

March 25, 2002

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

Fellow Texans:

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

In September 2000, I released the results of my review of the district's operations. This review offered 41 recommendations that could save EISD taxpayers a net of more than \$1.1 million by 2004-05. The review also noted a number of EISD's exemplary programs and model services provided by district administrators, teachers, and staff.

After a little more than one year, we returned to check on how well the district's leadership put these proposals into practice. Over the last year and a half, EISD has implemented, or is in the process of implementing, 38 of the proposals, or 92 percent. The district has saved \$56,500 to date and estimates net savings over five years to reach \$422,500.

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

Thanks for all that you do for Texas.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carole Keeton Rylander".

Carole Keeton Rylander
Texas Comptroller

Elgin ISD Progress Report

March 2002

Introduction

In August 2000, the Comptroller of Public Accounts' Texas School Performance Review (TSPR) staff and consultants completed a comprehensive school review of the Elgin Independent School District (EISD). During January 2002, TSPR staff returned to assess the district's progress in implementing the recommendations.

Since 1991, TSPR has recommended nearly 6,000 ways to save taxpayers more than \$630 million over a five-year period in more than 60 different public school districts throughout Texas. TSPR also conducts follow-up reviews of districts that have had at least one year to implement recommendations. These more than 40 subsequent reviews show that almost 90 percent of TSPR's combined proposals have been acted upon, saving taxpayers more than \$112 million, with the full savings estimated to grow in the future.

Improving the Texas School Performance Review

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

Comptroller Rylander began by establishing new criteria for selecting school districts for future reviews. Priority is now given to districts judged poorly performing academically and/or financially, and where a review will benefit the greatest number of students. To ensure this process also serves small districts, reviews of numerous school district in close proximity, regardless of academic or financial status are also performed to achieve some economy of scale, as was the case with the smaller districts reviewed in Bastrop County.

Recognizing that only about 52 cents of every education dollar is spent on instruction, Comptroller Rylander's goal is to drive more of every education dollar directly into the classroom. In addition, no longer are

school districts' best practices and exemplary models to be left buried inside individual TSPR reports. Instead, Comptroller Rylander has ordered best practices and exemplary programs to be shared quickly and systematically among all the state's school districts, and with anyone who requests such information. There is simply no reason for a district that has solved a problem efficiently to keep the solution to itself.

Comptroller Rylander also has directed TSPR to serve as an active clearinghouse of the best and brightest ideas in Texas public education. Best practices identified in the original review of EISD will be included in the Comptroller's best practices database, A+ Ideas for Managing Schools (AIMS), which is accessible on the Web at www.aimsdatabase.org.

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

- ensure students and teachers receive the support and resources necessary to succeed;
- identify innovative options to address core management challenges;
- ensure administrative activities are performed efficiently, without duplication and in a manner that spurs education;
- develop strategies to ensure the districts' processes and programs are continuously assessed and improved;
- understand the links among the districts' functional areas and determine ways to provide a seamless system of services;
- challenge any process, procedure, program or policy that impedes instruction and recommend ways to reduce or eliminate obstacles; and
- put goods and services to the "Yellow Pages test"-government should do no job if there is a business in the Yellow Pages that can do that job better and at a lower cost.

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

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

TSPR in the Elgin Independent School District

In March 2000, the Comptroller's office began a performance review of the Elgin Independent School District (EISD) as part of a countywide project to review the four districts in Bastrop County-Elgin, Bastrop, McDade and Smithville. This review signaled the first time since the initial pilot study in 1991 that the Comptroller had conducted a simultaneous countywide review of all of the districts in a single county. During the review, three key opportunities for improvement quickly surfaced-a decline in student achievement, an ineffective centralized decision-making process and the challenge to successfully integrate new managers into the organization.

Based upon more than five months of work, this report identified EISD's exemplary programs and suggested concrete ways to improve district operations. If fully implemented, the Comptroller's 41 recommendations could result in net savings of more than \$1.1 million over the five years following the review.

The Comptroller's office selected WCL Enterprises, a consulting firm based in Katy, Texas, to assist the agency with this review. The TSPR team interviewed district employees, school board members, parents, business leaders and community members and held a community meeting in EISD's cafeteria. To obtain additional comments, the review team conducted focus group sessions with district staff and reviewed letters from a wide array of parents, teachers and community members. Comptroller staff also received calls to the agency's toll-free hotline.

Surveys were sent to campus and central administrators and support staff; principals, assistant principals and professional support staff; and teachers as part of the review. The review team also consulted two databases of comparative educational information maintained by the Texas Education Agency (TEA)-the Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) and the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS).

EISD selected peer districts for comparisons based on similarities in student enrollment, student performance and community and student demographics. The selected peer districts were Bastrop, Del Valle, Leander, Manor and Taylor. TSPR also compared EISD to district averages in TEA's Region 13 Education Service Center, to which EISD belongs and the state as a whole.

EISD in Profile

Elgin ISD is located in Bastrop County approximately 40 miles east of the city of Austin. EISD has one high school, one middle school, one elementary school, a pre-K campus and an alternative education campus for secondary and elementary students for a total of 5 campuses.

Enrollment for 2001-02 is 2,889 students, which represents a 10.9-percent increase since 1997-98.

In 2001-02, EISD's students were 44.8 percent White, 41.0 percent Hispanic, 13.5 African American and .7 percent Asian/Pacific Islander or Native American. More than 51.3 percent of EISD's students were classified as economically disadvantaged.

In 2001, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) awarded EISD and its campuses an *Academically Acceptable* rating.

In 2000-01, 84.7 percent of all students passed the Reading portion of the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS), 86.2 percent passed the Math portion, 82.8 percent passed the Writing portion and 75.6 percent of students passed all tests taken. Each of these percentages is slightly below the state and regional averages, but represents an improvement over the district's student performance in the previous year.

In 2001-02, the district employed a staff of 432 employees, with teachers accounting for 218 or more than 50 percent of EISD staffing. The district had expenditures of \$20.01 million in 2001-02. In 2001-02, 37.2 percent of EISD's budgeted revenues were generated through local taxes, 4.1 percent came from other local and intermediate sources and 55.0 percent came from the state, while 3.7 percent came from the federal government.

In 2001-02, EISD budgeted 50.5 cents of every tax dollar on classroom instruction compared to the state average of 52 cents.

Significant changes have occurred in the district since the time of the review. Superintendent Kelton Cooper left the district in August 2000, and Superintendent Janie Simmons was named as his replacement. The vacant financial officer's position was filled, and a number of other key administrative positions experienced turnover. The board and current administration have over the last year set about the process of re-establishing policies, controls and procedures that had been dismantled or discarded by the previous administration.

While the district still has a lot of work to do, both EISD staff and TSPR team members have a sense of steady progress. Seventeen recommendations have been implemented, 21 are in various stages of progress, and three have been reviewed but not implemented. (See Appendix A for details on the recommendations' status.)

Exemplary Programs and Practices

EISD is a school district with some notable successes, and TSPR has identified numerous "best practices." Through commendations in each chapter, the original report highlighted model programs, operations, and services provided by EISD administrators, teachers and staff members. Other school districts throughout Texas are encouraged to examine these exemplary programs and services to see if they could be adapted to meet local needs. TSPR's commendations include the following:

- Elgin has a number of initiatives to address the needs of its non-college bound students, while also addressing critical needs areas in the workforce. Agricultural Biotechnology is a unique Career and Technology course designed to introduce students to the basics of molecular biology. Intergenerational Professions trains students to be caregivers for individuals and provide group care for young children and the elderly. This course provides opportunities for supervised workplace experience in addition to the regular classroom instruction. The Cisco Lab, a two-year telecommunications and networking lab program, prepares students to pass a computer network certification test. Students learn the basics of computer networking, cabling, and configuration. With this certification, a student qualifies for employment in an area where there is a critical shortage of qualified workers.

Beginning in 2001-02, EISD has entered into an articulation agreement with the Austin Community College. Any EISD graduate who has taken Agricultural Biotechnology at Elgin High School will receive three hours of credit for Introduction to Biotechnology upon entrance to Austin Community College. The Cisco Lab agreement has been extended through a grant from Region 13. The grant has allowed EISD to construct a new distance education lab to share this training with surrounding districts. In 2001-02, EISD had 23 students enrolled in this program, an increase of 44 percent since the time of the review. Each year, a minimum of three students completes the Certified Cisco Network Associate Exam that qualifies them for employment.

- In 1999-2000, the district began a intervention process called a Student Needs Team, which is designed to find ways to help students succeed before it is necessary for a teacher to recommend assessing a student's need for special education. Teachers try different strategies in the classroom based on input from a team of peers and district experts before referring the student for special education. The process promotes collaboration among parents,

students, schools and district level instructional, support and administrative staff members.

The district continues to use and refine the Student Needs Team (SNT). The elementary campus is piloting a modified procedure that the district will evaluate and consider for use at other campuses in the future.

- EISD's Maintenance Department uses a combination of external vendors and internal staff to cost-effectively meet the needs of the district. Maintenance Department staff handle most of the routine repairs for the district. The director of Maintenance contracts with various vendors, however, for heating, ventilating and air conditioning work for units with more than five tons in capacity and also for pest control. The director continuously reviews the cost of outside vendors within the Elgin area and in Austin. Based upon the material need, or the type of labor required, the director identifies the lowest cost alternatives.

In the last year, EISD has added some support systems. The district has found that licensed in-house staff are most cost effective, but are continuously assessing costs. EISD also has streamlined the communication processes by using e-mail to expedite the work requests and ensure that district personnel receive an immediate response.

- The Teacher Technologist Program, which began in the 2000-01 school year, is designed to maximize the benefits of educational technology and to provide a direct link between each school and the Technology Department. The teachers selected to participate receive extensive training not only on how to use technology, but also on how to use technology to teach. The teacher technologist is expected to work with other teachers at their campuses to integrate technology into the classroom.

The Teacher Technologist Program remains a strong program in EISD. The teacher technologists receive a \$750 stipend each semester, and the State Technology Allotment pays for the stipends. Expectations and the proficiencies for these technologists are clearly outlined in the Teacher Technologist Handbook, making it possible for interested teachers to see what they must do to qualify for the program.

TSPR Key Recommendations

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

District Organization and Management

Recommendation 2: Tie the allocation of resources to the District and Campus Improvement Plans. The district's administrators noted this recommendation was particularly significant for EISD because it helped the staff to determine where the district is today and to focus on the future. Setting priorities and tying resources to those priorities also was a tremendous morale boost for employees, because they felt they had a role to play in directing the district's future.

Educational Service Delivery

Recommendation 10: Develop a formal program evaluation process, clearly define roles and responsibilities and provide trained staff to lead the program. While the superintendent is setting up an evaluation process and clearly defining roles and responsibilities, she said she believes the result of implementing this recommendation is going to be seen in future student performance gains. The superintendent is excited about the district's prospects and believes that EISD, with better coordinated and focused programs, is well on its way to becoming a Recognized district in the future.

Recommendation 14: Develop a standardized approach to applying discipline in each EISD school. The district's new standardized approach to discipline and the resolution of a long-standing problem concerning the dress code has boosted morale among students and parents.

Personnel Management

Recommendation 16: Develop written information that clearly defines the basis of the index system and how the index multipliers are determined. The new executive director for Business and Support Services said when he came to the district he realized the district needed to rethink its index system of salary and compensation. In rethinking it, district officials collectively concluded the system was not workable and decided to review alternatives.

Recommendation 18: Integrate the benefits information with the payroll system. With the benefit and payroll systems and departments acting

independently, there were problems. The position of benefits coordinator has been moved from the Human Resources Department to the Business Office and is now supervised by the executive director for Business and Support Services. According to the executive director, this move has improved the coordination between the benefits coordinator and the accounting specialist and the use of the district's computer system.

Facilities Use and Management

Recommendation 20: Evaluate the quality of current maintenance work, identify opportunities to improve service and develop a plan to implement changes. The status of maintenance orders was a major concern of staff throughout the district. Implementing a new e-mail work order system has helped the district to reduce the number of pending work orders and to improve responsiveness and customer satisfaction. The new system allows the staff to prioritize and directly acknowledge and respond to those requesting maintenance and repair.

Financial Management

Recommendation 31: Create a districtwide purchasing procedure manual. The new executive director for Business and Support Services had used a purchasing procedure manual in other school districts. Using those manuals from previous districts as a model, he has created a manual that will provide district employees the information they need in order to understand the laws, rules and processes under which purchases can be made. He also said getting this information together and distributing it to campuses and departments will help the district to better manage its operations as the district grows.

Operations

Recommendation 33: Develop performance expectations for Child Nutrition employees. The district went well beyond the Comptroller's original recommendation. For the first, time, the district has developed a set of documented job expectations and evaluations for all employees. The superintendent said this process will help to improve performance throughout the district.

What Still Remains to be Done?

EISD has made steady progress in implementing TSPR recommendations, particularly considering that a new superintendent has come on board during this time. Seventeen recommendations have been implemented, 21

are in various stages of progress, and three have not been addressed. This section addresses the key areas requiring additional attention.

Energy Conservation

The district has contracted through an energy aggregator, or buying agent who knows the electric market and can help find the best deal available from the electricity providers, to save 35 percent on energy costs and is currently writing an energy management plan. EISD has also recently asked the State Energy Conservation Office (SECO) to conduct an energy audit (Recommendation 22). Although the district has contacted several energy management contractors to provide an energy audit of the district, SECO's audits are free to school districts and can provide an unbiased third-party opinion, rather than a proposal with a possible profit motive. The district knows that it needs to replace some lighting and air conditioning controls at the various schools that they hope to address as part of the updating of the facility master plan. A more comprehensive audit may identify other opportunities for energy saving improvements and add vital information to that process. Once these energy saving opportunities are identified, TSPR encourages the district to move forward with implementation.

Purchasing

The district has assessed an automated purchase requisition and order system, and such a system is available to the district through the RSCCC system, the computer system that the district is currently using (Recommendation 30). The administration said that initially automation might require additional staff to train and monitor the campus staff. Officials also were concerned that campus staff might view the automated system as additional work. TSPR's experience with automating the purchasing process shows that campus staff do require initial training and monitoring. Once the system is in place, however, duplicative entry by campus and central administrative staff is eliminated, errors are reduced and goods and services are delivered faster and more efficiently.

Transportation

While the district uses a flexible bus replacement cycle, administrators said the board has been reluctant to establish an annual budget for systematically replacing the district's bus fleet (Recommendation 40). Moreover, it is not unusual for a board that is facing a tight budget to defer replacing buses as a way to hold the line on costs. Replacing buses when the district has surplus cash sounds appropriate, but maintaining older buses actually can mean costly repairs and higher fuel costs as well as increased safety hazards. Establishing a policy that regularly allocates a

specified minimum for bus replacement is even more important for EISD because the district is growing. The demand for more routes will place greater stress on these older buses and will require the district to expand its fleet. Planning to meet this need in advance can reduce one-time costly bus purchases in the future.

EISD's Ideas for Improving the Texas School Performance Review

The Texas School Performance Review team does not assume that its process for performing school reviews works so well that it cannot be improved. Therefore, as part of the progress report preparation, TSPR asked Elgin ISD staff members and administrators what went right and what went wrong and how the process could be improved.

The feedback TSPR has received from other districts led to improvements in the review process. For example, early reports did not include implementation strategies, and districts told TSPR they needed help in getting started. As a result, the reports now include implementation strategies and timelines to complement the recommendations. Districts have told TSPR these blueprints are invaluable to achieving the desired results. It is important for TSPR staff, however, to continuously be mindful of those things that did not work as intended so that the review process can be improved.

Elgin administrators and board members made the observations listed below.

- On the positive side, administrators said the report in some cases gave the administration some leverage with the board and perhaps with staff who were reluctant to change. They also said they believed the report could have been more useful if it had not been for the controversy within the district at the time of the review and suggested that the timing of the report was perhaps not as good for EISD as it may have been for the other districts in the county.
- District administrators said there was considerable confusion over the countywide review process. They said the consultants got the information from the various districts in the county mixed up. They said the report's credibility was reduced by errors and confusion in the executive summary, which showed survey results that were actually results from Bastrop ISD. TSPR acknowledges the challenge of producing multiple district reports at the same time during a countywide review. To address this issue in recent countywide reviews, TSPR assigned a single TSPR and consulting

project manager to each of the districts within a county to ensure the integrity and individuality of each district is maintained.

- Some said the report gave too much emphasis to the complaints and concerns of chronic complainers inside and outside the district. Administrators said that it was upsetting when these complaints were given too much credence. TSPR attempts to base all recommendations on factual data, not public perceptions. In future reviews, TSPR will attempt to ensure this does not recur.
- Administrators also mentioned that the public briefing was very negative. While the administrators said the TSPR team handled themselves well, the public was angry and directed a number of pointed questions to the review team. Some members of the public were angry because they felt the report was not balanced, while others thought the review did not go far enough. Much of the anger was the result of the ongoing controversy in the district, but TSPR staff may have been able to deflect some of that anger if they had taken more time to discuss expectations with the board and the public earlier in the review process.

Elgin ISD Report Card

Chapter	# of Recommendations	Complete	In Progress	Not Implemented	Rejected	Percent Complete/ In Progress
District Organization and Management	6	3	3	0	0	50%/50%
Educational Service Delivery	8	3	5	0	0	38%/63%
Personnel Management	4	2	2	0	0	50%/50%
Facilities Use and Management	4	2	2	0	0	50%/50%
Financial Management	10	3	4	3	0	30%/40%
Operations	9	4	5	0	0	44%/56%
Overall Grade	41	17	21	3	0	41%/51%

Excellent = More than 80% complete

Satisfactory = 80% to 100% complete or in progress

Needs Work = Less than 80% complete or in progress

Appendix A STATUS OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND SAVINGS

Chapter 1: District Organization and Management

Rec. #	General Recommendation	Implementation Status	TSPR'S Projected Five - Year Savings (Costs)	Actual Savings (Costs) to Date	EISD's Projected Five - Year Savings (Costs)	Comments
1	Reduce the number of non-teaching staff in EISD. p. 23	In Progress	\$1,008,000	\$99,000	\$495,000	The district has grown considerably, and the district is carefully evaluating all hiring. In 1999-2000, when the district grew by only 50 students, the former superintendent hired 50 additional employees. The new administration honored the signed contracts but has steadily tried to reallocate staff as positions are vacated. The superintendent is working directly with principals and department heads to evaluate what is needed and what can be accomplished with the existing employees and the campus. The district improvement plans are being revised to include staffing allocations. Because of the district's tremendous growth, the number of

						employees has increased; however, some savings have been achieved through the elimination and reallocation of positions from the central office to campuses.
2	Tie the allocation of resources to the District and Campus Improvement Plans. p. 25	In Progress	\$0	\$0	\$0	Each campus administrator and site-based committee has worked to tie their budget to programs in the plan. Each principal will meet with the executive director of Business and Support Services to review the allocated State Compensatory Education funds and the percentages of those funds tied to personnel. A list of full-time equivalent (FTE) staff will be included in the plans. In the 2002-03 plans, all allocated resources will be tied directly to campus plans. Instruction sheets are now attached to the Preliminary Budget Calendar being used to prepare the 2002-03 budget.
3	Create a district level, site-based decision-making model assigning specific responsibilities for decision-making to the district advisory committee, the school staff, campus committees, administrators and the	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	The district and campus site-based committees have training in Administrative Policies and Procedures of Site-Based Decision Making. As of October 2001,

	board. p. 29					the board has approved all plans.
4	Publish a district newsletter each six weeks and hold semi-annual community exchanges. p. 31	Complete	(\$26,520)	\$0	\$0	In August 2001, EISD began to publish a monthly newsletter and is holding parent meetings to inform parents about upcoming events and programs. Because the newsletter is published monthly, it remains small enough to be produced in-house with no additional budgeted funds required. Distribution is accomplished via e-mail and on the Web page. Each school also publishes a newsletter that is sent home with the children. The district has had many positive comments as a result.
5	Post board agendas, board briefs and upcoming events on the EISD Web site. p. 33	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	All board meeting agendas and board briefs are posted on the Web site and e-mailed to all employees. Weekly calendars from the campuses also are posted for upcoming events.
6	Revise the responsibilities of the community education coordinator and develop a Volunteer/Community Involvement plan to strengthen the parental involvement program. p. 35	In Progress	\$0	\$0	\$0	The Community Education coordinator has taken on additional responsibilities in this area and has started putting a system in place to strengthen volunteer and community involvement. EISD's

						Community Education Department has a volunteer program in place but has not formally written a plan. Principals have received training on how to track and document volunteer hours. The bank billboard and the Elgin Courier advertise for volunteers. Volunteers must sign up in the Community Education office and after criminal record checks have been completed, volunteers may then report to the office of the campus in which they choose to volunteer.
	Totals - Chapter 1		\$981,480	\$99,000	\$495,000	
	Grand Totals (all chapters)		\$1,145,833	\$56,500	\$422,500	

Appendix A STATUS OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND SAVINGS

Chapter 2: Educational Service Delivery

Rec. #	General Recommendation	Implementation Status	TSPR'S Projected Five - Year Savings (Costs)	Actual Savings (Costs) to Date	EISD's Projected Five - Year Savings (Costs)	Comments
7	Develop consistent approaches to delivering adopted curriculum, establish performance benchmarks for each grade level and school and monitor and evaluate performance. p. 55	In Progress	\$0	\$0	\$0	The Academics 2000 grant funds teacher training on curriculum delivery. Staff development is scheduled for spring 2002 on curriculum alignment with the new Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) test. Benchmarks are in place at all campuses, and teachers must evaluate the progress of their students, submit data to the principal who in turn submits the data to the superintendent.
8	Implement programs designed to narrow the performance gap between Anglo, minority and economically disadvantaged students. p. 58	In Progress	(\$5,000)	\$0	\$0	The superintendent formed a Diversity Committee t and required the committee to take Awareness Training and then to train each

						<p>faculty member. A staff development program also was held on January 4, 2002 to provide teachers with teaching strategies for diverse learners. The district has adopted a yearlong theme "Linking Together for Quality Performance" and within the theme, the district adopted the concept of "Know the Learner." Each teacher must know the student's past performance on testing and then teach to the objectives and test the objectives and benchmark progress. Each campus site-based team completely disaggregated the test data to set the 2001-02 year's goals and objectives. Spring tutorials will be in place as well as parent conference days to keep parents informed of their child's status. This is being accomplished with existing staff development and grant funds.</p>
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9	Implement plans to reduce TAAS exemptions for minority students and monitor results. p. 62	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	The State-Developed Alternative Assessment (SDAA) test in grades 3-8 has eliminated the exempt status for special education. For the students in grades 9-12, the Special Education Director has directed the Admissions, Review and Dismissal (ARD) Committees to evaluate the status of the individual child before recommending an exemption. Limited English Proficient (LEP) students are given the Reading Proficiency Test in English (RPTE).
10	Develop a formal program evaluation process, clearly define roles and responsibilities and provide trained staff to lead the program. p. 68	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	The new executive director of Academics Services who came to the district in September 2001, has evaluated each program, developed campus teams for the programs, revised handbooks, obtained board approval of the handbooks and conducted parent meetings to

						inform parents of roles and responsibilities of each staff member on the team of each campus.
11	Evaluate programs funded with compensatory education funds and direct funds to successful programs and areas of greatest needs. p. 72	In Progress	\$0	\$0	\$0	The executive director of Academic Services has worked with principals to evaluate the effectiveness of the programs funded by compensatory education. As a result of the evaluation and identified student needs, the district changed the optional extended year programs curriculum and changed the class schedules. The principals also have worked closely with the executive director of Business and Support Services to ensure that personnel who are providing services are being accurately paid from compensatory funds. All programs on the campuses funded with compensatory education funds are now being aligned with resources in the campus

						improvement plans.
12	Evaluate the ESL program and make changes to better meet the needs of ESL students. p. 77	In Progress	\$0	\$0	\$0	The executive director of Academic Services, with the assistance of school principals is evaluating all Bilingual/ESL services and data, checking each campus' progress and monitoring the delivery of curriculum.
13	Amend G/T assessment criteria to ensure that all student populations have access to G/T assessment and services. p. 84	In Progress	(\$860)	\$0	\$0	The gifted and talented committee, consisting of G/T contacts from each campus with the executive director of Academic Services, revised last year's G/T plan. The committee researched procedures used by other districts and changed the identification and assessment criteria. The district added several assessment instruments [Agenda, SAGES, SAGES 2, and SOI (Structure of Intellect-Learning Abilities Test)]. The superintendent approved changes to the Gifted and Talented Plan

						and recommended the plan to the board for approval. The board approved the present plan in place.
14	Develop a standardized approach to applying discipline in each EISD school. p. 97	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	The campus and district site-based committees reviewed the recommendations and mandates set by the TASB Student Code of Conduct. All allowable modifications were made and sent to the board for approval of the handbook in July of 2001 for the 2001-02 school year. The district site-based committee modified the dress code for 2001-02 after receiving input from each campus committee and students. The revised dress code was mailed to parents with the final report card for the 2000-01 school year. Elgin Primary School has been a part of a program for better discipline called Foundations for three years. The district is now considering going districtwide with

						this discipline management plan. To ensure consistency, the superintendent monitors incidents and discipline techniques and evaluates principals based upon observations.
	Totals - Chapter 2		(\$5,860)	\$0	\$0	
	Grand Totals (all chapters)		\$1,145,833	\$56,500	\$422,500	

Appendix A STATUS OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND SAVINGS

Chapter 3: Personnel Management

Rec. #	General Recommendation	Implementation Status	TSPR'S Projected Five - Year Savings (Costs)	Actual Savings (Costs) to Date	EISD's Projected Five - Year Savings (Costs)	Comments
15	Evaluate the efforts of other districts to foster communication and involvement at all organizational levels and develop an approach that involves the board, superintendent and district staff, especially teachers. p. 109	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	The superintendent asked the Community Education Coordinator to evaluate other districts' communication methods. She gathered data from Bastrop, Manor, Smithville and Georgetown. After the superintendent reviewed those methods, EISD put in place the following: a monthly newsletter, a superintendent's weekly update to the board, and a weekly principals' and directors' meeting. Weekly campus calendars also are e-mailed to the central office, and the superintendent and the principals

						require all staff to use e-mail as a daily communication tool. The superintendent's cabinet also was formed and meets each month.
16	Develop written information that clearly defines the basis of the index system and how the index multipliers are determined. p. 114	In Progress	\$0	\$0	\$0	Starting with the 2000-01 school year, all administrators were placed on the index system. Salary schedules (with the index multipliers) were made available that showed how each salary was determined. The district, however, is in the process of discarding the index system and developing a standard mid-point salary schedule.
17	Adjust all EISD salaries to the level required for the position based upon the salary schedule adopted by the district. p. 116	In Progress	(\$107,088)	(\$108,000)	(600,000)	In November 2000, the board approved adjustments to certain positions that were inequitably funded. Presently, the district is studying the salary schedules of neighboring districts for all positions to develop a schedule that is both fair and

						comparable with surrounding districts. The district also is looking at a schedule that will provide flexibility when hiring high-demand skilled laborers, such as mechanics and skilled maintenance workers.
18	Integrate the benefits information with the payroll system. p. 117	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	The position of Benefits Coordinator has been moved from the Human Resources Department to the Business Office and is now supervised by the executive director for Business and Support Services. This move has enhanced the coordination between the Benefits Coordinator and Accounting Specialist when using the RSCCC system.
	Totals - Chapter 3		(\$107,088)	(\$108,000)	(\$600,000)	
	Grand Totals (all chapters)		\$1,145,833	\$56,500	\$422,500	

Appendix A STATUS OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND SAVINGS

Chapter 4: Facilities Use and Management

Rec. #	General Recommendation	Implementation Status	TSPR'S Projected Five - Year Savings (Costs)	Actual Savings (Costs) to Date	EISD's Projected Five - Year Savings (Costs)	Comments
19	Develop a long-range facilities master plan. p. 126	In Progress	\$0	\$0	\$0	The superintendent created a Facilities Committee in February of 2001. This committee was made up of the superintendent, principals, the executive director of Business and Finance, two board members, community members, teachers, athletic directors, the maintenance director and parents. The first task was to evaluate each facility and prioritize changes or renovations. The committee visited each site and discussed placement of classrooms and prioritized the renovations

						necessary to facilitate the students' needs and to accommodate scheduling maintenance work. The committee continues to meet with a few changes. The executive director of Business is now over Support Services, and the committee now includes representatives from the chamber of commerce and the city. The Facilities Committee is determining the growth needs of the district since a February 2001 demographic study showed the district could gain as many as 1,000 students in the next five years.
20	Evaluate the quality of current maintenance work, identify opportunities to improve service and develop a plan to implement changes. p. 131	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	A new e-mail work order system is in place that allows staff to prioritize the work and respond promptly to requests.
21	Eliminate one custodial floater position and hire two part time custodians. p. 135	Complete	\$44,870	\$37,500	\$187,500	The district has added 173,000 sq. ft. since the report was written, but is applying the 20,000 sq. ft. per custodian

						<p>standard. The district has 25.5 custodians. At 20,000 sq. ft. per custodian, the district has two custodians over the standard allowance, because of the number of portables, area rugs in the primary school and elementary school and the support that is necessary in the cafeteria in the morning and at noon. At the time of the review, the district has 4.5 positions more than the standard. Had EISD not applied the new standards, the district would have hired 2.5 additional custodians at a cost of \$37,500.</p>
22	<p>Have SECO conduct an energy management audit of all EISD facilities that do not have installed controls. p. 136</p>	In Progress	\$208,372	\$20,000	\$300,000	<p>The district has contracted through an energy aggregator to save 35 percent on energy costs. A district energy management plan is being written and the facility master plan is being updated. The district has contacted several energy management</p>

						contractors to provide an energy audit. As yet, however, the district has not formally requested an energy audit from the State Energy Conservation Office (SECO).
	Totals - Chapter 4		\$253,242	\$57,500	\$487,500	
	Grand Totals (all chapters)		\$1,145,833	\$56,500	\$422,500	

Appendix A STATUS OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND SAVINGS

Chapter 5: Financial Management

Rec. #	General Recommendation	Implementation Status	TSPR'S Projected Five - Year Savings (Costs)	Actual Savings (Costs) to Date	EISD's Projected Five - Year Savings (Costs)	Comments
23	Settle the successor-in-interest for the Bastrop County Education District between participating districts to reduce administrative time and effort in accounting for this activity. p. 153	In Progress	\$0	\$0	\$0	The Bastrop ISD is collecting and remitting these taxes to EISD through a cooperative arrangement. Bastrop ISD is attempting to determine an appropriate settlement amount for each district involved. While there is nothing that EISD can do at this point in the process, progress is being made.
24	Continue developing the implementation strategy for GASB Statement No. 34 to meet annual external financial reporting guidelines and TEA regulatory reporting requirements. p. 157	In Progress	\$0	\$0	\$0	The district has established asset guidelines consistent with GASB 34. The 2002-03 budget information will be integrated with management comments, and a breakdown of how facilities are being used will be provided. The district will use a standard depreciation

						schedule.
25	Contract for payroll processing. p. 158	Not Implemented	\$44,996	\$0	\$0	To this point the district has not felt this recommendation was workable; administrators indicated that they would review this recommendation again during the budget process.
26	Modify the depository agreement and cash and investment policies to provide for a sweep of idle cash balances into higher yielding investments on an overnight basis. p. 161	Complete	\$38,704	\$8,000	\$40,000	Depositories were offered an opportunity to provide a sweep account and declined to do so, saying they did not find it cost effective to provide this service. The district was, however, offered a higher rate of interest on funds deposited in checking accounts to offset lost revenue.
27	Make arrangements with the depository bank to convert existing accounts payable and payroll clearing accounts to controlled disbursement accounts to take advantage of clearing times for checks and the ability to fund only checks cleared each day. p. 163	Complete	\$2,878	\$0	\$0	Higher interest rates are paid for checking accounts to offset cost of funds left on deposit. Savings are included in Recommendation #26.
28	Revise daily investment	Complete	\$122,629	\$0	\$0	The district changed its

	activities to allow diversification of the portfolio to take advantage of higher yielding securities. p. 164					investment policy to allow it to purchase securities when appropriate. In 2000-01, the district invested more than \$8 million in securities. Because of declining interest rates, investments are not earning as much interest compared to previous years.
29	Establish procedures to ensure compliance with all state and local purchasing laws and policies. p. 172	In Progress	\$0	\$0	\$0	A district purchasing and business procedures manual is in draft form. The district continues to use the General Services Commission and other state purchasing cooperatives and individual bids to obtain the best prices. The executive director of Business and Support Services is examining budgets to determine who anticipates purchases of more than \$25,000 and is bidding those purchases early in the year, before the district reaches the \$25,000 threshold.
30	Automate the purchase	Not Implemented	\$0	\$0	\$0	The district has examined using

	requisition and order process. p. 174					an automated system; however, this assessment indicated an automated system would require additional staff. The district will continue to monitor this issue to determine when it will be feasible to implement.
31	Create and distribute a district-wide purchasing procedures manual. p. 175	In Progress	\$0	\$0	\$0	A district purchasing and business procedures manual is in draft form.
32	Establish an interlocal agreement with other school districts in Bastrop County in order to make purchases using each other's bids. p. 176	Not Implemented	\$0	\$0	\$0	While there are informal purchasing exchanges going on between districts, nothing has been formally adopted. The district has an agreement with Region 18, which gives the district access to approximately 600 vendors.
	Totals - Chapter 5		\$209,207	\$8,000	\$40,000	
	Grand Totals (all chapters)		\$1,145,833	\$56,500	\$422,500	

Appendix A STATUS OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND SAVINGS

Chapter 6: Operations

Rec. #	General Recommendation	Implementation Status	TSPR'S Projected Five - Year Savings (Costs)	Actual Savings (Costs) to Date	EISD's Projected Five - Year Savings (Costs)	Comments
33	Develop performance expectations for Child Nutrition employees. p. 181	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	The Human Resource and Child Nutrition directors have developed job expectations for kitchen employees, which have been presented to the kitchen staff. An annual employee evaluation form also has been developed.
34	Eliminate operational barriers and implement new programs to increase meal participation. p. 184	Complete	\$69,952	\$0	\$0	A scatter system where kiosks are positioned around the cafeteria allows students more choices and eliminates long lines. The staff uses student participation records to review menus each year to determine what the students like to eat. New products are evaluated in light of student acceptability and nutrition. New recipes are tested. Students

						have made recommendations on new items for menus. Menus will be discussed with students before menus are planned. The Regional Service Center offers in-service training for Child Nutrition employees before school opens, and training is offered at each kitchen during the school year. Kitchen managers attend special workshops for managers.
35	Develop an accurate, detailed and timely departmental budgeting and financial reporting system, and provide regular reports to kitchen managers. p. 190	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	Forms have been developed for budget and financial reporting for each campus. The director discusses results of monthly reports with kitchen managers and evaluates each operation. The business manager sends budget printouts showing monthly performance to the Child Nutrition director each month.
36	Comply with the state and federal laws regarding proper sanitation and health standards in EISD kitchens. p. 191	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	All kitchen employees have been supplied with a thermometer and trained on testing food for correct temperature. Equipment

						<p>repairs have been completed, and new equipment has been purchased for holding food at the correct temperatures. Air conditioners have been installed at the Elgin Elementary School, which was the Elgin Middle School. The old elementary school kitchen has been closed. Kitchen managers monitor the sanitation of their kitchen and train employees on sanitation. A Sanitation Systems Provider reviews sanitation procedures with employees each month at their kitchens. Cleaning is performed daily with a cleanup day at the end of each semester to perform extreme cleaning. Kitchens scored 92 and above on the most recent health inspections by the Bastrop County Health and Sanitation Department.</p>
37	Modify the existing technology plan to specify tasks and	In Progress	\$0	\$0	\$0	The Elgin ISD Technology Implementation Team meets a

	<p>dates that will accomplish the district's goals and spending priorities. p. 196</p>				<p>minimum of two times yearly to discuss district technology goals and timelines. Each campus Technology Implementation Team meets a minimum of two times per semester to discuss the campus programs and needs. The technology coordinator, with the assistance of the technology specialist and the business manager, creates a draft of the coming year's budget and implementation timelines based upon the campus-defined needs. In January 2001, the board approved the updated plan that contained additional detail on timeframes and staffing responsibilities. A five-year timeline (2000-05) is referenced in the Elgin ISD Technology Plan Goals and Objectives. Each goal and objective references the timeframe for implementation, staff responsible, available resources and evaluation of each of the objectives. Each</p>
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						objective is directly tied to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills, and spending priorities are established in the plan.
38	Develop a comprehensive disaster recovery plan and test it. p. 197	In Progress	\$0	\$0	\$0	With assistance from an information technology expert from the State Comptroller's Office, EISD began a planning process to create a Comprehensive Disaster Recovery Plan in December 2000. After studying various other recovery plans, EISD chose to create Impact Analysis Questionnaires for each department within the school district. The questionnaire was designed to obtain some specific information on recovery time objectives, recovery point objectives and financial losses over time stemming from the loss of a technology-based process. Separate questionnaires were completed for each critical function within

						<p>the departments. In December 2000, all questionnaires were returned to the Technology Office, and a continuity plan referencing Departmental Impact Questionnaires was begun. Documentation is now contained in the Disaster Recovery Plan Binder located in the Technology Office.</p>
39	<p>Develop a technology forum among all Bastrop County districts. p. 201</p>	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	<p>Technology knowledge sharing is an ongoing process supported by the Texas Computer Education Association (TCEA) and TECSIG (Technology Education Coordinator Special Interest Group). All Bastrop County districts are members of TCEA and work together through that organization to develop training for teachers, technology expectations for all grade levels and innovative technology-based classes. Members of TCEA focus on integrating technology into the K-12</p>

						environment and providing members with state-of-the-art information through conferences, workshops, newsletters, the Internet and collaborations with higher education and business. This organization allows Bastrop County technology departments to affiliate with the International Society for Technology in Education, which provides a two-way system of information throughout the world.
40	Adopt a 15-year bus replacement policy. p. 215	In Progress	(\$250,000)	\$0	\$0	The district is using a flexible replacement cycle. This cycle allows the district the flexibility to work within budgetary constraints and cash flow requirements while continuing to provide safe and reliable transportation. Two buses each year are sent to the state for refurbishing at a cost of approximately \$6,500 each. The expected useful life extension is five years. The

						district purchased one new bus in 2000, refurbished two in 2001 and two more in 2002. According to administrators, the district will purchase one or two buses next year, depending on funds availability, but has stopped short of establishing a formal replacement plan with recurring budgets each year.
41	Purchase and implement an automated fleet maintenance system. p. 216	In Progress	(\$5,100)	\$0	\$0	All buses are given preventive maintenance checks during regular scheduled oil changes. Operational checks are made twice each day, and the transportation mechanic makes spot checks. Bus records are being maintained and fuel and oil checks are made on a regular basis to ensure operational proficiency.
	Totals - Chapter 6		(\$185,148)	\$0	\$0	
	Grand Totals (all chapters)		\$1,145,833	\$56,500	\$422,500	