Wharton Independent School District

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

October 16, 2006

Mr. Don Hillis
Superintendent, Wharton Independent School District
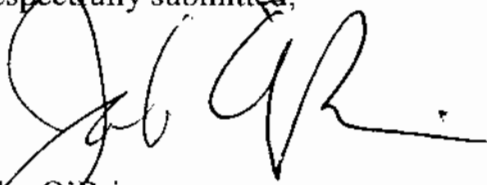
Dear Mr. Hillis:

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

The report's recommendations will help WISD 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 WISD.

The staff of the Legislative Budget Board appreciates the cooperation and assistance that your staff and WCL ENTERPRISES 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: Don Erdelt   Billy Bahnsen
        Marc Aaronson   Ronnie Bollom
        Hazel Hurd   Paul Fertsch
                                Gary Ward

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Wharton Independent School District's (WISD's) school review report noted seven commendable practices and made 54 recommendations for improvement. The following is a summary of the most significant accomplishments, findings, and recommendations resulting from the review. A copy of the full report is available at www.lbb.state.tx.us.

SIGNIFICANT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- The WISD Technology Department keeps the number of technology support staff low by using remote management software, while improving its turnaround time for repairs. The software provides the technology staff access to all district computers remotely, saving the district in personnel and time to assist the end user who is having technical problems.

- WISD partners effectively with local businesses and organizations such as Wharton County Junior College (WCJC), the Boys and Girls Club, the local newspaper, and the Gulf Coast Medical Foundation for donations of funds, goods, and services for many campus activities. The education of WISD students is greatly enhanced through these partnerships.

SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS

- WISD's instructional organization does not provide unified management of the district's educational services for all students.

- WISD's accounting processes lack internal controls ensuring proper check and balance procedures safeguard its assets.

- WISD waits until actual expenditures have been posted at year-end before approving budget amendments.

- Within a shared service arrangement (SSA) with two other districts, WISD is using its operating funds to pay a significantly higher portion for costs that support services to other member districts' students.

- WISD does not enforce its interlocal agreement with Wharton County which requires the county to deposit tax receipts daily.

- WISD uses funds from the general operating budget to pay federal and state program expenditures without requesting reimbursements from TEA in a timely manner.

- WISD lacks procedures to ensure hourly employees are compensated for overtime each pay period.

- WISD's superintendent has not established a formal process for routine communication with administrative staff and principals.

- The WISD Board of Trustees lacks operating procedures to supplement legal and local board policies pertaining to board member authority, board meetings, and related board operating routines and guidelines.

- WISD lacks a process for the timely update of local board policies.

- WISD is not ensuring that the Personnel and Public Relations Department serves as the clearinghouse for all new district employees.

SIGNIFICANT RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation: Revise the district's organizational structure to consolidate all the functions associated with student instruction under the assistant superintendent for Instruction. WISD's instructional organization does not provide unified management of the district's educational services for all students. WISD's instructional organization includes separate direct reports to the superintendent by the positions responsible for mainstream curriculum development (assistant superintendent for Instruction), special population instructional programs (director of Federal Programs), and integration of classroom technology (director of Technology). Resulting problems include: no formal monitoring of classroom instruction to ensure consistency of implementation of the new standard curriculum; no designated position at the district level to coordinate and monitor guidance and counseling activities uniformly throughout the district, leaving each school to determine how a counselor is used and what services to offer its students; the coordination of technology staff development training for teachers, and the development, coordination, and evaluation of the WISD

technology plan are activities performed solely by the director of Technology, with no input from the assistant superintendent for Instruction; and the separate development of instructional objectives for regular and special education student populations, which results in the overlap of staff roles and responsibilities in the delivery of educational services to district students, as well as duplication of labor. To promote coordination of efforts for instructional activities, the district should revise its organizational structure to consolidate all the functions associated with instruction under the assistant superintendent for Instruction. The recommended instructional organization maintains all functions associated with the directors of Federal Programs and Technology, but revises their reporting responsibility to the assistant superintendent for Instruction rather than the superintendent. This reorganization also creates a full-time Curriculum Management coordinator position and a part-time Gifted and Talented coordinator position, and designates one of the current counselors as a lead counselor. This will improve the ability of WISD administrators to set cohesive educational priorities and provide position responsibility to coordinate and monitor gifted and talented programs, standard curriculum implementation, and guidance and counseling activities uniformly throughout the district. The organizational revision will also create a more effective instructional environment for all WISD students and allow for operational efficiencies in carrying out strategies developed to meet WISD's student achievement goals and objectives.

Recommendation: Review job descriptions and the job duties of Finance Department staff and develop procedures to segregate responsibilities involving the district's purchasing, invoicing, accounts payable, and bank reconciliation functions. WISD's accounting processes lack internal controls ensuring proper check and balance procedures safeguard its assets. Eight different employees: five campus secretaries, the Health coordinator, the superintendent's secretary, and the bookkeeper/accounts payable clerk all reconcile bank statements monthly. These same employees also write checks and make deposits to these accounts, sometimes involving cash. The campus secretaries and principals are responsible for signing the checks while also maintaining reconciliation of the accounts. Resulting internal controls issues include: checks from certain accounts are written and signed by the same position(s), reconciliation of bank statements occurs by the same positions that write checks and make deposits for these same accounts, and no detailed review of accounts payable records occurs. Due to the lack of internal controls, the accounting functions in

WISD do not have a process allowing for proper segregation of duties which could result in improper payments to vendors, as well as the misuse of district funds. The Business manager should review job descriptions and the job duties of the Finance Department staff and develop procedures to segregate responsibilities involving the purchasing, invoicing, accounts payable, and bank reconciliation functions. These procedures should ensure proper controls for balancing accounts payable and for segregating duties in the Finance Department, as well as the reconciliation of bank statements by someone outside of the accounts payable process.

Recommendation: Comply with Texas Education Agency (TEA) requirements for budget amendments. WISD waits until actual expenditures have been posted at year-end before approving budget amendments. For 2004–05, the district did not approve all amendments to the budget until the October 2005 school board meeting, which was after the close of the district's fiscal year on August 31, 2005. The largest amendment presented at this meeting was in plant maintenance for $498,350 for flood-related expenses, and many of the other budget amendments presented during this meeting covered functional deficits. All amendments were posted to the general ledger prior to board approval rather than after board approval as required by TEA accounting guidelines. According to the *Financial Accountability System Resource Guide (FASRG)* §2.6.2, school districts must amend the official budget before exceeding a functional expenditure category such as instruction, administration, food service, or plant maintenance in the total budget. WISD's budget approval delay by the Board of Trustees until after the fiscal year ends results in the district being noncompliant with TEA requirements for budget amendments. WISD should comply with TEA requirements for budget amendments. The district should amend the budget based on the best estimate of expenditures before the close of the fiscal year, rather than waiting until actual expenditures have posted. Additionally, the district should present all amendments to the board before posting them to the general ledger.

Recommendation: Develop a shared services arrangement (SSA) budget inclusive of all costs associated with the services to special education students to ensure that all member districts are paying their full share of services. Within a SSA with two other districts, WISD is using its operating funds to pay a significantly higher portion for costs that support services to other member districts' students. The East Wharton County Special Instructional Services Cooperative (EWCSISC) is a SSA between WISD, Boling

ISD, and East Bernard ISD for the sole purpose of providing assessments and related services for students residing in these three districts who are eligible for services under each district's special education programs. Wharton ISD serves as the fiscal agent for the SSA, and as such is responsible for the general financial and personnel management responsibilities of the SSA, and for ensuring that funds are used in accordance with grant provisions. Prior to 2004–05, WISD used district funds to cover the annual salary and benefits of SSA employees that should have been included in the SSA budget. Currently, WISD bears other costs which total approximately $69,000 on an annual basis that are not allocated among the other EWCSISC member districts, including: facilities rent, utilities costs for administrative offices, the costs of WISD's technology staff repairing computers and other devices, and the cost of the annual financial audit. As a result of not having a system to properly distribute SSA costs across all member districts, WISD is paying for services for students of member districts without reimbursement. WISD should develop a SSA budget inclusive of all costs associated with the services to special education students to ensure that all member districts are paying their full share of services. The WISD Business manager and superintendent should present the budget to the management board of the EWCSISC for approval. Each year, the Business manager should review the budget to ensure that additional costs are included as they occur. WISD should invoice and receive funds from the member districts monthly.

Recommendation: Require the county to disburse funds to the district daily according to the requirements of the interlocal agreement to ensure the maximization of interest earnings. WISD does not enforce its interlocal agreement with Wharton County which requires the county to deposit tax receipts daily. The county collects taxes and deposits the receipts into its bank account daily. The funds remain in the county's bank account until the county processes a report and determines the amount in the account that is owed to the district. A check is then written to WISD for the share of tax collections designated for the district. Both the county and the district bank with the same local depository. According to the interlocal agreement, the county agrees to make tax payments to the district on a daily basis unless an alternative is approved WISD. Despite this stipulation, the county at times combines as many as 26 days of deposits into one disbursement to the district, as the interlocal agreement does not set a dollar threshold that requires disbursements be written; this decision is made by the county. When these funds are not received daily from the

county, the district's investment opportunities are minimized. This also results in difficulties in budget management. The Business manager and superintendent should meet with the county tax collector to review the interlocal agreement and the history of the district's tax collections, and should revise the agreement as necessary. Upon the revision and reauthorization of the interlocal agreement, the superintendent and county tax collector should sign and date the agreement, and it should be maintained on file with both entities. Additionally, since the district and county use the same bank, the district should consider adding to the agreement that the county deposit the daily disbursements directly.

Recommendation: Develop and implement a procedure for federal and state grant reimbursement ensuring that the district both requests and receives funds from TEA in a timely manner. WISD uses funds from the general operating budget to pay federal and state program expenditures without requesting reimbursements from TEA in a timely manner. The bookkeeper/accounts payable clerk is responsible for filing reimbursement requests with TEA for grant funds. For 2004–05, the district completed no reimbursement requests for September, October, January, April, and June. The district's general operating fund covered all expenditures until the receipt of grant funds from TEA. As a result of using general operating budget funds to pay federal and state program expenditures and not requesting reimbursements in a timely manner, the district is losing investment opportunities for the general fund. WISD should develop and implement a procedure for federal and state grant reimbursement ensuring the district both requests and receives funds from TEA in a timely manner. The Business manager should create a calendar for federal fund reimbursement requests. The district should submit reimbursement requests three days before a payroll cycle. The Business manager should review reports on a monthly basis, verifying that the district received the funds in a timely manner.

Recommendation: Develop procedures to properly compensate employees who have both a full-time and an additional part-time job with the district. WISD lacks procedures to ensure hourly employees are compensated for overtime each pay period. WISD currently employs a number of bus drivers and monitors who also hold nonexempt full-time positions elsewhere in the district. Bus driver and monitor pay is determined by averaging the drive/ride time for each route during the first week of school; these average minutes are then factored into the final pay amount of $0.20

per minute for drivers and $0.15 per minute for monitors. These amounts are given to the payroll clerk to calculate the rate of pay for each employee. The calculation is made once a year and rests on the assumption that the employees' work schedules never vary. Adjustments, if needed, are made only once a semester. As a result, overtime pay does not accurately reflect the actual time worked on a week-to-week basis in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) for employees who have two jobs in the district. The director of Personnel and Public Relations should coordinate with the Business manager to develop procedures to properly compensate employees who have both a full-time and an additional part-time job with the district. The procedures should include a method for calculating pay for each workweek; the compensation owed should be paid each pay period.

Recommendation: Establish a process to create routine internal communications among administrative staff and campus administrators. WISD's superintendent has not established a formal process for routine communication with administrative staff and principals. WISD administrative staff includes the assistant superintendent for Instruction, the director of Federal Programs, the Business manager, the director of Personnel and Public Relations, the director of Auxiliary Services, and the director of Technology. Based on interviews with the administrative staff, the superintendent meets with them irregularly in informal one-on-one sessions with no formal agenda. Similarly, interviews with principals indicated that there are no regularly scheduled meetings with the superintendent and campus administrators. Results of the lack of internal communications include: district nurses were not aware of new statutory requirements regarding students with diabetes that went into effect in June 2005, and the WISD administrative staff consistently exhibited a general lack of knowledge concerning the location of, and positions responsible for, needed information requested by the review team during on-site work. For example, staff was unaware of what district position is responsible for the coordination of community use of district facilities. The lack of planned and routine communications between the superintendent, administrative staff, and principals can result in district employees feeling frustration, experiencing job dissatisfaction, and being unable to perform their jobs effectively. A process that creates routine internal communications among administrative staff and campus administrators should be established, and should include formal, scheduled meetings with the superintendent and administrative staff and include a standard agenda. Meetings

with campus administrators should be routine and held on a monthly basis. In addition, an internal electronic newsletter published every other month could be helpful in establishing an effective internal communications process and open lines of communication between teachers and the superintendent/administrative staff.

Recommendation: Establish board operating procedures to govern board members individually and collectively. The WISD Board of Trustees lacks operating procedures to supplement legal and local board policies pertaining to board member authority, board meetings, and related board operating routines and guidelines. Interviews with board members and the superintendent indicated that in the past few years, the board has experienced operations problems between and among the superintendent and certain board members that caused disruption of both the board meeting process and administrative activities. Examples include: large volume of information requests by a board member to the WISD administrative staff, complaints lodged by a board member to state agencies when information or operating procedures appeared to be in question, receipt by the superintendent of communications from state agencies directing certain actions based on board member complaints, a meeting with teachers and community members conducted by one board member without the prior consent of the board, and the submission by a board member of a letter to the editor of the local newspaper, without the knowledge of the other board members, which urged citizens to vote against the February 2006 bond issue. While WISD does have formal legal and local board policies in place pertaining to these problems, the lack of defined operating procedures for board members to follow in performing their fiduciary responsibilities as members of the district's governing body results in disruption of the governance function at both the board and administrative levels of the district. The board and superintendent should work together in a workshop setting to develop board operating procedures. After the completion of the development process, the board and superintendent should review board policies affected by the new procedures, updating these policies as necessary.

Recommendation: Implement a process for the timely update of local board policies. WISD lacks a process for the timely update of local board policies. Policy BF (LOCAL) requires WISD to have board-adopted written policies available and accessible to staff members, parents, students, and community residents. These include legal policies which contain provisions from federal and state statutes and

regulations, case law, and other legal authority that together form the framework for local decision making and implementation, and local policies that are specific to WISD, but within legal guidelines. The review team found that a number of local board policies did not reflect actual practice. For example, Policy BQA (LOCAL) requires the district-level planning committee to meet at least six times per year, but WISD administrators reported that the committee meets only twice per year, once in the fall and once in the spring; the district last updated this policy in September 1996. A review of the district's Online Policy Manual revealed that of WISD's 163 local board policies, the district has not updated almost 40 percent or 62 local board policies since 2000 or earlier. Some of these local policies were adopted by the district in the 1980s with one policy dated April 1980. As a result of not having a process for the timely update of local board policies, WISD is not keeping its local policies up-to-date with changes in district practices and statutory requirements. The superintendent should select a local policy review committee, which consists of members of the district's administrative staff and campus administrators, to update the local board policies every three years.

Recommendation: Implement a consistent hiring process. WISD is not ensuring that the Personnel and Public Relations Department serves as the clearinghouse for all new district employees. Resulting problems include a lack of knowledge by the Personnel and Public Relations Department regarding district and campus job vacancies and out-of-date job listings located on the district website. An example of these problems occurred when the director of Federal Programs filled a vacant position in the Special Programs Department, and the Personnel and Public Relations Department received notification of the new hire only after the employee had been offered a position, and in some cases after the employee had actually begun working. Of additional concern is the lack of certainty that in situations such as the one described with the Special Programs Department, certification issues for paraprofessional or teacher positions are being addressed as stipulated in TEC §21.003, or that proper documentation such as the district application, I-9 information, and/or service records are being secured for the personnel folder. As a result of the current hiring practices in WISD, the Personnel and Public Relations Department does not have an opportunity to serve as the central administrative point for all district new hires. Thus, positions are filled that the Personnel and Public Relations Department did not know were vacant or had been filled. The Personnel and Public Relations Department should develop a hiring process that is

inclusive and involves a committee of stakeholders to interact with the applicant. To ensure continuity in the hiring process and that personnel laws and policies are being addressed, the Personnel and Public Relations Department should be the only department with the authority to offer positions to prospective applicants.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- WISD is located in Wharton County, approximately 50 miles southwest of Houston and 70 miles north of Victoria on U.S. Highway 59, and includes 180 square miles.

- WISD's student enrollment of 2,398 has seen a decrease of nearly 8 percent in recent years. The student population is relatively diverse, with 42.3 percent Hispanic, 30.4 percent African American, 25.9 percent Anglo, 1.1 percent Asian, and less than 1 percent Native American, with a large population of economically disadvantaged students (69.4 percent).

- The superintendent is Mr. Don Hillis, who has served the district in that capacity since 1997. Mr. Hillis served the district in a variety of positions before becoming superintendent, including teacher; assistant principal, and principal of Wharton High School; and director of Auxiliary Services.

- Out of the total of 401.5 full-time equivalent staff, 178.3 are teachers.

- Overall, WISD at 53 percent passing is 9 points behind the state average of 62 percent passing on all Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills tests taken for 2004–05.

- TEA rated the district *Academically Acceptable* in both 2004–05 and 2005–06. The 2005 Adequate Yearly Progress data shows that the district and all campuses *Met Adequate Yearly Progress* for 2005. Preliminary 2006 AYP results indicate that both the district and Wharton High School *Missed Adequate Yearly Progress*. Of the four remaining campuses, one is not rated, and the other three all *Met Adequate Yearly Progress*.

- WISD's School FIRST (Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas) Rating is *Superior Achievement*.

- Regional Education Service Center III in Victoria serves the district by providing board training and staff development.

- As of October 2006, the legislators for WISD are Senator Kenneth Armbrister and Representative Glenn Hegar.

- In February 2006, WISD voters passed a $25.9 million bond referendum to build a new elementary school to replace the Dawson and Hopper elementary campuses. Dawson is within the 100-year flood plain and has flooded twice since 1998; Hopper, built in 1936, would cost more to repair than to replace. The new campus will be completed by the start of the 2008–09 school year, and will result in a realignment of school grade levels. Sivells will become the new pre-K–1 campus, students in grades 2–5 will attend the new elementary, and sixth graders will join the seventh and eighth graders at Wharton Junior High.

SCHOOLS

- Hopper Elementary (pre-K–K)

- Sivells Elementary (1–3)

- Dawson Elementary (4–6)

- Wharton Junior High (7–8)

- Wharton High School (9–12)

- Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (7–12)

FINANCIAL DATA

- Total actual 2004–05 expenditures: $19.2 million

- Fund balance: 16.5 percent, or $2.6 million of 2004–05 total budgeted expenditures

- 2004 Tax Rate: $1.50 ($1.50 Maintenance and Operations)

The chapters that follow contain a summary of the district's accomplishments, findings, and numbered recommendations. Detailed explanations for accomplishments and recommendations follow the summary and include fiscal impacts.

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 2006–07 through 2010–11.

Following the chapters are the appendices that contain general information and the results from the district surveys conducted by the review team.

The table below summarizes the fiscal implications of all 54 recommendations contained in the report.

FISCAL IMPACT

	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09	2009–10	2010–11	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) SAVINGS	ONE-TIME (COSTS) SAVINGS
Gross Savings	$14,599	$67,982	$105,939	$105,939	$105,939	$400,398	$0
Gross Costs	($2,869)	($252,148)	($190,803)	($192,693)	($192,603)	($831,116)	($52,236)
Total	**$11,730**	**($184,166)**	**($84,864)**	**($86,754)**	**($86,664)**	**($430,718)**	**($52,236)**

CHAPTER 1

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND SAFETY/SECURITY OPERATIONS

WHARTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

CHAPTER 1. EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND SAFETY/SECURITY OPERATIONS

The purpose of any school system is to educate children. Texas school districts are challenged with providing instructional services in the most cost-effective and productive manner possible. Effective and efficient programs and a well-designed instructional program determine how well a district meets its goal of educating children. Student performance on standardized tests, subject matter mastery, and fluctuating student enrollment affect the district's program offerings, new program development, and modification of existing programs, in addition to all other services provided by a district.

The Wharton Independent School District (WISD) is located in Wharton County, approximately 50 miles southwest of Houston and 70 miles north of Victoria along United States Highway 59. Students are predominantly Hispanic, comprising 42.3 percent of the total student enrollment, with 30.4 percent African American, 25.9 percent Anglo, 1.1 percent Asian American, and less than 1 percent Native American; 69.4 percent of the students are economically disadvantaged, and 6.5 percent are English Language Learners (ELL). The district is a part of Regional Education Service Center III (Region 3) located in Victoria.

WISD had an enrollment of 2,398 students in 2005–06. There are five schools in the district: Wharton High School (grades 9–12); Wharton Junior High (grades 7–8); Dawson Elementary School (grades 4–6); Sivells Elementary School (grades 1–3) and Hopper Elementary School (pre-kindergarten and kindergarten).

WISD received an *Academically Acceptable* rating for 2005–06 from the Texas Education Agency (TEA). Of its five campuses, one received a *Recognized* rating, three received an *Academically Acceptable* rating, and Hopper Elementary was not rated because it only serves grades pre-kindergarten and kindergarten. WISD averages 150 student graduates annually, and 80 percent of Wharton students attend college after graduation.

Under the accountability provisions in the No Child Left Behind Act, all public school campuses, school districts, and the state are evaluated for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). Preliminary 2006 AYP data results indicate that both the district and Wharton High School *Missed AYP*. Of the four remaining campuses, one is not rated, and the other three all *Met AYP*.

In a safe district, schools identify potential threats or hazards and have mechanisms to respond as necessary. Some districts employ police departments to assist in the security of the district and its stakeholders and use security equipment to monitor potential security hazards. Other districts use contract officers or district staff to implement safety and security measures.

WISD uses both the Wharton County Sheriff's Office and the city of Wharton Police Department for its security needs. The 911 dispatcher serves as the contact point for the district, and makes contact with the appropriate department. Off-duty officers provide security at sports events. A Wharton city police Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) officer works in the district daily from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. in tandem with the school hours. The city bills the district $38,000 for the D.A.R.E. officer. Of that amount, the district pays 89.9 percent, and Region 3 pays 10.1 percent from their Title IV, Part A Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities shared services arrangement. All WISD schools use the D.A.R.E. officer, but the officer spends the majority of the time at Dawson Elementary School, as that is the targeted age for the D.A.R.E. program.

The district had a contract with Inter-quest Detection Canines for 2005–06 for five visits at $200 each, providing 10 one-half day visits to the district for contraband inspection services using nonaggressive contraband detection canines. The inspections may be unannounced, and target communal areas, lockers, gym areas, automobiles, grounds, and other areas as requested by the district. A handheld metal detector used during inspections can identify knives, weapons, and other prohibited objects. Initial campus inspections during fall 2005 did not reveal any drug-related substances.

WISD has a separate Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP) facility and an In-School Suspension (ISS) Program at each campus, but lacks an Alternative Education Program (AEP) or formal arrangement for the provision of a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program.

ACCOMPLISHMENT
- WISD's DAEP uses an array of activities, programs, and incentives to encourage behavior modification and academic progress in students assigned to the program.

FINDINGS

- WISD's instructional organization does not provide unified management of the district's educational services for all students.

- WISD lacks a curriculum management plan focused on improving student performance and ensuring curriculum delivery consistency across campuses and grade levels.

- WISD does not staff its libraries based on a defined staffing methodology, and is not consistent with the Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC) recommended standards.

- WISD does not provide district-level coordination of the guidance and counseling program.

- WISD lacks curriculum guides for counselor use to define and direct the instructional program.

- WISD does not require the development of an Individualized Health Plan (IHP) for diabetic students.

- WISD does not regularly update its Heath Services Procedural Manual to reflect changes in state requirements.

- WISD lacks a centralized process to determine how schools spend state compensatory education (SCE) funding.

- WISD does not enforce, monitor, and consistently train staff on campus access security procedures.

- WISD has not reviewed its high school open campus policy with all district stakeholders to determine if the policy creates any safety issues.

- There is conflicting information and perceptions in WISD regarding the issue of bullying, its accurate reporting and recording at the junior high school and high school levels, and the existing prevention measures to address it.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Recommendation 1: Revise the district's organizational structure to consolidate all the functions associated with student instruction under the assistant superintendent for Instruction.** The recommended instructional organization maintains all functions associated with the directors of Federal Programs and Technology, but moves their reporting responsibility to the assistant superintendent for Instruction rather than the superintendent, allowing the district to achieve unified management of WISD's educational services for all students. This organization structure also creates a full-time Curriculum Management coordinator position and a part-time G/T coordinator position, and designates one of the current counselors as lead counselor for the district.

- **Recommendation 2: Develop, adopt, and implement a comprehensive curriculum management plan that includes board policies and administrative regulations to direct curriculum delivery and management across the district.** Once a plan is developed, it will provide the framework for formal implementation and evaluation of curriculum documents to ensure vertical and horizontal alignment throughout the system. WISD should focus on developing this plan in an effort to have a cohesive, aligned instructional program, and increase student performance across the district.

- **Recommendation 3: Ensure that all campus libraries maintain appropriate staffing levels in accordance with TSLAC guidelines.** The district should redistribute library paraprofessionals across the district to ensure that all campuses are meeting the TSLAC *Acceptable* standard. This requires creating an additional half-time library paraprofessional position for 2007–08. The district should also create an additional librarian position for Hopper Elementary for 2007–08, as well as an additional half-time library paraprofessional position for 2008–09 through 2010–11.

- **Recommendation 4: Designate a lead counselor to coordinate the guidance and counseling program.** Using the program model and standards established by TEA, the lead counselor should work directly with each counselor to evaluate current practices, determine areas of need, and develop improvement plans for each campus. WISD should schedule regular meetings with all district counselors to discuss issues, align program components, and develop consistency among the campuses in programs, activities, and services. Once the initial program alignment stages are completed, the lead counselor should establish regular meetings with counselors, district administrators, and other school staff to ensure program enhancements and consistency among campuses continues.

- **Recommendation 5: Develop comprehensive curriculum guides including scope and sequence to define and direct instruction for the guidance and counseling programs for elementary and secondary students.** The assistant superintendent for Instruction and the district counseling staff should follow the guidance curriculum recommendations outlined in the TEA publication: *A Model Developmental Guidance and Counseling Program for Texas Public Schools: A Guide for Program Development Pre-K–12th Grade*, to create curriculum documents. The curriculum guides should include planned lessons covering the recommended seven curriculum content areas. Counselors should include student competencies as the basic framework for curriculum development, and define student expectations and counseling objectives for WISD students. School counselors can teach all or some of the curriculum through direct instruction, or can consult with teachers who can integrate the curriculum into the classroom. Counselors should design instruction activities and lessons for classroom guidance programs and other counseling groups and programs using the newly developed guides.

- **Recommendation 6: Communicate the requirements of Health and Safety Code, Chapter 168 to school district staff to ensure compliance with the statute.** The district should develop an IHP for all WISD diabetic students. The Health coordinator should provide information and training related to the development of IHPs for all district nurses. Each campus nurse should develop a system of documentation of IHPs from year to year, and ensure that teachers receive updated information regarding their student's IHPs each year.

- **Recommendation 7: Develop a process to regularly review and update the health services manual.** The assistant superintendent for Instruction and the Health coordinator should contact Region 3 and TASB after each legislative session to identify any changes that may affect current district health procedures. The supervisor should then determine if any training and/or procedures changes are required.

- **Recommendation 8: Assign the responsibility of central oversight for the use of SCE funding and compliance with program guidelines to the Special Programs Department.** This responsibility can be accomplished with the staff that currently works on Title I funding and related compliance. The Special Programs Department should evaluate opportunities for the use of SCE funds to supplement Title I funding at the district's five Title I schoolwide campuses. This will provide enhanced supplemental programs to all district students.

- **Recommendation 9: Control access to district schools by consistently requiring all campuses to adhere to written security procedures.** These include clearly identifying one main entrance, locking outside doors, requiring visitors to sign in and get a badge, and regularly training all personnel to be diligent in noticing and addressing strangers wandering through the building.

- **Recommendation 10: Engage all stakeholders to review the high school open campus policy.** The district's Board of Trustees should appoint a committee comprised of WISD students, parents, and staff, as well as Wharton community members and business owners to conduct the review process. As part of its work, the committee should survey the community about issues related to an open or closed campus, and hold a community forum where stakeholders can share their opinions and concerns about the issue. By engaging all stakeholders in this review, WISD can decide whether it is in the best interest of the students and community to limit the number of students who leave campus during the school day.

- **Recommendation 11: Create an advisory team to address bullying.** The team should consist of counselors, teachers, and parents; its purpose should be to evaluate the degree of bullying at the junior high school and high school campuses, determine if schools are reporting and recording incidents accurately, and select appropriate programs to address the specific issues.

DETAILED ACCOMPLISHMENT

DISCIPLINARY ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM

WISD's DAEP uses an array of activities, programs, and incentives to encourage behavior modification and academic progress in students assigned to the program.

WISD's DAEP is located in a building next to the junior high school. According to the DAEP director, the district remodeled the building to facilitate a better learning environment, including removing walls to create larger

learning spaces. There is also a computer lab at the facility, with the capacity for 31 computers.

Regular education students assigned to the DAEP must spend a minimum of 30 days in the program; the minimum for special education students is 20 days.

Students may either drive to the DAEP facility or ride a district bus. Each student receives a program-specific handbook at the time of program entry.

Students are required to receive instruction in 4 to 7 subjects a day, with subject modifications as appropriate. Most of the special education students do not receive a schedule change as required by federal law, so the DAEP is required to teach electives such as Physical Education (PE) and Shop.

The DAEP director is responsible for creating prevention and intervention programs for students transitioning back to their home campuses, completing attendance reports for principals, budgeting for the DAEP, supervising and training teachers at the DAEP and other campuses, student discipline, parent issues, and juvenile probation.

According to the director, the students assigned to the DAEP often have little or no self-esteem, and lack a true understanding of why they have been assigned to the program. Therefore, when a student is assigned to the program, the director conducts an orientation with the parents and the student to attempt to build a relationship.

To keep these students academically motivated and interested in addressing and correcting their behavior issues, the DAEP staff develops programs and activities that attempt to make learning fun, and to address the issues students bring with them to the program. The staff continually monitors students' academic progress and gauges their ability to be responsible for themselves. Among the programs that the DAEP offers, or has offered, are the following:

- Adults Make the Rules so Make the Adults Love You program - teaches students how to work within a system of adults; targets misunderstood students.

- Life's Lessons - a character education program. The day starts with an emotional and thought provoking prompt during which students have 10–15 minutes to write a response. Students then read and discuss their own responses and emotional thought processes related to the prompt.

- Texana Star Counseling - a student counseling and parent-coaching program held at the DAEP facility.

- Ropes Challenge Team Course - Located in Sugar Land, the course is designed to help instill leadership and trust characteristics in the students.

- Counsel on Substance Abuse (COSA) and Sandstone - A drug counseling prevention and treatment program initiated in response to student placement in the DAEP for drug activity. The program started with COSA, and serves to bring parents and students together to work together as families to fight the drug issue. When COSA dissolved in 2004, WISD contracted with a private group, Sandstone, to continue the same services. The program is funded by a five-year, $5 million grant from the Texas Association on Drugs and Alcohol.

The DAEP director believes that students who prove they are able to make good choices by being at school, that is, good behavior and grades, deserve to be rewarded for showing that they understand how they got to the DAEP and how to fix the problem in the future. The DAEP staff therefore designed a series of incentives for students that make good choices, including:

- one hour out to the football field or basketball court on Fridays;

- free computer time during the school day;

- special-order lunch;

- movie day once every six-weeks grading period;

- choosing a seat in class; and

- opportunities at the Morning Glory Ranch (MGR) Outdoor Education and Equine Therapy Facility.

  MGR provides two kinds of opportunities for DAEP students:

  o Equine therapy activities - to instill a sense of self-esteem and to enhance communication skills for those students who must perform court-ordered community service. Students also perform ranch duties, care for animals, clean the grounds, and repair stalls; and

  o Vocational opportunities - to accomplish graduation requirements for special education students.

DETAILED FINDINGS

INSTRUCTIONAL ORGANIZATION (REC. 1)

WISD's instructional organization does not provide unified management of the district's educational services for all students.

WISD's instructional organization includes separate direct reports to the superintendent by the positions responsible for mainstream curriculum development, special population instructional programs, and integration of classroom technology **(Exhibit 1-1)**.

The assistant superintendent for Instruction is the only position at the central office assigned the responsibility of providing leadership for the overall WISD instructional program. The assistant superintendent's major responsibilities and duties include directing the implementation of the state-mandated curriculum, Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), districtwide; serving as a resource to teachers and administrators for curriculum development, effective teaching practices, program enhancements and any other area of instruction needing assistance; as well as serving as the district coordinator for the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), State Developed Alternative Assessment (SDAA), Locally Developed Alternative Assessment (LDAA), the Reading Proficiency Test of English (RPTE), and training all campus coordinators in these areas annually. Additional responsibilities include:

- directing the development, coordination, and evaluation of the district improvement plan;

- coordinating the staff development program for the district for administrators and teachers;

- administering selected federal programs;

EXHIBIT 1-1
WISD INSTRUCTIONAL ORGANIZATION
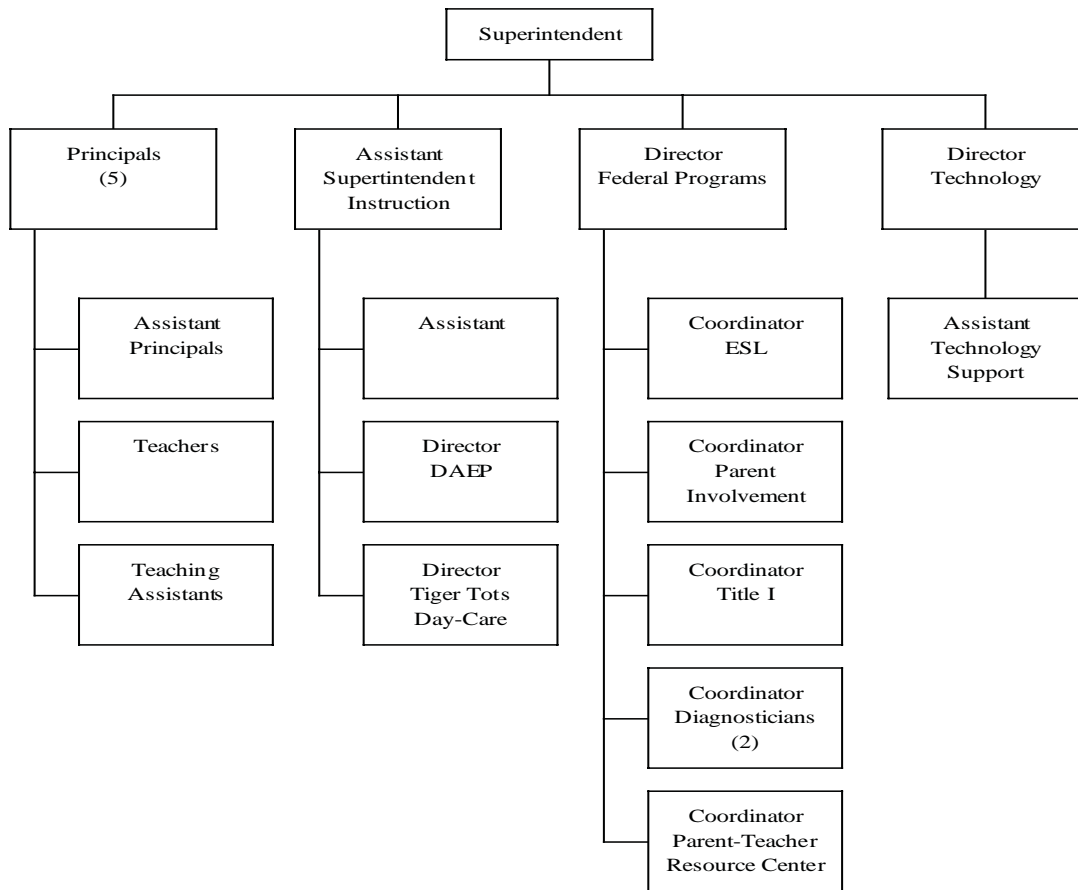
SOURCE: WISD assistant superintendent for Instruction, November 2005.

- administering selected state-funded programs;

- writing grant applications to competitive grant sources and administering the grants awarded;

- administering the operation of the DAEP;

- administering the operation of the Tiger Tots day-care center at Wharton High School;

- overseeing the counseling program;

- overseeing the nursing program;

- coordinating and directing the annual adoption of textbooks;

- assisting in the coordination, design, and evaluation of the district G/T program;

- serving as the district coordinator for the Dual and Concurrent Enrollment course offerings through Wharton County Junior College;

- coordinating the district Credit By Exam program; and

- assisting in interviewing and recruiting teachers and administrators.

WISD implemented a standard curriculum in 2005–06, developed and maintained by Regional Education Service Center V (Region 5), and tied to national and state learning objectives. According to the assistant superintendent, implementation of the new Region 5 standard curriculum was voluntary for campuses in 2005–06, but is mandatory beginning in 2006–07. The assistant superintendent also implemented Regional Education Service Center X's (Region 10) Web-accessed Comprehensive Curriculum Assessment Tool (WebCCAT) districtwide.

The director of Federal Programs, as head of the Special Programs Department, coordinates programs for special education students in WISD. This position is also in charge of the East Wharton County Special Instructional Services Cooperative (EWCSISC), for which WISD is the fiscal agent. Other members of the EWCSISC include neighboring school districts East Bernard ISD and Boling ISD. The director is primarily responsible for special education administration for the district and the EWCSISC. As part of this responsibility, the director coordinates the operation and compliance of the following programs for both WISD and the EWCSISC:

- federal and state-funded special education programs, including 504 programs;

- all Title I programs;

- all Title III Bilingual and ESL programs;

- federally-funded vocational education programs; and

- the state supplemental visually impaired program.

The director collaborates with district staff and outside personnel to formulate, develop, implement, and evaluate federal and special programs. This includes responsibility for EWCSISC's special education program to ensure special needs students receive needed services. Coordination of these programs include providing individualized education programs (IEPs) to meet the needs of all students, and ensuring program compliance with all state, federal, and local requirements.

Exhibit 1-2 shows the major responsibilities of the director of Federal Programs by area.

The director of Technology is responsible for all of WISD's educational and administrative technology functions. The director is the technology leader of the district. Major responsibilities and duties include:

- developing a technology budget;

- providing assistance to teachers as they integrate technology into their curriculum;

- coordinating technology staff development training for teachers and all departments;

- developing, coordinating, and evaluating the WISD technology plan;

- supervising and approving all technology purchases, including hardware and software;

- overseeing file maintenance, network repair, computer equipment, and the district website; and

- assisting in developing policies and procedures regarding technology issues.

Three different departments are presently performing WISD curriculum and staff development functions: Instruction, Special Programs, and Technology. Interviews with the assistant superintendent for Instruction indicated a feeling of compartmentalization within the existing structure, causing coordination issues between curriculum and staff development for mainstream and special education students. The assistant superintendent indicated that some Special Programs and Technology initiatives are carried out independently of Instruction, and as a result, have the potential for being less effective for WISD students as a whole. Instruction, Special

EXHIBIT 1-2
WISD DIRECTOR OF FEDERAL PROGRAMS
MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES
NOVEMBER 2005

BROAD RESPONSIBILITY AREA	RELATED DUTIES
Instructional and program management	• Direct and manage special education programs and services to meet students' needs.
	• Ensure the use of technology in the teaching/learning process.
	• Encourage and support the development of innovative instructional programs.
	• Manage the special education referral process; arrange for or conduct student assessments; make recommendations regarding placement and program management for individual students.
	• Supervise and monitor the admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) process within the EWCSISC.
	• Participate in committee meetings to ensure the appropriate placement and development of IEPs for students according to district procedures.
	• Ensure that curriculum renewal is continuous and responsive to student needs.
	• Inform superintendent or other administrator of the effects of current and impending legislation.
	• Participate in drafting project proposals and reports, including writing and developing the budget for federal/special funding of programs.
	• Prepare and submit standard applications for federal funds to TEA.
	• Evaluate all requests for projects and programs requiring federal/special money.
Policy, reports, and law	• Recommend policies to improve program.
	• Implement the policies established by federal and state law, State Board of Education rules, and local board policy in area of special education.
Budget and inventory	• Administer the special education department budget and ensure WISD manages funds prudently.
	• Compile budgets and cost estimates based on program needs.
	• Maintain a current equipment inventory and recommend replacing and disposing of equipment when necessary.
	• Approve and forward purchase orders for the Special Programs Department to the Finance Department.
	• Monitor grant-funded programs and their expenditures to ensure compliance with regulations and guidelines.
	• Ensure that the department/district manages federal/special programs wisely.
Personnel management	• Evaluate job performance of department employees.
	• Participate in recruiting, selecting, and training personnel, and make recommendations relative to personnel placement, assignment, retention, discipline, and dismissal.
Communication and community relations	• Participate in professional organizations.
	• Articulate the EWCSISC's mission and goals in the area of special education to the community.
	• Use appropriate and effective techniques to encourage parent involvement.
Consultation	• Serve as liaison between school and other agencies on joint projects that are federally funded.
	• Consult with administrators, counselors, and teachers regarding federal/special programs.

SOURCE: WISD job description for director of Federal Programs, November 2005.

Programs, and Technology all have responsibilities and duties in the areas of special and compensatory education, alternative programs, and instructional technology integration, but there is no collaboration or coordination of these responsibilities and duties among the three departments. Since the assistant superintendent is responsible for district improvement planning, coordination of all instruction-related activities is imperative for meeting the district's goals for student achievement for all student groups.

WISD's current organizational structure does not designate a central employee responsible for coordinating or monitoring the standard curriculum adopted in 2005–06. Each school determines what benchmark testing to perform. According to the assistant superintendent, there has been no formal monitoring of classroom instruction to ensure consistency of implementation of the new standard curriculum.

The assistant superintendent indicated that each school independently administers guidance and counseling activities on a site-based approach. WISD's current structure does not designate a central office employee responsible for coordinating and monitoring guidance and counseling activities uniformly districtwide. Each school determines how a counselor is used, and what services to provide.

The division in reporting lines between the regular education and special education functions affects the setting of educational priorities for WISD students. Both Instruction and Special Programs perform instruction planning activities independently. With Special Programs controlling special education and Title I funding, coordinating these programs with the overall curriculum and staff development activities of Instruction is inefficient and ineffective. As a result, WISD develops instructional objectives separately for regular and special education students, including overlapping of roles and responsibilities, lack of coordination and communication, and duplication of labor.

An example of this includes dyslexic students. According to the assistant superintendent, these students are required to have special program resources available to them, however, with the current WISD structure, coordination of these services between Instruction and Special Programs is unlikely to occur in an efficient and effective manner. The dyslexia program is currently the responsibility of Instruction, but it must coordinate with special education for the additional services required for these students.

For instructional technology, the state mandates currently in effect for technology use in the classroom create a need for

close coordination of staff development initiatives. This is especially true for the integration of technology in the classroom, and for ensuring that technology resources are consistently available for classroom instruction. Under WISD's current organizational structure, the activities performed independent of Instruction by the Technology Department include providing assistance to teachers as they integrate technology into their curriculum, coordinating technology staff development training for teachers, and developing, coordinating, and evaluating the WISD technology plan. This results in inadequate coordination of these efforts with mainstream educational efforts.

As WISD's instructional organization includes separate direct reports to the superintendent by the positions responsible for mainstream curriculum development, special population instructional programs, and integration of classroom technology, there is no provision of unified management of the district's educational services for all students. This results in the inability of WISD's central and campus administrators:

- to set cohesive educational priorities;
- to maintain an effective instructional environment for all WISD students; and
- to take advantage of operational efficiencies in carrying out strategies developed to meet the district's student achievement goals and objectives.

To promote coordination of efforts for instructional activities, the district should revise its organizational structure to consolidate all the functions associated with student instruction under the assistant superintendent for Instruction. **(Exhibit 1-3)**. This organizational revision will improve the ability of WISD administrators to set cohesive educational priorities, and provide position-specific responsibility to coordinate and monitor G/T programs, standard curriculum implementation, and guidance and counseling activities uniformly districtwide. The restructuring will create a more effective instructional environment for all WISD students, and allow for operational efficiency in carrying out strategies developed to meet WISD's student achievement goals and objectives. Through the consolidation of instructional functions, WISD should transfer the dyslexia program to the 504 special education function, currently a responsibility of the director of Federal Programs.

The recommended instructional organization maintains all functions associated with the directors of Federal Programs and Technology, but moves their reporting responsibility to the assistant superintendent for Instruction rather than the superintendent, allowing the district to achieve unified management of WISD's

EXHIBIT 1-3
WISD RECOMMENDED INSTRUCTIONAL ORGANIZATION
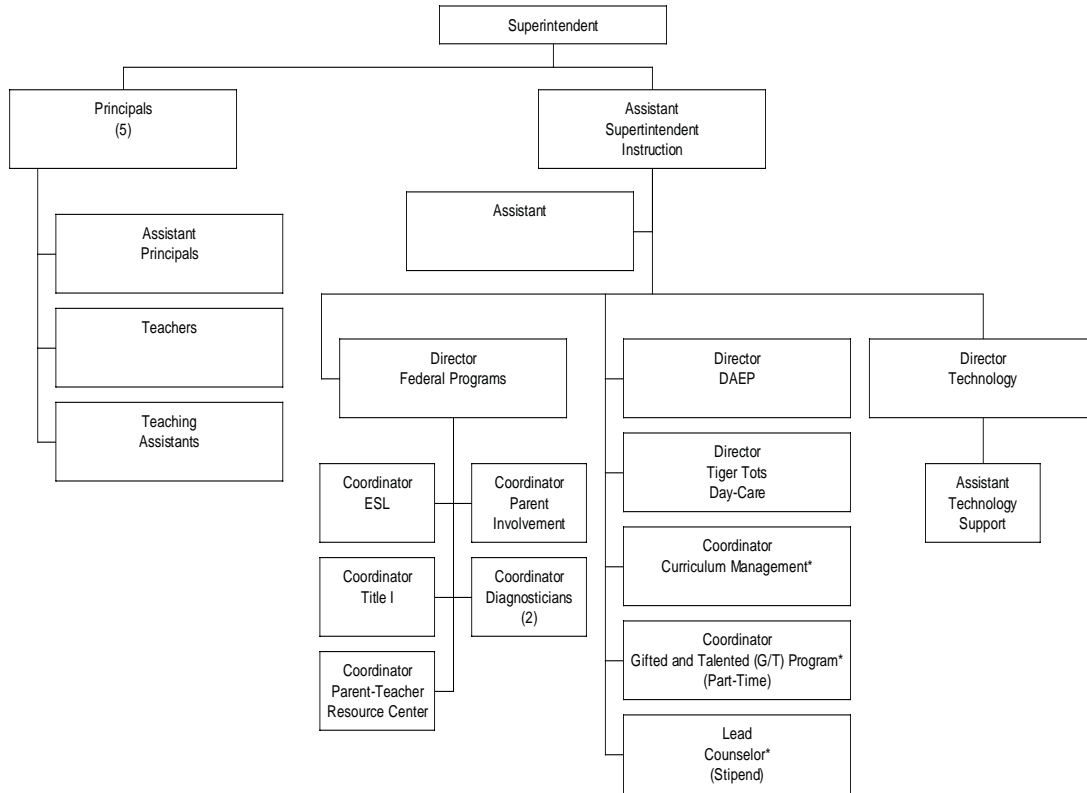
*Indicates new positions created by this recommendation.
SOURCE: WCL Enterprises, January 2006.

educational services for all students. This organization structure also creates a full-time Curriculum Management coordinator position and a part-time G/T coordinator position, and designates one of the current counselors as lead counselor for the district.

The new Curriculum Management coordinator will perform the following functions:

- monitor the use of standard curriculum in all classes, including making periodic site visits to campuses;

- ensure consistency in curriculum delivery to students by acting as a resource to principals and teachers on the new standard curriculum;

- perform periodic evaluations of student test scores on all district campuses; and

- identify, design, and coordinate districtwide staff development related to curriculum management and student performance.

A part-time G/T coordinator will assist the assistant superintendent in coordinating and monitoring the G/T program. This part of the recommended organization structure assumes that an existing

G/T teacher will divide time and job responsibilities between teaching and program coordination duties. The district will also be required to hire an additional part-time G/T teacher to take over the teaching duties previously performed by the new G/T coordinator.

A selected counselor will be paid a stipend to serve as lead counselor for the district, with responsibilities including conducting regular meetings with district counselors, standardizing the district's counseling curriculum, and vertically aligning instructional activities at district campuses.

WISD should implement this recommendation in 2007–08.

The fiscal impact for this recommendation is $98,004 annually ($64,565 for the Curriculum Management coordinator, $11,620 for the G/T program coordinator, $20,664 for the additional part-time G/T teacher, and $1,155 for the lead counselor):

- The salary for the new Curriculum Management coordinator is calculated using a 215-day contract x the daily rate for this position of $273 = $58,695 + 10 percent benefits, or $5,870 = $64,565.

- The salary for the G/T coordinator is calculated using the WISD average assistant principal salary of $58,695. This amount is divided by 2 since this is a part-time position, equaling a salary of $29,348 + 10 percent benefits of $2,935, for a salary of $32,283. With the assumption that the coordinator would already be a WISD G/T teacher, the fiscal impact also uses the district's average teacher salary of $41,327 divided by 2 to determine the salary for the part-time G/T teaching position, which is $20,664. As this is an existing position, no additional benefit costs would be necessary. Therefore, the total salary for the position with split duties including G/T coordinator and G/T teacher would be $52,947 ($32,283 + $20,664 = $52,947). This results in a net cost to the district of $11,620, for the portion of the salary of the G/T coordinator/teaching position ($52,947)—the average teacher's salary the G/T coordinator was making as a full-time G/T teacher for the district ($41,327). For the new part-time G/T teacher, there will be an additional cost to the district of $20,664, as determined in the calculations above for the salary for a part-time G/T teaching position. The net cost to the district for these two additional part-time positions would be $32,284 ($11,620 G/T coordinator/teacher + $20,664 part-time G/T teacher).

- The stipend for the lead counselor is based on $100 a month, an amount WISD pays other lead positions, for 10½ months, which would total $1,155 (10½ months x $100 a month = $1,050 + 10 percent for benefits, or $105).

CURRICULUM MANAGEMENT (REC. 2)

WISD lacks a curriculum management plan focused on improving student performance and ensuring curriculum delivery consistency across campuses and grade levels.

WISD's student performance on TAKS tests has been mixed since 2002–03. Overall, student performance declined relative to the state and Region 3 from 2002–03 to 2003–04 and 2004–05. **Exhibit 1-4** shows how WISD performed compared to the state and region, based on the sum of all grades on each TAKS test administered from 2002–03 through 2004–05. With the exception of the writing test in 2003–04, WISD student performance in each year and subject area was below the state average. WISD student performance was below the Region 3 average with the following exceptions: all tests, 2002–03 (above the region average); social studies and mathematics, 2002–03 (even); and writing, 2003–04 (even).

Exhibit 1-5 through **Exhibit 1-9** provide a comparison of the passing rates of WISD students at each grade level

EXHIBIT 1-4
WISD, REGION 3, AND THE STATE
TAKS MET STANDARD STUDENT PERFORMANCE (STANDARD ACCOUNTABILITY INDICATOR)
SUM OF ALL GRADES TESTED
2002–03 THROUGH 2004–05

TEST AREA	YEAR	WISD	REGION 3	STATE
Reading/English Language Arts	2004–05	79%	84%	83%
	2003–04	77%	80%	80%
	2002–03*	65%	66%	67%
Mathematics	2004–05	64%	71%	72%
	2003–04	63%	66%	67%
	2002–03	57%	57%	59%
Writing	2004–05	85%	91%	90%
	2003–04	89%	89%	89%
	2002–03	75%	79%	78%
Science	2004–05	51%	64%	66%
	2003–04	49%	60%	60%
	2002–03	37%	38%	41%
Social Studies	2004–05	83%	87%	88%
	2003–04	79%	83%	85%
	2002–03	73%	73%	75%
All tests	2004–05	53%	61%	62%
	2003–04	53%	56%	58%
	2002–03	47%	46%	48%

*No standard accountability indicator for this year; panel recommendation used.
SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS), 2002–03 through 2004–05.

compared to the regional and state averages from 2002–03 through 2004–05. Among the key points are:

- WISD student performance in mathematics, in grades 3 and 4 has been comparable to the region and state for the three-year period. However, for grades 5–11, WISD student performance has been below both the regional and state averages in all three years.

- WISD student performance in reading/language arts in grades 3–5 was typically at or just below both the regional and state averages in 2002–03 and 2003–04; however, performance dropped well below both the region and state in 2004–05.

- WISD student performance in science has consistently been well below both the region and the state.

- Only in social studies and writing has WISD student performance generally been close to the same level of the regional and state averages.

Mathematics is tested in each of grades 3–11 (**Exhibit 1-5**). At grades 3 and 4, WISD student performance has been comparable to the region and state for the three-year period; however, from grades 5–11, WISD student performance has been below both the regional and state averages in all three years.

Like mathematics, reading/language arts is tested in each of grades 3–11 (**Exhibit 1-6**). In grades 3–5, WISD student performance was consistently at or above both the region and state averages in 2002–03 and 2003–04; however, performance dropped well below both the region and state in

2004–05. In the remaining grades, WISD student performance has mirrored the region and state.

Science is tested in grades 5, 10, and 11 (**Exhibit 1-7**). WISD student performance has consistently been well below both the region and the state.

Exhibit 1-8 shows the results of TAKS social studies testing in grades 8, 10, and 11 from 2002–03 through 2004–05. WISD student performance has largely been at the same level of the regional and state averages.

Exhibit 1-9 shows the results of TAKS writing, which is tested at grades 4 and 7. Again, WISD student performance has been similar to the regional and state averages.

Exhibit 1-10 provides the sum of all grade levels on reading, mathematics, and writing TAKS tests as compared to peer districts, the region, and the state. From 2002–03 through 2004–05, WISD students scored below the regional and state averages in all areas for each year tested other than writing in 2003–04. Compared to its peer districts, WISD student performance was:

- The second lowest in reading in 2002–03, and lowest in both 2003–04 and 2004–05;

- In the middle in mathematics in 2002–03 and 2003–04, and the lowest in 2004–05; and

- The second lowest in writing in 2002–03, second highest in 2003–04, and in the middle in 2004–05.

Exhibit 1-11 shows the sum of all grade levels on science and social studies TAKS tests in comparison to peer districts, the

EXHIBIT 1-5
WISD, REGION 3, AND THE STATE
PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS PASSING MATHEMATICS TAKS BY GRADE LEVEL
GRADE 3 THROUGH 11
2002–03 THROUGH 2004–05

GRADE LEVEL	WISD			REGION 3			STATE		
	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
3	96.3%	88%	71%	94.2%	84%	82%	90.8%	83%	82%
4	88.1%	81%	80%	89.5%	80%	83%	88.0%	79%	82%
5	82.8%	66%	70%	88.7%	74%	82%	86.3%	73%	80%
6	75.2%	61%	60%	78.2%	64%	68%	79.3%	68%	73%
7	69.7%	59%	58%	71.6%	60%	64%	73.4%	61%	65%
8	68.6%	47%	57%	72.0%	57%	60%	73.2%	58%	62%
9	55.8%	45%	51%	63.9%	49%	58%	65.1%	52%	58%
10	71.3%	42%	49%	73.1%	52%	58%	74.2%	53%	59%
11	64.9%	73%	71%	68.0%	76%	82%	68.5%	77%	81%

Source: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2002–03 through 2004–05.

EXHIBIT 1-6
WISD, REGION 3, AND THE STATE
PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS PASSING READING/LANGUAGE ARTS TAKS
GRADE 3 THROUGH 11
2002–03 THROUGH 2004–05

GRADE LEVEL	WISD			REGION 3			STATE		
	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
3	91.6%	89%	82%	91.7%	90%	90%	89.6%	88%	89%
4	81.4%	81%	70%	85.8%	82%	80%	85.9%	81%	80%
5	80.4%	62%	65%	80.3%	73%	77%	80.0%	74%	75%
6	84.8%	78%	86%	87.5%	79%	86%	86.2%	79%	86%
7	84.0%	77%	78%	88.2%	79%	83%	88.0%	76%	81%
8	89.4%	79%	85%	89.7%	84%	87%	88.7%	84%	84%
9	80.8%	75%	83%	82.8%	79%	84%	82.4%	77%	83%
10	75.0%	69%	71%	71.0%	73%	67%	72.8%	73%	68%
11	67.5%	78%	79%	68.8%	85%	88%	69.8%	86%	88%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2002–03 through 2004–05.

EXHIBIT 1-7
WISD, REGION 3, AND THE STATE
PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS PASSING SCIENCE TAKS BY GRADE LEVEL
2002–03 THROUGH 2004–05

GRADE LEVEL	WISD			REGION 3			STATE		
	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
5	66.4%	38%	42%	72.8%	52%	63%	74.5%	55%	64%
10	62.5%	39%	43%	67.3%	54%	53%	69.6%	52%	55%
11	50.4%	71%	69%	64.5%	77%	78%	67.9%	77%	81%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2002–03 through 2004–05.

EXHIBIT 1-8
WISD, REGION 3, AND THE STATE
PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS PASSING SOCIAL STUDIES TAKS BY GRADE LEVEL
2002–03 THROUGH 2004–05

GRADE LEVEL	WISD			REGION 3			STATE		
	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
8	94.3%	73%	83%	92.1%	79%	83%	93.1%	82%	85%
10	87.2%	71%	79%	86.2%	78%	84%	86.8%	81%	85%
11	85.9%	93%	88%	89.4%	95%	94%	90.2%	95%	95%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2002–03 through 2004–05.

EXHIBIT 1-9
WISD, REGION 3, AND THE STATE
PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS PASSING WRITING TAKS BY GRADE LEVEL
2002–03 THROUGH 2004–05

GRADE LEVEL	WISD			REGION 3			STATE		
	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
4	85.6%	87%	81%	85.7%	87%	97%	86.8%	88%	91%
7	84.3%	92%	89%	88.1%	92%	92%	85.8%	89%	89%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2002–03 through 2004–05.

EXHIBIT 1-10
WISD, PEER DISTRICTS, REGION 3, AND THE STATE
PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS MEETING STANDARD TAKS SUM OF ALL GRADES
READING, MATHEMATICS, AND WRITING (ENGLISH VERSION)
2002–03 THROUGH 2004–05

ENTITY	READING			MATHEMATICS			WRITING		
	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
Aransas Pass	64.3%	82%	85%	58.0%	62%	70%	73.6%	72%	80%
Cuero	76.9%	84%	87%	65.2%	70%	74%	79.6%	95%	96%
Edna	71.4%	78%	83%	54.5%	60%	66%	76.9%	85%	81%
El Campo	75.2%	81%	84%	56,4%	65%	72%	78.7%	87%	89%
Wharton	**70.7%**	**77%**	**79%**	**56.8%**	**63%**	**64%**	**74.6%**	**89%**	**85%**
Region 3	**74.0%**	**80%**	**84%**	**57.2%**	**66%**	**71%**	**79.0%**	**89%**	**91%**
State	**73.2%**	**80%**	**83%**	**58.5%**	**67%**	**72%**	**77.8%**	**89%**	**90%**

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2002–03 through 2004–05.

EXHIBIT 1-11
WISD, PEER DISTRICTS, REGION 3, AND THE STATE
PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS MEETING STANDARD TAKS SUM OF ALL GRADES
SCIENCE AND SOCIAL STUDIES (ENGLISH VERSION)
2002–03 THROUGH 2004–05

ENTITY	SCIENCE			SOCIAL STUDIES		
	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
Aransas Pass	30.0%	51%	58%	69.2%	77%	82%
Cuero	42.9%	66%	74%	88.0%	90%	93%
Edna	36.5%	50%	63%	69.2%	86%	85%
El Campo	32.8%	57%	57%	79.0%	86%	86%
Wharton	**36.9%**	**49%**	**51%**	**72.6%**	**79%**	**83%**
Region 3	**37.8%**	**60%**	**64%**	**72.5%**	**83%**	**87%**
State	**40.5%**	**60%**	**66%**	**75.2%**	**85%**	**88%**

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2002–03 through 2004–05.

region, and the state. In science, WISD student performance was below both the state and regional averages from 2002–03 through 2004–05, with the difference between state and regional percentages of students passing and WISD students passing widening from less than one percentage point versus the regional average and less than four percentage points versus the state average in 2002–03 to 13 and 15 points versus the regional and state averages, respectively, in 2004–05.

Compared to its peer districts in science, WISD student performance went from second highest in 2002–03 to lowest in both 2003–04 and 2004–05.

In social studies, WISD student performance was above the regional average in 2002–03, but below in 2003–04 and 2004–05. WISD student performance was below the state

average all three years. Compared to the peer districts, WISD student performance was in the middle in 2002–03, and was the second lowest in 2003–04 and 2004–05.

Exhibits 1-12 through **1-22** provide the percentage of students who met the TAKS standard in all subject areas tested for WISD, its peer districts, the region, and the state. The following are among the key points:

- In general, WISD student performance was similar to the region and state in 2002–03 and 2003–04, but dropped well below in both the region and state averages in 2004–05.

- In comparison with its peer districts, WISD performance in 2002–03 varied from in the middle to the top of the group; however, by 2004–05, WISD student performance generally lagged behind that of its peers.

Exhibit 1-12 shows the reading and mathematics scores for students in grade 3. WISD student performance was similar to the region and state in 2002–03 and 2003–04, but dropped well below in both the regional and state averages in both subjects in 2004–05. Compared to its peer districts, the same results occurred, with WISD student performance going from near the top in both subjects, to among the lowest in both subjects.

Exhibit 1-13 shows reading, mathematics, and writing scores for grade 4. As with the third grade student performance, fourth grade student performance in all three subjects compared favorably to the regional and state averages and among the peer groups in 2002–03 and 2003–04. WISD student performance was comparable to the peer district, regional, and state averages only in mathematics in 2004–05. WISD student performance dropped well below the regional and state averages in reading and writing, tied for the lowest in reading, and was the second lowest in writing.

Exhibit 1-14 shows how students in WISD, peer districts, the region, and the state performed on the grade 5 TAKS for reading, mathematics, and science. From 2002–03 through 2004–05, WISD student performance dropped almost 25 percentage points in science, 15 percentage points in reading, and 13 percentage points in mathematics.

In 2002–03, WISD student performance in reading was above both the regional and state averages, and it was within a few percentage points of the regional and state level in mathematics and science. However, in 2003–04 and 2004–05, WISD student performance in all three subjects was double-digit percentage points below both the regional and

state averages in all but one subject in one year (mathematics versus state in 2003–04).

In 2002–03, compared to its peer districts, WISD student performance was the second highest in reading, second lowest in science, and lowest in mathematics. By 2004–05, however, WISD student performance was the lowest in both subjects among peer districts.

Exhibit 1-15 shows how students performed on the grade 6 TAKS for reading and mathematics. WISD's reading and mathematics scores show a decline in performance from 2002–03 through 2004–05. WISD student performance was lower than the regional and state averages in all three years, and the performance difference widened during that time.

In comparison to peer districts, WISD stayed approximately in the middle in both subjects.

Exhibit 1-16 shows how students performed on the grade 7 TAKS for reading, mathematics, and writing. In writing, WISD student performance increased from 2002–03 through 2004–05; however, it declined in both reading and mathematics. In mathematics, WISD student performance declined by over 10 percentage points.

Compared to the region and state, WISD student performance was below the regional and state averages in writing in 2002–03, but increased to be at the regional average and above the state average in 2003–04 and at the state average in 2004–05.

With the exception of 2003–04, when WISD student performance was above the state average, the regional and

EXHIBIT 1-12
WISD, PEER DISTRICTS, REGION 3, AND THE STATE
PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS MEETING TAKS STANDARD
READING AND MATHEMATICS
GRADE 3 (ENGLISH VERSION)
2002–03 THROUGH 2004–05

	READING			MATHEMATICS		
ENTITY	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
Aransas Pass	93.5%	73%	84%	92.1%	72%	83%
Cuero	94.6%	90%	87%	97.9%	78%	77%
Edna	94.3%	86%	80%	94.3%	79%	67%
El Campo	93.2%	90%	92%	95.4%	89%	86%
Wharton	**91.6%**	**89%**	**82%**	**96.3%**	**88%**	**71%**
Region 3	**91.7%**	**90%**	**90%**	**94.2%**	**84%**	**82%**
State	**89.6%**	**88%**	**89%**	**90.8%**	**83%**	**82%**

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2002–03 through 2004–05.

EXHIBIT 1-13
WISD, PEER DISTRICTS, REGION 3, AND THE STATE
PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS MEETING TAKS STANDARD
READING, MATHEMATICS, AND WRITING
GRADE 4 (ENGLISH VERSION)
2002–03 THROUGH 2004–05

ENTITY	READING			MATHEMATICS			WRITING		
	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
Aransas Pass	83.8%	70%	76%	96.1%	75%	73%	84.4%	75%	89%
Cuero	92.2%	87%	70%	92.2%	87%	82%	92.9%	92%	95%
Edna	83.6%	79%	83%	77.5%	72%	83%	82.9%	85%	77%
El Campo	76.4%	80%	76%	87.6%	79%	77%	77.8%	82%	83%
Wharton	**81.4%**	**81%**	**70%**	**88.1%**	**81%**	**80%**	**85.6%**	**87%**	**81%**
Region 3	**85.8%**	**82%**	**80%**	**89.5%**	**80%**	**83%**	**85.7%**	**87%**	**91%**
State	**85.9%**	**81%**	**80%**	**88.0%**	**79%**	**82%**	**86.8%**	**88%**	**91%**

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2002–03 through 2004–05.

EXHIBIT 1-14
WISD, PEER DISTRICTS, REGION 3, AND THE STATE
PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS MEETING TAKS STANDARD
READING, MATHEMATICS, AND SCIENCE
GRADE 5 (ENGLISH VERSION)
2002–03 THROUGH 2004–05

ENTITY	READING			MATHEMATICS			SCIENCE		
	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
Aransas Pass	69.5%	70%	65%	86.8%	70%	73%	62.7%	40%	47%
Cuero	86.4%	73%	86%	92.0%	76%	83%	75.5%	59%	70%
Edna	78.6%	72%	75%	89.1%	61%	88%	67.0%	33%	71%
El Campo	73.0%	63%	71%	85.1%	67%	81%	70.4%	40%	49%
Wharton	**80.4%**	**62%**	**65%**	**82.8%**	**66%**	**70%**	**66.4%**	**38%**	**42%**
Region 3	**80.3%**	**73%**	**77%**	**88.7%**	**84%**	**82%**	**72.8%**	**52%**	**63%**
State	**80.0%**	**74%**	**75%**	**86.3%**	**73%**	**80%**	**74.5%**	**55%**	**64%**

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2002–03 through 2004–05.

EXHIBIT 1-15
WISD, PEER DISTRICTS, REGION 3, AND THE STATE
PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS MEETING TAKS STANDARD
READING AND MATHEMATICS
GRADE 6 (ENGLISH VERSION)
2002–03 THROUGH 2004–05

ENTITY	READING			MATHEMATICS		
	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
Aransas Pass	77.9%	77%	89%	86.4%	73%	76%
Cuero	83.0%	77%	80%	76.6%	54%	56%
Edna	79.2%	78%	89%	67.9%	63%	58%
El Campo	86.2%	78%	82%	70.0%	57%	65%
Wharton	**84.8%**	**78%**	**81%**	**75.2%**	**61%**	**61%**
Region 3	**87.5%**	**79%**	**86%**	**78.2%**	**64%**	**68%**
State	**86.2%**	**79%**	**86%**	**79.3%**	**68%**	**73%**

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2002–03 through 2004–05.

EXHIBIT 1-16
WISD, PEER DISTRICTS, REGION 3, AND THE STATE
PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS MEETING TAKS STANDARD
READING, MATHEMATICS, AND WRITING
GRADE 7 (ENGLISH VERSION)
2002–03 THROUGH 2004–05

	READING			MATHEMATICS			WRITING		
ENTITY	**2002–03**	**2003–04**	**2004–05**	**2002–03**	**2003–04**	**2004–05**	**2002–03**	**2003–04**	**2004–05**
Aransas Pass	77.5%	64%	77%	66.4%	56%	60%	77.4%	87%	82%
Cuero	87.8%	81%	86%	79.4%	78%	72%	87.1%	98%	97%
Edna	87.0%	61%	82%	75.2%	33%	62%	83.2%	85%	84%
El Campo	91.5%	75%	85%	73.5%	57%	63%	94.5%	92%	94%
Wharton	**84.0%**	**77%**	**78%**	**69.7%**	**59%**	**58%**	**84.3%**	**92%**	**89%**
Region 3	**88.2%**	**79%**	**83%**	**71.6%**	**60%**	**64%**	**88.1%**	**92%**	**92%**
State	**88.0%**	**76%**	**81%**	**73.4%**	**61%**	**65%**	**85.8%**	**89%**	**89%**

Source: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2002–03 through 2004–05.

state averages exceeded WISD student performance. In mathematics, the gap widened slightly during that period.

Compared to its peer districts, the district stayed in the middle of the group in reading and writing from 2002–03 through 2004–05. However, in mathematics, WISD student performance went from the second lowest in 2002–03 to the lowest in 2004–05.

Exhibit 1-17 shows how students performed on the grade 8 TAKS for reading, mathematics, and social studies. WISD student performance declined in all three subjects from 2002–03 through 2004–05, including over 10 percentage points in mathematics and social studies.

Compared to the region and state in 2002–03, WISD's percentage of students passing the reading test was above the state and just slightly below the regional average and remained the same in 2004–05. In social studies, WISD student performance was above both the state and region in 2002–03 and at the regional average, but below the state in 2004–05.

From 2002–03 through 2004–05, WISD mathematics scores dropped over 10 percentage points. WISD student performance in mathematics was below the state and regional averages for all three years.

Compared to its peer districts, WISD student performance was the second lowest in reading from 2002–03 through

EXHIBIT 1-17
WISD, PEER DISTRICTS, REGION 3, AND THE STATE
PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS MEETING TAKS STANDARD
READING, MATHEMATICS, AND SOCIAL STUDIES
GRADE 8
2002–03 THROUGH 2004–2005

	READING			MATHEMATICS			SOCIAL STUDIES		
ENTITY	**2002–03**	**2003–04**	**2004–05**	**2002–03**	**2003–04**	**2004–05**	**2002–03**	**2003–04**	**2004–05**
Aransas Pass	83.5%	68%	71%	70.6%	40%	51%	91.4%	63%	74%
Cuero	93.7%	84%	93%	87.7%	75%	82%	99.4%	92%	94%
Edna	89.8%	86%	86%	76.3%	72%	49%	93.1%	87%	77%
El Campo	94.6%	85%	86%	75.7%	56%	63%	95.0%	82%	86%
Wharton	**89.4%**	**79%**	**85%**	**68.6%**	**47%**	**57%**	**94.3%**	**73%**	**83%**
Region 3	**89.7%**	**84%**	**87%**	**72.0%**	**57%**	**60%**	**92.1%**	**79%**	**83%**
State	**88.7%**	**84%**	**84%**	**73.2%**	**58%**	**62%**	**93.1%**	**82%**	**85%**

Source: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2002–03 through 2004–05.

2004–05; among the lowest in mathematics in all three years; and in the middle in social studies in all three years.

Exhibit 1-18 shows how students performed on the grade 9 TAKS for reading and mathematics. In reading, WISD student performance increased from 2002–03 to 2004–05, and declined in mathematics during the same period.

WISD performance was slightly below the regional and state averages in reading from 2002–03 through 2004–05, with the exception of 2004–05 when WISD student performance was the same as the state average.

WISD student performance was below the regional and state averages from 2002–03 through 2004–05 in mathematics, with the performance difference remaining approximately seven percentage points.

Compared to its peer districts, WISD student performance was second lowest in reading for all three years and moved from the second lowest in 2002–03 in mathematics to the lowest in 2004–05.

Exhibit 1-19 shows how students performed on the grade 10 TAKS for English/language arts and mathematics. WISD student performance declined in both subjects from 2002–03 through 2004–05.

WISD performance was above the regional and state averages in English/language arts in 2002–03 and 2004–05 but below both in 2003–04. In mathematics, WISD student performance was below the regional and state averages from 2002–03 through 2004–05, and the performance difference

EXHIBIT 1-18
WISD, PEER DISTRICTS, REGION 3, AND THE STATE
PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS MEETING TAKS STANDARD
READING AND MATHEMATICS
GRADE 9
2002–03 THROUGH 2004–05

ENTITY	READING			MATHEMATICS		
	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
Aransas Pass	74.2%	73%	80%	66.4%	52%	55%
Cuero	85.2%	82%	85%	80.3%	58%	64%
Edna	82.4%	88%	84%	63.2%	40%	63%
El Campo	88.4%	84%	88%	72.2%	53%	59%
Wharton	**80.8%**	**75%**	**83%**	**55.8%**	**45%**	**51%**
Region 3	**82.8%**	**79%**	**84%**	**63.9%**	**49%**	**58%**
State	**82.4%**	**77%**	**83%**	**65.1%**	**52%**	**58%**

Source: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2002–03 through 2004–05.

EXHIBIT 1-19
WISD, PEER DISTRICTS, REGION 3, AND THE STATE
PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS MEETING TAKS STANDARD
ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS AND MATHEMATICS
GRADE 10
2002–03 THROUGH 2004–05

ENTITY	ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS			MATHEMATICS		
	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
Aransas Pass	65.7%	73%	64%	86.0%	56%	67%
Cuero	77.5%	87%	86%	88.9%	59%	68%
Edna	61.6%	64%	66%	71.4%	49%	56%
El Campo	76.5%	84%	72%	74.8%	48%	65%
Wharton	**75.0%**	**69%**	**71%**	**71.3%**	**42%**	**49%**
Region 3	**71.0%**	**73%**	**67%**	**73.1%**	**52%**	**58%**
State	**72.8%**	**73%**	**68%**	**74.2%**	**53%**	**59%**

Source: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2002–03 through 2004–05.

widened from two to three percentage points in 2002–03, to nine to10 percentage points in 2004–05.

Compared to its peer districts, WISD has been in the middle in English/language arts and was the lowest all three years in mathematics.

Exhibit 1-20 shows how students performed on the grade 10 TAKS for science and social studies. WISD student performance declined in both subjects from 2002–03 through 2004–05.

WISD student performance was below both the regional and state averages from 2002–03 through 2004–05 in science; while in social studies, WISD student performance was above

both the regional and state averages in 2002–03, but fell below in 2003–04 and 2004–05.

Compared to its peer districts, WISD student performance was the lowest all three years in science. In social studies, the district's performance fell from the second lowest in 2002–03 to the lowest in both 2003–04 and 2004–05.

Exhibit 1-21 shows how students performed on the grade 11 TAKS for English/language arts and mathematics. WISD student performance increased in both subjects from 2002–03 through 2004–05.

From 2002–03 through 2004–05, WISD student performance in both subjects was below the regional and

EXHIBIT 1-20
WISD, PEER DISTRICTS, REGION 3, AND THE STATE
PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS MEETING TAKS STANDARD
SCIENCE AND SOCIAL STUDIES
GRADE 10
2002–03 THROUGH 2004–05

	SCIENCE			SOCIAL STUDIES		
ENTITY	**2002–03**	**2003–04**	**2004–05**	**2002–03**	**2003–04**	**2004–05**
Aransas Pass	70.4%	51%	51%	94.1%	82%	84%
Cuero	80.8%	59%	69%	98.4%	81%	91%
Edna	64.6%	47%	44%	81.3%	81%	86%
El Campo	68.3%	53%	50%	89.3%	84%	80%
Wharton	**62.5%**	**39%**	**43%**	**87.2%**	**71%**	**79%**
Region 3	**67.3%**	**54%**	**53%**	**86.2%**	**78%**	**84%**
State	**69.6%**	**52%**	**55%**	**86.8%**	**81%**	**85%**

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2002–03 through 2004–05.

EXHIBIT 1-21
WISD, PEER DISTRICTS, REGION 3, AND THE STATE
PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS MEETING TAKS STANDARD
ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS AND MATHEMATICS
GRADE 11
2002–03 THROUGH 2004–05

	ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS			MATHEMATICS		
ENTITY	**2002–03**	**2003–04**	**2004–05**	**2002–03**	**2003–04**	**2004–05**
Aransas Pass	67.4%	69%	93%	69.5%	79%	86%
Cuero	82.7%	93%	95%	85.7%	83%	83%
Edna	60.3%	89%	80%	64.0%	73%	81%
El Campo	79.8%	89%	87%	76.4%	78%	82%
Wharton	**67.5%**	**78%**	**79%**	**64.9%**	**73%**	**71%**
Region 3	**68.8%**	**85%**	**88%**	**68.0%**	**76%**	**82%**
State	**69.8%**	**86%**	**88%**	**68.5%**	**77%**	**81%**

Source: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2002–03 through 2004–05.

state averages in all three years. In both subjects, the performance difference between the region, state, and WISD widened, growing from a few percentage points to nine to 10 percentage points.

Compared to its peer districts, WISD student performance was in the middle in reading in 2002–03, and was the lowest in 2004–05. In mathematics, WISD student performance went from the second lowest in 2002–03 to the lowest in 2004–05.

Exhibit 1-22 shows how students performed on the grade 11 TAKS for science and social studies. WISD student performance increased in both subjects from 2002–03 through 2004–05.

Compared to the regional and state averages, WISD student performance was below both in both subjects from 2002–03 through 2004–05. The performance difference decreased in science and increased slightly in social studies.

Compared to its peer districts, WISD student performance was the lowest in science in 2002–03 and 2004–05, and in the middle in 2003–04. In social studies, WISD student performance was the second lowest in 2002–03, second lowest in 2003–04, and lowest in 2004–05.

In an effort to improve student performance, provide teachers with new instructional tools and support, and provide consistency in teaching TAKS objectives, WISD bought curriculum in 2004–05 from Region 5 Curriculum Leadership Cooperative (CLC), which had developed it over a 17-year period. The CLC is comprised of 41 school districts,

including WISD, and three private schools. WISD staff can access the CLC information through a link on the WISD website. According to the assistant superintendent for Instruction, the contract with CLC is a year-to-year contract. WISD paid CLC $7,500 to be a member of the cooperative for 2005–06. The district also paid a one-time fee for materials and supplies of $7,500.

The CLC's purpose "is to provide a vehicle for guiding students' instructional experiences toward successful transitions throughout the learning process."

CLC documents consist of standards-based scope and sequences for each six-week period, benchmark tests and goals, skill spreadsheets and resources (preK–12) presented in a core curriculum approach. All documents are vertically and horizontally aligned. The CLC materials reflect national and statewide academic standards and skills, and integrate real-world learning opportunities for increased student achievement.

The CLC operates with a systems approach, which according to CLC means that "responsibility is shared by teachers, principals, and central office administrative staff." Therefore, the CLC offers technical support in all curriculum areas for the entire district. It also provided training to all WISD teachers at the beginning of 2005–06 in order to ensure consistent implementation before the curriculum documents were distributed.

An additional tool complementary to the CLC curriculum that is provided to teachers is WebCCAT. Under a contract with an external vendor, Region 10 developed WebCCAT, a

EXHIBIT 1-22
WISD, PEER DISTRICTS, REGION 3, AND THE STATE
PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS MEETING TAKS STANDARD
SCIENCE AND SOCIAL STUDIES
GRADE 11
2002–03 THROUGH 2004–05

	SCIENCE			SOCIAL STUDIES		
ENTITY	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
Aransas Pass	55.0%	66%	85%	97.7%	92%	91%
Cuero	83.2%	83%	82%	97.9%	99%	95%
Edna	55.1%	70%	80%	81.8%	90%	97%
El Campo	67.0%	80%	76%	93.2%	94%	93%
Wharton	**50.4%**	**71%**	**69%**	**85.9%**	**93%**	**88%**
Region 3	**64.5%**	**77%**	**78%**	**89.4%**	**95%**	**94%**
State	**67.9%**	**77%**	**81%**	**90.2%**	**95%**	**95%**

Source: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2002–03 through 2004–05.

bank of over 25,000 assessment items for grades 3–11 in English/language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science, with the flexibility to add additional subjects and grades in the future. According to the assistant superintendent for Instruction, WISD pays $0.75 per student in grades 3–11 for this service. For 2005–06, the WebCCAT cost was $1,219.50 (average daily attendance of 1,626 students x $0.75 per student).

A teacher does not have to wait for the results of the benchmark tests provided with the CLC curriculum to monitor student mastery of the objectives. Instead, a teacher can access questions from WebCCAT using a link on the WISD website at any time throughout the school year to measure how students are mastering various objectives. The questions come in varying degrees of difficulty and complexity for use based upon individual student needs. WebCCAT also allows teachers to print out sample lesson plans.

In 2005–06, implementation of the CLC curriculum in WISD was voluntary and the degree of implementation varied from school to school; Hurricane Rita temporarily disrupted the implementation efforts during the fall 2005. Elementary and secondary principals all expressed support for the new curriculum. The principals said the overall reaction of teachers has been positive. The assistant superintendent for Instruction said the intent is to make use of the curriculum mandatory at all grade levels in 2006–07.

However, based on interviews with the assistant superintendent for Instruction and WISD principals, campus principals develop their own instructional focus and monitoring systems, thereby creating inconsistencies in curriculum delivery across the district. There is no plan for, nor position in, central administration to coordinate and monitor the implementation of the district's newly adopted curriculum, thus no formal instruction monitoring method exists at either the district or campus level. Principals use various methods to monitor curriculum implementation and instructional delivery, including classroom walk-throughs and observations, lesson plan reviews, meetings with department heads, and analysis of district- and state-mandated assessments. The degree of implementation of the Curriculum Leadership Cooperative (CLC) curriculum and benchmark tests to measure student mastery of objectives varies across campuses and grade levels.

The review team also noted several other issues that affect the consistent delivery of instruction and can impede student performance:

- The district disaggregates TAKS data at the campus level. The assistant superintendent for Instruction has no responsibility for reviewing the data on either a districtwide or an individual school basis. Hence, WISD has identified no districtwide trends, or planned corresponding staff development to address areas of concern.

- The district has no formal method or process to ensure students are prepared to go to the next grade level. While vertical teaming occurs informally at all grade levels, it occurs because principals contact each other to arrange opportunities, or teachers contact their counterparts at other schools. All the principals said during interviews that they make time for teachers to meet to address vertical alignment, but no formal process is in place to ensure this occurs.

Due to the lack of curriculum alignment and constancy of purpose as a system, WISD campuses operate as separate and independent entities that function more like a "confederation of schools" instead of a cohesive school system. The result is overall student performance that has been below the state and regional averages on the TAKS tests from 2002–03 through 2004–05, and shows inconsistencies from year-to-year by grade level and subject.

A consistent program for monitoring curriculum implementation for all campuses is critical to ensure that WISD teachers deliver the district curriculum without gaps and redundancies in order to maximize student performance. Without a coordinated system, students may not experience a smooth transition from grade level to grade level as it pertains to meeting curriculum standards. **Exhibit 1-23** outlines the key components of a curriculum management system.

Mt. Pleasant ISD uses a web-based program to monitor curriculum use. Research related to effective curriculum implementation and student performance is available through the Texas Association for the Supervision and Curriculum Development (TxASCD) and the Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD). Program support, vertical and horizontal alignment, and articulation of curriculum are some of the research areas on which TxASCD and ASCD provide information at the web site http://www.txascd.org/ and related links, which also outline professional development and best practices.

WISD should develop, adopt, and implement a comprehensive curriculum management plan that includes board policies

EXHIBIT 1-23
COMPONENTS OF A CURRICULUM MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

SYSTEM ELEMENT	CENTRAL OFFICE ACCOUNTABILITY	PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITY	SHARED RESPONSIBILITY	DESIRED OUTCOME
Instructional leadership	Provide curriculum aligned to TEKS objectives and strategies for teacher to use to accomplish those objectives	Serve as an instructional leader to assist teachers in implementing the curriculum and being able to monitor its implementation	Monitor application of curriculum, identify where teachers need assistance/ staff development, and provide feedback	Teachers have tools to focus on student achievement, principals assume role of instructional leadership on campus, and central office provides needed support
Instructional focus	Develop district plan that reflects goals for instructional effectiveness	Teachers document test objective and target and collaborative grade level planning occurs	Monitor implementation of campus instructional focus	Daily focus on TEKS integrated in all content areas
TAKS scores	Provide disaggregated test data to campuses	Review district and campus data, provide reports to campus departments and teachers, and review objectives ranking from weakest to strongest	Use test data in formulating district and campus plans, communicate these plans to parents and students, and align curriculum vertically and horizontally	Data drives decisions and district and campus plans focus on each sub-group with specific objectives
Instructional timeline	Develop district benchmark timelines, which correspond to district curriculum	Develop grade-level calendars in reading, mathematics, and writing at the beginning of each grading period which identify weak/strong objectives	Provide staff development and necessary support materials	Instruction aligned with district assessment, benchmark objectives calendars, and schoolwide low-to-high objectives
Assessment	Prepare and disseminate benchmark tests and provide test results to campuses	Administer benchmark tests, use tests for planning for instruction, and conduct conferences with students based upon previous year results	Review benchmark results with teachers	Benchmark results discussed and plans and strategies revisited for effectiveness
Vertical Teaming	Coordinate district meetings for teachers and administrators pre-kindergarten through grade 12	Coordinate campus meetings for teachers in all grade levels and content areas	Allocate time for teachers to meet on a regular basis to align curriculum and instruction and analyze data	Instruction aligned across all grade levels and content areas to maximize student learning
Tutorials for nonmastery students and enrichment for mastery students	Allocate funds for tutorials	Design tutorials for nonmastery students, design enrichment for master students, and communicate plan to parents	Monitor implementation of tutorials and enrichment	Increase passing rate of nonmastery students and expand curriculum for mastery students
Maintenance and reteaching	Assist with gathering instructional resources	Document maintenance and reteaching lessons in lesson plans	Monitor implementation of maintenance and teaching instruction and activities	Improved performance on specific objectives
Monitoring	Visit classrooms and conduct benchmark conferences with principals	Visit classrooms and conduct focused meeting with teachers, teams, and departments	Monitor the implementation of the campus initiative	Discuss problems and successes in administrative workshops

SOURCE: Customized by WCL ENTERPRISES based on work with other school districts using a curriculum management system.

and administrative regulations to direct curriculum delivery and management across the district. Once a plan is developed, it will provide the framework for formal implementation and evaluation of curriculum documents to ensure vertical and horizontal alignment throughout the system. WISD should focus on developing this plan in an effort to have a cohesive, aligned instructional program, and increase student performance across the district.

Components of the plan should include:

- Development of a consistent set of methods to monitor curriculum implementation districtwide. The assistant superintendent for Instruction and campus principals should develop a set of implementation procedures that will serve as a guide for all schools. The principals should submit periodic reports to the assistant superintendent on the status of implementation and any issues associated with implementation.

- Implementation of a formal vertical teaming process for all grade levels. Specific times should be established for all grade levels to interact. Information on individual students should be prepared to identify not only performance, but also the success of any programs used to address achievement gaps.

- Assessment of TAKS results on a districtwide basis in addition to each school, the identification districtwide trends, and staff development plan addressing these trends.

The assistant superintendent for Instruction could assign the responsibility of coordinating the management of the curriculum implementation and conducting continuous monitoring to the new Curriculum Management coordinator (Recommendation 1).

LIBRARY AND MEDIA SERVICES (REC. 3)

WISD does not staff its libraries based on a defined staffing methodology, and is not consistent with the TSLAC recommended standards.

All WISD campuses have a full-time, certified librarian except Hopper Elementary School, which has a full-time paraprofessional. Wharton High School and Dawson Elementary School also have full-time paraprofessionals. WISD uses a scope and sequence for teaching library skills to students in grades pre-kindergarten–12 during regular, scheduled library classes.

The TSLAC is directed to develop voluntary school library standards in Texas Education Code (TEC) §33.021. According to the section of the Texas Education Code, "A school district shall consider the standards in developing, implementing, or expanding library services." According to the TSLAC:

> "School Library Programs: Standards and Guidelines for Texas originates in the ongoing effort to support effective schools, results-oriented education, and accountability. These aims are at the forefront of the school librarianship."

Standards are a professional tool for objective assessment based on recognized measures of performance. The revised *Standards and Guidelines for Texas* is based on research that shows a correlation between school library resources and services and greater student achievement.

TSLAC criteria classifies libraries into four categories: *Exemplary, Recognized, Acceptable,* and *Below Standards.* TSLAC sets staffing standards based on schools' average daily attendance (ADA). **Exhibit 1-24** shows TSLAC standards for professional and nonprofessional staff.

Exhibit 1-25 shows TSLAC staffing standards for professional and paraprofessional staff as compared to WISD's current library staffing by school. Overall, WISD is understaffed by one professional and one-half of a paraprofessional position based on the TSLAC standards. Failure to provide necessary resources for all students can diminish student performance.

In February 2006, WISD voters passed a referendum authorizing WISD to issue bonds to build a new elementary school to replace Dawson and Hopper Elementary Schools. Dawson Elementary School was recommended for replacement since it is within the 100-year flood plain and has flooded twice since 1998. Hopper Elementary School was recommended for replacement because needed repairs would cost more than constructing a new building. Replacing two elementary schools with one new school will result in a realignment of school grade levels. When the new school is complete, students in grades pre-K–1 will attend Sivells Elementary, students in grades 2–5 will attend the new elementary school, students in grades 6–8 will attend the junior high school, and students in grades 9–12 will attend the high school. Although the campus realignment will result in one less campus in WISD, the district will still fall one paraprofessional position short of the standards for the years 2008–09 through 2010–11.

EXHIBIT 1-24
TSLAC STAFFING LIBRARY STANDARDS

	STANDARDS		
AREA	**EXEMPLARY**	**RECOGNIZED**	**ACCEPTABLE**
Professional Staff	At least:	At least:	At least:
0–500 ADA	1.5 Certified Librarians	1.0 Certified Librarian	1.0 Certified Librarian
501–1,000 ADA	2.0 Certified Librarians	1.5 Certified Librarians	1.0 Certified Librarian
1,001–2,000 ADA	3.0 Certified Librarians	2.0 Certified Librarians	1.0 Certified Librarian
2,001 + ADA	3.0 Certified Librarians + 1.0 Certified Librarian for each 700 students	2.0 Certified Librarians + 1.0 Certified Librarian for each 1,000 students	2.0 Certified Librarians
Paraprofessional Staff	At least:	At least:	At least:
0–500 ADA	1.5 Paraprofessionals	1.0 Paraprofessionals	0.5 Paraprofessionals
501–1,000 ADA	2.0 Paraprofessionals	1.5 Paraprofessionals	1.0 Paraprofessionals
1,001–2,000 ADA	3.0 Paraprofessionals	2.0 Paraprofessionals	1.5 Paraprofessionals
2,001 + ADA	3.0 Paraprofessionals + 1.0 Paraprofessional for each 700 students	2.0 Paraprofessionals + 1.0 Paraprofessional for each 1,000 students	2.0 Paraprofessionals

SOURCE: Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC) School Library Programs: Standards and Guidelines for Texas, 2005.

EXHIBIT 1-25
WISD
LIBRARY STAFFING BY SCHOOL COMPARED TO TSLAC STANDARDS
2005–06

			PROFESSIONAL		PARAPROFESSIONAL	
SCHOOL	**GRADE LEVELS IN EACH SCHOOL**	**CURRENT ENROLLMENT BY GRADE LEVEL**	**CURRENT**	**TSLAC STANDARD**	**CURRENT**	**TSLAC STANDARD**
Hopper Elementary School	Early childhood	3				
	Pre-kindergarten	130				
	Kindergarten	206				
	Subtotal	**339**	**0.0**	**1.0**	**1.0**	**0.5**
Sivells Elementary School	1st	221				
	2nd	167				
	3rd	186				
	Subtotal*	**576**	**1.0**	**1.0**	**0.0**	**1.0**
Dawson Elementary School	4th	146				
	5th	170				
	6th	170				
	Subtotal	**486**	**1.0**	**1.0**	**1.0**	**0.5**
Wharton Junior High School	7th	190				
	8th	168				
	Subtotal**	**361**	**1.0**	**1.0**	**0.0**	**0.5**
Wharton High School	9th	181				
	10th	171				
	11th	143				
	12th	141				
	Subtotal	**636**	**1.0**	**1.0**	**1.0**	**1.0**
	Totals	**2,398**	**4.0**	**5.0**	**3.0**	**3.5**

*Includes one student in Early Childhood and one student in fifth grade.

**Includes two students in tenth grade and one student in twelfth grade.

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS, October 2005; WISD school websites and principals; Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC) School Library Programs: Standards and Guidelines for Texas, 2005.

WISD plans to open the new elementary school beginning with the 2008–09 school year. Assuming enrollment by grade level remains the same, **Exhibit 1-26** illustrates WISD library staffing by school, compared to the TSLAC standards, and assumes that the paraprofessional at Hopper Elementary School would move to Sivells Elementary School, and the librarian and paraprofessional at Dawson Elementary School would move to the new elementary school.

WISD should ensure that all campus libraries maintain appropriate staffing levels in accordance with TSLAC guidelines.

In order for all campuses to align with TSLAC standards for 2007–08, WISD should:

- Create an additional half-time library paraprofessional position.

- Redistribute library paraprofessionals, including the newly created position, across the district as appropriate based on **Exhibit 1-26**.

- Create an additional librarian position for the Hopper Elementary campus.

In order for all campuses to align with TSLAC standards for 2008–09 through 2010–11, WISD should:

- Create an additional half-time library paraprofessional position.

- Eliminate the librarian position created in 2007–08 for Hopper Elementary.

The average salary for a library paraprofessional in WISD is $17,907. Including benefits of 10 percent of salary, or $895, adding one half-time paraprofessional will cost the district

EXHIBIT 1-26
WISD
PROJECTED LIBRARY STAFFING BY SCHOOL COMPARED TO TSLAC STANDARDS
2008–09

SCHOOL	GRADE LEVELS IN EACH SCHOOL	PROJECTED ENROLLMENT BY GRADE LEVEL	PROFESSIONAL		PARAPROFESSIONAL	
			2008–09*	TSLAC STANDARD	2008–09*	TSLAC STANDARD
Hopper Elementary School	Closed	N/A		N/A		N/A
Dawson Elementary School	Closed	N/A		N/A		N/A
Sivells Elementary School	Early childhood	4				
	Pre-Kindergarten	130				
	Kindergarten	206				
	1st	221				
	Subtotal**	**560**	**1.0**	**1.0**	**1.0**	**1.0**
New elementary school	2nd	167				
	3rd	186				
	4th	146				
	5th	170				
	Subtotal	**669**	**1.0**	**1.0**	**1.0**	**1.0**
Wharton Junior High School	6th	170				
	7th	190				
	8th	168				
	Subtotal**	**528**	**1.0**	**1.0**	**0.0**	**1.0**
Wharton High School	9th	181				
	10th	171				
	11th	143				
	12th	141				
	Subtotal	**636**	**1.0**	**1.0**	**1.0**	**1.0**
	Totals	**2,398**	**4.0**	**4.0**	**3.0**	**4.0**

*Assumes that the paraprofessional at Hopper Elementary School would move to Sivells Elementary School, and the librarian and paraprofessional at Dawson Elementary School would move to the new elementary school.
**Includes one student in fifth grade.
***Includes two students in tenth grade and one student in twelfth grade.
Source: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS, October 2005; WISD school websites and principals; TSLAC School Library Programs: Standards and Guidelines for Texas, 2005.

$9,849 for the 2007–08 school year ($17,907 salary/2 (half-time position) = $8,954 + $895 in benefits).

The average salary for a librarian in WISD is $43,460. With benefits of 10 percent of salary, or $4,346, adding one librarian position for Hopper Elementary for the 2007–08 school year would cost the district $47,806 ($43,460 salary + $4,346 in benefits).

The total cost to the district for the 2007–08 school year for the additional half-time paraprofessional and full-time librarian positions would be $57,655 ($9,849 paraprofessional salary + $47,806 librarian salary).

The elimination of a librarian position beginning in 2008–09 would result in an annual savings to the district of $47,806 for the 2008–09 through 2010–11 school years. The annual cost to the district for an additional half-time library paraprofessional position beginning in 2008–09 would be $9,849 ($17,907 average librarian paraprofessional salary/2 (half-time position) = $8,954 + $895 in benefits). Thus, the annual savings to the district for 2008–09 through 2010–11 would be $37,957 (Savings of $47,806 due to elimination of librarian position + cost of $9,849 for the additional half-time library paraprofessional position).

GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING PROGRAM COORDINATION (REC. 4)

WISD does not provide district-level coordination of the guidance and counseling program.

Interviews by the review team indicated that the district does not provide district-level support and supervision for the guidance and counseling program. Counselors do not have a written guidance plan that outlines program services for pre-K–12 students. WISD counselors work independently of each other within their campus settings. Counselors do not hold regularly scheduled meetings to support the collaboration and continuity of program components. The assistant superintendent for Instruction said that she tries to meet with counselors a minimum of two times a year. One of these meetings is held in at Region 3 in Victoria each year for training on the state testing program, and the second meeting is held in the district for additional in-district training on the state testing program.

Decisions as to what counseling services and activities are provided at each campus are made based on each counselor's personal experience, knowledge, time, and available resources. Activities focus on classroom visitations, social skills trainings, conflict resolution programs, and career education. Four of the five district counselors conduct special education ARD

meetings to assist in developing IEPs for students in special education programs. **Exhibit 1-27** summarizes the primary guidance and counseling activities at each campus for 2005–06.

TEC §33.006 establishes the roles and responsibilities of public school counselors and defines the scope of guidance and counseling programs. As stated, the primary responsibility of a school counselor is to counsel students to fully develop each student's academic, career, personal and social abilities. In addition, school counselors must work with the school faculty and staff, students, parents, and the community to plan, implement, and evaluate a developmental guidance and counseling program.

A Model Comprehensive, Developmental Guidance and Counseling Program for Texas Public Schools: A Guide for Program Development Pre-K–12th Grade - Fourth Edition, published by TEA, recommends that school counselors divide their time between four program components. These include:

- Guidance Curriculum – planned lessons covering seven areas including self-confidence development, motivation to achieve, decision-making and problem-solving skills and responsible behavior.

- Responsive Services – interventions on behalf of students whose immediate personal concerns or problems put their continued personal-social, career and/or education development at risk.

- Individual Planning – guidance for students as they plan, monitor and manage their own educational, career and personal-social development.

- System Support – services and management activities that indirectly benefit students.

The amount of time allocated is dependent upon the developmental and special needs of the students served. Each district or school must determine the amount of counselor time devoted to each component. **Exhibit 1-28** shows TEA's recommended time allocation for each of the four components by grade level.

During on-site interviews, each counselor estimated the amount of time spent in each of the service activities defined by TEA. **Exhibit 1-29** shows the estimated time allotments for each campus. WISD counselors focused time and effort in the areas of: (1) System Support that included administrative functions and test related activities; (2) Guidance Curriculum in group sessions; and (3) Responsive Services which included some administrative functions and one-on-one testing. The

EXHIBIT 1-27
WISD
PRIMARY COUNSELING AND GUIDANCE ACTIVITIES BY CAMPUS
2005–06

CAMPUS	GUIDANCE ACTIVITY
Hopper Elementary School	Counselor visits each classroom each day Daily character education class Daily tracking of "frequent fliers" for reward program Good behavior reward programs ARD activities One-to-one services
Sivells Elementary School	Guidance classes in the classroom, every other week ARD meetings
Dawson Elementary School	Guidance classes in the classroom Career awareness Conflict resolution Anger management, bullying, and harassment Peer mediation Social skills through PE Classes (Boys and Girls Town Social Intervention type activities)
Wharton Junior High School	PALS Career units in seventh and eighth grade English classes Interest Inventories Social skills training Conflict resolution – Sunburst curriculum Peer mediation ARD meetings
Wharton High School	Lessons on study skills through English classes four times a year in ninth grade classes ISS class as needed, once according to week (Aggression, bullying, honesty) Alternative class at Wharton Junior High one time a week PALS class ARD meetings

SOURCE: WISD counselors, November 2005.

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

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

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, A Model Comprehensive, Developmental Guidance and Counseling Program for Texas Public Schools, 2004.

counselors did not identify Individual Planning as an area of concentrated time and effort.

As a result of not having district-level coordination of the guidance and counseling program, campus-level programs are not aligned to the standards established in TEA's A Model Developmental Guidance and Counseling Program for Texas Public Schools: A Guide for Program Development Pre-K – 12th Grade. This leads to a lack of uniformity and assurance that the district is providing an appropriate developmental guidance and counseling program to address student needs in all areas of guidance and counseling.

WISD should designate a lead counselor to coordinate the guidance and counseling program. Using the program model and standards established by TEA, the lead counselor should work directly with each counselor to evaluate current practices, determine areas of need, and develop improvement plans for each campus. WISD should schedule regular meetings with all district counselors to discuss issues, align program components, and develop consistency among the campuses in programs, activities, and services. Once the initial program alignment stages are completed, the lead counselor should establish regular meetings with counselors, district administrators, and other school staff to ensure program enhancements and consistency among campuses continues. Necessary communications and program enhancements can occur for all counselors at all schools through program coordination at the district level, professional development programs, and curriculum updates. The lead counselor should report to the assistant

EXHIBIT 1-29
WISD COUNSELORS
PERCENTAGE OF TIME AND EFFORT
DISTRIBUTION OF SERVICES

SERVICE TYPE	HOPPER ELEMENTARY	SIVELLS ELEMENTARY	DAWSON ELEMENTARY	WHARTON JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL	WHARTON HIGH SCHOOL	
					COUNSELOR A	COUNSELOR B
Guidance Curriculum	30% (group)	20% (group)	25% (group)	10% (group)	35–40%	0%
Responsive Services*	20% (testing) 10% (one-on-one)	10% (one-on-one)	25% (one-on-one)	10% (one-on-one)	35–40%	25% (one-on-one)
Individual Planning**						
System Support***	40% (Administrative functions)	30% (Administrative functions) 40% (testing)	30% (Administrative functions) 20% (testing)	40% (Administrative functions) 40% (testing)	20% (Administrative functions) 5% (testing)	25% (Administrative functions) 50% (testing)

*Responsive services were also identified as administrative functions.
**No estimates were provided for planning activities.
*** System Support was identified as administrative functions and testing activities.
SOURCE: WISD counselor group interview, November 2005.

superintendent for Instruction and receive a stipend of $100 per month, as discussed in Recommendation 1 of this chapter.

GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING CURRICULUM (REC. 5)

WISD lacks curriculum guides for counselor use to define and direct the instructional program.

In interviews, district counselors said that the district lacks a curriculum scope and sequence to guide classroom instruction. Approximately 10 to 15 years ago, WISD implemented a counseling curriculum; however, the district did not maintain the document over time, and implementation failed to occur. Since that time, instruction topics have been determined at the campus level without regular coordination with other campus counselors. This lack of a vertical curriculum and consistent program delivery districtwide affects the services students receive as part of the total educational process.

Exhibit 1-30 summarizes the guidance and counseling curriculum topics covered at each WISD campus.

TEA published *A Model Developmental Guidance and Counseling Program for Texas Public Schools: A Guide for Program Development Pre-K–12th Grade* in 2004. Guidance curriculum is the "foundation of a developmental guidance program." TEA's guide identifies seven curriculum content areas for the guidance curriculum:

- Self-confidence Development;

- Motivation to Achieve;

- Decision-making, goal-setting, planning, and problem-solving skills;

- Interpersonal Effectiveness;

- Communication Skills;

- Cross-cultural Effectiveness; and

- Responsible Behavior.

As a result of not having curriculum guides for each elementary and secondary school guidance program, WISD cannot ensure that all schools consistently teach state guidance curriculum recommendations. Without this vertical and horizontal alignment, gaps and redundancies occur in the instruction content for the district's school guidance and counseling programs.

Some school districts create curriculum guides including scope and sequences to support guidance and counseling services delivery to students. Brownsville ISD developed and implemented comprehensive curriculum guides including scope and sequence. The guides define what specific topics the district will teach, when the topics will be included in the instructional calendar, and suggested activities to use. With this framework for instruction, counselors created the lessons they planned to teach in the order defined in the curriculum document.

WISD should develop comprehensive curriculum guides including scope and sequence to define and direct instruction for the guidance and counseling programs for elementary

EXHIBIT 1-30
WISD
GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING UNITS OF STUDY

CAMPUS	UNITS OF STUDY
Hopper Elementary School	Character Education • Citizenship • Responsibility • Compassion • Respect • Honesty • Fairness • Trustworthiness • Self-discipline Getting Along Following Rules School Safety Communication Skills
Sivells Elementary School	Anger Management Conflict Resolution Coping Strategies Study Skills Career Awareness Character Education – Character Counts-Six Pillars of Character Substance Abuse Awareness
Dawson Elementary School	Anger Management Conflict Resolution Study Skills Career Awareness Self-confidence Development Interpersonal Effectiveness Social Skills Fears and Anxieties Harassment Peer Pressure
Wharton Junior High School	*No Information Provided*
Wharton High School	Career Planning Death and Dying Suicide Self Esteem Study Habits Eating Disorders Sexuality Sexually Transmitted Diseases HIV Fitness Abstinence Pregnancy Violence Tobacco Sibling Rivalry Bullying Black History "He said, she said" Controversy

SOURCE: WISD counselors, March 2005.

and secondary students. The assistant superintendent for Instruction and the district counseling staff should follow the guidance curriculum recommendations outlined in the TEA publication: *A Model Developmental Guidance and Counseling Program for Texas Public Schools: A Guide for Program Development Pre-K–12th Grade*, to create curriculum documents. The curriculum guides should include planned lessons covering the recommended seven curriculum content areas. Counselors should include student competencies as the basic framework for curriculum development, and define

student expectations and counseling objectives for WISD students. School counselors can teach all or some of the curriculum through direct instruction, or can consult with teachers who can integrate the curriculum into the classroom. Counselors should design instruction activities and lessons for classroom guidance programs and other counseling groups and programs using the newly developed guides.

The district should budget $3,000 and pay each of the six WISD counselors a one-time payment, net of benefits, of $100 a day, for five days of work performed during summer months to develop curriculum guides (6 counselors x $100 a day x 5 days).

DEVELOPMENT OF AN INDIVIDUALIZED HEALTH PLAN FOR STUDENTS (REC. 6)

WISD does not require the development of an IHP for diabetic students.

Chapter 168.003 of the Health and Safety Code mandates that districts develop an IHP for students diagnosed with diabetes. Interviews by the review team indicated that neither the superintendent nor district officials had communicated this information to the district nurses at the time of the on-site visit by the review team; therefore, WISD has not met the requirements of, and is not in compliance with, the Chapter 168 mandate. House Bill 984 added Chapter 168 to the Health and Safety Code during spring 2005 and requires the following of a school or school district:

> "Upon receiving the student's diabetes management and treatment plan, the school principal, the school nurse (if the campus has a school nurse assigned to the campus), one of the student's teachers, and the student's parents must develop an individualized health plan for the diabetic student if the student will need care for the diabetes while at school or while participating in a school activity. The plan will be developed in collaboration with the student's physician, to the extent practicable. The individualized health plan must incorporate components of the student's diabetes management and treatment plan."

The effective date of this law was June 18, 2005. In meeting the needs of the district's diabetic students, the statute requires that:

> "Each school shall adopt a procedure to ensure that a school nurse or at least one unlicensed diabetes care assistant is present and available for the student's care during the regular school day."

Because WISD did not address the statutory change to the Health and Safety Code in 2005–06, it did not provide the IHPs to students as required. Therefore, campuses were unable to fulfill the state's requirements regarding the health care needs of diabetic students.

The WISD superintendent should fully communicate the requirements of Health and Safety Code, Chapter 168 to district staff to ensure compliance with the statute. The district should develop an IHP for all WISD diabetic students. The Health coordinator should provide information and training related to the development of IHPs for all district nurses. Each campus nurse should develop a system of documentation of IHPs from year to year, and ensure that teachers receive updated information regarding their student's IHPs each year.

HEALTH SERVICES MANUAL (REC. 7)

WISD does not regularly update its Heath Services Procedural Manual to reflect changes in state requirements.

An extensive procedure manual exists for WISD health services, including a comprehensive resource guide that outlines the following:

- Board of Trustee policies;
- administrative policies;
- general procedures;
- health appraisals;
- interagency relationships;
- blood borne pathogen policies;
- standing order from the school consultant;
- immunizations; and
- district-developed forms.

While the district's Health Services Procedural Manual is comprehensive in content, it is not updated annually to reflect changes in state health care requirements for students. At the time of on-site work in November 2005, the Health coordinator was unaware of the state's new requirements regarding diabetic students, and the Health Services Procedural Manual had not been updated since the previous school year.

The district should develop a process to regularly review and update its health services manual. The assistant superintendent for Instruction and the Health coordinator should contact Region 3 and TASB after each legislative session to identify any changes to state law that may affect current district health

procedures. The supervisor should then determine if any training and/or procedures changes are required.

STATE COMPENSATORY EDUCATION (REC. 8)

WISD lacks a centralized process to determine how schools spend SCE funding.

According to the assistant superintendent for Instruction and the director of Federal Programs, there is no central employee responsible in either the Instruction or Special Programs departments to oversee prioritization of supplemental educational programs funded with state SCE allocations to the district. Special Programs has no responsibility for SCE funding.

The state allocates SCE funds to school districts based on the number of students at risk of dropping out of school. The SCE program's purpose is to reduce the dropout rate and increase the academic performance of students identified as being at risk of dropping out of school. SCE provide funds supplemental to the regular educational program. This includes a general allocation to district DAEPs of not more than 18 percent of the total annual SCE allotment. WISD must use the funds to enhance the regular educational program. These funds must not replace or supplant regular funds. Texas funds SCE through the state school finance

formulas based on students identified in the district as at-risk.

Exhibit 1-31 shows WISD's budgeted SCE expenditures and expenditures for the regular instructional program by campus for 2005–06.

The Business manager indicated that WISD budgets SCE funds based on instructional position requests for SCE funded programs received from campuses at the time the district is developing the subsequent year's budget. The supplemental programs are the responsibility of each campus, with the individual campus improvement committees responsible for identifying programs for SCE funding. A review of campus improvement plans indicated that teacher full-time equivalents funded with SCE allocations were included, but there was no clear link in the campus improvement plans between the SCE-funded teacher full-time equivalents and the supplemental programs for at-risk students. Neither Instruction nor Special Programs could provide a listing of SCE-funded supplemental programs at campuses.

Exhibit 1-32 lists the SCE-funded programs provided at each WISD campus.

As a result of WISD's lack of a central process to determine how schools spend SCE funding, the district is at risk of

EXHIBIT 1-31
WISD
CAMPUSES, AT-RISK STUDENTS, AND BUDGETED SCE FUNDING
2005–06

CAMPUS	NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE AT-RISK STUDENTS	SCE FUNDING	SCE EXPENDITURES PER ELIGIBLE STUDENT	NON COMPENSATORY INSTRUCTIONAL FUNDING	TOTAL INSTRUCTIONAL FUNDING	TOTAL ENROLLMENT	TOTAL INSTRUCTIONAL EXPENDITURES PER STUDENT
Wharton High School	276	$209,535	$759	$1,755,418	$1,964,953	636	$3,090
Wharton Junior High School	129	121,448	941	1,133,778	1,255,226	361	3,477
Dawson Elementary School	183	282,553	1,544	912,708	1,195,261	486	2,459
Sivells Elementary School	194	415,367	2,141	978,893	1,394,260	576	2,421
Hopper Elementary School	168	233,832	1,392	451,376	685,208	339	2,021
Total	**950**	**$1,262,735**	**$6,778**	**$5,232,173**	**$6,494,908**	**2,398**	**$13,468**

SOURCE: WISD Business manager, March 2006.

EXHIBIT 1-32
WISD COMPENSATORY EDUCATION PROGRAMS
2005–06

SCHOOL	COMPENSATORY EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES
Hopper Elementary School	• Tutorials • Reading Enhancement Program • Computer Assisted Instruction • Professional Development • Summer School
Sivells Elementary School	• Tutorials • Reading Enhancement Program • Computer Assisted Instruction • Professional Development • Summer School
Dawson Elementary School	• Tutorials • Reading/Mathematics Enhancement Program • Computer Assisted Instruction • Reading Teacher Aide • Professional Development • Summer School
Wharton Junior High School	• Tutorials • Computer Assisted Instruction • Professional Development • ISS • DAEP • Summer School
Wharton High School	• Tutorials • Credit Recovery Program • ISS • DAEP • Professional Development • Summer School

SOURCE: WISD campus principals, November 2005.

noncompliance with program guidelines, including using SCE funds for supplanting rather than supplementing the regular instructional program.

State guidelines require SCE funds be spent on supplemental educational programs for students determined to be at risk of dropping out of school. The criteria for identifying students at risk of dropping out of school can include local criteria approved by the local board of trustees. The number of students served using local criteria is limited. TEA's *Financial Accountability System Resource Guide (FASRG)*, State Compensatory Education module lists the current criteria for identifying students at risk of dropping out of school as each student who is under 21 years of age and who:

- is in pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, or grade 1, 2, or 3 and did not perform satisfactorily on a readiness test of assessment instrument administered during the current school year;

- is in grade 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, or 12 and did not maintain an average equivalent to 70 on a scale of 200 in two or more subjects in the foundation curriculum during a semester in the preceding or current school year or is not maintaining such an average in two or more subjects in the foundation curriculum in the current semester;

- was not advanced from one grade level to the next for one or more school years;

- did not perform satisfactorily on an assessment instrument administered to the student under TEC Subchapter B, Chapter 39, an who has not in the previous or current school year subsequently performed on that instrument or another appropriate instrument at a level equal to at least 11 percent of the level of satisfactory performance on that instrument;

- is pregnant or is a parent;

- has been placed in an alternative education program in accordance with TEC §37.006 during the preceding or current school year;

- has been expelled in accordance with TEC §37.007 during the preceding or current school year;

- is currently on parole, probation, deferred prosecution, or other conditional release;

- was previously reported through the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) to have dropped out of school;

- is an English Language Learner, as defined by TEC §29.052;

- is in the custody or care of the Department of Protective and Regulatory Services or has, during the current school year, been referred to the department by a school official, officer of the juvenile court, or law enforcement official;

- is homeless, as defined by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvement Act of 2001 and its subsequent amendments; or

- resided in the preceding school year or resides in the current school year in a residential placement facility in the district, including a detention facility, substance

abuse treatment facility, emergency shelter, psychiatric hospital, halfway house, or foster group home.

According to TEC §29.081, school districts are required to use student performance data to design and implement appropriate compensatory, intensive, or accelerated instructional services that enable at-risk students to be performing at grade level at the conclusion of the next regular school term. Additionally, each school district is required to evaluate and document the effectiveness of its SCE program in reducing any disparity in performance on assessment instruments, or any disparity in the rates of high school completion between at-risk students and all other district students.

The state requires districts to have written policies and procedures addressing specific aspects of SCE-funded supplemental programs. Districts must describe these supplemental programs in the district improvement plan if implemented districtwide, or in the campus improvement plans if implemented at the campus level. Districts must redirect SCE resources when evaluations indicate that programs and/or services are unsuccessful in producing desired results for students at risk of dropping out of school.

TEA's *FASRG* allows the use of SCE funding to supplement federal Title I program funding on a Title I schoolwide campus. Title I schoolwide campuses are those that have actual low-income student enrollments of 40 percent or greater, based on free- and reduced-lunch eligible students. This option provides additional flexibility for the use of SCE funding in conjunction with Title I funding, and lessens the compliance burdens associated with serving only at-risk students with SCE funds on a stand-alone basis. All five WISD campuses are Title I schoolwide campuses.

WISD should assign the responsibility of central oversight for the use of SCE funding and compliance with program guidelines to the Special Programs Department. This responsibility can be accomplished with the staff that currently works on Title I funding and related compliance. The Special Programs Department should evaluate opportunities for the use of SCE funds to supplement Title I funding at the district's five Title I schoolwide campuses. This will provide enhanced supplemental programs to all district students.

FACILITIES UNRESTRICTED ACCESS (REC. 9)

WISD does not enforce, monitor, and consistently train staff on campus access security procedures.

WISD lacks annual campus access training to reinforce staff awareness of security issues. Many WISD campuses do not have offices with a line of sight view of people entering the building, even through the designated main entrance. Signage does not indicate where the main entrance is at every campus, and it is possible to enter each campus through unlocked doors away from the main entrance.

Among the specific issues affecting the enforcement and monitoring of campus access noted by the review team during a site visit were:

- WISD does not enforce campus access security procedures, although the student handbooks for each campus and signage on doors clearly indicate that visitors should report to the office and get a visitor badge.

  Wharton Junior High: Although a door sign stated that visitors should report to the main office, there was no one in the halls to prevent visitors and students from walking around at will. Once inside the building, there was no way to determine where the office was located.

  Hopper Elementary: Once inside the building it was possible to walk through the entire facility without notice.

  Sivells Elementary: Entrance to the main door was evident with good signage stating "Welcome to Our School. We encourage parents and community to visit our campus. However, for the safety of our students, we require that all visitors register in the office. Thank you for your cooperation in our safe-schools effort to protect your child." Another read "VISITORS: All visitors must report to the School Office Upon Entering the Building Trespassers will be Prosecuted." Although the signage was good, the front office was empty and the review team walked in the front door, through the cafeteria/auditorium, and on through the entire school.

  Dawson Elementary: After walking through the entire campus, no one asked why a review team member was in the building without a visitor badge and with a camera. Even a member of the administration simply gave a greeting.

- Campuses either do not have offices with line of sight to those entering the building even through what they designate as the main entrance, or do not consistently staff their main offices.

Wharton High School: There is no line of sight view of people entering the building from the main office, or any of the other multiple entrances.

Wharton Junior High: There is an unmarked main office immediately to the right as a visitor enters the building. A member of the review team passed by at least four times and was not stopped.

Sivells Elementary: The front office is near the main entrance, but the review team was able to walk through the building without notice because the office was vacant. A reception desk designed to stop people from coming in was not staffed during an initial visit. After the administration was alerted to this, the desk was occupied on a subsequent visit. After the review team member made an attempt to be seen, someone did offer assistance and provided a visitor's pass, but did not request identification. The windows to the main office were covered with decorations making visibility difficult.

Hopper Elementary: The front office is near the main entrance. There was a sign in sheet on a small desk in the front hall, but no one was staffing it and access to the entire building was possible without being stopped. After the on-site visit, the principal said that they "added a bell signaling entry through the front door (the only unlocked entrance) and a camera on the front door and front office with a monitor in the principal's office."

Dawson Elementary: The front office is near the main door, but no one was there or at a small table placed at the front door for visitor sign in. Staff was occupied elsewhere in the main office.

- Signage does not indicate the main entrance into any campus from public streets and to main campus doors.

Wharton High School: This is an open campus, adjacent to Wharton Junior College, surrounded by fields, with public main streets leading onto the campus from different directions. The main entrance is difficult to determine and not clearly identified. Students from both the college and high school drive off their campuses and walk across the fields at lunch. No one stopped the review team from entering the building through many doors, and only one person offered assistance with directions without asking the reason for the visit or suggest reporting to the main office.

Wharton Junior High: The main unmarked entrance to the building was difficult to locate.

Hopper Elementary: Although there is only one main entrance on the front of the building, the review team could not locate it easily.

Sivells Elementary: Entrance to the main door was evident if one drives around the perimeter of campus, but doors near a side parking lot initially appeared to be the way into the school until one gets a close look at the sign alerting visitors to go to the main office, without indicating how to get there.

- It is possible to enter each campus through unlocked doors.

Wharton High School: The campus is sprawling and it was possible to walk into each building from many different directions through unlocked entrances, from multiple covered walkways and parking lots. Most classroom doors opening to the outside of the building were locked, although internal classroom doors were not. One large room with unlocked external doors on both sides contained rows of unlocked lockers where objects could be placed and remain undetected.

Wharton Junior High: The campus consists of two main buildings with multiple floors connected by a hallway, a cafeteria, field house, gym, and band/choir area. All building doors were unlocked. The room next to one unlocked entrance door housed heavy equipment, and immediately next to this door was the girl's restroom, where undetected access from the street was possible. Internal classroom doors were open when vacant, and initially, the doors between buildings were open to the gymnasium/music room. Later during the visit, the doors were closed.

Dawson Elementary: Fencing is adjacent to the gym, with all other buildings on the campus unfenced. An area near a parking lot has a long breeze-way between two buildings. Playgrounds are enclosed by a fence. One entrance was along a pathway connecting the building with the parking lot. There was limited visibility should someone come in through that direction and walk directly into the cafeteria. Leading to the cafeteria building was a hallway. The doors to the Dawson cafeteria were all unlocked from the outside. A staff member walking by said we could use a chair to prop open the door since "everyone else did it." There

were two doors at this location along the hallway to the outside, on either side of the door to the cafeteria. One door was locked and the other unlocked. Several exterior doors were unlocked, permitting access into the entire building.

Hopper Elementary: There is a garden area with a pathway used to go to the unlocked cafeteria entrance between two parts of the building. As you walk along this path, there is a high fence. Although the fence is a deterrent, the cafeteria doors are unlocked even though each teacher carries a key to get back into the building. The possibility exists for someone to climb over the fence and enter the cafeteria.

Sivells Elementary: There were two outside doors (one by the parking lot and one near the gifted/talented room) that could have been opened with a heavy push. On a return visit, only the front door was unlocked, and all other doors were locked. The principal said that a work order had been requested to fix the two questionable doors. According to teachers and staff, this school has made great strides in the area of security. A retired detective works the back door each morning from 7:30 to 8:00 AM so the children can come in that way as a convenience, but absolutely no adults are permitted to come in that way. The visit later in the day did not find that level of security. The principal's past attempts to get parent volunteers to handle the front door were unsuccessful. After the site visit, the decision was made to assign an aide to the front door for the entire day as a security measure. The principal reminds staff to check doors to make sure visitors have closed them, and continues to look at other methods to solve this ongoing challenge.

At the DAEP building, the front door was propped open with a rug. One teacher said it was because the door kept locking and they had to get up to let people into the building. On a visit to the building after hours, access was made through an unlocked side door.

• WISD lacks annual campus access training to reinforce staff awareness.

Campus-specific training is at the discretion of each principal. School provided handbooks for both students and teachers state that visitors must report to the office. It was not evident during campus interviews if the staff received any standard level of training. Only at Sivells

Elementary did the principal say that teachers receive ongoing training, and after the access into the building by the review team, noted that further training would take place.

Comments from stakeholders at the community open house indicate that parents are concerned about the unrestricted access and lack of security on district campuses.

By not enforcing campus access security procedures, clearly indicating the main entrance to each campus, monitoring access, reinforcing policies through training, and locking doors, the district does not address a reasonable expectation of safety by students, staff, and parents.

According to *the Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2005* published jointly by the Bureau of Justice Statistics and National Center for Education Statistics, the proportion of students who reported "that schools lock entrance or exit doors during the day out of concern for student safety increased from 38 percent to 53 percent between 1999 and 2003." During school hours in 1999–2000, "75 percent of schools controlled access to school buildings by locking or monitoring doors." In 2003, over 90 percent of students reported a requirement that visitors sign in. This report is based on information from independent data sources that includes national surveys of students, teachers, and principals, and data collections from federal departments and agencies, including the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Center for Education Statistics, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Katy Independent School District (KISD) uses volunteers at key access points. The volunteers request visitor signatures and issue a visitor badge. Currently, parents and senior citizens volunteer to staff the doors in one-hour shifts. The presence of a visible, volunteer adult is an inexpensive strategy to secure key access points and ensure visitors are clearly identified by a visitor badge. As of 2005–06, KISD is still using this successful and inexpensive approach to campus access security. These volunteers only staff the doors and are not involved in any other aspect of district security.

WISD should control access to district schools by consistently requiring all campuses to adhere to written security procedures. These include clearly identifying one main entrance, locking outside doors, requiring visitors to sign in and get a badge, and regularly training all personnel to be diligent in noticing and addressing strangers wandering through the building.

HIGH SCHOOL OPEN CAMPUS AT LUNCH (REC. 10)

WISD has not reviewed its high school open campus policy with all district stakeholders to determine if the policy creates any safety or academic issues.

The issue of leaving the campus open or closing it encompasses several considerations involving potential conflict, including:

- Student safety - Students with vehicles drive other students off campus. During a site visit, many drivers coming off campus, even with passengers, did not wear seat belts and were talking on cell phones without looking at oncoming cars or crossing pedestrians. Though some students walked across the various streets, most left the parking lot in cars. The Wharton Police Department does not record the accidents specifically related to students, and data is not available to determine if there is a higher rate of accidents during the lunch period.

- Academic assistance during lunch time - Wharton High School students have 30 minutes for lunch. If students leave the campus, this includes the round trip drive or walk time, and purchase and consumption of food. Another period follows the lunch period, which the school encourages students to use for extra academic assistance. During a site visit, students appeared to be using the additional period as a continuation of lunch.

- Business for area merchants - Both the superintendent of WISD and Wharton Police Department police chief said that the local retail merchants who depend upon students for sales would not see closing the high school as a popular decision. No one has actually asked the merchants.

- Parental uncertainty - The superintendent said during interviews that parents who are uncomfortable with the open campus have the right to notify the school that their child cannot leave at lunch. The superintendent believed they would be pleased if the school made the

decision and saved them from being "the bad guy" in the eyes of their children.

- Student monitoring - The opportunity exists for students at any grade level to remain on campus if parents complete the required request. However, multiple exits create difficulty in monitoring and distinguishing between those students with permission and those without.

- Size and supervision of cafeteria - A major concern to WISD is that currently the cafeteria is not capable of providing lunch to all students simultaneously. Supervision during the lunch periods is unavailable as all staff and teachers also take lunch at the same time and often leave the campus.

Beyond just the conflicting points of view about keeping the campus open or closed, district stakeholders exhibit mixed feelings on the subject. **Exhibit 1-33** shows WISD staff and parent responses to a written statement from a review team survey, "The open lunch at the high school is a safety problem," in which 48 percent of teachers, 59 percent of administrative staff, and 33 percent of parents strongly agree or agree with the statement. Between 25 percent and 59 percent expressed no opinion.

Concerns surfaced during a community open house regarding the open campus status of the high school during the lunch period. Stakeholders expressed their concerns that the open campus contributes to drug abuse, discipline problems, and safety issues such as traffic accidents.

As a result of not engaging stakeholders in a process to determine whether the high school campus should remain open, the district delays both the resolution of the issue and determining the true priority of the community.

In Durango, Colorado a task force of students, parents, teachers, school administrators, and community members met in 2004 to make recommendations on whether the high

EXHIBIT 1-33
WISD STAFF AND PARENT SURVEY RESPONSES TO THE STATEMENT
"THE OPEN LUNCH AT THE HIGH SCHOOL IS A SAFETY PROBLEM."

RESPONDENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Support Staff	12%	6%	59%	18%	6%
Teachers	27%	21%	27%	12%	12%
Administrative staff	42%	17%	25%	8%	8%
Parents	8%	25%	33%	17%	17%

Source: Review Team Survey, November 2005.

school should implement a closed-campus policy. The process involved various stages of deliberation where participants could share their opinions and concerns.

WISD should engage all stakeholders to review the high school open campus policy. The district's Board of Trustees should appoint a committee comprised of WISD students, parents, and staff, as well as Wharton community members and business owners to conduct the review process. As part of its work, the committee should survey the community about issues related to an open or closed campus, and hold a community forum where stakeholders can share their opinions and concerns about the issue. By engaging all stakeholders in this review, WISD can decide whether it is in the best interest of the students and community to limit the number of students who leave campus during the school day.

BULLYING (REC. 11)

There is conflicting information and perceptions in WISD regarding the issue of bullying, its accurate reporting and recording at the junior high school and high school levels, and the existing prevention measures to address it.

Wharton High School has two counselors (one for grades 9 and 12, and one for grades 10 and 11). One counselor, speaking on behalf of both, said there is not much bullying at the high school between peer students, but it sometimes occurs against the younger students. The counselors deal with these situations on a case-by-case basis. In the past two years, there have been allegations of bullying, but investigations have proven inconclusive.

Although many responding principals and parents do not believe bullying is a problem, a substantial percentage (29 percent of principals, 37 percent of parents, and 53 percent of teachers) does believe bullying is an issue. Also, 71 percent of students surveyed believe bullying is a problem. **Exhibit**

1-34 shows the response to the survey statement, "Bullying is not a problem in this district."

Minutes of the February 21, 2006, WISD Board of Trustees meeting address the topic of bullying in several sections:

- Under *Citizen Comments*: Safety - "Parents are concerned about bullying of students…nothing is being done to improve this situation."

- Under *Public Hearing*: "In response to questioning about what the district was doing about their bullying problem, the superintendent stated that 'we have counselors on every campus who work with students and also a component of the D.A.R.E. program addresses bullying and helps with social skills.' A request was made for a follow up report regarding bullying at the next board meeting."

Discussions at previous board meetings regarded the topic of PEIMS reporting discrepancies among preliminary data sets available on the Internet. TEA makes this preliminary data available in November, before the release of AEIS reports. At the February 2006 WISD Board of Trustees meeting the board noted that the district reported no fights or assaults for the past school year, and that no fights have appeared on the PEIMS reports since 2002–03. However, both the superintendent and high school principal have stated that fights did occur. The superintendent attributes these discrepancies to out-of-date PEIMS data in Campus Improvement Plans, and the miscoding of campus PEIMS data related to fights during 2004–05.

WISD's *Student Code of Conduct* complies with the TEC §25.0341 definition of bullying that states: Bullying is "engaging in written or verbal expression or physical conduct that a school district Board of Trustees or the board's designee determines:

(1) will have the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student's property, or placing a student in

EXHIBIT 1-34
WISD SURVEY RESPONSES TO THE STATEMENT
"BULLYING IS NOT A PROBLEM IN THIS DISTRICT."

RESPONDENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
Principals	14%	57%	0%	29%	0%	0%
Parents	15%	33%	15%	33%	4%	0%
Teachers	10%	15%	19%	36%	17%	3%
Parents	15%	33%	15%	33%	4%	0%
Students	4%	21%	4%	50%	21%	0%

SOURCE: Review Team Survey, November 2005.

reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or of damage to the student's property; or

(2) is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive enough that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student. Requests by parents or other persons responsible to act on behalf of victims of bullying may request that the "Board of Trustees of a school district or the board's designee shall transfer the victim to another classroom at the campus to which the victim was assigned at the time the bullying occurred; or a campus in the school district other than the campus to which the victim was assigned at the time the bullying occurred." The board is required to verify that a student has been a victim of bullying.

TEC Subtitle G, Safe Schools, Chapter 37, Subchapter A, §37.001 states that the Student Code of Conduct must "prohibit bullying, harassment, and making hit lists and ensure that district employees enforce those prohibitions; and provide, as appropriate for students at each grade level, methods, including options, for: (A) managing students in the classroom and on school grounds; (B) disciplining students; and (C) preventing and intervening in student discipline problems, including bullying, harassment, and making hit lists. This section further explains that each school must have a discipline management program in the district improvement plan under §11.252. "The program must provide for prevention of and education concerning unwanted physical or verbal aggression, sexual harassment, and other forms of bullying in school, on school grounds, and in school vehicles."

Wharton High School Campus Improvement Plan states that "WHS will provide a safe and positive environment conducive to learning by adhering to state and federal safe-school mandates and effective school practices." Prevention programs specifically addressing bullying are not evident.

According to the assistant superintendent of Communications and Public Relations, Alief ISD uses the following programs:
- Bully Free Living for Middle School students;
- Parenting to Prevent Bullying; and
- Bullying: Prevention and Intervention for School Staff.

One of Alief ISD's schools uses a program called Build Respect, Stop Bullying, a computerized program that assesses where the students are in terms of knowledge, action, etc. so that they don't have to sit through instruction they don't need. Students have pamphlets for elementary and intermediate level, and a districtwide prevention program consisting of four levels with various topics. The district trains all parent involvement liaisons on these topics. Parents say they have a better understanding of how to handle and prevent bullying because of this proactive program. The district has fewer incidents of reported bullying cases than in prior years.

Lockhart ISD Junior High School, grades 6, 7, and 8, have one counselor and one assistant principal each that start with one grade and continue with that grade each year. They get to know each student, and thus the groundwork is set to work out conflicts, including bullying, through mediation. Their ground rules include matching one person for one person (so if two children accuse another, only one participates in the meeting with the other); what is said here stays here (you can discuss it with a teacher or parent, but not another student); and be respectful (this is a discussion, not an attack.) At the end of the meeting, they ask each student "What needs to happen to put this behind you?" The support of mediation by the administration encourages students to seek the assistance of adults when conflicts arise.

WISD should create an advisory team to address bullying. The team should consist of counselors, teachers, and parents; its purpose should be to evaluate the degree of bullying at the junior high school and high school campuses, determine if schools are reporting and recording incidents accurately, and select appropriate programs to address the specific issues.

For background information on Chapter 1, Educational Service Delivery and Safety/Security Operations, see page 155 in the General Information section of the Appendices.

FISCAL IMPACT

RECOMMENDATION	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09	2009–10	2010–11	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) SAVINGS	ONE-TIME (COSTS) SAVINGS
CHAPTER 1: EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND SAFETY/SECURITY OPERATIONS							
1. Revise the district's organizational structure to consolidate all the functions associated with student instruction under the assistant superintendent for Instruction.	$0	($98,004)	($98,004)	($98,004)	($98,004)	($392,016)	$0
2. Develop, adopt, and implement a comprehensive curriculum management plan that includes board policies and administrative regulations to direct curriculum delivery and management across the district.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
3. Ensure that all campus libraries maintain appropriate staffing levels in accordance with TSLAC guidelines.	$0	($57,655)	$37,957	$37,957	$37,957	$56,216	$0
4. Designate a lead counselor to coordinate the guidance and counseling program.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
5. Develop comprehensive curriculum guides including scope and sequence to define and direct instruction for the guidance and counseling programs for elementary and secondary students.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	($3,000)
6. Communicate the requirements of Health and Safety Code, Chapter 168 to school district staff to ensure compliance with the statute.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
7. Develop a process to regularly review and update the health services manual.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
8. Assign the responsibility of central oversight for the use of SCE funding and compliance with program guidelines to the Special Programs Department.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
9. Control access to district schools by consistently requiring all campuses to adhere to written security procedures.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0

FISCAL IMPACT (CONTINUED)

RECOMMENDATION	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09	2009–10	2010–11	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) SAVINGS	ONE-TIME (COSTS) SAVINGS
10. Engage all stakeholders to review the high school open campus policy.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
11. Create an advisory team to address bullying.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Totals–Chapter 1	**$0**	**($155,659)**	**($60,047)**	**($60,047)**	**($60,047)**	**($335,800)**	**($3,000)**

CHAPTER 2

DISTRICT MANAGEMENT AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS

WHARTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

CHAPTER 2. DISTRICT MANAGEMENT AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS

District organization and management involves: board members serving as policy makers; the development of goals and policies to guide program initiatives, establish performance expectations, and allocate limited resources; the superintendent and staff using these goals and policies to conduct daily administration of district operations; district and campus planning to ensure synchronized efforts to accomplish these goals; and an efficiently staffed organizational framework to lead programs and departments.

The school board, consisting of seven members, governs the district. Wharton Independent School District (WISD) constituents elect board members at-large to staggered three-year terms. Elections occur annually with a minimum of two and maximum of three board members standing for election each year. **Exhibit 2-1** presents WISD's board members, office held, length of board service, current term of office, profession, and place of business.

Mr. Don Hillis has been with WISD for 29 years, and has served as the district's superintendent since 1997. Prior to his appointment as WISD's superintendent, he served for nine years as assistant principal and four years as principal of Wharton High School, followed by seven years as director of Auxiliary Services. Mr. Hillis' current contract is effective through June 30, 2009. The board evaluates the superintendent annually in January.

Districtwide communications are the responsibility of the director of Personnel and Public Relations. The local newspaper, published twice weekly, is the primary communication tool for district and campus news, including academics and athletics. WISD also communicates through the district website, which features centralized information and a separate link for each campus, and through the district newsletter mailed to 200 homes in May 2005 and to 1,000 homes in October 2005.

Partnerships exist between schools and business and civic organizations and include the donation of goods and funds for school activities, volunteer assistance with campus activities, and mentor/speaker opportunities. WISD's five campuses independently cultivate partnerships with business and civic entities.

EXHIBIT 2-1
WISD BOARD MEMBERS
JANUARY 2006

BOARD MEMBER	OFFICE HELD	LENGTH OF BOARD SERVICE	CURRENT TERM OF OFFICE	PROFESSION	PLACE OF BUSINESS
Mr. Don Erdelt	President (9 years)	12 years, 9 months (since 1993)	May 2005–May 2008	Land/Environmental Superintendent	PSC Phosphate
Mr. Marc Aaronson	Vice President (6 years)	7 years, 9 months (since 1998)	May 2004–May 2007	Manager	Perma Pom, Inc.
Ms. Hazel Hurd	Secretary (15 Years)	21 years, 9 months (since 1984)	May 2005–May 2008	Retired Nurse	N/A
Mr. Billy Bahnsen*	Member	2 years, 9 months (since 2003)	May 2003–May 2006	Owner	Payce Products and Supplies
Mr. Ronnie Bollom	Member	7 years, 9 months (since 1998)	May 2005–May 2008	Building Official	City of Wharton
Mr. Paul Fertsch	Member	1 year, 9 months (since 2004)	May 2004–May 2007	Retired Teacher – Now Office Manager	Bremser Insurance, Inc.
Mr. Coby Frankum**	Member	2 years, 9 months (since 2003)	May 2003–May 2006	Scheduler	Conoco Phillips

*Mr. Billy Bahnsen was re-elected to an additional three-year term on May 13, 2006.
**Mr. Gary Ward was elected to replace Mr. Coby Frankum on May 13, 2006.
SOURCE: Wharton ISD secretary to the superintendent, February 24, 2006.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- WISD operates a Parent/Teacher Resource Center during regular business hours, housed at the Education Support Center, benefiting district staff and the community by providing equipment within close proximity that they may not otherwise have access to.

- WISD's well-organized and effective Title I, Part A program includes a popular school supply giveaway at the beginning of the school year, free parent resources in English and Spanish at well-attended events, parent surveys, and strong community advisory committee participation.

- WISD partners effectively with local businesses and organizations such as Wharton County Junior College (WCJC), the Boys and Girls Club, the local newspaper, and the Gulf Coast Medical Foundation for donations of funds, goods, and services for many campus activities.

- WISD has implemented an Emergency Communication Handbook that is clearly understood by teachers and staff members, reinforced through training, and works efficiently during actual emergencies.

FINDINGS

- WISD's superintendent has not established a formal process for routine communication with administrative staff and principals.

- The WISD Board of Trustees lacks operating procedures to supplement legal and local board policies pertaining to board member authority, board meetings, and related board operating routines and guidelines.

- WISD lacks a process for the timely update of local board policies.

- WISD does not ensure its board members meet the annual Texas Administrative Code (TAC) training requirements, and currently five board members are deficient in their number of training hours earned.

- WISD lacks a plan for effective communication with parents, students, and the community.

- WISD lacks a coordinated program encouraging parents and community members to volunteer in the district.

- WISD lacks an adequate process to track volunteer information.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Recommendation 12: Establish a process to create routine internal communications among administrative staff and campus administrators.** This process should include formal, scheduled meetings with the superintendent and administrative staff, and include a standard agenda. Meetings with campus administrators should be held on a monthly basis. The superintendent should also establish regular meetings of the administrative staff with teacher groups and support staff as part of a formal internal communications process to assist in management information dissemination. In addition, an internal electronic newsletter published every other month could be helpful in establishing an effective internal communications process and open lines of communication between teachers and the superintendent/administrative staff.

- **Recommendation 13: Establish board operating procedures to govern board members individually and collectively.** The board and superintendent should work together to develop the operating procedures in a workshop setting. After the completion of the development process, these parties should review board policies affected by the new procedures, updating these policies as necessary.

- **Recommendation 14: Implement a process for the timely update of local board policies.** The process could begin with a dissemination of local policies to affected campus administrators and district department heads for review. The campus principals and department heads would return the local policies to the policy review committee, and the committee could review for necessary updates, submitting the final suggested policy updates to the superintendent for review and eventual inclusion on a board meeting agenda for approval. The superintendent's secretary could then submit updates through WISD's current TASB policy service for inclusion in both the superintendent's official hard copy and online versions of the manual. A local policy review committee selected by the superintendent consisting of members of the district's administrative staff and campus administrators should perform this task every three years.

- **Recommendation 15: Develop a process to monitor and schedule board members for required annual**

training in accordance with existing district policy based on Texas Administrative Code (TAC) requirements. The superintendent should provide the board with information on continuing education opportunities, especially in the areas in which board members lack the required training hours. The district should ensure that each trustee earns the required training annually.

- **Recommendation 16: Develop a communications plan that includes strategies for external communications with stakeholders.** During the initial phase of the plan's development, meetings should be scheduled between the superintendent and external stakeholders, such as local ministers, senior citizens, and local business and civic organization representatives. These stakeholders can then meet once each semester to provide input on the plan as it progresses.

- **Recommendation 17: Develop a district volunteer plan that promotes parent and community involvement throughout the district.** The superintendent should form a committee including administrators, teachers, parents, and students from secondary schools to develop a volunteer program encouraging families and community members to become active participants in the educational process at WISD. The committee should use TEA's *Parent Involvement Manual* as a guide. The Volunteers in Public Schools (VIPS) coordinator should gather data on the number of volunteer hours by campus. This data should be used to aid in developing regular reports monitoring the progress of stated goals in the community volunteer plan.

- **Recommendation 18: Develop a process to track volunteer activities.** The VIPS coordinator should meet with the Sivells Elementary PTA president and each campus administrator to develop specifications for a volunteer management system. Once the database is established and maintained, the VIPS coordinator should work with the director of Personnel and Public Relations and the local newspaper to communicate the effectiveness of and participation in the volunteer program. The group should partner with the Wharton Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture to plan an annual community volunteer event recognizing individual volunteers at every campus, as well as district-business partnerships.

DETAILED ACCOMPLISHMENTS

PARENT/TEACHER RESOURCE CENTER

WISD operates a Parent/Teacher Resource Center during regular business hours, housed at the Education Support Center, benefiting district staff and the community by providing equipment within close proximity that they may not otherwise have access to.

Originally started in 1992 for WISD staff only, the district has broadened access to the Resource Center and its services to parents, community organizations, and local businesses, including day-care centers, senior citizen centers, churches, local libraries, and the Boys and Girls Club. In addition to individual teachers, school organizations such as Future Farmers of America, Head Start, PTA, and athletic groups take advantage of the equipment and services of the Resource Center. An average of 1,000 people use the facility every year.

The center offers the staff and community use of equipment such as: black-and-white and color copiers, a poster printer, two laminators, overhead projectors, eight die-cut machines and associated supplies, a paper cutter, two computers, one printer, a bookbinder, and a paper-folding machine. A paraprofessional district employee manages the center, assisting users with the equipment during regular business hours Monday through Friday, including answering questions, demonstrating the use of the machines, and fixing small breakdowns.

Additionally, an in-house library provides resources including guidebooks on curriculum, child development, gifted and talented education, remedial education, career and consumer education, parenting, teacher appraisal, staff development, and instructional strategies. WISD takes suggestions from teachers, parents, and other facility users into consideration when materials are ordered annually. The manager's sole function is to administer the Resource Center, assisting with locating and lending the materials.

WISD charges users for supplies, such as paper and laminating film. Charges for campus use of copiers (3 cents per copy) are lower than for personal/community users (5 cents per copy). Those who bring their own supplies and materials avoid charges for use of the equipment. The district uses Title V and Special Education Cooperative funding to update and purchase new equipment yearly.

Access to equipment that most of these civic organizations could not afford is a tremendous service to the community. As the Resource Center reduces the need for WISD staff to travel to Regional Education Service Center III (Region 3) in Victoria, and because the community has access to the equipment, the Resource Center is one of WISD's stellar partnerships with the community.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT THROUGH TITLE I FUNDS

WISD's well-organized and effective Title I, Part A program includes a popular school supply giveaway at the beginning of the school year, free parent resources in English and Spanish at well-attended events, parent surveys, and strong community advisory committee participation.

The WISD Title I Coordinator pooled donations from local business and Title I funds for a Back-to-School school supply giveaway in early August 2005. Nearly 500 parents lined up at the Wharton Civic Center for free school supplies for their children. Translators were available, and each campus sent representatives to give information to and answer questions from parents. The local newspaper attributed the high turnout of parents at the individual campus Back-to-School nights (300 at Dawson Elementary and 160 at Hopper Elementary) to advertising the events at the school supply giveaway.

More than 64 percent of the students in WISD are economically disadvantaged, making them eligible to receive services through Title I, Part A. A comprehensive needs assessment of the district's Title I parent involvement program started with surveys. Approximately 100 parents responded (about 10 percent in Spanish), requesting assistance with teaching reading skills, keeping children away from drugs, and understanding the programs of their child's school. Parent nights at each campus included distribution of free resources in English and Spanish to address these concerns. Such titles include: *Put Reading First, Growing Up Drug Free,* and *Helping Your Child Succeed in School.*

The Title I, Part A Advisory Committee comprises 16 parents representing Wharton High School, Wharton Junior High School, and Dawson and Sivells Elementary schools. This committee displays a broad, informed view of the Title I, Part A program in WISD, and reflects a willingness to be involved in the schools. The committee meets twice yearly to review the district's Title I, Part A plan, make revisions, and address concerns.

BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS

WISD partners effectively with local businesses and organizations such as Wharton County Junior College (WCJC), the Boys and Girls Club, the local newspaper, and the Gulf Coast Medical Foundation for donations of funds, goods, and services for many campus activities.

WISD and WCJC maintain a unique partnership. Beginning with the summer before their senior year, students may take dual credit courses at WCJC where they earn course credit toward both high school and college graduation requirements. High school administrators allow flexibility in students' schedules to allow for participation in college courses so that a Wharton High School senior can graduate with several hours of college credit. In its strategic plan, WCJC vows to cooperate with districts, vocational/technical schools, and other colleges and universities to promote a more productive educational environment within its service region.

In addition, WCJC provides personnel to administer scholarships to, and track students participating in, the Special Friends program for at-risk students. A community member created the Special Friends program in 1991, providing an endowment to challenge all at-risk students in the 5th grade class at Dawson Elementary. The goal of the program is to provide scholarships to at-risk students so they can attend college or trade school and become productive citizens. To be eligible for a scholarship, the student must remain in school, not be involved in drugs or any illegal activity, and show improvement in grades and citizenship. A total of 8 groups of students have participated in this program since it program began in 1991. Upon graduation, the students have five years to use the scholarship.

WCJC shares athletic facilities with WISD. The junior college uses WISD's baseball fields and in turn, WISD uses the junior college tennis facilities.

A cooperative arrangement between WISD and the local Boys and Girls Club benefits students with shared transportation and after school care. District buses deliver students to the Boys and Girls Club after school every day where they play games, have opportunities for exercise, and do their homework in a safe and climate-controlled environment until their parents pick them up. Some 200 students receive after-school care daily through the Boys and Girls Club. The effort grew out of an after-school Drug Abuse Resistance Education program (commonly known as D.A.R.E.). The superintendent served on the planning

committee for the partnership, which gathered local financial support for the effort.

The community's twice-weekly newspaper is the district's primary form of communication. Each campus is encouraged to contribute news features and photos regularly. The bulk of the newspaper's reports are school news, from athletics and calendars to student recognition and district news. While parents and community members complained in focus groups with district stakeholders during on-site work about weak communication from the district to the community, they all agreed that the newspaper was the primary vehicle for communicating district events and news to the community.

Approximately 10 years ago, WISD received a $40,000 grant from the Gulf Coast Medical Foundation and established a Family Crisis fund to assist needy children with medical care. The district invested the funds to generate additional funds. The WISD nurse coordinator administers the Family Crisis fund, which pays for clinic visits and medicines for children whose parents have no insurance and are unable to afford medical care. Parents must sign a consent form for treatment and establish a need for assistance.

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION HANDBOOK

WISD has implemented an Emergency Communication Handbook that is clearly understood by teachers and staff members, reinforced through training, and works efficiently during actual emergencies.

WISD has realized the importance of preparation in immediate response to emergencies. The director of Personnel and Public Relations drafted the initial quick reference emergency procedures document which was subsequently reviewed by campus personnel and adopted as the district's Emergency Communication Handbook. This 6.5 X 9 inch 3-ring binder is an abbreviated version of the full emergency procedures guide distributed to each principal and assistant principal. Each year during teacher in-service orientation prior to the start of the school year, WISD distributes Emergency Communication Handbooks to each new teacher and staff member, and provides dated, easy to replace, revised pages to all current staff. The handbook serves as the crisis communication reference for the district. Principals have the responsibility of clearly explaining roles and responsibilities to their staff at the in-service orientation and communicating with their staff during an emergency.

All personnel interviewed were able to locate their copy of the Emergency Communication Handbook and understood the contents. The superintendent keeps an extra copy of the handbook in his car and believes in the need to execute drills until response in a crisis becomes automatic.

Exhibit 2-2 shows the topics included in the WISD Emergency Communication Handbook, updated August 2005.

The handbook notes that some of the components of an effective plan include gathering the team together, checking the facts, and adapting the plan to fit the current crisis. The April 6, 2006 edition of the local Wharton newspaper featured an article entitled *Planning is Key to Safe Schools,* stated that WISD "….relies upon an Emergency Communication Handbook to dictate response of school staff to dozens of scenarios. The document outlines chain of command, a list of bus drivers for evacuations, proper notification methods and other pertinent information." It goes on to note that "In February, the school board adopted a state-mandated emergency operations handbook that addresses coordination between the district and local emergency response agencies."

Although regular drills are held throughout each school year, the district was able to test their emergency planning process during an actual telephone bomb threat in November 2005, targeted at all campuses, and initiating a districtwide facility evacuation. The superintendent was at the Region 3 service center in Victoria at the time. In his absence, the assistant superintendent for Instruction and the director of Personnel and Public Relations split up to cover Dawson and Hopper elementary schools, the schools with the least experienced principals. Fourteen Wharton city police officers responded to the threat and worked with maintenance personnel to search all campus facilities. Within one hour the police had traced the phone call and apprehended two juvenile suspects.

Each student in the district received a letter to take home to their parents explaining the situation, noting that the school had been evacuated, the police were notified, and a thorough search determined the threat to be a hoax.

At the time of the incident the district had already determined the need to improve their communication system. WISD's existing automatic identification and notification calling system is old, and not designed to communicate during a

EXHIBIT 2-2
WISD'S EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION HANDBOOK TOPICS
AUGUST 2005

TOPIC	CONTENTS	
Getting Prepared	Actions	
Purpose		
District Team	Emergency Numbers District Emergency Communication Team	Activation Procedures Media Procedures

Campus Team	Procedures Checklist
	How to Select Your Campus Crisis Team
	School Emergency Procedure Plan
	Effective Plan Components and Staff Rules
	Who's In Charge when the Principal is Away
	Responsibilities of School Administrators
	   during Disasters
		Communication Procedures for Person
		   in Charge of Facility
		Communication Guidelines
		Alternate School Locations
		Checklist for Principal
		Teacher Checklist for Any Emergency
		Checklist for Custodians

Emergencies	Emergency Bus Driver List Maintenance Communication Chain Allergic Reaction Bomb and Telephone Threats, and Demonstrations Telephone Threat Report Form Weapons of Mass Destruction Terrorism Child Abuse Reporting Clean Up Body Fluids Demonstrations Fire or Explosions	Tornado Warning Hazardous Material Emergency Kidnapping Life Threatening Emergency to Individuals Loitering or Strangers on Campus Major Gas Leak Medication Overdose Sexual Harassment/Sexual Abuse of Students Swimming Pool Accidents Weapons/Student Searches Weather - Closing of Schools

Bus Emergencies	Bus and Auto Accidents
	   and Precautionary Measures
	Procedures to Follow if Involved in a Bus Accident
		Bus Accident with Serious Injuries
		   and/or Fatalities
		Bus Failure

Death/Suicide	Death at School Suicide Procedures (Threat) Completed Suicide After School Hours	Completed Suicide During Hours Suicide Attempt During School Hours

SOURCE: Wharton ISD Emergency Communication Handbook, updated August 2005.

crisis. It was used historically to send a message alert to families about meetings or other nonemergencies. Feedback following this incident confirmed that parents agreed about the importance of contacting all parents immediately during emergencies. This confirmed for the district that an advanced system was vital. Rapid communication with parents provides comfort in crisis and eliminates inaccurate information and speculation.

To address these concerns, and in an effort to improve their emergency alert system on an immediate districtwide basis, WISD selected the Immediate Response Information System (IRIS), a high-speed automated contact system used successfully by other districts, including Houston ISD. The system sounds an alert message to thousands of recipients in only 30 seconds. Parents can receive routine, priority, and emergency messages by regular telephone, cell phone, pager, fax, wireless PDA device, or email. Since there is no installation required and the system can operate from any telephone or internet connection, it offers flexibility and cost

effectiveness. In the event of computer failure or other inability to access a computer, district leadership contacts the vendor toll-free from any telephone or cell phone to have an adviser immediately issue the message alert.

Exhibit 2-3 illustrates the implementation steps WISD is following to initiate the system.

According to the vendor, the system has the capacity to send the alerts in 10 different languages and, as an extra safeguard, record the exact time the message was sent and when each person received the message. Suggested examples of nonemergency notification possibilities include:

- changes in school hours;
- holiday closings;
- weather closings;
- maintenance closings;
- traffic advisories;
- sports schedules and cancellations;
- school academic ratings achievements;

EXHIBIT 2-3
WISD
EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION SYSTEM IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

STEP	ACTION	CONTENT
1	Organize Database	Includes members within the school, emergency response teams, and the community at large.
2	Input Data	Upload participant data such as: phone pager and fax numbers and email addresses into database.
3	Test Operation	Vendor conducts tests to ensure all functions work properly.
4	Train Users	Designated administrators/users are trained.
5	Monitor and Update	Vendor monitors service 24/7/365.

SOURCE: Immediate Response Information System (IRIS) content information.

- exam schedules;

- absent and tardy student notifications;

- PTA and Parent Teacher Organizations (PTO) meetings;

- parent and teacher conferences; and

- school events.

DETAILED FINDINGS

MANAGEMENT COMMUNICATIONS (REC. 12)

WISD's superintendent has not established a formal process for routine communication with administrative staff and principals.

WISD administrative staff includes the assistant superintendent for Instruction, the director of Federal Programs, the Business manager, the director of Personnel and Public Relations, the director of Auxiliary Services, and the director of Technology. Based on interviews with the administrative staff, the superintendent meets with them irregularly in informal one-on-one sessions with no formal agenda. Similarly, interviews with principals indicated that there are no regularly scheduled meetings with the superintendent and campus administrators.

The lack of internal communications include the following results, noted by the review team:

- District nurses were not aware of new statutory requirements that went into effect on June 18, 2005, regarding students with diabetes.

- When the review team looked into community use of facilities, none of the administrative staff, including the director of Personnel and Public Relations, the Business manager, the superintendent's secretary, and the Athletic director, were certain who was responsible for this function.

- The WISD administrative staff consistently exhibited a general lack of knowledge concerning the location

of, and positions responsible for, needed information requested by the review team during on-site work.

The lack of planned and routine communications between the superintendent, administrative staff, and principals can result in employees feeling frustration, experiencing job dissatisfaction, and being unable to perform their jobs effectively.

In Hays CISD (HCISD), the superintendent has a formal, scheduled Monday morning meeting with executive staff. Each executive team member adds items to the formal agenda throughout the week. The superintendent meets with all principals, directors, and coordinators monthly. The agenda seldom varies and includes department updates on responsibilities and events, review of board meeting matters, and discussion of any other pertinent topics. The HCISD superintendent also meets the morning after each board meeting with a teacher representative of each campus to review the meeting and answer questions the teachers bring from their campuses.

WISD should establish a process to create routine internal communications among administrative staff and campus administrators. This process should include formal, scheduled meetings with the superintendent and administrative staff, and include a standard agenda. Meetings with campus administrators should be held on a monthly basis. The superintendent should also establish regular meetings of the administrative staff with teacher groups and support staff as part of a formal internal communications process to assist in management information dissemination.

In addition, an internal electronic newsletter published every other month could be helpful in establishing an effective internal communications process and open lines of communication between teachers and the superintendent/administrative staff. The newsletter could have formal

sections and solicit news contributions or information about fellow teachers and employees. The newsletter could be emailed to all district employees, as well as printed and posted on the bulletin boards of the transportation office, at each campus cafeteria office, and on the internal bulletin boards of each campus.

BOARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (REC. 13)

The WISD Board of Trustees lacks operating procedures to supplement legal and local board policies pertaining to board member authority, board meetings, and related board operating routines and guidelines.

Interviews with board members and the superintendent indicated that in the past few years, the board has experienced operations problems between and among the superintendent and certain board members that caused disruption of both the board meeting process and administrative activities. Examples include:

- Numerous information requests by a board member to the WISD administrative staff.

- Complaints lodged by a board member to state agencies, such as TEA, the Legislative Budget Board, and the Attorney General when information or operating procedures appeared to be in question.

- Receipt by the superintendent of communications from state agencies directing certain actions based on board member complaints.

- One board member conducted a meeting with teachers and community members without the consent of the board.

- A board member wrote a letter to the editor of the local newspaper, which was published, urging citizens to vote against the February 2006 bond issue, without the knowledge of the other board members.

WISD Policy BBE (LOCAL) precludes individual board members from committing the board on any issue without board authorization. The policy also precludes board members as individuals from exercising authority over the district, its property, or its employees. Except for appropriate duties and functions of the board president, an individual member may act on behalf of the board only with the express authorization of the board. While the district does have local and legal policies in place pertaining to board member authority, board meetings, and related board operating routines and guidelines, the board does not have defined operating procedures for board members to follow in

determining how to perform their responsibilities as members of the district's governing body.

District records revealed that, beginning in May 2003, one board member has made a number of public information requests for district information despite the fact that WISD Policies BBE (LEGAL) and (LOCAL) provide for board member access to district information without using the public information request process. These requests have created general discord between and among the district administrative staff and board members.

According to the superintendent, the board member's requests became an issue due to the volume of information requested, and the time it was taking district staff to compile the information. The board met in executive session to discuss this situation and directed the board member to be more selective in the requests, and to stop asking for so much information on such a frequent basis. The superintendent also stated that other members of the school board felt that much of the information being requested by the board member was not pertinent to any board issue, and that the information requests were excessive and without merit.

These instances as noted by the review team are in conflict with team building concepts required in annual training for board members. The Texas Association of School Boards' (TASB) team building training, designed to meet State Board of Education annual training requirements, includes the following topic areas:

- Leadership Team Transition;

- Facilitated Team Self-Assessment;

- Understanding Personality Differences;

- ETHICS for Leadership Teams;

- Developing a Shared Vision for Governance Leadership;

- Districtwide Goal Setting;

- Identifying Superintendent Performance Goals;

- Developing Board-Superintendent Team Operating Procedures; and

- Solving Problems and Making Decisions as a Team.

The WISD board has only the formal board policies in place to govern board members individually and collectively. The lack of defined operating procedures for board members to follow in performing their fiduciary responsibilities as members of the district's governing body results in disruption of the governance function at both the board and administrative levels of WISD.

WISD Policies BBE (LEGAL) and (LOCAL) govern the right of access to district information by board members. Policy BBE (LEGAL) allows individual board members, in their official capacity as public officers entrusted with governing and overseeing the management of the district, an inherent right of access to records maintained by the district, under board policies and specifically Policy BBE (LOCAL).

Policy BBE (LEGAL) allows access to records pertaining to district fiscal affairs, business transactions, governance, and personnel matters, including information that may be properly withheld from members of the general public in accordance with Chapter 552 of the Texas Government Code. When a custodian of records other than the superintendent provides access to records or copies of records to individual board members, the provider is required to inform the superintendent of the records provided. Individual board members are not permitted to direct or require district employees to prepare reports derived from an analysis of information in existing

district records, or to create a new record compiled from information in existing district records. Directives to the superintendent or custodian of records regarding the preparation of reports are to be by board action only.

Policy BBE (LOCAL) requires that at the time the district provides board members access to confidential records or to reports compiled from such records, the superintendent or other district employee shall advise them of their responsibility to comply with confidentiality requirements. Individual board members do not have access to confidential student records unless the member is acting in his or her official capacity, and has a legitimate educational interest in the records in accordance with Policies FL (LEGAL) and (LOCAL) relating to student records.

WISD Policy BBF (LOCAL) - Board Members: Ethics covers standards to be followed by board members in dealing with the district issues and in working together as a team. **Exhibit 2-4** illustrates the standards to which WISD board members

EXHIBIT 2-4
WISD ETHICS STANDARDS
POLICY BBF (LOCAL)
MARCH 2006

ETHICAL STANDARD	STANDARD COMPONENTS
Equity in Attitude	• I will be fair, just, and impartial in all my decisions and actions. • I will accord others the respect I wish for myself. • I will encourage expressions of different opinions and listen with an open mind to others' ideas.
Trustworthiness in Stewardship	• I will be accountable to the public by representing District policies, programs, priorities, and progress accurately. • I will be responsive to the community by seeking its involvement in District affairs and by communicating its priorities and concerns. • I will work to ensure prudent and accountable use of District resources. • I will make no personal promise or take private action that may compromise my performance or my responsibilities.
Honor in Conduct	• I will tell the truth. • I will share my views while working for consensus. • I will respect the majority decision as the decision of the Board. • I will base my decisions on fact rather than supposition, opinion, or public favor.
Integrity of Character	• I will refuse to surrender judgment to any individual or group at the expense of the District as a whole. • I will consistently uphold all applicable laws, rules, policies, and governance procedures. • I will not disclose information that is confidential by law or that will needlessly harm the District if disclosed.
Commitment to Service	• I will focus my attention on fulfilling the Board's responsibilities of goal setting, policymaking, and evaluation. • I will diligently prepare for and attend Board meetings. • I will avoid personal involvement in activities the Board has delegated to the Superintendent. • I will seek continuing education that will enhance my ability to fulfill my duties effectively.
Student-Centered Focus	• I will be continuously guided by what is best for all students of the District.

Source: Wharton ISD Online Board Policy, March 2006.

should adhere in promoting the best interests of the district as a whole and in working together as a governing board. This policy was last updated in June 2000.

Cedar Hill ISD (CHISD) has taken steps to establish definite areas for board operating procedures to govern board members individually and collectively. **Exhibit 2-5** presents areas that CHISD considered during this process. Such operating procedures are often the key to effective boards and effective board/staff relationships.

WISD should establish board operating procedures to govern board members individually and collectively. The board and superintendent should work together to develop the operating procedures in a workshop setting. After the completion of the development process, these parties should review board policies affected by the new procedures, updating these policies as necessary.

LOCAL BOARD POLICY UPDATES (REC. 14)

WISD lacks a process for the timely update of local board policies.

Policy BF (LOCAL) requires WISD to have board-adopted written policies available and accessible to staff members, parents, students, and community residents. These include legal policies which contain provisions from federal and state statutes and regulations, case law, and other legal authority that together form the framework for local decision making and implementation, and local policies that are specific to WISD, but within legal guidelines.

These legal and local policies are available through the WISD website as part of a contractual arrangement with TASB. This arrangement includes the TASB Policy Online service, an Internet-based tool for delivering district policy to board members, school administrators, teachers, and parents. By subscribing to this service, WISD also receives periodic updates to legally referenced policies as laws and regulations change, and when applicable due to legal requirements, updates to locally referenced policies. The TASB service also includes locally referenced policy samples for the district to review for conformity to selected local practices. The locally referenced policies updated by the district are also included on the Policy Online service as submitted to TASB by WISD when the district creates or updates the local policies.

Policy BF (LOCAL) allows the initiation of policies and policy updates by the superintendent, board members, school personnel, or community citizens. The superintendent

recommends policies and policy updates for the Board of Trustees' consideration and ultimate approval. The WISD board adopts or updates local policies through approval at regular or special board meetings. Local policies become effective upon board adoption, or at a future date designated by the board at the time of adoption. The district then incorporates board-approved legal and local policies into the official WISD policy manual. Although WISD considers the official policy manual to be the copy kept in the superintendent's office, the superintendent's secretary said that it is the same as the online policy manual, available through the district's website.

According to the superintendent's secretary, who coordinates the TASB policy services for the district, the superintendent reviews new and updated policies from TASB, and submits them to the board for approval. The superintendent's secretary informs administrative staff and principals of new and updated board-approved policies through reference to the online policy website, or in some cases, by sending the new policies and updates to district departments and campuses manually. Administrative staff and principals are responsible for disseminating new and updated policies to department and campus staff. There is no formal process on an annual or other basis for the district's administrative staff and school board to review new, updated, and existing local board policies.

The review team found that a number of local board policies did not reflect actual practice. When the review team discussed two of the local policies with WISD administrative staff, the administrative staff was not aware of certain portions of the policies' content.

The first instance involved compliance with Policy BQA (LOCAL), Planning and Decision-Making Process: District-Level. This local policy requires the district-level planning committee to meet at least six times per year. When reviewing this policy with district administrators, many were not aware of the requirement. When the review team asked WISD administrators how many times the district-level planning committee met, it was reported that the committee meets at least twice per year, once in the fall and once in the spring. In reviewing the contents of Policy BQA (LOCAL), the review team found that WISD last updated the policy in September 1996.

The second instance involved the contents of Policy FEE (LOCAL), Attendance: Open/Closed Campus. During interviews, WISD administrators stated that the high school

EXHIBIT 2-5
AREAS OF CEDAR HILL ISD BOARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

PROPOSED OPERATING PROCEDURE	ELEMENTS WITHIN THE PROCEDURE
Developing board meeting agenda	Who can place an item on the agenda? What should or should not be included on the agenda? Use of consent agenda.
Member conduct during board meetings	Issue raised in open forum but not on agenda. Issue raised in open forum and on agenda. Discussion of employee performance (board/audience). Hearings and/or open forum. Point of personal privilege.
Split votes	In matters of legal principal. In matters of moral principal. In matters of major disagreement. In matters of personal preference.
Individual board member request for information or report	
Guidelines for reports to the board	Format, time limit, questions and answers, etc.
Citizen request/complaint to individual board member	
Employee request/complaint to individual board member	
Board member visit to school campus	
Communications	Superintendent/board and board/superintendent Superintendent/community Board/community
Evaluation of the superintendent	
Evaluation of the board	
Criteria and process for selecting board members	
Role/authority of board officers	
Board travel guidelines	
Campaigning for re-election	Support from employees Support from other board members
Goal-setting	When, term, how relates to program review, etc.

SOURCE: Cedar Hill ISD superintendent, February 2006.

was the only open campus in the district for lunch. A review of this policy in the WISD Online Board Policy Manual found that all campuses were open lunch campuses. The policy states "Students in all grades shall be permitted to leave campus during lunch." WISD last updated this local policy in December 2002. In reviewing this policy with the superintendent, the review team noted that the WISD school board had updated the policy on March 20, 2003 to reflect that high school was the only open lunch campus, but WISD had never submitted the change in the WISD Online Board Policy Manual.

Upon further review of WISD's local governance policies, the review team found that 12 of the 25 local board policies included in the local government section of the policy manual, Section B, have not been updated since 2000 or earlier **(Exhibit 2-6)**. This includes Policy BQA (LOCAL)

that requires the district-level committee to meet at least six times per year.

WISD organizes board policies in the Online Policy Manual in seven sections designated by letters A through G **(Exhibit 2-7)**. Within these sections, legally referenced board policies include the term (LEGAL), and locally referenced board policies include the term (LOCAL) after the individual policy reference letters. Exhibits supplementing referenced board policies include the term (EXHIBIT) after the individual policy reference letters.

A review of the 6 remaining board policy manual sections revealed that of WISD's 163 local board policies, including those listed in **Exhibit 2-6**, the district has not updated almost 40 percent, or 62 local board policies, since 2000 or earlier. WISD adopted some of these local policies in the 1980s, with one policy dated April 1980 **(Exhibit 2-8)**.

As a result of not having a process for the timely update of local board policies, WISD is not keeping its local policies up-to-date with changes in district practices and statutory requirements.

Katy ISD (KISD) performs local board policy updates every three to five years by contracting with a consultant to oversee the local policy review and update process. This process includes the dissemination of local board policies to affected department heads and campus principals in January. The department heads and campus principals review these policies, providing their comments and suggesting changes to the consultant by May. The consultant then reviews and accumulates suggested changes to local board policies, and reports these to the superintendent and executive management. After reviewing the suggested changes to local board policies included in the consultant's report, the superintendent submits final changes and updates to the policies to the board for review and eventual approval at a board meeting. KISD then incorporates the updates into the official board policy manual.

WISD should implement a process for the timely update of local board policies. A local policy review committee selected by the superintendent consisting of members of the district's administrative staff and campus administrators should perform this task every three years.

The process could begin with a dissemination of local policies to affected campus administrators and district department heads for review. The campus principals and department heads would return the local policies to the policy review committee, and the committee could review for necessary updates, submitting the final suggested policy updates to the superintendent for review and eventual inclusion on a board meeting agenda for approval. The superintendent's secretary could then submit updates through WISD's current TASB policy service for inclusion in both the superintendent's official hard copy and online versions of the manual.

The superintendent's secretary should also review the policy manual in the superintendent's office routinely to ensure that the online and hard copy versions contain the same information. Another option would be to update Policy BF (LOCAL) to designate the online version as the official district policy manual, eliminating the need to focus on two sets of information.

As part of this recommended process and the district's contract with TASB, the district could request that TASB, in coordination with the review every third year, give a local policy review seminar to assist in reviewing and updating of local board policies. The local policy review seminar should include a comprehensive review of the policies to ensure that they are up-to-date and consistent with changing local priorities, resources, and conditions, as well as a local

EXHIBIT 2-6
WISD
LOCAL GOVERNANCE BOARD POLICIES
LAST UPDATED IN 2000 OR EARLIER
FEBRUARY 2006

BOARD POLICY REFERENCE	BOARD POLICY TITLE	DATE LAST UPDATED
BAA (LOCAL)	Board Legal Status: Powers And Duties	August 24, 1992
BJCD (LOCAL)	Superintendent: Evaluation	November 24, 1993
BF (LOCAL)	Board Policies	April 10, 1996
BJA LOCAL)	Superintendent: Qualifications And Duties	April 10, 1996
BQA (LOCAL)	Planning And Decision-Making Process: District-Level	September 16, 1996
BQB (LOCAL)	Planning And Decision-Making Process: Campus-Level	September 16, 1996
BBB (LOCAL)	Board Members: Elections	August 25, 1997
BP (LOCAL)	Administrative Regulations	October 6, 1998
BJCD (EXHIBIT)	Superintendent: Evaluation	August 25, 1999
BJCF (EXHIBIT)	Superintendent: Non-Renewal	February 22, 1999
BBE (LOCAL)	Board Members: Authority	June 22, 2000
BBF (LOCAL)	Board Members: Ethics	June 22, 2000

Source: Wharton ISD Online Board Policy Manual, February 2006.

EXHIBIT 2-7
WISD
BOARD POLICY MANUAL CONTENTS
FEBRUARY 2006

BOARD POLICY MANUAL SECTIONS	BOARD POLICY MANUAL SECTION TITLES	POLICIES PERTAINING TO:	INDIVIDUAL BOARD POLICIES INCLUDED IN SECTION
A	Basic District Foundations	The legal status of the board and district as well as geographic information for district boundaries	AA through AF
B	Local Governance	All board activities, board meeting requirements, district planning requirements, and superintendent duties	BA through BR
C	Business and Support Services	General business and related management practices	CAA through CVF
D	Personnel	Personnel practices and related management activities	DAA through DPB
E	Instruction	Student instruction, special education and all related matters	EB through EMI
F	Students	Student attendance, admissions and related matters	FB through FP
G	Community and Governmental Relations	Public information and relations with other entities	GA through GRA

SOURCE: Wharton ISD Online Board Policy Manual, February 2006.

EXHIBIT 2-8
WISD
ALL LOCAL BOARD POLICIES
LAST UPDATED IN 2000 OR EARLIER
FEBRUARY 2006

BOARD POLICY MANUAL SECTION	LOCAL POLICIES UPDATED EARLIER THAN 2000/ TOTAL LOCAL POLICIES ON FILE
Basic District Foundations	0/3
Local Governance	12/25
Business and Support Services	13/27
Personnel	13/38
Instruction	12/27
Students	10/33
Community and Governmental Relations	2/10
Total	**62/163**

SOURCE: Wharton ISD Online Board Policy Manual, February 2006.

workshop on the contents and use of the board policy manual. The cost to the district for the policy review seminar would be $1,800 every third year, beginning in 2007–08.

BOARD TRAINING (REC. 15)

WISD does not ensure its board members meet the annual Texas Administrative Code (TAC) training requirements, and currently five board members are deficient in their number of training hours earned.

The WISD superintendent's secretary maintains board training records. No district employee has been designated as responsible for notifying board members regarding the number of training hours earned as compared to the number required by Title 19, Part 2, Chapter 61, Rule 61.1 of the TAC. In addition to the TAC requirements, the district's Policy BBD (LEGAL) specifies the number of required annual board training hours. WISD uses the resources of Region 3 and TASB for most training activities.

Board minutes for the January 17, 2006 board meeting reflect that the WISD board president announced that all board members are in compliance with the training hours required of board members. However, WISD board training records indicate that five board members are deficient in training hours by area of required training.

The TAC requires board members to complete specified training on an annual basis. Orientation sessions, team building sessions including all board members and the superintendent, and specified hours of continuing education are all part of the training requirements. New members are required to receive a local orientation within 60 days of joining the board, and an orientation to the Texas Education Code (TEC) within one year of election or appointment to the board. The TEC orientation is delivered by the Regional Education Service Centers (ESCs), and should be three hours in length. After every legislative session, each board member must obtain an update on the TEC, incorporating main changes in the code. The entire board must participate

annually with the superintendent in a team building session to enhance the effectiveness of the board-superintendent team.

A board member is required to receive at least sixteen hours of continuing education in the first year, and a minimum of eight hours of continuing education during each subsequent year of service. Starting in January 2006 in accordance with the Texas Government Code §551.005 and Regular 552.012, board members, along with all Texas elected officials, are required to have 1 hour of training annually on open meetings requirements and, if required by board policy, annual training on public information access to district records and information. Training can be obtained through TASB, ESCs, the district, or other approved service providers. **Exhibit 2-9**

provides an overview of continuing education requirements for board members.

Exhibit 2-10 lists WISD board members' compliance with training requirements from January 1998 through January 2006, an 8-year period. Based on this information, in comparison to required training hours, the board president is deficient in total hours and required hours for both Tiers Two and Three training during the period. Three other board members are deficient in Tier Two training for the period, including the board's vice president and secretary, and one board member is deficient in Tier One training.

Along with the orientation and team building training sessions, all board members must obtain additional

EXHIBIT 2-9
TEXAS ADMINISTRATIVE CODE
CONTINUING EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS FOR SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

TIER ONE TRAINING REQUIREMENTS		
CATEGORY OF CONTINUING EDUCATION	**FIRST-YEAR BOARD MEMBER**	**EXPERIENCED BOARD MEMBER**
Local District Orientation	Required within 60 days of election or appointment	Not required
Orientation to the Texas Education Code	Three hours	Not required
Update to the Texas Education Code	Incorporated into Orientation to the Texas Education Code	After legislative session and of "sufficient length" to address major changes
TIER TWO TRAINING REQUIREMENTS		
CATEGORY OF CONTINUING EDUCATION	**FIRST-YEAR BOARD MEMBER**	**EXPERIENCED BOARD MEMBER**
Team building Session/Assessment of Continuing Education Needs of the Board-Superintendent Team	At least three hours	At least three hours
TIER THREE TRAINING REQUIREMENTS		
CATEGORY OF CONTINUING EDUCATION	**FIRST-YEAR BOARD MEMBER**	**EXPERIENCED BOARD MEMBER**
Additional Continuing Education, based on assessed need and Framework for School Board Development	At least 10 hours	At least five hours
CONTINUING EDUCATION REQUIRED OF ALL ELECTED PUBLIC OFFICIALS EFFECTIVE 01/01/06*		
CATEGORY OF CONTINUING EDUCATION	**FIRST-YEAR BOARD MEMBER**	**EXPERIENCED BOARD MEMBER**
Open Meetings Training*	1 hour required within 90 days of election or appointment	1 hour Officials in office before 01/01/06 have until 01/01/07 to complete.
Public Information Act Training (Boards may delegate this training to the district's public information coordinator)*	If required by Policy BBD (LOCAL)	If required by policy BBD (LOCAL)
Total Minimum Number of Hours Annually	**At least 16 hours, plus local district orientation**	**At least eight hours, plus update to the Texas Education Code**

*Board members may count this training toward fulfillment of their Tier Three requirement if presented by a registered provider of school board training credit.
NOTES: (1) Local district officials may facilitate Tier Two activities.
(2) Local district officials may provide up to 50 percent of the required Tier Three training.
(3) Up to five hours of Tier Three credit may be earned in online courses.
SOURCE: Texas Administrative Code (TAC), Title 19, Part 2, Chapter 61, Rule 61.1, and TASB, February 2006.

EXHIBIT 2-10
WISD
BOARD MEMBER TRAINING RECORD
JANUARY 2006

TRAINING CATEGORY	MR. DON ERDELT, PRESIDENT	MR. MARC AARONSON, VICE PRESIDENT	MS. HAZEL HURD, SECRETARY	MR. BILLY BAHNSEN, MEMBER	MR. RONNIE BOLLOM, MEMBER	MR. PAUL FERTSCH, MEMBER	MR. COBY FRANKUM, MEMBER
TIER ONE TRAINING							
Completed	4.00	7.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	2.00	7.00
Required	0.00	3.00	0.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
Excess (deficiency)	4.00	4.00	4.00	1.00	1.00	**(1.00)**	4.00
TIER TWO TRAINING							
Completed	9.00	9.00	6.00	9.00	9.00	6.00	9.00
Required	24.00	24.00	24.00	9.00	24.00	6.00	9.00
Excess (deficiency)	**(15.00)**	**(15.00)**	**(18.00)**	0.00	**(15.00)**	0.00	0.00
TIER THREE TRAINING							
Completed	25.25	115.25	152.25	43.75	104.00	29.25	86.75
Required	40.00	45.00	40.00	20.00	45.00	15.00	20.00
Excess (deficiency)	**(14.75)**	70.25	112.25	23.75	59.00	14.25	66.75
Total Training							
Completed	38.25	131.25	162.25	56.75	117.00	37.25	102.75
Required	64.00	72.00	64.00	32.00	72.00	24.00	32.00
Excess (deficiency)	**(25.75)**	59.25	98.25	24.75	45.00	13.25	70.75

SOURCE: Wharton ISD secretary to the superintendent, Wharton ISD board training records January 1, 1998, through January 17, 2006.

continuing education annually. The board assesses needs and provides a framework for governance leadership that is the basis for additional board member continuing education. To the extent possible, the entire board should participate in continuing education programs together.

WISD includes these training requirements in Policy BBD (LEGAL), which states that continuing education for board members includes orientation sessions, an annual team building session with the board and the superintendent, and specified hours of continuing education based on identified needs to ensure that the board has an appropriate vision and structure, as well as accountability, advocacy, and unity.

Ensuring board members obtain the required continuing education is essential to having a board that is informed of educational laws, requirements, and best practices in governance. Team building is critical to making sure the board and the superintendent work together effectively in addressing district issues. As a result of not obtaining the training required by the TAC, WISD board members do not receive information on the most current methods of policy setting and providing direction to the superintendent and

the district, and risk exposure related to nonperformance of governance functions prescribed by state statutes.

Many boards, such as the Clear Creek ISD (CCISD) board, emphasize training opportunities to improve their effectiveness as board members. CCISD board members all exceed the minimum number of state-required training hours.

WISD should develop a process to monitor and schedule board members for required annual training in accordance with the existing district policy based on TAC requirements. The superintendent should provide the board with information on continuing education opportunities, especially in the areas in which board members lack the required training hours. The district should ensure that each trustee earns the required training annually.

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN (REC. 16)

WISD lacks a plan for effective communication with parents, students, and the community.

The superintendent maintains membership in and attends meetings of local civic organizations. However, he does not

initiate meetings with community members to keep them informed of district activities and issues.

During 2004–05, WISD's director of Personnel and Public Relations prepared and disseminated a 4-page district newsletter, *All Around Wharton ISD*. The newsletter is not published on a regular basis. According to the director, implementing the newsletter was a result of the limited amount of formal communication between the district and parents. WISD mailed the newsletter to 1,000 homes in October 2005.

In focus groups conducted by the review team, parents, staff, and members of the community either did not know about the district's newsletter, or had heard about it but had not received it. Any communication with the district which they described was between teachers and parents, or nonexistent. Participants were not familiar with the activities of the school board and the superintendent, and were uninformed of opportunities for parent involvement. Many also expressed the perception that administrators, starting with the superintendent, were not involved in the operations of the district.

As a result of not having regular, formal methods of communication with parents and other community members, WISD stakeholders are unaware of developments within the district and at each campus. This type of awareness, or lack of it, can be critical in the perception of the district by its stakeholders, the passage of bond elections, and planning for new schools.

Lake Travis ISD (LTISD) gathered more than 50 stakeholders, including members of district staff, the Board of Trustees, and the community, to develop a 5-year strategic plan for the district. The Public Information officer, an elementary school teacher, a parent of two students in the district, and public information officers from two neighboring districts comprised the communications subcommittee. They formulated a communications plan based on the experiences of the committee members, the existing positive aspects of district communications, and perceived weaknesses in district communications. LTISD includes the communications plan in the district's strategic plan.

In Hays Consolidated ISD (HCISD), the superintendent meets regularly with the "Gold" (senior citizens) Committee; the minority advisory committee; the ministerial alliance; the Superintendent's Liaisons (composed of a teacher representative from every campus); the principals; directors and coordinators; and the Growth Impact Committee. The

meetings are held monthly or bimonthly. The superintendent reviews activities at recent school board meetings, then opens up the forum for questions and concerns. The superintendent assembles a new team each year, but welcomes those who wish to serve for more than one year.

WISD should develop a communications plan that includes strategies for external communications with stakeholders. During the initial phase of the plan's development, meetings should be scheduled between the superintendent and external stakeholders, such as local ministers, senior citizens, and local business and civic organization representatives. These stakeholders can then meet once each semester to provide input on the plan as it progresses.

The communications plan should establish a mailing list and calendar of publication dates (twice a semester, though the key is that is published regularly) for *All Around Wharton ISD*, ideas for news and feature stories, and timelines for printing and distribution. The newsletter would include a standing story about school board action, parent involvement and partnership opportunities and/or initiatives, and campus news and calendars. The newsletter could be printed at the Resource Center, and students or volunteers could prepare labels for mailing.

The plan should also include an electronic external newsletter published every other week. The basis of the newsletter would be a calendar of upcoming events, and news briefs from the district and campuses could be highlighted in each issue. A database of parent email addresses from each of the campuses and the district contacts should be collected and maintained by the director of Technology. The director of Personnel and Public Relations would compile information from the electronic newsletter and email it to the director of Technology, who would then distribute it to parents, members of all community committees, and district personnel. The electronic newsletter should then be posted on the homepage of the district website.

COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER PLAN (REC. 17)
WISD lacks a coordinated program encouraging parents and community members to volunteer in the district.

Each school in WISD coordinates its own volunteer program; there is no centralized effort to recruit volunteers for district activities. The district employs a part-time VIPS coordinator who works with campus administrators to recruit volunteers, and schedules volunteers with teachers who indicated they would like to have a volunteer. The VIPS program has earned

a positive reputation for being an effective assistance to teachers, according to focus group interviews. The district does not receive any annual reports showing the number of volunteer involvement hours per campus. Each school has a sign-in sheet that includes the name of the volunteer, and the date and time that they volunteer. In many of the focus groups conducted by the review team, members of the community expressed the feeling that there is little volunteering going on in WISD. One comment heard was "Our parents are uninvolved."

The district tries to recognize volunteers through newspaper articles highlighting their involvement, and a portion of each board meeting is set aside for recognition of volunteers.

One enthusiastic parent organized the fledgling PTA at Sivells Elementary in 2005. Parents involved in the PTA at Sivells feel they have the support of the principal and teachers at the school, and many of the events planned by the PTA generate a large turnout. Several of the parents even keep a scrapbook of photos of PTA sponsored events.

Comments made by stakeholders during focus group sessions indicate little interest from parents and teachers in a PTA/PTO at other WISD campuses. Stakeholders indicated there is no initiation of the organization of PTA/PTO by campuses, no encouragement of teachers and parents to participate in PTA/PTO by campus administrators, and poor attendance at parent meetings.

Without a centralized, coordinated parent and community volunteer recruitment program, there are potential volunteers who don't know how to register to volunteer, and no standard system for tracking volunteer information such as names, home and email addresses, area(s) of interest, or the number of volunteer hours. With a coordinated program, a community feels more connected to the school.

TEA places great emphasis on the importance of parent and family involvement in public education. The agency created the Parent Involvement and Community Empowerment Initiative to address the need for more involvement and community participation. TEA developed a *Parent Involvement Manual* to assist schools, parent groups, and community volunteers in finding new ways to involve parents and families in the education of their children. The manual offers a step-by-step process to developing a Parent Involvement Plan that includes identifying critical issues, generating multiple solutions, and using the information gathered to develop the plan. According to the manual, parents, family members, and community members, as well

as school administrative leaders and teachers, are key players in successful parent involvement programs. The manual enables local schools, parent groups, districts, and community volunteers to look at new ways to involve parents and families in the education of their children; to help parents feel more comfortable with the school so they will want to become involved; and to provide an overview of key elements of Texas' public education program. The manual includes surveys, handouts, activities for meetings, and research on parent involvement.

The National PTA's *Seven Steps to a Successful Volunteer Program* provides useful information for creating and maintaining an active school volunteer program. The seven steps include:

- assessing volunteer needs at school;

- working with and training principals, teachers, and school staff on effectively using and supervising volunteers;

- setting goals and objectives for volunteer assignments;

- recruiting volunteers;

- training and orienting volunteers;

- retaining and recognizing volunteers; and

- evaluating volunteer performance and program success.

WISD should develop a district volunteer plan that promotes parent and community involvement throughout the district. The superintendent should form a committee including administrators, teachers, parents, and students from secondary schools to develop a volunteer program encouraging families and community members to become active participants in the educational process at WISD. The committee should use TEA's *Parent Involvement Manual* as a guide. The VIPS coordinator should gather data on the number of volunteer hours by campus. This data should be used to aid in developing regular reports monitoring the progress of stated goals in the community volunteer plan.

TRACKING VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES (REC. 18)

WISD lacks an adequate process to track volunteer information.

The director of Personnel and Public Relations performs a criminal history check on prospective school volunteers and informs volunteers when they may begin services. However,

because there is not consistent communication among and between campuses, central administration, and the community, there is a perception both internally and externally that volunteering is not taking place on the campuses. Volunteers contribute hours toward their child(ren)'s school, but the hours are tracked sporadically and inconsistently. Though each school tracks the volunteers as they should with a sign in sheet including the name of the volunteer and the date and time that they volunteer, schools do not consistently track or share volunteer information, such as names, home and email addresses, areas of interest or specialty, and the results of criminal history checks.

As a result of not having a process for tracking volunteer activities, WISD schools cannot create an adequate picture of the amount of volunteering which occurs, do not have a method to determine the strengths and weaknesses of volunteer activities, and have difficulty preventing duplications of requests for goods. They also cannot provide information to the district to recognize exemplary volunteers, and are not able to alter the community perception that parent involvement is weak.

WISD's Policy GKG (LEGAL) governs the school volunteer program. School volunteers work directly under each principal's supervision. According to Policy GKG (LEGAL), a volunteer program shall include:

- an effective training program for paid staff and prospective volunteers;

- the use of paid staff to plan and implement the volunteer program;

- an evaluation mechanism to assess the performance of volunteers, the cooperation of paid staff with the volunteers, and the overall volunteer program; and

- follow-up studies to guarantee the effectiveness of the program.

Districts that develop a strong base of volunteers create good relations with their communities. School volunteers are an important part of a school team, give young people a valuable role model of responsible citizenship, and provide many other benefits to the students and the schools.

In Hays CISD (HCISD), the assistant principals at each campus meet monthly with the district volunteer/mentor coordinator to share volunteer activities on each campus with one another. A database of volunteers based on these monthly meetings is maintained centrally, and total district volunteer hours are accounted for and shared with the community in the form of press releases and the district newsletter. A volunteer kickoff breakfast every September helps campuses recruit volunteers and mentors, and a volunteer recognition breakfast every spring allows the district to show appreciation for business partners and individual volunteers.

WISD should develop a process to track volunteer activities. By doing so, WISD schools would foster an authentic view of the amount of volunteering, create a method to determine the strengths and weaknesses of volunteer activities, prevent duplications of request for goods, provide the district with information to recognize exemplary volunteers, and alter the community perception that parent involvement is weak.

The VIPS coordinator should meet with the Sivells Elementary PTA president each campus administrator to develop specifications for a volunteer management system. The system should be maintained by the VIPS coordinator, and should include names and contact information (phone numbers and/or email addresses) of volunteers and district partners, as well as a standard for and identification of the types of volunteering (for example, reading assistance in the classroom, donation of beverages for Fall Festival, guest speaker at Career Day), and the hours volunteered. This group should meet at a minimum of every other month to review volunteer activities and participation and to update the volunteer database information.

Once the database is established and maintained, the VIPS coordinator should work with the director of Personnel and Public Relations and the local newspaper to communicate the effectiveness of and participation in the volunteer program. The group should partner with the Wharton Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture to plan an annual community volunteer event recognizing individual volunteers at every campus, as well as district-business partnerships.

FISCAL IMPACT

RECOMMENDATION	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09	2009–10	2010–11	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) SAVINGS	ONE-TIME (COSTS) SAVINGS
CHAPTER 2: DISTRICT MANAGEMENT AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS							
12. Establish a process to create routine internal communications among administrative staff and campus administrators.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
13. Establish board operating procedures to govern board members individually and collectively.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
14. Implement a process for the timely update of local board policies.	$0	($1,800)	$0	$0	($1,800)	($3,600)	$0
15. Develop a process to monitor and schedule board members for required annual training in accordance with existing district policy based on Texas Administrative Code (TAC) requirements.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
16. Develop a communications plan that includes strategies for external communications with stakeholders.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
17. Develop a district volunteer plan that promotes parent and community involvement throughout the district.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
18. Develop a process to track volunteer activities.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Totals-Chapter 2	**$0**	**($1,800)**	**$0**	**$0**	**($1,800)**	**($3,600)**	**$0**

CHAPTER 3

HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

WHARTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

CHAPTER 3. HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Personnel costs are typically the largest single expenditure in any school district. Therefore, efficient and effective management of personnel functions is critical to district performance. Effective human resource management requires compliance with federal and state laws such as Equal Employment Opportunity statutes, and concise work policies, procedures, and training programs. Personnel management encompasses staffing analysis, recruiting, hiring, salary and benefit administration, and performance evaluation.

Wharton Independent School District (WISD) employed 401.5 full time employees in 2004–05, equaling 77.4 percent, or $14.8 million, of the district's operating budget. The district's payroll costs have increased by $3.2 million from 2000–01 to 2004–05. **Exhibit 3-1** shows the staffing changes that have occurred in specific employee groups. Staffing has increased in the areas of professional support and educational aides. Student enrollment has decreased from 2,586 students to 2,484 students, a drop of 3.9 percent, during this same time period.

The WISD director of Personnel and Public Relations is the administrator in charge of human resource management. This position is assisted by a secretary. The Business manager assists with human resource functions including setting salaries, making pay adjustments, and implementing benefits. The Personnel and Public Relations Department posts positions, accepts applications, enters new employees in the payroll system during the summer, and handles leave accounting. The Business manager, along with the payroll clerk, is responsible for setting pay, completing new employee

paperwork including benefit forms, placing the employees in the payroll system after the start of the new budget year, inputting deduction and benefit information, and reporting employee information to the Teacher Retirement System of Texas (TRS).

FINDINGS

- WISD lacks a coordinated teacher recruitment plan establishing recruitment goals and strategies.

- WISD lacks procedures to ensure hourly employees are compensated for overtime each pay period.

- WISD does not maintain centralized oversight of the employee evaluation process.

- WISD is not ensuring that the Personnel and Public Relations Department serves as the clearinghouse for all new district employees.

- WISD lacks a local policy addressing nepotism by supervisory district staff related by affinity or consanguinity.

- The Personnel and Public Relations Department does not ensure that employee-related district policies are consistently disseminated across all campuses and are up-to-date with current statutory requirements, district policies, and applicable forms.

- WISD lacks a policy addressing state surcharges incurred by districts employing staff who simultaneously receive a retirement annuity from TRS.

EXHIBIT 3-1
WISD STAFF TOTALS
2000–01 THROUGH 2004–05

POSITION	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
Teachers	192.9	185.5	187.2	180.9	178.3
Professional Support	23.3	25.4	25.3	25.9	27.0
Campus Administrators	10.0	11.4	11.2	10.0	10.0
Central Office Administrators	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0
Educational Aides	73.7	76.1	77.2	76.2	79.7
Auxiliary	108.3	106.0	105.7	97.0	100.5
Total	**414.1**	**410.4**	**412.6**	**396.0**	**401.5**

Source: Texas Education Agency, Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS), 2000–01 through 2004–05.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Recommendation 19: Develop a teacher recruitment plan and designate the director of Personnel and Public Relations as the coordinator for the plan's implementation.** The plan should contain strategies to address personnel needs. This includes identifying district job vacancies, selecting in-state and out-of-state job fairs with applicant attendee characteristics matching district requirements, comprehensive pre- and post-recruitment trip planning to determine a marketing approach to these fairs, establishing proper follow-up techniques, and evaluating current recruitment strategies to determine if they should be continued.

- **Recommendation 20: Design procedures to properly compensate employees who have both a full-time and an additional part-time job with the district.** The director of Personnel and Public Relations should work with the Business Manager to design the procedures, which should include a method for calculating pay for each workweek, and all compensation owed should be paid out each pay period.

- **Recommendation 21: Centralize oversight of all human resource functions involving the employee evaluation process with the Personnel and Public Relations** Department. The director of Personnel and Public Relations should work with campus administrators and department heads to monitor the employee evaluation process. Each campus and department should have a designated liaison to the central office that is responsible for ensuring distribution, completion, and collection of annual staff evaluations. Additionally, the director of Personnel and Public Relations should work with department staff to develop a districtwide employee evaluation schedule to provide chronology and consistency in the creation, distribution, completion, collection, and retention of staff evaluations.

- **Recommendation 22: Implement a consistent hiring process.** The Personnel and Public Relations Department should develop a hiring process that is inclusive and involves a committee of stakeholders to interact with the applicant. To ensure continuity in the hiring process and that personnel laws and policies are being addressed, the Personnel and Public Relations Department should be the only department with the authority to offer positions to prospective applicants.

- **Recommendation 23: Create and implement a board-approved local nepotism policy.** The director of Personnel and Public Relations should work with the superintendent to create this policy which would address district officials in supervisory roles who are related to their staff by affinity or consanguinity.

- **Recommendation 24: Develop a comprehensive district employee handbook containing up-to-date employee-related policies with current law, district policies, and applicable forms.** This handbook can be disseminated to employees on the district intranet, or in a printed version distributed at the beginning of each school year. The district should update the handbook annually. The Personnel and Public Relations Department should work with campus administrators to make sure that campus-level employee handbooks are up-to-date and align with the district-level handbook.

- **Recommendation 25: Draft and implement a policy stating how the district will address the surcharges now associated with employing staff who have previously retired.** The superintendent should seek legal counsel in determining a plan that would offset the costs associated with the district hiring a TRS system retiree. This policy should be presented by the superintendent to the board for approval.

DETAILED FINDINGS

TEACHER RECRUITMENT PLAN (REC. 19)

WISD lacks a coordinated teacher recruitment plan establishing recruitment goals and strategies.

The recruitment efforts for the district are organized by the director of Personnel and Public Relations. Administrative staff including campus principals, the director of Federal Programs, and the director of Auxiliary Services assist in recruiting. The recruiters are briefed before going to a job fair; however, the district did not provide any documentation to the review team regarding what information is included in these job fair briefings. The recruiters do not have the authority to hire, so their sole purpose at the job fairs is to accept resumes and applications. Applicants are able to complete hard copy applications for recruiters to take back to the district.

Currently, WISD's recruiting efforts do not include a pre-recruitment trip process to develop a marketing approach for the specific job fair demographics. Additionally, the district

does not have a plan to follow up consistently with potential recruits that are undecided and may require some incentive to sway their decision.

Exhibit 3-2 shows the district's recruiting efforts for spring 2005. WISD representatives attended 14 job fairs and reported taking resumes from approximately 75 applicants. An additional 53 individuals completed applications at the job fairs, totaling 128 recruitment contacts. The district successfully hired three new employees from these applications.

EXHIBIT 3-2
WISD RECRUITING SCHEDULE
SPRING 2005

DATE	JOB FAIR
February 25	Houston Area Job Fair
March 3–4	Annual Spring Bilingual Conference Texas A&M - Kingsville
March 24	Lamar University
March 30	University of Texas - Austin Sam Houston State University
April 4	Texas A&M - College Station
April 5	Tarleton State University
April 6	Texas State University Angelo State University
April 8	University of Houston Victoria
April 12	Texas A&M - Kingsville
April 13	Texas A&M - Corpus Christi Prairie View A&M University
June 6–7	Texas Gulf Coast Texas Teacher Job Fair

Source: WISD director of Personnel and Public Relations, November 2005.

The district uses items such as district brochures, an area map, salary schedules, promotional items, and leftover teacher appreciation gifts in recruiting prospective employees. The 2004–05 recruiting budget for WISD was $16,895. The amount spent on district job fair and recruitment efforts that year was $11,855. Throughout 2004–05, WISD distributed 342 applications and 225 were returned. Overall, the district hired 20 professional employees including one principal, one assistant principal, two diagnosticians, and 16 teachers for 2005–06.

WISD participates in the Regional Education Service Center IV (Region 4) Human Resources Services Assistance Cooperative Advertising Project. Participation in this cooperative affords the district the opportunity to be exposed to future applicants in magazine publications. These publications include the *EOE Journal, Black EOE Journal, The Black Collegian, The Hispanic Network,* and the *National Minority Update.* Advertising in these national publications is designed to target minorities and graduating students of teacher preparation programs. These advertisements are intended to announce the Texas Gulf Teacher Job Fair, in which WISD participates. WISD's name and phone number are printed in these publications.

The lack of a district recruiting plan is reflected in the large differences existing between the percentage of minority students versus the percentage of minority teachers districtwide. **Exhibit 3-3** shows the comparison of student ethnic groups to that of the district's teaching staff. From 2000–01 to 2004–05, the Hispanic student population increased by 4 percent, while the African-American and Anglo population decreased by 1.9 percent and 2.8 percent, respectively. A large discrepancy currently exists between the percentage of African-American and Hispanic teachers in WISD and the student population of those same ethnicities.

An effective education setting provides extensive opportunity for students to build relationships, bonds, and mentorship from adult faculty and administration. The possibility for

EXHIBIT 3-3
WISD STUDENT/TEACHER ETHNICITY COMPARISON
2000–01 THROUGH 2004–05

ETHNICITY	AFRICAN-AMERICAN		HISPANIC		ANGLO		NATIVE AMERICAN		ASIAN/PACIFIC	
YEAR	STUDENT	TEACHER	STUDENT	TEACHER	STUDENT	TEACHER	STUDENT	TEACHER	STUDENT	TEACHER
2004–05	28.8%	5.6%	42.5%	5.0%	27.5%	88.2%	0.0%	1.1%	1.2%	0.0%
2003–04	29.3%	6.3%	40.4%	5.0%	29.4%	88.2%	0.0%	0.6%	0.9%	0.0%
2002–03	30.0%	6.1%	40.4%	4.8%	28.8%	88.6%	0.0%	0.5%	0.8%	0.0%
2001–02	30.3%	8.3%	38.6%	3.2%	30.3%	88.0%	0.0%	0.5%	0.7%	0.0%
2000–01	30.7%	8.3%	38.5%	4.1%	30.3%	87.0%	0.1%	0.5%	0.4%	0.0%

Source: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2000–01 through 2004–05.

these relationships is enhanced when adults and children share cultural identity. While common culture acts as a positive catalyst for any relationship by easing the burden of approachability, it is not inherently necessary to form a mentorship.

WISD should develop a teacher recruitment plan and designate the director of Personnel and Public Relations as the coordinator for the plan's implementation. The plan should contain strategies to address personnel needs. This includes identifying district job vacancies, selecting in-state and out-of-state job fairs with applicant attendee characteristics matching district requirements, comprehensive pre- and post-recruitment trip planning to determine a marketing approach to these fairs, establishing proper follow-up techniques, and evaluating current recruitment strategies to determine if they should be continued.

OVERTIME COMPENSATION (REC. 20)

WISD lacks procedures to ensure hourly employees are compensated for overtime each pay period.

WISD employs 20 bus drivers and five bus monitors in the Transportation Department. Eleven of the bus drivers are also employed in another full-time capacity in the school district, and of these 11, seven are hourly employees in nonexempt positions and subject to overtime compensation laws. Four of the five bus monitors are employed in another full-time capacity in the district in a nonexempt position as

an educational aide. **Exhibit 3-4** shows the compensation received by these 11 nonexempt district employees.

According to Policy DEA (LOCAL), employees are assigned to a pay grade based on the skill level, effort, and responsibility required of the job assignment. Employees are paid the hourly rate established for the assigned position. This method is used for the custodian and educational aide job assignments.

Bus driver and monitor pay is determined by averaging the drive/ride time for each route during the first week of school. The final pay amount for drivers is 20 cents per minute and 15 cents per minute for monitors. These amounts are given to the payroll clerk to calculate the rate of pay for each employee. The calculation is made once a year. If an employee needs a pay adjustment, it is done once a semester. This practice rests on the assumption that employees never vary from their work schedule throughout the entire year. Factors such as daily arrival and departure times, which can modify time on the job, are not considered when calculating an employee's pay. As a result, overtime pay does not accurately reflect the actual time worked on a week-to-week basis in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) for employees who have two jobs in the district.

According to the *Administrators Guide to the Fair Labor Standards Act* published by the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB), each workweek stands alone for the purpose

EXHIBIT 3-4
WISD TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION
2005–06

	FIRST POSITION			SECOND POSITION		
EMPLOYEE	TITLE	HOURLY RATE	HOURS WORKED	TITLE	HOURLY RATE	HOURS WORKED
1	Custodian	$9.54	8	Driver	$12.00	3 hours
2	Aide	$9.50	8	Driver	$12.00	2 hours 50 minutes
3	Aide	$11.57	8	Monitor	$9.00	3 hours 50 minutes
4	Aide	$9.19	8	Driver	$12.00	2 hours 30 minutes
5	Aide	$10.40	8	Driver	$12.00	3 hours
6	Aide	$10.95	8	Monitor	$9.00	3 hours 35 minutes
7	Aide	$10.66	8	Driver	$12.00	3 hours
8	Aide	$12.02	8	Driver	$12.00	2 hours 10 minutes
9	Aide	$12.83	8	Driver	$12.00	3 hours 20 minutes
10	Aide	$14.98	8	Monitor	$9.00	1 hour 35 minutes
11	Aide	$9.30	8	Monitor	$9.00	1 hour 55 minutes

SOURCE: WISD Business manager, November 2005.

of determining an employee's regular hourly rate of pay for that week. An employee working two or more jobs at different rates of pay must receive overtime pay equaling time-and-a-half of the weighted average of all rates of pay, for all hours worked, in that workweek.

The FLSA sets minimum standards for calculating employee pay, including overtime provisions for nonexempt employees. FLSA 29 Code of Federal Regulations §531.37 requires that an employee receive overtime pay at a rate of time-and-a-half earned for each hour worked in excess of the forty hour workweek. FLSA 29 CFR §531.36 requires the district to accurately compensate nonexempt employees for actual hours worked.

WISD's Policy DEA (LOCAL) states that compensation for overtime hours shall be awarded at 1½ times the employee's rate of pay, or by time-and-a-half earned in compensatory time. Nonexempt employees may be compensated for overtime with compensatory time in lieu of cash overtime pay. The employee shall be informed in advance if overtime hours will accrue compensatory time rather than pay.

WISD should design procedures to properly compensate employees who have both a full-time and an additional part-time job with the district. The director of Personnel and Public Relations should work with the Business Manager to design the procedures, which should include a method for calculating pay for each workweek, and all compensation owed should be paid out each pay period.

EMPLOYEE EVALUATIONS (REC. 21)

WISD does not maintain centralized oversight of the employee evaluation process.

Currently, WISD has Policy DNB (LEGAL) in place, requiring annual or more frequent evaluations for each superintendent, principal, supervisor, counselor, teacher, and other certified professional employees, including librarians, speech therapists, diagnosticians, and nurses.

The superintendent receives an annual evaluation from the school board, and is responsible for conducting evaluations of principals and department directors. Campus principals and department directors evaluate their own employees. Through a review of personnel files and interviews with district staff, the review team found that some educational aides had not been evaluated since 2000, and some school nurses had not been evaluated since 2003.

While the Personnel and Public Relations Department acknowledged that their department is responsible for filing employee evaluations, no administrator or department at the central administration level is currently maintaining centralized oversight of the employee evaluation process, and it is unclear who is responsible for constructing evaluation documents based on current job descriptions. The director of Auxiliary Services reported that staff evaluation is an ongoing process, and there is not a set time of the year that official evaluations for that department are completed for a specific employee group. Performance issues arising in the Auxiliary Services Department are addressed as they occur.

Employee performance evaluation is a critical component of maintaining and improving a school district's effectiveness. If WISD continues to engage in a decentralized evaluation process, this may result in the district overlooking the need to proceed with employee disciplinary action, and puts the district at risk of noncompliance with state and local policies. Additionally, WISD forgoes the benefits of having a document to serve as a feedback method for employees to elicit behavior change affecting student learning and relaying employee expectations, which are key to aligning district goals with staff goals.

Texas Education Code (TEC) §21.354 states that each school district shall appraise each administrator annually, using either the commissioner's recommended appraisal process and performance criteria or an appraisal process and performance criteria developed by the district. The Texas Administrative Code §150.1021 states school districts shall use local job descriptions as applicable in developing appraisal instruments.

WISD should centralize oversight of all human resource functions involving the employee evaluation process with the Personnel and Public Relations Department. The director of Personnel and Public Relations should work with campus administrators and department heads to monitor the employee evaluation process. Each campus and department should have a designated liaison to the central office that is responsible for ensuring distribution, completion, and collection of annual staff evaluations. Employee evaluation records should be maintained in personnel files located at the central administration building.

Additionally, the director of Personnel and Public Relations should work with department staff to develop a districtwide employee evaluation schedule to provide chronology and consistency in the creation, distribution, completion,

collection, and retention of staff evaluations. Timelines for these reviews may be established for professional staff members in conjunction with the recommendation for contracts at school board meetings. Paraprofessional staff evaluations should be completed before assignment notices for the upcoming school year are issued.

HIRING PROCESS CENTRALIZATION (REC. 22)

WISD is not ensuring that the Personnel and Public Relations Department serves as the clearinghouse for all new district employees.

As of 2005–06, when the director of Federal Programs filled a vacant position in the Special Programs Department, the Personnel and Public Relations Department received notification of the new hire only after the employee had been offered a position, and in some cases after the employee had actually started working. The director of Federal Programs acknowledged that he had been offering positions to individuals without notifying the Personnel and Public Relations Department because "that is just the way it has been." Additionally, district staff stated during interviews that future internal job openings were discussed with potential candidates before the official announcement of that position by the Personnel and Public Relations Department.

Of additional concern is the lack of certainty that in situations such as the one described with the Special Programs Department, certification issues for paraprofessional or teacher positions are being addressed as stipulated in TEC §21.003, or that proper documentation such as the district application, I-9 information, and/or service records are being secured for the personnel folder.

The Personnel and Public Relations Department is charged with complying with TEC §11.163, which mandates district vacancies be posted in a certain manner and filled within specific timelines. The Personnel and Public Relations Department is aware of this statute and has been posting the positions affected by it. Department personnel were able to show records of current vacancies, the posting of those vacancies, and the date each position was filled. There is no evidence that other departments know about this statute or have been abiding by it.

WISD's website directs applicants interested in employment opportunities to contact and/or mail applications to the director of Personnel and Public Relations. However, given the situation described with the Special Programs Department, it is possible that when individuals contact the Personnel and

Public Relations Department about a vacancy, the position has already been filled.

As a result of the current hiring practices in WISD, the Personnel and Public Relations Department does not have an opportunity to serve as the central administrative point for all district new hires. Thus, positions are filled that the Personnel and Public Relations Department did not know were vacant or had been filled.

TEC §11.163 states "School districts must provide notices of vacant positions no later than 10 days before the vacancy is to be filled to allow district employees an opportunity to apply." WISD Policy DC (LOCAL) states "The District's employment policy must provide that not later than the tenth school day before the date on which the District fills a vacant position for which a certificate or license is required as provided by TEC §21.003, other than a position that affects the safety and security of students as determined by the Board." Failing to keep an accurate account of the district vacancies puts WISD in violation of both TEC §11.163 and Policy DC (LOCAL).

Dripping Springs ISD has standardized, documented, and maintained a systematic districtwide hiring process. This process is monitored and maintained by the Human Resources Office. That office also serves as an advisor on the legal requirements related to the hiring process, such as appropriate questioning of applicants. When positions are filled, district administrators are notified immediately by email and the district website is immediately updated.

The district should implement a consistent hiring process. The Personnel and Public Relations Department should develop a hiring process that is inclusive and involves a committee of stakeholders to interact with the applicant. To ensure continuity in the hiring process and that personnel laws and policies are being addressed, the Personnel and Public Relations Department should be the only department with the authority to offer positions to prospective applicants.

LOCAL NEPOTISM POLICY (REC. 23)

WISD lacks a local policy addressing nepotism by supervisory district staff related by affinity or consanguinity.

WISD currently has a policy addressing employment requirements and restrictions related to nepotism. Policy DBE (LEGAL) addresses relationships between school board members and applicants, and the instances where the superintendent has hiring authority over those applicants.

The district does not have a policy addressing relationships between employees in a supervisory or management role and others working in the same department, grade level, or other professional capacity.

Policy DBE (LEGAL) defines nepotism as relationships within the third degree by consanguinity. The degree of relationship by consanguinity between a person and his or her descendant is determined by the number of generations separating them. Relatives within the third degree by consanguinity are an individual's parent or child (first degree), brother, sister, grandparent, or grandchild (second degree), and great-grandparent, great grandchild, aunt or uncle, nephew or niece, (third degree).

A husband and wife are related to each other in the first degree by affinity. For other relationships, the degree of relationship by affinity is the same as the degree of the underlying relationship by consanguinity.

For example, the Business manager and the bookkeeper/accounts payable clerk are related by marriage. The Business manager supervises the payroll and accounts payable functions of the district, including the functions performed by the Business manager's spouse. Without district policies addressing nepotism in district staff supervisory roles, opportunities for improprieties exist as it relates to tasks the bookkeeper/accounts payable clerk performs and the Business manager approves.

Districts have local nepotism policies defining their position on affinity and consanguinity as it applies to supervisory positions. Katy ISD has adopted Policy DBE (LOCAL), governing their employment requirements and restrictions regarding nepotism. Although Katy ISD practices fair and equitable hiring, the district prevents employees from supervising or evaluating relatives. Efforts are made to avoid assigning employees to the same grade level, same educational department, the same campus or central office, or to the same auxiliary work crew. As circumstances permit, the administration directs efforts to remedy situations not meeting these guidelines.

WISD should create and implement a board-approved local nepotism policy. The director of Personnel and Public Relations should work with the superintendent to create this policy which would address district officials in supervisory roles who are related to their staff by affinity or consanguinity.

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOKS (REC. 24)

The Personnel and Public Relations Department does not ensure that employee-related district policies are consistently disseminated across all campuses and are up-to-date with current statutory requirements, district policies, and applicable forms.

Currently, each campus updates and distributes its own version of WISD's employee handbook. For example, one elementary employee handbook alludes to the grievance policy but does not include the actual policy in the handbook. The junior high school employee handbook does not mention or include the grievance policy in its handbook.

The director of Personnel and Public Relations said that employee-related district policies may be found online. When employees call to request information on employee related matters or board policy, the director answers the question and notifies them the policy can be found on the district website.

Employee handbooks are a valuable resource for all district employees. They provide employees with a copy of district goals, policies, procedures, regulations, and benefits. An employee handbook provides a format for presenting a synopsis of personnel policies. If an employee needs the policy in its true form, the handbook may assist them in locating it. Failure to provide an up-to-date handbook to all employees may lead to inconsistencies in implementing district policies and requirements. It may also lead to legal challenges from staff, representative groups, and parents.

The Personnel and Public Relations Department should develop a comprehensive district employee handbook containing up-to-date employee-related policies with current law, district policies, and applicable forms. This handbook can be disseminated to employees on the district website, or in a printed version distributed at the beginning of each school year. The district should update the handbook annually.

The Personnel and Public Relations Department should work with campus administrators to make sure that campus-level employee handbooks are up-to-date and align with the district-level handbook. It is important to maintain campus-level handbooks so that they are in alignment with district practices detailed in the district-level handbook, and so that employees at each campus have access to the specific policies and practices in effect at their campuses, which might not have been addressed in the district employee handbook.

POLICY REGARDING HIRING RETIRED STAFF (REC. 25)

WISD lacks a policy addressing state surcharges incurred by districts employing staff who simultaneously receive a retirement annuity from TRS.

Texas Government Code §824.602 allows retired educators to return to full employment with a TRS covered employer based on identified acute shortage areas. The Board of Trustees of a school district determines by rule if there are acute shortage areas in the district. The TEA website provides a list of acute shortage areas determined as statewide shortages. However, districts must give hiring preference for teaching positions to certified applicants who are not retirees.

Recent legislation enacted into law through Texas Government Code §825.4092, requires a school district to contribute 12.4 percent of compensation and a health insurance surcharge to TRS for retirees hired by that district as of January 1, 2005. This law, aimed at turning around projected shortfalls in the TRS system, affects most public school and college retirees covered by the retirement system and rehired after January 1, 2005. The surcharge was designed to cover pension contributions no longer collected by TRS when a retiree is rehired.

According to the WISD superintendent, as of the effective date of the law, January 1, 2005, WISD has not employed any teachers or other staff that are retired. The district does have retired staff that were rehired prior to the above mentioned date. However, presently no steps have been taken by the district or the Board of Trustees to hire a retired applicant.

Though the current WISD staffing situation is not affected by Texas Government Code §825.4092, WISD has not taken any steps to address the effect this change in the law will have on the district should the hiring of a retiree become a necessity. If a retired teacher is rehired in WISD at the top of the teacher pay scale at $46,727, the district would have to send 12.4 percent of this amount to TRS to cover the surcharges, an amount of $5,794 (12.4% x $46,727 = $5,794). The insurance surcharge to be paid is determined by the health plan that the employee chooses. Therefore, it is impossible to calculate the district's cost until an employee is hired. The insurance costs range from a minimum of $23 to a maximum of $688.

The executive director of the Texas Retired Teachers Association stated that as long as school districts pay the minimum amount required by the state based on experience levels, they can hire at an amount over the minimum that would make up for the surcharge. The law may stipulate that the districts have to send TRS the money, but it can come out of the retiree's check.

Plano ISD recently passed a resolution stating that it was not willing to pay the extra cost of hiring a retiree. Specifically, Plano ISD stated it is not in a financial position to offer compensation to retired/rehired employees exceeding the compensation offered to other nonretired employees in similar positions not subject to surcharges.

Allen ISD plans to consider the surcharge as one of many factors when determining who to hire in a critical shortage area.

Pflugerville ISD adopted specific guidelines addressing these surcharges in their retired employees hiring procedures. The district determined that these contributions and payments will reduce an affected employee's salary up to 7 percent, plus the state's portion of the employee's TRS Care costs, minus the usual employee healthcare coverage contribution. Pflugerville ISD also limits rehired employment to a one-year contract.

Aldine ISD includes specific criteria in their employment manual to consider when hiring a retiree. Under eligibility, retired applicants will be considered for employment in the following order of preference:

- acute shortage area;

- locations with a large number of vacancies; and

- other vacancies for which there are limited applicants.

Aldine ISD also limits the employee's contract to a one-year term.

In collaboration with the superintendent, the director of Personnel and Public Relations should draft and implement a policy stating how the district will address the surcharges now associated with employing staff who have previously retired. The superintendent should seek legal counsel in determining a plan that would offset the costs associated with the district hiring a TRS system retiree. This policy should be presented by the superintendent to the board for approval.

For background information on Chapter 3, Human Resources Management, see page 198 in the General Information section of the Appendices.

FISCAL IMPACT

RECOMMENDATION	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09	2009–10	2010–11	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) SAVINGS	ONE-TIME (COSTS) SAVINGS
CHAPTER 3: HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT							
19. Develop a teacher recruitment plan and designate the director of Personnel and Public Relations as the coordinator for the plan's implementation.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
20. Design procedures to properly compensate employees who have both a full-time and an additional part-time job with the district.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
21. Centralize oversight of all human resource functions involving the employee evaluation process with the Personnel and Public Relations Department.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
22. Implement a consistent hiring process.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
23. Create and implement a board-approved local nepotism policy.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
24. Develop a comprehensive district employee handbook containing up-to-date employee-related policies with current law, district policies, and applicable forms.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
25. Draft and implement a policy stating how the district will address the surcharges now associated with employing staff who have previously retired.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Totals-Chapter 3	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**

CHAPTER 4

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

WHARTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

CHAPTER 4. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Wharton Independent School District (WISD) operates on a fiscal year beginning September 1, and ending on August 31 of the next year. On April 11, 2006, the WISD Board of Trustees approved an $18 million bond at an interest rate of 4.8 percent for the construction of a new elementary school. WISD lowered its tax rate from $1.50 per $100 of taxable property value to $1.485 for 2005–06, due to an increase in total taxable value of property within the district. The district collected 99.37 percent of the total taxes levied for 2003–04.

WISD's Finance Department has the positions shown in **Exhibit 4-1**.

WISD's Business manager reports to the superintendent. The Business manager's responsibilities include providing information to the superintendent on all district business and financial matters, and ensuring compliance with all laws and regulations, audit management, cash flow, investments, budget amendments, purchasing, budgeting, employee compensation, payroll, benefits administration, and fixed assets.

The PEIMS coordinator is responsible for coordinating the collection and reporting of the district's PEIMS data. The payroll clerk prepares all payrolls and submits payroll reports to the government agencies including the Teacher Retirement System (TRS) of Texas and the Internal Revenue Service. The payroll clerk is also responsible for recording all leave and managing employee benefits. The bookkeeper/accounts payable clerk maintains complete and systematic records of WISD's financial transactions, and processes accounts payables for vendors with names beginning with the letters A through O. The part-time accounts payable clerk is responsible for processing payments to vendors beginning with the letters P through Z, and is WISD's Career and Technology Education (CTE) programs secretary. WISD hired a receptionist/secretary for the Education Support Center in October 2005. This employee prepares tax and bank deposits, distributes purchase orders, and files paperwork for the Finance Department, in addition to handling district receptionist duties. The Special Education Resource Services (SERS) clerk is also responsible for fixed asset accounting, working approximately one day a month

EXHIBIT 4-1
WISD FINANCE DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION
NOVEMBER 2005
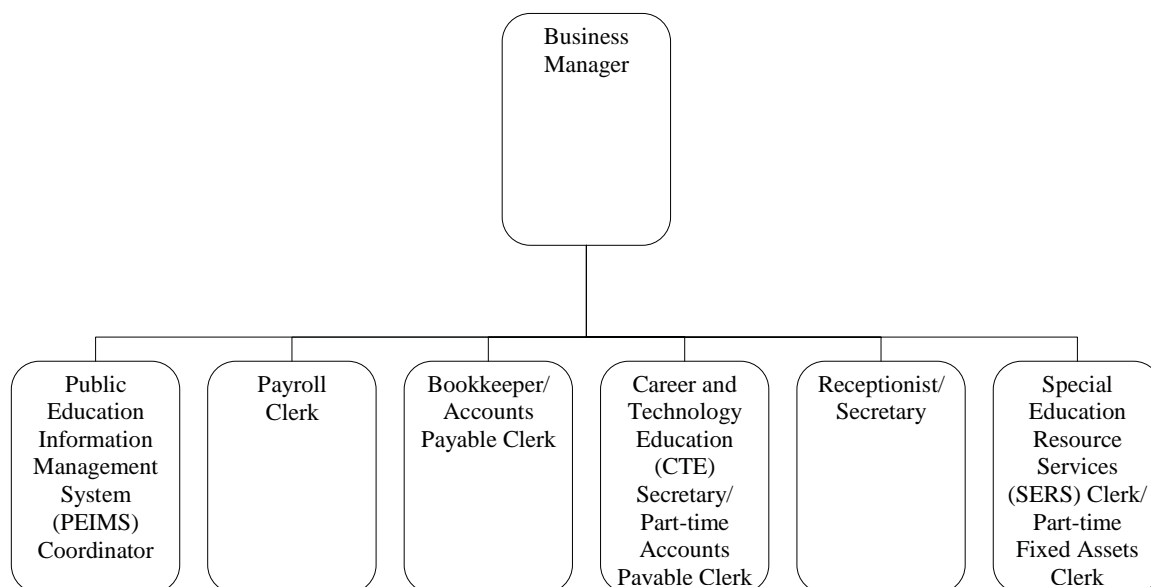
Source: WISD Business manager, November 2005.

on fixed assets, and ten additional days annually, to complete the district's annual physical inventory.

FINDINGS

- WISD's accounting processes lack internal controls ensuring proper check and balance procedures safeguard its assets.

- WISD bases its campus budget allocations on fixed nonpayroll amounts provided to each campus during the previous year, not altering them to reflect annual changes in student enrollment.

- WISD waits until actual expenditures have been posted at year-end before approving budget amendments, which is in noncompliance with Texas Education Agency (TEA) budget requirements.

- WISD lacks a competitive process for selecting an independent auditor.

- WISD's Finance Department lacks formal, district-specific, written finance procedures describing daily, weekly, monthly, and annual duties for accounting and accounts payable functions.

- Within a shared services arrangement (SSA) with two other districts, WISD is using its operating funds to pay a significantly higher portion for costs that support services to other member districts' students.

- WISD uses funds from the general operating budget to pay federal and state program expenditures without requesting reimbursements from TEA in a timely manner.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Recommendation 26: Review job descriptions and the job duties of the Finance Department staff and develop procedures to segregate responsibilities involving the district's purchasing, invoicing, accounts payable, and bank reconciliation functions.** These procedures should ensure proper controls for balancing accounts payable, and for segregating the Finance Department duties, as well as bank statement reconciliation by a party outside of the accounts payable process. The superintendent should review the procedures before implementation.

- **Recommendation 27: Develop a budget allocation formula based on estimated student enrollment.**

During the course of annual revenue estimation in December, the district could disaggregate district enrollment by campus. The district can then use this information to project future campus student enrollment. The Board of Trustees should approve the allocations in January of each year. The district should give the determined allocations to the campuses each March with all other budget information. The campuses could then develop their budgets using the allocated resources based on student numbers. After the district knows the fall enrollment it should evaluate the budget allocations, making adjustments based on actual enrollment if necessary.

- **Recommendation 28: Comply with TEA budget requirements for budget amendments.** The Business manager should prepare a final amendment based on projections each August, and present this to the board before August 31, to comply with TEA requirements in the *FASRG*. The district should amend the budget based on the best estimate of expenditures before the close of the fiscal year, rather than waiting until actual expenditures have posted. Additionally, the district should present all amendments to the board before posting them to the general ledger.

- **Recommendation 29: Develop a process for selecting an independent auditor using a competitive approach, focusing on auditor qualifications.** Audit contracts should be limited to five years. At the end of the contract period, a competitive process should be required for selecting an independent auditor for the next five-year term. The Business manager and superintendent should develop this process into a board policy and present it to the school board for adoption.

- **Recommendation 30: Develop written procedures for the Finance Department.** The Business manager should obtain copies of procedures manuals from other districts to use as a guide in preparing procedures for the district. The forms and instructions that WISD has on its website, such as the payroll checklist, should be included in the comprehensive manual. Staff members should be involved by writing their daily, weekly, monthly, and annual responsibilities for the Business manager to use as a starting point for developing the procedures. The district should post these procedures to its website.

- **Recommendation 31: Develop a SSA budget inclusive of all costs associated with the services to special education students to ensure that all member districts are paying their full share of services.** The WISD Business manager and superintendent should present the budget to the management board of the East Wharton County Special Instructional Services Cooperative (EWCSISC) for approval. Each year, the Business manager should review the budget to ensure that additional costs are included as they occur. WISD should invoice and receive funds from the member districts monthly.

- **Recommendation 32: Develop and implement a procedure for federal and state grant reimbursement ensuring the district both requests and receives funds from TEA in a timely manner.** The Business manager should create a calendar for federal and state fund reimbursement requests. The district should submit reimbursement requests three days before a payroll cycle. The Business manager should review reports on a monthly basis, verifying that the district received the funds in a timely manner.

DETAILED FINDINGS

INTERNAL CONTROL OF ACCOUNTING ACTIVITIES (REC. 26)

WISD's accounting processes lack internal controls ensuring proper check and balance procedures safeguard its assets.

School districts use internal controls to provide reasonable assurances that their financial reports are reliable, and that they are operating effectively and efficiently with as few fiscal errors as possible. In addition to these procedures, internal controls involve separating staff involved in a district's accounting areas through the segregation of duties among several positions. This ensures that no one person can circumvent the controls process. To date, WISD's external auditor has not cited the district for any internal control issues. However, the review team found internal control procedures lacking in bank reconciliations, check signing, and payment of vendor invoices (accounts payable).

Two WISD employees process vendor invoice payments. The bookkeeper/accounts payable clerk is responsible for vendors with names beginning with letters A through O and prints purchase orders. The CTE secretary/accounts payable clerk is responsible for vendors with names beginning with letters P through Z and special programs. Each accounts payable clerk

receives the vendor invoices, then copies and sends the invoice to the campus or department that placed the order. The clerks match the invoices after the campus or department verifies receipt of merchandise and accuracy of the invoices. The clerks enter the information into the financial system and print a report used for balancing payments. After the clerks balance the payments, the bookkeeper/accounts payable clerk prints the checks. Although the Business manager reviews a report of all entries, there is no detailed review of either of the clerks' accounts payable data entry, other than that completed by the clerk responsible for the initial entry. An automatic check signer imprints the checks with the signatures of both the superintendent and Business manager. Both the Business manager and the bookkeeper/accounts payable clerk have keys to the check signer.

The bookkeeper/accounts payable clerk and the CTE secretary/accounts payable clerk are responsible for mailing the checks to their vendors after the checks are printed. The CTE secretary/accounts payable clerk is also responsible for reconciling all bank statements.

Policy CH (LOCAL) establishes a Superintendent's Special Fund of $1,000, designated for emergency expenditures the superintendent needs in the performance of duties. Similar to a petty cash fund, WISD maintains this fund in a separate bank account, using it to pay for items that need addressing in a timely manner. Examples include costs for shipping packages to TEA and vendors, and food purchased for a coaches luncheon. According to the policy, the district reimburses the fund periodically, and provides a detailed report of checks written from this fund to the board on the monthly financial statement. Reports to the school board for August and September 2005 included a detailed listing with check number, vendor, expense purpose, and the check amount. The superintendent's secretary is responsible for writing and signing checks from this account, as well as reconciling the bank account statements. The superintendent also has signature authority for this fund.

Eight different employees: five campus secretaries, the Health coordinator, the superintendent's secretary, and the bookkeeper/accounts payable clerk all reconcile bank statements monthly. These same employees write checks on, and make deposits to these accounts, sometimes handling cash. The campus secretaries and principals are responsible for signing the checks while also maintaining accounts reconciliation. The campus secretaries are also responsible for depositing activity funds in the bank, for accounting, and for financial reporting of the activity funds. The reconciliations

examined by the review team included neither the date the Business manager received them, nor the date they were posted to the general ledger.

The accounting functions in WISD do not have a process allowing for proper segregation of duties. Allowing checks from certain accounts to be written and signed by the same person(s), bank statement reconciliations performed by the employee(s) who wrote the checks and made the deposits for the same accounts, and lacking a detailed review of accounts payable payment records are all examples of internal control risks that could result in improper payments to vendors, as well as the misuse of district funds.

TEA's *Financial Accountability Systems Resource Guide (FASRG)* recommends segregating the responsibilities of the requisitioning, purchasing, and receiving functions from the invoice processing, accounts payable, and general ledger functions. According to TEA, if the accounts payable position is not independent of purchasing and the person signing the checks, there could be weaknesses in internal controls. The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) recommends that entities adopt procedures ensuring proper segregation of duties among the staff initiating, authorizing, preparing, signing, and mailing payments, and reconciling bank statements.

The Business manager should review job descriptions and the job duties of the Finance Department staff and develop procedures to segregate responsibilities involving the district's purchasing, invoicing, accounts payable, and bank reconciliation functions. These procedures should ensure proper controls for balancing accounts payable, and for segregating the Finance Department duties, as well as bank statement reconciliation by a party outside of the accounts payable process. A Finance Department employee should have the responsibility of being the second signature on the Superintendent's Special Fund, as well as reconciling the account, rather than continuing the current situation whereby the superintendent's secretary has these responsibilities. The Business manager or superintendent should maintain the keys to the check signer, not allowing access to the check signer by the employees initiating and preparing payments. The signature plates should be in the custody of the person whose name appears on the plate, or with an employee not responsible for the data entry required for writing the check. The checks should not be accessible to the persons who requested, prepared, or recorded them after they are printed. A senior employee, or another employee not involved in the data entry, should review invoices for

completeness of supporting documents. The superintendent should review the procedures before implementation.

CAMPUS BUDGET ALLOCATIONS (REC. 27)

WISD bases its campus budget allocations on fixed nonpayroll amounts provided to each campus during the previous year, not altering them to reflect annual changes in student enrollment.

WISD allocates funds to campuses for nonpayroll expenditure budgeting. Nonpayroll expenditures include staff development tied to specific campus needs, travel, conference expenses, and classroom materials and supplies (for example, special types of paper, small equipment) purchases. The district bases its allocations on the total nonpayroll amount provided to the campus in the previous year. The site-based committee at each WISD campus decides how to distribute the campus budget allocation among the functions and categories each year as they see fit.

Campuses submit supplemental funds requests to the Business Manager in addition to the allocations already received. WISD budgets a $25,000 contingency amount to use during the year to fund these supplemental campus requests. From 2003–04 to 2004–05, campus requests have included additional funding for science lab equipment, floriculture lab tables and stools, choir risers, music sound systems, a wireless microphone system and stage curtains for theater arts, classroom furniture, and curriculum materials. As of November 2005, the district had not processed the requests for 2005–06. District officials reported that they were waiting to make sure the revenue estimates were correct before approving the additional expenditures at the campuses.

Exhibit 4-2 shows the 2004–05 expenditures per student for WISD campuses. Although Dawson and Sivells Elementary Schools have almost the same number of students, the latter received $251 more per student than the former.

Despite an enrollment increase from 2001–02 through 2003–04, Wharton Junior High School is the only campus with a per student expenditure decrease. All other campuses decreased in enrollment and increased in expenditures per student over the same time period **(Exhibit 4-3)**. According to the Business manager, although WISD did not allocate budgets for 2005–06 on a per student basis, the district increased Sivells Elementary School's campus allocation by $10,000 to better align it with the other elementary schools on a per student basis.

EXHIBIT 4-2
WISD CAMPUS EXPENDITURES PER STUDENT
2004–05

CAMPUS	GRADES	ENROLLMENT	PER STUDENT EXPENDITURES
Wharton High School	9–12	673	$5,894
Wharton Junior High School	7–8	369	$5,568
Dawson Elementary School	4–6	557	$4,443
Sivells Elementary School	1–3	543	$4,694
Hopper Elementary School	Pre-kindergarten–kindergarten	205	$4,146

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS), 2004–05.

EXHIBIT 4-3
WISD CAMPUS EXPENDITURES PER STUDENT
2001–02 THROUGH 2003–04

CAMPUS	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	CHANGE FROM 2001–02 THROUGH 2003–04
Wharton High School Enrollment	776	739	687	(89)
Wharton High School Expenditures	$5,035	$5,356	$5,894	$859
Wharton Junior High School Enrollment	361	368	391	30
Wharton Junior High Expenditures	$5,712	$6,150	$5,568	($144)
Dawson Elementary Enrollment	570	563	550	(20)
Dawson Elementary Expenditures	$4,066	$4,535	$4,443	$377
Sivells Elementary Enrollment	584	547	565	(19)
Sivells Elementary Expenditures	$4,167	$5,193	$4,694	$527
Hopper Elementary Enrollment	315	327	314	(1)
Hopper Elementary Expenditures	$3,243	$3,833	$4,146	$903

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2001–02 through 2003–04.

According to the Business manager, if a per student allocation formula were used, some campus budgets would increase and some would decrease, which would prevent site-based decision-making committees from anticipating future funding. While using a per student allocation formula to determine campus budgets would make it more difficult for site-based committees to project and budget the next year's funding, not allocating resources on a per student basis may result in some schools having fewer funds available per student to meet the needs of its population, especially if enrollment is fluctuating.

TEA *FASRG* §2.9.1 includes a sample resource allocation, illustrated in **Exhibit 4-4**. Although TEA does not intend Texas school districts to use the example as a model, TEA uses it to illustrate a standard type of budgetary allocation used by school districts. The example shows a per student allocation for elementary, junior high, and high school campuses. The district grants additional per student allocations based on the numbers of special education, compensatory education, gifted and talented, and English Language Learner (ELL) students. Allocations are also included for the athletic program and band on a per student basis.

The WISD Business manager and superintendent should develop a budget allocation formula based on estimated student enrollment. During the course of annual revenue estimation in December, the district could disaggregate district enrollment by campus. The district can then use this information to project future campus student enrollment. The Business manager could also use a tool such as the Pupil Projections Template, available on the Texas Association of School Business Officials (TASBO) website, as a means to develop campus enrollment estimates. WISD can use a template such as this to calculate enrollment estimates based on several forecasting methods such as by ratio projection, by cohort projection, and by trend projection.

EXHIBIT 4-4
TEA SAMPLE RESOURCE ALLOCATION
FASRG §2.9.1

1. PROPOSED CAMPUS ALLOCATIONS:

Elementary/Intermediate Schools	$65 per student
Junior High Schools	$75 per student
High Schools	$90 per student

2. PROPOSED SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM ALLOCATIONS:

Special Education Program (excludes Co-op direct expense)	$36 per student
Compensatory Education Program (add $140 for dyslexia student)	$10 per student
Gifted and Talented Program	$30 per student
ELL Program	$135 per student
Occupational Educational Program	$40 per student
Educational Technology Program	$30 per student in average daily attendance

3. PROPOSED CO-CURRICULAR PROGRAM ALLOCATIONS:

Athletic Program	$195 per student
Band Program	$ 84 per student

4. PROPOSED SUPPORT SERVICES ALLOCATIONS:

Curriculum/Instruction Department	$17 per student
Personnel Department	$5 per student
Administration/Communications	$11 per student
Health Services Department	
Business/Purchasing Department	$10 per student
Tax Collection Department (excludes delinquent attorney fees)	$1 per parcel
Facilities Department (excludes utilities, security, energy grant costs and insurance)	$75 per student
Information Systems Department	$15 per student

Source: Texas Education Agency, Financial Accountability System Resource Guide.

The Board of Trustees should approve the allocations in January of each year. The district should give the determined allocations to the campuses each March with all other budget information. The campuses could then develop their budgets using the allocated resources based on student numbers. After the district knows the fall enrollment it should evaluate the budget allocations, making adjustments based on actual enrollment if necessary.

BUDGET AMENDMENTS (REC. 28)
WISD waits until actual expenditures have been posted at year-end before approving budget amendments, which is in noncompliance with TEA budget requirements.

Although the Business manager presents budget amendments to the board every month for board approval, WISD did not approve final amendments to the 2004–05 budget by the end of its fiscal year. The district completed the amendments after the close of the fiscal year, when it knew the final costs of payroll and accruals. During 2004–05, the Business manager presented amendments to the board monthly. The amendments were the result of campuses moving budget allocations from originally budgeted areas to other areas, due to changes in campus needs.

At the school board meeting on October 18, 2005, amendments to the 2004–05 budget for the fiscal year which ended August 31, 2005 were approved. All amendments were posted to the general ledger prior to board approval rather than after board approval as required by the *FASRG*. **Exhibit 4-5** summarizes these amendments.

The largest amendment presented at the October 2005 school board meeting was for $498,350 in plant maintenance. This amendment was for disaster-related expenses due to the November 2004 Colorado River flood that affected Dawson Elementary. WISD posted the flood-related revenue and expenditures to a separate fund to isolate them from the regular maintenance and operations budget. The Business manager updated the board throughout the year regarding flood-related revenue and expenditures, and reported to them that the revenue from insurance would exceed the flood-related expenses. According to the 2004–05 financial audit, the insurance reimbursement was $904,535, with the district spending only $521,110 on flood renovations. All budget amendments were posted to the general ledger before board approval rather than after board approval, as required by TEA accounting guidelines.

EXHIBIT 4-5
WISD AMENDMENTS TO FISCAL YEAR 2005 BUDGET
OCTOBER 18, 2005

CATEGORY CHANGED	INCREASE/ (DECREASE)
GENERAL FUND	
Local Revenue	$916,021
State Revenue – TRS On-Behalf	19,546
Total Revenues	**$935,567**
Instructional	(38,189)
Curriculum	(4,121)
Guidance and Counseling	874
Attendance	513
Transportation	41,280
Food Service	25,996
Plant Maintenance	498,350
Payments to shared service arrangements	14,015
Total Expenditures	**$538,718**
FOOD SERVICE	
Local Revenue	($65,000)
Federal Revenue	100,316
Total Food Service Revenues	**$35,316**
Food Service Expenses	35,316
Total Food Service Expenditures	**$35,316**

SOURCE: WISD Board of Trustees agenda, October 18, 2005.

Many of the other budget amendments presented during this meeting covered functional deficits. WISD increased six functional areas in the general fund after the end of the fiscal year: guidance and counseling, attendance, transportation, food service, plant maintenance, and payments to shared service arrangements. The food service fund increased one functional area. Without the $25,996 budget amendment approved in October 2005 for food service, the 2004–05 financial audit would have shown that the actual food service expenditures exceeded the board-approved budgeted expenditures by $21,862. Of the amended funds for food service, $19,546 of this general fund amendment was a result of accounting for TRS On-Behalf, a benefits cost paid to TRS that the district absorbs on behalf of its employees. The district does not post these expenses and/or revenue in WISD's accounting system until the end of the fiscal year.

TEA requires districts to adopt their budget, inclusive of amendments, no later than August 31. TEA uses the minutes of the district board meetings to record the adoption of and amendments to the budget. According to *FASRG* §2.6.2,

school districts must amend the official budget before exceeding a functional expenditure category such as instruction, administration, food service, or plant maintenance in the total district budget. WISD's budget approval delay by the Board of Trustees until after the fiscal year ends results in the district being noncompliant with TEA requirements for budget amendments.

WISD should comply with TEA requirements for budget amendments. The Business manager should prepare a final amendment based on projections each August, and present this to the board before August 31, to comply with TEA requirements in the *FASRG*. The district should amend the budget based on the best estimate of expenditures before the close of the fiscal year, rather than waiting until actual expenditures have posted. Additionally, the district should present all amendments to the board before posting them to the general ledger.

FINANCIAL AUDIT (REC. 29)

WISD lacks a competitive process for selecting an independent auditor.

The same audit firm has conducted WISD's annual independent audit since 1986. During this time, the independent audit partners have rotated, and different staff auditors have reviewed the accounting records of the district. However, the same audit partner has been in charge of the independent audit for the last nine years. While the district did not provide any information regarding how it originally selected the current audit firm, interviews did ascertain that the district's Board of Trustees has not asked for requests for auditor qualifications because the board is satisfied with the services of the audit firm. In addition to the regular audit, the firm helps the district with accounting issues throughout the year. The current auditors have consistently completed the district's audit on time. The district has not received a management letter containing findings, or identifying problems with the district's financial management during the past four years, which are the years for which the review team received copies of audits. The 2004–05 audit made no mention of the adoption of budget amendments that were not in compliance with TEA requirements contained in *FASRG* §2.6.2, and did not mention any problems with internal controls, although the review team found a lack of segregation of duties for bank reconciliations, check signing, and accounts payable.

Exhibit 4-6 shows WISD's audit costs from 2001 through 2005.

EXHIBIT 4-6
WISD AUDIT COSTS
2001 THROUGH 2005

YEAR	AUDIT COST
2005	$14,550
2004	$13,850
2003	$13,125
2002	$12,500
2001	$11,750

SOURCE: WISD Business manager, November 2005.

According to the Business manager, WISD's audit cost increased in 2001 for the first time in five years. While the district's audit costs have not increased substantially, WISD still spends more on audit services and has been with the same auditor longer than all of its peers **(Exhibit 4-7)**.

EXHIBIT 4-7
WISD AND PEER DISTRICTS
NUMBER OF YEARS WITH AUDIT FIRM AND AUDIT COSTS
FOR 2003–04 AND 2004–05

SCHOOL	YEARS	2003–04	2004–05
Aransas Pass	10	$12,200	$12,200
Cuero	3	$13,000	$13,000
Edna	4	$12,000	$12,000
El Campo	3	$11,320	$11,320
Wharton	**20**	**$13,850**	**$14,550**

SOURCE: WISD Business manager and WCL ENTERPRISES survey of peer districts.

A competitive process for independent auditor selection ensures that the district obtains appropriate qualifications for the independent audit service, the independent audit team remains independent of the district's business office staff, and that audit costs remain competitive.

GFOA recommends that governmental entities undertake a full-scale competitive process for selecting independent auditors at the end of the audit contract term, consistent with applicable legal requirements. According to the GFOA, the policy of requiring a district to replace the auditor at the end of the audit contract, as is often the case in the private sector, enhances auditor independence. The GFOA further recommends that governmental entities should routinely explore the possibility of alternative service providers before making a decision to engage their independent auditors to perform significant nonaudit services. GFOA recommends that districts structure the audit procurement process so that

the principal factor in the selection of an independent auditor is the auditor's ability to perform a quality audit. The price does not serve as the sole criterion for the selection of an independent auditor.

According to TEA's *FASRG*, competitive proposal procedures provide for full competition among proposals. TEA procedures allow for negotiation with the proposer(s) to obtain the "best" services at the most financially competitive pricing. A sample request for audit services qualifications is available in Appendix 1 of the Auditing section of *FASRG*.

The superintendent should develop a process for selecting an independent auditor using a competitive approach, focusing on auditor qualifications. Audit contracts should be limited to five years. At the end of the contract period, a competitive process should be required for selecting an independent auditor for the next five-year term. The Business manager and superintendent should develop this process into a board policy and present it to the school board for adoption.

DOCUMENTATION OF PROCEDURES (REC. 30)

WISD's Finance Department lacks formal, district-specific, written finance procedures describing daily, weekly, monthly, and annual duties for accounting and accounts payable functions.

WISD lacks written guidelines for accounting and accounts payable functions, such as posting entries to the general ledger, invoice payments, or check processing. There is no written documentation stating who has the authority to make general ledger adjustments, or designating who has authority in the Finance Department if the Business manager is absent. Although the Finance Department has no comprehensive written procedures manual, several forms, such as travel requests, travel guidelines, theft and vandalism reports, purchase requisitions, and authorizations for payment, are available on the district's website. The payroll function has very detailed checklists developed by the payroll clerk, which staff uses to run the monthly payroll cycles. These checklists are beneficial for use if someone other than the payroll clerk must process payroll, and are a great resource for ensuring employees accomplish all the payroll-processing steps. WISD's Finance Department staff also use the Business Office Master Calendar available on the TASBO website (http://www.tasbo.org/BOChecklist.htm) to ensure awareness of reporting timelines. WISD employees use TEA's *FASRG*, and each staff member uses the detailed online procedures manual for the financial software used by the district.

Without written procedures for posting entries to the general ledger, invoice payment, or check processing, there is no standard, comprehensive documentation to guide or train new employees, or employees filling in when someone is absent. Written procedures manuals also provide a basis for periodic evaluations of processes and practices for the purposes of continuous improvement and improved control environments.

The GFOA recommends that every government entity document its accounting policies and procedures. The documentation should be readily available to all employees. The procedures should describe the authority and responsibility of all employees, especially those authorized to transact district business and those responsible for assets and records safekeeping. It is important for districts to update these procedures periodically according to a predetermined schedule.

WISD should develop written procedures for the Finance Department. The Business manager should obtain copies of procedures manuals from other districts to use as a guide in preparing procedures for the district. The forms and instructions that WISD has on its website, such as the payroll checklist, should be included in the comprehensive manual. Staff members should be involved by writing their daily, weekly, monthly, and annual responsibilities for the Business manager to use as a starting point for developing the procedures.

The district should post these procedures to its website. This will provide staff with regular access to this document, and will allow for easy updating by the Business manager, providing the staff with the most accurate version of procedures available. Discussion of these procedures should be incorporated into staff meetings, staff training, and the new employee training process. The Business manager should update these procedures as needed, but at least on an annual basis. The practice of reviewing and updating procedures could coincide with employee evaluations.

COST OF SSA – SPECIAL EDUCATION COOPERATIVE (REC. 31)

Within a SSA with two other districts, WISD is using its operating funds to pay a significantly higher portion for costs that support services to other member districts' students.

A SSA is an agreement between two or more school districts and/or education service centers providing services for entities involved. The East Wharton County Special Instructional Services Cooperative (EWCSISC) is a SSA between WISD, Boling ISD, and East Bernard ISD for the sole purpose of providing assessments and related services for students residing in these three districts who are eligible for services under each district's special education programs.

Each SSA must have a fiscal agent responsible for conducting various administrative duties, such as budgeting, accounting, and personnel management responsibilities related to the shared services. As fiscal agent for the EWCSISC, WISD is responsible for the general financial and personnel management responsibilities of the SSA, and for ensuring that funds are used in accordance with grant provisions. If the SSA does not use the money in accordance with the grant provisions, the fiscal agent may be financially responsible for the consequences of any instances of noncompliance. The fiscal agent may also be financially responsible if a member school district is unable to pay back its respective portion of questioned costs.

The total 2005–06 budget for the EWCSISC was $1,375,798, including payroll costs of $1,213,062 for the staff positions shown in **Exhibit 4-8**. Part-time positions such as substitutes, extended-year teachers, and extended-year aides are not

EXHIBIT 4-8
EWCSISC STAFF POSITIONS
2005–06

POSITION	NUMBER
Director	1
Diagnosticians	2
Licensed Specialist in School Psychology	1
Interns	2
Speech Therapists	3
Speech Therapist Assistant	1
Special Education Resource Services Aide	1
Administrative Aide	1
Clerical Staff	1
Life Skills Teachers	6
Life Skills Aide	1
Preschool Program for Children with Disabilities (PPCD) Teacher	1
PPCD Aide	1
Visually Impaired Teacher	1
Vocational Adjustment Coordinator	1
Job Coaches	2
Total	**26**

SOURCE: WISD Business manager, November 2005.

included in this exhibit. Other expenditures include contract services, supplies, travel for physical and occupational therapy, psychological evaluations, speech therapy, homebound services, and counseling.

The EWCSISC received $738,036 in federal funding for 2005–06, for all member districts through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, administered by TEA, and $30,000 from School Health and Related Services program sources. As fiscal agent for the SSA, WISD receives, and is responsible for the accounting of all federal funds for all member districts. WISD does retain a percentage of the federal funds for indirect costs associated with the federal grants, as it does with all federal funds received. The member districts divide the remaining $607,762 balance necessary to meet budgeted expenditures, paid from their state and local resources. For the 2005–06 budget year, this method of fund allocation was used to prorate the balance of funds needed according to the member districts' special education allotment received from TEA **(Exhibit 4-9)**. This breakdown of revenue is close to the percentage of special education students in each district.

Beginning in 2004–05 and continuing in 2005–06, the WISD Business manager moved the salaries of teachers and aides out of the district's general fund budget and into the EWCSISC budget for classes containing students from other districts. Before this, WISD was covering the full salary and benefits of employees that should have been included in the SSA budget. Despite this action, WISD continues to bear other annual costs of $68,869 not allocated to the other EWCSISC member districts. These include: facilities rent, transportation, administrative offices utilities costs, the costs of WISD's technology staff repairing computers and other devices, and the annual financial audit cost **(Exhibit 4-10)**.

WISD has taken steps to alleviate this financial burden. The superintendent notified the EWCSISC management board that WISD would spend the 2005–06 budget year determining a more equitable cost-sharing plan. The Business manager and EWCSISC director have been talking to other districts that are SSA fiscal agents to gather information concerning the financial operations of SSAs.

As a result of not having a system to properly distribute SSA costs across all member districts, WISD is paying for services for students of member districts without reimbursement. The district is not receiving reimbursement for the costs of building space rental, utilities, transportation, and indirect services such as payroll, accounting, auditing, and technology.

Each SSA is responsible for developing its own cost sharing methods. TEA's *FASRG* §1.3.1.4 includes administrative guidelines and considerations for SSAs. Based on the assumption that all expenditures are on the behalf of a school district, the fiscal agent should prorate the expenditures among those school districts on a basis determined by the governing entity. Examples given are:

- Percentages of expenditures by each member district as a ratio to the whole;
- Percentage of full-time equivalent staff members as a ratio to the whole;
- Percentage of personnel unit values as a ratio to the whole (teacher = 1.00 personnel unit, aides = 0.50 personnel unit, and support staff = 1.2 personnel units);
- Number of students participating in the SSA as a ratio to the whole; and
- Amount of an entitlement retained by the fiscal agent to expend on behalf of each member district.

EXHIBIT 4-9
EWCSISC BUDGET REVENUE DISTRIBUTION
2005–06

MEMBER DISTRICT	SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS	PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS	TEA SPECIAL EDUCATION ALLOTMENT	PERCENTAGE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION ALLOTMENT	COST TO EACH MEMBER DISTRICT
Boling	102	19.7%	$377,909	22.1%	$134,558
East Bernard	110	21.3	340,436	19.9	121,188
Wharton	**305**	**59.0**	**988,668**	**57.9**	**352,016**
Total	**517**	**100.0%**	**$1,707,013**	**100.0%***	**$607,762**

*Percentage total was rounded to 100%.
SOURCE: WISD Business manager, November 2005.

EXHIBIT 4-10
EWCSISC ESTIMATED COSTS NOT INCLUDED
IN THE SHARED SERVICES BUDGET
2005–06

DESCRIPTION	OTHER MEMBER DISTRICTS COSTS	WISD ANNUAL COST
Building space rental	$0	$5,973
Utilities	0	28,680
Transportation	0	3,743
Indirect services: business-related functions such as payroll, accounting, personnel, auditing, technology (2.215% of total expenditures)	0	30,473
Total	$0	$68,869

SOURCE: WISD Business manager, November 2005.

Many districts base cost sharing on the number of students, using the October PEIMS Snapshot count of special education students. Some also prorate by student, using the latest enrollment at the end of the school year. The Bastrop Special Education Cooperative uses a combination of methods. The Cooperative considers some expenses as fixed costs, dividing them equally among member districts, prorating the balance of the costs based on the fall PEIMS count. Some cooperatives require set fees be paid to the fiscal agent to help cover the costs associated with the administrative burden.

WISD should develop a SSA budget inclusive of all costs associated with the services to special education students to ensure that all member districts are paying their full share of services. The WISD Business manager and superintendent should present the budget to the management board of the EWCSISC for approval. Each year, the Business manager should review the budget to ensure that additional costs are included as they occur. WISD should invoice and receive funds from the member districts monthly.

WISD could save $28,925 annually if all the costs of the EWCSISC were included in the SSA for districts. By using the costs of $68,869 shown in **Exhibit 4-10** and multiplying by the 42 percent share that other EWCSISC member districts should be contributing (22.1 percent for Boling ISD and 19.9 percent for East Bernard as shown in **Exhibit 4-9**), WISD would receive $28,925 ($68,869 x 42 percent) in additional funds each year. As the district approved the EWCSISC SSA agreement for 2006–07 at the September 2006 board meeting, the district should implement this recommendation in 2007–08.

FEDERAL PROGRAMS REIMBURSEMENTS (REC. 32)

WISD uses funds from the general operating budget to pay federal and state program expenditures without requesting reimbursements from TEA in a timely manner.

The bookkeeper/accounts payable clerk is responsible for filing reimbursement requests with TEA for grant funds. For 2004–05, the district completed no reimbursements requests for September, October, January, April, and June. The district's general operating fund covered all expenditures until the receipt of grant funds from TEA **(Exhibit 4-11)**.

During 2005–06, WISD first requested TEA reimbursement for federal program expenditures on November 22, 2005. The total funds requested were $177,016. WISD received the funds from TEA on November 23 and 28, 2005, with the majority received on November 28 **(Exhibit 4-12).**

The district spent all of the funds received on November 23 and 28, 2005 from the district's operating cash between July 1, 2005 and November 22, 2005, until it received reimbursement from TEA. As of November 7, 2005, WISD's general operating fund was covering grant fund cash deficits of $305,612, and WISD's general ledger showed a cash fund deficit for state and federal programs of $198,308. WISD is using its general operating cash to cover cash deficits in these programs. In addition to the federal reimbursements, WISD did not receive payments of $107,304 from the EWCSISC member districts until after expenses were paid, requiring WISD to use money from its general fund to cover the Cooperative's costs.

As a result of using general operating budget funds to pay federal and state program expenditures and not requesting reimbursements in a timely manner, the district is losing investment opportunities for the general fund.

Most grants such as Title I, Title II, Title V, and IDEA-B allow districts to submit reimbursement requests, provided the district uses the funds within three days of receipt. Many districts request funds three days before required payment of major program expenditures, such as payroll, thereby ensuring they receive the funds before the expenditures occur. Some districts request reimbursements on a monthly or quarterly basis.

Bastrop ISD (BISD) pays employees twice each month. The district processes the payroll three days before the date it is paid. The staff accountant runs reports for total expenditures for all grant programs from the general ledger after the district processes payroll. BISD compares the total expenditures to

EXHIBIT 4-11
WISD FEDERAL REIMBURSEMENTS
2004–05

DATE FUNDS RECEIVED BY WISD	FUNDING SOURCE	FUNDS RECEIVED FROM TEA
November 15, 2004	Texas High School Completion	$6,098
December 2, 2004	Accelerated Reading, PEP, Carl Perkins, Title I, IDEA-B, Title V, Title II	$209,476
February 3, 2005	Title II, Title V, IDEA-B, Title I, Carl Perkins, PEP, Accelerated Reading	$317,634
March 22, 2005	Title II, Title V, IDEA-B, Title I, Carl Perkins, PEP, Accelerated Reading	$296,480
March 23, 2005	Title II, Texas High School Completion	$12,188
May 19, 2005	Title II, Title V, IDEA-B, Title I, PEP, Texas High School Completion, Master Math/Reading Stipend	$189,105
May 23, 2005	IDEA-B	$148,193
May 24, 2005	Accelerated Reading	$8,846
July 20, 2005	Title II, Title V, IDEA-B, Title I, Carl Perkins, PEP, Accelerated Reading, Texas High School Completion	$339,892
August 16, 2005	Title VI, Title II, Title III, Title I, Carl Perkins, PEP, Texas High School Completion	$72,418
August 18, 2005	Title V, IDEA-B, Title I	$263,510

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency Payment Report for WISD, 2004–05.

EXHIBIT 4-12
WISD FEDERAL REIMBURSEMENTS
NOVEMBER 2005

DATE FUNDS RECEIVED BY WISD	EXPENDITURE BEGINNING DATE	EXPENDITURE ENDING DATE	FUNDING SOURCE	FUNDS RECEIVED FROM TEA
November 23, 2005	September 1, 2005	October 31, 2005	Life Skills Grant for Student	$1,679
November 28, 2005	July 1, 2005	October 31, 2005	Title I	58,204
November 28, 2005	September 15, 2005	October 31, 2005	Carl D. Perkins	3,715
November 28, 2005	July 1, 2005	October 31, 2005	Title II	19,026
November 28, 2005	July 1, 2005	October 31, 2005	Title III	690
November 28, 2005	July 1, 2005	October 31, 2005	Title V	1,261
November 28, 2005	July 11, 2005	October 31, 2005	IDEA-B Formula	89,735
November 28, 2005	July 11, 2005	October 31, 2005	IDEA-B Preschool	1,443
November 28, 2005	September 1, 2005	October 31, 2005	Accelerated Reading Instruction	1,263
Total				**$177,016**

SOURCE: WISD Business manager, December 2005.

the grant reimbursements received, and requests the difference from TEA through the grant request form appropriate for each grant. With this process, BISD receives grant funds within a few days of the funds being spent. The accountant monitors check cycles between payroll periods and requests reimbursement from grant funds if a large expense occurs.

WISD should develop and implement a procedure for federal and state grant reimbursement ensuring the district both requests and receives funds from TEA in a timely manner.

The Business manager should create a calendar for federal and state fund reimbursement requests. The district should submit reimbursement requests three days before a payroll cycle. The Business manager should review reports on a monthly basis, verifying that the district received the funds in a timely manner.

Exhibit 4-13 provides a breakdown of the potential earned interest based on funding sources from which the district draws revenue. Applying the formula [(Funds Received by

TEA x TexPool December 2005 Interest Rate of 4.17 percent) divided by 365 days = daily earned interest x the number of days WISD waited for reimbursement)] gives the potential earned interest for that fund that WISD could have earned had those funds been requested in a more timely manner.

For example, using the first item on **Exhibit 4-13**, on November 15, 2005 WISD received funds totaling $6,098 related to the Texas High School Completion program. WISD waited 61 days to request reimbursement for these funds. Applying the TexPool December 2005 interest rate of 4.17 percent means this fund could receive $254 in interest

annually and/or $0.70 daily. The $0.70 accrued over 61 days equals $42 of potential interest earnings.

Using this formula for each funding source and totaling the potential earned interest shows that the district could earn $11,331 annually with five-year earnings of $56,655.

For background information on Chapter 4, Financial Management, see page 198 in the General Information section of the Appendices.

EXHIBIT 4-13
WISD FEDERAL REIMBURSEMENTS
NOVEMBER 2005

DATE FUNDS RECEIVED BY WISD	FUNDING SOURCE	FUNDS RECEIVED FROM TEA	TEXPOOL DECEMBER 2005 INTEREST RATE	DAILY EARNED INTEREST	DAYS WISD WAITED FOR REIMBURSEMENT	POTENTIAL EARNED INTEREST
November 15, 2005	Texas High School Completion	$6,098	4.17%	$0.70	61	$42
December, 2, 2005	Accelerated Reading, PEP, Carl Perkins, Title I, IDEA-B, Title V, Title II	$209,476	4.17%	$23.93	90	$2,154
February 3, 2005	Title II, Title V, IDEA-B, Title I, Carl Perkins, PEP, Accelerated Reading	$317,634	4.17%	$36.29	60	$2,177
March 22, 2005	Title II, Title V, IDEA-B, Title I, Carl Perkins, PEP, Accelerated Reading	$296,480	4.17%	$33.87	28*	$948
March 23, 2005	Title II, Texas High School Completion	$12,188	4.17%	$1.39	28*	$39
May 19, 2005	Title II, Title V, IDEA-B, Title I, PEP, Texas High School Completion, Master Math/ Reading Stipend	$189,105	4.17%	$21.60	61	$1,318
May 23, 2005	IDEA-B	$148,193	4.17%	$16.93	61	$1,033
May 24, 2005	Accelerated Reading	$8,846	4.17%	$1.01	61	$62
July 20, 2005	Title II, Title V, IDEA-B, Title I, Carl Perkins, PEP, Accelerated Reading, Texas High School Completion	$339,892	4.17%	$38.83	61	$2,369
August 16, 2005	Title VI, Title II, Title III, Title I, Carl Perkins, PEP, Texas High School Completion	$72,418	4.17%	$8.27	31	$256
August 18, 2005	Title V, IDEA-B, Title I	$263,510	4.17%	$30.11	31	$933
					Total:	**$11,331**

*Assumes a conservative 28 days based on the lowest number of days listed.
SOURCE: Texas Education Agency Payment Report for WISD, 2004–05 and WCL ENTERPRISES, 2006.

FISCAL IMPACT

	RECOMMENDATION	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09	2009–10	2010–11	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) SAVINGS	ONE- TIME (COSTS) SAVINGS
CHAPTER 4: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT								
26.	Review job descriptions and the job duties of the Finance Department staff and develop procedures to segregate responsibilities involving the district's purchasing, invoicing, accounts payable, and bank reconciliation functions.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
27.	Develop a budget allocation formula based on estimated student enrollment.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
28.	Comply with TEA budget requirements for budget amendments.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
29.	Develop a process for selecting an independent auditor using a competitive approach, focusing on auditor qualifications.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
30.	Develop written procedures for the Finance Department.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
31.	Develop a SSA budget inclusive of all costs associated with the services to special education students to ensure that all member districts are paying their full share of services.	$0	$28,925	$28,925	$28,925	$28,925	$115,700	$0
32.	Develop and implement a procedure for federal and state grant reimbursement ensuring the district both requests and receives funds from TEA in a timely manner.	$11,331	$11,331	$11,331	$11,331	$11,331	$56,655	$0
Total-Chapter 4		**$11,331**	**$40,256**	**$40,256**	**$40,256**	**$40,256**	**$172,355**	**$0**

CHAPTER 5

ASSET AND RISK MANAGEMENT

WHARTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

CHAPTER 5. ASSET AND RISK MANAGEMENT

Texas school districts are responsible for protecting the publicly financed assets provided to educate children. A school district's assets include real and personal property, cash, and fixed assets. Schools must manage these assets effectively to reduce the risk of loss. Asset and risk management programs control risks by protecting against significant financial and physical losses, and include activities such as investing idle cash; providing adequate and affordable health and workers' compensation insurance to employees; protecting all assets against loss from damage, theft, and obsolescence; and managing debt payments.

The Wharton Independent School District (WISD) Business manager is responsible for all aspects of the district's asset and risk management programs including cash and investment management, fixed asset management, workers' compensation, and property and casualty insurance. The Business manager has been in this position since 1992.

FINDINGS

- WISD maintains a large number of bank accounts, creating unnecessary administrative efforts on the part of Finance Department staff, and increasing the possibility of errors in accounting records.

- WISD does not enforce its interlocal agreement with Wharton County which requires the county to deposit tax receipts daily.

- WISD lacks a district work safety plan addressing workers' compensation losses.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Recommendation 33: Consolidate the district's bank accounts.** After reviewing all bank accounts, the Business manager should consolidate them into four accounts and ensure that all four are interest bearing. Activity and agency accounts should be considered separate by fund, but the aggregate funds should be contained within one bank account. A similar approach should be taken with the Special Friends accounts, the Superintendent's Special account, and the General Fund. The Payroll Clearing account should remain open, and the Capital Acquisition Program account should be reopened. Assigning the bank account

reconciliation to a Finance Department employee will reduce administrative time and processing errors.

- **Recommendation 34: Require the county to disburse funds to the district daily according to the requirements of the interlocal agreement to ensure the maximization of interest earnings.** The Business manager and superintendent should meet with the county tax collector to review the interlocal agreement and the history of WISD's tax collections, and should revise the agreement as necessary. Upon the revision and reauthorization of the interlocal agreement, the superintendent and county tax collector should sign and date the agreement, and it should be maintained on file with both entities. Additionally, since the district and county use the same bank, the district should consider adding to the agreement that the county deposit the daily disbursements directly.

- **Recommendation 35: Develop a district work safety plan to address workers' compensation losses.** To gain a comprehensive understanding of risks located across the district, the district should create a safety committee, led by the safety coordinator, with representatives from all employee groups. The safety coordinator should contact WISD's workers' compensation provider for a district training and accident prevention procedures review. The committee should review the provider's work-related injury analysis, along with any reports conducted by outside organizations on accident prevention and claims experience, to determine areas and occupation classifications that the district should focus on as it develops the district work safety plan.

DETAILED FINDINGS

BANK ACCOUNTS (REC. 33)

WISD maintains a large number of bank accounts, creating unnecessary administrative efforts on the part of Finance Department staff, and increasing the possibility of errors in accounting records.

As of October 31, 2005, WISD maintained 21 different bank accounts, including the dormant Special Friends Activity account **(Exhibit 5-1)**.

EXHIBIT 5-1
WISD SCHEDULE OF CASH IN BANK BY BANK ACCOUNT
OCTOBER 31, 2005

DESCRIPTION	INTEREST BEARING	INTEREST RATE	AMOUNT
Capital Acquisition Program	Yes	2.53%	$2,584.24
Dawson Accelerated Reader (AR)	No	0.00%	$620.01
Dawson Activity	Yes	2.53%	$13,941.07
Family Crisis Fund (Certificate of Deposit)	Yes	2.30%	$40,000.00
General Fund	Yes	2.53%	$105,243.47
Hopper Activity	Yes	2.53%	$40,442.82
Investment	Yes	2.53%	$56,847.76
Nurse Support	Yes	2.53%	$8,829.26
Payroll Clearing	No	0.00%	$40,076.35
Sivells Activity	Yes	2.53%	$47,465.75
Special Friends 2000	Yes	2.53%	$34,652.94
Special Friends 2001	Yes	2.53%	$24,649.06
Special Friends 2002	Yes	2.53%	$17,523.82
Special Friends 2003	Yes	0.60%	$13,800.34
Special Friends 2004	Yes	2.53%	$16,195.01
Special Friends Activity*			
Superintendent's Special	No	0.00%	$115.11
Wharton High School (WHS) Agency	Yes	2.53%	$149,071.26
WHS Activity	Yes	2.53%	$12,994.36
Wharton Junior High School (WJH) Agency	Yes	2.53%	$27,828.49
WJH Activity	Yes	2.53%	25,348.74
Total			**$678,229.86**

*This account is dormant.
Source: WISD Business manager, November 2005.

The district closed both the Capital Acquisition Program and Investment accounts in February 2006. This reduced the number of accounts WISD maintains from 21 to 19. There are six Special Friends accounts, set up separately at the request of a district benefactor and managed by the district. The district has not recorded two of the accounts composed of grant funds received from local education foundations, Dawson AR and the Nurse Support Fund, in its financial ledgers. The Dawson AR account was set up by the Dawson principal as a separate bank account when the grant funds were initially received. The Nurse Support Fund was set up as a separate bank account at the district depository bank by the Health coordinator.

Exhibit 5-2 is a listing of WISD bank accounts, their purpose, and the employee responsible for reconciliation.

Wharton High School (WHS) and Wharton Junior High School (WJH) each maintain separate checking accounts for agency funds and activity funds. These accounts have limited oversight by campus administration and lack a segregation of duties. The agency fund is for student clubs such as cheerleading, Future Farmers of America, and band. The activity fund is for library books, student rewards, field trips, instructional supplies, and other uses as determined by the campus principal. The principal has primary responsibility for both accounts. Campus secretaries are responsible for maintaining the activity fund forms, issuing cash receipt books, maintaining official activity fund records, depositing activity funds in the bank, and accounting and financial reporting of these funds. Activity sponsors at both WHS and WJH are responsible for managing their respective activity fund accounts, and may be responsible for deposits if so designated by the principal.

Eight different employees across three departments and five schools reconcile the 19 bank accounts monthly. At the campus level, principals and secretaries are responsible for both signing the checks and reconciling the accounts. The bank sends monthly account statements to the principal which are then used for the monthly reconciliations. Principals are responsible for verifying the reconciliation and approving them by signature. The departments and campuses complete the review and send a copy of the reconciliation to the Business manager for signature, then to accounting for posting on a monthly basis. The bookkeeper/accounts payable clerk reviews the reconciliation without documentation to back up the evaluation, and records the activity in the district accounting records. Cancelled checks or deposits are not reviewed. The reconciliations examined by the review team did not include the date that the Business manager received them, or the date posted into the general ledger.

WISD pays for activity fund expenditures using prenumbered checks from the activity fund accounts; an Authorization for Payment form must be completed for a check to be issued. The form includes the payee name and address, expenditure purpose, check amount, activity fund name, budget code, original invoice, cash register tape or other supporting documentation, and the principal's and sponsor's signature. Any request for more than $200 requires the Business manager's signature before payment can be authorized. All payments for fixed assets, inventory items, contracted

EXHIBIT 5-2
WISD BANK ACCOUNTS, PURPOSE, AND EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBLE FOR RECONCILIATION
NOVEMBER 2005

DESCRIPTION	PURPOSE	POSITION RESPONSIBLE FOR RECONCILING
Capital Acquisition Program*	1996B Capital Acquisition Program	Bookkeeper/Accounts Payable Clerk
Dawson AR**	Community grant for accelerated reading	Dawson Secretary
Dawson Activity	Campus activity fund	Dawson Secretary
Family Crisis Fund	Invested funds from a $40,000 grant from the Gulf Coast Medical Foundation into a Certificate of Deposit to assist needy children in the district with medical care.	Nurse Coordinator
General Fund	Operating fund of the district	Bookkeeper/Accounts Payable Clerk
Hopper Activity	Campus activity fund	Hopper Principal
Investment*	Before current year depository contract, special account required by the bank for them to match TexPool rate.	Bookkeeper/Accounts Payable Clerk
Nurse Support**	Interest from Family Crisis Fund for purchase of clothes and supplies for needy students.	Nurse Coordinator
Payroll Clearing	Clearing account for payroll	Bookkeeper/Accounts Payable Clerk
Sivells Activity	Campus activity fund	Sivells Secretary
Special Friends 2000	Donation from community member for at-risk students. Covers books, tuition for at-risk students from the 2000 graduation class.	Bookkeeper/Accounts Payable Clerk
Special Friends 2001	Donation from community member for at-risk students. Covers books, tuition for at-risk students from the 2001 graduation class.	Bookkeeper/Accounts Payable Clerk
Special Friends 2002	Donation from community member for at-risk students. Covers books, tuition for at-risk students from the 2002 graduation class.	Bookkeeper/Accounts Payable Clerk
Special Friends 2003	Donation from community member for at-risk students. Covers books, tuition for at-risk students from the 2003 graduation class.	Bookkeeper/Accounts Payable Clerk
Special Friends 2004	Donation from community member for at-risk students. Covers books, tuition for at-risk students from the 2004 graduation class.	Bookkeeper/Accounts Payable Clerk
Special Friends Activity	Dormant; originally used for parties for at-risk students.	Bookkeeper/Accounts Payable Clerk
Superintendent's Special	Account for incidental expenses	Superintendent's Secretary
WHS Agency	Student activity fund – Club funds	WHS Secretary
WHS Activity	Campus activity fund	WHS Secretary
WJH Agency	Student activity fund - Club funds	WJH Principal
WJH Activity	Campus activity fund	WJH Principal

*These accounts were closed as of February 2006.
**These accounts are not recorded in the district's financial ledgers.
SOURCE: WISD Business manager, November 2005.

services, or payments to employees must be paid through the Finance Department.

The Business manager meets annually with the high school staff and campus principals to review activity and agency fund procedures. Each secretary receives a written manual from the Business manager, the *Activity/Agency Fund Procedures*, which includes information on accountability and responsibility, audits, record retention, cash receipts, expenditures, capital outlay expenditures, extra duty pay to employees, contracted services, deposits, bank statements,

check cashing, returned checks, fund-raising activities, sales tax, and miscellaneous forms.

WISD uses more bank accounts in comparison to its peer districts, as shown in **Exhibit 5-3**.

EXHIBIT 5-3
WISD AND PEER DISTRICTS
NUMBER OF BANK ACCOUNTS
APRIL 2006

DISTRICT	BANK ACCOUNTS
Aransas Pass	10
Cuero	5
Edna	7
El Campo	13
Wharton	**19**

Source: WCL ENTERPRISES email and telephone survey, January 2006 and WISD Business manager, April 2006.

Maintaining a large number of bank accounts creates unnecessary administrative efforts on the part of the Finance Department and campus staff, and increases the possibility of errors in the accounting records. Accounts not included in the general ledger can result in the district underreporting cash in the annual financial audit and could lead to the bank deposits not being fully collateralized by the bank due to the exclusion of funds in reports generated from the district's financial system.

Some districts operate a limited number of bank accounts, saving administrative time in reconciling bank accounts and reducing errors in processing accounting records.

WISD's Business manager should consolidate the district's bank accounts. After reviewing all bank accounts, the Business manager should consolidate them into four accounts and ensure that all four are interest bearing. Activity and agency accounts should be considered separate by fund, but the aggregate funds should be contained within one bank account. A similar approach should be taken with the Special Friends accounts, the Superintendent's Special account, and the General Fund. The Payroll Clearing account should remain open, and the Capital Acquisition Program account should be reopened. Assigning the bank account reconciliation to a Finance Department employee will reduce administrative time and processing errors.

Exhibit 5-4 shows the recommended consolidation of WISD's bank accounts.

EXHIBIT 5-4
RECOMMENDED CONSOLIDATION OF WISD BANK ACCOUNTS
SEPTEMBER 2006

ACCOUNTS CLOSED	NEW ACCOUNTS
General Fund	General Fund
Special Friends 2000	
Special Friends 2001	
Special Friends 2002	
Special Friends 2003	
Special Friends 2004	
Superintendent's Special	
Sivells Activity	Student Activity
Hopper Activity	
Dawson Activity	
WHS Agency	
WHS Activity	
WJH Agency	
WJH Activity	
Nurse Support	
Dawson AR	
Payroll Clearing	Payroll Clearing
Capital Acquisition Program (for future bond proceeds)	Capital Acquisition Program

Source: WCL ENTERPRISES.

MAXIMIZING INTEREST EARNINGS ON TAX COLLECTION (REC. 34)

WISD does not enforce its interlocal agreement with Wharton County which requires the county to deposit tax receipts daily.

According to the interlocal agreement with Wharton County, the county agrees to make tax payments daily unless otherwise agreed to by WISD. The county collects taxes and deposits the receipts into its bank account daily. The funds remain in the county's bank account until the county processes a report and determines the amount in the account owed to WISD. The county sometimes combines as many as 26 days of deposits into one district disbursement As the interlocal agreement does not set a dollar threshold requiring written disbursements, this decision is made by the county. A check is then written to WISD for its share of tax collections.

WISD follows informal procedures regarding the disbursement and deposit of tax receipts from the county. The county calls the superintendent's secretary after writing the check. The secretary then goes to the county office to pick up the check, taking a deposit slip along and stopping at the district's bank to make the deposit on the way back. During school breaks, WISD leaves deposit slips with the county, and the county deposits the funds. Over the holidays, the superintendent's secretary picks up the disbursements and deposits them. The Business manager has no information on the tax collections until they are deposited, as the reports are received at the time of the deposits. This all occurs despite the county and the district having accounts at the same bank.

According to interviews with staff at the Wharton County Tax Office, from the latter part of November through the middle of February each year, Wharton County disburses funds daily to WISD due to a high volume of collections during this time period. However, **Exhibit 5-5** shows that from late November to December 2004, tax collection deposits sometimes took up to 17 days from the date of collection until WISD deposited the funds.

Inconsistency in deposits of tax collections can further be seen in **Exhibit 5-6**, which shows that WISD deposited tax collections seven more times from October through December 2005 than during the same period in 2004.

EXHIBIT 5-5
WISD TAX COLLECTIONS COMPARED TO DATES OF DEPOSIT
OCTOBER THROUGH DECEMBER 2004

DATE	TAX RECEIPT	DATE DEPOSITED IN BANK	DAYS FROM COLLECTION TO DEPOSIT IN WISD ACCOUNT *
October 1–20	$22,596.73	10/26	7 to 26
October 21–28	$94,282.55	11/04	8 to 15
October 29	$8,630.47	11/04	7
November 1–5	$201,675.04	11/08	5 to 9
November 8–9	$38,133.97	11/19	11 to 12
November 10–16	$67,865.26	11/19	4 to 10
November 17–18	$14,390.26	11/19	2 to 3
November 19–22	$42,800.63	11/29	8 to 11
November 23–24	$10,238.93	11/29	6 to 7
November 29	$14,026.25	12/08	10
December 1–2	$103,714.23	12/08	7 to 8
December 3	$81,545.25	12/08	6
December 6	$99,953.05	12/08	3
December 7	$18,008.16	12/08	2
December 8	$24,279.03	12/16	9
December 9–10	$28,895.36	12/16	7 to 8
December 13	$20,412.95	12/16	4
December 14	$29,429.19	12/16	3
December 15–16	$58,526.83	12/17	2 to 3
December 17	$24,457.09	12/21	5
December 20–27	$395,366.75	01/05	10 to 17
December 28	$128,568.08	01/05	9
December 29	$310,268.26	01/05	8
December 30	$233,730.43	01/05	7
December 31	$247,442.77	01/05	6

*Neither WISD nor Wharton County could provide detailed reports showing daily funds collected, therefore, a range had to be used.
Source: WISD superintendent's secretary, Tax Collection Reports October through December 2004, and WISD Business manager.

EXHIBIT 5-6
WISD NUMBER OF DAYS TAX COLLECTIONS DEPOSITED
OCTOBER – DECEMBER 2004 COMPARED TO
OCTOBER – DECEMBER 2005

MONTH	DAYS TAX COLLECTIONS DEPOSITED 2004	DAYS TAX COLLECTIONS DEPOSITED 2005	CHANGE IN DAYS FROM 2004 TO 2005
October	1	0	(1)
November	4	6	2
December	4	10	6
Total	**9**	**16**	**7**

Source: WISD superintendent's secretary, Tax Collection Reports October through December 2004 and 2005, and WISD Business manager.

Since WISD does not require the county to comply with the interlocal agreement and deposit tax receipts daily, WISD loses investment earnings and budget management is made more difficult.

Bastrop County collects taxes for the Smithville, Elgin, McDade, and Bastrop school districts. The tax collections are deposited daily to each district, by wire transfer of funds directly into investment pools or bank accounts, based on instructions from each individual district. Neither the districts nor the county pays additional fees for the wire transfers.

WISD should require the county to disburse funds to the district daily according to the requirements of the interlocal agreement to ensure the maximization of interest earnings. The Business manager and superintendent should meet with the county tax collector to review the interlocal agreement and the history of WISD's tax collections, and should revise the agreement as necessary. Upon the revision and reauthorization of the interlocal agreement, the superintendent and county tax collector should sign and date the agreement, and it should be maintained on file with both entities. Additionally, since the district and county use the same bank, the district should consider adding to the agreement that the county deposit the daily disbursements directly.

Exhibit 5-7 provides a breakdown of the potential earned interest based on tax collection disbursements to the district from October through December 2004, the heaviest fiscal quarter for tax collections. Applying the formula [(Amount of Tax Disbursement x TexPool December 2005 Interest Rate of 4.17 percent) divided by 365 days = daily earned interest x the shortest length of time between disbursement)] gives the potential earned interest for the tax collection funding

disbursement that WISD could have earned had those funds been provided daily to the district.

For example, using the first item on **Exhibit 5-7**, on October 26, 2005 WISD received tax collections for the period October 1–20 totaling $22,596.73. This disbursement was provided at least 7 days since the previous disbursement. Applying the TexPool December 2005 interest rate of 4.17 percent means this fund could receive $942 in interest annually and/or $2.58 daily. The $2.58 accrued over 7 days equals $18.07 of potential interest earnings.

Using the above formula, WISD could have earned $1,867 in interest had tax collections been received on a daily basis between October and December 2004. Assuming district tax collections were 25 percent in all other months, WISD could earn interest income of $1,401 for the months of January through September for a total of $3,268 in earned interest income annually [$1,867 x 25 percent = $467 x 3 (the three quarters of January through September) = $1,401 + $1,867 for October through December].

WORKERS' COMPENSATION (REC. 35)

WISD lacks a district work safety plan addressing workers' compensation losses.

The district's safety coordinator meets monthly with Maintenance, Transportation, custodial, and Food Service employees for informal training activities. Although there is no set agenda, the safety coordinator reviews safety videos and discusses safety issues such as back injuries, chemical use, preventing slips and falls, and other worker safety concerns. The safety coordinator also has a small budget to reward the employees that, within the departments included in the meetings, are injury-free at year's end. The safety coordinator does not meet with clerical, administration, or professional employees.

WISD wrote a memo containing workers' compensation procedures, sending it to principals, supervisors, nurses, secretaries, and the Finance Department in October 2000. The procedures have not been updated since 2000, and employees new to these positions are trained as needed. The procedures include the forms to complete in the event of an injury, how to complete the forms, and instructions to call the Business manager or the secretary to the director of Auxiliary Services any time an employee is injured.

The district participates in a fully-funded workers' compensation program through Texas Association of School Boards (TASB). The secretary to the director of Auxiliary

EXHIBIT 5-7
WISD ESTIMATED EARNED INTEREST ON TAX COLLECTIONS
OCTOBER THROUGH DECEMBER 2004

DATES TAX COLLECTIONS WERE RECEIVED	AMOUNT OF TAX DISBURSEMENT	DATE DEPOSITED IN BANK	TEXPOOL DECEMBER 2005 INTEREST RATE	DAILY EARNED INTEREST	SHORTEST LENGTH OF TIME BETWEEN DISBURSEMENT	POTENTIAL EARNED INTEREST
October 1–20	$22,596.73	10/26	4.17%	$2.58	7	$18.07
October 21–28	$94,282.55	11/04	4.17%	$10.77	8	$86.17
October 29	$8,630.47	11/04	4.17%	$0.99	7	$6.90
November 1–5	$201,675.04	11/08	4.17%	$23.04	5	$115.20
November 8–9	$38,133.97	11/19	4.17%	$4.36	11	$47.92
November 10–16	$67,865.26	11/19	4.17%	$7.75	4	$31.01
November 17–18	$14,390.26	11/19	4.17%	$1.64	2	$3.29
November 19–22	$42,800.63	11/29	4.17%	$4.89	8	$39.12
November 23–24	$10,238.93	11/29	4.17%	$1.17	6	$7.02
November 29	$14,026.25	12/08	4.17%	$1.60	10	$16.02
December 1–2	$103,714.23	12/08	4.17%	$11.85	7	$82.94
December 3	$81,545.25	12/08	4.17%	$9.32	6	$55.90
December 6	$99,953.05	12/08	4.17%	$11.42	3	$34.26
December 7	$18,008.16	12/08	4.17%	$2.06	2	$4.11
December 8	$24,279.03	12/16	4.17%	$2.77	9	$24.96
December 9–10	$28,895.36	12/16	4.17%	$3.30	7	$23.11
December 13	$20,412.95	12/16	4.17%	$2.33	4	$9.33
December 14	$29,429.19	12/16	4.17%	$3.36	3	$10.09
December 15–16	$58,526.83	12/17	4.17%	$6.69	2	$13.37
December 17	$24,457.09	12/21	4.17%	$2.79	5	$13.97
December 20–27	$395,366.75	01/05/05	4.17%	$45.17	10	$451.69
December 28	$128,568.08	01/05/05	4.17%	$14.69	9	$132.20
December 29	$310,268.26	01/05/05	4.17%	$35.45	8	$283.58
December 30	$233,730.43	01/05/05	4.17%	$26.70	7	$186.92
December 31	$247,442.77	01/05/05	4.17%	$28.27	6	$169.62
					Total:	**$1,867.00***

*Total rounded off to dollar amount.
SOURCE: WISD superintendent's Tax Collection Reports October through December 2004, WISD Business manager, and WCL ENTERPRISES, 2006.

Services is responsible for coordinating and filing all workers' compensation claims. These include claims for the employee, physician, and TASB. The secretary generates all claims reports online as needed, completes other forms when the employee returns to work, and completes the wage statement.

WISD pays workers' compensation based on fixed rates applied to actual payroll costs. Workers' compensation contributions decreased in 2003–04, but increased in 2004–05, and WISD anticipates an increase for 2005–06 **(Exhibit 5-8)**.

Insurance pools, such as those used by school districts, rate schools based on workers' compensation claims experience. Employees with common or similar services are grouped together into classification codes, and losses are categorized by these classifications. The insurance pools develop experience modifiers by comparing the employer's actual losses from year to year, and use them to adjust or modify the manual rates based on the employer's experience. An employer with better than average experience gains credit off the manual rate, while an employer with worse than average experience will pay more than the manual rate. The insurance

EXHIBIT 5-8
WISD WORKERS' COMPENSATION CONTRIBUTIONS
2002–03 THROUGH 2005–06

PLAN YEAR	WISD CONTRIBUTION	ANNUAL CHANGE IN CONTRIBUTION
2005–06*	$175,665	$5,866
2004–05	$169,799	$4,953
2003–04	$164,846	($17,842)
2002–03	$182,688	N/A

*This is an estimated figure based on 2005–06 payroll costs.
SOURCE: WISD Business manager, November 2005.

pool WISD uses calculates an experience modifier after consideration of the employer's actual data over the last three complete years, and compares it to the program's expected losses for each classification. These ratings, called experience modification factors (EMFs), are used to set district insurance contributions. EMFs are applied to WISD's manual contributions to reflect the district's actual experience as compared to the expected experience of similarly sized districts. An EMF over 1.00 indicates that the actual experience is worse than expected. WISD's EMF has exceeded 1.00 since 1993, except for 2004 when the district's EMF was 0.99, just below 1.00. **Exhibit 5-9** shows the past five years of WISD's workers' compensation claims, as well as the information for 2005–06, although the information for this year is incomplete.

EXHIBIT 5-9
WISD WORKERS' COMPENSATION CLAIMS
2000 THROUGH 2005

YEAR	CLAIMS	LOSSES	EMF
2000	24	$75,407	1.11
2001	21	$71,939	1.07
2002	25	$75,057	1.15
2003	41	$89,132	1.07
2004	36	$146,679	0.99
2005*	7	$1,500	1.10

*Data current as of October 31, 2005.
SOURCE: Texas Association of School Boards Member History, as of October 31, 2005. Information obtained from secretary to the director of Auxiliary Services.

WISD's professional/clerical/administration category has the highest number of workers' compensation claims, with 80 claims over the last five years **(Exhibit 5-10)**.

As shown in **Exhibit 5-11**, during 2003–04 and 2004–05 the professional/clerical/administration occupations in WISD had 49 total claims; 25 falls, and 16 strains.

WISD had a higher number of claims per employee than did its peers in 2004–05 **(Exhibit 5-12)**.

The safety coordinator has safety meetings with all employee categories except the professional/clerical/administration category. The employees that the safety coordinator does meet with have lower claims than does the only employee category the coordinator does not meet with.

An EMF higher than 1.00 can result in higher workers' compensation premiums and an increased loss of work time. If claims were to continue to rise, the EMF would also increase, causing the district to pay higher premiums. The primary benefits of experience ratings are that they include the individual employer's experience in the pricing and provide an incentive for loss prevention by promoting occupational safety.

Lyford Consolidated ISD (LCISD) reduced its workers' compensation program expenses by instituting a strong safety and loss prevention program. The district took advantage of TASB loss control services, including on-site visits by the loss control consultant, training, reviewing loss reports with district staff to identify high-risk areas, the loss control manual, and safety handout kits with monthly safety meeting topics. The supervisor for Maintenance and Transportation incorporated the TASB loss control manual and safety kit into the district's safety program. The safety program has been well documented through training logs and inspection forms. Training is provided to employees, with specific training addressing high-risk employees. New employees are trained to use personal protective equipment when it is issued. The training is documented on a form stating the type of equipment issued, type of training, and the employee's signature. LCISD also implemented a district safety committee including these personnel:

- Maintenance and Transportation supervisor;
- assistant custodian supervisor;
- Transportation representative;
- yard crew representative;
- custodian;
- administrator; and
- district police chief.

The safety committee meets monthly to review loss reports and safety issues. Based on these reviews, the committee determines the safety topics for the following months. The

EXHIBIT 5-10
WISD WORKERS' COMPENSATION NUMBER OF CLAIMS BY OCCUPATION
2000–01 THROUGH 2004–05

DEPARTMENT	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	TOTAL BY DEPARTMENT
Professional/Clerical/ Administration	12	8	11	24	25	**80**
Building Maintenance	7	5	7	5	4	**28**
Food Service	5	3	4	5	2	**19**
Custodial	0	4	3	6	3	**16**
Driver and Vehicle Maintenance	0	1	0	1	2	**4**
Total by Year	**24**	**21**	**25**	**41**	**36**	**147**

SOURCE: Texas Association of School Boards Member History, as of October 31, 2005. Information obtained from secretary to the director of Auxiliary Services.

EXHIBIT 5-11
WISD WORKERS' COMPENSATION CLAIMS BY TYPE OF INJURY
PROFESSIONAL/CLERICAL/ADMINISTRATION OCCUPATIONS
2003–04 AND 2004–05

TYPE OF INJURY	2003–04	2004–05	TOTAL
Falls	15	10	25
Strains	6	10	16
Other	3	5	8
Total Claims	**24**	**25**	**49**

SOURCE: WISD workers' compensation report, 2003–04 and 2004–05; WISD Business manager.

EXHIBIT 5-12
WISD AND PEER DISTRICTS
NUMBER OF WORKERS' COMPENSATION CLAIMS BY OCCUPATION
2004–05

DISTRICT	NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES	PROFESSIONAL/ CLERICAL/ ADMINISTRATION	BUILDING MAINTENANCE	FOOD SERVICE	DRIVER AND VEHICLE MAINTENANCE	CUSTODIAL	TOTAL	CLAIMS PER EMPLOYEE
Aransas Pass	353.6	8	1	1	1	2	**13**	0.037
Cuero	356.9	22	0	0	8	0	**30**	0.084
Edna	203.6	9	0	2	0	1	**12**	0.059
Wharton	**401.5**	**25**	**4**	**2**	**2**	**3**	**36**	**0.090**

Note: No information was available from peer district El Campo ISD.
SOURCE: Texas Association of School Boards Member History, as of October 31, 2005. Information obtained from secretary to the director of Auxiliary Services.

committee completes routine safety inspections of district facilities and playgrounds, documents findings, and makes recommendations for correcting unsafe practices or situations. By implementing a strong safety program, LCISD reduced both its workers' compensation losses and its workers' compensation contribution to the TASB Risk Management Fund.

WISD should develop a district work safety plan addressing workers' compensation losses. To gain a comprehensive understanding of risks located across the district, the district should create a safety committee, led by the safety coordinator, with representatives from all employee groups. The safety coordinator should contact WISD's workers' compensation provider for a district training and accident prevention procedures review. The committee should review the provider's work-related injury analysis, along with any reports conducted by outside organizations on accident prevention and claims experience, to determine areas and occupation classifications that the district should focus on as it develops the district work safety plan.

The district should develop a formal agenda to use in training, ensuring that either a campus or district department is trained each month, and meetings minutes should be recorded. The safety coordinator should meet with the director of Auxiliary Services after these trainings to review the minutes and any new claims reports.

The safety coordinator should develop an annual training course for all employees as part of this initiative. At a minimum, the training course should include accident trend analysis, district hazards, accident reporting procedures, and accident prevention strategies.

For background information on Chapter 5, Asset and Risk Management, see page 204 in the General Information section of the Appendices.

FISCAL IMPACT

RECOMMENDATION	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09	2009–10	2010–11	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) SAVINGS	ONE-TIME (COSTS) SAVINGS
CHAPTER 5: ASSET AND RISK MANAGEMENT							
33. Consolidate the district's bank accounts.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
34. Require the county to disburse funds to the district daily according to the requirements of the interlocal agreement to ensure maximization of interest earnings.	$3,268	$3,268	$3,268	$3,268	$3,268	$16,340	$0
35. Develop a district work safety plan addressing workers' compensation losses.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Totals-Chapter 5	**$3,268**	**$3,268**	**$3,268**	**$3,268**	**$3,268**	**$16,340**	**$0**

CHAPTER 6

PURCHASING

WHARTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

CHAPTER 6. PURCHASING

A school district's purchasing objective is to acquire the best products, materials, and services for its stakeholders at the lowest practical prices within state law and local policy's guidelines. Purchasing policies must accommodate the school district's unique operating environment and needs.

Wharton Independent School District's (WISD) Business manager is responsible for approving all purchases. The district makes purchases from an approved vendor list. The list includes vendors who responded to district proposals, or who are members of cooperative purchasing programs to which WISD belongs. The purchasing cooperatives WISD uses are the Regional Education Service Center III Purchasing Cooperative, the Texas Association of School Boards BuyBoard, the Cooperative Purchasing Network, the Department of Information Resources, and the Texas Building and Procurement Commission. WISD prints purchase orders once a week. The district issued 3,092 purchase orders in 2004–05; 40 of these were manual office purchase orders. The district does not have a warehouse operation, although they have a facility to receive computers and for limited paper storage. The secretary to the director of Auxiliary Services receives purchase deliveries at the Education Support Center. WISD distributes the supplies daily, or as needed, to the campus or department from which the order originated.

FINDINGS
- WISD lacks a written, comprehensive purchasing procedures manual.

- WISD lacks written credit card purchasing procedures and guidelines.

- WISD lacks a written procedure manual with comprehensive guidelines on textbook inventory management.

RECOMMENDATIONS
- **Recommendation 36: Develop a written, comprehensive purchasing procedures manual, and provide training to all district staff on purchasing policies, procedures, and practices.** The Business manager should document and review district practices not currently contained in the two-page purchasing

memo. State laws and local policies should be used as a base for policy statements. The Business manager should obtain copies of other districts' purchasing manuals and review the Texas Educations Agency's (TEA) *Purchasing Policy Manual-Model Content Outline* for guidance. After the manual is completed, the superintendent should review and approve it. The Business manager should train all new employees on the district's purchasing policies, and hold an annual update reviewing any changes to the purchasing manual and vendors for all employees involved in the purchasing function. WISD should post the manual to its website, and update it as new processes or information becomes available.

- **Recommendation 37: Develop written credit card procedures based on existing, verbal procedures that are common knowledge among authorized credit card users.** The existing procedures identify authorized purchasers, types of purchases, and purchasing limits specific to the employee's area of responsibility. Additional procedures should include a cardholder agreement form and proper documentation. A statement that the credit card(s) will not be used if budgeted funds are not available should be included in the cardholder agreement, and the procedures should specify that before using the card(s), the purchaser is responsible for determining that budget funds are available. The district should hold training for all authorized purchasers, and should train new employees authorized to use the credit cards before they can use the cards.

- **Recommendation 38: Develop and distribute a textbook procedures manual and train district staff responsible for distributing textbooks in proper textbook accounting.** The comprehensive textbook procedures manual should include instructions for issuing textbooks to teachers and students, handling damaged and lost textbooks, monitoring textbooks at campuses, collecting student textbooks and classroom sets, conducting an annual inventory of textbooks, the textbook adoption process, and state and local textbook requirements and policies. The manual should be distributed to all appropriate staff, and the Textbook coordinator should train school personnel on the procedures included in the manual. The Textbook

coordinator should review and update the manual annually, and it should be included on WISD's website and referenced in the teacher and student handbooks.

DETAILED FINDINGS

PURCHASING PROCEDURES (REC. 36)

WISD lacks a written, comprehensive purchasing procedures manual.

WISD teachers complete a purchase requisition form and submit it to the campus secretary to obtain items for their classrooms. The campus secretary reviews the document for correct budget codes, budget availability, and the appropriate vendor. The campus principal then authorizes the requisition and the campus secretary enters the information into the district's financial system. The Education Support Center receptionist mails or faxes the purchase order to the vendor after the Business manager or superintendent's final approval. Before WISD approves a purchase from a sole source vendor, the vendor must submit a sole source affidavit.

The secretary to the director of Auxiliary Services prepares bids for goods and services such as carpet replacement, roofing, construction, repairs, and buses, using specifications written by the director of Auxiliary Services. The Food Service Department prepares its own bids. The Business manager prepares a catalog bid for instructional, office, and athletic supplies, as well as all operational supplies and services, at the beginning of each fiscal year. The Business manager does not give final approval to bids completed by other departments. Each department presents its bid recommendations to the superintendent, who then presents the recommendations to the board.

The Business manager provides a two-page memo with thirteen purchasing procedures to administrators, supervisors, and secretaries annually. August 2004 was the last memo update. The purchasing procedures memo includes a short paragraph on each of these topics: purchase order submission, ordering materials on approval, blanket purchase orders, emergency purchases, check receipt on short notice, purchase of fixed asset or inventory items, the proper way to complete a purchase requisition, food orders, checking balances, completing budget amendments, and local and state policies on purchasing personal property. The memo is not available in the district's employee handbook, or on its website.

In addition to the topics mentioned above, the two-page memo contains the following procedures:

- Authorized WISD campus and department personnel enter purchase orders online with the district's financial management software.

- The Business manager or superintendent reviews and signs purchase requisitions before the purchase.

- The Education Support Center mails or faxes the purchase orders after final approval.

- WISD allows blanket purchase orders for monthly purchases from local vendors.

- WISD purchases materials using an approved vendor list. The Business manager must approve any purchases from vendors not on the approved vendor list.

- All purchases of $1,000 or more require written or telephone price quotes from at least three vendors from the approved vendor list sent to the Business manager and attached to the purchase order to the chosen vendor.

- All purchases of $10,000 or more shall require board approval before a transaction may take place.

Section 3.2.1 of the *Financial Accountability System Resource Guide (FASRG)* states that every school district, large and small, should have a written manual describing its purchasing policies and procedures. *FASRG* further states that the purchasing manual is the primary tool for establishing a strong control environment and should be strictly adhered to by employees of the district. A purchasing manual assists campus-level and department-level personnel in purchasing supplies and services, and should contain rules and purchasing guidelines consistent with relevant statutes, regulations, and board policies, and promote districtwide purchasing consistency. The manual should provide direction for district staff at all levels, and help train staff in the district's established purchasing policies.

WISD does have written procedures and forms not included in *FASRG's* purchasing manual, but of the 13 purchasing guidelines in the *FASRG*, WISD has only two of those guidelines listed in its two-page memo (**Exhibit 6-1**).

Processes for obtaining the best value by using purchasing cooperatives are not included; neither are detailed instructions on using the cooperatives to which the district currently belongs.

Without comprehensive purchasing procedures, WISD employees with purchasing authority may inadvertently

EXHIBIT 6-1
FASRG'S PURCHASING MANUAL GUIDELINES
COMPARED TO WISD'S PURCHASING PROCEDURES

GUIDELINES FROM FASRG	INCLUDED IN WISD'S PROCEDURES
Purchasing goals and objectives	No
Statutes, regulations, and board policies applicable to purchasing	No
Purchasing authority	No
Requisition and purchase order processing	Yes
Competitive procurement requirements and procedures	No
Vendor selection and relations	No
Receiving, distribution, and disposal of property	Yes
Bid or proposal form	No
Purchase order	No
Purchase requisition	No
Receiving report	No
Vendor performance evaluation form	No
Request for payment voucher	No

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, Financial Accountability System Resource Guide; WISD Purchasing Guidelines.

violate purchasing policies and procedures. Purchases may take longer when employees do not have guidelines available to explain the process.

Hays Consolidated ISD's (HCISD) purchasing manual includes a list of all of the purchasing cooperatives it uses, and gives detailed instructions to users for making purchases through the cooperatives. The manual also includes organization charts, vendor lists, sample bid tabulations and advertisements, purchase order instructions, and purchasing guidelines including price quotations and sole source procedures. HCISD also lists purchasing information on its website. The website includes the activity fund manual, disbursement vouchers, sponsor activity ledgers and records, returned check log, W-9 form, travel forms, hotel tax exemption form, sole source designation, a fax quote sheet, and a phone quote sheet.

The Business manager should develop a written, comprehensive purchasing procedures manual, and provide training to all district staff on purchasing policies, procedures, and practices. The Business manager should document and review district practices not currently contained in the two-page purchasing memo. State laws and local policies should be used as a base for policy statements. The Business manager

should obtain copies of other districts' purchasing manuals and review the TEA *Purchasing Policy Manual-Model Content Outline* for guidance.

WISD's purchasing manual should include:
- details of each type of purchase;
- instructions for using purchasing cooperatives;
- the district's vendor list;
- all purchasing processes involving state law or local policies;
- the Business manager's duties and responsibilities in tabulating, evaluating, and recommending bids; and
- all the purchasing forms used in WISD and instructions for using the forms.

After the manual is completed, the superintendent should review and approve it. The Business manager should train all new employees on the district's purchasing policies, and hold an annual update reviewing any changes to the purchasing manual and vendors for all employees involved in the purchasing function. WISD should post the manual to its website, and update it as new processes or information becomes available.

CREDIT CARD PROCEDURES (REC. 37)

WISD lacks written credit card purchasing procedures and guidelines.

The district uses two credit cards for travel and other miscellaneous purchases. The superintendent preapproves purchases on these cards for all travel-related expenses, and the Business Manager preapproves all other expenses. The superintendent's secretary is responsible for the credit cards, and gives verbal instructions regarding card usage before issuance. The instructions state the cards are only for approved purchases, requires the return of a receipt for any card use, and that the district will not pay for any unapproved purchases. Administrative employees authorized to use the cards include the high school principal, assistant superintendent for Instruction, athletic director, director of Personnel and Public Relations, Business manager, director of Federal Programs, superintendent, and the director of Auxiliary Services. The superintendent's secretary is also responsible for reconciling the account, and submitting payment authorizations to accounts payable after the superintendent approves all expenses. The Business manager views the total paid when approving the check processing,

but does not review the detailed invoices as the superintendent has already reviewed them.

WISD had over $27,000 in charges to the two credit cards in 2004–05. An evaluation of the invoices by the review team revealed several problems:

- the district paid tax on some purchases, although WISD is exempt from paying sales tax on the purchase of goods;

- some of the meal receipts did not provide the level of detail required, such as meal receipts without the names of those eating; and

- some motel receipts did not have the names of the employees using the rooms (that is, all rooms were in one employee's name).

Although the use of credit cards is a common practice in school districts, as seen in **Exhibit 6-2** their usage among WISD's peers is limited.

Without written procedures and guidelines for credit card use, employees have no point of reference informing them of

EXHIBIT 6-2
WISD AND PEER DISTRICTS
CREDIT CARD USAGE
2004–05

DISTRICT	USE CREDIT CARDS	TOTAL CHARGES FOR 2004–05
Aransas Pass	Yes	$8,642
Cuero	No	$0
Edna	No	$0
El Campo	Yes	*
Wharton	**Yes**	**$27,405**

*Used only to hold rooms for board members and administrators; minimal charges according to El Campo Business manager, April 2006.
SOURCE: WCL ENTERPRISES email and telephone survey, February 2006.

purchasing practices while using a credit card.

Some districts have comprehensive credit card procedures. These procedures include authority limits, accounting distribution, account code changes, acceptable and unacceptable card use, record keeping, payment processes, error and dispute resolution, card security, procedures if cards are lost or stolen, and how to dispute charges. Employees must sign a cardholder agreement before receiving a credit card. These procedures are available on the district's website,

along with forms for employees to use to dispute charges and report lost or stolen cards.

The superintendent and Business manager should develop written credit card procedures based on existing, verbal procedures that are common knowledge among authorized credit card users. The existing procedures identify authorized purchasers, types of purchases, and purchasing limits specific to the employee's area of responsibility. Additional procedures should include a cardholder agreement form and proper documentation. A statement that the credit card(s) will not be used if budgeted funds are not available should be included in the cardholder agreement, and the procedures should specify that before using the card(s), the purchaser is responsible for determining that budget funds are available. The district should hold training for all authorized purchasers, and should train new employees authorized to use the credit cards before they can use the cards.

WRITTEN GUIDELINES FOR TEXTBOOKS (REC. 38)

WISD lacks a written procedure manual with comprehensive guidelines on textbook inventory management.

WISD is responsible for over 17,000 textbooks, but has no written guidelines regarding their management. The Sivells Elementary principal is also the Textbook coordinator for the district. Although the Textbook coordinator has not attended formal training courses, the two prior Textbook coordinators provided on-the-job training. The Textbook coordinator places orders through Educational Materials which is the TEA textbook ordering system, using information based on enrollment numbers taken from the Public Education Information Management System and from the high school registrar.

Campus responsibility for textbooks resides with the principal at Hopper Elementary and the assistant principals at all other campuses. Campuses store their textbooks in bookrooms during the summer months. The district Textbook coordinator sends each campus a copy of the TEA *Interim Statement of Textbook Charges* after all the new adoptions have come in for the year. At the end of the school year, each campus Textbook custodian informs the district Textbook coordinator of the number of textbooks the district will need to order to both replace lost books and to meet the needs of anticipated larger classes. When a textbook is lost, the student pays the campus for it and the campus deposits the funds in the campus activity account. The campus Textbook custodian sends a check from the campus activity account to the district

Textbook coordinator with the required TEA form to purchase replacement textbooks from the state.

Each campus is responsible for ensuring that teachers know the procedures for issuing textbooks to students. Wharton High School's (WHS) student and teacher manuals contain limited information about textbook procedures. The student manual explains that the State of Texas or the Board of Trustees supplies the textbooks, and are the property of the school. The school loans the textbooks to students. Students must return the books at the end of the school term, or when the student withdraws from school. The teacher handbook includes written instructions on distributing and recording textbooks. Textbooks are numbered at WHS, and teachers keep a record of the textbooks issued to each student. WISD instructs teachers to check student textbooks every six weeks, at which time teachers report the missing books to the campus Textbook custodian so that the recovery process can begin. WHS also completes a book check at the end of each semester when students are required to clean their lockers. If a textbook is lost, the student who was assigned the textbook must pay for it. According to the student handbook, WHS does not issue a new book, or school reports or records, until the student pays for the lost book or the textbook has been returned.

Wharton Junior High (WJH) performs textbook checks twice annually. WISD did not provide information on textbook guidelines for the elementary schools.

Exhibit 6-3 shows WISD's textbook inventory for 2002–03 through 2005–06. The total textbook inventory for 2005–06 is 17,719 textbooks, valued at $806,127.

EXHIBIT 6-3
WISD VALUE OF TEXTBOOK INVENTORY
2002–03 THROUGH 2005–06

YEAR	TEXTBOOKS	VALUE OF TEXTBOOKS
2005–06	17,719	$806,127
2004–05	18,350	$801,604
2003–04	18,393	$798,008
2002–03	19,177	$818,315

SOURCE: WISD Textbook coordinator and Texas Education Agency reports, December 2005.

The lack of districtwide textbook coordination is also evident in how each campus handles lost textbook collection charges. Campuses use the TEA inventory list value as a basis for lost textbook charges. WHS assigns textbook damage fees based on the Textbook custodian's judgment of the condition of the

book. Damage fees range from $5 to $10. At WJH, the teachers assign the damaged book charges. The damage fees range from $2 to $10, depending on the age of the book and the amount of damage.

Exhibit 6-4 shows WISD textbook losses by campus for 2002–03 through 2004–05. Hopper Elementary School, the pre-kindergarten and kindergarten campus, is not included because the campus does not issue textbooks to its students.

EXHIBIT 6-4
WISD TEXTBOOK LOSSES BY CAMPUS
2002–03 THROUGH 2004–05

YEAR	DAWSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	SIVELLS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	WJH	WHS	TOTAL
2004–05	34	3	12	33	82
2003–04	45	15	6	26	92
2002–03	39	11	15	47	112
Total	**118**	**29**	**33**	**106**	**286**

SOURCE: WISD Textbook coordinator, November 2005.

In the same time period, WHS collected over 77 percent of the total value of its lost textbooks from students compared to less than 50 percent collected at the elementary schools **(Exhibit 6-5)**.

EXHIBIT 6-5
WISD TEXTBOOK LOSSES BY CAMPUS
2002–03 THROUGH 2004–05

YEAR	TEXTBOOKS LOST	VALUE OF LOST TEXTBOOKS	STUDENT FEES PAID FOR LOST TEXTBOOKS	DIFFERENCE PAID BY DISTRICT
Dawson Elementary School	118	$4,583	$1,967	$2,616
Sivells Elementary School	29	1,238	446	792
WJH	33	1,542	464*	**
WHS	106	5,269	4,067	1,202
Total	**286**	**$12,632**	**$6,944**	

*This total only represents fees from 2004–05.
**District information is missing WJH student fees paid for lost textbooks. As a result, calculating a total difference is not possible.
SOURCE: WISD Textbook coordinator, March 2006.

From 2002–03 through 2004–05, WISD lost 286 textbooks with a total value of $12,632 **(Exhibit 6-6)**.

EXHIBIT 6-6
WISD TEXTBOOK LOSSES
2002–03 THROUGH 2004–05

YEAR	TEXTBOOKS LOST	VALUE OF LOST TEXTBOOKS	STUDENT FEES PAID FOR LOST TEXTBOOKS	DIFFERENCE PAID BY DISTRICT TO TEA
2004–05	82	$3,620	$2,749	$871
2003–04*	92	4,090	1,703	2,387
2002–03*	112	4,922	2,492	2,430
Total	**286**	**$12,632**	**$6,944**	**$5,688**

*District information is missing WJH student fees paid for lost textbooks.
SOURCE: WISD Textbook coordinator, March 2006.

Teachers have no district guidelines to use in safeguarding each campus' textbook inventory. This results in an inability to ensure that the district is following state and local policies and procedures in protecting district resources. If the district had to replace all lost textbooks, the general operating fund or student activity funds would have to cover the costs. Additionally, since WISD has not established standard charges for lost or damaged textbooks, each campus may charge students differently. Without a written procedures manual establishing districtwide textbook management, each school is responsible for determining its own procedures.

Written procedures are critical for ensuring that a school district follows state and local policies and procedures in safeguarding district resources. Texas Administrative Code §66.107, Local Accountability, includes rules for the requisition, distribution, and management of the textbook inventory. This requires each school district to conduct an annual physical inventory of all currently adopted instructional materials that have been requisitioned by, and delivered to, the school district. The results of the inventory must be recorded in the district's files. Reimbursement and/or replacement shall be made for all instructional materials determined to be lost.

La Porte ISD has written textbook procedures that include:
- Textbook responsibilities for students, parents, guardians, teachers, principals, assistant principals, campus Textbook custodians, the district Textbook coordinator, superintendent, and Board of Trustees;

- District textbook administration including campus to campus transfers, textbook funds, fines, and losses;

- Campus textbook administration including ordering books, membership, quotas, and ordering for special populations; and

- Information regarding textbook security, out of adoption textbooks, damaged/lost textbooks, book covers, and textbook audits.

WISD should develop and distribute a textbook procedures manual and train district staff responsible for distributing textbooks in proper textbook accounting. The comprehensive textbook procedures manual should include instructions for issuing textbooks to teachers and students, handling damaged and lost textbooks, monitoring textbooks at campuses, collecting student textbooks and classroom sets, conducting an annual inventory of textbooks, the textbook adoption process, and state and local textbook requirements and policies.

The Textbook coordinator should develop a draft procedures manual; the district should review procedures currently included in the high school handbook for possible inclusion in the district procedures. The Textbook coordinator should request copies of procedures manuals from other districts to use as a starting point. School personnel involved in the textbook selection, distribution, and inventory processes should review the draft manual. After receiving input from school personnel and editing the manual to include this input, the Textbook coordinator should submit the manual to the superintendent for review and approval.

The manual should be distributed to all appropriate staff, and the Textbook coordinator should train school personnel on the procedures included in the manual. The Textbook coordinator should review and update the manual annually, and it should be included on WISD's website and referenced in the teacher and student handbooks.

FISCAL IMPACT

RECOMMENDATION	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09	2009–10	2010–11	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) SAVINGS	ONE- TIME (COSTS) SAVINGS
CHAPTER 6: PURCHASING							
36. Develop a written, comprehensive purchasing procedures manual, and provide training to all district staff on purchasing policies, procedures, and practices.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
37. Develop written credit card procedures based on existing, verbal procedures that are common knowledge among authorized credit card users.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
38. Develop and distribute a textbook procedures manual and train district staff responsible for distributing textbooks in proper textbook accounting.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Totals-Chapter 6	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**

CHAPTER 7

COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

WHARTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

CHAPTER 7. COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

Regardless of size and organizational structure, most school districts perform the following technology functions:

- Management and oversight of the entire district's instructional and administrative applications;

- Hardware and software maintenance of these applications;

- Planning, implementation, and oversight of local-area networks and a wide-area network; and

- Training and technical support for computer applications and networks.

The development of an effective, integrated network of software, hardware, and telecommunications is a major and technically complex endeavor. To achieve this, leadership, clear organizational goals, effective assignments of responsibilities, and committing sufficient financial and personnel resources are required. An imbalance in these key components will result in expending substantial resources without achieving the intended improvement in student skills and knowledge, increase in staff skills, or enhanced administrative efficiency.

The Wharton Independent School District (WISD) staff assigned to support technology includes the district director of Technology, one district technology support position, eight part-time school technology support positions (one each at the high school and junior high and two at each elementary), and five part-time Webmasters (one at each school) **(Exhibit 7-1)**. The part-time staff includes full-time teachers and librarians who take on additional technology responsibilities.

Exhibit 7-2 shows the duties and responsibilities of the WISD Technology Department staff. The district pays each technology support employee $1,000 in extra-duty pay per year on campuses where there is only one support position, and $500 on campuses where there are two support positions. WISD pays school Webmasters $400 a year for these extra duties.

ACCOMPLISHMENT

- The WISD Technology Department keeps the number of technology support staff low by using remote management software, while improving its turnaround time for repairs.

FINDINGS

- The WISD Technology Department lacks a formal, board-approved disaster recovery plan.

- WISD does not maximize the use of the district and campus websites for communication.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Recommendation 39: Document and expand the current disaster recovery procedures into a formal plan and present it to the school board for approval.** The plan should address all critical operations and functions of the district, and the procedures to ensure the ongoing availability of critical resources and operation continuity during a catastrophe.

- **Recommendation 40: Develop and implement guidelines to update and improve the appearance of the district and campus websites.** To improve the

EXHIBIT 7-1
WISD TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT SUPPORT POSITIONS
2005–06
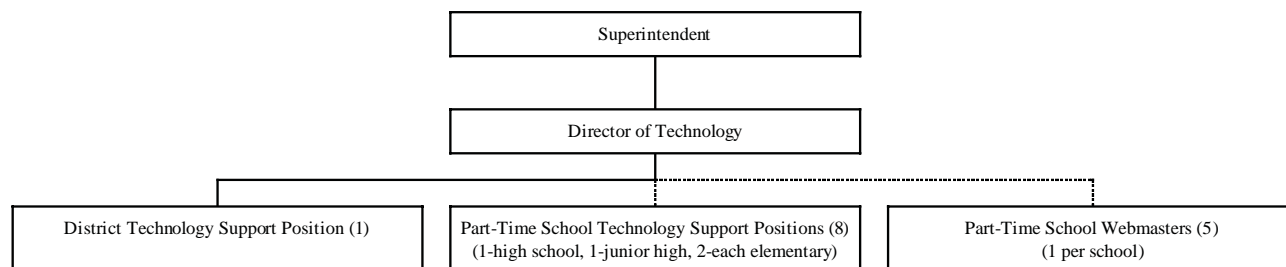
SOURCE: WISD director of Technology, November 2005.

EXHIBIT 7-2
WISD TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT
STAFF JOB DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
2005–06

JOB TITLE	DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
Director of Technology	• Identify and evaluate software and hardware products.
	• Supervise the distribution of technology and maintain an inventory of software and hardware.
	• Maintain and repair the district's local- and wide-area computer networks.
	• Supervise and approve all district technology purchases.
	• Maintain and repair district computers.
	• Coordinate the preparation and delivery of staff training.
	• Provide technical assistance to district staff.
	• Train teachers to integrate technology into their curriculum and provide technical support.
	• Supervise the baseline technology competency testing for teachers.
	• Assist the technology committee with the development of goals for technology integration.
	• Coordinate the district technology committee and annually supervise the development of the district technology plan.
	• Maintain the district website and supervise the school Webmasters.
	• Secure federal E-rate funding.
	• Supervise the distance learning connection to Regional Education Service Center III.
	• Provide support for the online grade book/attendance applications at the high school, junior high, and Dawson Elementary.
	• Supervise school technical support personnel.
	• Provide on-site, telephone, and remote access technical support.
Technology Support	• Assist the Director of Technology.
	• Support the district software.
	• Troubleshoot cabling problems.
	• Repair and maintain district Personal Computers (PCs), printers, projectors, and scanners.
	• Answer the Help Desk phone.
	• Use remote access software to solve technology problems.
Part-Time School Technology Support	• Provide basic troubleshooting for school PCs, printers, projectors, scanners, and digital cameras.
	• Articulate user problems to the Help Desk.
Part-Time School Webmasters	• Update school webpages monthly.
	• Encourage staff to contribute to the school website.
	• Encourage teachers to set up a classroom webpage on the school website.

SOURCE: WISD director of Technology, November 2005.

websites, the district should keep all site information current, and remove out-of-date information; add a quick link feature including district and campus calendars, cafeteria menus, school board agendas, and news/current events to the WISD homepage; and enforce consistency of web design and the information available or required on campus websites districtwide.

DETAILED ACCOMPLISHMENT

REMOTE TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE

The WISD Technology Department keeps the number of technology support staff low by using remote management software, while improving its turnaround time for repairs.

WISD purchased remote management software in spring 2005. Using this software, the district director of Technology and the technology support position can troubleshoot computer software problems, show users how to fix a problem themselves, check computers for uninvited software and viruses, and adjust computer settings. The district saves both the time and mileage costs of an employee driving to the school to make the repair. Repairs that once took an average of 1½ days per work order now take only about a half hour.

The remote management software also helps WISD resolve hardware issues, which are complicated by the wide variety of computer models and operating systems in the district. This wide variety is typically found in school districts which keep computers in use for over five years, unlike businesses and industry, which typically replace or update their technology on a three-year or less cycle. For example, 60 of the 71 WISD Macintosh brand computers (Macs) are older models running the OS8 operating system, seven Macs use the OS9 operating system, and four Macs use the OS10 operating system. Of the personal computers, 507 run on older Pentium 3 processors, and 694 have Pentium 4 processors. Operating systems vary considerably districtwide and include Windows 95, 98, 2000, and XP. However, district technology staff is able to continue timely support of these varied operating systems because remote technology software allows the staff to repair computer problems and load software remotely through the network.

The remote technology management software costs the district $293 for four licenses annually.

DETAILED FINDINGS

DISASTER RECOVERY PLAN (REC. 39)

The WISD Technology Department lacks a formal, board-approved disaster recovery plan.

The director of Technology has established technology disaster procedures because of three recent disasters, two floods and a hurricane evacuation. Before these disasters, the district had no plan for disaster recovery concerning its technology assets. To date, WISD's procedures are informal and have not been presented to the board for approval. These technology-related disaster procedures include:

- All technology equipment, including servers, computers, switches, and such, will be unplugged and moved off the floor onto tables. Teachers will move their computers and school technology support personnel will move the network equipment.

- District personnel will carry the back up tapes for fileservers and email servers, normally backed up every other day, out of town.

- Staff will place the back up tapes for grade reporting, attendance, payroll, and financial applications, backed up at 3:00 a.m. every day, in the vault.

- EDP Enterprises, Inc. (EDP), the vendor providing the student and financial software application, performs a full back up before any perceived disaster.

- EDP can print employee checks off-site if the fileserver crashes before a payroll date, or the WISD payroll clerk can go to a nearby school district using EDP software to run payroll there.

WISD created these unwritten procedures extemporaneously in response to recent disasters affecting the district. The director of Technology alone prepared these procedures, which are not sufficiently comprehensive and too narrow in scope to address the myriad types of potential disasters, or the many operational areas that could be affected in future disasters.

The primary objective of disaster recovery planning is to protect a school district if all, or part, of its operations and technology services become unusable. Preparedness is the key. Planning minimizes the disruption of operations, and ensures some level of organizational stability and an orderly recovery after a disaster.

Exhibit 7-3 shows the National Center for Education Statistics' key elements of a disaster recovery plan.

The Glen Rose Independent School District (GRISD) developed a comprehensive disaster recovery plan to handle the loss of its information systems. GRISD's plan includes emergency contacts for the Technology Department staff, the district, and software and hardware vendors. The plan includes protocols for both partial and full recoveries to ensure that the technology staff is knowledgeable in every aspect of recovery and restoration. The plan outlines designated alternate sites dependent upon the type of outage

EXHIBIT 7-3
KEY ELEMENTS OF A DISASTER RECOVERY PLAN

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

SOURCE: National Center for Educational Statistics, "Safeguarding Your Technology," 1998 (modified by Review Team).

that occurs. The plan also includes system redundancy and fault protection protocols, as well as a tape back up plan.

WISD should document and expand the current disaster recovery procedures into a formal plan and present it to the school board for approval. Disaster recovery planning involves more than off-site storage or back up processing. The plan should address all critical operations and functions of the district, and procedures to ensure the ongoing availability of critical resources and operation continuity during a catastrophe.

As part of the planning process, WISD should:

- Establish a disaster recovery planning committee including representatives from all functional areas of the district;

- Perform a risk analysis of possible disasters, including natural, technical, and human threats and determine the potential consequences and effect associated with each scenario;

- Establish priorities for processing and operations, including key personnel, information, processing systems, maintenance, documentation, vital records, and policies and procedures;

- Determine practical alternatives for processing in case of a disaster, including facilities, hardware, software, communications, data files, customer service, and user operations;

- Gather materials and documentation, including critical telephone numbers, hardware and software inventories, insurance policies, master call lists, master vendor lists, office supply inventory, and software and data file back up and retention schedules;

- Organize and document a written plan providing detailed documentation and procedures, including methods to maintain and update the plan to reflect any significant internal, external, or systems changes;

- Develop testing criteria and procedures to determine the feasibility and compatibility of back up facilities and procedures, identify plan areas needing modification, provide team member training, demonstrate the district's ability to recover, and provide motivation to maintain and update the disaster recovery plan; and

- Test the plan, including checklists, simulation tests, parallel tests, and full-interruption tests.

DISTRICT WEBSITE (REC. 40)

WISD does not maximize the use of the district and campus websites for communication.

The WISD website offers online job applications, up-to-date photos of student accomplishments, a district calendar, school board policies, and campus links. The WISD director of Technology serves as district Webmaster, and WISD pays a professional at each campus a $400 per year stipend to serve as campus Webmasters to keep campus pages current. While the district Webmaster trains the campus Webmasters, interviews reflect there is not adequate time to monitor the consistency of campus sites' information. The Webmaster's available time, abilities, and campus administrator support is the basis of each campus website's effectiveness.

On the district homepage, a link to a general Calendar page provides access to the district's school year calendar, sporting events calendar, and campus lunch menus. Meeting agendas are posted for the Board of Trustees, but at the time of the review, the most current was two months old. However, "Board Bits" detailing the minutes of the board meetings are posted in a timely manner following each meeting. Community members can communicate with WISD through two email addresses posted on the WISD homepage. These are checked and answered daily by the Webmaster.

The director of Personnel and Public Relations and campus representatives provide photographs and news bits to the Webmaster on a regular basis for the website.

A review of the General Information link on the WISD website on November 27, 2005, revealed these out-of-date items:

- Most recent Academic Excellence Indicator System report posted is dated 2001–02;

- September 20, 2005, Board agenda posting;

- No campus improvement plans for Wharton Junior High, Dawson Elementary, or Sivells Elementary;

- An outdated press release from the Texas Comptroller's office about the school start date;

- No local press releases;

- No link to emergency information; and

- School Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas (FIRST) Rating from November 18, 2003.

According to the focus groups conducted by the review team, the website is not an effective communications tool, primarily because it is not up-to-date.

As previously noted, each campus maintains its own website, accessible from a district website link. A November 2005 review of campus websites indicates that campus information varies widely, as seen below, because of the different campus Webmasters, and the limited district level oversight of the campus websites:

Hopper Elementary School: The pre-K and kindergarten center website features a calendar posted on July 29, 2005, a staff page of photographs showing no contact or other information about the staff members, and an up-to-date events page with photographs, campus field trips, and activities explanations. The campus posts no cafeteria menus, and campus website information is not printable.

Sivells Elementary School: The website for the first through third grade campus is the most informative of all the campus websites. The calendar is current and appealing. A link to "Sivells News" appropriately uses the website as a secondary form of communication with parents. Special programs such as Accelerated Reader, the Gifted/Talented Program, and Music-Choir have their own links. Student and parent photographs keep the school events page current, and the site links to physical education activities with photographs and brief text. The campus posted no cafeteria menus on its website.

Dawson Elementary School: The fourth through sixth grade campus posts a limited calendar, no staff information other than names and an email address link, no cafeteria menus, and a "homework" link used only to announce there is time at the beginning of every school day for students to get their homework checked. The homepage announced an upcoming Reading Night with no further information.

Wharton Junior High School: The seventh and eighth grade campus website is generally up-to-date with calendars, staff introductions, and contact information, as well as student recognition, such as awards assembly announcements. The junior high does not post cafeteria menus, and there is no information on school events or activities.

Wharton High School: The high school website lists daily announcements for ninth through twelfth graders, noted as a valuable feature by a parent during focus group interviews. The site also posts an up-to-date calendar and cafeteria

menus, as well as timely news about high school events and activities. The campus site provides current staff photographs as well as email addresses and phone number contact information.

While WISD has more advanced campus websites than those of its peer districts Cuero and Aransas Pass ISD, its many inconsistencies erode the quality of its website. Surveys of peer districts El Campo and Edna ISD's websites reflect information that is up-to-date and consistent among the campuses.

The El Campo ISD website features updated school board meeting agendas and packets, as well as "Board Briefs" on the district site. The site also includes easy to navigate, informative, and timely links to breakfast and lunch menus, updated district and athletic calendars, job opportunities, and contact information including email addresses for district staff.

Edna ISD also keeps quick links to current board meeting agendas and Board Notes, as well as the District Improvement Plan and minutes of District Team meetings. A "Parent Information" quick link displays parent newsletters as well as the current Student Code of Conduct. "News and Events" are located in the center of the district webpage. Cafeteria menus are under the "Schools" quick link. Campus links are informative and up-to-date.

Inconsistent information among the campuses, out-of-date information, and a lack of news erode the usefulness and effectiveness of the WISD district and campus websites.

WISD should develop and implement guidelines to update and improve the appearance of the district and campus websites. When kept current and reliable, a website can be an inexpensive and effective tool for internal and external communications.

To accomplish this, the district should make three fundamental changes beginning in 2006–07:
- Keep all site information current, and remove out-of-date information. Activate the "News" link and post press releases at least once a month or as appropriate. Post a version of the district's newsletter to the district website immediately after it has been mailed to stakeholders. Board of Trustees meeting agendas should also be posted timely manner.

- Add a quick link feature including district and campus calendars, cafeteria menus, school board agendas, and news/current events to the WISD homepage.

- Enforce consistency of web design and the information available or required on campus websites districtwide.

For background information on Chapter 7, Computers and Technology, see page 211 in the General Information section of the Appendices.

FISCAL IMPACT

RECOMMENDATION	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09	2009–10	2010–11	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) SAVINGS	ONE-TIME (COSTS) SAVINGS
CHAPTER 7: COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY							
39. Document and expand the current disaster recovery procedures into a formal plan and present it to the school board for approval.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
40. Develop and implement guidelines to update and improve the appearance of the district and campus websites.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Totals-Chapter 7	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**

CHAPTER 8

FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

WHARTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

CHAPTER 8. FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

Wharton Independent School District's (WISD) facilities are located on 125.44 acres, with six schools, including a high school, a junior high, three elementary schools, and an alternative school. The district also maintains an Education Support Center, a football stadium field house, a bus maintenance building, a food service warehouse, a maintenance building, two warehouses, and a house, totaling 555,239 gross square feet of space. The cost of the original buildings and improvements is $15.6 million (**Exhibit 8-1**).

The WISD director of Auxiliary Services is responsible for supervising three departments, Maintenance, Transportation, and Food Service. Within the Maintenance Department, a Maintenance supervisor oversees six maintenance areas, including heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC); electrical; general maintenance; grounds maintenance; safety; and campus support (**Exhibit 8-2**).

ACCOMPLISHMENT

- WISD uses a number of techniques to keep energy costs well below the standard for school energy expenditures.

FINDINGS

- WISD does not distribute its custodians among district facilities based on industry staffing standards.

- WISD lacks a plan to address facility needs beyond the projects approved in the 2006 bond election.

- WISD's manual maintenance work order process does not enable the district to maintain a repair history, or to evaluate the use of labor and material resources.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Recommendation 41: Establish a custodial allocation formula based on industry staffing standards, and staff district facilities accordingly.** Based on a ratio of 20,000 square feet per custodian, WISD would need to create five additional custodial positions to meet the Association of School Business Officials, International (ASBO) industry standard. The district should reallocate the additional custodial positions already allocated to Hopper Elementary and the Alternative School to other

EXHIBIT 8-1
WISD FACILITIES
2005–06

FACILITY	YEAR BUILT, RENOVATED, AND ACQUIRED	SQUARE FEET	COST
Wharton High School	1962, 1966, 1968, 1970, 1972, 1974, 1975, 1980, 1981, 1992, 1993	205,649	$5,788,239
Wharton Junior High	1920, 1939, 1956, 1958, 1962, 1968, 1974, 2002	94,931	3,500,807
Dawson Elementary	1950, 1956, 1961, 1974, 2001	81,739	1,729,183
Sivells Elementary	1951, 1968,1990	96,486	2,528,530
Hopper Elementary	1936, 1974, 1994, 2000	32,623	869,505
Alternative School	1974	4,632	235,776
Educational Support Center	1964	20,296	629,703
Tiger Stadium Field House	1969	1,200	55,000
Bus Maintenance Building	1980	3,750	51,711
Food Service Warehouse	1981	3,876	51,738
Maintenance Building	1938	2,737	39,504
Warehouse 1	1950	2,000	5,000
Warehouse 2	1950	3,000	5,000
Koehl House	1950 (2002)	2,320	71,000
Total All Facilities		**555,239**	**$15,560,696**

SOURCE: WISD director of Auxiliary Services, November 2005.

EXHIBIT 8-2
WISD MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION
2005–06

```
              ┌─────────────────────────────┐
              │ Director of Auxiliary Services │
              └─────────────────────────────┘
                           │
              ┌─────────────────────────────┐
              │    Maintenance Supervisor    │
              └─────────────────────────────┘
```

HVAC Lead Technician (1) Assistant (1)	**Electrical** Lead Technician (1) Assistant (1)
General Maintenance Lead Technician (1) Assistant (2)	**Grounds Maintenance** Lead Groundskeeper (1) Assistants (4) Part-time Grounds Workers (2)
Safety Coordinator (1)	**Campus Support** Delivery/Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Coordinator (1)
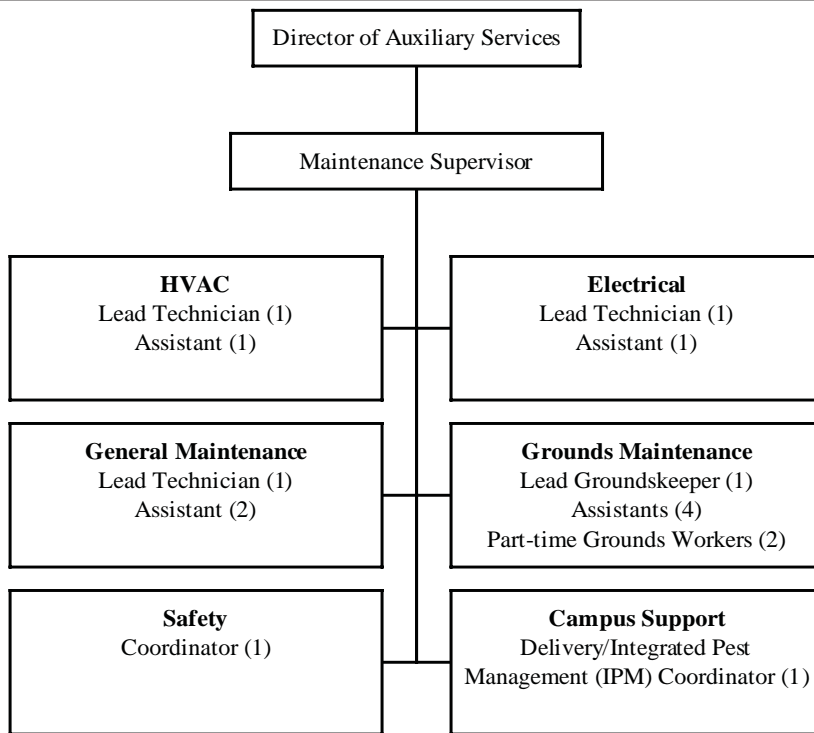
SOURCE: WISD Maintenance supervisor, November 2005.

facilities during the redistribution of custodial staff across the district.

- **Recommendation 42: Reconvene the Facilities Task Force Committee to develop a long-range district facility plan beyond the current bond proposal.** The committee should focus on prioritizing the remaining facility needs by year; identifying all facility needs not addressed as part of the bond planning; and identifying possible funding sources.

- **Recommendation 43: Purchase and install an automated system to enter and track maintenance work orders.** With an automated work order system, WISD would be able to measure the effectiveness of the Maintenance Department, quantify labor and material costs per work order, maintain a history of repairs made to specific district equipment, and evaluate the efficient use of department resources.

DETAILED ACCOMPLISHMENT

LOW ENERGY COSTS

WISD uses a number of techniques to keep energy costs well below the standard for school energy expenditures.

In 2004–05, WISD's energy costs were $0.84 per square foot (**Exhibit 8-3**) compared to the benchmark of $1 per square foot, as identified by the State Comptroller of Public Accounts. The district's utility bills continue to rise but, while WISD can control consumption, the district has no control over some components of its utility bills. For example, the electricity bill consists of the cost of the electricity and the charge to transmit and distribute the electricity. The Public Utility Commission of Texas regulates these transmission and distribution charges, and the district has no option but to pay for any increases in these fees.

WISD contracted with a Texas-based company to help reduce energy consumption and reduce energy costs from 1991 through 1995. The current Business manager, who was then a high school teacher, served part-time as the district's energy manager. The energy company trained the district energy manager to identify areas where energy could be saved, including turning off lights in empty classrooms, reducing the time air conditioning systems are on during the day, and turning off security lights. The district energy manager scheduled daily walks through the schools, identifying sources of wasted energy, and notifying the teacher or

EXHIBIT 8-3
WISD ENERGY EXPENDITURES
2000–01 THROUGH 2004–05

BUDGET CATEGORY	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
Electricity	$373,069	$379,545	$294,722	$360,980	$411,515
Natural Gas	$74,563	$37,762	$50,996	$55,709	$56,863
Total	**$447,632**	**$417,307**	**$345,718**	**$416,689**	**$468,378**
Square Feet of District Facilities	542,551	542,551	555,239*	555,239	555,239
Energy Costs Per Square Foot	**$0.83**	**$0.77**	**$0.62**	**$0.75**	**$0.84**

*The construction of a new gymnasium at Wharton Junior High School resulted in an addition of 12,688 square feet to the district facility total beginning in 2002–03.
SOURCE: WISD director of Auxiliary Services, November 2005.

administrator of the problems. The energy manager also entered utility bill data into a computerized database to generate energy reports. The computerized database was an industry-standard software tool dedicated to energy accounting, analysis, and reporting, and designed to:

- Track energy consumption factors, costs and budgets;

- Validate utility bill accuracy;

- Monitor energy consumption and cost trends;

- Track and monitor weather data variances;

- Track and monitor facility occupancy and building operation changes;

- Perform statistical analysis;

- Determine energy savings/cost avoidance performance; and

- Provide a wide range of valuable energy audit reports.

As compensation for its services, the company received $3,900 a month for 48 months. After the contract ended, the company continued to make quarterly on-site visits to the district for a year, offering energy-saving suggestions at no cost. Although WISD no longer has a contract with the company, the district's Business manager still sets high energy-conservation expectations. Examples of the district's current energy management and conservation efforts include:

- The district enters monthly energy bill data into a spreadsheet to maintain an energy expenditures and usage history.

- District maintenance staff performs random site visits to determine if lights remain on, doors are closed, water faucets are dripping, and the like. If any problems are found, the staff member leaves an "OOPS" note, reminding the teacher or staff member of the proper procedure.

- District HVAC employees establish set points for thermostats at 76 degrees in the summer and 69 degrees in the winter.

- HVAC employees program chillers to turn off about 3:45 p.m., and the fan coils to turn off at 4:00 p.m.

- HVAC employees set boilers at a maximum temperature of 140 degrees, except in areas requiring higher temperatures for sanitation purposes, such as cafeteria kitchens.

- The district replaces worn-out and damaged equipment, windows, and lighting as needed, with more energy-efficient units.

DETAILED FINDINGS

CUSTODIAL STAFFING (REC. 41)

WISD does not distribute its custodians among district facilities based on industry staffing standards.

Only seven of the 14 district facilities listed in **Exhibit 8-1** have custodians assigned to them. Each facility sets its custodial schedule based on its unique building use needs. For example, the high school has two custodians working from 6:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., and three custodians working from 1:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. The junior high divides its custodial staff into three schedules: one custodian works from 6:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.; one works from 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.; and two work from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The schedules for the three elementary schools are similar to the junior high to allow for extra cleaning help during the lunch periods. Most custodians work later hours to allow most

cleaning to happen after students and teachers leave the school.

Exhibit 8-4 shows that the number of square feet of facilities cleaned per WISD custodian ranges from a low of 4,632 square feet at the Alternative School, to a high of 32,162 square feet at Sivells Elementary, with a district average of 24,947 square feet per custodian. WISD did not provide information on the basis used to decide the number of custodians assigned to these facilities.

Compared to the peer districts, WISD ranks second-highest in the number of square feet cleaned per custodian (**Exhibit 8-5**).

Stakeholders' comments at the Community Open House indicated displeasure with the cleanliness of some of the

EXHIBIT 8-4
WISD CUSTODIAL STAFFING BY FACILITY
2005–06

FACILITY	CUSTODIANS	SQUARE FOOTAGE	SQUARE FEET PER CUSTODIAN
Wharton High School	6.5	205,649	31,638
Wharton Junior High	4	94,931	23,733
Dawson Elementary	3.5	81,739	23,354
Sivells Elementary	3	96,486	32,162
Hopper Elementary	3**	32,623	10,874
Alternative School	0.5	4,632	4,632
Educational Support Center	1	20,296	20,296
District Total	**21.5**	**536,356**	**24,947***

*District square feet per custodian = Total square footage divided by total number of custodians.
**Hopper Elementary has two full-time and two part-time custodians whose hours are equivalent to three full-time custodians.
SOURCE: WISD Maintenance supervisor, November 2005; WCL ENTERPRISES calculations.

schools, especially Wharton High School. Comments included "Most are not clean—high school is really bad," "School buildings are stinky and nasty—poor job of upkeep," and "High school appears dirty and unkempt." A survey of teachers found that about 27 percent disagreed, or strongly disagreed with the statement that their school was clean.

WISD's current custodial staffing levels results in unequal workloads among schools and inadequate cleaning at some schools.

EXHIBIT 8-5
WISD AND PEERS
CUSTODIAL STAFFING LEVELS
2005–06

DISTRICT	CUSTODIANS	TOTAL SQUARE FEET	SQUARE FEET PER CUSTODIAN
Aransas Pass	26	483,899	18,612
Cuero	16	460,000	28,750
Edna	15	349,873	23,325
El Campo	29	553,291	19,079
Wharton	**21.5**	**536,356**	**24,947**

SOURCE: WCL ENTERPRISES survey of peer districts, January 2006.

ASBO identified the typical duties of school custodians, and established the amount of time required to perform each duty (**Exhibit 8-6**).

Based on these work standards, ASBO has established a custodial staffing standard to be an average productivity of 2,500 square feet per staff-hour of work, for an 8-hour cleaning period, which equals 20,000 square feet to be cleaned per custodian.

Based on the ASBO standard, **Exhibit 8-7** shows that WISD is short 5.25 custodian positions districtwide. Wharton High School is understaffed by 3.5 positions, Sivells Elementary is understaffed by two positions, and Wharton Junior High and Dawson Elementary are each understaffed by a half a custodian. However, WISD has overstaffed Hopper Elementary and the Alternative School, by one custodial position at Hopper and a fourth of a position at the Alternative School.

WISD should establish a custodial allocation formula based on industry staffing standards, and staff district facilities accordingly. Based on a ratio of 20,000 square feet per custodian, and assuming the duties of the 0.25 custodial position could be redistributed among the custodial staff, WISD would need to create five additional custodial positions to meet the ASBO industry standard. The district should reallocate the additional custodial positions already allocated to Hopper Elementary and the Alternative School to other facilities during the redistribution of custodial staff across the district. Beginning in 2007–08, the annual cost to the district for the five additional custodial positions, including salaries and benefits, would be $88,330 a year for a five-year cost to the district of $353,320 (average annual custodial salary =

EXHIBIT 8-6
EXAMPLES OF RECOMMENDED CUSTODIAL WORK STANDARDS
ESTABLISHED BY ASBO

SPACE	SERVICE	UNIT MEASURE	WORK RATE TIME
Classrooms (average size)	Routine clean	850 sq. ft.	24 minutes
Offices - resilient floor	Routine clean	1,000 sq. ft.	24 minutes
Offices - carpet	Routine clean	1,000 sq. ft.	24 minutes
Floors	Dust mop	1,000 sq. ft.	12 minutes
	Damp mop	1,000 sq. ft.	20 minutes
	Spray buff - daily	1,000 sq. ft.	20 minutes
	Spray buff - weekly	1,000 sq. ft.	40 minutes
	Spray buff - monthly	1,000 sq. ft.	120 minutes
	Light furniture scrub	1,000 sq. ft.	240 minutes
	Medium furniture scrub	1,000 sq. ft.	300 minutes
	Heavy furniture scrub	1,000 sq. ft.	400 minutes
Bathrooms	3 or less commodes, urinals, and wash basins	Each	4.5 minutes
	More than 3	Each	3.0 minutes
Stairs	Damp mop	1 flight	12 minutes
	Wet mop	1 flight	35 minutes
	Hand scrub	1 flight	48 minutes
	Dust handrails	1 flight	2 minutes
	Dust treads	1 flight	6 minutes
Walls	Wash	1,000 sq. ft.	210 minutes
	Wash heavy soil	1,000 sq. ft.	290 minutes
Blinds	Dust	Each	15 minutes
	Damp dust	Each	30 minutes
	Wash	200 sq. ft.	340 minutes
Windows - single pane	Wash	1,000 sq. ft.	240 minutes
Windows - multi-pane	Wash	1,000 sq. ft.	320 minutes
Light fixtures - fluorescent	Dust	4 ft.	5 minutes
Light fixtures - egg crate	Wash	4 ft.	40 minutes
Light fixtures - open	Wash	4 ft.	20 minutes
Light fixtures - incandescent	Dust	Each	5 minutes
Light fixtures - incandescent	Wash	Each	15 minutes

SOURCE: Custodial Methods and Procedures Manual, Association of School Business Officials, International, 2000.

$16,060 + 10 percent benefits of $1,606 = $17,666 x 5 custodians = $88,330 per year x 4 years).

PLAN FOR FACILITY NEEDS (REC. 42)

WISD lacks a plan to address facility needs beyond the projects approved in the 2006 bond election.

Before the November 2004 Colorado River flood damaged Dawson Elementary, the district addressed its facility needs through the annual budget process, informally determining district needs and appropriating whatever general operating funds the district felt it could afford at the time. For larger projects, such as when WISD added a gym to Wharton Junior High in 2002, the Board of Trustees approved using a portion of the district's fund balance rather than incurring long-term debt. After the flood, the board determined that replacing Dawson Elementary would be more cost effective

EXHIBIT 8-7
WISD CUSTODIAL STAFFING COMPARED TO INDUSTRY STANDARDS
2005–06

FACILITY	CUSTODIANS	ASBO RECOMMENDED STANDARD	CUSTODIANS ABOVE/(BELOW) STANDARD*
Wharton High School	6.5	10	(3.5)
Wharton Junior High	4	4.5	(0.5)
Dawson Elementary	3.5	4	(0.5)
Sivells Elementary	3	5	(2)
Hopper Elementary	3	2	1
Alternative School	0.5	0.25	0.25
Educational Support Center	1	1	0
Total	**21.5**	**26.75**	**(5.25)**

*Number of custodians above/below standard = number of current WISD custodians minus the Association of School Business Officials recommended standard.
SOURCE: WISD Maintenance supervisor, November 2005; Association of School Business Officials, International.

than a full restoration, which necessitated considering long-term financing using school bonds. The board was also open to financing other facility needs with the school bonds.

WISD began planning for a bond referendum in February 2005; the board interviewed about 10 architects before selecting one to assist in the development of the district plan and to serve as the committee meetings facilitator. In March 2005, the architect surveyed each district facility and developed a preliminary list of building needs, such as safety concerns, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance issues, and the like. The architect was also responsible for establishing a cost for each facility need.

During March and April 2005, the board established a Facilities Task Force Committee, which included a public invitation to any citizen interested in serving on the committee. Once the committee began meeting in April 2005, about 80 citizens participated at some time during the process, which lasted through June 2005.

At the first meeting, the committee developed goals and conducted several master planning exercises to learn more about the district's needs, including reviewing census information from the state and Wharton County. During the second meeting in May 2005, the committee reviewed district demographic information and the list of building needs identified by the architect. In a third meeting, the committee continued reviewing the identified building needs and broke into smaller school groups to identify other needs.

Once the committee identified all the issues, it discussed options and began prioritizing the projects. WISD provided

the committee with financial information related to what tax rates would be required to pay for bonded indebtedness. The committee identified $26 million in projects to recommend to the board, which they felt was all district voters would approve. The recommended projects included the construction of a new elementary school to replace Dawson Elementary and Hopper Elementary; adding 10 classrooms, 25 parking spaces, a new cafeteria, and kitchen at the junior high; renovating the existing kitchen and adding a fine arts facility at the high school; and correcting deficiencies in schools related to safety and ADA compliance. Safety projects included adequate exit signage, fire alarms, fire sprinkler systems, and exit doors. ADA compliance projects included accessible ramps and handrails, restroom renovations, signage, door hardware, accessible sinks and drinking fountains, and playground access.

Under Title II of the ADA, local governments, including school districts, must ensure that services, programs, and activities do not exclude individuals with disabilities because buildings are inaccessible. However, districts need not remove physical barriers, such as stairs, in all existing buildings, as long as they make their programs accessible to individuals who are unable to use an inaccessible existing facility. Districts can provide services, programs, and activities offered in a facility to individuals with disabilities without removing physical barriers, through alternative methods such as:

- Relocating a service to an accessible facility, such as moving a public information office from the second floor to the first floor of a building;

- Providing an aide or personal assistant to enable an individual with a disability to obtain the service; or

- Providing benefits or services at the individual's home, or at an alternative accessible site.

Districts are not required to take any action that would result either in a fundamental alteration in the nature of the service, program, or activity, or undue financial or administrative burdens. According to the superintendent, when WISD cannot modify facilities it provides approved alternative methods to assist disabled students.

The Facilities Task Force Committee recommended Dawson Elementary be replaced since it is within the 100-year flood plain and has flooded twice since 1998. It also recommended Hopper Elementary be replaced because it needed repairs that would cost more than constructing a new building. Replacing two elementary schools with one new school will result in a realignment of school grade levels. When the new school is complete, students in grades pre-kindergarten–1 will attend Sivells Elementary, grades 2–5 students will attend the new elementary, grades 6–8 will attend the junior high, and grades 9–12 will attend the high school.

The committee presented its recommendations to the board, which called a bond referendum in February 2006. Members of the facility planning committee and other community members established a political action committee, which encouraged voters to support the bond program at the polls. On February 4, 2006, WISD voters approved the bond referendum with 983 (56 percent) votes for, and 772 (44 percent) votes against the referendum.

The Facilities Task Force Committee identified 294 facility needs during the course of planning for the bond referendum; only 25 of these were included in the bond program. The committee identified 55 of the 294 items as projects the district's Maintenance Department could complete. Of the remaining 214 items, the committee classified 168 of these as Priority 1 and Priority 2, needing attention within the next five years, but did not propose a method for completion. The committee felt the Priority 3 projects did not need completion for at least five years. **Exhibit 8-8** shows some of the $2.7 million in Priority 3 projects.

The remaining needs are still important to the community, as stakeholders expressed specific concerns about the poor appearance of the high school, including classrooms, sidewalks, parking lots, and the auditorium. There is a

EXHIBIT 8-8
EXAMPLES OF WISD FACILITY PROJECTS (PRIORITY 3)
RECOMMENDED FOR COMPLETION AFTER 2011

SCHOOL	PROJECT DESCRIPTION
Sivells Elementary	Provide ADA signage throughout the building.
	Replace some doors and frames.
	Provide ADA access to the rear of the computer lab, the stage in the cafeteria, the restroom to the kitchen restroom, the cabinets and sink in the teachers' lounge.
	Replace lighting on the stage and the gym.
	Enlarge and renovate the main office and the clinic.
Wharton Junior High	Heat and air condition the hallways.
	Replace two-pipe air conditioning system with a four-pipe system.
	Replace lockers in field house.
	Provide hot water in student and staff restrooms.
	Enlarge existing library.
	Repair tennis court.
	Renovate Home Economics lab.
Wharton High School	Replace Plexiglass windowpanes with tempered glass.
	Install new flooring in the main office, cafeteria storage, shower rooms, auditorium dressing room, 28 classrooms, and Home Economics lab.
	Install acoustical ceiling tile and grid in the old and new gym.
	Improve drainage around the school grounds.
	Replace rusting fence around tennis court.
	Install library shelving for equipment storage.
	Replace missing insulation on the underside of the roof deck in the new gym.

Source: WISD Master Facility Plan, 2005.

perception among the community that the district has long neglected and deferred needed facilities repairs.

Based on interviews with district department heads, other areas to be included in future discussions related to WISD facility needs include technology and food service.

During the bond planning process, a number of important components of a long-range facilities master plan were incorporated into the district's plans, providing a solid foundation upon which the district can expand the plan in the future. Components of a master facility plan, and how WISD addressed these components during the bond planning process include:

- **Facility capacity:** Districts establish school facility capacity by setting standards governing student-teacher ratios and the amount of square feet required per student in a classroom. These standards deal with the minimum size of core facilities, gyms, cafeterias, and libraries, so that schools do not overload these facilities or overuse portable classrooms. As part of the bond planning process, WISD asked the architect to develop the student capacity for each of its schools. **Exhibit 8-9** shows how each school's enrollment compares to its capacity.

- **Facility inventory:** Each school inventory should identify the use and size of each room. This enables planners to set the capacity of each school accurately. Districts note modifications to schools in the inventory to keep it current. The WISD architect incorporated building inventories when assessing building capacities.

- **Enrollment projections:** The district should make these projections for at least five years into the future. Accurate projections require planners to examine neighborhood demographics and track new construction activity in the district. Many school planners work in coordination

with county and city planners to track growth patterns. The WISD Facilities Task Force Committee reviewed district enrollment history and projections. The superintendent reported that the district does not use a professional demographer since enrollment history shows a consistent gradual decline since 2003–04.

- **Attendance zones:** Some districts use portable classrooms to temporarily alleviate overcrowding due to fluctuations in enrollment, which, if overused, can become a deficit to the education program. Other districts make adjustments in attendance zones based on geographic areas or zones to balance student populations, which can result in children changing schools often, especially in fast-growing districts. WISD balances school loads by assigning students to schools based on grade level. For example, all WISD third graders attend Sivells, and all fourth graders attend Dawson.

- **Facilities deferred maintenance assessment:** Districts identify items that are functionally obsolete or those that will be soon to support budgeting efforts. The WISD architect established a list of deficiencies at all schools and the Facilities Task Force Committee evaluated and prioritized them for possible inclusion in the bond program.

- **Building systems lifecycles:** Effective long-term budget planning requires an estimate of the remaining life of all major building systems such as roofs, HVAC, and security systems to identify systems that are functionally obsolete, or will be soon. The WISD architect evaluated building systems as part of the maintenance assessment.

- **Educational adequacy and functional equity among schools:** Educational standards change over time as districts implement new research and tools. In the WISD bond planning process, the district solicited input

EXHIBIT 8-9
WISD SCHOOL ENROLLMENT COMPARED TO CAPACITY
2005–06

SCHOOL	GRADE	ENROLLMENT	CAPACITY	BUILDING USE PERCENTAGE
Wharton High School	9–12	636	850	75%
Wharton Junior High	7–8	361	500	72%
Dawson Elementary	4–6	486	620	78%
Sivells Elementary	K–3	576	648	89%
Hopper Elementary	Pre-K–K	339	342	99%

Source: Texas Education Agency, Texas Public Schools, District & School Directory, March 2006; WISD architect.

from parents, teachers, principals, and administrators to identify issues related to educational adequacy and equity.

- **Capital improvement master plan:** Effective planning requires the district to anticipate its future needs and balances these needs against resources. A capital master plan charts future improvements to school facilities and identifies funding sources for them. The planning process, which should involve the community, should identify district goals and objectives and prioritize projects based on those goals and objectives. The WISD bond planning process included all of these components.

Without a plan to address district facility needs beyond the projects to be funded through the recent bond referendum, WISD does not have a guide to establish future budgets to ensure district facilities are maintained, renovated, or furnished as needed.

WISD should reconvene the Facilities Task Force Committee to develop a long-range district facility plan beyond the current bond proposal. The committee should focus on prioritizing the remaining facility needs by year; identifying all facility needs not addressed as part of the bond planning; and identifying possible funding sources.

MAINTENANCE WORK ORDER SYSTEM (REC. 43)

WISD's manual maintenance work order process does not enable the district to maintain a repair history, or to evaluate the use of labor and material resources.

From 1998–99 through 2003–04, WISD spent an average of 14.2 percent of its total general fund operating expenditures on maintenance and operations (**Exhibit 8-10**).

WISD's 2003–04 general fund maintenance and operations expenditures represented 15.6 percent of its total district general fund expenditures, the highest percentage as compared to its peer districts and the state (**Exhibit 8-11**).

WISD has the highest maintenance expenditures per student compared to peer districts, and its expenditures are about $183 greater per student than the state average (**Exhibit 8-12**).

The WISD maintenance request form is a single page asking building staff for the date, building, department, room number, the nature of the work requested, and the requestor of the work. The Maintenance Department enters the name of the employee performing the work, date completed, a description of the work performed, the time required to complete the job, office approval signature, and date of approval.

Teachers and custodians can download a maintenance request form from the district's website, print and fill out the form, and get their principal's approval. The school sends the completed form to the central office, and the director of Auxiliary Services prioritizes each request. The director's secretary assigns a number to the form, makes a copy, and sends the original form to the Maintenance Department office.

The Maintenance supervisor assigns the request to the appropriate maintenance worker, who completes the work, records the work performed and time required, gets an approval signature from the school, and returns the form to the Maintenance supervisor. The Maintenance supervisor sends completed maintenance request forms to the director of Auxiliary Services, for filing by date. WISD provided no information about the number of work order requests for a typical school year. Neither the Maintenance supervisor nor the director of Auxiliary Services uses the work order information to generate monthly summary reports.

EXHIBIT 8-10
WISD GENERAL FUND MAINTENANCE EXPENDITURES
1998–99 THROUGH 2003–04

	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	6-YEAR AVERAGE
Maintenance and operations expenditures	$1,702,940	$1,675,637	$1,865,864	$1,889,981	$1,977,256	$2,286,410	**$1,899,681**
Percentage of total operating expenditures	14.3%	13.7%	14.6%	13.3%	13.9%	15.6%	**14.2%**

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) online reports, 1998–99 through 2003–04 actual expenditures.

EXHIBIT 8-11
WISD AND PEER DISTRICTS
MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS GENERAL FUND
EXPENDITURES PER STUDENT AND PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL
GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURES
2003–04

	MAINTENANCE & OPERATIONS EXPENDITURES PER STUDENT	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL DISTRICT EXPENDITURES
Aransas Pass	$905	14.3%
Cuero	$694	11.1%
Edna	$670	13.3%
El Campo	$709	12.1%
Wharton	**$912**	**15.6%**
State	**$711**	**11.8%**

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS online reports, 2003–04.

EXHIBIT 8-12
WISD AND PEER DISTRICTS
MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS EXPENDITURES, PER
STUDENT
2003–04

	GENERAL FUND	ALL FUNDS
Aransas Pass	$905	$914
Cuero	$694	$753
Edna	$670	$678
El Campo	$709	$714
Wharton	**$912**	**$921**
State	**$711**	**$738**

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS online reports, 2003–04.

As a result of having a completely manual work order system, the district has no way to measure the effectiveness of the Maintenance Department, quantify labor and material costs per work order, maintain a repair history for specific district equipment, or evaluate the efficient use of department resources.

Computer software applications known as computerized maintenance management systems (CMMS) allow districts to register and acknowledge maintenance work requests, assign tasks to staff, confirm that work was completed, and track the cost of parts and labor. CMMS applications vary from single-user versions residing on one computer, and networked versions accessible by multiple users, to web-based applications that do not require hardware or software not found in most districts. Some vendors offer a minimal version of their software free of charge or at a low-cost in hopes that

the client will like the application enough to upgrade to a more full-featured version.

Rockwall ISD (RISD) schools enter maintenance needs work orders online, which improves repair turn-around time. The work order software is purchased and supported through Regional Education Service Center X and resides on a network server in Rockwall High School. Once the RISD Maintenance Department receives a work order, a maintenance staff member prints the request, stamps it with a date, and sends the request to the director of Maintenance who assigns the job to a maintenance worker. The Maintenance Department secretary electronically transfers the request to the maintenance technicians' workstation. When the task is complete, the worker enters the time required and any supplies and materials used, and then returns a copy with their daily timesheet. Maintenance electronically sends a status of the work order to the school for verification. The Maintenance Department keeps a paper copy of the work order as back up documentation.

WISD should purchase and install an automated system to enter and track maintenance work orders. With an automated work order system, WISD would be able to measure the effectiveness of the Maintenance Department, quantify labor and material costs per work order, maintain a history of repairs made to specific district equipment, and evaluate the efficient use of department resources. The cost for the maintenance software includes a one-time start-up fee of $276, as well as licensing fees of $979 per year, for a 5-year total cost to the district of $4,895 ($979 x 5 = $4,895).

FISCAL IMPACT

RECOMMENDATION		2006–07	2007–08	2008–09	2009–10	2010–11	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) OR SAVINGS	ONE-TIME (COSTS) OR SAVINGS
CHAPTER 8: FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT								
41.	Establish a custodial allocation formula based on industry staffing standards, and staff district facilities accordingly.	$0	($88,330)	($88,330)	($88,330)	($88,330)	($353,320)	$0
42.	Reconvene the Facilities Task Force Committee to develop a long-range district facility plan beyond the current bond proposal.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
43.	Purchase and install an automated system to enter and track maintenance work orders, and use the information to monitor maintenance and operations costs.	($979)	($979)	($979)	($979)	($979)	($4,895)	($276)
Totals-Chapter 8		**($979)**	**($89,309)**	**($89,309)**	**($89,309)**	**($89,309)**	**($358,215)**	**($276)**

CHAPTER 9

FOOD SERVICES

WHARTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

CHAPTER 9. FOOD SERVICES

Wharton Independent School District (WISD) participates in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and the School Breakfast Program (SBP). Districts participating in NSLP and SBP must serve students meals meeting federal guidelines for nutritional value, and offer free or reduced-price meals to eligible students. When districts participate in NSLP and SBP, they receive cash subsidies and commodities donated by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for eligible meals served at schools. The eligible meal categories are student-free, student reduced-price, and student-paid. The district does not receive federal reimbursement assistance for teachers and guest meals.

WISD's Food Service Department operates four kitchens and provides satellite services by transporting food to Hopper Elementary School. WISD Food Service served 110,498 free breakfasts to all students, and 247,464 lunches and snacks during 2004–05.

WISD employs a Food Service director, an assistant/buyer, a warehouse/driver, a part-time student worker, four campus cafeteria managers, and 20 Food Service workers (**Exhibit 9-1**). A manager supervises each full-service kitchen. The director has 22 years of experience with the district's Food Service Department.

WISD began 2004–05 with a surplus fund balance of $87,167. WISD's 2004–05 internal financial statements for the Food Service program reported revenues of $811,302, expenditures of $827,149, and a final ending fund balance of $71,320. Food Service had a deficit of $15,847 by the end of 2004–05, the result of WISD using Food Service funds for kitchen improvements (**Exhibit 9-2**).

EXHIBIT 9-1
WISD FOOD SERVICE DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION
JANUARY 2006
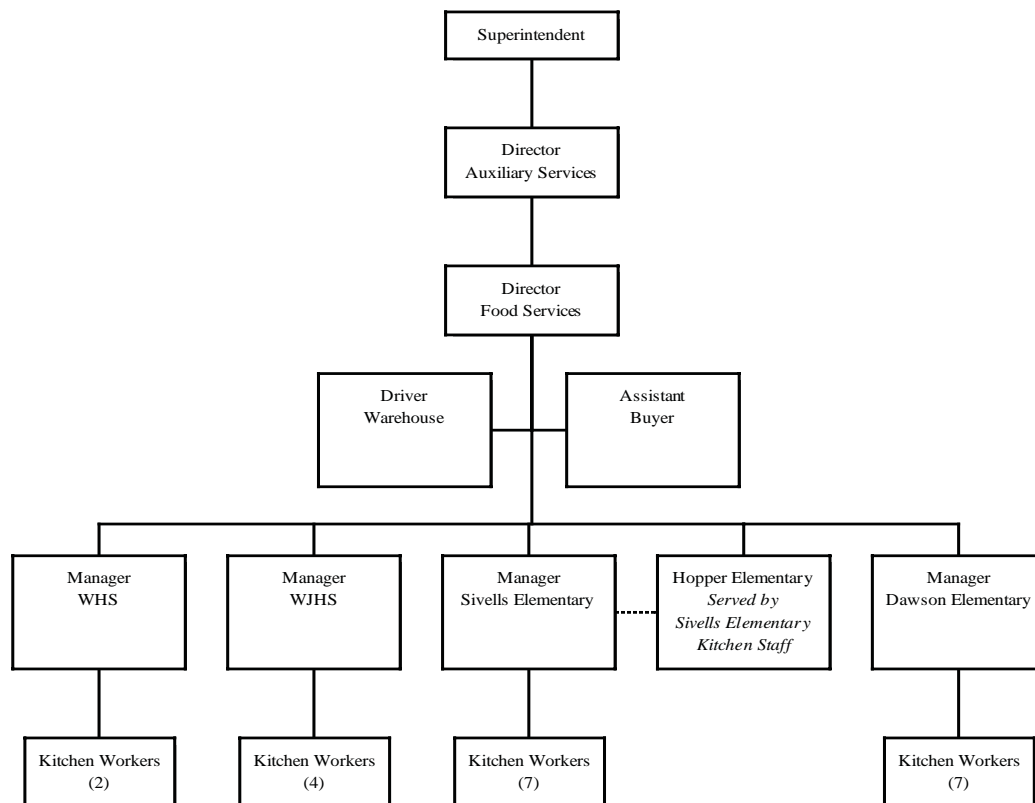
SOURCE: WISD Food Service director, January 2006.

EXHIBIT 9-2
WISD FOOD SERVICE DEPARTMENT
FINANCIAL INFORMATION
1999–2000 THROUGH 2005–06

SCHOOL YEAR	REVENUES	EXPENDITURES	DEFICIT OR SURPLUS	GENERAL FUND TRANSFER IN	ENDING FUND BALANCE
2005–06	$811,584	$812,728	($1,144)	$0	$70,176
2004–05	$811,302	$827,149	($15,847)	$0	$71,320
2003–04	$851,208	$798,621	$52,587	$0	$87,167
2002–03	$824,882	$811,236	$13,646	$0	$34,580
2001–02	$775,018	$838,565	($63,547)	$54,996	$20,934
2000–01	$752,478	$801,001	($48,523)	$61,175	$29,485
1999–2000	$816,461	$830,716	($14,255)	$23,147	$16,833

NOTE: Information for 2005–06 is budgeted information; all other years are actual amounts.
SOURCE: WISD financial reports, Business manager, December 2005.

Exhibit 9-3 illustrates that WISD's Food Service Department expenditures increased 3.3 percent from 2000–01 to 2004–05. During this same period, the Food Service department reduced labor and benefits by 5.9 percent, and food and nonfood costs by 2.1 percent. Hiring a management company to consult with the Food Service Department beginning in February 2001 and ending in August 2003 may have caused a 36.2 percent increase in miscellaneous costs. WISD paid the management company $2,450 a month for contracted services. According to the Food Service director, the individual from the contract management company consulted with the Food Service Department one to two days a month.

The miscellaneous category covers all other expenses for food, nonfood, labor, benefits, and equipment. According to the Business manager, Food Service spent $34,274 from the fund balance during 2004–05 for furniture and equipment and new kitchen flooring in the amounts of $11,250 and

$23,024 respectively. The district will continue to see an increase in equipment costs due to the need to replace its existing equipment. The 2004–05 budget year was the first time the district charged the Food Service Department a portion of the utility cost. While miscellaneous costs, equipment costs, and utilities show large percentage increases, these categories represent a small percentage of the overall expenditures.

FINDINGS

- WISD does not use management reports to monitor the Food Service program.

- WISD does not consistently monitor food and nonfood costs when preparing breakfast and lunch menus.

- WISD does not allocate interest earnings on Food Service cash and investment balances to the Food Service program as required by the Texas Department of

EXHIBIT 9-3
WISD FOOD SERVICES EXPENDITURES
2000–01 THROUGH 2004–05

COSTS	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	FIVE-YEAR PERCENTAGE CHANGE INCREASE/ (DECREASE)
Labor/Benefits	$402,870	$421,063	$387,555	$369,891	$379,199	(5.9%)
Food/Non-Food	318,983	334,027	309,626	307,529	312,272	(2.1)
Miscellaneous	69,667	74,119	114,055	100,000	94,902	36.2
Equipment	9,480	9,356	0	21,200	17,752	87.3
Utilities	0	0	0	0	23,024	N/A
Total	**$801,000**	**$838,565**	**$811,236**	**$798,621**	**$827,149**	**3.3%**

SOURCE: WISD financial reports, Business manager, December 2005.

Agriculture's (TDA) Administrative Reference Manual (ARM).

- WISD has not analyzed all the factors affecting student participation in the Food Service program.

- WISD does not plan or budget to replace district kitchen equipment.

- WISD's training program for kitchen staff is insufficient for program compliance and best operating practices.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Recommendation 44: Use multiple management reports to monitor Food Service program operations daily, weekly, monthly, and annually.** Management reports should include budgets, menu cost analyses, daily revenue totals, balance sheets, profit and loss statements, meals per labor hour (MPLH), staffing allocations, and key operating percentages as a part of the overall budget. Once the district implements these reports, it should track trends and generate reports to use as a planning tool for the Food Service Department's daily operations, as well as annual budget preparation.

- **Recommendation 45: Precost breakfast and lunch menus consistently to better monitor food and nonfood costs.** The Food Service director should determine available revenues and food costs per meal distribution, then precost breakfast and lunch menus monthly to align with the available revenues.

- **Recommendation 46: Allocate interest earnings on the Food Service fund balances to the Food Service program as required by the TDA.** The district should calculate and allocate interest earnings to the separate Food Service fund monthly, rather than continuing to leave the interest earnings in the general revenue fund.

- **Recommendation 47: Conduct an analysis of the factors affecting student participation in the Food Service program.** The analysis should focus on current meal choices, serving methods, food quality, the Open Campus Policy at the high school, and campus dining environments. The Food Service director should use the results of this analysis to develop a plan addressing the factors affecting student meal participation, and present it to the director of Auxiliary Services and the superintendent for approval. These parties should then work together to determine a timeline for plan implementation.

- **Recommendation 48: Develop a plan and budget for replacing district kitchen equipment.** The plan should initially focus on replacing inoperable equipment, as well as all rusted and wooden equipment. Additionally, shelving installed in freezers and coolers should be removed to allow for air circulation. The Food Service director and Business manager should review the inventory list of district kitchen equipment and prioritize the items in greatest need of replacement, based on their age. Once the district addresses its greatest needs, it should establish a formal replacement plan for the remaining equipment and present it to the superintendent for approval. Once a plan is developed and approved, the district should begin to budget for the kitchen equipment in priority order, as defined in the plan.

- **Recommendation 49: Provide the required training in blood borne pathogens, Hazardous Analysis of Critical Control Points (HACCP), sanitation inspections, sexual harassment, and wellness policies to all Food Service Department staff.** All department employees should participate in annual sexual harassment, blood borne pathogens, and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) regulations training sessions conducted by the Personnel and Public Relations Department. WISD should conduct the training on the workday currently used for cleaning the kitchens and receiving groceries. In addition, the Food Service director should contact Regional Education Service Center III (Region 3) to set up training for department employees in HACCP, sanitation inspections, and wellness practices.

DETAILED FINDINGS

MANAGEMENT REPORTING (REC. 44)

WISD does not use management reports to monitor the Food Service program.

WISD's Food Service director has access to the Food Service Department operational data, but has not used that information to create periodic program monitoring reports. The Finance Department sends monthly balance sheets and detailed reports to the Food Service director. The balance sheets contain detailed information on food, labor, and other costs, but no indication is given regarding the percentage of the budget the Food Service Department has spent to date. The department does not analyze or manipulate these reports for program projections. The Food Service director can view

but may not print financial information reports through the district's inventory tracking system.

Although WISD's Food Service director assists the Business manager in developing the Food Service Department's annual budget, the department does not generate the necessary daily, weekly, and monthly financial reports for the director's use in gauging financial performance and managing the program. The director therefore makes daily decisions regarding department operations without the data to support the resulting financial impact.

Financial management tools used by districts to control daily operating costs include daily deposit trends, weekly deposit trends, monthly deposit trends, budget trends, menu-costing, balance sheet percentages of the percentage used to date of the budget, monthly profit and loss statements by campus, and MPLH, which is calculated by dividing the number of meals served by the total number of hours worked over a given time period and is a factor in determining program staffing needs. Other tools include staffing allocations and the percentage of major expenditure categories to the overall budget.

The Food Service industry's established standards for MPLH include different levels based on the number of meals and meal equivalents served (**Exhibit 9-4**). The more meals served, the higher the MPLH. Reducing labor costs can also increase MPLH.

EXHIBIT 9-4
MINIMUM STAFFING GUIDELINES
FOR ON-SITE MEAL PRODUCTION

NUMBER OF MEALS AND MEAL EQUIVALENTS	MINIMUM RECOMMENDED MPLH
Up to 100	8
101–150	9
151–200	10–11
201–250	12
251–300	13
301–400	14
401–500	14
501–600	15
601–700	16
701–800	17
801–900	18
901+	19

SOURCE: "Managing Child Nutrition Programs," Josephine M. Martin and Martha T. Conklin, 1998.

School Food Service programs view the reimbursable lunch as the basic measurement standard for all edible food production. Food Service managers use industry-developed factors to convert all other food production to equal a reimbursable lunch equivalent.

The National Food Service Management Institute (NFSMI) uses the formulas shown in **Exhibit 9-5** to determine meal equivalents.

EXHIBIT 9-5
NFSMI MEAL EQUIVALENT FORMULAS

MEAL EQUIVALENT RATIO	DESCRIPTION
(1:1)	One reimbursable lunch equals one meal equivalent
(3:2)	Three breakfast meals equal two meal equivalents
(3:1)	Three snacks equal one meal equivalent

SOURCE: NFSMI Management Information System, February 2006.

The labor and benefits costs for cafeteria workers have a substantial impact on Food Service Department expenditures. WISD has not analyzed the cafeteria workers' salary information to determine the effect of these labor and benefits costs on the department's budget. As noted in **Exhibit 9-6**, the review team found that seven of the 21 WISD cafeteria workers, or one-third of the workforce, earns more than 40 percent of that group's salaries. The district has a relatively high percentage of cafeteria workers with longer tenure and thus higher hourly pay rates, resulting in WISD's labor and benefits costs, (nearly 46 percent of the department's expenditures) exceeding the industry recommendation that these costs not exceed 40 percent of department expenditures.

As a result of not utilizing management reports, the director is unable to plan for profitable program management.

Exhibit 9-7 shows some of the management reports used daily, weekly, monthly, and annually by the Comal ISD (CISD) Child Nutrition Department to monitor Food Service program operations.

WISD should use multiple management reports to monitor Food Service program operations daily, weekly, monthly, and annually. Management reports should include budgets, menu cost analyses, daily revenue totals, balance sheets, profit and loss statements, MPLH, staffing allocations, and key operating percentages as a part of the overall budget. Once

EXHIBIT 9-6
SALARIES OF WISD CAFETERIA WORKERS
2005–06

HOURLY RATE RANGE	NUMBER OF CAFETERIA WORKERS	PERCENTAGE OF ALL CAFETERIA WORKERS	TOTAL SALARIES OF ALL CAFETERIA WORKERS BY HOURLY RATE RANGE	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL SALARIES OF ALL CAFETERIA WORKERS
Above $9.00	7	33.3%	$79,916	40.6%
$8.50 - 8.99	0	0.0	0	0.0
$8.00 – 8.49	0	0.0	0	0.0
$7.50 – 7.99	5	23.8	43,853	22.2
$7.10 – 7.49	9	42.9	73,210	37.2%
Totals	**21**	**100.0%**	**$196,979**	**100.0%**

SOURCE: WISD salary structure provided by WISD Business manager, February 2006.

EXHIBIT 9-7
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT REPORTS USED TO MONITOR FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM OPERATIONS
CISD CHILD NUTRITION DEPARTMENT

REPORT	USES	FOOD SERVICES PROGRAM GENERATION FREQUENCY	SOURCE
Budget	• Allows for informed decisions and financial forecasts for the next year through the use of historical, economic, and demographic data, projected enrollment, menu changes and changes in operational procedures. • Allows for a forecast of financial performance for the next year. • Allows for comparisons between actual and forecasted performance.	Annual with monthly monitoring	Finance Department
Menu-Costing	• Allows for informed decision-making with regard to purchases and the continuation of products' costs.	Daily	Food Service Food Buying Guide
Daily Revenue Received from Lunch and Breakfast	• Allows for the identification of major sources of revenue such as daily deposits, free, reduced-price, paid reimbursements, a la carte, catering, or other.	Daily	Food Service Point of Sale (POS) system and Finance Department
Balance Sheet	• Allows for a comparison of current balances with balances at the end of the month of the prior year.	Monthly	Finance Department
Profit & Loss Statement	• Allows for identification and analysis of increases or decreases in participation or expenses. • Allows for identification of schools making a profit or experiencing a loss. • Allows administrators to determine where key issues/problems exist.	Monthly	Finance Department

Key Operating Percentages	• Allows management and staff to monitor expenditures over time including:
	  • Food cost percentage
	  • Labor cost percentage
	  • Other cost percentage
	  • Break-even point
	  • Inventory turnover
	  • Participation rates
	  • Average daily labor costs
	  • Average hourly labor costs
		Monthly or Annually	Food Service POS system and Finance Department

Meals Per Labor Hour	• Allows for analysis of staffing patterns by campus. • Allows for reduction of single hour increments based on difficulty of menu preparation.	Weekly and Monthly	Food Service POS system and Finance Department payroll records

SOURCE: Financial reports from CISD Child Nutrition Department, January 2006.

the district implements these reports, it should track trends and generate reports to use as a planning tool for the Food Service Department's daily operations, as well as annual budget preparation.

WISD should use menu-costing reports daily to provide information for cost control of purchased food products. Review of daily revenues identifies revenue trends. The balance sheet provides a periodic analysis of cash flow available to the program. Monthly profit and loss statements will assist in identifying problem revenue and expense areas. MPLH and staffing allocations will assist in determining the department's staffing needs, and key operating percentages will allow for monitoring monthly or yearly trends.

PRECOSTING MENUS (REC. 45)

WISD does not consistently monitor food and nonfood costs when preparing breakfast and lunch menus.

WISD's Food Service director plans menus on a monthly basis and develops production records for the campus managers to use for daily production. WISD controls portion size of all food during serving by using proper serving equipment.

However, while occasional spot checking of menu costs does occur, the Food Service director does not monitor food and nonfood costs consistently when preparing breakfast and lunch menus. Precosting menus is a financial tool used to determine available revenue and assist a Food Service Department in monitoring and appropriately budgeting for these costs. Precosting is also an operational tool, as menus must be prepared with minimal food waste and maximum efficiency in mind to allow campus cafeterias and Food Service Departments to operate efficiently. The information needed for precosting menus for breakfast and lunch is available in WISD's buying guide; a detailed list of all food/nonfood products and their current price. However, WISD does not precost its breakfast and lunch menus.

A menu is precosted by determining the cost to serve all five menu components, including nonfood items such as the paper and chemicals for cleaning. Food and nonfood expenses are major expenditure categories in a Food Service operation. These areas of expense must be monitored closely with safeguards put in place to identify excessive expenditures. By looking at the bid pricing for food for the district, Food Service departments can calculate an individual portion size to use in precosting a menu.

To determine food costs per meal, available revenues must first be determined. Meal prices and federal reimbursement rates generate revenue. To determine the available revenue per meal, the distribution of revenue per meal is calculated. The revenue distribution is a ratio of available revenue based on free, reduced-priced, and paid meal prices as a ratio to the participation rate for a given time period.

Exhibit 9-8 shows the meal prices for 2005–06. In 2005–06, all students were provided breakfast for free. The district has programmed its point of sale system to show $0 income for breakfast meals, but students remain coded as free, reduced, or paid, and WISD counts students as such when completing the daily and monthly reports and requesting reimbursement for breakfast meals. The lunch price for full paid elementary students is $1.85, and the lunch price for full paid secondary students is $2.10. The reduced-price lunch for both elementary and secondary students is $0.40.

EXHIBIT 9-8
WISD MEAL PRICES
2005–06

MEAL /CAMPUS	PRICES FOR 2005–06		
BREAKFAST	**PAID**	**REDUCED**	**FREE**
Elementary	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
Secondary	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
LUNCH			
Elementary	$1.85	$0.40	$0.00
Secondary	$2.10	$0.40	$0.00

Source: WISD Food Service director, January 2005.

Exhibit 9-9 shows the 2005–06 federal school meal reimbursement rates. The federal government determines these rates annually, based on the federal poverty rate (income). WISD provides free meals to students from households with incomes at or below 135 percent of the poverty rate. It also provides reduced-priced meals to students from households with incomes between 135 percent and 185 percent of the poverty rate. Households with incomes exceeding 185 percent of the poverty rate receive full priced meals. For full paid breakfasts, the federal reimbursement rate per meal is $0.23; for reduced-priced breakfasts the rate per meal is $0.97 and $0.24 for a severe-need campus; for free breakfasts the rate per meal is $1.27 and $0.24 for a severe-need campus. The full paid lunch rate per meal is $0.22; the reduced-priced lunch rate per meal is $1.92; and

EXHIBIT 9-9
FEDERAL SCHOOL MEAL REIMBURSEMENT RATES
2005–06

PROGRAM	FULL PRICE	REDUCED PRICE	FREE
Reimbursable Breakfast +	$0.23	$0.97	$1.27
Severe Need Breakfast =	$0.00	$0.24	$0.24
Total Reimbursement	$0.23	$1.21	$1.51
Reimbursable Lunches +	$0.22	$1.92	$2.32
Two-cent Supplement =	$0.02	$0.02	$0.02
Total Reimbursement	$0.24	$1.94	$2.34
Commodity Assistance	$0.18	$0.18	$0.18

SOURCE: Texas Department of Agriculture, Child Nutrition Department reimbursement rates, 2005–06.

the free lunch rate per meal is $2.32. There is also a two-cent supplement for each reimbursement rate.

To determine WISD's revenue distribution, one must first calculate the meal distribution. Meal distribution is the calculated percentage of the meal type divided by the total number of meals served. Add in the federal reimbursement rate, the price for meals paid by students, and the commodity assistance value per meal of $0.18; this equals total revenue. **Exhibit 9-10** shows this calculation for October 2005. Distributed revenue is the meal distribution multiplied by total revenue for the meal type. During October 2005, WISD served 13,187 breakfasts; 11.7 percent were served to full-paid students. The district received $0.23 for a paid breakfast. The distributed revenue is $0.03 (Federal

Reimbursement $0.23 + no charge for meal to student x 11.7 percent Meal Distribution). Adding all distributed revenues for paid, reduced, and free breakfasts gives a total of $1.34. Multiply $1.34 by 40 percent food/nonfood cost to determine the food/nonfood cost per meal distribution of $0.54. Therefore, WISD has $0.54 available for food/nonfood costs for the breakfast meal based on current revenues for the breakfast meals in October 2005. This same method of calculation is used to determine the revenue distribution for student lunches. Multiply the total distributed revenue for lunches of $2.50 by the 40 percent food/nonfood cost to determine food/nonfood cost per meal distribution of $1.00.

As illustrated in **Exhibit 9-10**, $0.54 is available for breakfast food/nonfood costs, and $1.00 is available for lunch food/nonfood costs. The review team examined and costed a week of WISD menus from November 2005 to determine the actual costs of the menus selected. The Food Service director provided the food costs to the district for the menu-costing sample in **Exhibit 9-11**. The average breakfast for this week cost $0.65 and the average lunch cost $0.92.

According to **Exhibit 9-11** for this week in November 2005, the Food Service Department spent too much on food/nonfood costs for breakfast meals, and not enough on food/nonfood costs for lunch meals. Due to not monitoring the food and nonfood costs consistently when preparing breakfast and lunch menus, WISD spent $0.11 more on breakfast

EXHIBIT 9-10
WISD REVENUE DISTRIBUTION
TO DETERMINE FOOD COST PER MEAL
OCTOBER 2005

TYPE OF MEAL	MEALS SERVED	MEAL DISTRIBUTION	FEDERAL REIMBURSEMENT RATE	PRICE FOR MEALS PAID BY STUDENTS	COMMODITY ASSISTANCE VALUE	TOTAL REVENUE	DISTRIBUTED REVENUE (TOTAL REVENUE X MEAL DISTRIBUTION)	FOOD COST PER MEAL DISTRIBUTION
BREAKFAST								
Paid	1,541	11.7%	$0.23	$0	$0	$0.23	$0.03	
Reduced	1,120	8.5%	$1.21	$0	$0	$1.21	$0.10	
Free	10,526	79.8%	$1.51	$0	$0	$1.51	$1.21	
Total	**13,187**						**$1.34**	**$0.54**
LUNCH								
Paid	5,171	17%	$0.24	$1.98	$0.18	$2.40	$0.41	
Reduced	3,130	10%	$1.94	$0.40	$0.18	$2.52	$0.25	
Free	22,591	73%	$2.34	$0	$0.18	$2.52	$1.84	
Total	**30,892**						**$2.50**	**$1.00**

SOURCE: WISD Food Service director, data from October 2005 reimbursement claim.

EXHIBIT 9-11
WISD SAMPLE COST OF ONE WEEK'S MENUS
NOVEMBER 2005

BREAKFAST MENU COSTS

MONDAY	COST	TUESDAY	COST	WEDNESDAY	COST	THURSDAY	COST	FRIDAY	COST	AVERAGE	RECOMMENDED
Waffles w/ Syrup	$0.10	Breakfast Taquitos	$0.35	Cereal, Toast	$0.26	Cinnamon Toast w/ Sausage	$0.57	Eggs with Sausage	$0.27		
Apple Juice	$0.10	Peaches	$0.16	Grape Juice	$0.13	Bananas	$0.15	Orange Juice	$0.13		
Milk	$0.21	Milk	$0.21	Milk	$0.21	Milk	$0.21	Milk	$0.21		
TOTAL	**$0.41**		**$0.72**		**$0.60**		**$0.93**		**$0.61**	**$0.65**	**$0.54**

LUNCH MENU COSTS

MONDAY	COST	TUESDAY	COST	WEDNESDAY	COST	THURSDAY	COST	FRIDAY	COST	AVERAGE	RECOMMENDED
Chicken Nuggets	$0.21	Turkey Corndog	$0.21	Hamburger on a Bun	$0.36	Pep. Pizza Pocket	$0.49	Beef Ravioli	$0.35		
Mashed Potatoes/ Gravy	$0.13	Beans	$0.08	Salad Trimmings	$0.16	Garden Salad	$0.16	Corn	$0.14		
Corn	$0.14	Pears w/ gelatin	$0.19	Oven fries	$0.11	Orange Wedges	$0.18	Peaches	$0.15		
Hot Roll	$0.05		$0.00		$0.00		$0.00	Texas Toast	$0.08		
Milk	$0.21	Milk	$0.21	Milk	$0.21	Milk	$0.21	Milk	$0.21		
Chemicals & Paper	$0.07	Chemicals & Paper	$0.07	Chemicals & Paper	$0.07	Chemicals & Paper	$0.07	Chemicals & Paper	$0.07		
TOTAL	**$0.81**		**$0.76**		**$0.91**		**$1.11**		**$1.00**	**$0.92**	**$1.00**

SOURCE: WISD Food Service director, WISD's bids for bread products, dairy and juice, and groceries, November 2005.

meals and $0.08 less on lunch meals during the week examined for **Exhibit 9-11** as compared to the amount recommended by the calculations in **Exhibit 9-10**. When the Food Service Department determines menu selections, it is important that the weekly average align with the available revenue, as seen in **Exhibit 9-10**.

WISD should precost breakfast and lunch menus consistently to better monitor food and nonfood costs. The Food Service director should determine available revenues and food costs per meal distribution, then precost breakfast and lunch menus monthly to align with available revenues.

ALLOCATION OF INTEREST EARNINGS (REC. 46)

WISD does not allocate interest earnings on Food Service cash and investment balances to the Food Service program as required by the TDA ARM.

Like most school districts, WISD budgets for Food Service operations with a special revenue fund, a subaccount of the general revenue fund. This allows the separation of all Food

Service operations resources for independent management and compliance purposes. The Finance Department derives balances through bookkeeping practices. A review of the Food Service fund year-end balance sheets and annual district audits for 2002–03, 2003–04, and 2004–05, indicated that WISD had not allocated the interest earnings on cash and investment balances of the general revenue fund into the special revenue fund for Food Service operations. Instead, WISD left all Food Service fund interest in the general revenue fund during these fiscal periods. A journal voucher entry moving interest income from the general revenue fund to the special revenue fund for Food Service operations did not occur during any of these years.

Exhibit 9-12 shows the 2004–05 revenue for the separate Food Service fund and illustrates that WISD did not allocate interest earnings to this fund.

The Business manager stated that the district does not allocate interest earnings on Food Service cash and investment

EXHIBIT 9-12
WISD FOOD SERVICES REVENUES
2004–05

REVENUE SOURCES	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE
Total Cash Sales	$155,391	19.2%
USDA Donated Commodities	35,316	4.4
State Reimbursement	7,043	0.8
Federal Reimbursement	613,552	75.6
Interest Income (not allocated)	0	0
Total Revenue	**$811,302**	**100%**

SOURCE: WISD financial reports, Business Manager, December 2005.

balances to the Food Service fund because until recently the general fund subsidized the Food Service program.

Because it does not allocate interest earnings on Food Service cash and investment balances to the Food Service fund, WISD is not in compliance with federal guidelines contained in the TDA's ARM. The guidelines require that all interest earnings for the Food Service program remain within the program. The ARM states, "All revenues received by or accruing to the child nutrition program must be used only for the operation or improvement of the Food Service program. Revenues include but are not limited to: receipts from child and adult meals, snack bar, and a la carte programs; earning on investments; other local revenues; and federal and state reimbursements."

WISD should allocate interest earnings on the Food Service fund balances to the Food Service program as required by the TDA. The district should calculate and allocate interest earnings to the separate Food Service fund monthly, rather than continuing to leave the interest earnings in the general revenue fund.

MEAL PARTICIPATION (REC. 47)

WISD has not analyzed all the factors affecting student participation in the Food Service program.

WISD's meal participation rates are below the state average for breakfast and lunch. The district provides breakfast and lunch meals for all students. WISD's Food Service Department served 110,498 breakfasts and 247,464 lunches during 2004–05. Meal participation rates are the number of students eating a reimbursable meal at school compared to the average daily attendance. During 2004–05, WISD's average breakfast participation rate was 24.4 percent, while the state's average rate was 28.0 percent. The average lunch participation rate

was 56.9 percent during the same school year while the state's average rate was 63.0 percent (**Exhibit 9-13**). Student surveys conducted by the review team indicate that the majority of students have few opinions regarding food appearance, taste, staff helpfulness, or the dining facility cleanliness, indicating that students may not participate enough in the meal programs to have an opinion.

Whether comparing WISD's participation rates to that of peer districts or the state, it is clear that participation rates in the district's Food Service program are not optimal. The review team found a number of factors districtwide that could affect student participation in the Food Service program.

One factor is limited meal choices. The elementary schools serve one entrée, a fruit, a vegetable, milk, and bread for lunch. The junior high serves one entrée, a fruit, a vegetable, milk, and bread for lunch, and the students have access to a salad bar. High school students have a large selection of a la carte items from which to choose. The Food Service director stated that if a school projects meal participation as being low on a particular day, it might add another entrée choice. However, the additional entrée is not included on the menu

EXHIBIT 9-13
WISD, PEER DISTRICTS, AND THE STATE
AVERAGE DAILY MEAL PARTICIPATION RATES
2004–05

ENTITY	AVERAGE DAILY MEAL PARTICIPATION RATES
	BREAKFAST
Aransas Pass	23.3%
Cuero	27.8%
Edna	18.8%
El Campo	22.6%
Wharton	**24.4%**
State	**28.0%**
	LUNCH
Aransas Pass	71.7%
Cuero	50.2%
Edna	45.9%
El Campo	55.2%
Wharton	**56.9%**
State	**63.0%**

SOURCE: Texas Department of Agriculture Child Nutrition Programs District profile, 2004–05 and state data from Texas Department of Agriculture website, 2004–05.

distributed to students, though sometimes the school makes an announcement regarding the revised menu.

Another factor is specific to Hopper Elementary School, where there is reduced meal quality due to the transport of meals from Sivells Elementary School and holding the food for long periods of time. During an on-site visit to Hopper, the review team observed that hamburgers and French fries transported from Sivells during the lunch period were of poor quality. The French fries were limp after being stored in a covered container; French fries are known within the industry to be a poor product to try and transport successfully.

Several factors affect meal participation at Wharton High School. During an on-site visit to the high school campus, the review team observed only 20 to 30 students eating in the dining room during the meal period. In staff interviews, the Food Service director attributed low participation here to the district's Open Campus policy at the high school, allowing students in grades 9–12 to leave campus during the lunch period. In addition to the Open Campus policy, the uninviting condition of the high school dining facility affects participation. The dining room is small with a dark interior and outdated color schemes, and the tables and chairs are old and worn. Public comments include those from stakeholders concerning the underutilization, cleanliness, and appeal of the campus dining areas. Specifically, stakeholders see the high school dining room as a place avoided by both students and staff.

Appealing menus and a variety of food choices are effective factors in increasing student participation in school breakfast and lunch programs. Students respond positively to a variety of menu choices and a bright, inviting dining environment. Allowing children to make food choices builds their self-esteem, and choices allow children to try new foods.

Because of the current meal choices, serving methods, and dining environment, WISD has less than optimal meal participation in its Food Service program, resulting in plate waste and unnecessary additional costs.

WISD's Food Service Department should conduct an analysis of the factors affecting student participation in the Food Service program. The analysis should focus on current meal choices, serving methods, food quality, the Open Campus Policy at the high school, and campus dining environments. The Food Service director should use the results of this analysis to develop a plan addressing the factors affecting student meal participation, and present it to the director of

Auxiliary Services and the superintendent for approval. These parties should work together to determine a timeline for plan implementation.

KITCHEN EQUIPMENT (REC. 48)

WISD does not plan or budget for replacing district kitchen equipment.

The age of most of the current WISD kitchen equipment ranges from 20 to 32 years old, raising the risk that much of it will need replacing at the same time. WISD lacks a contingency plan in its budget to pay for a large-scale replacement of kitchen equipment.

The Finance Department maintains a Food Service equipment inventory list. The campus cafeteria managers and the Food Service director review the inventory and revise the list annually. The Finance Department also manages the depreciable values, salvage values, and projected useful life. Funds have not been available for replacing the kitchen equipment until recently. For the past few years, the district has submitted informal verbal requests to replace kitchen equipment as part of the annual budget preparation process. Both the campus cafeteria managers and the Food Service director have input concerning the replacement of kitchen equipment.

The review team noted several instances of potential equipment problems, including:

- All facilities: All kitchen facilities are antiquated and small. Antiquated kitchens negatively affect the production efficiency and can be a safety hazard for employees.

- Wharton Junior High School: This equipment is well worn and inadequate for operating a campus Food Service facility: two two-burner hot plates, one upright refrigerator, one upright freezer, and a small fryer. The school uses this equipment to serve approximately 300 meals a day. Updated Food Service facilities operate with a four-burner range, a walk-in freezer and cooler, and a self-contained deep fryer.

- Sivells Elementary School: This equipment is inadequate for use at a campus Food Service facility: a wooden tray slide, a wooden butcher block, and rusting service carts. The Food Service director stated that the school uses the butcher block for opening large cans, not for food preparation. The director did not say the school would remove the butcher block, as the kitchen is small and

the wooden butcher block provides preparation space for the Food Service workers.

- Dawson Elementary School: Food Service employees do not use the dishwasher; during on-site visits it appeared to be inoperable.

In addition to the problems noted by the review team, a fall 2005 Department of State Health Services inspection found the following problems with WISD's kitchen facilities:

- Wharton High School: A small tabletop reach-in refrigerator containing milk products had a hold temperature of 45º Fahrenheit (F); potentially hazardous food is required to be held at a temperature of 41º F or below. Also, the kitchen employees' restrooms lacked hot water at hand-wash sinks.

- Wharton Junior High School: Kitchen employee restrooms lacked hot water at hand-wash sinks, and DSHS found slime in the ice machine.

- Sivells Elementary School: The kitchen had separate hot and cold hand-wash faucets. It was recommended that the large wooden butcher block not be used for food preparation due to very deep cracks, and that it be removed from the kitchen.

- Dawson Elementary School: Mechanical dishwasher was not temperature sanitizing properly; the cafeteria staff was hand sanitizing during the time of the visit.

Kitchen equipment in school district facilities must be up-to-date and operational. Spring ISD has an eight-year Food Service equipment replacement plan for the department's current inventory, projecting the costs for the purchase of capital outlay items.

WISD should develop a plan and budget for replacing district kitchen equipment. The plan should initially focus on replacing inoperable equipment, as well as all rusted and wooden equipment. Additionally, shelving installed in freezers and coolers should be removed to allow for air circulation. The Food Service director and Business manager should review the inventory list of district kitchen equipment and prioritize the items in greatest need of replacement, based on their age. Once the district addresses its greatest needs, it should establish a formal replacement plan for the remaining equipment and present it to the superintendent for approval. The plan should consider the following:

- General statement of need for replacement policy;

- Replacement cycle based upon the average useful life of each major type of equipment;

- Designation of usage levels to identify what exceptions exist for heavily used equipment that will require more rapid replacement;

- Plan for redeployment of older equipment that can be used for a backup system or for replacement parts;

- Established procedure for reviewing replacement policy; and

- Standard specifications for equipment purchases.

The Food Service director and Business manager should work together to review the formal equipment replacement plan, estimating yearly costs, identifying adequate revenue sources to cover these costs, and developing an eight-year equipment replacement plan. They should reevaluate the plan annually to ensure it still meets department needs, and remains tied to the district's long-range facility plan. Once a plan is developed and approved, the district should begin to budget for the kitchen equipment in priority order, as defined in the plan.

STAFF TRAINING (REC. 49)

WISD's training program for kitchen staff is insufficient for program compliance and best operating practices.

WISD does not conduct structured in-service training for Food Service Department employees at any time during the school year. However, the Food Service staff does attend a monthly safety training session provided by the district, and a few Food Service employees attend summer workshops at Region 3. According to the Food Service director, the Food Service staff has one workday in the school year when the staff is not serving meals to students. On this day, the staff works in the kitchens cleaning and receiving groceries.

Requirements by the TDA's ARM and DSHS require training in the following areas: blood borne pathogens, Hazardous Analysis of Critical Control Points (HACCP) plan, sanitation inspections, sexual harassment, and wellness policies. The Food Service staff is required to attend training in all of these areas. The district nursing staff or Personnel and Public Relations Department provides some of the areas of training, such as blood borne pathogens and sexual harassment. According to the director of Personnel and Public Relations, the Food Service Department has not participated in annual training sessions focusing on sexual harassment, blood borne pathogens, and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) regulations. The Food Service director plans to attend training on HACCP and wellness policies.

Without proper training, WISD's Food Service Department staff lacks knowledge in job-specific requirements critical to safely feeding the district's children. This includes how to handle accidents related to blood, training in the proper method and times to check food temperatures, how to reduce or prevent accidents, and what to do if an employee is the target of sexual harassment.

Many districts conduct in-service training at the beginning of the school year before students return to classes. During the in-service days, the districts provide the required training in blood borne pathogens, safety, sanitation, new regulations, and sexual harassment to all staff members. Carrollton-Farmers Branch ISD conducts annual department trainings at the beginning of each school year covering all of these training topics.

WISD should provide the required training in blood borne pathogens, HACCP, sanitation inspections, sexual harassment, and wellness policies to all Food Service Department staff. All department employees should participate in annual sexual harassment, blood borne pathogens, and HIPAA regulations training sessions conducted by the Personnel and Public Relations Department. WISD should conduct the training on the workday currently used for cleaning the kitchens and receiving groceries. In addition, the Food Service director should contact Region 3

to set up training for department employees in HACCP, sanitation inspections, and wellness practices. This will require adding one workday for the 27 Food Service Department employees to attend the training.

Based on the average Food Service employee salary of approximately $50 per day, with benefits of 10 percent or $5, the cost to the district in salaries for the additional workday will be $1,485 ($50 salary + $5 benefits = $55 x 27 employees = $1,485). The cost for Region 3 training is approximately $15 per employee, resulting in training costs to the district of $405 ($15 X 27 employees = $405). Department employees should participate in this training at least every other year to ensure that they are operating their cafeterias with the most current information available. The total cost to the district for this additional training would be $1,890 ($1,485 additional day's salaries + $405 in training costs). The training should begin in 2007–08, and reoccur in 2009–10.

This fiscal impact is based on the assumption that Region 3 will provide on-site training to the WISD Food Service Department staff.

For background information on Chapter 9, Food Services, see page 221 in the General Information section of the Appendices.

FISCAL IMPACT

RECOMMENDATION	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09	2009–10	2010–11	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) OR SAVINGS	ONE- TIME (COSTS) OR SAVINGS
CHAPTER 9: FOOD SERVICES							
44. Use multiple management reports to monitor Food Service program operations daily, weekly, monthly, and annually.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
45. Precost breakfast and lunch menus consistently to better monitor food and nonfood costs.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
46. Allocate interest earnings on the Food Service fund balances to the Food Service program as required by the TDA.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0

FISCAL IMPACT (CONTINUED)

RECOMMENDATION		2006–07	2007–08	2008–09	2009–10	2010–11	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) OR SAVINGS	ONE- TIME (COSTS) OR SAVINGS
47.	Conduct an analysis of the factors affecting student participation in the Food Service program.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
48.	Develop a plan and budget for replacing district kitchen equipment.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
49.	Provide the required training in blood borne pathogens, HACCP, sanitation inspections, sexual harassment, and wellness policies to all Food Service Department staff.	$0	($1,890)	$0	($1,890)	$0	($3,780)	$0
Totals-Chapter 9		**$0**	**($1,890)**	**$0**	**($1,890)**	**$0**	**($3,780)**	**$0**

CHAPTER 10

TRANSPORTATION

WHARTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

CHAPTER 10. TRANSPORTATION

The Wharton Independent School District (WISD) transportation fleet services 186 square miles. A staffing chart for the WISD Transportation Department is shown in **Exhibit 10-1**.

WISD's current Transportation supervisor has held this position since August 2005. Before taking this position, the Transportation supervisor worked in the district's Maintenance Department for one year and, prior to working there, spent eighteen months as a district mechanic. The Transportation supervisor reports to the director of Auxiliary Services, who began in this position with the district in June 2005. Twenty full-time bus drivers, one mechanic, five bus monitors, one part-time bus support employee for cleaning and general maintenance, and forty-four substitute drivers all report to the Transportation supervisor.

In 2004–05, WISD's transportation costs were $642,292 in 2004–05. District buses traveled 238,118 miles for state allowable transportation and WISD received $193,305, or 30.1 percent, of the total transportation costs, from state funds.

FINDINGS

- WISD lacks a written plan to consistently stagger bus replacement, limit bus lifespan, and estimate the salvage value and useful life of buses.

- WISD lacks procedures to ensure that bus routes are designed for maximum efficiency.

- WISD does not follow Texas Education Agency (TEA) requirements for reporting hazardous routes and mileage.

- WISD's informal fleet maintenance recording system prevents the district from generating management reports and providing a schedule for preventive maintenance.

- WISD's two-way communication system does not allow the central office or the Transportation Department to

EXHIBIT 10-1
WISD TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION
2005–06
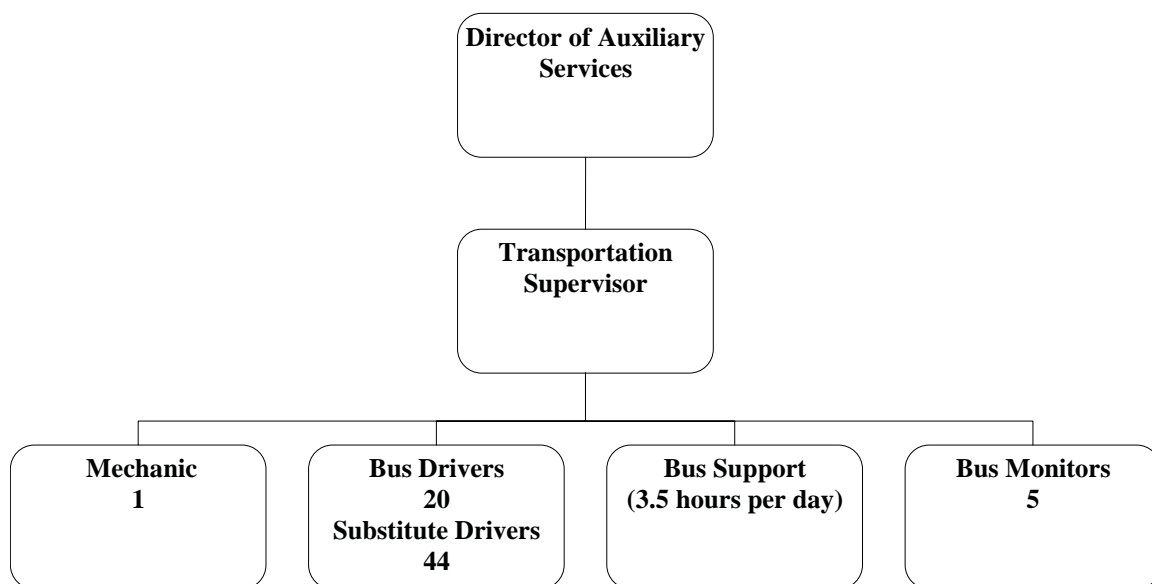
SOURCE: WISD Transportation supervisor, November 2005.

communicate to all drivers at the same time in cases of emergencies.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Recommendation 50: Develop a bus replacement plan providing bus fleet replacement and salvage procedures which promote efficient asset management and safe passage for all WISD students.** The Transportation supervisor should initially compile a fleet status report from the manual maintenance archives, which should include a schedule that projects current fleet depreciable values, useful life, and salvage values. In the plan, the Transportation supervisor should also recommend the number of spare buses that the district should maintain in addition to the buses needed for routes. The Transportation supervisor should work with the Business manager to develop purchasing guidelines that address bus capacity, based on ridership. WISD should consider contacting a bus auction company that provides online auction services for the disposal of buses. This information should be prepared for presentation to and consideration by the director of Auxiliary Services and the superintendent.

- **Recommendation 51: Contract for the performance of a review of all bus routes to determine if the routes are operating at maximum efficiency.** The Transportation supervisor, in collaboration with the director of Auxiliary Services, should develop specifications for a request for proposals for routing evaluations to be conducted during 2006–07. The specifications should include a review of the route design and require that routes be evaluated using routing software. The director of Auxiliary Services should review the specifications, prepare a request for proposal, advertise, and receive proposals. The district should evaluate the proposals and award a vendor contract for routing evaluation services. The evaluation of the routes should include increasing percent of capacity, increasing state funding, and lowering operating costs. After the initial evaluation, the district should implement bus route changes in preparation for the 2007–08 school year and should consider the performance of a route evaluation every five years, or more frequently if enrollment changes dramatically.

- **Recommendation 52: Begin reporting to TEA the mileage of routes within two miles of the school that are designated as hazardous routes by the school**

board. This mileage reporting should separate the two-mile eligible and hazardous mileages. A review of past reports should also be completed to determine if WISD exceeded the 10 percent cap, and thus owes funds to TEA. The district should review its hazardous definitions and update them if necessary.

- **Recommendation 53: Purchase and implement an automated fleet maintenance system.** The Transportation supervisor should work with the director of Auxiliary Services to develop specifications for a request for proposals for an automated system. The specifications should include functions that the district needs the software to perform. The director of Technology should work with the Transportation supervisor to develop these specifications. WISD should make sure the cost of the software includes adequate training and support.

- **Recommendation 54: Install a two-way communication system that includes installed vehicle radios.** The superintendent should contact the city and county to determine if an interlocal agreement could be established allowing the school to use the city or county's radio frequency for a monthly fee. If such an agreement could be established, the superintendent and the city or county should prepare an interlocal agreement to create a radio user group. The director of Auxiliary Services and the Transportation supervisor should prepare a request for proposal for the purchase and installation of radios on buses. After the director of Auxiliary Services and the Transportation supervisor review the proposals, they should make a recommendation to the superintendent. The superintendent should then make a recommendation to the board for the purchase and installation of radios in buses.

DETAILED FINDINGS

BUS REPLACEMENT PLAN (REC. 50)

WISD lacks a written plan to consistently stagger bus replacement, limit bus lifespan, and estimate the salvage value and useful life of buses.

WISD's Transportation supervisor consults with the director of Auxiliary Services and the superintendent annually to determine how many buses need to be both purchased and sold for salvage. During the budget approval process, the superintendent and Business manager present the number of buses for replacement to the board and these are approved in the budget. Decisions regarding the replacement of district

buses are made with no consideration given to either the age or total mileage of the bus(es) to be replaced, or the future budget implications of these large expenditures. The Transportation supervisor stated that the district does not maintain a bus replacement schedule, but does try to purchase two or three buses per year. This decision is not based on any formal method for determining the district's need for additional or replacement buses.

WISD purchased four buses between 1981 and 1989, 15 buses between 1990 and 1995, six buses between 1996 and 1999, and four buses between 2000 and 2006. The large number of 1992 models purchased was due to the district issuing debt through a Capital Acquisition Program that funded the purchase of nine buses. **Exhibit 10-2** shows

WISD's bus fleet as of August 2005. WISD has ten buses under 100,000 miles, 14 buses with between 100,000 and 150,000 miles, and five buses with over 150,000 miles.

Two buses purchased in 2004–05 (2005 and 2006 models) were acquired through the Texas Building and Procurement Commission bidding process. In October 2005, the district ordered two 2007 model 71-passenger buses at a cost of $67,015 each from a purchasing cooperative vendor. These purchases met the legal competitive procurement requirements necessitated by the State of Texas Attorney General's April 1999 Opinion JC-37 which indicates the types of procurement options that are allowable under state law. The buses were received by the district in January 2006. WISD also advertised to sell two buses in October 2005.

EXHIBIT 10-2
WISD BUS FLEET HISTORY
AUGUST 2005

MODEL YEAR	NUMBER PURCHASED BY MODEL YEAR	BUS NUMBER	FUEL TYPE	PASSENGER CAPACITY	MILEAGE AS OF 8/30/2005
1981	1	52	Gasoline	71	138,827
1983	1	19	Gasoline	71	116,133
1984	1	22	Gasoline	65	171,952
1989	1	44	Diesel	65	128,470
1990	2	43	Diesel	71	119,234
		42	Diesel	10	121,213
1991	2	47	Diesel	71	150,840
		48	Diesel	71	130,984
1992	9	41	Diesel	66	192,867
		49	Diesel	71	127,898
		50	Diesel	71	126,779
		53	Diesel	71	163,943
		54	Diesel	71	154,054
		55	Diesel	71	139,248
		56	Diesel	71	145,244
		57	Diesel	71	144,305
		58	Diesel	71	141,081
1995	2	70	Diesel	41	89,877
		73	Diesel	71	89,583
1996	1	66	Diesel	71	80,396
1997	1	67	Diesel	71	102,387
1999	4	71	Diesel	71	71,084
		72	Diesel	71	103,952
		35	Gasoline	21	58,290
		36	Gasoline	21	73,567
2000	1	34	Gasoline	24	54,346
2002	1	75	Diesel	71	71,432
2005	1	74	Diesel	71	20,361
2006	1	59	Diesel	24	4,515

SOURCE: WISD Transportation supervisor, November 2005.

After advertising, sealed bids were received and the district received $502 for one of the buses; the review team did not receive any information on the disposition of the second bus.

Exhibit 10-3 shows that WISD has more buses over 10 years old than its peer districts.

With the changes in the district's bus fleet due to the purchase and sale of buses during 2005–06, WISD currently has 31 buses, 19 of which are used to operate routes. This leaves 12 buses to use as spares for activities and as substitutes when other buses are being repaired.

Based on the industry standard of 15 years useful life for a school bus, 17 of the district's 31 buses are, or will be, due for replacement by 2010–11 **(Exhibit 10-4)**.

As a result of not having a bus replacement plan, WISD is risking large budget expenditures if a number of buses need replacing within a short time, as was the case for the district with the 1992 model purchases. The Board of Trustees and district administrators cannot anticipate future budget impacts without a bus replacement plan, as large purchases such as buses affect any long-range budgeting. Additionally, buses can have an uncertain delivery time, and the time between placing the order and receiving the buses can vary from a few months to a year, based on market conditions. Without a plan in place, the district may not receive the buses in the year it needs them.

The National Association of State Directors for Pupil Transportation Services believes timely replacement of school buses must be a planned process. In the January 2002 report,

EXHIBIT 10-3
WISD AND PEER DISTRICTS
COMPARISON OF AGE OF BUSES
2004–05

	AGE			BUSES	
DISTRICT	**1–5 YEARS**	**6–10 YEARS**	**10 YEARS OR OLDER**	**TOTAL NUMBER**	**PERCENTAGE OLDER THAN 10 YEARS**
Aransas Pass	4	5	6	15	40.0%
Cuero	6	7	12	25	48.0%
Edna	4	4	6	14	42.8%
El Campo	12	14	22	48	45.8%
Wharton	**4**	**8**	**20**	**32***	**62.5%**

*This number does not include the October 2005 sale of one bus.
Source: Texas Education Agency, School Transportation Operations Reports, 2004–05.

EXHIBIT 10-4
WISD BUSES DUE FOR REPLACEMENT
BASED ON 15 YEAR REPLACEMENT SCHEDULE

FISCAL YEAR FOR BUS REPLACEMENT	NUMBER OF BUSES FOR REPLACEMENT	MODEL YEAR	BUS NUMBER	FUEL TYPE	PASSENGER CAPACITY	BUS USAGE IN 2005–06	MILES TRAVELED 2004–05	MILEAGE AS OF 8/30/2005
2006–07	4	1984	22	Gasoline	71	Spare	125	171,952
		1989	44	Diesel	65	Regular Route	6,432	128,470
		1990	43	Diesel	71	In-town Shuttle	5,529	119,234
		1990	42	Diesel	10	Special Needs	921	121,213
2007–08	2	1991	47	Diesel	71	Regular Route	10,179	150,840
		1991	48	Diesel	71	In-town Shuttle	7,104	130,984
2008–09	9	1992	41	Diesel	66	Spare	8,313	192,867
			49	Diesel	71	Regular Route	10,127	127,898
			50	Diesel	71	Regular Route	8,363	126,779
			53	Diesel	71	Spare	10,184	163,943
			54	Diesel	71	Regular Route	10,451	154,054
			55	Diesel	71	Spare	10,599	139,248
			56	Diesel	71	Regular Route	10,897	145,244
			57	Diesel	71	Spare	8,392	144,305
			58	Diesel	71	Regular Route	10,441	141,081
2010–2011	2	1995	70	Diesel	41	Spare	6,107	89,877
			73	Diesel	71	In-town Shuttle	3,732	89,583
Total	**17**							

Source: WISD secretary to the director of Auxiliary Services, November 2005.

School Bus Replacement Considerations, it states that several factors (safety, efficiency, environmental, maintenance, and operating conditions) are involved in determining a bus replacement plan. Other factors that districts must consider are funding, federal standards, and cost/benefit analysis. This report suggests 12 to 15 years, or a 250,000-mile cycle, as an adequate timeline for bus useful life.

The Transportation supervisor should develop a bus replacement plan providing bus fleet replacement and salvage procedures which promote efficient asset management and safe passage for all WISD students. This would impact safety, asset management, and operational efficiency, and is critical for the district budget planning process. The Transportation supervisor should initially compile a fleet status report from the manual maintenance archives, which should include a schedule that projects current fleet depreciable values, useful life, and salvage values.

In the plan, the Transportation supervisor should also recommend the number of spare buses the district should maintain in addition to the buses needed for routes. The Transportation supervisor should work with the Business manager to develop purchasing guidelines that address bus capacity, based on ridership. WISD should consider contacting a bus auction company that provides online auction services for the disposal of buses. This information

should be prepared for presentation to and consideration by the director of Auxiliary Services and the superintendent.

The disposal of school buses that do not meet the latest standards or have reached the end of their life cycle is a priority the district must plan for within a realistic number of years. Using the fleet status report, WISD should develop a draft bus replacement schedule that staggers bus replacement for budgeting purposes. Through this action, WISD can avoid risking unexpected budget expenditures in the event a number of buses need replacing at one time.

ROUTE EFFICIENCY (REC. 51)

WISD lacks procedures to ensure that bus routes are designed for maximum efficiency.

WISD designs its bus routes manually, not adjusting routes as enrollment or residence fluctuates. The district operates 19 bus routes daily: 16 regular transportation and three special services routes (**Exhibit 10-5**). According to the Transportation supervisor, the district's bus routes have not changed in many years, and route efficiency is determined solely through bus drivers' knowledge of the routes.

Exhibit 10-6 shows all of the regular bus routes in WISD, and the number of students transported each day compared to bus capacity. Seven of the 16 regular routes operate at less than 70 percent of capacity. All routes are single routes except

EXHIBIT 10-5
WISD BUS ROUTES FOR ELIGIBLE REGULAR PUPILS (TWO OR MORE MILES)
2004–05

BUS NUMBER	ROUTE NUMBER	TOTAL DAILY MILES	AVERAGE DAILY RIDERSHIP	DESCRIPTION
48	25	22.4	36	In-town Shuttle
75	30	68.0	69	Two-Mile Eligible
54	31	58.0	41	Two-Mile Eligible
47	39	56.0	46	Two-Mile Eligible
56	40	59.4	51	Two-Mile Eligible
45	41	47.0	26	Two-Mile Eligible
58	42	57.8	77	Two-Mile Eligible
73	43	25.2	79	In-Town Shuttle
66	44	49.2	65	Two-Mile Eligible
50	45	45.6	82	Two-Mile Eligible
74	46	90.8	37	Two-Mile Eligible
46	47A	63.0	33	Two-Mile Eligible
44	47B	29.4	19	Two-Mile Eligible
71	63	54.6	35	Two-Mile Eligible
49	69	63.8	54	Two-Mile Eligible
43	70	31.2	56	In-Town Shuttle
59	71	47.6	9	Special Route
36	72	23.6	8	Special Route
34	75	55.2	5	Special Route

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency Transportation Route Services Report, 2004–05.

EXHIBIT 10-6
WISD BUS CAPACITY VERSUS RIDERSHIP
2004–05

ROUTE NUMBER	RIDERS PER ROUTE (WITHOUT HAZARDOUS)	RIDERS PER ROUTE (INCLUDES HAZARDOUS)	CAPACITY OF ASSIGNED BUS	PERCENT OF CAPACITY
25	36	70	71	98.6%*
30	69	70	71	98.6%
31	41	44	71	62.0%
39	46	49	71	69.0%
40	51	54	71	76.1%
41	26	26	71	36.6%
42	77	78	71	109.9%
43	79	83	66	125.8%*
44	65	67	71	94.4%
45	82	82	71	115.5%
46	37	37	71	52.1%
47A	33	34	71	47.9%
47B	19	35	71	49.3%
63	35	36	71	50.7%
69	54	54	71	76.1%
70	56	117	71	164.8%*

*Designates in-town shuttles that double route.
SOURCE: WISD Transportation Department records and Texas Education Agency Transportation Route Services Report, 2004–05.

for three in-town shuttles that double route (performing two separate routes consecutively, one after the other) to segregate elementary and secondary students.

Linear density is the ratio of the average number of regular program students transported daily to the number of miles driven daily. Higher linear density receives higher per mile reimbursement from the state and vice versa. Buses operating below capacity or traveling greater distances to pick up a small number of students adversely affects linear density. Districts must balance maximizing linear density with travel times for students; increased bus travel time for students is the trade-off for increased capacity. To maintain a higher linear density, school districts try maintaining ridership at approximately 75–80 percent of capacity.

TEA bases state transportation funding to school districts on the calculation of linear density for the regular home-to-school program. The district is assigned one of seven unique linear density ratios and corresponding reimbursement rates. **Exhibit 10-7** shows the categories of linear density and the related reimbursement, as defined by Texas Education Code (TEC) §42.155.

Exhibit 10-8 shows WISD's riders per mile for 2004–05.

WISD's linear density has varied from a high of 0.984 in 2000–01, to a low of 0.849 in 2003–04 **(Exhibit 10-9)**. The

EXHIBIT 10-7
STATE LINEAR DENSITY REIMBURSEMENT CATEGORIES
FOR REGULAR BUS ROUTES
2004–05

CATEGORY	LINEAR DENSITY RANGE	REIMBURSEMENT PER MILE
1	.000–.399	$0.68
2	.400–.649	$0.79
3	.650–.899	$0.88
4	.900–1.149	$0.97
5	1.150–1.649	$1.11
6	1.650–2.399	$1.25
7	2.400 or above	$1.43

SOURCE: Texas Education Code §42.155.

district's reimbursement per mile has been either $0.88 or $0.97 during this time.

WISD has the second highest linear density rate and reimbursement per mile for 2004–05 compared to its peer districts **(Exhibit 10-10)**, and the second lowest cost-per-rider **(Exhibit 10-11)**.

From 1999–2000 through 2004–05, WISD's reimbursement per mile **(Exhibit 10-12)** declined from TEC category five at $1.11 per mile in 1999–2000, to category four at $0.97 per mile from 2000–01 through 2003–04, to the current category three at $0.88 per mile.

EXHIBIT 10-8
WISD BUS SERVICE FOR ELIGIBLE REGULAR PUPILS
(TWO OR MORE MILES)
2004–05

ROUTE NUMBER	TOTAL DAILY MILES	AVERAGE DAILY RIDERSHIP	RIDERS PER MILE
25	22.4	36	1.61
30	68.0	69	1.01
31	58.0	41	0.71
39	56.0	46	0.82
40	59.4	51	0.86
41	47.0	26	0.55
42	57.8	77	1.33
43	25.2	79	3.13
44	49.2	65	1.32
45	45.6	82	1.80
46	90.8	37	0.41
47A	63.0	33	0.52
47B	29.4	19	0.65
63	54.6	35	0.64
69	63.8	54	0.85
70	31.2	56	1.79

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency Transportation Route Services Report, 2004–05.

EXHIBIT 10-9
WISD LINEAR DENSITY
2000–01 THROUGH 2004–05

YEAR	LINEAR DENSITY	REIMBURSEMENT PER MILE
2004–05	0.980	$0.88
2003–04	0.849	$0.97
2002–03	0.905	$0.97
2001–02	0.969	$0.97
2000–01	0.984	$0.97

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency Transportation Route Services Report, 2000–01 through 2004–05.

As a result of operating at a lower linear density rate since 1999–2000, WISD's state reimbursement per mile has decreased, costs of service per mile and per rider have increased, and more local funds are required to provide transportation.

Many school districts hire independent contractors to review their bus routes on a regular basis to determine if inefficiencies exist, and if savings opportunities are available. The Round Rock ISD (RRISD) Transportation Department performs

routing analysis and scheduling for 25 districts in Texas, charging $100 per bus for the service. The RRISD Transportation director said that this analysis can usually find five percent savings in any district for which RRISD provides routing and scheduling services. In one recent study of a school district, the routing analysis identified routes that would reduce the number of regular buses from 24 to 16, a 33 percent reduction.

WISD should contract for the performance of a review of all bus routes to determine if the routes are operating at maximum efficiency. The Transportation supervisor, in collaboration with the director of Auxiliary Services, should develop specifications for a request for proposals for routing evaluations to be conducted during 2006–07. The specifications should include a review of the route design and require that routes be evaluated using routing software. The director of Auxiliary Services should review the specifications, prepare a request for proposal, advertise, and receive proposals. The district should evaluate the proposals and award a vendor contract for routing evaluation services. The evaluation of the routes should include increasing percent of capacity, increasing state funding, and lowering operating costs. After the initial evaluation, the district should implement bus route changes in preparation for the 2007–08 school year and should consider the performance of a route evaluation every five years, or more frequently if enrollment changes dramatically.

The one-time cost to the district for the bus route review would be approximately $4,000. Districts have shown a 7 to 15 percent reduction in the number of routes when routes are analyzed for efficiency using routing software. WISD operated 150,602 regular program miles during 2004–05, at a cost of $2.32 per mile. Using an estimate of a 7 percent reduction in operating miles, by fully implementing routing changes for efficiency beginning with the 2007–08 school year, WISD could save $24,458 a year for regular program transportation (150,602 miles x $2.32 cost per mile x 7 percent = $24,458). In addition to the operating costs, a reduction in routes could delay the need to purchase new buses to replace some of the older buses used on regular routes.

TEA REPORTING OF HAZARDOUS ROUTES (REC. 52)

WISD does not follow TEA requirements for reporting hazardous routes and mileage.

TEA defines regular route transportation as the transportation of students living over two miles from their school. The

EXHIBIT 10-10
WISD AND PEER DISTRICTS
LINEAR DENSITY AND STATE ALLOTMENT
2004–05

SCHOOL DISTRICT	LINEAR DENSITY	REIMBURSEMENT PER MILE	TOTAL STATE ALLOTMENT	TOTAL TRANSPORTATION COST	PERCENT OF OPERATING COSTS RECEIVED FROM STATE
Aransas Pass	1.125	$1.43	$124,806	$336,252	37.1%
Cuero	0.4795	$0.79	$144,144	$634,769	22.7%
Edna	0.0487	$0.79	$80,842	$333,886	24.2%
El Campo	0.0428	$0.79	$261,876	$1,408,778	18.6%
Wharton	**0.98**	**$0.88**	**$193,305**	**$642,292**	**30.1%**

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency School Transportation Route Services and Operations Reports, 2004–05.

EXHIBIT 10-11
WISD AND PEER DISTRICTS
COMPARISON OF COST PER RIDER (TWO OR MORE MILE SERVICE)
2004–05

SCHOOL DISTRICT	TOTAL ANNUAL OPERATING COSTS	ANNUAL RIDERSHIP	COST-PER-RIDER PER DAY
Aransas Pass	$336,252	94,860	$3.54
Cuero	$634,769	83,520	$7.60
Edna	$333,886	49,860	$6.70
El Campo	$1,408,778	141,120	$9.98
Wharton	**$642,292**	**145,080**	**$4.43**

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency School Transportation Operations Reports and Route Services Reports, November 2005.

EXHIBIT 10-12
WISD TRANSPORTATION REIMBURSEMENT RATE
1999–2000 THROUGH 2004–05

YEAR	REIMBURSEMENT PER MILE
2004–05	$0.88
2003–04	$0.97
2002–03	$0.97
2001–02	$0.97
2000–01	$0.97
1999–2000	$1.11

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency School Transportation Operations Reports, 1999–2000 through 2004–05.

agency defines hazardous route transportation as the transportation of students living within two miles of the school, but the school board has declared walking conditions within this two-mile radius hazardous. TEC §42.155(d) allows districts to provide to the Commissioner of Education the definition of hazardous conditions applicable to the district and to identify specific hazardous areas. Although this allows the district to define the term "hazardous," TEA guidelines suggest areas having few or no sidewalks, busy

roadways, or railroad tracks qualify as hazardous. Route mileage reports to TEA must identify hazardous miles separately from regular route mileage.

Under TEA funding, the costs of school transportation are calculated on a per route mile basis. State reimbursement of travel costs uses the district's linear density as a basis and only applies to the costs of transporting students who live further than two miles from the school. Reimbursement eligibility for riders living with the two-mile radius is dependent upon the board declaring the walking conditions as hazardous. Districts can receive a maximum of 10 percent of the total reimbursement for regular education transportation for busing students who live less than two miles from their school when the route to school poses a safety risk, or hazard, to the students.

Since 2001–02, WISD has filed transportation reports without reporting hazardous miles separately on its TEA Route Services Report. In 1999–2000 and 2000–01, WISD reported 3,060 hazardous miles each year. From 2001–02 through 2004–05, although WISD reported students riding on hazardous routes, it reported no hazardous miles and, instead, recorded all miles as two-mile eligible.

Exhibit 10-13 shows a comparison of hazardous routes between WISD and its peer districts. WISD has the third highest ridership in this category yet it is claiming no miles.

EXHIBIT 10-13
WISD AND PEER DISTRICTS
COMPARISON OF HAZARDOUS ROUTES
2004–05

SCHOOL DISTRICT	HAZARDOUS ANNUAL MILEAGE	HAZARDOUS DAILY RIDERSHIP
Aransas Pass	2,988	87
Cuero	8,293	163
Edna	0	0
El Campo	2,304	1,021
Wharton	0	130

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency School Transportation Route Services Report, 2004–05.

The result of consolidating hazardous and regular route miles in the bus route report for services over two miles could mean that WISD is receiving more reimbursement from TEA than it should. If WISD has received excess funds due to this misreporting of information, the district may have to refund the excess received back to TEA.

The Transportation supervisor should begin reporting to TEA the mileage of routes within two miles of the school that are designated as hazardous routes by the school board. This mileage reporting should separate the two-mile eligible and hazardous mileages. A review of past reports should also be completed to determine if WISD exceeded the 10 percent cap, and thus owes funds to TEA. The district should review its hazardous definitions and update them if necessary. The Transportation supervisor and the secretary to the director of Auxiliary Services should review the TEA instructions for this mileage reporting and call the agency with any questions before completing the report.

FLEET MAINTENANCE RECORDS (REC. 53)

WISD's informal fleet maintenance recording system prevents the district from generating management reports and providing a schedule for preventive maintenance.

The review team analyzed fleet maintenance records for tracking and scheduling preventive maintenance of the transportation vehicles. Although an informal system was in place, information was not readily available in easy-to-access reports. The work order system is a manual system requiring employees to record information on paper, transfer it to a

ledger in a notebook, and enter the records into a spreadsheet. The district financial system compiles all tracking of inventory and warranties. The Maintenance Department completes the fuel usage and inventory manually, which is recorded a second time by the secretary to the director of Auxiliary Services.

Each day bus drivers complete a Pre-Trip Inspection Report, turning it in at the end of the day unless the bus needs repairs. If a bus requires repairs, the driver submits the report immediately. The Pre-Trip Inspection Report lists the major items that might need repairs such as brakes, lights, tires, horn, windshield wipers, exhaust pipes, fire extinguishers, and steering mechanisms. The driver checks if each item is okay or if it needs attention. The driver then signs the form stating that they have inspected the items listed. If the bus requires attention, the driver describes the problem on the form. The mechanic and Transportation supervisor review the forms daily and repair the problems. The report includes a section for the mechanic to enter the date on which the repairs took place. The Pre-Trip Inspection Report is then given to the Transportation supervisor for inclusion with maintenance records.

The Transportation supervisor keeps all vehicle maintenance records in a single notebook, containing a record of each vehicle, all work completed on each vehicle, and the date completed. In addition to the work completed on the vehicle, the log also includes a list of parts used on it. The Transportation supervisor maintains copies of invoices to use in tracking warranty information. The Transportation supervisor writes the bus numbers on the invoices for bus parts before sending them to the secretary to the director of Auxiliary Services for entry into the district's accounting system. The invoices are entered into the district financial accounting system detailing the bus number for the item purchased to allow the supervisor to find purchase dates of parts. The department keeps a very limited number of parts in inventory. Parts are ordered on an as needed basis, and delivered by a vendor or picked up by department employees. The Transportation supervisor is currently in the process of using invoices and notes found in the department to update information relating to bus maintenance performed before he began in his position in August 2005.

The Transportation Department keeps the preventive maintenance schedule for district buses on a chalkboard and updates it as maintenance occurs. The information on the board includes the bus number, odometer reading for the last service, odometer reading for the next service needed for oil

and air filter changes; transmission, brake, and rear end fluid changes; and inspections. The mechanic or supervisor can look at the board daily, compare the bus odometer readings with the odometer reading for the next service needed, and know when to perform maintenance. The Transportation supervisor transfer this information from the board into a manual ledger for each bus, and began recording this same information on a computer spreadsheet in October 2005.

The Transportation supervisor and the mechanic fuel buses and transportation vehicles, and a Maintenance Department employee is responsible for fueling maintenance vehicles. All fuel is recorded in a log, which is then sent to the secretary to the director of Auxiliary Services. The secretary records the fuel information to calculate the gas and diesel gallons used each month. Fuel is purchased on an as needed basis from the lowest priced, approved vendors after the district receives quotes for each purchase. The quotes are sent to the secretary to the director of Auxiliary Services and the requisition is entered into the district's requisition system.

Without sufficient information showing repairs, it is difficult to identify maintenance costs per bus as the vehicle approaches its use life (15 years). As a result, district administrators are unable to make an informed decision about when it is more cost effective to purchase a new bus or repair the older bus. While the district does work diligently to track bus maintenance, with no formal system in place, the potential for unintended negligence is possible and could present automotive problems, such as overdue oil changes, which could cause damage to buses that would be time and cost intensive to address. Proper documentation ensures that the district makes the best decision when considering whether to repair or replace buses.

The Frisco ISD (FISD) Transportation Department uses an automated software program to track fuel usage, preventive maintenance, tire usage, parts inventory control, warranties, labor costs, and for work order creation. The software also generates management reports that allow FISD to measure and monitor different performance measures to determine if changes are needed in department operations.

In addition to tracking and scheduling preventive maintenance, an effective automated fleet maintenance program can be used to:
- maintain records of work orders;
- maintain information needed for annual transportation reports;
- track parts inventories and vendor history;

- track warranties;
- track fuel usage and fuel inventory;
- track cost-per-mile;
- maintain personnel records; and
- generate management reports, which allow districts to measure and monitor different performance measures to determine if department operations need changes.

WISD should purchase and implement an automated fleet maintenance system. The Transportation supervisor should work with the director of Auxiliary Services to develop specifications for a request for proposals for an automated system. The specifications should include functions that the district needs the software to perform. The director of Technology should work with the Transportation supervisor to develop these specifications. WISD should make sure the cost of the software includes adequate training and support. The district should purchase the software in 2006–07.

The one-time cost of fleet maintenance software with a single-user license is $1,995, with $25 shipping and handling fees for a total of $2,020 ($1,995 + $25), which includes one year of software maintenance and support. The annual maintenance and support fee for successive years is $700.

TRANSPORTATION COMMUNICATION (REC. 54)

WISD's two-way communication system does not allow the central office or the Transportation Department to communicate to all drivers at the same time in cases of emergencies.

Transportation Code subsection (a) and (b), §545.424, as amended on September 1, 2005, requires that a person may not use a cell device while operating a passenger bus with a minor passenger on the bus except in case of emergency or if the passenger bus is not in motion.

The Transportation Department uses cell phones from two separate vendors. These accounts contain multiple phones, some of which are used by staff in other departments. The accounts are each set up on a month-to-month basis with one account charging on a per minute basis and the other charging a set monthly fee per phone.

WISD issues cell phones to bus drivers for transportation communication, but Transportation handbook procedures do not allow bus drivers to answer cell phones while driving the bus. Therefore, the driver must stop the bus before answering the cell phone, requiring the driver to find a safe

place to pull over and stopping the bus before answering the call. Additionally, drivers must reimburse WISD for any personal calls made on district cell phones.

The Transportation Department has five cell phones that include two-way communication or walkie-talkie capabilities. The Transportation supervisor, mechanic, and three bus drivers have the walkie-talkie cell phones; the remaining 17 bus drivers are issued cell phones that do not have two-way communication functionality. Once buses are in route transporting students, the Transportation supervisor has no way to contact all drivers quickly to tell them of weather emergencies, traffic or road conditions, or student emergencies. The Transportation supervisor must call each driver individually, leave a message and wait for the driver to return the call.

With regular cell phones, the district does not have the capability to communicate with all bus drivers at the same time in an emergency. Driver notification in emergencies can occur with cell phones, but not in a timely manner. WISD must also monitor personal cell phone usage to ensure that all personal calls are reimbursed by the drivers.

Without continuous, effective communication between the Transportation Department and all buses, unforeseen hazards may not be communicated effectively, problems with a bus may not be communicated quickly, and emergencies involving one or more buses may not be transmitted to all available personnel for assistance. All of these situations decrease overall bus operation safety.

Bastrop ISD (BISD) has an interlocal agreement with the county to provide radio communication for transportation and maintenance. The district pays a monthly fee per radio to the county. As a condition of the interlocal agreement, the county agreed to monitor radio communications of the transportation department and to respond to radio requests for assistance by BISD bus drivers.

A two-way radio communication system with various channels the entire district can use significantly enhances the effectiveness of communication between buses and other pertinent district personnel. Increased communication from buses to campus, coupled with close system use monitoring, increases operations efficiency as well. Two-way communication allows bus drivers to convey important information discovered on the bus route to all drivers, such as:

- changes in weather;
- unexpected road work;
- accidents;
- injury to, or incapacity of, the driver;
- student discipline problems; and
- vehicle breakdowns.

The district should install a two-way communication system that includes installed vehicle radios. The superintendent should contact the city and county to determine if an interlocal agreement could be established allowing the school to use the city or county's radio frequency for a monthly fee. If such an agreement could be established, the superintendent and the city or county should prepare an interlocal agreement to create a radio user group. The director of Auxiliary Services and the Transportation supervisor should prepare a request for proposal for the purchase and installation of radios on buses. After the director of Auxiliary Services and the Transportation supervisor review the proposals, they should make a recommendation to the superintendent. The superintendent should then make a recommendation to the board for the purchase and installation of radios in buses.

A one-time cost of $42,940 would be necessary for the purchase and installation of radios on 31 buses, and radios for the Transportation supervisor, mechanic, and director of Auxiliary Services. ($1,160 per radio installed x 34 installations = $39,440 + a base station for $3,500). The estimated monthly user fee is $12.50 a month; and for 34 radios, the total annual user fee would be $5,100 ($12.50 x 34 radios x 12 months). For 2006–07, the annual cost would be prorated for 8 months to begin in January 2007 until the close of the school fiscal year in August 2007, for a cost of $3,400 ($12.50 x 34 radios x 8 months). This gives the district enough time to purchase the radios and establish the interlocal agreement.

By transitioning to a two-way radio system, the Transportation Department will no longer require the use of the cell phones it currently uses. Savings from discontinuing use of these phones is calculated by adding the cost of these phones during both the school year and summer months together. The average monthly cost to WISD for cell phones during the school year is $200, and during the summer months of June and July it is $155. For 2006–07 the fiscal impact will be prorated for 8 months to begin in January 2007 to coincide with the radio purchase and installation. This will provide savings of $1,510 for 2006–07 [($155 average cost for cell phones in summer months x 2 months) + ($200 average cost for cell phones in months when school is in session x 6 months)] and, for subsequent years, an annual savings of

$2,310 [($155 average cost for cell phones in summer months x 2 months) + ($200 average cost for cell phones in months when school is in session x 10 months)].

For 2006–07, the cost to the district for implementing this recommendation is $1,890 ($3,400 for the addition of the radios - $1,510 for the elimination of the cell phones). For 2007–08 through 2010–11, the annual cost to the district is

$2,790 ($5,100 annual user fee for radios - $2,310 for the elimination of the cell phones).

For background information on Chapter 10, Transportation, see page 222 in the General Information section of the Appendices.

FISCAL IMPACT

RECOMMENDATION		2006–07	2007–08	2008–09	2009–10	2010–11	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) SAVINGS	ONE- TIME (COSTS) SAVINGS
CHAPTER 10: TRANSPORTATION								
50.	Develop a bus replacement plan providing bus fleet replacement and salvage procedures which promote efficient asset management and safe passage for all WISD students.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
51.	Contract for the performance of a review of all bus routes to determine if the routes are operating at maximum efficiency.	$0	$24,458	$24,458	$24,458	$24,458	$97,832	($4,000)
52.	Begin reporting to TEA the mileage of routes within two miles of the school that are designated as hazardous routes by the school board.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
53.	Purchase and implement an automated fleet maintenance system.	$0	($700)	($700)	($700)	($700)	($2,800)	($2,020)
54.	Install a two-way communication system that includes installed vehicle radios.	($1,890)	($2,790)	($2,790)	($2,790)	($2,790)	($13,050)	($42,940)
Totals-Chapter 10		**($1,890)**	**$20,968**	**$20,968**	**$20,968**	**$20,968**	**$81,982**	**($48,960)**

APPENDICES

WHARTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

GENERAL INFORMATION

CHAPTER 1
EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND SAFETY/SECURITY OPERATIONS

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) provides information on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), student demographics, staffing, and financial data to school districts and the public through the Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) and the Public Information Management System (PEIMS). Both systems are used to provide detailed information pertaining to the Wharton Independent School District (WISD).

Four Texas school districts were selected by the Legislative Budget Board to serve as "peer districts" for comparison purposes to WISD. The peer districts selected were: Cuero ISD, Edna ISD, Aransas Pass ISD (APISD), and El Campo ISD.

Exhibit A-1 compares WISD's 2005–06 enrollment, student ethnicity, and the percent of economically disadvantaged

students in WISD with Regional Education Service Center III (Region 3), and the state. WISD's African American student population is double that of the state's, and almost three times that of the region's. All other student populations in WISD are below region and state averages, while the level of economically disadvantaged students is nearly 15 percent above the state average, and 12 percent above the regional average.

Compared to its peer districts, WISD is in the middle in percentage of Hispanic students, has the highest percentage of African American students, and has the lowest percentage of Anglo students. WISD's percentage of economically disadvantaged students was the second highest, trailing only APISD.

From 2001–02 through 2005–06, WISD's student population declined by 8.1 percent (**Exhibit A-2**). This rate of decline was above the regional student population average, which declined by 2.6 percent, and the state average, which grew by 8.7 percent.

EXHIBIT A-1
WISD, PEER DISTRICTS, REGION 3, AND THE STATE
STUDENT ENROLLMENT, ETHNICITY, AND ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED
2005–06

ENTITY	ENROLLMENT	AFRICAN AMERICAN	HISPANIC	NATIVE AMERICAN	ASIAN/ PACIFIC	ANGLO	ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED
Aransas Pass	2,168	5.9%	47.0%	0.5%	1.1%	45.6%	69.6%
Cuero	1,981	14.8%	36.6%	0.1%	0.2%	48.3%	55.4%
Edna	1,472	15.6%	35.8%	0.1%	0.1%	48.3%	53.3%
El Campo	3,465	14.3%	51.9%	0.0%	0.2%	33.6%	62.8%
Wharton	**2,398**	**30.3%**	**42.4%**	**0.2%**	**1.1%**	**25.9%**	**69.4%**
Region 3	**53,885**	**11.1%**	**46.3%**	**0.2%**	**1.2%**	**41.2%**	**57.2%**
State	**4,521,043**	**14.7%**	**45.3%**	**0.3%**	**3.1%**	**36.5%**	**54.5%**

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS), 2005–06.

EXHIBIT A-2
WISD, REGION 3, AND THE STATE
STUDENT ENROLLMENT GROWTH
2001–02 THROUGH 2005–06

ENTITY	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06	PERCENTAGE CHANGE
Wharton	2,608	2,546	2,510	2,487	2,398	(8.1%)
Region 3	55,310	55,207	54,989	54,419	53,885	(2.6%)
State	4,160,968	4,255,821	4,328,028	4,400,644	4,521,043	8.7%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS, 2001–02 through 2005–06.

Beyond the composition of the students by ethnicity, there are several other valuable comparative indicators: income-related (for example economically disadvantaged), noncollege bound or Career and Technology Education (CTE), and special populations such as Gifted and Talented (G/T) education, English Language Learners (ELL), Bilingual/English as a Second Language (ESL), and special education.

WISD is above the regional average and below the state average of ELL students as a percentage of total student population for 2004–05. WISD experienced an increase of over 2 percent from 1999–2000 to 2004–05 (**Exhibit A-3**).

EXHIBIT A-3
WISD, REGION 3, AND THE STATE
ELL STUDENTS AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL STUDENT POPULATION
1999–2000 AND 2004–05

ENTITY	1999–2000	2004–05
Wharton	4.1%	6.8%
Region 3	5.0%	5.1%
State	13.9%	15.6%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS), 1999–2000 and 2004–05.

Among the other special student populations, the percentages of WISD students as a percentage of total enrollment are above the state and regional averages in G/T education, above the state average and below the regional average in special education, above the regional and state averages in CTE, and above the regional average, but below the state average in Bilingual/ESL education (**Exhibit A-4**).

Exhibit A-5 shows the 2004 graduation rates for WISD, peer districts, the region, and the state. With a 96 percent graduation rate, WISD exceeds the graduation rates for the region and state. The percent of African American, Hispanic,

EXHIBIT A-4
WISD, REGION 3, AND THE STATE
STUDENTS IN SPECIAL PROGRAMS AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL ENROLLMENT
2004–05

PROGRAM	WISD	REGION 3	STATE
Bilingual/ESL education	6.5%	4.6%	14.4%
CTE	24.0%	23.7%	20.3%
G/T education	8.1%	7.1%	7.7%
Special education	12.3%	13.0%	11.6%

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

EXHIBIT A-5
WISD, PEER DISTRICTS, REGION 3, AND THE STATE
GRADUATION RATES
CLASS OF 2004

ENTITY	ALL STUDENTS	AFRICAN AMERICAN	HISPANIC	ANGLO
Aransas Pass	86.6%	*	90.4%	83.8%
Cuero	87.9%	55%	84.4%	94.7%
Edna	91.7%	81.8%	90.6%	93.8%
El Campo	94.1%	92%	92.1%	96.1%
Wharton	**96.0%**	**100%**	**91.7%**	**95.0%**
Region 3	**89.9%**	**88.7%**	**84.9%**	**93.4%**
State	**84.6%**	**82.8%**	**78.4%**	**89.4%**

*Numbers less than five have not been cited due to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) 34CFR Part 99.1 and Texas Education Agency procedures OP 10-03.
SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2004–05.

and Anglo students that graduated in 2004 is also higher than the state and region rate for all students.

Exhibit A-6 shows the percentage of students in WISD, peer districts, the region, and the state who participated in Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT)/American College Test (ACT) testing. While graduation rates remain high in WISD, the participation levels of WISD students taking the SAT/ACT are lower than several peer districts, as well as the region and the state. Compared to its peer districts, WISD's percentage of students participating in SAT/ACT testing was the lowest in 2002–03, and the second lowest in 2003–04.

Exhibit A-7 shows the percentage of students in WISD, peer districts, the region, and the state who scored at or above the

EXHIBIT A-6
WISD, PEER DISTRICTS, REGION 3, AND THE STATE
PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS TESTED ON THE SAT/ACT
2002–03 AND 2003–04

ENTITY	PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS TAKING THE SAT AND ACT	
	2002–03	2003–04
Aransas Pass	51.1%	34.0%
Cuero	57.4%	57.3%
Edna	61.3%	56.7%
El Campo	57.0%	59.6%
Wharton	**49.4%**	**49.6%**
Region 3	**53.3%**	**52.6%**
State	**62.4%**	**61.9%**

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

EXHIBIT A-7
WISD, PEER DISTRICTS, REGION 3, AND THE STATE
PERCENT OF STUDENTS AT OR ABOVE CRITERION ON THE
SAT/ACT
2002–03 AND 2003–04

ENTITY	PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS AT OR ABOVE THE CRITERION ON THE SAT AND ACT	
	2002–03	2003–04
Aransas Pass	6.4%	23.5%
Cuero	24.7%	28.0%
Edna	14.0%	20.0%
El Campo	22.1%	18.4%
Wharton	**19.0%**	**22.1%**
Region 3	**20.8%**	**22.4%**
State	**27.2%**	**27.0%**

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

criterion (1110 on the SAT and 24 on the ACT), on the SAT/ACT in 2002–03 and 2003–04. In both years, the district's percentage of students scoring at or above the criterion was lower than the region and state averages. Compared with its peer districts, WISD's percentage of students at or above criteria in SAT/ACT testing was third highest in both 2002–03 and 2003–04.

The overall educational service delivery system can be evaluated by looking at several variables, such as how a district divides its funds among programs, the allocation of teaching positions among types of educational programs, and class size.

WISD budgeted $16,844,222 for total district expenditures in 2004–05. Of that total, $8,782,703, or 52.1 percent, was budgeted for direct classroom instruction and other activities that enhance or direct the delivery of learning to students (**Exhibit A-8**). The state average for classroom teaching expenditures was 50 percent.

EXHIBIT A-8
WISD AND THE STATE
BUDGETED CLASSROOM TEACHING EXPENDITURES AS A
PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL EXPENDITURES, ALL FUNDS
2004–05

ENTITY	CLASSROOM TEACHING EXPENDITURES	TOTAL EXPENDITURES	CLASSROOM TEACHING EXPENDITURES AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL EXPENDITURES
Wharton	$8,782,703	$16,844,222	52.1%
State	$16,118,450,371	$32,258,126,258	50.0%

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

From 1999–2000 through 2004–05, the student-teacher ratio in WISD decreased 1.4 percent to 13.9 students per teacher (**Exhibit A-9**). This ratio is lower than the state average and slightly above the regional average.

EXHIBIT A-9
WISD, REGION 3, AND THE STATE
STUDENT-TEACHER RATIO
1999–2000 AND 2004–05

ENTITY	1999–2000	2004–05	PERCENTAGE CHANGE
Wharton	14.1	13.9	(1.4%)
Region 3	13.7	13.6	(0.7%)
State	14.9	14.9	0.0%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 1999–2000 and 2004–05.

From 1999–2000 through 2004–05, WISD elementary class sizes stayed approximately the same (**Exhibit A-10**). In 2004–05, WISD's elementary class size range was approximately the same size as the state and regional averages.

EXHIBIT A-10
WISD, REGION 3, AND THE STATE
AVERAGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CLASS SIZE
1999–2000 AND 2004–05

ENTITY	1999–2000	2004–05
Wharton	17.1-19.7	17.2-20.5
Region 3	17.1-20.4	17.2-19.1
State	18.4-23.6	18.7-22.3

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 1999—2000 and 2004–05.

From 1999–2000 through 2004–05, average WISD secondary class sizes decreased in all subjects except mathematics (**Exhibit A-11**).

EXHIBIT A-11
WISD
AVERAGE SECONDARY SCHOOL CLASS SIZE
1999–2000 AND 2004–05

SUBJECT	1999–2000	2004–05	PERCENTAGE CHANGE
English	17.7	14.5	(18.1%)
Foreign languages	23.6	21.8	(7.6%)
Mathematics	15.4	15.1	(1.9%)
Science	19.6	18.0	(8.2%)
Social Studies	24.5	19.3	(21.2%)

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 1999–2000 and 2004–05.

Compared to the region and state, WISD secondary class sizes are below the state average in all subjects except foreign languages, and above the regional averages in science and social studies (**Exhibit A-12**).

EXHIBIT A-12
WISD, REGION 3, AND THE STATE
AVERAGE SECONDARY SCHOOL CLASS SIZE
2004–05

SUBJECT	WHARTON	REGION 3	STATE
English	14.5	17.6	20.5
Foreign languages	21.8	19.4	21.8
Mathematics	15.1	16.6	20.6
Science	18.0	17.7	21.7
Social Studies	19.3	19.1	22.7

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

WISD overall student attendance rates from 1999–2000 through 2003–04 were higher when compared to the averages of peer districts, the region, and the state (**Exhibit A-13**). In this comparison, WISD's rates were the only rates to increase, other than the state average, from 1999–2000 to 2003–04.

EXHIBIT A-13
WISD, PEER DISTRICTS, REGION 3, AND THE STATE
STUDENT ATTENDANCE RATE
1999–2000 AND 2003–04

ENTITY	1999–2000	2003–04
Aransas Pass	95.4%	95.4%
Cuero	96.3%	95.8%
Edna	96.4%	94.7%
El Campo	95.9%	95.9%
Wharton	**95.8%**	**95.9%**
Region 3	**95.9%**	**95.5%**
State	**95.6%**	**95.7%**

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 1999–2000 and 2003–04.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP

Teachers in WISD are involved in a mathematics and science workshop as part of a one-year graduate course, sponsored jointly by the district and the University of Houston Victoria (UHV). Participants earn three hours of graduate credit by registering for the *Advanced Geometry for Teachers* course during the year of participation without personal expenditure. As funding is available, this partnership also provides participants with computers and other technologies for use in the classroom to support mathematics and science instruction.

The staff development program is in its eighth year of operation, having begun in 1998–99. The program is funded through a Teacher Quality Grant from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board with all funds appropriated directly to the university. WISD, along with other districts in the Victoria area, was invited by UHV to participate in this program during the initial school year of the grant; today WISD remains the sole participating district. Based on the availability of yearly funding, UHV has invited WISD to maintain this partnership to train mathematics and science teachers.

According to the assistant superintendent for Instruction, 142 teachers (duplicated count) have participated in the program since 1998–99 (**Exhibit A-14**).

EXHIBIT A-14
NUMBER OF WISD TEACHERS PARTICIPATING IN
UHV STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM
1998–99 THROUGH 2005–06

SCHOOL YEAR	WISD TEACHER PARTICIPANTS
1998–99	14
1999–2000	17
2000–01	17
2001–02	13
2002–03	20
2003–04	19
2004–05	21
2005–06	21

SOURCE: WISD assistant superintendent for Instruction.

Since participating in the program receive three hours of graduate math credit, a total of 426 hours of graduate math credit has been awarded to WISD teachers since 1998–99.

Classes are held at the Education Support Center which serves as the district's administrative office. Tuition and fees are included in the grant to UHV, so the cost to district personnel is covered by the grant. The district provides meals and refreshments, and, until 2004–05, the district was reimbursed by UHV for these additional costs; for 2005–06 district funds were used to pay for meals and refreshments for program participants. Registration is offered to secondary teachers first, and elementary teachers from fourth grade and above may apply if additional openings are available.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The assistant superintendent for Instruction developed the district staff development plan for 2005–06, with the assistance of the superintendent, the director of Personnel and Public Relations, the director of Federal Programs, and campus principals (**Exhibit A-15**).

However, according to the assistant superintendent for Instruction, campus staff development is the domain of each campus administrator. There is no WISD central office employee assigned to work with campus personnel to identify and facilitate staff development targeting student performance needs at each individual campus.

EXHIBIT A-15
WISD STAFF DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES
2005–06

DATE	LOCATION/ACTIVITY
DISTRICTWIDE	
August 8	Districtwide – Preventing Sexual Harassment Public Information and Records Retention
August 9	Districtwide – Special Education Topics: • Making the Admissions, Review and Dismissal (ARD) Process Work • Discipline • Rules and Regulations • Legislation • Modifications
WHARTON HIGH SCHOOL	
August 10	Region 5 Curriculum Leadership Cooperative (CLC) training: Math, Science, English/Language Arts, and Social Studies Curriculum Training
August 11–12	Campus Workday and In-service activities – Higher Level Thinking Skills, Data Disaggregation for TAKS, Special Education Referral Process
Ongoing 2005–06	Region 3 Training Opportunities
WHARTON JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL	
August 10, 12	Campus Workday and In-service activities – Higher Level Thinking Skills, Differentiating Curriculum/Instruction, Instructional Leadership Training (known as ILT) to Instructional Leadership Development (known as ILD), Campus Improvement Program (known as CIP) Training, Writing Strategies, 8 Step Process
August 11	Region 5 CLC training: Math, Science, English/Language Arts, and Social Studies Curriculum Training
Ongoing 2005–06	Region 3 Training Opportunities
HOPPER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	
August 10–11	Campus Workday and In-service activities – Math Their Way, First Aid Emergency Care, Special Education Training Videos, Xerox training
August 12	Region 5 Curriculum Alignment and Training
Ongoing 2005–06	Region 3 Training Opportunities: Writing Supports, Success with Active Learning Strategies, STAGES Software, Intellitools Classroom Suite Software, CLASS, Sensational Simple Elementary Science, Capturing Kids Hearts
SIVELLS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	
August 10–11	Campus Workday and In-service activities – Piano Math, Accelerated Reading Meeting, Character Education, Processing the Language of Math, Correlating Science Scope and Sequence, Vertical Team Meetings
August 12	Region 5 Curriculum Alignment and Training
Ongoing 2005–06	Region 3 Training Opportunities
DAWSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	
August 10	Region 5 Curriculum Alignment and Training
August 11–12	Campus Workday and In-service Activities
Ongoing 2005–06	Region 3 Training Opportunities: Science Collaboration

Source: WISD assistant superintendent for Instruction, March 2006.

WISD professional development for 2005–06 included five days of in-service at the beginning of the school year. The training consisted of two days of districtwide in-service, planned by district personnel; two days of in-service designed to meet campus-specific needs; and one day of training on the new curriculum purchased from Regional Education Service Center V (Region 5).

HEALTH SERVICES

The Health Services program in a school district is an important factor in creating a safe, healthy environment conducive to learning. A comprehensive program incorporates procedures that are preventive and promote wellness through education, along with intervention techniques for students with health needs. Early identification of health concerns and a systematic approach to problem solving contribute to overall student learning. Student health status, the teaching and learning process, and educational outcomes are directly related. An effective health program facilitates the education process by promoting optimum student health for every student.

According to the National Association of School Nurses (NASN), caseload assignments for school nurses vary greatly, and are influenced by multiple factors such as: geographic location and number of school buildings; social, economic, and cultural status of the community; special health problems; the mobility of the people in the community; and licensed or unlicensed assistive personnel. NASN recommends a ratio of one nurse for 750 students for public schools. WISD employs a total of five nurses, one at each campus in the district, for a ratio of less than 500 to one. Three are Registered Nurses and two are Licensed Vocational Nurses. The district hires a substitute nurse if one is absent.

As required by Texas Education Code (TEC) §28.004 and §38.058, and WISD Policy FFAE (LEGAL), the district has established a Health Advisory Council which is chaired by the assistant superintendent for Instruction. A district must consider the recommendations of the local advisory council before changing the district's health education curriculum or instructional programs. While the committee has not met since 2003–04, according to the assistant superintendent, the council meets as necessary to review and consider any changes to the health education curriculum.

The majority of the council members must be parents of students enrolled in the district. In addition, the board must appoint at least one person from each of the following groups:

- teachers;

- school administrators,

- licensed heath care professionals;

- the clergy;

- law enforcement;

- the business community;

- senior citizens; and

- students.

As an example of the district's commitment to provide health services to its students and staff, WISD purchased eight Automated External Defibrillators in May 2005 at a cost of $13,000. The district offered training on use of the defibrillators during the summer and fall to approximately 40 staff members representing each of the five campuses.

WISD nurses participate in goal setting activities each year as part of their evaluation process. They engage in special project development or similar activities to enhance either their individual personal skills, or the services that the nursing staff provides. Each nurse reports to, and is evaluated by, both their campus principal and the Health coordinator. The Health coordinator reports to, and is evaluated by, the junior high school principal regarding campus responsibilities and the superintendent regarding districtwide responsibilities.

DELIVERY OF BILINGUAL/ESL PROGRAMS

Federal and state laws require school districts to provide educational access to students whose first language is not English. Specifically, TEC Chapter 29 requires that students whose home language is not English, and who are identified as ELL "shall be provided a full opportunity to participate in a bilingual education or English as a Second Language program."

School districts are required to identify ELL students, and districts with an enrollment of at least 20 ELL students in the same grade level are required to offer a Bilingual/ESL or an alternative language program. They are also required to use certified teachers to provide Bilingual/ESL programs to ensure that these students have the full opportunity to master the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). The Bilingual education program must be a full-time program of instruction in which both the students' home language and English are used for instruction. ESL programs must be intensive instruction programs, designed to develop

proficiency in the comprehension, speaking, reading, and composition of the English language.

Schools must provide Bilingual education in pre-kindergarten (pre-K) through the elementary grades. Bilingual education, instruction in ESL, or other transitional language instruction approved by TEA, must be provided in post-elementary grades through grade 6. For students in grades 7–12, districts must provide only instruction in ESL. Educating ELL students is an important task for Texas public schools, as approximately 660,308, or 15.3 percent of Texas students were enrolled in Bilingual/ESL programs in 2003–04.

WISD provides support to ELL students through the ESL program according to standards established by the state of Texas. The district uses a program model based on pulling students out of class for specific lengths of time to work with Bilingual or ESL certified teachers.

During 2005–06, 157 students were served in either a Bilingual or an ESL program by WISD. During 2005–06, the district employed a total of 20 teachers holding an ESL certificate, and one teacher certified in Bilingual education.

Of the 157 students served by WISD students in the Bilingual/ESL program, 11 students were in the bilingual program and 146 students were in ESL (**Exhibit A-16**). TEA approved an exception or waiver for WISD regarding the requirement to provide a Bilingual program at grades 2 and 3, so these students were served through the ESL program. Specific services provided to students by school are:

- Hopper Elementary School served 51 students using one Bilingual and eight ESL certified teachers. Both dual immersion and pull-out approaches are used, and time varies depending on individual student needs.

- Sivells Elementary School served 39 students using four ESL certified teachers. The campus had one fully self-contained/dual immersion class for grade 1, and pull-out programs for grades 2 (30 minutes per day) and 3 (45 minutes per day).

- Dawson Elementary School served 14 students using three ESL certified teachers. Students are served in a pull-out program in grades 4–6 for 30 minutes per day during their English class.

- The Wharton Junior High School (WJHS) ESL program served 18 students with three ESL certified teachers. Daily learning time ranges from a minimum of 55 minutes to a maximum of 195 minutes per day. The average daily learning total is 140 minutes through English class (55 minutes), Tiger Time (30 minutes), and ESL class (55 minutes).

- The Wharton High School (WHS) ESL program served 28 students with two teachers. Students were scheduled in three classes of 50 minutes each in English, social studies, and reading.

Enrollment in WISD's Bilingual/ESL program grew 34.2 percent from 2000–01 through 2004–05 (**Exhibit A-17**). During the same period total expenditures for the program declined 13 percent, and program per pupil expenditures declined 35.2 percent.

The Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) at each campus determines students' placement, monitors progress, determines whether ELL students test in Spanish or English, and oversees program exit. Committee members include a campus administrator, the Bilingual education teachers or two ESL teachers (grades 7–12), the classroom

EXHIBIT A-16
WISD
BILINGUAL/ESL STUDENTS AND TEACHERS BY CAMPUS
2005–06

CAMPUS	BILINGUAL		ESL	
	STUDENTS	TEACHERS	STUDENTS	TEACHERS
Wharton High School	*	0	26	2
Wharton Junior High School	*	0	16	3
Dawson Elementary School	*	0	11	3
Sivells Elementary School	*	0	47	4
Hopper Elementary School	11	1	46	8
District Totals	**11**	**1**	**146**	**20**

*Numbers less than five have not been cited due to FERPA 34CFR Part 99.1 and Texas Education Agency procedures OP 10-03.
SOURCE: WISD director of Federal Programs, 2005–06.

EXHIBIT A-17
WISD
BILINGUAL/ESL EDUCATION EXPENDITURES AND ENROLLMENT
2000–01 THROUGH 2004–05

	ACTUAL			BUDGETED		
CATEGORY	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	PERCENTAGE CHANGE
Bilingual/ESL education expenditures	$126,574	$65,484	$127,400	$106,435	$110,073	(13.0%)
Bilingual/ESL education enrollment	120	120	116	142	161	34.2%
Bilingual/ESL education expenditures per Bilingual/ESL student	$1,055	$546	$1,098	$750	$684	(35.2%)

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS, 2000–01 through 2004–05, and AEIS, 2000–01 through 2004–05.

teacher of the student being referred, and at least one parent of a bilingual or ESL student who is not a district employee.

Before exiting the program, districts must ensure that ELL students meet state performance standards for the English language criterion-referenced assessment instrument for reading and writing (when available) required in the TEC Chapter 29. Students must be successful at grade level, or score at or above the 40th percentile on both the English reading and the English language arts (ELA) sections of a TEA-approved norm-referenced assessment instrument. The LPAC will monitor the progress of Bilingual/ESL students exited from the program for two years after their exit to determine whether or not the student is academically successful.

The LPAC process for WISD ensures that students will be reclassified as "exited" when the following criteria are met:

- State standard on English TAKS in reading and writing (Grades 4, 8, Exit Level).

- Student's language and academic achievement indicates student is likely to succeed in a mainstreamed class.

- Program Exit-Parent Notification form is signed by parents and filed in the students' cumulative folder.

According to the director of Federal Programs, regular education teachers are provided training in Sheltered English and are supported at every campus. Sheltered English is an instructional approach used to make academic instruction in English understandable to ELL students. Students in these classes are "sheltered" in that they do not compete academically with native English speakers since the class includes only ELL students. In the regular classroom, English fluency is assumed. In contrast, in the sheltered English classroom, teachers use physical activities, visual aids, and the environment to teach important new words for concept development in mathematics, science, history, home economics, and other subjects (National Clearinghouse on Bilingual Education, 1987).

The methods that teachers employ in sheltered classes include the following:

- extralinguistic cues such as visuals, props, and body language;

- linguistic modifications such as repetition and pauses during speech;

- interactive lectures with frequent comprehension checks;

- cooperative learning strategies;

- focus on central concepts rather than on details by using a thematic approach; and

- development of reading strategies such as mapping and writing to develop thinking.

Sheltered English programs have proven successful in the development of academic competence in ELL students because such programs concentrate on the simultaneous development of content-area and ESL proficiency.

At the beginning of each year, ESL teachers meet with the regular education teachers and provide suggestions in all content areas to these teachers and in the special education content mastery classes. WISD staff attended Region 3 sponsored workshops in Victoria and through NET3 distance learning. Fall 2005 workshops included meetings for the directors of programs, Texas Observation Protocol (TOP) Training of Trainers, TOP Rater Training, and TOP Training for New Teachers, along with ESL Texas Examinations of Educator Standards, known as TExES, Review. The number of participants at each workshop was not available. **Exhibit A-18** shows the number of students served during 2004–05, the number of students who exited or moved into a

monitoring program for 2005–06, and the number of students remaining in the program.

Passing rates for ELL students taking the TAKS the year after exiting from the program in 2004–05 are shown in **Exhibit A-19**. WISD ELL students equal or exceed the state in areas tested and reported, with at least five students tested.

WISD only administers the English version of the TAKS test to its students.

Exhibit A-20 and **Exhibit A-21** show that for the sum of all grades from 2002–03 through 2004–05, the percentage of WISD students passing TAKS was below the state and regional averages in all three years in English/language arts and social studies, above both in science and writing when the district had sufficient numbers of students tested, and below both the state and regional averages in 2002–03 and 2003–04, but above the region in 2004–05.

The most recent Bilingual/ESL performance based assessment of the WISD program was conducted in January 2006 and included the following information: data analysis for 2005, program assessment by the district, staff certification review, a continuous improvement plan developed by the district, and results of a public meeting held by the district on the

EXHIBIT A-19
WISD AND THE STATE
ELL STUDENTS PERCENTAGE PASSING RATES ON TAKS
ONE YEAR AFTER EXITING BILINGUAL/ESL PROGRAM
2004–05

TESTED AREA	WHARTON	STATE
Mathematics	75.0%	35.0%
Reading/ELA	50.0%	50.0%
Science	*	25.0%
Social Studies	*	50.0%
Writing	83.3%	50.0%

*Numbers less than five have not been cited due to FERPA 34CFR Part 99.1 and Texas Education Agency procedures OP 10-03.
SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, Performance-Based Monitoring Analysis System(PBMAS), Bilingual/ESL Education, 2005.

program. The district's self-assessment and improvement plan focused on:

- adding one bilingual teacher at Sivells Elementary School (one current teacher is seeking such certification);

- expanding existing programs at each school based on student needs; and

- identifying specific strategies to increase ELL student performance on TAKS.

EXHIBIT A-18
WISD
STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN ESL PROGRAM BY GRADE LEVEL
2004–05 AND 2005–06

GRADE LEVEL	ESL STUDENTS 2004–05	ESL STUDENTS EXIT/MONITORED	PARENT DENIALS	ESL STUDENTS CONTINUING 2005–06
Pre-K	33			33
Kindergarten (K)	24			24
First	24	6/*		18
Second	13	*/*		11
Third	16	11/*		*
Fourth	14	*/9		*
Fifth	10	*/3		5
Sixth	17	*/7		8**
Seventh	12	*/*		9**
Eighth	13		6	7
Ninth	6		*	5
Eleventh	10		*	6**
Twelfth	5	5/*		*
Totals	**197**	**39/25**	**9**	**132**

*Numbers less than five have not been cited due to FERPA 34CFR Part 99.1 and Texas Education Agency procedures OP 10-03.
** Includes one or more students who withdrew.
SOURCE: WISD director of Federal Programs.

EXHIBIT A-20
WISD, REGION 3, AND THE STATE
ELL STUDENTS MEETING TAKS STANDARD IN ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS, READING, AND MATHEMATICS
SUM OF ALL GRADES TESTED
2002–03 THROUGH 2004–05

	ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS			READING			MATHEMATICS		
	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
Wharton	0.0%	35%	35%	33.3%	N/A	N/A	33.3%	34%	49%
Region 3	13.0%	48%	56%	40.9%	N/A	N/A	35.5%	46%	47%
State	14.5%	52%	58%	44.0%	N/A	N/A	39.2%	49%	54%

N/A = Information not available.
SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2002–03 through 2004–05.

EXHIBIT A-21
WISD, REGION 3, AND THE STATE
ELL STUDENTS MEETING TAKS STANDARD IN WRITING, SCIENCE, AND SOCIAL STUDIES
SUM OF ALL GRADES TESTED
2002–03 THROUGH 2004–05

	WRITING			SCIENCE			SOCIAL STUDIES		
	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
Wharton	60.0%	*	*	14.3%	<1%	<1%	12.5%	17%	24%
Region 3	44.1%	69%	72%	6.2%	18%	21%	20.8%	45%	45%
State	53.4%	72%	74%	8.7%	21%	28%	31.4%	46%	52%

*Numbers less than five have not been cited due to FERPA 34CFR Part 99.1 and Texas Education Agency procedures OP 10-03.
SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2002–03 through 2004–05.

Key points brought out in the public meeting by participants were:

- Information for parents is available in Spanish and English, including information sent home and invitation to school and district events.

- Interpreters are available on all campuses to explain information and answer questions.

- Bilingual/ESL teachers are highly qualified and receive staff development on an ongoing basis through WISD and Region 3.

- ESL summer school is offered over and above state required programs.

- Campus intervention teams monitor progress of struggling students.

CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION (CTE)

The Texas State Plan for CTE 2005–2007 outlines guidelines to assist school districts in their effort to offer effective career and technology education programs that prepare students for further education and eventual employment in a technology-intensive world. The plan includes two goals that each public school student master the basic skills and knowledge necessary for: (1) managing the dual roles of family member and wage earner; and (2) gaining entry-level employment in a high-skill, high-wage job or continuing the student's education at the postsecondary level.

The seven objectives in the state plan are based on elements that contribute to effective CTE programs:
- academic excellence as defined in No Child Left Behind (NCLB);

- quality career guidance and counseling;

- partnerships that benefit students and schools;

- rigorous academic and technical curricula supporting seamless career pathways;

- professional development for educators to enhance teaching and learning;

- ongoing quantitative and qualitative data evaluation of student performance; and

- administrative leadership necessary for program effectiveness and compliance.

The Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Chapter 74, Subchapter A requires school districts to offer career and technology education courses selected from at least three of the eight career and technology areas:

(1) agricultural science and technology,

(2) business education,

(3) career orientation,

(4) health science technology,

(5) family and consumer sciences education/home economics education,

(6) technology education/industrial technology,

(7) marketing, and

(8) trade and industrial education.

According to the Wharton High School (WHS) principal, WISD offered 28 different CTE courses with 480 students enrolled for 2005–06. The total number of students enrolled in CTE courses includes students counted more than once if they are enrolled in more than one CTE course (**Exhibit A-22**). Students may also enroll at Wharton County Junior College (WCJC) for CTE courses in the dual credit program if a program is not offered at WHS. No WHS students were enrolled in a dual credit program for CTE courses in 2005–06.

GIFTED AND TALENTED (G/T) EDUCATION PROGRAM

The Texas State Board of Education adopted the following goal to serve gifted learners: "students who participate in services designed for gifted students will demonstrate skills in self-directed learning, thinking, research, and communication as evidenced by the development of innovative products and performances that reflect individuality and creativity and are advanced in relation to students of similar age, experience, or environment. High school graduates who have participated in services for gifted students will have produced products and performances of professional quality as part of their program services."

According to TEC §29.123, the Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students forms the basis of program accountability for state-mandated services for gifted/talented students. The plan offers guidance for districts to develop plans with Acceptable, Recognized, or Exemplary performance measures. Acceptable performance measures include five areas of program performance reflecting those actions that are included in either state law or rule. The additional performance actions are not mandated, but provide viable targets that local districts may strive to attain.

EXHIBIT A-22
WHARTON ISD
CTE ENROLLMENT BY COURSE AT WHS
2005–06

COURSE	TOTAL ENROLLMENT
Family and Consumer Science	
Nutrition and Food Science	16
Personal and Family Development	27
Textile and Apparel Design	*
CTED Food	2
CTED Advanced Food	8
Culinary Arts	3
PEP	3
Child Care	15
Total Family and Consumer	**93**
Health Science	
Anatomy	7
Total Health Science	**7**
Agricultural Science	
Ag Mechanics	6
Intro Ag Science	9
Personal Skill Development	*
Applied Ag Science	13
Ag Coop	47
Horticulture	8
Adv. Floral	37
Animal Science	6
Total Agricultural Science	**134**
Business and Marketing	
Accounting	6
Business Computer Information Systems (BCIS)	144
CTED BCIS	14
Business Imaging	9
Total Business and Marketing	**173**
Trade and Industrial	
Mfg. Systems Metals	1
Mfg. Tech Metals	1
Intro Construction Careers	11
Auto Mechanics	6
Mill & Cabinet	1
HECE Coop	28
Total of Trade and Industrial	**48**
Technology Application	
Graphics	4
Business Image	9
Total Technology Courses	**13**
Grand Total WHS	**478**

*Enrollment information not available.
Source: WHS principal, February 2006.

Representatives from each WISD campus and other district stakeholders developed a comprehensive G/T plan in 2003–04. The assistant superintendent for Instruction facilitated the committee, which analyzed the existing G/T program, and considered alternatives based on information gathered by resources at Region 3 and the Texas Association of Gifted and Talented (TAGT), as well as other information supplied by the facilitator and committee members. The Board of Trustees adopted the plan on February 17, 2004, with implementation during fall 2005.

The WISD plan includes descriptions and specific guidelines for identification, curriculum scope and sequence, and campus programming. The plan states the following:

- *Kindergarten Challenge Program*—All kindergarten classes will meet weekly as a group for 20 minutes of additional instruction by a teacher for the Gifted/Talented.

- *Sivells Elementary: First, Second, and Third Grade Challenge Program*—Students identified as gifted will work with the building coordinator for the Gifted/Talented on a pull-out basis for no less than one-half day per week.

- *Dawson Elementary: Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Grade Challenge Program*—At each grade level, G/T students will be clustered into one or two classes per grade level, as appropriate. On-going G/T training will be provided to the teachers.

- *Wharton Junior High: Challenge Program*—An interdisciplinary pull-out course will be offered 30 minutes daily for identified gifted students.

- *Wharton High School: Challenge Program*—Opportunities for gifted students in the four core areas (English, math, science, social studies) are available at each grade level, such as dual credit/concurrent enrollment, Pre-Advanced Placement (Pre-AP) and Advanced Placement (AP) courses, honors courses, the Distinguished Achievement Graduation Plan, approved research projects, early graduation and extracurricular activities and competitions in individual areas of interest (WHS students can participate in both dual enrollment and AP courses in grades 11 and 12).

Districts are required to have a systematic process for identifying G/T students. TEA issued guidelines for identifying these students in an effort to make sure these students receive a quality education. The process must

include quantitative as well as qualitative evaluation tools and instruments. The identification process used in WISD includes six criteria:

- Intelligence Quotient, (commonly known as IQ);

- Reading Achievement (95th percentile);

- Math Achievement (95th percentile);

- Teacher Checklist;

- Products and Performance; and

- Parent Survey.

Students must meet any four of the six criteria to qualify for the G/T program.

Funding for identifying G/T students and programs is available through the Texas Foundation School Program. G/T programs should provide more challenging curriculum for qualified students from various cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic backgrounds than is offered to other students. The WISD G/T (or Challenge) Program operational guidelines state that the district will serve approximately 3–5 percent of the district population identified for general intellectual ability through a variety of objective and subjective criteria. In 2004–05, the district served 8.1 percent of the total population in the G/T program. The district continues to exceed the stated guideline in the number of students served by the program and has remained constant, according to the assistant superintendent.

Region 3 recognized the assistant superintendent for Instruction as advocate of the year for G/T Education during 2004–05, and recognized a district counselor as advocate of the year in support of G/T education for a prior year. TAGT provides various options and support for servicing G/T students. Instructional settings such as pull-out programs, differentiated curriculum, and cluster programs are some of the options. WISD's G/T program is designed as a pull-out program for grades 1–3, and clusters students in grades 4–6. Instruction is based on the TEKS and will accelerate, compact, provide greater depth, and expand the content by using the Kaiser McGee reading/language arts curriculum. Program options allow students to work in flexible group patterns and work independently.

WISD enrollment in the G/T program in 2005–06 was 86; 37 in Sivells Elementary School for grades 1–3, and 49 in Dawson Elementary School for grades 4–6 (**Exhibit A-23**).

EXHIBIT A-23
WISD
G/T EDUCATION ENROLLMENT
SIVELLS AND DAWSON ELEMENTARIES
2005–06

	SCHOOL		STUDENT ETHNICITY		
GRADE LEVEL	SIVELLS ELEMENTARY	DAWSON ELEMENTARY	AFRICAN AMERICAN	HISPANIC	ANGLO
1	12	*	*	*	9
2	10	*	*	*	7
3	15	*	*	*	12
4	*	14	*	*	8
5	*	17	*	*	12
6	*	18	*	*	13
Total	**37**	**49**	**7**	**18**	**61**
Percentage of total	**43.0%**	**57.0%**	**8.1%**	**20.9%**	**70.9%**

*Numbers less than five have not been cited due to FERPA 34CFR Part 99.1 and Texas Education Agency procedures OP 10-03.
Source: WISD assistant superintendent for Instruction, March 2006.

Of the 86 students, over two-thirds are Anglo, one-fifth are Hispanic, and less than one-tenth are African American.

From 2000–01 through 2004–05, WISD total expenditures for the G/T education program declined 8.8 percent, and per pupil expenditures declined 5.4 percent (**Exhibit A-24**). Enrollment declined 29 percent during the same period. Typically, districts do not report personnel costs, only material and supply costs, in total expenditures.

Students in grades 7–8 have the opportunity to participate in the daily G/T offering during a shortened class period between third and fourth period as described. G/T students identified at WHS are clustered with other advanced-level students in Pre-AP and AP courses. Pre-AP and AP courses and student participation in each course in 2005–06 are shown in **Exhibit A-25**.

During 2004–05, 11 WHS students took the AP English examination and six scored high enough on the exam to earn college credit.

Students are also encouraged to enroll in the dual credit/ concurrent enrollment program with WCJC. WHS has 38 students taking one or more courses in the dual credit program with WCJC. Students are able to take college-level courses and earn credits toward their college degree. The 38 WHS students were enrolled in three courses in 2005–06 (**Exhibit A-26**).

LIBRARY AND MEDIA SERVICES

The School Library Programs Standards and Guidelines for Texas defines an *Acceptable* collection as a balanced collection of 9,000 books, audiovisual software, and multimedia, or at least 20 items per student at elementary level, at least 16 items per student at middle school level, and at least 12 items per student at high school level, whichever is greater. A

EXHIBIT A-24
WISD
G/T EDUCATION EXPENDITURES AND ENROLLMENT
2000–01 THROUGH 2004–05

	ACTUAL				BUDGETED	
CATEGORY	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	PERCENTAGE CHANGE
G/T education expenditures	$95,078	$99,574	$74,131	$78,878	$86,754	(8.8%)
G/T education enrollment	283	283	226	214	201	(29.0%)
G/T education expenditures per G/T student	$336	$352	$328	$369	$432	28.6%

Source: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS, 2000–01 through 2004–05, and AEIS, 2000–01 through 2004–05.

EXHIBIT A-25
WISD
PRE-AP AND AP ENROLLMENT BY COURSE
2005–06

COURSE	TOTAL ENROLLMENT
Pre-AP Algebra	27
Pre-AP Geometry	36
Pre-AP Pre-Calculus	29
AP Chemistry	*
AP English IV	13
AP Calculus	7

*Numbers less than have not been cited due to FERPA 34CFR Part 99.1 and Texas Education Agency procedures OP 10-03.
SOURCE: WISD assistant superintendent for Instruction, March 2006.

EXHIBIT A-26
WISD
DUAL CREDIT COURSE ENROLLMENT BY COURSE
2005–06

COURSE	ENROLLMENT	
	FIRST SEMESTER	SECOND SEMESTER
Economics	*	*
Government	8	*
English IV	24	23

*Numbers less than five have not been cited due to FERPA 34CFR Part 99.1 and Texas Education Agency procedures OP 10-03.
SOURCE: WHS principal, March 2006.

Recognized collection is defined as a balanced collection of at least 10,800 books, audiovisual software, and multimedia or at least 22 items per student at elementary level, at least 18 items per student at middle school level, and at least 14 items per student at high school level, whichever is greater. An *Exemplary* collection is a balanced collection with at least 12,000 books, audiovisual software, and multimedia, or at least 24 items per student at elementary level, at least 20 items per student at middle school level, and at least 16 items per student at high school level, whichever is greater.

The results of the WISD August 2005 collection analysis are presented in **Exhibit A-27**. A comparison of the district's library holdings to the state acceptable minimum standard shows that schools are above the minimum, with *Exemplary* ratings.

WISD was notified in August 2006 that the district is the recipient of a $300,000 Improving Literacy Through School Libraries grant from the United States Department of Education (USDE). In the abstract for the grant, WISD stated that through this grant, the district will increase the number of library volumes, high-speed computers connected to the Internet, and hours librarians will have to plan collaborative, curriculum-based instructional units with teachers, as well as expand library operating hours and provide additional training and support to library media specialists.

SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

The federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires all public school districts receiving federal funds to provide free and appropriate education for all children with disabilities, regardless of the severity of their disabilities, in the least restrictive environment. The act also requires that students with disabilities be included in state and district assessment programs. Districts must develop an individualized educational program (IEP) for each child receiving special education services. The plan must include input from regular education teachers and must provide special education students with the greatest possible access to the regular curriculum and regular education classes.

EXHIBIT A-27
WISD
ENROLLMENT, LIBRARY BOOKS, BOOKS PER STUDENT, AND TEXAS STATE LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES COMMISSION (TSLAC) COLLECTION STATUS
2004–05

SCHOOL	AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCE (ADA)*	TOTAL NUMBER OF LIBRARY BOOKS	BOOKS PER STUDENT	TSLAC LIBRARY STATUS
Wharton High School	653	12,991	19.9	*Exemplary*
Wharton Junior High School	348	13,036	37.5	*Exemplary*
Dawson Elementary School	538	14,377	26.7	*Exemplary*
Sivells Elementary School	532	15,830	29.7	*Exemplary*
Hopper Elementary School	308	8,000	25.6	*Exemplary*

*ADA was calculated by multiplying school membership (enrollment) by 96 percent.
SOURCE: WISD Librarian reports, 2004–05.

IDEA defines an effective special education program designed to serve the diverse needs of all students with disabilities and comply with all requirements as stated in the act as having the following components:

- *Pre-referral intervention in regular education.* When a student experiences an academic problem in the regular education program, the regular education teacher should intervene to resolve the problem. If these steps do not yield satisfactory results, the problem should be referred to special education staff.

- *Referral to special education for evaluation.* Referrals to special education require an official written request supported by documentation. The referral must include an explanation of steps that have been taken in regular education to solve the student's problems prior to the referral.

- *Nondiscriminatory full individual evaluation.* After a student has been referred to special education, the district must provide a comprehensive nondiscriminatory evaluation or assessment within a prescribed amount of time.

- *Initial placement through an Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) committee.* After the evaluation or assessment is complete, an ARD committee meets to discuss the results and determine whether the student qualifies for special educational services in one of 13 categories. If the student qualifies, members of the ARD committee write a plan for the student's education.

- *Provision of educational services and supports according to a written IEP.* The ARD committee must develop an IEP specifying the classes, subject areas, development areas, and life skills courses in which the student will be instructed. The IEP should also include information on the amount of time the student will spend in regular educational settings as well as related services needs such as counseling, physical therapy or occupational therapy.

- *Annual program review.* Each year after a student's initial qualification and placement, the ARD committee should conduct a review to ensure that the student's IEP is appropriate.

- *Three year re-evaluation.* Every three years, the student should be considered for a full individual evaluation. An ARD committee should meet to discuss the results of the re-evaluation and determine whether the student still qualifies for special education services in the same category.

- *Dismissal from the special education program.* If and when a student no longer meets the criteria for eligibility, the student is dismissed from special education. The ARD committee must make this decision.

WISD is a member of and serves as the fiscal agent for the East Wharton County Special Instructional Services Cooperative (EWCSISC). In 2005–06, WISD served 363 students in special education across all campuses (**Exhibit A-28**).

WISD's Special Education Department is headed by the director of Federal Programs, who also serves as the director of the EWCSISC. The cooperative is organized and has full- and part-time staff in addition to the director as follows:

- Coordinator for psychologist/diagnostic services;

- Speech/language pathologists: two speech pathologists, two speech therapists (one contract);

- Assessment staff: two diagnosticians, two licensed specialists in school psychology (LSSP) and one vacant position that could be either a diagnostician or an LSSP;

- One Vocational Adjustment Coordinator/transition specialist, who works with special education students to prepare them for work programs, and one job coach;

- One program coordinator/resource teacher for the visually impaired students;

- Life skills: five teachers, one at each WISD school, and 11 paraprofessionals;

- Severe and profound: two teachers, one who serves students at Hopper Elementary and Sivells Elementary, and one serving students at Dawson Elementary;

- Structured learning, including autism and autistic tendencies: two teachers and one paraprofessional at Sivells Elementary, one paraprofessional at Dawson Elementary, and two paraprofessionals at Wharton Junior High;

- Contract personnel: one occupational and one physical therapist; one psychological assessment professional, and one specialized assessment professional, for example, bilingual, in addition to the contract speech therapist noted above; and

EXHIBIT A-28
WISD
SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS BY DISABILITY CATEGORY
2005–06

DISABILITY CATEGORY	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	PERCENTAGE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION ENROLLMENT
Orthopedic Impaired, Traumatic Brain Injury, and Non-categorical Early Childhood	*	0.0%
Other Health Impaired	32	8.8
Hearing Impaired	*	0.6
Auditory Impaired	*	0.6
Visually Impaired	7	1.9
Mentally Retarded	28	7.7
Emotionally Disturbed	18	5.0
Learning Disabled	149	41.0
Speech Impaired	117	32.2
Autism	8	2.2
Total	**363**	**100.0%**

*Numbers less than five have not been cited due to FERPA 34CFR Part 99.1 and Texas Education Agency procedures OP 10-03.
SOURCE: WISD director of Federal Programs, 2005–06.

- Support staff: secretary; two full-time special education records management administrative support personnel, one speech assistant to support the speech pathologists and therapists, and one student intern.

Services for the hearing impaired are provided through the Regional Education Program for the Deaf. Instruction arrangements for special education students are outlined in **Exhibit A-29**.

EXHIBIT A-29
WISD
SPECIAL EDUCATION INSTRUCTION ARRANGEMENTS
2005–06

INSTRUCTION ARRANGEMENT	DESCRIPTION	CAMPUS
Mainstream	Students are served in the general education classes with modifications and adaptations to meet individual needs.	All
Content Mastery	An instruction program/service delivery model provided at all campuses when needed by students. The service can be provided in a pull-out design or inclusion in the mainstream class.	All
Speech	Speech therapy services may be provided in a general education classroom or in a special education classroom.	All
Resource	Students are removed from the general education program for assistance in areas where students are identified as working significantly below their grade level. Time in resource is less than 50% of the regular school day.	All
Adaptive Physical Education (PE)	Classes for students who cannot endure the stress of the general education physical education program and must have the program adapted to meet their specific needs.	All
Homebound	Students are not able to attend school due to health issues and are served in the home by a certified itinerant teacher.	All
Early Childhood*	Students are identified as needing educational services from birth to age four, and are served in an educational setting per developed IEPs.	Hopper Elementary serves the students via PPCD, ages 3–5

*Early Childhood is the responsibility of Regional Education Service Center III.
SOURCE: WISD director of Federal Programs, 2005–06.

WISD and the EWCSISC have implemented a three-tiered intervention process, and distributed a detailed Intervention Team Manual to all staff (**Exhibit A-30**). This places greater emphasis on instructionally relevant interventions, and less emphasis on diagnostic labeling of children. The manual states that "there is increasing concerns for special education's ability to service those students for whom it was intended too serve. Thus, it is critical that we closely examine current practices and implement a more proactive, preventative approach to student failure." The manual details the steps in each tier with defined procedures, checklists to be followed, detailed adaptive strategies for general education interventions, interventions for mathematics instruction, reading fluency instruction, organizational strategies, and behavioral strategies.

EWCSISC staff said that implementing the three-tier intervention process has reduced the number of students being placed into special education programs because other, less restrictive interventions such as classroom accommodations (for example, extra reading time, additional test-taking time) are tried first. **Exhibit A-31** shows the number of students in special education, and the percentage of the total student population that number represents. The number and percentage has decreased annually since 2001–02.

Federal reimbursement for Medicaid School Health and Related Services (SHARS) and Medicaid Administrative Claims (MACs) are administered as part of the shared services agreement with the EWCSISC. According to the director of Federal Programs, the money received by the EWCSISC is deposited into revenue fund 437 because SHARS funds are not required to be coded into a separate fund. These dollars are neither prorated to the district, nor reported by the source (that is, district and student) from which the funds are generated. Funds in code 437 are used to provide services to any eligible student. The cooperative receives approximately $50,000 for special education services in Medicaid reimbursement annually.

Total expenditures for special education decreased from 2000–01 through 2004–05 by 50.6 percent, and expenditure per special education student decreased by 39.1 percent. Enrollment in special education programs decreased by 18.9 percent (**Exhibit A-32**).

EXHIBIT A-30
EWCSISC THREE-TIER INTERVENTION PROCESS

TIER	INTERVENTIONS
I	• Benchmark assessment/progress monitoring of student to identify the need for supplemental instruction, or additional behavioral accommodations.
	• Early modification of instruction to ensure that students receive the support necessary to develop essential skills.
	If the student does not make adequate progress, the campus intervention team meets to gather data/information and determine the Tier II intervention plan.
II	• Effective instructional and/or behavioral strategies that are scientifically sound.
	• Supplemental instruction and/or behavior accommodations provided through general education resources.
	• For academic difficulties: supplemental instruction is provided in small groups by an instructional specialist for 10–12 weeks.
	• For behavioral difficulties: supplemental behavioral support is provided for 5–6 weeks.
	• At the completion of the supplemental cycle, the student is evaluated to determine the student's needs.
	If the student makes adequate progress, he/she may exit Tier II. If not, the campus intervention teammates are to determine a plan. Options are: another round of Tier II intervention, or if a marked lack or progress has occurred, the team may proceed to Tier III.
III	• Effective instructional and/or behavioral strategies that are scientifically sound.
	• Student has participated in round 2 of Tier II, or has shown a marked lack of progress.
	• Intense instructional support (in addition to Tier I support) is provided though general education resources.
	• For academic difficulties: intense instruction is provided in a small group by an instructional specialist for 10–12 weeks, with behavior monitoring.
	• For behavioral difficulties: intense behavior support is provided for 5–6 weeks, with weekly monitoring.
	If the student makes adequate progress, he/she exits Tier III and returns to Tier I or Tier II, or the campus intervention team meets to gather information to initiate a referral for Section 504 or for special education evaluation.

SOURCE: Wharton ISD director of Federal Programs, November 2005.

EXHIBIT A–31
WISD
SPECIAL EDUCATION ENROLLMENT AND PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL ENROLLMENT
2000–01 THROUGH 2004–05

CATEGORY	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	PERCENTAGE CHANGE
WISD enrollment	2,605	2,608	2,546	2,510	2,487	(4.5%)
Students in special education	376	376	346	329	305	(11.8%)
Percentage of district students in special education	14.5%	14.5%	13.6%	13.1%	12.3%	N/A

N/A - Not applicable.
SOURCES: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2000–01 through 2003–04; PEIMS, 2000–01 through 2004–05.

EXHIBIT A-32
WISD
SPECIAL EDUCATION EXPENDITURES AND ENROLLMENT
2000–01 THROUGH 2004–05

	ACTUAL				BUDGETED	
CATEGORY	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	PERCENTAGE CHANGE
Special Education expenditures, all funds	$2,117,519	$2,185,504	$2,509,525	$2,528,163	$1,046,310	(50.6%)
Special Education enrollment	376	376	346	329	305	(18.9%)
Special Education expenditures per special education student	$5,632	$5,813	$7,253	$7,684	$3,431	(39.1%)

SOURCES: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2000–01 through 2003–04; PEIMS, 2000–01 through 2004–05.

FEDERAL TITLE PROGRAMS

The USDE reauthorized its Elementary and Secondary Education Act in 2002. The department titled the reauthorized act No Child Left Behind. NCLB challenges all public schools "to ensure that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and reach, at a minimum, proficiency on challenging state academic achievement standards and state academic assessments."

Both SCE and Title I provide funds supplemental to the regular education program that must be used to enhance the regular program. These funds must not replace or supplant regular funds. TEA allocates Title I funds to districts based on the number of economically disadvantaged students in the district. Eligibility for free/reduced-price lunch or breakfast is typically used to determine eligibility for Title I programs. Districts select the students to receive services based on specific educational need and economic status. Texas funds SCE through the state school finance formulas.

Title I, Part A expenditures for 2004–05 are shown in **Exhibit A-33**.

SECURITY ORGANIZATION AND STAFFING

As part of school safety, districts identify potential threats or hazards and have mechanisms to respond as necessary. Some

EXHIBIT A-33
WISD
TITLE I, PART A EXPENDITURES
2004–05

TITLE CATEGORY OF FUNDING	WISD BUDGET
Function 11	
Title I, Part A: Improving Basic Programs	$664,832
Title I, Part A: Professional and Contracted Services – Payroll	6,381
Title I, Part A: Improving Basic Programs Supplies and Materials	5,500
Total Function 11	**$696,713**
Function 13	
Title I, Part A: Improving Basic Programs Curriculum and Instructional Staff	53,832
Function 21	
Title I, Part A: Other Operating Costs	$2,500
Function 31	
Title I, Part A: Counseling and Guidance Services — Payroll	24,814
Function 61	
Title I, Part A: Community Services	
Total Title I, Part A	**$792,596**

SOURCE: WISD director of Federal Programs, November 2005.

districts employ police departments to assist in the security of the district and its stakeholders and use security equipment for monitoring potential security hazards as well. Other districts use contract officers or district staff to implement safety and security measures.

WISD has a full-time safety coordinator who conducts trainings in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), First Aid, and back injury prevention, as well as other safety programs. When staff returns from an injury-related absence, the coordinator meets with them one-on-one. **Exhibit A-34** shows the programs delivered in 2005 by the safety coordinator.

According to the director of Auxiliary Services, the safety coordinator meets with the safety committee once each month. Although each meeting has a specific objective, there is no formal agenda. Employees of the manual trade areas, including Maintenance, Transportation, and Custodial attend the meetings. When an issue pertains to professional or paraprofessional staff, they are invited to attend.

Food Service staff meets separately for training in areas such as the safe handling of food, lifting pots and pans, and general safety for everyone.

Exhibit A-35 shows safety and security services responsibilities by position.

PREVENTION PROGRAMS

WISD's elementary schools teach safety and good behavior, and link these programs to their campus improvement plans. Sivells, Hopper, and Dawson Elementary Schools all have creative character education programs including Random Acts of Good Character, Art contests, the Character Spy, and a Character Pledge and quote. Positive reinforcement is emphasized with coupons for good behavior, used for "purchasing" prizes and movies, bingo games for younger children, and a safety orientation field trip for kindergarten students to visit to their future first grade school. Prizes are inexpensive or are acknowledgements via the intercom.

EXHIBIT A-34
PROGRAMS DELIVERED BY THE WISD SAFETY COORDINATOR
2005

NAME OF PROGRAM	AUDIENCE	DATE DELIVERED	NUMBER ATTENDED
CPR	Bus Drivers	11/05	25
	Dental hygiene Students	8/11/05	10
	Food Services	4/28/05	24
	Food Services	4/28/05	21
CPR and First Aid	ESC Personnel	11/1/05	6
How to Handle Emergencies	Food Services	10/27/05	24
	Custodian/Maintenance	10/27/05	29
Safety at Home	Food Services	9/29/05	24
	Custodian/Maintenance	9/29/05	29
Safety Around Water	Food Services	8/25/05	24
	Custodian/Maintenance	8/25/05	26
Unsafe Acts That People Do	Custodians/Maintenance	7/26/05	20
Traffic Safety-Holiday Travel	Maintenance/Custodians/Transportation	6/30/05	22
Heat Stress	Food service	5/2005	24
	Maintenance/Custodians/Transportation	5/19/05	17
Back Safety	Food Service	2/24/05	24
	Maintenance/Custodians/Transportation	2/25/05	22
Alcohol Abuse	Food Services	1/27/05	45
Office Ergonomics	Food Service	3/31/05	24
	Food Service	3/31/05	21

SOURCE: WISD safety coordinator, November 2005.

EXHIBIT A-35
WISD
SAFETY AND SECURITY SERVICES
RESPONSIBILITY BY POSITION
2005–06

POSITION	RESPONSIBILITY
Superintendent	District Crisis Plan; Hearing officer for student appeals and expulsions
Superintendent, principals	Develop Student Handbook and Discipline Management Plan; develop and update board policies, administrative procedures and address concerns in these areas
Principals	Safety, security, and prevention training, coordination of School Resource Officer (SRO), campus crisis plans; drills and lockdowns; discipline management; code of conduct and enforcement; approving keys and access to building; truancy; address parent concerns for safety and security; canine drug detection contract
N/A in the district	Safety/security related grants and compliance
SRO	Liaison with police department; truancy follow-up
Counselors	Prevention and awareness classes
Principals, superintendent	Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP)
Safety coordinator	Meets with safety committee; conducts training classes in specific safety area
N/A	Alternative Education Plan
Athletic director	Scheduling SRO at extracurricular events
Custodians, outside contract	Fire extinguisher inspection
Transportation Department	School bus safety
N/A	Liaison with other districts on safety and security

SOURCE: Review team interviews, November 2005.

Positive press in local papers shows parents and the community what occurs within the schools.

Goal 4 of Hopper Elementary's Campus Improvement Plan is to educate all students in a learning environment that is safe, drug-free, and conducive to learning. Their emphasis is on character education, social skills, understanding social skills, student safety (such as no biting), and following rules. Red Ribbon week activities on trees around campus said "Celebrate a drug-free life." Kindergarten students tour the fire station and take turns spraying the hose. Bus drivers teach the importance of bus safety. To encourage children to speak with adults who can provide assistance, Child Protective Services comes on-site to speak with the students. The former principal started bingo to encourage good behavior, providing fun, inexpensive prizes as rewards. **Exhibit A-36** shows the character education activities at Hopper Elementary during 2005–06.

Dawson Elementary's Campus Improvement Plan Goal 3 is to provide a safe and enjoyable environment for teaching and learning. **Exhibit A-37** shows the activities at Dawson Elementary for character and prevention programs for 2005–06 in addition to Red Ribbon week activities.

The Sivells Elementary Campus Improvement Plan Goal 4 is to provide a drug-free environment that is conducive to ensuring the health, safety, and well-being of all students. They begin each morning with the Character Pledge: "I am a student of good character at Sivells Elementary. I dream of a school where everyone shows respect to each other. I believe I am responsible for my words and actions. I will be an honest, fair, caring school citizen each day." They hear a character quote each week and also about random acts of good character, character art contests and the "Character Spy." Students also draw names out of a bag and get coupons from teachers. The better the student behaves the more coupons the student earns. Students watch a good behavior movie with popcorn provided by the Parent Teacher Association (PTA). At the end of year they take a bus trip to the movies.

Exhibit A-38 shows the character education activities at Sivells Elementary for 2005–06.

Both Hopper Elementary, and to some degree Sivells Elementary, makes use of the local state Highway Patrol Trooper assigned to Education. His 2005–06 schedule for Hopper Elementary includes: Bus and pedestrian safety;

EXHIBIT A-36
HOPPER ELEMENTARY CHARACTER EDUCATION ACTIVITIES
2005–06

ACTIVITY/STRATEGY	OUTCOME
The "Celebration" song will be played over the intercom on days that every class earns a Happy Face in the cafeteria.	Pleasant atmosphere in the cafeteria
Qualifying students will be invited to Black Out Bingo at the end of each 6 weeks. Students must maintain a good behavior record with no office referrals for that 6 week period.	Fewer discipline referrals each 6 weeks
The social skill for each week will be taught and reinforced.	
Classes who exhibit good behavior in the hallway as they travel from one activity to another will be recognized during morning announcements.	Pride in self and school
Special assembly programs.	Opportunities for students to practice appropriate audience behaviors while learning about important social skills
"Golden Lunch Kit" competition held each day between lunch periods based on daily behavior.	Safe and orderly lunch with decreased lunch room discipline referrals
Deserving students will be entitled to reward visits to the office.	Reinforce good behavior and pride in self and school
Office discipline referrals mailed home.	Parent response and decrease in discipline referrals
Teachers routinely review playground and cafeteria rules before recess and lunch.	Playground safety and decreased accidents
The Gold Star incentive award to kindergarten classes for good behavior during Character Education on a daily basis.	Prizes and snacks for class with most stars.

SOURCE: Hopper Elementary Campus Improvement Plan, pages 26–30, 2005–06.

EXHIBIT A-37
DAWSON ELEMENTARY CHARACTER EDUCATION ACTIVITIES
2005–06

ACTIVITY/STRATEGY	CONTENT
Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) program in grade 5 and Gang Resistance Education and Training (G.R.E.A.T.) program in grade 6	Classroom instruction
Responsibility and Character Building in grades 4–6	Classroom instruction
Students will be orderly in hallways, classrooms and on campus	Teachers teach students how to walk in hallways; conduct codes in handbook
Fire safety	Classes and demonstrations by Wharton Volunteer Fire Department for all grade 4 students
Electrical safety	Taught and demonstrated by Power Company employees for all grade 5 students

SOURCE: Dawson Elementary Campus Improvement Plan, pages 25–29, 2005–06.

drug awareness; Halloween Safety; stranger awareness; traffic and safety belt awareness, and 9-1-1 awareness. He often brings "His Friend Tad," his 4-1/2 foot robot with bright yellow hair that drives a jeep and draws great attention from the audience.

OTHER SERVICES

WISD has a Pregnancy-Related Services program (PRS), which provides six weeks of homebound education services for pregnant students, including home tutoring during eligible pre-natal and post-partum homebound days. At six weeks old, the children are eligible for placement in a district child care-center called Tiger Tots. Tiger Tots is a licensed day-care housed on the campus of WHS. According to the assistant superintendent for Instruction, "the day-care is licensed for up to 17 infants and toddlers, and employs three full-time employees and generally one or more student workers." It has been in place for 15 years. Infants and toddlers of the district's high school and junior high school students are eligible to attend the program until the parent graduates. Tiger Tots started with a Pregnancy, Education, and Parenting (known as PEP) grant of $50,000.

EXHIBIT A-38
SIVELLS ELEMENTARY CHARACTER EDUCATION ACTIVITIES
2005–06

ACTIVITY/STRATEGY	CONTENT
Character Pledge	Students will recite the Sivells Character Pledge each morning.
Character Quote	Each week a character quote will be featured during morning announcements. Teachers will be encouraged to use the quote to generate discussion and lessons in the classroom. Character Quotes will be based on the Character Counts 6 Pillars of Character. A new Pillar will be used each 6 weeks.
Kids of Character Awards	Homeroom teachers will rotate turns for this award. Two classes from each grade level will choose two students that have exhibited good character qualities during the week. Students will be recognized during Friday morning announcements and presented with a certificate. Their picture will be taken for the local newspaper and school website.
The Character Spy	The Character Spy will make frequent unannounced visits to the school campus. The spy will be a different community volunteer that will dress in the "uniform" of the spy (a trench coat, floppy hat, sunglasses and magnifying glass). The change in physical appearance will be somewhat puzzling to students, and will help to foster the "mystery" of the spy's identity. Teachers will submit names of students prior to each visit so that these students can be "caught showing good character" by the Spy. These students will be presented with Character Spy buttons.
Random Acts of Good Character	All adults in the school building will be given 10 cutouts (shapes will be chosen by season. For example, Stars during Christmas season, snowmen during January-February).
	Adults will monitor the building for "random acts of good character" during a 6-week period, and award students by presenting them with a shape. Totals for the school will be announced on the intercom. At the end of the 6-week period, all students that receive a shape will be awarded with a special treat or activity.
Character Art Contest	The PTA will sponsor an art contest in the spring. Students will submit entries answering the question: "What does a person of good character look like?"
Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.)	Will be coming there in March or April to do programs in all classes.
Food Drive	In conjunction with Red Ribbon week in October, school donated 1,000 pounds of food to the SHARE center.
Publicity	Good publicity in local newspapers.

SOURCE: Sivells Elementary Campus Improvement Plan, pages 39–43, 2005–06; and Sivells counselor.

For the 2005–06 school year the operating budget is $19,000. Currently, there is no tracking of the children who are at the Tiger Tots Day-Care once they exit the program to determine if they graduate, get a General Educational Development (GED), dropout, or have babies who then attend Tiger Tots.

Twenty-six students participated in PRS during 2003–04; only 17 students were served during 2004–05. The 2005–06 numbers dropped again significantly halfway through the year, to five students, one of whom then withdrew, leaving four PRS students served during 2005–06.

Exhibit A-39 shows the number of students receiving PRS services in 2003–04 and 2004–05.

Wharton High School also offers a credit recovery program designed for all students who have failed a course or who have dropped out. This program provides these students with the ability to return to school and earn credits that are

EXHIBIT A-39
NUMBER OF WISD STUDENTS RECEIVING PREGNANCY-RELATED SERVICES
BY GRADE LEVEL
2003–04 AND 2004–05

GRADE	2003–04	2004–05
12	9	6
11	5	*
10	*	*
9	8	*
Graduated	6	*
Total	**32**	**21**

*Numbers less than five have not been cited due to FERPA 34CFR Part 99.1 and Texas Education Agency procedures OP 10-03.
SOURCE: WISD assistant superintendent for Instruction, November 2005.

counted toward graduation. During 2004–05, 146 students earned credits in this recovery program, and WHS had a 100 percent graduation rate. Students who drop out of school and choose not to enter the credit recovery program at WHS may enroll in the WCJC General Equivalency Diploma (GED) program.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

Children in Texas between the ages of 6 and 18 must attend school. TEC §25.085 Compulsory Attendance states that unless specifically exempted, a child "shall attend school in the district of his residence or in some other district to which he/she may be transferred as provided or authorized by law a minimum of 90 percent of the days of the regular school term of the district which the child resides or to which he has been transferred." **Exhibit A-40** shows the Superintendent's Semester Report of Student Attendance for 2004–05.

A comparison of WISD and peer district overall incident counts in **Exhibit A-41** shows that the number of reported incidents at WISD has increased the most among all peer districts from 2002–03 through 2004–05. Due to reporting changes, the data integrity cannot be insured since definitions of incident types may be inconsistent within a district, and when comparing multiple districts.

Data reported to TEA through the PEIMS in **Exhibit A-42** shows that the total number of offenses within WISD, although still high, is increasing at a slower rate than in previous years. Serious or persistent misconduct violating the student code of conduct while placed in alternative education program is increasing at the highest percentage. Due to

EXHIBIT A-40
WISD
SUPERINTENDENT'S SEMESTER REPORT OF STUDENT ATTENDANCE
2004–05

GRADE	PERCENTAGE IN ATTENDANCE
Pre-K	96.2%
K	96.6
1	97.9
2	98.0
3	98.0
4	97.7
5	97.9
6	97.9
7	98.1
8	97.7
9	96.0
10	94.6
11	96.1
12	96.0
Total	**97.1%**

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS, Table I-Superintendents' Semester Report of Student Attendance 2004–05.

reporting changes, the data integrity cannot be ensured since definitions of incident types could be inconsistent within a district and when comparing multiple districts.

In WISD, students who are suspected to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol are first observed and reported

EXHIBIT A-41
WISD AND PEER DISTRICTS
INCIDENT COUNTS
2002–03 THROUGH 2004–05

DISTRICT	2002–03				2003–04				2004–05				PERCENTAGE CHANGE 2002–03 THROUGH 2004–05
	E	M	HS	T	E	M	HS	T	E	M	HS	T	
WISD	**524**	**1975**	**1760**	**4259**	**121**	**2547**	**1783**	**5543**	**982**	**2944**	**2138**	**6064**	**42.4%**
El Campo	481	402	1469	2352	716	1116	1356	3188	904	1094	1323	3321	41.2%
Edna	295	524	174	993	207	621	345	1173	214	849	287	1350	36.0%
Aransas Pass	79	1641	661	2381	630	989	842	2461	234	841	1211	2286	(4.0%)
Cuero	117	1197	693	2807	182	1598	558	2338	216	500	390	1106	(60.6%)

Key: E=Elementary; M=Middle School; HS=High School; T=Total.
SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS 2001–02 through 2003–04.

EXHIBIT A-42
WISD
LOCATION OF OFFENSES BY NUMBER AND TYPE OF OFFENSE
2002–03 THROUGH 2004–05

NUMBER	TYPE OF OFFENSE	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	CHANGE 2004–05 VERSUS 2002–03	CHANGE 2004–05 VERSUS 2003–04
01	Disruptive Classroom Behavior	597	237	98	(83.6%)	(58.6%)
20	Serious or persistent misconduct violating the student code of conduct while placed in alternative education program	104	62	93	(10.6)	50
21	Violation of student code of conduct not included in codes 33 and 34	3,519	5,218	5,852	66.3	12.2
	Remaining incidents	39	26	21	(42.2)	(19.2)
	Total incidents	**4,259**	**5,543**	**6,064**	**42.4%**	**9.4%**

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS, 2002–03 through 2004–05.

by a campus administrator. "Under the influence" is defined by the Student Code of Conduct as "not having the normal use of mental or physical faculties but the student need not be legally intoxicated." The parent is called and informed, and given the option to take the student to the industrial medicine division of the local hospital for a drug test paid for by the district, or the student can instead be given a "field sobriety" test administered by a school nurse. If the test is positive the student may be placed in the DAEP or expelled for being under the influence of a prohibited substance.

Exhibit A-43 shows staff and parent responses to the survey statement, "Drugs are not a problem in this district." Over 50 percent of teachers and 43 percent of administrators disagree with this statement. A full-time counselor is available to service all campuses through a grant by Sandstone Healthcare Inc., a chemical dependency treatment company. but this resource is not often used.

This program is year-long and starts at the DAEP. When the student returns to their campus, procedures state that the counselor must follow the student, but thus far the counselor has not been permitted to do so even at the junior high where there have been incidents of possession of marijuana.

WISD officials attempted to solicit input from the community concerning drug testing. The proposal discussed was for a policy of testing students involved in extra-curricular activities. After discussion at a board meeting, the school trustees voted to "indefinitely postpone" the development of a policy.

DISCIPLINE MANAGEMENT

WISD has numerous documents that include discipline topics.

The *Discipline Management Plan*, revised June 2005, includes the district *Student Code of Conduct*, revised in August 2005.

The WISD *Code of Conduct* is taken from the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) version dated 2005. The WISD Board of Trustees officially adopted this document and the district distributes it to all students each year. The WHS website has a version stating "Revised 6/12/2003." The hardcopy included in the high school *Student Handbook* shows a revision date of June 2005. The stand-alone hardcopy shows a revision date of August 2005. Both students and parents sign an acknowledgment stating, "We acknowledge

EXHIBIT A-43
WISD STAFF AND PARENT SURVEY RESPONSES TO THE STATEMENT
"DRUGS ARE NOT A PROBLEM IN THIS DISTRICT"

RESPONDER	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
Administrators	14%	29%	14%	43%	0%	0%
Teachers	8%	15%	23%	34%	17%	3%
Parents	7%	41%	26%	22%	4%	0%

SOURCE: Review Team Survey, November 2005.

that we have received a copy of the Wharton ISD *Student Code of Conduct* for the 2005–2006 school year and understand that students will be held accountable for their behavior and will be subject to the disciplinary consequences outlined in the Code."

WISD's general conduct violations outlined in the *Student Code of Conduct* include disregard for authority, mistreatment of others, property offenses, possession of prohibited items, possession of telecommunications devices, illegal and prescription drugs, misuse of computers and the Internet, safety transgressions, and miscellaneous offenses. This document notes that:

> "Disciplinary action will draw on the professional judgment of teachers and administrators and on a range of discipline management techniques. Discipline will be correlated to the seriousness of the offense, the student's age and grade level the frequency of misbehavior, the student's attitude, the effect of the misconduct on the school environment, and statutory requirements. Because of these factors, discipline for a particular offense (unless otherwise specified by law) may bring into consideration varying techniques and responses.

Each school has a *Student Handbook* that also identifies the dress code. WISD *Dress Code* provides specific guidelines for all five campuses and all grade levels.

The *Discipline Management Plan* states that the teacher or administrator responsible for the discipline of a student in a given situation may use discretion within the broad guidelines provided in determining the disciplinary action most appropriate to the setting and the violation. Each school handles discipline individually. Student discipline referrals go to a teacher and principal conference. Special Education students have a conference with the parent(s), teacher, and principal.

The plan indicates that the campus administrator acts as the discipline person on each campus and has the authority to:
- Assess and implement the campus discipline management program.
- Remove a student from campus for emergency reasons.
- Refer students to school-community guidance centers, if available.
- Remove students to alternative education programs.

- Suspend a student for not more than three consecutive school days per incident.
- Recommend a student for expulsion.

The plan notes that discipline management techniques are available when assessing penalties for violations of the code of conduct, regardless of the offense. These include counseling, parent-teacher conferences, cooling-off or time-out, behavioral contracts, assigned school duties other than class tasks, verbal correction, withdrawal of privileges, including participation in extracurricular activities and honorary positions, sending the student to the office or other assigned areas, detention, corporal punishment, school defined and imposed probation, rewards and incentives, demerits, referral to outside agencies or authority, including school-community programs, confiscation of items that disrupt the educational process, grade adjustment, as provided by local policy, removal to an alternative education program, suspensions, and expulsion. This is typical in most districts.

Exhibit A-44 is taken from the online version of the *Discipline Management Plan* updated June 12, 2003, located at http://www.wharton.isd.tenet.edu/aboutwisd/misc/dmp0304.htm. The hard copy does not identify offenses by level.

During a community open house conducted for this performance review, a parent participant raised concerns regarding the district's discipline process during Level III hearings and the requirement for witnesses. In subsequent interviews, the superintendent noted:
- The district's standard is "reasonable belief" (that the facts and circumstances within the knowledge of the reviewer are sufficient to warrant a prudent person to believe an event has taken place). In a Level III hearing, the parent is given the option of recording the hearing as long as personnel issues are not the topic of the complaint. These include district personnel and other students.

- Violent incidents are investigated by campus administration and the local police.

- Although it is not mandatory to have an adult witness present, or to have an admission of guilt for an assault to be recognized, it always helps clarify the investigation when there is more than one student as a witness. There have been occasions in investigations when it becomes the word of one child against the other. In those circumstances, the campus administrator has a difficult

EXHIBIT A-44
WISD
DISCIPLINE MANAGEMENT PLAN
TYPES OF OFFENSES BY LEVEL
2005–06

LEVEL		TYPES OF OFFENSES	SAMPLE DISCIPLINARY OPTIONS
I	Minor acts of misconduct, generally observed in the classroom or in the building, which interfere with the orderly educational process, will result in disciplinary action. Discipline for Level I offenses is most often managed by the classroom teacher. Parents may be requested to come for a conference with the teacher to discuss the misbehavior and the disciplinary action.	Tardy; running or making excessive noise in the hall, classroom, or building; neglecting to bring required material or assigned work to class; failing to follow classroom rules; failing to participate in classroom activities; eating or drinking in an undesignated area; chewing gum; possessing and/or using nuisance items.	Verbal reprimand; time out in the classroom; confiscation of a prohibited nuisance item; special assignments or duties; behavioral contracts; withdrawal of privilege(s); change seat assignment; after school detention.
II	More severe and disruptive misbehaviors which interfere with the learning environment will result in disciplinary action. Parents will be notified of the offense and may be requested to come for a conference with the administrator to discuss the offenses and the disciplinary action.	Persistent offenses from Level I (minor acts of misbehavior). Cheating; truancy, including leaving school without permission; physical contact with another with implied intent to physically abuse; violation of the dress code; forgery of school records and/or forms; vandalism, engaging in acts of familiarity with another; using tobacco on school property; failure to serve detention; profanity, vulgar language or obscene gestures toward other students; assault.	Before school, after school, or lunch detention; grade penalty for copying or cheating; exclusion from extracurricular activities; corporal punishment; restitution; temporary removal from class; Saturday detention; In school suspension (ISS);suspension; removal to an alternative educational setting (permissive).
III	Acts of misbehavior which are serious and which disrupt the orderly educational process. Parents will be notified and requested to come for a conference with the administrator in each instance of Level III misbehavior.	Persistent offenses from Level II (more severe and disruptive misbehaviors). Placing any person in fear of imminent serious bodily injury by making threats of terroristic violence; gambling; fighting, trespassing, boycotting, physical abuse, or threat of physical abuse, stealing; insubordination, disturbance of classroom instruction; robbery; extortion, coercion, blackmail; vandalism; possession and/or concealment of a weapon; name calling, including racial and ethnic slurs; student harassment; offensive conduct of a sexual nature; perjury or lying as a witness during a school investigation; hazing; hacking; possession or distribution of pornographic or obscene material; sexual harassment.	Exclusion from extracurricular activities. Corporal punishment; suspension; removal to an alternative educational setting; referral to law enforcement; arrest.
IV	(Mandatory) Removal to alternative education program	Engages in conduct punishable as a felony, contains the elements of the offense of assault or terroristic threats under the Penal Code; sells, gives, or delivers to another person or possesses or uses or is under the influence of a controlled substance, alcohol, abusable glue or aerosol paint, volatile chemicals; public lewdness; indecent exposure.	
V	Expellable offenses		

Source: WISD Discipline Management Plan Including Student Code of Conduct, revised June 2005.

decision to make in determining whether a fight or assault has occurred.

Both the junior high school and high school include the *Tiger Life Plan* in the *Student Handbook*. This plan encourages students in "Making responsible Choices to Fulfill Human Needs." The *Tiger Life Plan*, created about 10 years ago by a campus committee, calls the process of student discipline "The Success Plan," and notes that all students begin each semester at the same level and move up in steps if they break classroom rules. Before the first step, the student receives a warning and is reminded of the rule involved. Administrative action levels begin at Step Four. The superintendent confirmed that the plan needs to be reviewed, updated and clarified so there is less room for interpretation by individuals. Included in this document are the five "The Tiger Life Rules" which are:

1. Practice and promote respect of self and others.

2. Be prompt and prepared.

3. Participate in all classroom activities.

4. Practice and promote safety.

5. Practice and promote responsibility.

Exhibit A-45 outlines the steps in the existing plan.

ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS (AEP)

In 1997, Congress reauthorized IDEA with some notable changes. The revisions require school systems to provide appropriate education services to students with disabilities, and make it easier to remove dangerous or violent students with special needs from the classroom. The law also permits the removal of students from regular education programs if they are involved with drugs or bring weapons to school.

WISD does not have a regular AEP; however, on occasion as mandated by a special education student's ARD, the district may provide an alternative education environment for an individual student.

WISD operates an In-School Suspension (ISS) program at each campus staffed by a certified teacher, and a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP) for grades 7–12, in a separate building adjacent to the junior high school building.

At the DAEP, there are two full-time teachers (one of which is the director), one aide, and one long-term substitute. The DAEP program starts at 8:00 a.m. and finishes at 2:50 p.m.

As of March 10, 2006, the DAEP had 31 students assigned to the program, and had served 110 during 2005–06 (**Exhibit A-46**). Of the students assigned to the program, 14 were

EXHIBIT A-45
WISD
TIGER LIFE PLAN
"THE SUCCESS PLAN"

STEP	LOCATION/TIME	ACTION	PARENT/GUARDIAN FOLLOW-UP
1	In classroom/submit plan	Complete acceptable Step 1 plan; submit to teacher; rejoin class activities.	Contacted by teacher on the day of the infraction.
2	Time-Out/SAC Room/duration of period	Review appropriate social skills; complete acceptable Step 2 plan.	Contacted by teacher. Parent mailed copy of Step 2 Plan along with form letter stating the next infraction may require the parents to come in for a conference with an administrator/teacher.
3	Time-Out/SAC Room/duration of period and one full day of SAC	Complete acceptable Step 3 plan; SAC room teacher counsels student.	Contacted by SAC supervisor; may be required to help student develop plan.
4	Time-Out/SAC Room/duration of period and one full day of SAC	Complete acceptable Step 4 plan.	Contacted by an administrator.
5	Three day SAC assignment	Complete acceptable Step 5 plan.	Conference with an administrator.
6	Three days of suspension	Complete acceptable Step 6 plan.	Conference with all teachers.
7	Suspension up to 3 days pending hearing for possible removal to an alternative placement.	Must have a hearing prior to return to campus.	

SOURCE: WHS and WJH Student Handbooks, 2005–06.

EXHIBIT A-46
WISD
DAEP STUDENT DATA BY GRADE
MARCH 10, 2006

GRADE	NUMBER OF STUDENTS
7	*
8	12
9	9
10	5
11	*
Total	**31**

*Numbers less than five have not been cited due FERPA 34CFR Part 99.1 and Texas Education Agency procedures OP 10-03.
SOURCE: WISD DAEP director, March 2006.

special education students. Of the 110 students that had been assigned to the program during 2005–06, 41 were special education students and 26 were repeat participants in the DAEP.

Exhibit A-47 shows the referrals to DAEP from 2001–02 through December 5, 2005, by ethnicity and special education.

CHAPTER 2
DISTRICT MANAGEMENT AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS

WISD's 2005–06 organization has seven functional positions, and five principals reporting directly to the superintendent (**Exhibit A-48**). This organization includes separate direct reports to the superintendent responsible for mainstream curriculum development, special population instructional programs, and integration of classroom technology.

The superintendent is responsible for the annual performance review of these positions.

The seven functional positions reporting directly to the superintendent include:

- The Athletic director is the head football coach at the high school, reporting to the superintendent for Athletic director duties only.

- The Business manager directs and manages the operation of all financial and business affairs of the district, including accounting, payroll, purchasing, and risk management. This position serves as the chief financial adviser to the superintendent and board. The Business manager is also responsible for PEIMS submission to TEA, and oversees the district PEIMS coordinator.

- The director of Personnel and Public Relations is responsible for all human resource and public relations functions of the district.

- The director of Auxiliary Services is responsible for WISD's food service, transportation/vehicle maintenance, and maintenance operations.

- The assistant superintendent for Instruction provides leadership for the overall instructional program of WISD.

- The director of Federal Programs coordinates programs for special student populations in WISD. This position is also in charge of the East Wharton County Special Instructional Services Co-Op, of which WISD is both a member and fiscal agent.

- The director of Technology is responsible for all of WISD's educational and administrative technology

EXHIBIT A-47
WISD
REFERRALS TO DAEP BY ETHNICITY AND SPECIAL EDUCATION
2001–02 THROUGH DECEMBER 5, 2005

YEAR	ETHNICITY			SPECIAL EDUCATION	TOTAL
	AFRICAN AMERICAN	HISPANIC	ANGLO		
2005–06**	29	25	5	21	**59**
2004–05	61	51	11	41	**123**
2003–04	53	45	16	40	**114**
2002–03	79	54	18	61	**151**
2001–02*	68	49	13	72	**149**

*19 not identified.
**2005–06 only through 12/05/05.
SOURCE: WISD DAEP director, March 2006.

EXHIBIT A-48
WISD ORGANIZATION
NOVEMBER 2005
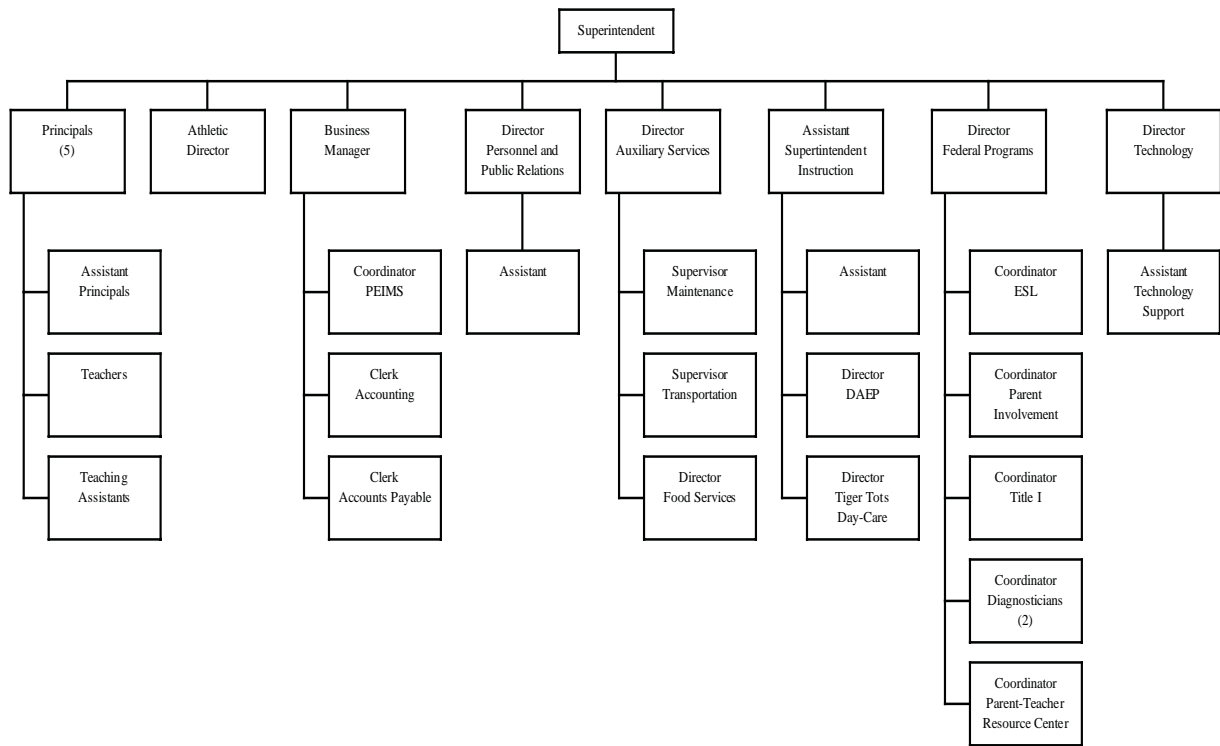
SOURCE: WISD assistant superintendent for Instruction, November 2006.

functions. The director is the technology leader of the district.

The Athletic director works with administrators, coaches, and other paraprofessional and professional personnel to organize, supervise, and coordinate a competitive sports program for WISD. Major responsibilities and duties include:

- supervise athletic activities;

- assist administration in evaluating all coaching personnel;

- assume responsibility for the continuous study and improvement of the athletic program;

- oversee program quality control;

- assist in any way possible for community and public relations with the media;

- assist in the selection and purchase of all equipment and supplies for the Athletic Department;

- work with head coaches and administration in preparation of an annual budget;

- maintain proper records of all financial matters;

- arrange for contracted services for athletic events as needed;

- coordinate maintenance of athletic facilities; and

- coordinate athletic scheduling.

Major responsibilities and duties of the Business manager primarily include those in fiscal management activities:
- inform the superintendent on the business affairs of the district;

- evaluate accounting procedures, systems, and controls in all district departments and recommend improvements in their design, implementation, and maintenance;

- maintain a continuous accounting program for all funds, and assist the district's independent auditors in conducting the annual or periodic audit;

- ensure that accounting systems comply with applicable laws and regulations including the Texas Education Agency's *Financial Accountability System Resource Guide (FASRG)*;

- develop periodic cash flow analyses to aid in determining cash available for investment and payment of bills;

- maintain the district's investment portfolio;

- oversee preparation of monthly bank reconciliations for all district bank accounts;

- approve all budget amendments;

- review and approve all purchase orders, check requests, and maintain control of budget by verifying availability of funds;

- assist in the preparation and development of the budget; and

- administer the business office budget, and ensure that programs are cost effective and funds are managed prudently.

Other areas of the Business manager's responsibility include those related to policy, reporting, and compliance with laws; purchasing and inventory management; and personnel management duties within the department.

Major responsibilities and duties of the director of Personnel and Public Relations include:

- teacher recruitment;

- teacher contracts;

- teacher certification;

- monitor paraprofessional certificates for renewal substitutes teachers;

- employment policies;

- supervise personnel records management;

- attend board meetings regularly and make presentations as needed;

- participate in professional development activities to maintain current knowledge of human resource rules, regulations, and practices;

- monitor and control NCLB personnel requirements; and

- coordinate the Texas Beginning Educator Support System (TxBess), a first year teacher mentoring program, and train mentors for the TxBess program using the TxBess Activity Profile instrument.

Public relations duties of this position include:

- being a spokesperson for the district in the absence of the superintendent;

- produce district print materials;

- provide pictures, articles and press releases for the local newspaper, published twice a week;

- maintain district press clippings;

- keep informed of developing communication trends and techniques;

- speak at civic organization meetings;

- coordinate the school columns for the local newspaper;

- supply tokens for Teacher Appreciation Week;

- work with the Chamber of Commerce on new teacher orientation;

- provide the Chamber of Commerce, Wharton Economic Development Corporation , and Wharton realtors with information on WISD and printed materials about the schools;

- write and annually update the Emergency Communication Handbook;

- write and publish Board Bits, which are the summaries of WISD board meetings;

- plan and direct the annual employee retirement, recognition, and appreciation banquet;

- assist with open records requests; and

- write and publish the WISD quarterly newsletter, *All Around Wharton ISD.*

Duties of the director of Auxiliary Services include making sure that the campus physical plants are maintained in a condition of operating excellence so that full educational use may be made at all times; providing students with a physical learning environment that is safe, attractive and functional; directing food service programs to meet regulatory and nutritional requirements for students; directing the district's transportation and vehicle maintenance program; and guaranteeing safe and efficient operation of the Transportation

Department. Major responsibilities and duties are listed by area in **Exhibit A-49**.

The assistant superintendent for Instruction is the only position at the central office assigned the responsibility of providing leadership for the overall WISD instructional program. The assistant superintendent's major responsibilities and duties include directing the implementation of the state-mandated curriculum, Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills

EXHIBIT A-49
WISD
DIRECTOR OF AUXILIARY SERVICES
MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES
NOVEMBER 2005

BROAD RESPONSIBILITY AREA	RELATED DUTIES
Food Service operations	• Direct district's food service program. • Work cooperatively with campus administrators to create lunch schedules and resolve personnel issues. • Direct the process of providing free and reduced lunch applications for meal eligibility and reimbursement of funds. • Annually review production records versus compliment to determine and substantiate the number of employees in food service. • Administer the food service budget. • Initiate purchase orders and bids. • Approve and forward invoices, and purchase orders for nonfood items to the Finance Department. • Develop improvement plans for the food service division.
Transportation operations	• Prepare and update bus routes and schedules for all schools, and develop plans for any future identified route extensions/additions. • Coordinate and document transportation for extracurricular activities and special programs. • Respond to after-hours emergency calls as needed. Operate bus and deliver buses to drivers when breakdowns occur, and substitute as a driver when needed. • Notify bus supervisor, schools, and public of any changes in bus routes and schedules. • Compile, maintain, file, and present all physical and computerized reports, records, and other documents required in transportation area. • Implement district's student discipline policy when riding district vehicles/buses, and make sure that drivers communicate to students expected behavior according to these policies. • Comply with applicable personnel policies. • Prepare the data necessary to process transportation payroll. • Contract for services that cannot be performed by district personnel. • Monitor fuel prices and storage compliance. • Administer transportation budget. • Initiate purchases and bids. • Approve and forward invoices for transportation to the Finance Department. • Recommend and coordinate disposal process of obsolete, worn-out, or vehicles with defects. • Recommend purchase of vehicles as necessary. • Review student behavior reports and conduct conferences with parents, students, administrators, and drivers on disciplinary issues. • Communicate suspension of riding privileges to drivers and transportation staff. • Assign bus drivers to routes. • Recruit, train, and supervise Transportation supervisor, and evaluate all transportation personnel. • Process and maintain all documents required for alcohol and drug testing of bus drivers, coordinate such testing, and evaluate suspect employees. • Advise administration about inclement weather conditions that may result in the closing of schools, and about road hazards. • Help with gathering of information in investigations of school bus accidents and student safety violations. • Organize and conduct training programs to promote driver and student safety. • Perform disaster duty and exercises as needed. • Attend professional growth activities to keep abreast of innovative techniques in transportation. • Maintain good rapport with parents and community.

EXHIBIT A-49 (CONTINUED)
WISD
DIRECTOR OF AUXILIARY SERVICES
MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES
NOVEMBER 2005

BROAD RESPONSIBILITY AREA	RELATED DUTIES
Building maintenance and repair	• Direct and manage maintenance and repair operations of district. • Receive and process work orders for repair and maintenance of buildings and grounds. • Prepare plans and specifications for contracted repair work and site improvements for bid processing. Oversee all major construction projects, working with architects and contractors. • Provide technical and supply support for custodial operations, and develop custodian guidelines for campus administrators to use when supervising and training their custodians. • Compile, maintain, and file all physical and computerized reports, records and other documents required in maintenance area. • Prepare the data necessary to process maintenance payroll. • Administer maintenance budget. • Initiate purchase orders and bids. • Approve and forward invoices and purchase orders to the Finance Department. • Recommend disposal of obsolete equipment, and purchase replacement equipment when necessary. • Assign and prioritize work to maintenance personnel, and inspect work-in-progress and completion phases. • Evaluate maintenance supervisory performance to ensure effectiveness. • Recruit applicants for maintenance positions and supervise the Maintenance supervisor. • Perform disaster duty when needed. • Attend professional growth activities to keep abreast of innovative techniques in maintenance operations. • Respond to after-hours emergencies as needed.

SOURCE: WISD job description for director of Auxiliary Services, November 2005.

(TEKS), districtwide; serving as a resource to teachers and administrators for curriculum development, effective teaching practices, program enhancements and any other area of instruction needing assistance; as well as serving as the district coordinator for the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), State Developed Alternative Assessment (SDAA), Locally Developed Alternative Assessment (LDAA), the Reading Proficiency Test of English (RPTE), and training all campus coordinators in these areas annually. Additional responsibilities include:

• directing the development, coordination, and evaluation of the district improvement plan;

• coordinating the staff development program for the district for administrators and teachers;

• administering selected federal programs;

• administering selected state-funded programs;

• writing grant applications to competitive grant sources and administering the grants awarded;

• administering the operation of the DAEP;

• administering the operation of the Tiger Tots day-care center at Wharton High School;

• overseeing the counseling program;

• overseeing the nursing program;

• coordinating and directing the annual adoption of textbooks;

• assisting in the coordination, design and evaluation of the district G/T program;

• serving as the district coordinator for the Dual and Concurrent Enrollment course offerings through Wharton County Junior College;

• coordinating the district Credit By Exam program; and

• assisting in interviewing and recruiting teachers and administrators.

WISD implemented a standard curriculum in 2005–06, developed and maintained by Regional Education Service Center V (Region 5), and tied to national and state learning

objectives. According to the assistant superintendent, implementation of the new Region 5 standard curriculum was voluntary for campuses in 2005–06, but is mandatory beginning in 2006–07. The assistant superintendent also implemented Regional Education Service Center X's (Region 10) Web-accessed Comprehensive Curriculum Assessment Tool (WebCCAT) districtwide.

The director of Federal Programs, as head of the Special Programs Department, coordinates programs for special education students in WISD. This position is also in charge of the East Wharton County Special Instructional Services Cooperative (EWCSISC), for which WISD is the fiscal agent. Other members of the EWCSISC include neighboring school districts East Bernard ISD and Boling ISD. The director is primarily responsible for special education administration for the district and the EWCSISC. As part of this responsibility, the director coordinates the operation and compliance of the following programs for both WISD and the EWCSISC:

- federal and state-funded special education programs, including 504 programs;

- all Title I programs;

- all Title III Bilingual and ESL programs;

- federally-funded vocational education programs; and

- the state supplemental visually impaired program.

The director collaborates with district staff and outside personnel to formulate, develop, implement, and evaluate federal and special programs. This includes responsibility for EWCSISC's special education program to ensure special needs students receive needed services. Coordination of these programs include providing individualized education programs (IEPs) to meet the needs of all students, and ensuring program compliance with all state, federal, and local requirements.

The position has responsibilities in the following broad areas:

- instructional and program management;

- policy, reports and compliance with laws;

- budget and inventory of federal programs for WISD and EWCSISC;

- personnel management;

- communication and community relations; and

- consultation.

Exhibit A-50 shows the major responsibilities of the director of Federal Programs by area.

The director of Technology is responsible for all of WISD's educational and administrative technology functions. The director is the technology leader of the district. Major responsibilities and duties include:

- developing a technology budget;

- providing assistance to teachers as they integrate technology into their curriculum;

- coordinating technology staff development training for teachers and all departments;

- developing, coordinating, and evaluating the WISD technology plan;

- supervising and approving all technology purchases, including hardware and software;

- overseeing file maintenance, network repair, computer equipment, and the district website; and

- assisting in developing policies and procedures regarding technology issues.

BOARD MISSION

The WISD Board of Trustees has adopted this mission statement:

> "By providing each student with a quality education second to none, Wharton Independent School District in cooperation with its culturally and economically diverse community, will produce graduates:
> - possessing the unquenchable desire for lifelong learning,
> - capable of pursuing their ambitions, and
> - prepared to seize the challenges of tomorrow."

The mission statement is reviewed annually and as needed by the board.

Interviews with most WISD board members and administrative staff support the belief that the WISD Board of Trustees generally work well together as a team, and indicate that administrative staff has a positive working relationship with board members.

A review of board minutes indicated that the board discusses agenda items in open meetings and that board votes were generally consistent, with most of the board in agreement with most issues.

EXHIBIT A-50
WISD
DIRECTOR OF FEDERAL PROGRAMS
MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES
NOVEMBER 2005

BROAD RESPONSIBILITY AREA	RELATED DUTIES
Instructional and program management	• Direct and manage special education programs and services to meet student's needs.
	• Ensure the use of technology in the teaching-learning process.
	• Encourage and support the development of innovative instructional programs.
	• Manage the special education referral process; arrange for, or conduct, student assessments; make recommendations regarding placement and program management for individual students.
	• Supervise and monitor the ARD process within the EWCSISC.
	• Participate in committee meetings to ensure the appropriate placement and development of individual education plans for students according to district procedures.
	• Ensure that curriculum renewal is continuous and responsive to student needs.
	• Inform superintendent or other administration of the effects of current and impending legislation.
	• Participate in the drafting of project proposals and reports, including the writing and development of the budget for federal/special funding of programs.
	• Prepare and submit standard applications for federal funds to TEA.
	• Evaluate all requests for projects and programs requiring federal/special money.
Policy, reports, and law	• Recommend policies to improve program.
	• Implement the policies established by federal and state law, State Board of Education rules, and local board policy in area of special education.
Budget and inventory	• Administer the special education budget and ensure that funds are managed prudently.
	• Compile budgets and cost estimates based on program needs.
	• Maintain a current inventory of equipment and recommend the replacement and disposal of equipment when necessary.
	• Approve and forward purchase orders for the Special Programs Department to the Finance Department.
	• Monitor grant-funded programs and their expenditures to ensure compliance with regulations and guidelines.
	• Ensure that federal/special programs are managed wisely.
Personnel management	• Evaluate job performance of district employees in the department.
	• Participate in the recruitment, selection, and training of personnel, and make recommendations relative to personnel placement, assignment, retention, discipline, and dismissal.
Communication and community relations	• Participate in professional organizations.
	• Articulate the EWCSISC's mission and goals in the area of special education to the community.
	• Use appropriate and effective techniques to encourage parent involvement.
Consultation	• Serve as liaison between school and other agencies on joint projects that are federally funded.
	• Consult with administrators, counselors, and teachers regarding federal/special programs.

SOURCE: WISD job description for director of Federal Programs, November 2005.

The majority of the board and community worked in tandem to prepare for the bond election in February 2006 that passed in a community vote.

OPEN MEETINGS—
EMAIL COMMUNICATIONS AND RELATED MATTERS

Email is frequently used as a form of communication regarding district business by and among board members and the superintendent. WISD policies BE (LEGAL) Board Meetings and BEC (LEGAL) Board Meetings: Closed Meetings discuss board meetings and related policy. According to Texas Association of School Boards (TASB), TASB supplied legal policies do not address the question of emailing among board members related to open meetings.

The newly required Open Meetings Act training provided by the Texas Office of the Attorney General and TASB discusses the issue of using emails for communicating board issues among board members. Based on discussion with TASB, the superintendent may send out information to board members routinely by email regarding board meeting information and school business issues. Board members, however, must be very cautious not to use email to discuss these issues among the members to the extent that a quorum of the members participates, which would create both open and closed meetings violations. As long as the discussion of issues includes three or less board members (less than a quorum), there is no problem related to these email discussions.

Texas Government Code §551.143 to 145 provide criminal penalties for violation of the Open Meetings Act. According to TASB, the district attorney of the county in which the potential violation occurs handles all possible violations. Under the Texas Government Code Sections referenced:

Board members that circumvent either open or closed meetings under the Open Meetings Act commit a misdemeanor punishable by:

1. A fine of not less than $100 or more than $500;

2. Confinement in the county jail for not less than one month or more than six months; or

3. Both the fine and confinement.

Board members that participate in a closed meeting knowing that there is no certified agenda of the closed meeting or no tape recording of the closed meeting commit a Class C misdemeanor.

The following sections of Policy BE (LEGAL) are significant to the issue of open meetings violations related to the emailing among board members:

"Meeting" means a deliberation among a quorum of the Board, or between a quorum of the Board and another person, during which public business or public policy over which the Board has supervision or control is discussed or considered, or during which the Board takes formal action. (Texas Government Code 551.001(4))

"Meeting" also means a gathering:
1. That is conducted by the Board or for which the Board is responsible;

2. At which a quorum of members of the Board is present;

3. That has been called by the Board; and

4. At which the Board members receive information from, give information to, ask questions of, or receive questions from any third person, including an employee of the District, about the public business or public policy over which the Board has supervision or control. (Texas Government Code 551.001(4))

"Deliberation" means a verbal exchange during a meeting among a quorum of the Board, or between a quorum of the Board and another person, concerning any issue within the jurisdiction of the Board or any public business. (Texas Government Code 551.001(2))

The Board may conduct a closed meeting for discussing these things as further described in BEC (LEGAL):
1. Attorney Consultation – Texas Government Code 551.071

2. Real Property – Texas Government Code 551.072

3. Prospective Gift – Texas Government Code 551.073

4. Personnel Matters – Texas Government Code 551.074

5. Employee-Employee Complaints – Texas Government Code 551.082

6. Student Discipline – Texas Government Code 551.082

7. Personally Identifiable Student Information – Texas Government Code 551.0821

8. Medical Or Psychiatric Records – Texas Government Code 551.0785

9. Security Devices – Texas Government Code 551.076

10. Assessment Instruments – Texas Education Code 39.030(A)

11. Emergency Management – Texas Government Code 418.183(F)

12. Economic Development Negotiations – Texas Government Code 551.087

If a closed meeting is allowed, the Board shall not conduct the closed meeting unless a quorum of the Board first convenes in an open meeting for which proper notice has been given and the presiding officer has publicly announced that a closed meeting will be held and has identified the section or sections of the Open Meetings Act or other applicable law under which the closed meeting is held. (Texas Government Code 551.101)

A final action, decision, or vote on a matter deliberated in a closed meeting shall be made only in an open meeting for which proper notice has been given. (Texas Government Code 551.102)

The Board shall either keep a certified agenda or make a tape recording of the proceedings of each closed meeting, except for private consultation with the District's attorney. The certified agenda must include a statement of the subject matter of each deliberation, a record of any further action taken, and an announcement by the presiding officer at the beginning and end of the closed meeting indicating the date and time. A presiding officer shall certify that a certified agenda is a true and correct record of the proceedings. If a tape recording is made, it must include announcements by the presiding officer at the beginning and end of the meeting indicating the date and time. (Texas Government Code 551.103)

Closed meetings may not be recorded by an individual trustee against the wishes of a majority of the Board. Zamora v. Edgewood ISD, 592 S.W.2d 649 (Texas Appropriation-San Antonio, 1979)

The Board shall preserve the certified agenda or tape recording of a closed meeting for at least two years after the date of the meeting. If a legal action involving the meeting is brought within that period, the Board shall preserve the certified agenda or tape recording while the action is pending. (Texas Government Code 551.104(a)) WISD uses certified agendas and has them on file for the two-year period.

A certified agenda or tape recording of a closed meeting is available for public inspection and copying only under a court order issued as a result of litigation involving an alleged violation of the Open Meetings Act. (Texas Government Code 551.104(b), (c))

No Board member shall participate in a closed meeting knowing that neither a certified agenda nor a tape recording of the closed meeting is being made. (Texas Government Code 551.145)

No individual, corporation, or partnership shall without lawful authority disclose to a member of the public the certified agenda or tape recording of a meeting that was lawfully closed to the public. (Texas Government Code 551.146)

No Board member shall knowingly call or aid in calling or organizing a closed meeting that is not permitted under the Open Meetings Act, close or aid in closing a regular meeting to the public except as permitted under the Open Meetings Act, or participate in a closed meeting that is not permitted under the Open Meetings Act. (Texas Government Code 551.144(a))

It is an affirmative defense to prosecution under Subsection 551.144(a) that a Board member acted in reasonable reliance on a court order or a written interpretation of the open meetings law contained in an opinion of a court of record, the attorney general, or the Board's attorney. (Texas Government Code 551.144(c))

Also significant to these issues are Texas Attorney General Opinions –
- JC-0307 – 2000 Cornyn, and

- LO-95-055 – 1995 Morales

PUBLIC INFORMATION REQUESTS

WISD follows board policy with respect to public information requests from the community and others outside of the district. Board policies specifying process and procedures in case of the receipt of a request for public information include:
- Policy GBA (LEGAL) Public Information Program: Access to Public Information

- Policy BBD(LEGAL) Board Members: Training and Orientation

- Policy BEC (LEGAL) Board Meetings: Closed Meetings

- Policy GBAA (LEGAL) Information Access: Requests for Information

- Policy GBAA (EXHIBIT) Information Access: Requests for Information

These policies incorporate all statutory provisions for handling public information requests.

WISD Policy GBAA (LEGAL) designates the superintendent as the district's officer for public information. Under the policy, each department head is an agent of the officer for public information for the purposes of complying with the public information laws and the district's policy on public records. The policy requires the public information officer to:

- make public information available for public inspection and copying;

- carefully protect public information from deterioration, alteration, mutilation, loss, or unlawful removal; and

- repair, renovate, or rebind public information when necessary to maintain it properly.

This policy follows Texas Government Code, Chapter 552, providing for information access to the public under state law. If the requested information is unavailable because it is in storage or active use, the superintendent or designee shall certify this fact in writing to the requestor and set a date and

hour within a reasonable time when the information will be available for inspection or duplication. If the superintendent or designee cannot produce the public information for inspection or duplication within 10 business days after the date of the information request, the superintendent or designee shall certify that fact in writing to the requestor and set a date and hour within a reasonable time when the information will be available for inspection or duplication. A requestor cannot take original copies of public information from the district under state law and board policy. Board Policy GBAA (EXHIBIT) specifies charges that the requestor must pay for copies of public information and the use of personnel and equipment resources of the district.

When WISD receives a public information request, it goes first to the superintendent, who then distributes it to an appropriate central office staff member for handling. The designated central office staff member processes the request as quickly as possible within the state-mandated 10-day period, and makes the information available to the requesting party. If the public information request might involve confidential information, the superintendent forwards it to the board's attorney for guidance.

The superintendent's secretary keeps an open records request log, containing hard copies of all letters, responses, and material related to all open records requests made. **Exhibit A-51** shows entries to the open records request log for the first calendar quarter of 2004.

EXHIBIT A-51
WISD
OPEN RECORDS REQUEST LOG
FIRST CALENDAR QUARTER 2004

DATE OF REQUEST	REQUEST SUBJECTS	DATE-RESPONSE
01/26/04	Information on Algebra I teacher at Wharton Junior High School (WJH)	02/06/04-Responded
01/27/04	1. All district records pertaining to the Gifted/Talented (G/T) program at WISD, to include documents, letters, emails, memoranda, board notes, report, notes from the evaluation process with Region 3 personnel, and records of any and all training received by district staff in this area. 2. All information pertaining to the funding of this program, including money raised by fundraisers and held by the school, and information regarding how the funding is used at each campus, both now and in the past. 3. All district records pertaining to inter-district transfers of students. The number of students who have transferred, and the districts they went to for the past five years. 4. The current and past WISD PEIMS Annual Performance Reports, and all related information regarding violence in WISD schools, including tables published in the 2003–04 District Improvement Plan and the 2003–04 WJH Campus Activity Plan.	02/06/04-Response Letter to requestor requesting for more specificity on Number One and Number Three.
02/10/04	Request for audiotape record of the Level Three proceedings before the Board on January 20, 2004, in which requestor expressed a complaint that own child was a victim of assault at school.	02/17/04-Response

EXHIBIT A-51 (CONTINUED)
WISD
OPEN RECORDS REQUEST LOG
FIRST CALENDAR QUARTER 2004

DATE OF REQUEST	REQUEST SUBJECTS	DATE-RESPONSE
02/10/04	1. Withdrew Request Number One on G/T Program from 01/27/04 2. Still requested Number Two 3. Clarified what was wanted in Number Three	02/17/04-Responded
02/12/04	1. WISD G/T curriculum for grades K–12, for the past three years 2. Notes and documentation of evaluations of WISD G/T program, for the past three years 3. Program Evaluation Model used by the WISD 4. WISD G/T staffing information, past three years 5. WISD G/T budget information, past three years 6. Number of children served in WISD G/T Program, disaggregated by subpopulation, for the past three years, as well as academic information of students 7. The last DEC report of the WISD G/T 8. Program documentation of administration and teacher annual training hours in G/T education for the past three years 9. AEIS Program information for each campus for the past three years, specifically: Student Enrollment by Program; Teachers by Program (populations served), Budgeted Instructional Operational Expenses by Program	02/25/04-Responded
02/13/04	1. G/T Program - curriculum K–12 2. Copies of evaluation that was performed this school year 3. Program Evaluation Model used by the district 4. The last DEC report of the G/T program 5. Documentation of administration and teacher annual training hours 6. AEIS Program Information for each campus for the past three years 7. Student Enrollment by Program Teachers by Program Budgeted Instructional & Operational Expenses by Program 8. Texas State Plan for the Education of G/T Students (revised May 2000) 9. Text of statutes that define "self defense" and "assault" 10. Texas Penal Code, Sec. 22.01 11. Texas Penal Code, Sec. 9.31 12. Texas Education Code, Chapter 37 13. Administrative procedure manuals for discipline referrals 14. List of employees to be evaluated 15. Job descriptions 16. Copy of each contract 17. Documentation of professional development for the past year 18. Last year's evaluation	02/27/04-Responded
03/02/04	1. District Improvement Plan, past three years 2. Strategic plans or long-range planning documents 3. District operating procedures and administrative regulations 4. Campus Improvement Plans, past three years 5. Administrative procedures for planning and decision-making process (district and campuses) 6. Procedures for selection of professional staff, community, and business representatives and parents to district and campus-level planning committees in a manner that provides for appropriate representation of the community's diversity 7. Dates and notes of public meetings of district and campus planning, and decision-making committee meetings for the past three years 8. The most recent biennial district evaluation report 9. Documentation of discipline management training, including current law, of WISD employees, for the past three years 10. Curriculum guides 11. Curriculum development process in general, and specifically the math curriculum development at WISD	(Spring Break March 8–12) March 15 – Responded (phone conversation with Superintendent) March 16 - Responded (list of all requests - asked requestor to highlight those which requestor felt had not been received) March 17 - Responded (Requestor came to office to examine materials) March 22 - Responded (Requestor came to office to examine materials)

EXHIBIT A-51 (CONTINUED)
WISD
OPEN RECORDS REQUEST LOG
FIRST CALENDAR QUARTER 2004

DATE OF REQUEST	REQUEST SUBJECTS	DATE-RESPONSE
03/02/04 (continued)	12. PEIMS 090 and 110 data for the past three years 13. Specific budget items, including revenues, receipts, expenditures, expenses, and disbursements for WISD G/T and Special Education programs for each campus for the past three years, including PEIMS 030 and 032 data, and also including funds raised by G/T parent support group at Sivells Elementary School 14. Dates of hearings for public discussion of the district annual performance report and the annual financial report for the past three years.	(Spring Break March 8–12) March 15 – Responded (phone conversation with Superintendent) March 16 - Responded (list of all requests - asked requestor to highlight those which requestor felt had not been received) March 17 - Responded (Requestor came to office to examine materials) March 22 - Responded (Requestor came to office to examine materials)
03/03/04	1. Employees to be evaluated, what type of contract they have, what they are certified in, and what classes they currently teach 2. Information relating to the Bullying programs. 3. Copy of employee's contracts. 4. Documentation of professional development for the past year. 5. Last year's evaluation. 6. Current G/T curriculum K–12 7. Copies of evaluation that was performed this school year. 8. Program Evaluation Model used by the district 9. Last DEC report of the G/T program 10. Documentation of administration and teacher annual training hours 11. AEIS Program information for each campus for the past three years	Responded within 10 days according to superintendent.
03/22/04	1. Dawson staff meeting agendas - 09/08/03 and 08/15/03 2. Dawson CPAC Agendas, sign-in sheets, notes 08/26/02–02/16/04 3. Crisis Prevention Training WISD 4. Sivells Discipline Training Records 5. Sivells CPAC Agendas and dates, 2000–01, 2001–02, 2002–03 6. MM Hopper Staff Development 7. MM Hopper Campus Performance Advisory Committee meetings for 2002–03 and 2003–04 school years 8. 32 G/T Training Records - Dawson 9. 18 G/T Training Records - Wharton High School (WHS) 10. 1 Email 03/17/04 Mrs.Garrett to Mr. Boyette 11. 26 G/T Training Records -WJHS 12. 12 WHS Faculty Meeting agendas, 2001–02 through 2002–03 13. 8 Math -Vertical Alignment Planning 14. WISD math curriculum	03/22/04-Responded
03/29/04	10 day extension to examine materials provided under the March 22, 2004, request	03/30/04-Responded permission to extend

SOURCE: WISD superintendent, March 2006.

Policy BBD (LEGAL) requires each board member to complete a training course regarding the responsibilities of the district, and district officers and employees under Chapter 552 of the Texas Government Code, within 90 days of taking the oath of office or assuming duties as a public official. The Texas Office of the Attorney General may provide the training, or approve other acceptable sources of training.

Board members who have been sworn in or assumed duties before January 1, 2006, must complete the training required by Texas Government Code 552.012 before January 1, 2007.

BOARD MEETINGS

WISD conducts board meetings in accordance with board policies BE (LEGAL) and (LOCAL). Policy BE (LEGAL) defines a meeting as a deliberation among a quorum of the board, or between a quorum of the board and another person, during which public business or public policy over which the Board has supervision or control is discussed or considered, or during which the Board takes formal action.

Policy BE (LEGAL) also defines a meeting as a gathering:

- that is conducted by the board or for which the board is responsible;

- at which a quorum of members of the board is present;

- that has been called by the board; and

- at which board members receive information from, give information to, ask questions of, or receive questions from any third person, including an employee of the district, about the public business or public policy over which the Board has supervision or control.

Board policies BE (LEGAL) and (LOCAL) also include the following information for conducting meetings of the board:

• Deliberation	• Social function or convention
• Legislative committee or agency meeting	• Open to public
• Parental access	• Recording
• Minutes	• Notice required
• Continued meeting	• Inquiry during meeting
• Time of notice and accessibility	• Internet posting
• Specificity of agenda / notice	• Emergency meeting or addition to agenda
• Catastrophe	• Special notice to news media
• Quorum	• Secret ballot
• Meeting by conference call	• Notice
• Recording	• Meeting by videoconference call
• Notice of locations	• Recording
• Quality of audio and video signals	• Remote participation
• Internet broadcast	• Attorney consultation
• Exception	• Hearing-impaired persons
• Meeting place	• Meeting time

• Special or emergency meetings	• Agenda
• Deadline	• Preparation
• Notice to members	• Closed meeting
• Order of business	• Rules of order
• Voting	• Consent agenda
• Minutes	• Discussions and limitation

WISD conducts closed meetings in accordance with its Policy BEC (LEGAL) Board Meetings: Closed Meetings. The board keeps a certified agenda of the proceedings of each closed meeting, except for private consultation with the district's attorney. The certified agenda includes a statement of the subject matter of each deliberation, a record of any further action taken, and an announcement by the presiding officer at the beginning and end of the closed meeting indicating the date and time. The presiding officer certifies that a certified agenda is a true and correct record of the proceedings. The superintendent's secretary keeps the certified agendas in accordance with board policy, maintaining the certified agendas of closed meetings in file for at least two years after the date of the meeting. If there is legal action involving the meeting within that period, WISD keeps the certified agenda while the action is pending. Certified agendas of closed meetings are available for public inspection and copying only under a court order issued resulting from litigation involving an alleged violation of the Open Meetings Act.

WISD maintains agendas and minutes of board meetings in accordance with board policy and state law. Agendas include public input opportunities, although the board members interviewed said the public rarely attends meetings. Policy BED (LOCAL) - Board meetings: Public Participation provides that the board shall allot 10 minutes to hear persons desiring to make comments to the board. Persons who wish to participate in this portion of the meeting shall sign up with the presiding officer or designee before the meeting begins, and shall indicate the topic about which they wish to speak. No individual presentation shall exceed five minutes. Delegations of more than five persons shall appoint one person to present their views before the Board.

WISD makes tapes of regular board meetings and the superintendent's secretary uses these to prepare meeting minutes for board approval at the next regular meeting. WISD provides tapes of regular meetings to board members and the public based on appropriate requests. The district charges the costs for these tapes to board members and the

public in accordance with WISD board policy GBAA (EXHIBIT) Information Access: Requests for Information.

The WISD board receives information packets the week before each board meeting, allowing board members and staff to review the agenda items before scheduled board meetings. Board packet items from the September 20, 2005, meeting included items listed below:

- Agenda;

- Information on a public hearing to discuss WISD's rating under the School Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas (FIRST);

- Minutes for final approval from previous meetings;

- Monthly financial reports and investment information;

- Tax Collector's Report;

- Disbursements for approval;

- Budget amendments;

- TASB Policy Update 76;

- Appraisal district resolution for inclusion of East Bernard as a taxing entity and allowing a new board member for the County Appraisal District;

- Superintendent's report on an evaluation instrument; and

- General information on items to be discussed in executive session.

SUPERINTENDENT EVALUATION

The WISD Board of Trustees evaluates the superintendent annually each January. Most interviews with board members indicated that they were very satisfied with the superintendent's performance. The WISD board uses a performance appraisal document dividing the evaluation into nine different areas as shown below:

- personal characteristics

- leadership characteristics

- board/superintendent relations

- administration management

- personnel management

- fiscal and facilities management

- campus and district improvement

- student services management

- school/community relations

Each area has several subareas for individual evaluation by the board members. The board evaluates the superintendent in the nine areas based on these performance categories:

3-Exceptional

2-Proficient

1-Needs improvement

At the end of the evaluation document, there is a section for each board member to comment on areas of the evaluation requiring additional written input. This includes written input on the superintendent's exemplary or excellent performance, as well as on areas needing improvement.

Once all board members have completed their ratings in the nine different areas, the board develops an average score by area. The board then discusses the evaluation with the superintendent.

The final step in completing the instrument involves the board's development of priority performance goals for the following year. The superintendent and board agree on these priority performance goals during the evaluation process.

The WISD superintendent and board agreed on six priority performance goals in the latest superintendent evaluation process (**Exhibit A-52**).

EXHIBIT A-52
WISD PRIORITY PERFORMANCE GOALS
SUPERINTENDENT EVALUATION
JANUARY 2006

GOAL	DESCRIPTION
1.	Increase student achievement in all areas - targeting ESL and economically disadvantaged students.
2.	Meet the needs of students requiring special services.
3.	Promote safe and orderly schools.
4.	Recruit and retain quality staff and increase starting teacher pay for the 2006–07 school year.
5.	Provide leadership in financial management.
6.	Maintain current facilities and prioritize district needs not covered by the new bond issue.

SOURCE: WISD superintendent, January 2006.

The WISD board updated the superintendent evaluation document in January 2006. The prior superintendent evaluation document had evaluation areas similar to the new one, but the board condensed most of the performance areas and categories to reflect the superintendent's performance more clearly. The board also added a new section to the document to develop five priority performance goals annually. **Exhibit A-53** displays a summary comparison between WISD's old and new superintendent evaluation document.

DISTRICT PLANNING

WISD follows Policies BQA (LEGAL) and BQA (LOCAL) for district-level planning activities. The policies establish duties for a districtwide planning committee in these areas:

- establishing the district-level planning and decision making process in accordance with Texas Education Code requirements;

- composing the membership of a district-level planning committee;

- establishing routine consultation with the superintendent;

- developing, evaluating, and revising the District Improvement Plan (DIP) annually to guide district staff in the improvement of student performance in accordance with state standards;

- analyzing district dropout prevention efforts;

EXHIBIT A-53
COMPARISON OF WISD'S OLD AND NEW
SUPERINTENDENT EVALUATION INSTRUMENT
JANUARY 2006

PERFORMANCE	WISD SUPERINTENDENT EVALUATION INSTRUMENT	
	OLD	NEW
Areas and number of subareas	1. Personal characteristics-9	1. Personal characteristics-4
	2. Leadership characteristics-6	2. Leadership characteristics-6
	3. Board/superintendent relationships-9	3. Board/superintendent relations-5
	4. Administration and school climate-9	4. Administration management-7
	5. Personnel management-9	5. Personnel management-7
	6. Fiscal and facilities management-7	6. Fiscal and facilities management-6
	7. School improvement-3	7. Campus and district improvement-3
	8. Student management-3	8. Student services management-5
	9. School/community relations-7	9. School/community relations-5
Categories	5-Clearly outstanding	3-Exceptional
	4-Exceeds expectations	2-Proficient
	3-Satisfactory	1-Needs improvement
	2-Below expectations	
	1-Unsatisfactory	
	Not Applicable - N/A, not known	
Comments	• Comments from board members on any area of the evaluation that requires an additional statement	• Comments from board members on any area of the evaluation that requires an additional statement
	• Statements included for exemplary or excellent performance, as well as areas needing improvement	• Statements included for exemplary or excellent performance, as well as areas needing improvement
Priority goals	None	• A maximum of five priority performance goals for the following year are determined during the evaluation process or no later than one month after the evaluation.
		• The superintendent and board agree on all priority performance goals.

Source: WISD superintendent, March 2006.

- holding annual meetings with one of these a posted public meeting to discuss WISD's performance and the performance objectives of the DIP;

- establishing systematic communications measures to periodically obtain broad-based community, parent, and district staff input; and

- providing information to the community, parents, and district staff regarding the district-level planning committee's recommendations.

As the district passed a bond issue in February 2006, facility planning was a major thrust in 2005–06. A facility-planning group made up of citizens was involved in this activity, which included a long-range facility plan.

The review team obtained the WISD DIPs for 2004–05 and 2005–06. These plans included documentation of district-level planning committee meetings, assessment of districtwide needs in student achievement and other operational areas, districtwide goals, and the objectives and strategies associated with achieving these goals. The DIPs showed that WISD modified its goals and objectives over the two-year period based on the needs assessments, and included additional goals based on the superintendent's priority performance goals for the year as established by the board.

LEGAL SERVICES

WISD uses the Bracewell & Giuliani law firm for legal services. WISD evaluates legal services annually, and the board amends and approves law firm arrangements as necessary.

In 2004–05, WISD budgeted $20,000 for the firm's legal services and spent $39,106. According to the WISD Business manager, the excess was due primarily to special education related cases.

CAMPUS PARTNERSHIPS

Exhibit A-54 lists campus partnerships.

EXHIBIT A-54
WISD CAMPUS PARTNERSHIPS
2005–06

BUSINESS PARTNER	SCHOOL	ACTIVITIES
McDonalds	M.M. Hopper	Perfect Attendance rewards; snacks; Honor
	Sivells Elementary	Roll/Accelerated Reader rewards
	Dawson Middle School	
Pizza Hut	M.M. Hopper	Book It; Reward Parties; snacks
	Sivells Elementary	Book-It
	Dawson Middle School	Honor Roll/Attendance rewards
HEB	M.M. Hopper	Gift cards, supplies
	Wharton Junior High	School supplies
Wal-Mart	M.M. Hopper	Pending Grant Process
Dominos	M.M. Hopper	Summer School snacks
	Wharton Junior High	Fundraisers
Sonic	M.M. Hopper	Summer School snacks
	Dawson Middle School	rewards
	Wharton Junior High	Honor Roll
Church's Chicken	M.M. Hopper	Summer School snacks
Wharton County Sheriff's Office	Sivells Elementary	Safety Presentations
Gulf Coast Medical Foundation	Sivells Elementary	$5,000 grant for Accelerated Reader
	Wharton Junior High	JH Football Programs
Wharton Funeral Home	Sivells Elementary	Set up Tent for Buddy Fun Day
Silver Wings	Wharton Junior High	Honor Roll
Coca-Cola	Wharton Junior High	Fundraisers
Better Beverage	Wharton Junior High	New Scoreboard
Hudgins Groover	Wharton Junior High	Scoreboard Advertising
Washington Mutual	Wharton Junior High	Sales rewards
Target	Wharton Junior High	Sales rewards
Paramount Promotions	Wharton Junior High	Honor Roll
Whataburger	Wharton Junior High	Reading rewards
Wharton Fire Department	Sivells Elementary	Fire Truck at Fall Festival
Wharton Police Department	Sivells Elementary	Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) training

SOURCE: WISD campus principals, January 2006.

CHAPTER 3
HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

TEACHER APPLICATION PROCESS, TURNOVER, AND EXIT INTERVIEWS

WISD uses an online application for prospective teachers. Applications are accepted and organized by the Personnel and Public Relations Department.

The district has a low teacher turnover rate and replaced only 16 teachers in 2005–06. District policy states that when a vacancy occurs, principals and department managers are to work with the Personnel and Public Relations Department to determine appropriate applicants to interview.

According to the director of Personnel and Public Relations, the Personnel and Public Relations Department does not conduct exit interviews with resigning teachers. Instead, this task is the responsibility of the campus principals.

PERFECT ATTENDANCE INCENTIVE

WISD uses a financial incentive to increase staff attendance. This incentive was added by a board policy update on November 29, 2004. The superintendent reported that this type of incentive has been beneficial in reducing district absences and has worked even more effectively since the incentive changed from being given annually to being given biannually. The director of Personnel and Public Relations also reported that the district has experienced a decrease in absences due to personal and sick leave.

The attendance incentive amount awarded for perfect attendance is given per semester, and is determined by the full-time employee's job classification. At the August 2005 school board meeting, the Board of Trustees adopted the schedule for 2005–06. Professional employees, excluding administrators, received $200, bus drivers received $70, and all other employees received $100.

STAFF WELCOME

At the beginning of 2005–06, the superintendent, Business manager, and director of Personnel and Public Relations worked together with the First Presbyterian Church, McDonald's, and the Wharton Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture to provide a district staff welcome event not only providing pertinent district information to new employees, but showing them that the district is honored to have them in their employ. This one day introduction served as an avenue to answer new staffers' questions, and got basic housecleaning items out of the way, thereby allowing the

focus of the remaining in-service days to be on the district's students. Additionally, the Chamber of Commerce provided each employee with a goodie bag filled with items from the local business community.

When discussing the low teacher turnover rate, the director of Personnel and Public Relations and the superintendent both said that district efforts to welcome new employees to the district was a huge factor in teacher retention, based on information in the teacher reduction data from the last few years. Although specific PEIMS data is not available for employee groups besides teachers, the district said that the turnover rate for these groups is similar to that of the teachers. Surveys conducted by the review team also support the positive impact this orientation process has on the way district employees feel; over half of each group surveyed felt that the district does a good job of orienting new employees to the district.

Employees who begin district employment other than at the beginning of the school year are provided with a modified version of the orientation that is accompanied by the same warm welcome that the others receive.

FILE RETENTION

On November 18, 2005, WISD initiated its annual file retention program for 2005–06. WISD contracts with an outside vendor to manage the district's records retention process. Directives are sent to the campuses by the Business manager on how to prepare records for retention, preservation, and/or disposal, in accordance with Local Government Code, Subchapter C, of the Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC).

Once those records identified by TSLAC's *Schedule for Records of Public School Districts*, have been prepared for the recommended action, the contracted company is charged with managing the identified records. This process takes approximately one month to complete, and each year newly identified records which were previously missed are retained or destroyed, according to procedural requirements.

CHAPTER 4
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

School districts adopt a tax rate at the beginning of each fiscal year to fund general operations and debt service. Calculation of this rate is dependent upon the certified tax roll provided by the central appraisal district. School districts levy taxes on real and personal property. WISD, like many districts, offers

property tax homestead exemptions of $15,000 to all taxpayers. The district offers an additional $10,000 exemption to taxpayers having an "age 65" or "disabled" classification. These exemptions remove part of the taxpayer's home value from taxation equal to the total exempted dollar amount. Land used for agricultural purposes is reduced to agricultural value upon application for an exemption by the landowner.

Five years of WISD property values are included in **Exhibit A-55**. Property values have varied from a 0.11 percent decline in 2002–03, to a growth of 15.82 percent in 2005–06.

EXHIBIT A-55
WISD
LOCAL PROPERTY VALUES
2001–02 THROUGH 2005–06

YEAR	LOCAL NET TAXABLE VALUE	INCREASE/ (DECREASE)	PERCENTAGE CHANGE
2005–06	$542,383,502	$74,080,491	**15.82%**
2004–05	$468,303,011	$15,392,567	**3.40%**
2003–04	$452,910,444	$11,072,960	**2.51%**
2002–03	$441,837,484	($529,170)	**(0.11%)**
2001–02	$442,366,654	$35,420,649	**8.64%**

Source: WISD Business manager, November 2005.

In 2004–05, WISD had a higher percentage of business properties than did its peer districts and the state, but a lower percentage than the Region 3 average, as illustrated in **Exhibit A-56**.

WISD's maintenance and operations property tax rate reached the maximum rate of $1.50 allowed by state law in 2002–03. However, in 2005–06, the district lowered its tax rate to $1.485. Local property values have increased by 32.65 percent during this same period (**Exhibit A-57**).

Since 2000, WISD has increased its reliance on revenue from local sources from 40.6 percent to 40.7 percent. State revenues fluctuated between a high of 55.0 percent in 2001–02 to a low of 51.4 percent between 2002–03 and 2003–04 to 52.6 percent in 2004–05. During this same period, other revenues, including interest earnings, have decreased while federal funding has increased, as illustrated in **Exhibit A-58**. Interest earnings during this time period have fluctuated based on the market interest rates.

WISD's local property tax funding as a percentage of total budgeted revenue is higher than all but one of its peers, but lower than the state average. A factor in the district's use of local property tax funds is its tax base. As the district's tax base increases, state funding decreases. In 2004–05, WISD received 52.64 percent of its revenue from state sources. This was above the state average of 38.6 percent (**Exhibit A-59**).

WISD's budget of total expenditures on classroom teaching was lower than all but one of its peers, as well as the state in 2004–05 (**Exhibit A-60**). The expenditure of $521,110 for flood-related expenses during this school year decreased the percentage of monies spent on classroom teaching. Without this expenditure, the district would have spent 56.2 percent, rather than 54.5 percent, on classroom teaching expenditures.

Exhibit A-61 shows how WISD distributed budgeted funds in 2004–05 as compared to the state averages.

WISD's expenditures per student have decreased from $6,579 in 2000–01, to $6,495 in 2004–05. Instructional expenditures have decreased $448 from the 2000–01 per student expenditure of $4,205 (**Exhibit A-62**). WISD's per student expenditures are above the state average for all but 2004–05.

EXHIBIT A-56
WISD, PEER DISTRICTS, REGION 3, AND THE STATE
ASSESSED PROPERTY VALUES BY CATEGORY
2004–05

ENTITY	BUSINESS	RESIDENTIAL	LAND	OIL & GAS	OTHER
Aransas Pass	20.4%	55.5%	8.1%	13.8%	2.1%
Cuero	37.4%	37.6%	22.2%	1.5%	1.4%
Edna	26.4%	27.1%	30.4%	14.6%	1.5%
El Campo	27.0%	31.6%	14.3%	26.2%	0.9%
Wharton	**44.2%**	**37.5%**	**11.4%**	**6.0%**	**0.9%**
Region 3	**48.7%**	**25.3%**	**12.8%**	**12.4%**	**0.8%**
State	**34.0%**	**54.6%**	**6.6%**	**4.0%**	**0.7%**

Source: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2004–05.

EXHIBIT A-57
WISD TAX RATE, ENROLLMENT, AND PER STUDENT PROPERTY VALUES
2001–02 THROUGH 2005–06

CATEGORY	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06	PERCENTAGE CHANGE FROM 2001–02 THROUGH 2005–06
Tax Rate	$1.485	$1.50	$1.50	$1.50	$1.485	0.00%
Total Students	2,606	2,544	2,507	2,484	2,399	(207)
Total Property Value	$431,467,224	$429,995,128	$440,704,561	$453,180,408	$502,560,537	$71,093,313
Property Value Per Student	$165,567	$169,023	$175,790	$182,440	$209,488	$375,055

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2001–02 through 2004–05, and WISD Business manager, 2005–06.

EXHIBIT A-58
WISD
BUDGETED SOURCES OF REVENUE
AS A PERCENT OF TOTAL BUDGETED REVENUE, ALL FUNDS

SOURCE OF FUNDS	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
Local property tax	40.6%	38.3%	34.8%	33.2%	40.7%
Other local & intermediate	3.7	3.2	4.2	3.6	2.92
State	52.6	55.0	51.4	51.4	52.6
Federal	3.1	3.5	9.5	11.8	3.76
Total	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

NOTE: Totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.
SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2001–02 through 2004–05, and PEIMS Budgeted Financial Data, 2004–05.

EXHIBIT A-59
WISD, PEER DISTRICTS, AND THE STATE
SOURCES OF BUDGETED REVENUE
AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL BUDGETED REVENUE, ALL FUNDS
2004–05

ENTITY	LOCAL PROPERTY TAX	OTHER LOCAL AND INTERMEDIATE	STATE	FEDERAL
Aransas Pass	39.01%	2.49%	54.21%	4.29%
Cuero	26.21%	5.44%	65.19%	3.15%
Edna	39.93%	3.67%	53.45%	2.95%
El Campo	43.97%	2.83%	49.54%	3.66%
Wharton	**40.69%**	**2.92%**	**52.64%**	**3.76%**
State	**54.17%**	**3.46%**	**38.60%**	**3.76%**

NOTE: Totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.
SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS Budgeted Financial Data, All Funds 2004–05.

EXHIBIT A-60
WISD, PEER DISTRICTS, AND THE STATE
BUDGETED CLASSROOM TEACHING EXPENDITURES
AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL EXPENDITURES, ALL FUNDS
2004–05

ENTITY	CLASSROOM TEACHING EXPENDITURES	TOTAL EXPENDITURES	CLASSROOM TEACHING EXPENDITURES AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL EXPENDITURES
Aransas Pass	$8,081,311	$15,234,558	53.1%
Cuero	$7,233,650	$12,624,099	57.3%
Edna	$4,931,855	$9,026,692	54.6%
El Campo	$12,307,988	$21,550,612	57.1%
Wharton	**$8,782,703**	**$16,130,874**	**54.5%**
State	**$16,118,450,371**	**$28,607,396,924**	**56.3%**

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

EXHIBIT A-61
WISD AND THE STATE
TOTAL BUDGETED EXPENDITURES BY FUNCTION
AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL BUDGETED EXPENDITURES, ALL FUNDS
2004–05

FUNCTION	WISD	PERCENT SPENT	STATE	PERCENT SPENT
Instruction (11,95)	**$8,782,703**	54.45%	$16,118,450,371	56.3%
Instructional-Related Services (12)	**354,744**	2.20	525,318,107	1.8
Curriculum/Staff Development	**193,286**	1.20	310,860,548	1.1
Instructional Leadership (21)	**39,369**	0.24	371,395,976	1.3
School Leadership (23)	**1,010,257**	6.26	1,727,503,540	6.0
Guidance and Counseling (31)	**374,673**	2.32	937,725,775	3.3
Social Work Services (32)	**22,038**	0.14	63,285,165	0.2
Health Services (33)	**199,624**	1.24	287,602,279	1.0
Student Transportation (34)	**432,778**	2.68	855,072,756	3.0
Food Services (35)	**843,984**	5.23	1,633,707,456	5.7
Co-curricular/ Extracurricular Activities (36)	**581,744**	3.61	754,237,672	2.6
Central Administration (41)	**680,799**	4.22	1,149,010,142	4.0
Plant Maintenance & Operations (51)	**2,447,243**	15.17	3,266,349,808	11.4
Security & Monitoring Services (52)	**9,728**	0.06	222,924,019	0.8
Data Processing Services (53)	**157,904**	0.98	383,462,260	1.3
Other	*	*	491,050	0.2
Total Budgeted Expenditures	**$16,130,874**	**100%**	**$28,607,396,924**	**100%**

*Not applicable.
SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS, 2004–05.

EXHIBIT A-62
WISD AND THE STATE
OPERATING EXPENDITURES PER STUDENT
2000–01 THROUGH 2004–05

EXPENDITURE CATEGORY	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
Instruction	$4,205	$4,334	$4,607	$4,632	$3,757
Instructional and School Leadership	430	437	467	476	423
Student Support Services	962	991	1,073	1,072	988
General Administration	226	241	250	258	274
Support Services	756	755	830	963	1,053
WISD Total Per Student	**6,579**	**6,758**	**7,227**	**7,401**	**6,495**
State Total Per Student	**$6,444**	**$6,696**	**$7,037**	**$7,084**	**$6,526**

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS Actual Financial Data, 2000–01 through 2003–04, and PEIMS Budgeted Financial Data, 2004–05.

WISD's grant funding per student has increased by $296 since 2001–02, as illustrated in **Exhibit A-63**. This increase can be attributed to changes at the federal level in the distribution of funds through NCLB.

FUND BALANCE

A district's fund balance is an indicator of its overall financial condition. Bond rating agencies consider fund balance when establishing the financial rating of a school district for assigning a debt rating. TEA has developed a formula to estimate a school district's "optimum" fund balance. **Exhibit**

EXHIBIT A-63
WISD
FEDERAL FUNDING PER STUDENT
2001–02 THROUGH 2004–05

YEAR	TOTAL FEDERAL FUNDING	AMOUNT PER STUDENT
2004–05	$2,565,206	$1,033
2003–04	$2,273,004	$907
2002–03	$2,249,760	$882
2001–02	$1,921,376	$737

SOURCE: WISD Financial Statements, August 2001 through August 2005.

A-64 shows that WISD has a small annual shortfall in the undesignated, unreserved general fund balance in comparison to the optimum fund balance formula. The general fund balance has been below the optimum level established by TEA for two of the last three years. The general fund is the primary fund that a school district uses to fund programs and pay the wages and salaries of employees. School districts typically reserve a percentage of this fund for unforeseen circumstances or events, such as natural disasters, changes in program requirements, delays in property tax payments, or changes mandated by the Texas Legislature. These funds are not earmarked, reserved, or designated for any specific use.

In 1997–98, WISD began discussing the need to build a new junior high gymnasium and the need to build the fund balance up to a level that would allow this construction. As planned, the district spent $1.6 million in 2002–03 on the construction of a new gymnasium, and installing air conditioning in all district gymnasiums. In 2003–04, WISD began rebuilding the fund balance for future projects that would not be a part of any bond packages.

The district uses a standard of three months operating expenditures as their minimum fund balance amount. For 2005–06, the fund balance was expected to grow larger because of an insurance reimbursement for damages sustained in the November 2004 flood of Dawson elementary. The reimbursement was $904,535 but the district only spent $521,110 on flood renovations.

WISD's operating fund balance as a percentage of their total expenditures increased from 31.9 percent of the budget in 2001–02 to 45.7 percent in 2004–05, the latest year for which actual financial information is available (**Exhibit A-65**). The difference in the district's fund balance between 2003–04 and 2004–05 was $672,730, and $383,425 of this net change was the difference between the flood insurance receipts and expenditures. In addition, $207,830 was due to

EXHIBIT A-65
WISD
OPERATING ENDING FUND BALANCE AS PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL EXPENDITURES
2001–02 THROUGH 2004–05

YEAR	ENDING FUND BALANCE	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL EXPENDITURES
2004–05	$7,420,316	45.7%
2003–04	$6,747,586	44.2%
2002–03	$5,846,550	39.1%
2001–02	$5,263,034	31.9%

Source: WISD annual financial reports, 2001–02 through 2004–05.

the transfer of funds from the district's self-funded insurance fund to the general fund since the district is no longer self-funded, and $81,475 was from the difference in revenues over expenditures for 2004–05.

STANDARDS OF THE SCHOOL FINANCIAL INTEGRITY RATING SYSTEM OF TEXAS (SCHOOL FIRST)

The School FIRST rating system was established by TEA to rate the financial status of Texas school districts by comparing the results of financial benchmarks to minimum standards developed by the agency. WISD ranked third out of its five peers in the percentage of operating expenditures spent on instruction (**Exhibit A-66**).

WISD's investment earning per student were lower than all but one of its peers as shown in **Exhibit A-67**.

WISD had the lowest administrative cost ratio when compared to its peers (**Exhibit A-68**). Low administrative costs are considered a positive attribute of a district.

MONTHLY BOARD FINANCIAL REPORTS

The Business manager presents monthly financial reports to the Board of Trustees at each regularly scheduled board meeting. The October 2005 financial reports included an

EXHIBIT A-64
WISD
OPTIMUM FUND BALANCE AND CASH FLOW CALCULATION
2001–02 THROUGH 2004–05

SCHOOL YEAR	WISD GENERAL FUND FUND BALANCE	TEA GENERAL FUND OPTIMUM FUND BALANCE	SHORTFALL OF WISD FUND BALANCE COMPARED TO TEA OPTIMUM
2004–05	$7,420,316	$7,556,179	($135,863)
2003–04	$6,747,586	$6,869,915	($122,329)
2002–03	$5,846,550	$5,790,234	$56,316
2001–02	$5,263,034	$6,067,487	($804,453)

Source: WISD financial audits, 2001–02 through 2004–05.

EXHIBIT A-66
WISD AND PEER DISTRICTS
SCHOOL FIRST RESULTS
PERCENTAGE SPENT ON INSTRUCTION
2003–04

SCHOOL DISTRICT	PERCENTAGE OF OPERATING EXPENDITURES FOR INSTRUCTION	ACCEPTABLE RANGE
Aransas Pass	55.86%	Yes
Cuero	57.72%	Yes
Edna	59.94%	Yes
El Campo	59.63%	Yes
Wharton	**58.54%**	**Yes**

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, 2003–04 School FIRST report.

EXHIBIT A-67
WISD AND PEER DISTRICTS
SCHOOL FIRST RESULTS
INVESTMENT EARNINGS PER STUDENT
2003–04

SCHOOL DISTRICT	INVESTMENT EARNINGS PER STUDENT	ACCEPTABLE RANGE
Aransas Pass	$31.51	Yes
Cuero*	$282.43	Yes
Edna	$67.77	Yes
El Campo	$51.60	Yes
Wharton	**$47.83**	**Yes**

*Cuero ISD's investment earnings per student include investment earnings on bond proceeds.
SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, 2003–04 School FIRST report.

EXHIBIT A-68
WISD AND PEER DISTRICTS
SCHOOL FIRST RESULTS
ADMINISTRATIVE COST RATIO
2003–04

SCHOOL DISTRICT	ACCEPTABLE ADMINISTRATIVE COST RATIO	ADMINISTRATIVE COST RATIO	ACCEPTABLE RANGE
Aransas Pass	14.01	11.62	Yes
Cuero	14.01	7.98	Yes
Edna	14.01	11.58	Yes
El Campo	14.01	7.76	Yes
Wharton	**14.01**	**7.14**	**Yes**

Source: Texas Education Agency, 2003–04 School FIRST report.

investment report for the month of September 2005, and copies of the investment pool reports as of September 30, 2005. Other financial information presented to the board included a monthly tax collection report; summary report of budgeted and actual revenues, expenditures and encumbrances for each fund; a list of disbursements over $10,000 for board approval; and a detailed listing of all disbursements for the month.

TRAINING

The Business manager is a Certified Texas School Business Official through the Texas Association of School Business Officials (TASBO). To obtain this certification, the Business manager completed three courses in accounting, three courses in payroll accounting, three courses in purchasing, and one course in management. The Business manager has also completed two additional courses from TASBO, and has 133 hours of training from workshops offered by the regional education service center on topics such as school finance, legislative updates, investment training, using Excel, the School FIRST, and setting tax rates. The bookkeeper/accounts payable clerk has completed three accounting courses offered by TASBO and has 62 hours of training from regional education service center workshops covering special education reporting, School FIRST, PEIMS changes, accounting, federal funds training, and the attendance at quarterly meetings.

BUDGET DEVELOPMENT

The Business manager begins the budget process in January of each year by establishing a calendar, estimating preliminary enrollment, and estimating budget projections for the budget year. In March, a budget document for the next school year is given to principals, campus secretaries, and department heads. The budget document includes instructions for completing the budget worksheets, and for entering the budget in the financial system. The budget document also includes board policy, the budget calendar, definitions of account codes, request forms for supplementary budget needs, State Compensatory Education guidelines, and site-based budgeting guidelines.

Campuses hold site-based budget meetings in March and April. Campus secretaries complete the budget worksheets and post the information into the financial system. Campuses are responsible for confirming that all budget entries and changes post to the budget. All budget information from the campuses and departments is completed by the end of April. During April and May, individual meetings are held with the principals and administrative staff, and the superintendent reviews the budgets.

The budget calendar and schedule of Truth-In-Taxation requirements are presented to the Board of Trustees each

April. Estimates of taxable values are received by June 7, and the non-salary budget is presented to the board between May and July. A budget workshop was held July 19, 2005 to plan for 2005–06, and pay increases were approved August 23, 2005. The budget was adopted August 30, 2005, after a public hearing on the proposed budget and tax rate.

Survey results show that a majority of parents surveyed, 63 percent, said that financial information is readily available, and 48 percent thought that the school board and district administration do a good job of explaining the use of tax dollars (**Exhibit A-69**).

PAYROLL

WISD processed 5,657 payroll checks, and 207 checks for deduction payments between September 2004 and August 2005. The Finance Department is staffed with one individual charged with preparing the monthly payroll for all employees; this position is also responsible for administering all benefits. The clerk pays an average of 489 employees per month. Approximately 58 percent of WISD employees participate in direct deposit. The payroll is a manual process; the clerk keeps leave records in a manual ledger and in the payroll system. Copies of all extra duty timesheets are given to employees with their paychecks. Manual time sheets are used rather than time clocks. In addition to posting substitutes into the payroll system, these positions are also posted into a spreadsheet.

FINANCIAL SOFTWARE

The district originally planned to upgrade its financial software in 2004–05, but this was delayed due to the flooding of the Dawson campus. On June 21, 2005, the board authorized the purchase of hardware and software to update the district's financial system. According to pricing received from the software vendor in March 2004, the upgrade would cost $40,750, with an additional $4,366 annual support cost. WISD spent almost $39,000 in support fees for financial and student software in 2004–05 from the same vendor.

The financial software does not have the capability of creating reports in Excel. In order for the report to be put into a spreadsheet, staff must enter a printed report into the spreadsheet. The Business manager manually signs every purchase order as there is no approval process in the financial system.

The upgrade will change the district from a Unix system to a Windows system. Users will be able to have several screens open at one time, and the system allows for multiple levels of security. The system includes an online TEA Financial Accounting and Reporting guide, online help, and the ability to designate funds active, pending, or terminated, and simplifies the end-of-month procedures. Reports can be previewed on the screen before printing, and all reports will use laser printers. The reports can also be saved and exported to various data formats such as Excel. Purchase orders will be printed on plain paper rather than preprinted forms. The software has an online bank reconciliation process. The system also includes simplified PEIMS processing that does not require multiple extracts and edits. The speed of edits is improved, thereby saving staff time.

CHAPTER 5
ASSET & RISK MANAGEMENT

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

WISD provides a variety of benefits to its employees. Employees earn five state personal leave days per year, and five local sick leave days per year for use in the event of illness. Local sick leave may accumulate to a maximum of 20 workdays, while state personal leave has no limit on accumulation. Both can be taken by the employee with no loss of pay. WISD also provides a sick leave bank. Employees may voluntarily donate sick leave to the bank to assist a specific employee suffering from a catastrophic illness who is unable to perform the duties of his or her position. Donated days are taken and requested from within job classification categories. The different categories in WISD are

EXHIBIT A-69
WISD PARENT SURVEY RESULTS
DECEMBER 2005

SURVEY STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
Board members and administrators do a good job explaining the use of tax dollars.	11%	37%	33%	19%	0%	0%
Financial information about my child's school or the district is readily available.	15%	48%	30%	7%	0%	0%

SOURCE: Survey conducted by review team, December 2005.

administration/professional, clerical/technical, and manual trades. To be eligible to receive leave from the bank, the employee must be eligible to participate in the Teacher Retirement System (TRS), be actively employed on a full-time basis, and have earned at least one day of local sick leave. No district employee is permitted to donate more than three days per school year. The maximum number of days that can be donated to a specific employee during the year is 30 days. Employees are offered other benefits to protect their and their family's health and livelihood, including medical, life, disability, dental, and cancer insurance.

The payroll clerk administers all benefits under the supervision of the Business manager. As new employees are hired by the district, the payroll clerk informs them of their options for insurance, giving them an enrollment packet. Enrollment is completed by submitting forms to the payroll clerk, except for Section 125 Cafeteria Plan benefits which are completed by an outside agent. Pursuant to Section 125, these benefits are paid for by the employee on a pre-tax basis.

WISD employees are covered under the state's health care program. All of the health plans available to the employees offer comprehensive coverage including preventive care,

prescription drugs, vision exams, maternity coverage, and many other benefits as illustrated in **Exhibit A-70**. A comprehensive summary of health benefits is available on the TRS website at www.trs.state.tx.us.

As of March 2006, WISD has approximately 72 percent, or 289, of its employees enrolled in TRS Active Care, the district's health insurance. A survey of peer districts found that WISD contributes the same amount for health insurance as all but Aransas Pass and Cuero ISDs, which contribute more by $62.88 and $6.67 respectively. (**Exhibit A-71**)

PROPERTY CASUALTY INSURANCE

The district has secured property casualty insurance through TASB as the result of a 2003 bid. WISD entered into an interlocal agreement with TASB, and has continued to renew coverage based on this agreement. An interlocal agreement is one of the eight procurement methods allowed under TEC §44.031 for the purchase of goods or services. WISD's coverage limits and premiums for 2005–06 are illustrated in **Exhibit A-72**.

Exhibit A-73 shows the property insurance deductibles for WISD and its peers in 2005–06.

EXHIBIT A-70
SUMMARY OF WISD EMPLOYEE BENEFITS
2005–06

BENEFIT DESCRIPTION	EXPLANATION	PAYMENT
Medical	Employee selects from one of three plans: • ActiveCare 1 • ActiveCare 2 • ActiveCare 3	The state and district contribute $75.00 and $150.00 per month respectively toward employee coverage. The state also provides $41.66 in health care reimbursement for all full-time nonadministrative TRS eligible employees.
Dental	Indemnity plan	Employees electing dental coverage for employee only have premiums of $37.10 per month for Preferred Provider Option, and $12.07 per month for prepaid.
Disability Income Protection	Optional ancillary insurance that provides income protection in the event an employee is sick or disabled for a long-term basis.	Rates vary with age and income.
Cancer	Optional ancillary insurance which provides a prescriptive benefit to individuals who are suffering from cancer.	Rates vary depending on options selected.
Term Life	Optional ancillary life insurance from $10,000 to $90,000.	Rates dependent on age and level selected.
Flexible Spending Account Plan	Health care and dependent care reimbursement through Internal Revenue Code Section 125.	Deduction dependent on employee choice not to exceed $3,600 for health care and $5,000 for dependent care reimbursement.

SOURCE: WISD records, 2005–06, Business manager.

EXHIBIT A-71
WISD AND PEER DISTRICTS
HEALTH INSURANCE INFORMATION
MARCH 2006

DISTRICT	HEALTH INSURANCE	EMPLOYER CONTRIBUTION
Aransas Pass	TRS Active Care	$287.88
Cuero	TRS Active Care	$225.00
Edna	TRS Active Care	$231.67
El Campo	TRS Active Care	$225.00
Wharton	**TRS Active Care**	**$225.00**

SOURCE: WCL ENTERPRISES email and telephone survey, February 2006.

WISD's insurance claims for 2001 through 2005 are illustrated in **Exhibit A-74**.

In July 2006, TASB notified WISD that because it was unable to buy enough reinsurance, its risk management fund would drop the district's property insurance coverage on September 1, 2006. The district requested insurance bids from six companies with two returning bids, including TASB, who had notified the district in August that coverage would be offered beginning September 1. At the August 2006 board meeting, TASB's policy was unanimously accepted buy the board, although the cost has risen to $328,883, an increase of $240,609 from 2005–06; this

EXHIBIT A-72
WISD
SCHEDULE OF INSURANCE COVERAGE
2005–06

COVERAGE TYPE	LIMITS OF COVERAGE	DEDUCTIBLE PER OCCURRENCE	PREMIUM
Buildings, Personal Property, Auxiliary Structures (Blanket Coverage)	$53,959,521	$1,000	**$72,306**
Hurricane and Hail Coverage		$25,000	**Included in Building Premium**
Flood (Excludes Dawson Elementary)	$10,000,000	$1,000	**6,600**
Equipment Breakdown	Same as property	$1,000	**3,518**
Band Equipment	$200,000	$250	**500**
EDP Enterprises (EDP) Equipment, Data, & Media	$1,750,000	$250	**4,725**
Direct Physical Loss of Technology Network Equipment	$250,000	$250	**625**
General Liability		$1,000	**2,709**
-Personal Injury	$1,000,000		
-Employee Benefits Liability	$100,000		
School Professional Legal Liability	$1,000,000	$2,500	**5,103**
Sexual Misconduct Claims Endorsement	$1,000,000	$2,500	**1,052**
Vehicle Fleet Liability	$100,000 per person $300,000 per occurrence	$250	**20,300**
Crime	$25,000	$250	**281**
Storage Tank	$500,000	$5,000	**1,354**
Flood Insurance			
-Dawson Elementary - grades 4 & 5 building (buildings and contents)	$1,000,000	$5,000	**6,621**
-Dawson Elementary - grade 6 building (building and contents)	$1,000,000	$5,000	**6,621**
-Learning Center (building and contents)	$386,500	$5,000	**3,102**
-Gym (building and contents)	$702,000	$5,000	**5,268**
Total			**$140,685**

SOURCE: WISD Business manager, November 2005.

EXHIBIT A-73
WISD AND PEER DISTRICTS
PROPERTY INSURANCE DEDUCTIBLE
2005–06

DISTRICT	DEDUCTIBLE
Aransas Pass	$250,000
Cuero	$5,000
Edna	$1,000
El Campo	$5,000
Wharton	**$1,000**

SOURCE: WISD Business manager and WCL ENTERPRISES peer survey, December 2005.

EXHIBIT A-74
WISD
INSURANCE CLAIMS
2001 THROUGH 2005

TYPE OF COVERAGE	NUMBER OF CLAIMS	TOTAL AMOUNT OF CLAIM	WISD'S PAYMENT OF CLAIM
Auto Liability	11	$49,619	$2,459
Auto Physical Damage	3	8,272	750
Crime	0	0	0
Equipment Breakdown	0	0	0
General Liability	8	0	0
Property	5	28,660	2,250
Band Equipment	0	0	0
EDP Equipment	0	0	0
Flood and Earthquake	2	17,346	1,000
Other Equipment	0	0	0
School Professional Legal Liability	0	0	0
Total	**29**	**$103,897**	**$6,459**

SOURCE: WISD insurance claims reports, 2001–2005.

increase is attributed to high insurance claims as a result of hurricane damage sustained in 2005.

FIXED ASSETS

Efficient management of fixed assets provides information for planning and control that identifies the type of asset, its original cost, and its physical location. This information is necessary for inventory records and calculating annual depreciation, and provides a basis for insurance valuations and other insurance purposes such as calculating premiums and determining replacement values for claims arising from fire, theft, vandalism, or other damage.

According to the Governmental Accounting Standards Board, statement 34, school districts are required to report capital assets without factoring in their depreciation value, so that the cost of a fixed asset, less accumulated depreciation, can be recognized over its useful life. WISD has established a $5,000 capitalization threshold. In addition to recording assets over $5,000, WISD has an inventory threshold of $200 for equipment such as computers.

The district's Special Education Resource Services aide is responsible for maintaining the fixed assets and inventory records. Other daily duties include operating the Parent/ Teacher Resource Center at the Education Support Center. The district's bookkeeper generates inventory reports monthly, and the fixed asset clerk pulls each purchase order of the inventory or fixed asset items. The fixed assets clerk also updates the purchase information to include a complete description, room number, and serial number. WISD completes an annual physical inventory in March. Each teacher receives an updated inventory list. If items are reported missing, a disposition report is given to the Business manager. The Business manager receives the superintendent's approval to remove these items from the inventory and then the fixed asset clerk removes the item from the inventory. The clerk also removes assets from the inventory when they become obsolete and are no longer of any use to the district.

WISD has over 50,000 items in fixed asset inventory, valued at nearly $27 million (**Exhibit A-75**).

EXHIBIT A-75
WISD
FIXED ASSETS
2004–05

CATEGORY	QUANTITY	VALUE
Land	7	$286,943
Building & Improvements	473	20,361,948
Furniture	574	250,510
Technology	1,725	2,344,167
Vehicles	72	1,356,341
Audio Visual Equipment	605	263,271
Library Books	44,801	535,769
Other Equipment	1,860	1,527,415
Total	**50,117**	**$26,926,364**

SOURCE: WISD fixed asset clerk, November 2005.

Expenditures for fixed asset or inventory items costing over $200 are made through the budget process. This includes items purchased from activity or agency funds, even though the district maintains these funds in separate bank accounts at the campus level. The schools may reimburse their activity or agency accounts with prior approval from the Business manager or superintendent.

DEBT

WISD currently has bonded debt of $18 million at an interest rate of 4.8 percent. This debt was approved by the WISD Board of Trustees on April 11, 2006, for the construction of a new elementary school.

WISD's previous debt history includes a 1996 capital acquisition program paid from general fund revenues. The last payment on this debt was in February 2006. The district used these funds to replace the Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) systems, replace lighting districtwide, and install an electronic energy management system for energy conservation. The district also used these funds for purchasing buses, maintenance of vehicles, cafeteria equipment, technology equipment, phone systems, science lab equipment, band instruments, and athletic equipment. The original debt was $4,370,000 for personal property financing, with a net effective interest rate of 4.51 percent, and $500,000 for real property with a net effective interest rate of 4.44 percent.

DEPOSITORY BANK

WISD requested bids for a district bank depository in May 2005. WISD mailed notices of the bid to six banks and received two responses. The Business manager reviewed the responses and then made a recommendation to the board. The district's depository contract is effective from September 2005 through August 2007. The bank charges no service fees to the district, and agrees to pledge collateral equal to 125 percent of the district's deposits.

INVESTMENTS

WISD manages its cash through investment funds and bank accounts to maximize interest earnings. The superintendent and Business manager are the designated investment officers. The board received an annual investment report reviewing investment objectives, strategies, and a history of interest rates for WISD on October 18, 2005. They also received an annual investment report detailing the investment earnings from September 2004 through August 2005. WISD's investments for 2004–05 were in two investment pools, three

bank accounts, and in direct investment instruments (**Exhibit A-76**).

EXHIBIT A-76
WISD
INVESTMENT EARNINGS BY INVESTMENT INSTRUMENT
2004–05

FUND	PERCENT OF TOTAL INVESTMENTS	AVERAGE INTEREST RATE	INTEREST EARNINGS
TexPool	8%	2.492%	**$16,891**
Lone Star	9	2.413%	**18,887**
Prosperity Bank/Investment Account	51	2.521%	**120,010**
Prosperity Bank/General Fund	25	1.760%	**37,353**
Prosperity Bank/Health Insurance	2	1.760%	**902**
Direct Investments	5	3.151%	**7,812**
Total	**100%**		**$201,855**

Source: WISD Annual Investment Report, August 2005.

WISD had over $9 million invested at the end of December 2005. Over 72 percent was invested in investment pools (46.8 percent in TexPool and 25.4 percent in Lone Star) as illustrated in **Exhibit A-77**.

As interest rates change, the Business manager moves funds into different accounts to maximize investments. **Exhibit A-78** illustrates the investment changes made by the Business manager from August 2005 to December 2005 to have funds in the accounts earning the most interest.

EXHIBIT A-77
WISD
INVESTMENT ACCOUNTS
DECEMBER 31, 2005

INVESTMENT	BALANCE INVESTED	INTEREST RATE	PERCENT OF INVESTMENTS
TexPool	$4,295,231	4.17%	46.8%
Lone Star	2,330,291	4.06%	25.4
Prosperity Bank/Investment, General Fund	757,179	2.53%	8.2
Direct Investments	1,804,000	3.77%	19.63
Total	**$9,186,701**		**100%**

Source: WISD Business manager, investment report for December 2005.

EXHIBIT A-78
WISD INVESTMENT ACCOUNTS
2004–05 ANNUAL COMPARED TO DECEMBER 31, 2005

INVESTMENT	2004–05 PERCENT INVESTED IN INVESTMENT FUNDS	DECEMBER 2005 BALANCE INVESTED	DECEMBER 2005 INTEREST RATE
TexPool	8%	46.8%	4.17%
Lone Star	9	25.4	4.06%
Prosperity Bank/ Investment, General Fund	78	8.2	2.53%
Direct Investments	5	19.63	3.77%
Total	**100%**	**100%**	

SOURCE: WISD Business manager, investment report for December 2005.

TAX COLLECTION SERVICES

Through the 1999 tax year, the Wharton County Central Appraisal District was responsible for the collection of taxes for Wharton ISD. WISD paid the appraisal district $9,349 for their collections services. In September 1998, WISD and Wharton County entered into an agreement for the county tax assessor-collector to serve as the district's tax assessor-collector beginning with the 2000 tax year, and each year thereafter at no cost to WISD. The county prepares and mails all tax statements and certifies the anticipated tax collection rate. The county will calculate the effective tax rate and publishes all notices required by law. The county provides monthly collection reports to WISD. The county also contracts for delinquent tax collection on behalf of the district. WISD pays the attorney's fee for collecting delinquent taxes from the receipts of delinquent taxes, penalty, and interest. Other districts pay an average of 37 cents per parcel for collection services according to the 2003–04 *Appraisal District Operations Report - Appraisal District Consolidated Collection Services Survey* compiled by the state Comptroller's office.

WISD and one other peer district do not pay for tax collection services as shown in **Exhibit A-79**.

By contracting with the county, WISD has saved over $56,000 in tax collection fees over the last six years. (The calculation uses the collection fee paid by WISD in 1999 of $9,349 x 6 years = $56,094.)

EXHIBIT A-79
WISD AND PEER DISTRICTS
ANNUAL COST OF TAX COLLECTION SERVICES
JANUARY 2006

DISTRICT	COST	PARCELS	COST PER PARCEL
Aransas Pass	$19,081	9,488	$2.01
Cuero	$8,230	8,613	$0.96
Edna	$11,900	11,900	$1.00
El Campo	$0	12,000	$0.00
Wharton	**$0**	**13,399**	**$0.00**

SOURCE: WISD Business manager and WCL ENTERPRISES peer survey, January 2006.

CHAPTER 6
PURCHASING

CONTRACT MANAGEMENT

Although WISD does not have a formal, centralized procedure for contract management, the superintendent or school board approves and signs all contracts. District departments are responsible for managing contracts specific to their areas. The only multiple year contracts the district has are for the bank depository, tax collections, financial audits, and an interlocal agreement for both insurance and purchasing cooperatives. The Business manager monitors these contracts and submits renewals to the school board as necessary. The superintendent and the individual departments responsible for the contracts also monitor them.

PURCHASING

TEC §44.031 requires competitive bidding thresholds for procuring goods and services, as shown in **Exhibit A-80**. Generally, when districts purchase items valued at $25,000 or more, or multiple like items with a cumulative value of $25,000 or more in a 12-month period, they must follow one of the competitive procurement methods listed in the exhibit below. When purchasing these types of items, WISD uses competitive bidding, requests for competitive sealed proposals, requests for proposals, and catalog purchases.

If the bid exceeds $25,000, TEC §44.031 requires a district to advertise bids at least once weekly for two weeks in any newspaper published in the county in which the district is located before it may accept bids for purchases. For purchases between $10,000 and $25,000, districts must advertise in two successive issues of any newspaper within their county per TEC §44.033. State law requires the advertisements specify the anticipated purchase categories such as art

EXHIBIT A-80
COMPETITIVE PROCUREMENT METHODS FOR TEXAS SCHOOL DISTRICTS
2005–06

PURCHASING METHOD	DESCRIPTION
Competitive Bidding	Requires bids to be evaluated and awarded based solely upon bid specifications, and terms and conditions contained in the request for bids, according to the bid prices offered by suppliers and pertinent factors affecting contract performance. Forbids negotiation of prices of goods and services after proposal opening.
Competitive Sealed Proposals	Requires the same terms and conditions as competitive bidding; but allows changes in the nature of a proposal and prices after proposal opening.
Request for Proposals	Generates competitive sealed proposals and involves several key elements, including newspaper advertisement; notice to proposers; standard terms and conditions; special terms and conditions; a scope-of-work statement; an acknowledgment form/response sheet; a felony conviction notice; and a contract clause.
Catalog Purchase	Provides an alternative to other procurement methods for the acquisition of computer equipment, software, and services only.
Interlocal Contract	Provides a mechanism for agreements with other local governments, the state, or a state agency to perform governmental functions and services.
Design/Build Contract	Outlines a method of project delivery in which the school district contracts with a single entity to both design and construct a project.
Job Order Contract	Provides for the use of a particular type of contract for jobs for minor repairs and alterations; typically used for jobs involving manual labor.
Reverse Auctions	Outlines a bidding process that involves submission of bids by multiple suppliers, unknown to each other, in a manner that allows the suppliers to bid against each other.
Construction Management Contract	Outlines the use of a contract to construct, rehabilitate, alter, or repair facilities using a professional construction manager.

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, FASRG, September 2005; Texas Education Code §44.031.

supplies, duplicating paper, or electrical supplies, to better target and attract vendors in a position to supply such goods. WISD advertises at the beginning of each year for such purchases, and uses this advertisement to create a vendor list. The district advertises for bids on purchases over $25,000 on an as needed basis.

The Office of the Attorney General in Texas issued Opinion JC-37 in 1999, stating that school district procurement through an interlocal agreement, or a cooperative purchasing arrangement, satisfies competitive bidding requirements. State law also allows school districts to participate in catalog purchasing programs from the Texas Building and Procurement Commission (TBPC) and Catalog Information Services Vendors (CISV). WISD has purchased school buses through TBPC and computers through CISV.

TEXTBOOK ADOPTION PROCESS
The assistant superintendent for Instruction oversees WISD's textbook adoption process. Both the assistant superintendent and the superintendent serve on the textbook adoption committee each year, in addition to one representative from each campus, dependent upon the subject area being selected.

For 2004–05, the committee included 18 teachers, the superintendent and the assistant superintendent for Instruction. The board approves the textbook adoption committee in the fall of each year. Committee members are encouraged to attend textbook presentations to view the available titles. The campuses also receive sample textbooks for review. The committee choices are presented to the board annually for approval.

VENDOR DISCOUNT BID LISTING
The Business manager conducts an annual, comprehensive request for proposals for instructional and office supplies; athletic supplies and equipment; and maintenance, custodial, electrical, transportation, and food services supplies and services. The vendors give the district discounts from shelf price and/or catalog price, and all prices include freight and delivery. WISD adds service vendors to a list and requests quotes as needed. This list is updated yearly, and includes approved vendors based on responses received from proposal requests. Campuses and departments use the approved vendor list to place orders for supplies, materials, services, and equipment. The board approves the discount bid vendor lists.

The review team evaluated all purchases between $10,000 and $25,000 made by the district from 2004–05. WISD had 26 aggregate procurements exceeding $25,000, and 36 of the selected aggregate procurements equaled or exceeded $10,000. According to provisions of TEC §44.033, all of the purchases between $10,000 and $25,000 followed competitive procurement procedures.

CHAPTER 7
COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE AND HARDWARE

In 2005–06, WISD had approximately 1,201 computers across the district: 71 Macintoshes (Macs) and 1,130 Personal Computers (PCs). Of this total, 1,178 units (71 Macs and 1,107 PCs) were located on the district's five campuses (**Exhibit A-81**). All of the Macs were located on the Hopper

Elementary Campus. According to the director of Technology, 142 (23 at the central administration building and 119 on the campuses) of the 1,201 computers were used for noninstructional purposes.

According to the WISD inventory provided to the review team, other equipment located at the campuses includes peripheral devices such as printers, scanners, and digital cameras.

WISD's wide-area network (WAN) consists of fiber optic cabling run on utility poles connecting all schools to the Education Support Center (Administration Building) through gigabit switches. The district leases two high-speed data circuits; a T-1 data circuit for Internet connectivity, and a T-1 data circuit to Region 3 in Victoria used for video conferencing, staff development, meetings with Region 3, and video communications with other educational entities

EXHIBIT A-81
WISD
CAMPUS COMPUTER INVENTORY
2005–06

SCHOOL	COMPUTER COUNT	COMPUTER LABS	MINIMUM COMPUTERS PER CLASSROOM	MEDIA PROJECTORS	TEACHER COMPUTERS
Hopper Elementary School	138	1 Application lab (24 computers)	2 to 3	2	1 desktop for each teacher.
Sivells Elementary School	209	Math lab (25) Reading lab (25) Library (7)	2 to 3	7	1 desktop for each teacher.
Dawson Elementary School	218	grades 4/5 lab (26) grade 6 lab (26) 2 Alpha Smart mobile writing labs (30 each) Library (6)	2 to 3	16	1 desktop for each teacher.
Wharton Junior High School	251	Tech Application lab (27) Open lab (28) Math lab (26) Keyboarding lab (24) Alternative lab (20 each) Library (9)	2 to 3	8	1 desktop or laptop for each teacher.
Wharton High School	362	Business Computer Information Systems (BCIS) lab (25) BCIS/GA lab (25) Plato lab (20) Plato laptops (10) Math lab (30) Writing lab (30) TAKS lab (20) 2 Mobile labs (15 each) Library (28)	2 to 3	12	1 desktop for each teacher.
Total	**1,178**				

SOURCE: WISD director of Technology, March 2006.

through the Texas Education Telecommunications Network (TETN). The WAN connects to classrooms through 100 Megabit, Category 5 (Cat 5) twisted-pair cable. All five schools and all of the district's 270 classrooms are connected to the Internet, and all schools have combinations of networked and stand-alone printers.

WISD has computer labs in all schools. The high school has multiple labs, including a mobile wireless lab, two open labs that focus on math and writing, a small TAKS lab, and two dedicated labs: Technology Applications (Tech App) and Business Computer Information Systems. The junior high has four labs, including two open labs, a keyboarding lab, and a Tech App lab. Dawson Elementary and Sivells Elementary each have two open labs, while Hopper Elementary has one open lab.

All computers use Microsoft Office and Internet Explorer software. Teacher computers also have Microsoft Exchange for email. Other software programs include TAKS review and drill software, online attendance, and grade book software (WHS, WJH, and Dawson Elementary).

The director of Technology maintains the fixed asset inventory of technology equipment, and all inventory changes are reported to the coordinator. At the end of the year, teachers turn in an inventory of fixed assets in their classroom and the coordinator checks it against the inventory list to reconcile the counts. The coordinator also places a hand-written inventory code on each new computer, and ensures the proper licensing of all computers and software.

WISD teachers, administrators, and staff may request new computers for their classrooms and offices after five years, but the district does not necessarily dispose those replaced. These computers are often refurbished and placed back into classrooms running software applications that do not require the latest hardware technology. The coordinator contacts a recycling company to pick up a computer only if the main computer circuit board goes out. The coordinator purchases and stocks brand-specific replacement parts for its computers, and outsources repairs on laser printers.

TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

WISD uses a district technology committee to support implementation of the district's long-range technology plan. The committee consists of 14 members, including teacher representatives from each campus, all technology support staff, two district librarians, district administrators, two parents, and the director of Technology. The committee

meets a minimum of twice a year, in September or October and again in the late spring, to discuss and review any new information or state requirements related to technology, software needs, district issues, and specific strategies to ensure implementation of the district's technology plan. Additional meetings are called on an as needed basis.

To facilitate planning and decision-making, WISD uses the district technology committee to plan staff development activities, review and modify the technology plan, develop priorities for hardware and software purchases, and review campus and teacher technology requests before approving or denying funding requests.

As additional money is identified in the budget during the year, some of these funds are used for additional classroom technology. The technology committee is involved in reviewing these additional requests and making recommendations to the director of Technology and the superintendent.

TECHNOLOGY PLAN

TEA requires that all district technology plans address these requirements:

- E-Rate: Schools and districts are required to have an approved technology plan to participate in the federal Schools and Libraries Universal Service Support Program. The plan must establish clear goals and a realistic strategy; include professional development strategies; assess telecommunications services, hardware, software, and other services; provide for a sufficient budget to acquire and maintain the hardware, software, and other services; and monitor progress toward the specified goals and be able to make mid-course corrections. Districts use E-Rate funding to pay for basic telephone service, long-distance telephone service, T-1 data lines, and Internet access.

- No Child Left Behind (NCLB): Requires districts to address a broader range of requirements (12 criteria) than the minimum requirements of E-Rate (five criteria). NCLB holds districts accountable for evaluating the success or failure of all elements of the technology plan.

- NCLB Title II, Part D: Transforming Education Through Technology Program. Districts may receive a subgrant from TEA if their long-range technology plan is consistent with the statewide technology plan.

- Texas Long-Range Plan for Technology (LRPT): The Texas LRPT offers recommendations to school districts in four areas: teaching and learning; educator preparation and development; administration and support services; and infrastructure for technology. Districts must correlate the strategies for each objective in their technology plans to these recommendations.

- Texas Campus School Technology and Readiness (STaR) Charts: The Texas STaR Chart is a tool for technology planning, budgeting for resources, and evaluation of progress in integrating technology into the school curriculum and infrastructure. In addition to submitting their technology plan to the state, districts must submit the Texas STaR Chart Needs Assessment online through the STaR website for each school at least annually.

- Children's Internet Protection Act: Requires schools and libraries to certify that they are enforcing a policy of Internet safety including measures to block or filter content of certain visual depictions for both minors and adults.

Exhibit A-82 shows the goals and objectives of the WISD 2004–07 technology plan, and their correlation to the LRPT, E-Rate, and NCLB.

According to the 2004–07 WISD technology plan:
- all five campuses and 100 percent of the classrooms are connected to the Internet;

- there are three students for each computer, within the state's long-range technology plan guidelines of achieving a ratio of one student per one computer by 2010; and

- every teacher has a computer.

EXHIBIT A-82
WISD
2004–07 TECHNOLOGY PLAN GOALS AND OBJECTIVES*

GOAL	OBJECTIVE	CORRELATES TO
Improve student achievement and teacher effectiveness through the use of technology.	All teachers will integrate technology into instruction to improve student learning and meet the needs of individual learning styles.	LRPT: Teaching and Learning E-Rate: ER01 NCLB: 01, 02, 03, 04a ,07, 08, 10, 11
	All teachers and students will have access to and use technological curriculum resources.	LRPT: Teaching and Learning E-Rate: ER01 NCLB: 01, 03, 08, 10
District and Campus staff performance in technology will continuously improve.	All teachers will be offered professional development opportunities on basic loadset software and integrating technology.	LRPT: Educator Preparation and Development E-Rate: ER02 NCLB: 01, 03, 04a, 04b, 06, 07, 12
The administration will provide effective leadership for the district in integrating technology into the curriculum and improving effectiveness and efficiency.	The district will provide tools to ensure effectiveness and efficiency.	LRPT: Administration and Support Services E-Rate: ER01 NCLB: 03, 04a, 05, 12
	Planning will be ongoing for improvement in educational technology.	LRPT: Administration and Support Services E-Rate: ER01 NCLB: 06, 11
	Parents and the community will be included in technology initiatives.	LRPT: Administration and Support Services E-Rate: ER01 NCLB: 03, 09, 12
All students and educators in the district will have a cost-efficient, effective, and safe educational technology infrastructure.	All schools will have a technology and telecommunications infrastructure that facilitates good communications, instruction, and other services.	LRPT: Infrastructure for Technology E-Rate: ER01 NCLB: 05, 12
	All schools will have efficient and timely technical support.	LRPT: Infrastructure for Technology E-Rate: ER01 NCLB: 12

*As of June 2005.
Source: WISD Technology Plan, 2004–07.

Using needs assessment data identified in the district surveys, STaR chart results, and other anecdotal information provided to the director of Technology from staff, students, and other district stakeholders, the district annually reviews and modifies, on an as need basis, the three-year district technology plan. For 2005–06, the following key priorities were identified:

- The need to continue upgrading existing technology equipment to improve network speed, including network hubs and switches; more dedicated Cat 5 cabling from the classrooms to the wiring closets; and upgrading servers to the Windows Server 2003 operating system.

- Greater focus on the teaching and learning process for technology, especially in the areas of teacher preparation and development.

- At least half of the teachers surveyed said that they need more computers and projection devices in their classroom, extra training, and more time to develop technology-integrated lessons. They also would like more training on how to use spreadsheets and how to develop multi-media projects, including using digital cameras and scanners.

TECHNOLOGY BUDGET

Exhibit A-83 shows the breakdown of technology expenditures and funding sources for each year of the district's technology plan.

In the district's technology budget, 39.8 percent of the money comes from local funds, 24.2 percent from instructional tech funds, and 21.9 percent from capital outlay funds designated from the district's local fund balance (CAP funds) (**Exhibit A-84**).

INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY

In WISD's technology plan, the Executive Summary states "Instructional technology can have an effect on student learning. Direct teaching is the most important element that effects student learning—technology augments direct instruction but cannot replace. Technology must be viewed as a tool to accomplish learning, rather than an end in itself. Based on this belief, the WISD will establish initiatives that integrate technology with the existing curriculum." In the district technology plan, Objective 1.1 states "100 percent of the districts teachers will integrate technology into instruction to improve instruction. The use of instructional technology will supplement areas of overall district need."

According to the director of Technology, while there is no written technology curriculum for each grade level, the lab managers at each school are trained to understand the grade-level TEKS Technology Applications objectives. Since all students at each campus visit labs through their grade progression and take the required Technology Applications and keyboarding courses, these students meet competencies when they complete the eighth grade.

EXHIBIT A-83
WISD TECHNOLOGY PLAN
BUDGETED EXPENDITURES BY YEAR
2004–05 THROUGH 2006–07

BUDGET ITEM	2004–05	2005–06	2006–07	TOTAL
Staff Development	$11,230	$11,230	$11,230	**$33,690**
Telecommunications and Internet Access	9,744	9,744	9,744	**29,232**
Materials and Supplies	51,495	51,495	51,495	**154,485**
Equipment	67,594	66,594	66,594	**134,188**
Maintenance	93,848	88,848	88,848	**271,544**
Miscellaneous Expenses	0	0	0	**0**
Total Budget	**$233,911**	**$227,911**	**$227,911**	**$689,733**
FUNDING SOURCES FOR BUDGET				
Title II, Part D	$19,594	$19,594	$19,594	**$58,782**
E-rate	$7,698	$7,698	$7,698	**$29,074**
Local Funds	$206,619	$200,619	$200,619	**$607,857**

SOURCE: WISD Technology Plan, 2004–07.

EXHIBIT A-84
WISD
TECHNOLOGY FUNDING SOURCES
2005–06

BUDGET CATEGORY	LOCAL FUNDS	INSTRUCTIONAL TECH	CAP (*)	E-RATE	TITLE II, PART D	TITLE I
Telecommunications	$2,046	$0	$0	$7,698	$0	$0
Materials	12,359	33,987	0	0	0	5,150
Equipment	0	3,330	49,946	0	13,319	0
Maintenance	71,078	17,770	0	0	0	0
Staff Development	5,230	0	0	0	6,000	0
Total	**$90,713**	**$55,087**	**$49,946**	**$7,698**	**$19,319**	**$5,150**
Percentage of Total Technology Budget	**39.8%**	**24.2%**	**21.9%**	**3.4%**	**8.5%**	**2.3%**

*CAP funds are capital outlay funds designated from the district's fund balance.
Source: WISD Technology Plan, 2004–07.

The technology at each campus is designed to ensure that students meet required competencies with specific emphasis on the following:

- Hopper Elementary School (grades pre-K through K): Every student goes to the lab for 45 minutes weekly for keyboarding. The campus also has a variety of software programs used in the classrooms to support mastery of TEKS technology objectives, including Riverdeep Destination Success and Wiggleworks.

- Sivells Elementary School (grades 1–3): Every student visits the lab twice a week for 45 minutes per session. Students spend time on keyboarding, as well as math and reading software linked to TEKS objectives that are tested on the TAKS tests. Students also work on original projects using Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint software.

- Dawson Elementary School (grades 4–6): Teachers sign up for lab time, and students use the lab time to work on keyboarding, PowerPoint, research, and writing projects. Teachers can also access software related to TAKS science objectives for fourth and fifth grade students, and software related to TAKS reading objectives for fourth through sixth grade students. Some teachers at the campus use Neo AlphaSmart labs, SmartBoards, document cameras, and projectors in the classrooms. Region 3 trained 10 teachers on this campus through their Tech Mentoring Program. This program provides assistance to other teachers in integrating technology in the classroom.

- Wharton Junior High School (grades 7–8): All students take keyboarding and Technology Applications in grade 8 as stand-alone courses, using the state-adopted Prentice Hall Technology Applications courseware and the TEKS as a basic curriculum. In addition, the junior high school uses teacher-developed technology curriculum materials to complement the state-adopted courseware. Teachers also sign up for lab time. Students use the lab time to conduct Internet research and complete projects involving the use of PowerPoint, Excel, Rosetta Stone, Word, and geometry software.

- Wharton High School (grades 9–12): The English teachers all use the labs for research papers. Teachers in all other subject areas have an opportunity to sign up to have their students use the labs and the library lab for projects and research.

According to the director of Technology, future plans include focusing on projects targeting specific subjects. Although all eighth grade students take the Technology Applications and keyboarding courses, the district plans to have teachers in each subject area focus on technology competency. For example, language arts classes would focus on Word projects, math classes on Excel projects, social studies classes on PowerPoint projects, and science on multimedia projects.

ASSESSMENT OF TECHNOLOGY PROFICIENCY

In fall 2002, the TEA Educational Technology Advisory Committee implemented the STaR Chart. This online resource tool provides for self-assessment of campus and district efforts to effectively integrate technology across the curriculum. The Texas STaR Chart is designed around the four key areas of the *Long-Range Plan for Technology, 1996–2010*, and incorporates State Board for Educator

Certification Standards for all teachers and National Staff Development Council Standards. The areas include: Teaching and Learning, Educator Preparation and Development, Administration and Support Services, and Infrastructure for Technology. School districts use STaR Chart results to assist in technology planning, budgeting for resources, and evaluation of progress toward increasing levels of technology integration (**Exhibit A-85**).

The director of Technology responded to the STaR survey during the first year of implementation. Campus principals responded to the STaR Survey the second year, and all staff members responded to the STaR survey in 2004–05. Results are provided to the campus principals who meet with staff to determine training needs. Staff members on campuses statewide complete the STaR survey online, and the campus and district must use the profiles to gauge their annual progress toward integrating technology into the instructional program and alignment with national and state standards. The STaR survey evaluates individual skills in each area and categorizes results into four levels of progress: Early Tech, Developing Tech, Advanced Tech, and Target Tech.

All teachers at each campus in WISD complete the STaR chart. Each campus then submits a campus technology plan annually to the director of Technology.

Exhibit A-86 show that each campus is in the Developing Tech stage in all areas as measured by the STaR chart.

Based on the evaluation of the self-assessments done by each teacher and administrator, the director of Technology indicated two areas to be addressed during 2005–06: Teaching and Learning (specifically teacher role and collaboration learning), and Educator Preparation and Development (specifically content of training and capabilities of educators).

In addition to completing the STaR chart, teachers complete a brief, informal, annual email survey about their projected needs in technology. According to the director of Technology, WISD uses the STaR chart responses to "get a feel of how to plan for technology, both hardware and training." The campuses are also given a copy of their campus STaR Chart responses before developing their campus improvement and campus technology plans.

According to the director of Technology, 2005 survey results indicated that teachers were moderately, to very comfortable with hardware and the district's basic software (Microsoft Office), and were comfortable using email to contact parents. Approximately half of WISD teachers surveyed assign research on the Internet, and use the computer lab(s) available

EXHIBIT A-85
AREAS OF EVALUATION AND RUBRIC SCORES FOR THE TEXAS STAR CHART

PROGRESS LEVELS	TEACHING AND LEARNING	EDUCATOR PERSPECTIVE	ADMINISTRATION AND SUPPORT	INFRASTRUCTURE FOR TECHNOLOGY
Early Tech	6-8	6-8	5-7	5-7
Developing Tech	9-14	9-14	8-12	8-12
Advanced Tech	15-20	15-20	13-17	13-17
Target Tech	21-24	21-24	18-20	18-20

SOURCE: Texas STaR Charts, 2004–05; WISD director of Technology, November 2006.

EXHIBIT A-86
WISD
CAMPUS STAR CHART ASSESSMENT
2004–05

CAMPUS	TEACHING AND LEARNING	EDUCATOR PERSPECTIVE	ADMINISTRATION AND SUPPORT	INFRASTRUCTURE FOR TECHNOLOGY
Hopper Elementary School	Developing	Developing	Developing	Developing
Sivells Elementary School	Developing	Developing	Developing	Developing
Dawson Elementary School	Developing	Developing	Developing	Developing
Wharton Junior High School	Developing	Developing	Developing	Developing
Wharton High School	Developing	Developing	Developing	Developing

SOURCE: Texas STaR Charts, 2004–05; WISD director of Technology, November 2006.

at their campus. More than half of the teachers indicated that there are not enough classroom computers. Teachers did not specify any existing barriers due to a lack of technical or administrative support.

The director of Technology also reported that student surveys were completed in spring 2004 by district fourth, seventh, and eighth graders. The results showed that approximately 50 percent of the fourth grade students practice keyboarding, use word processing, use the Internet for research, and use associated printers that are available. Survey results from the seventh and eight grade students indicate computer use related to typing practice, word processing, Internet use, and printers. The use of spreadsheets, design of Web pages, digital cameras, or scanners was not identified as occurring by students, but according to the director of Technology these items are available. The use of spreadsheets and the development of multimedia projects is related to training opportunities as based on the needs assessment, offered by WISD during 2004–05.

DISTANCE LEARNING

WISD is a member of Region 3 Net3, a program offered by Region 3 that provides distance learning opportunities for staff development and other training. According to the director of Technology, WISD also offers distance learning programs providing additional educational experiences for students through TETN at WHS. Distance learning technologies enhance the learning process, providing opportunities for students that might not otherwise be available through traditional instruction methods. Distance learning also provides learning experiences for teachers through professional development sessions and training updates.

Based on information provided by the director of Technology, discussions have occurred regarding the district's desire to develop and expand distance learning capabilities beyond the current use level. No defined plan or implementation timeline has been developed to expand distance learning in support of student learning and additional professional development.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The effect of technology on student achievement revolves around how well teachers integrate technology into the classroom to support student instructional objectives. This requires placing computers into schools and classrooms, and providing resources that teachers need in order to incorporate technology into lesson plans and other educational activities.

Substantial professional development emphasizing both technology applications and its integration into curriculum, and classroom instruction is necessary to further technology integration. Teachers and administrators must have a clear vision of effective technology integration best practices, and a clear path to achieve true integration of technology into instructional programs.

WISD provides ongoing professional development opportunities for classroom teachers focused on increasing levels of technology integration into the instructional program. Ongoing staff development opportunities occur during the summer and early fall for new staff members.

According to the director of Technology, the ongoing professional development opportunities for classroom teachers focus on increasing levels of technology integration into the instructional program. Interviews with campus principals and the director of Technology indicated that WISD established professional development as a high priority for all staff. According to the 2004–07 technology plan, "All teaching staff will be offered professional development opportunities on basic loadset software and integrating technology." Strategies identified in the 2004–07 technology plan include:

- Using a train-the-trainers approach, develop a pool of qualified master trainers. According to the director of Technology, the district has completed this strategy.

- Offer after-school training sessions, provide summer workshops on requested topics, provide collaborative opportunities for teachers, and disseminate Region 3 training opportunities to teachers. In addition to disseminating the Region 3 Staff Development handbook, the WISD technology staff offers summer training based on the STaR Chart needs assessment and district survey responses.

- WISD will offer professional development opportunities using video-conferencing from Region 3 over Net3. Among the opportunities available to WISD teachers via video-conferencing are: Bilingual/ESL, adaptive PE, Leadership Academy, social studies, Campus Testing Coordinators, Title IV, PEIMS, G/T upgrades, special education, technology updates, E-Rate updates, and TETN offerings.

- WISD will send campus technology leaders to the Texas Computer Educators Association (TCEA) annual convention. In 2004–05, 17 teachers, three lab managers, two librarians, and three technicians went to

the TCEA convention. In 2005–06, 10 teachers, four lab managers, two librarians, and two technicians went to the convention.

- Assess teacher competencies to ensure all teachers reach a minimum eighth grade level of Teach Application competencies, as defined by the State Board for Educator Certification. According to the director of Technology, WISD offers three technology competency tests, and a teacher must pass all three tests to qualify for new hardware and software purchases. As of March 2006, 44 percent of all district teachers had passed all three tests.

Planned technology staff development efforts for 2005–06 are outlined in **Exhibit A-87**.

SOFTWARE ADOPTION

WISD has implemented a district software adoption process. According to the director of Technology, software is mostly standardized, but with prior approval a teacher or administrator can request specific educational software to be used on the campus-based server. At the campus level, an individual requesting evaluation and/or purchase of specific software must submit the request to the director of Technology through the campus committee and/or principal, for consideration and approval. With prior approval, a campus site-based decision-making committee, or individual staff members have the ability to purchase software from the campus budget to meet individual needs. The director of Technology relies on this approach to ensure that gaps across the curriculum do not occur, which results in greater consistency from classroom to classroom, grade level to grade level, and across campuses. Purchases are not made without communicating with the director of Technology. This procedure also guarantees that the application purchased is licensed, appropriately installed, and recorded on the district software database.

District software adoption procedures require that all software be previewed before purchase to assure that technology decisions are made only after considering the district's overall goals and objectives for instructional technology.

Information received from WISD's director of Technology indicates that several software programs are provided to each campus as a districtwide standard (**Exhibit A-88**).

EXHIBIT A-87
WISD
PLANNED TECHNOLOGY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
2005–06

TARGETED STAFF	TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES
All lab managers and selected teachers	TCEA Convention (February 2006)
All teachers	Marco Polo Internet training (June 2006)
Dawson Elementary School (5 teachers/year)	Region 3 Mentoring Group Specialized technology integration training (3rd year of project)
Dawson Elementary School	Science and reading teachers – Sleek software training (March 2006)
Dawson Elementary School	SmartBoard training in May
Staff targeted to take district technology competency tests/others as requested	Excel (summer and fall) PowerPoint Microsoft Word (Basic) Private tutoring (throughout the year)
Hopper Elementary School staff	Destination Success (August)
Special Ed teachers	CLASS training (September)
New WHS, WJH, Dawson teachers	Lynx Gradebook/Attendance training (August)
WISD special education staff	SEAS Computer Maintenance training (August)
WISD staff	Region 3 offering at ESC designated sites Region 3 offerings via Net3

Source: WISD director of Technology, March 2006.

EXHIBIT A-88
WISD
INSTRUCTIONAL SOFTWARE
2005–06

| CAMPUS | SOFTWARE TITLE | |
	ADMINISTRATIVE	INSTRUCTIONAL
ALL	• Windows XP • Office 2003 • Sophos anti-virus • Exchange (staff computers) • Teacher Self Report (teacher computers) • Spybot	• Office 2003 • Acrobat Reader • Internet Explorer

SOURCE: WISD director of Technology, March 2006.

CHAPTER 8
FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

HISTORY OF FLOODING AT DAWSON ELEMENTARY

Dawson Elementary is located within a 100-year flood plain near the bank of the Colorado River, and the school has flooded twice in the last eight years, in October 1998 and November 2004. The November 2004 flood left 15 inches of water and mud in the building, ruining carpet, cabinets, lockers, and doors. The school remained closed to instruction from Thanksgiving Day 2004, to January 3, 2005. During this time, students attended classes at the Wharton Civic Center, the WISD Education Support Center, and the Boys and Girls Club.

As a direct result of the flood damage, the WISD Board of Trustees began planning to construct a new school outside of the flood plain. This will result in closing both Dawson and Hopper Elementary Schools, the two elementary campuses closest to the Colorado River.

The community around Dawson Elementary has expressed concern about the plan as the new elementary school would not be located in their neighborhood. However, Dawson Elementary is not considered a neighborhood school since all district students in Grades 4, 5, and 6 attend the school.

Another concern mentioned in public comments related to the clean-up and restoration contract for Dawson Elementary after the 2004 flood. The concern was that the school board awarded a contract to clean up the flood damage to a company without conducting a formal bid process. However, TEC §44.031(h) and WISD Policy CV (LEGAL) state that if a school is damaged as a result of an unforeseen catastrophe, and the board determines that the delay posed by competitive bidding requirements would prevent or substantially impair

the conduct of classes, then contracts for the repair of the facility may be made by methods other than those normally required by TEC §44.031(h). The company participated in the contract to restore Dawson Elementary after the first flood, and the district was pleased with their work. The contract with the restoration company was approved during an emergency board meeting on November 29, 2004, and the district's insurance policy covered the restoration costs.

ENROLLMENT HISTORY

Exhibit A-89 illustrates WISD's enrollment history from 1994–95 through 2004–05. The district's enrollment declined over 11 percent during this time period.

EXHIBIT A-89
WISD ENROLLMENT HISTORY
1994-95 THROUGH 2004–05

SCHOOL YEAR	ENROLLMENT	PERCENTAGE INCREASE/ (DECREASE) FROM PRIOR YEAR	PERCENTAGE INCREASE/ (DECREASE) FROM 1994–95
1994–95	2,808	N/A	N/A
1995–96	2,793	(0.5%)	(0.5%)
1996–97	2,754	(1.4%)	(1.9%)
1997–98	2,760	0.2%	(1.7%)
1998–99	2,698	(2.2%)	(3.9%)
1999–2000	2,667	(1.1%)	(5.0%)
2000–01	2,605	(2.3%)	(7.2%)
2001–02	2.618	0.5%	(6.8%)
2002–03	2,566	(2.0%)	(8.6%)
2003–04	2,510	(2.2%)	(10.6%)
2004–05	2,485	(1.0%)	(11.5%)

SOURCE: WISD Master Planning document used in Facility Task Force Committee Meeting Number 2, May 2005.

MAINTENANCE STAFFING

WISD has fewer maintenance employees than two of the four peer districts (**Exhibit A-90**).

FACILITIES FUNDING

Since WISD voters approved the bond referendum in February 2006 to build a new elementary school, the district will apply for state funding to assist with debt repayment of the new bonds. However, state appropriations are limited, and TEA does not guarantee approval of the funds.

EXHIBIT A-90
WISD AND PEER DISTRICTS
MAINTENANCE STAFFING LEVELS
2005–06

POSITION	ARANSAS PASS	CUERO	EDNA	EL CAMPO	WHARTON
Supervisor	1	1	1	1	1
Carpenter	2	0	1	1	0
Plumber	1	0	1	1	0
Electrician	1	0	0.5	1	2
HVAC Tech	2	2	0.5	1	2
Painter	1	0	0	0	0
Locksmith	0	0	0	0	0
General Maintenance	11	4	0	4	3
Grounds Worker	5	2	1	2	6
Other	0	0	1	1	2
Total	24	9	6	12	16

SOURCE: WCL survey of peer districts, January 2006.

Texas offers two programs to assist districts with school facilities debt repayment, the Instructional Facilities Allotment (IFA) and the Existing Debt Allotment (EDA).

IFA provides assistance to school districts in making debt service payments or qualifying bonds and lead-purchase agreements. In order to qualify school districts must first apply for the program through TEA. If approved, IFA guarantees receiving districts $35 per unweighted average daily attendance for every penny of tax effort to assist districts in the payment of new instructional debt obligations. District property wealth is the central factor in determining which districts receive IFA funding. If IFA appropriations do not cover the demand in a given year, other factors are considered, such as whether the district was denied IFA assistance the prior biennium; substantial student growth in the preceding five years; and the absence of other outstanding debt. Most of the debt financed through this program is in the form of General Obligation bonds or lease-purchase agreements.

Districts can also qualify for EDA, which the district can use to offset up to 12 cents of local tax effort related to existing school district bonds. However, to receive the funds, the district must also agree to reduce its Interest and Sinking tax rate to reflect the amount of state assistance that, combined with local tax revenue, covers the principal and interest on the bonds.

OTHER MAINTENANCE OPERATIONS

The WISD Maintenance Department's procedures show that the district follows the following maintenance guidelines recommended by TEA's *FASRG*:

- Preventive maintenance: WISD schedules routine maintenance for tasks such as checking/replacing HVAC filters, adjusting/replacing HVAC belts, checking and greasing bearings, checking required fluid levels, pressure washing mold from equipment and structures, and checking electrical system components.

- Job descriptions for maintenance staff: WISD maintains written job descriptions for each maintenance staff position.

- Evaluating staff work performance and quality: The WISD Maintenance supervisor evaluates each maintenance worker annually using a written appraisal document. The employee is first evaluated on how effectively the employee promotes a positive climate, such as working well with others; reporting to work on time; being absent only with good cause; exhibiting good judgment in decision-making and problem solving; recognizing departmental needs and suggesting ways to improve efficiency and productivity. Employees are also evaluated on their performance and professional effectiveness, such as maintaining high standards of productivity; following district policies and procedures; demonstrating proper maintenance, care, storage, and use of equipment and materials; maintaining

proper safety and security precautions; and seeking to improve job performance through self-assessment, skill development, training, and goal setting. These evaluations are kept in the Maintenance Department files.

- Staff training: WISD encourages and assists the professional growth of its maintenance workers. As a result, five employees are certified applicators for pesticides, weeds, and ornamentals; one is a certified instructor for CPR, one is a licensed journeyman electrician, and one is a licensed universal HVAC technician. The district arranges for the technicians to receive continuing education classes to maintain their licenses and certificates. WISD also provides timely training for asbestos abatement and containment and other safety programs.

CHAPTER 9
FOOD SERVICES

NUTRITION EDUCATION

Nutrition education is not required, nor is it funded through federal and state regulations; however, the WISD Food Service Department provides nutrition education to students through promotions, posters, and information on the monthly menus. The Food Service director provides training for students on understanding food labels in the spring. The training is a work in progress for the fifth graders, and will provide 20 minutes on the nutritional analysis of a common menu served by the Food Service Department. The example menu will instruct the students on serving sizes, calories, and fat content. The Food Service director will also compare the calories and fat of low-fat milk and whole milk.

As of July 1, 2006, wellness policies are required in all school districts. The district wellness policy is a combined effort with physical fitness, curriculum, and current nutrition policies. The Food Service Department is responsible for compliance with current Texas Department of Agriculture nutrition policies.

TECHNOLOGY

WISD's Food Service Department uses the Systems Design company for point of sale (POS)and meal applications processing. Their system allows for student meal accountability. Students may prepay for meals or pay as they go. The student enters a four digit individual code tied to their account. The code identifies the student as a free,

reduced, or paid lunch recipient, and identifies the student's account balance. Food items are entered into the system at POS by the cashier, and the system determines whether cash is needed or not. The POS system compiles daily, weekly, monthly, or annual reports by meal category count. The system also determines total daily deposits by cash or check, and generates bank deposit information by campus locations.

Student information on System Design interfaces with the district's student database information from EDP. Student data is used for the free and reduced-priced meal application portion of the system. Applications for free and reduced-priced meals are processed in WISD's food service central office by the director and the assistant/buyer.

WISD's procedures for accepting free and reduced-priced meal applications include:

- Managers hand out letters to the households (applications and instructions).

- Managers receive applications at campus registration during the beginning of the school year.

- Any student who has not returned an application after the third week of school is sent another application.

- New students receive an application from the cafeteria manager to take home.

- All applications are turned into the Food Service Department.

- The Food Service director and assistant are the determining officials.

- The Food Service director enters all applications into the computer.

- Parents may complete an application at the food service office anytime during the school year between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.

The Food Service director feels this method is both effective and efficient.

The Food Service Department currently uses a computerized inventory system program from EDP for tracking inventory at the Food Service central office location. All food is brought to the central freezer and cooler warehouse. The campus managers have an order sheet on which they handwrite their weekly orders. The orders are entered into the EDP system by the Food Service assistant/buyer. The orders are printed

and given to the warehouse driver who pulls the products and delivers them to each campus. The department does a physical inventory monthly and at the end of the school year, comparing it to the computerized data at the central warehouse location. The Food Service director rarely notices discrepancies between the two inventory methods. If one is found, the director tracks back until the discrepancy is found and then makes the corrections. The procedure for tracking inventory at each campus locations is a manual physical inventory. This process is done periodically and is not on a standard schedule.

The Systems Design software provides all of the required federal reporting for operating child nutrition programs, and is working well for the Food Service Department.

CHAPTER 10
TRANSPORTATION

BELL SCHEDULE

WISD operates a single-bell schedule, meaning that all schools essentially start and end classes at the same time. WISD has four campuses beginning classes at 8:00 a.m., and three end at 3:15 p.m. Wharton Junior High has the only different end time: 3:18 p.m. Dawson Elementary School is the only school with both start and end times differing from all other schools: classes begin at 8:05 a.m. and end at 3:20 p.m.

BUS ROUTES

Exhibit A-91 shows the route data for WISD from 2000–01 through 2004–05. To establish route mileage and daily ridership figures, TEA requires districts to gather mileage and ridership data on the first Wednesday of each month of

EXHIBIT A-91
WISD
ROUTE SERVICES REPORTS SUMMARY
2000–01 THROUGH 2004–05

	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
REGULAR PROGRAM					
Annual Standard Ridership	150,120	148,860	130,140	132,300	145,080
Annual Standard Mileage	152,560	153,636	139,428	155,898	147,852
Linear Density	0.984	0.969	0.933	0.848	0.98
Effective Allotment per Mile	$0.97	$0.97	$0.97	$0.97	$0.88
Annual Mileage (including hazardous)	155,620	153,636	144,720	155,898	147,852
Total Daily Ridership	906	827	821	819	936
Hazardous Annual Mileage	3,060	0	0	0	0
Hazardous Daily Ridership	72	0	93	84	130
SPECIAL PROGRAM					
Total Daily Ridership	108	79	130	53	113
Total Annual Mileage	49,146	47,047	34,138	39,738	58,514
CAREER & TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM					
Total Daily Ridership	0	0	0	0	0
Total Annual Mileage	0	0	0	0	0
ALLOTMENTS					
Regular Program	$150,951	$149,027	$140,378	$151,221	$130,110
Special Program	53,078	50,340	32,772	42,917	63,195
CTE Program	0	0	0	0	0
Private Program	816	816	0	0	0
Total Allotment	**$204,845**	**$200,183**	**$173,150**	**$194,138**	**$193,305**

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, School Transportation Route Services Reports, 2000–01 through 2004–05.

the school year. The average of the two highest months is reported to TEA to establish ridership. Route Services reports generated by TEA from this data includes information on ridership and mileage for regular education, special education, and the CTE program.

In 2004–05, WISD transported 806 regular program riders and 113 special program riders on a daily basis; these students represented 37 percent of the district's total enrollment of 2,484. WISD operates 19 bus routes daily, including 13 regular transportation routes (transporting students over two miles), three special needs routes, and three in-town shuttles (transporting students less than two miles). The district also uses a 17-passenger van to transport students for extra-curricular travel. Bus routes are not assigned, rather drivers choose the bus routes they want to drive in order of their seniority.

Bus requests by district staff are submitted on a paper form to the Transportation supervisor after approval by the principal. After the trip is completed, the completed forms are given to

the secretary to the director of Auxiliary Services so that the proper budget can be charged.

OPERATIONS

The School Transportation Operations Report is designed to establish a cost-per-mile amount to be used for reimbursements from TEA in the fiscal year following the report. WISD's transportation costs increased over 55 percent from 2000–01 to 2004–05, while the total route mileage has only increased by 2.3 percent. WISD's cost-per-mile has increased 43.2 percent over the same period. According to TEA's 2004–05 Student Transportation Operations Cost and Mileage report, the district transported students a total of 298,936 miles at a cost of $2.32 per mile for the regular program, and $1.47 per mile for the special programs. Total 2004–05 operations costs were $642,292, with a state allotment of $193,305. WISD budgeted 2.68 percent of the district's total operating expenses for transportation, as compared to the state average of 2.99 percent. **Exhibit A-92** shows the School Transportation Operation Report over the last five years from 2000–01 through 2004–05.

EXHIBIT A-92
WISD
SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION OPERATIONS REPORT SUMMARY
2000–01 THROUGH 2004–05

	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	PERCENT CHANGE
OPERATIONS COSTS						
Salaries & Benefits	$265,406	$292,473	$290,793	$291,420	$348,099	31.2%
Purchased & Contracted Services	19,675	24,992	24,534	20,904	29,276	48.8
Supplies & Materials	51,157	43,747	58,269	58,224	87,735	71.5
Other Operating Expenses	9,498	14,069	56,470	120,300	177,182	1765.5
Debt Service	0	0	0	0	0	0
Capital Outlay	68,514	53,026	0	0	0	(100)
Total Operations Costs	**$414,250**	**$428,307**	**$430,066**	**$490,848**	**$642,292**	**55.0%**
MILEAGE SUMMARY						
Route Mileage	204,239	200,688	178,616	181,234	208,964	2.3%
Extra/Co-curricular Mileage	68,875	70,259	73,485	87,939	77,444	12.4%
Non-School Organizations Mileage	0	0	0	0	1,629	100%
Other Mileage	942	9,574	5,290	7,697	10,899	1,057.0%
Total Annual Mileage	**274,056**	**280,521**	**257,391**	**276,870**	**298,936**	**9.1%**
Cost per Mile – Regular	**$1.62**	**$1.65**	**$1.71**	**$1.83**	**$2.32**	**43.2%**
Cost per Mile – Special	**$1.07**	**$0.96**	**$1.44**	**$1.41**	**$1.47**	**37.4%**

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, School Transportation Operations Reports, 2000–01 through 2004–05.

Exhibit A-93 shows WISD's operations costs for transportation compared to its peer districts.

Exhibit A-94 is also a comparison of operating costs, but each cost category is shown as a percentage of the total operations costs for each district.

Other information obtained from peer districts' School Transportation Operations Reports shows that WISD has the second lowest cost-per-mile for pupil transportation compared to its peer districts (**Exhibit A-95**). Deadhead miles, as defined by TEA, are those incurred between the location where the student transportation vehicle is parked and the campus site where the route officially begins and ends.

PROCEDURES

WISD has a comprehensive transportation procedures manual. The Busing Guidelines for Wharton ISD manual includes safety and security procedures for both the driver and students while on the route, extra trip request procedures,

student discipline rules, and procedures for busing WISD students. It also includes the statutory requirements related to pupil transportation and driver safety policies. Phone numbers are included, with instructions of who to call in case of mechanical failure or emergencies. The procedures to follow if a bus is involved in an accident, including out-of-town accidents, are outlined in the manual.

At the beginning of 2005–06, the Transportation supervisor met with all certified drivers in a mandatory meeting, and reviewed the district's Busing Guidelines for Wharton ISD page by page. WISD requires all drivers to sign a statement that they have received the WISD bus handbook, and agree to follow all rules and procedures therein to provide for the safety and well-being of both the WISD students and the bus drivers. The transportation employees also meet monthly with the district's safety coordinator for safety meetings.

TRAINING FOR DRIVERS

In addition to the district's Busing Guidelines for Wharton ISD, all Texas school bus drivers are required to meet

EXHIBIT A-93
WISD AND PEER DISTRICTS
COMPARISON OF OPERATIONS COSTS
2004–05

SCHOOL DISTRICT	SALARIES & BENEFITS	PURCHASED & CONTRACTED SERVICES	SUPPLIES & MATERIALS	OTHER OPERATING EXPENSES	DEBT SERVICE	CAPITAL OUTLAY	TOTAL OPERATING COSTS
Aransas Pass	$207,168	$17,544	$77,599	$33,941	$0	$0	$336,352
Cuero	$467,553	$32,355	$116,881	$17,980	$0	$0	$634,769
Edna	$150,544	$11,147	$60,072	$112,123	$0	$0	$333,886
El Campo	$1,103,551	$39,047	$135,538	$130,642	$0	$0	$1,408,778
Wharton	**$348,099**	**$29,276**	**$87,735**	**$177,182**	**$0**	**$0**	**$642,292**

Source: Texas Education Agency, School Transportation Operations Reports, 2004–05.

EXHIBIT A-94
WISD AND PEER DISTRICTS
PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS OF OPERATING COST CATEGORIES
2004–05

SCHOOL DISTRICT	SALARIES & BENEFITS	PURCHASED & CONTRACTED SERVICES	SUPPLIES & MATERIALS	OTHER OPERATING EXPENSES	DEBT SERVICE	CAPITAL OUTLAY
Aransas Pass	61.6%	5.2%	23.1%	10.1%	0.0%	0.0%
Cuero	73.7%	5.1%	18.4%	2.8%	0.0%	0.0%
Edna	45.1%	3.3%	18.0%	33.66%	0.0%	0.0%
El Campo	78.3%	2.8%	9.6%	9.3%	0.0%	0.0%
Wharton	**54.2%**	**4.6%**	**13.7%**	**27.6%**	**0.0%**	**0.0%**
Peer Average	**60.1%**	**4.6%**	**19.8%**	**15.5%**	**0.0%**	**0.0%**

Source: Texas Education Agency, School Transportation Operations Reports, 2004–05.

EXHIBIT A-95
WISD AND PEER DISTRICTS
COMPARISON OF MILEAGE DATA, REGULAR TRANSPORTATION
2004–05

SCHOOL DISTRICT	ROUTE MILEAGE (INCLUDING DEADHEAD)	EXTRA/ CO-CURRICULAR MILEAGE	NON-SCHOOL ORGANIZATIONS MILEAGE	OTHER MILEAGE	TOTAL ANNUAL MILEAGE	COST-PER-MILE (REGULAR)
Aransas Pass	80,750	35,566	0	900	117,216	$2.47
Cuero	187,770	40,709	1,087	1,679	231,245	$2.58
Edna	104,107	25,009	793	1,558	131,467	$2.31
El Campo	373,485	74,816	3,201	47,464	498,966	$2.60
Wharton	**150,602**	**74,988**	**1,629**	**10,899**	**238,118**	**$2.32**

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, School Transportation Operations Reports, 2004–05.

standards as set in TAC, Rule 14.11. Bus drivers must be at least 18 years of age; possess a valid driver license; meet medical requirements by obtaining an annual physical; maintain an acceptable driving record that is reviewed annually; and possess a valid Texas School Bus Driver Safety Training Certificate verifying the successful completion of the Texas School Bus Driver Safety Training Program. The training course includes instruction in 10 units comprising the Course Guide for School Bus Driver Training in Texas as approved by the Texas Department of Public Safety. The 10 units include:

- Introduction;

- School bus driver's image;

- Preventive maintenance;

- Traffic regulations and driving procedures;

- Defensive driving;

- Safety and emergency procedures;

- First aid;

- Procedures for loading and unloading students;

- Special education/handicapped child; and

- Awareness and effects of alcohol and other drugs.

RECORDS RETENTION

The secretary to the director of Auxiliary Services is responsible for keeping bus driver personnel files current to ensure compliance with the TAC. The district maintains this information in bus driver files:

- Texas Department of Public Safety driving check, completed annually;

- annual physical;

- copy of current driver license; and

- copy of TEA-required certification.

This information is maintained in a spreadsheet by the secretary to the director of Auxiliary Services, and the Transportation supervisor does not allow a bus driver to drive unless all information is complete.

COMMUNITY

Survey results show that parents are pleased with the transportation services provided by WISD (**Exhibit A-96**).

EXHIBIT A-96
WISD PARENT RESPONSES TO SURVEY STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 2005

SURVEY STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
The length of the student's bus ride is reasonable	11%	30%	26%	7%	4%	22%
The drop-off zone at the school is safe.	15%	44%	22%	0%	0%	19%
The bus stop near my house is safe.	7%	37%	30%	4%	0%	22%
The bus stop is within walking distance from our home.	11%	33%	30%	0%	4%	22%
Busses arrive and depart on time.	15%	30%	26%	7%	0%	22%

SOURCE: Survey conducted by review team, December 2005.

TEACHER SURVEY

N=96

PART A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Note: Percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding.

QUESTION	5 YEARS OR LESS	6-10 YEARS	11-15 YEARS	16-20 YEARS	20+ YEARS	NO ANSWER
How long have you been employed by the school district?	23%	22%	7%	13%	29%	6%

STATEMENT	ELEMENTARY	JUNIOR HIGH	HIGH	NO ANSWER
Circle the grade level you teach. If you work at two levels, please circle the one at which you teach the most classes.	60%	11%	22%	6%

PART B: SURVEY QUESTIONS

A. DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
1. Central office staff is accessible to teachers.	46%	39%	5%	7%	2%	1%
2. Central administration supports the educational process.	46%	42%	2%	7%	2%	1%
3. Campus principals and assistant principals are accessible to teachers.	64%	30%	2%	3%	0%	1%
4. The campus improvement plan reflects the priorities of my school.	50%	36%	8%	3%	0%	2%
5. The strategies/activities included in the plan to address priorities at my school are effective.	40%	40%	8%	9%	1%	2%

B. EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
6. Education is the main priority in our school district.	46%	42%	2%	7%	2%	1%
7. The district provides curriculum guides for all grades and subjects.	35%	41%	13%	5%	4%	2%
8. The curriculum guides are appropriately aligned and coordinated.	34%	28%	15%	15%	6%	2%
9. The district's curriculum guides clearly outline what to teach and how to teach it.	27%	33%	18%	14%	5%	3%
10. The district provided sufficient training in the use of the curriculum guides prior to their implementation.	16%	38%	20%	20%	3%	4%
11. Input from teachers was widely solicited in the selection, and any modification, of curriculum guides.	17%	25%	21%	27%	7%	3%

B. EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY (CONTINUED)

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	NO ANSWER
12. My principal encourages the use of the curriculum guides.	27%	45%	16%	6%	2%	4%
13. I use the curriculum guide on a regular basis.	23%	39%	17%	15%	3%	4%
14. The curriculum guides support my school's student achievement priorities.	24%	38%	24%	7%	3%	4%
15. Support is available from central office staff to help me use the curriculum guides.	23%	28%	26%	11%	6%	5%
16. The district has scope and sequence documents to ensure students achieve grade level objectives and are prepared for the next grade.	30%	34%	17%	11%	4%	3%
17. My school uses vertical teaming to ensure that students learn the necessary material to be prepared for the next grade.	29%	32%	14%	15%	7%	3%
18. The district uses a pacing calendar to determine when objectives are taught.	20%	34%	20%	18%	5%	3%
19. The district uses benchmark tests to monitor student performance and identify performance gaps.	27%	51%	10%	6%	1%	4%
20. My principal observes teachers in my school on a regular basis to ensure that the curriculum is being taught consistently.	34%	46%	4%	7%	5%	3%
21. In my school, the educational programs are effective in the following areas:						
a. Core subjects	39%	43%	5%	7%	1%	5%
b. Electives	20%	31%	31%	5%	1%	11%
c. Computer instruction	33%	42%	13%	7%	1%	4%
d. Career and technology	19%	29%	40%	5%	0%	7%
e. Bilingual/ESL	34%	35%	19%	7%	1%	3%
f. Gifted and talented	34%	31%	16%	10%	3%	5%
g. Special education	38%	41%	11%	4%	3%	3%
h. Alternative education	17%	27%	34%	5%	8%	8%
22. All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs, and art classes.	34%	35%	8%	13%	2%	7%
23. The student-teacher ratio is reasonable.	38%	42%	3%	7%	1%	9%

B2. PRINCIPAL AS AN INSTRUCTIONAL LEADER

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
24. My principal:						
a. is an advocate and spokesperson for the school to all stakeholders.	36%	32%	15%	4%	3%	9%
b. provides teachers with materials and professional development necessary for the successful execution of their jobs.	33%	55%	3%	6%	0%	2%

B2. PRINCIPAL AS AN INSTRUCTIONAL LEADER (CONTINUED)

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
c. recognizes and celebrates school accomplishments and acknowledges failures.	36%	42%	5%	10%	4%	2%
d. protects teachers from issues and influences that would detract from their teaching time or focus.	25%	45%	11%	13%	4%	2%
e. communicates and operates from strong ideals and beliefs about schooling.	34%	40%	13%	10%	1%	2%
f. fosters shared beliefs and a sense of community and cooperation.	33%	40%	11%	10%	3%	2%
g. demonstrates an awareness of the personal aspects of teachers and staff.	30%	44%	15%	6%	3%	2%
h. is knowledgeable about current curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices.	29%	41%	8%	10%	9%	2%
i. establishes a set of standard operating procedures and routines.	32%	48%	7%	5%	4%	3%
j. establishes clear goals and keeps these goals in the forefront of the school's attention.	28%	40%	14%	14%	3%	2%
k. involves teachers in the design and implementation of important decisions and policies.	32%	34%	9%	15%	7%	2%
l. is aware of the details and undercurrents in the running of the school and uses this information to address current and potential problems.	29%	35%	11%	16%	6%	2%
m. has quality contact and interactions with teachers and students.	34%	36%	9%	14%	4%	2%
n. recognizes and rewards individual accomplishments.	32%	33%	13%	14%	6%	2%
o. is willing to and actively challenges the status quo.	24%	33%	20%	15%	6%	2%
p. is directly involved in the design and implementation of curriculum, instruction and assessment practices.	24%	33%	19%	16%	6%	2%
q. monitors the effectiveness of school practices and their impact on student learning.	24%	38%	18%	10%	6%	4%
r. ensures that faculty and staff are aware of the most current theories and practices and makes the discussion of these a regular aspect of the school's culture.	23%	32%	17%	19%	7%	2%
s. adapts his or her leadership behavior to the needs of the current situation and is comfortable with dissent.	29%	31%	16%	17%	4%	3%
t. establishes strong lines of communication with teachers and among students.	31%	32%	17%	14%	4%	2%
u. inspires and leads new and challenging innovations.	25%	29%	18%	17%	9%	2%

C. PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
25. Teacher turnover is low.	31%	46%	13%	8%	0%	2%
26. District teacher salaries are competitive.	9%	27%	15%	34%	11%	3%

C. PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT (CONTINUED)

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
27. Salaries are a key factor in retaining teachers.	23%	34%	17%	21%	2%	3%
28. The district has a good and timely program for orienting new teachers.	19%	50%	16%	11%	1%	3%
29. Professional development for teachers in my school is targeted to the needs of students.	16%	61%	10%	8%	1%	3%
30. Teachers in my school help determine professional development needs.	14%	52%	17%	15%	1%	2%
31. Teachers in my school receive annual personnel evaluations.	40%	56%	2%	0%	0%	2%
32. Teachers are recognized for superior performance.	10%	29%	21%	30%	6%	3%
33. Teachers are counseled about less than satisfactory performance.	10%	27%	48%	7%	3%	4%
34. The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	11%	28%	51%	3%	2%	4%
35. The district's health insurance package is cost effective.	5%	29%	23%	28%	11%	3%

D. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
36. My school regularly communicates with parents.	36%	50%	5%	3%	2%	3%
37. My school has sufficient volunteers to help student and school programs.	27%	29%	18%	20%	3%	3%
38. The district works with businesses and community organizations to improve education.	29%	34%	19%	13%	2%	3%

E. FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
39. Teachers provided input into the current process to identify facility needs.	22%	45%	14%	15%	2%	3%
40. My school is clean.	16%	46%	8%	21%	6%	3%
41. Needed repairs at my school are made in a timely manner.	16%	40%	13%	26%	3%	3%

F. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
42. Teachers at my school have input to the campus budget process.	9%	26%	32%	24%	5%	3%
43. Financial resources are allocated fairly and equitably at my school.	14%	50%	19%	10%	3%	4%

G. PURCHASING

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
44. Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	35%	47%	13%	1%	1%	3%
45. Textbooks are in good shape.	26%	51%	14%	5%	1%	3%
46. The district has an effective process for recapturing the cost of lost textbooks.	18%	34%	39%	5%	1%	3%
47. The school library meets student's needs for books and other resources.	39%	46%	10%	2%	0%	3%

H. FOOD SERVICES

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
48. The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	7%	43%	29%	14%	4%	3%
49. Students have enough time to eat.	16%	63%	7%	11%	0%	3%
50. Students eat lunch at an appropriate time of day.	18%	66%	4%	6%	3%	3%
51. Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	15%	51%	22%	6%	2%	4%
52. Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	26%	52%	13%	6%	0%	3%
53. Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	25%	54%	13%	5%	0%	3%

I. SAFETY AND SECURITY

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
54. Teachers feel safe and secure at my school.	29%	51%	3%	14%	0%	3%
55. Access to my school during school hours is well controlled.	29%	42%	8%	15%	3%	3%
56. Security procedures for visitors, such as reporting first to the office, are strictly enforced at my school.	23%	38%	10%	23%	3%	3%
57. The student code of conduct is fairly and equitably administered in my school.	26%	49%	7%	10%	4%	3%
58. Gangs are not a problem in this district.	15%	31%	27%	20%	4%	3%
59. Drugs are not a problem in this district.	8%	15%	23%	34%	17%	3%
60. Bullying is not a problem in this district.	10%	15%	19%	36%	17%	3%
61. Safety hazards do not exist on my school's grounds.	17%	29%	20%	24%	6%	4%
62. My school has a crisis plan with which I am familiar.	28%	57%	6%	4%	1%	3%
63. Practice drills are conducted regularly to ensure students and staff are prepared in case of a crisis.	33%	54%	2%	5%	2%	3%
64. The high school's open campus policy during lunch is a safety problem. (HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS ONLY)	27%	21%	27%	12%	12%	0%

J. COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
65. Students in my class regularly use computers.	31%	39%	8%	14%	4%	4%
66. Students in my class have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom or in labs.	35%	45%	5%	7%	3%	4%
67. Teachers in my school know how to use computers to enhance instruction.	26%	51%	11%	8%	0%	3%
68. Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	22%	57%	9%	8%	0%	3%
69. The district meets students' needs in classes in computer fundamentals.	23%	51%	15%	8%	0%	3%
70. The district meets student needs in classes in advanced computer skills.	17%	36%	30%	10%	2%	4%
71. Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	40%	50%	5%	2%	0%	3%
72. Technology staff responds quickly to requests for service or support.	32%	49%	5%	9%	1%	3%

PRINCIPAL SURVEY

N=7

PART A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Note: Percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding.

QUESTION	5 YEARS OR LESS	6-10 YEARS	11-15 YEARS	16-20 YEARS	20+ YEARS	NO ANSWER
How long have you been employed by the school district?	43%	14%	14%	0%	29%	0%

STATEMENT	PRIMARY	ELEMENTARY	JUNIOR HIGH	HIGH	OTHER	NO ANSWER
Circle the grade level at which you work.	43%	14%	14%	0%	29%	0%

PART B: SURVEY QUESTIONS

A. DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
1. Central office staff is accessible to my administrative staff and me.	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
2. The district improvement plan reflects the needs of the district.	71%	29%	0%	0%	0%	0%
3. The campus improvement plan reflects the priorities of my school.	86%	14%	0%	0%	0%	0%
4. The strategies/activities included in the plan to address priorities at my school are effective.	71%	29%	0%	0%	0%	0%

B. EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
5. Education is the main priority in our school district.	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
6. The district provides curriculum guides for all grades and subjects.	86%	14%	0%	0%	0%	0%
7. The curriculum guides are appropriately aligned and coordinated.	71%	29%	0%	0%	0%	0%
8. The district's curriculum guides clearly outline what to teach and how to teach it.	57%	43%	0%	0%	0%	0%
9. The district has scope and sequence documents to ensure students achieve grade level objectives and are prepared for the next grade.	57%	14%	29%	0%	0%	0%

B. EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY (CONTINUED)

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
10. My school uses vertical teaming to ensure that students learn the necessary material to be prepared for the next grade.	86%	0%	14%	0%	0%	0%
11. The district uses a pacing calendar to determine when objectives are taught.	43%	14%	14%	29%	0%	0%
12. The district uses benchmark tests to monitor student performance and identify performance gaps.	86%	14%	0%	0%	0%	0%
13. Teachers in my school are observed on a regular basis to ensure that the curriculum is being taught consistently.	86%	14%	0%	0%	0%	0%
14. All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs, and art classes.	86%	14%	0%	0%	0%	0%
15. The student-teacher ratio is reasonable.	71%	29%	0%	0%	0%	0%
16. Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	86%	14%	0%	0%	0%	0%

C. PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
17. Teacher turnover is low.	86%	14%	0%	0%	0%	0%
18. Teacher openings are filled quickly.	71%	29%	0%	0%	0%	0%
19. Teachers are recognized for superior performance.	57%	43%	0%	0%	0%	0%
20. Teachers are counseled about less than satisfactory performance.	71%	29%	0%	0%	0%	0%
21. Principal/assistant principal salaries are competitive.	43%	43%	0%	14%	0%	0%
22. The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.	57%	43%	0%	0%	0%	0%
23. Professional development for teachers in my school is targeted to the needs of students.	71%	29%	0%	0%	0%	0%
24. Teachers in my school help determine professional development needs.	86%	14%	0%	0%	0%	0%
25. For new principals and assistant principals, the district conducts an orientation program on key job responsibilities.	43%	43%	14%	0%	0%	0%
26. It is the responsibility of the principal to "train" an assistant principal.	57%	29%	14%	0%	0%	0%
27. The district provides ongoing professional development for principals and assistant principals in key areas (e.g., the principal as instructional leaders).	71%	29%	0%	0%	0%	0%

C. PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT (CONTINUED)

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
28. All teachers in my school receive annual personnel evaluations.	71%	14%	14%	0%	0%	0%
29. All administrative staff in my school receives annual personnel evaluations.	86%	14%	0%	0%	0%	0%
30. The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	57%	43%	0%	0%	0%	0%
31. The district's health insurance package is cost effective.	29%	43%	14%	14%	0%	0%

D. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
32. My school regularly communicates with parents.	86%	14%	0%	0%	0%	0%
33. My school has sufficient volunteers to help student and school programs.	14%	29%	14%	43%	0%	0%
34. The district works with businesses and community organizations to improve education.	43%	57%	0%	0%	0%	0%

E. FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
35. Campus administrators provided input into the current process to identify facility needs.	86%	14%	0%	0%	0%	0%
36. My school is clean.	71%	29%	0%	0%	0%	0%
37. The school grounds are well maintained.	86%	14%	0%	0%	0%	0%
38. Repairs at my school are made in a timely manner.	71%	29%	0%	0%	0%	0%
39. Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

F. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
40. Campus administrators have input to the district budget process.	71%	29%	0%	0%	0%	0%
41. Teachers at my school have input to the campus budget process.	57%	29%	0%	14%	0%	0%

G. PURCHASING

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
42. Purchasing processes are not cumbersome.	71%	14%	14%	0%	0%	0%
43. Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	86%	14%	0%	0%	0%	0%
44. Textbooks are in good shape.	71%	29%	0%	0%	0%	0%
45. The district has an effective process for recapturing the cost of lost textbooks.	71%	29%	0%	0%	0%	0%
46. The school library meets students' needs for books and other resources.	86%	14%	0%	0%	0%	0%

H. FOOD SERVICES

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
47. The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	29%	29%	43%	0%	0%	0%
48. Students have enough time to eat.	86%	14%	0%	0%	0%	0%
49. Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.	71%	29%	0%	0%	0%	0%
50. Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	57%	43%	0%	0%	0%	0%
51. Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	57%	43%	0%	0%	0%	0%
52. Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	71%	29%	0%	0%	0%	0%

I. TRANSPORTATION

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
53. The drop-off zone at the school is safe.	57%	43%	0%	0%	0%	0%
54. The district has a simple method to request buses for special events.	71%	29%	0%	0%	0%	0%
55. Buses typically arrive and leave on time.	71%	29%	0%	0%	0%	0%

J. SAFETY AND SECURITY

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
56. School disturbances are infrequent.	71%	29%	0%	0%	0%	0%
57. Gangs are not a problem in this district.	43%	29%	29%	0%	0%	0%
58. Drugs are not a problem in this district.	14%	29%	14%	43%	0%	0%
59. Bullying is not a problem in this district.	14%	57%	0%	29%	0%	0%
60. The student code of conduct is fairly and equitably enforced at my school.	86%	14%	0%	0%	0%	0%
61. Safety hazards do not exist on my school's grounds.	43%	29%	14%	0%	0%	14%

J. SAFETY AND SECURITY (CONTINUED)

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
62. Access to my school during school hours is well controlled.	43%	57%	0%	0%	0%	0%
63. Security procedures for visitors, such as reporting first to the office, are strictly enforced at my school.	57%	43%	0%	0%	0%	0%
64. My school has a crisis plan with which all staff are familiar.	86%	14%	0%	0%	0%	0%
65. Practice drills are conducted regularly to ensure students and staff are prepared in case of a crisis.	71%	29%	0%	0%	0%	0%
66. The high school's open campus policy during lunch is a safety problem. (HIGH SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS ONLY)	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

K. COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
67. Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom or in labs.	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
68. Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	86%	14%	0%	0%	0%	0%
69. Teachers in my school know how to use computers to enhance instruction.	71%	29%	0%	0%	0%	0%
70. Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	86%	0%	14%	0%	0%	0%
71. Technology staff responds quickly to requests for service or support.	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

ADMINISTRATOR, PROFESSIONAL, AND TECHNICAL STAFF SURVEY

N=25

PART A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Note: Percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding.

QUESTION	5 YEARS OR LESS	6-10 YEARS	11-15 YEARS	16-20 YEARS	20+ YEARS	NO ANSWER
How long have you been employed by the school district?	16%	16%	24%	20%	24%	0%

QUESTION	ADMINISTRATOR (E.G., ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT, DIRECTOR, COORDINATOR, DEPARTMENT HEAD)	PROFESSIONAL (E.G., COUNSELOR, LIBRARIAN)	OTHER (E.G., IT STAFF)	NO RESPONSE
Are you a(n):	48%	36%	12%	4%

PART B: SURVEY QUESTIONS

A. DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
1. The district improvement plan reflects the needs of the district.	20%	60%	12%	4%	4%	0%
2. Central office staff are accessible to me.	48%	36%	8%	8%	0%	0%
3. My job responsibilities are well defined.	40%	48%	4%	8%	0%	0%
4. My job description is current.	40%	40%	16%	4%	0%	0%

B. PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
5. Salaries for my position are competitive with similar positions in the job market.	8%	28%	12%	52%	0%	0%
6. The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.	20%	48%	20%	12%	0%	0%
7. The district operates an effective professional development program.	28%	36%	12%	16%	8%	0%
8. I receive an annual personnel evaluation.	36%	48%	8%	4%	4%	0%
9. The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	24%	36%	36%	0%	4%	0%
10. The district's health insurance package is cost effective.	20%	28%	28%	20%	4%	0%

C. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
11. The district works with businesses and community organizations to improve education.	20%	40%	12%	28%	0%	0%

D. FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
12. Administrative staff provided input into the current process to identify facility needs.	24%	40%	20%	8%	8%	0%

E. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
13. The budget process is comprehensive and well developed.	20%	40%	32%	8%	0%	0%
14. My department's budget reflects the department's goals.	28%	40%	16%	12%	4%	0%

F. PURCHASING

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
15. Purchasing processes are not cumbersome.	28%	36%	16%	12%	8%	0%

G. SAFETY AND SECURITY

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
16. The high school's open campus policy during lunch is a safety problem. (HIGH SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF ONLY)	42%	17%	25%	8%	8%	0%

H. COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
17. I receive sufficient training to know how to use my computer and the software needed for my job.	44%	52%	4%	0%	0%	0%
18. Computers are new enough to be useful for all my work needs.	40%	52%	4%	0%	4%	0%
19. Technology staff responds quickly to requests for service or support.	48%	40%	4%	8%	0%	0%

SUPPORT STAFF SURVEY

N=49

PART A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Note: Percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding.

QUESTION	5 YEARS OR LESS	6-10 YEARS	11-15 YEARS	16-20 YEARS	20+ YEARS	NO ANSWER
How long have you been employed by the school district?	31%	31%	16%	10%	10%	2%

QUESTION	CLERICAL OR PARAPROFESSIONAL POSITION	CLASSROOM AIDE	OTHER	NO RESPONSE
Are you a(n):	33%	27%	41%	0%

PART B: SURVEY QUESTIONS

A. DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
1. My job responsibilities are well defined.	29%	57%	4%	8%	0%	2%
2. My job description is current.	29%	49%	6%	8%	2%	6%

B. PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
3. Salaries for my position are competitive with similar positions in the job market.	4%	14%	20%	37%	22%	2%
4. I receive overtime pay or compensatory time off for all hours worked beyond my normal work week.	27%	47%	14%	6%	6%	0%
5. The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.	20%	39%	24%	16%	0%	0%
6. The district provides ongoing training for me in my job.	18%	45%	14%	16%	2%	4%
7. I receive an annual personnel evaluation.	27%	51%	10%	8%	2%	2%
8. The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	14%	39%	29%	12%	6%	0%
9. The district's health insurance package meets my needs.	6%	43%	24%	16%	10%	0%

C. SAFETY AND SECURITY

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
10. The high school's open campus policy during lunch is a safety problem. (HIGH SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF ONLY)	12%	6%	59%	18%	6%	0%

D. COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
11. I receive sufficient training to know how to use my computer and the software needed for my job.	10%	33%	10%	12%	6%	29%
12. Technology staff responds quickly to requests for service or support.	16%	35%	6%	12%	2%	29%

PARENT SURVEY

N = 78

PART A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Note: Percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding.

QUESTION	5 YEARS OR LESS	6-10 YEARS	11+ YEARS	NO ANSWER
How long have you lived in the school district?	19%	7%	67%	7%

STATEMENT	ELEMENTARY	JUNIOR HIGH	HIGH	NO ANSWER
Circle the grade level at which you have children. If you have children at more than one level, please circle all levels that apply.	70%	13%	17%	0%

PART B: SURVEY QUESTIONS

A. DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
1. School board members listen to the opinions and desires of parents and community members.	15%	63%	22%	0%	0%	0%
2. Central office administrators are accessible to parents.	22%	67%	4%	4%	4%	0%
3. Campus administrators at my child's school are accessible to parents.	30%	70%	0%	0%	0%	0%

B. EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
4. I receive sufficient information from the district regarding academic expectations for my child (i.e., TAKS testing, retention, etc.).	26%	59%	15%	0%	0%	0%
5. I receive timely communications from my child's teachers regarding his/her progress in school.	30%	56%	7%	7%	0%	0%
6. I receive sufficient information on programs offered by the district for which my child may be qualified (e.g., gifted and talented, career and technology, special intervention programs after school or in the summer).	22%	48%	15%	15%	0%	0%
7. Class sizes are reasonable.	22%	48%	7%	15%	0%	7%

C. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
8. My child's school provides me with regular communications on school events and activities.	22%	63%	11%	4%	0%	0%
9. My child's school has sufficient volunteers to help student and school programs.	11%	52%	30%	7%	0%	0%

D. FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
10. Parents provided input into the current process to identify facility needs.	11%	48%	37%	0%	4%	0%
11. My child's school is clean.	22%	59%	7%	11%	0%	0%
12. My child's school is well maintained.	26%	59%	4%	11%	0%	0%

E. FINANCIAL & ASSET AND RISK MANAGEMENT

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
13. Board members and administrators do a good job explaining the use of tax dollars.	11%	37%	33%	19%	0%	0%
14. Financial information about my child's school or the district is readily available.	15%	48%	30%	7%	0%	0%

F. PURCHASING

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
15. My child is issued textbooks in a timely manner.	26%	63%	11%	0%	0%	0%
16. My child's textbooks are in good shape.	26%	48%	19%	7%	0%	0%

G. FOOD SERVICES

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
17. My child regularly purchases his/her lunch from the cafeteria.	11%	44%	22%	7%	15%	0%
18. Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	19%	67%	7%	4%	0%	4%
19. Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	15%	59%	19%	4%	0%	4%
20. Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	22%	59%	7%	7%	0%	4%

H. TRANSPORTATION

STATEMENT	DAILY	SOMETIMES	RARELY	NEVER	NO ANSWER
21. My child(ren) ride(s) the bus.	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
22. The length of the student's bus ride is reasonable.	11%	30%	26%	7%	4%	22%
23. The drop-off zone at the school is safe.	15%	44%	22%	0%	0%	19%
24. The bus stop near my house is safe.	7%	37%	30%	4%	0%	22%
25. The bus stop is within walking distance from our home.	11%	33%	30%	0%	4%	22%
26. Buses arrive and depart on time.	15%	30%	26%	7%	0%	22%

I. SAFETY AND SECURITY

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
27. My child feels safe and secure at school.	22%	63%	7%	7%	0%	0%
28. Gangs are not a problem in this district.	11%	44%	26%	15%	4%	0%
29. Drugs are not a problem in this district.	7%	41%	26%	22%	4%	0%
30. Bullying is not a problem in this district.	15%	33%	15%	33%	4%	0%
31. The student code of conduct is fairly and equitably administered in my school.	19%	59%	11%	11%	0%	0%
32. The high school's open campus policy during lunch is a safety problem. (HIGH SCHOOL PARENTS ONLY)	8%	25%	33%	17%	17%	0%

J. COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO ANSWER
33. Computers are new enough to be useful to teach students.	11%	59%	22%	4%	0%	4%
34. My child has regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom or in labs.	11%	59%	22%	4%	0%	4%
35. My child's teacher(s) know(s) how to use computers in the classroom.	30%	41%	22%	4%	0%	4%

STUDENT SURVEY

N=24

PART A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Note: Percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding.

QUESTION	JUNIOR	SENIOR
1. What is your classification?	50%	50%

PART B: SURVEY QUESTIONS

A. EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1. Education is the main priority.	29%	54%	0%	8%	8%
2. Students respect my school's principal and assistant principal(s).	8%	42%	8%	42%	0%
3. Teachers are motivated and interested in teaching.	13%	58%	21%	8%	0%
4. Class sizes are reasonable.	29%	63%	0%	8%	0%
5. Students have access to a school nurse, when necessary.	25%	67%	4%	4%	0%
6. In my school, the educational programs are effective in the following areas:					
a. Core subjects	21%	71%	4%	4%	0%
b. Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	29%	50%	4%	17%	0%
c. Advanced placement/dual credit program	42%	42%	8%	8%	0%
d. Career and Technical Education	8%	46%	33%	13%	0%
e. Career counseling program	17%	29%	38%	17%	0%
f. College counseling program	17%	25%	38%	21%	0%
g. Special education	8%	42%	50%	0%	0%
h. Fine Arts (band, choir, art, drama, etc.)	17%	42%	17%	21%	4%

B. FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
7. My school is clean.	0%	50%	13%	38%	0%
8. The school is well maintained, both inside and out.	4%	63%	4%	21%	8%

C. PURCHASING

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
9. Textbooks are issued in a timely manner.	17%	83%	0%	0%	0%
10. There are enough textbooks in all my classes.	21%	71%	0%	8%	0%
11. The school library meets my needs for books and other resources.	25%	58%	4%	13%	0%

D. FOOD SERVICES

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
12. The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	0%	21%	71%	0%	8%
13. Students have enough time to eat.	0%	33%	29%	33%	4%
14. Discipline and order are maintained in the school's cafeteria.	0%	29%	63%	8%	0%
15. Cafeteria staff is helpful.	0%	13%	67%	13%	8%
16. Cafeteria facilities are clean.	4%	13%	71%	4%	8%

E. TRANSPORTATION

STATEMENT		
17. I ride the bus.	Yes	No

IF YOU ANSWERED "NO" TO QUESTION #15, PLEASE SKIP TO #23.

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
18. The driver maintains discipline.	50%	50%	0%	0%	0%
19. The length of my bus ride is reasonable.	50%	25%	0%	0%	25%
20. The drop-off zone at school is safe.	50%	50%	0%	0%	0%
21. Buses arrive and depart on time.	0%	75%	0%	25%	0%
22. Buses are clean.	0%	50%	0%	50%	0%

F. SAFETY AND SECURITY

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
23. I feel safe and secure at school.	8%	63%	13%	13%	4%
24. School disturbances are infrequent.	0%	38%	25%	38%	0%
25. Gangs are not a problem.	4%	46%	17%	33%	0%
26. Drugs are not a problem.	0%	17%	8%	58%	17%
27. Vandalism is not a problem.	4%	21%	4%	58%	13%
28. Bullying is not a problem.	4%	21%	4%	50%	21%

F. SAFETY AND SECURITY (CONTINUED)

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
29. Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	8%	50%	0%	29%	13%
30. Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	0%	79%	21%	0%	0%
31. Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	0%	25%	25%	50%	0%

G. COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
32. Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom or in labs.	17%	75%	0%	8%	0%
33. Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	25%	67%	0%	8%	0%
34. Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	21%	63%	0%	17%	0%
35. The district offers enough computer classes to meet my needs.	13%	63%	8%	17%	0%
36. Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	21%	54%	4%	17%	4%
37. Teachers and aides monitor student access to Internet websites.	8%	83%	0%	8%	0%
38. The district meets student needs in classes in advanced computer skills.	8%	63%	17%	13%	0%