result in a reduction of $2,550 per year. However, due to inconsistent and rising fuel costs, no savings are conservatively associated with this portion of the fiscal impact.

The district should realize approximately $7,659 annually in estimated savings with an initial one-time investment of $5,000 for software.

BUS DISCIPLINE (REC. 80)

LISD does not collect, analyze, and report on districtwide bus incident and referral data. In 2004–05, the district instructs bus drivers to handle student discipline issues in conjunction with individual school principals. On results from review surveys, 20.2 percent of students disagree or strongly disagree that the bus driver maintains discipline on the bus. Among parents, 18.8 percent disagree or strongly disagree that the driver maintains discipline. DCS also does not compile student discipline information for any of the districts it serves.

In a document titled *First Semester Accomplishments* provided by the superintendent to the board on December 6, 2004, LISD staff listed six accomplishments by the Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation Department. The first two of the following accomplishments specifically address student discipline on buses:

- Behavior problems on route buses have been addressed and have declined this school year.

- Also, we have been very prompt in solving problems those parents, students, schools have concerning the routes.

- Purchased 10 buses from Dallas County.

- Our drivers have run all extracurricular trips in a timely manner.

- We have created and distributed ID badges for Houston Elementary School bus riders, per the Principal's request.

- We have established a great standing with Dallas County Schools.

However, the district provided no documentation to the board or review team for these accomplishments. For the first two accomplishments listed, LISD does not currently collect districtwide statistics on bus discipline referrals.

One LISD school principal maintains files of bus incidents in the individual discipline records for the students involved but does not compile statistics at the route or school level. At Rolling Hills Elementary, the assistant principal is responsible for tracking bus referrals and has compiled detailed statistics by infraction type and route for that school. Other principals do not maintain any log of bus referrals at any level. Some principals reported that certain drivers on certain routes have historically had greater difficulty maintaining bus discipline but did not have the documentation to support the claims.

One elementary school the review team visited had data readily available on bus referrals. At that school,

one bus driver averaged two referrals every week for the first four months of 2004–05. That principal said during interviews that these statistics did not represent an improvement over referrals for the same time in 2003–04.

One of the peer districts, Red Oak ISD, provided information on its bus discipline process. Whenever a Red Oak driver makes a referral, he must send a copy back to the Transportation Department so that the district can compile statistics. In 2002–03, Red Oak used its data to show principals that the district needed to change its bus discipline procedures.

Many districts collect bus discipline referral data at the district level to improve transportation operations. By collecting and analyzing referral data for the regular routes, the districts ensure quality services are being delivered. In addition, problem routes and problem drivers can be readily identified and then appropriate remedial action can be taken. The same process is used with extracurricular drivers and trips. Only by tracking discipline referrals can districts determine whether efforts in reducing bus disruptions are successful.

The Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation Department should collect bus incident and referral data districtwide and publish an annual longitudinal analysis of bus discipline incidents by route, school, and district levels. The Transportation supervisor should collect incident and referral data and analyze it monthly to identify any trends or problems. The Transportation supervisor should prepare an annual report for the director of Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation, the superintendent, and the board that reviews bus discipline incidents by route, school, and district levels. The supervisor should include the resulting disciplinary actions and address any systemic problems.

LISD should require principals to send one copy of the multi-part discipline referral form to the Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation Department each time there is a bus incident. The Transportation supervisor should collect this data and analyze it monthly to identify any trends or problems. Where the data indicates continuing problems with a student, the Transportation supervisor should meet with the student, the student's parents, the driver, and the school principal, as appropriate. Where the data indicates problems with a driver, the Transportation supervisor should meet with the driver and the DCS supervisor to determine whether additional training or other actions are necessary.

BUS DRIVER TRAINING AND EVALUATION (REC. 81)

Neither DCS nor LISD is providing adequate student behavior management training to bus drivers as outlined in board policy or annual evaluations for bus drivers. The LISD bus conduct requirements and possible consequences for misbehavior are provided to each student in the district's *2004–05 Student Handbook and Student Code of Conduct.* The handbook also indicates that bus riding is a privilege, not a right, and that bus privileges may be revoked in response to misbehavior. The handbook outlines the consequences for improper conduct on the bus. For a first violation, a bus conduct report is written and given to the principal. The report may be sent home for parent signature. For a second violation, the student may be denied bus privileges for three days. For a third violation, the student may be denied privileges for 10 days. For a fourth violation, the student may be denied transportation for the rest of the school year.

Bus drivers reported to the review team that the administration is generally supportive when students are disciplined for bus misconduct. However, school administrators said that drivers are not systematically handling bus misconduct. Several school administrators identified specific regular route drivers who they believe are having great difficulty in managing student behavior, as evidenced by the number of repeated referrals those drivers make to the schools. Administrators did not have documentation to support these beliefs since the district does not collect and compile bus referral statistics.

In the focus groups, bus drivers cited maintaining bus discipline as an ongoing issue. The biggest discipline issues, according to interviews, involve the following student behaviors:

- getting out of seats;

- opening windows without permission;

- using profane language; and

- talking too loudly.

Extracurricular drivers noted that trip sponsors often threaten unreasonable punishments, and this has an overall negative impact on bus discipline. According to drivers, students are less likely to behave for the bus driver or the trip sponsor when they know that unreasonable punishments will not occur.

All of the drivers working in LISD attend the required certification training but do not attend any other training specifically for discipline management. Required certification training occurs every three

years. LISD does not provide extracurricular drivers with any discipline management training. DCS drivers attend monthly safety training meetings, but DCS drivers stated that these meetings do not specifically address discipline management.

Moreover, LISD does not conduct annual bus driver evaluations, including observations of driving performance. In focus groups with both pools of drivers, drivers indicated that the only time a supervisor will ride with them is if there is an ongoing discipline problem and the driver has requested assistance. Although LISD does not currently directly employ its regular route drivers and DCS does not conduct ride-along reviews of drivers, the district is still responsible for ensuring the safe transportation of its students whenever they are on a bus.

On the review team-conducted surveys, 17.0 percent of students disagree or strongly disagree that the bus drivers allow students to sit down before taking off. Twenty-four (24) percent disagree or strongly disagree that buses are clean. Slightly fewer, 20.3 percent disagree or strongly disagree that the bus driver maintains discipline on the bus. Similarly, 18.8 percent of parents disagree or strongly disagree that drivers maintain bus discipline. While these figures are not large, they reflect the least positive responses by students and parents regarding LISD's transportation services.

The 2000 School Review publication *Keeping Texas Children Safe in School* outlines steps that districts must take to ensure the safety of their students and employees. Of the 10 steps outlined, one is that districts must "ensure that discipline management extends inside and outside the classroom." To do that, districts must provide "regular and ongoing discipline-management training." Districts frequently work with their local Regional Education Service Centers to obtain training materials related to discipline management at a reasonable cost.

Annual evaluations of drivers vary from district to district but generally cover four evaluation areas: managing student behavior problems appropriately; completing safety maintenance checks properly; following bus route schedules; and keeping the bus clean. In many school districts, a bus driver's supervisor also annually conducts a "ride-along" with each driver. The driver has no prior notification of his ride-along evaluation. The supervisor observes the driver during the pre-trip inspection, rides on the bus throughout the route, evaluates the driver's student management skills, and observes the post-trip inspection. In addition to observing the job performance of the driver, the supervisor has the opportunity to verify route times, identify any route

hazards, and assess the ride times for students. If the supervisor identifies any deficiencies in either the driver's performance or the route, they are corrected in a timely manner. The results of the ride-along and follow-up become an important component in the driver's annual evaluation. Kerrville ISD developed a process that includes an annual ride-along in its bus driver evaluations.

The National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Systems (NASDPTS), in its *National School Transportation Specifications and Procedures*, recommends that transportation directors monitor and evaluate school bus drivers on the performance of their duties. This monitoring and evaluation includes direct observation of drivers while driving their routes. The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) has concluded that in one fatal school bus accident, lack of a sufficient performance evaluation was a contributing factor in the tragedy. In a 2002 letter to all state governors, the NTSB noted that although the bus driver involved had received classroom training, no one had evaluated her actual driving performance. The NTSB concluded that a performance evaluation may have discovered her performance deficiencies and provided her superiors with a way to correct them before the accident.

LISD should provide regular training on bus discipline management and annual evaluations of all bus drivers in addition to what the district already provides in certification requirements. The district should institute annual paid training for all extracurricular drivers provided by the Transportation supervisor. LISD should require that any contract provider of regular route transportation also provide discipline management training to its drivers. The district should provide refresher training when necessary, as evidenced by rates of discipline incidents on specific routes or with specific drivers.

The Transportation supervisor should conduct annual evaluations, including a ride-along, of all bus drivers who transport LISD students. The district should develop a performance review form for its bus drivers and annually review individual performance. At least once per year, the Transportation supervisor should complete an unannounced ride-along with each of the regular and extracurricular drivers.

The Transportation supervisor should also develop a department policy and supporting procedures. The director should then use the results of the evaluation to develop supplemental training opportunities.

This fiscal impact estimate is based on the cost of providing district-sponsored training for the district's

pool of extracurricular drivers. Assuming $45 for training materials available through Region 10, the total costs would equal approximately $450 annually for ten part-time drivers (10 x $45) or $2,250 over five years.

BUS EVACUATION DRILLS (REC. 82)

LISD does not conduct nor require board-supported annual bus evacuation drills with students. The Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation Department director and Transportation supervisor were unaware of any evacuation drills conducted in the past. Of the six principals interviewed regarding transportation, none could document any bus evacuation drills conducted in recent years.

Bus drivers in focus groups stated that the only time they practiced evacuation techniques was in their required certification classes. These classes are held only once every three years, and the evacuation portion does not use actual students to provide realistic training.

The National Highway Transportation Safety Administration's Highway Safety Program Guideline Number 17 establishes minimum recommendations for pupil transportation safety. The guideline recommends that at least once during each school semester, each student transported from home to school in a school bus should be instructed in safe riding practices, proper loading and unloading techniques, and proper street crossing to and from school bus stops. In addition, each student should participate in a supervised timed emergency evacuation drill. Bus evacuation drills are strongly

recommended by the Texas Department of Public Safety to ensure student safety in the event of an accident.

The district should practice bus evacuation drills at least twice per school year or according to a developed schedule. The Transportation supervisor should schedule, coordinate, and supervise at least one of the bus evacuation drills for all regular route student riders and provide related policy to the superintendent for review and to the board for adoption. All extracurricular drivers should participate in at least one drill per year as well. The Transportation supervisor should schedule and coordinate the remaining bus evacuation drill with drivers and campus administrators.

Both drivers and students need to practice bus evacuation drills to encourage familiarity and proficiency in the event of an emergency. Drills should be conducted on school grounds, perhaps at the end of a morning run on a designated day as students are dropped at school and in coordination with campus administrators. The Transportation supervisor should time the drills in person to ensure students and drivers follow evacuation procedures and to provide appropriate feedback on completion.

FISCAL IMPACT

RECOMMENDATION	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09	2009–10	5-YEAR (COSTS) OR SAVINGS	ONE-TIME (COSTS)
76. Develop and implement key transportation performance measures and annually seek competitive bids for regular route transportation.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
77. Review routes and ridership annually and continuously update regular route descriptions.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
78. Adopt transportation policies in the areas of bus replacement, the maximum number of hours a driver may work, and maximum student ride times.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
79. Automate the system for extracurricular scheduling and billing and adopt related policies and procedures addressing drivers, fuel costs, and driver support.	$7,659	$7,659	$7,659	$7,659	$7,659	$38,295	($5,000)

FISCAL IMPACT (CONTINUED)

RECOMMENDATION	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09	2009–10	5-YEAR (COSTS) OR SAVINGS	ONE-TIME (COSTS)
80. Collect, analyze, and publish longitudinal bus incident and referral data by type, route, school, and district levels and annually report to the board.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
81. Provide regular training on bus discipline management in accordance with board policy and conduct annual driver evaluations.	($450)	($450)	($450)	($450)	($450)	($2,250)	$0
82. Require and practice bus evacuation drills supported through board policy.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Chapter 9 Totals	$7,209	$7,209	$7,209	$7,209	$7,209	$36,045	($5,000)
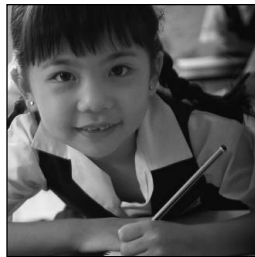
Chapter 10

Safety and Security

Lancaster Independent School District

CHAPTER 10
SAFETY AND SECURITY

Lancaster Independent School District (LISD) has an established Police Department that, in 2004–05, consists of nine certified police officers, including the chief of Police, one public safety officer, and a secretary, as authorized by board policy CKE (LOCAL). The board charges officers with providing a safe and secure learning environment for students and staff. The department assigns one officer each to the intermediate, junior high, and high school east campuses. A fourth officer patrols the district during the day, and another patrols in the evening. The chief of Police and the remaining four officers work at the high school west campus. The district uses a federal Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) grant obtained in 2003 to fund one of the current officer positions and two vacant positions; local funds support the remaining positions. The LISD Police Department has a fleet of five vehicles.

FINDINGS

- LISD lacks a central accountability function to address safety and security planning, compliance issues, and coordination between campuses, the central office, and outside agencies.

- The district does not develop annual, comprehensive safety and security goals and objectives based on a needs assessment and statistical data analysis that correlate with the District Improvement Plan and a strategic direction for the Police Department.

- LISD does not base police officer hiring decisions or deployment schedules on trend analysis or staffing formulas, reducing departmental overall effectiveness and resulting in significant overtime.

- At the district level, there is no assigned accountability to ensure districtwide emergency coordination, campus compliance for required emergency planning and drill execution, or procedural and training updates.

- LISD is not actively assessing and addressing physical security issues of its campuses and buildings.

- LISD does not have a consistent district employee or student badge policy.

- The district is not clearly communicating enforcement responsibility for the Student Code of Conduct, resulting in campus inconsistencies.

- Existing board policy does not specify a maximum number of free Dress Code days, a process for campus administrators to notify central office personnel when students will not be wearing their uniforms, or an annual review.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Recommendation 83 (p. 194): Create a district-level Safety and Security Advisory/Coordination Committee supported by board policy.** LISD lacks a central accountability function to address safety and security planning, compliance issues, and coordination between campuses, the central office, and outside agencies. The district should ensure that internally the chief of Police, principals, and transportation and maintenance administrators participate on this committee. By combining a broad representative base from each campus, appropriate departments, and relevant community agencies, the district consistently and adequately addresses all safety and security concerns and facilitates coordination for emergency planning, campus drills, physical facility review, and other identified areas of concerns on an ongoing basis.

- **Recommendation 84 (p. 196): Conduct an annual safety and security needs assessment and program review based on data collection and analysis.** The Police Department should collaboratively develop a process for routinely collecting the necessary data to support longitudinal campus, campus sub-location, time of day, and day of week analysis. In addition, the district should include data obtained from annual physical safety and security inspections of all facilities in current and historical analyses. By capturing and reviewing all necessary data, the Police Department staff and central administration can more appropriately develop strategic goals to match both district and campus needs, provide the board with the necessary information to make future planning and budgetary decisions, and evaluate safety and security programs for effectiveness.

- **Recommendation 85 (p. 197): Develop and adhere to annual staffing formulas and deployment schedules for police officers.** The district is not basing staffing or deployment decisions on safety and security statistical analysis or staffing formulas and has more officers per student than all peer districts and some neighboring districts. In addition, LISD assigns all but one officer to a day shift, leaving before-school hours at some schools unattended and resulting in significant overtime pay for coverage at evening sporting events. The chief of Police should review staffing levels as well as peer and industry suggestions and develop a staffing formula to assign police officers to

shifts that most broadly cover the needs of the district, including early morning and evening hours. LISD should review officer deployment at least annually and compare it to detailed incident statistics by campus and time of day.

- **Recommendation 86 (p. 198): Revise districtwide emergency planning and conduct monitored crisis drills according to a master schedule.** The district inconsistently completes fire and other emergency drills by campus and does not ensure accurate completion of documentation. The chief of Police should monitor all campus crisis drills. The district should also require electronic submission of related items such as time required to complete a drill and provide feedback for improvement to campus administrators. By focusing attention on consistent and accurate completion of crisis management through joint planning with outside agencies, the district ensures that teachers, staff, and students can appropriately respond to a real emergency.

- **Recommendation 87 (p. 200): Require each school to complete a security threat assessment of its campus.** The superintendent should require each school to complete a security threat assessment of its campus using the expertise, training, and labor of the police officers for assistance. The threat assessment should identify potential areas of intrusion assessible on foot or by vehicle, number of accessible hiding spots for intruders, and areas where building design or landscaping makes security surveillance difficult. The district should then use this information in safety and security strategic planning efforts.

- **Recommendation 88 (p. 201): Revise board policy and consistently implement a uniform districtwide badge system.** All district staff should have a badge designed in a uniform format, including numbered badges issued to substitutes. In addition, the district should consistently enforce requirements for students and staff to visibly display their badges at all times during school hours and/or designated times. By revising board policy to require badges for substitutes and imposing accountability for consistent and complete enforcement of campus badge requirements to principals, the district promotes a more controlled and safe environment for both students and staff, and reduces the risk of unidentified strangers entering schools.

- **Recommendation 89 (p. 202): Annually revise and update the Student Code of Conduct and include specific training on enforcement responsibilities.** The district is not clearly communicating enforcement responsibility for the Student Code of Conduct resulting in campus inconsistencies. The district should provide specific training each year on the responsibilities designated to campus administrators, staff, and the Police Department, ensuring all personnel understand enforcement expectations. The superintendent should assign the Code of Conduct Committee the task of creating a process to immediately address possible questions regarding enforcement. By annually reviewing and training districtwide staff on the Code of Conduct, the district clarifies enforcement ambiguities and ensures it matches new or revised district goals, objectives, expectations, and related policies.

- **Recommendation 90 (p. 203): Amend board policy to define free Dress Code days and related administrative approval procedures.** Existing board policy does not specify a maximum number of free Dress Code days or specify a process for campus administrators to pre-notify central office personnel when students will not be wearing their uniforms. As a result, LISD inconsistently enforces the Dress Code between campuses, and districtwide administrators and personnel, including police officers, cannot determine when students are in violation of regulations. By standardizing the maximum number of days each campus may implement free Dress Code days through annual review and by ensuring central administration pre-approval and notification of these days through required publication on the district's website calendar, the district ensures more consistent implementation of the Dress Code and provides campus administrators with the latitude to customize these days.

DETAILED FINDINGS

DISTRICTWIDE SAFETY AND SECURITY COORDINATION AND MANAGEMENT (REC. 83)

LISD lacks a central accountability function to address safety and security planning, compliance issues, and coordination between campuses, the central office, and outside agencies. The district's Police Department also does not have an established process to effectively communicate and resolve districtwide safety and security issues that pertain to other departments.

The second of six goals in LISD's 2004–05 draft District Improvement Plan states, "LISD will provide a safe and orderly environment that emphasizes the district's core beliefs and character values." Of the five objectives for this goal, one states, "Campus staff, administrations, and parents will be involved in maintaining a safe and orderly environment." Two of the 2004–05 activities or strategies for meeting this objective are, "All administrative staff will participate in extracurricular events through duty rotation," and "District crisis team will be identified and comprehensive crisis plan review will be conducted." According to staff interviews and a review of district documentation, the district has not established a Safety and Security Committee or a Crisis Team in 2004–05 or previously.

The board charges the Police Department with responding to crises. No other district representatives collaboratively address crisis management or safety and security issues. The Police Department also has numerous general administrative procedures but no long- or short-term strategies outlined in the District Improvement Plan providing operational and philosophic guidance for overall personnel and equipment management. In interviews, several department personnel noted a lack of concrete departmental mission, direction, and responsibilities.

Police officers reported perceived misunderstandings by teachers and principals regarding the specific roles and duties of the LISD officers on each campus community. Police officers differed from each other in their individual perceptions of these roles as well. Some officers said they support assisting administrators in Student Code of Conduct enforcement, while others said their primary concern was to strictly enforce laws. In addition, officers do not consistently participate in campus emergency planning or districtwide training efforts.

According to survey results gathered at the beginning of the review, all respondent groups indicated that they have at least some safety and security concerns. Over one-third (35.7 percent) disagrees or strongly disagrees that vandalism is not a problem in LISD; the same percentage disagrees or strongly disagrees that drugs are not a problem. Somewhat fewer (20.1 percent) indicated that school disturbances occur and that gangs are a problem in LISD (25.0 percent). Similar percentages of principals and assistant principals indicated the same responses to the same survey questions. Slightly larger percentages of district administrative and support staff did the same. The surveys did not ask questions on broader safety and security issues such as school site safety and coordinated emergency response planning.

LISD's Police Department lacks a clear strategic direction, as evidenced by the chief of Police openly questioning whether a school district police force could work effectively. During interviews and focus groups, officers expressed frustration about overall appreciation for their efforts and to clearly understanding their role in the district community.

While the district has a policies and procedures manual for safety and security, only one school actively used the manual during onsite visits. Board policy CE (LOCAL) stipulates that the chief of Police and the superintendent or designee shall review the manual at least once every year and make effective appropriate revisions. When the review team requested to see a copy of the policies and procedures manual at Lancaster High School West, the staff told the review team that the manual no longer applied.

Although a school district police force is a certified law enforcement agency, in many respects these police forces are unique. Properly focused, a school district force can have a much greater impact on students and district climate than a city police department will have on an average city. Officers often develop relationships with students, and prevention plays a large role. Districts that effectively coordinate safety and security issues often ensure that activities—such as developing site physical security plans, coordinating emergency response drills, actively assisting in truancy issues, providing safety-related training to students and staff, and developing data-driven statistics on safety and security concerns—occur regularly.

The National School Safety Center, created by presidential directive in 1984, released a document in 1999 entitled *Working Together to Create Safe Schools.* This document outlines numerous strategies for improving school safety and states the following:

> *"Perhaps the most important strategy is to place school safety on the educational agenda. This includes developing a safe schools plan—an ongoing process that encompasses the development of districtwide crime prevention policies, in-service training, crisis preparation, interagency cooperation, and student/parent participation. An appointed task force should develop and implement the plan with representatives from all elements."*

Some districts establish a coordinating Safety and Security Advisory/Coordination Committee, clearly communicating their commitment to maintain a safe and orderly learning environment to students, staff, and the community. The purpose of these committees is often to serve as the focal point for districtwide safety and security programs, develop appropriate district strategies, coordinate the efforts

of central office departments as they relate to safety and security, support the safety and security needs of school administrators, and provide direction for any individual school safety committees. Such a committee also drives the strategic focus of existing district Police Departments. Department representatives, local business representatives, principals, and frequently architects and construction representatives during times of construction and renovation participate on these board-approved committees. Often, these committees ensure that campus and district goals match and that emergency planning and drilling efforts meet with state and local standards.

One of LISD's peers, Red Oak ISD, has such a committee. The district's chief of Police heads the Safe School Committee. As outlined in the *Red Oak ISD Comprehensive Safe School Plan of Prevention, Intervention, and Crisis Management Response*, the committee also counts as members representatives from each campus, transportation, maintenance, administration, and outside agencies including the Red Oak and Glen Height's Police and Fire Departments, the Ellis County Sheriff's Department, and other county emergency management agencies.

LISD's board should draft a policy to create a district-level Safety and Security Advisory/Coordination Committee and assign it the central accountability function to address safety and security planning, compliance issues, and coordination between campuses, the central office, and outside agencies. The district should ensure that its chief of Police, principals, head nurse, and transportation and maintenance administrators participate on this committee. The superintendent should charge this committee with supporting Goal Two of the District Improvement Plan, to provide a safe and orderly learning environment. The committee should develop a strategic vision for the operation of the Police Department that supports the goals in the DIP. By combining a broad representative base from the each campus, appropriate departments, and relevant community agencies, the district can consistently and adequately address all safety and security concerns and facilitate coordination for emergency planning, campus drills, physical facility review, and other identified areas of concerns on an ongoing basis.

SAFETY NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND PROGRAM REVIEW (REC. 84)

The district does not develop annual, comprehensive safety and security goals and objectives based on a needs assessment and statistical data analysis that correlate with the District Improvement Plan and a strategic direction for the Police Department. The

Police Department also does not link associated program evaluation and training to statistical data analysis, stakeholder input, and facility reviews. The district requires its Police Department staff, as peace officers, to keep up with the required state training, yet it does not consistently match training to particular needs identified annually in the district. Seven police officers have attended some juvenile-related training since the inception of the district's Police Department. However, in December 2004, no one from LISD attended a major safety and security conference with a prominent expert in the field sponsored by Regional Education Service Center X (Region 10).

In a December 2004 document titled *First Semester Accomplishments*, the superintendent provided the board with the following list of four Police Department accomplishments:

- kept campuses safe from intrusion;

- entered into a project with Homeland Security;

- recruited volunteers to work at a major inoculation project with the high school campus as a selected inoculation site; and

- participated in a major training program.

The board, however, did not receive any quantifiable results, evidence of ongoing progress, or supporting documentation. In follow-up review efforts, district staff identified the last three items as portions of a larger proactive security project under Homeland Security that is coordinated through the Dallas County Health Department. The project encompasses planning and preparation for a potential mass inoculation in the event of a chemical bomb explosion. Members of the LISD Police Department are participating in this project, which included initial training and planning efforts with other agencies. As of January 2005, the chief of Police recruited approximately 200 volunteers to participate in this project.

The Police Department also does not seek or include stakeholder input in operational assessments. For example, some Police Departments annually ask principals to provide feedback on the officers assigned to their schools. This evaluation asks the principal to rate the quality of service provided by the officer, how often the officer's supervisor visited the campus, whether the principal would like to have the officer return the following school year, and whether the principal has any general comments or concerns regarding the quality of the Police Department. These surveys become part of the officer's personnel evaluation. Other departments administer a more general satisfaction survey to

district stakeholders. Districts use results of both kinds of surveys to identify problem areas and drive goal-setting efforts for the next school year.

Performance, accountability, and cost-efficiency measures allow program leaders, school boards, and the public to determine the success of a program. Performance measures also provide stakeholders with information on program quality and goal achievements. Cost-efficiency measures provide stakeholders with information on program efficiencies, enabling them to assess whether they have achieved goals and objectives in the most frugal way feasible. Accountability measures ensure stakeholders that someone is monitoring implementation of the program for consistency and reviewing the results for success.

As noted in the Texas School Performance Review's *Keeping Texas Children Safe in School*, the goals and objectives of a solid prevention strategy include being proactive, not reactive; identifying roles and responsibilities; and preparing a comprehensive plan. Being proactive requires a district to deploy resources with a clear design related to the achievement of district goals. A comprehensive plan requires a district to take a larger view of security, beyond individual school plans and into districtwide security concerns. The primary benefit to a district is to assure that it has minimized as much as possible its safety and security risks and is using its finite resources as wisely as possible in the process. Ultimately, a good strategic plan incorporates an environmental or situation needs assessment, a mission statement, long-term goals, measurable objectives, and strategies to achieve those goals.

The district should conduct a needs assessment for the Police Department and ensure that it prioritizes identified findings; includes performance, accountability, and cost-efficiency measures; and aligns with the district, campus, and departmental strategic plans. The chief of Police should conduct annual program reviews by developing a process for routinely collecting the data that will support longitudinal campus, campus sub-location, time of day, and day of week analysis in meeting identified performance, accountability, and cost-efficiency measures.

OFFICER DEPLOYMENT, STAFFING, AND OVERTIME (REC. 85)

LISD does not base police officer hiring decisions or deployment schedules on trend analysis or staffing formulas, reducing departmental overall effectiveness and resulting in significant overtime. Of the nine filled positions in the LISD Police Department, eight work a daytime shift, from 7:30AM. to 4:30PM. The

other officer works an evening shift from 4:00PM. to midnight. The chief of Police assigns one officer each to the intermediate, junior high school, and east high school campuses. Three police officers, the public safety officer, and the chief of Police base themselves at Lancaster High School West. The chief of Police patrols various locations throughout the day, while one of the west campus officers focuses his daytime patrols on the elementary schools. The Police Department does not have officers directly assigned to elementary campuses. The one officer working the evening shift patrols the entire district. The department also assigns the vacant administrative lieutenant position to the west high school campus. This position jointly patrols with the chief of Police.

During shifts, officers patrol their assigned areas and respond to crisis calls, accidents, and reports of criminal activity. According to their job descriptions, LISD also expects officers to help provide traffic control at athletic events, school closings, and school openings.

Elementary schools begin at 7:45AM, and students and buses begin arriving as early as 7:10AM. There is no officer on duty during these morning hours. Several of the elementary principals interviewed said traffic problems frequently occur in the mornings. In particular, parents dropping off their children sometimes do not follow the required traffic flows and create potentially dangerous situations. While each school's staff addresses these situations, principals noted that problems are ongoing.

In another early morning situation, staff at the junior high said that although school does not start until 8:45AM, students begin arriving on campus as early as 7:00AM. Most of the students arrive by 8:15AM. At this time, there are no designated gathering areas for students inside the building. Sports teams use the gym in the mornings for practice. Consequently, students congregate outside the front and rear of the school. The school staff provides limited supervision. Both the principal and assigned police officer expressed concern about an increased potential for fights, bullying, theft, and drug activity during this period. The district does not have tracked incident statistics for this period. However, the officer assigned to the intermediate school does compile quarterly statistics by campus area. For the first quarter of 2004–05, the officer recorded six incidents in front of the school. Three were for disorderly conduct (fighting), two were for assault, and one was for disruption of school.

Exhibit 10-1 provides information on the student enrollment and related Police Departments for LISD, some of the surrounding districts, and peer

EXHIBIT 10-1
POLICE FORCE AND ENROLLMENT COMPARISONS
LISD PEER AND LOCAL DISTRICT COMPARISONS
2003–04

DISTRICT	STUDENT ENROLLMENT	PERCENT ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED	NUMBER OF BUDGETED FULL-TIME POLICE OFFICERS*	SECURITY AND MONITORING BUDGETED FUNDS
LISD	4,751	55.1%	12**	$487,119
Cedar Hill	7,491	33.2%	4	370,592
Dallas	160,319	79.5%	NA	9,507,864
DeSoto	7,641	36.8%	5 SRO	113,034
Duncanville	11,346	49.1%	5 SRO	442,617
Red Oak	4,803	20.7%	4	235,407
Terrell	4,158	59.2%	4	230,093

* SRO denotes School Resource Officers or certified police officers who assist in creating a safe learning and working environment for students, teachers, administrators, and other school employees only; NA denotes not applicable or not available.
**LISD's COPS grant funds three budgeted positions, and the district has two grant-related vacancies.
SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS), 2003–04, and peer district websites

districts. The numbers of police officers do not include administrative/secretarial staff. As shown, except for Dallas ISD, LISD has at least twice as many officers as peer and comparison districts with Police Departments. Red Oak, Terrell, and Cedar Hill each have four peace officers certified by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcements Standards and Education (TCLEOSE). Cedar Hill also has a dispatcher and is advertising in May 2005 for two additional peace officers. Red Oak and Cedar Hill are closest in size to LISD.

The district also deploys officers to provide security during numerous evening events, particularly basketball and football games for which the chief of Police assigns officers to mitigate perceived team rivalries. Although the district has one officer assigned to the evening shift, the chief of Police said he believes it necessary to deploy more than one officer to night sporting events. He frequently requires day shift officers to work overtime for this function.

During focus groups, officers said that the chief of Police often mandates a significant amount of overtime work. The district typically assigns more than one officer to cover basketball, football, and other major evening events. One evening during the on-site visit, the chief of Police directed that all officers work at a football game. Several district staff members said in interviews that the superintendent and other central administrators do not believe that so many officers are necessary for such events. Some administrators also expressed the opinion that a large police presence at sporting events presents a negative image of the district. LISD personnel have not reached an agreement about the role of the police force in evening functions. Meanwhile, the district is accruing overtime expenses because it permanently assigns only one officer to work the evening shift.

As of December 17, 2004, the district had spent $32,768 of a $50,000 overtime budget for 2004–05. Although the district had used more than half its overtime budget less than halfway into the year, the chief of Police does not believe the department will exceed its budget because he attributed most of the overtime to football and basketball games, two fall sports. In 2002–03, the district spent $47, 862 on police overtime; in 2003–04, the figure was $41,353. The fiscal impact and savings consist of reducing by two-thirds the budget allocation of $50,000 for officer overtime each year. This is an estimated cost savings of $33,000 per year.

The district should develop annual staffing formulas and deployment schedules based on an annual assessment of district needs and effectively reduce scheduled overtime. Police officer shift assignments should broadly cover the needs of the district and include early morning and evening hours. LISD should annually review departmental staffing needs and officer deployment compared to detailed incident statistics by campus, time of day, staffing levels, and incident statistics for peers.

This fiscal impact is based on 2004–05 budgeted overtime expenditures of $50,000. LISD should realistically work to incrementally reduce its budgeted and actual expenditures for overtime payments by one-third of its current levels in year one and by two-thirds of its current budgeted amounts for years two through five. First year savings equal $16,500 ($50,000 x 0.33). Savings in years two through five equal $33,000 annually ($50,000 x 0.66). The district should realize five-year savings of $148,500 [$16,500 + ($33,000 x 4 years)].

EMERGENCY PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT (REC. 86)
At the district level, there is no assigned accountability to ensure districtwide emergency

coordination, campus compliance for required emergency planning and drill execution, or procedural and training updates. Currently, the district has an undated 82-page *Emergency Management Handbook* that contains emergency contact numbers, roles, responsibilities, and instructions for responding to crises. The handbook details a variety of situations from gang altercations, bomb threats, and fallen aircraft, to suspected biological threats. However, ongoing LISD emergency planning is limited; other than fire and tornado drills, no emergency drills have been conducted districtwide. There has also been no review of emergency plans by individual campus administrators or consistent and updated safety and security emergency training provided districtwide to administration and staff. During interviews, campus administrators said the district told them to base school-level emergency plans on the district's *Emergency Management Handbook*; however, a principal said the district does not provide them with clear directions for developing plans that deal with the most common types of emergencies.

Police officers are also not routinely involved in the development of campus-level emergency response plans. The six campus-safety plans provided to the review team were essentially school layouts with drawn fire evacuation routes. Only one plan showed the location of the main gas cutoff. During visits to five schools, four school administrators could not readily locate a copy of LISD's *Emergency Management Handbook*. Four administrators said that their individual campus emergency plan was the district handbook. Only one school, Pleasant Run Elementary, had a readily available campus-level crisis management plan. It was last updated in 2002–03. Pleasant Run Elementary School's Crisis Management Plan lists members of the crisis response team by name, but it does not include any details on how the school should respond to the most likely emergencies. It defines "Code Red" as a lockdown but does not define a code that would alert staff members to evacuate.

During interviews, only one school administrator acknowledged holding a lockdown drill in 2004–05. Most principals stated that they conduct tornado drills at least once a year, and all said they had conducted fire drills. However, the records for one

school show that it has not conducted an average of one fire drill per month, as required by the State Fire Marshal's Office. In addition, only one school logged whether or not it was able to complete the fire drills in less than the state-recommended time of three minutes.

In 2003–04, there were two bomb threats to one school. According to the police, the response was poor. Instead of evacuating the building, the school went to lockdown status and massed all the students in the gym without knowing the location of the threatened bombs. **Exhibit 10-2** shows the number of false alarms and similar incidents for the past four years from 2000–01 through 2003–04.

The chief of Police is working with other local agencies and has recruited 200 of 300 necessary volunteers to assist with a community response in the event of a "dirty" or chemical bomb. The Police Department designated the high school as the area's mass inoculation center, although the program has not conducted actual joint drills to date. In the event of an emergency, there is no time to download a copy of a crisis plan or to leaf through an emergency handbook. In a school crisis, principals and teachers are the very first responders. Their initial actions could have either lifesaving or mortal consequences.

To mitigate the risk of unprepared staff in emergencies, many districts routinely conduct crisis drills. These districts ensure that annual training occurs, familiarizing all staff with the contents of district and campus emergency and crisis manuals. Reviews of almost every major emergency public education situation around the nation identify cross-jurisdictional communication and coordinated response as major problem areas.

Some districts provide campus administrators with a specific plan detailing procedures for emergency lockdowns and evacuations. These districts establish common signals identifying the type of emergency, such as four short bells for a lockdown or one long bell for immediate evacuation. These districts require campus administrators to identify key emergency response personnel and their back-ups. Schools then prepare small laminated cards with emergency phone numbers and emergency steps posted in prominent exit locations in each classroom or building for easy accessibility and use by staff if necessary.

EXHIBIT 10-2
LISD NUMBER OF FALSE ALARMS AND SIMILAR INCIDENTS
2000–01 THROUGH 2003–04

REASON CODE	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
False alarm/false report	0	1	3	6
Terrorist threat	0	3	0	0

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS), 2000–01 through 2003–04.

Many school districts around the country are also revamping and enhancing emergency planning and management in concert with local entities. They regularly conduct, monitor, and analyze responses to all internal crisis drills according to suggested guidelines. For example, the U.S. Department of Education, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, and the American Preparedness Campaign have cited Fairfax County Public Schools' (FCPS) emergency plans as national models regardless of the size of the district. Administrators ensure that safety and security representatives cooperatively develop emergency plans with all other local emergency preparedness plans and local, state, and federal health, safety, and emergency personnel. FCPS safety and security committee members regularly review and update plans that include procedures to respond to critical incidents or natural disasters and ensure school system personnel regularly practice all related drills. Administrators ensure the district regularly reviews facilities to identify and address safety and security issues and to collaboratively provide facilities and transportation services as key resources in regional emergency response situations.

The district should institute and implement an annual emergency planning and management review, a master schedule, and update the process according to a developed schedule. This broad effort should include extending cooperative planning efforts such as those already begun in relation to Homeland Security and implementation of posted emergency/crisis drill cards near classroom and building exits. In addition, the district should ensure campus principals or designees conduct fire and tornado drills according to state and/or local requirements, and that they record and submit results to the chief of Police or another designated safety and security administrator. The district should include results from an annual safety and security facilities review in any procedural or emergency plan revisions. The district should ensure campus and district administrators and personnel know their specific roles in emergencies and are aware of any safety and security emergency revisions, additions, and/or omissions through annual training.

PHYSICAL SECURITY (REC. 87)

LISD is not actively assessing and addressing physical security issues of its campuses and buildings. Teachers in a focus group expressed concerns about adults easily entering campuses unchallenged. Despite the district's campus visitor policy, the review team walked unchallenged through areas of several schools. Most schools visited showed signs of inadequate attention to general security issues including the following:

- blind entries left unlocked during the school day;

- school parking lots that remain accessible throughout school hours;

- landscaping that provides convenient hiding spots;

- security video cameras that have been broken for two years;

- security video cameras trained on the same areas without rotation, while other areas have no video surveillance;

- portable classrooms without two-way communications devices;

- campuses not completely fenced or with unlocked gates; and

- open campus layouts that provide students and others with places to loiter unobserved and unprotected.

During nighttime visits to two district schools, the review team found that parking lot lighting was good, but also found these problems:

- a gym door was unlocked with no custodian nearby;

- there were numerous dark areas around the buildings where lighting was inadequate; and

- some motion-sensing lights were not working.

Police officers in the focus group said that these issues exist to some degree on all the campuses and expressed frustration with a lack of coordination and serious review of these security issues outside of the Police Department. During interviews and focus groups with campus administrators and personnel, responses about these security concerns focused on a perceived lack of concern and a perception that nothing bad will happen here.

As part of this review, principals/assistant principals and teachers answered survey questions related to safety and security. The review team asked principals/assistant principals and teachers whether they believed that safety hazards exist on their school grounds. Twenty-five (25) percent, or one out of four of the principals/assistant principals, indicated a belief that safety hazards are present, as did 22 percent, or approximately one out of five, of the district's teachers.

As noted in *Keeping Texas Children Safe in School*, safe school districts "look for trouble" before it finds them. This "looking" involves recognizing the critical need to keep all but the main entrance door locked

after the start of school. It also includes fencing campuses where possible and reviewing building designs to identify areas that could provide intruders with inappropriate access to students. In the most proactive districts, "looking," means having experts complete annual security threat assessments of each campus and taking whatever steps are possible to reduce potential problems.

The superintendent should require each school principal to complete a security threat assessment of its campus using the expertise, training, and labor of the police officers for assistance. The threat assessment should identify potential areas of intrusion assessable on foot or by vehicle, number of accessible hiding spots for intruders, and areas where building design or landscaping make security surveillance difficult. Each assessment should include a sliding scale rating of various security issues. Each assessment also should include an action plan for reducing identified security risks. The district should then use this information in safety and security strategic planning efforts.

EMPLOYEE AND STUDENT BADGES (REC. 88)

LISD does not have a consistent district employee or student badge policy. Not all of the badges look the same. Some campuses provide badges to staff, and some do not. Further, schools do not enforce visitor sign-in and identification policies. Taken together, it is difficult for district personnel to immediately identify strangers on campus.

LISD's *2004–05 Student Handbook and Code of Conduct* states that all visitors to district schools must first report to the principal's Office. Visitors must sign their name into a book and wear a badge. However, the district enforces the visitor sign-in policy sporadically. Only one school required review team members to sign-in, and none asked for identification. Only one school provided a visitor badge; it was not uniquely numbered and was easily reproducible. Moreover, there are no procedures at any school to verify that visitors return badges. None of the schools require visitor sign-out.

The *Student Handbook* also states that all high school students are required to wear school identification badges. The district implemented this policy in 2003–04; at that time, all high school students received free badges. Teachers in the focus group reported a high level of satisfaction with the badges that year. In 2004–05, the district still requires student badges, but the high school asked students to pay $5 for them. Since this presented a hardship for some students, not all purchased them. The high school principal estimates that approximately 90 percent of high

school students purchased a badge this year, but teachers report that fewer than that wear a badge every day. The district did not have actual statistics to support these counts. The review team saw numerous high school students without a badge readily visible while on-site.

Below the high school level, several schools have identification badges for students. Students are not required to wear them, however. At some schools, the badges have magnetic strips coded with the student's cafeteria account, enabling students to swipe them for food purchase. Administrators at these schools reported success with those badges and did not report problems of unauthorized use. The principal at Houston Elementary School requested identification badges for students riding buses in 2004–05.

According to staff, it is unclear whether the district requires badges. Some administrators said that they are required, as did some school principals. However, teachers at some schools reported that the district did not issue them badges. One teacher only received a badge as part of a promotion by an outside vendor. Of those teachers with badges attending a focus group, the review team noted that not all of the badges were of a consistent style.

Substitute teachers in the district do not have identification badges. Instead, they wear an orange sticker tag that says "substitute" on which they write their name. Full-time teachers expressed concern to the review team that it is easy to obtain these stickers.

As noted in *Keeping Texas Children Safe in School*, safe school districts require visitors to sign-in and wear badges. They instruct their teachers and staff to stop anyone on the campus without a badge and direct them to the main office. Districts with effective visitor policies require all visitors to sign-in. They check identification and verify the purpose of their visit. If the visitor claims to be a parent, they crosscheck the identification with a roster of all parents of the students in the school. They issue numbered visitor badges that are difficult to duplicate. They require visitors to return badges when leaving and maintain badge control.

Many school districts around the country have implemented photo-identification badge systems for both students and employees, primarily because of security concerns. For example, Killeen ISD high school and middle school student badges have a photo and a barcode. The employee badge, required for all employees, has a photo, barcode, and magnetic strip. The district plans to use them for documenting attendance at in-service training. For

substitute teachers and visitors, the district uses numbered badges without pictures.

Neighboring Cedar Hill ISD uses visitor -badges similar to employee badges in all aspects except the use of a photo. All visitors must sign-in and display the plastic badge while on campus or in the district's administrative offices.

Many photo identification and badge systems, such as that owned by the district, offer different colored plastic for use when creating badges. Some districts use different colored badges to identify substitutes, full-time employees, and students. Others imprint labels on similar colors of plastic to distinguish badge types. Most make badges uniformly and then consistently enforce display requirements.

Many districts use security or identification badges for additional purposes. For example, while administrators in some districts process paperwork for a new student, they immediately print an identification card including a photograph, a signature, and a barcode or magnetic stripe. That student can immediately use the card in the library to check-out materials, in the cafeteria as a meal card, for access to a computer in a computer lab, and as an attendance aid by swiping the card in the classroom. Some of these districts also use magnetic identification cards to provide controlled accessibility to certain locations such as custodial closets containing chemicals.

LISD should revise board policy to implement a uniform districtwide badge system to promote greater security. All district staff should have a badge designed in a uniform format. LISD should provide badges to high school students free of charge each year and only charge the established fee for a replacement badge. Substitute teachers and visitors should receive numbered badges that they return each day. The substitute and visitor badges should differ in color or design and should be difficult to reproduce. The district could assign a specific badge to substitutes once they complete their training; however, the district should maintain control of those badges and require substitutes to return them at the end of each day they work.

Because the district already owns the badge-making equipment, this fiscal impact includes the cost estimate for supplies. The supplies include blank badges, printer ink, and strap clips at an annual estimated cost of $500 or a five-year cost of $2,500.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT (REC. 89)

The district is not clearly communicating enforcement responsibility for the Student Code of Conduct, resulting in campus inconsistencies. Campus administrators and district staff reported differences in enforcement, weakening the code's effectiveness as a guide to appropriate behavior and a deterrent to bad behavior. For example, while district policy states that it is the responsibility of the principal or the principal's designee to enforce violations—including those related to the Dress Code—not all campus principals consistently enforce infractions in the same manner. Police officers reported in interviews that they are frequently asked to assist some principals enforce the Dress Code.

Exhibit 10-3 shows the Student Code of Conduct violations from 2000–01 through 2003–04 and the resulting consequences. There is a significant increase in the number of out-of-school suspensions in 2003–04. Although the district has not separately analyzed the number of Dress Code violations, some staff attributed this increase to the requirement that students wear uniforms during this time.

After meetings with the review team, the district undertook a massive review and rewrite of the 2004–05 Student Code of Conduct. The district convened a Code of Conduct Committee and researched sample documents, including those from Dallas ISD. The team wanted to ensure that the revised Student Code of Conduct was "crystal clear" and "set the standard" as mentioned in *Keeping Texas Children Safe in School.* The district separated minor from major infractions and the non-violent infractions from the violent.

The 2005–06 Student Code of Conduct includes language that is clear and easy to understand that addressed one of the committee's goals during the revision—to clearly outline expectations and

EXHIBIT 10-3
LISD STUDENT DISCIPLINARY ACTION SUMMARY
CODE OF CONDUCT VIOLATIONS AND PERCENT CHANGE
2000–01 THROUGH 2003–04

ACTION CODE	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	PERCENT CHANGE FROM 2000–01 THROUGH 2003–04
Out-of-school suspension (05)	493	522	568	1,159	135%
In-school suspension (06)	2,611	2,427	2,482	2,231	(15%)
Placement in DAEP (07)	89	101	83	96	8%
Other Action Code	23	12	9	8	(65%)
Total Violations of Code of Conduct	3,216	3,062	3,142	3,494	9%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS, 2000–01 through 2003–04.

consequences for non-compliance. While the district has finished annual review and revision of the code, including board adoption in May 2005, the process is not complete.

The district should address the problem of inconsistent Student Code of Conduct implementation by ensuring all personnel understand the enforcement expectations and varying roles of administrators and staff. The district should provide specific Student Code of Conduct training each year about the responsibilities designated to campus administrators, staff, and the Police Department. The superintendent should assign the Code of Conduct Committee the task of creating a process to immediately address possible questions regarding enforcement. The district should review the code annually to clarify any enforcement ambiguities and to ensure it matches new or revised district goals, objectives, expectations, and related policies.

DRESS CODE ENFORCEMENT
(REC. 90)

Existing board policy does not specify a maximum number of free Dress Code days, a process for campus administrators to notify central office personnel when students will not be wearing their uniforms, or annual review. As a result, the district does not consistently enforce the Dress Code or uniform policy from campus to campus, creating the impression, according to some staff and administrators, that it is an unimportant rule. District personnel also have no way of knowing in advance which students or campuses have permission to be out of uniform for the day. In addition, although teachers and staff had positive comments about implementation of the uniform Dress Code, the district has not compiled the statistics to make a judgment about the effectiveness of the policy.

LISD has a board-approved uniform policies—

FNCA (LOCAL) and FNCA (LEGAL)—adopted in 2000 for the elementary through junior high grades and in 2004–05 for the high school. The *2004–05 Student Handbook and Student Code of Conduct* details the uniform requirements. **Exhibit 10-4** outlines the general requirements of the Dress Code by grade. The handbook also specifies how the clothes must fit, the acceptable length of shorts, skorts, and jumpers, and general grooming requirements.

Initially violating a Dress Code standard is a Category I offense. The Student Code of Conduct leaves the punishment up to the school administrator but allows any of the following consequences:

- assignment to school duties other than class tasks;
- warning;
- detention;
- withdrawal of privileges;
- telephone call/note to parent;
- parent conference;
- community service—Saturday work class;
- in-school suspension;
- corporal punishment; or
- forced conference.

Officers noted that uniforms make it easier to identify intruders on school grounds. Principals, teachers, police officers, and district administrators conveyed positive remarks about implementation of the Dress Code. Several employees said they personally noticed improvements in student behavior after adopting and enforcing the Dress Code. However, the administration has not formally assessed whether implementing the Dress Code has had any impact on student behavior as measured

EXHIBIT 10-4
LISD PROVISIONS OF THE STUDENT DRESS CODE

CLOTHING ITEM	PRE-K – GRADE 6	GRADES 7 AND 8	GRADES 9–12
Shirts, Blouses, Turtlenecks	White, Red, Blue polo shirts and turtlenecks	White, Yellow, Gray polo shirts and turtlenecks	White, Orange, Black polo shirts and turtlenecks
	White only dress shirts and blouses Shirts must be tucked		
Slacks	Khaki, Navy Blue	Khaki, Navy Blue, Black	
	Belt required		
Shorts, Skorts	Khaki, Navy Blue	Not allowed	Not allowed
Skirts, Jumpers, Dresses	Khaki, Navy Blue	Khaki, Navy Blue, Black	
Sweatshirts, Vests, Sweaters	White, Red, Blue	White, Gray, Yellow	White, Orange, Black
Jackets, Windbreakers	Any solid color		
Shoes	Appropriate for school		
Hats, Caps, Shower Caps, Bandanas, Gloves, Headbands	Not to be worn inside any building		

SOURCE: LISD, 2004–05 Student Handbook and Student Code of Conduct, December 2004.

through data analysis. The district has also not tracked or analyzed Dress Code violations separately from other Student Code of Conduct violations.

Teachers, campus staff, and police officers all noted during interviews and focus groups inconsistent support for Dress Code enforcement. For example, when the district initially implemented the high school Dress Code at the beginning of 2004–05, the principal enforced it strictly on the first day. According to the principal, an estimated 150 students violated the Dress Code and spent the entire day in the auditorium. On the second day, 15 students violated the Dress Code. During on-site visits, the review team saw students in violation of the Dress Code for the following reasons:

- wearing skirts shorter than the required maximum of three inches above the knee;

- wearing shirts without collars, often T-shirts;

- wearing shirts untucked; and

- wearing oversized or baggy pants, as well as cargo pants.

During on-site visits, it was difficult to observe students at some schools and deduce the requirements of the Dress Code without referring to the requirements printed in the Student Code of Conduct. Students at the Lancaster High School West had a free dress day during the review team's visit, yet not all administrators knew about it.

Police officers gave numerous examples where the administrators asked or told them to assist in enforcing the Dress Code yet they reported observing teachers who would not do the same. According to interviews, principals are routinely making exceptions to the Dress Code, using it as a reward tool. Some principals give individual students passes for a free dress day. One principal gives these

passes to all students who bring a parent to the PTA meeting. Some staff said making individual student exceptions sometimes puts district staff on the defensive when trying to enforce the Dress Code on their own. This results from staff not immediately knowing which students have free dress passes.

In the peer district of Terrell ISD, schools can only grant three "free dress" days per year. Those are campus events communicated in advance to staff. In Duncanville ISD, within 10 miles of Lancaster, the district includes enforcement of the Dress Code and Student Code of Conduct violations in job descriptions for its police officers. The district also identifies a similar responsibility to all staff communicated during annual orientation days. By consistently and clearly outlining responsibility for enforcing its Dress Code, Duncanville ISD also sets a precedent of consistency for enforcing all aspects of the Student Code of Conduct.

LISD should annually revise and update its Dress Code policy to include a maximum number of free dress days per campus and develop related administrative approval procedures. The district should require advance notice and central office approval of these days. Administrators and the board should also publish free uniform days on the district's monthly calendar maintained on its website. By standardizing districtwide free dress days, requiring pre-approval for campus free days, and publishing all days on the district's website, the district promotes consistency in enforcement and provides individual school administrators with the latitude to customize free days as rewards.

For more information on Chapter 10: Safety and Security, see page 241 in the General Information section of the appendices.

FISCAL IMPACT

RECOMMENDATION	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09	2009–10	5-YEAR (COSTS) OR SAVINGS	ONE-TIME (COSTS)
83. Create a district-level Safety and Security Advisory/Coordination Committee supported by board policy.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
84. Conduct an annual safety and security needs assessment and program review based on data collection and analysis.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
85. Develop and adhere to annual staffing formulas and deployment schedules for Police officers.	$16,500	$33,000	$33,000	$33,000	$33,000	$148,500	$0
86. Revise districtwide emergency planning and conduct monitored crisis drills according to a master schedule.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
87. Require each school to complete a security threat assessment of its campus.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
88. Revise board policy and consistently implement a uniform districtwide badge system.	($500)	($500)	($500)	($500)	($500)	($2,500)	$0
89. Annually revise and update the Student Code of Conduct and include specific training on enforcement responsibilities.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
90. Amend board policy to define free Dress Code days and related administrative approval procedures.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Chapter 10 Totals	$16,000	$32,500	$32,500	$32,500	$32,500	$146,000	$0

Chapter 11

Community Involvement

Lancaster Independent School District

CHAPTER 11
COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The primary role of the Community Relations Department staff is to work closely with the superintendent to convey a public message and image consistent with the policies and programs put forth by the Board of Trustees and implemented by the superintendent's Office. The department's purpose is to engender public support, involvement, and investment in Lancaster Independent School District schools and in the district as a whole. The Community Relations Department includes a director, assistant, and secretary.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS
- LISD has created and developed many well-designed and frequent publications to communicate activities, events, successes, and achievements of the district.

- LISD established an active educational foundation to provide funds for innovative teaching grants and scholarships.

FINDINGS
- The Community Relations Department does not have a comprehensive planning document that includes actions and activities, available resources, and performance measures for carrying out the goals and objectives of the department in promoting community relations and involvement.

- LISD has not developed an annual end-of-year report that provides parents and community members with an overview of the district's accomplishments, specific student and staff information, financial data, and other related information to improve community support and advance district goals.

- The district has not conducted school climate or customer satisfaction surveys and does not have a process in place to retain, analyze, and follow up on survey data.

- LISD does not consistently update and maintain current information on its website (www.lancasterisd.org) regarding accomplishments and information for parents and community members.

- A link for parents and other users to email board members is not available on the district's website, thereby reducing the public's ease in communication access to district officials.

- LISD does not have a structured volunteer program to encourage parents and other citizens to volunteer in the district.

- Many LISD publications, such as newsletters, newspaper clippings, and brochures, are not dated and in some instances do not contain media sources.

RECOMMENDATIONS
- **Recommendation 91 (p. 209): Develop and annually update a departmental planning document with goals and objectives.** The director of Community Relations and staff should develop a planning document that includes the goals and objectives of the department, and actions and activities for carrying out those goals. The document should include implementation dates for actions, available resources, assigned personnel, performance measures, and accountability schedules. By utilizing the plan, the district should be able to optimize the use of time and resources in promoting community relations and involvement.

- **Recommendation 92 (p. 213): Develop and distribute an end-of-the year annual report to the community.** The department should design, develop, and distribute a pamphlet or brochure that provides information about the district's achievements for the year. The brochure should include items such as district goals, list of board members, financial data, student enrollment, schools, staff statistics, summary of test scores, student awards, new policy initiatives, district achievements, and other valuable information. By providing this type of report, the district promotes community partnerships and district goals.

- **Recommendation 93 (p. 213): Develop, conduct, and analyze results from annual community school climate and/or customer satisfaction surveys.** Individual departments (such as Maintenance and Community Relations) involved in surveying staff, parents, or community members should develop the survey and provide it to the Technology Department to administer online. Once completed, the Technology Department should provide individual departments with the results. The district should also develop a process to retain, analyze, and follow up on the survey data. The district should require principals to survey parents at least once a year. The parent survey should direct its questions to school-related issues and the relationship of the school to students' parents or guardians. By conducting these surveys the district can assess customer

feedback and implement informed strategies for district improvement.

- **Recommendation 94 (p. 215): Develop a process to regularly update the district's website.** The director of Community Relations should work with the Technology staff in charge of the website to develop a more efficient updating process to make website changes on a more timely basis. By regularly updating its website, the district delivers current information to parents and community members effectively and cost efficiently.

- **Recommendation 95 (p. 216): Provide email addresses for a direct website link to board members and develop a process for timely email responses.** The director of Community Relations should seek approval for a district website email link for the public to communicate with board members. The district should develop a process addressing email responses. Board members and the superintendent should ensure that emailed questions and issues of concern from the public are answered in a timely fashion. By ensuring website email access to board members, the district provides an economical and efficient means for communication.

- **Recommendation 96 (p. 216): Develop a structured volunteer program.** The district should provide training to principals in directing their school volunteer program and in appointing a coordinator to oversee the program for their schools. The director of Community Relations should oversee the districtwide volunteer program, establish goals and objectives, publicize efforts frequently, provide a process for a year-end evaluation, and identify hours as in-kind contributions. The director of Community Relations should encourage each school to form a Parent Advisory Committee (PAC). By establishing a structured volunteer program, the district should encourage more parents and community members to volunteer in the district.

- **Recommendation 97 (p. 218): Update procedures to require a publishing date and source for all district community relations publications.** The director of Community Relations should update procedures to ensure that each publication released to the public has a publication date and a source. By requiring all publications and newspaper clippings have a date and source attached, the district should be able to more easily maintain organized files and facilitate information retrieval. All news

clippings should be dated, sourced, and maintained on file for future reference.

DETAILED ACCOMPLISHMENTS

PUBLICATIONS

LISD has created and developed many well-designed and frequent publications to communicate activities, events, successes, and achievements of the district. **Exhibit 11-1** describes several district publications.

The publication *Our Tickets to Student Success* is a pamphlet-like folder that contains six 6½" by 4" colorful card stock ticket-like sheets. Each ticket contains information about *Adopt a School*, *Partners in Education*, *PTA*, *Volunteers in School*, *Lancaster Education Foundation*, and *Texas Scholars Program*. The pamphlets are distributed to the Chamber and other groups. The pamphlet was designed by the Community Relations Department and produced by the PTRC. *Our Tickets to Student Success* has been nominated for a Bright Idea Award given by the Texas School Public Relations Association (TSPRA).

The department issues the LISD newsletter quarterly to parents and members of the community. The newsletter is a 17" x 11" publication that occasionally contains colored photos of events. The newsletter includes a message from the superintendent, along with news articles about past and upcoming events. The newsletter provides other information depending on the issue, such as dress code, sport schedules, and lunch menus and prices. The first quarterly publication included a series of frequently asked questions and answers.

The student handbook provides an abundance of information, not only to students but parents as well. The district requires parents to sign and return to their child's school a form indicating that the handbook was received. Prior to 2004–05, the district spent $15,000 per year on printing expenses for the student handbooks. In 2004–05, through a business partnership with the local newspaper, the district reduced printing expenses to $2,037 by changing from offset printing and regular copying to webcast printing, resulting in a handbook similar to a college course catalogue. The handbook contains the following:

- general information about the district's mission, *No Child Left Behind* Act, six-week periods, progress reports, student holidays, and inclement weather policy;

- enrollment information about admission, residence requirements, transfers, and withdrawals;

- student records, including information about attendance and academics; and

EXHIBIT 11-1
EXAMPLES OF LISD PUBLICATIONS

PUBLICATION	DESCRIPTION
Board of Trustees Pamphlet	Pamphlet provides roles, responsibilities, and photos of board members. It also includes a welcome message, conflict resolution information, and how to address the board at meetings.
Our Tickets to Student Success Pamphlet	Folder contains information about the Lancaster Education Foundation, Adopt-a-School Partner Program, Texas Scholars Program, Lancaster Chamber of Commerce Partners in Education, Parent Teacher Association, and Volunteers in Schools.
Parent Teacher Resource Center (PTRC) Brochure	Brochure details offerings, special services for teachers and parents, and hours of operation.
Lancaster ISD After-School Program Brochure	Brochure provides program description, fact sheet, and the need for the program.
Lancaster ISD Newsletter	Newsletter contains current district information and is issued quarterly to parents and community members.
Lancaster ISD Communication Handbook	Handbook contains board meeting dates and board members' addresses and phone numbers, district school calendar, city and government agencies with phone numbers, Lancaster Homeowners Associations, and Curriculum Management Team with points of contact. It is provided to school and central administrators, board members, and City of Lancaster staff.
Student Handbook & Student Code of Conduct	Handbook is issued to students and parents.
New Teacher Academy Program Booklet	Program booklet is issued to new teachers at beginning of the school year during orientation.
Employee Handbook	Handbook is issued to all employees — choice left to employee to receive on the Lancaster ISD website or as a hard copy.
Flyers	Flyers announce such events such as public hearings, public forums, State of the School Tour (for staff), Town Hall meetings, Neighborhood Walks, Kindergarten Round-Up, and Martin Luther King Celebration.

SOURCE: LISD, Community Relations Department, December 2004.

- student Code of Conduct, Dress Code, general conduct, and discipline information.

The department regularly sends press releases to local radio and TV outlets but the media does not always publish them. The department clips published releases and maintains them on file. The district has plans to telecast board meetings via a cable network.

All of the publications and efforts that the department is undertaking help to promote the district's mission, its goals, and accomplishments. The district has improved relations with parents, community leaders, and citizens by using these various publication outlets to communicate with the public.

EDUCATION FOUNDATION
LISD established an active educational foundation to provide funds for innovative teaching grants and scholarships to LISD educators. The district created a Lancaster Education Foundation in 2003 that has since raised over $100,000 to provide innovative teaching grants and scholarships to LISD educators. The district established articles of incorporation and bylaws and elected officers for the operation of the non-profit foundation to raise funds directly related to teaching and learning at LISD.

Three 2004–05 fundraising activities include:

- Employee Annual Fund Drive (October 2004);

- Evening of Excellence Gala (November 2004); and

- Children First Golf Tournament (March 2005).

Employees raised over $7,000 for the employee fund drive. LISD staff, community leaders, and other Lancaster citizens attended the November gala. The evening activities included entertainment, dinner, dancing, and an auction. The tax-exempt foundation has raised over $107,000 since its inception.

DETAILED FINDINGS

COMMUNITY RELATIONS PLANNING (REC. 91)
The Community Relations Department does not have a comprehensive planning document that includes actions and activities, available resources, and performance measures for carrying out the goals and objectives of the department in promoting community relations and involvement. While the department is providing and supporting many activities throughout the district and community to promote and maintain good community relations, no planning document exists to guide the department and to ensure that it is coordinated and held accountable for its efforts and resources.

Exhibit 11-2 provides an overview of the districtwide community initiatives and programs that support the district in fulfilling its mission. A sample of selected schools' commitments involving parents

EXHIBIT 11-2
LISD COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMS

ACTIVITY/PROGRAM	DESCRIPTION
Lancaster Education Foundation	Foundation raises funds to provide innovative teaching grants and scholarships to Lancaster ISD educators.
Partners in Education Program	Program provides corporate sponsorship of district events including financial contributions, volunteers, and time. A total of 24 business partners participate.
Adopt-a-School Partner	Program allows a business or organization to focus resources—human and financial—to support a specific Lancaster ISD school. Example: Wal-Mart supports Lancaster Intermediate School.
Booster Clubs	Clubs organize to help raise funds to enrich school's participation in extra-curricular activities such as athletics, academics, and the arts.
Parent Teacher Association (PTA)	Districtwide PTA council and PTAs organize at each campus.
Neighborhood Walks	Lancaster ISD sponsors Saturday walks through neighborhoods promoting district initiatives, activities, and events. The superintendent, staff, parents, and community members participate in walks.
Town Hall Meetings	The superintendent sponsors meetings for parents on issues and topics such as district standards and Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS).
Lancaster ISD After-School Program	Program provides quality after-school care for school age children. Activities range from games to crafts to sports to homework assistance. Program is in its first year of operation at Rosa Parks-Millbrook Elementary and Rolling Hills Elementary.
Public Forums	Forums are held jointly with the City of Lancaster—quarterly forums for citizens of Lancaster on such topics as academic excellence in Lancaster schools and what the future holds for both entities.
Website	Lancaster ISD website includes information designed for parents and community members such as school menus, district calendar, Parent/Teacher Resource Center, PTA news, Community Relations, district highlights, Campus Chats.
District Newsletters	Quarterly district newsletters are distributed to parents on district events and related topics.
Media	News articles written on the district are distributed through press releases to Lancaster Today (daily newspaper), Dallas Morning News (Friday southwest section), and Lancaster Connection (published by City of Lancaster, issued quarterly).
Board of Trustees Meetings—"Citizens Communication"	Board meetings provide opportunity for public participation at a time designated during the meeting called "Citizens Communications."
City of Lancaster	Strong working relationship exists between the city and Lancaster ISD—each participating in city-sponsored events and meetings.
Chamber of Commerce	Chamber sponsors Partners in Education Program and Texas Scholars Program as well as support to the district and its schools. Strong working relationship exists between the chamber and Lancaster ISD.
Cedar Valley Community College	College offers free on-site English as a Second Language (ESL) courses to Lancaster ISD educators and an auto mechanics class to students at Lancaster High School. College plans for cooperative facility use when new high school is built.
Lancaster Outreach Center	Center provides assistance programs to those in need. Agency conducts Leadership Groups at the Lancaster High School and at Rosa Parks-Millbrook Elementary and provides basic school supplies to children at Lancaster and Wilmer-Hutchins ISDs.
Advisory and Ad Hoc Committees	Committees provide community/parent participation in Lancaster ISD committees such as Foundation's Gala Event, Special Events Task Force, Homecoming Committee, Back-to-School Parade, end of year convocation, new teacher orientation, town hall events, student dress and conduct codes, and after-school program.
Special Events	Events include: Kindergarten Round Up, Back-to-School Parade, Martin Luther King Celebration, and Lancaster ISD 100th Year Celebration.

SOURCE: LISD, Community Relations Department, December 2004.

and the community is provided in **Exhibits 11-3** and **11-4** divided by upper level and elementary schools. As shown in these exhibits, there are numerous activities and programs, but not all are included in a districtwide plan. The department is not maintaining a document, electronically or otherwise, with department goals and objectives and planned actions that detail staff in charge, purpose of activity, results, or a way to evaluate the activity.

The district did not present any documented evidence of review or evaluation of these programs to determine their effectiveness, usefulness, and value to promoting Community Relations goals.

EXHIBIT 11-3
LISD SCHOOL SURVEY ON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
UPPER LEVEL RESPONSES

SURVEY QUESTIONS	LANCASTER HIGH SCHOOL EAST	LANCASTER HIGH SCHOOL WEST	LANCASTER JUNIOR HIGH	LANCASTER INTERMEDIATE
1. Parent survey conducted each school year?	No	No	No	No
2. School activity sponsored for students and parents?	Fine Arts presentations, choir and band concerts, drill & cheerleader spring show, theatre arts programs, sports events, pep rallies, sport events, motivational speakers, class assemblies, and school dances.	Pep rallies, motivational speakers, class assemblies, and school dances.	Monthly school dance; talent shows; cultural history observances (Hispanic and African-American); story teller; student/faculty basketball games; track and field day; fund raising activities to travel to Washington, DC and NY; and pep rallies.	Family Read and Family Math held every six weeks and Spring Field Day.
3. Parents, businesses, community members represented on School Improvement Team (SIT)?	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
4. Parent Teacher Association (PTA)?	Yes and active. Meet four times a year with approximately 20 parents and 10 teachers attending.	Yes and active. Meet four times a year with approximately 20 parents and 10 teachers attending.	Yes and active. Meet every other month with approximately four teachers and 10 to 20 parents attending.	Yes and active. Meet every other month with an occasional extra meeting with anywhere from 25 to 200 parents/teachers attending.
5. Parent Advisory Committee (PAC)?	No	Yes	No	No
6. Designated public relations person or team?	PR needs handled by central office director of PR.	Yes	Yes	No
7. Newsletter to parents?	Monthly	Monthly	Notes are sent on progress reports, report cards, and through the district's software-grading system as distributed. Progress reports are sent every three weeks and report cards every six weeks.	Weekly or on occasion a second letter is sent during week. Printed on blue paper so that parents know it is from principal.
8. Partnerships?	No	Yes	No	Wal-Mart has adopted school as a Partner In Education. Zachary Construction has assisted in constructing a walking track.
9. Volunteer coordinator and program?	Yes, the school has a volunteer coordinator. Volunteers are requested to sign in on a form for volunteers only, and hours donated by the volunteer are tracked.	Yes, the school has a volunteer coordinator. Volunteers are requested to sign in on a form for volunteers only, and hours donated by the volunteer are tracked.	No, the school does not have a volunteer coordinator. Volunteers are requested to sign in on a form for volunteers only, and hours donated are tracked.	No, the school does not have a volunteer coordinator. Volunteers are requested to sign in on a form for volunteers only, and hours are tracked.
10. Use of school facilities by outside groups?	Upward Bound, Religious Organizations, Dance Academy, National Home Security, Dallas GED program, and a variety of other groups.	Upward Bound, Religious Organizations, Dance Academy, National Home Security, and Dallas GED program.	Various youth organizations and occasional private school functions.	Youth Basketball and Youth Football for banquets, Christmas parties for Wal-Mart and Adult Care Facility, Girl Scouts, and Berne Academy for graduation.

SOURCE: School Review Survey of LISD principals, January 2005.

EXHIBIT 11-4
LISD SCHOOL SURVEY ON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL RESPONSES

SURVEY QUESTIONS	ROSA PARKS/ MILLBROOK ELEMENTARY	PLEASANT RUN ELEMENTARY	ROLLING HILLS ELEMENTARY	WEST MAIN ELEMENTARY	HOUSTON ELEMENTARY
1. Parent survey conducted each school year?	One to be conducted in 2004–05; none last year.	No	Yes	Yes	No
2. School activity sponsored for students and parents	School carnivals, field trips, fund-raisers, Saturday school, after school program, talent shows, and community reunions.	Field trips, plays, assemblies, and Field Day.	Cultural celebrations and programs; field trips; and special classes (Physical Education, Art, Computer Lab, and Music).	Daily early morning assemblies, grade-level field trips, and special programs brought to the school.	Six weeks award assembly, Tiger Eyes great behavior incentive, Fall Festival, Spring Carnival, and Houston Steppers.
3. Parents, businesses, community members represented on School Improvement Team (SIT)?	Yes, a member from the community and a business member.	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
4. Parent Teacher Association (PTA)?	Yes and active. Monthly meetings with approximately 70 parents/teachers attending.	Yes and active. Monthly meetings with approxi-mately 100 parents/ teachers attending.	Yes and active. Meetings held four times a year and monthly parent meetings focused on particular curricular areas with approximately 100 parents/ teachers attending.	Yes and active. Meet eight times a year with approximately 50 to 75 parents/ teachers attending.	Yes and active. Meet bi-monthly with approxi-mately 100 parents/teachers attending.
5. Parent Advisory Committee (PAC)?	In current agenda to establish. Currently use administrators and teachers as needed, informally.	No	No	No	No
6. Designated public relations person or team?	Principal	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
7. Newsletter to parents?	Monthly newsletter	Weekly newsletter	Monthly	Bi-monthly unless need arises and then more often.	Monthly
8. Partnerships?	Informal relationship with Wal-Mart. Second year the store has given a $2,000 donation to the school.	No	No	Partnerships coordinated through the Department of Community Relations.	LGS Technologies and Dicky's Barbecue.
9. Volunteer coordinator and program?	Yes, the school has a volunteer coordinator, and volunteers are now requested to sign in on a volunteer form. Hours will be tracked beginning this semester.	Yes, the school has a volunteer coordinator. Volunteers do not sign in on a separate volunteer form. Hours are not tracked.	Yes, the school has a volunteer coordinator, and volunteers are requested to sign in on a volunteer form. Hours are tracked.	Yes, but there are few volunteers. Volunteers sign in with other visitors. Hours are not tracked.	No, the school does not have a volunteer coordinator. Volunteers are requested to sign in on a form for volunteers only, but the hours are not tracked.
10. Use of school facilities by outside groups?	Basketball and baseball organizations.	City Youth Recreational Basketball, Boy Scouts, and Girl Scouts.	Cheerleader/ drill team.	Lancaster Recreation Basketball League practices at school.	Homeowner Associations

SOURCE: School Review Survey of LISD principals, January 2005.

By not having a planning document to coordinate, track, and assess the large number of department activities and programs, the district is unable to determine where it is headed with each of these activities, what is working and what is not, and what might be expanded upon.

Districts use planning documents to guide, coordinate, and assess their efforts. By developing an action plan with goals and strategies, the district helps to create accountability, achieve goals, and optimize performance. The district saves time and money by setting and managing goals.

The Community Relations Department should develop and annually update a departmental planning document for implementing the goals and objectives of the department for promoting community relations and involvement. The document should include implementation dates for actions, available resources, assigned personnel, performance measures, and accountability schedules.

ANNUAL REPORT (REC. 92)

LISD has not developed an annual end-of-year report that provides parents and community members with an overview of the district's accomplishments, specific student and staff information, financial data, and other related information to improve community support and advance district goals. While information about the district and its students is communicated to parents and the community throughout the year through the website, district newsletters, and other publications, the district does not produce an end-of-year district report. The district does not collect, analyze, evaluate, and then summarize highlights of the year, district achievements and accomplishments, and other important data into one report for the community.

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) annually releases an Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) report to each Texas school district, and, as required by state law, the district holds a public hearing concerning the report. However, the AEIS report covers district data for the previous school year, and thus the facts and figures are not for the current school year. An end-of-year report provides more current data for parents and the community about the accomplishments that have been made during the current school year. Such a report keeps parents and community members informed, interested, and alerted to the improvements made in the district to gain and sustain community support. Further, an end-of-year report is enormously effective in publicizing the district in recruiting

teachers, other employees, and bringing businesses into the city.

By not having an end-of-year annual report, community members do not receive timely and valuable insight into the school district operations and accomplishments to improve community support for district goals and relationship with the district.

Many school districts around the state provide regular annual end-of-year reports to their community to promote and sustain community support. The Cedar Hill Independent School District publishes a district report in a tri-fold brochure format. It has district information and highlights such as mission statement, board of trustees, district leadership, student enrollment by year and race, number of schools, construction calendar, retention rates, campus ratings, taxable values, maintenance and operations budget, Dress Code, and number of free and reduced lunches by year. The district helps to build community interest and support by keeping the community informed with current district information.

The district should develop and distribute an LISD end-of-the year annual report to sustain and promote stakeholder support and interest in schools. The report should include an evaluative assessment of the growth of the district in order to develop and sustain citizen support and interest in the district. The report should also include items such as the district mission and goals and the progress made toward these goals, names of board members, student enrollment, school staff statistics, summarized information on the budget and testing results, status of bond projects, community involvement activities and events, new concepts introduced into the school system, student awards, and any other valuable accountability information. It should have sufficient detail and explanation so that an average community member can understand. The district should present the report in a well-designed pamphlet or brochure to enhance the communication value for the community.

SCHOOL CLIMATE/CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEYS (REC. 93)

The district has not conducted school climate or customer satisfaction surveys and does not have a process in place to retain, analyze, and follow up on survey data. The district does not provide parents and community members with an anonymous method of providing feedback to the board and the superintendent. While the school district has provided parents and community members an opportunity to express views through forums and

public hearings, the attendance at these events is generally low, as was witnessed at the community open house held by the review team. Several parents remarked during a parent focus group conducted shortly after the community open house that parents are so inundated with school activities, community events, church activities, work, and family concerns that they are often unable to attend public hearings, forums, or other district events to provide input. However, those parents in attendance enthusiastically welcomed the idea of having more suitable opportunities to communicate with the district.

Further, not many schools in the district conduct parent surveys. Only two schools—West Main and Rolling Hills Elementary Schools—have conducted a parent survey. Rosa Parks/Millbrook Elementary planned to conduct a survey at the conclusion of 2004–05.

The district also does not conduct customer satisfaction surveys of staff (principals, teachers, paraprofessionals, administrators, or auxiliary employees) to gain insight into the satisfaction with services that the district provides these employees. For instance, the Maintenance Department does not conduct an annual survey containing questions about maintenance services, so the district lacks feedback to help set maintenance priorities.

While review team interviews with principals show a general satisfaction level with maintenance services, the principals stated concerns regarding district response time to non-emergency or non-urgent situations. These findings were generally confirmed by the school review survey of principals and assistant principals, district administrators and support staff, and teachers.

More than the majority of respondents to the school review survey agreed that the district properly maintained its buildings. Survey responses related to maintenance services included the following: 83 percent of the 14 principals and assistant principal respondents indicate that they strongly agree or agree with the statement, "Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner," while 8 percent offered no opinion and 8 percent disagree. Among the 47 responding district administrative and support staff, 74 percent strongly agree or agree, while 14 percent offered no opinion, and 15 percent disagree or strongly disagree. Among the 226 teachers responding, 66.3 percent strongly agree or agree, while 12 percent offered no opinion and 21.5 percent disagree or strongly disagree. However, the teacher group surveyed had the highest levels of disagreement with the district's proper maintenance of buildings at more than 21 percent.

More than the majority of school review survey respondents agreed that the district made timely repairs. Just over 66 percent of the 14 principal and assistant principal respondents indicate that they strongly agree or agree with the statement, "Repairs are made in a timely manner," while 16.6 percent offered no opinion and 16.6 percent disagree. Among the 47 responding district administrative and support staff, 69 percent strongly agree or agree, while 11.9 percent offered no opinion and 19 percent disagree or strongly disagree. Among the 226 teachers responding, 58.4 percent strongly agree or agree, while 14 percent offered no opinion and 27.5 percent disagree or strongly disagree. However, the disagreement levels were higher than those for building maintenance, which may indicate a district issue in achieving timely repairs.

The school review survey showed higher levels of agreement for emergency maintenance responses. A total of 91 percent of the 14 principal and assistant principal respondents indicated that they strongly agree or agree with the statement, "Emergency maintenance is handled promptly," and 8 percent disagree. Among the 47 responding district administrative and support staff, 78.5 percent strongly agree or agree, while 16.7 percent offered no opinion and 4.7 percent disagree or strongly disagree. Among the 226 teachers responding, 70.5 percent strongly agree or agree, while 20.2 percent offered no opinion and 9 percent disagree or strongly disagree. Having disagreement levels in the single digits below 10 percent may indicate the district has adequate service provision in emergency repairs.

The district lacks the ability to retain, analyze, and follow up on survey results. For instance, the review team learned that survey data was lost when a Child Nutrition survey was conducted of parents, staff, and students regarding impressions, expectations, variety, and quality of child nutrition. The survey asked for suggestions regarding the improvement of delivering child nutrition and reasons for not using these services provided by LISD. The Child Nutrition Department was not able to find data or the analyzed results. Not only did the department lose the survey data, but also resources used to conduct the survey did not get a return in value. According to interviews, the district made no attempt to recover the data even though recovery could be available through network backups.

Without conducting follow-up surveys targeting responses from particular groups, the district cannot gain insight into the root causes of problems or low levels of satisfaction in order to take appropriate corrective action. Without a process to retain, analyze, and follow up on survey data, the district cannot implement change and subsequent survey

data may be less useful since those being surveyed may lose faith in the credibility of the process. This in turn means the district may lose touch with customers' opinions of services delivered. In the case of Child Nutrition lost survey data, the district may see reduced student participation in the food program, which means lost local, state, and federal revenue.

Many districts survey parents about school volunteer programs, teacher and principal communications, district programs, and school decision-making opportunities to allow parents who are often unable to participate in school events a chance to voice their opinions. Districts conduct this type of survey widely to provide useful insight into public opinion and perception. Districts ask broad questions on a survey regarding public perceptions and satisfaction about district operations and schools to help guide the district and board in setting priorities. Many school districts survey parents in their schools at least once a year. A parent survey specifically designed for a school collects useful campus-level information that a district-level survey of parents cannot. In order to capture appropriate information in parent surveys, districts include questions concerning school-related issues and the school relationship to students' parents or guardians. In particular, questions on a school survey can relate to activities, tests, homework, and academics at a particular school. A school survey serves as an important instrument for the school to learn about its parents and their concerns. By conducting surveys at the campus and district level, districts yield valuable information essential to more effectively managing services provided to staff and students and maintaining a healthy organization.

Surveys are a great avenue for school districts to find the pulse of the community and customers it serves and is a best-practice tool. Surveys assist in the evaluation of services and identifying areas of strengths and opportunities for improvement.

The district should develop and conduct annual community school climate and/or customer satisfaction surveys of parents, community members, and district staff. The district should also ensure that a process is developed to retain, analyze, and follow up on survey data. Principals should survey the parents at their schools at least once a year. The parent survey should direct its questions to school-related issues and the relationship of the school to students' parents or guardians. The Technology Department should be responsible for administering surveys developed by departments and schools and providing the survey results. To reduce costs and increase ease of access, the survey should be computer-based and conducted online using the

Internet with careful attention to maintaining the anonymity of all respondents. In the case where those surveyed do not have ready access to the Internet, the district should conduct a paper-based survey. The district should also have Spanish language surveys available for those who have English as a second language. The district can obtain sample survey instruments from Regional Education Centers III (Victoria) or VI (Huntsville) and others, as they have extensive client survey experience. The Technology Department should collect and store data in a network drive that is backed up by the school district to minimize the risk of data loss. In the case of the lost survey data in Child Nutrition, the director of Child Nutrition should seek the advice of the Technology Department to see if the data can be recovered as soon as possible and report the survey results to the cafeteria managers, the chief financial officer, and the superintendent. The district should use computer-based statistical applications for survey data analysis, develop a survey reports, and use survey results in district planning and decision-making. The district should annually provide feedback on survey results and changes based on results to the community by the end of the school year. Survey information should be sent to all families in the new school year packets and posted on the district website.

DISTRICT WEBSITE (REC. 94)

LISD does not consistently update and maintain current information on its website (www.lancasterisd.org) regarding accomplishments and information for parents and community members. While an abundance of information is available on the district's website, some of the information, especially that which is valuable to parents and other community members, is not current.

For instance, on the home page of the website, winter break dates still appeared long after winter break. Under "highlights," spring 2004 events are still highlighted. The highlighted events are not always dated or indexed with titles so that the user can easily locate an event.

The PTRC has a few bulleted items about the center but little information about how to access the center, the hours, fees, and resources. This information would be valuable to parents and teachers since the center is specifically designed for both. The links to the school PTAs often lack substantial information such as PTA officers, meeting dates, and a description of the services the PTA are providing to the school. With some of the district's PTAs lacking attendance at meetings, the website can be a valuable tool to promote participation in the school's PTA.

Under Community Relations, bond information is still shown, although the bond election occurred in spring 2004. While the page on partnerships lists all LISD business partners, contributions to the district and campuses is not featured.

The district inclusion of the Student Handbook and Code of Conduct, tips for parents, and Internet resources for parents are helpful and excellent resources for parents. However, the information is not updated regularly. One obstacle in keeping current and adding material is that the Community Relations director is unable to access the website to make these changes as needed and must wait until the Elementary Instructional Coordinator in Technology is able to do this. The Technology Department is responsible for the entire district website and has been unable to keep this site updated, especially in relation to parents and the community.

Subsequent to the review team's visit, the district updated many of the LISD Web pages with current information such as the PTRC, which now includes hours of operation, pricing data, and other related information.

By not having a regularly updated website, LISD does not keep its parents and community members well informed regarding district operations and activities. When parents and district stakeholders' do not have easy access to current district information, their ability to contribute and participate in district affairs is limited.

School district websites provide effective and cost efficient ways of communicating with the public. Public school districts across the country now have websites available to the public and some with an abundance of information for teachers, employees, parents, and the community and often with links to other sources of information. The most effective websites are the ones that maintain regular updates.

The district should develop an efficient process for updating its website in a timely fashion so that the information delivered to parents and community members is current. The director of Community Relations should work with Technology staff in charge of the website in developing a more efficient updating process to ensure changes to the website occur on a more timely basis.

EMAIL LINKS (REC. 95)
A link for parents and other users to email board members is not available on the district's website, thereby reducing the public's ease in communication access to district officials. While an email address is provided for the superintendent and other district

leadership, the district does not provide website email access to board members. Subsequent to the review team's visit, the district added a mailbox graphic to the superintendent's email address on the website so users are more aware of this option. The website does include board members' names, photos, and phone numbers.

The Community Relations Department is in the process of obtaining board approval for a plan to provide an email system for parents and the public to access the superintendent and board members through the district's website. The plan is called *Team of Eight,* allowing the public to send an email that will not just go to one board member but to all members and the superintendent. This system will allow each board member to have first-hand insight into public perceptions.

By not having email access to district board members, district stakeholders do not have a convenient and quick method of communicating their opinions, concerns, or questions about district affairs to board members. This limits the community feedback and information board members need to make informed decisions for the district.

Website email links are economical and effective ways to communicate with the public. By providing a website email address option to access board members, many school districts find it offers another level of communication. When school districts provide such a service, it demonstrates that the board and superintendent's desire to hear from the public. If the public does not get a timely response, however, the district's provision of email addresses is ineffective. The perception from the public then is that the board member or superintendent does not value their input. Thus, to put such a resource in place, both board members and superintendent must make the effort to respond to emails from the public in a timely fashion.

The district should provide email addresses for a direct website link to board members along with an economical and efficient process to respond in a timely fashion to these emails. The director of Community Relations should seek approval for a district website email link for the public to communicate with the board members. Board members and superintendent should ensure that questions and issues of concern from the public are answered in a timely fashion.

VOLUNTEERS (REC. 96)
LISD does not have a structured volunteer program to encourage parents and other citizens to volunteer in the district. The district has not determined why some schools currently have more volunteers than

others and what some schools are successfully doing that others are not. It has not made an analysis of the volunteer program. The schools do not furnish the director of Community Relations with volunteer reports that describe the schools' volunteer efforts such as the number of volunteers who have donated time and in what capacity (that is, School Improvement Team, a Parental Advisory Committee, assistance to a school, teacher, or district, and the number of hours currently donated).

A review team survey of district administrators and support staff, principals, and teachers showed general disagreement with the survey statement, "Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs." The following are the survey results of respondents disagreeing:

- 49 percent of district administrators and support staff, with 20 percent having no opinion*;*

- 46 percent of principals, with 16 percent having no opinion; and

- 53 percent of teachers, with 22 percent having no opinion.

Almost a majority of district administrators, support staff, and principals think their schools do not have enough volunteers. More than a majority of teachers think the schools do not have enough volunteers.

LISD's district policies GKG (LEGAL) and GKG (LOCAL), Community and Government Relations, provide the requirements and guidelines for a volunteer program. All volunteers must submit an application and undergo a background check before they can volunteer in the schools. Currently, the district encourages each school to select a volunteer coordinator, provide a sign-in for volunteers only, and track volunteer hours. In a survey of principals conducted by the review team, six schools report appointing a coordinator to oversee the program at their school. Several of the schools report that they do not provide a separate sign-in sheet for volunteers, and four of the schools do not track hours donated by volunteers. However, one of those schools has plans to do so. While five schools track volunteer hours, they do not send a report to the director of Community Relations so that volunteer hours are recorded as in-kind contributions.

The district provides several avenues in which community members and students can volunteer their services to the district:

- tutor, read with students, assist with school organizations and activities, chaperone, and support students;

- prepare materials for teachers; and

- provide community service (Lancaster High School students comple community hours for graduation honors).

PAC is another way in which parents can participate as contributors and collaborators in school-based decision making. However, in 2004–05, Lancaster High School West is the only school responding to the principal survey with a PAC. Rosa Parks/Millbrook Elementary is in the process of establishing a PAC.

During interviews, the director of Community Relations said the district is conducting a seminar entitled *Building Support for Better Schools* with a component on volunteerism. In addition, the director said she already informed principals about maintaining volunteer sign-in sheets and tracking volunteer hours.

By not having a structured volunteer program, the district does not recruit the volunteers needed to help with teaching and leaning in the schools. In addition, although recorded at some of the schools, the district does not report overall volunteer hours to use as in-kind matching for grant applications, thereby reducing the district's capacity to leverage outside resources for student success.

A well-structured volunteer program provides for year-end reports of volunteer hours and a listing of activities taking place. An effective program requires schools to provide regular updates on volunteer hours. These hours serve as in-kind contributions, which can be useful for grant applications requiring matching district funds.

A school-established PAC is an effective avenue to allow parents to become part of the school processes. By establishing this type of committee, districts encourage and empower parents, which often leads to increases in parent participation and volunteers. PAC committees address topics such as academic and extracurricular programs, general school improvement, school climate, and other school-related issues. A school's PAC enhances communication and cooperation among students, school, and home. The committee sometimes assists in setting school goals, sponsoring programs and forums, and helping to solicit volunteers for the school.

Community and parental involvement provides invaluable services to the school and in turn contributes to student success. A structured volunteer program overseen by a district often provides direct services to teachers and the schools on a daily basis. Strategies used by districts to increase volunteerism include the following:

- appointing a coordinator at each campus (preferably not a teacher who already undertakes many responsibilities) who is able to oversee the program, work with teachers to determine their needs, and set up a schedule each day of work tasks;

- surveying potential volunteers about their interest and availability;

- offering training classes to volunteers;

- inviting parents to ride the school bus and eat lunch with their children; and

- training parents to become parent mentors.

The director of Community Relations should develop a structured volunteer program to encourage parents and other citizens to volunteer. The district should provide training to principals in directing their school volunteer program and in appointing a coordinator to oversee their school's program. The program should include instructions for providing a report of activities undertaken by volunteers and year-end reports of volunteer hours. The district should include information regarding the school's SIT committee and the PTA in the report.

The district should encourage each campus to form a PAC. The director of Community Relations should seek input and approval for establishing PACs in the schools from the board, the superintendent, executive staff, principals, and parents. The director should develop a structure for the committees such as the frequency of meetings (three to four annually), objectives and goals, members, and outcomes. The campus principals should ensure that the meetings are publicized to maximize attendance and parental input.

The director of Community Relations should oversee the volunteer program districtwide, set up goals and objectives, publicize efforts frequently, provide a process for a year-end evaluation, and identify hours as in-kind contributions.

PUBLICATION DATES AND SOURCES (REC. 97)

Many LISD publications such as newsletters, newspaper clippings, and brochures are not dated and in some instances do not contain media sources. The district has not placed publishing dates on several of its publications. For instance, newsletters reviewed by the review team did not contain a date of publication. The newsletters are not titled except for LISD logo so it is difficult to determine what type of publication it is—a regular newsletter issue, a special issue of district-sponsored events and activities, or merely a document promoting the district. District pamphlets, leaflets, and/or brochures are also not dated (for example, the brochures for the *After-School Program*, *Tickets to Success*, and the *PTRC*).

News media clippings saved by the department for future references also do not indicate date of publication. Out of the 41 clippings provided to the review team, 19 did not have date of publication or in some cases the media source was unidentified.

Without publication dates, there is no way for staff or the public to tell if the publication is up-to-date. This increases the risk of community members using outdated information and being misinformed about true district operations and activities.

One of the responsibilities of the district is maintaining an archive of community involvement publications. Districts that provide a date and source for copies of news articles, newsletters, pamphlets, and other publications ensure that institutional knowledge is maintained for future reference.

The district should ensure that a publishing date and source are posted on all district community relations publications so that record-keeping is accurate and useful. All archived materials should be labeled and dated for future reference. The director of Community Relations should update procedures to reflect this data requirement. All district-maintained news clippings should be dated, identified with a source, and maintained on file for future reference.

FISCAL IMPACT

RECOMMENDATION	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09	2009–10	5-YEAR (COSTS) OR SAVINGS	ONE-TIME (COSTS)
91. Develop and annually update a departmental planning document with goals and objectives.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
92. Develop and distribute an end-of-the year annual report to the community.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
93. Develop, conduct, and analyze results from annual community school climate and/or customer satisfaction surveys.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
94. Develop a process to regularly update the district's website.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
95. Provide email addresses for a direct website link to board members and develop a process for timely email responses.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
96. Develop a structured volunteer program.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
97. Update procedures to require a publishing date and source for all district community relations publications.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Chapter 11 Totals	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0

Appendices

Lancaster Independent School District

CHAPTER 1
EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

This appendix section reviews supplemental information and data for the educational service delivery functions of LISD.

ORGANIZATION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

Exhibit A-1 shows the current organizational structure of the Department of Teaching and Learning. As shown, the director of Teaching and Learning oversees a coordinator of Staff Development and Gifted, a coordinator for Writing, three Reading specialists, two Mathematics specialists, two coordinators of Instructional Technology, a coordinator of State Testing, a coordinator of Science, and a coordinator for Social Studies.

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

Understanding the student population served, the number and types of schools, and distribution of funds are major factors in providing a quality instructional delivery system. **Exhibits A-2** through **A-4** provide an overview of various district facts.

The four peer districts selected for the purpose of comparing data with LISD are Desoto, Red Oak, Sheldon, and Terrell Independent School Districts.

Lancaster is a city of 28,000 people and is surrounded by open farmland, low rolling hills, creeks, and woodlands. Founded in 1852 as a frontier post, Lancaster is located south of the Dallas city limits and encompasses 29.2 square miles. It is bordered by Interstate 35E to the west, Ellis County to the south, Dallas (Interstate 20) and Hutchins to the north, and unincorporated areas of Dallas County (Interstate 45) to the east.

Exhibit A-2 shows 2003, 2004, and 2005 student enrollment in LISD by school: one high school, one junior high, one intermediate, and five elementary schools. Note that the Alternative School is not listed due to the fluctuation in student enrollment. The LISD student enrollment as of March 2005 is 5,313.

Exhibit A-3 shows 2003–04 total enrollment and percentages of student ethnicity for Lancaster ISD, statewide, and the comparison districts. As seen, Lancaster ISD:

- has the third highest enrollment with 4,751 students;

- has the highest second percentage of African American students with 73.7 percent;

- has the second lowest percentage of Hispanic students with 16.8 percent;

- has the lowest percentage of Anglo students with 9.0 percent;

- has the lowest percentage of Asian/Pacific Islander students with .3 percent;

- is tied with Terrell ISD with the second highest percentage of Native American students with .3 percent;

EXHIBIT A-1
LISD DEPARTMENT OF TEACHING AND LEARNING
2004–05
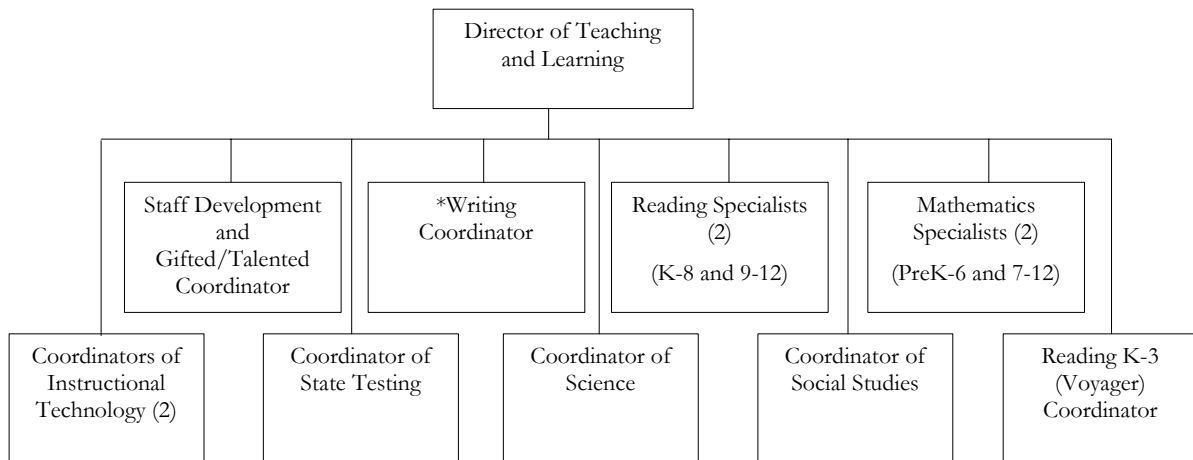
*The Writing coordinator is also an assistant principal.
NOTE: The district hired a consultant to oversee guidance who reports to the director of Teaching and Learning.
SOURCE: http://www.lancasterisd.org, December 2004.

EXHIBIT A-2
STUDENT ENROLLMENT BY SCHOOL
2003–04

SCHOOL	GRADE LEVEL	OCTOBER 2003	MARCH 2004	MARCH 2005
Lancaster High	9-12	1,416	1,412	1,35
Lancaster Junior High	7-8	823	814	872
Lancaster Intermediate	5-6	694	719	773
Rolling Hills Elementary	K-5	487	487	618
West Main Elementary	K-5	253	256	276
Rosa Parks/Millbrook Elementary	PK-4	407	451	496
Pleasant Run Elementary	PK-4	360	377	373
Houston Elementary	PK-3	269	282	370
Total		4,709	4,798	5,313

NOTE: Not listed is LISD's Alternative School due to the fluctuation in student enrollment.
SOURCE: http://www.lancasterisd.org/Campuses/campus_directory.htm, December 2004.

EXHIBIT A-3
LISD AND PEER DISTRICTS
STUDENT INFORMATION
2003–04

DISTRICT	TOTAL ENROLLMENT	PERCENT OF AFRICAN AMERICAN	PERCENT OF HISPANIC	PERCENT OF ANGLO	PERCENT OF ASIAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER	PERCENT OF NATIVE AMERICAN
Lancaster	4,751	73.7%	16.8%	9.0%	0.3%	0.3%
Desoto	7,641	69.6%	13.1%	16.1%	1.0%	0.2%
Red Oak	4,803	6.8%	19.3%	72.7%	0.5%	0.7%
Sheldon	4,523	25.0%	45.5%	28.7%	0.7%	0.1%
Terrell	4,158	82.3%	24.3%	41.8%	1.4%	0.3%
Peer District Average	5,175.2	41.5%	23.8%	33.7%	0.8%	0.3%
Statewide	4,311,502.0	14.3%	43.8%	38.7%	2.9%	0.3%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS), 2003–04.

- has a lower total enrollment than the peer district average;

- has a higher percentage of African American students than the peer district average;

- has a lower percentage of Hispanic, Anglo, and Asian/Pacific Islander, students than the peer district average; and

- has the same percentage of Native American students as the peer district average.

INSTRUCTION AND STUDENT SUPPORT EXPENDITURES

Exhibit A-4 shows LISD and peer districts' total percentage operating expenditures by function for 2003–04. As seen, LISD has the following characteristics:

- the lowest percentage of expenditures for instruction with 50.5 percent;

- the second highest percentage of expenditures for instructional-related services with 2.9 percent;

- the lowest percentage of expenditures for support services for students with only 2.7 percent;

- the lowest percentage of expenditures for cocurricular/extracurricular activities with 1.7 percent;

- a higher percentage of expenditures for instructional-related services than the peer district average; and

- a lower percentage of expenditures for instruction, support services, and co-curricular extracurricular activities than the peer district average.

REVISED PRINCIPAL EVALUATION

LISD drafted a revised principal evaluation instrument in 2005 to help the district hold principals more accountable for increased student achievement. The district has implemented this principal evaluation process subsequent to the review team's on-site visit. **Exhibit A-5** is a copy of the drafted evaluation form.

EXHIBIT A-4
LISD, PEER DISTRICTS, AND STATE AVERAGE
TOTAL PERCENTAGE OPERATING EXPENDITURES BY FUNCTION
2003–04

OPERATING EXPENDITURES BY FUNCTION	LANCASTER	DESOTO	RED OAK	SHELDON	TERRELL	PEER DISTRICT AVERAGE	STATE
Instruction	50.5%	51.5%	54.1%	51.1%	50.8%	51.60%	51.8%
Instructional-Related Services	2.9%	2.4%	1.9%	1.7%	3.6%	2.50%	3.2%
Instructional Leadership	1.6%	1.5%	1.9%	1.9%	1.2%	1.56%	1.4%
Support Services-Student	2.7%	4.3%	4.5%	3.7%	6.0%	4.24%	4.2%
Cocurricular/Extracurricular Activities	1.7%	2.3%	2.3%	2.1%	2.2%	2.12%	2.2%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2003–04.

EXHIBIT A-5
LISD DRAFT PRINCIPAL EVALUATION INSTRUMENT

Principal Evaluation	Principal's Name: _____	SS#: _____
Objective: In compliance with TEC 21.354. 39.054, TAC 150.1021, 150.1022, student performance as measured by AEIS and campus-level performance gains are addressed.		
NEEDS (List teachers and areas in which they are low.)	**STRATEGIES** (Itemize specific actions designed to address specific needs of each teacher. Specify any extra resources needed. List pertinent dates when essential to strategies.)	**DOCUMENTATION/EVALUATION** (Assess available proof that actions were taken to address needs.)
Goal Reading Math High School Completion Rate Goal 4 year 5 year Percent Passing TAKS Goal <u>Writing</u> Goal <u>Reading</u> Goal		
Objective: Teachers with low Classroom Effectiveness Includes (CEIs); low Grade-level School Effectiveness Indices (SEIs)		
NEEDS (List teachers and areas in which they are low. NOTE: This information is confidential. DO NOT share with anyone but the specific teachers and your supervisor)	**STRATEGIES** (Itemize specific actions designed to address specific needs of each teacher. Specify any extra resources needed. List pertinent dates when essential to strategies.)	**DOCUMENTATION/EVALUATION** (Assess available proof that actions were taken to address needs.)
Objective:		
NEEDS (List teachers and areas in which they are low.)	**STRATEGIES** (Itemize specific actions designed to address specific needs of each teacher. Specify any extra resources needed. List pertinent dates when essential to strategies.)	**DOCUMENTATION/ EVALUATION** (Assess available proof that actions were taken to address needs.)
Comments		
Note: Senate Bill 1 enacted in 1995 mandates that teacher appraisal information be confidential and not subject to the Open Records Act of the state of Texas. Accordingly, all participants are cautioned to treat all such information regarding appraisals as confidential in nature.	Principal _____ Campus _____ Superintendent or Asst. Supt. _____ *Signature only indicates receipt of final evaluation*	

SOURCE: LISD, assistant superintendent's Office, 2005.

SERVICES OFFERED BY REGIONAL EDUCATION SERVICE CENTER X

LISD is a member of the Regional Educational Service Center X (Region 10) that is one of the 20 statewide regional education service agencies assisting school districts and charter schools improve student achievement. Located in Richardson, Region 10 provides services that impact more than 618,135 students and 74,785 educators in 81 public schools districts, 31 charter schools, and nine counties.

The mission of RESC 10, in partnership with its client school districts and charter schools, is to:

- support Region 10 school district, campus and charter school initiatives for improving both excellence and equity in student achievement [TEC, 8.002(1)];

- enhance the efficiency, effectiveness, and economy of educational programs across the region [TEC, 8.002(2)];

- and encourage the fulfillment of statewide initiatives [TEC, 8.002(3)] congruent with the individual missions of public school districts and charter schools in the region.

Exhibit A-6 provides a list of Region 10 Division of Instruction Services offered to LISD and shows whether the service is fee-based or free of charge, whether or not LISD participates, and some general comments related to the service.

SAT AND ACT PERFORMANCE

Exhibit A-7 shows LISD's SAT and ACT scores for the classes of 2000 through 2003 as well as how the district compares to state averages. As shown, LISD shows progress from 2000 through 2002 on the SAT; however, dropped from 845 to 808 for the Class of 2003. Also, LISD scored 181 points below the state average.

LISD's performance on the ACT has fluctuated over the past four years. While the district improved from the Class of 2001 to 2002, the Class of 2003 scores declined by .7 from the Class of 2002.

CHAPTER 2
DISTRICT LEADERSHIP, ORGANIZATION, AND MANAGEMENT

This appendix section reviews supplemental information and data for the district leadership, organization, and governance functions of LISD.

The U.S. Constitution reserves the education of students to the states. Historically, states have adopted provisions that place the governance and day-to-day management of schools in the hands of local authorities, typically local school boards or Boards of Trustees. These boards generally have broad powers to establish policy, enter into contracts, develop budgets, and employ personnel. Among the 50 states there is considerable variation in the legal structure of school districts. Some school districts are fiscally independent and do not have to depend upon the state or another body politic for fiscal resources, while others are totally dependent on other entities for their resources. For example, school districts in some states must rely on city councils, county commissions, or like bodies and the state for budget approval and funds. Some school districts must take budget proposals or operating tax levies to the public for approval, and other boards have latitude to set budgets and approve revenue levies within the constraints of law. The legal foundation of school districts is critical to the overall functioning of the organization since it defines the locus of power that determines how school boards and executive personnel may carry out their assigned responsibilities.

In Texas, the Boards of Trustees rely on a combination of local, state, and federal resources to support education programs. The primary state laws controlling the governance and operation of schools in Texas are found in Texas Education Code (TEC). These laws give the local Board of Trustees broad powers to adopt policies, fix contracts, approve the appointment of personnel, develop and approve a budget, and design other actions to ensure secure, safe, and proper schools for the citizens.

The LISD Board of Trustees' membership, district, term, and office held are as noted in **Exhibit A-8**.

Conditions in LISD of material importance to this review include the following:

- a recently appointed—July 2003—superintendent of schools focused on improving student learning, establishing fiscal credibility, and ensuring that adequate facilities are available to support instruction and related activity;

- strong support for the superintendent as reflected in interviews with a majority of district personnel, community members, and the Board of Trustees;

- a shared concern among the board, superintendent, and staff for ensuring that the fiscal integrity of the district is established and maintained; and

- voter approval of a $110 million bond issue for renovation and retrofitting of existing facilities, construction of new facilities, technology

EXHIBIT A-6
REGION 10 SERVICES OFFERED TO LISD

TITLE OF SERVICE	FEE-BASED OR NO CHARGE	DISTRICT PARTICIPATION?
Math/Science (Funded under *Title II Shared Services Agreement)	Fee	Yes
Reading/Language Arts and Social Studies (Funded under *Title V Shared Services Agreement)	Fee	Yes
Instructional Strategies/Generalists (Funded under *Title II Shared Services Agreement)	Fee	Yes
Dyslexia	No Charge	Yes
Reading Recovery	Fee	Yes
Safe and Drug-Free Schools (Funded under *Title IV Shared Services Agreement)	Fee	Yes
Career and Technology (CATE)	No Charge	Yes
Learn and Serve	No Charge	No
Gifted/Talented	Fee	No
AEIS IT	Fee	Yes
Distance Learning Courses	Fee	Yes
Online Services: Blackboard Courses	Fee	No
Link2 Teachers Web pages	No Charge	No
Gale Database for High Schools	No Charge	Yes
Technical Academies A+ and N+ Certification	Fee	No
Technology Specialist Institute (Funded under *Title V Shared Services Agreement)	Fee	Yes
Academic Success Through Home Partnerships	COOP	No
NCLB Support	No Charge	Yes
Bilingual/ESL-Compliance	No Charge	Yes
ESL TExES-Certification (Funded under *Title III Shared Services Agreement)	Fee	Yes
Migrant Education/Migrant Shared Services Co-op (Funded under *Title I Shared Services Agreement)	Fee	Yes
Bilingual/ESL-Cooperative (Funded under *Title III Shared Services Agreement)	Fee	Yes
WebCCAT	No Charge	Yes
Informed Instruction Vertical Alignment Tool	Fee	Yes
Child Nutrition Purchasing Cooperative	Fee	No
Teacher Preparation Certification	Fee	Yes
EdNet [10] Video Network	Small fee but doesn't cover full cost	Yes
Digital Media Resources	Fee also underwritten by RCI	No
Speech Language Pathology	Fee for participants	Yes
Deaf Education Program	No	Yes
Lille Nielson's 3A's of Active Learning—training, equipment and technical support for students with low incidence disabilities	No Charge	Yes
Services for visually impaired Students	Fee, paid quarterly	Yes
Autism Academy for teachers working with students with autism	No charge	Yes
FACES Training for teachers working with students with severe cognitive disabilities	No charge	Yes
TAKS Academy	No charge	Yes
Area Therapists Meeting	No charge	Yes
Non-Violent Crisis Prevention Institute full sessions and refresher sessions	No charge	Yes
Transition Outcomes Project for collecting and using data for transition planning for middle and high school students with disabilities	No charge	Yes
Special Education Directors' Meetings and New Director's Academy; Administrative technical assistance	No charge	Yes
NCLB: An Institute for Paraprofessionals—training to prepare paraprofessionals to meet the requirements of NCLB	No charge	Yes

*Only one fee is paid by Lancaster for each shared service agreement (Title II, Title III, Title IV, Title V). This list is organized by service category, not necessarily fund.
SOURCE: Regional Education Service Center X (Region 10), 2005.

EXHIBIT A-7
LISD SAT AND ACT SCORES
CLASSES OF 2000 THROUGH 2003

		STATE	LISD
SAT	Class of 2003	989	808
	Class of 2002	986	847
	Class of 2001	987	830
	Class of 2000	990	888
ACT	Class of 2003	19.9	16.5
	Class of 2002	20.0	17.2
	Class of 2001	20.3	16.4
	Class or 2000	20.5	18.6

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 1999–2000 through 2003–04.

upgrades, and land acquisition that will be implemented in two phases.

During interviews, the superintendent emphasized the need to continue efforts to maintain strong community support for improving schools by demonstrating that student achievement is increasing, efficiently and effectively implementing the voter approved $110 million bond issue, and placing the district on a fiscally sound footing.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES FOCUS ON MISSION AND ESTABLISHED GOALS

Since hiring the new superintendent in July 2003, the board redefined LISD's vision, mission, core beliefs, and goals. The vision statement for LISD focuses on the development of world-class schools adapting to changing student needs with an emphasis on success in today's society and the workplace. The mission builds on this theme by stating the following:

> LISD, in partnership with parents and community, will provide a rigorous academic program in a safe and orderly learning environment that empowers each student to become a responsible, productive citizen.

- The mission lends to the following eight core belief statements: Lancaster Independent School District will be a high achieving school district for all students;

- all individuals have inherent worth and should be treated with respect;

- family, school, and community are partners in learning and the development of students;

- accountability is essential to achieving academic excellence for all students;

- implementation of clear standards for teaching and learning is mandatory for continuous improvement of student achievement;

- every person is responsible for his or her actions;

- every child deserves caring, certified, competent, highly qualified, and dedicated teachers every day; and

- fiscal responsibility requires assessing the needs of students and targeting resources for the improvement of education for all students.

Four key goal areas support the core beliefs. Each goal statement includes a specific series of measurements for providing data on the status of goal attainment. The first goal statement, Finance, declares that LISD will provide a financially responsible educational system for the students and patrons of the district. The second goal statement, Academic Excellence, states that LISD will provide an academic opportunity for all children that is ever improving in its quality and availability. Goal statement three, Reading, asserts that LISD will implement a reading program that provides every child with the tools necessary to read on or above grade level. Finally, goal statement four, Communication, states that the Board of Trustees and the superintendent will create a communications environment that is positive and productive for the district and the community.

The vision, mission, core beliefs, and goals are consistent with the primary tenets of the effective schools research. Board members in each board meeting openly display their commitment statements.

EXHIBIT A-8
LISD BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEMBERSHIP

NAME	DISTRICT	TERM EXPIRES	LENGTH OF SERVICE (YEARS)	OFFICE
Nina Mangrum	1	2005	2	Member
Edwin Kirkland	2	2006	11	Vice President
Carolyn Morris	3	2006	11	Member
Sue Mendoza	4	2005	2	Secretary
Rick Glover	5	2005	2	Member
Nannette Vick	6	2006	6	President
Russell Johnson	7	2005	2	2nd Vice President

SOURCE: LISD, superintendent's Office, March 2005.

During meetings, specific reference is made to these guiding principles. The review team observed board members engaging in specific acts of fiscal responsibility while considering and approving important student-related recommendations related to providing temporary classroom space. Also, each board meeting includes information presentations related to LISD progress.

The LISD statements of vision, mission, and core beliefs are visibly posted on the district's website with reference made to guiding principles.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Among the many accomplishments of the Board of Trustees since the employment of the new superintendent is the full review and updating of the policy manual. Furthermore, the district completed the process in a record seven-month period and included placement on the district's website.

The superintendent assigned the coordination of the updating process to the director of Human Resources. The updating process was implemented through a contract with the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) that included the association providing prototypical policy language consistent with Texas legal requirements and generally accepted practices among school districts. The director of Human Resources and other administrative staff reviewed, amended, and presented proposed policy provisions to the board for their consideration. The board reviewed, revised as deemed appropriate, and adopted the provisions. Upon completion of the review, the district submitted the provisions to TASB for final review as to legality, formatting, and placement on the website.

LEGAL SERVICES

Three firms provide legal services for the district. Interviews with six of seven board members, district personnel, and principals reveal a high level of satisfaction with current legal services. All contracts for services are current and include appropriate provisions for services and related fees.

Fees for all legal services, including general counsel, tax collections, and special education representation for the three-year period of 2001–02 through 2003–04 are listed in **Exhibit A-9**.

The firm of Chappell, Hill, and Lowrance, L.L.P., provides general counsel for the board and administration and attends meetings upon request. The firm provides four attorneys, associates, and paralegals at rates ranging from $80 to $195 per hour through a base retainer fee of $500 per month. This retainer covers routine telephone inquiries. The firm of Linebarger, Heard, Goggan, Blair, Graham, Pena,

EXHIBIT A-9
LEGAL FEES: 2001–02 THROUGH 2003–04

YEAR	STUDENT ENROLLMENT	ANNUAL LEGAL FEES	AMOUNT PER STUDENT
2001–02	4,138	$97,273	$22.78
2002–03	4,318	67,438	15.62
2003–04	4,751	76,422	16.09
Three-Year Average	4,402	$79,378	$18.00

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2001–02 through 2003–04.

and Sampson, L.L.P., provides delinquent tax collection services in accordance with Texas Property Code § 33. The firm of Walsh, Anderson, Brown, Schulze, and Aldridge, P.C., provides the district's special education legal services through an agreement that calls for the execution of one or more Letters of Engagement prior to any undertaking in lieu of providing specific rates for services outside of those covered through basic consultation. The retainer for basic consultation, special publications, and email updates is $1,000 annually.

CHAPTER 3
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND COMPUTERS

This appendix section reviews supplemental information and data for the Information Technology (IT) and Computers Department functions of LISD.

TECHNOLOGY ORGANIZATIONAL FUNCTIONS

Instructional and Administrative Technology staff provides technology services to the district. **Exhibit A-10** shows the organizational functions by staff for the Technology Department. Two instructional technology coordinators (Instructional Technology unit) oversee training, teacher technology proficiency, technology staff development, coordination of technology instructions, instructional software support, and software evaluation. The coordinator for elementary instructional technology also oversees the computer lab at each elementary campus and maintains the district website. Instructional technology staff also assists with grant implementation and educational software licensing. Administrative Technology staff (Administrative Technology unit) consist of three technicians who report to the coordinator for Technology Services, who oversees the operation and development of Lancaster's infrastructure, hardware acquisitions, upgrades and support, network support, E-Rate

EXHIBIT A-10
LISD TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT FUNCTION CHART

```
                          ┌─────────────────────────────────┐
                          │  LANCASTER ISD TECHNICAL SUPPORT │
                          └─────────────────────────────────┘

┌──────────────┐     ┌──────────────┐     ┌──────────────┐     ┌──────────────┐
│ Coordinator  │     │ Coordinator  │     │              │     │ Coordinator  │
│ for          │     │ for          │     │ Technological│     │ for          │
│ Elementary   │     │ Secondary    │     │ Secretary    │     │ Technology   │
│ Instructional│     │ Instructional│     │              │     │ Services     │
│ Technology   │     │ Technology   │     │              │     │              │
└──────────────┘     └──────────────┘     └──────────────┘     └──────────────┘

┌──────────────┐     ┌──────────────┐     ┌──────────────┐     ┌──────────────┐
│ Software     │     │ Software     │     │ Basic        │     │ Network      │
│ Assistance   │     │ Assistance   │     │ Software     │     │ Technicians  │
│ and Training │     │ and Training │     │ Assistance   │     │              │
└──────────────┘     └──────────────┘     └──────────────┘     └──────────────┘

┌──────────────┐     ┌──────────────┐     ┌──────────────┐     ┌──────────────┐
│ Gradebook    │     │ Gradebook    │     │ Edline Parent│     │ Infrastructure│
│ and Edline   │     │ and Edline   │     │ Support      │     │ / Network    │
└──────────────┘     └──────────────┘     └──────────────┘     └──────────────┘

┌──────────────┐     ┌──────────────┐     ┌──────────────┐     ┌──────────────┐   ┌──────────────┐
│ Student      │     │ Student      │     │ Work Order   │     │ Hardware     │──▶│ Hardware     │
│ Information   │     │ Information   │     │ Submission   │     │ Installation │   │ Repair and   │
│ System       │     │ System       │     │              │     │              │   │ Maintenance  │
└──────────────┘     └──────────────┘     └──────────────┘     └──────────────┘   └──────────────┘

┌──────────────┐     ┌──────────────┐                          ┌──────────────┐   ┌──────────────┐
│ AEIS         │     │ AEIS         │                          │ Software     │──▶│ Software     │
└──────────────┘     └──────────────┘                          │ Installation │   │ Assistance   │
                                                               └──────────────┘   └──────────────┘
┌──────────────┐     ┌──────────────┐                          ┌──────────────┐
│ Palm Pilot   │     │ District     │                          │ Email        │
│ and mClass   │     │ Database and │                          └──────────────┘
└──────────────┘     │ Forms        │
                     │ Creation     │                          ┌──────────────┐
                     └──────────────┘                          │ Project      │
┌──────────────┐     ┌──────────────┐                          │ Review and   │
│ Instructional│     │ Instructional│                          │ Recommendation│
│ Software     │     │ Software     │                          └──────────────┘
└──────────────┘     └──────────────┘
                                                               ┌──────────────┐
┌──────────────┐     ┌──────────────┐                          │ District     │
│ Product      │     │ Product      │                          │ Website      │
│ Review and   │     │ Review and   │                          │ Support      │
│ Recommendation│    │ Recommendation│                         └──────────────┘
└──────────────┘     └──────────────┘
                                                               ┌──────────────┐
┌──────────────┐                                               │ Backups of   │
│ Maintain     │                                               │ Files        │
│ District     │                                               └──────────────┘
│ Website      │
└──────────────┘
```

SOURCE: LISD, Technology Department, December 2004.

funding, non-instructional software licensing and grant implementation. The Technology staff secretary provides clerical support for work orders and purchase orders and assists with help desk support. While the Instructional Technology unit reports to the director of Teaching and Learning and superintendent, the coordinator for Technology Services reports directly to the superintendent. Both units coordinate their responsibilities to achieve shared goals for the district.

TECHNOLOGY POSITION DESCRIPTIONS
Each of these positions has a current position description that is consistent with their

responsibilities. Excerpts of these position descriptions are shown on **Exhibit A-11**. The district has been making revisions subsequent to our on-site review, but changes have not been formalized. Salary data is reasonable and consistent among staff. During the 2003–04, only one person resigned from the technology staff, and the vacant position was filled through an internal staff promotion. Functions between the instructional and administrative units are specific to their respective areas, yet both units continually communicate on technology-related issues.

STAFFING LEVELS

The Technology staff supports over 5,200 students and 1,100 computers. **Exhibit A-12** shows peer district comparisons on technology staffing levels.

TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT

Currently, Region 10 supports Lancaster ISD AEIS-IT Support and Training, PEIMS, Human Resources, Finance, Payroll, and videoconferencing technical services. Edline, Mclass-TPRI, Imagination Station, Voyager, System Design, Inc., and SBC of the private sector support the district's technology services.

EXHIBIT A-11
LISD TECHNOLOGY FUNCTION PURPOSE BY POSITION

Job Title:	Instructional Technology Coordinator
Reports to:	Superintendent
Dept./School:	Curriculum and Instruction
Wage/Hour Status:	Exempt

Primary Purpose:
Facilitate the effective use of computers and other technology in instructional programs districtwide. Assist in the development of short- and long-range plans for integration of technology into the instructional program. Implement and coordinate the technology staff development and training program.

Job Title:	Coordinator of Technology Services
Reports to:	Superintendent
Dept./School:	Technology
Wage/Hour Status:	Exempt

Primary Purpose:
Direct and manage the information systems and computer services for the district. Ensure efficient and effective access to information and related technology by all campuses and administrative departments.

Job Title:	Network Technician
Reports to:	Coordinator/Tech. Services
Dept./School:	Technology Department
Wage/Hour Status:	Exempt

Primary Purpose:
To maintain and troubleshoot a metropolitan area network. Build, maintain, and administer networks, perform system backups, and support server systems and supporting software.

Job Title:	Administrative Secretary for Technology
Reports to:	Administrator Designated
Dept./School:	Central Administration Office
Wage/Hour Status:	Nonexempt

Primary Purpose:
Organize and manage the routine work activities of an administrative department office and provide clerical services to the department head and other staff members.

SOURCE: Lancaster ISD, Technology Department, December 2004.

EXHIBIT A-12
LISD AND PEER DISTRICT COMPARISONS FOR TECHNOLOGY STAFF RATIOS

DISTRICT	STUDENT ENROLLMENT	TECHNOLOGY STAFF	RATIO OF STUDENTS TO TECHNOLOGY STAFF
Lancaster	5,203	6	867:1
DeSoto	7,584	11	689:1
Red Oak	4,811	5	962:1
Sheldon	4,600	6	766:1
Terrell	4,228	7	604:1

SOURCE: LISD, Technology Department and Peer District Interviews, December 2004.

The technical support structure consists of the coordinators for elementary and secondary instructional technology who have similar functions — both provide assistance with the following: software and training, grade book and Edline, the student information system, AEIS information technology, instructional software, and product review and recommendation. The coordinator for elementary instructional technology oversees Palm Pilot and mClass and maintains the district's website while the coordinator for secondary instructional technology oversees the district database and creates forms.

The Technology secretary provides assistance with basic software, Edline parent support, and work order submission. The Technology Services staff provide assistance with the following: infrastructure and network, hardware installation, repair and maintenance, software installation and support, electronic mail, product review and recommendation, website support for the district, and back-up data files.

The only area of overlapping functions of the Instructional and Administrative Technology staff involves the review and recommendation of technology-related products.

DISTRICTWIDE WEBSITE

The LISD website is hosted by a private company, providing another layer to test links or updates to the site. Currently, the coordinator for elementary instructional technology programs all website updates in FrontPage 2000®. The district uses FrontPage software, HTML, and Adobe PDF templates to program its web pages.

The district is in the process of using students to program web pages for staff through a Web Mastery class at the high school first offered in 2004–05. Students will be responsible for programming web pages linked to the LISD homepage as part of their class projects in 2005–06.

CHAPTER 4
FINANCE AND ASSET/RISK MANAGEMENT

This appendix section reviews supplemental information and data for the finance and asset/risk management functions of LISD.

Exhibit A-13 reflects the structure of the Business Office of Lancaster ISD.

The staff in the Business Office performs the following functions:

- The chief financial officer is responsible for overseeing the financial activities of Lancaster ISD. These responsibilities include:
  - approving all purchase requisitions;
  - providing basic information to support preparation of the annual budget;

EXHIBIT A-13
BUSINESS OFFICE STRUCTURE
2004–05
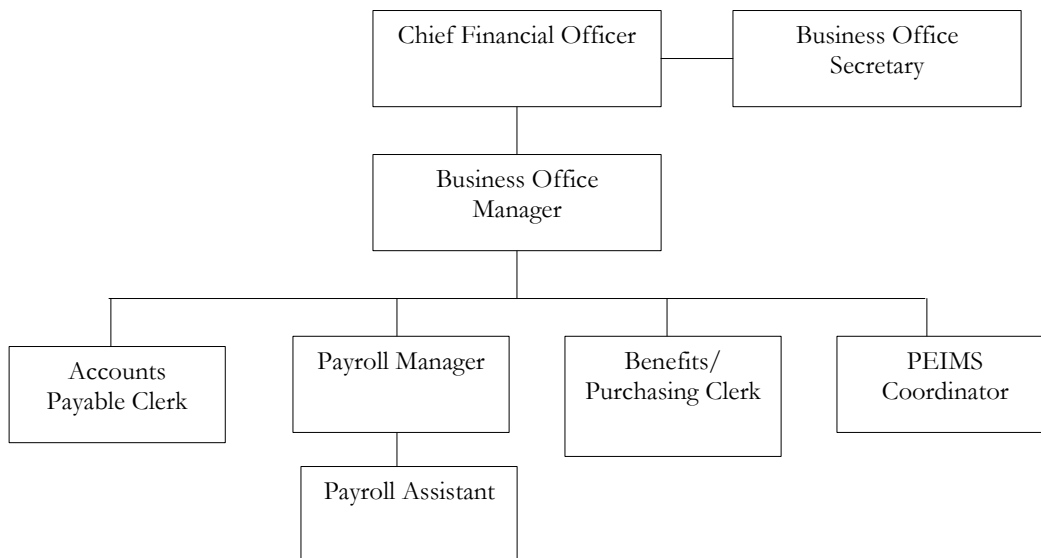
SOURCE: LISD, chief financial officer, December 2004.

- o providing a monthly financial and investment report to the Board of Trustees; and

  - o ensuring that effective internal controls are in place.

- The Business Office secretary performs routine clerical functions as well as supports the chief financial officer by undertaking routine bookkeeping activities, preparing purchase orders and payment authorizations, and processing the time records for the office.

- The Business Office manager serves as the chief accountant by:

  - o evaluating accounting procedures;

  - o working with the independent auditor in conducting the annual audit;

  - o performing the cash management activities that include developing a cash flow analysis and ensuring the completed monthly bank reconciliations;

  - o preparing and entering all budget adjustments;

  - o reviewing and approving purchase orders and check requests; and

  - o administering the business office budget.

- The duties of accounts payable clerk include:

  - o receiving and processing for payment all accounts payable invoices, requisitions, and purchase orders;

  - o matching invoices to purchase orders and signed receipt copies;

  - o preparing and distributing paid invoices; and

  - o maintaining the files of all paid invoices.

- The Payroll manager supervises the preparation and production of the Lancaster ISD bi-weekly and monthly payrolls. The responsibilities of this position include coordinating direct deposit activities with the appropriate banks and coordinating payroll system related issues and changes with the technical staff.

- The Payroll assistant supports the Payroll manager and has specific duties associated with processing the absent from duty forms and substitute time sheets and preparing the various payroll reports associated with employee benefits and payroll deductions.

- The Benefits/Purchasing clerk handles all of the benefits programs for Lancaster ISD. This includes reviewing benefits with new employees, handling employee inquiries, processing worker's compensation claims, and providing timely notice to employees under requirements of Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA). This position also handles all of the processing for purchase orders, including mailing and distribution of the various copies of the purchase orders.

- The Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) coordinator is responsible for managing the PEIMS system relating to the daily attendance information.

Texas school districts receive revenue from three primary sources: local sources, state funding, and federal programs. Property taxes provide the majority of the local resources for school districts in Texas. The districts establish and adopt a tax rate, and the county appraisal district appraises the value of the property within the district. LISD levies property taxes consisting of a maintenance and operations component and an interest and sinking fund component. The combined rate for these components is applied to the assessed property value to determine the district's total tax levy. **Exhibit A-14** compares the property tax rate for Lancaster ISD with the peer districts. Lancaster ISD has the lowest maintenance and operations rate and the second lowest total rate. Both rates for Lancaster ISD are higher than the statewide average.

Exhibit A-15 compares the total revenues by source for LISD with the peer districts. LISD has the second highest percentage of local sources among the peer districts and is higher than the statewide average for this revenue source. Conversely, LISD receives the second lowest percentage of state resources among the peer districts and receives an amount slightly below the state average. Although LISD receives the third highest amount of federal resources among the peer districts, this percentage is well below the average for the peer districts and the state.

Exhibit A-16 provides a comparison of the percentages of resources expended by program. LISD expends the lowest percentage of resources for instruction among the peer districts and the statewide average. LISD spends a higher percentage than the peer district and statewide averages for central administration, plant maintenance and operations, security monitoring services, and data processing services.

EXHIBIT A-14
LISD, PEER DISTRICTS, AND STATE
PROPERTY TAX RATES
2002–03

DISTRICT	MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS	INTEREST AND SINKING FUND	TOTAL
Lancaster	$1.462	$0.188	$1.650
Desoto	1.500	0.210	1.710
Red Oak	1.465	0.105	1.570
Sheldon	1.480	0.224	1.704
Terrell	1.500	0.210	1.710
State	$1.447	$0.105	$1.552

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2003–04.

EXHIBIT A-15
LISD, PEER DISTRICTS, AND STATE
REVENUE SOURCES
2002–03

DISTRICT	LOCAL	PERCENT OF TOTAL	STATE	PERCENT OF TOTAL	FEDERAL	PERCENT OF TOTAL
Lancaster	$1,161,735.00	55.1%	$12,752,598	38.8%	$1,944,735	6.1%
Desoto	28,722,300.00	52.6%	23,266,945	42.6%	2,574,157	4.7%
Red Oak	13,040,901.00	39.2%	18,886,785	56.8%	1,335,391	4.0%
Sheldon	32,407,758.00	77.2%	5,014,105	11.9%	4,562,381	10.9%
Terrell	16,391,770.00	46.9%	13,939,992	39.9%	4,619,527	13.2%
Peer District Average	$18,344,892.80	54.2%	$14,772,085	38.0%	$3,007,238	7.8%
State	$16,810,228,899.00	50.2%	$13,662,999,350	40.8%	$3,019,887,926	9.0%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2003–04.

EXHIBIT A-16
LISD, PEER DISTRICTS, AND STATE
TOTAL PERCENTAGE OF OPERATING EXPENDITURES BY FUNCTION
2002–03

DESCRIPTION	LANCASTER	DESOTO	RED OAK	SHELDON	TERRELL	PEER DISTRICT AVERAGE	STATE
Instruction	**53.6%**	58.0%	59.3%	56.3%	56.3%	**56.7%**	58.2%
Instructional-Related Services	**4.2%**	2.7%	2.1%	1.8%	4.0%	**3.0%**	3.6%
Instructional Leadership	**2.1%**	1.7%	2.0%	1.8%	1.3%	**1.8%**	1.5%
School Leadership	**6.7%**	6.8%	6.8%	4.9%	6.7%	**6.4%**	5.7%
Support Services-Student	**4.4%**	4.9%	4.9%	4.0%	6.6%	**5.0%**	4.7%
Student Transportation	**0.5%**	1.0%	3.5%	5.2%	3.6%	**2.8%**	2.7%
Food Services	**5.4%**	5.8%	5.1%	4.9%	5.0%	**5.2%**	5.3%
Co-curricular/ Extracurricular Activities	**2.2%**	2.6%	2.5%	2.3%	2.4%	**2.4%**	2.5%
Central Administration	**4.9%**	5.0%	2.8%	5.1%	4.3%	**4.4%**	3.7%
Plant Maintenance and Operations	**12.8%**	9.9%	9.9%	12.2%	7.9%	**10.5%**	10.2%
Security and Monitoring Services	**1.1%**	0.2%	0.8%	1.0%	0.7%	**0.8%**	0.7%
Data Processing Services	**2.1%**	1.4%	0.4%	0.4%	1.2%	**1.1%**	1.2%
Total Operating Expenditures	**100.0%**	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	**100.0%**	100.0%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2003–04.

Exhibit A-17 provides information involving the percentage of resources expended by object. LISD expends the second highest percentage for payroll costs among the peer districts, and this average is higher than the peer group average and the statewide percentage. LISD spends the least on professional and contracted services and other operating costs compared to peer districts and statewide. In each case, LISD has the lowest percentage of resources identified for these expenditure categories. The LISD debt service percentage is higher because of the repayment of tax anticipation notes.

EXHIBIT A-17
LISD, PEER DISTRICTS, AND STATE
TOTAL PERCENTAGE OF OPERATING EXPENDITURES BY OBJECT
2002–03

DESCRIPTION	LANCASTER	DESOTO	RED OAK	SHELDON	TERRELL	PEER DISTRICT AVERAGE	STATE
Payroll Costs	**73.6%**	72.2%	76.0%	70.9%	70.9%	72.7%	72.2%
Professional and Contracted Services	**6.7%**	8.6%	6.8%	12.1%	9.6%	8.8%	7.7%
Supplies and Materials	**5.4%**	6.3%	7.0%	6.5%	8.3%	6.7%	7.5%
Other Operating Costs	**1.7%**	1.9%	1.9%	2.4%	2.0%	2.0%	2.3%
Debt Service	**11.4%**	9.8%	5.2%	6.0%	7.8%	8.0%	8.4%
Capital Outlay	**1.2%**	1.2%	3.1%	2.2%	1.5%	1.8%	1.9%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2003–04.

The district uses the accounting and payroll software purchased from Region 10. This software provides online financial information as well as the capability of providing monthly reports for management purposes.

CHAPTER 5
PURCHASING

This appendix section reviews supplemental information and data for the Purchasing functions of LISD.

School districts must comply with the purchasing requirements identified in the Texas Education Code (TEC) Chapter 44, Subchapter B.

With the exception of contracts for the purchase of produce or vehicle fuel, the statutes require that all district contracts valued at $25,000 or more in the aggregate for each 12-month period shall be made by the method that provides the best value to the district. The options are:

- competitive bidding;
- competitive sealed proposals;
- a request for proposals for services other than construction services;
- a catalog purchase as provided by Government Code Chapter 2157, subchapter B;
- an interlocal contract;
- the reverse auction procedure as defined by Government Code 2155.062(d); and
- the formation of a political subdivision corporation under Local Government Code 304,001.

In awarding a contract, districts may consider:

- purchase price;

- the reputation of the vendor and of the vendor's goods and services;
- the quality of the vendor's goods and services;
- the extent to which the goods or services meet the district's needs;
- the vendor's past relationship with the district;
- the impact on the ability of the district to comply with laws relating to historically underutilized businesses;
- the total long-term cost to the district to acquire the goods and services; and
- any other relevant factor specifically listed in the request for bids proposals.

For purchases of goods and services between $10,000 and $25,000, the district can either use the same methods identified for purchases in excess of $25,000, or the district may obtain quotes from an established vendor list, with the purchase being made from the lowest responsible bidder providing a quote.

Competitive bids are not required for professional services of licensed or registered professions such as certified public accountants, architects, and professional engineers. The district authorizes contracts for these types of services on the basis of demonstrated competence and qualifications to perform the services for a fair price.

LISD uses a decentralized purchasing process overseen by the chief financial officer who handles bids as required. All other purchases are based on orders through catalogues available to the schools and departments from various purchasing cooperatives. Purchase requests are processed using the Region 10 purchasing system, an online system that allows representatives from schools or departments to enter the required information.

Requests are approved online, and then a clerk in the Business Office places the order.

CHAPTER 6
HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

This appendix section reviews supplemental information and data for the Human Resources Management functions of LISD.

ORGANIZATION

The Human Resources (HR) Department of the LISD consists of three staff members. A director oversees the department with the support of an HR manager and secretary. HR is responsible for seeing that all positions in the district are filled. Currently, the district employs 649 employees. **Exhibit A-18** provides an overview of the positions in the district and the number of employees filling those positions.

TEACHER CERTIFICATION

Exhibit A-19 provides an overview of the 86 Lancaster ISD teachers who are not fully certified by the State of Texas. Fifty-eight of these teachers are enrolled in Alternative Certification Programs approved by the Texas Education Agency (TEA).

Alternative Certification Programs usually take a year and a half to complete.

The six teachers who are on a deficiency plan must pass either the Certification of Educators in Texas (ExCET) examination or the Texas Examinations of Educator Standards (TExES) examination, which will eventually replace the ExCET examination. In addition, these teachers must take six hours of course work each year they are on the plan; a teacher may remain on the plan for no more than three years. If the requirements are not met within three years, the state will deny certification. Four of these teachers on deficiency plans are in their first year of the plan, while the other two are in the final year. If they do not meet the requirements, they will no longer be able to teach and will be let go or placed on substitute status. Nine teachers are currently on substitute status. These teachers do not receive district benefits or the same rate of pay as a teacher. A substitute on a long-term assignment is paid $110 a day.

Thirteen teachers are also new to the district from outside Texas. The Texas State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) is reviewing the certification credentials of these teachers to determine if teaching

EXHIBIT A-18
LISD EMPLOYEES
AS OF DECEMBER 2004

POSITION	NUMBER EMPLOYEES	POSITION	NUMBER EMPLOYEES
DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION		**TECHNOLOGY**	
Superintendent	1	Technicians	4
Assistant Superintendent	1	**CLERICAL**	
Chief Financial Officer	1	Secretaries	23
Directors	8	Bookkeeper	2
Coordinators	10	Receptionist	1
Managers	3	Registrar	2
Facilitators	1	Clerks	13
Diagnosticians	2	**MAINTENANCE**	
Occupational Therapists	1	Custodians & Maintenance Workers	69
Speech Pathologists	1	**FOOD SERVICES**	
Specialists	3	Supervisor	1
Other[1]	3	Application Processor	1
CAMPUSES		Food Service Staff	55
Principals	10	**TRANSPORTATION**	
Assistant Principals	12	Supervisor	1
Teachers	326	Bus Driver	1
Counselors	13	**SECURITY**	
Librarian	8	Chief of Police	1
Nurses	5	Police Officers	9*
Nurse Aides	3	TOTAL	649*
Dean of Instruction (HS)	1		
Assistant Director - Athletics (HS)	1		
ROTC Program (HS)	1		
Teacher Aides	23		
Special Education Aides	26		
Long-term Substitutes	2		

[1]*"Other" includes Student/Parent Advocate, Special Assistant to Superintendent for Construction, and Substitute Arranger; NOTE: *does not include two resignations from 2004–05.*
SOURCE: LISD, Human Resources and Finance Department - Payroll Database, December 9, 2004.

EXHIBIT A-19
TEACHER CERTIFICATION
2004–05

CERTIFICATION PLAN	TEACHERS	PERCENTAGE	FIRST YEAR	SECOND YEAR	FINAL YEAR
			PERMIT OR PROGRAM[1]		
Deficiency Plan[2]	6	1.8%	4	0	2
Alternative Certification Programs:					
I Teach Texas	5	1.5%	5	0	0
Education Career Alternative Program (ECAP), FW	9	2.8%	6	2	1
Texas A&M	8	2.5%	8	0	0
Region 10	28	8.6%	20	7	1
Region 11	2	0.6%	2	0	0
Other Programs[3]	6	1.8%	6	0	0
Out of State Teachers[4]	13	4.0%			
Substitute Status[5]	9	2.8%			
Total Number of Teachers Not Fully Certified	**86**	**26.4%**	**51**	**9**	**4**
Number of Lancaster ISD Teachers	326				

[1] Teacher is either on a teacher permit or in an alternative certification program.
[2] Teacher required to complete six hours of course work per year and pass state certification examinations – only allowed on plan for three years.
[3] Other programs include University of North Texas, Mountain View, Texas Central University, Letourneau, and NRW.
[4] Certification status under review by State Board for Educator Certification - reviewing teaching examinations taken in other states to determine if tests meet Texas examination requirements.
  On an emergency permit and can remain on permit for only one year.
[5] Teachers did not fulfill certification requirements or were not recommended for certification. Placed on substitute status - no benefits and $110 a day in pay
SOURCE: LISD, Human Resources Department, December 2004.

examinations taken in other states meet the same requirements as in Texas.

Except for teachers on deficiency plans and teachers from outside Texas who are waiting for TEA to determine their eligibility for a Texas teaching certificate, all of the teachers listed are considered by the TEA to be highly qualified under No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requirements. Currently, 94 percent of Lancaster ISD teachers (307 teachers out of 326 teachers) are considered highly qualified.

The prospect of all Lancaster ISD teachers being fully certified and highly qualified is encouraging. However, the challenge for Lancaster ISD is to keep these teachers in the Alternative Certification Programs working toward full certification.

TEACHER MENTORSHIP
Lancaster ISD has adopted a new mentorship program titled Texas Beginning Educator Support System (TxBESS), an initiative of SBEC. The director of HR has undergone training in the program, which is designed to provide systematic support for beginning teachers in their first and second years on the job. Seventy-nine new teachers are currently in the program and are mentored by teachers determined to be outstanding by school principals. Each teacher mentor receives a $100 stipend. Mentors receive the six-hour training at the beginning of the school year and then meet periodically during the school year with mentorees. The district attempts to provide one-on-one mentorship, but some mentors have two to three

teachers. The district is endeavoring to provide more compensation to the mentor and to strengthen the program.

TEACHER QUALIFICATION
Exhibit A-20 provides an overview of Lancaster ISD teachers with a bachelor's, master's, or doctorate degree.

Lancaster ISD has three teachers with doctorate degrees and 45 with master's degrees. One teacher holds an associate degree but is serving as a Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) instructor.

EXHIBIT A-20
LISD TEACHERS
DEGREES

DEGREES	NUMBER OF TEACHERS
Associate	1
Bachelor's	277
Master's	45
Doctorate	3

SOURCE: LISD, Human Resources Department, December 2004.

CHAPTER 7
FACILITIES CONSTRUCTION, USE, AND MANAGEMENT
This section reviews supplemental information and data for the facilities construction, use, and management functions of LISD.

ORGANIZATION
The district staffs the Maintenance Office with a total of ten positions, three of which are shared with other departments. The staffing includes the

following: one director of the Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation Department, one secretary, and one office manager, all with responsibilities for the maintenance, custodial, and transportation functions; two carpenters, one who also does masonry work and one who provides locksmith services; one master plumber and one master electrician; two Heating Ventilation Air Conditioning (HVAC) technicians; one painter; and one preventive maintenance (PM) person assigned to HVAC, exhaust fan systems, and fire extinguisher inspections. In addition to handling maintenance, custodial, and transportation services, the director also coordinates emergency management, telephone services, and other responsibilities as assigned.

LISD does not outsource facility-related maintenance or custodial functions. Two supervisors, one assigned day shift and the second night shift, manage the daily custodial functions. A supervisor and a crew leader who doubles as an equipment mechanic are responsible for an eight-person crew to manage the district's grounds.

Exhibit A-21 provides the organization for maintenance, grounds, and custodial services. All positions have current job descriptions, and a manual, General Information for all Custodial/Maintenance Employees, provides other job-related information.

CHAPTER 8
CHILD NUTRITION
This appendix section reviews supplemental information and data for the Child Nutrition functions of LISD.

CHILD NUTRITION DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION
The district employed a Child Nutrition director, two application processors, nine campus cafeteria managers, and 41 Child Nutrition workers in 2004–05. **Exhibit A-22** shows the organizational structure of the LISD Child Nutrition Department.

As shown, the Child Nutrition director reports to the district's chief financial officer, who reports to the superintendent. The Child Nutrition application processors and secretary report directly to the Child Nutrition director. The campus managers also report to the Child Nutrition director, and the Child Nutrition program workers report to the campus cafeteria managers.

CHILD NUTRITION EXPENDITURES
Exhibit A-23 details expenditure recapture for LISD Child Nutrition for 2002–03 and 2003–04 and budgeted expenditures for 2004–05. The district projects 2004–05 total Child Nutrition expenditures to increase by 22.3 percent from 2002–03 actual expenditures. The district expects payroll costs to increase by 10 percent and supplies and materials costs to increase by 35.5 percent from 2002–03.

CAMPUS CAFETERIAS
Each of the LISD campus kitchens fully prepares meals, serving traditional menus to students as shown in **Exhibit A-24**.

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK
The district uses an employee handbook detailing departmental policy, procedures, and job expectations for Child Nutrition Department staff. The handbook clarifies role expectations and elaborates on the consequences for falling below these levels. The handbook also includes a variety of information about the department's functions, as listed below:

- departmental organization;
- staff chain of command;
- job descriptions and function requirements and restrictions;
- benefits;
- eligibility verification process;
- attendance regulations, assignments, and schedules;
- attitude expectations;
- dress regulations;
- retirement program;
- drug-free requirements;
- required departmental forms, including staff evaluation form;
- warnings;
- termination information;
- complaint procedures;
- performance deficiency criteria,
- health record information;
- Article XVI;
- pesticide notices; and
- the district calendar.

EXHIBIT A-21
LISD MAINTENANCE, GROUNDS, AND CUSTODIAL SERVICES ORGANIZATION
2004–05

		Director of Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation Department		
Administrative Assistant				Secretary

Custodial Night Lead	Custodial Day Lead	Asbestos	Maintenance	Grounds Supervisor
High School West	High School We st	Safety	Plumber	IPM Coordinator
High School East	High School East		Electrician	Grounds Crew
Lancaster Junior High	Lancaster Junior High		Carpenter/ Locksmith	
Lancaster Intermediate School	Lancaster Intermediate		Carpenter	
Houston Elementary	Houston Elementary		HVAC	
Pleasant Run Elementary	Pleasant Run Elementary		HVAC	
Rolling Hills Elementary	Rolling Hills Elementary		Painter	
Rosa Parks/ Millbrook	Rosa Parks/ Millbrook		HVAC/Fire Ext./ Inspections/ Preventive Maintenance	
West Main Elementary	West Main Elementary		Roofing	
J. D. Hall Learning Center	Administration Building		Telecommunications/ Public Address/ Clock/Bell Systems	
Night Floater	Service Center		Fire Alarm/ Security Systems	
	Day Floater			

EXHIBIT A-22
LISD CHILD NUTRITION DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION
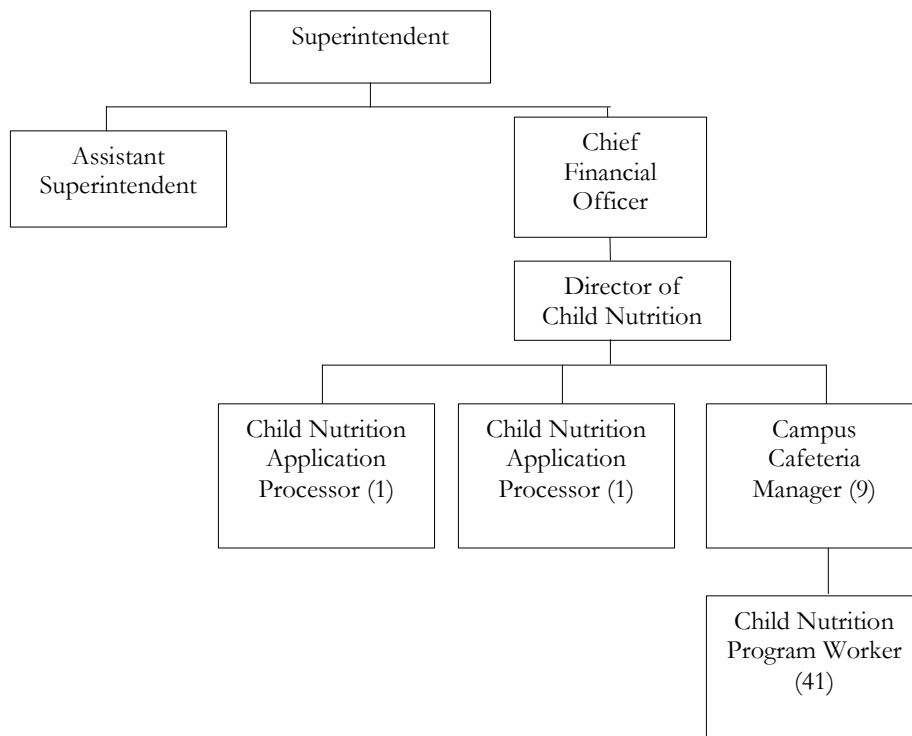
SOURCE: LISD, Child Nutrition Department, December 2004.

EXHIBIT A-23
CHILD NUTRITION EXPENDITURE RECAPTURE
2002–03 AND 2003–04 ACTUAL AMOUNTS AND 2004–05 BUDGETED AMOUNTS

EXPENDITURE RECAP				
35 CAFETERIA		*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
6100	Payroll	$706,255	$757,142	$777,000
6200	Purchase & Contract Services	48,500	48,500	51,000
6300	Supplies & Materials	640,669	687,246	868,245
6400	Other Operating Expenditures	7,000	7,000	8,000
6600	Capital Outlay	20,000	20,000	35,000
Total Function 35		$1,422,424	$1,519,888	$1,739,245
Total Child Nutrition Expenditures		$1,422,424	$1,519,888	$1,739,245
CHILD NUTRITION REVENUES				
	National School Lunch Program	$644,253	$752,036	$864,905
	National School Breakfast Program	128,262	148,606	148,606
	State Matching	17,000	15,000	15,000
	Commodities	91,169	67,946	72,045
	Local Revenues	541,740	536,300	638,689
Total Revenues		$1,422, 424	$1,519,888	$1,739,245

SOURCE: LISD, Child Nutrition Department, 2004.

EXHIBIT A-24
KITCHEN FACILITIES AND MEAL PREPARATION TYPE, INCLUDING SERVING CAPABILITIES

SCHOOL	MENU	TYPE
High School West Campus	Traditional	Self Preparation
High School East Campus	Traditional	Self Preparation
Junior High School	Traditional	Self Preparation
Intermediate School	Traditional	Self Preparation
Pleasant Run Elementary	Traditional	Self Preparation
West Main Elementary	Traditional	Self Preparation
Houston Elementary	Traditional	Self Preparation
Rosa Parks Millbrook	Traditional	Self Preparation
Rolling Hills Elementary	Traditional	Self Preparation

SOURCE: LISD, Child Nutrition Department, 2004.

The district provides the handbook to all Child Nutrition Departmental staff annually.

MEAL PRICES
Exhibit A-25 shows the 2004–05 breakfast and lunch meal prices for LISD. The district raised meal prices in 2004–05. Breakfast prices range from $.30 for reduced-price meals for students to $1.25 for adult meals, which is $.10 more than in 2003–04.

Lunch prices range from $.40 for reduced-price meals for students to $2.50 for adult meals. Also in 2003–05, the district increased the regular elementary lunch price from $1.50 to $1.75 and the price of junior high and high school regular lunches from $1.75 to $2.00 per meal. The district also increased the price for an adult meal to the state-recommended price of $2.50.

MEAL SERVING TIMES
Exhibit A-26 shows the 2004–05 meal-serving times for LISD. Breakfast times range from 25 minutes at Houston Elementary and West Main Elementary to 45 minutes at Lancaster High School. The earliest lunch times begin at 10:00AM at Rosa Parks Millbrook and Rolling Hills Elementary. The latest lunchtime begins at 11:30AM at the Junior High School.

CHAPTER 9
TRANSPORTATION
This section reviews supplemental information and data for the transportation functions of LISD.

The main goal of every school district's Transportation Department is to transport all

EXHIBIT A-25
BREAKFAST AND LUNCH PRICES 2004–05

BREAKFAST	AMOUNT
Student	$0.90
Reduced-Price	0.30
Adult	1.25
Milk	0.40
LUNCH	
Elementary-Intermediate	$1.75
Junior High	2.00
High School	2.00
Reduced-Price	0.40
Adult	2.50
Milk	0.35

SOURCE: LISD, Child Nutrition Department, 2004.

EXHIBIT A-26
BREAKFAST AND LUNCH SERVING TIMES BY CAMPUS

SCHOOL	MEAL	TIME START	TIME END
Lancaster High Schools	Breakfast	8:15 AM	9:00 AM
	Lunch	10:45 AM	1:00 PM
Lancaster Junior High	Breakfast	8:15 AM	8:45 AM
	Lunch	11:30 AM	1:45 PM
Lancaster Intermediate School	Breakfast	7:15 AM	7:45 AM
	Lunch	10:45 AM	12:30 PM
Houston Elementary School	Breakfast	7:15 AM	7:40 AM
	Lunch	10:30 AM	12:30 PM
Rosa Parks Millbrook Elementary	Breakfast	7:15 AM	7:45 AM
	Lunch	10:00 AM	12:45 PM
Rolling Hills Elementary	Breakfast	7:15 AM	7:45 AM
	Lunch	10:00 AM	12:45 PM
Pleasant Run Elementary	Breakfast	7:15 AM	7:45 AM
	Lunch	10:35 AM	12:30 AM
West Main Elementary	Breakfast	7:15 AM	7:40 AM
	Lunch	10:30 AM	12:30 PM

SOURCE: LISD, Child Nutrition Department, 2004.

students to and from school and approved extracurricular activities in a timely, safe, and efficient manner. Texas' 35,000 school buses travel more than 380 million miles a year, carrying nearly 1.4 million children every day. The annual statewide cost for public school bus transportation is nearly $808 million. School districts collectively operate one of the safest forms of transportation in the country, better than any other form of mass transit and nearly 2,000 times safer than any family car.

The Texas Education Code (TEC) authorizes, but does not require, each Texas school district to provide transportation between home and school, from school to Career and Technology Education training locations and for co-curricular and extracurricular activities. In addition, the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires school districts to provide transportation for

students with disabilities if they also provide transportation for the general student population or if disabled students require transportation to receive special education services.

The TEC also states that a school district may receive state funding for transporting regular and special program students between home and school. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) sets the funding rules. Local funds must pay for transportation costs not covered by the state. For the regular transportation program, TEA reimburses qualified transportation expenses according to a prescribed formula based on linear density. Linear density is the ratio of the average number of regular program students transported daily to the number of miles driven daily. As linear density increases, so does a district's rate of reimbursement.

State funding for regular program transportation is limited to students living two or more miles from the school they attend unless the students face hazardous conditions walking to school. The state does not pay for summer school transportation or for co-curricular routes between schools during the day, nor is extracurricular transportation, such as trips to after-school and weekend events, funded by the state.

All special education transportation, except for certain field trips, is eligible for state reimbursement. Because special programs, unlike the regular program, are not able to achieve efficiency by clustering students at bus stops, they are not reimbursed based on linear density. The Texas Legislature capped reimbursement for special program transportation at $1.08 per mile.

LISD is 29.2 square miles in size. For more than a decade, LISD has contracted with Dallas County Schools (DCS) to provide regular transportation. DCS is not a school district serving its own students but rather a governmental agency serving the 15 independent school districts in Dallas County. In addition to LISD, DCS provides transportation and vehicle maintenance services to these districts:

- Carrollton/Farmers Branch ISD;
- Cedar Hill ISD;
- Coppell ISD;
- Dallas ISD;
- DeSoto ISD;
- Highland Park ISD;
- Irving ISD;
- Richardson ISD; and

- Wilmer-Hutchins ISD.

For LISD, DCS hires and manages the regular route drivers, plans the routes for the regular runs, drives the regular routes each school day, services and maintains the regular route buses, and determines when additional bus acquisitions are necessary. DCS provides extracurricular transportation services for other districts, but LISD has chosen to provide its own internally.

LISD buses operate on a schedule to support staggered bell times. Elementary and intermediate schools begin at 7:45AM, the junior high at 8:45 AM, and the high school at 9:00 AM. In the afternoon, the elementary and intermediate schools end at 2:45PM, the junior high at 4:00 PM, and the high school at 4:00 PM. This schedule allows buses to make multiple runs.

The Transportation supervisor reports to the director of the Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation Department. Both the director and supervisor were new to these positions in August 2004. The organization of the Maintenance, Custodial, and Transportation Department is shown in **Exhibit A-27**. The secretary under the director supports both maintenance and transportation needs. She is the primary person responsible for scheduling extracurricular trips and managing billing and reimbursement for extracurricular trips. All of the LISD bus drivers are part-time employees who are not eligible for benefits. Some of the drivers work for LISD in addition to other area school districts.

The two LISD mechanics provide all maintenance and repairs for the district's extracurricular fleet of 27 buses excluding major bodywork or special repairs for which they do not have tools. Besides maintenance and repair, the mechanics wash and fuel these buses. In addition to the bus fleet, the mechanics maintain and repair the district's maintenance and custodial vehicles (21 pick-ups, vans, trucks, and trailers), maintenance and custodial equipment (17 mowers), Food Services Department van, and five Police Department cars. Finally, the mechanics substitute as bus drivers when needed.

Under the terms of their interlocal agreement, DCS and LISD jointly purchase any buses needed for the district's routes. Each entity pays half the cost of the bus. At the end of the bus' normal lifespan of 10 to 12 years, DCS gives the bus to LISD to use for extracurricular transportation. **Exhibit A-28** shows the breakdown of the DCS fleet used to provide transportation for the district. Of the 38 buses, most are less than 10 years old. Six of the older buses are designated as spares by DCS.

EXHIBIT A-27
LISD TRANSPORTATION ORGANIZATION
2004–05
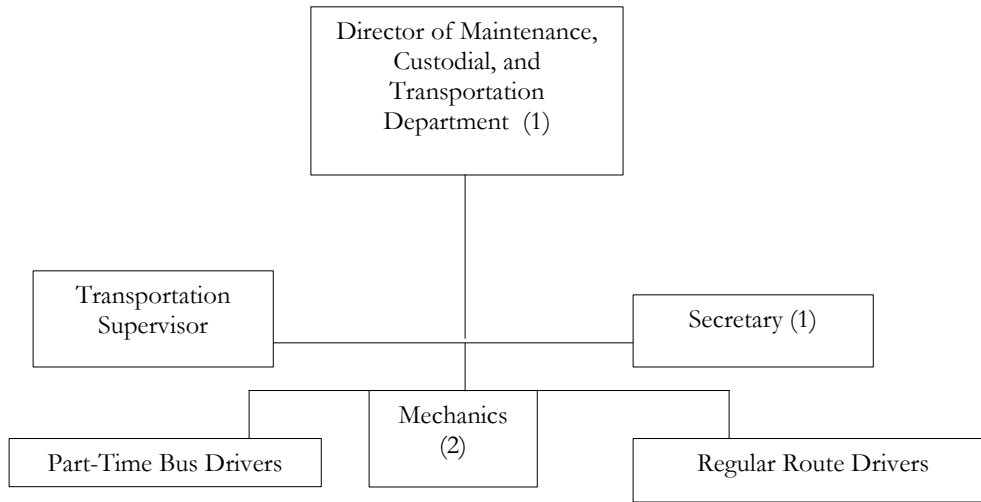
SOURCE: LISD, Transportation Office, December 2004.

EXHIBIT A-28
DALLAS COUNTY SCHOOL
BUS FLEET USED TO SERVE LISD

MODEL YEAR	AGE IN YEARS	NUMBER OF BUSES
1990	15	2
1992	13	1
1994	11	5
1995	10	4
1996	9	2
1998	7	3
1999	6	4
2000	5	4
2001	4	4
2002	3	5
2003	2	3
2004	1	1
Average Age/Total Number of Buses	6.8	38

SOURCE: Dallas County Schools, Transportation Department, January 2004.

Exhibit A-29 provides information on the 2003–04 regular route miles in each peer district by type of mileage. DCS, on behalf of LISD, drives fewer miles than any of the peers. Only LISD and Terrell ISD transport students for bilingual education.

Exhibit A-30 provides information on the 2003–04 special education and career and technology route mileages in LISD each peer district. DCS, on behalf of LISD, drives the least number of special education miles. LISD drives an average number of miles transporting career and technology education students.

Exhibit A-31 shows the daily riders and number of buses for the regular and special education programs in LISD and the peer districts for 2003–04. LISD provides transportation for an average of 43 percent fewer students than the peer districts. Because De Soto and LISD outsource their transportation to DCS, the total number of buses figure is not provided. If DCS needs a spare bus to provide service to DeSoto or LISD, they can pull from a common pool of buses.

CHAPTER 10
SAFETY AND SECURITY
This appendix section reviews supplemental information and data for the safety and security functions of LISD.

The National School Safety Center, created in 1984 by Presidential designation, released a document in 1999 entitled, Working Together to Create Safe Schools. This document outlines numerous strategies for improving school safety and states:

> Perhaps the most important strategy is to place school safety on the educational agenda. This includes developing a safe schools plan – an ongoing process that encompasses the development of districtwide crime prevention policies, in-service training, crisis preparation, interagency cooperation and student/parent participation. An appointed task force should develop and implement the plan with representatives from all elements of the school community…

EXHIBIT A-29
LISD AND PEER DISTRICTS REGULAR EDUCATION
MILEAGE DATA COMPARISON
2003–04

SCHOOL DISTRICT	ROUTE MILEAGE	ALTERNATIVE MILEAGE	BILINGUAL MILEAGE	GIFTED/ TALENTED MILEAGE	PRE-K MILEAGE	TOTAL ANNUAL MILEAGE
Lancaster	164,088	0	7,758	0	0	171,846
DeSoto	241,344	2,070	0	0	0	243,414
Red Oak	219,303	14,938	0	5,841	0	240,082
Sheldon	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Terrell	296,280	0	3,320	0	12,240	311,840
Peer District Average	252,309	5,669	1,107	1,947	4,080	265,112

NA denotes not available.
SOURCE: LISD and Peers, School Transportation Route Services Reports, 2003–04.

EXHIBIT A-30
LISD AND PEER DISTRICTS
SPECIAL EDUCATION AND CAREER AND
TECHNOLOGY MILEAGE DATA
COMPARISON
2003–04

SCHOOL DISTRICT	SPECIAL EDUCATION MILEAGE	CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY MILEAGE
Lancaster	57,954	3,060
DeSoto	76,568	10,548
Red Oak	71,198	3,186
Sheldon	NA	NA
Terrell	94,350	1,800
Peer District Average	80,705	5,178

SOURCE: LISD and Peer Districts, School Transportation Route Services Reports, 2003–04.

The best approaches to school safety are aggressive in nature. A safe school system will effectively manage its resources and assertively plan for future situations. Proactive planning for safety requires accurate and up-to-date information regarding the current and future status of conditions in the system's schools and facilities. Safety inspections must be routine and thorough, procedures must be in place to facilitate quick reporting of emerging safety situations, and the response to identified situations must be prompt.

As noted by the National Crime Prevention Council in its publication, Safer Schools: Strategies for

Educators and Law Enforcement to Prevent Violence:

> What's among the most promising ideas in the country right now? Not metal detectors, not mesh backpacks, but an extension of the partnership you are building--law enforcement officers in schools. Whether as school resource officers (permanently assigned to that school or school cluster), as school district police (again with school-specific assignments), or as community policing officers who work with the school as resources to various school classes and projects, they are making a difference. Officers at school, not as enforcers but as helpers and problem solvers, can spot trouble and help identify preventive solutions or needed interventions, build positive relationships with students and staff, and offer counseling and access to community resources. These officers, especially if they are regularly at one school, get to know children's personal situations and their normal behaviors, all of which help in spotting and heading off trouble.

The Texas School Performance Review (TSPR) published a report on school safety in June 1998. Based on the results of its numerous school performance reviews, TSPR found that the most effective districts have a safety plan that includes prevention, intervention, and enforcement strategies.

EXHIBIT A-31
LISD AND PEER DISTRICTS DAILY RIDERSHIP AND TOTAL BUSES
2003–04

DISTRICT	REGULAR PROGRAM		SPECIAL PROGRAM	
	DAILY RIDERS	TOTAL BUSES	DAILY RIDERS	TOTAL BUSES
Lancaster	1,259		94	
DeSoto	2,578		78	
Red Oak	1,543	40	205	13
Sheldon				
Terrell	2,547	31	104	6
Peer District Average	2,223	36	129	10

SOURCE: LISD and Peer Districts, School Transportation Operation Reports and School Transportation Route Services Reports, 2003–04.

An effective program includes these steps:

- Know your goals and objectives: where your district is going, and what you want to accomplish.

- Establish clear expectations for students, parents, teachers, and administrators.

- Address warning signs before they turn into trouble.

- Look for trouble before it finds you.

- Recognize trouble when you see it.

- Have individuals in the right place and at the right time to intervene.

- Have a plan of action appropriate for the occasion and practice it.

- Leave no room for double standards.

- Ensure that discipline management extends inside and outside the classroom.

- Alternative programs are not just a matter of compliance with the law; they are many students' last chance at success.

The first three steps comprise an effective prevention strategy, the next four intervention, and the last three enforcement. The following is noted in the publication:

> Taken individually, the steps outlined in the law or those used by successful districts don't seem dramatic. But when districts apply these measures in a comprehensive system, they can and do get significant results.

The LISD Police Department has jurisdiction over all LISD campuses, all property real and personal outside the campuses that is owned, leased, rented by, or otherwise under the control of LISD. This jurisdiction includes LISD buses on routes and school bus stops.

The LISD Police Department, as required by Texas law, has a memorandum of understanding with the City of Lancaster Police Department outlining their separate responsibilities. This memorandum allows LISD officers to join with the city force in enforcing laws off campuses where the safety and welfare of students and employees and/or school property are concerned. LISD officers are also allowed to render mutual aid to the city when requested.

The LISD Police Department has a fleet of five patrol vehicles. They include the following:

- 1984 two-door Chevrolet Blazer;

- 1984 four-door Ford station wagon;

- 1999 four-door Ford Taurus;

- 2000 four-door Chevrolet Malibu; and

- 2002 four-door Ford Explorer.

Of the five vehicles, only three are routinely used for patrols. The department uses its newest vehicle as its primary patrolling and incident response vehicle.

CHAPTER 11
COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

This appendix section reviews supplemental information and data for the community involvement function of LISD.

ORGANIZATION AND FUNCTION

The Department of Community Relations of the Lancaster ISD consists of three staff members. A director oversees the department with the support of an assistant and secretary. The department is responsible for overseeing all district public information activities. The director serves as district spokesperson, coordinates all media coverage, and acts as a liaison between the school system and the community. District publications, including newsletters, recruitment brochures, programs for special events, and other related types of publications, are designed and prepared by this department. The department prepares press releases and publishes articles and photos in local media and other publications. Press clippings are filed and maintained by this office.

ACTIVITIES

Exhibit A-32 provides an overview of all activities and events for which the department is directly responsible. The exhibit also lists all activities and events in which the department participates as well as those it supports.

EXHIBIT A-32
LISD DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC RELATIONS
ACTIVITIES, EVENTS, ORGANIZATIONS

ACTIVITY
Advisory & Ad Hoc Committees
After School Program
Back to School Parade
Board of Trustees Meetings
Bond Election Activities
Book Studies
Booster Clubs
Cedar Valley Community College
Chamber of Commerce
City of Lancaster
District Brochures, Flyers, & Other Publications
District Newsletters
District Website
Faith-Based Organizations
Freedom is Not Free Program
Homecoming Committee
Lancaster Education Foundation
Lancaster Outreach Center Drives
LISD After School Program
LISD Convocation
Martin Luther King Parade
Media Publications
Neighborhood Walks
New Teacher Orientation
Parent Teacher Association (PTA)
Parent Teacher Resource Center
Partners in Education Program
Public Forums
Special Events
Student & Communications Handbook
Town Hall Meetings
Volunteer Program

SOURCE: LISD, Community Relations Department, December 2004.

COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSE AND
FOCUS GROUP COMMENTS

COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSE

As part of the review process, the review team held a Community Open House and 11 focus groups for a variety of participants to obtain additional input. The district hosted the Community Open House on December 7, 2004, at Lancaster High School from 4:30 PM to 7:30 PM. The Open House and focus group attendees provided the review team with comments on the district's instructional, financial, safety, operational, and community services.

Below is a summary of actual comments from attendees at the Community Open House and focus groups, organized by area of review. The following comments represent individual opinions and do not reflect the findings and/or opinions of the Legislative Budget Board or the review team.

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

- There is a need for additional programs for artistic children.

- The class sizes are too large. Too many student distractions in classes. Nothing done about behavior problems.

- No one to help the kids in the large classes who are not understanding the lesson taught.

- Need the teacher to communicate with the parent about the child's learning abilities in their class. Teacher spends more time writing in agenda about behavior, child is failing and there is no mention in the agenda, a phone call to parent, e-mail, or being entered on Edline.

- Edline is not being updated regularly in order for the parent to help the child before they fail the six weeks.

- Need teacher aides or floating teacher aides to help students or break them down into small groups to help them learn the major subjects better.

- Teachers concentrate so much on TAKS test until the focus is lost.

- Not enough textbooks for the student to take home or for the parent to look over to help their child review for class work or test.

- Teachers need to be skilled in teaching all ethnic groups and abilities. They need to be able to keep the class' attention. The principal needs to help the teacher with behavior problems in class so that the kids that are trying to learn can stay focused.

- Teachers spend so much time correcting behavior 90 percent of the time, until 10 percent is spent teaching without interruption. The teacher and the students have to tune out the bad behavior and interruptions in order to learn.

- There needs to be more incentives to encourage enrollment in German; we have the teacher and the facilities.

DISTRICT LEADERSHIP, ORGANIZATION, AND MANAGEMENT

- Better communication between management and staff, management and community, and management and parents is needed.

- When time has been spent doing five-year technology plans, Campus Improvement Plans, etc., why aren't those plans actually being implemented and progress reports being sent to all individuals?

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND COMPUTERS

- LISD passed a $110 million bond in May 2004, and then passed another $9.3 million for technology update. Where does this $9.3 million come from? Need a written statement.

- Not enough technology computers, DVR, overhead projectors, LCDs and laser printers (LCD monitors).

- More wireless and classroom instruction is needed (i.e., social studies interaction with students across the world or state – ties to curriculum being taught).

- More computers and labs needed.

- More technology in instruction is needed.

- Link monitors and keyboards with teachers' computer steps. Need some time to follow while hands-on learning.

- Not enough PCs for students in classroom.

- Not enough PCs in lab – more mobile laptops.

- Laptop program for the teachers would be an excellent incentive program for district employees.

- All students should be involved in computer classes.

- We need a computer lab for students to use in after-school hours – many students don't have a personal computer.

- AP COM SCI course number 125205, doesn't have Java Load on any computer. Java is the backbone of the AP test. The class needs to move to a better room with better computers with Java loaded, so the students can write and debug like real data process engineers.

- There should be more computers in the library.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT
- No comments.

PURCHASING AND WAREHOUSING
- No comments.

ASSET AND RISK MANAGEMENT
- No comments.

HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
- Is it possible to seek more than one insurance carrier for PPO or HMO? The salary increase has been a positive move in the right direction.

FACILITIES CONSTRUCTION, USE, AND MANAGEMENT
- No comments.

FOOD SERVICES
- Need more variety of food choices. Too much starch in high school (i.e., mashed potatoes, breaded steak fries, pizza with fries on the side) is available. More thought into balancing nutrition.

- Extend lunch period and variety.

- I believe that the lunch prices are too much. I mean, last year $1.75 was good, no one complained, and the food was pretty good. Now the food is terrible, and the prices are too much. Also, there is never enough food. I have last lunch each day, and sometimes I don't get anything.

- They are increasing prices for school lunches every year. What is the reason for the increase, and where does this money go?

- Lunch periods are short because there are so many students eating lunch and in line at one time, the students have less time to eat. They end up eating their dessert and a little bit of the main food and are hungry during the afternoon periods.

- Some students eat so early they are not hungry.

- Well, I haven't eaten lunch all year because the food is tasteless. Sometimes they have the same food for three days, and there isn't a big selection.

TRANSPORTATION
- Currently, only those students living more than two miles from home campus are eligible to ride the bus. This perhaps needs to be re-visited to better serve the community demographics.

- Additionally, communication to parents regarding route specifics needs great improvement. Currently, there is too much confusion where children are to catch the bus. Also, notification needs to be distributed much, much earlier than the 1st week of school.

- I believe that if anyone needs to ride to school, there should be a bus to pick them up.

SAFETY AND SECURITY
- Put more lights in the East Campus parking lot—it is especially dark when leaving board meetings.

- Put flashing lights near Branchwood and Beltline at the crosswalk. On Beltline, there should be detectors.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT
- I think involvement is very good.

- Need more involvement in our schools.

- Need to request e-mail addresses of every parent, one for dad, one for mom, one for student.

- There are few parent teacher conferences scheduled.

COMMUNITY LEADERS' FOCUS GROUP
- Great improvement in the relationship between LISD, the city, and the community.

- The working relationship between the LISD board and the city has improved remarkably; much credit goes to Dr. Lewis.

- The district is striving to improve programs, but it still has a long way to go. Students are still not achieving academically.

- Much hope in the community—the future looks bright.

- The city is enticing companies and industries to come to Lancaster. Good schools a must.

- Chamber of Commerce has jumped back into working with the district through providing

scholarships, partnerships, Texas Scholars, and the Educational Foundation.

- Seeing improvement everywhere and in a short time. Hopefully this will be sustained.

- A trust between the city and the district has resulted. Everything is in place, and the leaders in the community and district are working off the same page.

- The superintendent and his staff have done an outstanding job—long hours and hard work.

- Whole culture of the organization is changing.

- Chamber of Commerce and those who attended the I-35 bridge dedication were excited and proud of the LISD band. What a difference from a few years back.

- While the future looks bright and improvements have been made, students are not where they should be academically, and work is needed to raise test scores.

- The group discussed topics such as bond issues, neighborhood walks, visibility of superintendent, and economic development.

PARENT FOCUS GROUP

- A parent reported that her 8th grade student has a long-term substitute teacher who is not certified and possibly not qualified. The student has reported to her mother that the teacher often makes mistakes in content matters.

- Two other parents reported that their children are in classes taught by long-term substitutes. These parents had no complaints, but were concerned if the substitute was degreed and certified.

- All of the parents reported that they had not received a letter that their child was being taught by an uncertified teacher.

- Discussion revolved around parental rights and where parents might learn about Texas education laws and regulations.

- The parents attending are very interested in their children's education, the district, and the schools, but are concerned that too many parents in the district are not.

- Few parents volunteer in the schools or participate in the PTA.

- Attendees discussed obstacles that prevent parents from participating in school and district activities. These obstacles included the following:

- **Language Barriers** – Parents who speak Spanish said they hesitate to come to events because they are not fluent in English and often there are no interpreters present. An example given was a PTA meeting with no Spanish interpreter present that had quite a few Spanish-speaking parents in attendance. The Spanish-speaking parents in attendance did not know much about what was going on in the district.

- **School Activities** – Parents said they are confronted with too many choices when it comes to choosing activities to attend. It is hard for them to pick and choose when so much is going on.

- **Communication** – Parents said they feel that this is a huge problem. They don't receive newsletters or bulletins that supposedly come home with their children in time for events or activities. Elementary teachers send information home with their students, but notices and bulletins only come home with the child on Tuesdays. So much is stuffed in the packets that parents have a tendency not to read every piece.

- One suggestion to increase participation at PTA meetings was to provide incentives for parents to attend. The incentives do not need to be costly (i.e., small tokens or privileges for students who have the most parents present at the PTA meetings). PTAs in the district are not very active, except at Pleasant Run Elementary.

- Pleasant Run's principal sends a newsletter home each Monday with elementary students. Teachers place the letters in backpacks along with the homework for the week.

- Some parents felt there was an overemphasis on Fine Arts. Some parents with children in the band did not like that their children were continually being taken out of classes for band trips. The I-35 bridge dedication took band students out of classes from nine in the morning until late in the afternoon. Parents want more emphasis on academics.

- Parents in attendance suggested forming neighborhood support groups to get parents interested. The support groups would help those parents who do not participate learn more about the district, the schools, and activities.

FAITH-BASED FOCUS GROUP

- According to attendees, the following are activities in which churches are involved with the district:

- The Good Faith ministry received a 21st Century grant for an "After School Program." Plans are underway to have the program in operation at Houston Elementary.

- First Baptist provides a luncheon for teachers and administrators during orientation week at the beginning of the school year.

- First Baptist also hosts a Baccalaureate Program and a Seniors Awards Banquet.

- Harvest Tree has provided food for the district's summer program.

- Harvest Tree has provided sessions on discipline to help single-parent families and is also establishing an "After School Program."

- Dr. Lewis is passionate and a visionary.

- Key factors—better communication, continued partnerships, and have ministers be seen in the schools and at school events.

PRINCIPALS' FOCUS GROUP

When asked to rate the following services, principals responded as follows:

- Custodial: A+

- Transportation: B (lacks flexibility but good drivers)

- Food Service: Elementary-B; High School-C

- Maintenance: B+

- Support for Special Education: need more training in laws and regulations

- Staff Development for principals: really improved this year with Dr. Lewis. He provides focus on importance and believes that each teacher should be involved in major conference-type activities at least every three years.

Other comments from principals included the following:

- Plan for improving facilities is excellent.

- We do not have enough control over activity funds. They are not carried forward each year. This is something that started this past year.

- Purchasing procedures are cumbersome. If we need small items such as limited office supplies, we need to request a purchase order. We do not have school-based funds to use. This delays meeting important needs.

- Shortage of cafeteria tables at one or more schools.

- We are just completing a new crises and emergency plan.

- The new high school facility will solve space problems.

- The superintendent involves principals through his Level Five meeting that takes place the 3rd Wednesday of each month. This is also the time for staff development for administrators.

FOOD SERVICE FOCUS GROUP

- Proud of serving a lot of students, in their opinion, in a short amount of time.

- Staff complaints regarding increase in cost of lunches.

- All staff should be trained to feel more like a team member that LISD has confidence in.

- Bar code cards with picture IDs would be more helpful.

- Food supply seems adequate and not over purchased.

- More discipline of students needed in high school cafeterias.

- Would prefer to not be considered "lunch ladies" or "cafeteria workers."

- Need more training on budget issues and accountability for school staff so they will not keep taking supplies overnight and on weekends (comes from cafeteria budget).

- Facility request to use cafeteria space should be implemented.

- Some schools get last minute (that day) notification of a) students going on field trip and not needing lunch b) students needing box lunch for field trip that day, and c) teachers needing snacks or meals prepared for meeting that day.

- Possibly a pay equity situation might be present.

FOCUS GROUP OF EXTRACURRICULAR DRIVERS

- Among the extracurricular drivers, there are generally two types: those who have full-time jobs elsewhere but need this job to make ends meet, and those who drive only because they want to and do not need the money as much. The first group generally has a limited schedule, while the second group is usually available to drive anytime.

- They believe the band isn't paying for the services it receives, nor is it submitting transportation requests in a timely manner. Moreover, the drivers have waited more than one hour on several occasions for the band to get ready to be transported.

- Because of a parking shortage at the football stadium, the football team and the band are bused approximately one mile from the high school to the stadium. For the band, this requires five buses (three years ago it only required one bus). Drivers are paid to wait through the game and then transport the students back to the high school.

- Event sponsors enforce discipline unevenly. Coaches often threaten ridiculous potential punishments that they know will never be carried out (such as running 100 laps). Overall, bus discipline is not too bad.

- Maintenance does an excellent job maintaining the aged fleet they have. There have only been a few breakdowns on the road.

- Drivers must drive 50 miles in order for the district to reimburse them for the cost of a meal. This policy means that a driver who transports students five miles to an event, then waits four hours before transporting them back will not qualify for meal reimbursement. The policy should be based on the length of the trip, not the mileage.

- Drivers are not issued fuel cards for long trips and run the risk of running out of fuel while en route. Drivers who have paid for fuel out of their own pockets report that it can take three to four months to get reimbursed.

- When teachers plan for a trip, they budget for the normal cost for an extracurricular driver ($10/hour + $1/mile). However, when mechanics and others have to fill in because the extracurricular drivers are not available, teachers end up paying much more.

FOCUS GROUP OF MECHANICS

- There is no fuel/wash person on staff, although they believe that position exists (this position was previously held by the new transportation supervisor). As a result, they must spend time washing and fueling buses. They are paid too much to be doing this activity. Drivers do not fuel buses because they are not given fuel cards.

- One of the mechanics drives a bus route everyday. This takes approximately three hours each day and reduces the amount of time that

can be spent on maintenance. The other mechanic runs routes when the district is shorthanded and estimates that this occurs an average of once per week.

- The buses just received from Dallas County Public Schools came without any maintenance records. All need roof maintenance and new tires before they can be put into use.

- There has been a big jump in the number of extracurricular trips since the new Fine Arts director started.

- They are currently carrying a large amount of obsolete inventory, such as big bolts that fit none of the equipment they service.

- Their work schedules do not coincide with those of the rest of the Transportation Department. As a result, they have bought their own cell phones to try to maintain communication.

- There are no accident investigations to speak of when there is a workers' compensation claim. One of the mechanics got diesel fuel in his eyes and, because the maintenance shop did not have an eye wash station, ended up in the emergency room. No one investigated the problem.

- The superintendent promised everyone annual evaluations; mechanics have not received one yet.

- They provide their own hand tools; they are not reimbursed by the district for any breakage.

- They have not received training in blood borne pathogens, first aid, workplace safety, or emergency evacuations.

FOCUS GROUP OF POLICE OFFICERS

- The biggest issues they deal with are discipline, fistfights, profane language, classroom discipline, general disobedience, and dress code violations. There are some drug issues in the district (mostly marijuana) and some gang activity.

- They are often called to enforce Code of Conduct violations rather than law violations. For example, they all have been asked to enforce Dress Code violations, although this is an area of the Student Code of Conduct, not law.

- Teachers and administrators do not appear to understand the role of campus police officers and regard them as nothing more than security guards.

- From the intermediate level up, they all have been called to classrooms to enforce discipline, such as when a student refuses to be quiet or refuses to leave a classroom when asked. They feel that teachers rely on them to enforce classroom discipline because the teachers lack the skills to enforce discipline on their own.

- Two officers have left, but those positions have not been filled. There is only one officer on the night shift.

- The department is not getting adequate support for training or equipment. The district does not provide bulletproof vests; several have purchased them with their own money. The radio in one of the squad cars was broken for three weeks. The radar guns they have were discards from the City of Lancaster.

- When an officer is called to respond to a situation after hours, they must do so in their own private vehicles. They do not receive any reimbursement for this.

- The implementation of the COPS grant has been problematic. The three officers hired under the COPS grant were told that the starting salary would be a certain amount. However, when the paychecks arrived, their salaries were lower. District administrators blamed it on a misunderstanding with how the grant worked.

- There is a significant amount of mandatory overtime to cover all of the nighttime events. Sometimes officers must use their own vehicles to cover events. They are not reimbursed for this.

- The dogs are ineffective at actually finding illicit substances because the students know not to leave drugs in their lockers. Instead, students hide the substances on their person because the dogs are not allowed to sniff them personally. There have been few instances of the dogs getting a hit when searching the campuses.

- Several buildings have no alarm systems. Many district buildings have inadequate exterior lighting.

- There is a written emergency plan, but no active training for emergency situations. There is an administrative attitude that nothing bad is going to happen here.

- There were two bomb threats last school year, and the district's response was a disaster. The campuses involved did not evacuate the buildings, but rather herded all the students into the gym, without knowing the location of the supposed bomb.

- There are no threat assessments for any of the campuses or district buildings.

- There has been no cross-jurisdictional emergency planning or training.

- There are numerous blind entries in district buildings that are routinely left unlocked.

- Students are being removed too early from DAEP because parents complain.

FOCUS GROUP OF REGULAR ROUTE BUS DRIVERS

Three drivers, with an average of 2.5 years in the district, run five routes in the morning and five routes in the afternoon. All are actually employees of Dallas County, but run routes exclusively for LISD.

Comments included

- They had more buses last year; this year, they have cut the routes and the runs for the district. As a result, most drivers now have two runs each morning and two more each afternoon.

- They are unaware of any existing policies on student ride times.

- Buses are generally well maintained and any maintenance concerns are addressed quickly.

- The buses need to have air conditioning. It can get extremely hot inside the buses. Last summer, the drivers had several children with asthma who had to get off the bus because of the extreme heat. This could create a life-threatening situation.

- Bus discipline is a continuing issue, although principals are generally responsive. School administrators generally enforce the portion of the Student Code of Conduct related to bus discipline. According to participants, the biggest bus discipline issues with students are as follows:

  - getting out of seats;

  - opening windows without permission;

  - using profane language; and

  - talking too loudly.

- Drivers are concerned with the safety hazard posed by students with large musical instruments and/or large backpacks. The aisle quickly becomes impassable. In the event of an evacuation emergency, drivers believe they would be unable to reach the rear of the bus to open the rear door.

▪ Bus drivers do not recall any bus evacuation drills with district students, nor do transportation supervisors complete an annual ride-along as part of the performance evaluation process. Supervisors will ride along if there is a discipline problem and the driver has requested assistance.

▪ They all have two-way radios and can call for help quickly in the event of an emergency.

▪ There is no system to verify eligibility of students on their buses. They have no way to know who should be on which bus, nor do they know when a student's bus privileges have been revoked. Some principals are diligent about informing drivers when a student's privileges have been revoked, but this is neither consistent nor coded in policy.

FOCUS GROUP OF TEACHERS ON THE TOPICS OF TRANSPORTATION AND SAFETY AND SECURITY

TRANSPORTATION

▪ Buses are overcrowded and there are not enough of them. Last year, elementary students had to ride with intermediate students.

▪ Bus drivers are wonderful people, but they need better training in student behavior management. When drivers have a problem in the afternoon with students, they will often bring the students back to the school so that the school administrators can deal with them. In some cases, school administrators have then transported these students home in their own private vehicles.

▪ There should be a floating bus monitor available to assist drivers with discipline issues.

▪ There have been incidents of younger students getting on the wrong bus and then not knowing where they live.

▪ Small academic groups cannot afford to use bus transportation for trips. Most student groups must fund their own transportation. However, athletics, choir, fine arts, and band all receive annual budgets for transportation.

▪ Extracurricular buses are supposed to be available on a first come, first serve basis; but in reality sports get priority over academics.

▪ The process for requesting extracurricular transportation is paper-based, and teachers are not automatically notified whether their trip request has been scheduled.

▪ There is an unclear policy on when a student may switch buses. A student who normally rides a bus may, with a parent's note, ride home on another bus. However, a student who normally walks is not allowed to ride a bus, even with a parent's note.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

▪ There is a concern that asbestos exists in several of the school buildings. In addition, one school flooded, causing the carpets to mold. Several teachers have reported becoming sick from this problem.

▪ There are numerous ceiling leaks in district buildings. One such leak caused part of the ceiling in the teacher's lounge to collapse.

▪ At the intermediate school, all of the exterior doors are locked except the front one. The teachers in the portables do not have keys to the doors nearest them and must walk all the way around the building to enter.

▪ There is basically no security when adults enter a campus. Teachers reported walking on campuses without identification and not being challenged by anyone.

▪ Not all teachers at all schools have badges. Either there is no consistent badge policy, or it is not being enforced. High school students were charged $5 for a badge this year. Consequently, not all high school students have badges. This creates a problem enforcing discipline because a teacher cannot always identify the student offenders by name. Substitutes do not have badges but instead wear orange stickers.

▪ There have been thefts in the high school. Teachers have no place in their classrooms to lock their purses.

▪ Where the uniform policy is enforced, it has cut down on discipline problems.

▪ There are too few bathrooms at one of the elementary schools.

▪ The factory across the street from Houston Elementary is releasing noxious fumes, and teachers worry it is carcinogenic.

▪ Parents go wherever they want on school grounds and are not challenged.

▪ Car drivers ignore rules and policies when dropping off and picking up students. They will pull into the paths of buses if the car-rider lane gets too long, or drop off students in the faculty

parking lot and tell them to dodge traffic to get to the door.

▪ Alternative school placements are not happening because the process takes too long. Also, the placement process is apparently not uniform among the schools, as several teachers described different processes.

DEPARTMENT CHAIR FOCUS GROUP

▪ The English curriculum guides are lacking a solid grammar unit.

▪ Local benchmark testing is conducted; however, [department chairs] don't get the results back in a timely manner to adjust instruction for the next grading period.

▪ U.S. history benchmarks are not aligned well.

▪ Administrators rarely provide feedback on lesson plans.

▪ It takes anywhere from two months to a year to process a purchase order.

▪ Human Resource staff are not always "user friendly."

▪ The campus improvement plan process is nonexistent; one member stated, "It is like rowing a boat, but going in circles…no direction." Others in the focus group concurred.

▪ Concerns were raised about the new directive for all students to take an advanced placement course; teachers said that some of the students just aren't ready.

▪ There is too little emphasis on career and technology education courses.

▪ We would like to see weekly progress reports conducted electronically.

▪ Too many students are going on field trips when they are not passing courses.

▪ We need a better tardy system.

▪ Very inconsistent enforcement of dress code.

▪ Fine Arts is all geared to music. What about visual arts, theater, and R.O.T.C.?

▪ Special education teachers need a special education specialist, like they have for core-subject areas.

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE AND
SUPPORT STAFF SURVEY RESULTS

(total number = 47)

Demographic Data

Totals may not equal 100 percent due to rounding.

1.	GENDER (OPTIONAL)	MALE	FEMALE
		19.15%	80.85%

2.	ETHNICITY (OPTIONAL)	NO RESPONSE	AFRICAN AMERICAN	ANGLO	HISPANIC	ASIAN	OTHER
		0.00%	31.25%	56.25%	4.17%	0.00%	8.33%

3.	HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN EMPLOYED BY LANCASTER ISD?	1-5 YEARS	6-10 YEARS	11-15 YEARS	16-20 YEARS	20+ YEARS
		39.58%	25.00%	18.75%	10.42%	6.25%

4.	ARE YOU A(N):		
	ADMINISTRATOR	CLERICAL STAFF	SUPPORT STAFF
	37.50%	41.67%	20.83%

5.	HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN EMPLOYED IN THIS CAPACITY BY LANCASTER ISD?	1-5 YEARS	6-10 YEARS	11-15 YEARS	16—20 YEARS	20+ YEARS
		50.00%	33.33%	12.50%	4.17%	0.00%

A.   DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1. The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.	17.02%	68.09%	10.64%	4.26%	0.00%
2. School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.	19.15%	53.19%	17.02%	10.64%	0.00%
3. The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	42.55%	42.55%	4.26%	6.38%	4.26%
4. The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	44.68%	36.17%	8.51%	6.38%	4.26%
5. Central administration is efficient.	25.53%	55.32%	4.26%	10.64%	4.26%
6. Central administration supports the educational process.	40.43%	46.81%	8.51%	2.13%	2.13%
7. The morale of central administration staff is good.	25.53%	42.55%	21.28%	8.51%	2.13%

B.   EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
8. Education is the main priority in our school district.	50.00%	31.82%	6.82%	6.82%	4.55%
9. Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.	13.95%	62.79%	13.95%	6.98%	2.33%
10. The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	6.98%	53.49%	25.58%	9.30%	4.65%
11. The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	13.95%	37.21%	34.88%	9.30%	4.65%

B.   EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT (CONTINUED)

SURVEY QUESTIONS		STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
12.	The district has effective educational programs for the following:					
a)	Reading	26.19%	54.76%	7.14%	9.52%	2.38%
b)	Writing	19.05%	66.67%	4.76%	9.52%	0.00%
c)	Mathematics	23.81%	57.14%	7.14%	9.52%	2.38%
d)	Science	17.07%	65.85%	7.32%	7.32%	2.44%
e)	English or Language Arts	21.43%	64.29%	4.76%	7.14%	2.38%
f)	Computer Instruction	19.05%	61.90%	9.52%	9.52%	0.00%
g)	Social Studies (history or geography)	14.29%	66.67%	9.52%	7.14%	2.38%
h)	Fine Arts	23.81%	69.05%	4.76%	2.38%	0.00%
i)	Physical Education	23.81%	59.52%	7.14%	7.14%	2.38%
j)	Business Education	16.67%	40.48%	26.19%	11.90%	4.76%
k)	Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	21.95%	56.10%	12.20%	9.76%	0.00%
l)	Foreign Language	7.14%	61.90%	19.05%	11.90%	0.00%
13.	The district has effective special programs for the following:					
a)	Library Service	9.52%	61.90%	9.52%	19.05%	0.00%
b)	Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	12.20%	41.46%	19.51%	19.51%	7.32%
c)	Special Education	20.93%	48.84%	16.28%	9.30%	4.65%
d)	Head Start and Even Start programs	7.32%	26.83%	46.34%	12.20%	7.32%
e)	Dyslexia program	9.76%	24.39%	36.59%	24.39%	4.88%
f)	Student mentoring program	7.32%	26.83%	48.78%	14.63%	2.44%
g)	Advanced placement program	14.63%	51.22%	21.95%	9.76%	2.44%
h)	Literacy program	14.63%	41.46%	24.39%	14.63%	4.88%
i)	Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	7.32%	41.46%	24.39%	14.63%	12.20%
j)	Summer school programs	14.29%	57.14%	14.29%	9.52%	4.76%
k)	Alternative education programs	9.52%	59.52%	19.05%	7.14%	4.76%
l)	"English as a second language" program	9.52%	64.29%	16.67%	7.14%	2.38%
m)	Career counseling program	10.00%	47.50%	25.00%	10.00%	7.50%
n)	College counseling program	9.76%	43.90%	24.39%	17.07%	4.88%
o)	Counseling the parents of students	7.32%	39.02%	24.39%	21.95%	7.32%
p)	Drop out prevention program	2.38%	45.24%	28.57%	16.67%	7.14%
14.	Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	12.50%	50.00%	20.00%	12.50%	5.00%
15.	Teacher turnover is low.	0.00%	14.29%	16.67%	45.24%	23.81%
16.	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	9.76%	53.66%	17.07%	14.63%	4.88%
17.	Teacher openings are filled quickly.	6.98%	62.79%	16.28%	6.98%	6.98%
18.	Teachers are rewarded for superior performance.	0.00%	26.83%	29.27%	26.83%	17.07%
19.	Teachers are counseled about less than satisfactory performance.	7.14%	47.62%	23.81%	16.67%	4.76%
20.	All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs, and art classes.	11.90%	42.86%	16.67%	21.43%	7.14%
21.	The student-to-teacher ratio is reasonable.	9.52%	42.86%	14.29%	23.81%	9.52%
22.	Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	16.67%	80.95%	2.38%	0.00%	0.00%
23.	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	21.95%	48.78%	12.20%	9.76%	7.32%

C.   PERSONNEL

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
24. District salaries are competitive with similar positions in the job market.	11.63%	37.21%	18.60%	23.26%	9.30%
25. The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.	2.33%	53.49%	20.93%	16.28%	6.98%
26. Temporary workers are rarely used.	2.38%	35.71%	45.24%	14.29%	2.38%
27. The district successfully projects future staffing needs.	11.90%	42.86%	28.57%	11.90%	4.76%
28. The district has an effective employee recruitment program.	14.29%	30.95%	42.86%	7.14%	4.76%
29. The district operates an effective staff development program.	11.90%	54.76%	14.29%	16.67%	2.38%
30. District employees receive annual personnel evaluations.	11.90%	66.67%	11.90%	7.14%	2.38%
31. The district rewards competence and experience and spells out qualifications such as seniority and skill levels needed for promotion.	9.52%	26.19%	26.19%	28.57%	9.52%
32. Employees who perform below the standard of expectation are counseled appropriately and timely.	2.38%	45.24%	33.33%	16.67%	2.38%
33. The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	4.76%	54.76%	35.71%	0.00%	4.76%
34. The district's health insurance package meets my needs.	7.14%	28.57%	30.95%	23.81%	9.52%

D.   COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
35. The district regularly communicates with parents.	21.95%	58.54%	9.76%	9.76%	0.00%
36. The local television and radio stations regularly report school news and menus.	7.32%	29.27%	31.71%	26.83%	4.88%
37. Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.	7.32%	24.39%	19.51%	41.46%	7.32%
38. District facilities are open for community use.	16.28%	41.86%	32.56%	6.98%	2.33%

E.   FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
39. Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff, and the board provide input into facility planning.	19.05%	54.76%	16.67%	4.76%	4.76%
40. The architect and construction managers are selected objectively and impersonally.	17.07%	46.34%	31.71%	0.00%	4.88%
41. Schools are clean.	14.29%	61.90%	16.67%	4.76%	2.38%
42. Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	16.67%	57.14%	14.29%	7.14%	4.76%
43. Repairs are made in a timely manner.	11.90%	57.14%	11.90%	14.29%	4.76%
44. Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	26.19%	52.38%	16.67%	2.38%	2.38%

F.   FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
45. Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers.	14.63%	48.78%	29.27%	2.44%	4.88%
46. Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	9.52%	45.24%	28.57%	9.52%	7.14%
47. The district's financial reports are easy to read and understand.	7.14%	42.86%	28.57%	14.29%	7.14%
48. Financial reports are made available to community members when asked.	4.88%	46.34%	41.46%	4.88%	2.44%

G.   PURCHASING AND WAREHOUSING

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
49. Purchasing gets me what I need when I need it.	4.76%	61.90%	11.90%	14.29%	7.14%
50. Purchasing acquires the highest quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.	11.90%	57.14%	21.43%	7.14%	2.38%
51. Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for the requestor.	2.38%	54.76%	23.81%	11.90%	7.14%
52. The district provides teachers and administrators an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment.	4.88%	41.46%	29.27%	17.07%	7.32%
53. Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	7.32%	41.46%	26.83%	19.51%	4.88%
54. Textbooks are in good shape.	7.32%	43.90%	26.83%	19.51%	2.44%
55. The school library meets student needs for books and other resources for students.	12.50%	42.50%	10.00%	30.00%	5.00%

H.   SAFETY AND SECURITY

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
56. Gangs are not a problem in this district.	2.44%	24.39%	36.59%	29.27%	7.32%
57. Drugs are not a problem in this district.	4.88%	17.07%	36.59%	29.27%	12.20%
58. Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	4.88%	17.07%	39.02%	29.27%	9.76%
59. Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	14.63%	63.41%	9.76%	12.20%	0.00%
60. Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	14.63%	56.10%	17.07%	12.20%	0.00%
61. A good working arrangement exists between local law enforcement and the district.	27.50%	52.50%	15.00%	2.50%	2.50%
62. Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	9.76%	63.41%	17.07%	4.88%	4.88%

I.   COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
63. Students regularly use computers.	26.19%	59.52%	7.14%	7.14%	0.00%
64. Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	21.43%	40.48%	14.29%	21.43%	2.38%
65. Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	19.05%	66.67%	9.52%	4.76%	0.00%
66. Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	14.29%	42.86%	19.05%	21.43%	2.38%
67. The district meets students' needs in computer fundamentals.	17.07%	48.78%	24.39%	9.76%	0.00%
68. The district meets students' needs in advanced computer skills.	11.90%	42.86%	28.57%	14.29%	2.38%
69. Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	23.81%	54.76%	11.90%	4.76%	4.76%

PRINCIPAL AND ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS
SURVEY RESULTS

(total number = 14)

Demographic Data

Totals may not equal 100 percent due to rounding.

1.	GENDER (OPTIONAL)	MALE	FEMALE
		35.71%	64.29%

2.	ETHNICITY (OPTIONAL)	NO RESPONSE	AFRICAN AMERICAN	ANGLO	HISPANIC	ASIAN	OTHER
		0.00%	35.71%	57.14%	0.00%	0.00%	7.14%

3.	HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN EMPLOYED BY LANCASTER ISD?	NO RESPONSE	1-5 YEARS	6-10 YEARS	11-15 YEARS	16-20 YEARS	20+ YEARS
		0.00%	42.86%	14.29%	7.14%	0.00%	35.71%

4.	WHAT GRADES ARE TAUGHT IN YOUR SCHOOL?		
PRE-KINDERGARTEN	**KINDERGARTEN**	**FIRST GRADE**
6	6	6
SECOND GRADE	**THIRD GRADE**	**FOURTH GRADE**
6	6	5
FIFTH GRADE	**SIXTH GRADE**	**SEVENTH GRADE**
0	0	2
EIGHTH GRADE	**NINTH GRADE**	**TENTH GRADE**
2	5	5
ELEVENTH GRADE	**TWELFTH GRADE**	
6	6	

A.   DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1. The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.	21.43%	64.29%	14.29%	0.00%	0.00%
2. School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.	35.71%	28.57%	28.57%	7.14%	0.00%
3. School board members understand their role as policymakers and stay out of the day-to-day management of the district.	14.29%	21.43%	28.57%	28.57%	7.14%
4. The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	35.71%	28.57%	28.57%	7.14%	0.00%
5. The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	42.86%	42.86%	0.00%	14.29%	0.00%
6. Central administration is efficient.	28.57%	21.43%	0.00%	50.00%	0.00%
7. Central administration supports the educational process.	42.86%	28.57%	21.43%	7.14%	0.00%
8. The morale of central administration staff is good.	42.86%	14.29%	35.71%	7.14%	0.00%

B.   EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
9. Education is the main priority in our school district.	30.77%	53.85%	15.38%	0.00%	0.00%
10. Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.	30.77%	38.46%	7.69%	23.08%	0.00%
11. The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	7.69%	46.15%	30.77%	15.38%	0.00%
12. The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	23.08%	23.08%	46.15%	7.69%	0.00%
13. The district provides curriculum guides for all grades and subjects.	53.85%	15.38%	.00%	30.77%	0.00%
14. The curriculum guides are appropriately aligned and coordinated.	30.77%	38.46%	.00%	30.77%	0.00%
15. The district's curriculum guides clearly outline what to teach and how to teach it.	16.67%	41.67%	16.67%	25.00%	0.00%
16. The district has effective educational programs for the following:					
a) Reading	25.00%	50.00%	16.67%	8.33%	0.00%
b) Writing	30.77%	53.85%	15.38%	0.00%	0.00%
c) Mathematics	38.46%	46.15%	0.00%	15.38%	0.00%
d) Science	23.08%	53.85%	7.69%	15.38%	0.00%
e) English or Language Arts	23.08%	53.85%	23.08%	0.00%	0.00%
f) Computer Instruction	23.08%	38.46%	15.38%	23.08%	0.00%
g) Social Studies (history or geography)	23.08%	46.15%	15.38%	15.38%	0.00%
h) Fine Arts	30.77%	53.85%	7.69%	7.69%	0.00%
i) Physical Education	30.77%	38.46%	7.69%	23.08%	0.00%
j) Business Education	23.08%	30.77%	46.15%	0.00%	0.00%
k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	15.38%	46.15%	38.46%	0.00%	0.00%
l) Foreign Language	23.08%	38.46%	30.77%	7.69%	0.00%
17. The district has effective special programs for the following:					
a) Library Service	15.38%	38.46%	15.38%	30.77%	0.00%
b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	7.69%	23.08%	23.08%	38.46%	7.69%
c) Special Education	30.77%	53.85%	0.00%	15.38%	0.00%
d) Head Start and Even Start programs	0.00%	15.38%	61.54%	23.08%	0.00%
e) Dyslexia program	0.00%	38.46%	23.08%	23.08%	15.38%
f) Student mentoring program	0.00%	23.08%	38.46%	38.46%	0.00%
g) Advanced placement program	15.38%	46.15%	38.46%	0.00%	0.00%
h) Literacy program	23.08%	46.15%	15.38%	15.38%	0.00%
i) Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	7.69%	23.08%	38.46%	30.77%	0.00%
j) Summer school programs	23.08%	38.46%	30.77%	7.69%	0.00%
k) Alternative education programs	30.77%	46.15%	7.69%	15.38%	0.00%
l) "English as a second language" program	7.69%	69.23%	15.38%	7.69%	0.00%
m) Career counseling program	7.69%	23.08%	53.85%	15.38%	0.00%
n) College counseling program	7.69%	30.77%	53.85%	7.69%	0.00%
o) Counseling the parents of students	7.69%	23.08%	23.08%	46.15%	0.00%
p) Drop out prevention program	7.69%	15.38%	53.85%	23.08%	0.00%
18. Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	30.77%	30.77%	15.38%	7.69%	15.38%
19. Teacher turnover is low.	0.00%	7.69%	0.00%	38.46%	53.85%
20. Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	15.38%	23.08%	7.69%	38.46%	15.38%

B.   EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT (CONTINUED)

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
21. Teachers are rewarded for superior performance.	7.69%	7.69%	7.69%	61.54%	15.38%
22. Teachers are counseled about less than satisfactory performance.	23.08%	61.54%	0.00%	15.38%	0.00%
23. All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs, and art classes.	7.69%	15.38%	15.38%	53.85%	7.69%
24. Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	53.85%	30.77%	7.69%	7.69%	0.00%
25. Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	30.77%	46.15%	15.38%	7.69%	0.00%

C.   PERSONNEL

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
26. District salaries are competitive with similar positions in the job market.	7.69%	61.54%	7.69%	15.38%	7.69%
27. The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.	23.08%	38.46%	7.69%	23.08%	7.69%
28. Temporary workers are rarely used.	15.38%	46.15%	15.38%	15.38%	7.69%
29. The district successfully projects future staffing needs.	23.08%	23.08%	23.08%	15.38%	15.38%
30. The district has an effective employee recruitment program.	7.69%	30.77%	15.38%	38.46%	7.69%
31. The district operates an effective staff development program.	7.69%	53.85%	7.69%	15.38%	15.38%
32. District employees receive annual personnel evaluations.	38.46%	53.85%	0.00%	7.69%	0.00%
33. The district rewards competence and experience and spells out qualifications such as seniority and skill levels needed for promotion.	15.38%	7.69%	15.38%	38.46%	23.08%
34. Employees who perform below the standard of expectation are counseled appropriately and timely.	15.38%	69.23%	0.00%	7.69%	7.69%
35. The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	15.38%	46.15%	30.77%	7.69%	0.00%
36. The district's health insurance package meets my needs.	15.38%	30.77%	23.08%	0.00%	30.77%

D.   COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
37. The district regularly communicates with parents.	38.46%	46.15%	7.69%	7.69%	0.00%
38. Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.	15.38%	23.08%	15.38%	30.77%	15.38%
39. District facilities are open for community use.	30.77%	46.15%	7.69%	15.38%	0.00%

E.   FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
40. Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff, and the board provide input into facility planning.	33.33%	33.33%	16.67%	16.67%	0.00%
41. Schools are clean.	41.67%	41.67%	0.00%	16.67%	0.00%
42. Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	33.33%	50.00%	8.33%	8.33%	0.00%
43. Repairs are made in a timely manner.	16.67%	50.00%	16.67%	16.67%	0.00%
44. Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	33.33%	58.33%	0.00%	8.33%	0.00%

F.   FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
45. Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers.	16.67%	25.00%	8.33%	25.00%	25.00%
46. Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	8.33%	25.00%	0.00%	50.00%	16.67%
47. Financial resources are allocated fairly and equitably at my school.	16.67%	33.33%	25.00%	16.67%	8.33%

G.   PURCHASING AND WAREHOUSING

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
48. Purchasing gets me what I need when I need it.	16.67%	33.33%	8.33%	16.67%	25.00%
49. Purchasing acquires high quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.	33.33%	16.67%	33.33%	16.67%	0.00%
50. Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for the requestor.	33.33%	16.67%	8.33%	16.67%	25.00%
51. The district provides teachers and administrators an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment.	25.00%	0.00%	25.00%	41.67%	8.33%
52. Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	16.67%	41.67%	0.00%	33.33%	8.33%
53. Textbooks are in good shape.	16.67%	50.00%	8.33%	25.00%	0.00%
54. The school library meets student needs for books and other resources.	36.36%	27.27%	0.00%	18.18%	18.18%

H.   FOOD SERVICES

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
55. The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	9.09%	45.45%	0.00%	36.36%	9.09%
56. Food is served warm.	45.45%	27.27%	18.18%	9.09%	0.00%
57. Students have enough time to eat.	27.27%	45.45%	9.09%	18.18%	0.00%
58. Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.	36.36%	45.45%	0.00%	18.18%	0.00%
59. Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	18.18%	27.27%	9.09%	45.45%	0.00%
60. Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	45.45%	54.55%	0.00%	.00%	0.00%
61. Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	36.36%	54.55%	0.00%	9.09%	0.00%
62. Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	27.27%	63.64%	0.00%	9.09%	0.00%

I.   TRANSPORTATION

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
63. The drop-off zone at the school is safe.	36.36%	63.64%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
64. The district has a simple method to request buses for special events.	27.27%	63.64%	0.00%	9.09%	0.00%
65. Buses arrive and leave on time.	27.27%	54.55%	9.09%	9.09%	0.00%
66. Adding or modifying a route for a student is easy to accomplish.	27.27%	18.18%	27.27%	18.18%	9.09%

J.   SAFETY AND SECURITY

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
67. Students feel safe and secure at school.	33.33%	66.67%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
68. School disturbances are infrequent.	33.33%	33.33%	0.00%	25.00%	8.33%
69. Gangs are not a problem in this district.	16.67%	16.67%	41.67%	16.67%	8.33%
70. Drugs are not a problem in this district.	8.33%	8.33%	41.67%	33.33%	8.33%
71. Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	16.67%	16.67%	41.67%	25.00%	0.00%
72. Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	33.33%	41.67%	8.33%	16.67%	0.00%
73. Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	16.67%	58.33%	16.67%	8.33%	0.00%
74. A good working arrangement exists between local law enforcement and the district.	16.67%	58.33%	8.33%	16.67%	0.00%
75. Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	33.33%	58.33%	0.00%	8.33%	0.00%
76. Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	25.00%	50.00%	0.00%	25.00%	0.00%

K.   COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
77. Students regularly use computers.	33.33%	58.33%	0.00%	8.33%	0.00%
78. Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	16.67%	50.00%	0.00%	33.33%	0.00%
79. Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	25.00%	50.00%	0.00%	16.67%	8.33%
80. The district meets student needs in computer fundamentals.	25.00%	41.67%	8.33%	16.67%	8.33%
81. The district meets student needs in advanced computer skills.	25.00%	25.00%	8.33%	33.33%	8.33%
82. Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	25.00%	66.67%	0.00%	8.33%	0.00%
83. Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	25.00%	66.67%	0.00%	8.33%	0.00%

TEACHER SURVEY RESULTS

(total number = 226)

Demographic Data

Totals may not equal 100 percent due to rounding.

1.	GENDER (OPTIONAL)	MALE	FEMALE
		29.20%	70.80%

2.	ETHNICITY (OPTIONAL)	NO RESPONSE	AFRICAN AMERICAN	ANGLO	HISPANIC	ASIAN	OTHER
		0.00%	43.56%	46.22%	6.22%	0.89%	3.11%

3.	HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN EMPLOYED BY LANCASTER ISD?	NO RESPONSE	1-5 YEARS	6-10 YEARS	11-15 YEARS	16-20 YEARS	20+ YEARS
		0.00%	72.57%	14.60%	5.31%	4.87%	2.65%

4.	WHAT GRADE(S) DO YOU TEACH THIS YEAR?		
PRE-KINDERGARTEN	KINDERGARTEN	FIRST GRADE
30%	39%	40%
SECOND GRADE	THIRD GRADE	FOURTH GRADE
48%	46%	35%
FIFTH GRADE	SIXTH GRADE	SEVENTH GRADE
36%	0%	25%
EIGHTH GRADE	NINTH GRADE	TENTH GRADE
22%	44%	48%
ELEVENTH GRADE	TWELFTH GRADE	
50%	46%	

A.   DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1. The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.	9.78%	39.11%	44.89%	5.33%	0.89%
2. School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.	9.33%	43.11%	35.11%	9.33%	3.11%
3. School board members work well with the superintendent.	20.00%	43.56%	27.11%	6.67%	2.67%
4. The school board has a good image in the community.	15.32%	44.14%	25.68%	13.51%	1.35%
5. The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	26.13%	44.59%	15.32%	11.71%	2.25%
6. The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	30.22%	48.00%	14.22%	5.33%	2.22%
7. Central administration is efficient.	14.22%	48.00%	15.11%	18.22%	4.44%
8. Central administration supports the educational process.	21.43%	52.68%	12.05%	9.82%	4.02%
9. The morale of central administration staff is good.	20.89%	44.89%	26.67%	5.78%	1.78%

B.   EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
10. Education is the main priority in our school district.	39.07%	44.65%	3.26%	9.30%	3.72%
11. Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.	16.74%	41.40%	15.35%	18.60%	7.91%
12. The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	6.02%	26.85%	44.91%	16.20%	6.02%
13. The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	6.94%	26.85%	49.54%	12.50%	4.17%
14. The district provides curriculum guides for all grades and subjects.	25.58%	46.05%	8.84%	13.95%	5.58%
15. The curriculum guides are appropriately aligned and coordinated.	21.33%	45.50%	13.27%	13.74%	6.16%
16. The district's curriculum guides clearly outline what to teach and how to teach it.	17.45%	33.96%	16.98%	20.75%	10.85%
17. The district has effective educational programs for the following:					
a) Reading	19.53%	47.91%	13.95%	13.02%	5.58%
b) Writing	11.16%	44.19%	21.40%	18.60%	4.65%
c) Mathematics	13.55%	51.40%	22.43%	8.88%	3.74%
d) Science	10.70%	45.12%	26.98%	13.95%	3.26%
e) English or Language Arts	13.02%	48.84%	20.47%	14.88%	2.79%
f) Computer Instruction	11.68%	42.99%	31.78%	10.28%	3.27%
g) Social Studies (history or geography)	8.45%	46.01%	30.99%	11.74%	2.82%
h) Fine Arts	18.22%	51.87%	22.43%	5.61%	1.87%
i) Physical Education	14.49%	53.27%	27.57%	3.74%	0.93%
j) Business Education	6.10%	23.47%	64.32%	4.69%	1.41%
k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	6.57%	23.00%	62.91%	5.63%	1.88%
l) Foreign Language	8.06%	26.54%	59.72%	5.21%	0.47%
18. The district has effective special programs for the following:					
a) Library Service	13.68%	42.92%	25.47%	15.57%	2.36%
b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	7.48%	29.44%	25.70%	25.23%	12.15%
c) Special Education	17.84%	51.64%	14.55%	12.21%	3.76%
d) Head Start and Even Start programs	10.23%	16.74%	62.79%	6.98%	3.26%
e) Dyslexia program	6.05%	20.93%	53.02%	15.81%	4.19%
f) Student mentoring program	5.16%	19.72%	53.99%	16.90%	4.23%
g) Advanced placement program	9.30%	28.84%	51.16%	6.98%	3.72%
h) Literacy program	10.33%	28.64%	41.31%	16.90%	2.82%
i) Programs for students at risk of of dropping out of school	4.74%	18.01%	59.24%	13.74%	4.27%
j) Summer school programs	8.96%	45.28%	36.79%	6.60%	2.36%
k) Alternative education programs	12.15%	43.46%	36.45%	6.07%	1.87%
l) "English as a second language" program	14.42%	49.30%	24.19%	8.37%	3.72%
m) Career counseling program	5.61%	15.89%	66.36%	7.48%	4.67%
n) College counseling program	3.74%	17.29%	67.29%	5.61%	6.07%
o) Counseling the parents of students	7.01%	20.09%	46.73%	17.76%	8.41%
p) Drop out prevention program	3.30%	14.15%	66.04%	11.32%	5.19%

B.   EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT (CONTINUED)

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
19. Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	10.33%	31.46%	33.33%	14.08%	10.80%
20. Teacher turnover is low.	1.40%	7.01%	24.77%	23.83%	42.99%
21. Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	10.75%	45.79%	15.42%	18.69%	9.35%
22. Teacher openings are filled quickly.	8.37%	28.84%	33.95%	22.79%	6.05%
23. Teachers are rewarded for superior performance.	4.69%	22.54%	26.29%	21.60%	24.88%
24. Teachers are counseled about less than satisfactory performance.	10.28%	43.93%	27.57%	13.08%	5.14%
25. Teachers are knowledgeable in the subject areas they teach.	16.74%	63.72%	9.77%	8.37%	1.40%
26. All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.	10.28%	32.71%	20.09%	21.03%	15.89%
27. The student-to-teacher ratio is reasonable.	6.94%	32.87%	12.50%	31.02%	16.67%
28. Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	24.54%	54.63%	13.89%	4.63%	2.31%

C.   PERSONNEL

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
29. District salaries are competitive with similar positions in the job market.	20.93%	57.67%	7.44%	11.63%	2.33%
30. The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.	14.42%	48.37%	16.28%	15.81%	5.12%
31. Temporary workers are rarely used.	4.69%	28.17%	36.62%	24.41%	6.10%
32. The district successfully projects future staffing needs.	8.84%	25.12%	34.42%	23.72%	7.91%
33. The district has an effective employee recruitment program.	7.48%	23.83%	44.39%	19.16%	5.14%
34. The district operates an effective staff development program.	11.74%	42.72%	18.31%	18.78%	8.45%
35. District employees receive annual personnel evaluations.	25.35%	60.09%	11.74%	2.35%	0.47%
36. The district rewards competence and experience and spells out qualifications such as seniority and skill levels needed for promotion.	7.44%	23.26%	32.09%	22.79%	14.42%
37. Employees who perform below the standard of expectation are counseled appropriately and timely.	6.05%	38.60%	34.88%	17.21%	3.26%
38. The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	5.58%	27.91%	57.21%	7.44%	1.86%
39. The district's health insurance package meets my needs.	7.91%	43.26%	13.02%	21.86%	13.95%

D.   COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
40. The district regularly communicates with parents.	23.83%	56.54%	11.68%	6.54%	1.40%
41. The local television and radio stations regularly report school news and menus.	2.79%	16.74%	44.65%	22.79%	13.02%
42. Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.	4.67%	20.09%	22.43%	33.18%	19.63%
43. District facilities are open for community use.	12.56%	46.05%	35.35%	4.65%	1.40%

E.　FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
44. The district plans facilities far enough in the future to support enrollment growth.	11.06%	45.67%	18.27%	15.87%	9.13%
45. Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff, and the board provide input into facility planning.	11.06%	43.27%	33.65%	8.17%	3.85%
46. The architect and construction managers are selected objectively and impersonally.	6.80%	22.82%	66.50%	1.46%	2.43%
47. The quality of new construction is excellent.	8.17%	24.04%	65.87%	0.96%	0.96%
48. Schools are clean.	16.83%	58.65%	7.69%	14.42%	2.40%
49. Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	15.38%	50.96%	12.02%	16.35%	5.29%
50. Repairs are made in a timely manner.	12.08%	46.38%	14.01%	20.77%	6.76%
51. Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	15.46%	55.07%	20.29%	7.25%	1.93%

F.　FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
52. Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers.	6.22%	27.75%	44.02%	16.27%	5.74%
53. Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	10.05%	39.71%	41.15%	5.74%	3.35%
54. Financial resources are allocated fairly and equitably at my school.	11.06%	38.46%	28.37%	14.42%	7.69%

G.　PURCHASING AND WAREHOUSING

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
55. Purchasing gets me what I need when I need it.	9.05%	27.62%	31.43%	19.05%	12.86%
56. Purchasing acquires the highest quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.	6.67%	30.48%	49.05%	8.57%	5.24%
57. Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for the requestor.	6.70%	28.71%	38.76%	15.31%	10.53%
58. Vendors are selected competitively.	5.26%	22.01%	67.46%	3.35%	1.91%
59. The district provides teachers and administrators an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment.	7.14%	26.19%	29.05%	21.90%	15.71%
60. Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	7.21%	38.94%	24.04%	17.31%	12.50%
61. Textbooks are in good shape.	8.10%	53.33%	24.76%	8.10%	5.71%
62. The school library meets the student needs for books and other resources.	16.19%	41.43%	15.71%	17.62%	9.05%

H.   FOOD SERVICES

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
63. The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	6.73%	40.38%	20.67%	21.63%	10.58%
64. Food is served warm.	12.02%	60.10%	14.90%	9.13%	3.85%
65. Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.	15.38%	67.79%	3.85%	10.10%	2.88%
66. Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	13.46%	48.08%	10.58%	18.75%	9.13%
67. Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	17.79%	51.44%	7.69%	15.38%	7.69%
68. Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	18.27%	58.65%	10.58%	8.65%	3.85%
69. Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	15.05%	66.50%	12.62%	4.37%	1.46%

I.   SAFETY AND SECURITY

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
70. School disturbances are infrequent.	13.11%	51.94%	5.83%	18.45%	10.68%
71. Gangs are not a problem in this district.	11.06%	30.29%	33.65%	20.19%	4.81%
72. Drugs are not a problem in this district.	8.21%	21.74%	34.30%	26.09%	9.66%
73. Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	7.73%	27.54%	28.99%	25.60%	10.14%
74. Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	24.76%	51.46%	16.99%	4.37%	2.43%
75. Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	17.96%	43.20%	30.58%	6.31%	1.94%
76. A good working arrangement exists between local law enforcement and the district.	20.29%	48.79%	26.57%	3.38%	0.97%
77. Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	14.49%	49.76%	8.70%	17.39%	9.66%
78. Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	12.14%	46.60%	19.42%	16.02%	5.83%

J.   COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
79. Students regularly use computers.	17.87%	50.24%	7.73%	18.36%	5.80%
80. Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	12.08%	29.47%	10.14%	32.85%	15.46%
81. Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	20.87%	63.11%	6.80%	8.25%	0.97%
82. Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	15.46%	46.38%	10.63%	15.46%	12.08%
83. The district meets student needs in classes in computer fundamentals.	11.59%	47.83%	14.98%	18.84%	6.76%
84. The district meets student needs in classes in advanced computer skills.	10.63%	26.09%	36.71%	17.87%	8.70%
85. Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	21.74%	59.90%	3.86%	11.59%	2.90%

PARENT SURVEY RESULTS

(total number = 105)

Demographic Data

Totals may not equal 100 percent due to rounding.

1.	GENDER (OPTIONAL)	MALE	FEMALE
		26.00%	74.00%

2.	ETHNICITY (OPTIONAL)	NO RESPONSE	AFRICAN AMERICAN	ANGLO	HISPANIC	ASIAN	OTHER
		7.62%	60.95	15.24%	2.86%	10.48%	2.86%

3.	STATEMENT	NO RESPONSE	1-5 YEARS	6-10 YEARS	11 YEARS OR MORE
	How long have you lived in Lancaster ISD?	3.81%	53.33%	23.81%	19.05%

4.	WHAT GRADE LEVEL(S) DOES YOUR CHILD(REN) ATTEND?		
	PRE-KINDERGARTEN	KINDERGARTEN	FIRST GRADE
	7.62%	12.38%	12.38%
	SECOND GRADE	THIRD GRADE	FOURTH GRADE
	13.33%	21.90%	17.14%
	FIFTH GRADE	SIXTH GRADE	SEVENTH GRADE
	11.43%	16.19%	8.57%
	EIGHTH GRADE	NINTH GRADE	TENTH GRADE
	20.95%	12.38%	13.33%
	ELEVENTH GRADE	TWELFTH GRADE	
	7.62%	10.48%	

A. DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1. The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.	10.58%	36.54%	37.50%	9.62%	5.77%
2. School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.	9.71%	33.01%	36.89%	13.59%	6.80%
3. The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	20.00%	36.19%	31.43%	5.71%	6.67%
4. The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	20.00%	36.19%	33.33%	5.71%	4.76%

B. EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
5. The district provides a high quality of services.	10.00%	40.00%	16.00%	22.00%	12.00%
6. Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.	7.69%	38.46%	39.42%	9.62%	4.81%
7. The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	3.88%	30.10%	40.78%	17.48%	7.77%
8. The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	3.00%	33.00%	46.00%	11.00%	7.00%

B. EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT (CONTINUED)

SURVEY QUESTIONS		STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
9.	The district has effective educational programs for the following:					
	a)　Reading	19.23%	57.69%	4.81%	14.42%	3.85%
	b)　Writing	15.24%	56.19%	9.52%	12.38%	6.67%
	c)　Mathematics	15.38%	52.88%	9.62%	15.38%	6.73%
	d)　Science	17.14%	50.48%	8.57%	20.95%	2.86%
	e)　English or Language Arts	15.38%	57.69%	7.69%	15.38%	3.85%
	f)　Computer Instruction	15.69%	48.04%	16.67%	12.75%	6.86%
	g)　Social Studies (history or geography)	16.67%	54.90%	13.73%	11.76%	2.94%
	h)　Fine Arts	15.38%	52.88%	18.27%	9.62%	3.85%
	i)　Physical Education	15.24%	58.10%	15.24%	5.71%	5.71%
	j)　Business Education	6.86%	34.31%	45.10%	9.80%	3.92%
	k)　Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	5.77%	35.58%	48.08%	6.73%	3.85%
	l)　Foreign Language	9.71%	29.13%	47.57%	9.71%	3.88%
10.	The district has effective special programs for the following:					
	a)　Library Service	18.27%	52.88%	14.42%	10.58%	3.85%
	b)　Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	13.46%	32.69%	28.85%	18.27%	6.73%
	c)　Special Education	14.29%	30.48%	43.81%	6.67%	4.76%
	d)　Head Start and Even Start programs	8.65%	29.81%	48.08%	7.69%	5.77%
	e)　Dyslexia program	3.88%	14.56%	64.08%	11.65%	5.83%
	f)　Student mentoring program	9.52%	22.86%	37.14%	22.86%	7.62%
	g)　Advanced placement program	5.77%	28.85%	45.19%	16.35%	3.85%
	h)　Literacy program	8.65%	33.65%	39.42%	11.54%	6.73%
	i)　Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	3.85%	21.15%	57.69%	8.65%	8.65%
	j)　Summer school programs	12.50%	37.50%	37.50%	6.73%	5.77%
	k)　Alternative education programs	11.43%	23.81%	54.29%	6.67%	3.81%
	l)　"English as a second language" program	7.69%	26.92%	58.65%	4.81%	1.92%
	m)　Career counseling program	6.67%	24.76%	46.67%	12.38%	9.52%
	n)　College counseling program	5.77%	25.96%	49.04%	7.69%	11.54%
	o)　Counseling the parents of students	6.80%	22.33%	36.89%	18.45%	15.53%
	p)　Drop out prevention program	3.92%	18.63%	58.82%	10.78%	7.84%
11.	Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	12.50%	30.77%	22.12%	17.31%	17.31%
12.	Teacher turnover is low.	9.71%	24.27%	36.89%	13.59%	15.53%
13.	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	15.38%	25.00%	29.81%	16.35%	13.46%
14.	A substitute teacher rarely teaches my child.	13.33%	29.52%	21.90%	21.90%	13.33%
15.	Teachers are knowledgeable in the subject areas they teach.	14.56%	53.40%	18.45%	6.80%	6.80%
16.	All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs, and art classes.	17.14%	40.00%	18.10%	13.33%	11.43%
17.	Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	29.13%	48.54%	7.77%	10.68%	3.88%
18.	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	16.35%	35.58%	32.69%	10.58%	4.81%
19.	The district provides a high quality education.	14.42%	36.54%	15.38%	19.23%	14.42%
20.	The district has a high quality of teachers.	15.53%	35.92%	21.36%	15.53%	11.65%

C. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
21. The district regularly communicates with parents.	20.39%	42.72%	5.83%	11.65%	19.42%
22. District facilities are open for community use.	12.50%	21.15%	44.23%	12.50%	9.62%
23. Schools have plenty of volunteers to help students and school programs.	8.74%	30.10%	29.13%	15.53%	16.50%

D. FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
24. Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff, and the board provide input into facility planning.	7.62%	31.43%	39.05%	16.19%	5.71%
25. Schools are clean.	19.23%	60.58%	6.73%	6.73%	6.73%
26. Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	14.42%	53.85%	20.19%	7.69%	3.85%
27. Repairs are made in a timely manner.	12.50%	29.81%	48.08%	5.77%	3.85%
28. The district uses very few portable buildings.	15.24%	49.52%	19.05%	9.52%	6.67%
29. Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	9.71%	32.04%	53.40%	1.94%	2.91%

E. ASSET AND RISK MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
30. My property tax bill is reasonable for the educational services delivered.	14.42%	26.92%	23.08%	20.19%	15.38%
31. Board members and administrators do a good job explaining the use of tax dollars.	10.68%	27.18%	36.89%	12.62%	12.62%

F. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
32. Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers.	4.76%	24.76%	60.00%	6.67%	3.81%
33. Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	5.77%	23.08%	61.54%	5.77%	3.85%
34. The district's financial reports are easy to read and understand.	5.71%	21.90%	61.90%	8.57%	1.90%
35. Financial reports are made available to community members when asked.	3.85%	19.23%	70.19%	3.85%	2.88%

G. PURCHASING AND WAREHOUSING

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
36. Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	12.75%	43.14%	14.71%	12.75%	16.67%
37. Textbooks are in good shape.	13.73%	52.94%	10.78%	11.76%	10.78%
38. The school library meets student needs for books and other resources.	16.50%	48.54%	16.50%	8.74%	9.71%

H.   FOOD SERVICES

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
39. My child regularly purchases his/her meal from the cafeteria.	31.68%	42.57%	5.94%	15.84%	3.96%
40. The school breakfast program is available to all children.	33.01%	51.46%	8.74%	4.85%	1.94%
41. The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	11.76%	33.33%	28.43%	13.73%	12.75%
42. Food is served warm.	15.69%	46.08%	22.55%	11.76%	3.92%
43. Students have enough time to eat.	9.62%	28.85%	11.54%	26.92%	23.08%
44. Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.	10.68%	51.46%	17.48%	14.56%	5.83%
45. Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	11.54%	26.92%	26.92%	15.38%	19.23%
46. Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	15.38%	47.12%	20.19%	11.54%	5.77%
47. Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	13.59%	48.54%	19.42%	9.71%	8.74%
48. Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	19.05%	54.29%	14.29%	4.76%	7.62%

I.   TRANSPORTATION

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
49. My child regularly rides the bus.	28.57%	16.33%	15.31%	17.35%	22.45%
50. The bus driver maintains discipline on the bus.	5.94%	23.76%	51.49%	10.89%	7.92%
51. The length of the student's bus ride is reasonable.	8.91%	31.68%	47.52%	4.95%	6.93%
52. The drop-off zone at the school is safe.	18.63%	45.10%	31.37%	1.96%	2.94%
53. The bus stop near my house is safe.	17.00%	34.00%	40.00%	3.00%	6.00%
54. The bus stop is within walking distance from our home.	17.82%	40.59%	38.61%	.99%	1.98%
55. Buses arrive and depart on time.	13.00%	25.00%	47.00%	6.00%	9.00%
56. Buses arrive early enough for students to eat breakfast at school.	8.00%	30.00%	49.00%	5.00%	8.00%
57. Buses seldom break down.	10.00%	30.00%	55.00%	5.00%	.00%
58. Buses are clean.	9.09%	31.31%	51.52%	6.06%	2.02%
59. Bus drivers allow students to sit down before taking off.	13.13%	26.26%	53.54%	1.01%	6.06%
60. The district has a simple method to request buses for special events.	6.00%	22.00%	68.00%	3.00%	1.00%

J.   SAFETY AND SECURITY

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
61. Students feel safe and secure at school.	17.14%	60.00%	4.76%	13.33%	4.76%
62. School disturbances are infrequent.	12.50%	50.00%	13.46%	13.46%	10.58%
63. Gangs are not a problem in this district.	17.65%	38.24%	32.35%	7.84%	3.92%
64. Drugs are not a problem in this district.	13.46%	38.46%	31.73%	10.58%	5.77%
65. Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	14.29%	40.00%	24.76%	13.33%	7.62%
66. Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	15.24%	42.86%	37.14%	3.81%	.95%
67. Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	13.46%	33.65%	37.50%	8.65%	6.73%
68. A good working arrangement exists between the local law enforcement and the district.	14.29%	43.81%	36.19%	4.76%	.95%
69. Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	13.46%	44.23%	16.35%	16.35%	9.62%
70. Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	12.75%	38.24%	31.37%	10.78%	6.86%

K. COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
71. Teachers know how to teach computer science and other technology-related courses.	14.42%	44.23%	32.69%	5.77%	2.88%
72. Computers are new enough to be useful to teach students.	15.38%	47.12%	24.04%	7.69%	5.77%
73. The district meets student needs in computer fundamentals.	11.76%	44.12%	26.47%	7.84%	9.80%
74. The district meets student needs in advanced computer skills.	8.65%	33.65%	30.77%	18.27%	8.65%
75. Students have easy access to the Internet.	9.62%	47.12%	29.81%	7.69%	5.77%

STUDENT SURVEY RESULTS

(total number = 548)

Demographic Data

Totals may not equal 100 percent due to rounding.

1.	GENDER (OPTIONAL)	MALE	FEMALE
		49.17%	50.83%

2.	ETHNICITY (OPTIONAL)	NO RESPONSE	AFRICAN AMERICAN	ANGLO	HISPANIC	ASIAN	OTHER
		0.00%	74.52%	8.69%	11.00%	0.77%	5.02%

3.	WHAT IS YOUR CLASSIFICATION?	JUNIOR	SENIOR
		53.79%	46.21%

A. EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1. The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	3.18%	25.28%	34.08%	25.28%	12.17%
2. The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	4.17%	27.65%	39.39%	20.83%	7.95%
3. The district has effective educational programs for the following:					
a) Reading	7.02%	43.44%	24.40%	17.93%	7.21%
b) Writing	9.76%	40.15%	21.76%	21.58%	6.75%
c) Mathematics	17.29%	46.10%	14.87%	12.27%	9.48%
d) Science	7.84%	40.11%	21.27%	17.91%	12.87%
e) English or Language Arts	18.88%	49.91%	17.76%	8.22%	5.23%
f) Computer Instruction	16.89%	44.47%	24.02%	9.38%	5.25%
g) Social Studies (history or geography)	13.99%	46.27%	17.35%	13.62%	8.77%
h) Fine Arts	19.93%	42.46%	24.39%	7.82%	5.40%
i) Physical Education	20.60%	36.70%	27.90%	7.87%	6.93%
j) Business Education	9.29%	33.64%	37.36%	12.45%	7.25%
k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	9.53%	32.71%	37.20%	12.90%	7.66%
l) Foreign Language	13.42%	39.13%	23.82%	13.23%	10.40%
4. The district has effective special programs for the following:					
a) Library Service	11.21%	30.65%	27.10%	20.19%	10.84%
b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	10.07%	29.10%	36.38%	14.93%	9.51%
c) Special Education	10.45%	28.17%	46.27%	8.96%	6.16%
d) Student mentoring program	5.25%	18.57%	37.90%	23.45%	14.82%
e) Advanced placement program	15.76%	36.02%	29.27%	11.82%	7.13%
f) Career counseling program	5.96%	23.84%	35.75%	20.30%	14.15%
g) College counseling program	6.10%	29.76%	29.21%	18.85%	16.08%
5. Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	9.34%	26.56%	12.45%	30.04%	21.61%
6. Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	8.97%	28.02%	25.64%	21.61%	15.75%
7. The district provides a high quality education.	3.87%	16.39%	22.47%	32.04%	25.23%
8. The district has high quality teachers.	3.50%	11.79%	22.84%	29.28%	32.60%

B.   FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
9. Schools are clean.	2.93%	10.60%	12.61%	27.24%	46.62%
10. Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	1.28%	18.50%	21.25%	29.12%	29.85%
11. Repairs are made in a timely manner.	2.21%	11.95%	21.32%	30.15%	34.38%
12. Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	3.34%	20.22%	31.91%	20.22%	24.30%

C.   PURCHASING AND WAREHOUSING

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
13. There are enough textbooks in all my classes.	3.29%	17.18%	11.33%	32.54%	35.65%
14. Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	4.22%	22.94%	18.72%	28.62%	25.50%
15. Textbooks are in good shape.	3.13%	23.16%	15.99%	28.31%	29.41%
16. The school library meets student needs for books and other resources.	9.36%	29.36%	23.12%	19.27%	18.90%

D.   FOOD SERVICES

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
17. The school breakfast program is available to all children.	8.27%	30.70%	24.08%	14.89%	22.06%
18. The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	1.29%	8.32%	14.60%	22.74%	53.05%
19. Food is served warm.	2.60%	18.00%	12.99%	25.23%	41.19%
20. Students have enough time to eat.	1.66%	3.51%	7.01%	17.34%	70.48%
21. Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.	2.75%	17.80%	14.31%	18.72%	46.42%
22. Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	10.52%	5.90%	8.12%	14.58%	60.89%
23. Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	6.41%	27.66%	20.33%	19.23%	26.37%
24. Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	6.96%	26.56%	20.70%	19.05%	26.74%
25. Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	3.14%	19.00%	28.04%	20.30%	29.52%

E.   TRANSPORTATION

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
26. I regularly ride the bus.	6.68%	16.70%	29.31%	17.63%	29.68%
27. The bus driver maintains discipline on the bus.	6.89%	12.66%	60.15%	7.64%	12.66%
28. The length of my bus ride is reasonable.	6.15%	18.62%	60.52%	6.15%	8.57%
29. The drop-off zone at the school is safe.	8.01%	22.16%	55.31%	6.33%	8.19%
30. The bus stop near my house is safe.	7.10%	19.81%	57.57%	5.61%	9.91%
31. The bus stop is within walking distance from our home.	8.61%	18.16%	57.87%	4.49%	10.86%
32. Buses arrive and depart on time.	5.22%	15.49%	58.77%	8.58%	11.94%
33. Buses arrive early enough for students to eat breakfast at school.	5.02%	17.66%	60.78%	6.51%	10.04%
34. Buses seldom break down.	5.79%	12.34%	61.68%	7.48%	12.71%
35. Buses are clean.	4.10%	12.48%	59.22%	10.06%	14.15%
36. Bus drivers allow students to sit down before taking off.	7.98%	18.92%	56.03%	6.31%	10.76%

F. SAFETY AND SECURITY

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
37. I feel safe and secure at school.	5.87%	26.79%	23.67%	20.55%	23.12%
38. School disturbances are infrequent.	4.80%	20.11%	30.07%	24.17%	20.85%
39. Gangs are not a problem in this district.	12.52%	17.13%	25.23%	18.60%	26.52%
40. Drugs are not a problem in this district.	7.52%	13.58%	25.87%	20.18%	32.84%
41. Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	4.58%	16.67%	28.39%	24.18%	26.19%
42. Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	7.62%	26.77%	42.01%	10.59%	13.01%
43. Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	5.57%	20.59%	33.40%	19.29%	21.15%
44. A good working arrangement exists between the local law enforcement and the district.	6.26%	20.44%	49.91%	10.68%	12.71%
45. Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	2.78%	13.17%	32.65%	20.04%	31.35%
46. Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	2.78%	12.43%	38.78%	22.45%	23.56%

G. COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
47. Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	4.60%	20.59%	18.20%	28.13%	28.49%
48. Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	9.94%	37.75%	25.97%	14.00%	12.34%
49. Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	7.38%	31.37%	25.83%	16.61%	18.82%
50. The district offers enough classes in computer fundamentals.	5.52%	28.91%	32.23%	17.68%	15.65%
51. The district meets student needs in advanced computer skills.	5.71%	24.68%	36.65%	15.29%	17.68%
52. Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	9.36%	30.64%	21.65%	19.63%	18.72%