

TRANSMITTAL LETTER

March 28, 2003

The Honorable Rick Perry, Governor
The Honorable David Dewhurst, Lieutenant Governor
The Honorable Thomas R. Craddick, Speaker of the House
Commissioner Felipe Alanis, Ph.D.

Fellow Texans:

I am pleased to present my performance review of the Galena Park Independent School District (GPISD).

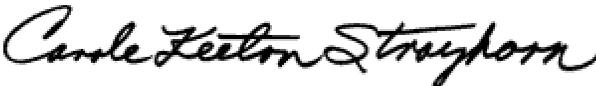
This review is intended to help GPISD hold the line on costs, streamline operations, and improve services to ensure that more of every education dollar goes directly into the classroom with the teacher and children, where it belongs. To aid in this task, I contracted with SDSM, Inc.

I have made a number of recommendations to improve GPISD's efficiency. I also have highlighted a number of "best practices" in district operations-model programs and services provided by the district's administrators, teachers, and staff. This report outlines 73 detailed recommendations that could save GPISD nearly \$10.2 million over the next five years, while reinvesting more than \$3.1 million to improve educational services and other operations. Net savings are estimated to reach nearly \$7.1 million that the district can redirect to the classroom.

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

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

Sincerely,



Carole Keeton Strayhorn
Texas Comptroller

c: Senate Committee on Education

House Committee on Public Education

The Honorable Mario Gallegos, Jr., Texas Senate, District 6

The Honorable John Whitmire, Texas Senate, District 15

The Honorable Joe Crabb, Texas House of Representatives, District 127

The Honorable Harold Dutton, Jr., Texas House of Representatives,
District 142

The Honorable Joe Moreno, Texas House of Representatives, District
143

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In September 2002, Texas Comptroller Carole Keeton Strayhorn began a review of the Galena Park Independent School District (GPISD). Based upon more than six months of work, this report identifies GPISD's exemplary programs and suggests concrete ways to improve district operations. If fully implemented, the Comptroller's 73 recommendations could result in net savings of nearly \$7.1 million over the next five years.

Improving The Texas School Performance Review

Soon after taking office in January 1999, Texas Comptroller Carole Keeton Strayhorn consulted school district officials, parents and teachers from across Texas and carefully examined past reviews and progress reports to make the Texas School Performance Review (TSPR) more valuable to the state's school districts. With the perspective of a former teacher and school board president, the Comptroller has vowed to use TSPR to increase local school districts' accountability to the communities they serve.

Recognizing that only 51 cents of every education dollar is spent on instruction, Comptroller Strayhorn's goal is to drive more of every education dollar directly into the classroom. Comptroller Strayhorn also has ordered TSPR staff to share best practices and exemplary programs quickly and systematically with all the state's school districts and with anyone else who requests such information. Comptroller Strayhorn has directed TSPR to serve as a clearinghouse of the best ideas in Texas public education.

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

- ensure that students and teachers receive the support and resources necessary to succeed;
- identify innovative ways to address the district's core management challenges;
- ensure that administrative duties are performed efficiently, without duplication, and in a way that fosters education;
- develop strategies to ensure that the district's processes and programs are continuously assessed and improved;
- challenge any process, procedure, program or policy that impedes instruction and recommend ways to reduce or eliminate obstacles; and
- put goods and services to the "Yellow Pages Test": government should do no job if a business in the Yellow Pages can do that job better and at a lower cost.

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

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

TSPR In Galena Park ISD

In December 2000, Comptroller Strayhorn selected GPISD for a school performance review. Based on the Comptroller's criteria for school audits, GPISD is among the 50 largest school districts in Texas with more than 65 percent of its students economically disadvantaged. While academically the district is excelling, the district is facing financial challenges associated with meeting the needs of a growing and diverse student population.

In January 2001, after consulting with the board, Superintendent Neeley called the Comptroller and requested that the review be delayed. The review began in September 2002, with interviews and two public forums held at Galena Park High School from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. on September 17 and September 19, at North Shore Senior High School. The Comptroller's office selected SDSM Inc., an Austin-based consulting firm, to assist with the review at a cost to the Comptroller's office of \$185,000. The review team interviewed district employees, school board members, parents, business leaders and community members.

To obtain additional comments, the review team conducted focus group sessions with teachers, principals, parents and community members. To ensure that all stakeholder groups could provide input, TSPR sent surveys to students, parents, teachers, campus and central administrators and support staff.

A total of 312 respondents answered surveys. Sixty administrative and support staff, 31 principals and assistant principals, 68 teachers, 33 parents and 120 students completed written surveys as part of the review. Details from the surveys and public forums appear in **Appendices A** through **F**.

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

GPISD selected peer districts for comparisons based on similarities in student enrollment, student performance and community and student demographics. The selected peer districts were Aldine ISD, Pasadena ISD, Humble ISD and Goose Creek CISD. TSPR also compared GPISD to district averages in TEA's Regional Education Service Center IV (Region 4), to which GPISD belongs, and to the state as a whole.

During its six-month review, TSPR developed 73 recommendations for improving operations and saving taxpayers nearly \$10.2 million by 2006-07. Cumulative net savings from all recommendations (savings minus recommended investments or expenditures) would reach nearly \$7.1 million by 2006-07.

A detailed list of costs and savings by recommendation appears in **Exhibit 4**. Many TSPR recommendations would not have a direct impact but would improve the district's overall operations.

Acknowledgments

The Comptroller's office and SDSM, Inc., wish to express their appreciation to the GPISD Board of Trustees, Superintendent Dr. Shirley Neeley, district employees, students, parents and community residents who helped during this review. Special thanks go to Mike Seale, who served as GPISD's liaison. He arranged for office space, equipment and meeting rooms, organized the findings meeting, responded to data requests and accommodated the review team's needs.

Galena Park ISD

GPISD, an urban school district located in eastern Harris County, covers 32 square miles and includes land in four separate political subdivisions: the city of Galena Park; Jacinto City; several unincorporated communities in Harris County including Greens Bayou, Woodland Acres and the Cloverleaf Addition in Harris County; and a limited area of the city of Houston. The district's students are 63 percent Hispanic, 21 percent African American and 14 percent Anglo. Economically disadvantaged students make up 65.8 percent of the student population.

Exhibit 1 details the demographic characteristics of GPISD Regional Education Service Center (Region 4), the state and GPISD's peer school districts.

Exhibit 1
Demographic Characteristics of Students
GPISD, Peer Districts, Region 4 and the State
2001-02

District	Ethnic Group (Percent)					Economically Disadvantaged
	2001-02	African American	Hispanic	Anglo	Other	
Aldine	53,201	33.7%	54.7%	8.8%	2.9%	73.7%
Pasadena	43,476	5.6%	66.8%	24.1%	3.5%	57.3%
Humble	25,239	10.6%	15.3%	70.7%	3.5%	17.3%
GPISD	19,336	21.3%	62.9%	13.8%	2.0%	65.8%
Goose Creek Consolidated	18,274	17.3%	42.6%	38.7%	1.3%	52.2%
Region 4	900,198	21.7%	38.1%	34.8%	5.4%	48.8%
State	4,146,653	14.4%	41.7%	40.9%	3.1%	50.5%

Source: Texas Education Agency (TEA), Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS), 2001-02.

In 2001-02, the district served 19,336 students in three high schools, four middle schools, one intermediate school and 12 elementary schools. Of these 19 schools, the district has six schools classified as "Exemplary" by TEA and 13 "Recognized" schools. GPISD's 2001-02 budget was more than \$139.9 million. The district employs 2,524 staff members; 1,326 (52.5 percent) are teachers.

The district has made significant strides academically under the direction of its superintendent, Dr. Shirley Neeley, who was hired in 1995. In 1994-95, the district's overall TEA accreditation status was Accredited, the precursor to today's ranking of Academically Acceptable. In 2001-02, GPISD is the largest Exemplary district in the state.

As shown in **Exhibit 2**, GPISD's percent improvement on Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) over this period nearly doubled the state increase. Although GPISD was last among its peers in 1997-98, its student performance in 2001-02 surpassed all but one of the peer districts as well as the state and regional average.

Exhibit 2
Percent of Students Passing TAAS, All Tests Taken (Grades 3-8 and 10)
GPISD, Peer Districts, Region 4 and the State
1997-98 through 2001-02

District	1997-98*	1998-99**	1999-2000**	2000-01**	2001-02	Percentage Point Change 1997-98 to 2001-02
Humble	87.4%	85.6%	87.6%	88.7%	89.9%	2.5%
Aldine	80.1%	78.4%	80.6%	84.1%	87.1%	7.0%
Goose Creek	78.1%	80.3%	82.8%	85.3%	86.4%	8.3%
Pasadena	77.9%	79.4%	81.4%	83.9%	86.6%	8.7%
GPISD	74.2%	79.2%	81.4%	85.4%	89.1%	14.9%
Region 4	75.9%	78.1%	80.6%	83.1%	86.8%	10.9%
State	77.7%	78.1%	79.9%	82.1%	85.3%	7.6%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 1997-98 through 2001-02.

*Recalculated from original posting to include special education and grades 3 and 4 Spanish TAAS.

** Recalculated from original posting to include special education and grades 3 through 6 Spanish TAAS.

The following series of key findings and recommendations is designed to assist the board, superintendent and administration in overcoming a number of challenges, including:

- improving student performance beyond state assessments;
- enhancing business management practices; and
- instilling public confidence and improving communication.

Key Findings and Recommendations

Improve Student Performance Beyond State Assessments

Improve participation rates in the statewide testing program. A smaller percentage of GPISD students take the TAAS than the state and regional averages, due primarily to its Special Education and Limited-English-Proficient (LEP) exemption rates. In 2001-02, more than 8 percent of the district's students tested took the State Developed Alternative Assessment, an alternative test given to special education students. While the district has done a commendable job of improving its

students' TAAS scores, it should develop and implement districtwide and campus-specific strategies to increase participation rates for future statewide tests.

Review end-of-course data and develop strategies to prepare for the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills. In 2001-02, GPISD high school students fell below regional and state averages on exit-level TAAS writing and all tests taken and end-of-course exams. TEA has indicated that districts can predict how their students will perform on the new Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) by their performance on the end-of-course exams. Students' performance on the more rigorous TAKS can be improved by incorporating end-of-course objectives and strategies in the district improvement plan (DIP) and campus improvement plans (CIPs).

Improve student performance on college entrance tests. GPISD students score below the state and regional averages on college entrance tests. GPISD high schools differ in the emphasis they place on the American College Test (ACT) and Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) in their CIPs. The district has attempted to improve student participation and performance by offering preparatory courses and staff training for teachers on incorporating test-taking skills into the regular curriculum. Including a greater focus on ACT/SAT preparation and exam-taking in the DIP and in its CIPs should help the district to better prepare students for college and ultimately for the workforce.

Improve student participation in Advanced Placement (AP) courses and exams. While GPISD has received recognition for increasing its number of students enrolled in AP courses, the AP participation rate and AP performance by district students remain below regional and state averages. Students surveyed during a 2002 evaluation of the AP program said that their main reason for not taking AP exams was a lack of preparation. In addition, the district holds its secondary teachers accountable for student performance on AP exams, but not for participation. Consequently, teachers tend to encourage students who are more likely to do well on the AP exams to participate. A comprehensive plan focusing on the academic and financial benefits to be gained by participating in AP courses, and including a staff development schedule for AP teachers in the areas of test-taking and preparation, would help the district increase its participation and exam rates.

Enhance Business Management Practices

Apply industry staffing formulas at the campus level and reduce the number of secretaries at the central administrative level. According to industry standards, GPISD is overstaffed with vice principals, clerical and

secretarial positions. According to the district, present staffing levels provide teachers with the resources needed for a positive teaching environment, but the district and campus improvement plans do not reflect that goal. Using industry standards, GPISD could eliminate six assistant principal positions and 35 clerical positions. These measures would produce a five-year savings of more than \$4.4 million.

Strengthen compliance with state and board purchasing policies.

GPISD does not have a formal purchasing process to ensure compliance with state law and board policy or to ensure that the district receives the best value for its money. District purchasing is decentralized, with several departments making purchases individually. While the district has a Purchasing Department, it has not assigned specific personnel or senior purchasing coordinator to monitor all purchases and ensure compliance with applicable laws and policies. Consequently, GPISD could not verify that 23 of the 49 vendors were unable to provide documentation to verify compliance with state law and board policy. A formal contracting process with strong internal controls would help the district ensure procurement compliance.

Perform cost-benefit analysis to ensure that computer purchases are cost-competitive. GPISD's choice to standardize its computing resources and purchase exclusively from one vendor does not encourage competitive costing. Limiting itself to one vendor may cost the district unnecessarily. The district should perform a cost-benefit analysis that weighs whether to remain with a single type of equipment or to expand to multiple vendor platforms. The analysis should compare not only the purchase cost but also reliability issues and costs associated with supportability and maintenance needs. The analysis should form the basis of the district's computer purchasing strategy. Competitive bidding should save the district nearly \$2.3 million over five years.

Use cost of service and interest rates as the major criteria in selecting a depository bank. GPISD did not award its depository contract based on the lowest cost and highest interest earnings. Instead, the board accepted the recommendation of the district's depository bid selection committee and awarded the contract to a bidder that does not offer services provided by the other bidders. Furthermore, the successful bidder does not require the lowest compensating balance or provide the best net cost to the district. By using cost of service and interest rates as the major criteria in selecting a depository bank, the district could save nearly \$277,800 over a five-year period.

Hire an internal auditor who reports directly to the board. GPISD does not have an internal auditor who reports directly to the board. At one time, the district had a position with duties including audit activities that

reported to the chief operations officer. The district, however, never had a charter or audit plan; internal audit work was very limited in scope and nature; several of the audit reports were never issued; and many audit projects were left unfinished. This position eventually was transferred to the Purchasing Department and the person in this position no longer performs internal auditing. An internal auditor could improve internal controls and ensure compliance with laws, rules and board policy. The internal auditor should report directly to the board to guarantee the position's independence and enhance the board's ability to receive unbiased and unfiltered reports on district operations and special investigations.

Instill Public Confidence and Improve Communication

Restrict the district from purchasing from or contracting with business entities in which board members have a substantial interest.

Businesses related to four different GPISD board members each received more than \$150,000 from the district from 1999-2000 to 2001-02. While all board members follow the district policy requiring them to abstain from voting in such instances, community members still perceive a conflict of interest. A policy restricting board members from doing business with the district would assure community members that board members are there to serve the students' best interests.

Reduce staffing in the School/Community Relations Department. The number of employees in GPISD's School/Community Relations Department far exceeds staffing levels in all of the peer districts. According to job descriptions provided by the district, three clerical workers are responsible for changing the marquee in front of the administration building and five are responsible for purchasing office supplies from neighborhood businesses. The department's top manager, by contrast, has relatively light job responsibilities compared to other assistant superintendent positions within the district. Eliminating the assistant superintendent for School/Community Relations and the executive secretary would allow the district to increase efficiency and save more than \$140,000 annually.

Improve district communication with the Spanish-speaking community. GPISD's student enrollment is 86 percent minority; 62.9 percent of the students are Hispanic. Even so, the district does not translate important information into Spanish. While individual campuses translate some documents, none are available in Spanish at the district level. In addition, the district does not provide a translator at board meetings to help Spanish-speaking community members understand or communicate with board members. Improving bilingual communication would

encourage more Spanish-speaking parents to become involved in the district.

Exemplary Programs and Practices

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

- **The combined efforts of the GPISD board, superintendent and staff helped the district achieve the Texas Education Agency's Exemplary ranking for 2001-02.** Their efforts in supporting the district's vision and goals for student performance were recognized when GPISD achieved Exemplary status in September 2002. GPISD is the largest district in the state to achieve TEA's Exemplary ranking. In 1998, the district superintendent and board set a goal of achieving Exemplary status districtwide in three years. Every aspect of the district's planning efforts and the entire district staff was involved in working toward that goal, and teachers and principals as well as central administrators were held accountable for their progress.
- **GPISD has a well-planned, well-implemented and clearly defined process for curriculum alignment and updating, and the instructional infrastructure to support it.** GPISD had an initial comprehensive curriculum management audit in 1996 and a follow-up audit in 2002. These audits have guided the district in formulating its curriculum development process and developing a strong infrastructure for instructional support. GPISD uses district and campus instructional specialists for each core area. The instructional specialists spend their time in the classroom demonstrating lessons and instructional strategies in response to specific school and student needs and offer after-school sessions and peer coaching. The instructional specialists are master teachers whose classroom experience, certifications and training allow them to help improve instruction at their schools.
- **GPISD integrates immigrant students into the district effectively through its New Arrival Center (NAC) program.** The NAC is a voluntary program for students who have been in the U.S. 12 months or less and who have scored "not English speaking" on an Oral Language Proficiency Test. Students spend one semester in the program, after which the district places them in

appropriate classes. The NAC offers small classes, more individual attention, better opportunities for the student to interact with other students and teachers and more opportunities for the teacher to observe each student and provide them with individual assistance.

- **GPISD works closely with local educational and civic organizations to provide services for students and community members.** The local YMCA provides after-school activities at six GPISD elementary schools. The city of Galena Park has an arrangement with the district that allows community members to use the district's baseball fields and tennis courts. The district also partners with businesses, civic organizations and several universities and colleges, all of which provide resources to help students succeed in school.
- **GPISD uses fewer but more specialized employees to repair and maintain its facilities.** GPISD's Maintenance Department uses two separate teams to perform regularly scheduled preventive maintenance. One, the Preventative Maintenance team, consists of a crew leader and four preventative maintenance workers and performs routine maintenance for different facility equipment and facilities, such as heating, air conditioning and lighting. The other team, the Corrective Team, includes a crew leader, two carpenters and a general laborer, and focuses its efforts on scheduled tasks such as painting, caulking, minor carpenter repairs and glass replacement. GPISD's director of Maintenance believes that these teams have allowed the district to operate with its reduced staffing levels and still exceed industry standards.
- **GPISD used innovative funding mechanisms to renovate a school, with an actual repayment amount that was less than the amount borrowed.** In 1997, Congress enacted the Tax Payer Relief Act, which authorized a little known debt instrument for school finance called Qualified Zone Academy Bonds (QZABs). QZABs allow qualifying schools or communities to borrow at little or no interest cost. Texas received an allocation of \$36 million for 2002 and districts were limited to a maximum amount of \$8 million each. GPISD issued the maximum allowable \$8 million in QZABs, which must be paid off in 14 years. GPISD makes annual payments of \$438,560 through an investment contract with a bank. The proceeds of the contract will pay off the QZABs; in essence, the district has received \$8 million and will pay \$6.1 million over 14 years to retire the debt.
- **The Transportation Department's bus driver career ladder program helps the district recruit and retain bus drivers.** The

Transportation Department uses a career ladder for bus drivers as a recruitment and retention tool. Competition for full-time positions results in motivated, high-quality drivers. The district has all full-time positions filled and part-time substitute driver/attendants with Commercial Drivers Licenses are waiting for full-time positions to become vacant.

Savings and Investment Requirements

Many TSPR recommendations would result in savings and increased revenue that the district could use to improve classroom instruction. The savings opportunities identified in this report are conservative and should be considered minimums. Proposed investments of additional funds usually are related to increased efficiencies or savings or improved productivity and effectiveness.

TSPR recommends 73 ways to save GPISD nearly \$10.2 million over a five-year period. Reinvestment opportunities would cost the district more than \$3.1 million during the same period. Full implementation of all recommendations in this report, then, could produce net savings of nearly \$7.1 million by 2007-08.

Exhibit 3
Summary of Net Savings
TSPR Review of Galena Park Independent School District

Year	Total
2003-04 Initial Annual Net Savings	\$905,138
2004-05 Additional Annual Net Savings	\$1,505,116
2005-06 Additional Annual Net Savings	\$1,527,584
2006-07 Additional Annual Net Savings	\$1,551,200
2007-08 Additional Annual Net Savings	\$1,576,128
One Time Net (Costs)/Savings	(\$6,950)
TOTAL SAVINGS PROJECTED FOR 2003-08	\$7,058,216

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Exhibit 4 Summary of Costs and Savings by Recommendation

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	Total 5-Year (Costs) or Savings	One Time (Costs) or Savings
Chapter 1: District Organization and Management							
1. Adopt a policy restricting procurement from or contracting with business entities in which a board member has a substantial interest. p. 29	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
2. Enforce board policies concerning board travel budgets and adopt state travel guidelines for GPISD board members' expense reimbursements. p. 31	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
3. Change the titles of district positions that do not include significant supervisory responsibilities to specialist or coordinator. p. 36	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
4. Evaluate staffing formulas for assistant principals	\$230,447	\$691,340	\$691,340	\$691,340	\$691,340	\$2,995,807	\$0

	and campus-based clerical staff and tie any additional staff to improved student performance. p. 43								
5.	Develop and implement staffing formulas for secretarial positions in departments and support functions. p. 45	\$296,716	\$296,716	\$296,716	\$296,716	\$296,716	\$1,483,580	\$0	
Totals Chapter 1		\$527,163	\$988,056	\$988,056	\$988,056	\$988,056	\$4,479,387	\$0	
Chapter 2: Educational Service Delivery									
6.	Implement instructional strategies to reduce the number of students who are retained in grade 1. p. 69	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
7.	Review TAAS participation and exemptions at schools with higher exemption rates and implement strategies to increase participation rates in statewide exams. p. 72	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
8.	Prepare a plan to review end-of-course data and develop strategies to prepare for the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills. p. 74	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	

14.	Develop and implement strategies for handling students with disruptive behavior to reduce the number of special education students who are placed in the district's disciplinary alternative education program. p. 120	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
15.	Increase library staffing to meet the "Acceptable" staffing standard. p. 124	(\$263,454)	(\$263,454)	(\$263,454)	(\$263,454)	(\$263,454)	(\$1,317,270)	\$0
16.	Increase library collection size to meet "Acceptable" standards. p. 125	(\$145,395)	(145,395)	(\$145,395)	(145,395)	(\$145,395)	(\$726,975)	\$0
Totals Chapter 2		(\$455,047)	(\$456,297)	(\$456,297)	(\$456,297)	(\$456,297)	(\$2,280,235)	(\$6,950)
Chapter 3 Personnel Management								
17.	Develop a complete list of essential duties for each position to use in hiring and workers' compensation programs. p. 136	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
18.	Update the exit report form and train administrators to obtain responses that provide more meaningful management information. p. 143	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

	publications, including sections of the district's Web site, into Spanish. p. 189							
28.	Establish a Web Advisory Committee and develop a three-year Web development plan. p. 190	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
29.	Require that the GPISD Education Foundation pay a portion of the foundation's administrative costs. p. 197	\$64,502	\$64,502	\$64,502	\$64,502	\$64,502	\$322,510	\$0
Totals Chapter 4		\$146,339	\$146,339	\$146,339	\$146,339	\$146,339	\$731,695	\$0
Chapter 5: Facilities Use and Management								
30.	Reduce the costs of maintenance contracts by competitively bidding contracts every three to five years. p. 219	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
31.	Develop guidelines and staffing requirements to identify and address future repair projects. p. 220	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
32.	Implement the WATT Watchers program at all district schools for teachers and students. p. 227	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

33.	Conduct a formal energy audit to identify additional energy savings opportunities. p. 229	\$11,169	\$11,169	\$11,169	\$11,169	\$11,169	\$55,845	
Totals Chapter 5		\$11,169	\$11,169	\$11,169	\$11,169	\$11,169	\$55,845	
Chapter 6: Asset and Risk Management								
34.	Minimize the amount of funds in checking accounts to maximize interest earnings. p. 238	\$4,601	\$4,601	\$4,601	\$4,601	\$4,601	\$23,005	\$0
35.	Obtain written documentation from investment companies that the revised investment policies have been received and reviewed. p. 240	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
36.	Use cost of service and interest rates as the major criteria in selecting a depository bank. p. 244	\$55,548	\$55,548	\$55,548	\$55,548	\$55,548	\$277,740	\$0
37.	Reconcile the subsidiary fixed asset ledger to the general ledger and investigate the differences. p. 250	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
38.	Adopt a board policy that defines the value of fixed assets that should be capitalized, specifies the	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

	performance against the standard and develop a plan to bring staffing levels to adopted standards. p. 320							
49.	Develop and implement a free breakfast in the classroom program at all elementary schools to increase student breakfast participation. p. 325	\$81,265	\$81,265	\$81,265	\$81,265	\$81,265	\$406,325	\$0
50.	Design and implement programs to increase high school breakfast participation. p. 327	\$13,214	\$26,427	\$26,427	\$26,427	\$26,427	\$118,922	\$0
51.	Survey students to gain feedback to improve food service operations. p. 331	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
52.	Modify the Student Nutrition Services fund balance monitoring process to prevent excess fund balances. p. 338	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
53.	Implement the point-of-sale system at all district snack bars. p. 339	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
54.	Implement freezer alarm monitoring at all district	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

	schools. p. 340							
55.	Streamline the financial analysis and reporting process by linking all information into the profit and loss statements. p. 342	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Totals Chapter 9		\$182,085	\$195,298	\$195,298	\$195,298	\$195,298	\$963,277	
Chapter 10: Transportation								
56.	Reduce overtime costs by hiring three drivers and four substitute drivers/attendants. p. 358	\$19,314	\$19,314	\$19,314	\$19,314	\$19,314	\$96,570	\$0
57.	Evaluate and fully implement all components available in the Transfinder software. p. 361	\$147,137	\$147,137	\$147,137	\$147,137	\$147,137	\$735,685	\$0
58.	Periodically review and evaluate alternatives to improve efficiency and minimize the cost of special program transportation. p. 363	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
59.	Develop a required refresher training program for employees outside the Transportation Department who drive buses and ensure that all drivers attend. p. 365	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

60.	Establish a 15-year bus replacement schedule. p. 369	\$48,316	\$48,316	\$48,316	\$48,316	\$48,316	\$241,580	\$0
Totals Chapter 10		\$214,767	\$214,767	\$214,767	\$214,767	\$214,767	\$1,073,835	\$0
Chapter 11: Safety and Security								
61.	Amend the High Point contract to require at least two progress reports to the home school administrator per student per semester. p. 382	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
62.	Develop a drill schedule that includes emergency responders and other district personnel. p. 387	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
63.	Include a field-test procedure in the bid process when purchasing safety or security equipment. p. 393	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
64.	Schedule periodic background checks for existing employees. p. 394	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
65.	Develop a district procedure to track truancy case dispositions. p. 395	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Totals Chapter 11		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Chapter 12: Computers and Technology								
66.	Perform cost-benefit analysis and purchase cost-competitive	\$318,160	\$450,508	\$472,976	\$496,592	\$521,520	\$2,259,756	\$0

	district's disaster recovery plan. p. 421							
73.	Implement a centralized problem-reporting process using consistent procedures and problem-tracking tools. p. 422	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Totals Chapter 12		\$318,160	\$450,508	\$472,976	\$496,592	\$521,520	\$2,259,756	\$0
Gross Savings								
		\$1,518,983	\$2,125,437	\$2,147,905	\$2,171,521	\$2,196,449	\$10,160,295	\$0
Gross Costs								
		(\$613,845)	(\$620,321)	(\$620,321)	(\$620,321)	(\$620,321)	(\$3,095,129)	(\$6,950)
Total								
		\$905,138	\$1,505,116	\$1,527,584	\$1,551,200	\$1,576,128	\$7,065,166	(\$6,950)

Total Savings	\$10,160,295
Total Costs	(\$3,102,079)
Net Savings	\$7,058,216

Chapter 1

DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

This chapter reviews the overall organization and management of Galena Park Independent School District (GPISD) in the following sections:

- A. Board Governance
- B. District Management
- C. Planning and Evaluation

To effectively manage a school district, elected officials and district staff must cooperate and understand the differences in their roles. The school board determines the district's goals and policies. District staff implement the board's orders and provide the board with feedback.

The staff is responsible for implementing the plans approved by the board and for recommending modifications necessary to ensure the successful operation of all district programs and duties. The superintendent, as the chief executive officer of the district, recommends the level of staffing and the amount of resources necessary to operate and accomplish the board's goals and objectives.

BACKGROUND

GPISD, an urban school district in Harris County, covers 32 square miles and includes land in four political subdivisions: the city of Galena Park, Jacinto City, unincorporated areas in Harris County and a limited area of the city of Houston. As of 2001, 97 percent of the district was developed. More than 86 percent of the district's students are minorities making this district a "majority minority" school district. In 2001-02, nearly 66 percent of the students were economically disadvantaged.

GPISD began as the Clinton School on land originally part of the Stephen F. Austin colony founded in 1834. The first school, built in 1926, was on the site of the present Galena Park Elementary School. The early school employed 13 teachers and served grades 1 to 11. This school originally fell under the Harris County school system. In 1928, the community built a new high school and changed its name to Galena Park, in recognition of the Galena Signal Oil Company. Two years later, the community founded GPISD. The district has employed only five superintendents since 1937.

The 1970 federal desegregation order required the district to integrate its schools. The order forced GPISD to create a bi-racial committee composed of five African Americans and five Anglo members. The mandate initially required that the school board and the committee make bi-annual reports to the U. S. District Court for the Southern District of Texas, Houston Division. The court stopped requesting that GPISD submit the reports in 1998, but still requires that the bi-racial committee meet at least two times per year.

As of 2002, the district included 12 elementary schools, one grade 6 campus, four middle schools and three high schools. The district has 19,336 students and 2,524 staff members including 1,326 teachers.

The district made significant strides academically under the direction of Superintendent Dr. Shirley Neeley. GPISD hired an education-auditing firm to conduct a comprehensive review of its operations in 1996. Between 1996 and 2002, the district's board and senior staff made a concentrated effort to implement most of the audit recommendations. The superintendent cited this study as a significant starting point in the district's efforts to improve student performance.

Information from the Texas Education Agency (TEA) demonstrates that the district's efforts are producing results. **Exhibit 1-1** shows the changes in student performance and other indicators since 1994-95.

Exhibit 1-1
GPISD Student, Staff and Financial Indicators
1994-95 through 2001-02

Indicator	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02
District Rating	Academically Acceptable	Academically Acceptable	Academically Acceptable	Academically Acceptable	Recognized	Recognized	Recognized	Exemplary
Student Enrollment	16,992	17,439	17,610	17,806	18,167	18,506	18,885	19,336
Percentage of Students Passing TAAS	48.9%	59.3%	68.0%	74.2%	80.2%	81.4%	85.4%	89.1%
Student Demographics:								
African American	19.4%	19.9%	20.5%	21.3%	21.3%	21.3%	21.5%	21.0%
Hispanic	48.2%	50.0%	52.1%	53.8%	55.9%	58.3%	60.8%	62.9%
Anglo	29.9%	27.6%	25.0%	22.5%	20.5%	18.2%	15.8%	14.0%
Asian Pacific	2.4%	0.5%	2.3%	2.3%	2.2%	2.0%	1.8%	1.9%
Native American	0.1%	0.7%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%
Economically Disadvantaged Students	39.5%	57.9%	52.2%	58.9%	59.4%	62.1%	64.6%	65.8%
Total Staff	1,768.7	1,857.6	1,886.0	2,007.2	2,100.1	2,272.6	2,388.7	2,524.1

Total Central Administrators	19	23	23	20.4	10	8	10	32*
Total Teachers	946.7	976.7	1,016.5	1,089.4	1,110.5	1,199.3	1,269.5	1,325.9
Teacher Demographics:								
African American	11.4%	12.8%	14.3%	17.1%		19.1%	21.2%	21.7%
Hispanic	5.7%	7.0%	7.7%	9.0%	17.3% 10.4% 7	13.8%	15.2%	17.4%
Anglo	82.5%	79.0%	76.6%	72.4%	0.7%	65.2%	61.5%	58.9%
Students per Teacher	17.9	17.9	17.3	16.3	16.4	15.4	14.9	14.6
Spending per student	\$4,759	\$4,866	\$5,139	\$5,343	\$5,601	\$6,100	\$6,542	\$6,773
Tax Rate	\$1.587	\$1.587	\$1.617	\$1.647	\$1.677	\$1.614	\$1.684	\$1.684
Property Value per student	\$142,147	\$144,500	\$142,983	\$146,382	\$156,551	\$153,403	\$157,569	\$162,856
Fund Balance	\$12,714,464	\$28,136,359	\$22,792,455	\$24,100,512	\$6,757,841	\$8,091,208	\$15,574,616	\$19,166,321

Source: Texas Education Agency (TEA), Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS), 1994-95 through 2001-02.

* District explanation for the increase in number of central administrators. During the year GPISD changed the titles of 17 instructionally related employees. Following Public Education Information Management Systems (PEIMS) guidelines the positions were changed from code 080-Non Campus Professional Staff to code 012-Instructional Officer (Central Office).

In 1994-95, TEA auditors scored GPISD as "accredited." This is the equivalent of an "academically acceptable" ranking in TEA's current rating system. At the time, GPISD employed relatively few minority teachers for a district with a large minority student population. Approximately 19 percent of the district's students were African Americans and 48 percent of the students were Hispanic. However, 11 percent of the teachers were African American and less than 6 percent were Hispanic. GPISD spent less per student (\$4,759) than the state average per student (\$5,057).

From 1994 to 2002, the district saw significant changes in the demographics of its student population. The number of economically disadvantaged students increased from 39.5 percent in 1994-95 to 65.8 percent in 2001-02. The percentage of African American students increased slightly, from 19.4 percent to 21 percent. The percentage of Hispanic students increased from 48.2 percent to 63 percent. During this same period, the number of Anglo students declined from 29.9 to 14 percent.

GPISD has made substantial improvements in its educational service delivery. In 2001-02, GPISD spent \$6,773 per student compared with the state average of \$6,913. GPISD has 14.6 students per teacher compared with 14.7 students per teacher across the state. The district's student enrollment grew steadily, increasing from 16,992 students in 1994-95 to 19,336 students in 2001-02. This was an increase of nearly 14 percent in six years. The property tax value per student during the same period increased nearly 15 percent, from \$142,147 in 1994-94 to \$162,856 in 2001-02. The district chose to use a portion of its general fund to pay for its bond program.

GPISD's teaching staff increased 40 percent, from 946.7 to 1,325.9. The district recruits more minority teachers to reflect more closely its student population. The percentage of African American teachers increased nearly 10 percent and equals the percentage of African American students in the district. Although the percentage of Hispanic teachers is just slightly less than the state average of 17.6 percent and has tripled, from 5.7 to 17.4 percent, the percentage of Hispanic teachers is still less than the percentage of Hispanic students enrolled in the district. GPISD increased its teaching staff by creating new positions, such as campus instructional specialists, in response to small increases in student enrollment.

The district employs 32 staff members in central administration, an increase of 68 percent from its 1994-95 staff of 19. The district created most of these new jobs to meet the recommendations of its 1996 curriculum management audit. The audit recommended that the district hire an assistant superintendent for Communications, a director of New Facilities and Planning, a director of Recruiting, a chief financial officer and 10 central instructional specialists to support classroom teachers.

Chapter 1

DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

A. Board Governance

Under the Texas Education Code, the Board of Education of a Texas independent school district is a corporate body, elected by the public with the "exclusive power and duty to oversee the management of the public schools of the district." The board, as a legal agent of the state of Texas, derives its status from the Texas Constitution and the Legislature. It must follow state and federal statutes, as well as regulations and relevant court decisions.

A seven-member Board of Trustees governs GPISD. **Exhibit 1-2** describes GPISD's current board. The district elects all members at large. The board staggers the terms of its members. On the first Saturday in May, the district conducts annual elections for about a third of the board members.

Exhibit 1-2
GPISD Board Members
September 2002

Member	Years of Experience	Profession	End of Term
Wayne Oquin, President	6	Chamber of Commerce President	2003
C.C. "Buddy" Wilson, Vice President	6	Engineer	2003
Jeff Miller, Secretary	7	Insurance broker	2004
Jerry Toliver	7	Manager	2005
Jaime Moreno	2	Construction Administrator	2004
William Bill Cobbs*	1	Retired	2005
Dawn Thompson-Fisher*	1	Legal Assistant	2005

Source: GPISD Superintendent's Office.

**Elected to the board on May 4, 2002.*

GPISD's board meets the second Monday of the month for a regular board meeting. In addition, the board may hold special or called meetings as necessary. Regular board meetings begin at 7 p.m. in the boardroom of the Administration Building located at 14705 Woodforest Boulevard in Houston. The board does not have standing committees.

While no board meetings were conducted during the time of the review team's visit, the review team reviewed videotapes of the April, May and June 2002 board meetings. The review team

also examined minutes from all the board's meetings from July 16, 2001 through August 13, 2002.

The board conducts its meetings in accordance with established procedures and *Robert's Rules of Order*. The public can provide input at regular and special meetings during a public comment session scheduled after the student and staff recognition parts of the meeting. The board posts notices of its meetings as required by law. The district videotapes each meeting and records the minutes in sufficient detail to document board decisions. GPISD does not televise the board meetings. The district provides minutes to each district administrator and posts a summary of each meeting on its Web site. Board members receive agendas the Wednesday of the week prior to a board meeting. Board members also receive a weekly packet that contains any changes or corrections to the meeting agenda.

GPISD board policies, which are posted on the district Web site, define the training requirements of board members. GPISD policy requires board members to comply with any training required by the Texas State Board of Education (SBOE), including local district orientation for new members, an annual team-building session and continuing education. The SBOE sets training requirements for new and existing board members in Texas Administrative Code 61.1. The SBOE requires 16 hours of training annually for new board members and eight hours annually for existing board members.

The superintendent provides the board with a secretary who records and maintains minutes of each board meeting, schedules appointments, provides information as needed and maintains records of each board member's training. This position also serves as the superintendent's secretary. District staff presents information to the board during regular board meetings and workshops. The superintendent ensures that sufficient funding exists in the budget for board participation in training and professional development seminars.

Exhibit 1-3 lists the training hours taken by for each GPISD board member in 2001-02. All board members met or exceeded their training requirements for 2001-02. The district provides orientation training to new board members and conducts information sessions for candidates running for the board.

Exhibit 1-3
GPISD Board Member Training
June 2001 through August 2002

Member	Hours of Training
Wayne Oquin	17.00
C. C. "Buddy" Wilson	17.00
Jeff Miller	17.00
Jerry Toliver	27.25

Jaime Moreno	23.25
William Bill Cobbs*	15.00
Dawn Thompson-Fisher*	4.00

Source: GPISD Superintendent's Office.

*Elected in May 2002.

During interviews with the review team, board members demonstrated an informed understanding of their role as school board trustees. One member said he supervised only one position in the district, the superintendent. The board reviews program evaluations and planning documents as part of the workshop meeting each month and allows time for individual board members to ask questions.

FINDING

The district developed and implemented a long-term plan to significantly improve student performance. One of the district's first steps toward developing the plan was assessing the district's performance and operations. In 1996, the district began an external curriculum management audit conducted by an education-auditing firm. The curriculum audit focused on district performance for a three-year period from 1993-94 through 1995-96. In 1995-96, the district received an accreditation status from the TEA of academically acceptable. TEA only gave one school in the district, Cimarron Elementary School, a ranking of recognized or exemplary. At that time district student performance on the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) was below state and regional averages in every grade. The average for all students taking the test in grades 3-8 and grade 10, was 59.3 percent. This average was nearly 8 percent below the state average of 67.1 percent and nearly 10 percent below the regional average of 69.1 percent.

The curriculum management audit focused on curriculum, instruction and any aspect of school operations that affected educational service delivery. The audit found a large number of initiatives regarding teaching and learning underway in the district. The audit also found that top administrators were highly visible and committed to student growth and achievement. However, the auditors noted that the district's educational service delivery lacked focus. According to the curriculum report, the district's organizational structure was "confusing" and "unwieldy" and needed to be realigned to appropriate group responsibilities. The curriculum management audit recommendations centered on five main areas: streamlining and aligning the administrative organization structure; establishing and implementing a comprehensive district assessment program; establishing an effective system for curriculum management and instructional delivery; developing a comprehensive staff development program for teachers; and redefining principal and teacher roles. **Exhibit 1-4** identifies some of the key findings and recommendations contained in the final report.

Exhibit 1-4 Results of 1996 Curriculum Management Audit

Finding	Recommendation	Status
<p>Administrative structure is confusing and unwieldy, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School-related and business functions are scattered throughout the organization. • Quality control is impossible because of the arrangement of curriculum design, implementation and assessment functions. • No chief financial officer is part of senior management. • Supervisory responsibilities are uneven and often excessive. 	<p>Revise organization structure to :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Align similar functions. • Create a chief financial officer position and group all business and financial functions. • Group all support services under the assistant superintendent for Support Services and create a separate department for construction contracts. • Redefine human resources and add a director of Recruiting. • Limit the term director to administrative positions that have supervisory responsibilities. 	<p>Implemented. Implemented. Implemented. Implemented. Not Implemented.</p>
<p>While the scope of the curriculum is adequate, the quality of the curriculum guides is insufficient to guide instruction, the coordination across and between grade levels is ineffective, the quality of instruction varies and expectations for monitoring are unclear.</p>	<p>Improve curriculum guides beyond "minimalist TAAS system", including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop desired student competencies. • Assess the current curriculum. • Assign a top level administrator to design a comprehensive curriculum plan. • Develop a districtwide monitoring system. 	<p>Implemented. Implemented. Implemented. Implemented.</p>
<p>Staff development is broad and extensive but unfocused and unwieldy in delivery.</p>	<p>Develop staff development plan based on teacher appraisal.</p>	<p>Implemented.</p>
<p>The new high school plan may further affect comparability and equity between different areas of the district.</p>	<p>Change plan and make both existing high schools into schools for grades 9-10 and make the new high school</p>	<p>Not implemented due to lack of community</p>

	house all grade 11-12 students in the district.	support.
Student placement and referral practices reflect disparities between demographic groups.	Develop programs to overcome inequities in student placement, program offerings and access to effective instruction.	Implemented.
GPISD's assessment program is inadequate for effective instructional decision-making.	Establish and adequately staff a testing, research and evaluation division.	Implemented.
Student performance is uneven and varied among grade levels and ethnic groups.	Redefine principal responsibilities and teacher practices.	Implemented.
Budgeting does not reflect individual school differences.	Implement a curriculum-based budget and allocation system.	Implemented.

Source: University Research Associates, Inc., A Curriculum Management Audit of the Galena Park Independent School District, 1996-97.

In implementing the audit recommendations, the superintendent and board re-emphasized the district's mission statement and the primary goal of improving student achievement. The district improvement plan and individual campus improvement plans outlined the goal of student achievement. The superintendent and district administrators promoted the goal at every public opportunity such as chamber of commerce meetings, board meetings and football games. The superintendent and administrators enlisted the support of staff at meetings and worked to involve the entire district staff in developing strategies to meet the goal.

According to a memo from the deputy superintendent for Educational Services, another key element in implementing the recommendations was the district commitment of resources to ensure that every student received individual attention. When implementing new initiatives, many districts often simply reassign tasks to existing positions. However, GPISD added support staff at the campus and central levels. Since 1996-97, the district increased its staff by hiring campus instructional specialists, technical instructional specialists, central instructional specialists and additional assistant principals and counselors. The district used needs assessments provided by school principals to plan these staff increases for maximum benefit.

In 1998, the district developed strategies for applying the recommendations in each of the five areas. For example, in instructional delivery, the district created a *Ten Step TAAS Improvement Plan* to identify specific steps it would take to improve student learning. The plan set annual goals and created processes for measuring the district's achievement of these goals. To improve the focus and coordination of education initiatives, the district realigned its administrative functions and consolidated educational functions under one senior administrator, the deputy superintendent for Educational Services. GPISD created the Research and Evaluation Department to monitor the effectiveness of various educational strategies.

The district also developed strategies to hold teachers, principals and central administrators directly accountable for progress toward improving student performance. The *TAAS Ten Step Improvement Plan* required each school to achieve a Recognized or Exemplary rating in three years. According to the plan, the district would demote and reassign any principal who did not achieve the goal. Each school developed an individual TAAS improvement plan projecting the yearly gains it needed to achieve this rating. Each instructional support organization documented its efforts to support each campus in achieving target gains. The district reviewed the assignments of the superintendent, positions in the department of Instructional Services, principals and teachers based on student achievement. GPISD reassigned three principals. The district moved two of these principals to other schools as assistant principals and transferred the other to the Human Resource Services Department as a teacher mentor.

In exchange for holding them accountable, the district gave principals the flexibility to decide how to accomplish the three-year goal at their campus. For example, principals have discretionary positions that they can adapt to meet the changing needs of their specific school. The district uses a school's size to calculate the number of discretionary positions available to a school. Principals can use each position to fill a nonprofessional position such as an aide or a clerk. The principal can combine two positions to fill a teaching position or, beginning in 2001-02, a counselor position. Principals interviewed by the review team said that this flexibility helped them meet their targets.

TEA awarded GPISD a rating of Exemplary in September 2002 as a result of the district's commitment of resources toward its goal of improved student performance. GPISD is the largest district in the state to achieve this TEA ranking.

GPISD staff, board members and community representatives spoke of their support for the educational program in the district and described with pride the role that they played in achieving the Exemplary ranking. The board, community and staff spoke in a united manner, almost as "one voice," in describing the district's efforts.

COMMENDATION

GPISD achieved TEA's Exemplary ranking for 2001-02 by implementing a unified long-term plan supported by board, superintendent and staff commitment; additional targeted resources; and a comprehensive assessment process.

FINDING

The superintendent includes a question and response form in the weekly information packet sent to each board member. This form consists of three parts: questions or additional information needed regarding items in the board packet; a request for a meeting with the superintendent during the week; and suggested times for the meeting. The form lists upcoming district events that board members are invited to attend. Board members can indicate whether or not they plan to attend. This form allows board members to ask questions that arise as they review information and reduces the need for calls to the office. Board members fax their responses to the

superintendent by the next Tuesday morning. The superintendent responds to questions in the next weekly information packet.

As a result of this quick response to questions and comments, board members stay informed regarding district actions. The superintendent shares the answers with each board member to ensure that everyone receives the same information.

The weekly board packet also includes a weekly update from the superintendent, information regarding program evaluations, planning information, miscellaneous administrative information, district correspondence and information regarding upcoming events. The superintendent uses the weekly board packet as a key method for communicating with board members, notifying them of events and sharing information in an informal manner.

COMMENDATION

Question and response forms in the weekly information packet help board members stay informed.

FINDING

The fact that the district conducts business with four firms in which GPISD board members have a substantial interest fuels a perception of misconduct by certain members of the community. While these transactions were completely legal and conducted in accordance with state law and board policy, the district paid these firms from \$25,000 to \$650,000 between 1999-2000 and 2001-02. **Exhibit 1-5** presents a history of payments to business entities related to GPISD board members. The amounts are gross payments to the members' businesses and do not represent payments to individual board members. GPISD's business relationship with some of these businesses spans long periods of time (in some cases almost 40 years), exceeding the tenure of any current board member.

**Exhibit 1-5
Payments to Business Entities in Which GPISD
Board Members Have Substantial Interests
1999-2000 through 2001-02**

Business Entity	Board Member / Year Elected	1999- 2000	2000-01	2001-02	Total
Dexter D. Joyner, Attorney	Dawn Thompson-Fisher / 2002	\$184,255	\$193,737	\$275,366	\$653,358
North Channel Travel	Wayne Oquin / 1996	\$46,861	\$30,723	\$33,652	\$111,236
Slocomb Insurance Agency	Jeff Miller / 1997	\$235,407	\$33,956	\$39,806	\$309,169
Woodforest National Bank	Jeff Miller/ 1997	\$11,475	\$25,068	\$25,524	\$62,067
Molina Walker Architects	Jaime Moreno / 2001	\$61,841	\$71,026	\$411,031	\$543,898

Source: GPISD Purchasing Department and GPISD Bank Depository Bid.

The Texas Local Government Code Section 171.004(a) requires local public officials with a substantial interest in a business entity or real property to file affidavits stating the nature and extent of the interest before a vote or decision on any matter concerning the business entity or real property. The code also requires these officials to abstain from voting on the matter.

Section 171.002 defines a substantial interest in a business entity and a substantial interest in real property. The code says that an official has a substantial interest in a business entity if the official owns 10 percent or more of the voting stock or shares of the entity; the official owns 10 percent or more than \$15,000 of the entity's fair market value; or the official's income from the business entity exceeded 10 percent of his or her gross income for the previous year. This section also says that a person has a substantial interest in real property if the interest is an equitable or legal ownership with a fair market value of \$2,500 or more and that a local public official is considered to have a substantial interest under this section if a person closely related to the official has a substantial interest. **Exhibit 1-6** presents details on GPISD board members' business entities and the type of interest indicated on their Disclosure of Substantial Interest in a Business Entity forms.

Exhibit 1-6
Detail of Board Members' Conflict of Interest Statements
May - July 2002

Board Member	Business Entity	Type(s) of Substantial Interest
William Cobbs	None noted	N/A
Jeff Miller	Slocomb Insurance Agency	Ownership of 10 percent or more of voting stock Ownership of 10 percent or more of fair market value Ownership of \$15,000 or more of fair market value Funds from entity exceed 10 percent of gross income
Jeff Miller	Woodforest National Bank	Ownership of \$15,000 or more of fair market value
Jaime Moreno	Molina Walker Architects	Specific type of interest not checked on form
Wayne Oquin	North Channel Travel	Ownership of 10 percent or more of voting stock Ownership of 10 percent or more of fair market value Ownership of \$15,000 or more of fair market value Funds from entity exceed 10 percent of gross income
Dawn Thompson-Fisher	Dexter D. Joyner, Attorney	Funds from entity exceed 10 percent of gross income

Jerry Toliver	None noted	N/A
C. C. Wilson	San Jacinto College	Wife is employed by college.

Source: GPISD board member Disclosure of Substantial Interest in a Business Entity forms dated May through July 2002.

GPISD policy BBFA (LEGAL) follows this state law and describes how a board member may participate in a vote or decision on matters involving business entities or real property in which the board member has a substantial interest.

According to the policy, the board member must file an affidavit stating the nature and extent of the interest and abstain from further participation if the "action on the matter will have a special economic effect on the business entity that is distinguishable from the effect on the public." The policy requires the board to take a separate vote on a budget item for a contract with a business entity in which a board member has a substantial interest. The review team's examination of board minutes and board member conflict of interest affidavits verified that board members properly abstained on votes in which they had a legally defined conflict of interest.

Even with a policy requiring a board member to abstain from voting, the school board can still present the appearance of a conflict of interest. Some members of the public expressed concern about board members doing business with related entities. Whether the allegations are founded or not, the perception among the community is that some board members may be making biased business decisions for the district.

Recommendation 1:

Adopt a policy restricting procurement from or contracting with business entities in which a board member has a substantial interest.

The board should adopt a policy that prohibits its members from doing business directly or indirectly with the school district they serve as an elected official. The only exception would be in the instance where only one vendor in the community is capable of providing goods and service to the school district. Given the size of Houston, this would be a rare occurrence.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent and board invite the public to comment on potential concerns with the conflict of interest policy.	May 2003
2.	The superintendent obtains information from other school districts about their conflict of interest policies.	June 2003
3.	The superintendent presents other districts' policies to the board.	July 2003

4.	The board consults legal counsel regarding a revised conflict of interest policy.	July 2003
5.	The board considers and adopts a conflict of interest policy that restricts or prevents the district from contracting with or making purchases from a business entity in which a board member has a substantial interest.	August 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Board policies concerning board travel do not adequately define reasonable expenses. Board members do not consistently follow existing guidelines. GPISD reimbursed two former board members for expenses without receipts. These payments appear to be in conflict with current board policy and, in one case, appear excessive. In addition, the board does not follow its own stated policy in setting and adhering to a board travel budget.

The policy, Board Members: Compensation and Expenses (LEGAL), states that "board members shall be reimbursed for reasonable expenses incurred in carrying out board business at the board's request and for reasonable expenses incurred while attending meetings and conventions as official representatives of the board." The district does not pay the travel expenses of spouses and other people who have no district responsibilities or duties when they accompany board members to board-related activities. The district also has a local policy, BBG (LOCAL), that extends the legal policy to require board travel reimbursement expenses to be approved in the budget each year and that any board member travel expense reimbursement that exceeds reimbursement rates for state employees will be paid out of local funds. The National School Board Association's annual convention and the Texas Association of School Boards' annual convention are approved board events. The GPISD board president must approve travel to other meetings prior to the event.

Exhibit 1-7 lists board expenses from 1999-2000 through 2001-02. The review team audited board expenses for these three years by examining all expense items in each year including expenses paid by the district directly and those paid by the board member and reimbursed by the district. Each district check used to pay board expenses had supporting documentation including copies of receipts and a signed check request except for two missing receipts that were missing.

**Exhibit 1-7
GPISD Board Travel Expenses
1999 - 2002**

Year	Board Travel Budget	Actual Expenses	Difference
-------------	----------------------------	------------------------	-------------------

1999-2000	\$12,500	\$8,787	\$3,713
2000-01	\$ 0	\$3,516	(\$3,516)
2 001-02	\$5,000	\$9,361	(\$4,361)

Source: Director of Finance and Budget.

For the most part, board travel and expense reimbursements met the requirements of the district's policy. However, there were some exceptions. The district paid for four movies charged to two board members' hotel rooms for a total of \$35.96. One expense file contained a notation that the district requested reimbursement, but the file contains no documentation that the district was reimbursed. The district had no hotel receipts on file to support hotel charges of \$1,064 for a one-night stay for a board member convention in New Orleans. In addition, the district had no documentation for expenses of \$78 for a former board member. In 2000-01, the board did not make a separate budget for travel as its policy requires, and actual expenses that year totaled more than \$3,500. In 2001-02, board travel expenses exceeded the budget by \$4,361.

Board members and district staff can abuse travel expenses if board policies are not enforced. The board's decision to forgo a separate travel budget in 2000-01 and its disregard for the budget in 2001-02 did not encourage board member accountability. The superintendent stated that the problems with travel reimbursements were isolated incidents of two former board members. The district developed a new form, Board Travel Reimbursement Request, to prevent further abuses.

Some school districts have travel policies that follow the state's travel guidelines. These guidelines are available online at www.window.state.tx.us/comptrol/san/fm_manuals/tag_man/02tag_man/pdftravelallowtoc.html. If a board member elects to stay in a more expensive hotel or spends money on alcoholic beverages or movie rentals during their travel, the district simply does not reimburse the individual for that portion of the expense.

Recommendation 2:

Enforce board policies concerning board travel budgets and adopt state travel guidelines for GPISD board members' expense reimbursements.

The board should formally review its policies concerning reimbursement of board expenses and direct the district to ensure that a board travel budget is approved each year during the annual budget process. Each board member should be informed of the types of travel expenditures that are reasonable and acceptable when traveling on district business.

The board should adopt at least a minimal budget each year to cover the cost of board training. During the year, if the board decides to exceed the approved budget, district staff should prepare a formal budget amendment and present it to the board for approval. The district should deny travel expense reimbursement requests that violate board policy and, if necessary, the board as a whole should address unwarranted reimbursement requests.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent and the board president review the current board travel and reimbursement policies with the entire board.	April 2003
2.	The superintendent ensures that at least minimal funding is included in the annual budget for board-training requirements.	April 2003 and Annually
3.	The superintendent or for designee monitors board travel reimbursement requests to ensure compliance with district policies.	May 2003 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 1

DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

B. District Management (Part 1)

As specified in Section 11.201 of the Texas Education Code, the superintendent, who is the chief executive officer of the district, is responsible for:

- assuming administrative responsibility and leadership for the planning, operation, supervision and evaluation of the education programs, services and facilities of the district and for the annual performance appraisal of the district's staff;
- assigning and evaluating all personnel of the district other than the superintendent;
- recommending personnel hires other than the superintendent as provided by Section 11.163 of the Texas Education Code;
- initiating the termination or suspension of an employee, or the non-renewal of an employee's term contract;
- managing the day-to-day operations of the district;
- preparing and submitting to the Board of Trustees of a proposed budget as provided by Section 44.002 of the Texas Education Code;
- recommending board policies and overseeing the implementation of adopted policies;
- developing appropriate administrative regulations to implement policies established by the Board of Trustees;
- providing leadership to attain student performance in the district based on indicators adopted under Section 39.051 of the Texas Education Code and other indicators adopted by the State Board of Education or the district's school board;
- organizing the district's central administration; and
- performing any other duties assigned by the board.

Section 11.253(a) of the Texas Education Code requires "each school district to maintain current policies and procedures to ensure that effective planning and site-based decision-making (SBDM) occur at each school to direct and support the improvement of student performance." SBDM provides a way for teachers, parents and community members to help central and school administrators make decisions to improve student performance.

The superintendent serves as the chief executive officer for the district and provides leadership by recommending policies to the board and implementing adopted board policies. This position recommends all personnel actions to the board, attends all board meetings and communicates regularly with the board. The superintendent makes other recommendations to the board including the annual budget and procedures regarding district operations. These recommendations cover a variety of instructional and business matters.

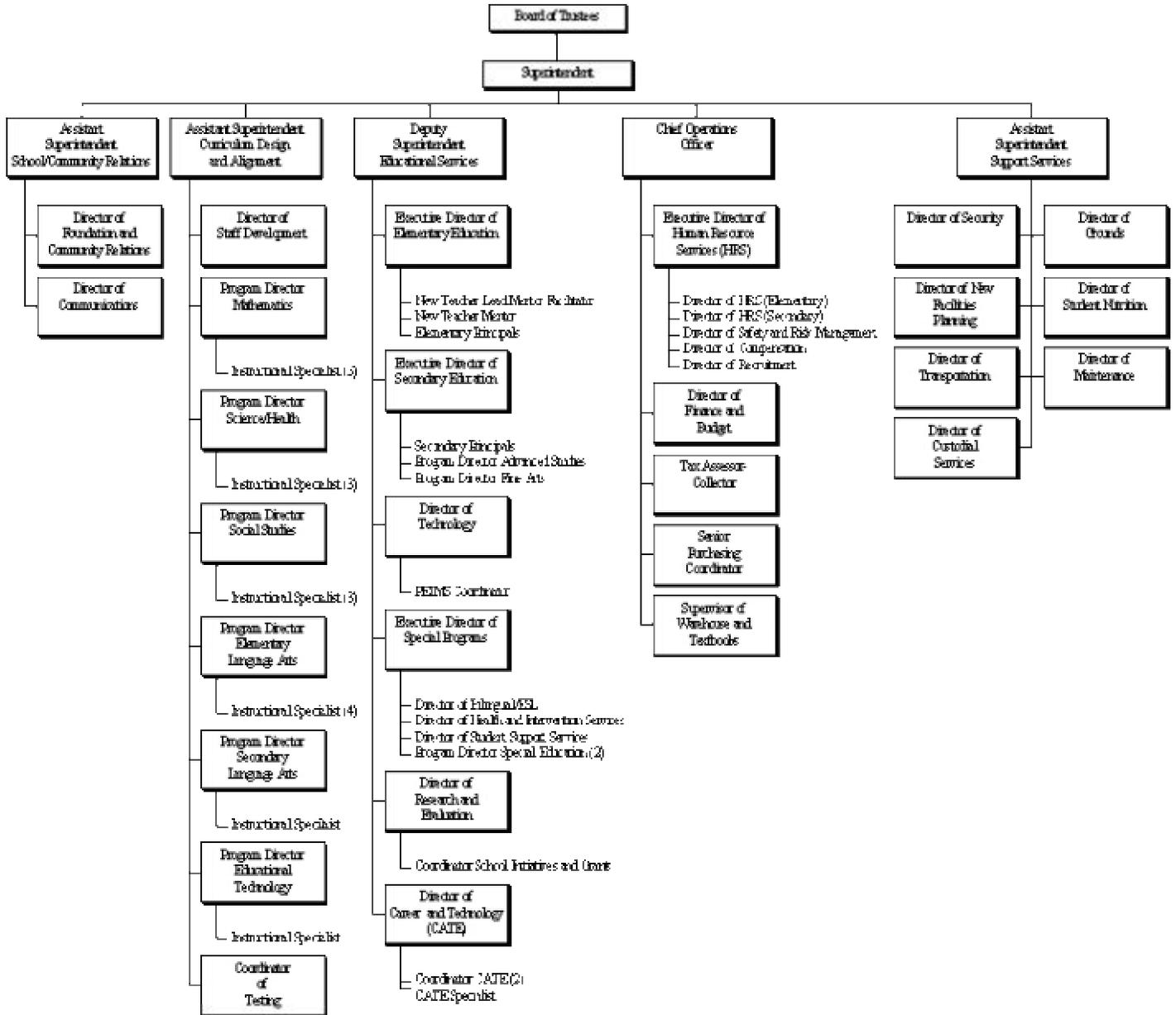
The superintendent also evaluates operations and programs and ties their performance to district plans. For example, during September 2002, GPISD's superintendent reported to the board the results of the GPISD summer school programs including student performance and financial results. During this same

month the superintendent reported TAAS Performance Trend Data from 1999-2002 and briefed the board on a draft of enrollment projections through 2008.

The board reviews the superintendent annually. The review team assessed the 2002-03 draft superintendent contract and the board's evaluations of the superintendent for the last three years. The contract sets out the goals and objectives established for the position. The superintendent's contract provides for a lump sum settlement in case of termination by the board rather than a buy out of the remaining contract. The superintendent's salary for 2001-02 was less than any of GPISD's peer districts' superintendents.

GPISD's central administration includes the superintendent and five senior administrators: a chief operations officer, a deputy superintendent and three assistant superintendents. The district has four executive directors, 22 directors and a tax assessor collector. GPISD also employs 10 program directors who function as instructional specialists. **Exhibit 1-8** presents the district's current organizational structure.

**Exhibit 1-8
GPISD Organization
2002-03**



Source: GPISD superintendent.

GPISD selected four peer districts for comparative purposes: Aldine ISD, Goose Creek CISD, Humble ISD and Pasadena ISD. The review team compared GPISD's organizations to these peer districts. All of these districts currently hold a Recognized rating from TEA. Staff comparisons between districts are difficult because each district assigns titles and functions according to its unique needs. For example, the senior administrative position for business and finance functions is called a chief operations officer in

GPISD, a business manager in Humble, an associate superintendent in Pasadena and an executive director in Goose Creek. The review team made several different comparisons to develop an understanding of how each district organizes its staff.

Exhibit 1-9 compares overall staffing in GPISD to its peers. Two of the peers, Aldine and Pasadena, are substantially larger than GPISD, so the comparison was made based upon percentage of positions by category in each district. In most categories, GPISD allocated positions across the district in a manner similar to that of its peers. GPISD had slightly fewer professional support staff than the peer districts and more central positions as a percentage of total staffing. GPISD also had more auxiliary positions, including clerical positions, than its peers as a percentage of total staffing.

**Exhibit 1-9
Total Staffing
GPISD and Peer Districts
2001-02**

Staffing Type	GPISD	Aldine	Goose Creek	Humble	Pasadena
Teachers	1,325.9	3,574.1	1,156.6	1,694.1	2,706.5
Professional Support	153.2	469.4	190.4	320.5	352.5
Campus Administration	63.8	196.6	61.7	117.6	127.8
Central Administration	32.0	72.5	24.0	14.0	45.0
Education Aides	137.1	1,143.7	142.8	242.3	619.7
Auxiliary	812.0	1,980.9	722.6	868.1	1,381.7
Total	2,524.1*	7,437.2	2,298.0*	3,256.6	5,233.2
Staff Category as Percent of Total					
Teachers	52.5%	48.1%	50.3%	52.0%	51.7%
Professional Support	6.1%	6.3%	8.3%	9.8%	6.7%
Campus Administration	2.5%	2.6%	2.7%	3.6%	2.4%
Central Administration	1.3%	1.0%	1.0%	0.4%	0.9%
Education Aides	5.4%	15.4%	6.2%	7.4%	11.8%
Auxiliary	32.2%	26.6%	31.4%	26.7%	26.4%
Totals	100.0%	100.0%	*100.0%	*100.0%	*100.0%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2001-02.

*Total from AEIS report may not equal individual staffing because of rounding.

Exhibit 1-10 compares the number of assistant/deputy superintendents in GPISD with its peers and lists the average salary for each position. Given the larger enrollments in two of the peers, Aldine and Pasadena, the chart also included a comparison of positions per 1,000 students. GPISD had fewer senior administrators than Aldine and Pasadena and more senior administrators than Goose Creek and Humble. Comparing the number of full-time employees (FTEs) per 1,000 students, however, GPISD had more senior administrators than its peers. GPISD paid its senior administrators less than the peer districts except for Goose Creek.

Exhibit 1-10
Senior Administrative Positions
GPISD and Peer Districts
2001-02

District	Enrollment	Number of FTEs	FTEs per 1,000 Students	Average Total Salary
GPISD	19,336	5	0.26	\$100,144
Pasadena	43,476	11	0.25	\$100,876
Aldine	53,201	10	0.19	\$105,298
Humble	25,239	4	0.16	\$105,887
Goose Creek	18,274	1	0.05	\$98,842

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 2001-02 and AEIS 2001-02.

Exhibit 1-11 compares the number of instructional positions in GPISD with the number of instructional officers in the peer districts. Instructional officers are defined in the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) data standards as key specialists for a major instructional, instruction-related or pupil services programs. These positions usually report to the superintendent or the senior instructional administrative position. Responsibilities may include curriculum development, supervision of programs or supervision of certified personnel. Typical positions in this category include director of Guidance, director of Curriculum or director of Elementary Programs. GPISD had more positions than all its peers except for Pasadena, and more FTEs per 1,000 students than all of the peers. GPISD paid lower salaries than all of its peers except for Pasadena.

Exhibit 1-11
Central Instructional Positions
GPISD and Peer Districts
2001-02

District	Enrollment	Number of FTEs	FTEs per 1,000 Students	Average Total Salary
GPISD	19,336	23	1.19	\$66,644

Goose Creek	18,274	19	1.04	\$69,601
Pasadena	43,476	29	0.67	\$63,944
Humble	25,239	7	0.28	\$68,345
Aldine	53,201	10.5	0.20	\$70,629

Source: TEA, PEIMS and AEIS, 2001-02.

FINDING

The district maintains its comprehensive board policies and other procedures and handbooks on its Web site. The district subscribes to the Texas Association of School Boards' (TASB) policy services and updates its policies frequently during the year as TASB issues new draft policies reflecting changes in regulatory requirements. Local policies are also developed as needed to reflect individual district procedures. Individual departments developed their own department policies and handbooks to address specific needs of different employee groups. For example, the Food Services Department has an employee handbook, and the Custodial Services Department maintains specific instructions for head custodians that address cleaning and building openings and closings. The district maintains administrative procedures, forms and instructions for travel, fixed assets and payroll. The manual covers 22 separate district business functions.

COMMENDATION

Provides information to stakeholders through a well-developed well-maintained Web site.

FINDING

Contacts with the district's attorneys are limited to specific administrators including the superintendent, the deputy superintendent for Educational Services, the executive director of Human Resource Services, the chief operations officer and the director of New Facilities and Planning. The district has developed standard contract language for most recurring contracts and does not rely on attorneys to prepare standard contracts or to be present at each board meeting. The policies are informal. A review of legal fees for the past two years showed that most contacts with the district's attorneys involved personnel actions, problems with construction contracts or pending litigation.

COMMENDATION

GPISD controls legal fees by limiting contacts with attorney to specific key administration and developing standard contract language that does not require legal review.

FINDING

While GPISD uses the title "director" to describe positions that have significant supervisory responsibilities, it also gives the title to employees who manage programs in the district but have minimal or no supervisory responsibility. Two divisions, Educational Services and Curriculum Design

and Alignment, employ most of the directors who have minimal supervisory responsibilities. Curriculum Design and Alignment has seven director or program director positions who supervise 15 instructional specialists. Educational Services has six director or program director positions who do not supervise professional staff.

GPISD has four executive directors responsible for major functions in the district: Secondary Education, Special Programs, Human Resource Services and Elementary Education.

The district has 22 director-level positions. Six of these positions are in the finance and human resources areas including Finance/Budget, Human Resource Services Elementary, Human Resource Services Secondary, Safety and Risk Management, Recruitment and Compensation. Four of these positions- Human Resource Services Elementary, Human Resource Services Secondary, Recruitment and Compensation-do not supervise staff other than limited clerical positions. Seven positions are in Support Services including four internal and three contracted directors. The internal directors include Student Nutrition, New Facilities and Planning, Transportation and Grounds. The three director positions that are filled with contracted personnel are Security, Maintenance and Custodial Services. All of these positions directly supervise significant numbers of staff.

In the School/Community Relations Department there are two directors- Foundation and Community Relations and Communications-who do not supervise any professional positions. Curriculum Design and Alignment has one director, the director of Staff Development, who does not supervise any professional positions. In Educational Services, there are five director positions: Research and Evaluation, Career and Technology, Bilingual/ESL, Health and Intervention Services and Student Support Services. They supervise either no staff or one or two professional staff members. The remaining director in Educational Services, the director of Technology, supervises significant numbers of staff members, both professional and technical.

In addition to the 22 director positions, there are 10 program director positions. Four of these positions in Educational Services, Advanced Studies, Fine Arts, and Special Education do not supervise staff. Program directors in Curriculum Design and Alignment supervise one to four instructional specialists.

The district's use of the title "director" to include professional staff who do not supervise significant numbers of staff or lead district departments creates the impression that the district is overstaffed in central administration and may result in confusing reporting relationships. The curriculum audit performed in 1996 raised this same concern. During that audit, the team commented that several directors had functional responsibilities rather than supervisory responsibilities.

Recommendation 3:

Change the titles of district positions that do not include significant supervisory responsibilities to specialist or coordinator.

The district should review the job descriptions of all director positions and redefine those that do not include direct management responsibilities as either instructional specialists or coordinators.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1	The executive director of Human Resource Services works with the deputy superintendent for Educational Services and the assistant superintendents for School/Community Relations and Curriculum Design and Alignment to examine job descriptions for all director and program director positions.	April 2003
2	The executive director of Human Resource Services develops a staffing plan to redefine positions with no management responsibilities as specialists or coordinators.	June 2003
3	The superintendent reviews and approves the plan and submits it to the board for approval.	July 2003
4	The board reviews and approves the recommended staffing plan.	July 2003
5	The executive director of Human Resource Services implements the plan prior to the start of the 2004-05 year.	August 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

GPISD employs significantly more support staff at the school level than the minimum standards recommended by industry research groups. The high support staff levels occur because campus staffing in the district is based on a combination of basic allotments to each school regardless of size, supplemented by assignments of additional staff based upon enrollment.

The district's basic allotment formula at the elementary level provides each school with a principal, assistant principal, counselor, librarian, nurse, music teacher, physical education teacher, instructional specialist and technology instructional specialist. Each school is also assigned five clerical positions including a principal secretary, school secretary, ADA/PEIMS aide, library/LRC aide and a pre kindergarten (PK) aide for each PK teacher. The Human Resources Department indicated that elementary schools with enrollments exceeding 900 students are assigned a second assistant principal. Support for special populations such as special education is determined by the appropriate department. Although school enrollments range from 385 students at Woodland Acres Elementary School to 1,052 students at Cloverleaf Elementary School, all schools had the same basic clerical allotments. Four schools have two assistant principals - Cimarron, Cloverleaf, Green Valley and Havard. One of these four schools, Green Valley, had less than 900 students. Woodland Acres shared a principal and assistant principal with Woodland Acres Middle School.

In addition to the basic allotments, elementary schools also receive flexible units based upon their size that can be used for additional teachers or support staff. Schools may receive up to three additional units. Each unit can be used for a clerical support position or two units can be combined for a professional position such as a teacher or counselor. The district attributes their academic performance in part to these flexible units, which provide increased staffing and allow principals to tailor positions at their campus to meet individual school needs such as the need for reading specialists. However, the district

has not analyzed its staffing assignments to substantiate any specific student performance improvements resulting from the increased staffing or specialized assignments provided by flexible units.

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) recommends minimum personnel standards based upon the enrollment in a given school. **Exhibit 1-12** displays SACS minimum personnel standards for elementary schools. SACS formulas recommends a second assistant principal for schools with populations over 1,100 and a second clerical position for schools with enrollments over 660 students.

Exhibit 1-12
SACS Minimum Personnel Requirements for Elementary Schools

Number of Students	Principal	Assistant Principals	Secretaries or Clerks
1-263	0.5	0.0	0.5
264-439	1.0	0.0	1.0
440-659	1.0	0.0	1.0
660-879	1.0	0.5	1.5
880-1,099	1.0	1.0	1.5
1,100-1,319	1.0	1.5	2.0
1,320-Up	1.0	2.0	2.0

Source: Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) Standards for the Accreditation of Elementary Schools, Standard 5 Human Resources, approved by the Commission on Elementary and Middle Schools, 2002-03 School Year.

Exhibit 1-13 compares GPISD's staffing with SACS standards in the elementary schools, with differences between SACS standard and actual district positions shown in the "Difference" column. For the purposes of this comparison all part-time positions recommended in the SACS formulas were rounded to full-time positions. Also, given the workload demands placed on Texas schools due to PEIMS reporting, those positions were not considered in the comparison. The library aide and PK aides were also not included in this comparison because these positions could be considered instructional support. Most elementary schools exceeded the SACS standard for support staff. Two elementary schools, Pyburn and Tice operated with less clerical staffing than recommended by SACS. Student academic performance at Tice and Pyburn was not affected by less staff as these schools were two of the five elementary schools rated "exemplary" by TEA in 2002.

Exhibit 1-13
GPISD Elementary Schools
Comparison of SACS Standards to Actual Staffing
By School and Position

School	Enrollment	Position	SACS Standard	Actual Positions	Difference Over/Under
Cimarron Elementary	1,023	Principal	1.0	1.0	0.0
		Assistant Principal	1.0	2.0	1.0
		Secretaries or Clerk	2.0*	4.0	2.0
Cloverleaf Elementary	1,052	Principal	1.0	1.0	0.0
		Assistant Principal	1.0	2.0	1.0
		Secretaries or Clerks	2.0*	5.0	3.0
Galena Park Elementary	702	Principal	1.0	1.0	0.0
		Assistant Principal	1.0*	1.0	0.0
		Secretaries or Clerks	2.0*	4.0	2.0
Green Valley Elementary	866	Principal	1.0	1.0	0.0
		Assistant Principal	1.0	2.0	1.0
		Secretaries or Clerks	2.0*	5.0	3.0
Jacinto City Elementary	831	Principal	1.0	1.0	0.0
		Assistant Principal	1.0	1.0	0.0
		Secretaries or Clerks	2.0*	5.0	3.0
Havard Elementary	967	Principal	1.0	1.0	0.0
		Assistant Principal	1.0	2.0	1.0
		Secretaries or Clerks	2.0*	4.0	2.0
MacArthur Elementary	643	Principal	1.0	1.0	0.0
		Assistant Principal	0.0	1.0	1.0
		Secretaries or Clerks	1.0	4.0	3.0
North Shore Elementary	899	Principal	1.0	1.0	0.0
		Assistant Principal	1.0	1.0	0.0
		Secretaries or Clerks	2.0*	4.0	2.0

Purple Sage Elementary	799	Principal	1.0	1.0	0.0
		Assistant Principal	1.0	1.0	0.0
		Secretaries or Clerks	2.0*	4.0	2.0
Pyburn Elementary		Principal	1.0	1.0	0.0
		Assistant Principal	1.0	1.0	0.0
		Secretaries or Clerks	2.0*	2.0	0.0
Tice Elementary	827	Principal	1.0	1.0	0.0
		Assistant Principal	1.0	1.0	0.0
		Secretaries or Clerks	2.0*	2.0	0.0
Woodland Acres Elementary	385	Principal	1.0	.5**	(.5)
		Assistant Principal	0.0	.5**	.5
		Secretaries or Clerks	1.0	3.0	2.0
Total		Principals			0.0
		Assistant Principals			5.0
		Secretaries/Clerks			24.0

Source: Compiled from SACS Standards and GPISD Salary Listing, October 4, 2002, and TEA, AEIS, 2001-02.

*Note: SACS-recommended half-time positions were rounded to full-time positions for comparison purposes.

** Indicates shared positions at Woodland Acres Elementary and Middle Schools.

Chapter 1

DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

B. District Management (Part 2)

GPISD middle schools are staffed in a similar manner as elementary schools except that assistant principal and clerical positions are based on the school's enrollment. Each middle school receives a position for each 160 students with a minimum of three clerical positions. There are no set formulas for flexible units. **Exhibit 1-14** outlines the staffing formula used for assistant principal positions. Counselor positions are staffed based upon the same formula as assistant principals. Teaching positions are based on a factored number of students.

Exhibit 1-14
GPISD Middle School Staffing Formula
For Assistant Principals

Enrollment	Positions
0-399	1.0
400-799	2.0
800-1199	3.0
1200-1599	4.0
1600-1999	5.0

Source: GPISD Human Resources Department February 2003.

SACS also recommends minimum personnel requirements for middle schools, based on enrollment, in its *Accreditation Standards 2000: Additional Standards Unique to Middle Schools*. The SACS minimum standards for middle schools are presented in **Exhibit 1-15**. These standards recommend smaller staffing formulas than those used by the district. SACS recommends that a second assistant principal position be added when school enrollments exceed 1,000 students while GPISD adds a second assistant principal when the enrollment exceeds 400 students.

Exhibit 1-15
SACS Minimum Personnel Requirements for Middle Schools

Number of Students	Principal	Administrative or Supervisor	Secretaries or

		Assistants	Clerks
1-249	1.0	0.0	0.5
250-499	1.0	0.5	1.0
500-749	1.0	1.0	1.5
750-999	1.0	1.0	1.5
1000-1249	1.0	1.5	2.0
1,250 - 1,499	1.0	2.0	2.0
1,500 - up	*	*	*

Source: SACS Policies, Accreditation Standards 2000: Additional Standards Unique to Middle Schools.

**One full-time equivalent staff member shall be added where needed for each additional 250 students over 1,500.*

Exhibit 1-16 compares GPISD staffing with SACS standards at the middle school level. Differences between the SACS standard and actual district positions are shown in the "Difference" column. Again for comparison purposes one clerical position was excluded for each campus due to the demands of PEIMS reporting and SACS part-time positions were rounded to full-time positions. All schools had more assistant principals than recommended by the SACS as well as more clerical positions. The district believes that these additional positions help to increase student performance, but were unable to document this belief in terms of student achievement. In 2002 for example, Galena Park Middle School is rated as "recognized" by TEA as are the other middle schools, yet this school operates with approximately half the clerical staffing of the other schools. Cobb Sixth Grade Center was rated as "exemplary" by TEA in 2002.

The district does not always follow its own staffing formulas. According to its staffing formula for clerical and technical support in middle schools, Galena Park Middle School should have five positions instead of three and North Shore Middle School should have six positions rather than its current seven positions.

Exhibit 1-16
GPISD Sixth Grade/Middle Schools
Comparison of SACS Standards to Actual Staffing
By School and Position

School	Enrollment	Position	SACS Standard	Actual Positions	Difference Over/(Under)
Cobb Sixth Grade	1,035	Principal	1.0	1.0	0.0
		Assistant Principals	2.0*	3.0	1.0
		Secretaries or Clerks	2.0	7.0	5.0
Cunningham Middle	888	Principal	1.0	1.0	0.0
		Assistant Principals	1.0	3.0	2.0
		Secretaries or Clerks	2.0*	7.0	5.0
Galena Park Middle School	986	Principal	1.0	1.0	0.0
		Assistant Principals	1.0	3.0	2.0
		Secretaries or Clerks	2.0*	4.0	2.0
North Shore Middle	1,159	Principal	1.0	1.0	0.0
		Assistant Principals	2.0*	3.0	1.0
		Secretaries or Clerks	2.0	7.0	5.0
Woodland Acres Middle	422	Principal	1.0	0.5**	(0.5)
		Assistant Principals	0.5	0.5**	0.0
		Secretaries or Clerks	1.0	3.0	2.0
Total		Principals			0.0
		Assistant Principals			6.0
		Secretaries/Clerks			19.0

Source: Compiled from SACS Standards and GPISD Salary Listing, October 4, 2002, and TEA, AEIS, 2001-02.

*Note: SACS-recommended half-time positions were rounded to full-time positions for comparison purposes.

** Indicates shared positions at Woodland Acres Elementary and Middle Schools.

GPISD high schools are staffed in a similar manner as middle schools. Each high school receives a clerical/technical position for each 150 students with a minimum of three clerical/technical positions. There are no set formulas for flexible units. **Exhibit 1-17** outlines the staffing formula used for the assistant principal positions. Counselor positions are staffed based upon the same formula as assistant principals. Teaching positions are based on a factored number of students.

Exhibit 1-17
GPISD High School Staffing Formula
For Assistant Principals

Enrollment	Positions
0-399	1.0
400-799	2.0
800-1199	3.0
1200-1599	4.0
1600-1999	5.0
2000-2399	6.0
2400-2799	7.0
2800-3199	8.0

Source: GPISD Human Resources Department February 2003

SACS further recommends minimum personnel requirements for high schools, based on enrollment, in its Accreditation Standards 2000: Resources, Human Resources. The SACS minimum standards for high schools are shown in **Exhibit 1-18**.

Exhibit 1-18
SACS Minimum Personnel Requirements for High Schools
Accreditation Standards 2000: Human Resources

Number of Students	Principal	Administrative or Supervisory Assistants	Secretaries or Clerks
1-249	1.0	0.0	1.0
250-499	1.0	0.5	2.0
500-749	1.0	1.0	3.0

750-999	1.0	1.5	3.5
1000-1249	1.0	2.0	4.0
1250-1499	1.0	2.5	4.5
1500-Up	*	*	4.5

Source: SACS Commission on Secondary and Middle Schools, 2000.

*One full-time equivalent staff member shall be added where needed for each additional 250 students over 1,500.

GPISD does not follow its own formulas for assistant principals and clerical staffing at the high school level. Based upon the district formula, Galena Park High School should have 10 clerical/technical positions instead of the current 14 positions. North Shore High School should have six assistant principals instead of the current five positions and 13 instead of 15 clerical positions. North Shore Senior High should have nine clerical positions instead of its current 12 positions.

Exhibit 1-19 compares staffing in GPISD high schools with SACS standards. For comparison purposes, part-time positions recommended by SACS were rounded up to full-time positions and due to the demands of the PEIMS reporting, two clerical positions for each campus were excluded from the comparison.

Exhibit 1-19
GPISD High Schools
Comparison of SACS Standards to Actual Staffing
By School and Position

School	Enrollment	Position	SACS Standard	Actual Positions	Difference Over/(Under)
Galena Park High	1,611	Principal	1.0	1.0	0.0
		Assistant Principals	3.0	5.0	2.0
		Secretaries or Clerks	5.0*	12.0**	7.0
North Shore High	2,068	Principal	1.0	1.0	0.0

		Assistant Principals	6.0*	5.0	(1.0)
		Secretaries or Clerks	8.0*	13.0**	5.0
North Shore Senior High	1,468	Principal	1.0	1.0	0.0
		Assistant Principals	3.0*	4.0	1.0
		Secretaries or Clerks	5.0*	10.0**	5.0
Total		Principals			0.0
		Assistant Principals			2.0
		Secretaries/Clerks			17.0

Source: Compiled from SACS Standards and GPISD Salary Listing, October 4, 2002, and TEA, PEIMS, 2001-02.

*Note: SACS-recommended half-time positions were rounded to full-time positions for comparison purposes.

**Does not include two positions related to PEIMS reporting.

Based on SACS minimum standards, GPISD is overstaffed by 13 assistant principal positions and 60 clerical positions. Justification for this level of staffing is difficult without documented performance measures that tie expanded staffing levels to improved student performance.

GPISD's staffing formulas also do not identify staffing in the detail needed to meet the requirements of the Texas Education code regarding State Compensatory Education (SCE) funds. According to the district's independent accountants' report on State Compensatory Education Compliance, district and campus improvement plans were not in alignment in the area of supplemental full-time equivalent staff requirements with the district's financial records. This meant that the staffing and resource requirements needed to implement and monitor programs for "at-risk" students were not clearly defined. Basic program costs were funded with SCE allotments. This resulted in questioned costs of \$547,057 for 2001-02 and prevented the district from meeting the 85 percent requirement for allocating SCE funds to qualified expenditures.

Recommendation 4:

Evaluate staffing formulas for assistant principals and campus -based clerical staff and tie any additional staff to improved student performance.

GPISD can reduce campus administrative and clerical costs by using staffing formulas based upon the SACS minimum standards for schools. The review team stresses that the standards established by SACS are minimums that should be adjusted to reflect special circumstances such as PEIMS reporting requirements in Texas school districts. Using these standards, GPISD can eliminate 13 assistant principal positions and 60 clerical positions, and realize significant savings. Even if the district conservatively eliminated six assistant principal positions and 21 clerical positions it would save more than \$600,000 annually.

The district should stop filling vacant assistant principal and school clerical positions until excess positions can be eliminated.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent and principals examine existing assistant principal and clerical staffing for all schools using SACS standards to determine individual school staffing needs.	April 2003
2.	The superintendent freezes hiring for any overstaffed positions and transfers excess personnel.	April 2003
3.	The superintendent develops a plan for minimum clerical staffing allocations at all schools and submits it to the board for approval.	June 2003
4.	The board reviews and approves recommended staffing plan.	July 2003
5.	The superintendent continues the hiring freeze for any overstaffed positions and transfers excess personnel pending full implementation of the new staffing guidelines at the beginning of the 2004-05 school year.	August 2003
6.	The superintendent approves full implementation of the approved staffing plan.	August 2004

FISCAL IMPACT

The review team based estimates for reducing staff on the minimum salary for each position eliminated plus the cost of providing variable and fixed benefits for that position. The variable costs are calculated as 2.42 percent of the position's salary. The fixed costs are the same for each employee are \$2,820 a year. This is based on the \$235 cost per month for health and dental insurance ($\$235 \times 12 \text{ months} = \$2,820$).

The district's minimum salary for a clerk in pay grade CP42 is \$14,800 plus variable benefits of \$358 ($\$14,800 \times 2.42 \text{ percent} = \358) and fixed benefits of \$2,820. The salary and benefits for one clerical position are \$17,978 ($\$14,800 \text{ plus } \$3,178 = \$17,978$). Salary and benefits for 21 school clerical positions are \$377,538 ($\$17,978 \times 21 \text{ positions} = \$377,538$).

The district's minimum salary for an elementary school assistant principal in pay grade AP13 is \$44,412 plus variable benefits of \$1,075 ($\$44,412 \times 2.42 \text{ percent} = \$1,075$) and fixed benefits of \$2,820. The salary and benefits for one elementary assistant principal position is \$48,307 ($\$44,412 \text{ plus } \$3,895 = \$48,307$). Salary and benefits for two elementary assistant principal positions total \$96,614 ($\$48,307 \times 2 \text{ positions} = \$96,614$).

The district's minimum salary for a middle school assistant principal in pay grade AP14 is \$47,966 plus variable benefits of \$1,161 ($\$47,966 \times 2.42 \text{ percent} = \$1,161$) and fixed benefits of \$2,820. The salary and benefits for one middle school assistant principal position are \$51,947 ($\$47,966 \text{ plus } \$3,981 = \$51,947$). Salary and benefits for two middle school assistant principal positions are \$103,894 ($\$51,947 \times 2 \text{ positions} = \$103,894$).

The district's minimum salary for a high school assistant principal in pay grade AP15 is \$52,555 plus variable benefits of \$1,272 ($\$52,555 \times 2.42 \text{ percent} = \$1,272$) and fixed benefits of \$2,820. The salary and benefits for one high school assistant principal position is \$56,647 ($\$52,555 \text{ plus } \$4,092 = \$56,647$). Salary and benefits for two high school assistant principal positions are \$113,294 ($\$56,647 \times 2 \text{ positions} = \$113,294$).

Annual savings of the staffing reduction plan would be \$691,340 ($\$377,538 \text{ plus } \$96,614 \text{ plus } \$103,894 \text{ plus } \$113,294 = \$691,343$). The first year estimate represents one-third of total savings to compensate for the hiring freeze and attrition ($\$691,343/3 = \$230,448$).

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Evaluate staffing formulas for assistant principals and campus-based clerical staff and tie any additional staff to improved student performance.	\$230,447	\$691,340	\$691,340	\$691,340	\$691,340

FINDING

Secretarial staffing at the central administration level appears high when compared with the number of professionals and other support staff in those departments.

Exhibit 1-20 shows the break down of clerical positions in central administration departments and support functions. For the comparison, large auxiliary functions that include significant numbers of non-professional staff were not included in the analysis. The review team did not include Transportation, Custodial Services, Student Nutrition, Maintenance and Grounds.

Exhibit 1-20
Central Administration Staffing by
Major Salary Group
2002-03

GPISD Salary Group	Number of Positions
Administrative Business	15
Administrative Professional	44
Clerical/Paraprofessional	43
Secretaries/Executive Secretaries	41
Teachers*	16
Technical Operators	17
Total	176
Ratio of secretaries to administrative, teachers and technical staff	1:2.25
Ratio of secretaries to all other central administration staff	1:3.29

Source: GPISD Salary Schedule October 2002 Check distribution organization 400.

**GPISD has some teachers that are centrally based.*

There is one secretary for every two central office staff, excluding other clerical positions. When other clerical staff is added to the ratio, there is still one secretary for every 3.29 total staff in central administration. While these secretarial positions may directly support staff not located in central administration, the ratio is low. The district said that the level of secretarial support shown in the exhibit allows instructional support staff more time to work with teachers and to lighten administrative loads. But the district did not provide the review team with any policy, cost benefit analysis or allocation formulas to support this position.

In today's professional firms, one secretarial position often supports five to seven professional positions. This is due, in part, to a greater reliance on technology and up-to-date communication systems.

Recommendation 5:

Develop and implement staffing formulas for secretarial positions in departments and support functions.

The district can reduce overall auxiliary costs by developing and implementing staffing formulas for secretarial staff in non-school departments and support functions. The staffing formulas should take into account the specialized needs of departments and support units as well as advantages of technology.

If the district adopted a staffing formula for secretarial support in non-school departments and support functions of one secretary for each five positions in central administration, 1:5, the district could eliminate 14 positions resulting in significant cost savings. This would bring district secretarial support more in line with the staffing ratios of professional firms and other service organizations.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent works with the executive director of Human Resource Services and develops a formula for clerical staffing that meets the needs of non-school departments and responsibilities.	April 2003
2.	The superintendent and senior central administrators examine existing clerical staffing for all departments and support.	May 2003
3.	The superintendent develops a plan for secretarial staffing allocations for all departments and support functions and submits it to the board for approval.	June 2003
4.	The board reviews and approves recommended staffing plan.	July 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

Salary and benefits for 14 central secretarial positions are \$296,718 (\$21,194 x 14 positions). The fiscal impact is based on the minimum salary for a clerk in pay grade CP44 based on a 215-day work year or \$17,940 annual salary plus variable and fixed benefits. The variable benefit component is calculated as 2.42 percent of salary and equals \$434 (\$17,940 x 2.42 percent). Fixed benefits are calculated as \$235 per month for health and dental insurance or \$2,820 annually (\$235 x 12 months).

Total fringe benefits are \$3,254 (\$434 variable benefits plus \$2,820 fixed benefits = total benefits). The salary and benefits for one clerical position equals \$21,194 (\$17,940 plus \$3,254).

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Develop and implement staffing formulas for secretarial positions in departments and support functions.	\$296,716	\$296,716	\$296,716	\$296,716	\$296,716

Chapter 1

DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

C. Planning and Evaluation

Planning is a vital ingredient in district management. Proper planning establishes the district's mission; identifies goals and objectives; sets priorities; identifies ways to complete the mission; and determines performance measures and benchmarks to chart progress toward the achievement of the district's goals and objectives. Planning anticipates the effect of decisions; indicates the possible financial consequences of alternatives; focuses on educational programs and methods of support; and links student achievement to the cost of education.

TEA encourages planning by requiring districts to prepare and submit certain planning documents including an annual budget, district and campus improvement plans, technology plans, an annual report on student achievement goals, a biennial district evaluation report and a district performance report. To meet Texas Education Code (TEC) requirements, the district also must form a district-level committee to develop the district improvement plan and school-level committees to develop campus improvement plans. The district-level committee also must consult with the superintendent concerning the planning, operation, supervision and evaluation of the district's educational program per TEC 11.252(f).

Other plans and reports not specifically required by law are nonetheless essential to sound district operations and can have a significant impact on district management and fiscal accountability. These planning efforts include the calculation and planning of student enrollment projections; facilities planning; planning for food service, textbook acquisition and distribution; school staffing; and districtwide budgeting and financial planning. These plans must be accurate and must be used by the district for a school district to operate effectively.

Section 21 of the TEC outlines how to implement SBDM. SBDM is a process in which the schools become the primary unit of leadership toward improving student achievement. GPISD developed campus advisory teams that work with the school faculty to provide SBDM. The team consists of the principal, elected members of the school staff, parents, business representatives and community members. Each year the Campus Advisory Team prepares and adopts a campus improvement plan to identify what each school will do to achieve school and district objectives.

FINDING

GPISD integrates its SBDM process with long-term enrollment and facility planning to drive its budget and decision-making processes.

The Comprehensive District Improvement Plan contains GPISD's strategic plan and goals. This plan includes the district's mission statement, a graduate profile that describes expectations and goals for each GPISD student, the district's vision for the year 2010 and district goals for the current year. The plan also includes improvement plans for the board and superintendent, each major central administration department and campus improvement plans for each school including the alternative schools.

There are a number of noteworthy characteristics in the plan. The district's mission is clear and straightforward: to prepare students to become productive citizens and lifelong learners. Students, parents, community and business representatives and district staff worked to develop the graduate profile, which is not designed to define minimum skills, but to define a standard of skills and attitudes needed to prepare students for productive lives. It serves as a foundation for the district's strategic planning and budgeting process and includes personal qualities, work habits and attitudes, basic educational skills, thinking and reasoning skills, interpersonal abilities and technology skills.

Vision 2010 is the district's vision for the future. This one-page vision statement is a road map of ideas and dreams for the district's future. The district Planning and Advisory Committee-which includes central administration staff, principals, teachers, parents and community and business representatives-developed the district goals. Individual campus level committees develop CIPs that are tailored to each school. **Exhibit 1-21** lists the district's 10 goals.

**Exhibit 1-21
GPISD Goals
2001-02**

District Goals	
1.	Excellence in student performance
2.	Completion of formal graduation program
3.	Full development of each student's personal qualities, work habits and attitudes
4.	Meeting the needs of at-risk students
5.	A safe environment for learning
6.	Increased access to technological tools

7.	Full-day kindergarten program
8.	Increase skills, knowledge and abilities of GPISD employees
9.	Partnerships with educators, parents, families and business
10.	State-of-the-art, multi-purpose facilities

Source: GPISD Comprehensive District Improvement Plan, 2001-02.

Each improvement plan includes an assessment of past progress, current status and an action plan. The action plan identifies specific tasks or objectives with starting and ending dates, assigns responsibility and determines indicators of success. The action plan shows specific funding amounts and funding sources for tasks or objectives that require financial resources. The plan lists all funding sources for a given task or objective including sources from outside the district such as funds or support donated by a business partnership.

District policy requires that GPISD establish district and campus advisory committees each September. These advisory committees develop campus and district plans each spring. The committees complete executive summaries each April and May. The board approves all district and campus goals in June. District and campus staffs include resources needed to accomplish these plans in the budget documents. The budget process begins in each January when initial revenue budgets are prepared.

GPISD begins its budget process each year with presentations to the board focused on the administration's major budget initiatives for the year. The administration modifies these initiatives after it receives input from the board in a budget workshop in February. The board sets its budget calendar at this initial meeting, scheduling an April meeting to consider staffing and compensation and June meetings on the general budget. Budgets are formula-driven, based upon the number of students expected at each school. The district considers these funds discretionary and allocates them to the school to address the priorities set by the CIP and the needs of the school. Schools may request additional funding which the board reviews based on district goals and available funding. GPISD administration allocates departments an amount equal to their current budget with instructions to maintain the current budget level or reduce their budgets based upon the availability of funds. The Technology Department or individual school place items from the district's technology plan initiative in the budget.

Administration summarizes school and department budgets and presents them to the board with comparisons to the prior year's budget in a series of workshops in June, July and August. The board approves the final budget

in August, as required by law. The board reviews and approves budget amendments throughout the year.

The district evaluates instructional programs such as summer school programs on a scheduled basis, usually every three to five years. The administration reports program results to the board annually, usually at the end of the program period. The evaluation includes both performance and financial results, if appropriate.

The district also performs long-range planning, including the development of enrollment projections, classroom capacity estimates, attendance zone changes and estimates of the life cycles of the district's equipment and structures by facility. In August 2002, the district completed an estimate of maintenance needs and equipment replacement needs by facility through the year 2010. In September 2002, GPISD completed a study of enrollment projections through the year 2008.

This integrated planning process benefits GPISD by providing adequate time to make appropriate decisions and adequate information to support the decision-making process.

COMMENDATION

GPISD's integrated planning processes drive district decision-making and budgeting processes.

Chapter 2

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

This chapter reviews the Galena Park Independent School District (GPISD) educational service delivery system in the following sections:

- A. Student Performance and Instructional Resources
- B. Gifted and Talented and Advanced Placement
- C. Compensatory Education/Title I
- D. Special Education
- E. Bilingual Education/English as a Second Language
- F. Career and Technology Education
- G. Dropout Prevention and Alternative Education
- H. Library and Media Services

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

BACKGROUND

GPISD selected four Texas school districts to serve as peer districts for comparative purposes: Aldine, Goose Creek Consolidated, Humble and Pasadena. To make these comparisons, the review team relied on Texas Education Agency's (TEA) Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) and Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS). The AEIS reports provide demographic, staffing and financial data for each school district and for each school. AEIS reports are a summary of the more comprehensive PEIMS data reported by school districts each year. These reports are sent to each school and district and are available on the TEA Web site at www.tea.state.tx.us. The most recent AEIS and PEIMS data are for 2001-02.

GPISD served 19,336 students in 2001-02. The district's ethnic enrollment breakdown consisted of 62.9 percent Hispanic, 21.3 percent African American and 13.8 percent Anglo. The district has 65.8 percent of its students classified as economically disadvantaged. Among the peer districts, Goose Creek Consolidated is closest in size to GPISD, with a student enrollment of 18,274. GPISD's percent of Hispanic students is more than 20 percentage points higher than the state and regional averages, and its number of economically disadvantaged students is more than 15 percentage points higher.

Exhibit 2-1 presents demographic information for GPISD, its peer districts, districts served by Regional Education Service Center IV (Region 4) and the state.

Exhibit 2-1 Demographic Characteristics

**GPISD, Peer Districts, Region 4 and State
2001-02**

District	Student Enrollment		Ethnic Group (Percent)				Economically Disadvantaged
	2001-02	5-Year Percent Change*	African American	Hispanic	Anglo	Other	
Aldine	53,201	9.5%	33.7%	54.7%	8.8%	2.9%	73.7%
Pasadena	43,476	6.3%	5.6%	66.8%	24.1%	3.5%	57.3%
Humble	25,239	8.8%	10.6%	15.3%	70.7%	3.5%	17.3%
GPISD	19,336	8.6%	21.3%	62.9%	13.8%	2.0%	65.8%
Goose Creek	18,274	1.3%	17.3%	42.6%	38.7%	1.3%	52.2%
Region 4	900,198	8.7%	21.7%	38.1%	34.8%	5.4%	48.8%
State	4,146,653	6.5%	14.4%	41.7%	40.9%	3.1%	50.5%

Source: Texas Education Agency (TEA), Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS), 2001-02.
*Percent change is defined as 2001-02 values minus 1997-98 values divided by 1997-98 values.

Exhibit 2-2 shows budgeted instructional expenditures for GPISD and its peer districts in 2001-02. GPISD has the highest percent of expenditures among its peers for Regular Education and the second highest for Career and Technology Education (CATE). The district has the lowest expenditures for Bilingual/ESL, Special Education and G/T. Its instructional expenditures per student are the second highest among its peer districts.

**Exhibit 2-2
Budgeted Instructional Expenditures
GPISD and Peer Districts
2001-02**

District	Total Expenditures *	Instructional Expenditures Per Student	Percent Regular	Percent G/T	Percent Special Education	Percent CATE	Percent Bilingual/ESL	Percent Comp. Education
Aldine	\$218,685,143	\$4,110	60.8%	1.2%	14.8%	3.8%	8.9%	10.5%
Pasadena	\$151,265,270	\$3,479	66.0%	2.9%	9.9%	3.1%	5.6%	12.4%

Humble	\$89,892,367	\$3,562	75.2%	5.7%	12.7%	3.3%	1.2%	2.0%
GPISD	\$70,039,436	\$3,622	78.3%	0.4%	9.5%	4.1%	1.2%	6.6%
Goose Creek	\$62,058,810	\$3,411	70.2%	2.3%	10.6%	4.3%	8.1%	4.6%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2001-02.
 *Includes functions 11, 95 and 21.

As seen in **Exhibit 2-3**, GPISD ranks first among its peer districts in the percentage of students enrolled in bilingual/ESL programs, CATE programs and Special Education and fourth in the percentage of students who are enrolled in G/T education programs. GPISD has a higher percentage of students enrolled in bilingual/ESL and CATE programs than regional and state averages, although the percentage of GPISD students enrolled in G/T programs is lower than regional and state averages. The district's percentage of Special Education students is higher than the Region 4 average, but slightly lower than the state average.

Exhibit 2-3
Student Enrollment by Program
GPISD, Peer Districts, Region 4 and State
2001-02

District	Percent G/T	Percent Special Education	Percent CATE	Percent Bilingual/ESL
Humble	9.9%	10.0%	17.1%	4.7%
Goose Creek	5.8%	10.0%	11.2%	11.5%
Aldine	5.6%	9.9%	19.4%	21.1%
GPISD	5.2%	11.5%	25.2%	21.3%
Pasadena	4.9%	7.1%	14.8%	21.2%
Region 4	7.4%	10.0%	17.1%	15.4%
State	8.2%	11.7%	19.3%	13.1%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2001-02.

Exhibit 2-4 shows budgeted expenditures share by function for GPISD, its peer districts and the state. GPISD occupies the middle position in instruction, instruction-related services, school leadership and per-student expenditures, but its student support services are the lowest. The district has the highest share of expenditures for instructional leadership and central administration and the second highest for cocurricular/extracurricular activities.

Exhibit 2-4
Percent of Budgeted Expenditures by Function
GPISD, Peer Districts and State
2001-02

Expenditures by Function	Pasadena	Aldine	GPISD	Humble	Goose Creek	State
Instruction (11,95)	58.7%	54.5%	51.7%	51.5%	45.6%	51.0%
Instruction-Related Services (12,13)	2.7%	1.8%	2.4%	2.9%	2.2%	2.7%
Instructional Leadership (21)	1.5%	1.4%	1.8%	0.8%	1.3%	1.2%
School Leadership (23)	5.6%	6.1%	5.4%	5.0%	4.7%	5.2%
Student Support Services (31,32,33)	3.7%	4.7%	3.7%	5.0%	4.4%	4.0%
Student Transportation (34)	2.0%	5.1%	3.0%	2.6%	3.2%	2.6%
Food Services (35)	6.0%	5.3%	5.5%	4.0%	5.3%	4.8%
Cocurricular/ Extracurricular Activities (36)	1.6%	1.0%	1.8%	1.6%	1.9%	2.2%
Central Administration (41,92)	2.7%	2.8%	3.7%	2.9%	3.7%	3.5%
Plant Maintenance and Operations (51)	11.6%	8.6%	11.6%	8.8%	12.6%	10.1%
Security and Monitoring Services (52)	0.8%	0.5%	1.1%	0.4%	1.0%	0.6%
Data Processing Services (53)	1.1%	1.7%	0.6%	0.7%	0.9%	1.1%
Other*	2.1%	6.6%	7.6%	13.8%	13.4%	10.8%
Per-Pupil Expenditures**	\$5,785	\$7,356	\$6,773	\$6,730	\$7,283	\$6,913

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2001-02.

* Includes any operating expenditures not listed above and all nonoperating expenditures such as debt service, capital outlay and community and parental involvement services.

** Per-pupil expenditures were calculated based on total expenditures.

Exhibit 2-5 shows the percent of professional staff in various categories in 2001-02 for GPISD, peer districts, Region 4 and the state. GPISD's percentage of teachers is the highest among the peer districts, and its teachers and auxiliary staff percentages are higher than regional and state averages. The district's percentages of professional support staff and educational aides are the lowest among its peer districts, and its percent of campus administration staff is the second lowest among its peer districts and below regional and state averages. Auxiliary staff includes clerks, secretaries, food service, maintenance, custodial and transportation employees.

Exhibit 2-5
Professional Staff
GPISD, Peer Districts, Region 4 and State
2001-02

Professional Staff	GPISD	Humble	Pasadena	Goose Creek	Aldine	Region 4	State Average
Teachers	52.5%	52.0%	51.7%	50.3%	48.1%	48.2%	50.5%
Professional Support	6.1%	9.8%	6.7%	8.3%	6.3%	15.4%	8.9%
Campus Administration	2.5%	3.6%	2.4%	2.7%	2.6%	2.6%	2.7%
Central Administration	1.3%	0.4%	0.9%	1.0%	1.0%	0.9%	1.0%
Educational Aides	5.4%	7.4%	11.8%	6.2%	15.4%	9.0%	10.3%
Auxiliary Staff	32.2%	26.7%	26.4%	31.4%	26.6%	24.0%	26.5%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2001-02.

Compared with its peer districts, GPISD has the least experienced teacher population and the highest percentage of beginning teachers and teachers with one to five years of experience (**Exhibit 2-6**). The district's percent of beginning teachers is nearly twice the state average, while more than one half, 52.7 percent, of its teachers have five or fewer years of experience, compared with the 35.6 percent state average. GPISD teachers have an average of 9.3 years of experience compared with a state average of 11.9 years, and an average of one to three years less experience than teachers in its peer districts. GPISD had the highest percent of teacher turnover and teachers on permit among its peer districts, and both numbers were higher than the state average in 2001-02.

Exhibit 2-6
Teacher Experience Teachers on Permit and Turnover Rate
GPISD, Peer Districts and State
2001-02

Experience	GPISD	Humble	Pasadena	Goose Creek	Aldine	State Average
Percent of Teachers to total staff	52.5%	52.0%	51.7%	50.3%	48.1%	50.5%
Beginning Teachers	14.8%	5.9%	11.5%	7.7%	10.0%	7.8%
1-5 Years	37.9%	27.3%	30.6%	25.7%	29.8%	27.8%
6-10 Years	14.9%	18.8%	15.5%	15.6%	18.9%	18.1%
11-20 Years	15.9%	27.2%	19.3%	26.4%	23.3%	24.7%
More than 20 Years	16.5%	20.9%	23.1%	24.7%	17.9%	21.6%

Turnover Rate	19.4%	15.0%	13.8%	13.9%	18.7%	15.7%
Percent of Teachers on Permit	7.9%	5.0%	5.7%	3.7%	6.0%	5.0%
Average Years of Experience	9.3	11.7	11.5	12.5	10.6	11.9

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2001-02.

While GPISD occupies the middle position among its peer districts in teacher academic qualifications, its percentages of teachers without a degree and teachers with a master's degree are higher than the state averages (**Exhibit 2-7**).

**Exhibit 2-7
Teacher Degrees
GPISD, Peer Districts and State
2001-02**

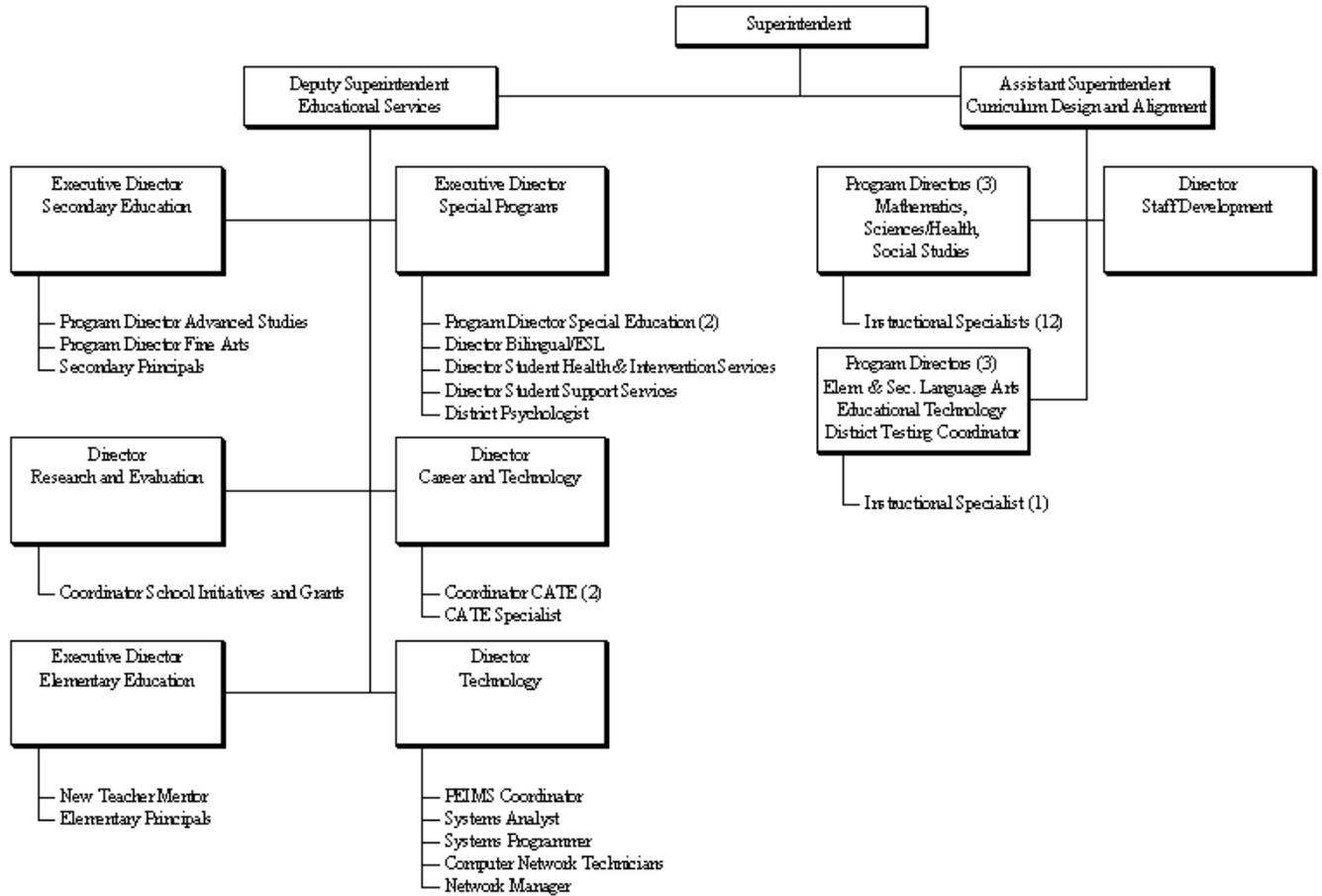
Education Level	Pasadena	Goose Creek	GPISD	Humble	Aldine	State Average
No Degree	4.6%	3.1%	2.7%	1.4%	0.3%	1.4%
Bachelor's	74.4%	62.8%	72.5%	72.3%	75.7%	75.3%
Master's	20.4%	34.0%	24.5%	25.9%	23.4%	22.8%
Doctoral	0.6%	0.2%	0.4%	0.5%	0.6%	0.5%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2001-02.

Exhibit 2-8 depicts the district's organizational chart for educational service delivery. GPISD's Department of Instruction (DOI) consists of Curriculum Design and Alignment headed by an assistant superintendent, and Educational Services headed by a deputy superintendent.

**Exhibit 2-8
GPISD Education Service Delivery Organization**

2002



Source: GPISD Organizational Chart, 2002.

Chapter 2

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

A. Student Performance and Instructional Resources (Part 1)

Student performance on the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) serves as the primary factor in determining a district's accountability ratings. The TAAS is administered in grades 3 through 8 and grade 10 in reading and mathematics. Grades 4, 8 and 10 are also assessed in writing, and grade 8 is tested in social studies and science. An exit-level examination is given in grade 10.

In 2002-03, the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) will replace the TAAS. The new assessment is more rigorous than the TAAS and will be administered in grades 3 through 11. Math will be assessed in grades 3 through 11. Reading will be assessed in grades 3 through 9 and English Language Arts in grades 10 and 11. Writing will be assessed in grades 4 and 7; social studies in grades 8, 10 and 11; and science in grades 5, 10 and 11. The exit-level examination will be given at grade 11.

The State Developed Alternative Assessment (SDAA), introduced in 2001, assesses special education students in grades 3 through 8 who receive instruction in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), but for whom the TAAS is not an appropriate measure of academic performance. The test assesses students in reading, writing and math in their appropriate instructional levels, as determined by their Admission, Review and Dismissal (ARD) committees.

FINDING

GPISD has continuously improved its TAAS performance over the past five years by more than 14 percentage points. GPISD made the greatest gains on TAAS performance among its peer districts from 1997-98 to 2001-02 (**Exhibit 2-9**). GPISD's percent improvement on the TAAS over this period was higher than the state's percentage point increase of 7.6, and the district's performance in 2001-02 also surpassed the regional average. In 1997-98, GPISD was the lowest TAAS performing district among its peer districts, but it occupied the second-highest position among the five districts in 2001-02. GPISD's TAAS performance was below regional and state averages in 1997-98, but has surpassed the regional and state averages since 1998-99.

Exhibit 2-9
Percent of Students Passing TAAS, All Tests Taken (Grades 3-8 and 10)

**GPISD, Peer Districts, Region 4 and State
1997-98 through 2001-02**

District	1997-98*	1998-99**	1999-2000**	2000-01**	2001-02	Percentage Point Difference 1997-98 to 2001-02
Humble	87.4%	85.6%	87.6%	88.7%	89.9%	2.5%
Aldine	80.1%	78.4%	80.6%	84.1%	87.1%	7.0%
Goose Creek	78.1%	80.3%	82.8%	85.3%	86.4%	8.3%
Pasadena	77.9%	79.4%	81.4%	83.9%	86.6%	8.7%
GPISD	74.2%	79.2%	81.4%	85.4%	89.1%	14.9%
Region 4	75.9%	78.1%	80.6%	83.1%	86.8%	10.9%
State	77.7%	78.1%	79.9%	82.1%	85.3%	7.6%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 1997-98 through 2001-02.

**Recalculated from original posting to include special education and grades 3 and 4 Spanish TAAS.*

*** Recalculated from original posting to include special education and grades 3 through 6 Spanish TAAS.*

GPISD made performance gains on the TAAS at every grade level and in every subject area between 1997-98 and 2001-02 (**Exhibit 2-10**). GPISD also surpassed both regional and state averages in 2001-02 in grades 3 through 7, and in all areas but science in grade 8. GPISD was above state and regional averages in 2001-02 in reading, but it was below state and regional averages in writing and in all tests taken in grade 10. GPISD was above the state average in math in grade 10, but below the regional average.

**Exhibit 2-10
Percent of Students Passing the TAAS (English version)
GPISD, Region 4 and State
1997-98 and 2001-02**

	Reading	Mathematics	Writing	Science	Social	All Tests
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									Studies		Taken	
Grade Level*	1998	2002	1998	2002	1998	2002	1998	2002	1998	2002	1998	2002
Grade 3												
GPISD (E)	85.8%	90.2%	77.5%	90.5%							73.0%	84.6%
Region 4	88.5%	89.5%	83.9%	88.9%							79.8%	84.4%
State	86.2%	88.0%	81.0%	87.4%							76.6%	82.3%
Grade 4												
GPISD (E)	89.9%	95.3%	85.9%	96.9%	88.6%	92.8%					77.9%	88.4%
Region 4	92.6%	94.0%	89.0%	95.2%	91.3%	91.2%					82.6%	87.0%
State	89.7%	92.5%	86.3%	94.1%	88.7%	89.8%					78.6%	84.7%
Grade 5												
GPISD	90.4%	94.3%	89.5%	98.1%							85.0%	93.8%
Region 4	91.6%	93.6%	91.4%	96.8%							87.3%	92.3%
State	88.4%	92.7%	89.6%	96.2%							83.9%	91.3%
Grade 6												
GPISD	84.8%	90.4%	84.1%	97.5%							77.6%	89.6%
Region 4	86.0%	89.3%	86.0%	94.3%							80.1%	87.1%
State	85.6%	88.2%	86.1%	93.8%							79.9%	86.0%
Grade 7												
GPISD	84.9%	95.0%	82.5%	96.0%							76.0%	93.0%
Region 4	86.0%	92.3%	83.6%	92.7%							78.8%	88.5%
State	85.5%	91.3%	83.7%	92.2%							78.5%	87.6%
Grade 8												
GPISD	87.4%	96.9%	82.8%	97.6%	78.4%	91.4%	78.2%	91.8%	58.7%	90.8%	51.9%	82.3%
Region 4	86.4%	95.2%	84.3%	93.9%	84.5%	86.4%	85.1%	93.3%	70.8%	86.3%	63.2%	76.1%
State	85.3%	94.3%	83.8%	92.9%	84.0%	85.3%	84.3%	93.0%	69.9%	83.7%	61.8%	73.4%
Grade 10												
GPISD	84.5%	95.6%	66.9%	92.4%	86.4%	89.8%					61.8%	84.9%
Region 4	88.4%	95.2%	78.8%	93.3%	89.5%	92.1%					73.4%	87.5%

State	88.3%	94.5%	78.4%	92.2%	89.9%	91.3%					73.1%	85.7%
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Source: TEA, AEIS, 1997-98 and 2001-02.

* Shaded areas show that those particular tests are not administered at those grade levels.

GPISD initiated a comprehensive Curriculum Management Audit by an external consultant in 1996 and a follow-up audit in 2002. These audits resulted in extensive changes in curriculum design and update, assessment, testing, performance data analysis and staff development, and refocused principal responsibilities and teacher practices. The audits helped guide the development of TAAS performance improvement strategies such as the district's 1996 10-Step TAAS Improvement Plan and the Instructional Focus Activities (IFAs). The 10-Step TAAS Improvement Plan required that each school achieve a Recognized or Exemplary rating within three years and outlined the following strategies (**Exhibit 2-11**).

Exhibit 2-11
GPISD's 10-Step TAAS Improvement Plan
1996

Step	Strategies
1	Each campus will develop a TAAS Improvement Plan that projects yearly gains needed to achieve a Recognized or Exemplary rating. Principals of campuses that do not achieve targeted gains will report to the board on how they will reach the target the following year.
2	Each director and each coordinator will document efforts to support each campus in achieving its target gains.
3	The superintendent and the board will review assignment of the superintendent, the Department of Instruction, principals and teachers, based on student achievement. Principals are given three years to raise their campuses to Recognized or Exemplary status.
4	The Department of Instruction will develop a districtwide focused program for reading and math instruction that includes teacher training and student evaluation.
5	All elementary schools will teach a minimum of 90 minutes of math and 90 minutes of reading every day.
6	All students in grades 6-12 who fail any part of the TAAS will enroll in TAAS remedial classes until they pass all sections of the test. TAAS

	remedial sections will replace elective courses in the upper levels.
7	Every teacher will participate in Dr. Shirley Crook's Performance Improvement Strategies training within the first year of employment with GPISD.
8	A TAAS Success Profile will be developed for every student (grades 3-exit), which documents the student's strengths, weaknesses and progress toward the exit-level TAAS.
9	GPISD campus and DOI staff will continue to visit and study the methods of similar districts and campuses that have demonstrated high performance on the TAAS.
10	GPISD will continue to develop and improve technology to align curriculum and to make student assessment and progress tracking more accurate and efficient.
In addition	The district established an extensive program on every campus of individual tutoring for students who are in danger of not passing the TAAS.

Source: GPISD assistant superintendent of Curriculum Design and Alignment.

The IFAs are TAAS warm-ups. Each IFA focuses on a certain objective and is formatted like a TAAS question. The IFA identifies the topic and its TEKS and TAKS elements. These IFAs are integrated into the curriculum and scope and sequence and cover all objectives. Teachers who have been most successful with the TAAS wrote the IFAs and provided the materials and strategies. Teachers at each grade level and subject area receive IFAs for each grading period. All teachers spend the first 10 minutes of class on an IFA to reinforce alignment.

As part of its TAKS preparation program, the Student Success Initiative, GPISD has rewritten its 2002-03 IFAs to reflect TAKS content. The Student Success Initiative details TAKS preparation tasks for principals and teachers by month from September through August. The district trained all campus staff in the new assessment and has provided individual instruction and tutoring to students who are at risk of failure. GPISD communicated its efforts to parents in meetings and through literature in English and Spanish. GPISD also allocated funds for summer school for intensive, small-group instruction prior to the third administration of the TAKS in July.

In 2001-02, GPISD received an Exemplary rating from TEA. TEA assigns annual accountability ratings to each district and campus, based primarily on the TAAS and on dropout rates. The accountability system includes five categories for districts: Exemplary, Recognized, Academically

Acceptable, Academically Unacceptable and Unacceptable: Data Quality. For schools, the categories are: Exemplary, Recognized, Academically Acceptable and Low Performing. To receive an Exemplary rating, at least 90 percent of all students and of each student group-African American, Hispanic, Anglo and economically disadvantaged-must pass the TAAS in reading, writing and mathematics. To achieve a Recognized rating, 80 percent of all students and each student group must pass the TAAS in reading, writing and mathematics; and to be rated Academically Acceptable, 50 percent of each student group must pass. Scores for students with disabilities and from the TAAS Spanish version of reading and mathematics in grades 3 through 6 are included in the accountability calculations. According to TEA, failure to meet TAAS standards is the primary reason that schools are rated Low Performing.

Exhibit 2-12 shows accountability ratings for GPISD and its peer districts from 1998 through 2002. In 1998, two districts were rated Recognized and three, including Galena Park, were rated Acceptable. In 2002, Galena Park has an Exemplary rating and the other four districts have Recognized ratings. GPISD improved from Acceptable in 1998 to Recognized in 1999 through 2001, and to Exemplary in 2002.

**Exhibit 2-12
Accountability Ratings
GPISD and Peer Districts
1997-98 through 2001-02**

District	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Aldine	Recognized	Recognized	Recognized	Recognized	Recognized
Pasadena	Recognized	Recognized	Recognized	Recognized	Recognized
GPISD	Acceptable	Recognized	Recognized	Recognized	Exemplary
Goose Creek	Acceptable	Acceptable	Recognized	Recognized	Recognized
Humble	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Recognized

Source: TEA, Accountability Reports, 1997-98 through 2001-02.

Accountability ratings in 2002 show that of the district's 23 schools, 13 were Recognized, six were Exemplary, two were Acceptable and two were not rated. In 1998, 13 of the district's 19 schools were Acceptable, five were Recognized and one was Exemplary (**Exhibit 2-13**).

**Exhibit 2-13
GPISD TEA School Accountability Ratings
1998 through 2002**

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
North Shore High School	Acceptable	Acceptable	Recognized	Recognized	Recognized
Galena Park High School	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Recognized	Recognized
North Shore Senior High School	N/A*	Acceptable	Recognized	Recognized	Recognized
North Shore Middle School	Acceptable	Recognized	Acceptable	Recognized	Recognized
Cloverleaf Elementary	Exemplary	Exemplary	Exemplary	Recognized	Exemplary
Cobb Sixth Grade Campus	N/A*	N/A*	N/A*	Recognized	Exemplary
Cimarron Elementary	Recognized	Recognized	Recognized	Recognized	Recognized
Galena Park Middle School	Acceptable	Recognized	Recognized	Recognized	Recognized
James B. Havard Elementary	N/A*	Acceptable	Acceptable	Recognized	Acceptable
North Shore Elementary	Recognized	Recognized	Recognized	Recognized	Recognized
Cunningham Middle School	Acceptable	Exemplary	Recognized	Exemplary	Recognized
Green Valley Elementary	Acceptable	Recognized	Acceptable	Recognized	Recognized
Jacinto City Elementary	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Exemplary	Exemplary
Tice Elementary	Acceptable	Acceptable	Exemplary	Exemplary	Exemplary
Purple Sage Elementary	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Recognized	Recognized

Galena Park Elementary	Recognized	Recognized	Recognized	Acceptable	Recognized
MacArthur Elementary	Recognized	Recognized	Recognized	Recognized	Exemplary
Pyburn Elementary	Recognized	Recognized	Acceptable	Acceptable	Exemplary
Woodland Acres Middle School	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Recognized	Recognized
Woodland Acres Elementary	Acceptable	Acceptable	Recognized	Exemplary	Recognized
ACE Center	Ae: acceptable	Ae: acceptable	Ae: acceptable	Ae: acceptable	Ae: acceptable
High Point High School	Ae: acceptable	Ae: acceptable	Not rated	Low performing	Not rated: data quality**
School for Accelerated Learning	N/A*	N/A*	N/A*	Not rated	Not rated
District	Acceptable	Recognized	Recognized	Recognized	Exemplary

Source: TEA, Accountability Reports, 1997-98 through 2001-02.

* These schools did not exist yet.

** Refers to an alternative education program that is not rated due to data quality problems.

COMMENDATION

GPISD improved its TAAS performance over the past five years culminating in an Exemplary rating.

FINDING

GPISD sets high student performance and details expectations through the GPISD Graduate Profile. GPISD tries to ensure that its students meet the Graduate Profile performance and conduct expectations by aligning its instructional program and activities with the profile, the TEKS and the TAAS. In addition, GPISD has made its instruction and assessment scope

and sequence uniform, has used IFAs and benchmark assessments in all content areas and has followed a multicultural social studies instructional program.

The district developed the Graduate Profile with the assistance of an external consultant, and community groups, business representatives, GPISD employees, parents and students helped identify the skills and characteristics they wanted graduates to possess. The information these groups provided also helped define the district's mission and goals.

The Graduate Profile outlines expected knowledge, skills and conduct for GPISD graduates in five areas: personal qualities, work habits and attitudes; new basics; thinking and reasoning skills; interpersonal abilities; and technology. The "new basics" area goes beyond reading, math and writing to include technology, character education and foreign language.

In the personal qualities, work habits and attitudes area, graduates are expected to have qualities such as:

- collaborative team attitude: knows how to contribute to a group, works with others and values democratic processes;
- self-motivated: is goals-oriented, demonstrates self-discipline and intrinsic motivation;
- responsible and accountable: takes responsibility for self and community, is willing to be accountable, is committed to achieving a goal;
- respectful: respects self and others, accepts and celebrates cultural differences;
- contributing citizen: gives back to the community and is equipped to be a contributing member of society;
- career and life: demonstrates knowledge and training for a career, knows how to manage time and stress, is able to perform various real-world activities;
- cultural awareness: follows global thinking and cultural understanding, appreciates and accepts diversity, values all individuals;
- flexible and adaptable: is equipped to make choices and to respond to a constantly changing environment, is able to accept and to flourish with change; and
- positive attitude: believes in his or her own self-worth, maintains a positive perspective, exhibits a "can-do" attitude.

In the new basics area, the GPISD graduate is expected to have the following skills and qualities:

- communication and languages: demonstrates primary language and communication competency in at least one other language;
- reading: recognizes that literacy is an essential skill; comprehends, interprets and appreciates literature;
- writing: communicates thoughts, ideas, information and messages responsibly, clearly and eloquently in a grammatically correct form;
- arithmetic/mathematics: performs basic computations and thinks mathematically with confidence and enthusiasm;
- speaking: organizes thoughts and communicates ideas, knowledge and information using fluent, responsible speech;
- historical, social and global awareness: knows how the American society, political systems and economy function within a global context, understands and appreciates the diversity in America and the world, and understands our history;
- geography: has a sense of geography in order to become more aware and to think globally;
- government: understands political institutions and processes, civil rights, and justice in a free society and participates as a responsible citizen in a democracy;
- fitness and health: applies nutritional, hygienic and physical knowledge to remain physically and mentally energetic, and is free of substance abuse;
- arts: develops an appreciation for culture, the arts and music and can be creative and imaginative; and
- science: understands the basics of how things work and is interested in experimentation and inventions.

In the area of thinking and reasoning skills, the GPISD graduate is expected to have the following:

- knows how to learn: can acquire and apply new knowledge;
- is a resourceful researcher: can identify appropriate research tools, can find, analyze and interpret available information and recognizes that the ability to research is as important as firsthand knowledge;
- can make decisions: sets specific goals, understands consequences and analyzes data to make well-informed decisions;
- can solve problems: recognizes and deals with all types of problems and can resolve conflicts; and
- has an open mind: is receptive to new ideas, can respond to and accept change and accepts constructive criticism.

In the area of interpersonal abilities, the GPISD graduate is expected to have the following:

- participates as a team member: contributes ideas, provides suggestions and works hard;
- communicates: has strong written and verbal skills;
- problem-solving: can handle and resolve conflicts, has good decision-making skills, takes personal responsibility for solving his or her own problems;
- welcomes diversity: works well with individuals from diverse backgrounds, is globally and culturally aware and accepting and celebrates and values diversity; and
- multilingual: communicates competently in at least one language other than English.

In the area of technology, a GPISD graduate is expected to have the following:

- technology literacy: understands technology and how to use it, sees computers as an integral part of learning and communication;
- a tool for learning: technology enhances and facilitates the learning process, yet does not replace teachers, coaches and mentors;
- accessing information: the ability to access knowledge is an integral part of learning, with volumes of information now available, the focus is on the importance of being a resourceful researcher;
- advanced classes: the option for advanced computer training is available with a focus on current technology; and
- cutting-edge technology: software and equipment are up-to-date and innovative.

COMMENDATION

GPISD has set high expectations for student performance and conduct, and provides an instructional program that helps achieve those expectations.

FINDING

GPISD has an effective curriculum alignment and update process that is supported by its instructional program. Using what it learned from its curriculum management audits in 1996 and 2002, the district developed its current curriculum and instructional support infrastructure (**Exhibit 2-14**).

Exhibit 2-14
Curriculum Management Audit Recommendations
1996 and 2002

Original Recommendation	Follow-Up Audit Recommendation
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<p>Identify, adopt and implement an effective model to revise curriculum guides and establish useful curriculum design and delivery beyond TAAS with maximal articulation and coordination.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish systemwide understanding of curriculum development and delivery. • Train curriculum content personnel on curriculum guide design and deep alignment so that student objectives are congruent with assessment and align by content and context. • Outline required skills and knowledge and describe instructional resources and strategies in the curriculum guide • Expand assessments beyond the TAAS.
<p>Establish and implement a comprehensive, multidimensional district assessment program to provide meaningful data for decision-making in student learning, program evaluation and teaching improvement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand program evaluation into all curriculum areas. • Include assessment of organizational and school climate. • Establish periodic norm-referenced testing to determine national and state comparability in high-priority curriculum areas. • Use deep alignment between assessment and curriculum. • Require administrators to use assessment analysis in organizational decision-making. • Monitor results and disseminate data among all district stakeholders.
<p>Organize and assign staff responsibility for testing analysis to provide useful data for instructional decision-making.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require and reinforce use of data in organizational and classroom decision-making.
<p>Develop and implement ways to overcome inequities in student learning among diverse groups in student placement, program offerings and access to effective instruction.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify strategies to bridge gaps among ethnic groups. Require principals to monitor achievement rates and report steps taken and results.

<p>Develop a comprehensive set of board policies to focus organizational actions and innovation, and to support services in assessment for excellence.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinforce system policies on instruction and move teachers to more robust teaching strategies. Monitor instructional practices and log types of instruction for analysis by administrative personnel.
<p>Design and implement a comprehensive, focused staff development plan based on teacher appraisal.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expect each supervisor to help develop staff and use appraisal data to evaluate the development program. • Continue to monitor campus improvement plans to ensure that staff development supports district goals and helps students to learn. • Ensure that campus-based instructional and technology specialists support classroom teachers in instructional improvement.
<p>Refocus and redefine principal responsibilities and teacher practices to improve curriculum and instruction.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Align instructional delivery with board policies, teacher job descriptions and the teacher appraisal process. • Align expectations for monitoring the curriculum with board policy, principal job descriptions and the administrator appraisal process. • Direct DOI staff to monitor classroom lessons and IFAs to provide feedback to teachers and principals. • Ensure that all principals are trained in curriculum monitoring methods. • Continue training teachers in effective teaching practices. Expect principals, DOI personnel and instructional and technology specialists to support classroom teachers in the use of effective

	instructional strategies.
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Source: GPISD Department of Instruction Improvement Plan.

The GPISD curriculum is vertically aligned. Scope and sequence is consistent across grade and educational levels (elementary, middle, high) in each subject area. "Curriculum alignment" refers to the coordination of the written, taught and assessed curriculum; the articulation of skills and knowledge across all grade levels (K-12), and the alignment of instruction within grade levels and departments and across schools. Alignment is reinforced through horizontal and vertical teaming. GPISD has a consistent framework for the development and update of curriculum and instruction implementation for all programs. Each program incorporates the district mission, the Graduate Profile and the content area purpose statement. The curriculum specifies the standards on which it is based. For example, the math program incorporates the TEKS, the national math standards and the district curriculum. The program also specifies the staff development it provides, defines effective or best practices and lists the different assessments it uses.

GPISD has curriculum guides for each grade level and subject area. Program directors, teachers and instructional specialists help to design and update the curriculum. The GPISD curriculum cycle includes the development of course objectives based on state mandates, district expectations and student needs; correlation of course objectives to the TEKS and state assessments; development of the scope and sequence; development of sample units of study, and development of appropriate assessments including benchmark tests. GPISD continually updates the curriculum using horizontal and vertical teaming and horizontal and vertical articulation. The district provides staff development in curriculum writing to make the guides teacher-friendly and to incorporate resources and instructional strategies. The district gives release time to curriculum teams during the year, and the teams also work over the summer.

The long-range GPISD plan for 2001-02 through 2005-06 has two parts. The first part is an annual cross-subject-area calendar that shows textbook adoptions and curriculum document development or revision, IFA revisions, benchmark test and district assessment revisions and unit development or revision. The second part of the document consists of five-year plans for each content area and educational level. The plans specify annual assessments to be developed or revised, staff development to be provided, available resources and curriculum revisions.

GPISD has a strong instructional support infrastructure that uses instructional specialists for each core area. In 2002-03, GPISD had four

instructional specialists in language arts, two for early literacy and two who work with grades 2 and above; three math specialists, one for each educational level; three science specialists; two social studies specialists; and an instructional technology specialist. There are specialists in all program areas, including special education and bilingual/ESL. District instructional specialists, typically hired from within the district, are master teachers whose classroom experience, certifications and training equip them to work with other teachers to guide instructional improvement. These instructional specialists demonstrate lessons and instructional strategies in response to specific school and student needs, and they offer after-school sessions and peer coaching. The instructional specialists use school performance data, identify areas of weakness and discuss with principals specific school needs.

GPISD also has campus instructional specialists at elementary- and middle-school levels. They work with teachers and students, coordinate benchmark tests, assist with scope and sequence and do small-group instruction. Campus instructional specialists meet monthly with the district instructional specialists and the program directors. They also coordinate a central office tutoring program in which central office staff members tutor students. District specialists and program directors observe teachers in their classrooms, then leave a copy of their completed observation forms with the principal and the teacher who was being observed. In 2001-02, approximately 3,000 teachers were observed. The district also asks those teachers who observe a specialist demonstrating lessons or instructional strategies to evaluate the specialists.

GPISD offers extensive professional development, consistent across grade levels, to its staff. This professional development includes a five-day summer Reading Institute for teachers in grades 2 through 12. The district also offers an eight-day Writing Institute and has added a five-day History Alive Social Studies Institute and several Texteam Math Institutes: The math institutes include a five-day pre-K/Kindergarten institute; three, three-day middle-school institutes; a five-day middle-school institute; two, three-day high-school institutes; and a five-day high-school institute. Approximately 70 percent of GPISD teachers have participated in the institutes. The district has a five-year staff development plan that projects staff development needs. Staff development is based on student performance data, state mandates, curriculum updates and staff development evaluation data.

COMMENDATION

GPISD has a well planned, well-implemented and clearly defined process for curriculum alignment and updating, and the GPISD instructional infrastructure supports that process.

FINDING

GPISD has developed and uses a program evaluation framework and an evaluation calendar. GPISD's objective in developing the Framework for Program Evaluation is to establish a systematic ongoing process integrated with the district's program development cycle. The district will use the evaluation data to plan and revise all its educational programs annually for a five-year period. The program evaluation standards were based on the National Curriculum Audit Center sponsored by the American Association of School Administrators and the Joint Committee for Educational Evaluation. Each program evaluation specifies the purpose; the type and scope; the development process, frequency, design and reporting; and how the data will be used. **Exhibit 2-15** shows key standards.

Exhibit 2-15 GPISD Program Evaluation Standards September 2002

Standard	Indicators	Documents
<p>Control: GPISD demonstrates control of services, programs and personnel.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An aligned, tested and taught curriculum • Performance-based philosophy • Board adopted instructional goals • Accountability through roles and responsibilities • Long-range planning 	<p>Board policies, long- and short-range plans, job descriptions, administrative regulations, state and federal laws, compliance documents, annual reports, official reports, official memoranda from superintendent or other cabinet members, accreditation reviews, other external or internal reviews</p>
<p>Direction: GPISD has established clear and valid objectives for students.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written curriculum for all subject areas • A policy for department operations • Periodic review of programs • Textbook and 	<p>Curriculum guides, course catalogs, scope and sequence charts, pacing charts, curriculum planning documents, grant applications, state and federal compliance documents, long- and short-range plans, budget</p>

	<p>resource adoption by the board</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special areas of emphasis, such as library services 	<p>documents, lesson plan guidebooks, board policies, textbook/teacher guides, needs assessment results</p>
<p>Consistency/Equity: GPISD demonstrates consistency and equity in its program development and implementation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Predictability of the written curriculum across levels • Adequate training for staff • Effective, efficient service delivery • Delivery of curriculum • Equitable access to the curriculum for all students 	<p>Long- and short-term plans, budget documents, staff development surveys, climate studies, curriculum monitoring system, formal reports on programs, annual reports, program evaluations, accreditation reports or other reviews</p>
<p>Assessment/Feedback: GPISD uses the results of designed or adopted assessments to adjust, improve or eliminate ineffective practices or programs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An assessment program • Program effectiveness and efficiency based on data • Reports to the board about program effectiveness 	<p>Test scores, public reports on test scores, internal memoranda linking test scores to curricular/instructional priorities, graduate follow-up studies, student evaluations of programs, dropout data, college placement records, statements about graduating classes</p>
<p>Productivity: GPISD focuses on improved productivity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A program-centered budget • Resources allocated to curriculum priorities • A supportive environment • Data-driven 	<p>Past budgets and budget working papers, public relations brochures, official budget documents filed with agencies, long-range facility plans, test scores, enrollment projections and studies</p>

	decisions to increase student learning	
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Source: GPISD Department of Research and Evaluation, Program Evaluation Framework, September 2002.

Chapter 2

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

A. Student Performance and Instructional Resources (Part 2)

Depending on the program or service being evaluated, the evaluation may include additional standards for utility, feasibility, propriety and accuracy. The utility standards ensure that the evaluation contains the information its intended users need. The feasibility standards ensure that the evaluation will be practical, diplomatic and cost effective. The propriety standards ensure that the evaluation will be conducted legally, ethically and with regard to those involved in the evaluation and to those affected by its results. The accuracy standards help to ensure that the evaluation will provide usable information.

The GPISD Department of Research and Evaluation established a calendar for evaluating one districtwide department or core area and one support service annually (**Exhibit 2-16**). The district also conducts a customer satisfaction survey every four years.

Exhibit 2-16
GPISD Program Evaluation Cycle
2001-02 through 2004-05

2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
K-12 science	K-12 Fine arts	K-12 language arts	K-12 math
Special education	Customer satisfaction	District Planning Advisory Council and Site-based Committee	Health
District Planning Advisory Council and Site-Based Committee	New programs	New programs	Food services
New programs	School initiatives funded by grants	School initiatives funded by grants	Physical education
School initiatives funded by grants			Block scheduling
			New programs
			School initiatives

			funded by grants
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Source: GPISD Department of Research and Evaluation, Program Evaluation Framework.

In evaluating programs, the Department of Research and Evaluation first conducts a needs assessment in September through October, and then in November, assembles an external team of 20-25 people that includes professors from local universities, program staff from other districts and Region 4 staff. Working in groups of two, the evaluation team visits every school and observes classes for two to two-and-a-half days. The team also conducts roundtable discussions with parents. On the last day, the team discusses findings and formulates recommendations and commendations. In December, the department conducts stakeholder surveys as part of the evaluation. The evaluation report is organized by standard, including commendations and recommendations for each standard area, student and staff demographic data and stakeholder survey results. The Department of Research and Evaluation evaluates new principals and assistant principals through teacher surveys. It conducts senior exit surveys and graduate follow-up surveys based on random samples of graduates and customer satisfaction surveys that involve students and parents.

COMMENDATION

GPISD uses a Program Evaluation Framework to conduct systematic evaluations of all programs and services and to improve programs based on evaluation results and recommendations.

FINDING

GPISD retains a higher percent of students in grade 1 than the state average. The district retained 7.4 percent of grade 1 students, compared to the state average of 5.8 percent in 2001-02 (**Exhibit 2-17**). GPISD's retention rate in grade 1 was 1.6 percentage points higher than the state rate, but retention rates in kindergarten and grades 4 through 8 were below the state average.

**Exhibit 2-17
Retention Rates by Grade for 2001-02
GPISD, Peer Districts and State**

Grade Level	Aldine	GPISD	Humble	Goose Creek	Pasadena	State Average
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K	7.0%	1.8%	1.8%	1.7%	1.6%	2.6%
1	11.8%	7.4%	2.3%	4.9%	12.9%	5.8%
2	10.4%	3.9%	1.3%	6.2%	6.6%	3.5%
3	6.6%	2.6%	0.4%	4.5%	3.8%	2.5%
4	2.7%	1.1%	0.3%	1.6%	1.8%	1.4%
5	0.6%	0.3%	0.0%	0.3%	0.4%	0.8%
6	0.9%	1.0%	1.2%	0.8%	2.8%	1.5%
7	4.6%	1.2%	1.1%	0.6%	2.9%	2.5%
8	2.6%	0.4%	0.9%	0.1%	3.0%	1.9%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2001-02.

A five-year history of GPISD's retention rates by grade level (**Exhibit 2-18**) shows an increase in retention in grades K through 4 and grade 7 and a decrease in grades 5, 6 and 8 between 1997-98 and 2000-01. In 2001-02, GPISD increased retention rates in kindergarten and grades 3, 6 and 7 over 2000-01 rates, but decreased retention rates in grades 1 and 2.

Exhibit 2-18
GPISD Retention Rates by Grade
1997-98 through 2001-02

Year	K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
2001-02	1.8%	7.4%	3.9%	2.6%	1.1%	0.3%	1.0%	1.2%	0.4%
2000-01	1.0%	10.7%	6.4%	2.4%	1.3%	0.3%	0.7%	0.9%	1.0%
1999-2000	0.4%	8.1%	4.0%	2.8%	1.7%	0.4%	1.2%	1.2%	1.0%
1998-99	0.2%	6.0%	3.4%	1.6%	1.0%	0.6%	1.3%	1.2%	1.3%
1997-98	0.5%	5.3%	2.0%	1.4%	0.8%	0.6%	1.4%	1.0%	1.5%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 1997-98 through 2001-02.

GPISD wants to ensure that students will be academically prepared for their grade level and can pass the TAKS. GPISD's elementary Campus Improvement Plans (CIPs) aimed to attain a 90-percent passing rate on all portions of the TAAS in all subject areas and for each subpopulation in grades

3 through 5 by 2001-02. Several of the CIPs specify strategies and programs to prepare PK through grade 2 students for the TAAS. GPISD screens students in grades 1 and 2 to ensure that they are developmentally ready and appropriately placed and that they have mastered the skills necessary to progress successfully on grade level. GPISD conducts early literacy assessments; provides tutoring, benchmark assessments and accelerated reading instruction programs, and monitors student progress using performance data.

Research has shown that most students who cannot read by grade 3 have a difficult time catching up to their peers. TEA's Task Force on Early Childhood and Elementary Education recommends that schools identify student needs early in the school year. The task force also recommends that schools use multiple assessments to help identify students early in their schooling and give them the resources they will need to succeed. The 1999 social promotion law requires educators to establish strong accelerated programs for students who have been retained.

Ingram ISD has developed a set of competencies for grades K through 12 that all students must have before they can be promoted to a higher grade. This set of competencies provides teachers with a clear guideline for what students need to know when they complete each grade and helps both teachers and administrators make promotion and retention decisions. Ingram ISD has also implemented the use of the Stanford 9 tests in grades 1 and 2 to assess preparedness for grade 3 and for the TAAS. Many districts include details like Ingram's set of competencies and any budgeted funds in both the CIPs and the DIP.

Kerrville ISD (KISD) has a transitional first grade to increase student preparedness and success in school. The transitional program is designed to enrich the kindergarten curriculum and give students an additional year to mature. KISD has developed screening procedures for the identification of students who can benefit most from this program. KISD offers an extended curriculum through the use of high-interest children's literature in its transitional program. High-interest literature refers to the most popular children's library books. The teachers integrate children's literature in all content areas. The transitional-year program helped KISD to increase its TAAS pass rates in grades 3 and 4.

Recommendation 6:

Implement instructional strategies to reduce the number of students who are retained in grade 1.

GPISD should develop grade-level competencies with clear guidelines about what students should know before they can be promoted to higher grades. The district should also consider special instructional programs and strategies for the lower grades to ensure that all students in grades 3 and above perform at grade level.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The assistant superintendent of Curriculum Design and Alignment, the deputy superintendent of Educational Services and the elementary school principals review district, campus and teacher retention rates throughout K-1 grade levels.	April 2003
2.	The assistant superintendent of Curriculum Design and Alignment, the deputy superintendent of Educational Services and the director of Research and Evaluation identify districts with successful K-1 retention prevention strategies and programs.	April 2003
3.	The assistant superintendent of Curriculum Design and Alignment and the deputy superintendent of Educational Services establish a committee of elementary principals, instructional specialists and teachers to develop a set of grade-level competencies.	May 2003
4.	The committee reviews district practices, available resources and effective strategies and materials obtained from Region 4 and other districts, and recommends strategies to reduce retention rates to the assistant superintendent of Curriculum Design and Alignment and the deputy superintendent of Educational Services.	May 2003
5.	The assistant superintendent of Curriculum Design and Alignment and the deputy superintendent of Educational Services present detailed strategies and associated funds for training or materials to the superintendent and the board for approval and inclusion in the next year's budget.	June 2003
6.	The assistant superintendent of Curriculum Design and Alignment and the deputy superintendent of Educational Services ensure the strategies are integrated into the 2003-04 CIPs.	August 2003
7.	The director of Research and Evaluation analyzes elementary student performance and school accountability and submits a report to the Instructional Services Department.	June 2004 and Annually

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

GPISD's TAAS participation rate in 2001-02 was lower than regional and state averages

(Exhibit 2-19). GPISD has the second-lowest TAAS participation rate among its peer districts-mainly due to its ARD and Limited-English-Proficient (LEP) exemption rates. GPISD had the highest percent of ARD exemptions and the second-highest percent of LEP exemptions among the peer districts, and those exemption rates were higher than regional and state averages. The district had the second-highest exemption rate of Hispanic students compared to its peer districts, and this rate was also higher than state and regional averages. However, GPISD had the lowest absenteeism rate among its peer districts, the region and the state.

Exhibit 2-19
TAAS Participation Rates
GPISD, Peer Districts, Region 4 and State
2001-02

	Humble	Goose Creek	Pasadena	GPISD	Aldine	Region 4	State
All Tested	97.5%	95.3%	95.7%	95.2%	94.6%	96.1%	96.2%
Not Tested	2.5%	4.7%	4.3%	4.8%	5.4%	3.9%	3.8%
Absent	1.0%	1.6%	0.7%	0.6 %	0.7%	0.9%	0.7%
LEP Exemption	0.5%	1.0%	2.4%	2.2%	2.0%	1.5%	1.4%
ARD Exemption	0.6%	1.3%	0.6%	1.4%	1.2%	0.9%	1.1%
Not Tested: Special Education	8.8%	17.3%	10.6%	10.2%	13.6%	10.2%	10.6%
SDAA	2.5%	4.4%	3.8%	8.3%	4.9%	5.3%	6.7%
Not Tested: Hispanic	4.6%	5.7%	5.2%	6.1%	6.8%	5.7%	5.6%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2001-02.

GPISD TAAS participation rates varied across schools (**Exhibit 2-20**). Galena Park High School had the highest nonparticipation rate. ARD exemption rates were highest at the high-school level, with Galena Park

High School having the highest ARD exemption rate in the district, followed by North Shore High School. Galena Park Middle School had the highest nonparticipation rate among middle schools. Among elementary schools, Woodland Acres had the highest nonparticipation rate and the highest LEP exemption rate; its LEP exemption rate was the highest among all district schools. Exemption rates were higher in schools with a larger population of recent immigrants; these schools have New Arrival Centers.

Exhibit 2-20
GPISD TAAS Participation and Exemption Rates by School
2001-02

School	Not Tested	LEP Exemption Rates	ARD Exemption Rates
North Shore High School	7.6%	0.0%	6.4%
Galena Park High School	15.3%	0.0%	10.7%
North Shore Senior High School	7.6%	0.0%	6.4%
Cobb Sixth Grade Campus	3.7%	2.3%	0.7%
Cunningham Middle School	1.4%	0.0%	0.0%
Galena Park Middle School*	5.8%	4.2%	0.4%
North Shore Middle School	4.6%	3.1%	0.6%
Woodland Acres Middle School*	4.7%	4.5%	0.0%
Cloverleaf Elementary	3.0%	2.1%	0.7%
Cimarron Elementary*	5.7%	4.3%	0.4%
James B. Havard Elementary	1.5%	0.0%	1.3%
North Shore Elementary*	5.6%	4.1%	0.0%
Green Valley Elementary	2.9%	1.3%	1.1%
Jacinto City Elementary	3.9%	1.2%	1.2%
Tice Elementary	2.4%	0.8%	0.5%
Purple Sage Elementary	1.3%	0.5%	0.0%
Galena Park Elementary*	5.1%	4.4%	0.0%
MacArthur Elementary	3.9%	2.3%	0.0%
Pyburn Elementary	5.4%	3.3%	0.4%

Woodland Acres Elementary*	9.0%	7.9%	0.0%
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Source: TEA, AEIS, 2001-02.

* These schools have New Arrival Centers for recently arrived immigrants who are exempted from the TAAS per LPAC committees.

GPISD administers benchmark release tests to all special education students, with the exception of life skills students. The district uses these scores, the scores from the grade 9 mock TAAS and students' testing history to determine whether students should be exempt from the exit-level TAAS. Special education students who did not take the exit-level TAAS took an appropriate grade-level-release TAAS.

Most districts with low ARD exemption rates identify modifications that special education students need in order to be able to take the TAAS and enroll special education students having difficulties with the TAAS in TAAS remediation classes.

Recommendation 7:

Review TAAS participation and exemptions at schools with higher exemption rates and implement strategies to increase participation rates in statewide exams.

GPISD should conduct a districtwide review of its TAAS participation rates and focus on schools with high LEP and ARD exemption rates. The district should develop and implement district and campus specific strategies to increase state assessment participation.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The deputy superintendent of Educational Services and the principals review TAAS participation rates and exemptions for the district and for individual schools, and identify schools with high LEP and ARD exemption rates.	April 2003
2.	The director of Research and Evaluation researches effective strategies used by similar districts, prepares a report and distributes it to principals and to the deputy superintendent of Educational Services.	May 2003
3.	The principals develop recommendations on how to increase state assessment participation at their schools.	June 2003
4.	The deputy superintendent of Educational Services prepares a	July 2003

	plan for increasing state assessment participation that incorporates principal recommendations and strategies used effectively by other districts.	
5.	The principals implement the strategies.	September 2003 - May 2004
6.	The deputy superintendent of Educational Services monitors state assessment participation and refines the plan as needed.	May 2004 and Annually

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The academic performance of GPISD high school students on exit-level TAAS writing and all tests taken is below regional and state averages. GPISD had the lowest grade-10 TAAS performance in writing and the second-lowest performance among its peer districts in math and all tests taken (**Exhibit 2-21**).

Exhibit 2-21
Grade 10 TAAS Performance
GPISD, Peer Districts, Region 4 and State
2001-02

Grade 10	Humble	Goose Creek	GPISD	Pasadena	Aldine	Region 4	State
Reading	97.7%	96.3%	95.6%	94.3%	93.5%	95.2%	94.5%
Writing	97.4%	94.1%	89.8%	90.0%	90.5%	92.1%	91.3%
Math	96.7%	94.0%	92.4%	90.6%	94.1%	93.3%	92.2%
All Tests Taken	94.1%	88.9%	84.9%	83.9%	85.6%	87.5%	85.7%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2001-02.

GPISD's performance on end-of-course exams in 2001-02 also was below some regional and state averages, and was the lowest among its peer districts in biology (**Exhibit 2-22**). GPISD occupied the middle position among its peer districts in its performance on Algebra I, English II and U.S. History end-of-course exams. The percent of GPISD students who passed end-of-course exams in Algebra I, Biology and English II was

lower than the Region 4 averages. The performance of GPISD students on the end-of-course Biology exam was 7.8 percentage points lower than the state average, and 10 percentage points lower than the regional average.

Exhibit 2-22
Percent Passing End-of-Course Exams
GPISD, Peer Districts, Region 4 and State
2001-02

End-of-Course Exam	Aldine	Humble	GPISD	Goose Creek	Pasadena	Region 4	State
Algebra I	74.2%	69.5%	57.8%	57.6%	53.0%	62.1%	57.8%
Biology	82.4%	91.1%	72.0%	74.8%	78.1%	82.0%	79.8%
English II	72.5%	73.7%	69.3%	65.7%	60.7%	71.0%	69.0%
U.S. History	62.3%	89.4%	80.4%	83.1%	73.5%	77.1%	73.9%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2001-02.

GPISD's participation in end-of-course exams was lower than regional and state averages in Algebra I and English II (**Exhibit 2-23**). GPISD had the second-lowest participation rate among its peer districts in the percent of students who took the Algebra I and English II end-of-course exams.

Exhibit 2-23
Percent Taking End-of-Course Exams
GPISD, Peer Districts, Region 4 and State
2001-02

End-of-Course Exam	Pasadena	Humble	Goose Creek	GPISD	Aldine	Region 4	State
Algebra I	19.1%	17.5%	16.9%	16.3%	15.6%	16.9%	17.0%
Biology	25.0%	24.0%	26.2%	25.3%	23.4%	23.6%	24.0%
English II	23.1%	22.7%	22.4%	21.5%	20.1%	21.8%	21.8%
U.S. History	19.1%	21.4%	16.4%	18.4%	3.3%	15.6%	16.3%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2001-02.

GPISD's DIP and CIPs focus on TAAS improvement, and they identify multiple strategies for TAAS preparation. Only the North Shore High

School CIP addresses the end-of-course exam issue, but it lists a single end-of-course strategy. District administrators said that the district has not focused on end-of-course exams as part of its performance improvement effort. As of 2002-03, students are not required to take end-of-course exams. TEA, however, has indicated that districts can predict how their students will do on the TAKS based on the end-of-the-course exams.

Fort Worth ISD (FWISD) developed a set of curriculum guides that include correlations to the TEKS, the TAAS and end-of-course and advanced placement exams and the adopted texts in addition to the district academic content standards based on the TEKS. The guides also include a teaching sequence of courses and a vertical spiral continuum of skills from kindergarten to grade 12. In addition, the curriculum guides include suggested instructional activities and assessment tools for determining student mastery levels. FWISD incorporated in its Ninth Grade Success Initiative, which aims to reduce the number of students who are retained in grade 9 or who drop out of school, an objective of increasing by 5 percent the number of students who pass end-of-course exams, especially the algebra end-of-course exam. Through a TEA grant, FWISD provides math and reading tutors, after-school algebra labs, graphing calculators, parent and community workshops and a lending library for parents.

Recommendation 8:

Prepare a plan to review end-of-course data and develop strategies to prepare for the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills.

GPISD should review its biology curriculum and instructional practices and the staff development that biology teachers get and then make appropriate modifications. The district should develop a plan to improve participation and performance on the new TAKS. The district and the schools should also incorporate end-of-course objectives and strategies in the DIP and CIPs.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The deputy superintendent of Educational Services, the assistant superintendent of Curriculum Design and Alignment and the secondary principals review student participation in, and performance on, end-of-course exams and grade-10 student performance on the TAAS.	April 2003
2.	The deputy superintendent of Educational Services, the assistant superintendent of Curriculum Design and Alignment and the secondary principals establish a committee to review biology curricula. instructional practices. resources and staff	April 2003

	development.	
3.	The committee prepares recommendations for modifications in curriculum, staff development and instructional practices, and submits its recommendations to the deputy superintendent of Educational Services and the assistant superintendent of Curriculum Design and Alignment.	May 2003
4.	The deputy superintendent of Educational Services and the assistant superintendent of Curriculum Design and Alignment prepare a plan for increasing participation in, and performance on, end-of-course exams and disseminate it to the secondary principals.	June 2003
5.	The principals implement the plan.	August 2003 - May 2004
6.	The deputy superintendent of Educational Services monitors participation and performance on end-of-course exams and on the grade-11 TAKS.	May 2004 and Annually

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

GPISD students' participation and performance on college entrance exams fall below regional and state averages (**Exhibit 2-24**). In 2001-02, GPISD's average score (911) on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) was 89 points lower than the regional average of 1,000 and 76 points lower than the state average of 987. GPISD's average American College Test (ACT) score (17.4) was 2.8 points lower than the state average (20.2) and 3.3 points lower than the regional average (20.7). Only 10.9 percent of GPISD students who took the SAT met the established criteria, compared with the state average of 26.9 percent and the Region 4 average of 30.4 percent. GPISD was the second lowest among its peer districts in the percent of students who met the criteria, and was also the second lowest in its average SAT and ACT scores and in the percent of students who took college entrance exams. The percent of GPISD students who took college entrance exams in 2001-02 was lower by 25.5 percentage points than the regional average and lower than the state average by 23.1 percentage points. A majority of GPISD students attend San Jacinto College North, which does not require students to take the ACT or the SAT for admission.

Exhibit 2-24 College Entrance Examination Scores

**GPISD, Peer Districts, Region 4 and the State
Class of 2001**

District	Percent of Students Who Took the Exams	Percent of Students Who Met the Criteria	Average SAT Score	Average ACT Score
Humble	80.7%	40.4%	1,055	21.6
Aldine	55.2%	8.9%	869	17.2
Goose Creek	42.2%	21.8%	957	19.8
GPISD	39.8%	10.9%	911	17.4
Pasadena	38.3%	21.7%	968	20.4
Region 4	65.3%	30.4%	1,000	20.7
State Average	62.9%	26.9%	987	20.2

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2001-02.

The number of GPISD students who took college admission tests increased from its level in 1999-2000. The average SAT scores in 2001-02 decreased for the second consecutive year (**Exhibit 2-25**).

**Exhibit 2-25
GPISD Student Participation in College Admission Tests
1997-98 through 2001-02**

Year	Number of Students Who Took the ACT	Number of Students Who Took the SAT	Total Number of Students Who Took ACT/SAT	Average SAT Scores
2001-02	244	312	552	886*
2000-01	198	270	468	912
1999-2000	245	248	493	936
1998-99	299	233	530	908
1997-98	252	170	422	947

Source: GPISD 1997-2002 SAT Profile, College Admissions Totals # Students Tested, September 5, 2002.

* TEA, AEIS, 2001-02 shows an average SAT score of 911.

The ACT includes questions about English, mathematics, reading and science reasoning, with scores ranging from 1 to 36 on each component. The ACT composite score is the average of the four component scores. The SAT includes a verbal and a mathematics component. Scores range from 200 to 800 for each test component. The combined total is the reported score and ranges up to a maximum of 1600. TEA has set the scores of 21 on the ACT and 1110 on the SAT as the minimum criteria for student scores to be acknowledged in the district's accountability rating.

GPISD high schools differ in the emphasis they give ACT/SAT exams in their CIPs. The 2001-02 Galena Park High School CIP identifies only a Preliminary SAT (PSAT)/SAT class. The 2001-02 North Shore High School CIP addresses only the PSAT. One of North Shore Senior High School's main goals is to increase the number of students who take Advanced Placement (AP), ACT and SAT exams, using strategies such as providing orientations at feeder schools and to parents about the benefits of AP courses and ACT/SAT scores. In the 2002 self-evaluation of the Advanced Placement program, the student survey showed that the main reason AP students gave for not taking AP exams was their lack of preparation for the test. All the high school CIPs emphasize TAAS preparation and performance.

GPISD has made efforts to improve student participation and performance on college entrance exams. The district has offered PSAT and SAT preparation sessions since 1996, and it pays \$5 of the \$10 PSAT fee for each student who takes the exam. In September 2002, College Board consultants trained high school English and math teachers to incorporate PSAT and SAT skills into the regular curriculum; additional training is scheduled for February 2003. GPISD also participates in the Duke Talent Identification Program, which identifies top-performing students in grade 7 and encourages them to take the SAT or the ACT as middle-school students. GPISD has increased the percent of students in the recommended high school program: 38.4 percent of students in the class of 2001 were in the program, an increase of 11.9 percentage points from the 26.5 percent in the class of 2000. The district's percent of students in the recommended high school program is lower than the regional average of 44.3 percent and the state average of 51.1 percent.

Texas districts encourage secondary students to take college entrance exams before graduation by initiating a PSAT/SAT program targeted toward younger students, typically students in middle school. These programs give students the experience of taking tests, as well as a score that can be used as a guide for improvement when they are in high school. Many districts also offer a financial incentive to students by waiving or discounting test fees for both the PSAT and SAT as well as providing teacher training in strategies that are designed to improve student

performance on college entrance exams. Some districts have also aligned their curriculum with the SAT.

Recommendation 9:

Improve student participation and performance on college entrance tests by providing staff development to designated teachers on test preparation and offering a student preparation course.

GPISD should create a greater focus on ACT/SAT preparation and exam taking both in the DIP and in its CIPs. GPISD should make the SAT a primary goal and should allocate more resources to teacher and student preparation. GPISD should identify effective ACT/SAT test preparation strategies and resources that other districts use, assign teachers to help students prepare for these tests, provide staff development to these teachers in the use of the materials and strategies and offer a preparation course to all students. The district should increase student and parent awareness of the importance of the ACT/SAT to students' postsecondary education and career opportunities and inform them of the instructional and financial resources available to them. This effort should begin in middle school and continue throughout high school as part of a broader plan for preparing students for postsecondary education.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The executive director of Secondary Education and high school counselors gather information about materials and strategies from districts that have successfully improved student participation in, and performance on, college entrance exams.	April 2003
2.	The executive director of Secondary Education works with middle school and high school principals and counselors to develop a plan to increase parent and student awareness of the importance of ACT/SAT participation and performance, using effective strategies from other districts.	May 2003
3.	The middle school and high school principals and counselors implement the plan to increase parent and student awareness of how important the ACT and the SAT are and what resources are available to them.	August 2003
4.	The executive director of Secondary Education reviews available test preparation course materials and staff development programs, selects a course and submits the information to the deputy superintendent of Educational Services for review and approval.	August 2003
5.	The executive director of Secondary Education arranges staff	January

	development for the assigned teachers and obtains preparation materials.	2004
6.	The executive director of Secondary Education and principals assign middle and high school teachers to teach a test preparation course.	September 2003
7.	The high school principal informs students about the preparation course.	February 2004
8.	The executive director of Secondary Education monitors student participation in the preparation courses, participation in the tests and performance on the ACT/SAT.	March - May 2004
9.	The executive director of Secondary Education meets with high school principals and counselors to evaluate the effectiveness of strategies and make needed changes.	May 2004
10.	The executive director of Secondary Education prepares a report for the deputy superintendent of Educational Services, the superintendent and the board.	June 2004

FISCAL IMPACT

The fiscal impact for this recommendation is based on the assumptions that the district will purchase training and ACT/SAT preparation materials; that teachers who complete the training will teach ACT/SAT preparation courses; and that the district will provide a \$1,000 stipend to those teachers. To be conservative, the maximum number of teachers (30) is used to calculate the annual stipend for each selected teacher, yielding an annual cost of \$30,000 (30 teachers x \$1,000 stipend).

The Learning Systems, a nonprofit company with 20 years of experience, offers SAT training to districts at \$6,950 for two days of training a group of four to 30 teachers. This training program includes all teacher course materials and 100 student packets. Additional student packets are available in lots of 50 for \$625.

The one-time cost of training will be \$6,950. In the first year, GPISD will also need to purchase 200 additional student packets (\$625 x 4 lots) in addition to the packets included in the training program. Costs for the first year will include training, 200 packets and stipends to 30 teachers: \$6,950 + \$2,500 + \$30,000.

Starting in the second year, the district will annually purchase packets for 300 students at a cost of \$3,750 (\$625 x 6 lots of 50). Costs for each following year will be \$3,750 + \$30,000 (\$1,000 stipends to 30 teachers).

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
One-Time training cost	(\$6,950)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Purchase student packets and pay teacher stipends.	(\$32,500)	(\$33,750)	(\$33,750)	(\$33,750)	(\$33,750)
Net (cost)/Savings	(\$39,450)	(\$33,750)	(\$33,750)	(\$33,750)	(\$33,750)

Chapter 2

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

B. Gifted and Talented and Advanced Placement

Texas state law requires all school districts to identify and provide services for gifted and talented students. In 1990, the State Board of Education (SBOE) adopted its *Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students*, a guide for meeting the law's requirements. In 1996, SBOE updated the plan to incorporate Texas Education Code Section 29.123 requirements to ensure that such services are provided.

GPISD's Advanced Studies program consists of the G/T program in kindergarten through grade 10, pre-Advanced Placement (pre-AP) in grades 7 and 8 and pre-Advanced and Advanced Placement in grades 9 through 12. The program provides an enhanced curriculum for students who perform or show the potential to perform at a remarkably high level of accomplishment when compared with others for the same age, experience or environment and who excel in general intellectual ability, creativity and productive thinking.

At the elementary level (K-5), GPISD offers an enrichment curriculum called the Journeys to the top 4 to 7 percent of students at each grade level at each school. These students are "clustered" in their regular classrooms. Starting in grade 4, students are assessed for eligibility to participate in the districtwide Encounters pullout program for grades 4 through 10. GPISD selects the top 3 to 5 percent of its students in each grade level districtwide, regardless of their home schools. Students in grades 4 and 5 who are in the program go to a designated school for one day a week, and grade 6 students attend the program one day a week at the Cobb Sixth Grade Campus. Students in grade 7 through 10 who are in the program attend a specially designed program for one period a day on their home campus. Students in grades 7 and 8 participate in Encounters for one period a day instead of a reading class. Students in grades 9 and 10 can take an Encounters class as an elective. In 2001-02, GPISD had three Encounters teachers for grades 4 through 6, and 158 Journeys teachers. The district supports its G/T staff with a G/T specialist, an itinerant G/T teacher who worked with all Journeys students and teachers in grades kindergarten through 5. In addition, the G/T program had 12 Journeys cadre teachers. Each elementary school principal selected one Journeys teacher to serve as a cadre representative. The cadre representative works with other Journeys teachers at his or her school and helps the G/T specialist to coordinate the Journeys program on their campuses.

Students can be nominated for the G/T program by parents, school personnel and community members. GPISD uses multiple criteria to identify gifted/talented students, including achievement test scores, ability test scores, creativity test scores, teacher nomination scores, past records, students' work products and outstanding accomplishments in school and the community. The nomination process takes place from January through March. Nominated students are tested in May, and selections are made in June. In the fall, G/T students in grades 1 and 6 and new students are identified. The district's G/T selection committee comprises the Advanced Studies program director, district G/T teachers, a parent, a diagnostician, a counselor, the bilingual/ESL coordinator and the executive director of elementary and secondary schools. Principals serve as ad hoc committee members. Parents are notified of their child's selection by mail, and they must grant permission for their child's participation.

At the secondary level, G/T students receive instruction in pre-AP and AP classes taught by AP- and G/T-trained teachers. GPISD offers 10 pre-AP courses including Algebra II, Biology I, Chemistry I, English I and II, Geometry, Physics, Pre-Calculus, World Geography and World History. AP courses include Algebra II, Biology, Calculus, Chemistry, English III and IV, French, Spanish IV and V, Studio Art, U.S. History, European History, Economics, Music Theory, U.S. Government/Politics, Physics, Art History and Environmental Science. GPISD also offers dual credit courses in collaboration with San Jacinto College North in English IV, Government and U.S. History, Business Computer Information Systems (BCIS) and Psychology. In 2002-03, 130 GPISD students participate in these courses.

With a budget of \$102,963, GPISD serves 991 students in its 2002-03 G/T program (**Exhibit 2-26**). Grades 4 and 5 have the largest number of students in the G/T program.

Exhibit 2-26
GPISD Gifted/Talented Students by Grade Level
2002-03

Grade	Number of Students	Percent of Students
Grade 1	44	4.4%
Grade 2	63	6.4%
Grade 3	93	9.4%
Grade 4	131	13.2%
Grade 5	140	14.1%

Grade 6	60	6.0%
Grade 7	86	8.7%
Grade 8	88	8.9%
Grade 9	89	9.0%
Grade 10	85	8.6%
Grade 11	59	5.9%
Grade 12	53	5.3%
Total	991	

Source: GPISD Advanced Studies Program, November 2002.

The number of students participating in the G/T program has decreased between 1997-98 and 2001-02, as shown in **Exhibit 2-27**. Among its peer districts, GPISD is the only district whose G/T participation decreased since 1997-98. District administrators attribute the decrease in the number of G/T students to the change in the identification process the district made in spring 2000. The district changed the timing of G/T student identification to April/May instead of August/September. While this change makes immediate placement and services easier, it leaves the district unsure of how many students who were identified as G/T in the spring will remain in the district the following school year. Since 1995, 433 students identified as G/T did not remain in the district the following year, did not enroll or withdrew from the program.

Exhibit 2-27
G/T Student Participation
GPISD and Peer Districts
1997-98 through 2001-02

District	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	Percent Change 1998-2002
Aldine	2,523	2,798	2,878	3,085	2,967	17.6%
Humble	2,184	2,273	2,529	2,531	2,510	14.9%
Pasadena	1,902	1,964	2,079	2,163	2,111	11.0%
Goose Creek	1,040	1,032	1,038	1,008	1,051	1.0%
GPISD	1,182	1,098	931	1,010	996	(15.7%)

Source: TEA, AEIS, 1997-98 through 2001-02.

In 2001-02, all GPISD G/T teachers received the required training, which is paid by the district. GPISD offers a wide range of G/T staff development to all its teachers. In 2001-02, 848 (64 percent) of GPISD teachers received some G/T training.

Exhibit 2-28 shows G/T students, teachers and expenditures for GPISD, peer districts and the state in 2001-02. GPISD had the second-lowest percent of G/T students and the highest percent of G/T teachers among its peer districts. The percent of G/T students falls below the state average, but the percent of G/T teachers is higher than the state average. GPISD also has the lowest percent of budgeted expenditures for G/T among its peers and the lowest per-student expenditures. The district's percent of budgeted expenditures for G/T is below the state average.

Exhibit 2-28
Number and Percent of Gifted/Talented Students and Teachers
GPISD, Peer Districts and State
2001-02

District	G/T Student Enrollment		G/T Teachers		Budget Instructional Expenditures for G/T	
	Number	Percent	Number*	Percent	Amount per Student	Percent**
Aldine	2,964	5.6%	67.2	1.9%	\$834	1.2%
Humble	2,510	9.9%	28.5	1.7%	\$1,971	5.7%
Pasadena	2,111	4.9%	31.7	1.2%	\$2,023	2.9%
Goose Creek	1,051	5.8%	37.1	3.2%	\$1,306	2.3%
GPISD	996	5.2%	70.6	5.3%	\$276	0.4%
State	339,270	8.2%	6,438.7	2.3%	\$767	1.8%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2001-02.

* Expressed in Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs).

** G/T expenditures as percent of total budgeted instructional program expenditures.

The GPISD Advanced Studies program director conducts annual surveys of teachers, students and parents in its Journeys, Encounters, pre-AP and

AP programs. The survey results, analyzed by program, school and grade level, are presented to the G/T Advisory Committee with recommendations to stop, start or continue the practice. Based on the survey results, in 2001-02, the G/T Advisory Committee recommended that the program investigate expanding Encounters into grades 11 and 12, that technology teacher training be geared to the needs of gifted students, that the Advanced Studies program improve communication with parents and students about the pre-AP and AP programs and that the district increase resources and training for bilingual G/T teachers. For 2002-03, the G/T Advisory Committee recommended that the district implement a G/T bilingual curriculum and improve parent orientation opportunities for the pre-AP and AP programs.

FINDING

The number of students who participate in the GPISD G/T programs does not represent the ethnic and economic diversity of the district. In 2001-02, GPISD had 86.2 percent minority students; of those, 62.9 percent were Hispanic students. The GPISD gifted/talented programs had 66.8 percent minority students including 43.2 percent Hispanic students (**Exhibit 2-29**). G/T programs are expected to represent the composition of the general student population. Participation of Hispanic and African American students in the G/T programs varied by grade level and G/T program.

Exhibit 2-29
GPISD G/T Enrollment by Ethnicity/Race
2001-02

Grade Level	G/T Program	Number of G/T Students	Percent Hispanic	Percent Anglo	Percent African American	Percent Asian American
Grade 1	Journeys	36	66.7%	19.4%	8.3%	5.6%
Grade 2	Journeys	94	53.2%	21.3%	23.4%	2.1%
Grade 3	Journeys	99	56.6%	24.2%	16.2%	3.0%
Grade 4	Journeys and Encounters	120	45.8%	30.8%	17.5%	5.9%
Grade 5	Journeys and Encounters	138	50.7%	26.1%	19.6%	3.6%
Grade	Encounters	60	40.0%	41.6%	11.7%	6.7%

6						
Grade 7	Encounters	69	34.8%	37.7%	18.8%	8.7%
Grade 8	Encounters	93	28.3%	41.3%	23.9%	6.5%
Grade 9	Pre-AP and Encounters	92	34.8%	39.2%	21.7%	4.3%
Grade 10	Pre-AP and Encounters	76	46.2%	39.5%	11.8%	2.6%
Grade 11	AP	56	26.8%	39.3%	17.8%	16.1%
Grade 12	AP/ Dual Credit	60	28.3%	46.7%	15.0%	10.0%
Total		993				

Source: GPISD Gifted/Talented Enrollment Report, 2001-02.

The participation rate of Hispanic students in G/T programs varied by program (**Exhibit 2-30**). Participation of Hispanic students was highest in the Journeys program. Hispanic students were under-represented in the Encounters program and in GPISD pre-AP, AP and dual enrollment courses.

Exhibit 2-30
GPISD Enrollment by G/T Program
2001-02

G/T Program	Number of G/T Students	Percent Hispanic	Percent Anglo	Percent African American	Percent Asian American
Journeys (Grades 1-5)	487	52.4%	25.4%	18.3%	3.9%
Encounters (Grades 4-10)	381	38.3%	37.8%	17.9%	6.0%
Pre-AP, AP, Dual Credit (Grades 9-12)	270	34.4%	41.1%	16.7%	7.8%

Source: GPISD Gifted and Talented Enrollment Report, 2001-02.

The GPISD G/T program also under-represents economically disadvantaged students, at-risk students and bilingual/ESL students (Exhibit 2-31).

**Exhibit 2-31
GPISD G/T Enrollment by Student Subpopulation
1999-2000 through 2001-02**

Year	Number of G/T Students	Percent at Risk		Percent Economically Disadvantaged		Percent Bilingual/ESL	
		In G/T	In District	In G/T	In District	In G/T	In District
1999-2000	931	10.2%		38.2%		4.8%	
2000-01	1,010	16.2%		41.0%		7.3%	
2001-02	996	13.2%	46.5%	42.2%	71.5%	7.7%	21.3%

Source: GPISD Advanced Studies.

In 2000-01, GPISD attempted to increase the number of bilingual/ESL and minority students in its G/T programs by adding nonverbal and creativity tests and by expanding the selection criteria to include language-free, culturally fair identification instruments. The district considers multiple selection criteria at all grade levels. All kindergarten through grade 2 students take the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test to ensure that no student is overlooked. At all grade levels, identification criteria also include the Scales for Rating Behavioral Characteristics of Superior Students. Kindergarten identification criteria also include a student portfolio. GPISD uses the Spanish forms of all achievement tests and translates them during their administration to ensure that non-English-speaking students are fairly assessed.

Socorro ISD (SISD) succeeded in increasing the representation of Hispanic students in its G/T program to a level that approaches its overall district representation by aggressively identifying G/T students from ethnically and linguistically diverse backgrounds. SISD students are 89 percent Hispanic and 52 percent limited English proficient (LEP); 87 percent of the district's G/T students are Hispanic. SISD identified tests, measures and expertise that best suit its student population. SISD uses Raven, a reasoning ability instrument that uses no language, combined with the Spanish Assessment of Basic Education, an achievement measure in Spanish, and the expertise of its LEP director in the G/T identification and screening process.

Fort Worth ISD (FWISD) made its G/T program more ethnically and linguistically diverse by changing its identification and screening processes. FWISD added more identification criteria and a language-free, culturally fair identification instrument. The new identification process considers multiple criteria at all grade levels. All kindergarten through grade 1 students take the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test (NNAT) to make sure that no student is overlooked. Kindergarten students' identification criteria also include the Scales for Rating Behavioral Characteristics of Superior Students-Revise and the Student Portfolio/Student Performance. Elementary school principals found the NNAT helpful for identifying ethnic and language minority G/T students.

Recommendation 10:

Ensure all gifted and talented students are identified and served.

The district should increase the participation of Hispanic, bilingual/ESL, economically disadvantaged and at-risk students in its gifted/talented programs by giving these students the opportunity to demonstrate their skills and abilities. The district should review strategies used by other districts that have succeeded in making their G/T programs more ethnically and linguistically diverse.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The program director of Advanced Studies, the deputy superintendent of Educational Services and the district's G/T Advisory Council review the strategies the schools use to identify and assess students for the program.	April 2003
2.	The Advanced Studies program director contacts districts with G/T programs that are representative of their populations and examines their strategies.	May 2003
3.	The deputy superintendent of Educational Services and the Advanced Studies program director develop strategies aimed at under-represented groups.	May - June 2003
4.	The Advanced Studies program director and the G/T specialist implement the targeted strategies.	September 2003
5.	The Advanced Studies program director and the deputy superintendent of Educational Services monitor the programs to determine the effectiveness of the targeted strategies.	May 2004 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The participation rate and performance of GPISD students on Advanced Placement (AP) exams ranks below regional and state averages. The percentage of GPISD students who take AP exams is the third highest among the peer districts, but it is below regional and state percentages (**Exhibit 2-32**). The performance of GPISD students on the AP exams is the lowest among all the peer districts and is below regional and state averages. Fewer GPISD students who took AP exams had scores that exceeded the criteria, and GPISD had the lowest percent of such scores.

Exhibit 2-32
Advanced Course Completion and
Advanced Placement Exams
GPISD, Peer Districts, Region 4 and State
2000-01

District	Percent of Students Who Complete Advanced Courses	Percent of AP Students Tested	Percent of All AP Scores That Exceed Criteria	Percent of AP Examinees with Scores That Exceed Criteria
Humble	27.1%	8.3%	77.5%	79.9%
Pasadena	13.3%	5.0%	56.9%	56.3%
GPISD	10.9%	9.4%	36.7%	43.0%
Goose Creek	10.8%	13.7%	42.1%	48.6%
Aldine	7.3%	8.2%	49.8%	59.0%
Region 4	21.7%	13.3%	64.0%	66.5%
State Average	19.3%	14.3%	50.1%	54.0%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2000-01.

The concept behind the AP program is to provide college-level courses to high-school students to ease their transition to college. According to the College Board, the number of advanced courses that students complete is one of the best predictors of success on the SAT and in college. In the 2002 self-evaluation of the Advanced Placement program, the student survey showed that the main reason AP students gave for not taking AP exams was their lack of preparation for the test.

GPISD staff makes presentations on pre-AP and AP courses during parent assemblies and distributes brochures on Advanced Placement at the beginning of the year. The district received recognition for increasing the number of students who are enrolled in AP courses. Secondary GPISD teachers said that they are held accountable for student performance but not for the level of student participation in AP tests. Consequently, they tend to encourage only students who are likely to do well on them to take the AP tests. North Shore Senior High School received the 2002-03 Siemens Award for Advanced Placement, which is given to schools with improved participation in the AP program.

However, the percentage of GPISD students who complete AP courses is below state and regional averages (**Exhibit 2-33**). GPISD did not rank well compared with its peer districts on any of these measures. The percent of GPISD students who complete AP courses is 10.8 percentage points below the Region 4 average and 8.4 percentage points lower than the state average.

Exhibit 2-33
Percent of GPISD Students Who Complete Advanced Courses
Compared to Region 4 and State
1997-98 through 2000-01

	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01
GPISD	9.7%	10.1%	9.6%	10.9%
Region 4 Average	19.4%	18.1%	24.6%	21.7%
State Average	18.9%	17.5%	20.1%	19.3%

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

The number of AP exams taken by GPISD students increased from 1997-98 to 2001-02 (**Exhibit 2-34**). GPISD student performance on AP exams over the five-year period (as measured by the percent of exams on which students scored a 3 or higher) varied; it was highest in 1998-99. The percent of AP exams on which students scored a 3 or higher increased in 2001-02 compared with the previous two years. GPISD students scored a 3 or higher in 2001-02 on only 40 percent of the AP exams. Galena Park High School pays for student AP exam fees. North Shore Senior High School pays most of the AP exam fee for students who have a B average or higher.

Exhibit 2-34
Performance on Advanced Placement Exams
1997-98 through 2001-02

Year	Number of AP Exams	Percent of Grades 3 or Higher
1997-98	106	31.1%
1998-99	168	48.8%
1999-2000	213	38.0%
2000-01	266	35.0%
2001-02	333	40.0%

Source: GPISD Department of Instruction, District AP Exam Results.

Many Texas districts encourage students to take AP courses and the subsequent AP tests by focusing on the academic and financial benefits that students can gain such as receiving college credit for courses taken while in high school. Many districts offer training to AP and regular education teachers in test-taking strategies. Districts also offer tutorials on test-taking strategies and access to computer labs supplied with applicable software. Districts like Dripping Springs ISD also encourage students to enroll in G/T activities such as debate, humanities, G/T independent study courses, dual-credit courses or the G/T summer academy because these activities increase students' performance on AP tests. Texas encourages school districts to let students pay at least a small portion of the examination fee, because industry research indicates that students who pay a portion of the fee score higher than those students who do not pay a fee for AP exams.

Recommendation 11:

Develop and implement a plan to increase the number of students taking Advanced Placement courses and passing Advanced Placement exams.

GPISD should develop a comprehensive plan to increase the number of students who take AP courses and exams and to improve student performance on these exams. The plan should contain a staff development schedule and should provide staff development to teachers of AP courses in the areas of test-taking strategies and in preparation for AP tests. The district may consider paying stipends to teachers who teach AP courses to motivate them to recruit students for the courses. In the annual self-evaluation of the AP program, GPISD should include questions about incentives to take AP courses and exams, and use the information for recommendations to include in its action plan. The district should also guide and prepare more students to take the recommended high school program.

GPISD should also contact other districts with high levels of AP course participation, exam taking and AP exam performance to find out what strategies they have used and then incorporate such strategies in its action plan. In presentations about the AP program to middle school parents and students, teachers and administrators should focus on the importance of taking AP exams and on the academic and financial benefits of doing so, including earning college credit and reducing college costs. The district should advertise the program in its newsletters and in articles in the local newspaper. School and district administration should recruit parent organizations and school improvement teams to advocate the program. Middle- and high school principals should invite representatives from local colleges and universities to speak about the benefits of earning college credit through the AP program. The district should also invite former students who participated in AP courses to speak to students about how these courses have helped them in college. The district should also review its AP curricula and exams to identify instructional gaps or areas of weakness.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Advanced Studies program director contacts other districts with high participation in AP courses and good performance on AP exams, and reviews their AP programs.	April 2003
2.	The Advanced Studies program director surveys parents, students and teachers to determine reasons for nonparticipation in AP courses, incentives to participate and incentives to take AP exams.	April 2003
3.	The Advanced Studies program director develops a plan to increase participation in AP courses and AP exams and submits the plan to the deputy superintendent of Educational Services for review and approval.	May 2003
4.	The Advanced Studies program director incorporates strategies into the Advanced Studies Action Plan.	May - June 2003
5.	The Advanced Studies program director informs middle and high school staff about changes in the program.	August 2003
6.	The Advanced Studies program director monitors the number and performance of students who take AP courses and exams to determine the effectiveness of the strategies.	September 2003 - May 2004

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 2

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

C. Compensatory Education/Title I

Like many other Texas school districts, GPISD uses compensatory education funds to provide special support for students who are at risk of dropping out and for students who are not performing at grade level. Texas began to fund compensatory programs in 1975. In 1997, Section 42.152 of the Texas Education Code was amended to include reporting and auditing systems that cover the appropriate use of compensatory education allotment funds. State compensatory education (SCE) funds, like federal Title I funds, are required to be supplemental, and their use does not reduce the amount of regular funds.

While there is flexibility in identifying students and creating successful programs, state criteria now require districts to use student performance for compensatory, intensive or accelerated instructional programs so these students will perform at grade level at the end of the following school year. Districts may use local criteria to identify their at-risk students, but these criteria have to be board approved. Districts are also required to evaluate and document how effective their use of the program has been in reducing disparities in performance. In addition, there are stricter requirements for funding disciplinary alternative education programs, and SCE funding of programs and staffing must be acknowledged in DIPs and CIPs. These changes became effective at the beginning of the 2001-02 school year.

In accordance with state law, GPISD uses the following criteria to determine if a student is at risk of dropping out:

- pre-K through grade 3 students who did not perform satisfactorily on a readiness test or an assessment during the current school year;
- did not perform satisfactorily on an assessment instrument (TAAS);
- has limited English proficiency;
- did not maintain an average equivalent to 70 out of 100 in two or more subjects in the foundation curriculum during a semester in the current or preceding school year;
- was not advanced from one grade level to the next for two or more school years;
- has been placed in an alternative education program during the preceding or current school year;
- has been expelled during the preceding or current school year;
- is currently on parole, probation, deferred prosecution or other conditional release;
- was previously reported through PEIMS to have dropped out of school;
- 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, an officer of the juvenile court or a law enforcement official;
- is pregnant or is a parent;
- is homeless; or
- lived in a residential placement facility in the district during the preceding year or the current school year.

In 2001-02, GPISD had 8,992 students who were classified as being at risk, which is 46.5 percent of its student population (**Exhibit 2-35**). GPISD's percent of at-risk students is higher than the state average by more than six percentage points.

Exhibit 2-35
Number and Percentage of At-Risk Students
GPISD, Peer Districts and State
2001-02

District	Number of At-Risk Students	Percent of At-Risk Students
Aldine	29,395	55.1%
Pasadena	20,749	47.6%
GPISD	8,992	46.5%
Goose Creek	6,998	38.2%
Humble	4,448	17.6%
State	1,664,473	40.1%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2001-02.

Exhibit 2-36 shows distribution of economically disadvantaged and at-risk students in GPISD schools.

Exhibit 2-36
GPISD Economically Disadvantaged and At-Risk Students
2001-02

School	Enrollment	Number of Economically Disadvantaged Students	Percent of Economically Disadvantaged Students	Number of At-Risk Students	Percent of At-Risk Students
North Shore High School	2,068	880	42.6%	929	44.9%
Galena Park High School	1,611	988	61.3%	912	56.6%
North Shore Senior High School	1,468	503	34.3%	841	57.3%
North Shore Middle School	1,159	740	63.8%	446	38.5%
Cloverleaf Elementary	1,052	1,005	95.5%	692	65.8%
Cobb Sixth Grade Campus	1,035	628	60.7%	207	20.0%
Cimarron Elementary	1,023	752	73.5%	451	44.1%
Galena Park Middle School	986	731	74.1%	310	31.4%

James B. Havard Elementary	967	428	44.3%	197	20.4%
North Shore Elementary	899	692	77.0%	445	49.5%
Cunningham Middle School	888	448	50.5%	274	30.9%
Green Valley Elementary	866	575	66.4%	283	32.7%
Jacinto City Elementary	831	706	85.0%	442	53.2%
Tice Elementary	827	664	80.3%	298	36.0%
Purple Sage Elementary	799	589	73.7%	404	50.6%
Galena Park Elementary	702	586	83.5%	534	76.1%
MacArthur Elementary	643	558	86.8%	353	54.9%
Pyburn Elementary	576	472	81.9%	374	64.9%
Woodland Acres Middle School	422	352	83.4%	155	36.7%
Woodland Acres Elementary	385	380	98.7%	306	79.5%
ACE Center	103	35	34.0%	103	100.0%
High Point School East (DAEP)	28	16	57.1%	28	100.0%
School for Accelerated Learning (JJAEP)	8	0	0.0%	8	100.0%

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 2001-02.

GPISD's State Compensatory Education budget for 2001-02 was \$4.4 million. GPISD ranked third among its peer districts in SCE expenditures per student and as percent of budget (**Exhibit 2-37**). GPISD's SCE budget as percent of total budget was higher than regional and state averages. GPISD had the second-lowest percent of SCE teachers among its peer districts, and was below regional and state averages.

Exhibit 2-37
SCE Expenditures per Student
GPISD, Peer Districts, Region 4 and State
2001-02

District	Budget Expenditures	Percent of Total Budget	Amount per Student*	Compensatory Education Teachers (FTEs)	Percent of Total FTEs
Aldine	\$22,400,724	10.5%	\$762	460.3	12.9%
Pasadena	\$18,263,874	12.4%	\$880	11.8	0.4%
GPISD	\$4,435,814	6.6%	\$493	13.7	1.0%

Goose Creek	\$2,788,931	4.6%	\$399	62.8	5.4%
Humble	\$1,732,279	2.0%	\$389	35.0	2.1%
Region 4	\$190,520,859	5.9%	\$523	1,748.7	3.1%
State	\$931,021,213	6.4%	\$559	8,778.8	3.1%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2001-02.

* Amount per student was calculated by dividing Budget by total number of at-risk students.

TEA distributes Title I, Part A funds of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) to provide school districts with extra resources to help improve instruction in high-poverty schools and ensure that poor and minority children have the same opportunity as other children to meet state academic standards. Funds are distributed based on the number of economically disadvantaged students in a school. Although economically disadvantaged students are typically those who are eligible for free or reduced priced lunch or breakfast, the students served are selected based on educational need, not economic status. A school can be designated as a Title I, Part A schoolwide program if 50 percent or more of the students at the school or in the attendance zone are low income. The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) reauthorized the ESEA. School districts can now use Title I funds for activities that research has shown will help all students meet state standards. In 2002-03, GPISD became a designated schoolwide Title I, Part A program for the first time.

In 2001-02, GPISD had the second-highest percent of students classified as economically disadvantaged among its peer districts, and was higher than regional and state averages (**Exhibit 2-38**). GPISD will receive \$2.8 million in Title I, Part A funds in 2002-03.

Exhibit 2-38
Economically Disadvantaged Enrollment
GPISD, Peer Districts, Region 4 and State
2001-02

District	Number	Percent
Aldine	39,230	73.7%
Pasadena	24,896	57.3%
GPISD	12,728	65.8%
Goose Creek	9,546	52.2%
Humble	4,362	17.3%
Region 4	439,446	48.8%
State	2,093,511	50.5%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2001-02.

GPISD cofunds a number of programs with SCE and Title I, Part A funds. These programs are listed in **Exhibit 2-39**.

Exhibit 2-39
GPISD State Compensatory Education (SCE) and Title I, Part A-Funded Programs
2001-02

Program	Program Description
Accelerated Center for Education (ACE)	ACE is a high-school program for students who could not graduate in four years because of insufficient credits.
Center for Success (CFS)	CFS is the district's disciplinary alternative education program for elementary through high-school students.
Reading Recovery	This is an early literacy intervention program for grade 1 students who have difficulty learning to read and write. Children meet individually with specially trained teachers for 30 minutes a day for 12-30 weeks.
New Arrival Centers	The program helps non-English-speaking students to master content as they learn English. Students spend three periods a day for one semester in the center with a teacher who is trained in accelerated learning.
Help One Student To Succeed (HOSTS)	HOSTS is a structured mentoring program with individualized tutoring.
Star Catchers Academy	This is a high-school extended-day tutoring program for students who have failed the TAAS.
Tutorials	Tutoring programs include Content Mastery, a tutoring lab; after-school tutoring; reading and math tutorial program and TAAS/TAKS tutorials
Instructional specialists	These are elementary curriculum and technology instructional specialists.

Source: GPISD Special Programs.

In addition, GPISD SCE funding supports:

- the Dyslexia program;
- TAAS/TAKS reading, math, writing and social studies classes;
- geometry and algebra extended classes for students who are unable to complete and master objectives in one period;
- content mastery, a tutoring lab for students who need extra academic experience;
- NovaNet (a computerized credit recovery program);
- the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program, designed to increase schoolwide learning and performance, especially for "average" students; and
- the Peer Assistance and Leadership (PAL) program, a curriculum-based program that models the principles of service learning and teaches students to be effective peer helpers.

Using SCE and Title I, Part A funds, GPISD was able to pay for 103 teachers and 32 aides, as shown in **Exhibit 2-40**.

Exhibit 2-40
SCE and Title I, Part A-Funded Teachers and Aides
2001-02

	SCE		Title I, Part A	
	Teachers	Aides	Teachers	Aides
Elementary Schools	25.5	0	28.5	16
Middle Schools	16.0	1	0.5	4
High Schools	14.5	2	1.0	0
Alternative Education	15.0	6	2.0	3
Total	71	9	32	23

Source: GPISD Special Programs.

FINDING

GPISD has increased the performance of its economically disadvantaged and at-risk students and has reduced the performance gap among student groups. At-risk students improved their performance on the TAAS in all areas in grades 3 through 5. At-risk students in grades 6 through 8 and in grade 10 made similar gains from 1998-99 through 2001-02, although the performance of students in grade 6 through 8 declined in 2001-02 from 2000-01 levels, as did the performance of students in grade 10 writing (**Exhibit 2-41**).

Exhibit 2-41
GPISD TAAS Performance of At-Risk Students
1998-99 through 2001-02

TAAS	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02
Grade 3				
Reading	83%	84%	80%	85%
Math	75%	77%	83%	89%
Grade 4				
Reading	79%	82%	86%	86%
Math	75%	81%	88%	93%
Writing	84%	82%	79%	85%

Grade 5				
Reading	75%	77%	83%	82%
Math	84%	86%	93%	94%
Grade 6				
Reading	77%	75%	77%	67%
Math	83%	77%	94%	92%
Grade 7				
Reading	80%	77%	83%	81%
Math	79%	88%	92%	84%
Grade 8				
Reading	84%	89%	93%	90%
Math	83%	89%	95%	93%
Writing	85%	80%	86%	74%
Grade 10				
Reading	78%	89%	85%	94%
Math	76%	83%	84%	88%
Writing	76%	88%	93%	84%

Source: GPISD TAAS Analysis, Five-Year Trend Data, Percent Passing by Program Groups.

GPISD's economically disadvantaged students made progress in their TAAS performance at all grade levels and in all subject areas (**Exhibit 2-42**).

Exhibit 2-42
GPISD TAAS Performance of Economically Disadvantaged Students
1998-99 through 2001-02

TAAS	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02
Grade 3				
Reading	85%	86%	84%	88%
Math	79%	79%	83%	88%
Grade 4				
Reading	87%	90%	93%	94%

Math	84%	88%	94%	96%
Writing	90%	88%	87%	93%
Grade 5				
Reading	83%	88%	91%	93%
Math	89%	93%	96%	98%
Grade 6				
Reading	83%	81%	86%	89%
Math	86%	82%	96%	97%
Grade 7				
Reading	84%	83%	87%	93%
Math	84%	91%	94%	94%
Grade 8				
Reading	89%	89%	94%	96%
Math	89%	91%	96%	97%
Writing	89%	82%	88%	89%
Grade 10				
Reading	80%	84%	81%	96%
Math	76%	83%	82%	92%
Writing	81%	85%	86%	88%

Source: GPISD TAAS Analysis, Five-Year Trend Data, Percent Passing by Program Groups.

At all grade levels, GPISD economically disadvantaged students scored higher on the TAAS than economically disadvantaged students in Region 4 and statewide from 1997-98 through 2001-02 (**Exhibit 2-43**). In 1997-98, the TAAS performance of GPISD economically disadvantaged students in grades 3, 8 and 10 was below the regional average. In 2001-02, GPISD's economically disadvantaged students scored 6 (grade 10) to 18.4 (grade 8) percentage points above the state average. In 2001-02, the district's economically disadvantaged students scored 5.2 (grade 5) to 15 (grade 8) percentage points higher than the regional average.

Exhibit 2-43
Percent of GPISD Economically Disadvantaged Students Passing All TAAS Tests
By Grade Compared to Region 4 and State
1997-98 through 2001-02

	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02
Grade 3					
GPISD	67.0%	76.0%	76.3%	77.4%	83.0%
Region 4	69.5%	66.0%	68.8%	70.1%	76.8%
State	66.2%	69.3%	68.0%	69.3%	74.5%
Grade 4					
GPISD	74.1%	77.9%	78.6%	81.9%	87.8%
Region 4	73.6%	68.0%	73.2%	76.0%	80.9%
State	68.9%	69.2%	71.4%	74.2%	78.1%
Grade 5					
GPISD	82.8%	78.7%	86.5%	90.7%	93.4%
Region 4	80.1%	71.4%	78.5%	84.5%	88.2%
State	75.3%	73.0%	77.4%	82.1%	86.7%
Grade 6					
GPISD	72.7%	77.3%	75.0%	85.0%	87.8%
Region 4	67.5%	66.2%	69.9%	72.8%	80.2%
State	68.2%	69.3%	71.7%	73.6%	78.5%
Grade 7					
GPISD	69.0%	76.6%	80.2%	85.5%	91.5%
Region 4	64.4%	64.4%	67.2%	75.6%	81.7%
State	65.5%	66.0%	68.1%	75.7%	80.5%
Grade 8					
GPISD	40.8%	55.8%	50.7%	69.3%	79.7%
Region 4	43.8%	45.5%	48.1%	54.4%	64.7%
State	43.5%	46.6%	48.0%	54.3%	61.3%
Grade 10					
GPISD	56.2%	65.5%	71.9%	74.8%	82.8%
Region 4	57.7%	62.3%	70.2%	69.3%	77.7%
State	58.2%	63.0%	68.4%	68.9%	76.8%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 1997-98 through 2001-02.

GPISD reduced the TAAS performance gap between economically disadvantaged students and students who are not economically disadvantaged at all grade levels and in all subject areas between 1998-99 and 2001-02 (**Exhibit 2-44**). GPISD also reduced the gap in the performance of at-risk students and students who are not at risk in grades 3, 4, 5 and 10 in all subject areas. GPISD reduced the performance gaps between these two groups of students in grade 6 math, grade 7 math and grade 8 reading, math and social studies.

Exhibit 2-44
Comparison of TAAS Performance of
GPISD Economically Disadvantaged and Non-Economically Disadvantaged
and At-Risk and Not-at-Risk Students by Grade
1998-99 and 2001-02

	1998(99)						2001(02)					
	Econ. Disad.	Not Econ. Disad.	Percentage Point Difference	At-Risk	Not At-Risk	Percentage Point Difference	Econ. Disad.	Not Econ. Disad.	Percentage Point Difference	At-Risk	Not At-Risk	Percentage Point Difference
Grade 3												
Reading	85%	92%	(7%)	83%	93%	(10%)	88%	92%	(4%)	85%	93%	(8%)
Math	79%	83%	(4%)	75%	86%	(11%)	88%	91%	(3%)	89%	90%	(1%)
All Tests	75%	81%	(6%)	70%	84%	(14%)	82%	87%	(5%)	79%	87%	(8%)
Grade 4												
Reading	87%	93%	(6%)	79%	95%	(16%)	94%	97%	(3%)	86%	98%	(12%)
Math	84%	93%	(9%)	75%	94%	(19%)	96%	98%	(2%)	93%	98%	(5%)
Writing	90%	95%	(5%)	84%	96%	(12%)	93%	93%	0%	85%	95%	(10%)
All Tests	76%	87%	(11%)	63%	89%	(26%)	87%	90%	(3%)	75%	92%	(17%)
Grade 5												
Reading	83%	91%	(8%)	75%	93%	(18%)	93%	94%	(1%)	82%	97%	(15%)
Math	89%	93%	(4%)	84%	93%	(9%)	98%	98%	0%	94%	99%	(5%)
All Tests	78%	87%	(9%)	68%	89%	(21%)	93%	94%	(1%)	82%	97%	(15%)
Grade 6												
Reading	83%	93%	(10%)	77%	97%	(20%)	89%	92%	(3%)	67%	95%	(28%)
Math	86%	92%	(6%)	83%	94%	(11%)	97%	97%	0%	92%	98%	(6%)
All Tests	77%	89%	(12%)	70%	93%	(23%)	88%	91%	(3%)	67%	94%	(27%)
Grade 7												
Reading	84%	93%	(9%)	80%	96%	(16%)	93%	97%	(4%)	81%	99%	(18%)
Math	84%	91%	(7%)	79%	96%	(17%)	94%	97%	(3%)	84%	99%	(15%)
All Tests	76%	88%	(12%)	69%	93%	(24%)	91%	95%	(4%)	73%	98%	(25%)

Grade 8												
Reading	89%	92%	(3%)	84%	97%	(13%)	96%	98%	(2%)	90%	99%	(9%)
Math	89%	91%	(2%)	83%	96%	(13%)	97%	98%	(1%)	93%	99%	(6%)
Writing	89%	93%	(4%)	85%	97%	(12%)	89%	94%	(5%)	74%	97%	(23%)
Social Studies	61%	75%	(14%)	51%	83%	(32%)	88%	94%	(6%)	75%	96%	(21%)
Science	79%	86%	(7%)	73%	92%	(19%)	90%	93%	(3%)	78%	97%	(19%)
All Tests	81%	85%	(4%)	72%	94%	(22%)	87%	93%	(6%)	72%	96%	(24%)
Grade 10												
Reading	80%	91%	(11%)	78%	92%	(14%)	96%	95%	(1%)	94%	97%	(3%)
Math	76%	81%	(5%)	66%	86%	(20%)	92%	92%	0%	88%	96%	(8%)
Writing	81%	92%	(11%)	76%	94%	(18%)	88%	91%	(3%)	84%	96%	(12%)
All Tests	66%	76%	(10%)	55%	83%	(28%)	83%	86%	(3%)	77%	93%	(16%)

Source: GPISD TAAS Summary Reports, 1998-99 and 2001-02.

Commendation

GPISD increased the TAAS performance of its economically disadvantaged and at-risk students and reduced the performance gap among student groups.

Chapter 2

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

D. Special Education

Under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), districts must provide appropriate public education for all children with disabilities regardless of their severity. IDEA requires districts to provide educational services in the "least restrictive environment," and to include students with disabilities in state and district assessment programs. Districts also are required to develop an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) for each of these children with input from general education teachers. The IEP has to provide special education students with curricula that are related to those of children in general education classrooms.

According to the IDEA, an effective special education program must have the following elements:

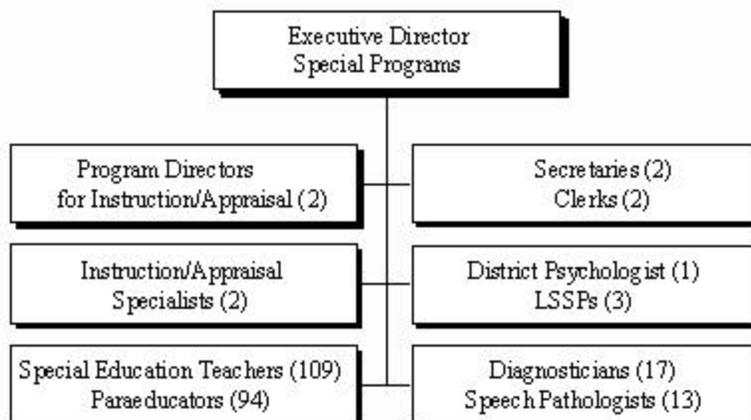
- *Prereferral intervention in general education*: When a student has an academic problem in the general education program, the teacher should try to solve the problem. If this does not help, the problem is referred to special education staff.
- *Referral to special education for evaluation*: To refer a student to special education means writing an official request supported by documentation that details what steps have already been taken to solve the problem.
- *Comprehensive nondiscriminatory evaluation*: Once a student has been referred, the district must provide a "full and individual evaluation" within a certain period of time.
- *Initial placement through an ARD committee*: After the evaluation is completed, a committee of educators, administrators, parents and others decides if the student qualifies for special education services. If so, the committee writes a plan for the student's education.
- *Provision of educational services and support according to a written IEP*: The IEP includes information about the classes, subject areas, developmental areas and/or lifeskills courses in which the student will be instructed, how much time will be spent in general education and related needs like speech therapy or counseling.
- *Annual program review*: An ARD committee conducts an annual review to ensure the student's program is appropriate.
- *Three-year re-evaluation*: Every three years, the student undergoes a comprehensive individual assessment to determine if the student is still eligible.

- *Dismissal from the special education program:* If and when a student no longer meets the eligibility criteria, the student is dismissed from special education, by recommendation of the ARD committee.

The GPISD Special Education Department has 246 FTEs, including the executive director of special programs, two program directors, a district psychologist, two specialists, three secretaries and four clerks. Each school has special education instructional staff, a full-time or shared diagnostician and a shared licensed specialist in school psychology (LSSP). GPISD has 109 special education teachers, 94 paraeducators, 17 diagnosticians, 13 speech pathologists and three LSSPs. In addition, GPISD contracts with one diagnostician, 0.5 speech pathologist, 1.5 LSSPs, 0.5 special education counselor, one occupational therapist, one physical therapist and one occupational therapist assistant. Of the 109 special education teachers, all but five are certified; three are on permit, one is on a nonrenewable permit and one is a substitute high school teacher.

Exhibit 2-45 shows an organizational chart of the GPISD Special Education Department.

Exhibit 2-45
GPISD Special Education Department
Organizational Chart
2002-03



Source: GPISD Organizational Chart, 2002-03.

GPISD offers a full range of special education instruction for its students. Programs include the Positive Attitudes for School Success (PASS) program aimed at students with behavioral problems. After initial training in self-discipline and campus discipline rules in a self-contained

environment for one week, the students are gradually mainstreamed into general and special education classes.

GPISD offers the following special education services:

Mainstream - Students with disabilities who spend all of their classroom hours in a regular classroom are "mainstreamed." Content mastery services are available at all schools to all students with disabilities. Each secondary school has one content mastery teacher. In the elementary schools, resource teachers provide content mastery tutoring and resource classes.

Resource - The district offers resource classes in the core subjects at all schools in reading, language arts and math. Resource classes follow the student's IEP, which is correlated with the TEKS and stays in sequence with regular classes. Learning-disabled students have a combination of regular classes and resource classes.

Vocational adjustment class (VAC) - Eligible secondary students are instructed in job-readiness skills and are monitored in on-the-job placements.

Self-contained classes - Students with severe disabilities, who cannot be appropriately served in a regular classroom, receive instruction in a "self-contained" classroom, or "lifeskills" room, where their needs are met and skills are taught within a functionally based curriculum. These classes are available at seven elementary schools and all secondary schools.

Adaptive Physical Education - The ARD committee provides physical education when the student needs it. Occupational and physical therapists provide adaptive physical education programs for students who would not benefit from a general education physical education program with modifications.

Homebound - This program provides at-home services for all students who cannot attend school because of illness or injury. In 2002-03, one full-time special education teacher provides services to 14 students and attends ARDs. As the number of homebound students fluctuates through the year, the district may hire additional teachers from the substitute

pool as needed or contract with one or more of its special education staff for extra-duty pay.

Preschool - GPISD provides a preschool program, coordinated by special education and general education teachers, for children with disabilities who are three to five years old. The Preschool Program for Children with Disabilities is located at six elementary schools.

Students with severe auditory impairments who require a total communication educational program and who cannot be served in GPISD are sent to the East Harris County Cooperative for Deaf Education. In 2002-03, 16 students from GPISD attend the program at a cost of \$84,227. Seven other GPISD students with auditory impairments receive services in the district through an itinerant deaf-education teacher. GPISD also participates in the Harris County Cooperative for the Visually Impaired. Five GPISD students attend the cooperative, which serves students up to the age of three at a cost of \$19,960. In addition, GPISD contracts with Avondale, an autism center, for some students at a cost of \$48,000 per year. GPISD also contracts with the New Day Treatment Center, for some students with severe mental retardation at a cost of \$19,795 a year; with the Center/United Way for some students at a cost of \$80,000 a year; and the Bayes Treatment Center, a residential facility, at a cost of \$160,000 a year. GPISD also contracts with the Adaptive Behavior Center of the Harris County Department of Education for six units at a cost of \$95,400 a year.

In each of these settings, appropriate curriculum modifications and services are provided to all students.

Exhibit 2-46 shows the number of students who are enrolled in special education and special education expenditures in GPISD, its peer districts, Region 4 and the state. GPISD has the highest percent of special education students among its peer districts. GPISD's percent of special education students is higher than the Region 4 average, but slightly lower than the state average. The district's per-student expenditure is 75.4 percent of the state average and 73 percent of the regional average.

Exhibit 2-46
Special Education Enrollment and Expenditures
GPISD, Peer Districts, Region 4 and State
2001-02

District	Number of Special	Percent of Special Education	Budgeted Special Education	Percent of Budgeted Instructional	Per-Student Expenditure
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	Education Students	Students	Expenditures	Expenditures	
Aldine	5,276	9.9%	\$31,536,369	14.8%	\$5,977
Pasadena	3,093	7.1%	\$14,655,596	9.9%	\$4,738
Humble	2,530	10.0%	\$11,093,598	12.7%	\$4,385
GPISD	2,233	11.5%	\$6,392,648	9.5%	\$2,863
Goose Creek	1,831	10.0%	\$6,360,230	10.6%	\$3,474
Region 4	90,238	10.0%	\$419,046,692	13.0%	\$4,644
State	485,010	11.7%	\$1,841,869,962	12.6%	\$3,798

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2001-02.

In 2002-03, GPISD has 2,167 special education students. **Exhibit 2-47** shows the number of special education students by grade level.

Exhibit 2-47
GPISD Students Enrolled in Special Education by Grade Level
2002-03

Grade Level	Number of Students	Percent of Students
Early Education	96	4.4%
Pre-Kindergarten	23	1.1%
Kindergarten	62	2.9%
Grade 1	122	5.6%
Grade 2	132	6.1%
Grade 3	130	6.0%
Grade 4	178	8.2%
Grade 5	211	9.7%
Grade 6	223	10.3%
Grade 7	193	8.9%
Grade 8	179	8.3%
Grade 9	229	10.6%

Grade 10	153	7.1%
Grade 11	121	5.6%
Grade 12	115	5.3%
Total	2,167	100.0%

Source: GPISD, Special Education Enrollment, 2001-02.

Exhibit 2-48 describes the number and percent of students by disability. Of the total GPISD special education students served, 58 percent have learning disabilities, 26.2 percent have speech impairments, 5.5 percent have mental retardation and 4.5 percent are emotionally disturbed.

Exhibit 2-48
GPISD Students Enrolled in Special Education
Number and Percent of Students by Primary Disability
2002-03

Disability	Number of Students	Percent of Students
Orthopedic Impairment	10	0.5%
Auditory Impairment	12	0.5%
Visual Impairment	9	0.4%
Mental Retardation	119	5.5%
Emotional Disturbance	98	4.5%
Learning Disability	1,257	58.0%
Speech Impairment	568	26.2%
Autism	30	1.4%
Other Health Impairment	47	2.2%
Multiple Impairments	17	0.8%
Total	2,167	100.0%

Source: GPISD, Special Education Enrollment, 2002-03.

FINDING

GPISD participates in the School Health and Related Services (SHARS) and Medicaid Administrative Claims (MAC) programs. As of September 1992, school districts can enroll as Medicaid providers and apply for

Medicaid reimbursement for services they provide to disabled students. The SHARS program reimburses districts for medically necessary, reasonable services so that disabled children get free, appropriate public education. Services include assessment, audiology, counseling, medical services, school health services, occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech therapy, physiological services and associated transportation. GPISD works with the Texas Association of School Boards for assistance with SHARS. The district received SHARS reimbursements totaling \$386,646 between 1998-99 and 2001-02.

The MAC program reimburses districts for health-related administrative services that cannot be billed through SHARS, such as referral, outreach and coordination. GPISD has participated in the MAC program since 1998 through the La Porte ISD Cooperative that Deloitte Touche Consulting Group manages. Between 1998-99 and 2001-02, GPISD received \$481,035 in reimbursement from MAC (**Exhibit 2-49**).

Exhibit 2-49
GPISD SHARS and MAC Funds
1998-99 through 2001-02

Year	SHARS Funds	MAC Funds
1998-99	\$2,978	\$34,903
1999-2000	\$169,044	\$81,395
2000-01	\$114,056	\$222,450
2001-02*	\$100,568	\$142,287
Total	\$386,646	\$481,035

Source: GPISD Special Education.
**2001-02 figures are for three quarters only.*

COMMENDATION

GPISD participates in SHARS and MAC and received more than \$800,000 in reimbursement for 1998 through 2002.

FINDING

GPISD has a high rate of students referred to special education who do not meet special education eligibility criteria, with 696 referrals in 2001-02. Of these, 450 referrals did not involve speech, and 246 referrals involved

speech (**Exhibit 2-50**). More than 41 percent of the students who were referred for testing for services not involving speech did not qualify for service.

**Exhibit 2-50
GPISD Special Education Referrals
2001-02**

Referrals	Number of Referrals	Qualified Referrals		Do Not Qualify	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Excluding Speech	450	263	58.4%	187	41.6%
Speech Referrals	246	211	85.8%	35	14.2%
Total	696	474	68.1%	222	31.9%

Source: GPISD, Referral Report Card, 2001-02.

A prereferral process helps prevent inappropriate referrals to special education. The process helps the classroom teacher to develop alternative strategies for students who are experiencing difficulty and helps to distinguish true learning disorders from characteristics of second language acquisition, culture or other linguistic, socioeconomic or environmental differences.

GPISD's prereferral process is campus-based. Each school has an Intervention Assistance Team (IAT) to analyze the student's situation and to develop prereferral intervention strategies. The team is composed of a five- to seven-member instructional support committee that considers options and develops an intervention plan for each student with academic or social difficulties. The team members vary depending on the needs of individual students, the specialized programs and services available at individual schools. Team members may be appointed by the principal or the school's professional staff and may include an administrator-facilitator, two to three instructional professionals, a diagnostician or an LSSP, the child's teacher and a Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) representative, if the student is LEP. Other team members could include a counselor or behavior specialist, a speech/language pathologist and a school nurse. The team provides a support system for teachers and helps reduce inappropriate special education referrals.

The GPISD prereferral process includes several steps. The first step involves classroom intervention, in which the teacher meets with the student's parents to design a behavior intervention plan. If the student has academic problems, the teacher may enroll the student in a remedial class or use other remedial options such as dyslexia screening and intervention,

HOSTS reading and math tutorials, Title I programs, Reading Recovery, content mastery or TAAS tutorials. The teacher may use classroom modifications to accommodate the student's unique learning style, such as extra time for assignments, using word processors for writing assignments or calculators for math computation, seating in the front row or additional academic support. If these methods are not effective, the teacher completes a request for assistance and tells the parents that the student's progress will be presented to the IAT. The second step involves IAT intervention, in which the IAT coordinator will make a classroom observation, discuss the situation with the teacher and schedule an IAT meeting. This meeting recommends intervention strategies and schedules a follow-up meeting. The teachers will inform the parents about the IAT recommendations and implement them. The IAT reconvenes in four to six weeks to review progress and refine the interventions. The IAT may refer the student for special education assessment.

Implementation of the prereferral process has not been consistent across schools. GPISD's rate of inappropriate referrals varied from school to school, as shown in **Exhibit 2-51**. The overall rate of "Did Not Qualify" (DNQs) did not vary between the fall and the spring semesters. Galena Park Elementary, Woodland Acres Elementary and Woodland Acres Middle School had the highest percentages of DNQs. GPISD special education administrators consider a DNQ rate of 50 percent or higher to be of concern; such schools need additional training in the prereferral process. In 2001-02, seven schools had 50 percent more DNQs in the fall, and six schools in the spring semester had a DNQ rate of 50 percent or higher.

Exhibit 2-51
GPISD Special Education Referrals Not Involving Speech
2001-02

School	Fall Semester			Spring Semester		
	Number of Referrals Excluding Speech	Percent Qualify	Percent DNQ	Number of Referrals Excluding Speech	Percent Qualify	Percent DNQ
Galena Park High School	5	80%	20%	11	64%	36%
North Shore High School	4	50%	50%	2	50%	50%
North Shore Senior High School	5	60%	40%	7	71%	29%

Cobb Sixth Grade Campus	4	75%	25%	21	71%	29%
Cunningham Middle School	0	0%	0%	3	67%	33%
Galena Park Middle School	11	45%	55%	4	50%	50%
North Shore Middle School	2	0%	100%	13	54%	46%
Woodland Acres Middle School	0	0%	0%	19	37%	63%
Cloverleaf Elementary	17	52%	48%	20	55%	45%
Cimarron Elementary	12	42%	58%	13	46%	54%
James B. Havard Elementary	12	58%	42%	15	60%	40%
North Shore Elementary	5	40%	60%	24	71%	29%
Green Valley Elementary	8	75%	25%	31	68%	32%
Jacinto City Elementary	16	93%	7%	3	66%	34%
Tice Elementary	12	50%	50%	20	65%	35%
Purple Sage Elementary	9	55%	45%	26	73%	27%
Galena Park Elementary	5	40%	60%	18	28%	72%
MacArthur Elementary	18	61%	39%	20	65%	35%
Pyburn Elementary	0	0%	0%	24	54%	46%

Woodland Acres Elementary	0	0%	0%	11	36%	64%
Total	145	59%	41%	305	58%	42%

Source: GPISD, Referral Report Card.

GPISD has provided training in the referral of LEP students for special education at the campus level and to district appraisal staff who serve on campus IAT committees. Schools conduct annual reviews of referral procedures and guidelines to ensure staff understands the difference between a learning disability and difficulties students may have because of their lack of English language proficiency.

Many districts with a high percent of students eligible for services through an LEP program ensure that all general and special education teachers are trained in language assessments. This helps ensure that referred students have been prescreened to determine whether or not their needs are language based. These districts also monitor prereferral and special education referral percentages, with particular attention to students who are eligible for LEP services to reduce the number of inappropriate referrals to special education programs.

Recommendation 12:

Ensure that GPISD staff use the prereferral procedures effectively to reduce the number of inappropriate referrals.

GPISD should train the principals, general education teachers and IAT members in the prereferral process to ensure uniformity across campuses. GPISD's special education administrative staff should regularly monitor the prereferral process at each school and offer additional training to teachers and IAT members. The district should also train all special assessment personnel in the identification processes to promote uniform assessment and identification so that all students referred to special education are properly identified.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Special Education director reviews referral and DNQ data from each school.	April 2003
2.	The Special Education director and IAT members discuss the referral data, modify the prereferral process and prepare information on the new process.	May 2003

3.	The Special Education director and the IAT submit the modified prereferral plan to the deputy superintendent of Educational Services for review and approval.	June 2003
4.	The Special Education director, program directors and specialists train principals, general education teachers, special education staff and IAT members in the modified prereferral process.	August 2003
5.	The Special Education director arranges training for all diagnosticians through Region 4 or another organization to ensure uniform assessment and student identification.	August 2003
6.	The Special Education program directors and specialists monitor the pre-referral process at each school; prepare reports for each school, which include corrective actions; and identify needs for additional training.	August 2003 - May 2004
7.	The Special Education program directors and specialists provide the necessary additional training for schools and report to the special education director.	September 2003 - May 2004
8.	The Special Education director monitors the diagnosticians and reviews student identification data.	August 2003 - May 2004
9.	The Special Education director prepares a report for the deputy superintendent of Educational Services on the district's prereferral and identification results.	May 2004

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 2

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

E. Bilingual Education/English as a Second Language

Texas Education Code Chapter 29 requires that every Texas student who is identified as LEP must be provided a full opportunity to participate in a bilingual or an ESL program. Limited English proficiency students are defined as those whose primary language is something other than English and whose English language proficiency limits their participation in an English-language academic environment.

All school districts with 20 or more LEP students in the same grade level are required to offer bilingual/ESL or an alternative language program in pre-kindergarten through the elementary grades. Districts must also provide bilingual education, ESL instruction or other transitional language instruction approved by TEA in the post-elementary grades through grade 8. For students in grades 9 through 12, schools are required only to provide instruction in ESL.

School districts are required to identify LEP students and provide bilingual or ESL programs as an integral part of their regular educational programs, as well as hire teaching personnel who are certified in these areas.

GPISD's bilingual/ESL program is designed to promote consistent standards for English proficiency and to provide all students with the opportunity to become competent in speaking, reading, writing and understanding the English language. The goal is to facilitate the successful integration of such students into the regular school curriculum. GPISD uses a Transitional Bilingual Program Model for grades pre-kindergarten through 5 and an ESL program for grades 6 through 12. GPISD also offers a dual language program at two schools in 2002-03. A dual language program provides an equal amount of instruction in English and Spanish to a classroom of LEP and non-LEP students. GPISD also has New Arrival Centers for new immigrants at three elementary schools, four middle schools and two high schools.

The Transitional Bilingual Program Model divides students into three categories based on their English proficiency. LEP students are instructed initially in their primary language where they learn the same concepts and skills taught in the English-speaking classrooms. As students become more proficient in English, they make a transition to English. The beginners level, grades pre-kindergarten through 1, consists of instruction in English from 10 to 30 percent of the time. Grades 2 and 3 receive instruction in English 40 to 50 percent of the time. In grades 4 and 5,

instruction in English increases to 75 to 90 percent of the time. Instruction in English increases by 10 percent for each grade level in pre-kindergarten through 3.

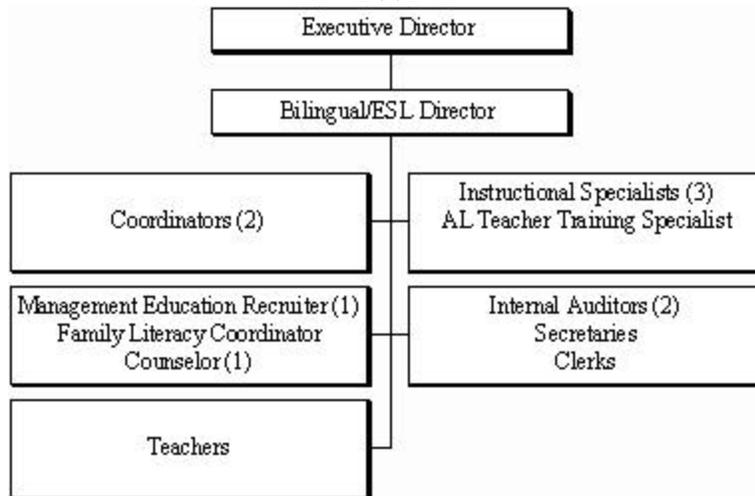
GPISD identifies LEP students with the Home Language Survey, completed for each student by the parent (PK-12) or student (9-12) during registration. Any student whose home language is not English is assessed in grades pre-kindergarten through 1 with the Oral Language Proficiency Test (OLPT)/IDEA and in grade 2 with an English-norm-referenced test such as the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS). Students who score as Non-English-Speaking (NES)/limited-English-speaking (LES) on the OLPT/IDEA and below 40 percent on the ITBS are considered to be LEP. Students in grades 3 through 12 are considered to be LEP if they score NES or LES and below 70 TLI (Texas Learning Index) on TAAS reading and/or writing.

The LPAC determines student placement, monitors progress and oversees program exit. GPISD has clearly defined identification, screening, review, monitoring and exit procedures. The elementary level committee consists of a campus administrator, a certified teacher assigned to bilingual education, a certified teacher assigned to the ESL program and a parent of a bilingual/ESL child who is not a district employee. The secondary committee consists of a parent of an ESL student who is not a district employee and one or more professionals such as a campus administrator, a dean of instruction or an ESL teacher. At the secondary level, a counselor may replace the certified bilingual/ESL teacher. All LPAC members receive training annually. The LPACs meet several times a year, with their first meeting within four weeks of students' identification as LEPs. LPACs meet again in February and in April to determine testing requirements for each LEP student. GPISD requires that an LPAC member, usually the bilingual or ESL teacher, serve on the ARD committee for LEP students who also receive special education services. The LPACs conduct an end-of-year review and, working with the teacher, determine student placement for the next year. The LPAC also monitors students who exit the bilingual/ESL program for two years.

The bilingual/ESL director coordinates bilingual/ESL education. The GPISD Bilingual/ESL Department has 18 staff members, including a bilingual/ESL PK-K coordinator, a dual-language coordinator, three instructional specialists, an Accelerated Learning (AL) teacher training specialist, two internal auditors, a migrant family literacy coordinator, an immigrant/migrant program counselor, a migrant recruiter, four secretaries and two clerks. In September 2002, three positions were vacant, including the director's position. In 2002-03, GPISD has a total of 200 bilingual/ESL teachers, including 112 certified bilingual teachers, 67 certified ESL teachers, 16 bilingual/ESL teachers on permit and five bilingual teachers

"at will" (**Exhibit 2-52**). (The district employs teachers classified "at will" until certified teachers can be hired.) GPISD offers two ESL ExCET sessions for teachers who want to become ESL certified. GPISD pays for teachers' ESL tests. GPISD also helps teachers who want to become bilingually certified by sending them to Region 4 training and Saturday reviews, and by providing these teachers with information about local college programs.

**Exhibit 2-52
Bilingual/ESL Department
Organization Chart
2002**



Source: GPISD Organizational Chart.

In 2001-02, GPISD had 4,514 LEP students, 23.3 percent of its student population. More than 91 percent of these students were enrolled in bilingual or ESL programs (**Exhibit 2-53**).

**Exhibit 2-53
GPISD LEP, Bilingual and ESL Students by School
2001-02**

School	Enrollment	LEP		Bilingual		ESL	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
North Shore High School	2,068	170	8.2%	0	0.0%	144	7.0%
Galena Park High School	1,611	212	13.2%	0	0.0%	198	12.3%

North Shore Senior High School	1,468	32	2.2%	0	0.0%	30	2.0%
Cobb Sixth Grade Campus	1,035	87	8.4%	0	0.0%	70	6.8%
Cunningham Middle School	888	37	4.2%	0	0.0%	34	3.8%
Galena Park Middle School	986	143	14.5%	0	0.0%	132	13.4%
North Shore Middle School	1,159	157	13.5%	0	0.0%	113	9.7%
Woodland Acres Middle School	422	81	19.2%	0	0.0%	76	18.0%
Cloverleaf Elementary	1,052	589	56.0%	444	42.2%	137	13.0%
Cimarron Elementary	1,023	339	33.1%	216	21.1%	70	6.8%
James B. Havard Elementary	967	105	10.9%	65	6.7%	36	3.7%
North Shore Elementary	899	348	38.7%	319	35.5%	18	2.0%
Green Valley Elementary	866	137	15.8%	46	5.3%	78	9.0%
Jacinto City Elementary	831	368	44.3%	331	39.8%	4	0.5%
Tice Elementary	827	193	23.3%	57	6.9%	122	14.8%
Purple Sage Elementary	799	259	32.4%	204	25.5%	42	5.3%
Galena Park	702	370	52.7%	337	48.0%	9	1.3%

Elementary							
MacArthur Elementary	643	318	49.5%	268	41.7%	0	0.0%
Pyburn Elementary	576	300	52.1%	211	36.6%	72	12.5%
Woodland Acres Elementary	385	269	69.9%	197	51.2%	47	12.2%
Accelerated Center	103	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
High Point High School	28	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
JJAEP	8	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Total	19,346	4,514	23.3%	2,695	13.9%	1,432	7.4%

Source: GPISD, Students by Program and School.

GPISD had the highest percent of bilingual/ESL students among its peer districts in 2001-02. GPISD serves students who speak a total of 11 different languages, but the district provides bilingual education only to Spanish-speaking students. The district serves all other LEPs through its ESL program because no other language is spoken by 20 or more students per grade level districtwide. GPISD has an ESL teacher for each grade level districtwide. Although GPISD's bilingual/ESL population was 5.9 percentage points higher than the regional average and 8.2 percentage points higher than the state average, it had the lowest percent of expenditures for bilingual/ESL among its peer districts. The district's percent expenditures were 27.9 percent of the state's average and 16.2 percent of the Region 4 average. Its per-student expenditure for bilingual/ESL was also the lowest among its peers and was only 16.6 percent of the state's average and 11.2 percent of the Region 4 average (Exhibit 2-54).

Exhibit 2-54
Bilingual/ESL Student Enrollment, Budget and Expenditure
GPISD, Peer Districts, Region 4 and State
2001-02

District	Students Enrolled in Bilingual/ESL	Percentage of Total Enrollment	Total Budgeted Expenditures	Percentage of Budgeted Expenditure	Per-Student Instructional Expenditure
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Aldine	11,216	21.1%	\$19,019,883	8.9%	\$1,696
Pasadena	9,211	21.2%	\$8,335,423	5.6%	\$905
GPISD	4,127	21.3%	\$792,246	1.2%	\$192
Goose Creek	2,094	11.5%	\$4,857,272	8.1%	\$2,320
Humble	1,179	4.7%	\$1,083,170	1.2%	\$919
Region 4	138,476	15.4%	\$237,653,112	7.4%	\$1,716
State	542,312	13.1%	\$625,092,391	4.3%	\$1,153

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2001-02.

In 2001-02, GPISD had the second-highest percent of bilingual/ESL teachers among the peer districts (**Exhibit 2-55**). GPISD's percent of bilingual/ESL teachers was nearly twice the state average, but its bilingual/ESL teacher-student ratio was the lowest among the peer districts and was below state and regional levels.

Exhibit 2-55
Bilingual/ESL Teacher-to-Student Ratio
GPISD, Peer Districts, Region 4 and State
2001-02

District	Students Enrolled in Bilingual/ESL	Bilingual/ESL Faculty	Percent of Bilingual/ESL Staff to Total Staff	Teacher-to-Student Ratio
Aldine	11,216	478.7	13.4%	23:1
Pasadena	9,211	416.2	15.4%	22:1
GPISD	4,127	192.4	14.5%	21:1
Goose Creek	2,094	91.3	7.9%	23:1
Humble	1,179	10.9	0.6%	108:1
Region 4	138,476	5,357.6	9.4%	26:1
State	542,312	21,989.5	7.8%	25:1

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2001-02.

The performance of LEP students in GPISD bilingual/ESL programs who took the TAAS in Spanish is shown in **Exhibit 2-56**.

Exhibit 2-56
GPISD Spanish TAAS Performance of Bilingual/ESL Students
2001-02

Grade Level	Students	Reading	Math	Writing	All Tests Taken
Grade 3	Bilingual/ESL	85%	97%		85%
	Bilingual	86%	98%		86%
	ESL	71%	63%		63%
Grade 4	Bilingual/ESL	77%	95%	91%	74%
	Bilingual	78%	94%	91%	74%
	ESL	60%	100%	100%	60%
Grade 5	Bilingual/ESL	91%	95%		90%
	Bilingual	93%	100%		93%
	ESL	100%	86%		92%
Grade 6	Bilingual/ESL	78%	--		78%
	Bilingual	--	--		--
	ESL	78%	--		78%

Source: TEA, TAAS Summary Report, All Students Not in Special Education, May 2002.
**Shaded areas show that those particular tests are not administered at those grade levels.*

Exhibit 2-57 compares the 2001-02 TAAS performance of LEP students with non-LEP students, of bilingual students with students who are not bilingual and of ESL students with students who are not ESL.

Exhibit 2-57
GPISD TAAS Performance Comparison
2001-02

	LEP		Bilingual		ESL	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No

Grade 3						
Reading	87%	91%	79%	91%	91%	89%
Math	94%	87%	90%	89%	96%	88%
All Tests	85%	83%	78%	84%	90%	82%
Grade 4						
Reading	85%	96%	80%	95%	86%	95%
Math	93%	97%	96%	96%	91%	97%
Writing	84%	94%	86%	93%	84%	93%
All Tests	75%	89%	78%	88%	73%	89%
Grade 5						
Reading	81%	95%	88%	94%	77%	95%
Math	97%	98%	98%	98%	96%	98%
All Tests	83%	95%	89%	93%	79%	94%
Grade 6						
Reading	54%	92%	--	90%	56%	92%
Math	91%	98%	--	97%	91%	98%
All Tests	61%	91%	--	89%	60%	91%
Grade 7						
Reading	66%	97%	--	95%	60%	97%
Math	84%	96%	--	95%	81%	96%
All Tests	63%	94%	--	92%	56%	94%
Grade 8						
Reading	74%	99%	--	97%	71%	99%
Math	86%	99%	--	98%	84%	99%
Writing	54%	94%	--	91%	49%	94%
Science	68%	94%	--	92%	64%	94%
Social Studies	60%	93%	--	90%	59%	93%
All Tests	53%	93	--	89%	47%	93%
Grade 10						
Reading	80%	97%	--	95%	77%	97%

Math	73%	94%	--	92%	70%	94%
Writing	40%	94%	--	90%	33%	94%
All tests	38%	89%	--	85%	31%	89%

Source: TEA, TAAS Summary Report, 2001-02.

FINDING

GPISD integrates new non-English-speaking immigrant students into the district through its New Arrival Center (NAC) program, a voluntary program for students who have been 12 months or less in the United States and who have scored "Not-English-Speaking" on an Oral Language Proficiency Test. To participate in the program, students must be literate in their native language. Students spend one semester in the program and then are placed in appropriate classes. The program accepts 17 students per semester per center. The NACs offer an Accelerated Learning model, which allows students to learn at a faster pace and retain a larger portion of what they have learned. NACs offer small classes, individual attention, opportunities for the student to interact with other students and with the teachers and opportunities for the teacher to observe each individual student and provide individual assistance. Students spend three periods a day for one semester with the same teacher. The daily curriculum includes English as a second language, public speaking, reading strategies, U.S. history and a class specially selected for each student. Content is integrated so that students also master the TEKS of the integrated areas of instruction while they learn English. The NAC curriculum uses U.S. history as the foundation of the program, which helps fulfill content requirements and teach American culture. Reading strategies are also taught, and public-speaking instruction helps students to develop confidence in their language skills. At the end of the semester, participating students should be able to follow basic verbal and written directions, understand written text and function effectively in a regular classroom. GPISD has NACs on 10 campuses, as shown in **Exhibit 2-58**.

Exhibit 2-58
GPISD New Arrival Centers
2002-03

School	Program Established	Number of Students
Cimarron Elementary School	2000-01	9
Galena Park Elementary	2000-01	9
Woodland Acres Elementary	2000-01	15

Cobb Sixth Grade Campus	2001-02	17
Galena Park Middle School	1999-2000	12
North Shore Middle School	1999-2000	16
North Shore Middle Pre-Literacy	2000-01	15
Woodland Acres Middle School	2001-02	13
Galena Park High School	January 1998	16
North Shore High School	August 1998-99	19

Source: GPISD Bilingual/ESL Department.

COMMENDATION

GPISD integrates immigrant students into the district effectively through its New Arrival Center program.

FINDING

The GPISD bilingual/ESL program uses an effective long-range planning process, with a five-year comprehensive plan. GPISD developed the plan with the participation of many district and school administrators and staff members. The plan addresses nine program areas in detail. In addition to a steering committee of district administrators, principals, teachers and professional staff, GPISD established a planning committee and a review committee for each program area. The review committees clarified and fine-tuned the objectives and action steps formulated by the planning committees. Other committees included assessment, identification and placement, curriculum and instruction, programs, recruitment and staffing, staff development, resources and technology, transportation and parental and community involvement.

The long-range plan stated the goal of each component, defined the objectives and outlined action steps for each objective. For each objective and action step, the plan provided start and completion dates, the person with primary responsibility, the population, the resources required, indicators of success and formative and summative evaluation measures. The plan helps the bilingual/ESL program to ensure districtwide uniformity in program procedures and operations, and it also helps the Bilingual/ESL Department assess which schools need additional instructional support and resources.

COMMENDATION

GPISD has developed a detailed long-range plan that addresses each area of the bilingual/ESL program, with input from many district and school administrators, teachers and professional staff members.

FINDING

GPISD's bilingual/ESL exit criteria do not meet state requirements. The district uses the following criteria to determine which students should be released from the bilingual/ESL program:

- passing the reading and writing portions of the TAAS (grades 3-12);
- scoring 40 percent or higher on the ITBS (grade 2);
- getting a score of "Fluent-English-Speaking" on the IDEA; and
- scoring "Advanced" on the Reading Proficiency Test in English (RPTE).

The exit criteria that the district uses do not include an oral and written language proficiency test in the student's primary language and a written proficiency test in English. Without assessing students on their reading and writing proficiency in their primary language and in English before releasing them from the bilingual/ESL program, these students may not be prepared to perform well in a regular English classroom. Not meeting state exit criteria puts the district in a noncompliance status that requires corrective action. GPISD is in the process of changing its exit criteria to include a written language proficiency test in the student's primary language and in English. These exit criteria will be implemented at the end of 2002-03.

The No Child Left Behind Act requires states to implement accountability systems for all schools and all students. States must report progress annually by poverty, race, disability and limited English proficiency. The law is designed to help LEP children become proficient in English, to develop high levels of academic attainment in English, to meet the same academic content and achievement standards as other children and to help such children achieve at high levels in their core academic subjects. It is also supposed to help school districts develop high-quality language instruction programs.

Recommendation 13:

Revise bilingual/English as a second language exit criteria to comply with state requirements.

The district should revise its exit criteria by adding a language proficiency test in the student's primary language that includes oral and written

components and a written proficiency test in English. The district should train the bilingual/ESL staff and LPAC members in these additional tests and monitor the use of revised exit criteria.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The bilingual/ESL director and staff review the district exit criteria and determine needed revisions.	April 2003
2.	The bilingual/ESL director researches and identifies tests, selects the tests appropriate for the different grade levels and purchases them.	May 2003
3.	The bilingual/ESL director trains staff and LPAC members in the revised exit criteria and tests.	June - July 2003
4.	The bilingual/ESL staff administers the tests and identifies students who can exit the program.	September 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

Fiscal impact is based on the assumption that the district will administer oral and written language proficiency tests in English and Spanish to bilingual students in grades 2 through 6. GPISD uses the Idea Proficiency Test (IPT). IPT English and Spanish reading and writing tests for grades 2 through 3 cost \$193 for a set of 50. IPT English and Spanish reading and writing tests for grades 4 through 6 cost \$203 for a set of 50. In June 2002, GPISD had 688 bilingual students in grades 2 and 3, and 739 students in grades 4 through 6. Oral IPT English and Spanish tests cost \$38 for a set of 50 test booklets (grades K-6).

GPISD needs to purchase 14 sets of IPT English reading and writing tests (688 students/50 tests per set) for grades 2 and 3 at a cost of \$193 per set for a total of \$2,702 (14 x \$193).

GPISD needs to purchase 14 sets of IPT Spanish reading and writing tests for grades 2 and 3 at a cost of \$193 per set for a total of \$2,702 (14 x \$193).

The total cost for IPT English and Spanish reading and writing tests for grades 2 and 3 is \$5,404.

GPISD needs to purchase 15 sets of IPT English reading and writing tests (739 students/50 tests per set) for grades 4 through 6 at a cost of \$203 per set for a total cost of \$3,045 (15 x \$203).

GPISD needs to purchase 15 sets of IPT Spanish reading and writing tests (739 students/50 tests per set) for grades 4 through 6 at a cost of \$203 per set for a total cost of \$3,045 (15 x \$203).

The total cost for IPT English and Spanish reading and writing tests for grades 4 through 6 is \$6,090.

GPISD needs to purchase 29 sets of IPT Spanish oral tests (688 + 739 = 1,427 students. 1,427/50 28.54 or 29 sets) and 29 sets of oral English IPT tests at a cost of \$38 for a set of 50. (Cost of oral English and Spanish IPT test sets: 58 sets x \$38/set). The total cost for IPT English and Spanish oral tests for grades 2 through 6 is \$2,204.

The total cost for all IPT English and Spanish writing and reading and oral tests for grades 2 through 6 is \$13,698. (((\$2,702 x 2) + (\$3,045 x 2) + (\$2,204))

The number of bilingual students will remain the same in 2004 through 2008 as in 2003-04.

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Revise bilingual/English as a second language exit criteria to comply with state requirements.	(\$13,698)	(\$13,698)	(\$13,698)	(\$13,698)	(\$13,698)

Chapter 2

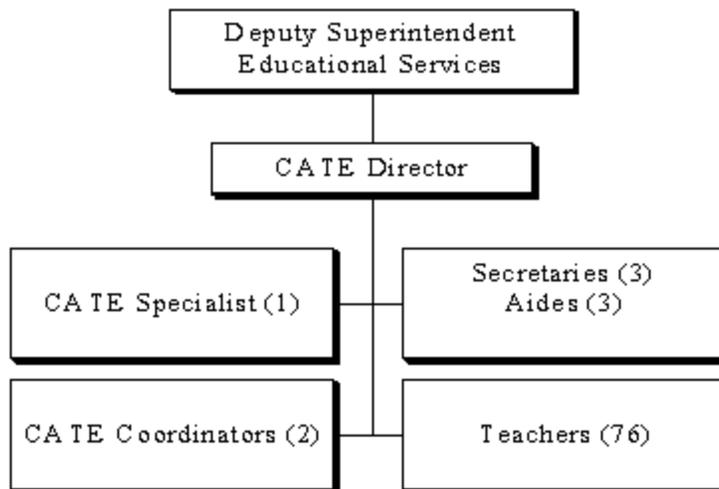
EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

F. Career and Technology Education

Texas Education Code Section 29.181 states that "Each public school student shall master the basic skills and knowledge necessary for managing the dual roles of family member and wage earner; and gaining entry-level employment in a high-skill, high-wage job or continuing the student's education at the post-secondary level." The Texas Administrative Code chapter 74, subchapter A requires school districts to offer "Programs of study for broad career concentrations in areas of agricultural science and technology, arts and communication, business education, family and consumer science, health occupations technology, trade and industry and technology education that will prepare students for continued learning and post-secondary education in employment settings."

In GPISD, the Career and Technology Education program has 86 full-time employees, including its director, 76 teachers, one CATE specialist, two CATE coordinators, three secretaries and three aides (**Exhibit 2-59**). Of the 76 teachers, five are on emergency permits. CATE's 2001-02 budget was \$3 million.

Exhibit 2-59
GPISD Career and Technology Education Program
2002



Source: GPISD Career and Technology Education Department, December 2002.

GPISD served 4,882 students in 2001-02 in its CATE program (**Exhibit 2-60**). Compared with its peer districts, GPISD had the largest percent of students enrolled in CATE, the second-highest percent of budgeted CATE expenditures and the lowest per-student expenditure. GPISD had a low per-student expenditure because of the large number of students enrolled in its CATE programs.

Exhibit 2-60
Percent of Student Enrollment and Budgeted Expenditures in CATE
GPISD, Peer Districts, Region 4 and State
2001-02

District	Number of Students in CATE	Percent Enrolled in CATE	Budgeted CATE Expenditures	Budgeted Career and Technology Expenditures	Per-Student Expenditure
Aldine	10,317	19.4%	\$8,103,233	3.8%	\$785
Pasadena	6,448	14.8%	\$4,608,049	3.1%	\$715
GPISD	4,882	25.2%	\$2,740,959	4.1%	\$561
Humble	4,305	17.1%	\$2,862,369	3.3%	\$665
Goose Creek	2,045	11.2%	\$2,556,085	4.3%	\$1,250
Region 4	153,971	17.1%	\$109,540,887	3.4%	\$711
State	802,149	19.3%	\$599,190,896	4.1%	\$747

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2001-02.

GPISD had the highest percent of CATE teachers among its peer districts. GPISD's teacher-student ratio was the second lowest among its peer districts in 2001-02, lower than the regional average but higher than the state average (**Exhibit 2-61**).

Exhibit 2-61
CATE Student Enrollment and CATE Teachers
GPISD, Peer Districts, Region 4 and State
2001-02

District	Number of Students in CATE	Number of CATE Teachers (FTEs)	Percent of CATE Teachers	Student-Teacher Ratio
Aldine	10,317	131.9	3.7%	78:1

Pasadena	6,448	44.5	1.6%	145:1
GPISD	4,882	66.7	5.0%	73:1
Humble	4,305	56.6	3.3%	76:1
Goose Creek	2,045	48.3	4.2%	42:1
Region 4	153,971	1,824.0	3.2%	84:1
State	802,149	11,844.2	4.2%	68:1

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2001-02.

GPISD's CATE program starts in grades 7 and 8 with courses such as Skills for Living, Technology Education and Keyboarding. In the middle school level, students take an interest, aptitude and career awareness test. GPISD offers more than 80 career and technology classes in six career clusters, as shown in **Exhibit 2-62**. The clusters are agricultural science and technology, business and marketing, family and consumer science education, technology education, health science technology and trade and industrial education.

Exhibit 2-62
GPISD School-to-Career Program Offerings by Career Clusters
2001-02

Career and Technology Classes
Agricultural Science and Technology
Basic Agriculture Personal Skills Development Agricultural Communications Environmental Technology Introduction to Agricultural Mechanics Introduction to Horticulture Horticulture I Floral Design Advanced Floral Design Animal Science Advanced Animal Science Equine Science Landscape Design, Construction and Maintenance Wildlife and Recreation Management
Business Education
Introduction to Business

Recordkeeping
Accounting I and II
Banking and Financial Systems
Business Computer Information Systems I and II
Business Computer Programming
Business Law
Business Management
Business Ownership
Office Administration Lab
Administrative Procedures I and II
Business Image Management and Multimedia
International Business
Keyboarding
Business Education Independent Study

Health Science Technology Education

Health Science Technology I
Health Science Technology II
Health Science Career Preparation III
Medical Terminology
Health Science Technology Independent Study

Technology Education

Technology Systems
Architectural Graphics
Engineering Graphics
Technical Introduction to Computer-Aided Drafting
Computer-Aided Drafting I and II
Research and Development Robotics
Pre-Engineering Principals

Trade and Industrial Education

Introduction to Criminal Justice I
Correctional Systems I
Criminal Investigation II
Crime in America II
Introduction to Electronic Systems
Electronics/Network Design
Advanced Network Design
Cosmetology I and II
Introduction to Precision Metal Manufacturing Careers
Metal Technology I
Apprenticeship/Machinist, Welder, Carpentry
Automotive Services II/Transportation Service Technician
(ASE- certified/internship)
Automotive Services II

Introduction to Building Carpentry Building Carpentry I and II Collision Repair and Refinishing Services I and II Introduction to Media Technology Media Technology I-II: Introduction to Visual Communication Processes Introduction to Computer Technologies Computer Technician I and II
Family and Consumer Science
Family Health Needs Personal and Family Development Family and Career Management Apparel Interior Design Food Production and Catering I and II Nutrition and Food Science Advanced Food Science and Technology Child Development I and II BESTT/Child Care and Guidance Management Family and Consumer Science Career

Source: GPISD, Career and Technology Department.

Participation of CATE students in each of the career clusters is shown in **Exhibit 2-63**. The Business Education cluster attracts the most students.

Exhibit 2-63
Participation of GPISD Students in CATE by Cluster
2002-03

CATE Cluster	Number of Students*	Percent of Students*
Agriculture Science and Technology	262	5.4%
Business Education	3,193	65.4%
Family and Consumer Science	1,968	40.3%
Health Science Technology Education	366	7.5%
Technology Education	498	10.2%
Trade and Industrial Education	1,009	20.7%
Total	4,882	

Source: GPISD CATE Program Enrollment.

* Number of Students does not total, and percent of students exceeds 100 because a student may enroll in multiple clusters.

The performance of CATE students on the TAAS is shown in **Exhibit 2-64**. GPISD CATE students performed well on the TAAS and improved their performance in 2001-02.

Exhibit 2-64
GPISD CATE Student Performance on the TAAS
1999-2000 through 2001-02

District/Campus	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02
District			
Reading	88%	88%	96%
Math	84%	88%	92%
Writing	87%	87%	89%
Galena Park High School			
Reading	83%	88%	97%
Math	81%	88%	92%
Writing	85%	87%	91%
North Shore High School			
Reading	91%	89%	95%
Math	86%	90%	92%
Writing	88%	86%	88%

Source: GPISD Research and Evaluation Department.

FINDING

The GPISD CATE program prepares students for post-secondary employment through its certification programs, technology and traditional trade programs and through cooperative programs. The program gives students opportunities to gain work experience through apprenticeships, internships and cooperative education. Through interest and aptitude tests and career exploration in grade 8, students decide on a career major and develop a four-year sequenced course plan, choosing electives based on their projected career major interests.

The technology programs cover the areas of engineering, industrial and business technology. The engineering and industrial technology programs include course work in computer-assisted drafting, electronics and electronics career development. Business technology includes classes in business computer information systems, general business practices and marketing.

GPISD's two automotive technology facilities are certified by the National Automotive Technology Educational Foundation and are selected members of the Automotive Youth Education System. The

GPISD CATE program offers certifications in several areas, including:

- Cisco;
- Certified Nurse Aides (CNAs);
- Cosmetology;
- Associated Builders and Contractors;
- Automotive Service Excellence (ASE), an automotive certification;
- Educational Aide II (SBEC Certification);
- Microsoft Office User Specialist (MOUS) certification;
- A+;
- I-CAR (auto collision); and
- Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training (BAT) in welding and machining.

In 2001-02, eight students received a Texas College of Cosmetology (TCC) cosmetology certification and three earned CNA certification. In 2002-03, 10 students are eligible for the TCC cosmetology certification, 13 are eligible for the CNA certification and nine are eligible for the Cisco certification.

The GPISD CATE Department has an articulation agreement with San Jacinto College North at three locations. An articulation agreement is a formal written contract between a district and a post-secondary institution that coordinates occupational training so that course work is not duplicated. Classes are taught at the high school. These courses are accepted for college credit when the student completes the work and meets the required technical competencies. Credit hours transfer to San Jacinto College North and to any other college or university that accepts such courses.

The articulation agreement covers courses in accounting, auto body repair technology, child development and family studies, computer information systems, construction technology, criminal justice, electrical technology, electronics technology, engineering drafting technology, management

development, office administration, nursing and welding technology (**Exhibit 2-65**). The GPISD CATE Department also participates in the statewide articulation program with the Texas Education Agency/Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. In this program, participating colleges in Texas accept these articulated high school courses as being equal to introductory-level college courses. In 2000-01, the district received the Outstanding Tech Prep Program award.

Exhibit 2-65
GPISD San Jacinto College North Articulation Agreement
1997

Program	Course
Accounting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Microcomputer Applications I
Auto Body Repair Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Auto Collision I and II
Child Development and Family Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Childhood Professionals I and II • Microcomputer Applications
Computer Information Systems - Business Option, Microcomputer Option or Network Administration Option	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer Science I • Business Computer Applications I and II • Microcomputer Applications • Business Information Processing
Construction Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building Trades I and II • Construction Carpentry I and II
Criminal Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criminal Justice • Microcomputer Applications
Electrical Technology/Electronics Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocational Electronics I and II

Engineering Drafting Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical Drafting I and II
Management Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accounting • Microcomputer Applications
Nursing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anatomy/Physiology • Health Occupations Co-op
Office Administration: Bilingual Secretary Option, Executive Secretary Option, Legal Secretary Option, Information Processing Option, Medical Office Manager Option	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accounting • Microcomputer Applications
Welding Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metal Trades I and II

Source: San Jacinto College North Tech Prep, 1997.

The GPISD CATE program offers students the opportunity to gain work experience through a number of local business cooperative programs in the areas of family and consumer science, health care and business and marketing. In 2002-03, GPISD began a hotel management program with the Hyatt Regency in Houston. This two-year program for juniors and seniors includes courses in Hospitality I and II and Food Production I. In 2002-03, GPISD offers only Hotel Management I, so seniors who entered the program this year will be able to complete only one course instead of the two-year program. These seniors will have the option to apply to the University of Houston Hilton College and enroll in a hotel management program or continue their training at the Hyatt while being employed there full-time. In 2002-03, 13 juniors and 10 seniors were selected for the program, based on their academic performance, attendance, conduct and level of interest in the hospitality industry.

GPISD also has a school affiliation agreement with the East Houston Regional Medical Center for clinical rotations and with the Pasadena Care Center for the Certified Nurse Aide (CNA) program that involves 26 students who train for 30 days. Students enrolled in Health Science Technology II receive hands-on training during the instructional day in a clinical rotation class at the East Houston Regional Medical Center. Students rotate through the emergency room, obstetrics-gynecology, newborn nursery, surgery, day surgery, medical nursing floor, telemetry,

dietary, medical records, laboratory, radiology and cardiopulmonary departments.

The GPISD CATE program participates in the National Vocational-Technical Honors Society (NVTHS), an organization similar to the National Honors Society. To be elected to NVTHS, a student must have a 90 average for three semesters in CATE courses. NVTHS students receive special recognition at graduation.

COMMENDATION

The GPISD CATE program prepares students for employment through several programs that offer students opportunities to gain work experience and to earn specialized certification.

FINDING

GPISD uses a Business Advisory Council and business advisory councils for each CATE program to ensure that its programs meet business needs. The Business Advisory Council has 19 members: 13 who represent CATE program areas, four parent representatives and two community leaders. The parent and community representatives change annually. The Business Advisory Council meets once a year, usually in the fall. The purpose of the annual meeting is to provide input on workforce changes, to review funding for the CATE Department and to make recommendations on how to use the funds. The council also seeks information from CATE business partners to ensure that the curriculum taught and the equipment used are comparable to what is used in a business setting.

The CATE program has business advisory councils for each of the six CATE programs: Trade and Industrial Education, Technology Education, Health Science Technology Education, Business Education, Family and Consumer Science and Agricultural Science and Technology. The business advisory councils have members from local businesses. Specific programs such as Automotive Services Technology, Automotive Collision Repair and Hospitality Services also have advisory councils. Members associated with these councils meet two to three times a year. Together, all council members comprise the Business Advisory Council.

The Business Advisory Council helps GPISD to determine occupational demand and identify need for new courses. Based on recommendations from the business advisory councils, GPISD updated its technology programs and added certification programs such as Cisco, A+, Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) and MOUS (Microsoft Office User Specialist), and initiated participation in cooperative programs such as the hotel management program with the Hyatt Regency, the East Houston Regional

Medical Center and the automobile dealers. The automotive advisory council has worked closely with the schools to offer internships to students and to ensure that students work with the latest technology. Council members donated diagnostic tools and late-model automobiles for use in student training. The district also approved the Bureau of Apprenticeship in welding and metal trades, following a recommendation of its advisory councils. GPISD also expanded its agricultural science program and opened a new facility, based on advisory council recommendations. The district is considering the establishment of an engineering academy.

COMMENDATION

GPISD uses its program-specific and general business advisory councils to ensure that its CATE programs are up to date and meet local business needs.

Chapter 2

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

G. Dropout Prevention and Alternative Education

Texas has set dropout prevention as one of its primary goals. TEA considers the dropout rate as one of four criteria in assigning annual accountability ratings to districts and schools, in addition to performance on the TAAS, attendance and data quality. TEA requires districts to report information on students who leave school, which is used to determine a district's dropout rate. Districts must use the guidelines in the TEA Leaver Codes and Definitions to report information on students who withdraw from school. Each school district must develop a comprehensive dropout prevention plan to help keep students from dropping out of school.

GPISD reduced its dropout rates from 1.8 percent in 1995-96 to 0.5 percent in 2000-01. The district's dropout rates in 1998-99, 1999-2000 and 2000-01 were lower than regional and state dropout averages (**Exhibit 2-66**). GPISD has used several strategies to decrease its dropout rate. The district identifies students who are at risk of dropping out and provides intense academic and counseling intervention, believing that students who are successful in school will not drop out. The district has also developed credit recovery options at each high school and refers students who need a more intense remedial program to the Accelerated Center for Education (ACE) where staff develops individual graduation plans for them. The district has truancy/dropout clerks at secondary schools, and attendance clerks and a parent-education-and-pregnancy-related specialist to help students to resolve anything that keeps them from attending school.

In addition, the district has improved its student data management so it can identify leavers more quickly. Once identified, students who do not return to GPISD can be located. The district's contract deputy officers go out to the leaver's last known address and to surrounding houses, talk to neighbors, family members and friends and check police and county records to locate these students. When students are located, counselors or assistant principals contact them to get them back to school, into a GED program or into another training program. Students who return to school after they are contacted by the counselor or assistant principal are referred to a crisis/youth counselor who helps them find ways to continue their education.

Exhibit 2-66
Annual Dropout Rates
GPISD and Peer Districts
1995-96 through 2000-01

District	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01
Aldine	2.6%	2.6%	2.3%	1.5%	0.8%	0.6%
Pasadena	2.2%	2.0%	2.0%	1.6%	1.9%	0.9%
GPISD	1.8%	2.5%	1.9%	1.5%	0.9%	0.5%
Goose Creek	1.5%	1.0%	1.7%	1.5%	1.1%	1.2%
Humble	0.5%	0.3%	0.4%	0.4%	0.2%	0.3%
Region 4	2.2%	1.7%	1.8%	1.7%	1.5%	0.9%
State Average	1.8%	1.6%	1.6%	1.6%	1.3%	1.0%

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

TEA Leaver Codes describe why a student may withdraw or leave school. For example, Code 01 is "student graduated." Code 14 refers to a student who "withdrew from/left school because of age." Code 28 refers to a student who "withdrew from school with declared intent to enroll in another Texas public school district." TEA requires districts to use these codes to report information on students who withdraw from school, and then uses this information in its accountability rating system. Nearly 90 percent of GPISD students who left the district did so to attend another school in Texas or outside of Texas (**Exhibit 2-67**). In 2001-02, several GPISD middle schools had a large number of leavers. These schools include North Shore Middle School (170 leavers), Cunningham Middle School (129 leavers), Galena Park Middle School (81 leavers) and Woodland Middle School (37 leavers).

Exhibit 2-67
GPISD Leavers
2001-02

Leaver Codes	2001-02
(28) Student intends to enroll in a Texas public school	350
(07) Left with intent to enroll outside of Texas	39
(16) Return to home country	15
(29) Student intended to enroll in a Texas private school	10
(60) Withdrew for home schooling	6
(22) Enrolled in alternative program, in compliance, working toward a GED	6

(99) Other (reason unknown or not listed)	6
Other reasons with five or fewer students	14
Total	446

Source: GPISD School Leaver Summary, 2001-02 Fall Collection.

GPISD's primary dropout prevention programs are the Accelerated Center for Education and the Center for Success (CFS), which is the district's disciplinary alternative education program. The ACE was opened in 1984 to serve students who dropped out or who were retained in one grade level for two or more years, students who were not expected to graduate within four years from the date they started grade 9, students who failed the TAAS, students who are parents or are pregnant and students who previously dropped out.

Students must apply to the ACE to be admitted. Once admitted, students stay in the program until they graduate or earn a GED. Students attend classes for four hours a day. The ACE curriculum is self-paced with individualized teacher instruction that is supplemented with computer-assisted instruction, videotapes, textbooks and study guides. It also offers classes to students who are in their last trimester of pregnancy through six weeks after the birth. The ACE has a staff of 15 FTEs, including a principal and an assistant principal, eight certified teachers, an instructional aide, a counselor, two secretaries and a switchboard operator. The ACE has a student-teacher ratio of 11:1.

The ACE uses a number of methods to improve student success. These methods include a self-paced learning program, assessment and remediation for previous academic failure and split sessions to help accommodate student work schedules, day-care needs or personal preferences. The program has a set level of expectations in which students are encouraged to complete two classes each six-week period and achieve an 80-percent mastery level. Students receive support services such as counseling, academic advising and contacts with social service agencies. A 1999-2000 evaluation of the ACE showed that students had a 91.7 percent attendance rate. A 2000-01 evaluation showed that 78 percent of the students who were enrolled in the GED program completed it and that students earned 80.6 percent of the credits attempted. Since 1994, 655 students have completed the ACE program, earning a high-school diploma or a GED. Student enrollment in ACE is shown in **Exhibit 2-68**. Enrollment is limited by the physical constraints of the separate ACE building and by flood damage to the building that occurred in 2001-02.

Exhibit 2-68
GPISD ACE Enrollment
1999-2000 through 2001-02

Student Group	1999-2000		2000-01		2001-02	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
African American	35	15.2%	33	15.2%	28	15.7%
Hispanic	124	53.9%	129	59.4%	97	54.5%
Anglo	69	30.0%	53	24.4%	52	29.2%
Asian American	2	0.9%	2	0.9%	1	0.6%
Total	230	100.0%	217	100.0%	178	100.0%

Source: GPISD Accelerated Center for Education.

The Center for Success is the district's disciplinary alternative education program. CFS provides alternative placements for discipline referrals to students in grades 1 through 12 (**Exhibit 2-69**). The largest numbers of students placed at CFS are in grades 7, 8 and 9. CFS combines academics with counseling and remediation, using one-on-one teaching and NovaNet computer-based instruction. NovaNet is a competency-based computer program that is aligned with the TEKS and the TAAS. The Center has a staff of 21, including a principal and an assistant principal, 10 teachers, five teacher aides, two counselors, an attendance clerk and a secretary.

Exhibit 2-69
GPISD Assignments to Center for Success by Grade Level
1999-2000 through 2001-02

Grade	1999-2000		2000-01		2001-02	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Grade 1	4	1.2%	1	0.3%	4	1.2%
Grade 2	6	1.8%	0	0.0%	2	0.6%
Grade 3	7	2.1%	6	1.8%	7	2.2%
Grade 4	3	0.9%	12	3.6%	4	1.2%
Grade 5	17	5.2%	12	3.6%	15	4.6%
Grade 6	14	4.2%	40	12.0%	25	7.7%
Grade 7	57	17.3%	44	13.2%	54	16.7%

Grade 8	62	18.8%	43	12.9%	55	17.0%
Grade 9	91	27.6%	91	27.4%	88	27.2%
Grade 10	31	9.4%	40	12.0%	38	11.8%
Grade 11	23	7.0%	27	8.1%	21	6.5%
Grade 12	14	4.2%	16	4.8%	10	3.1%
Total	329	100.0%	332	100.0%	323	100.0%

Source: GPISD, Student Assignments at Center For Success.

Elementary students are assigned to CFS for a minimum of 10 days. Middle and high school students are assigned for a minimum of 20 days. On average, students stay at CFS for 18 to 19 days (Exhibit 2-70). About 60 percent of CFS placements are discretionary, and about 40 percent are mandatory. Students are placed in CFS for persistent misbehavior, insubordination to teachers, gang-related fighting, theft, vandalism and terroristic threats. They are characterized by poor attendance, persistent misbehavior, gang affiliation, limited self-control, low self-esteem, being two to three years behind academically, lack of parental involvement and low potential for academic success. CFS has a counseling outreach follow-up program to help students to make the transition from CFS back to their home school. CFS received an award for being the safest school in GPISD. In 2001-02, CFS received a \$5,000 grant for Safe and Drug Free Schools.

Exhibit 2-70
GPISD Center for Success
1999-2000 through 2001-02

	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02
Enrollment	329	332	323
Mandatory Placement	42.2%	39.4%	37.2%
Discretionary Placement	57.7%	60.5%	62.8%
Average Length of Stay	17.9 days	18.0 days	18.9 days
Recidivism Rate	10.3%	6.3%	7.7%

Source: GPISD, Student Assignments at Center for Success.

FINDING

The percent of special education students placed at CFS has been disproportionately higher than their representation in the district (**Exhibit 2-71**). The percent of special education students placed at CFS has increased since 1999-2000 from 20.6 to 27.5 percent in 2001-02, while their percent in the district has decreased. Between 1999-2000 and 2001-02, the percent of special education students at CFS has been 9.4 to 16.5 percentage points higher than their percent in the district for the same period. In 2001-02, the percent of special education students in CFS was 2.5 times greater than their percent in the district.

Exhibit 2-71
GPISD Center for Success Student Characteristics
1999-2000 through 2001-02

	1999-2000		2000-01		2001-02	
	CFS	District	CFS	District	CFS	District
African American	30.6%	21.3%	25.6%	21.5%	27.2%	21.3%
Hispanic	45.8%	58.2%	52.7%	60.7%	56.3%	62.8%
Anglo	23.1%	18.2%	21.6%	15.8%	16.4%	13.8%
Asian American	0.0%	2.0%	0.0%	1.8%	0.0%	1.8%
Special Education	20.6%	11.2%	23.4%	11.9%	27.5%	11.0%

Source: GPISD, Center for Success, Ethnicity Percent Breakdown.

To manage special education students with disruptive behavior, Special Education Departments perform functional behavior assessments (FBAs) of students and develop behavior intervention plans for these students, through their ARD committees. The Special Education Department trains ARD committee members in the development of FBAs and trains teachers to implement the behavior intervention plans.

Recommendation 14:

Develop and implement strategies for handling students with disruptive behavior to reduce the number of special education students who are placed in the district's disciplinary alternative education program.

GPISD's Special Education Department should review its procedures and strategies for handling students with disruptive behavior and determine whether these strategies were used with special education students in CFS before they were sent there. The department should also review the training it provides to special education teachers and to regular education

teachers who have special education students in their classes. Following such a review, GPISD should train all teachers in these strategies, establish a process for handling disruptive special education students and monitor the use of these strategies at the home campuses.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Special Education director reviews with school administrators the procedures and strategies that special education and regular education teachers use to manage the behavior of special education students.	April 2003
2.	The Special Education director and school administrators modify the behavior management strategies that campuses use to manage special education students.	May 2003
3.	The Special Education director trains school administrators and staff in behavior management strategies and procedures for special education students.	June - July 2003
4.	The Special Education director monitors the implementation of the behavior management strategies and procedures at each school.	August 2003 - May 2004
5.	The Special Education director reviews statistics on the number of special education students who are placed in the district's disciplinary alternative education programs.	May 2004 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 2

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

H. Library and Media Services

In May 1997, the Texas State Library and Archives Commission adopted a series of recommended standards called *School Library Program Standards: Guidelines and Standards*. According to this publication, the goal of school library programs is to ensure that students and staff alike effectively use ideas and information and become literate, lifelong learners. To accomplish this task, the library program should provide instruction in research and the evaluation of resources, individual guidance and access to materials in multiple formats. The guidelines offer criteria that identify library programs as exemplary, recognized, acceptable or below standard in the areas of the library learning environment, curriculum integration, resources, library program management and facilities. The NCLB Act also emphasizes the importance of libraries and expects libraries to be resources to improve the literacy skills and academic achievement of students and to provide them with increased access to up-to-date school library materials; a well-equipped, technologically advanced school library media center and well-trained, professionally certified school library media specialists.

GPISD has 20 libraries, one at each of the 12 elementary schools, five middle schools and three high schools. The alternative education centers do not have libraries. GPISD has a lead librarian who is also the librarian for one of the elementary schools. The lead librarian reports to the director of Secondary English Language Arts. GPISD does not have a district library plan, but librarians meet at regular intervals to discuss district and school library needs and concerns, and to plan staff development. GPISD library programs are not evaluated annually. In spring 2001, GPISD librarians completed a library evaluation using the TEA Technology/Library online assessment. The libraries used these data to assess their campus library needs and to formulate budgets. GPISD school libraries are subject to site-based decision-making. Each principal decides the amount of funding to allocate to the library in his or her respective school. As shown in **Exhibit 2-72**, the library expenditures and dollars per student vary greatly from school to school. Library expenditures for 2001-02 ranged from \$1,500 to \$16,000. The dollars per student ranged from \$1.81 to \$12.98.

Exhibit 2-72
GPISD Library Expenditures
2001-02

School	Library Expenditures	Dollar Per Student
North Shore High School	\$13,500	\$6.52
Galena Park High School	\$16,000	\$9.93
North Shore Senior High School	\$13,605	\$9.27
Cobb Sixth Grade Campus	\$5,850	\$5.65
Cunningham Middle School	\$10,835	\$12.20
Galena Park Middle School	\$8,894	\$9.02
North Shore Middle School	\$3,534	\$3.05
Woodland Acres Middle School	\$4,545	\$10.77
Cloverleaf Elementary	\$4,000	\$3.80
Cimarron Elementary	\$6,100	\$5.96
James B. Havard Elementary	\$4,288	\$4.43
North Shore Elementary	\$6,800	\$7.56
Green Valley Elementary	\$4,965	\$5.73
Jacinto City Elementary	\$8,493	\$10.22
Tice Elementary	\$1,500	\$1.81
Purple Sage Elementary	\$10,000	\$12.51
Galena Park Elementary	\$5,529	\$7.88
MacArthur Elementary	\$6,918	\$10.76
Pyburn Elementary	\$5,780	\$10.03
Woodland Acres Elementary	\$5,000	\$12.98

Source: GPISD Library Information.

GPISD is a member of the Texas Library Collection, a statewide resource-sharing system administered by the TEA that facilitates libraries' technical services and local collection development and offers access to electronic full-text resources. Each library has computers for student use with access to the Texas Library Collection and other online resources.

FINDING

More than one-half of the GPISD libraries do not meet the Texas School Library Programs Standards for staff at the "Acceptable" level. The state

guidelines for "Acceptable" or higher-rated libraries require at least one certified librarian and one half-time library aide in schools with 351 to 700 students. In schools with 701 to 1,050 students, "Acceptable" libraries need to have one certified librarian and one aide. In schools with 1,051 to 1,400 students, "Acceptable" library staffing includes one certified librarian and two aides. In schools with 1,401 to 2,100 students, "Acceptable" libraries have two certified librarians and two aides. The state guidelines for "Recognized" libraries require one certified librarian and 1.5 aides for schools with 701 through 1,050 students.

Exhibit 2-73 shows library staffing for each GPISD school, school enrollment and whether each school library met library standards. Five of the libraries do not have certified librarians. Eleven of the 20 GPISD libraries (55 percent) are below standard, eight libraries are at the "Acceptable" level, and one library is at the "Recognized" level.

Exhibit 2-73
State Library Staffing Standards and GPISD Library Staffing

School	Enrollment	Number of Staff	Meets or Exceeds Standard
North Shore High School	2,068	1 certified librarian + 1 aide	Below Standard
Galena Park High School	1,611	1 certified librarian + 1 aide	Below Standard
North Shore Senior High School	1,468	1 certified librarian + 1 aide	Below Standard
Cobb Sixth Grade Campus	1,035	1 certified librarian	Below Standard
Cunningham Middle School	888	1 librarian** + 1/2 aide	Below Standard
Galena Park Middle School	986	1 certified librarian + 1 aide	Acceptable
North Shore Middle School	1,159	1 librarian** + 2/3 aide	Below Standard
Woodland Acres Middle School	422	1 certified librarian + 1/2 aide	Acceptable
Cloverleaf Elementary	1,052	1 certified librarian + 1 aide	Below Standard

Cimarron Elementary	1,023	1 certified librarian +1 aide	Acceptable
James B. Havard Elementary	967	1 certified librarian +1 aide	Acceptable
North Shore Elementary	899	1 certified librarian + 2/3 aide	Acceptable
Green Valley Elementary	866	1 certified librarian + 2/3 aide	Below Standard
Jacinto City Elementary	831	1 certified librarian + 1.5 aides	Recognized
Tice Elementary	827	1 librarian* + 1 aide	Acceptable
Purple Sage Elementary	799	1 certified librarian + 1 aide	Acceptable
Galena Park Elementary	702	1 certified librarian + 1 aide	Acceptable
MacArthur Elementary	643	1 librarian** + 1 aide	Below Standard
Pyburn Elementary	576	1 librarian** + 1 aide	Below Standard
Woodland Acres Elementary	385	1 certified librarian + 1/3 aide	Below Standard

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 2001-02; GPISD Librarians.

*Librarian expects certification in 2002.

**Librarian expects certification in 2003 or later.

GPISD falls short of the three librarians and 6.3 aides needed to meet the "Acceptable" staffing standard(Exhibit 2-74).

**Exhibit 2-74
State Library Staffing Standards and GPISD Library Staffing**

School	Enrollment	Number of Staff	Standard	Staffing Needed to Meet Acceptable Standard
North Shore High	2,068	1 certified	2 certified	1 certified

School		librarian + 1 aide	librarians + 2 aides	librarian + 1 aide
Galena Park High School	1,611	1 certified librarian + 1 aide	2 certified librarians + 2 aides	1 certified librarian + 1 aide
North Shore Senior High School	1,468	1 certified librarian + 1 aide	2 certified librarians + 2 aides	1 certified librarian + 1 aide
Cobb Sixth Grade Campus	1,035	1 certified librarian	1 certified librarian + 1 aide	1 aide
Cunningham Middle School	888	1 librarian + 1/2 aide**	1 certified librarian + 1 aide	1/2 aide
North Shore Middle School	1,159	1 librarian + 2/3 aide**	1 certified librarian + 2 aides	1 1/3 aides
Cloverleaf Elementary	1,052	1 certified librarian + 1 aide	1 certified librarian + 2 aides	1 aide
Green Valley Elementary	866	1 certified librarian + 2/3 aide	1 certified librarian + 1 aide	1/3 aide
MacArthur Elementary	643	1 librarian + 1 aide**	1 certified librarian + .5 aide	(.5 aide)
Pyburn Elementary	576	1 librarian + 1 aide**	1 certified librarian + .5 aide	(.5 aide)
Woodland Acres Elementary	385	1 certified librarian + 1/3 aide	1 certified librarian + .5 aide	1/5 aide

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 2001-02; GPISD Librarians.
 Librarian expects certification in 2002.
 **Librarian expects certification in 2003 or later.

GPISD library staff identified staffing concerns, including library staff turnover, the lack of a full-time aide in some libraries, and the assignment of librarians to classrooms to allow teachers time for planning.

Recommendation 15:

Increase library staffing to meet the "Acceptable" staffing standard.

To meet the "Acceptable" staffing standard, GPISD needs to hire three certified librarians and 6.3 aides. In addition, GPISD needs to monitor the five librarians who are in the process of becoming certified.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Elementary and Secondary executive directors and the lead librarian review library staffing and submit a plan to the deputy superintendent of Educational Services regarding the hiring of certified librarians and aides.	April 2003
2.	The deputy superintendent of Educational Services submits the plan to the superintendent who submits it to the board for approval.	May 2003
3.	The board approves the new positions.	June 2003
4.	The lead librarian prepares job descriptions for the certified librarians and the library aides.	May 2003
5.	The executive director of Human Resource Services advertises the positions, interviews candidates jointly with the lead librarian and hires library staff.	July - September 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

The fiscal impact is based on the assumption that the midpoint salary for a library aide is \$15,320 plus benefits, and the midpoint salary for a certified librarian is \$45,035 plus benefits. GPISD has two benefit components. Variable benefits of Medicare, workers compensation and unemployment are 2.42 percent of salary. Fixed benefits consist of \$235 a month, which includes \$225 a month for health insurance and \$10 a month for dental insurance. The district will hire three certified librarians and 6.3 library aides.

Certified librarian: \$45,035 salary + \$1,090 variable benefits (2.42 percent of \$45,035) + \$2,820 health and dental insurance (\$235 x 12 months).
Salaries and benefits for three certified librarians: \$48,945 x 3.

Library aide: \$15,320 salary + \$371 (2.42 percent of \$15,320) + \$2,820 health and dental insurance (\$235 x 12 months). Salaries and benefits for 6.3 library aides is \$116,619.

Hiring three librarians and 6.3 library aides: \$146,835 + \$116,619 = \$263,454

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Increase library staffing to meet the "Acceptable" staffing standard.	(\$263,454)	(\$263,454)	(\$263,454)	(\$263,454)	(\$263,454)

FINDING

More than one-half of GPISD libraries do not meet the "Acceptable" level in the size of their library collection, as specified in the *School Library Programs Standard*. The *School Library Programs Standards* define an "Acceptable" collection as a balanced collection of 9,000 books, software and electronic resources such as Internet access for schools with enrollments of 600 or below. For schools with more than 600 students, the "Acceptable" standard is defined as a minimum of 15 items per student. A "Recognized" collection is defined as a balanced collection of 10,800 items for schools with 600 or fewer students, and for schools with more than 600 students, a minimum of 18 items per student. An "Exemplary" collection is a balanced collection with at least 12,000 items for schools with 600 or fewer students, and for schools with more than 600 students, a minimum of 20 items per student.

GPISD library staff identified concerns about the size and age of the collection in specific schools.

Exhibit 2-75 shows the library collection size at each school, the number of students, the number of items per student, and whether the collection meets the "Acceptable" standard or exceeds it. Eleven of the 20 libraries do not meet the "Acceptable" standard for collection size. Five of the schools meet the standard; one is "Recognized;" and three schools meet the "Exemplary" standard.

**Exhibit 2-75
GPISD Library Collection by School
2001-02**

School	Enrollment	Collection	Collection	Meets or
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		Size	Per Student	Exceeds Standard
North Shore High School	2,068	22,551	10.9	Below Standard
Galena Park High School	1,611	22,149	13.7	Below Standard
North Shore Senior High School	1,468	13,581	9.2	Below Standard
Cobb Sixth Grade Campus	1,035	8,052	7.8	Below Standard
Cunningham Middle School	888	15,446	17.4	Acceptable
Galena Park Middle School	986	8,705	8.8	Below Standard
North Shore Middle School	1,159	18,571	16.0	Acceptable
Woodland Acres Middle School	422	10,280	24.4	Acceptable
Cloverleaf Elementary	1,052	13,436	12.8	Below Standard
Cimarron Elementary	1,023	10,499	10.3	Below Standard
James B. Havard Elementary	967	11,537	11.9	Below Standard
North Shore Elementary	899	16,849	18.7	Recognized
Green Valley Elementary	866	23,525	27.2	Exemplary
Jacinto City Elementary	831	12,406	14.9	Below Standard
Tice Elementary	827	11,972	14.5	Below Standard
Purple Sage Elementary	799	17,510	21.9	Exemplary
Galena Park Elementary	702	16,432	23.4	Exemplary
MacArthur Elementary	643	10,889	16.9	Acceptable
Pyburn Elementary	576	10,494	18.2	Acceptable
Woodland Acres	385	6,696	17.4	Below

Elementary				Standard
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Source: TEA, PEIMS, 2001-02; GPISD Librarians.

School libraries that need to replenish their collections often seek grants or phase in money to help fund the increase in library collection size. The NCLB Act offers grants to eligible local education agencies.

Recommendation 16:

Increase library collection size to meet "Acceptable" standards.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The lead librarian determines the number of books that need to be added and develops appropriate lists and a budget.	April 2003
2.	The lead librarian and the district's grant writer research grant opportunities for expanding library collections.	May 2003
3.	The lead librarian and the elementary and Secondary Education executive directors prepare a plan; an estimated budget, including grant applications; and a schedule for increasing the collections, and submit them to the deputy superintendent of Educational Services for review and approval.	May - June 2003
4.	The lead librarian and the grant writer prepare and submit grant proposals.	June - August 2003
5.	The lead librarian obtains funds through a grant and/or the district to expand library collections.	September 2003
6.	The lead librarian and the district librarians work together to finalize the lists of books and other materials to be purchased.	September 2003
7.	The lead librarian oversees purchasing.	October - December 2003
8.	The district librarians integrate the new books and other materials into their collection.	January - February 2004

FISCAL IMPACT

This fiscal impact is based on the assumption that the district will purchase 45,436 books at an average cost of \$16 per book over a five-year period. North Shore High School needs to purchase 8,469 books to reach the 15

items per student, North Shore Senior High School needs to purchase 8,439 books, and Galena Park High School needs to purchase 2,016 books. Cobb Sixth Grade Campus needs to purchase 7,473 books, and Galena Park Middle School needs to purchase 6,085 books. Cloverleaf Elementary needs to purchase 2,344 books to reach the 15 items per student standard; Cimarron Elementary needs to purchase 4,846 books to meet the standard; Havard Elementary needs to purchase 2,968 books; Jacinto City Elementary needs to purchase 59 books, Tice Elementary needs to purchase 433 books, and Woodland Acres Elementary needs to purchase 2,304 books. The purchase of 45,436 books at \$16 a book is \$726,976 or \$145,395 a year for five years [45,436 x \$16 = \$726,976/5 years = \$145,395], beginning in 2003-04.

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Increase library collection size to meet "Acceptable" standards.	(\$145,395)	(145,395)	(\$145,395)	(145,395)	(\$145,395)

Chapter 3

PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

This chapter reviews the personnel functions within the Galena Park Independent School District (GPISD) in the following sections:

- A. Organization and Management
- B. Recruitment, Hiring and Retention
- C. Staffing, Salaries and Benefits
- D. Employee Relations

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

BACKGROUND

Management of human resources by school districts varies throughout the State of Texas. Many school districts join the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB), a professional organization that provides management tools and support to member districts. Districts using TASB materials to support personnel processes usually have similar policies, position descriptions and forms. GPISD relies on TASB services in areas such as forms, policies, position classification and compensation.

Organizational culture is unique to each district. Culture is defined by the values, attitudes and expectations of the organization. It creates the work environment for employees and administrators. The human resource department plays a critical role in maintaining a positive work environment by ensuring employees complement the school district's organizational culture. For example, if a district emphasizes a team environment it should employ personnel who enjoy and thrive in a team environment. Personnel programs should support the desired culture. Training for a team-based culture might include teambuilding exercises and rewards that recognize the team's efforts.

Part of the organizational culture involves the balance of authority and participation given to the human resources department in performing various employment related responsibilities. Some districts delegate most of the management authority for employment practices to the school level and some districts place it at the central administration level. GPISD's culture emphasizes teamwork and accountability by providing flexibility

in personnel management to administrators who are held accountable for successful performance.

State law establishes education specific standards for pay, reporting new hires, educator qualifications, contractual relationships, performance evaluations and training. Federal law sets additional legal requirements that regulate hiring practices, hours of work, minimum wages, benefits and work environment. Effective personnel management requires that employers measure budget and program decisions against legal requirements and employee relations. District size, community values, economic conditions, competition for staff in surrounding districts and numerous other factors affect the human resource decisions of a district. While each district has its own work environment, the human resource industry relies on comparisons and demographic information to measure successful programs. GPISD selected four districts, Aldine, Pasadena, Humble and Goose Creek Consolidated to serve as its peer districts for comparative purposes. While the size of the selected peer districts varies, all are located in the same geographic area as GPISD. All peers have exceeded the minimum acceptable accountability rank. State and region data may include districts that have rankings of acceptable and below.

Exhibit 3-1 provides an overview of some basic attributes of GPISD, its selected peers, the Regional Education Service Center IV (Region 4) and the state.

Exhibit 3-1
District Profile Information
GPISD, Peer Districts, Region 4 and State
2001-02

District	Accountability Rating	Student Population	Total Staff	Average Years Experience of Teachers with District	Payroll Costs as Percent of Budget
Aldine	Recognized	53,201	7,437.2	6.7	78%
Pasadena	Recognized	43,476	5,233.2	8.5	81.5%
Humble	Recognized	25,239	3,256.6	7.4	76%
GPISD	Exemplary	19,336	2,524.1	6.2	74.5%
Goose Creek Consolidated	Recognized	18,274	2,298	8.9	68.1%

Region 4	N/A	900,198	117,808.8	7.8	73.6%
State	N/A	4,146,653	560,063.1	7.8	73%

Source: Texas Education Agency (TEA), Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS), 2001-02.

Chapter 3

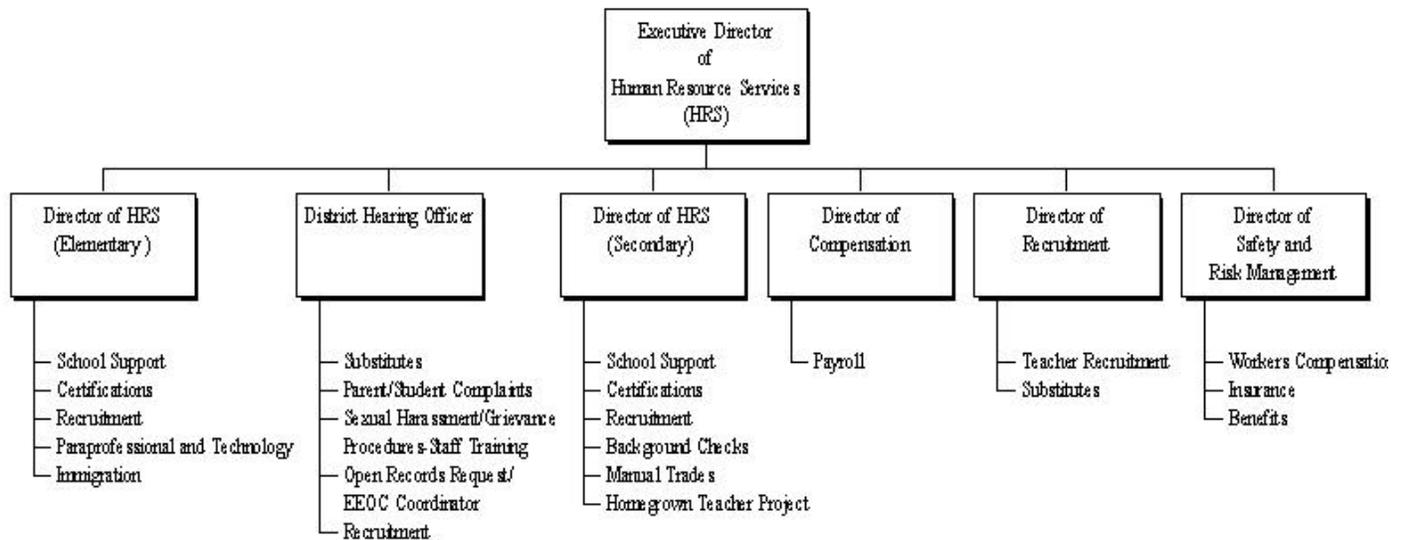
PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

A. Organization and Management

GPISD coordinates personnel management through a central administrative office. The Human Resource Services Department also includes personnel-related financial processes such as payroll and risk management. In 2000, the district employed consultants to evaluate and make recommendations to improve the district's organizational structure. The Human Resource Services Department structure reflects those recommendations. For example, consultants recommended assignment of separate directors for elementary school services and secondary school services.

Exhibit 3-2 outlines the organization of its Human Resource Services Department.

Exhibit 3-2
GPISD Human Resource Related Functions
2002-03



Source: GPISD Department Organization Chart 2002 and interviews with Human Resource Services directors, September 2002.

State law limits certain responsibilities to a district's Board of Trustees. For example, only a board can set a department budget, authorize the creation and funding of a new position or make policy. Administrators and staff carry out procedures and operations and make recommendations for board approval. **Exhibit 3-3** summarizes GPISD's assignment of personnel responsibilities within this legal framework.

Exhibit 3-3
GPISD Distribution of Human Resource Related Functions
2002-03

Responsibility	Assignment			
	Principals/ Department Heads	Human Resource Services Department	Executive Level Administrators	Board of Trustees
Recruiting	Recruit locally	Recruit teachers throughout state, nationally and internationally	No specific assignment	No specific assignment
Hiring staff	Interview and approve for school assignment	Post positions, interview and approve for hire into applicant pool	Approval and recommendation to board	Final approval
Background checks	No specific assignment	Perform background checks and investigate findings	No specific assignment	No specific assignment
Teacher certification verification	Communication link between teachers and HRS	Perform verification, follow up with principals and teachers. Monitor deficiency plans.	No specific assignment	No specific assignment
Salary determinations	No specific assignment	Place on scale according to procedures	Approve and make recommendations to board	Final approval
Employee contracts	Recommend renewal or non-renewal	Review and make recommendations to board	Approve and make recommendations to board	Final approval
Compensation and classification	Provide information to HRS	Review, correct and provide findings and recommendations	Approve and make recommendations to board	Final approval
Record maintenance and retrieval	Maintain school based records	Maintain district level records	Approve contracts, make budget and policy recommendations.	Provide policies and infrastructure for storage and retention
Attendance monitoring (employees)	Keep sign in and substitute records, review reports	Provide periodic management reports	Review provided reports, approve and recommend policy and procedure changes.	Review provided reports, approve policy changes
Substitute assignment	Supervise substitutes and	Hire staff and conduct orientation	Approve and make recommendations to	Approve hiring

	monitor utilization		the board.	
Benefits administration	No specific assignment	Conduct open enrollment, manage provider contract, resolve employee problems	Review and recommend provider or contract changes, analyze funding implications, make recommendations to board	Approve contracts, approve funding, approve benefits package
Employee safety	Report unsafe conditions for correction, provide report of employee injuries	Manage workers' compensation for injuries, suggest training	Review reports, monitor program, make recommendations to board.	Monitor risk fund and injury reports
Payroll management	Forward timesheets and leave reports	Process and distribute payroll	Approve and report to board	Approve budget and expenditures
Determination of staffing levels	Make need based requests and determine how to use flexible staff positions	Utilize projected enrollment to plan for necessary staffing as provided by PEIMS	Review projections, develop staffing plan allocations, make recommendations to board	Final approval
Employee grievances and complaints	School level dispute resolution	Conduct investigations if not resolved at school level	Hear appeals per policy (has designated task to hearings officer)	Hear appeals from superintendent level hearings

Source: Interviews with Human Resources Services Department staff and school principals, September 2002.

The district places responsibility for hiring and retention programs in its Human Resource Services Department. The Human Resource Services Department's stated mission is to "continually strive to recruit, select, place and retain highly qualified personnel, ensure competitive compensation for all employees and provide the highest possible level of customer service in all areas of Human Resource Services." The Human Resource Services Department has one executive director, five directors, one hearing officer, one office manager, seven secretaries, one receptionist and nine clerks who serve the district's 2,524 employees.

The human resource industry monitors the ratio of personnel staff to employees served for all types of organizations. While government tends to have fewer human resource staff for the number of employees, standards specific to the human resource profession provide a point of comparison for similar positions performing similar tasks across the nation. According to the Bureau of National Affairs, the human resource profession's benchmark ratio of human resource staff to employees is 1:100 employees. The GPISD's ratio is 1:100.1.

As shown in **Exhibit 3-4**, GPISD ranks higher than the state in staff turnover and has a lower "average years of experience" among teaching staff. According to GPISD recruitment information, 42 percent of the 2002-03 teaching staff is in its first year of teaching.

Exhibit 3-4 compares the district's teacher profile with state averages.

Exhibit 3-4
Comparative Teacher Skills and Experience Profiles
GPISD and State
2001-02

Comparison	Percent Teachers with 5 or Less Years Experience	Average Years of Experience	Percent Teachers with Advanced Degrees	Percent Ethnic Diversity among Teachers	Percent of Staff Turnover
GPISD	52.7	9.3	24.9	41.1	19.4
State	35.6	11.9	23.3	27.5	15.7

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2001-02

FINDING

The Human Resource Services Department uses several tools to assist the district in meeting its goal of exemplary ranking. It provides an annual report on personnel data in strategic areas; develops departmental goals to serve the district goals; outlines a department-wide action plan; and monitors individual staff performance toward these goals. GPISD has developed a strategic plan that incorporates department level strategies for achieving district goals. As part of this process, the department tracks staff and resource information. The department provides reports to school and department level administrators in areas such as teacher certification and use of employee leave. It also provides an annual report to the board on personnel issues such as recruitment, turnover, compensation and benefits, which shows how the department supports district-level strategies for achieving goals. The board uses this information to decide which programs or strategies to fund.

Each director in the Human Resource Services Department develops annual goals. The executive director of Human Resource Services monitors achievement by meeting with the section directors three times a year. At the initial meeting, the director discusses the director's individual goals, which the executive director approves. The executive director conducts a second meeting to check progress toward goals approximately halfway through the year. The final meeting at the end of the year measures performance and goal achievement.

The Human Resource Services Department develops a monthly calendar for the upcoming school year to ensure timely performance of personnel activities. The calendar, which is in table form, lists all tasks or activities due in a particular month and assigns staff to each activity. When tasks are completed they are marked on the table. The calendar enables staff and administrators

to easily identify incomplete tasks, set priorities and organize resources to ensure successful completion of upcoming assignments.

An effective human resources department matches its strategies to the organization's goals. In GPISD, the Human Resource Services Department matches employment practices and programs to district goals and has organized its internal departmental process to enhance goal achievement.

COMMENDATION

The Human Resource Services Department uses several tools to monitor department performance against goals and provides staff with schedules for meeting operating deadlines that affect district success.

FINDING

In keeping with a business and educational philosophy that emphasizes technology, the GPISD Web site provides several services online. For example, the Web site provides employees with 24-hour access to benefits and other helpful information.

The district is converting to a total electronic application process. Individuals seeking district employment can apply online. Local applicants without access to a computer can use computers available in the administrative offices. The Web site also provides a bulletin board enabling applicants to post questions about the application process. Questions and answers posted to the bulletin board are available to other applicants, which potentially reduces duplication of effort. The Human Resource Services Department is developing an electronic form to process newly hired employees. The program will extract employee information from the electronically submitted application and prefill the routine information into the hire form. The Human Resource Services Department is also investigating the use of video conferencing to interview applicants who do not live in the Galena Park area.

Employees using the GPISD credit union can bank online through the district Web site. Links to the credit union allow members to check balances, pay bills and perform other activities. This process has security features to reduce the risks sometimes associated with conducting business on the Internet.

District employees can also review and print district forms. For example, the district posts requirements for participation in the district's professional development program and federally-required legal notices online. District policies can be reviewed anytime through the "policy online" link to TASB. The variety of Web offerings provides convenience to employees and reduces paperwork in district offices.

COMMENDATION

GPISD provides employees with online access to numerous district services.

FINDING

The Human Resource Services Department provides district administrators with numerous reports on the performance of programs and initiatives, as well as information necessary for good management. The department issues performance reports on district human resource goals annually. For example, the director of recruitment compiles information on recruiting efforts, employee turnover, vacancy rates and other performance measures of GPISD strategic initiatives. The director reports the information to the board during the budget process. The district uses the compilation to develop and adjust compensation programs to achieve desired staffing goals.

The Human Resource Services Department closely tracks teacher certification, providing information to principals on the status of certification efforts. State law requires notification to parents when uncertified teachers are assigned to teach their children. The department's certification reports help confirm when to send notices to meet the provisions of the statute.

Certification reports also assist in developing hiring strategies. The district places teachers needing additional education credits for certification on an emergency permit. The district also develops a deficiency plan to show the number of credit hours needed for certification and provide the employee with information on area training programs. Teachers can complete certification courses at local universities. Region 4 has a shorter, but more intensive program. After reviewing certification information, the Human Resource Services Department determined uncertified teachers on a deficiency plan had a lower completion rate than those who attempted certification through the Region 4 training program. The district responded by narrowing its policy to those participating in the Region 4 program when hiring uncertified teachers.

The district uses numerous surveys and other data collection efforts to provide a variety of reports. For example, new teachers fill out a survey requesting information on their recruitment location and their opinion of the recruitment process. GPISD compiles the survey responses and provides them to administrators for review.

Information from the payroll system provides information on absences. Reports show absences by nature of absence, day of the week and school. The reports help administrators determine if a pattern of absences exists so they can develop solutions.

Effective and thorough reports provide GPISD with the ability to measure programs, enabling staff to develop strategies to improve performance standards.

COMMENDATION

GPISD's Human Resource Services Department provides regular reports to district administrators to improve management of daily operations.

FINDING

GPISD's Human Resource Services Department recruitment manual provides forms, questionnaires, procedures and other helpful information to guide personnel involved in recruiting and hiring. The district has a director of Recruitment, but recruiting duties are also

shared with the directors of Human Resource Services-Elementary and Human Resource Services-Secondary. Occasionally, principals or other staff will participate in the recruitment and hiring process.

The manual provides staff with tips for interviewing, identifies standard questions developed by the Human Resource Services Department staff and includes form letters for notifying applicants who are not being considered for employment. It also includes procedures requiring the district to respond to applicants within seven days after receiving an application. This helps recruiters present a professional image of the district. The manual covers the following topics:

- district recruiting mission statement, schedule and principles;
- teacher selection process;
- position openings spreadsheet;
- information on hiring myths and understanding applicants;
- interview techniques, including a teacher interview report and flow chart, 13 steps to a successful interview, what to tell the applicant before the interview and questions for new and experienced teachers;
- job fairs;
- conducting reference checks;
- sample follow-up letters;
- legal considerations;
- certification basics; and
- ExCET material (teacher qualification exam)

The hiring process has a number of legal risks associated with federal laws such as the Civil Rights Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Providing specific guidelines and written materials for hiring processes helps staff less familiar with hiring laws to select employees while complying with applicable laws.

COMMENDATION

GPISD's recruitment procedures manual provides step-by-step guidance for a professional and legally compliant hiring process.

FINDING

GPISD has not defined the essential duties of all district jobs. The district uses the TASB job description format, which does not include designation of essential and non-essential tasks. When the district creates a new position or when a position's duties change, the directors of Human Resource Services-Elementary and Human Resource Services-Secondary work with district supervisors and administrators to develop position descriptions. GPISD job descriptions list the following categories: primary purpose, qualifications, responsibilities and duties and working conditions.

The district's lack of essential and non-essential tasks in personnel descriptions creates problems in several areas. For example, when an employee is injured, the director of Safety and Risk

Management develops a list of essential tasks for determining if an injured employee can return to work and conditions for returning. By listing the major responsibilities and working conditions, GPISD job descriptions provide some guidance in determining if a medical condition interferes with a duty or responsibility of a position. However, the descriptions do not supply enough definition for the risk manager to make accommodation decisions without an additional determination on whether a function is essential or non-essential.

Essential duty definitions help meet legal requirements in a variety of employment activities. For example, employers cannot ask applicants or employees if they have a medical or other condition that would affect their performance. They can ask if an employee can perform the essential functions of a position. Applicants must determine from reading the job description if a task can be performed with or without reasonable accommodation.

A job function is considered essential if the position exists to perform that function; only a limited number of available employees can perform the function; or the function is so highly specialized that the person in the position was specifically hired to perform the function. For example, travel might be a requirement for both the director of recruiting and a school principal. Travel might be considered an essential function for the director of recruiting because it comprises a large portion of the job and there are a limited number of employees to assume an aggressive travel schedule. On the other hand, travel might be non-essential for a school principal. If the required travel consists of possible trips to Austin during the legislative session, other principals could fill that duty.

The determination of essential functions should be consistent throughout the employment process. Consistency supports a process that treats disabled applicants and employees fairly and allows the district to hire competent employees based on ability. Without thoughtful definitions of essential functions employers risk confusion and temporary loss of productivity when employees realize they cannot perform an essential task and must ask for reasonable accommodation. The Austin Independent School District includes essential tasks as part of its job descriptions and posts these for applicants to review.

Recommendation 17:

Develop a complete list of essential duties for each position to use in hiring and workers' compensation programs.

Essential functions are not required to be included in the job description, but inclusion can provide applicants or others with necessary position information. If the district changes or clarifies essential functions during a workers' compensation review, the changes should be made to a master description for that position used in filling the position. In determining whether a function is essential, the district should consider the amount of time spent on the job performing that function; the consequences of not requiring that position holder to perform the function; the work experience of others who have held the position; and the work experience of present job holders in similar positions.

The description of the duty should provide the reader with a clear understanding of requirements necessary to perform the function. Descriptions may include frequency, possible manner of performance and operational function. For example, a position expected to make visits to various school locations might have language that states "frequently travels to district schools to work with administrators and teachers on curriculum concerns." Essential functions can be distinguished from non-essential functions by putting non-essential functions under a separate heading, placing an asterisk by the essential functions or by other similar methods.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The directors of Human Resource Services-Elementary and Human Resource Services-Secondary obtain and review any essential duties lists created for workers' compensation cases.	May 2003
2.	The directors of Human Resource Services-Elementary and Human Resource Services-Secondary review position descriptions and draft lists of essential and non-essential tasks for each position, using language that adequately identifies the mental or physical skills necessary to perform the task.	May 2003
3.	The directors of Human Resource Services-Elementary and Human Resource Services-Secondary meet with supervisors to discuss draft lists and make necessary corrections.	July 2003
4.	The directors of Human Resource Services-Elementary and Human Resource Services-Secondary provide the final list to the executive director of Human Resource Services for approval.	July 2003
5.	The executive director of Human Resource Services provides the lists to the chief operations officer for review by legal counsel for approval or suggestions on appropriate language.	August 2003
6.	The executive director of Human Resource Services provides the approved list to the superintendent for review and recommendation to the board.	October 2003
7.	The board reviews and approves the lists for use in hiring and other personnel activities.	November 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 3

PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

B. Recruitment, Hiring and Retention

Whether voluntary or involuntary terminating an employee, an employer incurs costs when an employee leaves an organization. To avoid these costs, employers develop programs to recruit and retain employees. A district's employee turnover rate provides one measure of its personnel programs. Turnover refers to the process of termination and replacement of employees.

In 2001-02, three of the five peer districts-Humble, Pasadena and Goose Creek Consolidated-had lower turnover rates than the state average of 15.7. GPISD had the highest turnover rate at 19.4, followed by Aldine at 18.7 (**Exhibit 3-5**).

Exhibit 3-5
Teacher Turnover Rate
GPISD, Peer District and State
1997-98 through 2001-02

District	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02
GPISD	14.1	20.4	19.9	18.3	19.4
Aldine	13.8	16.3	14.3	17.1	18.7
Humble	11.4	18.0	13.4	17.9	15.0
Pasadena	10.5	16.3	14.5	13.9	13.8
Goose Creek Consolidated	11.9	12.1	12.3	13.8	13.9
State Average	13.3	15.5	15.0	16.0	15.7

Source: TEA, AEIS, 1997-98 through 2001-02.

School districts develop recruitment strategies and programs that target desired applicants and meet district goals. GPISD uses several recruiting strategies. **Exhibit 3-6** compares sample recruiting strategies of GPISD with Pasadena, which spends almost twice as much as GPISD, and Humble, which spends less than half as much as GPISD. GPISD and Pasadena ISD (PISD) recruit internationally with funding assistance from other agencies or governments. While PISD hosts its own job fair in Puerto Rico, most of the international recruitment effort is initiated by various organizations such as the Canadian Ministry of Education, TEA

and Region 4. GPISD has hired international teachers from Canada, Spain, Mexico and the Philippines. The district applies a \$2,000 critical shortage-area signing bonus to relocation costs. The sponsoring program provides funding for international recruiting efforts. For example, the TEA funds the recruiting program in Spain.

**Exhibit 3-6
Recruitment Strategies
GPISD and Selected Peer Districts
2002-03**

Strategy or Program	GPISD ISD	Pasadena ISD	Humble ISD
District Hosted Job Fair	Yes	Yes	Yes
Area Job Fairs	Yes	Yes	Yes
State University Recruiting	Yes	Yes	Yes
Out of State Recruiting	Yes	Yes	Yes
International Recruiting	Yes	Yes	No
Teleconference Recruiting	No	Yes	No
Budget	\$47,674	\$88,000	\$17,300

Source: Peer districts recruitment brochures and questionnaires; interviews with GPISD director of Recruitment.

As a recruiting tool, GPISD increased salaries at the beginning levels of the teacher compensation scale. **Exhibit 3-7** shows GPISD teacher salary increases from 1997-98 through 2001-02.

**Exhibit 3-7
GPISD Average Teacher Salaries by Category
1997-98 through 2001-02**

Position	Average Salary 1997-98	Average Salary 1998-99	Average Salary 1999-2000	Average Salary 2000-01	Average Salary 2001-02	Percent Change 1997-98 through 2001-02
Teacher with 1-5 years of experience	\$28,279	\$30,002	\$33,497	\$34,466	\$34,792	23%

Teacher with 6-10 years of experience	\$31,171	\$32,623	\$35,829	\$36,756	\$37,182	19%
Teacher with 11-20 years of experience	\$38,349	\$40,406	\$43,453	\$44,001	\$41,850	9%
Teacher with more than 20 years experience	\$45,645	\$47,839	\$51,200	\$51,691	\$48,875	7%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 1997-98 through 2001-02.

Salaries for experienced teachers have not increased proportionately with increases for newer teachers. GPISD is considering longevity pay for experienced teachers as a teacher retention strategy in its 2002-03 compensation plan.

FINDING

GPISD has several programs focused on retaining teachers new to the teaching profession. Because the district recruits heavily at colleges and universities, the district hires a large number of new or inexperienced teachers. New teachers who make a career changes generally do so within their first five years. To help ease new teachers into teaching, the district provides new teacher assistance that ranges from special training to certification assistance.

GPISD has two district level teacher mentors who make site visits and host workshops and district events. The new teacher mentor program, which began in 1991, provides professional and personal support to beginning teachers. In addition to the two full time teacher mentors, each school has a lead mentor that plans activities, hosts meetings, listens to new teacher concerns and provides support and advice. The district recruits school-based teacher mentors through interest questionnaires, volunteers and the school's lead mentor. The 24 lead mentors receive a stipend, as well as certificates and snacks at the monthly meeting.

The mission of GPISD's mentor program, called the Induction Year Teacher Program, is "to provide assistance, support and encouragement through a collaborative process so that all teachers are successful." The district new teacher mentor provides training to participants. The goals of the Induction Year Teacher Program include promoting professional development and personal well being; providing survival skills; and creating a family atmosphere. GPISD surveys new teachers to determine the effectiveness of the mentor program.

The Induction Year Teacher program uses the Texas Beginning Educator Support System (TxBESS) to evaluate new teacher performance. Developed by the State Board for Educator Certification, TxBESS helps schools develop new teacher skills. The TxBESS program has identified standards for new teachers, which are considered the basics of successful teaching. Region 4 provides training to GPISD new teacher mentors on administering the TxBESS program.

GPISD also hosts a new teacher academy that new teachers attend at assigned schools. Principals cover school routines, policies and procedures. Topics discussed concern the teacher code of ethics, discipline procedures, classroom management, the crisis plan, school goals and objectives, lesson plans, attendance reporting, special programs, curriculum requirements and instructional expectations. The district also provides a map to new teacher attendees showing the location of district schools, as well as area eating establishments. International teachers receive additional training developed specifically to assist their transition to Texas schools.

The GPISD Office of Research and Evaluation surveys new GPISD teachers annually to evaluate the district employment process. In 2002, 68.8 percent of the teachers surveyed were in their first five years of teaching. **Exhibit 3-8** shows survey responses ranking new teacher programs. Responses were given a scale of one to five, with a response of five being the highest ranking.

Exhibit 3-8
GPISD Hiring Procedures
Survey Responses by New Teachers
2002

Topic	5 (Highest Rank)	4	3 (Midpoint Rank)	2	1 (Lowest Rank)
Explanation of Hiring Procedures/General Information	49.6 %	24.0%	15.2%	6.4%	1.6%
Assistance with certification requirements	48.8%	20.0%	8.0%	7.2%	4.0%
Organization and timeliness of orientation	49.6%	28.0%	13.6%	2.4%	2.4%

Source: GPISD Office of Research and Evaluation Employment Process Evaluation 2002 Spring Report, March 2002.

In open comments to the 2002 survey, teachers noted the most positive aspect of the process involved the personal touch provided and staff helpfulness. In a 2001 survey, the Office of Research and Evaluation surveyed new teachers on staff development and the mentor program. **Exhibit 3-9** shows selected survey responses for 2001.

Exhibit 3-9
GPISD Development Programs
Survey Responses by New Teachers
2001

Topic	Strong	Average	Poor	Not Acceptable
Districtwide staff development	64.1%	33.3%	2.6%	0%
Campus staff development	64.1%	35.9%	0%	0%
Accessibility of mentor	65.0%	22.5%	10.0%	2.5%

Source: GPISD Office of Research and Evaluation Employment Process Evaluation 2001 Spring Report, February 2001.

In comments to the 2001 survey, new teachers included the strong support of mentors, the new teacher in-service and the many district staff interested in new teacher progress as the most positive aspects of the processes. GPISD's new teacher initiatives seek to reduce the number of teachers who quit teaching and seek a different career.

COMMENDATION

The district uses a variety of strategies to increase the likelihood that their new teachers will stay in the teaching field.

FINDING

GPISD developed a hiring procedure to reduce the number of teacher vacancies at the start of year. While employees leave throughout the year, schools try to start the school year with a full teaching staff. Start of year vacancies refer to the measure of unfilled positions on the first day of school. Between 1999-2000 and 2001-02, the start of school year vacancy rate for teachers dropped from 10 percent to 1 percent.

The Human Resource Services Department analyzes a number of indicators such as turnover and enrollment projections to determine the number of teachers needed to fill upcoming year vacancies. The director of Recruitment develops a recruitment schedule for the year. The director of Recruitment reviews potential recruitment fairs to determine which may provide the best opportunities to meet needs in the coming year. The director selects fairs from the *Recruiters Guide*, a publication that lists the projected attendance and diversity of candidates for each education-related job fair.

The GPISD board has delegated hiring authority to recruiters. Recruiters interview likely candidates at job fairs. The district provides recruiters preprinted index cards with spaces for candidate information, including interview observations such as appearance, job knowledge and motivation. When an applicant meets the district's skills and qualifications for a teaching position, recruiters make an offer, which is documented in an "Agreement to Contract" letter. The letter binds the district to provide a position for the applicant in the upcoming school year. The candidates accepting an agreement to contract form a pool of available teachers. Principals select newly hired teachers from the pool. The agreement does not bind the applicant to the district. Because the district constantly recruits, the pool stays constantly replenished.

Through year-round recruitment, the district makes offers early in the school year. For example, the district offers a job in October to a college student who will not graduate until the following May. To keep in the applicant focused on GPISD, the district sends additional letters and makes phone calls in the months following the employment offer. The district enters the applicant information into its human resources computer database.

Principals with teacher openings review pool applicant qualifications through the district's human resources computer database. The principal selects applicants with the qualifications for a particular position to interview. If an applicant has the skills for the position, the principal will extend an offer for assignment at his or her respective school.

Although principals must select applicants from the pool, they have the ability to recruit and refer applicants to the pool. Principals can attend local job fairs to recruit for openings. Once principals identify a candidate they would like to hire, they send potential applicants to the Human Resource Services Department for screening. The district places the successful candidates in the pool, but designate the candidate for a position at the respective principal's school.

This method, which has been GPISD's primary tool to recruit teachers in critical shortage areas, has contributed to the reduction of the start of year teacher vacancy rate. For 2002-03, the district hired 221 teachers to fill new positions and vacated positions. As a result, the district had only two vacancies at the start of the school year.

COMMENDATION

The district reduced its start of school year teacher vacancy rate by authorizing recruiters to make job offers and maintaining contact with teachers who have been selected for employment with the district.

FINDING

The Human Resource Services Department uses an applicant-screening and interview process to identify desirable employee characteristics and attitudes without risk of unintentional discrimination or bias. The initial interview uses a screening tool developed by Gallup to identify candidates possessing characteristics preferred by the district. The tool, referred to as the Teacher Perceiver Interview (TPI), measures a teacher's philosophy about education, how the teacher relates to others and how the teacher activates and structures learning in the classroom. The TPI has both a long and short format, which provides recruiters flexibility. The process provides an understanding of an applicant's talent for teaching. GPISD began using the screening tool in 1996.

The district trains Human Resource Services Department staff, as well as principals, in the administration and scoring of the interview questions. The Gallup instrument trains interviewers to listen for specific themes and ideas in the potential applicants' responses. The interviewer then scores responses. Gallup has validated the accuracy of TPI scoring by matching TPI scores with teaching evaluations. Further studies of TPI scores have shown no substantial differences in results across classifications of race, gender, age or years of experience.

If an applicant scores within the desirable range on the TPI, the applicant is asked additional district-developed questions. The follow-up questionnaire asks questions to test applicant priorities in the classroom. These questionnaires differentiate between new and experienced teachers. All applicants receive consistent interviews. The district trains all recruiters to provide a consistent interview process. By using defined interview tools, GPISD identifies qualified candidates in a reliable process.

COMMENDATION

GPISD uses a reliable applicant screening process that gathers consistent information in interviews and identifies appropriate candidates through a standardized interview tool.

FINDING

The district tracks voluntary and involuntary separations from employment, but the process captures broad categories that do not provide adequate information to effectively analyze the employee's reason for leaving the district. A voluntary separation is a decision to resign made by an employee. An involuntary separation ends employment for reasons not controlled by the employee. While most separations are voluntary resignations, other reasons, such as death or job abandonment, may also be tracked.

In 2000-01 and 2001-02, moving from the district was the reason given most frequently by teachers who left the district (**Exhibit 3-10**).

**Exhibit 3-10
GPISD Teacher Separations
2000-01 through 2001-02**

Reason	Number Leaving 2000-01	Percent of Total	Number Leaving 2001-02	Percent of Total
Moving from district	62	28%	75	39%
Retirement	15	7%	17	9%
Spouse relocated	3	1%	0	0%
Moved out of state	3	1%	3	2%
District requirements	20	9%	19	10%
Closer to home	12	5%	6	3%
Stayed at home	11	5%	7	4%
Lateral move	1	0%	0	0%
Advancement	11	5%	11	6%
Did not divulge	71	32%	33	17%
Health	1	0%	0	0%
Further education	4	2%	5	3%
Personal reason	3	1%	13	7%

Career change	4	2%	3	2%
Deceased	1	0%	0	0%
Total	222	100%	192	100%

Source: GPISD Recruitment Report 2001-02.

An exit report or interview helps determine employment separation issues. The departing employee's supervisor usually conducts the exit interview. The type of questions asked and the quality of any interview can affect the information reported. To ensure departments conduct exit interviews, GPISD departments to report exit interview data with the separating paperwork to the Human Resource Services Department.

The human resource industry uses various methods to calculate the cost of employee turnover. Actual costs of turnover vary according to the type of staff, benefits, training, specialized knowledge, level within the organization, recruitment efforts and other factors. The KE Consulting Group, for example, estimates the cost of turnover at 1.0 to 1.5 times the salary of the terminated staff. The American Management Association places the estimation at 30 percent of an employee's salary. Utilizing both of these methods, **Exhibit 3-11** shows an estimated range for turnover costs for teachers who left the district in 2001-02.

Exhibit 3-11
GPISD Estimated Turnover Cost for Replaced Teachers
2001-02

Employee Category	Teacher Resignations	Minimum Salary for Position	Estimated Cost at 30 Percent of Salary	Estimated Cost at 1.5 Times Salary
Teachers	192	\$35,050	\$2,018,880	\$10,094,400

Source: GPISD Recruitment and Retention Report to Board and GPISD Compensation and Benefits Handbook 2002 for resignation and salary information.

When a trained and competent employee leaves a job, the employer incurs additional costs to recruit, hire and train a replacement. The learning curve for a new position makes a new employee initially less productive. Knowing why employees leave can help target solutions for preventing staff from leaving. Exit data can help an organization create an environment that encourages employees to stay. Resources spent on replacement may be reallocated to fund retention or reward programs.

A separating employee may be uncomfortable discussing reasons for leaving, but trained personnel or well-designed surveys can elicit specific information that will aid employers in retention efforts. Pasadena Independent School District (PISD) makes the determination of why teachers resign the first step of its recruitment plan. PISD's survey of teachers who leave determined that the main reason was the distance from their home to the district. Since reducing drive time was not within its control, PISD focused on alternative strategies such as recruiting applicants from the community or recruiting international applicants who can relocate close to the community. Specific information has allowed PISD to improve retention strategies and resources.

Recommendation 18:

Update the exit report form and train administrators to obtain responses that provide more meaningful management information.

Gathering clear information involves going beyond general phrases such as "more money" or "better opportunity" to discover why an opportunity is better or how much of a salary increase will lure away a good employee. Is the employee leaving for better medical benefits for dependents? Is the personal reason a conflict with a supervisor? Could the district have done anything to make the career path better? Specific information can lead to improved strategies for retention.

A quality exit interview process can also provide insight into the effectiveness of the district's policy and procedure. Some employees may consider their reasons for termination to be personal, but many employees will participate if they understand the information will improve district services. Others may be more comfortable if the district provides the option of being interviewed by the Human Resource Services Department, instead of their direct supervisor.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The directors of Human Resource Services-Elementary and Human Resource Services-Secondary meet and discuss methods of refining the exit report such as redefining categories or asking specific questions about the new position.	April - 2003
2.	The directors of Human Resource Services-Elementary and Human Resource Services-Secondary update the exit form to reflect adopted changes.	April - May 2003
3.	The directors of Human Resource Services-Elementary and Human Resource Services-Secondary meet with principals, assistant principals and department heads to provide training on use of the	May - July 2003

	form and eliciting appropriate responses.	
4.	The directors of Human Resource Services-Elementary and Human Resource Services-Secondary document the procedure, to include an alternative exit interview with human resources staff, if terminating employee is not comfortable with supervisor discussion.	August 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The district does not track the cost-effectiveness of its recruitment efforts. GPISD attends recruitment fairs throughout Texas and the United States and participates in government-sponsored international recruiting. While, the district tracks and reports on where hired employees were first recruited and gathers information on the number of applicants it contacts through attended job fairs, it does not track the cost of each recruitment trip.

At orientation, the district provides new teachers with a form regarding their recruitment. The district compiles this information as part of the annual recruiting performance report presented to the board. **Exhibit 3-12** shows the number of teachers hired at the various job fairs.

Exhibit 3-12
GPISD Attended Recruitment Fairs
2002

Recruitment Fairs	2002 Fairs Attended	Number Hired for 2002-03	Number as Percent of Total Hired All Efforts
Texas Fairs			
Region 4	Yes	25	12%
GPISD	Yes	15	7%
BABES	Yes	3	1%
University of Houston	Yes	20	8%
University of Houston	Yes	10	5%

Clear Lake			
University of Houston Downtown	Yes	4	2%
University of Texas	Yes	1	1%
University of Texas, San Antonio	Yes	1	1%
University of Texas, Pan Am	Yes	0	0%
Sam Houston State University	Yes	7	3%
Texas A&M University	Yes	6	3%
Texas A&M, Corpus Christi	Yes	3	1%
Prairie View A&M	Yes	3	1%
West Texas A&M	Yes	0	0%
Texas A&M, Kingsville	Yes	0	0%
Houston Baptist University	Yes	2	1%
Texas Tech University	Yes	2	1%
Southwest Texas State University	Yes	3	1%
Baylor University	Yes	2	1%
Lamar University	Yes	2	1%
Sul Ross University	--	1	1%
East Texas State University	Yes	0	0%
Texas Christian University	Yes	0	0%
Texas Southern University	--	5	2%
Stephen F. Austin University	Yes	5	2%
Out Of State Fairs			
University of Northern Iowa	Yes	2	1%
University of Oklahoma	Yes	2	1%
Oklahoma State University	Yes	0	0%

Louisiana State University	Yes	2	1%
University of Louisiana, Lafayette	Yes	0	0%
Southern Louisiana University	Yes	0	0%
McNeese State, Louisiana	Yes	1	1%
Northwestern State, Louisiana	Yes	0	0%
University of Nebraska	Yes	2	1%
Iowa State University	--	1	1%
Belmont University, Tennessee	--	1	1%
St. Mary's University, Michigan	--	1	1%
Michigan State University	Yes	0	0%
University of Michigan	Yes	0	0%
Central Michigan State	Yes	0	0%
North Alabama College	Yes	0	0%
University of Southern Illinois	Yes	0	0%
University of Illinois	Yes	0	0%
Illinois State University	Yes	0	0%
Kansas State University	Yes	1	1%
University of Kansas	Yes	0	0%
Emporia State University, Kansas	Yes	0	0%
Gateway Job Fair, St. Louis	Yes	0	0%
Nashville Teachers Fair	Yes	0	0%
International Programs			
Philippines	Special Program	29	13%
Spain	Special	12	6%

	Program		
Mexico	Special Program	8	4%
Canada	Special Program	3	1%

Source: GPISD Recruitment Manual, GPISD Recruitment and Retention Report 2002.
 *Percentages may not total to 100 percent due to rounding.

The director of Recruitment confirmed the fairs attended by providing a copy of the spring 2002 recruitment schedule. A comparison of the fairs on the spring schedule to the 2002 recruitment report showing the source of newly hired teachers reveals a variance. Six locations provided new teachers to the district, but the list of fairs attended did not include the locations. According to the two sources of information, GPISD hired 237 teachers from recruiting travel efforts. Texas-based recruitment fairs provided 120 teachers. National recruiting fairs provided 65 teachers. International recruiting efforts provided 52 teachers.

Fairs are selected from the *Recruiters Guide*, a publication that lists the projected attendance and diversity and for each education related job fair. The director of Recruitment develops an attendance schedule for the upcoming year based on the district's projected needs as measured against the projected attendance of each fair. The director enters the schedule on a spreadsheet and lists the date of the fair, the name of the fair, the projected attendance at the fair, the cost of entry and the deadline for sign-up. Recruiters interview candidates and can make job offers at the fairs. Two and occasionally three district staff members attend fairs to recruit teachers.

The director of recruitment develops an attendance schedule for the upcoming year. The director enters the schedule on a spreadsheet and lists the date of the fair, the name of the fair, the projected attendance at the fair, the cost of entry and the deadline for sign-up. Recruiters interview candidates and can make job offers at the fairs. Two and occasionally three district staff members attend fairs to recruit teachers.

The district provides recruiters a form to document applicants interviewed at the fairs. The recruiters also note if an interview was conducted at the district offices, over the telephone or on a specified recruiting trip. The district does not compare information against the fair's projected attendance or the cost of each trip against the number of qualified applicants interviewed or applicants hired. The district does not review the

performance of the various fairs against various recruiting goals to determine if individual trips were worth the resources spent.

Using the performance information in **Exhibit 3-12**, the auditor determined 51 percent came from Texas activities, 27 percent from national efforts and 22 percent from special international programs. Disregarding the special international programs, Texas recruitment provided 65 percent of the new teachers and national recruitment 35 percent. Texas trips resulted in a new employee 86 percent of the time, while national trips resulted in a new employee 36 percent of the time.

GPISD staff members said that each year they review candidate information cards and the interview forms to determine which recruiting visits to continue and which to drop. According to district staff, the number of teachers ultimately hired serves as the most important indicator of success. Of the 24 out-of-state fairs, four provided two teachers per site and five sites provided a single teacher each.

GPISD does not analyze and match its recruiting efforts to the types of teachers needed. For example, the Human Resource Services Department has identified the need for experienced teachers. Most recruiting fairs attended target graduating students. In 2002-03, 42 percent of the teachers hired had no teaching experience. Although GPISD recruitment activities were successful in vacancy reduction, they were not analyzed against other goals or performance measures.

GPISD budgeted \$20,154 for recruitment travel in 2002-03. The district informally monitored job fair success rates by the number of candidate information cards completed at each fair. However, GPISD has not formally tied success rates of 2001-02 recruitment activities to the travel budget, planned trips for 2002-03 recruitment or goals such as maintaining a mix of new and experienced teachers. To compile the recruitment fairs information, several different recruiting reports had to be reviewed. GPISD provided conflicting information for use in the exhibit. The district collects a range of information, but it is not compiled and analyzed to provide a full picture of cost, value and success as measured against more than one or two district goals.

Successful recruitment programs track and analyze a full range of performance measures, using the analysis to redirect resources to meet recruitment goals. Humble Independent School District reviews each recruitment effort through several measures such as the money spent on the visit, the number of prospective applicants seen and the number of visits for the number of employees hired.

Recommendation 19:

Develop a process to measure the effectiveness of district recruitment efforts.

The district should develop, track and analyze performance information to determine the cost benefit of each recruiting trip or strategy. Examples of the types of information that should be gathered are the number of candidates met or interviewed, cost of travel, cost of staff per job fair and qualified candidates as a percent of total candidates at each fair. The district should also measure recruitment efforts against a variety of district goals.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Recruitment develops a form that captures performance data such as the number of candidates met or interviewed at a particular fair, the cost of travel and staff per fair and number of projected attendees.	May 2003
2.	The director of Recruitment develops a report that analyzes the information to determine the cost benefit of each trip.	June 2003
3.	The director of Recruitment captures the necessary information and performs periodic analysis.	July 2003 and thereafter
4.	The director of Recruitment shares the findings with the executive director of Human Resource Services.	August 2003 and thereafter

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

GPISD does not track the success rate of recruiting advertisements to determine which are the most effective and provide the best value. The Human Resource Services Department advertises in a variety of publications and Web sites. Through a Region 4 recruiting cooperative in 2000-01, the district advertised in the *Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Journal*, *the Black EOE Journal*, *The Black Collegian*, *The Hispanic Network* and *National Minority Update*. The district also advertises with local newspapers such as the *Houston Chronicle*. Immigration laws require job ads be placed in a newspaper of general circulation such as the *Chronicle*, as well as in minority periodicals such as the *Hispanic Network* and *Minority Update*.

The district uses recruitment Web sites such as the Texas Regional Education Applicant Placement Program (TXREAP), the Educational

America Network, the Texas Workforce Commission and the *Houston Chronicle* E-Recruiter Program. The results from these advertisements are not tracked to determine the most beneficial advertisements.

In 2001-02, GPISD spent \$2,292 on print advertisement, \$2,000 on Web advertisement and \$10,333 on other types of recruitment media. Human Resource Services Department rates recruiting resources based on staff beliefs about the effectiveness of advertising programs. District staff said the combined efforts of the *Houston Chronicle*, E-Recruiter and the GPISD Web site generated "3,700 inquiries and a commensurate number of applications." The district dropped an unproductive movie theatre advertisement program after a few months. The district did not provide information or analysis to support that the cost of a service outweighed its value suggesting that informal review determines the effectiveness of each advertising effort, rather than a budget-based analysis.

Companies, including districts, must review advertisements to determine effectiveness and best value. The Austin Independent School District measures the success of its recruiting fair advertising by tracking which advertisement brought in the most attendees and comparing the numbers to various budget and performance measures. School districts across Texas develop programs to measure the return on their advertising investment.

Recommendation 20:

Develop a performance tracking procedure for recruiting advertisements.

Without measuring the performance of advertisements, GPISD may not be effectively spending its advertising dollars. Advertisements can be assigned a number or other code that distinguishes the publication or program. Applicants may be asked to include the code as a reference number in applying for the position. Another alternative, the online employment application could include a mandatory field requiring applicants to identify where they learned of the district's employment opportunities.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Recruitment develops a code or tracking number to be placed in the advertisement.	April 2003
2.	The director of Recruitment amends the employment application to include an area for tracking advertising information.	May 2003
3.	The director of Recruitment implements the tracking process.	June 2003

4.	The director of Recruitment analyzes information gathered and uses it to make decisions on where to place advertisements.	July 2003 and Ongoing
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FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 3

PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

C. Staffing, Salaries and Benefits

In 2001-02, GPISD employed a staff of 2,524.1 full-time equivalents (FTE's) or full-time employees. Since the district emphasizes student achievement, it holds each school's administration responsible for success or failure in meeting student achievement goals.

The district determines the number of staff needed to adequately maintain an effective educational environment in part by formula. Executive level administrators meet to analyze staffing reports and determine the number of staff needed for the upcoming school year. As part of the staffing allocation process, principals have flexible staffing units they can use to meet specific school needs. For example, a teacher position counts as two units. An aide counts as one unit. If the principal has four flexible staff units, the principal could hire two teachers for special instructional needs. Another principal with the same number of flexible units may decide to hire four aides to perform support duties. Flexible units are determined in part by the school's student enrollment. **Exhibit 3-13** shows the formula central administrators use to staff elementary schools.

Exhibit 3-13
Staffing Formulas for GPISD Elementary Schools
2002-03

Enrollment	Flex Units	Estimated Salary Amount Budgeted
0-599	1	\$40,000
600-699	1.5	\$60,000
700-799	2	\$80,000
800-899	2.5	\$100,000
900-999	3	\$120,000
1,000-1,999	3.5	\$140,000

Source: GPISD Human Resource Services Department.

GPISD sets the basic elementary school staffing allotment for administrative and professional positions at one principal, one assistant principal, one counselor, one librarian, one nurse, one music teacher, one

physical education teacher, one technology instructional specialist and one instructional specialist. Standard support positions include one principal secretary, one school secretary, one Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) aide, one library aide and one aide per pre-kindergarten teacher. Elementary schools with an enrollment of more than 900 students are eligible for a second assistant principal.

The district removes principals if their school has not reached recognized status within three years of their assuming the principal position. The district recently added the same level of accountability to assistant principal positions. All principals interviewed said the district provides them support, authority and flexibility to manage and staff their school to meet performance goals.

The performance expectations tied to a timeline that exists for principals do not extend to the central administrators with decision-making authority affecting school performance. The district uses compensation policies to hold central and support staff accountable for performance. The district will deny raises or district compensation increases to staff not meeting performance expectations.

Exhibit 3-14 compares the district's staffing to its peer districts, the region and the state.

**Exhibit 3-14
Staffing Comparison
GPISD, Peer Districts, Region 4 and State
2001-02**

District	GPISD	Aldine	Pasadena	Goose Creek	Humble	Region 4	State
Students	19,336	53,201	43,476	18,274	25,239	900,198	4,146,653
Teachers	1,325.9	3,574.1	2,706.5	1,156.6	1,694.1	56,772.6	282,583.1
Professional Support Staff	153.2	469.4	352.5	190.4	320.5	18,139.8	49,903.6
Educational Aides	137.1	1,143.7	619.7	142.8	242.3	10,561.3	57,941.4
Auxiliary Staff	812	1,980.9	1,381.7	722.6	868.1	28,229.2	148,644.9
Administrators*	95.8	269.1	172.8	85.7	131.6	4,105.9	20,990
Students Per Teacher	14.6	14.9	16.1	15.8	14.9	15.9	14.7

Students Per Professional Support Staff	126.2	113.3	123.3	96	78.7	49.6	83.1
Students Per Aide	141.0	46.5	70.2	128	104.2	85.2	71.6
Students per Auxiliary	23.8	26.9	31.5	25.3	29.1	31.9	27.9
Students Per Administrator	201.8	197.7	251.6	213.2	191.8	219.2	197.6

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2001-02.

*Administrators include campus and central administrators.

GPISD has the lowest student to teacher ratio among its peers, slightly lower than the state average. The district has more students per professional staff than its peers and substantially more than the state and region. The district has substantially more students per educational aide than its peers, the state or the region. The GPISD student to administrator ratio is in the middle of the peer, region and state range. By contrast, the GPISD student per auxiliary staff ratio has the fewest students to staff when compared to the state, region and peer districts.

GPISD routinely reviews district compensation rates to determine market competitiveness. Although the district performs a market survey annually, it does not review all jobs each year. With assistance from TASB compensation specialists, a category of jobs is reviewed and recommendations made. All positions are reviewed every three years. In 2000, after performing a market analysis on administrative and professional positions, TASB recommended an increase: in the number of work days for 51 employees, special adjustments for 12 employees, a stipend for 316 teachers in critical shortage areas and a general pay increase of 4 percent for 146 employees who were below the minimum of their pay range. In 2001, TASB analyzed the market for auxiliary and technology positions and found that current pay ranges in all job families were market competitive and clerical, paraprofessional and manual trades were slightly above market. TASB recommended that all employees be given a general pay increase of 3 percent.

The district assigns a pay range for each job grade and establishes its minimum and maximum rates of pay. The district categorizes each job by skill, effort and responsibility required. The superintendent makes recommendations to the board on annual pay increases that are based on cost of living indexes, wage increases in similar job markets and district

financial resources. The district calculates pay increases on the midpoint of each pay range. If the district gives a pay increase of 5 percent, the district calculates 5 percent on the midpoint and provides that amount equally through the range. For example, an employee at midpoint would receive a 5 percent increase. An employee at a range's minimum would receive the same dollar amount, which actually results in a higher percentage increase. Calculating raises to midpoint is a standard TASB compensation policy used by many Texas districts.

Exhibit 3-15 shows GPISD's adopted administrative/professional salary schedule for 2002-03.

Exhibit 3-15
GPISD Administrative Professional Salary Schedule
2002-03

Pay Grade Level	Types of Staff Included	Minimum Daily Rate	Maximum Daily Rate
AP10	Occupational Therapist Assistant, Youth Substance Abuse Intervention Counselor, LVN Campus Nurse, LVN Itinerant Nurse	\$150.22	\$225.33
AP11	Specialists in Family Service, Community Class Teacher, EHS Educational, EHS Social Services, Intervention	\$172.75	\$259.13
AP12	Diagnostician, Speech-Language Pathologist.	\$198.67	\$297.99
AP13	Assistant Principal, Elementary; Coordinators in Bilingual/ESL, Career and Technology, District Testing, Early Childhood, School Initiative/Grant, Title VII Project; Prevention/Intervention Specialist	\$214.55	\$321.84
AP14	Assistant Principal Middle School, School Psychologist, Coordinator Special Education-Instructional Services, New Teacher Mentor-Secondary	\$231.72	\$347.58
AP15	Assistant Principals for High School, ACE and CFS; Program Directors of Advanced/Enriched/Accelerated Studies, Fine Arts, Mathematics, Science and Health, Social Studies, Instructional Technology, Language Arts-Elementary, Language Arts-Secondary, Special Education-Appraisal Services and Compliance: Coordinator for Athletics-Head	\$250.26	\$375.39

	Football, New Teacher Mentor Facilitator-Elementary		
AP16	Directors in Bilingual/ESL Education, Health and Intervention Services, Human Resource Services-Elementary, Human Resource Services-Secondary, Research and Evaluation, Staff Development, Student Support Services; Principals for ACE, CFS and Elementary Schools; Foundation and Community Relations Director	\$270.28	\$405.42
AP17	Directors of Athletics, Career and Technology Education, Recruitment; Middle School Principals	\$291.90	\$437.86
AP18	District Hearing Officer, Executive Directors in Elementary Education, Human Resource Services, Secondary Education, Special Programs High School Principal	\$315.26	\$472.89
AP19	Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Design and Alignment, Deputy Superintendent for Educational Services	\$340.48	\$510.72

Source: GPISD Compensation and Staffing Plan, 2002-03.

The district maintains an administrative business salary schedule that sets pay grades for department administrators supporting the district's business operations. The groups consists of administrators and senior staff in departments such as Purchasing, Technology, Finance and Budget, Student Nutrition, Transportation and the Tax Assessor/Collector.

The district maintains a clerical/paraprofessional salary schedule for aides, clerks, secretaries, bookkeepers and similar staff. The manual trades category includes custodians, warehouse positions, grounds keepers, nutrition staff and similar jobs and has a separate salary schedule set to hourly rates of pay. Counselors and librarians share a salary schedule based on years of service. Teachers and nurses also share a year of service based salary schedule.

The district provides academic supplements, or stipends, ranging from \$6,800 for agriculture, to \$300 for sponsoring University Interscholastic League (UIL) academic competition participation. Fine Arts supplements range from \$6,500 to \$475. Additional performance based supplements are available to music administrators. Coaching stipends vary from a low of \$1,000 to a high of \$5,500.

For the most part, GPISD remains competitive with its peers at all teacher experience levels. As a result of recent recruitment strategies, the district has increased salaries for new teachers, making its starting rate higher than the peer average. However, at the top end of the experience range, GPISD teachers fall below the peer average. While all district employees are eligible for longevity awards, the district's 2002-03 compensation plan states that the district is developing a new compensation schedule that will reward teacher longevity (**Exhibit 3-16**).

**Exhibit 3-16
Teacher Salaries
GPISD and Peer Districts
2001-02**

District	Beginning	1-5 Years	6-10 Years	11-20 Years	More than 20 Years
Aldine	\$33,534	\$36,515	\$41,463	\$50,100	\$55,573
Pasadena	\$29,727	\$35,097	\$37,443	\$42,031	\$49,284
Humble	\$31,758	\$34,856	\$36,490	\$41,687	\$49,206
GPISD	\$32,465	\$34,792	\$37,182	\$41,850	\$48,875
Goose Creek Consolidated	\$30,272	\$34,281	\$36,134	\$43,359	\$50,648
Peer Average	\$31,323	\$35,187	\$37,883	\$44,294	\$51,178

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2001-02.

Exhibit 3-17 shows when peer salaries are averaged by category, GPISD falls below the average for teacher salaries and above the average for professional support, campus administration and central administration.

**Exhibit 3-17
Average Actual Salaries
GPISD and Peer Districts
2001-02**

District	Teachers	Professional Support	Campus Administration	Central Administration
Aldine	\$43,732	\$50,927	\$62,779	\$68,808
Pasadena	\$39,453	\$48,737	\$63,625	\$77,070
Humble	\$39,837	\$48,063	\$52,065	\$85,363
GPISD	\$38,246	\$50,476	\$60,744	\$75,225

Goose Creek Consolidated	\$40,697	\$49,974	\$60,167	\$64,361
Peer Average	\$40,930	\$49,425	\$59,659	\$73,901

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2001-02.

Exhibit 3-18 compares GPISD's budgeted expenditures by category. GPISD payroll costs, as a percentage of the total district budget, rank slightly higher than the state average. GPISD spends slightly more on contract services than the state average. On average, Texas districts spend more on debt service than GPISD. The district also spends less on supplies and materials than the state average.

Exhibit 3-18
Budgeted District Expenditures by Category
GPISD and State
2001-02

Expenditure Category	GPISD Percent of Total Budget	State Percent of Total Budget
Payroll Costs	74.5%	73.0%
Professional and Contracted Services	9.8%	8.3%
Supplies and Materials	5.4%	6.3%
Other Operating Costs	1.9%	1.9%
Debt Service	7.4%	8.7%
Capital Outlay	1.0%	1.8%
Total	100.0%	100.0%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2001-02.

In addition to salaries, GPISD also provides the following benefits:

- health insurance (employee premium funded in part by the district);
- dental insurance (employee premium funded in part by the district);
- vision service plan (voluntary participation paid by employee);
- life insurance up to \$120,000 (voluntary participation paid by employee);
- prepaid legal services (optional);

- long-term care insurance (voluntary participation paid by employee);
- teacher retirement with state contribution;
- annual leave;
- automatic check deposit (optional);
- tax-sheltered annuities (optional);
- cancer insurance (optional);
- classroom stipends up to \$5,000 provided by the district's nonprofit foundation;
- disability insurance (voluntary participation paid by employee); and
- a Cafeteria Plan (pre-tax deductions for medical and child care reimbursement).

Besides regular employees, GPISD also manages a pool of substitutes. Several departments use substitutes, including schools and the Transportation Department. The district uses an automated caller system for substitute assignment. The absent employee calls the automated system to activate it. The system automatically locates and calls a substitute. Substitutes receive training on district policies and procedures through an orientation program. GPISD also provides them a substitutes handbook for guidance and reference.

FINDING

By improving the teacher salary schedule, GPISD is trying to retain its teaching staff. **Exhibit 3-19** shows the GPISD teachers pay increase from 2001-02 to 2002-03. The pay scale changes include an equity increase and additional steps to address compression issues between experience levels. For example, the years of experience steps in the 2001-02 scale were only \$50 apart in the first three years. In the new scale, the first year of experience increases base salary by \$700 and years two and three increase by \$200 dollars.

**Exhibit 3-19
GPISD Teacher Salary Schedule
2001 through 2003**

2001-02 Step	2001-02 Salary	2002-03 Step	2002-03 Salary
		0	\$35,050
0	\$34,550	1	\$35,750
1	\$34,600	2	\$35,950
2	\$34,650	3	\$36,150

3	\$34,750	4	\$36,350
4	\$35,150	5	\$37,050
5	\$35,630	6	\$37,250
6	\$36,060	7	\$37,450
7	\$36,401	8	\$37,650
8	\$36,776	9	\$37,850
9	\$37,075	10	\$38,850
10	\$37,360	11	\$39,250
11	\$37,680	12	\$39,650
12	\$38,640	13	\$40,050
13	\$39,570	14	\$40,570
14	\$40,474	15	\$41,700
15	\$41,269	16	\$42,269
16	\$42,063	17	\$43,063
17	\$42,827	18	\$43,827
18	\$43,531	19	\$44,531
19	\$44,215	20	\$45,215
20	\$44,848	21	\$45,848
21	\$45,451	22	\$46,451
22	\$46,024	23	\$47,024
23	\$46,557	24	\$47,557
24	\$46,959	25	\$48,400
25	\$47,301	26	\$48,950
26	\$47,684	27	\$49,500
27	\$48,485	28	\$50,050
28	\$49,034	29	\$50,600
29	\$49,645	30	\$51,850
30	\$50,213	31	\$52,425
31	\$50,463	32	\$53,000
32	\$50,463	33	\$53,575

33	\$51,058	34	\$54,150
34	\$51,859	35	\$54,725
35	\$52,373	36+	\$55,300

Source: GPISD Compensation and Staffing Plan, 2002-03.

Prior to 2000, teachers and counselors shared the same pay scale. In response to a recommendation in the 2000 TASB compensation survey, the district divided the teacher and counselor salary schedule.

Each employee group has a separate pay scale, making pay issues more easily identified and resolved. The 2002-03 teacher pay scale adjustment was part of GPISD's continuing efforts to address teacher retention concerns.

COMMENDATION

GPISD is addressing teacher retention by developing an equitable pay scale for all levels of experience.

FINDING

GPISD's recruitment program encourages "homegrown" teachers. Through the homegrown teacher program, GPISD graduates can take education-related courses while gaining work experience in the district. Students begin at San Jacinto College North and transfer to the University of Houston at Clear Lake to complete degree requirements. A GPISD employee developed the program in 1992 in response to a growing need for teachers.

To qualify for the program, a participant must be a GPISD graduate pursuing a teaching degree. Students accepted into the homegrown program must maintain a 2.5 grade point average and take a minimum of 12 semester hours in the fall and spring semesters. The students, who are assigned to a GPISD school, work 15 to 20 hours a week. The jobs provide participants with teaching field experience and opportunities for GPISD employment.

The Human Resource Services Department keeps the board informed on the number of employees hired from within the district. In 2002, the district hired nine Galena Park High School graduates and 20 North Shore High School graduates. In the 2001 employment process evaluation, several teachers noted the following reasons for working for GPISD:

- grew up in district and desired a job closer to home;

- the positive contributions of the district to the community;
- location;
- the homegrown program; and
- strong network of people with positive attitudes.

It is a source of pride in the district that many of its employees were Galena Park students.

COMMENDATION

GPISD develops future staff through the homegrown teachers program, which encourages district graduates to become teachers.

Chapter 3

PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

D. Employee Relations

A large part of employee satisfaction depends on the employee's relationship with supervisors and central administrators. GPISD's goal is to provide employees with a positive work environment. The district conducts satisfaction surveys to monitor employee issues. In interviews with the review team, school administrators expressed a high level of satisfaction with district administration and a high level of respect and admiration for the district superintendent. **Exhibit 3-20** shows the level of district support by non-teaching staff employees.

Exhibit 3-20
Survey of GPISD Support and Auxiliary Staff
2002

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
District salaries are competitive with similar positions on the job market.	32.8%	46.6%	1.7%	10.3%	3.4%
The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.	32.8%	51.7%	3.4%	6.9%	0.0%
The district successfully projects district staffing needs.	32.8%	34.5%	17.2%	8.6%	1.7%
The district has an effective employee recruitment program	39.7%	36.2%	10.3%	5.2%	3.4%
The district operates an effective staff development program.	34.5%	44.8%	8.6%	5.2%	1.7%
The district rewards competence and experience and spells out qualifications such as seniority and experience necessary for promotion.	24.1%	32.8%	13.8%	15.5%	6.9%
Employees who perform below the standard of expectation are	20.7%	34.5%	25.9%	8.6%	3.4%

counseled appropriately and timely.					
The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	32.8%	41.4%	17.2%	3.4%	0.0%
The district's health insurance package meets my needs.	17.2%	34.5%	19%	15.5%	8.6%

Source: TSPR Survey of District Staff, September 2002.

Note: Totals may not sum to 100 percent because of "no responses."

Support and auxiliary staff generally believe they are fairly compensated, effectively trained and held accountable for meeting performance standards. The largest areas of disagreement concerned the adequacy of health insurance benefits and competency rewards.

Exhibit 3-21 shows the level of teacher support for district personnel programs. Teachers generally believe their salary is competitive and that staff development is effective. Areas of disagreement include the successful projection of staffing needs, the adequacy of health benefits and competency rewards.

Exhibit 3-21
Survey of GPISD Teachers
2002

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
District salaries are competitive with similar positions on the job market.	27%	50%	2%	11%	11%
The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.	23%	59%	6%	9%	3%
The district successfully projects district staffing needs.	11%	36%	27%	21%	5%
The district has an effective employee recruitment program.	14%	52%	17%	14%	5%
The district operates an effective staff development program.	21%	50%	6%	20%	3%

The district rewards competence and experience and spells out qualifications such as seniority and experience necessary for promotion.	8%	24%	12%	35%	21%
Employees who perform below the standard of expectation are counseled appropriately and timely.	11%	38%	27%	21%	3%
The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	12%	39%	33%	9%	6%
The district's health insurance package meets my needs.	9%	33%	15%	20%	23%

Source: TSPR Survey of District Staff, September 2002.

Note: Totals may not sum to 100 percent because "no response" answers are not included.

The district has a number of staff development programs. The district's extensive training calendar lists courses ranging from brain-based research to cooperative learning to leadership training. GPISD provides the staff the opportunity to learn computer network design, management and troubleshooting. Other technology courses teach the legal issues that govern access and use of technology. The district provides these courses as part of the monthly staff development offerings.

GPISD also provides classroom grants through a nonprofit foundation that raises additional funds for district programs. Newsletters provide district congratulations for personal or professional successes. The district also gives staff the opportunity to provide feedback through surveys.

To enhance professional development, the district also provides access to professional organizations. GPISD welcomes these organizations and provides on-campus access to new teachers for the first year. Professional organizations may become involved in the grievance process as employee advocates, but there are no adversarial relationships between the district and employee organizations. Employees can have membership dues deducted from their paychecks.

The district has a grievance process that emphasizes mediation. Complaints are handled according to the level of the complaint. Although the number of complaints has almost doubled since 1997, the percentage

of complaints as compared to number of staff has increased only slightly, from 1.3 percent to 1.8 percent. **Exhibit 3-22** shows the number of complaints by level.

**Exhibit 3-22
GPISD Employee Grievances
1997-98 through 2001-02**

Year	Number of Complaints	Level I	Level II	Level III
1997-98	25	22	2	1
1998-99	37	30	5	2
1999-2000	45	31	10	4
2000-01	40	31	9	0
2001-02	47	35	7	5

Source: GPISD Hearings Office.

A level one complaint is managed by meeting with the principal or immediate supervisor within 15 days of the complaint. The district does not define or limit the nature of a complaint, which can range from conflicts with co-workers to disagreement with application of a policy or procedure. If the complaint is against the administrator or supervisor, the superintendent may designate another person to hear the complaint. The district resolves most grievances at level one.

A level two complaint is an appeal to the superintendent. A level two complaint must be filed within seven days of receiving the written response on the level one mediation. The superintendent may designate another staff member to hear the complaint. GPISD has a designated hearings officer to decide level two complaints. The hearings officer meets with the employee to discuss the complaint and must keep a written record of the hearing and findings. Any information or evidence that an employee wishes to have considered must be presented at level two.

A level three complaint is an appeal to the board. The appeal must be in writing. The hearings officer forwards all information presented at level two to the board for consideration. An employee cannot provide new information at level three that was not provided at level two. The board is not required to make findings on an appealed complaint. If the board does not make a formal decision, the level two decision is considered to be upheld by the board.

FINDING

GPISD does not review employee files at the school or department level to ensure compliance with federal privacy laws or to inspect employee disciplinary actions. The district has a disciplinary grievance process that allows employees who are not satisfied with the school response to appeal to a hearings officer in the Human Resource Services Department. The district's emphasis is on mediation of the dispute, but employees can have a hearing on their complaint. If the complaint is not resolved at the school or department level, the complainant can appeal. For purposes of the appeal procedure, the hearings officer serves as the superintendent's designee.

In interviews, principals said that the Human Resource Services Department does not audit or supervise employee development files at the school level. Schools keep information on employees such as warnings, disciplinary actions, performance acknowledgements, leave requests and other operational materials. If an employee files a grievance, the Human Resource Services Department will review the school's employee file. If an employee does not file a grievance, the Human Resource Services Department does not review the files.

Principals maintain files according to operating needs. For example, schools may have different procedures for requesting leave. The file location for leave requests may vary from school to school. Some may keep copies of sick leave requests in files with other personnel information. Some may treat sick leave requests as medical information and keep them separate from other personnel records. As another example, principals establish and maintain employee discipline. Procedures for documentation and retention of disciplinary actions vary from school to school.

The district provides training to administrators on proper documentation of employee issues, but does not routinely review files to ensure the administrators apply the training. GPISD also does not routinely review school or department level employee discipline to ensure discipline is applied fairly throughout the district.

Recent federal privacy legislation makes securing medically related information of critical importance. Requests for leave, excuses for illness and identification of Family Medical Leave Act events should be appropriately maintained. Generally, schools forward most medical-related information to the Human Resource Services Department, but some information may remain behind in school or department level files. Principals had varying procedures for securing school employee files. Since federal privacy legislation carries penalties for violations, compliant

districts in Texas are taking steps to make sure the district handles all personnel information to comply with the law.

Recommendation 21:

Audit school personnel files periodically to ensure consistency and compliance with district disciplinary policies and privacy statutes.

The district should develop a schedule to conduct periodic audits of school files. The schedule should ensure that files at each school are reviewed annually at a minimum.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The directors of Human Resource Services-Elementary and Human Resource Services-Secondary develop a schedule for periodic review of school personnel files.	May 2003
2.	The directors of Human Resource Services-Elementary and Human Resource Services-Secondary audit school personnel files for appropriate content, storage and consistent handling of disciplinary issues.	June 2003
3.	The directors of Human Resource Services-Elementary and Human Resource Services-Secondary develop any necessary training suggested by findings during their audit of school files.	August 2003
4.	The directors of Human Resource Services-Elementary and Human Resource Services-Secondary periodically audit school personnel files for compliance with policy and law.	September 2003 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 4

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

This chapter reviews the community involvement efforts of Galena Park Independent School District (GPISD) in the following sections:

- A. Organization and Management
- B. Parental and Community Involvement
- C. Public Information
- D. Business Partnerships

Effective two-way communication between the school district and the community results in valuable community partnerships, increased parental involvement and more school volunteers. School districts need the support of local organizations and businesses to strengthen educational programs and activities. Outreach programs help district administrators become familiar with community priorities and provide important services to the community. Districts often solicit feedback from parents as well as business and civic groups to identify opportunities to improve overall performance.

Successful communication strategies should strive to involve businesses, community organizations and parents. Strategies include newsletters, focus group meetings, Internet Web sites, cable television programs, school calendars, brochures, newspaper articles and other publications. An effective communications department ensures the coordination and delivery of district information to the community in a timely manner. In ethnically diverse districts, exceptional efforts must be made to involve and communicate with the non-English speaking community.

BACKGROUND

Located in a highly industrialized area of eastern Harris County, 12 miles from downtown Houston along the Houston ship channel, GPISD has experienced slow but steady growth since 1997-98. GPISD student enrollment has grown 8.6 percent from 1997-98 to 2001-02. Student enrollment has increased roughly 2 percent a year in GPISD, from 17,806 students in 1997-98 to 19,336 students in 2001-02. In 2001-02, 65.8 percent of the students enrolled were classified as economically disadvantaged. Fifty-six percent of the economically disadvantaged students participate in the free meals program.

From 1997-98 through 2001-02, the Hispanic student population increased from 53.8 to 62.9 percent, an increase of 16.9 percent. Anglo student enrollment decreased from 22.5 in 1997-98 to 13.8 percent in 2001-02, a

38.7 percentage decrease. The African American and the other student populations remained relatively steady. Hispanic students made up the largest student population group at 62.9

percent of the total population, followed by African American students at 21.3 percent. Anglo students made up 13.8 percent of the student population. During the same period, the percentage of students classified as economically disadvantaged rose from 58.9 to 65.8 percent (**Exhibit 4-1**).

Exhibit 4-1
Racial and Ethnic Composition of GPISD Students
1997-98 through 2001-02

Student Ethnicity	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02
African American	21.3%	21.3%	21.3%	21.5%	21.3%
Hispanic	53.8%	55.9%	58.3%	60.8%	62.9%
Anglo	22.5%	20.5%	18.2%	15.8%	13.8%
Other*	2.4%	2.3%	2.1%	1.9%	2.0%
Economically Disadvantaged	58.9%	59.4%	62.1%	64.6%	65.8%

*Source: Texas Education Agency (TEA), Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) Reports, 1997-98 through 2001-02. *Other includes Native American and Asian/Pacific Islanders ethnic groups.*

GPISD consists of 12 elementary schools, five grade 6/middle schools, three high schools and two alternative schools. In addition, GPISD sends students to a disciplinary alternative education program (DAEP) and to the juvenile justice alternative education program (JJAEP). In December 1999, GPISD voters narrowly approved a \$120 million bond referendum to renovate existing schools and construct an additional elementary school, additional classrooms, a new stadium/natorium and a new administration building. Construction will be completed in February 2007.

The changing demographic composition and the growth in the GPISD area serve as critical issues for the district. Many existing facilities have been renovated and expanded to accommodate growth. The district, however, is landlocked on the south side by the Houston ship channel, so new construction has focused on the northern end of the district known as North Shore.

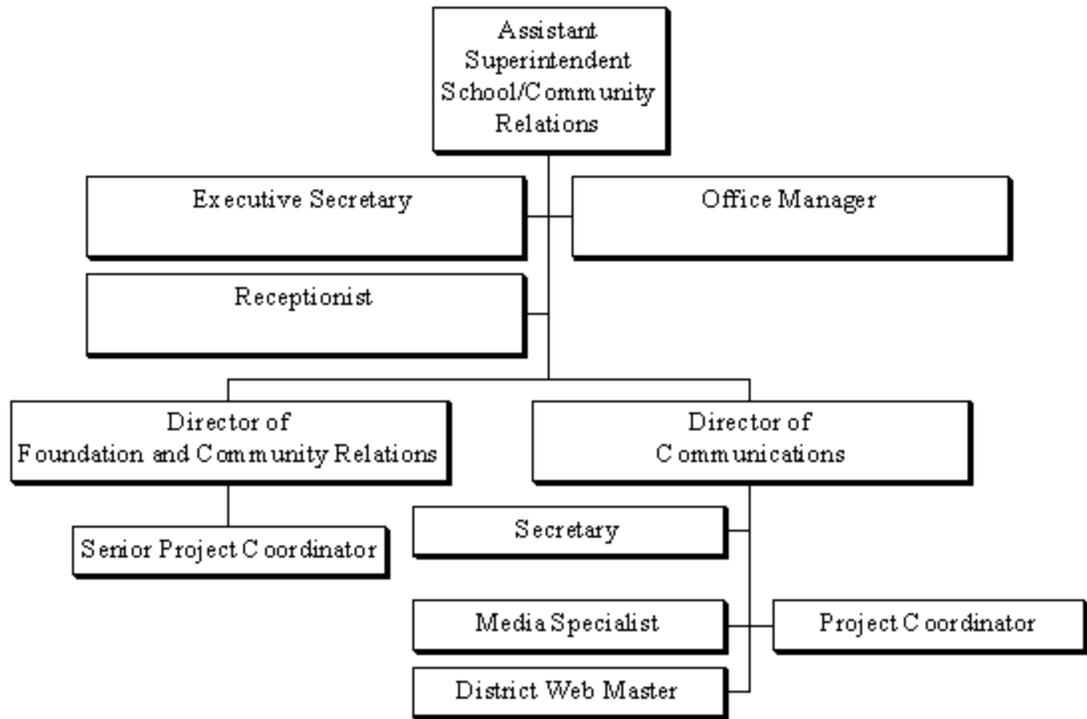
The School/Community Relations Department plays a significant role in ensuring effective communication with the community. The department's stated mission is "to prepare students to become productive citizens and lifelong learners." The purpose of the department is to "design and maintain an effective and efficient communications network for the exchange of information, ideas and concerns, which will facilitate two-way communications for GPISD."

The department employs 11 full-time employees, including the assistant superintendent for School/Community Relations, a director of Communications, a director of Foundation and Community Relations, an office manager, two secretaries, two project coordinators, a media specialist and a Webmaster. Though assigned to the department, the Webmaster also works on districtwide technology issues and is located in the Technology Department. The School/Community Relations Department also employs the districtwide receptionist/switchboard operator. In 1999, the district established the GPISD Education Foundation, a nonprofit organization to support educational programs for both students and parents. Two Foundation positions, the director of Foundation and Community Relations and the senior project coordinator of Foundation and Community Relations, report to the assistant superintendent of School/Community Relations.

Exhibit 4-2 illustrates the organizational structure of the School/Community Relations Department.

Exhibit 4-2
School/Community Relations Department Organization

2002-03



Source: GPISD School/Community Relations Department.

The department hires an external consultant as needed to perform graphic layout work for the department's districtwide publications. Although the Webmaster works for both the School/Community Relations and Technology departments, the Webmaster's salary is included in the School/Community Relations Department's budget.

Exhibit 4-3 presents budget information for the School/Community Relations Department. The department's annual budget for school/community involvement activities is \$692,229.

Exhibit 4-3
GPISD School/Community Relations Department Budget
2001-02

Description	Amount Allocated
Number of Staff	11
Salaries and Fringe Benefits	\$509,824
Professional Contract Services	\$73,485
Supplies and Materials	\$37,549

Other Operating Expenditures	\$57,371
Capital Outlay	\$14,000
Total Budget	\$692,229

Source: GPISD director of Finance and Budget.

Chapter 4

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

A. Organization and Management

To achieve a successful community involvement program, a district must develop an effective department organization plan focused on leadership, staffing patterns, district resources and needs.

FINDING

The School/Community Relations Department's improvement plan, included as a chapter in the 2002-03 GPISD District Improvement Plan (DIP), appears incomplete and provides limited value as a blueprint for accountability and improvement. The plan includes department-identified goals, but it does not list the department challenges or areas for improvement. While other departments improvement plans include sections titled "Where We've Been," "Where We Are Now" and "Where We're Going," the School/Community Relations Department only includes a section titled "Where We Are Now."

The review team noted that programs originally included in the 2001-02 department improvement plan have been placed on hold or are not included in the 2002-03 plan. For 2002-03, the department identified only two department-level goals: 1) Increase school business partnerships and financial base for the Foundation and 2) Improve communication between the department, campuses and the community. **Exhibit 4-4** lists the tasks, objectives and actions associated with these two goals.

Exhibit 4-4
GPISD Improvement Plan for the
School/Community Relations Department
2002-03

Goal: Increase school business partnerships and financial base for the foundation.		
Task/Objective/Action	Primary Responsibility (Person)	Indicators of Success
Identify and establish sustaining school business partnerships for campuses that do not have a business partner.	Foundation Director	Number of business partners acquired
Continue to increase financial	Foundation Director	Number of

support for the foundation by increasing the number of employees using payroll deductions for contributions and increasing donations from the business community.		employees using payroll deduction for contributions; at least \$25,000 in new donations from business
Goal: Improve communication between department, campuses and community.		
Identify and develop Campus Communicator Liaison Program.	Webmaster; Director of Communications	Increased number of campus successes reported
Develop Distinguished Awards to honor community members.	Assistant Superintendent for School/Community Relations; Director of Communications; Media Specialist; Webmaster	Selection of Honorees
Develop a plan to include Spanish translation of districtwide publications.	Assistant Superintendent for School/Community Relations; Director of Communications	Publications are published in both English and Spanish

Source: GPISD 2002-03 District Improvement Plan.

The School/Community Relations Department improvement plan also does not list any goals, tasks or objectives associated with other important department responsibilities such as publications, media relations, special events coordination, community relations, Web development, parental and volunteer involvement and internal department activities.

Strategies listed to measure success are also vague. As stated, they provide a description of overall desired results instead of measurable outcomes. Most indicators of success use words like "increase," instead of setting specific targets, such as "increase by 30 percent."

Departments and school districts benefit from well-developed improvement plans that include measurable performance standards. Effective plans hold the department and specific staff accountable and provide a blueprint for improvement. Lacking this basic planning tool, departments compromise efficiency, effectiveness and accountability.

GPISD's School/Community Relations Department's efforts are an example of this. Functions are not clearly defined in the plan, tasks are unassigned, and little programmatic guidance is provided. Though the department participates in many important community involvement

activities, produces a number of publications, conducts several forums, submits articles to the media and develops the districtwide Web site, the DIP does not mention or address any of these efforts. Nor is progress in any area systematically assessed from one year to another. Lacking performance measures and annual reviews, the department cannot gauge and report whether it is meeting any of its goals.

The review team also found programmatic weaknesses that were not addressed in the DIP. For example, the department usually does not support school-level functions that increase parental and community involvement. Volunteer efforts are left to the individual schools to organize. Successful district community involvement departments work in partnership with local schools and other district departments to increase community involvement and include specific plans and programs for this in their DIP. Family and community involvement in children's education makes a significant difference and educators and other staff sense the level of priority administrators give to involving parents. By spearheading district programs that support campus efforts to involve the community, the district sends a strong message that community involvement is a high priority in GPISD. However, it is essential that all programs be included in the DIP and that they include performance measures, strategies for achieving success and timelines.

Fort Worth ISD developed a comprehensive district improvement plan that measurably improved the district's commitment to community involvement. The plan specifies programs, objectives, strategies and performance measures. It also includes coordinating several programs at the district level, such as the Adopt-A-School Program, Vital Links Student Internships, Radio Shack Scholars Program, Chairs for Teaching Excellence, and the Fort Worth ISD Parent and Volunteer Program as well as assisting local campus efforts.

The Texas School Performance Review created a list of the top 10 issues facing public schools and innovative ways to solve them. The report, *Top 10 Ways to Improve Public Schools*, suggests, "Have a vision; plan how to get there; live it." The report further states that:

"Strategic planning enables a district to define its goals and objectives, establish priorities, and determine specific implementation strategies. The process begins as a school district assesses its strengths and weaknesses, both in the instructional and support areas. From broad goals, very specific strategies for achieving them are developed. One of the most critical strategies involves the allocation of resources to make those goals happen. Priorities are set, meaning that some goals will be targeted immediately, while others will be deferred until additional money or resources become available."

Top 10 Ways to Improve Public Schools identifies the following effective strategic planning strategies:

- knowing your customers and understanding their priorities through surveys or focus groups of students, parents, teachers, administrators and community leaders;
- use direction and focus from the school board and a steering committee to set priorities or major goals;
- set up broad-based and diverse committees to address the established priorities and develop activity plans to address each priority;
- develop activity plans that contain measurable outcomes, dates and assignments of responsibility for implementation;
- conduct two-way communication between the governing body and the committees during the plan development period;
- ensure decisive governance that uses committee recommendations to the greatest degree possible when approving the final plan;
- conduct performance-based annual monitoring and adjusting of activity plans and
- tie budgets requiring expenditures directly to the district's overall goals.

Recommendation 22:

Develop a comprehensive improvement plan for the School/Community Relations Department that specifies goals, performance measures, strategies and timelines.

The School/Community Relations Department plan should clearly identify goals and objectives for its media, Web development, publications and school/business relations divisions. The plan should specifically address the activities the department will undertake to increase and improve communications with the community and it should identify how the department will assist schools with various community involvement activities such as parental involvement and media activities.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the assistant superintendent for School/Community Relations to develop a more comprehensive department improvement plan.	April 2003
2.	The assistant superintendent for School/Community Relations establishes a department level planning committee composed of the director of Communications, the director of Foundation and Community Relations. the assistant superintendent for	May 2003

	School/Community Relations and other selected members from the department.	
3.	The director of Communications and the director of Foundation and Community Relations identify unit goals and objectives and develop action plans that include timetable for improvement.	May 2003
4.	The department planning committee reviews the unit plans and develops a comprehensive, measurable improvement plan.	June 2003
5.	The superintendent reviews the action plan from each functional area and includes the action plans in the 2003-04 District Improvement Plan.	July 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

The recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Numerous examples exist of duplication of duties in GPISD's School/Community Relations Department and some top administrative responsibilities may not be commensurate with similar executive level positions in the district. The department employs six non-exempt and five exempt positions. Non-exempt positions serve as support staff positions in clerical/secretarial, technical/paraprofessional and maintenance/service areas and are subject to the minimum wage and overtime pay provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act. The district pays non-exempt staff on an hourly basis and overtime for hours exceeding 40 a week. Exempt positions include managerial, administrative and professional staff, which are salaried positions not subject to the overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act.

The School/Community Relations Department's non-exempt clerical/secretarial positions include the receptionist, the office manager, the executive secretary for the assistant superintendent for

School/Community Relations, the senior project coordinator for Foundation and Community Relations, the secretary to the director of Communications and the project coordinator for Communications. Managerial and professional exempt positions include the assistant superintendent for School/Community Relations, the director of Communications, the director of Foundation and School Relations, the Webmaster and the media specialist. In addition to these employees, the district contracts with the former director of Communications to provide graphic/layout and editorial support for several publications. Between May and September 2002, the department paid \$6,497 for these services.

The School/Community Relations Department does not employ a staff member qualified to write or produce Spanish publications. **Exhibit 4-5** lists the positions employed by the School/Community Relations Department and each position's major job duties.

Exhibit 4-5
Positions in the GPISD School/Community Relations Department
2001-02

Department Positions	Job Description
Assistant Superintendent for School/Community Relations	Promotes communication with employees, community, board members and media. Coordinates the dissemination of information. Facilitates the operations of the SCR Department. Handles district complaints directed to the department.
Executive Secretary to the Assistant Superintendent for School/Community Relations	Assists the assistant superintendent for the SCR department in facilitating the operations of the department: Handles confidential information; types correspondence; ensures that information on marquee is current; assists with budget; maintains location log for Web Master and Media Specialists; coordinates calendars; maintains personnel files; greets visitors; prepares agenda and records minutes; develops and maintains work calendars for department's professional staff and makes frequent trips to businesses for materials and supplies.
Office Manager	Manages all operations of the department: Compiles information for reports; develops receptionist schedule; coordinates and schedules district/department events; prepares items for student/employee recognitions; maintains location log for Webmaster and media specialist; develops monthly calendar of events; develops work calendars for clerical staff; maintains district marquee; orders supplies and makes frequent trips to businesses for materials and supplies.
Director of Communications	Promotes communication with employees, media, community and board members: Arranges for media coverage; assists with community meetings; manages preparation of new releases; coordinates distribution of information; organizes and plans meetings for district committees and coordinates with director of security in planning and coordinating crisis management.

Receptionist	Receives and directs phone calls for the district and administration building staff. Provides assistance to administration building visitors and vendors.
Secretary to the Director of Communications	Assists the director of Communications: types correspondence; makes travel arrangements; coordinates banquet awards; assists with photography; maintains current phone directory; maintains director's calendar as required; ensures that information on marquee is current; schedules appointments and makes frequent trips to businesses for materials and supplies.
Project Coordinator for Communications	Assists the director of Communications and the secretary to the director: assists with photography; maintains current phone directory; maintains schedule for art displays; prepares thank you letters to district staff; assists in ensuring information placed on marquee is current; assists receptionist; delivers department mail; manages district birthday and Christmas cards and makes frequent trips to businesses for materials and supplies.
Director of Foundation and Community Relations	Facilitates operation of education foundation and school business partnership program: seeks and obtains foundation grants; prepares annual grant applications; conducts annual grant writing workshops; seeks new school business partnerships; coordinates financial transactions with foundation treasurer and maintains foundation publications.
Senior Project Coordinator for Foundation and Community Relations	Assists the director of Foundation and Community Relations in facilitating the operation of the foundation and the school business partnership program: maintains filing system; organizes and manages all routine work activities of director; types correspondence; schedules appointments and maintains calendar for director; assists in receiving and processing donations; prepares minutes for foundation meetings; makes travel arrangements and makes frequent trips to businesses for materials and supplies and donations.
Media Technology Specialist	Responsible for developing and preparing technology and media-related activities (infomercials, videos and videotaped board meetings).
Webmaster	Responsible for the design, development, and maintenance of the district-level Web page. This

	position is assigned to this department, but is shared with the Technology Department.
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Source: GPISD, School/Community Relations Department Job Descriptions.

Based on a review of School/Community Relations Department position descriptions, some non-exempt staff functions and job descriptions appear duplicative. For example, several positions share similar secretarial duties. The job descriptions for the office manager and the executive secretary both list maintaining the location log for the Webmaster and media technology specialist. The department maintains the location log so that the staff can locate the Webmaster or the media technology specialist as needed. Both of these positions, in addition to the secretary for the director of Communications, ensure that "the information on the marquee is correct." Five of the six clerical/secretarial positions-the executive secretary, the office manager, the project coordinator for Communications, the senior project coordinator for Foundation and Community Relations and the secretary to the director of Communications-make frequent trips to businesses for materials and supplies. Both the project coordinator for Communications and the secretary to the director of Communications maintain the district's phone directory.

While districts often cross-train employees and encourage employees to assist each other as needed, one employee is usually assigned the specific job responsibility. The assistant superintendent for School/Community Relations said that duplication ensures that more than one person can perform specific job duties and allows clerical/secretarial staff to support one another as needed. The job descriptions, however, do not state which individual has primary responsibility for specific duties and which serve as "backups."

By not identifying which employee has primary responsibility for specific duties, assessing employee performance and ensuring accountability becomes considerably more difficult. It also complicates assessing staffing needs. All of the peer districts-Aldine, Pasadena, Humble and Goose Creek Consolidated ISDs-employ fewer employees in their respective departments of Communications or Public Information than GPISD. Variations exist among each district and GPISD in terms of department responsibility. For example, in some districts the receptionist and Webmaster positions are located in other district departments. Some peer district departments do not plan districtwide events and do not manage an education foundation. While duties may vary in the other districts, the number of secretarial/clerical positions in GPISD considerably exceeds those in the peer districts. **Exhibit 4-6** lists the number and type of employees in the department of Communications or offices of Public Information in the peer districts. Two districts, Aldine and Pasadena,

employ five employees; Goose Creek Consolidated employs four; and Humble employs eight.

**Exhibit 4-6
Communications Staffing
GPISD and Peer Districts
2002-03**

District	Department Positions	Number of Staff (full-time equivalents)	Number of employees in Department per 1,000 students	Student Enrollment
Galena Park	Secretary/Clerical (6)¹ Director (2)¹ Webmaster (1)² Media specialist (1) Assistant Superintendent (1)	11	0.57	19,336
Humble*	Secretary (1) Communication Editor (1) Internet Coordinator (1) Graphics Coordinator (1) Director (2) Grant Writer (1) Assistant to the Director (1)	8	0.32	25,239
Pasadena	Communication Specialist (1) Graphics Artist/Webmaster (1) Publications Editor (1) Communication Assistant (1) Deputy Superintendent (1) ³	5	0.12	43,476
Aldine	Secretary/Clerical (1) Director (1) Assistant Director (1) Graphic Designer (1) Assistant Superintendent (1) ⁴	5	0.09	53,201
Goose Creek Consolidated	Secretary (1) Media/Technology (1) Publications Coordinator (1) Director (1)	4	0.22	18,274

Source:

www.aldine.k12.tx.us; www.galena-park.isd.tenet.edu;

www.humble.k12.tx.us; www.pasadenaisd.org; www.goosecreek.cisd.esc4.net;

Follow-up phone interviews with each respective director of Communications. Galena Park School/Community Relations Department. Student enrollment information is from the TEA Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) report, 2001-02 for Galena Park, Humble, Pasadena, Aldine and Goose Creek Consolidated ISDs.

Note: Enrollment figures are based on the 2001-02 AEIS reports.

*Includes two departments: Department of Community Involvement and Department of Public Information.

¹ The director of Foundation and Community Relations and the senior project coordinator for the Foundation allocate approximately 50 percent of their time to the foundation and to School/Community Relations Department duties.

² The Webmaster position is assigned to the School/Community Relations Department, but is physically located in the Technology Department.

³ Deputy superintendent position is responsible for all non-instructional departments in the district. Department is also in charge of the district print shop, which employs one press shop foreman and six press operators.

⁴ Assistant Superintendent duties also include legislative and governmental relations.

Some departmental management responsibilities are also duplicative. For example, job descriptions for the assistant superintendent for School/Community Relations and the director of Communications assign responsibility for promoting communication with employees, community, media and board members to both positions. Also, both positions are responsible for coordinating the distribution or dissemination of information.

The management responsibilities associated with the position of assistant superintendent of School/Community Relations do not appear to be commensurate with similar executive level positions in the district. A comparison shows that the assistant superintendent for School/Community Relations position is not commensurate with other district-level positions in terms of the number of units or divisions under each department head. While the assistant superintendent for School/Community Relations oversees two units, communications and the education foundation, other assistant superintendents oversee larger and more complex units. The assistant superintendent for Support Services, for instance, manages security, grounds, new facilities and planning, maintenance, transportation, student nutrition and custodial services. **Exhibit 4-7** shows each executive level position's oversight. All executive level positions listed in the exhibit have a salary range from \$77,969.92 to \$116,954.90.

Exhibit 4-7

GPISD Executive Level Positions, Unit/Division Oversight 2002

Department Position	Units/Divisions
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Assistant Superintendent for School/Community Relations	Director of Communications Director of Foundation and Community Relations Media Specialist Webmaster
Chief Operations Officer	Director of Finance and Budget Executive Director of Human Resource Services Tax Assessor-Collector Senior Purchasing Coordinator Coordinator of Warehouse and Textbook Operations
Assistant Superintendent for Support Services	Director of Security Director of Grounds Director of New Facilities and Planning Director of Maintenance Director of Transportation Director of Student Nutrition Director of Custodial Services
Deputy Superintendent for Educational Services	Executive Director of Secondary Education Executive Director of Elementary Education Director of Technology Director of Career and Technology Education (CATE) Director of Research and Evaluation Executive Director of Special Programs
Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Design and Alignment	Program Director for Mathematics Program Director for Science and Health Program Director for Social Studies Program Director for Secondary Language Arts Program Director for Elementary Language Arts Program Director for Instructional Technology Director of Staff Development District Testing Coordinator

Source: GPISD, assistant superintendent for School/Community Relations.

The assistant superintendent for School/Community Relations is not responsible for any other district units or departments. The assistant superintendent's job duties include promoting open and positive communication with employees, community members, board and media representatives; assisting the superintendent for Schools in developing effective communication links between the district and the community; coordinating the dissemination of pertinent information about the district and its activities to the community and employees; and facilitating the efficient and effective operations of the School/Community Relations Department.

The assistant superintendent for School/Community Relations fulfills these duties by attending all cabinet-level meetings, board meetings and the community advisory meetings, including the Bi-racial committee, the Hispanic Forum and the student advisory committee. The assistant superintendent for School/Community Relations also attends many district events and serves as a communication link between the district, employees and the community. **Exhibit 4-8** shows a partial list of meetings and events that the assistant superintendent for School/Community Relations attends on a regular basis.

Exhibit 4-8
Meetings and Events Attended by the Assistant Superintendent
for School/Community Relations (Sample Activities)
2001-02

Meetings	Events
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabinet Meetings • A-Team Meetings • Planning Meetings for Opening Day Celebrations • Bi-racial Committee Meetings • Hispanic Forum Meetings • Board of Trustees Meetings • Teacher Leadership Council • Principals' Meetings • Community Leadership Council Meetings • Student Advisory Board Meetings • Area Council PTA Meetings • Multicultural Festival Meetings • Crisis Management Meetings • North Channel Chamber 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service Awards Banquet • Opening of School Celebrations • School Visits • Education Foundation Kick-off Luncheon • Career Day • Veteran's Day Program • Mayor Teacher Excellency Reception • Transportation Department Luncheon • North Channel Chamber of Commerce Business Expo • Support Services Opening Inservice • International Teachers' Reception • Pep Rallies

Luncheon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State of the District Program
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Source: GPISD School/Community Relations Department.

With duplication of duties and a difference in the levels of duties performed by district executive level staff within the same pay structure, the department would benefit from a comprehensive staffing re-evaluation and needs assessment.

Effective school districts review their staffing patterns to ensure appropriate levels of staffing for the functions performed. To prevent inequities, districts also review positions within similar pay levels to determine that they are in line with duties performed and areas supervised.

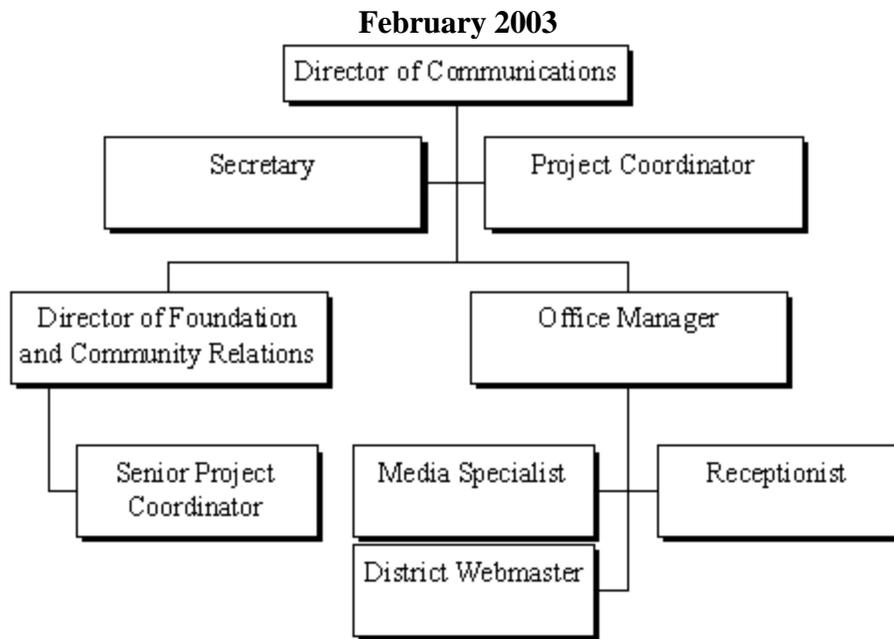
Recommendation 23:

Eliminate the positions of assistant superintendent for School/Community Relations and the executive secretary to the assistant superintendent and reorganize the School/Community Relations Department.

The director of Communications should assume some of the responsibilities currently performed by the assistant superintendent. Other tasks would be assigned to or shared by other employees of the district. The director of Communications should report directly to the superintendent.

The department should also conduct a thorough job and needs analysis and develop a detailed lists of each position's function, role and duties. The department should review and prioritize the department's functions and assign staff accordingly. Each job description should be revised and updated. **Exhibit 4-9** presents a sample, revised organization chart.

Exhibit 4-9
School/Community Relations Department
Sample Re-Organized Department



Source: Texas School Performance Review.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent submits to the board a recommendation to eliminate two positions: the assistant superintendent for School/Community Relations and the executive secretary to the Assistant Superintendent of School/Community Relations and recommends reorganizing the School/Community Relations Department.	April 2003
2.	The board considers and approves both recommendations.	April 2003
3.	The superintendent and the executive director of Human Resources implement the employee actions approved by the board.	August 2003
4.	The director of Communications, in consultation with the superintendent, prioritizes functions of the department, reviews and revises all job descriptions and reorganizes the department accordingly.	August 2003
5.	The director of Communications presents the new organizational plan to the superintendent for approval.	September 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

Eliminating the position of assistant superintendent of School/Community Relations would result in an annual savings of \$103,050. The base salary

including salary supplements for this position amounts to \$97,861. The variable fringe benefits, calculated at 2.42 percent of salary equals \$2,368 ($\$97,861.70 \times .0242 = \$2,368$). The fixed benefit amount for health and dental care equals \$2,820 ($\$235 \times 12 \text{ months} = \$2,820$). The total benefits equal \$5,188 ($\$2,368 + \$2,820 = \$5,188$). The base salary plus salary supplements and total benefits for this position amounts to \$103,050 ($\$97,862 + \$5,188 = \$103,050$).

Eliminating the executive secretary to the Assistant Superintendent of School/Community Relations would result in an annual savings of \$37,938. The base salary including salary supplements for this position amounts to \$34,288. The variable fringe benefits, calculated at 2.42 percent of salary equals \$830 ($\$34,288 \times .0242 = \830). The fixed benefit amount for health and dental care equals \$2,820 ($\$235 \times 12 \text{ months} = \$2,820$). The total benefits equal \$3,650 ($\$830 + \$2,820 = \$3,650$). The base salary plus salary supplements and total benefits for this position amounts to \$37,938 ($\$34,288 + \$3,650 = \$37,938$).

By eliminating both positions, the total annual savings would be \$140,988 ($\$103,050 + \$37,938 = \$140,988$).

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Eliminate the positions of assistant superintendent of School/Community Relations and executive secretary to the Assistant Superintendent of School/Community Relations and reorganize the School/Community Relations Department.	\$140,988	\$140,988	\$140,988	\$140,988	\$140,988

Chapter 4

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

B. Parental and Community Involvement

A diverse community, Galena Park consists of communities in Galena Park, Jacinto City, a small portion of the city of Houston and other unincorporated areas in Harris County. Board members and community leaders said that the school district unites the community and provides it an identity. GPISD's student composition includes 62.9 percent Hispanic, 21.3 percent African American and 13.8 percent Anglo. The district uses outreach activities to involve parents and community groups.

GPISD's expenditures for community services do not include budgeted expenditures for the School/Community Relations Department but cover recreation, civic activities and services for nonpublic school students. The Academic Information Management System Glossary defines these type of expenditures as "Budgeted expenditures for activities or purposes other than regular public education. These are activities relating to the whole community, such as the operation of a school library, swimming pool and playground for the public." GPISD, allocates these expenses to supplement the early Head Start Program and to fund other parental involvement activities that supplement state compensatory parental involvement activities. Although GPISD spends more than all but one of its peer districts on community services activities, it spends just \$.58 less than the state average (**Exhibit 4-10**).

Exhibit 4-10
Community Services Budgeted Expenditures
GPISD, Peer Districts and State
2001-02

District	Community Services Expenditures	Total Enrollment	Expenditure per Student
Humble	\$506,402	25,239	\$20.06
GPISD*	\$372,356	19,336	\$19.26
Pasadena	\$299,861	43,476	\$6.90
Aldine	\$186,356	53,201	\$3.50
Goose Creek	\$3,500	18,274	\$0.19
State	\$82,280,326	4,146,653	\$19.84

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2001-02.

**Information provided by GPISD Director of Finance and Budget.*

FINDING

GPISD strives to work closely with advisory groups and civic and educational organizations. GPISD has several community advisory groups that meet two to four times a year with the superintendent and other district staff. Such groups include the Superintendent's Student Advisory Board (SAB), the Teachers' Leadership Council (TLC), the District Planning and Advisory Council (DPAC), the Bi-racial Committee, the Hispanic Forum and the Community Leadership Council (CLC).

GPISD community links provide a two-way flow of information; share the focus and common bonds that tie the district and community together; communicate the GPISD mission and goal focus; plan for the future; and ask members to provide information and concerns. For example, during a recent Hispanic Forum, forum members expressed concerns about GPISD staff and district schools.

At each meeting, the superintendent provides an update on several district-related issues such as student performance, facilities and transportation. During one recent meeting in 2002, updates were provided on conversion of the old administration building to classrooms for GP High School; MacArthur Elementary; athletic facilities (GPISD lighted tennis courts and GPISD baseball/softball complex); district high school athletic college scholarship signings; and San Jacinto College North Resources.

The CLC includes leaders from business and industry, elected officials, clergy and members of civic organizations. The 55-member CLC meets four times a year with the superintendent and members of her staff. The CLC provides businesses and community leaders an opportunity to meet informally with the superintendent and her Administrative Cabinet, which consists of the assistant and deputy superintendents and the chief operations officer. As with the Hispanic Forum and the Bi-racial Committee, the district uses CLC meetings to update community leaders on school issues and to listen to concerns and issues. CLC members told the review team that these meetings are beneficial and serve as an important two-way communication venue.

In addition to these committees, GPISD conducts a variety of activities to expand the communication link between the district and the local community. The district opens several of its facilities for community groups and partners with nonprofit agencies that provide services to GPISD students and parents.

In partnership with the local YMCA, the district provides after-school care in six elementary schools to 385 children. The YMCA charges a weekly fee for service, but offers need-based scholarships. The district provides the elementary facilities free of charge. Through a partnership with the Harris County Department of Education, the district offers English as a second language (ESL) classes for limited-English proficient parents, General Education Development (GED) classes and after school care programs in some GPISD elementary schools.

Along with Houston, Spring Branch, Alief and North Forest ISDs, GPISD participates in a school park program, SPARK. The Galena Park mayor's office initially asked Woodland Acres Elementary to investigate ways to build a school/community park. Woodland Acres applied to the SPARK program, a grassroots effort involving local schools, the PTO/PTA, civic clubs, parents and neighbors that help public schools develop their playgrounds into community parks. After being selected to be a SPARK member, the Woodland Acres principal created a SPARK committee. Woodland Acres had to raise \$5,000, and the district and corporate partners had to contribute \$5,000. Community volunteers and parents provided the labor to build the park.

The district works with the Galena Park Community Resource and Training Center Office of San Jacinto College North to provide a variety of resources: The League of Latin American Citizens (LULAC); the Housing Authority; Women Infant and Children (WIC) and voter registration services. The college offers dual-credit classes for GPISD students.

The district has also worked closely with other education organizations and civic organizations in the region. As a result of a partnership with San Jacinto College North, Harris County Department of Education, University of Houston Clear Lake, North Channel Chamber of Commerce, the Galena Park-San Jacinto City Rotary Club and the San Jacinto North College, the district received a federal grant, Gaining Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP). This five-year \$1.8 million grant will help prepare students at Woodland Acres and Galena Park Middle Schools and Galena Park High School for post-secondary education. The grant will fund services such as summer programs, mentoring, advising, cultural enrichment, parent training, tutoring, social services, Aspiring to College clubs, Saturday at College programs and programs to increase college awareness and career awareness.

Through a mutually beneficial arrangement with the city of Galena Park, the district allows community access to baseball fields, tennis courts and tracks. Each year, the Houston Astros baseball team organization invites GPISD community members, student and district employees and their

family members to purchase half-price Astros tickets. More than 1,000 people from GPISD attended one game at Minute Maid Park in Houston.

The district celebrates its diversity in several ways. Instead of celebrating specific ethnic groups during specific months of the year, like Black History month, district policy requires that each school designate one week each school year as multicultural week. During that week, the school celebrates the culture of all ethnic groups. In addition to this multicultural week, schools may choose to celebrate various other holidays like Cinco de Mayo. Special celebrations may also take place during Black History month celebrating African American culture. Staff integrate multicultural lessons into the curriculum, teaching students to respect differences and recognize similarities among cultures.

GPISD participates in the North Channel Multicultural Festival with Channelview and Sheldon ISDs and San Jacinto College North. During this festival, each district school adopts a country, creating exhibits, presentations, displays and food to represent the adopted country.

The review team surveyed teachers, district staff, administrators and parents relating to community use of facilities. **Exhibit 4-11** shows that a majority of district staff and parents agree that school facilities are open for community use.

Exhibit 4-11
GPISD Community Involvement Survey Results
September 2002

District Facilities are open for community use.	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Teachers	14.7%	42.6%	22.1%	16.2%	4.4%
District administrative and support staff	31.0%	37.9%	13.8%	8.6%	3.4%
Principals and Assistant Principals	35.5. %	58.1%	3.2%	3.2%	0%
Parents	12.1%	30.3%	36.4%	12.1%	3.0%

Source: TSPR Surveys.

Note: May not add up to 100 percent due to "no responses."

To assist community organizations wanting to use its facilities, the district provides a Facilities Use Booklet to all school principals and interested

community organizations. The booklet outlines all procedures on the use of GPISD facilities.

COMMENDATION

GPISD works closely with local education and civic organizations to provide services for students and to develop mutually beneficial relationships.

FINDING

GPISD became a designated schoolwide Title I, Part A program in 2002-03 for the first time. Federal Title I programs "enable schools to provide opportunities for children served to acquire the knowledge and skills contained in the state content standards and to meet the state student performance standards developed for all children." The program specifically helps schools with high concentrations of students from low-income families provide a high-quality education. Funds are distributed on the basis of the number of economically disadvantaged students, but students served do not need to be economically disadvantaged. The law allows a school to be designated as a Title I, Part A if 50 percent or more of students at the school or in the attendance zone are classified as low income. In 2001-02, GPISD's percentage of economically disadvantaged students at 65.8 percent exceeded the state average of 50.5 percent.

Title I program requirements contain an important parental involvement component. Grant recipients must provide parental education services and volunteer opportunities to develop stronger relationships with the home and to encourage parents to become more involved in their children's educations.

The GPISD director of Health and Intervention Services manages the Title I parental involvement activities. In 2002-03, GPISD received \$2.8 million in Title I funds, allocating 1 percent or \$28,000 for parental involvement activities. These funds pay identified teachers, counselors or aides extra duty pay to serve as parent facilitators. In addition, each school receives \$350 for miscellaneous parental involvement activities such as food for parent breakfasts. Schools can use some of the overall Title I funds that are not part of the 1 percent parental involvement component to employ parent facilitators. In 2002-03, four schools (Cobb Sixth Grade Campus, Cloverleaf Elementary, Woodland Acres Elementary and Pyburn Elementary), had parent facilitators. GPISD also used Title I funds to pay 23 teacher aides involved in parental involvement activities. In addition, the district pays some counselors and teachers stipends to serve as parent volunteer facilitators. The district provides effective practical parenting training for the facilitators.

Teacher aides and facilitators work with school staff to establish a parent resource network in the Houston/Galveston area. Parents and families in need of health services, shelter and food are referred to several area community organizations. The school district also partners with the East Harris County Education Department to provide GED and ESL education to native Spanish-speaking parents. Parent facilitators also inform parents of all area ESL classes offered in neighboring districts, area community colleges, community centers and churches. Though classes began in early September, interested parents may enroll at any time. **Exhibit 4-12** shows a calendar of ESL classes available in GPISD schools.

Exhibit 4-12
GPISD/East Harris County Department of Education GED/ESL
Classes
Fall 2002-03

School	Registration	Class/Days	Time
Cloverleaf Elementary	September 4 and 6	Tuesdays and Thursdays	6-9 PM
Holy Trinity Church	September 10 and 12	Mondays and Wednesdays	8:30-11:30 AM
North Channel Library	September 12	Wednesdays and Thursdays	6-9 PM
St. Timothy Episcopal	September 4	Mondays and Thursdays	8:30-2:30 PM

Source: GPISD, Director of Health and Intervention Services Department.

Various parent facilitator sessions are available in several schools in GPISD. Working in collaboration with district staff and community organizations, the district provides parent education opportunities. **Exhibit 4-13** shows a sample of sessions by school.

Exhibit 4-13
Sample GPISD Parent Education Opportunities
Fall 2002

School	Sessions
Jacinto City Elementary	Immunizations, Health Care Services, Meet the Teacher, Back to School Safety, Community Safety, Health and Safety, Computer Lab, Partners in Literacy, Anger Management.
Cobb Sixth	Creating Family Friendly Schools for Paraprofessional Staff.

Grade Campus	Cobb Volunteer Training, New Arrival Parent Meeting, Grandparents Day, PTA Meeting Title I Compact and Parent Involvement, Math for 6th Graders - Parent overview (English and Spanish sessions), Parent Involvement Day Breakfast, Bring Your Parent to School Day, Computer Classes for Parents, Reading for Success - "Could My Child Have a Reading Problem?", Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast.
Purple Sage Elementary	Growing up Drug Free, DARE Dads Club Celebrating Drug Free, DARE Dads Club Showing Our Thanks, Homework Tips for Parents, Personal Safety for Children.
Cloverleaf Elementary	Donuts for Dads-Community Health Issues, Muffins for Moms-Health Issues, Nutrition Education.
North Shore Senior High	Open House, College Night, Financial Aid Night, What to Expect your Senior Year, PTSA.
Green Valley Elementary	Cara y Corazón, Donuts with Dads-Tackling the TAKS, Muffins with Mom, Goodies with Grandparents, Effective Parenting, Safe Discipline, Career Fair.
Pyburn Elementary	Growing and Learning, Guiding the Journey, Getting to Know Ourselves, The Association for the Advancement of Mexican Americans.
Tice Elementary	Growing up Drug-Free, Homework Tips for Parents, TEKS, Personal Safety for Children.
Woodland Acres Elementary	Dual Language Program Orientation, New Arrival Center Orientation, Back-to-School Night, Process of Language Development, Families Who Read Together Grow Together, Parent Literacy, The Storyteller
Havard Elementary	Volunteer Breakfast, ADD/ADHD Parent Ed-Evening, Grandparents Raising Kids, Math Night, Nutrition Class
Cunningham Middle School	Healthy Relationships, Health Fair, Holiday Treat for Parents, Computer Tips, Preparing Students for Higher Ed. TAKS
Cimarron Elementary	Adult ESL, First Grade Parent Academy, Community Health Fair, Third Grade Parent Academy, Science at Cimarron, Accelerated Reader for ESL Parents, Technology Basics for Parents
North Shore High School	NAC Parent Orientation, Open House, College Night, Parent Appreciation Day, Parent Involvement Drive, Financial Aid, PTSA
Galena Park Elementary	Cara y Corazón, AAMA: A Family Strengthening Program, Personal Safety. Growing up Drug Free. Homework Tips for

	Parents, Early Childhood Intervention Program
Woodland Acres Middle	Teen Dating, AAMA Workshop-Family Members
MacArthur Elementary	Lightspan Parent Night, Family Math and Science Night, Strategies for Helping Your Child at Home, Nutrition Classes
Galena Park Senior High School	Freshman requirements, School Curriculum, Parent Involvement, School Safety, About Graduation, College Night
Galena Park Middle	School Safety, Safety Begins at Home, Child Abduction Prevention, 8 th Grade Parent and Student Orientation to High School
North Shore Elementary	Meet the Teacher, Open House, Family Fun-Math and Science, Family Reading Night, Family Health Fair

Source: GPISD, Director of Health and Intervention Services Department.

In addition to the parent facilitator sessions, the executive director for Special Programs facilitates the District School Initiatives Team meetings. These meetings, conducted two to four times a year, inform parents about district goals and objectives and changes in federal and state laws, and provide information about the special programs in the district, including Special Education, Gifted and Talented, Bilingual/ESL education and Compensatory Education. At a meeting held during October 2002, the executive director for Special Programs provided an update on district goals and objectives; No Child Left Behind (student performance, parent involvement, completion/graduation rates, scientifically researched-based programs, homeless children); and parent involvement.

Through program and activity funding, GPISD provides necessary services to parents and involving them in their child's education.

COMMENDATION

GPISD uses Title I parental involvement funds to provide valuable services for GPISD parents.

FINDING

The School/Community Relations Department does not routinely assist local schools in recruiting, training or screening parent volunteers. Coordinated by school counselors, organizing and training volunteers takes place at the school level. Volunteer screening is also done at the

school level so a parent who volunteers at more than one school will be screened by each school.

Each school determines the way volunteers sign in so that the school can track the number of volunteer hours accumulated. Not all schools submit a list of volunteer hours to the director of Foundation and Community Relations. Because not all schools submit a monthly report to the district, the district does not currently know exactly how many volunteers participate in GPISD or how many volunteer hours have been accumulated districtwide. The director of Foundation and Community Relations said that the district is starting to become more uniform in tracking volunteer hours.

Teachers, staff, principals and parents differ in their opinion regarding the availability of volunteers to help student and school programs. Although 58 percent of teachers and nearly 40 percent of principals and assistant principals do not believe the district has enough volunteers; only 25 percent of parents and district administrative and support staff believe the district does not have enough volunteers (**Exhibit 4-14**).

Exhibit 4-14
GPISD Community Involvement Survey Results
September 2002

Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Teachers	5.9%	25.0%	10.3%	42.6%	16.2%
District administrative and support staff	17.2%	31.0%	20.7%	19.0%	6.9%
Principals and Assistant Principals	12.9%	38.7%	9.6%	32.3%	6.5%
Parents	3.0%	42.4%	27.4%	24.2%	0.0%

Source: TSPR Survey Results.

Note: May not add up to 100 percent due to "no responses."

During a public forum, parents offered the following comments regarding district parental involvement:

- "I don't feel enough effort is put into parental involvement..."

- "Although parents are told they are welcomed, when they express a genuine concern, they are made to feel unwanted. Just send your money, come to programs but do not ask questions."
- "The district does not seem to do enough to get parents involved."

The director of Foundation and Community Relations said the district uses volunteers in almost every area of a school including breakfast and lunch duty, the library, school clinics and the office. Parent volunteers assist teachers in classrooms, serve as chaperones for field trips and dances and help with Project Graduation. The district sends volunteers a "Thank You" note to acknowledge their involvement in GPISD. Some schools also acknowledge volunteers on an individual basis.

District publications, the district Web site and individual school Web sites do not routinely list volunteer opportunities. Although the district Web site has a section entitled "Parents," the page did not include volunteer opportunities. A review of individual school Web sites did not discover sites that included volunteering needs and opportunities at the school level. However, the Web site did highlight two GPISD volunteers who recently received the TEA Heroes for Children Award and were recognized by the State Board of Education in Austin.

Individual community members and school personnel efforts contribute to some of the effective volunteer efforts in GPISD. MacArthur Elementary has an effective volunteer program called the Help One Student To Succeed (HOSTS) program. The HOSTS teacher and the principal secure an adequate numbers of volunteers to judge science and history fairs and debate, music, poetry and prose contests.

Some school districts have developed effective volunteer tracking systems. El Paso ISD has a comprehensive computerized volunteer information management system (CVIMS). The database system tracks monthly Volunteers in Public Schools (VIPS) and Partners in Education (PIE) program volunteers, volunteer hours, monetary donations and in-kind services. It also produces a summary report at the end of the school year used to recognize individual volunteers and schools with the highest participation levels.

Many schools provide parent volunteer training sessions. Ysleta ISD supports school volunteer efforts with a strong training program. Every school has a volunteer training program, which new and existing volunteers attend to learn about volunteer opportunities and any recent district policy or procedure changes. In addition, the district teaches school volunteer coordinators how to train volunteers who join the program after the annual district orientation session. The volunteer orientation session covers information contained in a comprehensive district handbook,

Opening the Door to Volunteering, distributed to every orientation participant. The brochure contains information in both English and Spanish, which increases support from all segments of the Ysleta ISD community.

Recommendation 24:

Develop and implement a plan that supports and assists individual schools in recruiting, tracking, training and screening volunteers.

The plan should be as comprehensive as possible and include the following: use the district's Web site and publications to advertise volunteer opportunities; use local media outlets on a regular basis to increase awareness of the district's need for more parent volunteers; communicate information in English and Spanish; implement uniform and shared volunteer screening procedures to ensure children's safety; centralize the tracking of volunteer efforts; identify successful volunteer programs and assist those schools that need more volunteers.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The assistant superintendent for School/Community Relations requires the director of Foundation and Community Relations to conduct a volunteer needs assessment at every school; identify successful volunteer recruitment, retention, training, and screening efforts; and submit a written report of findings to the superintendent for approval and distribution to all campuses.	April 2003
2.	The assistant superintendent for School/Community Relations and the director of Foundation and Community Relations develop plan and a timeline for assisting schools in recruiting, tracking, training and screening volunteers.	May 2003
3.	The director of Foundation and Community Relations works with the Technology Department to develop a volunteer tracking system.	May 2003
4.	The director of Communications ensures that every districtwide publication and the district's Web site include a list of volunteer opportunities.	May 2003
5.	The director of Foundation and Community Relations works with the director of Security to develop parent volunteer screening procedures and ensures that all volunteers are appropriately screened.	May 2003
6.	The director of Communications works with the Webmaster to post volunteer opportunities on the district Web site.	May 2003
7.	The director of Foundation and Community Relations works with the	May

	school principals to develop a training manual for parent volunteers.	2003
8.	The director of Foundation and Community Relations institutes a "volunteer week," highlighting volunteer needs and efforts and conducting a districtwide volunteer appreciation day.	July 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The School/Community Relations Department does not effectively track the complaints it receives. The assistant superintendent for School/Community Relations said her primary responsibilities include working "with parents and community members with complaints, typically after they have worked with the other members involved in the complaint process." The district has a comprehensive complaint resolution process in place for concerned parents and citizens. It also includes complaint procedures in the student handbook but not on the district Web site.

The assistant superintendent for School/Community Relations said that the School/Community Relations Department is not responsible for tracking district complaints, but serves as a clearinghouse for complaints. The assistant superintendent keeps a file of all complaints her office receives. The district directs community members with formal complaints to the School/Community Relations Department or the district hearing officer.

Formal complaints include three levels. Principals receive Level I complaints and must provide a written response to these. The district hearing officers receive Level II complaints and the board receives Level III complaints. Informal complaint processes may involve the parent, teacher, assistant principal, principal, executive directors of Elementary or Secondary Education and the assistant superintendent for School/Community Relations.

The department does not effectively track or periodically evaluate the outcome or nature of the complaints filed or received in the School/Community Relations Department. The assistant superintendent for School/Community Relations prepared a summary list of district complaints filed from March 2001 to September 2002. While the report identifies some complaints as Level I, II or III, it does not assess how many of each level were filed. Although the assistant superintendent is not responsible for the grievance process, the School/Community Relations Department's role in the complaint process is not well defined. It is also

unclear which complaints are forwarded to the hearing officer and which are resolved by the department.

Several complaints lack enough detail to provide useful information for process planning and improvement. One entry, "Parent filed a grievance against principal," does not explain the nature of the complaint, even though a Level III grievance was ultimately filed. Some complaints warrant further investigation because apparently resolutions were not obtained or incomplete resolutions were described. The summary does not indicate whether the complainant was satisfied with the resolution. In one instance, a parent complained that "staff members were not providing appropriate services for student nor was the school a welcoming place." The parent filed a Level II grievance, but did not attend the hearing because of medical reasons. The parent never contacted the district to reschedule. In this situation, the district should have contacted the parent to reschedule a Level II hearing, particularly since the parent felt unwelcome in the school system. **Exhibit 4-15** shows a sample list of complaints, action taken and resolution. The last two sample entries show that students were transferred to another school, but it is unclear if this was the requested or desired outcome by the student and/or parent. In one instance, a student was transferred to another school "because the regular class was full at home campus."

Exhibit 4-15
GPISD Sample Complaints
May 2001 through September 2002

Complaint/Concern/ Issue	Action Taken	Resolution/Follow-up
Parent filed a grievance against the principal	Parent filed Level I grievance	Grievance reached Level III (heard before Board of Trustees); Board upheld Hearing Officer's decision at Level II
Parent complained that staff members at child's school were not providing appropriate services for student nor was the school a welcoming place	Information forwarded to principal, executive director of Special Education; Parent filed Level I; several responses in writing	Parent filed Level II; did not attend hearing because of medical concerns; never contacted district to reschedule
Parent complained that student is being mistreated and parent is not welcome on school campus	Parent referred to principal's supervisor	Student transferred to different campus

Parent complained that although she gave permission for student to attend bilingual class parent wanted him placed in regular class; regular classes full at home campus	Information forwarded to principal and principal's supervisor; meeting with parent and director of Bilingual/ESL; Response in writing	Student placed in regular class on another campus
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Source: GPISD, School/Community Relations Department.

The assistant superintendent for School/Community Relations said that the complaint summaries are purposely vague "to protect the identity of parents and students involved." While individual names should never be included in a summary report, a useful evaluative report provides sufficient information about the number, nature and outcome of the complaints received. Summary reports should be useful enough to allow department staff to learn and improve the way that complaints are handled and tracked.

In El Paso ISD, each complainant is required to complete, in advance, a five-page Public Complaint Form that records the complainant's name, address, school or department, date of the event leading to the complaint, nature of the complaint and recommended solution. The form documents actions taken related to the complaint at four distinct complaint levels. In the past, El Paso ISD has solicited input from citizens about the formal complaint process. The district uses the input to assess complaint outcomes and to improve the process on an ongoing basis. Implementing proper record-keeping procedures is necessary for maintaining both public accountability and the privacy rights of those whose personal information is contained in public sector records. Adequate complaint tracking allows schools to ensure that complaints are being handled appropriately.

Recommendation 25:

Clarify the role of the School/Community Relations Department in the district complaint process and work with the hearing officer to track and report district complaints.

The role of the School/Community Relations Department in the complaints process should be clearly defined. If necessary, the district complaint process should identify which types of complaints should be sent to the School/Community Relations Department and which should be heard by the hearing officer. The assistant superintendent for School/Community Relations should work with the hearing officer to assess the types and frequency of complaints. A complaint tracking system

should be developed and an annual summary report should be given to the superintendent and the board, providing useful information in determining areas that need improvement.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the assistant superintendent for School/Community Relations to define the department's role in the district complaint process.	April 2003
2.	The assistant superintendent for School/Community Relations and the hearing officer jointly develop a tracking system for district-level complaints.	May 2003
3.	The assistant superintendent for School/Community Relations and the hearing officer prepare an annual summary report of complaints received in the district.	May 2003 and Annually
4.	The assistant superintendent for School/Community Relations and the hearing officer present the annual report to superintendent and to the school board.	May 2003 and Annually
5.	The assistant superintendent for School/Community Relations assesses the report and makes necessary modifications to improve the complaint process.	June 2003 and Annually

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 4

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

C. Public Information

Public information includes all of the activities that a school district develops to communicate with the community, local businesses, students, parents and district employees. Media relations are also an important function of a school district's public information office. School districts prepare news releases, community events, newsletters, calendars and Web sites. In addition, effective communication links usually involve special community advisory committees or forums. A district's public information activities also include the process by which open record requests are made by citizens and organizations.

FINDING

Controversies have arisen in the district, which might have been avoided through better communication. Two board members ran for reelection in the controversial May 2002 board elections, which involved three open seats. A difference of two votes decided one of those seats. The unsuccessful former board member is suing the successful candidate to overturn this election decision. During the election campaign, one of the board members seeking reelection made a number of allegations regarding the conduct of the superintendent and the district during the election process. Both of these board members said that the district moved the timing of the election to discourage voting. They also said that the superintendent actively supported other candidates by contributing money to their election campaigns and by campaigning for the candidates in community settings. District employees can participate in election campaigns as individuals.

The board members who were serving at the time of the May 2002 elections said that the former board members alleging misconduct were uncooperative and refused to follow board policies regarding personnel actions and often tried to interfere with the superintendent's authority to manage district operations within the constraints set by the board. They also said that until these members were elected in November 1998, the board had worked well together in an atmosphere of trust.

Board members initially dealt with the behavior of these former board members informally by counseling the other members. When that failed, the school board hired an experienced board facilitator to meet with the board at its annual retreat. When that approach also failed, the other board members said they began to ignore comments and concerns expressed by

these two members. The lack of cooperation among board members became visible to the community during the May 2002 election and reinforced residual bad feelings in some community segments. During meetings with the review team, certain community segments expressed a total lack of trust in the current board and senior administrators with allegations covering more than 10 years.

Other community members made allegations about the behavior of the district and its superintendent during the May 2002 school board election. For example, in 1999, the local newspaper disclosed that the district wrote checks for \$600 to cover participation by the high school coaching staff in golf tournament fund raisers for two incumbent constables. The district drew this money from its school activities funds even though board policy CFD (LOCAL) limits the use of activity funds to purposes that benefit students. The district collects the money for its activity funds from students for a school-related purpose. When the superintendent became aware of the problem, she requested that the funds be returned to the school activity fund and sent a written memorandum to all staff that clearly stated the district policy. The superintendent gave individual written statements of the policy to the individuals who had requested the checks. The superintendent also brought in the district's external auditor to review the GPISD's accounts payable process, identify any other problems and make recommendations to ensure that this did not occur in the future.

In addition, anonymous letters were sent to the local newspapers and the Houston Police Department (HPD) alleging that the GPISD paid for a helicopter ride by the superintendent as part of the beginning of school activities in 2002. Community members participating in a review team focus group meeting made the same allegation. Different informants estimated the cost of the helicopter ride between \$500 to \$15,000. The review team investigated this allegation and determined that the superintendent did ride in a HPD helicopter on its regularly scheduled route. As part of HPD's public relations program, the helicopter landed at the parking lot of the district's new stadium during the opening ceremonies for the facility. HPD's motorcycle unit and constables also participated in these activities. The district paid no money to HPD or the constables for their participation in these opening ceremonies.

In GPISD, the superintendent's office handles open record public information requests, channeling them to the appropriate district department. Under Open Records Act regulations, citizens can obtain information and documents pertaining to district business. The district has an official Access to Public Information Request form, a schedule of charges and a statement of charges. The Request for Records identifies the type of request made and the name of the individual or organization requesting information. The district applies standard charges to reproduce

public records. Notification charges include reproduction charges for paper copies, diskettes, magnetic tapes, VHS videocassettes, faxes and audiocassettes. Microfiche or microfilm charges are also identified. The district charges \$15.00 an hour for personnel time charge. The district receives approximately 80 to 100 open record requests each year. The armed forces and photographers requesting senior names and addresses make the majority of these requests.

In an effort to improve communication between parents/community and the school district, Comal ISD created an ombudsman position that reports directly to the superintendent. The ombudsman troubleshoots problems and community concerns and searches for solutions.

Recommendation 26:

Create an ombudsman position that reports directly to the superintendent and is responsible for troubleshooting, open records requests and fostering two-way communication with the public.

The ombudsman should have proven trouble-shooting or problem-solving skills as well as experience organizing and facilitating mediation and public input meetings that allow and encourage the community to openly discuss issues of concern.

Additional responsibilities may include such things as ensuring all complaints are tracked, handled and resolved expeditiously; all open records requests are tracked and handled expeditiously; and other duties as needed by the district. The Ombudsman should also be bi-lingual in Spanish.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent asks the executive director of Human Resources to develop a job description and job vacancy announcement for the position of Ombudsman.	April 2003
2.	The superintendent submits both to the board for its consideration and approval.	April 2003
3.	The superintendent asks the financial manager if the budget will allow adding this position for the next fiscal year.	April 2003
4.	The board approves creating and filling the Ombudsman position.	May 2003
5.	The executive director of Human Resources posts/advertises a job opening position for Ombudsman.	June 2003

6.	The executive director of Human Resources and the superintendent create a committee to interview and select qualified applicants.	July 2002
7.	The committee rates and recommends the most qualified applicants to the superintendent.	July 2003
8.	The superintendent interviews and selects the most qualified applicant.	August 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

The skills necessary to perform these duties are similar to those possessed by an experienced counselor position. The salary range for an experienced counselor would be approximately \$50,000 to \$55,000, according to the Texas Association of School Boards, Human Resources Department. The variable benefits rate is calculated at 2.42 percent of salary and equals \$1,331 (\$55,000 x 2.42 percent = 1,331). Fixed benefits are calculated at \$235 per month for health and dental insurance or \$2,820 annually (\$235 x 12 months = \$2,820). Total fringe benefits equal \$4,151 (\$1,331 variable benefits plus \$2,820 fixed benefits = \$4,151). The salary and benefits for this position equals \$59,151 annually.

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Create an ombudsman position that reports directly to the Superintendent and is responsible for troubleshooting, open records requests and fostering two-way communication with the public.	(\$59,151)	(\$59,151)	(\$59,151)	(\$59,151)	(\$59,151)

FINDING

The GPISD School/Community Relations Department maintains several districtwide publications to inform district staff, parents and the community. The district works with local news organizations to publicize various district events. Several approaches are used to enhance communication. The following district publications provide information to parents, businesses and the community: Galena Park ISD: Statistics; Galena Park ISD: Highlights; district map and calendar; *Your Schools*, a quarterly publication for all GPISD residents, tax payers and community members; *Insight*, a newsletter for district staff; *The Basic Facts*, a booklet

that contains important district contact information; and the district Crisis Management Plan.

In addition, individual district departments publish a variety of informational packets for parents and students that include the student code of conduct, special education information booklet, bilingual education booklets and others.

The district also videotapes all district board meetings and produces several videos each year to promote the district. Between August and December 2002, the district taped 41 events including district board meetings, press conferences and cultural events. GPISD also produced 22 videos about other district events that were from four to 20 minutes long. Examples of these videos include construction and budget updates; a school safety video; an overall district information video; and the Region IV intern of the year video. Videos are shown at several events, including the Hispanic Forum, the Bi-racial Committee and the school board meeting. Several schools have requested copies of videos to show at school-sponsored events.

The School/Community Relations Department also maintains the district's Web site, which it updated and redesigned in September 2002. Although information still needs to be uploaded and several department and school level Web sites are being developed, the Web development initiative is growing and improving.

Exhibit 4-16 shows that overall, community members believe that the district regularly communicates with parents. In addition, 76 percent of parents said that the district regularly communicates with them.

Exhibit 4-16
GPISD Public Information Survey Results
2002-03

The district regularly communicates with parents.	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Teachers	14.7%	64.7%	10.3%	10.3%	0.0%
District administrative and support staff	37.9%	41.4%	10.3%	3.4%	1.7%
Principals and Assistant Principals	45.2%	48.4%	6.4%	0.0%	0.0%
Parents	15.2%	60.6%	3.0%	15.2%	3.0%

Source: GPISD Surveys.

Note: May not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.

COMMENDATION

The School/Community Relations Department publications keeps the GPISD community informed of district activities and accomplishments.

FINDING

The School/Community Relations Department does not translate important district information into Spanish in a timely and efficient manner. Though the district publishes a variety of publications, very few are available in Spanish at the district level. Bilingual school-level staff, some of which do not have translating skills, translate many documents. Schools do not receive any district-level help on the translation process. The main publication sent out districtwide, *Your Schools*, is not translated into Spanish. The district plans to produce this publication in both languages by February 2003. An inspection of the district offices shows that the district does not display any welcoming signs in Spanish.

The Human Resource Department creates and publishes the district's Student Handbook. The Student Handbook and Code of Conduct 2002-03 were not available in Spanish at the beginning of the school year. At the September 17, 2002 meeting with the Hispanic Forum, the superintendent said that there was an error in the first printing of the Spanish version and that the Spanish version of the handbook would be available in late September. The Hispanic Forum members requested several copies.

A review of Hispanic Forum minutes showed that members of the Hispanic Forum have been requesting translation services since the forum began meeting in 1997. Members also said that many of the district translations are grammatically incorrect.

Official district translators are not available at board meetings, but the assistant superintendent for School/Community Relations said that one would be provided if requested. She said a translator had never been requested. Several PTA members said that translators are made available in school meetings. Despite these efforts, some parents said they would attend and participate in more PTA meetings if the meetings were conducted in English and Spanish. Their district needs to continue its efforts to make community members from different cultural backgrounds welcome and comfortable.

The assistant superintendent for School/Community Relations and the director of Communications said that translating services are a district priority. The assistant superintendent for School/Community Relations said that the district uses bilingual district employees to translate various documents and emergency notices such as health warnings. These employees, however, cannot translate large documents or newsletters on an ongoing basis. In addition, many bilingual employees may not possess the necessary skills required for a technical translation.

The 2002-03 DIP for the School/Community Relations Department states that the department will develop a plan to ensure Spanish translation of districtwide publications. The plan allocates \$20,000 and specifies that by October 2002, 50 percent of the plan will be implemented. The review team did not find evidence that this task had been completed, though the Spanish version of the student handbook was being printed. Although no translators are being hired by the School/Community Relations Department, the department's assistant superintendent said that the district is hiring two translators, one for curriculum and one for education services. The assistant superintendent for School/Community Relations said that a district secretary or a teacher has been paid extra duty to assist with district translations.

With the exception of one document in the "Parents" Web page that is available in English and Spanish, the GPISD Web site does not include any information for Spanish-speaking community members.

Recommendation 27:

Contract with qualified, certified English-Spanish translation services to translate district publications, including sections of the district's Web site, into Spanish.

Since 62.9 percent of GPISD's student enrollment is Hispanic, the School/Community Relations Department needs to provide district publications in Spanish. An initial Internet search located several translation companies in the Houston area. Qualified, accredited translators can also be found through the American Translators Association (ATA) online directories. As an educational organization, the district should ensure that it provides quality translations. The 2002-03 DIP allocated \$20,000 for translation services as needed for departmental needs.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The assistant superintendent for School/Community Relations directs the director of Communications to identify district publications to be	April 2003
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	published in Spanish.	
2.	The director of Communications works with the senior purchasing coordinator to develop a contract with a translating service to translate newsletters, publications and Web site content.	May 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The School/Community Relations Department does not have a Web development plan that allows the Webmaster to assess districtwide needs. The district's Web site provides several valuable online services to the GPISD community, and the School/Community Relations Department is working to make the Web site more complete and comprehensive. A strong development process ensures that all district departments are adequately represented and the Web development process is developed according to identified needs. With appropriate plans, the district can identify required online technical support needs for schools.

The Webmaster, who is assigned to the School/Community Relations Department, works closely with the Technology, Human Resource Services and other district level departments. In addition, the Webmaster works with local schools, providing Web design classes for individuals who are developing school Web sites.

The 2002-03 District Improvement Plan states that the Webmaster and the director of Communications will identify and develop a Campus Communicator Liaison Program. This program will identify personnel in the schools to report school level successes to the Webmaster for posting on the Web site.

Although a review of the Web site shows that several areas still need development, the overall organizational structure of the Web site is in place and the Web site is operational. The review showed that the district does not have adequate quality control review to ensure that the Web grammar content is correct. The review team identified an online application form with typographical errors.

Although the Webmaster said that several departments will require significant Web-related activities in the next few years, the district has not defined the Web development responsibilities of each district department or created a calendar of Web development activities.

Austin ISD (AISD) established a Web Advisory Committee to oversee changes and additions in content areas to ensure all of AISD's departments are adequately represented on the Web site and to develop better online technical support materials and user guidelines for school Webmasters.

Recommendation 28:

Establish a Web Advisory Committee and develop a three-year Web development plan.

A Web development plan should include a prioritized list of activities that will be implemented during a three-year period. Ultimately, each department should have a comprehensive interactive Web site, which includes all relevant information. The plan should also identify a quality control review process to ensure that material posted is reviewed and correct.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Communications works with the Webmaster to create a districtwide Web Advisory Committee.	April 2003
2.	The advisory committee develops a district Web site needs assessment.	June 2003
3.	The Webmaster uses the needs assessment to prioritize the list of needs and develop a three-year development plan.	July 2003
4.	The Webmaster presents the plan to the Web Advisory Committee for review and approval.	July 2003
5.	The Web Advisory Committee recommends changes and additions as necessary to improve the district Web site.	August 2003 Ongoing
6.	The Webmaster implements the plan.	August 2003 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 4

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

D. Business Partnerships

Involving the business community often allows a district to secure additional funding for various school activities. School business partnerships and foundations also enhance the overall education service delivery for students by increasing the number of school volunteers and bringing specialized expertise and resources to classroom teachers and school offices.

FINDING

GPISD developed partnerships with businesses through the GPISD Education Foundation that increase funds and resources for school activities. The district's School Business Partnership Program, managed by the director of Foundation and Community Relations, recruits business partners for each of its schools. The district aims to establish a partner for each school, but this goal has not yet been achieved. During the last year, the School/Community Relations Department has worked closely with schools to more "aggressively target relationships with community businesses and corporations."

Exhibit 4-17 shows the donations made to GPISD from 1999 to 2002. The donations include in-kind contributions, volunteer hours and a variety of other contributions such as uniforms, school supplies, furniture, food and meals, gift certificates, free services, tutoring, staff development speakers, movie passes, prescription glasses, clothes, magazines, dictionaries, encyclopedias, books for libraries and electronics.

Exhibit 4-17
GPISD School Donations
1998-99 through 2001-02

Year	School Donations
2001-02	\$583,639.41
2000-01	\$225,548.43
1999-2000	\$626,621.13
1998-99	\$62,590.89

Source: GPISD, Department of School/Community Relations.

The School Business Partnership Program seeks to increase financial support to all GPISD schools. **Exhibit 4-18** presents a sample monthly list of local business involvement.

Exhibit 4-18
Sample Monthly Partnership Donations
September 2000

School	Partnerships	Value	Type of Support/Donation
Administration Annex	Methodist Hospital, Harris County Sheriff's Department, MHMRA Harris County	\$875	Staff development speakers
Cloverleaf Elementary	Holy Trinity United Methodist Church, Beta Sigma Phi Beta Iota Mu Chapter, Christy Cundiff and Janet Mitchell, Woodforest Baptist Church, Enviro Tech	\$3,600	Uniforms, school supplies
Galena Park Elementary	Galena Park Assembly of God, Order of Eastern Star, Randall's, Galena Park United Methodist Church, Galena Park/San Jacinto Rotary Club	\$406	School supplies
Green Valley Elementary	HEB Pantry Foods, Lozano's Salon 2000, Leon Nunley Insurance Agency, Woodforest Citizens on Patrol, Sellers Brothers, Pancho's, Wal-Mart, Academy, Howard Glendale Funeral Home, McDonald's Hamburgers, Gallery Furniture, Woodforest Baptist Church	\$5,345	Gift cards, free haircuts, gift certificates, tents, happy meal toys and cookies, lounge furniture, uniforms, school supplies
MacArthur Elementary	Galena Park Assembly of God, Galena Park United Methodist Church, Galena Park/San Jacinto City Rotary Club, Eastern Star	\$1,285	Packages of school supplies
Center for	ACE Mart Restaurant	\$238	Coffee maker, coffee

Success	Supply		decanter
Purple Sage Elementary	Purple Sage Elementary PTA, Dawn Schaefer	\$900	Faculty/staff welcome back breakfast, parents volunteer all day in a kindergarten class
Woodland Acres Middle School	Robin Woolery	\$100	Prescription glasses

Source: GPISD, School/Community Relations Department.

In addition to the School Business Partnership Program, GPISD established a nonprofit, tax-exempt education foundation, the Galena Park ISD Education Foundation, to support educational programs for both students and teachers in 1999-2000. The foundation is a nonprofit, tax exempt 501 (c) (3) organization of citizens that "share a vision of enhancing education in GPISD." The foundation supports educational programs and activities that either have not been funded or have been under-funded by the normal district's operating budget. **Exhibit 4-19** shows the foundation's goals and priorities.

Exhibit 4-19
GPISD Education Foundation, Goals and Priorities
2001

Goals	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage all students to work at their highest potential • Recognize teachers for innovative efforts and exemplary teaching • Build public awareness and confidence in our schools • Involve the community in assuring a quality education for the leaders and workers of tomorrow 	
Priorities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovative Teaching Grants • Technology • Staff Development • Endowed Scholarship Programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Special Needs of Students • Interactive Learning Experiences for Students • School/Community Partnership Programs

Source: GPISD Education Foundation: Funding Innovation in the Classroom, department of School/Community Relations.

Exhibit 4-20 shows the GPISD Education Foundation's annual financial summary report, ending December 2001. As of December 2001, the Foundation maintained an endowment fund of \$100,000. In addition, the director of Foundation and School Partnerships said that by having the education foundation, the district will be able to save more than \$7 million using the education foundation as a community partner for matching support in applying for Qualified Zone Academy Bonds (QZAB), federal funds used to renovate North Shore High School. Under the QZAB program, the district repays the principal, but not the interest, on the bonds.

Exhibit 4-20
Statement of Support and Expenses
January 1, 2001 through December 31, 2001

Category	Amount Awarded
Support and Revenue	\$186,005
Total Expenses	\$220,996
Net Assets Beginning of Year	\$120,626
Net Assets End of Year	\$85,635
Bank Balance 11/30/01	\$121,758
Endowment Fund	\$100,000

Source: GPISD Foundation Annual Report, 2001.

Businesses and individuals support the Foundation through donations of various amounts. The foundation has established five donor levels: Platinum - \$5,000 or more for three years; Gold - \$5,000 or more; Silver - \$2,500 or more; Bronze - \$1,000 or more; and Founding benefactors - \$500 or more.

As of December 2001, the foundation had one Platinum partner, eight Silver Partners, 22 Bronze Partners and two benefactors. **Exhibit 4-21** lists these business partnerships.

Exhibit 4-21
GPISD Education Foundation Partners
2001

Partner Level	Partners	Amount of Donation
Platinum	Dr Pepper Bottling Co. of Texas	\$50,000
Gold	None	\$5,000
Silver	Community Hospital Foundation Woodforest National Bank Equilon Enterprises, LLC Brady Hull & Associates SHW Group, Inc. Architects/Engineers Shiloh Printing & Christian Bookstore GB Biosciences Anheuser-Busch, Inc.	\$2,500 each
Bronze	Dexter Joyner, Attorney Slocumb Insurance Agency, Inc. East Houston Regional Medical Center CLR Architects/Engineers Baytex Operations - Burger King Texmark, Inc. ATOFINA Chemicals, Inc. Lyondell-Citgo Refining, LP J.P. Morgan Chase Foundation Comerica Bank, Galena Park Howard Glendale Funeral Home Bracewell & Patterson Southwest Securities Molina Walker Architects Day Brown Rice, Consulting Engineers Borden Dairy Hodges & Ocker, Inc. ServiceMaster, Inc. Two private donors	\$1,000 each
Benefactor	Reliant Energy - HL&P Galena Park/Jacinto City Rotary Club	\$500 each
Total	33 Partners	\$93,000

Source: GPISD, School/Community Relations Department.

The Educator Initiative Grant Program (EIGP), managed by the foundation, encourages and rewards innovative and creative instructional approaches. Individuals or teams of individuals employed by GPISD who are involved in the instruction of students or provide support through auxiliary positions are eligible to apply for this grant. Individual entries selected can be awarded up to \$1,000, and teams are awarded up to \$5,000. In awarding the grants, the foundation uses a "prize patrol"

consisting of district administrators, board members, community representatives, business partners and PTA presidents. The "prize patrol" travels to the district schools and personally delivers the grants. During the past four years, the foundation has awarded more than \$221,000 as shown in **Exhibit 4-22**.

Exhibit 4-22
GPISD Education Foundation
1999 through 2002

Year	Foundation Awards
1999**	\$31,516.60
1999-2000	\$64,850.00
2000-01	\$69,020.35
2001-02	\$56,373.95
Total	\$221,760.90

Source: School/Community Relations Department.

*** Represents half of a school year - from September to December.*

Exhibit 4-23 shows a sample of projects that have been funded.

Exhibit 4-23
Sample Projects Awarded by the GPISD Education Foundation
1999 through 2002

Project	Amount Awarded
<i>Read Naturally:</i> Students using the Read Naturally program learn to read fluently. With individual teacher/student conferencing, the students set personal goals regarding the number of correct words read per minute and grade level of material. The individualized approach increased fluency, comprehension, self-confidence and motivation.	\$3,500
<i>Incorporating Digital Media (Video) into Print Journalism:</i> The purpose of this grant is to expose students to modern digital (streaming) video by incorporating it into existing print projects and publications. It is also designed to increase excitement, participation and interest in the journalism program by using modernized methods such as digital video clips and multimedia Web sites.	\$1,800

<i>Learn While You Earn:</i> The Automotive Technology Program has recently become NATEF and AYEF certified. These certifications have opened the door for students to enter this career choice before graduating. The funds from this grant enable a Galena Park High School senior to obtain full-time employment prior to graduation.	\$3,000
<i>Buffalo Bayou Water Quality Project:</i> Galena Park High School students experience the use of interdisciplinary studies to complete an investigation of Buffalo Bayou in the area of Galena Park and other North Shore sites. Students engage in professional water testing procedures, map out land profiles, explore the history of Galena Park, examine economic and political actions and learn how they affect water quality in Buffalo Bayou.	\$2,500
Other Projects	
Spread the Color	\$2,561
Backpacks for Learning	\$3,000
Vocational Job Sampling	\$1,000
Biology Goes Soft(Ware, That Is)	\$5,000
Cultural Connections	\$2,500
Reading for College	\$1,000
Dance Innovation Program	\$2,000

Source: GPISD Education Foundation Brochure: "Funding Innovation in the Classroom."

Every year, the foundation hosts the Dazzling Diamond Gala at the Radisson Hotel and Conference Center. This gala honors North Shore and Galena Park high schools graduates in the top 5 percent of their class. These students select a Galena Park teacher who made an impact on their life or education. Each student receives a personalized portfolio and each teacher a "diamond" on a wooden base.

The foundation also hosts an annual golf tournament and an annual fund drive to raise money for the foundation. In addition, the foundation received a donation of up to \$25 for every subscription or renewal/extension received from the *Houston Chronicle*.

COMMENDATION

The GPISD Education Foundation and the School Business Partnership Program provide excellent services to GPISD students

and teachers by raising funds for innovative classroom projects and by sponsoring several district events.

FINDING

The GPISD Education Foundation and GPISD established a program to allow employees to contribute to the foundation through an automatic payroll deduction. Employees can deduct any amount desired. In September 2002, 280 employees participated in the program. As a result of the program, the foundation will raise approximately \$19,200 in 2002-03 through employee contributions.

COMMENDATION

The GPISD Education Foundation's employee contribution program is an innovative and effective way to involve district staff in raising funds for the GPISD Education Foundation.

FINDING

Although the GPISD Education Foundation is a separate nonprofit organization, district funds pay the salaries of the director of Foundation and Community Relations and the senior project coordinator. The director's salary in 2002-03 is \$79,257, and the senior project coordinator's salary in 2002-03 is \$25,792. The foundation director said that she and the senior project coordinator spend approximately 50 percent of their time performing foundation duties.

Exhibit 4-24 shows GPISD's salary investment in the foundation over the last four years. Although the foundation pays for its postage, printing, office supplies and brochures, the district provides other indirect costs, such as office space and utilities, provided as an in-kind foundation contribution.

Over the last four years, the foundation has contributed approximately \$221,000 to the school district through various grants, but the district's cost for the director's salary during the same period was \$142,746. The amount is based on the director spending approximately 50 percent of her time on foundation-related duties. The \$142,746 amount does not include the salary of the senior project coordinator. Taking into account the district's salary contribution from 1999 to 2002 to the education foundation, the district has received \$87,126.30 in awards. This figure does not include salary paid or foundation awards received in 2002-03. Allocating 50 percent of the senior project coordinator's salary, or \$12,896, will further reduce the funds the district receives from the foundation. If the district's in-kind contributions are also considered, this

amount is reduced further. If the foundation paid 60 percent of the director's and the senior project coordinator's salary, the foundation's administrative costs would exceed 15 percent of the foundation-obtained contributions.

Exhibit 4-24
GPISD Director of Foundation Salary and Awards Provided
1999 through 2003*

Year	Salary for Director of Foundation	50 Percent of Director of Foundation Salary	Awards Provided by the Foundation	Difference Between Awards Provided and Foundation Cost to the District
1999**	***	***	\$31,516.60	***
1999-2000	\$66,306	\$33,153	\$64,850.00	\$31,697.00
2000-01	\$68,956	\$34,478	\$69,020.35	\$34,542.35
2001-02	\$70,974	\$35,487	\$56,373.95	\$20,886.95
2002-03	\$79,256	\$39,628	***	***
Total	\$285,492	\$142,746	\$221,760.90	\$87,126.30

Source: GPISD, School/Community Relations Department.

** Salary amounts do not include benefits.*

*** Represent half of a school year - from September to December.*

**** These figures are unavailable.*

The director of Foundation and Community Relations said that she spends approximately 50 percent of the time performing job duties for the foundation. She is also responsible for other non-foundation-related duties, related primarily to building district business and community partnerships.

Recommendation 29:

Require that the GPISD Education Foundation pay a portion of the foundation's administrative costs.

The district should require the foundation to contribute 60 percent of the salary for the director of Foundation and Community Relations and 50

percent of the salary of the senior project coordinator based on the amount of time spent for foundation-related work.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the GPISD Education Foundation to partially pay for the salaries of the director of Foundation and Community Relations and senior project coordinator.	April 2003
2.	The GPISD Education Foundation partially pays the salary for the director of Foundation and Community Relations and senior project coordinator.	August 2003
3.	The superintendent and the Education Foundation board of directors annually review foundation budget to assess administrative costs and to review the benefit of supporting the education foundation through salaries and other in-kind contributions.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

GPISD could produce a savings of \$64,502 by sharing the cost of the director of Foundation and Community Relations and the senior project coordinator's salaries with the GPISD Education Foundation. The district could save 60 percent of \$83,994 (director of Foundation and Community Relations' salary plus benefits) (\$83,995 x 60%) plus 50 percent of \$28,212 (senior project coordinator's salary plus benefits) (\$28,212 x 50%), a total savings of \$64,503 (\$50,396 + \$14,106) per year.

Director of Foundation and Community Relations' salary plus benefits:
 Salary (\$79,256) x benefits rate (1.0242) + fixed benefits (\$235/month insurance x 12 months) = \$83,994.

Senior project coordinator position's salary plus benefits: Salary (\$24,792) x benefits rate (1.0242) + fixed benefits (\$235/month insurance x 12 months) = \$28,212.

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Require that the GPISD Education Foundation pay a portion of the foundation's administrative costs.	\$64,502	\$64,502	\$64,502	\$64,502	\$64,502

Chapter 5

FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

This chapter reviews the facilities use and management functions within the Galena Park Independent School District (GPISD) in the following sections:

- A. Facilities Planning and Construction Management
- B. Maintenance and Grounds Operations
- C. Custodial Operations
- D. Energy Management

An effective facilities program coordinates all the building resources in the district, including facility planning, construction management, maintenance, housekeeping and energy management. The program should provide a safe and clean environment where students can learn and integrate facility planning with other aspects of school planning.

BACKGROUND

GPISD is an urban school district located in eastern Harris County adjacent to the Houston Ship Channel. The district has grown slowly, but steadily, during the past eight years from 16,630 students in 1993-94 to 19,336 students in 2001-02. The growth, reflects an increase of 16.3 percent and an average annual increase of 2.0 percent. New apartment complexes and subdivisions in the northern portion of the district contributed to the student increase. The district still has limited room for more residential growth. Enrollment projections completed in August 2002 forecast an anticipated growth rate of almost 20 percent for the period 2000-01 to 2011-12, at an average annual growth rate of 1.9 percent. An earlier study, conducted in 1996, projected an enrollment of 18,821 in 2001-02, approximately 3 percent less than the actual enrollment of 19,336 for that period.

In the past, community members expressed concerns that the area of GPISD north of IH-10 received a disproportionate number of new schools. Thirty-two percent of the district enrollment, or 6,155 students, reside south of IH-10 and 68 percent of the enrollment, or 13,154 students, live north of IH-10. **Exhibit 5-1** shows the 2001-02 enrollment of southern and northern schools in the district. The number of schools in the north and south areas of the district are proportionate to the student population in each area. One of three high schools is in the southern portion of the district. Two of five middle schools are in the southern portions of the district, and five of 12 elementary schools are in the southern portion of the district.

Exhibit 5-1
GPISD Schools and Enrollment by School
2001-02

Schools Located South of IH-10		Schools Located North of IH-10	
School	2001-02 Enrollment	School	2001-02 Enrollment
High Schools			
Galena Park	1,610	North Shore Senior	1,468
		North Shore	2,066
		Accelerated Center for Education (ACE)	102
		Center for Success	8
Middle Schools			
Galena Park	986	Cunningham	888
Woodland Acres	422	North Shore	1,159
		Cobb Sixth Grade Campus	1,034
Elementary Schools			
Galena Park	702	Cimarron	1,020
Jacinto City	831	Cloverleaf	1,051
MacArthur	643	Green Valley	865
Pyburn	576	Havard	967
Woodland Acres	385	North Shore	899
		Purple Sage	799
		Tice	827
Total Enrollment*	6,155		13,153

Source: Assistant Superintendent for Support Services and Texas Education Agency (TEA), Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS), 2001-02.

** Note: Enrollment does not include 28 GPISD students enrolled at High Point, an alternative school that serves students from many districts.*

Although at different rates, all areas of GPISD continue to grow. According to the 2002 enrollment projections study, during the next decade a slight increase in enrollment is projected for elementary schools south of IH-10, averaging about 25 students a year. Elementary schools north of IH-10 are expected to grow at a faster rate, averaging about 138 new students a year. Elementary enrollment is expected to increase overall by about 1,634 students during this period. GPISD plans to add two new elementary schools during this period to address projected growth.

Middle schools and high schools will also continue to grow, adding 941 middle school students and 1,499 high school students by 2011-12. Again, most of this growth will be in schools north of IH-10.

District voters approved the issuance of \$80 million of general obligation bonds for construction projects in 1995. The district used these funds to build the Cobb Sixth Grade Campus, Havard Elementary School and North Shore Senior High School. The district also used the funds for renovations at each existing school except for Galena Park Middle School, which was completed in 1992.

On September 18, 1999, GPISD voters approved a \$120 million bond construction program. Through October 2002, the district has issued \$95 million in bonds.

Exhibit 5-2 lists the projects approved in the latest bond election by their original project number with the original budget and current or final project cost through October 2002. The percentage variance compares the estimated cost or final cost to the original budget approved by the voters. Projects that cost more than originally budgeted are shown as a negative.

Variances represent the difference between the original budget and the current estimate or final cost. Most construction projects will have a final cost that differs from the original budget due to a variety of factors, such as cost increases during construction or changes to original plans. The GPISD variances include a shift of contingency and escalation allowances from individual projects to a combined pool. The district construction staff included escalation and contingency allowances in the estimated cost for each project submitted to the voters for approval based on standard industry practices. The allowances were later combined into one pool. If additional funds are needed for an individual project, the staff prepares a budget amendment for board approval. District construction staff told the review team in interviews that this allows for greater district control of these allowances and results in overall decreased costs for individual projects. Another change that affected variances included moving the

covered play areas, originally included in each elementary school project, into a single combined project for improved oversight.

**Exhibit 5-2
GPISD 2000 Bond Program**

Project Numbers	Project Description	Original Budget	Current Estimate or Final Cost	Percentage Variance Under or (Over)
Completed Projects				
1	Cimarron ES - Renovations and 10 additional classrooms	\$2,679,330	\$1,478,595	44.8%
2	Jacinto City ES - Six additional classrooms	\$2,773,652	\$1,907,187	31.2%
3	North Shore HS West - Renovations	\$4,081,793	\$3,843,443	5.8%
4	New Transportation Facility	\$1,291,088	\$3,264,609	(152.9%)
5	Cloverleaf ES - Renovations and 12 additional classrooms	\$3,955,721	\$2,418,922	38.9%
6	Administration Building	\$6,931,978	\$6,783,195	2.1%
7	New Future Farmers of America (FFA)/Agricultural	\$3,918,083	\$3,598,441	8.2%
8	MacArthur ES - Kitchen renovations and four additional classrooms	\$3,716,533	\$3,346,569	10.0%
10	Covered playgrounds at nine elementary schools	\$0	\$1,288,695	NA
Subtotal		\$29,348,178	\$27,929,656	4.8%
Construction Projects				
9	Stadium Complex/Natatorium	\$21,198,139	\$22,962,601	(8.3%)
11	Green Valley ES -	\$4,754,782	\$3,743,931	21.3%

	Kitchen renovations and 11 additional classrooms			
12	Tice ES - Four additional classrooms	\$4,220,612	\$2,548,503	39.6%
14	North Shore ES - Renovations and nine additional classrooms	\$2,763,969	\$2,718,153	1.7%
16	North Shore HS East - Renovations	\$8,241,042	\$6,742,183	18.2%
13	New elementary school - Normandy Crossing	\$13,314,922	\$13,294,909	0.2%
Subtotal		\$54,493,466	\$52,010,280	4.6%
Design Projects				
16	Galena Park ES - renovations and four additional classrooms	\$3,621,565	\$3,091,970	14.6%
17	Galena Park HS / Dement	\$10,791,251	\$15,363,541	(42.4%)
19	Woodland Acres ES - Renovations	\$628,336	\$365,303	41.9%
Subtotal		\$15,041,152	\$18,820,814	(25.1%)
Pending Projects				
20	Purple Sage ES - Renovations	\$1,445,096	\$1,269,006	12.2%
21	Havard ES - Two additional classrooms	\$534,874	\$470,163	12.1%
22	Pyburn ES - Two additional classrooms	\$1,484,140	\$1,117,284	24.7%
23	Cunningham MS - Structure and mechanical repairs	\$2,472,851	\$2,171,528	12.2%
24	Woodland Acres MS - Renovations	\$293,674	\$257,889	12.2%
25	Galena Park MS -	\$841,200	\$738,701	12.2%

	Renovations			
26	North Shore MS - Renovations	\$1,244,919	\$1,093,222	12.2%
27	ACE	\$244,712	\$0	NA
28	North Shore Senior HS - bus canopy and footbridge	\$195,645	\$171,906	12.1%
29	Maintenance Facility	\$747,816	\$656,691	12.2%
30	Support Services Annex	\$225,876	\$198,352	12.2%
31	Parent Education Program (PEP)	\$624,114	\$0	NA
32	New Center for Success	\$86,593	\$0	NA
Subtotal		\$10,441,510	\$8,144,742	22.0%
Miscellaneous Funding				
33	Inflation*	\$7,197,494	\$758,604	89.5%
34	Computers and Technology	\$3,478,200	\$3,478,200	0.0%
35	Bond Administration cost	\$0	\$100,000	NA
36	Project Management	\$0	\$2,818,117	NA
37	Bid Contingency and Escalation	\$0	\$5,858,986	NA
Subtotal		\$10,675,694	\$13,013,907	(21.9%)
Total		\$120,000,000	\$119,919,399	0.1%

Source: GPISD 2000 Bond Construction Program Monthly Progress Report, October 2002.

Note: The variance Percentage is calculated by subtracting the current or final cost from the original cost and dividing by the original cost.

* Note: Inflation allowance decreases over time as funds are transferred to individual projects to cover increases due to inflation.

Of the 32 projects included in the voter-approved 2000 bond program, nine have been completed. Projects completed through October 2002 cost \$27,929,656; 4.8 percent less than the amounts approved by the voters. As a result, the district saved \$1,418,522 in costs to date. The district cancelled three projects. To take advantage of existing space, the district relocated the Parent Education Program (PEP) building to the old Human Resources Building and the Accelerated Center for Education and the Center for Success to the North Shore High School. GPISD also combined Project 17, the Galena Park High School, and Project 18, Dement Field, into a single project, expanding it to include a new fine arts addition, additions to the athletic field and a new community center, Arthur C. Lilly Center.

One of the completed projects, the Transportation Facility resulted in a significant cost increase. The final cost of the Transportation Facility was \$1,973,521 higher than the original budget of \$1,291,088. After a study by the director of Transportation and an outside management review by the Texas Association of School Business Officials, the district decided to relocate the Transportation Facility. To increase the efficiency of operations and reduce total travel time, the facility was moved to a central location on land to be shared with a planned elementary school, Normandy Crossing. The new site provided sufficient space for a centralized operation. The original project would have required the district to continue operating a small, separate satellite transportation facility in the southern portion of the district. In the original project, the Transportation Facility would have shared paved parking space with the new stadium. The additional project costs included land acquisition costs, the cost for paved bus parking space and the cost of an expanded building to house the entire function.

The district has 22 school facilities, including 12 elementary schools, five sixth grade/middle schools, three high schools, an alternative school and an early head start center. The district houses two other alternative schools in buildings with other schools. The district has eight support facilities, including the new administration building, a new transportation facility and a new stadium/natatorium.

Exhibit 5-3 describes all district facilities, including classroom space, administrative offices and support functions, which total 2,986,864 square feet.

**Exhibit 5-3
GPISD Facilities
2002-03**

Facility	2001-02	Instructional	Square
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	Enrollment	Arrangement or Use	Feet
Galena Park High School	1,610	9-12	209,234
North Shore Senior High School	1,468	11-12	317,017
North Shore High School and Center for Success	2,066	10-11	388,281
ACE	102	9-12	7,706
Center for Success	8	9-12	9,649
Galena Park Middle School	986	6-8	143,527
North Shore Middle School	1,159	7-8	216,836
Woodland Acres Middle School	422	6-8	92,605
Cunningham Middle School	888	7-8	162,765
Cobb Sixth Grade Campus	1,034	6	130,893
Cimarron Elementary School	1,020	EE-5	108,496
Cloverleaf Elementary School	1,051	EE-5	98,446
Galena Park Elementary School	702	EE-5	59,318
Green Valley Elementary School	865	EE-5	105,748
Havard Elementary School	967	EE-5	99,445
Jacinto City Elementary School	831	EE-5	106,124

MacArthur Elementary School	643	EE-5	80,139
North Shore Elementary School	899	EE-5	94,227
Purple Sage Elementary School	799	EE-5	92,795
Pyburn Elementary School	576	EE-5	77,182
Tice Elementary School	827	EE-5	83,467
Woodland Acres Elementary School	385	EE-5	50,275
Administration Building	N/A	Offices	81,000
Administration Annex	N/A	Offices	5,603
Becker Early Head Start Center	N/A	Head Start Program	26,092
Grounds Maintenance	N/A	Offices/Shop	1,501
Facilities at Force Street	N/A	Offices	3,102
FFA Facility	NA	Classroom/Meeting Rooms/Animal Rooms	28,880
Maintenance / Warehouse	N/A	Offices/Shops/Warehouse	6,311
Transportation	N/A	Offices/Shops	17,700
San Jacinto Community Building	N/A	Offices/Meeting Rooms	6,500
Stadium /Natatorium	N/A	Athletics	76,000
Total			2,986,864

Source: GPISD, assistant superintendent for Support Services and director of Custodial Operations.

Exhibit 5-4 lists each school in the district, its capacity and estimated classroom use rate. The district's goal in the 2000 bond program was to address the district's school facility needs for the foreseeable future. A high school and a sixth grade center were built to meet the anticipated needs of the district through 2010-11 and beyond. The district plans to add

two elementary schools, one in the 2000 bond program and one at a later date to address growth at the elementary level.

Exhibit 5-4
GPISD Schools-Capacity and Use Rates
2002-03

Schools	Permanent Classrooms	Portable Classrooms	Special Purpose Rooms	Total Classrooms	Total Student Capacity	Current Student Enrollment	Total Classroom Use Rate
Galena Park High School	94	10	N/A	104	2,600	1,610	61.9%
North Shore Senior High School	91	0	N/A	91	2,275	1,468	64.5%
North Shore High School and Center for Success	112	11	N/A	123	3,075	2,176	70.8%
Total High School Capacity*					7,950	5,254	66.1%
Galena Park Middle School	53	4	N/A	57	1,425	986	69.2%
North Shore Middle School	82	0	N/A	82	2,050	1,159	56.5%
Woodland Acres Middle School	29	0	N/A	29	725	422	58.2%
Cunningham Middle School	64	0	N/A	64	1,600	888	55.5%
Cobb Sixth Grade Campus	71	0	N/A	71	1,775	1,034	58.3%
Total					7,575	4,489	59.3%

Middle School Capacity*								
Cimarron Elementary School	50	10	8	60	1,320	1,020	77.3%	
Cloverleaf Elementary School	48	12	9	60	1,320	1,051	79.6%	
Galena Park Elementary School	28	4	7	32	704	702	99.7%	
Green Valley Elementary School	46	9	9	55	1,210	865	71.5%	
Havard Elementary School	43	6	6	49	1,078	967	89.7%	
Jacinto City Elementary School	45	0	6	45	990	831	83.9%	
MacArthur Elementary School	33	7	10	40	880	643	73.1%	
North Shore Elementary School	46	10	6	56	1,232	899	73.0%	
Purple Sage Elementary School	39	0	6	39	858	799	93.1%	
Pyburn Elementary School	30	2	8	32	704	576	81.8%	
Tice Elementary School	39	1	9	40	880	827	94.0%	
Woodland	20	0	8	20	440	385	87.5%	

Acres Elementary School							
Total Elementary School Capacity**					11,616	9,565	82.3%

Source: GPISD, assistant superintendent for Support Services, September 2002 and TEA, AEIS, 2001-02.

*A formula of 25 students per classroom is used to calculate middle and high school classroom capacity.

**A formula of 22 students per classroom is used to calculate elementary school classroom capacity.

Note: Includes ACE and the Center for Success that are housed on the same campus with North Shore High School. Enrollment numbers do not include 28 students that attend High Point, an alternative school located outside of the district.

Exhibit 5-5 compares the existing school capacity and the estimated capacity of the two planned elementary schools to the projected student enrollment in 2010-11 to estimate a classroom usage rate for 2010-11. The student enrollment projections are based on an enrollment projections study completed in August 2002. This study projects a slow, but steady growth pattern. The 1996 study projected the district would reach an enrollment of 18,821 in 2001-02, which was approximately 3 percent less than the actual enrollment of 19,336 in 2001-02. For planning purposes, GPISD uses 80 percent capacity as full capacity. Based on the 2002 enrollment projections, GPISD will be at or above the 80 percent planning number for elementary schools and high schools and approximately 8 percent below capacity for the middle schools in eight years.

**Exhibit 5-5
Projected Capacity
2010-11**

	Total Student Capacity	Projected Student Enrollment	Projected Classroom Usage Rate
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High Schools	7,950	6,753	84.94%
Middle Schools	7,575	5,430	71.68%
Elementary Schools*	13,552	13,259	97.83%

Source: Enrollment forecasts for Galena Park ISD 1996 and 2002, TEA, AEIS, 2001-02.

GPISD, assistant superintendent for Support Services September 2002.

* Note: Total student capacity for elementary schools includes capacity projected for two planned new schools, Normandy Crossing - 968 students and Uvalde - 968.

GPISD selected four Texas school districts to serve as peer districts for comparative purposes: Aldine, Goose Creek Consolidated, Humble and Pasadena. **Exhibit 5-6** compares GPISD's 2001-02 budgeted maintenance function expenditures, reported to TEA as function 51, to the same budgeted expenditures in peer districts. In GPISD, this includes expenditures in the Maintenance, Custodial Services and Grounds departments. GPISD spends more than its peer districts on a per student basis, except for Goose Creek Consolidated.

Exhibit 5-6
Budgeted Maintenance Function Expenditures
GPISD and Peer Districts
2001-02

Expenditure Type	GPISD	Aldine	Goose Creek	Humble	Pasadena
Payroll	\$6,351,052	\$14,779,685	\$6,274,499	\$7,900,474	\$14,160,264
Other Services	\$7,200,588	\$15,288,158	\$8,095,852	\$5,940,009	\$10,886,232
Supplies	\$806,505	\$2,762,922	\$1,434,545	\$798,400	\$2,430,597
Other Expenses	\$684,862	\$309,000	\$618,997	\$398,583	\$1,311,125
Capital Outlay	\$211,400	\$435,500	\$297,148	\$6,811	\$261,475
Total	\$15,254,407	\$33,575,265	\$16,721,041	\$15,044,277	\$29,049,693
Enrollment	19,336	53,201	18,274	25,239	43,476
Total Cost Per Student	\$789	\$631	\$915	\$596	\$668

Source: TEA, Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS), 2001-02 for expenditure type and TEA, AEIS, 2001-02 for enrollment data.

Exhibit 5-7 compares 2001-02 budgeted maintenance function expenditures for GPISD to regional averages for public schools. These averages are the result of an annual American School and University survey of public school districts with 600 or more students. GPISD spends more per student and more per square foot than the average in the five-state region that includes Louisiana, Texas, New Mexico, Arkansas and Oklahoma. The comparison shows that for maintenance department expenditures, GPISD spends 45 percent more per square foot, or \$5.01 per square foot, as compared to the average of \$3.46 per square foot for the region. The comparison also shows that the district spends 31 percent more per student, \$789 in GPISD, as compared to \$602 for the regional average.

**Exhibit 5-7
GPISD Maintenance Function
Budgeted Expenditures 2001-02**

Maintenance and Operations Expenditures	
GPISD cost per square foot	\$5.01
ASU average cost per square foot	\$3.46
Difference	\$1.55
GPISD cost per student	\$789
ASU average cost per student	\$602
Difference	\$187

Source: American School and University (ASU) 30th annual Maintenance and Operations Cost Study, 2001; and TEA, PEIMS, 2001-02.

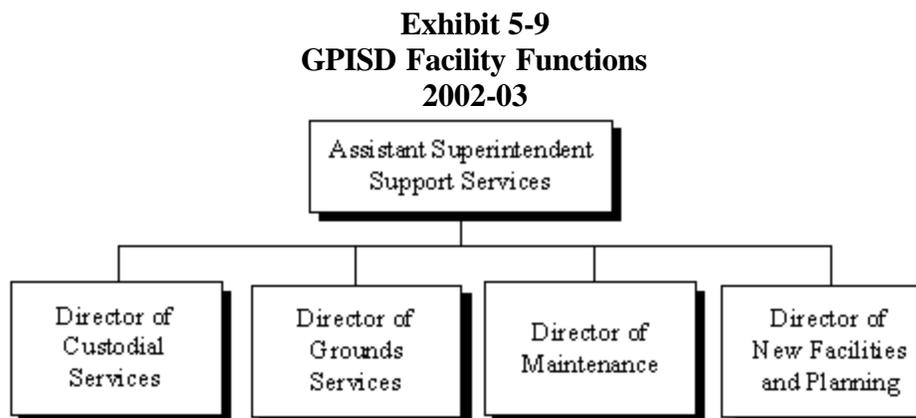
Exhibit 5-8 shows the actual and budgeted expenses for the district during the last five years. Budget increases resulted from salary raises, utility costs increases and the addition of almost one million square feet in facilities.

**Exhibit 5-8
GPISD Maintenance Function
Actual Expenditures
1998-99 through 2002-03**

Expense	1998-99 Actual	1999-2000 Actual	2000-01 Actual	2001-02 Actual	2002-03 Budgeted	Percent Change 2001- 02 to 2002- 03
Payroll	\$5,366,217	\$5,499,116	\$5,970,839	\$6,104,046	\$6,710,968	9.9%
Services	\$5,075,930	\$5,362,493	\$6,510,709	\$6,667,205	\$7,278,585	9.2%
Supplies	\$680,664	\$695,616	\$709,214	\$766,716	\$851,421	11.0%
Other	\$710,853	\$593,278	\$636,064	\$920,669	\$824,442	(10.5%)
Capital Outlay	\$187,576	\$279,179	\$351,131	\$286,016	\$211,400	(26.1%)
Total	\$12,021,240	\$12,429,682	\$14,177,957	\$14,744,652	\$15,876,816	7.7%

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 1998-99 through 2001-02, GPISD Budget and Finance Department and 2002-03.

The assistant superintendent for Support Services manages the district facility functions and relies on four directors. **Exhibit 5-9** describes the organization structure.



Source: GPISD Organization Chart, September 2002.

The director of Custodial Services and director of Maintenance are contract employees. Custodial Services provide cleaning services for district schools and support facilities and directly supervise and train the district custodians. Grounds Services maintain the district school and athletic grounds and also provide detailed landscaping services, including weeding, edging, pruning and watering designated lawn and landscape

areas as directed. Maintenance Services handles the repair and upkeep of the district's facilities through the use of craft trades such as carpenters, plumbers, electricians and heating, ventilation and air-conditioning (HVAC) technicians. Maintenance Services also provides preventive maintenance, energy management and environmental and air quality services. New Facilities and Planning performs master planning, facility assessment, space design and the development of planning standards. The department directly supervises each construction project from design to construction and archival document control.

Chapter 5

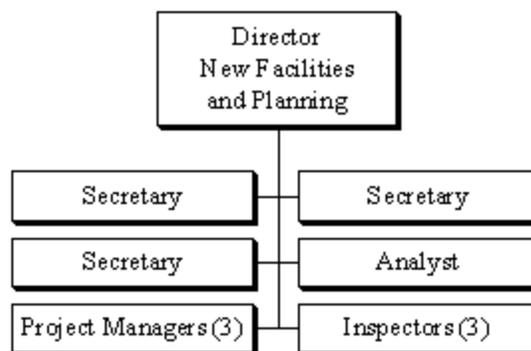
FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

A. Facilities Planning and Construction Management

Facilities planning and design ensures that new facilities and renovations meet the educational needs of a district's current and future students. The function has numerous key components: facilities planning, standardization of design and materials, periodic assessment of building condition, construction supervision and evaluation of costs and quality.

GPISD has a formal planning and construction monitoring department that plans and monitors new construction and renovations of existing buildings. New Facilities and Planning consists of a director, three project managers, three inspectors, three secretaries and a cost analyst. The project managers, inspectors and one secretary are contract employees hired for the duration of the building program and will be phased out beginning next year (the fourth year of the six-year bond program), as bond construction activities begin to decline. **Exhibit 5-10** describes the organization. The contract positions continue to be housed at the Force Street Maintenance and Grounds Facility. One secretary, three project managers and three inspectors are contract employees.

Exhibit 5-10
GPISD New Facilities and Planning
2002-03



Source: Director of New Facilities and Planning, September 2002.

FINDING

GPISD has a formal planning and construction monitoring organization that includes a combination of GPISD staff and contractors with sufficient experience to effectively plan for new facilities and renovations and monitor construction. The director of New Facilities and Planning has

more than 20 years of construction experience overseeing large public and private sector construction projects. An individual project manager oversees each project and is accountable for its success. Project managers and inspectors are contracted staff, chosen for specific experience in large-scale construction programs.

Using formal standards set by the district, project managers and inspectors work with contractors to ensure that the project is completed on time. Project managers conduct weekly meetings with contractors on each project and prepare written summaries of each meeting detailing the status of the project, identifying problems and recommending actions to address problems. The director of New Facilities and Planning, the assistant superintendent for Support Services, the director of Maintenance and Maintenance supervisors review these minutes. Information from the meetings forms the basis for the monthly reports made to the board on each current project.

The budget includes project management costs, which average 3 percent or less. This average cost of project management compares favorably to industry standards set by the Association of Higher Education Facilities Officers, of 3.5 to 4 percent.

The department established formal design standards for construction design and educational specifications, as well as standardized construction materials used in both new construction and renovations. The director of Custodial Services and the director of Maintenance and Maintenance supervisors participated in the development of the standards. These positions also participate in the approval of design documents and often monitor construction in progress. Principals, teachers and parents participated in the development of the educational specifications.

Effective school districts often rely on outside construction specialists for supervision of major construction projects, including owner agents, architects, engineering firms, construction project managers and others. This is particularly true when the district does not have in-house expertise. Using independent skilled construction specialists allows the district to monitor the construction program to ensure projects are completed based upon specifications and the agreed budget.

GPISD's professional staff, composed of GPISD staff and contract employees, provides the structure and skills needed to effectively manage a \$120 million construction program. This flexible staffing structure allows the district to control costs by augmenting staff with experienced construction managers as needed and to reduce staff quickly when needs diminish.

COMMENDATION

PISD's professional facility planning and construction staff enables the district to plan effectively for new construction and renovations and to monitor and evaluate the results of its planning.

FINDING

GPISD has a comprehensive facilities master planning process that includes enrollment projections, educational and space requirements and building condition assessments. To prepare for the 1999 bond election, the district completed a comprehensive building assessment in 1998 to develop the district's master facility plan. This assessment was used during the first two years of the bond program. The district has not updated the master facility plan annually, but as specific projects began the district updated the individual building assessment to identify any additional requirements. The plans are updated periodically, allowing the district to control, monitor or evaluate facilities and to plan effectively for the future. The plans also account for upcoming educational requirements. GPISD added science labs to each elementary school during the summer 2002 based on the increased science requirements for elementary students under the upcoming Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills. Starting in 2002-03, elementary students will be tested for knowledge beginning in grade five.

The district updates enrollment projections annually to reflect the actual enrollment of the prior year. Projections for future years are developed by applying the actual enrollment of the prior year to the formulas used in the projections.

Senior district staff, including the superintendent, the deputy superintendent for Educational Services, the chief operations officer and the assistant superintendent for Support Services review and evaluate the district's progress in implementing the facility master plan. The board receives a monthly construction progress report.

A master facilities plan helps define district facility needs to provide the best results at the best possible price. An effective master plan builds on a school district's strategic plan. Districts use these plans to project enrollment needs by demographic area, educational and space requirements and facility repair and renovation needs. The plans also document alternative programs with related costs and educational effects. Plans are updated frequently to evaluate the district's progress in achieving its facilities goals.

Exhibit 5-11 describes the essential elements of facility planning and the activities performed by the district. It is a model of the facilities planning developed by the Texas Education Agency and demonstrates GPISD's comprehensive approach to facility planning.

Exhibit 5-11
Model Long Range Facilities Planning Process and
GPISD Planning Process Components
September 2002

Major Activities	Recommended Deliverables	Components included in GPISD Planning Process
Planning		
Needs Identification	Needs Assessment	Facility Evaluation that provides: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Objective and technical analysis of the physical condition of GPISD school buildings (including portable buildings) and support facilities; 2. Identification of costs required to bring schools to standard, addressing both building deficiencies and improvements needed to meet GPISD's standards for instructional space; 3. Assessment of the ability of each GPISD school to adequately support its educational mission; 4. Space inventory of each school and floor plans; and 5. Implementation strategy based on prioritized needs. Enrollment forecast used historical data and 1990 and 2000 Census data to determine conditions and demographic trends. Forecasting model used this data to forecast Grade 1 enrollment by school. Grades 2 through 12 were forecast using a cohort survival method that estimates the number of children who will continue from one grade to the next.
Periodic	Annual Review	Biannual Safety Review by Harris

Review		County.Walk through updates on all projects started in third year of bond program.
Community Involvement	Community input in planning process, including design	Public meetings as part of planning process; Citizen advisory committee; and Community participation in educational programming committees.
Capital Improvement Planning	Facilities Project List Master Schedule Budget Plan	Separate renovation and addition budgets prepared for each project, including estimated cost of each professional fee, site development costs, utility service costs and construction costs that include contingency allowances and furniture and equipment allowances. Life Cycle and Capital Renewal Forecast that included life cycle estimates of each building and systems such as roofs or HVAC systems in the district and determined anticipated replacement dates and costs.
Facility Programming	Educational Specifications Building standards Construction standards	Formal standards for building design, educational specifications and construction materials.
Facility Design	Design documents	Comparison of design documents to building standards.
Facility Construction	On site inspections	On site inspections by inspectors, project managers and maintenance staff. Weekly progress meetings with written minutes.
Evaluation	Cost analysis Development of final costs	On site inspections by inspectors, project managers and maintenance staff. Weekly progress meetings with written minutes. Detailed monthly progress reports to the board, including comparison to original budget and documentation of each change order.

Source: TEA and GPISD Support Services Department.

COMMENDATION

GPISD's long range facility planning process enables the district to define facility needs and address them effectively.

FINDING

GPISD's creative funding and budgeting method and construction cost and performance monitoring process helps the district keep construction costs within the budget approved by the voters. In its fourth year, of a six-year \$120 million bond program, GPISD has completed nine of 32 planned projects at a cost of \$27,929,656. Through October 2002, the district has saved \$1,418,522, or 4.8 percent on the projects originally budgeted for \$29,348,178.

Before the beginning of the bond program, the New Facility and Planning Department developed formal standards for buildings, including educational specifications, and issued formal bids for projects, as required by law. The district hired experienced project managers to oversee the formal bidding process. The project managers oversee individual projects and are held accountable for the project success. Managers also conduct weekly meetings with each contractor, preparing minutes to describe the project's status.

Although the district does not bid out professional services such as architectural services, it does evaluate each architect and drops unsatisfactory service providers. GPISD requires performance bonds for all general contractors and aggressively addresses nonperformance by contractors by using methods up to and including legal action.

The board receives monthly progress reports, which provide an audit trail at a summary level of all bond program projects. The original budgets approved by the voters are compared to the approved project budgets, estimates to completion and final costs. Change orders affecting each project are documented from the beginning of the project to the current date. Board members can quickly determine the status of each project and the reasons for budget changes.

The director of New Facility and Planning attributes some of the success in completing projects under budget to a pooling process. Allowances for contingencies and escalation from each individual project, as originally budgeted for approval by the voters, are removed from the individual project and placed in a pool. Funds needed for cost overruns and changes in specifications are transferred from the pool to individual projects only after approval of a formal change order by the board. According to district staff, this practice allows for greater district control of these allowances and results in overall decreased costs for individual projects. This practice

also ensures that cost overruns are clearly justified prior to presentation to the board for approval.

By using structured monitoring processes and evaluation tools, GPISD can effectively evaluate the status of its bond construction program. The overall impact of the monitoring creates an environment in which contractors must perform according to precise specifications. The term "on time and on budget" defines the way the district does business.

COMMENDATION

Creative funding and budgeting, and structured cost and performance monitoring helps GPISD avoid cost overruns in its bond construction program.

Chapter 5

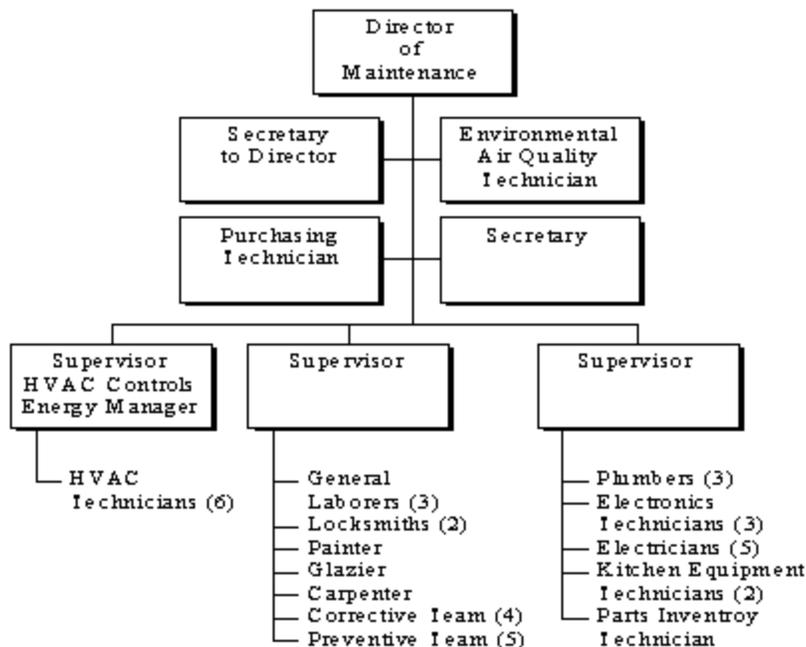
FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

B. Maintenance and Grounds Operations

Effective school maintenance requires several structured processes, including: timely and accurate information to plan and manage daily operations; a comprehensive work order system that ensures quick response to school needs and collects information about equipment and related repair costs; a preventive maintenance process that minimizes down time, reduces costs and extends equipment life; and a method to monitor service levels and obtain feedback for improvement.

The Maintenance Department is responsible for maintaining all district facilities. **Exhibit 5-12** displays the Maintenance Department organizational chart. The director of Maintenance is a contract position.

Exhibit 5-12
GPISD Maintenance Department Organization and Staffing
2002-03



Source: GPISD Director of Maintenance.

The Maintenance Department includes a director of Maintenance, three supervisors, two secretaries, a purchasing technician, an environmental air quality technician and 38 craft positions, including carpenters, painters, HVAC technicians, electricians and plumbers. The HVAC supervisor also

serves as the district's energy manager. GPISD contracts with Aramark, formerly Service Master, for management services. The contract includes one full-time manager who serves as the director of Maintenance for the district and support services, such as the work order system. The services cost the district \$18,854 monthly for 2001-02, or \$226,248 annually.

FINDING

GPISD operates its maintenance services effectively using less staff than some districts. The district's Maintenance Department uses 38 craft positions to repair and maintain district equipment and facilities. **Exhibit 5-13** lists the craft positions in GPISD and compares them to standards established by the Association of Higher Education Facilities Officers, formerly known as Association of Physical Plant Administrators (APPA). GPISD uses significantly fewer carpenters and painters than recommended in the standards. Instead, the district relies on specialized positions such as electronics technicians and kitchen equipment technicians. After taking into account the specialized positions, GPISD operates with 21 fewer full-time employees (FTEs) than recommended by standards.

**Exhibit 5-13
GPISD Staffing Comparison
Craft Positions
September 2002**

Craft	Standards (per GSF)	Recommended Staffing	GPISD Staffing	Difference Over or (Under)
Heating, Ventilation and Air-Conditioning (HVAC)	1:450,000 GSF	7	6	(1)
Electricians	1:380,000 GSF	8	5	(3)
Carpenters	1:200,000 GSF	15	1	(14)
Plumbers	1:390,000 GSF	8	3	(5)
Painters	1:200,000 GSF	15	2	(13)
General Laborers	1:500,000 GSF	6	3	(3)
Locksmith *	NA	NA	2	2
Preventive Maintenance Team*	NA	NA	5	5
Corrective Team*	NA	NA	4	4

Electronics Technicians*	NA	NA	3	3
Kitchen Equipment Technicians*	NA	NA	2	2
Environmental/Air Quality Technician*	NA	NA	1	1
Parts Inventory Technician*	NA	NA	1	1
Total		59	38	21

Source: Association of Higher Education Facilities Officers and GPISD Maintenance Department.

**Standards have not been developed for these specialized positions.*

GPISD's Maintenance Department uses two separate preventive maintenance teams to perform regularly scheduled preventive maintenance. One team, the Preventive Maintenance team, consists of a crew leader and four preventive maintenance workers. This team focuses on preventive maintenance tasks for equipment in the buildings and performs routine maintenance needed for different facility equipment such as HVAC and lighting. The Corrective Team includes a crew leader, two carpenters and a general laborer and focuses on preventive maintenance projects requiring carpentry and construction skills. This team performs scheduled tasks such as painting, caulking, minor carpenter repairs and glass replacement. Neither of these teams routinely respond to work orders.

While the district has developed no specific cost savings, GPISD's director of Maintenance said that these teams enable the district to operate at its present staffing levels. The two recent bond programs, which paid for building renovations also allows the department to function with fewer staff.

COMMENDATION

GPISD uses fewer, but more specialized, staff to repair and maintain its facilities.

FINDING

GPISD's work order processing system provides accurate and timely information on service levels, workload assignments and labor and cost

information. After work order requests are entered into the department's Service Work Orders system (either at the school or centrally in the Maintenance Department), the Maintenance department secretary generates work orders and assigns them to supervisors based on the work request description. Although work orders are completed as received, most work orders are completed within a day of the request. If the work order is an emergency, it is handled immediately. The system's management reports track individual staff performance, evaluate the repair needs of each facility and the responsiveness of the department. Historical information on repairs at a given facility provides important management information to the Director of Maintenance on replacement decisions and evaluation of preventive maintenance.

Exhibit 5-14 describes the number of work orders completed by facility for October 2002. During this month the department completed 992 work orders. October was selected for the analysis because it is typically a busy month in school districts. Enrollments are often at the highest point for the year and there are many fall events scheduled in each school.

Exhibit 5-14
GPISD Work Orders Processed
October 2002

Facility	Number of Work Orders	Percentage Completed Within One Day
ACE	1	0.0%
Administration Building	30	63.3%
Athletic Complex	38	78.9%
Center for Success	5	80.0%
Cimarron Elementary School	36	72.2%
Clover Leaf Elementary School	44	79.5%
Cobb Sixth Grade Campus	20	85.0%
Cunningham Middle School	39	76.9%
Dement	6	66.7%
Early Head Start	13	76.9%
FFA/Agriculture	5	100.0%
Force Street Annex	2	50.0%
Galena Park Elementary School	23	73.9%

Galena Park High School	103	71.8%
Gale na Park Middle School	28	85.7%
Green Valley Elementary School	46	76.1%

**Exhibit 5-14
GPISD Work Orders Processed
October 2002**

Facility	Number of Work Orders	Percentage Completed Within One Day
Havard Elementary School	36	77.8%
Jacinto City Elementary School	30	73.3%
MacArthur Elementary School	41	70.7%
Maintenance Shops	28	92.9%
North Shore Elementary School	33	90.9%
North Shore High School	69	87.0%
North Shore Middle School	50	74.0%
North Shore Senior High School	48	68.8%
PEP	4	75.0%
Purple Sage Elementary School	38	78.9%
Pyburn Elementary School	37	73.0%
Galena Park Community Center	6	66.7%
Tice Elementary School	47	74.5%
Transportation	5	80.0%
Warehouse	1	100.0%
Woodland Acres Elementary School	23	65.2%
Woodland Acres Middle School	57	77.2%
Total	992	76.5%

Source: Completed Work Request Summary Report, October 2002.

The Maintenance staff completed 76.5 percent of all work orders within one day of the date requested. Most of the orders not completed within one day involved routine orders to install items such as pencil sharpeners or required parts that had to be ordered before the project could be completed.

COMMENDATION

GPISD's work order system provides meaningful management information for the effective operations of the Maintenance Department.

FINDING

Although GPISD uses fewer staff to perform maintenance, custodial and grounds operations, the overall cost of maintenance for the district exceeds that of all of its peers, except Goose Creek Consolidated. **Exhibit 5-15** compares maintenance costs for GPISD and its peers. Two peers, Aldine and Pasadena, have a much larger student enrollment than GPISD, so the comparison is presented on a cost per student basis. The total cost for maintenance in GPISD is \$789 per student compared to \$631 per student in Aldine, \$596 in Humble and \$668 in Pasadena. Only Goose Creek Consolidated (\$915 per student) spent more per student overall.

**Exhibit 5-15
Maintenance Expenditures
GPISD and Peer Districts
2001-02**

Expenditure Type	GPISD	Aldine	Goose Creek	Humble	Pasadena
Payroll	\$6,351,052	\$14,779,685	\$6,274,499	\$7,900,474	\$14,160,264
Cost per Student	\$328	\$278	\$343	\$313	\$326
Other Services	\$7,200,588	\$15,288,158	\$8,095,852	\$5,940,009	\$10,886,232
Cost per Student	\$372	\$287	\$443	\$235	\$250
Supplies	\$806,505	\$2,762,922	\$1,434,545	\$798,400	\$2,430,597
Cost per Student	\$42	\$52	\$79	\$32	\$56
Other	\$684,862	\$309,000	\$618,997	\$398,583	\$1,311,125

Expenses					
Cost per Student	\$35	\$6	\$34	\$16	\$30
Capital Outlay	\$211,400	\$435,500	\$297,148	\$6,811	\$261,475
Cost per Student	\$11	\$8	\$16	\$0	\$6
Total	\$15,254,407	\$33,575,265	\$16,721,041	\$15,044,277	\$29,049,693
Enrollment	19,336	53,201	18,274	25,239	43,476
Total Cost Per Student	\$789	\$631	\$915	\$596	\$668

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 2001-02 for expenditure information and TEA, AEIS, 2001-02 for enrollment information.

Except for Goose Creek Consolidated, GPISD spends slightly more in salaries than its peers. Even though the district is efficient in its staffing, GPISD spends \$328 per student as compared to \$278 in Aldine, \$313 in Humble and \$326 in Pasadena. Only Goose Creek Consolidated spends more, \$343 per student. This may be attributed to higher salaries or more skilled staff at GPISD. For example, in GPISD the HVAC supervisor, who serves as the district's energy manager, has an associate degree in computer technology and the Environmental Air Quality technician has 60 college credit hours. Most districts fill craft positions with employees who either hold licenses for that position or have completed two- to four-year apprenticeships.

GPISD spends significantly more for other services than its peers, except for Goose Creek Consolidated. GPISD spent \$372 per student, or \$85 more per student than Aldine, \$137 more than Humble and \$122 more than Pasadena. Goose Creek Consolidated spent \$71 more per student, at \$443, than GPISD. The other services category includes expenditures for all utilities such as electricity, gas, water and telephone services, as well as contracted services such as mowing or pesticide services. This category also includes expenditures for outside contractors who may provide roofing or other construction work. In GPISD, this category includes an Aramark contract that provides maintenance and custodial management and supplies for the district.

GPISD spends \$42 per student for supplies, Aldine spends \$52, Goose Creek Consolidated spends \$79 and Pasadena spends \$56. Only Humble spent less at \$32 per student. Part of this difference in costs is due to the

fact that custodial supplies are provided by the Aramark contract and are included in other services shown above. Custodial supplies are not shown separately in the GPISD contract.

GPISD spends more than all of its peers in the other expenses category. This category includes travel and miscellaneous expenditures that do not fit in the other categories. GPISD spends \$35 per student compared to \$6 in Aldine, \$34 in Goose Creek Consolidated, \$16 in Humble and \$30 in Pasadena. GPISD spends less than its peers in capital outlay, except for Humble. This could be due to the major bond programs in the district that would limit the need for general revenue expenditures. GPISD spends \$11 per student in capital outlay compared to \$8 in Aldine, \$16 in Goose Creek Consolidated, \$0.27 in Humble and \$6 per student in Pasadena.

In 2001-02, GPISD spent \$772,684 for services provided under the Aramark contract. None of the peer districts use outside contractors for major maintenance functions. This contract began in 1988 when the district contracted out custodial services. In 1995, the district expanded the contract to include maintenance management and has extended the contract each year since. Cost increases are based on inflation indexes and increases in the amount of square feet in the district. The contract has not been competitively bid since 1995. By not bidding out this contract on a periodic basis, the district may spend more than needed for these services.

School districts and other local governments often find that re-bidding service contracts result in savings of 4 to 5 percent annually-even if they remain with an existing vendor. Advances in technology and products, as well as increased efficiency contribute to the savings. Vendors also provide their best pricing in competitive situations.

Recommendation 30:

Reduce the costs of maintenance contracts by competitively bidding contracts every three to five years.

The district should re-bid major service contracts on a periodic basis to ensure that it receives the best prices for services. The bid process should include existing vendors as long as their performance has been satisfactory. When comparing bid prices, the district should also consider the cost of providing these services in-house. The bid process should be directed by district employees, not contracted staff, to ensure objectivity.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The assistant superintendent for Support Services develops a schedule to re-bid service contracts on a three to five year	April 2003
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	cycle.	
2.	The senior purchasing coordinator works with the assistant superintendent for Support Services to develop bid specifications based upon current market research.	June 2003 and Ongoing
3.	The senior purchasing coordinator bids service contracts based upon the schedule.	August 2003 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The Maintenance Department has no formal process to determine when department staff should perform a repair or when a repair should be done by outside vendors. The lack of a formal process may result in increased costs. The director of Maintenance makes decisions based on his judgment and the available budget. Generally, any project with an estimated cost of more than \$10,000 is assigned to contractors. As the district has added new facilities, the staff's ability to do significant projects has been reduced. The amount of renovations completed for existing buildings in the bond construction program has also reduced the need for major maintenance projects.

A formal process to identify projects for completion by either in-house staff or by contractors would help the district to determine the appropriate level of staffing for the Maintenance Department and increase accountability. This practice is especially important in districts that have recently completed bond construction programs. Too often districts fail to recognize the continuing need for major repairs and fail to budget appropriately.

School districts such as Midland ISD (MISD) have analyzed quality of staff, skill sets, the ability to control service costs in-house and the cost effectiveness of maintenance operations to identify tasks to be performed by staff and those performed by outside vendors. This review process helped MISD improve the cost effectiveness of its maintenance programs.

Recommendation 31:

Develop guidelines and staffing requirements to identify and address future repair projects.

The director of Maintenance should evaluate the ability of the department to perform significant repair or construction projects and develop

guidelines that identify the types of projects to be performed in-house using staff and those to be performed by outside vendors. Consideration should be given to the time period after the completion of the current bond program when projects will be completed using regular operating funds.

Once the current bond program is completed, the district will have to determine the appropriate level of staffing needed in the Maintenance and New Facility and Planning Departments to provide needed services, including facility repair projects. The recently completed report that evaluates the condition of all GPISD buildings and systems, the Life Cycle and Capital Renewal Forecast, provides an excellent starting point. This report could be used to identify projects to assign to Maintenance versus projects to be managed by New Facility and Planning.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Maintenance develops a method to evaluate the ability of staff to handle significant repair projects now and after the completion of the current bond program.	July 2003
2.	The director of Maintenance identifies expected repair needs and evaluates the cost effectiveness of in-house versus contractor performance.	October 2003
3.	The director of Maintenance, working with the assistant superintendent for Support Services, develops recommendations about maintenance guidelines for significant repairs, including staffing needs.	January 2004
4.	The assistant superintendent for Support Services submits these recommendations to the superintendent for approval.	February 2004
5.	The superintendent approves the recommendations and directs the chief operations officer to include recommendations in the next budget process.	April 2004
6.	The director of Maintenance implements the approved recommendations.	September 2004 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

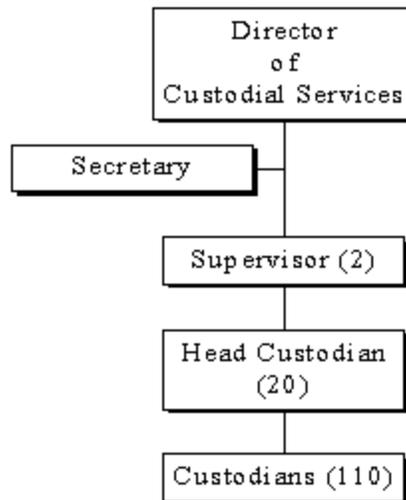
Chapter 5

FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

C. Custodial Operations

GPISD's Custodial Department consists of a director, two supervisors, a secretary and 130 custodians. The district contracts out custodial management services with Aramark, formerly Service Master. Aramark provides four positions, including the director, two supervisors and the secretary. All custodians are district employees. Aramark trains and supervises staff, prepares budgets, supplies liability insurance and furnishes all cleaning supplies. The company guarantees a minimum number of cleaning hours each year, as well as a maximum number of overtime hours. The Custodial Services Department supervises all custodians. **Exhibit 5-16** lists the positions in the department. The director of Custodial Services, secretary and two supervisors are contract employees.

Exhibit 5-16
GPISD Custodial Services Department
2002-03



Source: GPISD director of Custodial Services, September 2002.

FINDING

Although the district provides adequate custodial coverage during the day, it schedules most custodians to work in the late afternoon and evening when classes are not in session. These staggered schedules, together with strong supervision, standardized cleaning methods and cleaning products and frequent training help GPISD control staffing.

The service contract between the district and Aramark defines daily, weekly and monthly cleaning tasks. All buildings are staffed based on a square footage formula of approximately 26,000 square feet per custodian. GPISD custodians actually average 23,440 square feet per custodian. This formula is adjusted if individual schools require additional coverage. The district schedules one morning custodian who is responsible for opening the school from 6:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. with a 30 minute lunch period. A second custodian, usually the head custodian, reports at 1:00 p.m. to help with cleaning after the lunch period. The remaining custodians work an evening shift, 3:00 p.m. to 11:30 p.m.

The district surveys school staff, including teachers and principals, twice a year to determine their level of satisfaction. Problems indicated in the survey comments are investigated and resolved. In most categories, custodial operations receive a four or five on a scale of one to five, with five being the highest rating.

Exhibit 5-17 lists the custodial assignments by individual school and facility. This exhibit compares GPISD staff to an industry standard of 20,000 square feet per custodian. Based on this standard, the district uses 19 fewer custodians to accomplish its mission than standards would dictate.

Exhibit 5-17
GPISD Custodial Staffing Comparison
2002

School/Facility	Square Feet	Type of Facility	Recommended Staffing at 20,000 sq. ft. per custodian.	GPISD staffing	Difference
Galena Park High School	209,234	school	10.5	11.0	(0.5)
North Shore Senior High School	317,017	school	15.9	13.0	2.9
North Shore High School	388,281	school	19.4	14.0	5.4
ACE	7,706	school	0.4	1.0	(0.6)
Center For Success	9,649	school	0.5	0.0	0.5

Galena Park Middle School	143,527	school	7.2	7.0	0.2
North Shore Middle School	216,836	school	10.8	9.0	1.8
Woodland Acres Middle School	92,605	school	4.6	3.5	1.1
Cunningham Middle School	162,765	school	8.1	8.0	0.1
Cobb Sixth Grade Campus	130,893	school	6.5	7.0	(0.5)
Cimarron Elementary School	108,496	school	5.4	5.0	0.4
Cloverleaf Elementary School	98,446	school	4.9	5.0	(0.1)
Galena Park Elementary School	59,318	school	3.0	4.0	(1.0)
Green Valley Elementary School	105,748	school	5.3	4.0	1.3
Havard Elementary School	99,445	school	5.0	5.0	0.0
Jacinto City Elementary School	106,124	school	5.3	4.0	1.3
MacArthur Elementary School	80,139	school	4.0	4.0	0.0
North Shore Elementary School	94,227	school	4.7	4.0	0.7
Purple Sage	92,795	school	4.6	4.0	0.6

Elementary School					
Pyburn Elementary School	77,182	school	3.9	3.0	0.9
Tice Elementary School	83,467	school	4.2	4.0	0.2
Woodland Acres Elementary School	50,275	school	2.5	3.5	(1.0)
Becker Early Head Start Center	26,092	school	1.3	0.0	1.3
Administration Building	81,000	Offices /Warehouse	4.1	4.0	0.1
Administration Annex*	5,603	Offices	0.3	0.0	0.3
Grounds Maintenance*	1,501	Offices	0.1	0.0	0.1
Facilities Force Street*	3,102	Offices	0.2	0.0	0.2
FFA Facility	28,880	Classrooms	1.4	0.0	1.4
Maintenance / Warehouse*	6,311	Offices/Shops/Warehouse	0.3	0.0	0.3
Transportation	17,700	Office/Shops	0.9	1.0	(0.1)
San Jacinto Community Building *	6,500	Offices/Meeting	0.3	0.0	0.3
Stadium /Natatorium	76,000	Office/Sports	3.8	2.0	1.8
Total	2,986,864		149.4	130.0	19.4

Source: GPISD director of Custodial Services, APPA standards.

* Note: indicates buildings cleaned by custodians assigned to other schools as their primary assignment.

Exhibit 5-18 indicates the customer level of satisfaction with the cleanliness of the school as determined by a review team survey conducted in September 2002.

Exhibit 5-18
Survey Respondents View of School Cleanliness
September 2002

Survey Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
Schools are clean						
Teachers	29.4%	58.8%	1.5%	8.8%	1.5%	0.0%
Administrators and Support Staff	56.9%	32.8%	3.4%	1.7%	0.0%	5.2%
Principals	64.5%	35.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Parents	39.5%	51.5%	3.0%	0.0%	3.0%	3.0%
Students	18.3%	44.2%	14.2%	15.8%	7.5%	0.0%

Source: TSPR surveys.

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

More than 80 percent of administrators, teachers, principals and parents who responded to the survey agreed with the statement that "schools are clean."

COMMENDATION

GPISD's structured approach to custodial services provides clean facilities using fewer staff.

Chapter 5

FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

D. Energy Management

The HVAC Controls supervisor in the Maintenance Department serves as the district's energy manager overseeing the district energy management program. Using centralized controls, the supervisor, monitors and regulates temperature control in each school and district facility. These central controls allow the supervisor to turn units on and off, adjust temperatures and provide heating and cooling for special events outside of regular school hours.

Energy use and water consumption for each school are tracked using a software program called Fast Accounting System for Energy Reporting (FASER) installed in 2000. This system tracks monthly utility costs for electricity, gas and water, including individual bill information such as total use, units and total cost, grouped by energy type for each building. Management reports can be produced for each building, energy type, billing date and accounting period. The system can also produce summary reports, including each or all of this information. The HVAC Controls supervisor monitors costs monthly to identify unusual use.

FASER also determines cost avoidance or realized savings based on past performance comparing current costs to a 12-month base year. This program uses mathematical regression analysis and formulas to factor in weather conditions, building area changes and rate changes. In 2001-02, GPISD began tracking each school and this information is forwarded to each principal on a monthly basis.

Exhibit 5-19 lists the utility costs per square foot, including electric and gas for each school.

Exhibit 5-19
GPISD Annual Utility Costs per Square Foot
2001-02

Facility	Square Footage	Annual Utility Cost	Cost Per Square Foot
Galena Park High School	209,234	\$249,050	\$1.19
North Shore High School	411,277	348,146	0.85
North Shore Senior High School	317,017	389,141	1.23

Center for Success	83,512	10,609	0.13
Cobb Sixth Grade Campus	130,893	185,795	1.42
Cunningham Middle School	162,765	152,112	0.93
Galena Park Middle School	143,527	168,152	1.17
North Shore Middle School	216,836	188,887	0.87
Woodland Acres Elementary and Middle Schools	142,880	173,075	1.21
Cimarron Elementary School	108,496	93,910	0.87
Cloverleaf Elementary School	98,446	99,660	1.01
Galena Park Elementary School	59,318	65,321	1.10
Green Valley Elementary School	105,748	87,471	0.83
Havard Elementary School	99,445	91,241	0.92
Jacinto City Elementary School	106,124	84,914	0.80
MacArthur Elementary School	80,139	75,543	0.94
North Shore Elementary School	94,227	115,670	1.23
Purple Sage Elementary School	92,795	121,327	1.31
Pyburn Elementary School	77,182	66,599	0.86
Tice Elementary School	83,467	96,656	1.16
New Administration Building*	81,000	95,531	1.18
Administration Annex	5,603	40,840	7.29
Becker Early Head Start Center**	26,092	NA	0.00
Grounds Maintenance	1,501	6,412	4.27
Facilities Force Street	3,102	749	0.24
Maintenance/ Warehouse	6,311	14,493	2.30
Transportation	17,700	10,150	0.57
San Jacinto Community Building**	6,500	NA	0.00
Total	2,971,137	3,031,454	\$1.02

Source: *Fast Accounting System for Energy Reporting Monthly Building Report, September 2002.*

Note: *The new administration building opened in January 2002.*

*** Buildings are not separately metered. Costs and square footage have been included in schools costs. Analysis does not include the stadium complex/natatorium that was under construction in 2001-02.*

GPISD developed and implemented districtwide energy conservation guidelines. The 2001-02 average cost per square foot for schools in GPISD equalled \$1.02, which is in line with the average estimated by the State Energy Conservation Office (SECO) of \$1 per square foot for school district energy costs.

FINDING

GPISD has formal written energy conservation guidelines for all district staff that outline district goals on energy conservation and set specific temperature ranges and energy use. For example, thermostats are set at 55 degrees during the winter months and morning. Custodians raise the thermostats to 70 degrees before school starts each morning. In the summer, thermostats are set no lower than 72 degrees to save energy and eliminate possible damage to coils. District guidelines assign responsibility for energy conservation to specific positions, including principals and head custodians, and set specific instructions for adjusting the thermostats in easy-to-follow language. The school principal or head custodian at secondary schools enforces the guidelines. **Exhibit 5-20** lists key areas covered in the guidelines.

Exhibit 5-20 GPISD Energy Management Program Guidelines 2002

Key Areas Covered in the Guidelines	Description
Expectations	Each student and employee is expected to contribute to energy efficiency and is expected to be an "energy saver" as well as an "energy consumer."
Guiding Rules	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do not interfere with classroom instructional program.• Do not light areas that are not in use.• Do not heat or cool unoccupied areas.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do establish and practice equipment shutdown procedures for daily and holiday savings.
Roles and Responsibilities	<p>Principal or head custodian is responsible for the implementation and enforcement of the guidelines. Head custodians are responsible for the efficient shutdown of all utility systems when the facility is closed daily.</p> <p>The HVAC Controls supervisor is responsible for temperature controls.</p>
Purpose	Avoid wasting utilities to save money for instructional needs.
Building Checklist	<p>Items Covered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Morning Open Morning Transition Student Occupied Hours After Transition Last Activity/Special Function Daily Closing
Custodial Checklist	<p>Items Covered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What to do when custodians arrive and during the day, including specific temperature settings; What to do when students leave, including specific times for each type of school: elementary, middle and high school; and What to do when teachers leave, including departure times for each type of school.

Source: GPISD Energy Management Program Guidelines/Policy.

The program management guidelines serve several purposes. The expectations section identifies values and guiding rule section establishes basic rules. The roles and responsibility section assigns accountability. The building and custodial checklists provide practical direction in language that is easy to understand and to follow. As a result of these guidelines, GPISD ensures that custodians at each school contribute to the energy program, helping to limit energy use. These written guidelines help GPISD effectively control its utility costs.

COMMENDATION

GPISD's energy conservation guidelines provide specific information to reduce utility use and limit energy costs.

FINDING

While the Energy Management program focuses attention on conserving energy, there is no formal education program for teachers or students, the major energy consumers in the district. Nor is there an incentive program for individual schools to share in savings from cost avoidance. The education program consists of flyers sent to each school principal at the beginning of the school year.

The HVAC Controls supervisor said that district staff often request that air conditioning be turned on whenever they are in the building, often giving no advance notice to the Maintenance Department. After school or weekend use at times requires heating or cooling major portions of a building for a few staff scattered in various locations.

By not actively involving students and teachers in more activities the district energy conservation efforts, GPISD misses a key opportunity to further limit energy costs and increase energy conservation. The purpose of an energy conservation program should not be to prevent or overly limit building use. However, the program should make employees aware that energy use has costs attached and that staff actions can help reduce costs.

Many school districts, such as Spring ISD in the Houston area, use rebate programs that reward schools for being energy efficient. A school that reduces its use below the amount budgeted for that school receives a check for 50 percent of the savings. The remaining 50 percent is used by the district to fund energy-related building and equipment improvements, such as replacement of equipment.

Nonprofit organizations such as the Texas Energy Education Development offer curriculum-related programs that combine a "hands on" out of the classroom series of activities and projects suited for use in science, math, social studies, language arts and special education classes. This program uses a "Kids Teaching Kids" philosophy for students to teach themselves, their fellow students and the community about energy resource issues and energy conservation. School projects can be submitted annually for state and national awards.

The WATT Watchers is a program sponsored by the State Energy Conservation Office, a division in the State Comptroller's Office. The program involves students in energy efficiency and promotes activities that instill an energy efficient ethic in students. Student teams patrol assigned areas of a school and monitor energy conservation efforts,

particularly lighting which accounts for 25 to 40 percent of energy use in schools.

GPISD implemented the WATT Watchers program in November 2002 in 13 of the district's 22 schools. The district is also installing a program called "Sleep is a good thing" that saves money by putting computer monitors to sleep after 10 minutes. If used by all of the 7,000 district computers,

the district's energy manager said this program, which is offered by the EPA at no cost. could save the district up to \$100,000 annually.

Recommendation 32:

Implement the WATT Watchers program at all district schools for teachers and students.

This program should be implemented districtwide to encourage the greatest savings. The district energy manager should evaluate the results of the program and identify practices that encourage the greatest savings. Results should be summarized and reported on a monthly basis to principals and quarterly to the superintendent and the board.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The district's energy manager develops an action plan to implement the WATT Watchers and "Sleep is a good thing" programs across the district.	April 2003
2.	The assistant superintendent for Support Services and the deputy superintendent for Educational Services approve the plan and direct its implementation.	May 2003
3.	The energy manager monitors the plans implementation, identifies good ideas and reports results monthly to principals.	August 2003 and Ongoing
4.	The energy manager reports quarterly to the superintendent and the board.	November 2003 and Ongoing
5.	The energy manager evaluates the results of the plan at the end of the first year of implementation and annually thereafter.	November 2004 and Annually

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

GPISD spends significant resources evaluating energy costs and resources, including identifying overcharges, but has not conducted a formal energy audit to identify possible additional energy savings. GPISD maintenance staff worked with the district construction staff to develop design and construction standards that incorporate energy conservation practices and materials. The HVAC Controls supervisor also reviews construction designs and construction work in progress to identify and address potential problems. However, a formal energy audit has not been performed on a districtwide basis to identify additional building retrofit opportunities, as well as individual school conservation practices.

School districts often use energy audits to identify potential utility costs savings. These audits evaluate utility costs, type and age of HVAC equipment and conservation practices used by the organization to reduce costs. Audit team members often include a variety of engineering and conservation skills that enable the audit team to address all aspects of a comprehensive energy conservation program.

SECO performs these audits free to public sector organizations, including school districts. The audits provide detailed recommendations on equipment and procedures to implement that provide energy savings. The audits also estimate the time it will take to recoup money spent on implementation of recommendations through lowered energy costs.

By contracting with an energy management firm to design and establish an energy management and accountability program, Corpus Christi ISD (CCISD) has conserved energy and saved millions of dollars in energy use. CCISD contracted with an energy management firm for a four-year program. As part of the contract, the firm installed an energy management system throughout the district, upgraded all lighting and replaced outdated and nonfunctioning equipment. CCISD also contracted with another firm for an audit of electric, gas and water/wastewater billings. The district has saved more than \$475,000 annually from its use of performance contractors.

One way that districts can reduce energy costs at schools and other facilities is by turning off the lights on vending machines. The average soft drink machine uses two fluorescent bulbs, which total 80 watts; plus the energy required to operate the ballast a component required to alter electricity for fluorescent bulbs. Using a very conservative estimate of only two kwh (kilo watts per hour) per day usage, a soda machine uses an annual total of 730 kwh just for lights. At an average rate of \$0.10 per kwh, each machine costs GPISD \$73 per year to run the lights. GPISD operates 153 soda vending machines districtwide.

Recommendation 33:

Conduct a formal energy audit to identify additional energy savings opportunities.

The district should conduct a formal energy audit to determine if there are other opportunities for additional energy savings.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Maintenance requests an energy management audit from an outside organization with experience in energy audits.	June 2003
2.	The organization completes the audit and provides GPISD with recommendations.	September 2003
3.	The director of Maintenance develops a detailed cost budget to implement the recommendations.	January 2004
4.	The director of Maintenance, working with the assistant superintendent for Support Services, reviews the report and develops a recommended implementation plan that is submitted to the superintendent for approval.	April 2004
5.	The superintendent approves the plan and submits it to the board.	May 2004
6.	The board approves the plan and directs implementation.	June 2004
7.	The director of Maintenance includes the approved costs in the 2003-04 budget.	June 2004
8.	The director of Maintenance evaluates the results of the plan at the end of the first year of implementation and annually thereafter.	October 2005 and Annually

FISCAL IMPACT

Energy savings from school conservation measures could result in significant savings to the district, but are conservatively limited here to savings that could be achieved through disconnecting the lights in vending machines, as mentioned above. By disconnecting the lights in 153 soda machines, the district could save an estimated \$11,169 annually (\$73 per year x 153 soda machines).

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Conduct a formal energy audit	\$11,169	\$11,169	\$11,169	\$11,169	\$11,169

to identify additional energy savings opportunities.					
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Chapter 6

ASSET AND RISK MANAGEMENT

This chapter reviews the asset and risk management functions of Galena Park Independent School District (GPISD) in the following sections:

- A. Cash Management
- B. Risk Management
- C. Fixed Asset Management
- D. Bond Issuance and Indebtedness

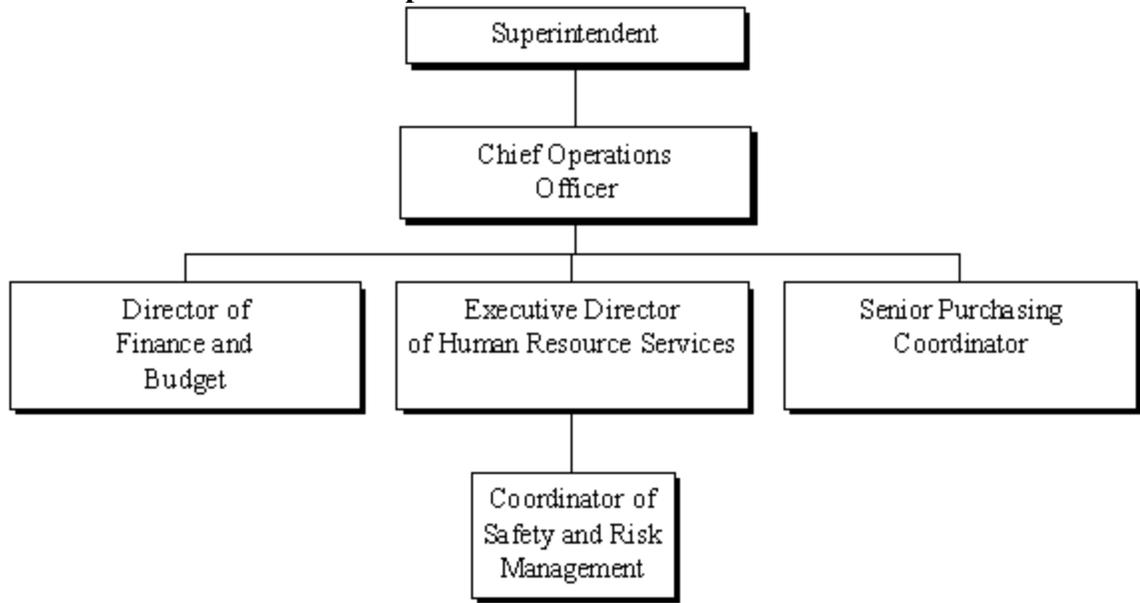
Texas school districts have a fiduciary responsibility to protect publicly financed assets provided to educate children. An effective asset and risk management program provides a district with investments that earn the maximum interest rate available while safeguarding funds and ensuring liquidity to meet the district's fluctuating cash flow requirements. Asset and risk management also control costs by protecting the district against significant losses with the lowest possible insurance premiums while providing sound and cost-effective health insurance for district employees. Fixed asset management accounts for district property accurately and safeguards it against theft and obsolescence. Effective bond management ensures the district complies with bond covenants and that outstanding bonds pay the lowest interest rate possible.

BACKGROUND

The GPISD's chief operations officer oversees the district's risk management functions as well as bond issuance and indebtedness. The chief operations officer and the director of Finance and Budget serve as the district's investment officers, managing cash and investments. The personnel in Safety and Risk Management handle all insurance and workers' safety matters for the district. The Purchasing Department oversees the district's fixed assets. **Exhibit 6-1** presents the GPISD organization of the asset and risk management functions.

Exhibit 6-1 **Organization of Asset and Risk Management Functions**

September 2002



Source: GPISD, director of Finance and Budget, September 2002.

GPISD invests in certificates of deposit (CD), public funds investment pools, money market bank accounts, interest-bearing checking accounts and U. S. government securities. A variety of companies provide the district property and casualty, flood, workers' compensation and health insurance. An external firm performs the district's annual inventories of fixed assets and provides fixed asset management software. The district's current outstanding bonds include unlimited tax school building bonds, unlimited tax refunding bonds and Qualified Zone Academy Bonds.

Chapter 6

ASSET AND RISK MANAGEMENT

A. Cash Management

Effective cash management practices ensure that districts collect funds in a timely manner and invest in secure instruments with maximum earning potential. Cash and investments must be safeguarded against the risk of loss by holding cash in accounts guaranteed by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC). If the deposit exceeds the FDIC coverage, the institution should provide a depository bond or pledge securities to the district in an amount equal to or greater than the overage. The director of Finance and Budget monitors the amount of securities pledged by the depository bank to ensure the district's funds are safeguarded. Compass Bank holds the securities in safekeeping for GPISD.

The maturity of the investments should match the district's fluctuating cash flow demands. Effective cash management provides the district with additional revenue to fund essential programs and operations by providing market rates of return on the maximum amount of cash not needed to fund immediate needs.

In GPISD, the director of Finance and Budget prepares a monthly and annual cash flow forecast for the general operating fund and the capital projects fund. The cash flow forecast includes inflows from local property taxes, state funding, interest earnings, federal program funds and miscellaneous sources. The forecast includes outflows attributable to accounts payable, payroll and the district's contribution for health insurance.

The district checks an online daily bank account summary to determine its cash position at the depository bank. The director of Finance and Budget can transfer funds between the investment accounts and checking accounts as necessary. State funds are deposited to the depository bank and transferred to an investment account. Utilizing a night drop box, the district deposits tax receipts and places the funds into an account that pays interest at a rate comparable to the public funds investment pools. The district generally transfers the funds to the investment pool accounts.

Texas school districts must select a depository bank through a competitive bid process to comply with the Texas Education Code (TEC), Chapter 45, Subchapter G. The two-year term of the agreement that results from the bid may be extended for one two-year term. GPISD bid the depository contract for a two-year period that runs from September 2001 through August 2003. After reviewing three bank bids, GPISD selected Woodforest National Bank. The report reviews the district selection process at a later point.

GPISD maintains 10 checking accounts at Woodforest National Bank. These accounts are consolidated for purposes of calculating bank fees and interest for the monthly analysis. In accordance with the terms of the depository agreement, the district also maintains seven liquidity accounts that earn interest comparable to the public funds investment pools and are not subject to bank fees. The district also maintains one account for the Fast Growth Coalition at Woodforest National Bank subject to the same terms as the liquidity accounts. **Exhibit 6-2** presents the bank accounts and related balances as of August 31, 2002.

Exhibit 6-2
GPISD Bank Accounts as of August 31, 2002

Account Name	Balance	Interest Bearing?	Subject to Analysis?
Payroll	\$947,270	Yes	Yes
General Operating	\$2,410,069	Yes	Yes
Student Activity	\$23,608	Yes	Yes
Employee Insurance	\$471,256	Yes	Yes
Self Funded Insurance	\$52,618	Yes	Yes
Debt Service	\$646	Yes	Yes
Capital Projects	\$390	Yes	Yes
Food Service	\$14,394	Yes	Yes
Tax Escrow	\$2,754	Yes	Yes
Special Revenue	\$57,178	No	Yes
Qualified Zone Academy Bonds	\$21,750	Yes	No
Lynn Murray Trust	\$2,100	Yes	No
Capital Projects Liquidity	\$27,222	Yes	No
1998 Bonds	\$73	Yes	No
2001 Bonds	\$361	Yes	No
1997 Bonds	\$55	Yes	No
2000 Bonds	\$22	Yes	No
Total	\$4,031,766		

Source: GPISD, Finance and Budget Department, Woodforest National Bank Account Statements, August 31, 2002.

The Public Funds Investment Act (PFIA), Chapter 2256 of the Texas Government Code (TGC), governs the investment of public funds. GPISD's investment policies allow district funds to be invested in the following investment types:

- obligations of, or guaranteed by, governmental entities as permitted by TGC 2256.009;
- certificates of deposit and share certificates as permitted by TGC 2256.010;
- fully collateralized repurchase agreements permitted by TGC 2256.011;
- banker's acceptances as permitted by TGC 2256.012;
- commercial paper as permitted by TGC 2256.013;

- two types of mutual funds as permitted by TGC 2256.014 (money market mutual funds and no-load mutual funds);
- a guaranteed investment contract as an investment vehicle for bond proceeds, provided it meets the criteria and eligibility requirements established by TGC 2256.015; and
- public funds investment pools as permitted by TGC 2256.016.

As of August 31, 2002, GPISD had one government security, a Federal Home Loan Bank (FHLB) security, with a book value of \$1 million as an investment in the general fund. This security, which has an interest rate of 3.05 percent, matures April 2003. GPISD invests funds in three public funds investment pools. **Exhibit 6-3** presents GPISD's investments by the institution, type, interest rate and amount.

Exhibit 6-3
GPISD Public Funds Investment Pools
August 31, 2002

Pool	Fund	Account Type	Amount	Interest Rate
Lone Star	Debt Service Fund	Liquidity Corporate Fund	\$870,920	1.89%
Lone Star	General Fund	Liquidity Corporate Fund	\$12,530,181	1.89%
Lone Star	Capital Projects Fund	Liquidity Corporate Fund	\$288,876	1.89%
Lone Star	Food Service	Liquidity Corporate Fund	\$1,652,550	1.89%
Lone Star	Student Activity	Liquidity Corporate Fund	\$530,798	1.89%
Lone Star	Self Funded	Liquidity Corporate Fund	\$3,349	1.89%
Lone Star	Lynn Murray Trust	Liquidity Corporate Fund	\$146,931	1.89%
Lone Star	1997 Bond Fund	Liquidity Corporate Fund	\$55	1.89%
Lone Star	Galena Park ISD 2000 Bonds	Liquidity Corporate Fund	\$222,310	1.89%
Lone Star	Galena Park ISD 2001 Bonds	Liquidity Corporate Fund	\$520,988	1.89%
	Total Lone Star		\$16,766,958	
Logic	General Operating	CLASS	\$57,732	1.86%
Logic	Debt Service	CLASS	\$22,213	1.86%
Logic	Capital Projects	CLASS	\$2,041	1.86%
Logic	1998 Bonds	CLASS	\$852	1.86%
Logic	Galena Park ISD 2000 Bonds	CLASS	\$2,207	1.86%
	Total Logic		\$85,045	
TexPool	General Operating		\$4,495,444	1.87%

TexPool	Debt Service Fund		\$1,291,362	1.87%
TexPool	1998 Bonds		\$264,803	1.87%
TexPool	2000 Bonds		\$1,099,309	1.87%
TexPool	2001 Bonds		\$2,278,798	1.87%
TexPool	Qualified Zone Academy Bonds		\$7,522,135	1.87%
	Total TexPool		\$16,951,851	
Total			\$33,803,854	

Source: GPISD, Finance and Budget Department, Investment Pool Account Statements, August 31, 2002.

GPISD has also invested in CD's at Woodforest National Bank (**Exhibit 6-4**).

Exhibit 6-4
GPISD Certificates of Deposit
August 31, 2002

Fund	Investment Period	Amount	Interest Rate
General Fund	Six Months	\$3,000,000	2.25%
Food Service Fund	Six Months	\$1,000,000	2.25%
Debt Service Fund	Six Months	\$1,000,000	2.25%
Total		\$5,000,000	

Source: GPISD, Finance and Budget Department, Certificate of Deposit copies.

GPISD diversifies investments among several types of investments with differing maturities. Diversification or investing in different types of instruments with different maturity dates spreads the maturity, liquidity, credit and market risk. As a result, a specific event, such as the decline in value of one security, will have less effect on the district's total portfolio than if the district had all its money in a single security.

FINDING

GPISD is not maximizing interest earnings on funds in its checking accounts. GPISD's depository agreement states that, "interest earned during the month on each account would be reflected on the monthly account analysis as an expense item." This means GPISD pays itself interest on the checking accounts subject to analysis by the depository bank. Banks pay interest on checking accounts funds by either charging the interest back to the account in fees, which effectively means the bank is not paying interest, or paying interest and not charging the interest back to the account through fees. A review of the account analysis statements shows that the bank includes an expense in its service charge for the

interest the district receives on accounts. Effectively, GPISD is not receiving any interest on the funds in the checking accounts subject to account analysis.

To help cover the bank charges, the depository agreement contains a compensating balance agreement that provides for an earnings credit on the account balance. The account balances necessary to cover the bank charges are considered compensating balances. If the account balance generates enough credit, the bank does not deduct charges. If the balances exceed the compensating balance, the district does not receive the earnings credit of more than the bank charges. In the case of GPISD, the bank applies the earnings credit toward the interest paid to the district. The net effect of the depository agreement resulted in GPISD paying the bank \$4,175 in 2001-02. In addition, GPISD did not receive interest on the funds in the accounts subject to analysis. The director of Finance and Budget said GPISD earned \$2,804 in interest on the accounts not subject to account analysis, and that GPISD's net cost for maintaining its accounts with the depository bank was \$1,371.

Exhibit 6-5 presents the total bank charges paid by GPISD, the amount of bank charges attributable to interest paid to GPISD, the net bank fees, the earnings credit to offset the bank fees and the net cost to the district on a monthly basis for 2001-02. Net bank fees represent the cost of services for which the district pays the bank and are calculated by subtracting the fee charged for interest paid to the district from the total fees charged to the district. Account records submitted to TSPR are reflected in the exhibit below.

Exhibit 6-5
GPISD Checking Account Analysis Statements
September 2001 through August 2002

Month	Total Fees GPISD Paid to Bank	Interest Paid To District And Charged As Fees	Net Bank Fees	Earnings Credit to Offset Bank Fees	Net Cost (Credit to GPISD)
September-01	\$9,448	\$6,269	\$3,179	\$3,967	(\$788)
October-01	\$8,797	\$4,984	\$3,813	\$2,210	\$1,603
November-01	\$6,773	\$4,946	\$1,827	\$1,908	(\$81)
December-01	\$9,354	\$7,452	\$1,902	\$2,510	(\$608)
January-02	\$8,438	\$6,294	\$2,144	\$2,216	(\$72)
February-02	\$12,484	\$8,990	\$3,494	\$3,678	(\$184)
March-02	\$7,843	\$5,975	\$1,868	\$2,231	(\$363)
April-02	\$8,479	\$5,647	\$2,832	\$1,918	\$914
May-02	\$7,307	\$5,320	\$1,987	\$1,860	\$127
June-02	\$9,371	\$4,928	\$4,443	\$1,685	\$2,758
July-02	\$7,776	\$4,954	\$2,822	\$1,632	\$1,190

August-02	\$7,090	\$5,607	\$1,483	\$1,804	(\$321)
Totals	\$103,160	\$71,366	\$31,794	\$27,619	\$4,175

Source: GPISD, Finance and Budget Department, Woodforest National Bank Account Analysis Statements, September 2001 through August 2002.

Many districts minimize the amount of funds in their depository banks. The Brownsville ISD (BISD) administrator for Investments uses the daily balance log to determine the amount of funds available to invest and the amount of funds needed to cover scheduled payments. The administrator uses an historical analysis of the amount of checks that clear the bank on a daily basis to determine the cash balance necessary for the checking accounts. To maximize district interest income, the BISD administrator transfers cash on a daily basis, if necessary, between the checking accounts and the investment pool accounts.

Recommendation 34:

Minimize the amount of funds in checking accounts to maximize interest earnings.

The district should maintain minimal balances in the checking accounts subject to account analysis. All funds more than the minimum balance required for checks to clear on a normal basis should be invested in one of the public funds investment pools. The district will actually earn interest on the funds in the investment pools and should earn more interest than the bank charges paid. The net effect will be an increase in interest earnings.

Because the district has the ability to monitor the amount of cash in the checking accounts, it knows when additional funds are necessary to fund accounts payable and payroll disbursements. The district can reasonably estimate the amount of funds necessary to cover checks clearing on a daily basis through the review of records maintained by the district.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the chief operations officer to minimize the amount of cash left in the checking accounts that are subject to the depository bank's account analysis.	April 2003
2.	The chief operations officer and the director of Finance and Budget determine the amount to be left in the checking accounts based on the historical volume of checks that clear on a daily basis.	April 2003
3.	The chief operations officer and the director of Finance and Budget present the proposed reserve balances to the superintendent for review and approval and receive the superintendent's approval.	May 2003
4.	The chief operations officer directs the director of Finance and Budget to move all funds exceeding the reserve balances into the investment pools.	May 2003
5.	The director of Finance and Budget minimizes the amount of cash in the checking accounts and submits reports to the chief operations officer for review and approval.	June 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

The fiscal impact of this recommendation is calculated by multiplying the average monthly ledger balance of the GPISD checking accounts that are subject to account analysis minus a reserve for outstanding checks times the average interest rate earned on the TexPool accounts minus the net bank fees paid in 2001-02. **Exhibit 6-6** presents the average ledger balances for the accounts subject to account analysis and TexPool interest rate for the month. Due to the decline in interest rates during this period of time, the average interest rate calculated for TexPool is based on the last six months.

**Exhibit 6-6
GPISD Average Monthly Ledger Balances and TexPool Interest Rates
2001-02**

Month	Ledger Balance	TexPool Interest Rate
September-01	\$2,191,149	
October-01	\$1,667,258	
November-01	\$1,728,775	
December-01	\$2,524,626	
January-02	\$3,802,383	
February-02	\$6,348,194	
March-02	\$2,141,072	1.78%
April-02	\$2,038,215	1.83%
May-02	\$1,841,927	1.82%
June-02	\$1,782,777	1.83%
July-02	\$1,716,216	1.89%
August-02	\$1,953,388	1.87%
Average	\$2,477,998	1.84%

Source: GPISD, Finance and Budget Department, Woodforest National Bank account analysis statements, September 2001 through August 2002; TexPool Web site, September 2002.

Assuming the district maintains a reserve of \$500,000 in checking accounts, it would receive interest of \$36,395 [(\$2,477,998 - \$500,000) x 1.84 percent] by investing the excess funds in TexPool. By minimizing the amount of cash in the checking accounts, the district would not maintain sufficient balances to cover the annual net bank fees of \$31,794. This would provide the district with net interest revenue of \$4,601 annually. The net interest revenue is calculated by subtracting the net bank fees from

the interest GPISD would receive by investing the excess funds in TexPool (\$36,395 - \$31,794 = \$4,601) annually.

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Minimize the amount of funds in the depository bank checking accounts to maximize interest earnings.	\$4,601	\$4,601	\$4,601	\$4,601	\$4,601

FINDING

GPISD does not maintain written proof that it provided entities with which it invests funds the most recent investment policy revisions or obtained verification that the entities reviewed the policies. While the district complies with the Public Funds Investment Act (PFIA), not providing the revised investment policies to these business organizations weakens the internal controls over investments. The GPISD investment policies contain PFIA requirements.

As required in the Texas Government Code, Chapter 2256.005, GPISD board policy contains the following requirement.

...a written copy of the investment policy shall be presented to any person offering to engage in an investment transaction with an investing entity or to an investment management firm under contract with an investing entity to invest or manage the entity's investment portfolio. For purposes of this policy, a business organization includes investment pools and an investment management firm under contract with an investing entity to invest or manage the entity's investment portfolio. The qualified representative of the business organization offering to engage in an investment transaction with the District shall execute a written instrument in a form acceptable to the District and the business organization substantially to the effect that the business organization has:

- Received and thoroughly reviewed the District investment policy; and
- Has acknowledged that the business organization has implemented reasonable procedures and controls in an effort to preclude investment transactions conducted between the District and the organization that are not authorized by the District's policy, except to the extent that this authorization is dependent on an analysis of the makeup of the entity's entire portfolio or requires an interpretation of subjective investment standards.

The investment officer may not acquire or otherwise obtain any authorized investment described in the District's investment policy from a person who has not delivered to the District the instrument described above.

The board revised policy CDA [Legal] on November 12, 2001 and policy CDA [Local] on February 5, 2001. Although all of the investment firms have returned a statement that meets the requirement, only Banc of America Securities LLP and Banc One Capital Markets, Inc. have returned a statement that reflects having received and reviewed the revised investment policies. Statements from the remaining investment firms are dated prior to the last policy revision date. As noted earlier in the report, the chief

operating officer and the director of Finance and Budget serve as the district's investment officers. The chief operating officer supervises the investment of the district's funds. The job duties of the director of Finance and Budget specifically include the responsibility for directing and managing the district's investment portfolio to comply with state law and board policy.

The review team did not find any investments that did not comply with the district investment policy provisions.

North Texas State University's Center for Public Management advises attendees of their PFIA seminars to provide revised policies to business organizations and obtain written confirmation from those organizations that the revised policy has been received and reviewed. Some districts require a statement from investment companies that reflects the company has received and reviewed the investment policies of the district each time the district revises the policies. These districts are assured that the investment companies have implemented reasonable procedures and controls in an effort to preclude investment transactions that are not authorized by the district's policy.

Recommendation 35:

Obtain written documentation from investment companies that the revised investment policies have been received and reviewed.

Each time the district updates its investment policy, the chief operations officer should obtain written confirmation from investment companies that the changes have been received and reviewed.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the chief operations officer to obtain written documentation from investment companies that the revised investment policies have been received and reviewed.	April 2003
2.	The chief operations officer and the director of Finance and Budget review all statements from investment companies confirming their receipt and review of the districts investment policies and determine the entities that did not receive the revised policies.	April 2003
3.	The director of Finance and Budget sends the investment companies the revised investment policies and requests written confirmation of their receipt and review.	May 2003
4.	The director of Finance and Budget prepares a report for the chief operations officer that includes the confirmations from the investment companies for review and approval.	June 2003
5.	The chief operations officer presents the report to the superintendent for review, approval and inclusion in a board packet.	July 2003
6.	The chief operations officer ensures the investment companies receive and review all future revisions of the investment policies.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

GPISD did not award the depository contract based on the lowest cost and highest interest earnings offered to the district. The district used evaluation criteria other than cost or interest earnings to determine the best bid received for the depository contract that ends in August 2003. According to the depository bid form, the district used the following criteria for selecting the depository bank:

- net cost/revenue of banking services;
- cut off for same day funds availability;
- hours of lobby operation;
- number of deposit sites in the district;
- past experience with GPISD;
- Internet banking;
- six-day processing capabilities;
- overall quality and soundness of proposal:
- banking services to other school districts; and
- positive pay capabilities.

The evaluation criteria listed in the bid notice was not organized in order of importance or weight.

At a cost of \$12,000, the district contracted with Deloitte Touche LLP to oversee the depository bid for the 2001-03 biennium. A letter from Deloitte Touche LLP outlined the company's responsibilities:

- reviewed the previous request for proposals (RFP) used in prior selections;
- updated and finalized the RFP with current information and specifications;
- assisted the district in determining the weight of factors for each listed criteria;
- distributed the RFP to the appropriate institutions;
- interacted with vendors as appropriate;
- reviewed and summarized responses to the RFP;
- answered clarifying questions from GPISD selection committee members;
- compiled GPISD selection committee's scores; and
- reported on results of GPISD selection committee.

According to the letter, Deloitte's role "was to facilitate and administer the selection process. We did not provide any expressed or implied decisions, opinions or views on the conclusions reached by the GPISD selection committee."

The selection committee included the district's assistant tax assessor-collector, the accounting supervisor, the chief operations officer and the secretary of the Athletic Department. **Exhibit 6-7** presents a summary of the selection committee's ranking of the three depository bids received by GPISD.

Exhibit 6-7 Summary of the Depository Bank Selection Committee Ranking

Bank A

	Evaluation Criteria	Evaluator 1	Evaluator 2	Evaluator 3	Evaluator 4	Total Raw Score	Weight	Final Score
1	Net Cost/Revenue of Banking Services	5	5	5	5	20	0.95	19
2	Cut off for same day funds availability	4	4	4	4	16	0.50	8
3	Hours of Lobby operation	2	3	3	3	11	0.53	5.83
4	Number of deposit sites in the District	0	1	0	2	3	0.47	1.41
5	Past experience with Galena Park ISD	0	3	0	3	6	0.50	3
6	Internet Banking	5	4	5	5	19	0.48	9.12
7	Six day processing capabilities	0	2	0	2	4	0.30	1.2
8	Overall quality and soundness of proposal	5	3	4	5	17	0.30	5.1
9	Banking services to School Districts	0	2	1	2	5	0.50	2.5
10	Positive pay capabilities	5	4	3	5	17	0.47	7.99
	Totals	26	31	25	36	118	5.00	63.15

Bank B

	Evaluation Criteria	Evaluator 1	Evaluator 2	Evaluator 3	Evaluator 4	Total Raw Score	Weight	Final Score
1	Net Cost/Revenue of Banking Services	3	3	4	4	14	0.95	13.3
2	Cut off for same day funds availability	5	4	5	5	19	0.50	9.5
3	Hours of Lobby operation	4	5	5	5	19	0.53	10.07

4	Number of deposit sites in the District	5	5	5	5	20	0.47	9.4
5	Past experience with Galena Park ISD	5	5	4	5	19	0.50	9.5
6	Internet Banking	5	4	5	5	19	0.48	9.12
7	Six day processing capabilities	5	5	5	5	20	0.30	6
8	Overall quality and soundness of proposal	0	3	3	2	8	0.30	2.4
9	Banking services to School Districts	5	4	4	4	17	0.50	8.5
10	Positive pay capabilities	5	4	4	5	18	0.47	8.46
	Totals	42	42	44	45	173	5.00	86.25

Bank C

	Evaluation Criteria	Evaluator 1	Evaluator 2	Evaluator 3	Evaluator 4	Total Raw Score	Weight	Final Score
1	Net Cost/Revenue of Banking Services	1	2	2	2	7	0.95	6.65
2	Cut off for same day funds availability	0	3	2	2	7	0.50	3.5
3	Hours of Lobby operation	1	3	2	2	8	0.53	4.24
4	Number of deposit sites in the District	1	1	0	3	5	0.47	2.35
5	Past experience with Galena Park ISD	0	3	0	3	6	0.50	3
6	Internet Banking	5	4	5	5	19	0.48	9.12
7	Six day processing capabilities	0	2	0	2	4	0.30	1.2
8	Overall quality and soundness of proposal	0	3	2	2	7	0.30	2.1
9	Banking services to School	2	3	3	2	10	0.50	5

	Districts							
10	Positive pay capabilities	5	4	2	5	16	0.47	7.52
	Totals	15	28	18	28	89	5.00	44.68

Source: GPISD, Finance and Budget Department, Depository Contract Agenda Item, June 11, 2001.

The summary of responses prepared by Deloitte Touche LLP lists Bank A as requiring the lowest compensating balance and providing the best net cost to the district. The summary also states that Bank B would no longer offer six-day processing after June 2001; however, the evaluation committee ranked Bank B with the maximum 20 points on this evaluation criterion.

Even though Bank B did not offer positive pay at the time of the bid opening, the committee also awarded the bank 18 points in this category. According to the director of Finance and Budget, Bank B still did not offer positive pay at the time of the review team's visit. Positive pay is a daily reconciliation of the district's data file of checks issued compared to the bank's data file of checks paid. The district's data file of checks consists of an electronic list of checks issued including the check amount submitted to the bank. The bank rejects any checks not matching the district's data file. The bank notifies the district on a daily basis of the rejected checks. This process reduces the risk of losses due to fraud and the time necessary to reconcile the bank statements.

Exhibit 6-8 summarizes the banks' responses to the net monthly earnings/expense computation worksheet required by the bank depository bid. The district provided a bank balance and number of services used in the bid form in order for each bank to calculate the monthly cost of services, earnings credit and net interest paid. This allowed the district to compare the fiscal impact of the banks' service charges and interest rates.

Exhibit 6-8
Summary Cost Information for Bank Depository Bid

Item	Bank A	Bank B	Bank C
Monthly cost of services	\$2,920	\$6,987	\$7,668
Earnings credit	\$5,110	\$4,860	\$5,989
Net cost of services	\$0	(\$2,127)	(\$1,679)
Net interest paid	\$2,502	\$0	\$0
Total monthly (cost) revenue	\$2,502	(\$2,127)	(\$1,679)
Annualized (cost) revenue	\$30,024	(\$25,524)	(\$20,148)

Source: GPISD, Finance and Budget Department, bid forms for depository bank bid for the 2001-03 biennium, April 2001 and November 2002.

The director of Finance and Budget said the cut-off for same day funds availability, hours of lobby operation, number of deposit sites and six-day processing capabilities significantly affect GPISD's ability to generate the maximum return on its deposits. In fact, GPISD weighted these four factors as 55 percent of the evaluation criteria in determining the selection of the depository. GPISD does not believe **Exhibit 6-8** takes these factors into consideration, but did not provide any evidence of how these factors affect the annualized (cost) revenue of banking services.

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) instructions for the depository bid document require the district to "list the criteria, in order of importance, that will be used in the bid evaluation process." TEA's instructions list examples of the criteria that might be used; but leave the exact criteria and priorities up to each district based on specific needs and concerns. TEA criteria include:

- cost of services;
- type of third-party institution holding collateral;
- financial strength of institution;
- experience in providing depository services to similar accounts;
- interest rates offered on time deposits, checking accounts and/or repurchase

agreements;

- location(s) and hours of operation of bank offices;
- electronic bank services offered; and
- any additional services offered.

The law requiring school districts to bid the depository contract identifies interest rates and cost of services as the primary criteria for selection of a depository bank. Section 45.207 (c) of the Texas Education Code (TEC) states, "in determining the highest and best bid, or in case of tie bids the highest and best tie bids, the board of trustees shall consider the interest rate bid on time deposits, charges for keeping district accounts, records, and reports and furnishing checks, and the ability of the bidder to provide the necessary services and perform the duties as school depository, together with all other matters that in the judgment of the board of trustees would be to the best interest of the school district."

Many school districts bid the depository contract every biennium in order to achieve the best value for the district. Some of these districts consider the cost of services and interest paid as the major factor in the evaluation process. Some of these districts have received depository bids with no service charges or compensating balance requirements and are paid interest on the balances left in the depository bank. These districts reduce the costs associated with banking and receive interest on their deposits.

Recommendation 36:

Use cost of service and interest rates as the major criteria in selecting a depository bank.

The chief operations officer should develop the bank depository bid for the 2003-05 biennium using cost of services and interest earnings as the major criteria. The evaluation criteria should also be listed in the order of importance in the bid notice.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the chief operating officer to develop the depository bid using cost of services and interest earnings as the major criteria for selecting the depository bank.	May 2003
2.	The chief operations officer prepares the depository bid and submits it to the superintendent for review and approval.	June 2003
3.	The chief operations officer releases the depository bid to the banks.	June 2003
4.	The chief operations officer prepares a tabulation of the responding banks' bids and submits it to the board for review and approval and receives approval.	July 2003
5.	The chief operations officer executes the depository agreement with the successful bidder and develops a transition plan for a new depository bank, if necessary.	August 2003
6.	The district uses the depository bank selected based on the evaluation criteria.	September 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

The fiscal impact of this recommendation is based on the banks' responses to the net monthly earnings/expense computation worksheet in the depository bid form. The annual savings of \$55,548 is calculated by subtracting the annualized (cost) revenue from the district's current depository bank from the annualized (cost) revenue from Bank A ($\$30,024 - (\$25,524) = \$55,548$). The savings assumes the district continues to use outside assistance to facilitate and administer the bid process.

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Use cost of service and interest rates as the major criteria in selecting a depository bank.	\$55,548	\$55,548	\$55,548	\$55,548	\$55,548

Chapter 6

ASSET AND RISK MANAGEMENT

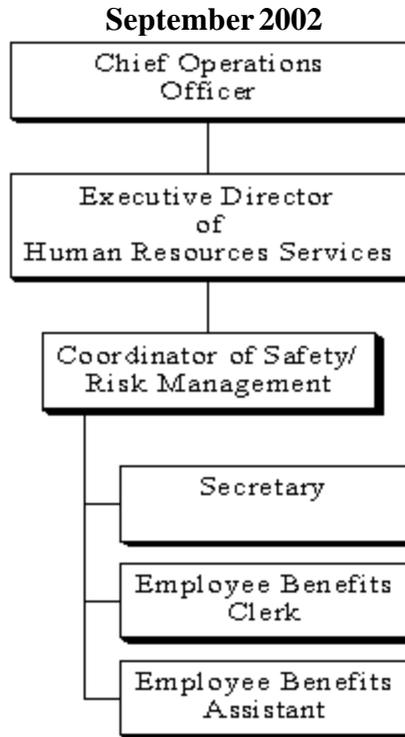
B. Risk Management

An effective risk management program provides a safe environment for students and employees, minimizes workers' compensation claims and costs, offers sound and cost effective health insurance for district employees and protects the district against significant losses with the lowest possible insurance premiums. To ensure the district protects itself against significant losses, it must conduct annual accurate appraisals of property values and inventories of fixed assets. To minimize claims and reduce premiums for workers' compensation, districts must assess and reduce hazards.

The coordinator of Safety and Risk Management is responsible for oversight of the risk management functions in GISD and has three employees supporting the functions. The district is proposing to reorganize Safety and Risk Management so that employee benefits reports directly to the executive director of Human Resource Services. In preparation of the change, it reduced the director of Safety and Risk Management to coordinator in September 2002. **Exhibit 6-9** presents the organization of the GPISD risk management functions.

Exhibit 6-9

GPISD Risk Management Organization



Source: GPISD, Interim Coordinator of Safety and Risk Management, September 2002.

District insurance policies, through a variety of companies, protect the district against loss of real and personal property, vehicle loss or damage, professional liability, student athletic injury, unemployment claims, losses from employee dishonesty and environmental clean-up liability. **Exhibit 6-10** presents a summary of these coverages.

Exhibit 6-10
GPISD Insurance Policies and Coverage Limits
September 2002

Coverage Type	Coverage Limit	Deductible	Company	Cost
Property - Blanket Replacement Cost EDP	\$368,828,000 \$4,000,000	\$25,000 \$1,000	St. Paul Fire and Marine Insurance Company	\$736,303
Vehicle Coverage - Combined Single Limit Liability	\$5,214,856	\$1,000	TASB	\$183,397
Professional Liability Insurance	\$2,000,000	\$10,000	TASB	\$32,570

UIL Activities Insurance Catastrophic	\$2,000,000	\$25,000	Cigna	\$4,313
Boiler and Machinery	\$36,123,500	\$25,000	Hartford Steam Boiler	\$16,353
Public Official Bonds - Selected Individuals	\$50,000 to \$1,000,000		Colonial American Casualty and Surety	\$8,000
Environmental Clean-up	\$1,000,000	\$4,000	Tank Owners Mutual	\$600
Flood Insurance - Three Locations	\$1,242,000	\$500	Delta Lloyds Insurance	\$6,687
Total Premium				\$988,223

Source: GPISD, Interim director of Safety and Risk Management, September 2002.

The district insures itself for unemployment claims through the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) for an annual premium of \$57,314 based on the 2001 calendar year gross wages of \$85 million. At an annual premium of \$1,052,069, Texas Political Subdivisions (TPS) insures GPISD for workers' compensation. The district is in the third year of a three-year TPS contract. **Exhibit 6-11** presents the district's premiums and losses from 1999-2000 through 2001-02.

**Exhibit 6-11
Workers' Compensation Claims and Premiums
1999-2000 through 2001-02**

	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02
Workers' Compensation Claims	\$962,205	\$553,833	\$195,770*
Workers' Compensation Premiums	\$694,424	\$909,013	\$1,052,069

Source: GPISD, interim director of Safety and Risk Management, Five-year Claims History; Insurance Summary, September 2002.

* Losses through June 2002.

The third party administrator (TPA) for TPS provides loss control services for the district. These services include case management, investigations, training and reporting. The district coordinates a safety-training program

through the schools and departments that covers hazardous materials, blood borne pathogens, CPR/First Aid, ladder safety, electrical safety, fire safety, slips/trips/falls avoidance, lifting/moving and other topics. Schools receive materials to assist them in training staff, and central office staff provide specific training. The district trains all administrative staff on reporting and managing work-related accidents.

The district has a light duty program to return injured employees to work as soon as practical. The light duty assignments are based on the physician's evaluation of the employee's injury and the normal physical demands of the employee's job. The injured employee takes a district-designed form to a physician for the initial medical evaluation that contains information about the physical demands of the job. The physician fills out the form and notes what job functions the individual cannot perform and returns it to GPISD. The district uses this information to determine whether the employee can return to his or her job in a limited capacity or whether the employee needs to be placed in a different position.

The district has developed a crisis procedures manual that includes emergency numbers and procedures to assist administrators in handling emergency situations. The district performs fire and other safety drills during the school year.

The district pays \$225 each month for employees' health insurance plan and \$10 each month for their dental insurance plan. Employees have the choice of three health insurance plans. Under the self-funded dental insurance plan, employees may use the provider of their choice. **Exhibit 6-12** presents the cost to the employee for each of the plans.

Exhibit 6-12
Health and Dental Insurance Premiums
2002-03

Plan/Coverage	Monthly Premium	District Pays	Employee Pays
PPO			
Employee Only	\$438.93	\$225.00	\$213.93
Employee and Children	\$743.21	\$225.00	\$518.21
Employee and Spouse	\$806.34	\$225.00	\$581.35
Family	\$1,096.00	\$225.00	\$871.00
Two Employees	\$806.34	\$450.00	\$356.34

Two Employees and Family	\$1,096.00	\$450.00	\$646.00
HMO Option I			
Employee Only	\$283.38	\$225.00	\$58.38
Employee and Children	\$476.46	\$225.00	\$251.46
Employee and Spouse	\$516.26	\$225.00	\$291.26
Family	\$698.83	\$225.00	\$473.83
Two Employees	\$516.26	\$450.00	\$66.26
Two Employees and Family	\$698.83	\$450.00	\$248.83
HMO Option II			
Employee Only	\$331.52	\$225.00	\$106.52
Employee and Children	\$557.40	\$225.00	\$332.40
Employee and Spouse	\$603.96	\$225.00	\$378.96
Family	\$817.54	\$225.00	\$592.54
Two Employees	\$603.96	\$450.00	\$153.96
Two Employees and Family	\$817.54	\$450.00	\$367.54
Dental Insurance			
Employee Only	\$27.50	\$10.00	\$17.50
Employee and Children	\$49.50	\$10.00	\$39.50
Employee and Spouse	\$49.50	\$10.00	\$39.50
Family	\$73.00	\$10.00	\$63.00
Two Employees	\$49.50	\$20.00	\$29.50
Two Employees and Family	\$73.00	\$20.00	\$53.00

Source: GPISD, interim director of Safety and Risk Management, Benefit Rate Sheet, September 2002.

Each employee receives a packet of information regarding each type of coverage. Both HMO plans provide a regional network and the PPO provides a national network. **Exhibit 6-13** presents a summary of the differences in the three health insurance plans.

Exhibit 6-13
Health Insurance Plan Summary
2002-03

Plan Element	HMO I	HMO II	PPO	Explanation
Office Visit Copay	\$25/\$45	\$15/\$30	\$25	Primary Care/Specialist
Emergency Room Copay	\$100	\$100	\$100	
Hospital Copay	\$750	\$500	-	
Copay Out-of-pocket	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$1,500/\$3,000	Individual/Total
Deductible	-	-	\$500/\$1,000	Individual/Total
Co-insurance Percentage	-	-	80%/60%	In/Out Network
Prescription Drug Copays	\$10/\$30/\$45	\$10/\$20/\$40	\$10/\$20/\$40	Generic/Formulary/Non-Formulary
Mail Order Drugs	2 x Copay	2 x Copay	2 x Copay	

Source: GPISD, interim director of Safety and Risk Management, Unicare/Wellpoint Cost Analysis, September 2002.

The district provides employees with the opportunity to sign up for a number of other benefits at cost through payroll reduction. These benefits include optional life insurance, prepaid legal services, cancer insurance, accident insurance, long-term care insurance, intensive care insurance, disability insurance and a flexible benefits plan.

Chapter 6

ASSET AND RISK MANAGEMENT

C. Fixed Asset Management

An effective fixed asset management system accounts for district property accurately and safeguards it against theft and obsolescence. The TEA defines fixed assets as purchased or donated tangible items with a unit cost greater than \$5,000 that have a useful life of more than one year. Planning and control of fixed asset transactions are crucial to the long-range financial plan of the district. With the implementation of Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Statement 34 that requires districts to depreciate fixed assets, the importance of the fixed asset management system increases.

In GPISD, the senior purchasing coordinator reports to the chief operations officer and oversees fixed asset management and purchasing.

Fixed asset management is supposed to begin when a purchase order is generated. For purchases of more than \$1,000 coded to the 6600 object code series, the senior purchasing coordinator sends a fixed asset addition form and a fixed asset tag with the purchase order copy to the location placing the order. Since the district does not have central receiving, each purchasing location conducts asset tagging. When the location receives the fixed asset, the staff completes the form for fixed asset additions and returns the form to the senior purchasing coordinator. The senior purchasing coordinator enters the information into the fixed asset management system.

The purchasing department developed a purchasing manual that includes sample forms and instructions for employees. The purchasing manual also includes instructions and forms to transfer or delete fixed assets from a location. The coordinator provides facilities a change order form to fill out when transferring fixed assets and a fixed asset disposal worksheet when a facility stops using an asset or it is no longer useable. The coordinator enters all information into the fixed asset management system. Annually, the district conducts an auction to dispose of obsolete assets.

GPISD contracts with RCI Technologies, Inc. (RCI) to inventory district assets annually. The district paid RCI \$25,925 to inventory the assets in 2001-02. The physical inventory included the scanning of all assets in the district, tagging of all assets not previously tagged, assignment of replacement cost values to assets without purchase price documentation and preparation of detailed fixed asset listings

by location. RCI provided GPISD with an updated CD ROM containing the entire district's fixed asset information. This information is the district's subsidiary ledger for fixed assets.

FINDING

GPISD has not maintained the district's fixed asset management system. The report from the system for 2001-02 provided to the review team contained no additions or deletions. The beginning balances for the report for 2001-02 did not agree with the ending balances from 2000-01. District staff said the differences were related to the previous year's depreciation and deletions from the prior year. **Exhibit 6-14** presents the information contained in the annual audit report for 2000-01.

Exhibit 6-14
GPISD Fixed Asset Account Group
2000-01

Asset Description	September 1, 2000	Additions	Deletions and Adjustments	August 31, 2001
Land	\$10,813,117	\$0	(\$4,645,076)	\$6,168,041
Buildings and Improvements	\$242,019,858	\$5,379,177	\$22,587,497	\$269,986,532
Construction in Progress	\$0	\$15,441,304	\$0	\$15,441,304
Furniture and Equipment	\$32,230,054	\$2,711,597	(\$3,060,475)	\$31,881,176
Vehicles	\$5,024,308	\$518,111	(\$648,790)	\$4,893,629
Library Books	\$3,684,655	\$143,580	(\$3,828,235)	\$0
Total	\$293,771,992	\$24,193,769	\$10,404,921	\$328,370,682

Source: GPISD, Annual External Audit, August 31, 2001.

The information contained in the subsidiary ledger for fixed assets did not agree with the information reported in the 2000-01 audit. The information in the subsidiary ledger has been summarized to match the categories in the annual audit and the amounts are presented without cents. The depreciation expense reported in the subsidiary ledger has also been eliminated. **Exhibit 6-15** presents the summary from the subsidiary ledger for 2000-01.

Exhibit 6-15
GPISD Fixed Asset Subsidiary Ledger
2000-01

Asset Description	September 1, 2000	Additions	Deletions and Adjustments	August 31, 2001
Land	\$5,856,741	\$311,300	\$0	\$6,168,041
Buildings and Improvements	\$158,107,450	\$127,320,386	\$0	\$285,427,836
Construction in Progress	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Furniture and Equipment	\$28,347,926	\$394,198	(\$225,339)	\$28,516,785
Vehicles	\$5,214,460	\$0	(\$38,900)	\$5,175,560
Library Books	\$84,387	\$0	\$0	\$84,387
Total	\$197,610,964	\$128,025,884	(\$264,239)	\$325,372,609

Source: GPISD, Item Class Summary Report, August 31, 2001.

The August 31, 2001 totals of the subsidiary ledger and the fixed asset account group, as presented in the annual audit, do not agree. The approximately \$3 million difference can be partially attributed to the value of the library books reported in the subsidiary ledger. The deletion of the library books reported in the annual audit was not reflected in the subsidiary ledger. The remaining difference falls in the furniture and equipment and vehicles categories. This difference may be due to the input of replacement values by RCI. If RCI finds an asset during the inventory process, company staff enter a

value in the database that becomes the district's subsidiary ledger for fixed assets. These assets do not have a purchase date or purchase value that reflects the actual transaction.

By maintaining an accurate listing of the district's assets in its accounting system, the district could establish one internal control to ensure the safety of district assets. The TEA Financial Accountability System Resource Guide (FASRG) internal control checklist questions whether a district regularly balances subsidiary ledgers with control accounts. The lack of agreement between the audited financial statements and the subsidiary ledger for fixed assets indicates that either the audited financial statements were misstated or the subsidiary ledger was incorrect.

Many districts balance their subsidiary ledgers with the general ledger as a part of the internal control structure. Districts investigate any differences between the two ledgers and require adequate explanations and approval before any adjustments are made. This assures these districts that the financial information in the district's general ledger system agrees with detailed records in the subsidiary ledgers and that any discrepancies are explained.

Recommendation 37:

Reconcile the subsidiary fixed asset ledger to the general ledger and investigate the differences.

The district should routinely balance the subsidiary fixed asset ledger with the general ledger. Any differences should be investigated and fully explained before the adjusting entry is made to either ledger. This procedure will strengthen the internal controls over the fixed assets of the district.

Items input by RCI should be researched to determine the purchase date and appropriate value to include in the database.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The chief operations officer directs the director of Finance and Budget and the senior purchasing coordinator to reconcile the subsidiary fixed asset ledger with the general ledger.	April 2003 and Quarterly
2.	The director of Finance and Budget and the senior purchasing coordinator reconcile the subsidiary fixed asset ledger with the general ledger and investigate and explain all differences.	May 2003 and Quarterly
3.	The director of Finance and Budget and the senior purchasing coordinator present a report to the chief operations officer for review and approval and receive approval.	May 2003 and Quarterly
4.	The director of Finance and Budget adjusts the ledgers accordingly.	June 2003 and Quarterly

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

GPISD does not have a board policy that defines fixed assets, establishes a depreciation method or establishes responsibility for safeguarding of

assets. Although the district uses a \$1,000 threshold and a useful life of more than two years for determining whether assets are recorded in the fixed asset group of accounts, no board policy exists that sets that threshold. The district uses the straight-line method to depreciate the district's fixed assets, but no policy exists that addresses the depreciation of fixed assets.

GASB 34 does not prescribe a minimum level for the capitalization of assets; however, it does require districts to disclose the dollar value above which asset acquisitions are added to the capital accounts. TEA requires assets that cost \$5,000 per unit or more to be capitalized. GASB 34 does not prescribe the method of depreciation to be used to depreciate capital assets, but it does require disclosure of the method in the annual financial statements. TEA recommends the straight-line method.

The FASRG states that adequate procedures are essential to the protective custody of school property. Appropriate systems designate responsibility for custody and proper use of assets. Management must impose discipline throughout the organization so that an appropriate level of internal control will be maintained to assure that adequate custody of assets is maintained.

Many school districts use the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) policy service to assist with the development of their board policies for fixed assets. The policies developed by TASB for these districts generally include a definition of fixed assets and locally defined assets. Locally defined assets are those costing less than \$5,000 that the district tracks for accountability purposes. The policies also include requirements for annual inventories of fixed assets and designate responsibility for the safekeeping of fixed assets. These local policies are designed to meet the needs of the individual school districts.

Recommendation 38:

Adopt a board policy that defines the value of fixed assets that should be capitalized, specifies the depreciation method that should be used and assigns responsibility for safeguarding fixed assets.

The district should have a policy that defines fixed assets and specifies the depreciation method the district will use in the implementation of GASB 34. These two items are required to be disclosed in the annual financial statements and should reflect board policy. The district should use the \$5,000 limit for the capitalization threshold.

The policy should assign responsibility to the school principals and department heads for all assets in their custody. The policy should also address the consequences for not safeguarding the assets in their custody.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The board directs the superintendent to develop a policy that defines fixed assets, establishes a depreciation method for fixed assets and assigns responsibility for assets of the district.	April 2003
2.	The superintendent meets with the chief operations officer, director of Finance and Budget and the senior purchasing coordinator to determine the appropriate threshold for capitalizing fixed assets in the fixed asset account group, the method for depreciating assets in the fixed asset account group and the appropriate threshold for locally defined assets.	May 2003
3.	The superintendent meets with central and school administrators to discuss and determine the appropriate level to assign responsibility for the district's assets.	May 2003
4.	The superintendent contacts TASB policy services for assistance in developing a policy for the district's assets.	June 2003
5.	The superintendent presents the policy to the board for review and consideration and revises the policy, if necessary.	July 2003
6.	The superintendent presents the policy to the board for approval and receives approval.	August 2003
7.	The superintendent distributes the policy and directs its implementation.	August 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 6

ASSET AND RISK MANAGEMENT

D. Bond Issuance and Indebtedness

Bonds are contractual representations that a debt is owed by one party, the issuer, to one or more other parties, the investors. Bonds may be secured by lien on personal or real property or may be unsecured. The bond indenture, the contract between the issuer and the investors, specifies the maturity date, interest payments, denominations of principal, call and/or conversion provisions, security, the trustee, repayment plans such as a bond sinking fund and special provisions. An effective bond management program ensures that the outstanding bonds pay the lowest rate possible and that the district complies with bond covenants, including restrictions on how bond funds can be used and instructions for how the bonds will be repaid.

In order to realize interest savings or to reorganize the debt structure of the district, GPISD has issued several series of bonds to build facilities in the district and to refund prior bond issues. The next opportunity to refund a bond issue on its call date is August 2006. The district has also issued Qualified Zone Academy Bonds (QZABs) to renovate one of the schools in the district. The district does not have any other outstanding debt.

Exhibit 6-16 presents the bond series, original issue, interest rate, maturity and amount outstanding for each bond.

Exhibit 6-16
GPISD Outstanding Bond Issues
September 2002

Bond Series	Original Issue Amount	Interest Rate	Final Maturity	Amount Outstanding
Unlimited Tax School Building Bonds Series 1993	\$14,384,106	2.6 to 5.15	2003	\$509,106
Unlimited Tax School Building Bonds Series 1995	\$12,000,000	2.6 to 6.9	2016	\$12,000,000
Unlimited Tax School Building and Refunding Bonds Series 1996	\$40,054,475	4.4 to 6.425	2031	\$39,554,475

Unlimited Tax School Building Bonds Series 1998	\$13,000,000	5.0 to 8.0	2031	\$12,485,000
Unlimited Tax School Building Bonds Series 1998	\$23,000,000	4.75 to 6.25	2031	\$19,970,000
Unlimited Tax School Building Bonds Series 2000.	\$25,000,000	5.5 to 7.0	2021	\$24,475,000
Unlimited Tax School Building and Refunding Bonds Series 2001	\$44,729,418	3.25 to 5.5	2026	\$44,039,418
Unlimited Tax School Building and Refunding Bonds Series 2002	\$29,426,437	3.0 to 5.75	2032	\$29,426,437
Qualified Zone Academy Bonds	\$8,000,000	6.28%*	2016	\$8,000,000
	\$209,594,436			\$190,459,436

Source: GPISD Annual External Audit August 31, 2001; GPISD Debt Service Schedules, September 2002.

* This is the credit rate on the QZABs.

The district's bonds have an underlying rating of A1 with Moody's Investors Service and an AA-rating from Fitch Ratings. Fitch upgraded the district's rating in August 2002 from A+ to AA-. Fitch attributed its upgrade to solid financial performance and management, anticipated increase in liquidity, limited future debt needs, the stable but concentrated economy of the district and unique additional operations and maintenance tax rate flexibility. All the bonds carry a higher rating in the market due to their guarantee by the Texas Permanent School Fund. The district has \$25 million in authorized but not yet issued bonds from the 1999 bond referendum for \$120 million. This provides the district with flexibility in meeting its future needs without having to return to the voters for approval.

The district uses Arbitrage Compliance Specialists to calculate arbitrage on the outstanding bond issues to ensure compliance with the federal regulations. Arbitrage occurs when the district sells bonds, invests the funds from them at a higher rate of interest and makes a profit. The federal government regulates the profit a district can make from this practice.

FINDING

The district saved money using innovative financing to renovate a school. The district issued \$8 million in QZABs in 2002. In 1997, Congress created the QZABs to help schools raise funds to renovate and repair buildings, invest in equipment and up-to-date technology, develop challenging curricula and train quality teachers.

QZABs are retired using maintenance and operations (M&O) taxes instead of interest and sinking (I&S) taxes. As such, they are considered a time warrant under Texas law and must meet the requirements under Texas Education Code section 45.103. The proceeds from the QZABs must be used for renovation or repair of a classroom facility or to purchase equipment to enhance an academic program.

School districts usually fund large projects, like building renovation or construction, through tax-exempt bonds. School districts must then pay a substantial amount of interest on this debt. QZABs reduce the burden of interest payments by giving financial institutions holding the bonds a tax credit in lieu of interest. The school district must still pay back the amount of money it initially borrowed, but does not have to pay any interest and the district generally saves about half the cost of renovating a school. The credit rate for QZABs sold on a given day is set by the Treasury Department.

Each state is allotted an amount of money its districts may borrow using QZABs. Texas received an allocation of \$36 million for 2002 and districts were limited to a maximum amount of \$8 million. A qualified district is located in an Empowerment Zone or Enterprise Community or where at least 35 percent of its students are eligible for free or reduced-price school lunch. The two alternative criteria allow both rural and urban districts serving poor children to benefit from QZABs. In addition, a qualified district must develop a partnership with a business or private entity that must make a contribution to the district worth at least 10 percent of the money borrowed using the QZAB. These contributions can take the form of cash; goods, including equipment and technology; services, including help developing curriculum or using technology; or internships or field trips that provide opportunities for students to learn outside a traditional classroom setting.

The business or other private entity does not simply make a donation to the school. The school and the business become partners to create a plan for improving student education. The GPISD Education Foundation partnered with GPISD for the QZABs.

The QZABs must be paid off at the end of 14 years in a single lump sum payment. GPISD has funded the retirement of the QZABs through an investment contract with Bank One. The investment contract is structured so that GPISD makes annual payments of \$438,560 for 14 years and the proceeds of the contract will pay off the QZABs. This equates to GPISD receiving \$8 million today and paying \$6.1 million over 14 years to retire the debt.

COMMENDATION

GPISD used innovative funding mechanisms to obtain funds to renovate a school with an actual repayment amount estimated to be less than the amount borrowed.

Chapter 7

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

This chapter reviews the Galena Park Independent School District (GPISD) financial management functions in the following sections:

- A. Organization, Management and Staffing
- B. Planning and Budgeting
- C. Accounting and Internal Control
- D. Internal and External Auditing
- E. Tax Collection

School districts must practice sound financial management to maximize limited resources and plan for future needs. Effective financial management ensures that internal controls are in place and operating as intended, technology is maximized to increase productivity and reports are prepared timely and accurately.

BACKGROUND

School districts' financial operations must comply with federal, state and local laws and regulations. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) requires districts' financial operations to follow the requirements of the *Financial Accountability System Resource Guide* (FASRG). The FASRG combines requirements for financial management from a variety of sources into one guide for Texas school districts.

Texas school districts receive revenue from three primary sources: local sources, state funding and federal programs. Property taxes provide the primary local source of funds for most school districts. GPISD levies property taxes composed of a maintenance and operations (M&O) component and an interest and sinking (I&S) component used for debt service payments.

GPISD receives state funding based on a formula approved by the Legislature. In general, the funding is based on the number of district students in average daily attendance (ADA). The formula contains additional funding for programs to benefit students with special needs. GPISD also receives state funding from the Instructional Facilities Allotment (IFA) to pay a portion of the debt service payments on the district's bonded debt. The state IFA program assists property-poor school districts with facility upgrades and acquisition. GPISD's 2002-03 budget listed 53.9 percent of its revenue from state sources.

The district receives federal funds for a variety of student programs. TEA requires districts to budget the food service program revenues they receive. The district also budgets the indirect cost of federal program revenues in the general fund. GPISD projected 4.2 percent of its 2002-03 budget revenue from federal sources. Since 1998-99, GPISD's local revenues have increased by 16.8 percent and state revenues have increased by 46 percent. The state revenues increase can be attributed to an increase in student population and the change in state funding for debt service. **Exhibit 7-1** presents GPISD revenues for all funds for the period from 1998-99 through 2002-03.

Exhibit 7-1
GPISD Revenues as a Percentage of Total Revenues
1998-99 through 2002-03

Source of Funds	1998-99 Actual	1999-2000 Actual	2000-01 Actual	2001-02 Budget	2002-03 Budget	Percent Change From 1998-99
Local	\$50,510,115	\$50,865,996	\$54,151,142	\$56,536,996	\$58,993,760	16.8%
State	\$51,900,554	\$61,558,040	\$69,473,594	\$69,392,896	\$75,772,530	46.0%
Federal	\$8,675,730	\$10,159,672	\$12,075,274	\$5,247,569	\$5,921,579	(31.7%)
Total	\$111,086,399	\$122,583,708	\$135,700,010	\$131,177,461	\$140,687,869	26.6%

Source: TEA, Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS), 1998-99 through 2001-02; GPISD Finance and Budget Department.

One way to ascertain the effectiveness of financial management is to compare the district with peer districts. GPISD selected Aldine, Goose Creek Consolidated, Humble and Pasadena ISDs as peer districts. **Exhibit 7-2** compares the budgets of GPISD and its peer districts based on the source of funds.

Exhibit 7-2
Revenue Sources
GPISD and Peer Districts
2001-02

District	Local	Percent of Total	State	Percent of Total	Federal	Percent of Total
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Goose Creek Consolidated	\$117,838,920	89.7%	\$8,990,358	6.8%	\$4,590,000	3.5%
Humble	\$106,363,734	61.4%	\$64,471,808	37.2%	\$2,276,077	1.3%
GPISD	\$56,536,996	43.1%	\$69,392,896	52.9%	\$5,247,569	4.0%
Aldine	\$138,678,027	40.2%	\$205,318,087	59.5%	\$1,150,000	0.3%
Pasadena	\$99,565,911	39.6%	\$141,694,657	56.3%	\$10,220,000	4.1%

Source: TEA, Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS), 2001-02.

Exhibit 7-3 presents budgeted expenditure information as a percent of total for GPISD and the peer districts by object code description for 2001-02. Object codes are accounting categories used to accumulate and organize financial data to aid in analysis. As the object code breakdown in **Exhibit 7-3** shows, compared to the peer districts GPISD ranks second lowest for payroll costs and highest for contracted services.

Exhibit 7-3
Budgeted Expenditures for
All Budgeted Funds by Object Code Description
GPISD and Peer Districts
2001-02

Object Code	Goose Creek Consolidated	GPISD	Humble	Aldine	Pasadena
Payroll	68.1%	74.5%	75.1%	78.0%	81.5%
Contracted Services	9.3%	9.8%	5.7%	6.4%	7.0%
Supplies	5.8%	5.4%	4.1%	6.9%	7.3%
Other Operating	2.2%	1.9%	2.1%	1.0%	1.5%
Debt Service	11.3%	7.4%	12.3%	5.7%	1.0%
Capital Outlay	3.4%	1.0%	0.8%	2.0%	1.7%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2001-02.

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

Chapter 1 of the FASRG mandates that school districts use functional codes to track expenditures for different school district operations. **Exhibit 7-4** presents budgeted expenditures for all budgeted funds by function for GPISD and peer districts as a percentage of total budgeted expenditures.

GPISD budgets a larger percentage of expenditures on instructional leadership and security and monitoring services than any of the peer districts. GPISD and Goose Creek CISD budget the highest percentage of expenditures for general administration. Of all the peers, GPISD budgets the lowest percentage of funds for instructional resources and ranks second highest in percentage of funds budgeted for curriculum and staff development. GPISD and Pasadena ISD budget the second highest percentage for plant maintenance and operations.

Exhibit 7-4
All Budgeted Funds
Functional Expenditures as a Percentage of Total Expenditures
GPISD and Peer Districts
2001-02

Function	Goose Creek Consolidated	Humble	GPISD	Aldine	Pasadena
Instruction (11)	45.6%	51.4%	51.7%	54.4%	58.3%
Instructional Resources (12)	1.4%	1.5%	1.3%	1.4%	1.8%
Curriculum and Staff Development (13)	0.8%	1.4%	1.1%	0.4%	0.9%
Instructional Leadership (21)	1.3%	0.8%	1.8%	1.4%	1.5%
School Leadership (23)	4.7%	5.0%	5.4%	6.1%	5.6%
Guidance and Counseling (31)	3.3%	3.9%	2.9%	3.7%	2.6%
Social Work Services (32)	0.4%	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%
Health Services (33)	0.7%	0.9%	0.7%	0.9%	1.0%
Student Transportation (34)	3.2%	2.6%	3.0%	5.1%	2.0%
Food Services (35)	5.3%	4.0%	5.5%	5.3%	6.0%
Co-/Extracurricular Activities (36)	1.9%	1.6%	1.8%	1.0%	1.6%
General Administration (41)	3.7%	2.9%	3.7%	2.8%	2.7%
Plant Maintenance/Operations (51)	12.6%	8.8%	11.6%	8.6%	11.6%

Security and Monitoring Services (52)	1.0%	0.4%	1.1%	0.5%	0.8%
Data Processing Services (53)	0.9%	0.7%	0.6%	1.7%	1.1%
Community Services (61)	0.0%	0.3%	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%
Debt Service (71)	11.3%	12.3%	7.4%	5.7%	1.0%
Facility Acquisition (81)	2.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.9%	1.0%
Payments to JJAEP (95)	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%	0.4%
Payments to TIF (97)	0.0%	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Total	100.2%	99.9%	99.9%	100.1%	100.1%

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 2001-02.

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

Exhibit 7-5 presents budget data in the AEIS format, and compares GPISD budgeted expenditures and percent of total budgeted in each function to the state budget. The AEIS format combines the operating expenditures in several functional categories for reporting purposes, such as guidance and counseling, social work services and health services reported as support services. The AEIS format considers debt services and capital outlay as non-operational expenditures and reports these expenditures for all functions in the "other" category. Other functional categories not specifically listed in **Exhibit 7-5** are also included in the "other" category. GPISD budgeted less than 1 percent more than the state average for instruction and 1.4 percent more for plant maintenance and operations. GPISD budgeted 2.2 percent less than the state average in the "other" category.

Exhibit 7-5
All Budgeted Funds - AEIS Format
Functional Expenditures as a Percentage of Total Expenditures
GPISD and State Averages
2001-02

Function	GPISD		State		Difference From State
	2001-02 Budget	Percent Of Total	2001-02 Budget	Percent Of Total	
Instruction (11,95)	\$67,588,476	51.6%	\$14,631,385,818	51.0%	0.6%

Instructional-Related Services (12,13)	\$3,063,097	2.3%	\$772,745,118	2.7%	(0.4%)
Instructional Leadership (21)	\$2,317,818	1.8%	\$341,707,491	1.2%	0.6%
School Leadership (23)	\$7,062,503	5.4%	\$1,503,291,919	5.2%	0.1%
Support Services-Student (31,32,33)	\$4,817,796	3.7%	\$1,151,876,566	4.0%	(0.3%)
Student Transportation (34)	\$3,509,048	2.7%	\$745,071,074	2.6%	0.1%
Food Services (35)	\$7,073,174	5.4%	\$1,379,203,123	4.8%	0.6%
Co-curricular/ Extracurricular Activities (36)	\$2,220,172	1.7%	\$642,534,469	2.2%	(0.5%)
Central Administration (41)	\$4,799,914	3.7%	\$1,017,293,427	3.5%	0.1%
Plant Maintenance and Operations (51)	\$15,043,007	11.5%	\$2,899,134,491	10.1%	1.4%
Security and Monitoring Services (52)	\$1,469,353	1.1%	\$171,833,893	0.6%	0.5%
Data Processing Services (53)	\$769,545	0.6%	\$314,553,132	1.1%	(0.5%)
Other*	\$11,228,995	8.6%	\$3,097,208,226	10.8%	(2.2%)
Total Budgeted Expenditures	\$130,962,898	100.0%	\$28,667,818,747	100.0%	0.0%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2001-02.

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding.

**Other includes any operating expenditures not listed above and all non-operational expenditures such as debt services, capital outlay and community and parental involvement services.*

Chapter 7

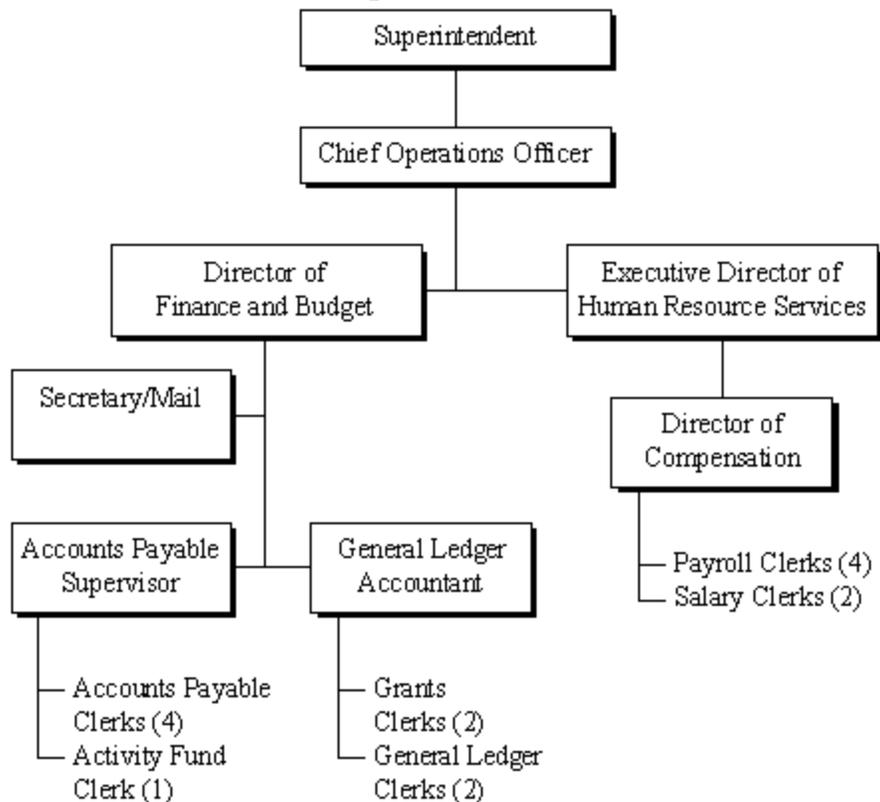
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

A. Organization, Management and Staffing

To fulfill their primary purpose of providing a free and appropriate education for all district students, school districts must have effective financial management. Effective financial management uses strong systems of internal control that include checks and balances on all transactions and proper staffing.

In GPISD, the chief operations officer oversees financial management functions. Separate units managed by the executive director of Human Resource Services and the director of Finance and Budget perform the financial functions. The executive director of Human Resource Services also administers risk management and benefits. **Exhibit 7-6** presents GPISD's organization of financial management functions.

Exhibit 7-6
GPISD Financial Management Organization
September 2002



Source: GPISD, director of Finance and Budget and director of Compensation.

FINDING

The district does not appropriately segregate duties between the payroll and human resource functions. The same department that hires employees and determines salary level also pays employees. The director of Compensation, who oversees the payroll function, reports to the executive director of Human Resource Services. The chief operations officer said from an efficiency and employee satisfaction standpoint, aligning the payroll function with the human resource function works very well. The executive director of Human Resource Services said an employee can call one office and have all payroll questions answered by one individual.

Segregation of duties provides primary internal controls in accounting and finance. Internal controls supply checks and balances to ensure that errors, misstatements and wrongdoing will be detected. If a single department controls a process from start to finish, the risk of errors and fraudulent activities increases. Although the review team did not find any errors or irregularities, by having one department control employment and payroll increases the district's potential risk.

Human Resource Services divides personnel functions into components supervised by a director-level administrator. The executive director of Human Resource Services said both departments operate efficiently, effectively and have consistently been valued for both their productivity and integrity. Although the executive director of Human Resources said the district's software security system decreases the risks associated with the lack of segregation of duties, the district did not provide any information to show other internal controls that mitigate this internal control weakness.

Many districts segregate the payroll function from the human resource function. All of GPISD's peers, Goose Creek Consolidated, Pasadena, Humble and Aldine ISDs have the payroll function aligned with the finance function. In Waco ISD, payroll and human resource functions are segregated. The human resource functions hire employees, calculate salary, input employee information into the system and forward the appropriate paperwork to the payroll function. The payroll function verifies the calculation of the pay information and, upon receipt of all required documentation, activates and pays the employees. This ensures the district has appropriate controls over its biggest expenditure.

Recommendation 39:

Segregate the payroll and human resource functions to improve internal controls over payroll.

The director of Compensation and the four payroll clerks should report to the director of Finance and Budget. The two salary clerks should report to the Human Resource Services Department. This will segregate the duties of setting, calculating and entering salary information from the duties of activating and paying employees. This segregation of duties will improve the internal controls over the payroll function.

The district should revise the job descriptions of the director of Finance and Budget and the director of Compensation to reflect the changes in responsibility and reporting relationships. The district will also need to revise the administrative procedures manual for the business functions to remove human resource functions, such as job reclassification procedures, from the manual.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the chief operations officer to move the payroll function to the Finance and Budget Department and revise the appropriate job descriptions.	May 2003
2.	The chief operations officer moves the oversight of payroll to the director of Finance and Budget and prepares revised job descriptions for the positions affected for the superintendent's review and approval.	June 2003
3.	The superintendent approves the revised job descriptions and reorganization of the payroll function.	July 2003
4.	The director of Finance and Budget begins oversight of the payroll function and revises the procedures manual to eliminate the human resource functions.	July 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 7

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

B. Planning and Budgeting

A school district's annual budget represents planned expenditures for the year and provides the basis for determining the district tax rate. The budget process should be methodical and include phases for development, presentation and adoption.

First, the district must estimate its revenues to determine available funds for the budget year. School districts receive revenues from the federal government, state government and local taxpayers. Federal revenues can fluctuate significantly based on changes in the federal budget, and districts must take great care to ensure that necessary funds will be available. State revenues are based on factors estimated annually. The most critical of these factors involve student attendance. A district must not only estimate the number of students, but also the type of students since the state formula provides different amounts of funding for students with special needs. The district must also appropriately estimate appraised property values to determine funding from the local taxpayers. The GPISD budget process includes these processes.

Next, the district estimates its expenditures for the budget year. Although the Texas Education Code (TEC) states that the superintendent is responsible for preparing the budget, the process should include opportunities for staff and community input. If a district uses a per-pupil allocation process for staffing, supplies and other budgeted expenditures, it must involve the site-based decision-making (SBDM) committee at each school to determine how those allocations are used. During the development process, a district also must account for the priorities established in the campus improvement plans and the district improvement plan. All other departments must establish needs based on their provided services. GPISD uses a per-pupil allocation process and ties the budget to the planning process.

After compiling this information, the superintendent typically presents the preliminary budget to the administration and board for review. If estimated revenues do not cover estimated expenditures, the superintendent should provide options for increasing revenue, reducing expenses or using a portion of the undesignated fund balance to achieve a balanced budget. A district should use the fund balance only for one-time expenditures, such as capital improvements, and not to fund continuing expenditures, such as raises for employees. The presentation phase also should include opportunities for district employees input. The final

presentation phase should allow public input. The TEC requires public budget hearings, and only after the hearing can a board adopt its budget.

The final step in the budget process is the adoption of the budget, and it occurs before districts can spend funds. Once adopted, the budget becomes the legal authority for the district to make expenditures. The budget controls expenditures, and expenditures cannot exceed the budget. If an expenditure is going to exceed the budget, the administration must prepare, present and have a budget amendment adopted by the board before the expenditure is made.

Each year, GPISD begins its budget process with a board discussion regarding the administration's major initiatives. With the board's input, the district refines its initiatives to become the guide for the budget's development. The district sets the budget calendar at the initial meeting, conducting an April board meeting on staffing and compensation and a June meeting on the general budget.

The district estimates revenue budgets in January, basing state revenue on enrollment projections adjusted to represent the expected average daily attendance (ADA). The district initially bases tax revenue on current year values and adjusts assessed values for the next year as information becomes available during the budget process.

GPISD uses a per-pupil allocation for school funding. The high schools receive \$205 to \$219, the middle schools \$130, the sixth grade center \$124 and the elementary schools \$100 for each expected unit of ADA. The schools allocate these discretionary funds to campus improvement plan priorities and school needs. Schools may request increased allocations that the district will review based on its overall priorities and fund availability. A formula based on the number of students projected to attend each school determines the school staffing. Schools can also receive discretionary personnel units to meet specific needs.

GPISD provides departments an allocation equal to the budget and directs the departments to reduce or maintain the budget. If the district has additional funds available, the departments prepare above-allocation requests. GPISD gives program managers of funds earmarked for specific populations the funds to be distributed to the schools. After funding districtwide programs, GPISD allocates these funds based on the number of students served at the schools.

The district conducts a refresher course on its finance software for all budget managers annually. Each school and department manager inputs their budget into the district finance software system based on the allocation received. The process, which begins at the end of February or

the first of March, takes approximately 30 days. The Budget and Finance Department reviews the budgets input by managers to ensure that allocations given were not exceeded and for appropriate coding. Because the districts uses financial software, managers have access to the budget on September 1 and do not have to wait for the budget to be input in the financial system after board approval.

The district reviews above-allocation requests in March or April and enters approved requests into the system. The budget is summarized and prepared for presentation to the board in June. The district presents a highly summarized budget to the board that includes comparisons to the prior year's budget. The board conducts workshops as appropriate. The final proposed budget is presented for board approval in August.

The district amends the budget monthly as necessary. The district's Finance and Budget Department assists schools and departments in managing their budgets by approving amendments of less than \$5,000 as long as in the aggregate the functional expenditure budget is not exceeded. Amendments are entered in a spreadsheet and presented to the board for approval at its next meeting. Any amendment exceeding \$5,000 is presented individually to the board for approval. This process prevents budget amendments from hindering schools and departments in providing necessary goods and services and ensures that district expenditures do not exceed adopted functional budgets.

FINDING

GPISD monitors and analyzes state funding to ensure it receives the maximum funding available. The director of Finance and Budget conducts regular reviews and analyses of the district's financial position, including state funding, tax collections and expenditures. The review determines if budgeted revenues and cash flows are maximized and compares actual revenues and expenditures to the budget.

During this review, the director of Budget and Finance discovered that the state used an incorrect refined ADA number in the Legislative Planning Estimate (LPE) that determines the district funds for 2002-03. The LPE determines the cash flow the district receives from the state and, as a result of the change, the district will receive an additional \$3 million in 2002-03. This additional funding will prevent the district from being significantly underpaid during 2002-03 and will allow the district to use the cash during 2002-03 instead of receiving the cash in September 2003.

The director of Finance and Budget also found that the state did not carry forward the reduction in property value as a result of the utility deregulation under Senate Bill 7. The reduction in property value

increases the district's tax effort and the amount of funding received from the state. TEA notified the district of the change in property value on November 15, 2002. The recalculated change in property value will provide the district an additional \$195,216 in state revenue for 2001-02 in a lump-sum payment. The district also will receive additional revenue for 2002-03, but has not yet been notified of the amount.

Effective financial management includes reviewing and analyzing the underlying factors that affect district funding. These regular reviews ensure that the district receives and earns appropriate state funding to increase GPISD's cash flow for 2002-03.

COMMENDATION

GPISD monitors and analyzes state funding in detail on a regular basis and has received additional cash flow as a result.

Chapter 7

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

C. Accounting and Internal Control

A district's accounting and payroll functions are critical to maintaining a solid financial foundation. Administrators and the board require accurate, timely financial reports for decision-making. Since payroll represents the largest expenditure in a district's budget, it must be accurate. Internal controls safeguard a district's assets from misappropriation.

GPISD uses Delta Management Systems, Inc. (DMS) software to maintain its financial records. This comprehensive software provides the information to manage the district's finances, including the general ledger, subsidiary ledgers and comparative financial reports for the period and year-to-date. The district moved its fixed asset subsidiary ledger from the DMS software to a stand-alone system. The software includes an encumbrance module the district uses to ensure expenditures do not exceed the budget. This module places a hold on budgeted funds as soon as a purchase order is entered and will not accept the purchase order if sufficient funds are not available.

GPISD supplies financial information online for all principals, directors and program managers. The DMS software produces the information to report required financial information to the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS), which is required by the TEC Section 42.006. The system also accounts for revenues and expenditures based on the fund, function, object, cost center and program intent codes described in the FASRG.

The Finance and Budget Department prepares and presents quarterly financial reports to the board. The financial statements provide information on the adopted budget, amended budget, year-to-date revenues, year-to-date expenditures, percent of revenue received or budgeted funds expended and a comparison to the same period in the previous year. The financial statements also provide information on transfers between funds and the change in fund balance through the end of the reporting period. In addition, the financial statements for the general fund present the administrative cost ratio for the district and the standard administrative cost ratio established by TEA. The financial statements cover the general fund; federal, state and local grant funds; student nutrition fund; debt service fund; seven capital project funds; insurance fund; and the Lynn Murray scholarship fund.

The district has prepared for the implementation of Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Statement 34. GASB issues accounting and financial reporting rules for state and local governments throughout the United States. GASB statement 34, issued June 1999, requires capital assets to be reported after depreciation in the financial statements. TEA required all school districts to implement GASB 34 for the year that ended in 2002. The GPISD director of Finance and Budget attended GASB 34 training sessions and met with the external auditor in preparation of implementation. Although the district did not use the recommended \$5,000 threshold for fixed assets, the district removed fixed assets valued less than \$1,000 from the accounting records in the general fixed asset account group during 2000-01.

The district has segregated the accounts payable function from other accounting functions. Controls over manual checks include a check log, approval process, controlled access to the check stock and controlled access to the key for the check signing machine. In February 2002, a mailing from the Accounts Payable supervisor required all vendors to provide the district with an IRS Form W-9 with the vendor's tax identification number. At the same time, the Accounts Payable supervisor reiterated to the vendors the district's purchasing policies concerning purchase orders and the district's inability to pay for items not supported by a purchase order.

GPISD has centralized its activity funds into one bank account and all revenues and expenditures are accounted for in the DMS software. Although the district updates its comprehensive activity fund manual on a periodic basis, it is currently revising the manual. The manual defines activity funds as funds received and held by the school, as trustee, to promote the general welfare of the school as well as the educational development and morale of all students. The manual divides activity funds into three distinct types of funds: student funds, faculty/staff funds and district funds. The manual explains how to appropriately charge revenues and expenditures to each of these fund types and provides specific examples of allowable and unallowable expenditures.

Student funds include funds collected from students for club and classroom dues and various school-approved fundraising activities. Schools expend these funds for the benefit of the students either through the students' clubs, class level or the school as a whole. Faculty/staff funds are collected through the efforts of the faculty and staff, including faculty and staff vending machines. The principal, faculty and staff representatives determine how to spend these funds for the benefit of the faculty and staff members or for the benefit of others. District funds are collected by the school on behalf of the central office or funds furnished to

the schools by the central office. The central office decides how to expend these funds.

The activity funds must follow the same procedures as other district funds, including competitive bidding requirements. The chief operations officer must approve all contracts or agreements, and the director of Finance and Budget must approve all transfers of the funds between accounts. An accounts payable clerk reconciles the activity funds. The activity funds manual procedures present internal controls to ensure schools and the district use activity funds for the appropriate purpose.

The general ledger accountant oversees the accounting and reporting related to federal grants. The general ledger accountant developed a spreadsheet to assist budget managers in preparing their budgets. The spreadsheet calculates benefits associated with salaries paid from the grant funds. The ledger accountant uses the spreadsheet to ensure all costs associated with employees paid from these funds are budgeted. The accountant monitors these accounts throughout the year to ensure any changes in payroll budgets appropriately reflect the related benefits. This internal control ensures the district does not overspend grant funds.

The general ledger accountant also establishes all new account codes in the general ledger. The accountant reviews requests for new account codes to ensure compliance with the FASRG. The general ledger accountant informs the appropriate budget manager of the new account code and expenditures that should be charged to it. This process acts as both an internal control to ensure proper reporting to TEA and the federal government and as an educational process for the budget managers.

FINDING

GPISD has a comprehensive and up-to-date administrative procedures manual for district business functions. The manual contains board policies related to each subject; administrative procedures; and forms and instructions for travel, fixed assets, payroll and other areas. The manual includes detailed instructions on how to use the district's financial software to prepare the budget and review financial information. The manual also contains the accounting code structure with detailed descriptions from the FASRG on the appropriate accounts to use.

The manual, which reflects actual district operating procedures, meets several elements of the Government Finance Officers Association's (GFOA) recommended practices. It also serves as a training guide for new employees and contains a local board policy about the level of fund balance the district should maintain. The manual includes 22 sections relating to topics such as budget, purchasing, accounts payable, payroll,

fixed assets, donations, cash collection, textbooks and school facilities use. The Tax Office section of the manual includes detailed instructions on how to perform duties from posting bankruptcy checks to handling returned tax statements.

The district revises the procedures manual on a periodic basis. In 2002, GPISD hired a consultant to help convert the manual into electronic format. Once the district completes a final review and revisions to the manual, it intends to publish the manual on the district's Web site.

COMMENDATION

GPISD has a comprehensive and up-to-date administrative procedures manual for its business functions.

FINDING

The district reconciles bank statements manually and does not post all entries from the reconciliations in a timely manner. Because the district reconciles the bank statements without using the district's financial software or the depository bank, the process is time consuming. A clerk develops an outstanding check list by manually comparing each check written in the month to the checks that cleared the bank. Although entries for interest and bank charges are posted as a result of the reconciliation process, not all items are posted. Several reconciling items from October 2001 remained on the July 2002 bank reconciliation.

In 2001-02, the district generated more than 33,000 checks, approximately 2,750 checks each month. One clerk reconciles the payroll and accounts payable bank accounts, which clear a majority of the checks each month. Although the reconciliations are performed in a timely manner, the process is extremely time consuming.

The clerk matches the check number and amount on the check register to the bank statement. The clerk researches each check that posted to the bank without a check number and each check that posted to the bank at an amount different than the check register. The clerk matches all items that cleared the bank from prior months to the outstanding check list for the last reconciliation. Finally, the clerk enters all the checks that did not clear the bank in a spreadsheet to develop the outstanding check list. The outstanding check list for the general operating fund in July numbered six pages.

After the clerk develops the outstanding check list, the clerk records all postings to the bank statements in the district's accounting system. For any items not posted, such as interest and service charges, the clerk develops a

journal entry for approval and posting to the district's general ledger. However, some items from the preceding October remained on the July bank account reconciliation and were not posted until August.

The district agrees the bank reconciliation process should be fully automated and intends to use the depository bank's positive pay system to assist in the bank reconciliation process once it is available. The district anticipates the system will be available in January 2003. Positive pay performs a daily reconciliation of the district's data file of checks issued compared to the bank's data file of checks paid. The district's data file of checks consists of an electronic list of checks issued including the check amount submitted to the bank. The bank rejects any checks not matching the district's data file. The bank notifies the district on a daily basis of the rejected checks. This process reduces the risk of losses due to fraud and the time necessary to reconcile the bank statements.

Many districts automate the bank reconciliation process to reduce the time and effort required to reconcile the accounts. In these districts, the bank sends the district an electronic list of all the checks that cleared the bank and the district uploads the information into its financial software. The software produces an outstanding check list for the account and an exceptions list for checks posted at an amount different than the check register or without a check number. The district researches these items, ensures the deposits and other credits were posted and ensures the charges and other debits were posted. These districts find they are able to use their limited human resources more efficiently by automating the bank reconciliation process.

Recommendation 40:

Automate the bank reconciliation process and post all related entries monthly.

GPISD should automate the reconciliation process for its most active accounts: accounts payable and payroll. During the first month that the district uses the automated system, the clerk should reconcile the accounts manually to ensure the process works appropriately and then check the system periodically.

Implementing this reconciliation will provide the clerk with additional time to perform other duties, including preparing journal entries for all reconciling items and having them posted each month. The district's financial software has the capability to accept the electronic files and prepare the outstanding check list.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The chief operations officer directs the director of Finance and Budget to automate the bank reconciliation process.	April 2003
2.	The director of Finance and Budget contacts the bank and requests and receives the cleared check list in an electronic format beginning with the June bank account statements.	May 2003
3.	The director of Finance and Budget has the Technology Department upload the electronic file and the system generates the outstanding check list and the clerk reconciles the bank accounts.	July 2003 and Monthly
4.	The director of Finance and Budget reviews the manual outstanding check list for June's bank statements and the automated outstanding check list to ensure the automated process works appropriately.	August 2003 and Annually

FISCAL IMPACT

The fiscal impact of this recommendation is an annual cost of \$2,916, which was calculated by multiplying the bank's monthly service charge for electronic check lists times the number of months (\$243 x 12). The monthly service charge is calculated based on the depository agreement's charges for monthly maintenance of \$25 for each account and serial sort and item charges of 7 cents times the average number of checks written each month $[(\$25 \times 2 + (2,750 \times \$0.07 = \$193) = \$243 \times 12 = \$2,916]$.

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Automate the bank reconciliation process and post all related entries monthly.	(\$2,916)	(\$2,916)	(\$2,916)	(\$2,916)	(\$2,916)

FINDING

The district's time reporting system is cumbersome and requires unnecessary paperwork from departments. The individual departments and schools receive absent-from-duty reports and time sheets from employees. Schools summarize information on a spreadsheet, which is sent to payroll with the absent-from-duty reports attached. The schools and departments maintain the original time sheets.

The district, which pays employees twice a month, offers employees who do not work the entire year the option of being paid over 12 months. For those employees who choose the 24 pay option, payment is calculated by multiplying the scheduled hours a day times the rate of pay times the number of days scheduled and dividing the result by 24. Unless the

employee is absent or works more hours than scheduled, this figure is the gross pay that the employee receives each of the 24 pay periods. Payroll receives the spreadsheets and absence reports and enters the information into the payroll system. The employees' gross wages for that period are adjusted based on the information received.

During the summer months, the departments must send a spreadsheet for the employees even though they are not working. The director of Student Nutrition Services said that the payroll sheets submitted do not accurately reflect the hours worked since the scheduled hours for the year are reported throughout the entire year. This paperwork is unnecessary since there are no absences and no hours worked above the scheduled hours. The director of Compensation said that the employees on 24 pay periods would receive their normal check if nothing was reported during the summer months.

The district pays employees who choose to be paid over the months they work for actual hours worked each pay period. The schools and departments send a separate spreadsheet for these employees. Time worked and absences are entered in the payroll system, which then generates the pay for the period. In addition to employees who have elected to be paid over the period they work, summary time sheets include student workers and crossing guards.

The district is conducting a pilot program on the Kronos time management and reporting system. The district installed a time clock at each location and a remote time recorder in the cafeterias. Employees present an identification card to the system when they arrive and depart from work. The Kronos information is suppose to upload electronically to the payroll system, automatically calculating employee pay. The district intends to implement the system for transportation, manual trades, custodial, cafeteria and other hourly employees by the end of 2002-03. The district has encountered difficulties in uploading the information from Kronos to the payroll system during the pilot program.

Time management and reporting systems can provide a significant benefit to districts. These systems provide an accurate record of employee time and an extensive array of reports to help the districts analyze labor costs. Many districts extend the time reporting systems use beyond the hourly employees to clerical, professional and administrative employees. This provides the district with an accounting for all employees time and reduces the risk of employees being paid for time not worked. For example, Webb Consolidated ISD requires all employees to record their arrival and departure. This provides the district with a record of the hours worked by custodians, food service workers, teachers, principals and

administrators, which ensures the district pays employees for time worked and absences are properly reported.

Recommendation 41:

Eliminate the requirement for schools and departments to submit timesheets for employees not working during the summer months.

If the Kronos time management system is not functional by June 2003, the district should eliminate the unnecessary time reporting spreadsheets in the summer months and require all departments and schools to report time for employees who actually work. If Kronos is working properly, the district should eliminate all unnecessary paperwork and submit only absent-from-duty reports to payroll, since the time management system will produce any reports necessary.

The district should consolidate the Kronos identification card with the district's ID badge so employees only have one card. Since all employees are required to wear the district ID badges, all employees can be added to the time management system. The district plans to put most employees on the Kronos system and have already purchased time recorders and badges.

The district should add classes of employees to the system in phases; hourly employees first, nonexempt employees second and exempt employees last. By including all employees on the time management system, the district can ensure that employees are paid appropriately for time worked and that absences are appropriately reported.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The chief operations officer directs the director of Compensation to discontinue the practice of completing time-reporting paperwork in the summer months.	April 2003
2.	The director of Compensation informs the school and departments they no longer have to submit the spreadsheets for employees not working in the summer months.	May 2003
3.	The schools and departments submit time reporting paperwork only for those employees actually working.	June 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 7

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

D. Internal and External Auditing

Internal auditing provides an independent appraisal function within a school district that evaluates the efficiency and effectiveness of the district's operations as well as compliance with laws, rules, regulations, policies and procedures. Internal audit also reviews district activities for efficient and effective operations. The internal and external audit functions complement each other and provide the district with a coordinated audit effort to ensure compliance and efficient and effective operations.

TEC Section 44.008 requires school districts to undergo an annual external audit by a certified public accountant. The scope of the external audit is financial and designed to provide reasonable assurance that the financial statements fairly present the district's financial condition. The external audit also reviews internal controls for material weaknesses and checks for compliance with laws, rules and regulations.

GPISD's auditor since 1993, Null-Lairson, Professional Corporation, performed GPISD's annual financial and compliance audit for the year ended August 31, 2001. The review team received copies of the audit reports for three years. All of the reports stated that the financial statements of the district, taken as a whole, fairly presented the financial condition of the district and that no material weaknesses in internal controls were found by the auditors. A material weakness is a condition in which the design or operation of one or more internal control components does not sufficiently reduce the risk of misstatements in material amounts or of errors going undetected.

FINDING

GPISD does not have a policy for competitive procurement of external audit services on a periodic basis. Although the district issues requests for proposals (RFPs) periodically and has solicited proposals for audit services three times in the last 10 years, no policy exists. The district issued the last request for proposals (RFP) in May 2002 for the annual audit of 2001-02. The bid process was open for 16 days. The district requested a one-year proposal, with an option to renew the agreement annually for the next three years.

The district received three responses to the 2002 RFP. The proposals ranged in cost from \$29,700 to \$54,800. The estimated hours for the highest and lowest proposals were 590 and 580, respectively. The

proposals were summarized and given to six employees to evaluate and score based on a point system. Although the chief operations officer is responsible for the annual financial and compliance audit, he did not participate in the evaluation process. The chief operations officer said he distanced himself from the process to avoid the appearance of a conflict of interest since he had voted on the auditor's contract in prior years as a GPISD board member and had worked with the firm as Fort Bend ISD's chief financial officer.

The evaluators' responses were summarized on a spreadsheet, and the firm with the highest score was recommended to the board for approval. The district checked the firms' references, which reported favorably on the audit firms. The only significant difference between the high and low bid was that the low bidder had not audited a district with more than 10,000 students. The district awarded the annual audit to the firm with the highest estimated cost.

The director of Finance and Budget said the firm's reputation, experience and knowledge of GPISD were more critical than cost because of several unique or first-time issues the district faced in 2002. These issues included the TSPR review, the district effectiveness and compliance review visit from TEA, the implementation of GASB 34, the state compensatory education (SCE) audit and the leaver audit. The director of Finance and Budget also said the administration believes engaging the same auditors to perform the SCE audit and the regular financial audit would be a more cost-effective solution for the district.

The summary contained hours and costs associated with one firm performing the SCE agreed upon procedures audit. The summary stated that the fees for the SCE audit were not broken out separately, but in the response from the firm, both the hours and related fees were stated separately. The SCE audit should not have been considered in the RFP for the annual financial and compliance audit since it is not a part of the annual audit. It is a separate engagement by auditing standards and should have been procured separately since the required procedures were not outlined in the RFP.

Numerous professional organizations agree that cost should not be the only factor considered in choosing a firm to perform the annual financial and compliance audit. However, these same organizations agree that cost should be a factor after considering the qualifications of the respondents. The Government Finance Officers Association recommends that governmental entities use a competitive process for the selection of independent auditors on a periodic basis and that the process actively seek all qualified firms available to perform the annual audit. Competitive procurement on a periodic basis helps to reduce audit costs. Rotating

auditors periodically also ensures the independence of the audit firm when reviewing the district's financial record.

Many school districts have established policies for the periodic use of a competitive process for the procurement of external audit services. San Benito Consolidated ISD (SBCISD) has a policy of seeking proposals every five years. Their policy does not exclude the possibility of the audit firm being re-engaged by the district when proposals are received. The external audit firm for SBCISD has performed the annual audit for six years. SBCISD has continuity in the audit process and is assured the fees are competitive.

Recommendation 42:

Adopt a policy for the periodic competitive procurement and rotation of external audit services to ensure independence.

The board should adopt a policy that requires the external audit services be competitively procured every five years. This will provide continuity of audit services and allow the audit firms to spread the start-up costs associated with audits over the five-year period.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent, chief operations officer and director of Finance and Budget meet to determine how often the district should seek proposals for audit services and the weight that costs should be given in evaluating the proposals.	April 2003
2.	The superintendent contacts TASB policy services and other school districts for assistance in developing a policy for the competitive procurement of external audit services.	May 2003
3.	The superintendent presents the policy to the board for review and consideration and revises the policy, if necessary.	June 2003
4.	The superintendent presents the policy to the board for approval.	July 2003
5.	The superintendent distributes the policy and directs its implementation for 2003-04.	July 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

GPISD does not have an internal auditor. The district had a position that included audit activities, but transferred that position to the Purchasing function. The person who was in the position is a certified internal auditor and participates in a number of professional organizations, including the Greater Houston Area School District Internal Auditors Group. This employee reported to the chief operations officer but did not have a direct line of responsibility to either the superintendent or board. The employee performed internal audit work very limited in scope and nature. Many of the reports prepared were not issued and many projects were not finished. The copies of the reports that were completed and issued were from 1999. The function did not have a charter or audit plan.

GPISD's external audit firm reports on internal control weaknesses that could have a negative impact on the district's ability to prepare financial information in accordance with established standards. The external auditors also report on any compliance issues found during the audit. The district does not have an independent function to monitor compliance with board policies, regulations or laws. The only review of internal control and compliance by an independent entity is the external audit.

Internal auditing supplies an independent appraisal function within the district that evaluates the efficiency and effectiveness of the district's operations. Based on the evaluations, internal audit makes recommendations to enhance district operations and processes. These recommendations may refine procedures that exist in the district or add procedures to improve operations or controls over the district's assets. The internal audit function monitors compliance with laws, regulations and policies for the district as well as providing special reports and analyses to the board and administration.

Most internal audit functions have a charter adopted by the board that explains the general purpose and objective of the function. The charter also establishes the authority of the function and its responsibilities. This charter generally references the Institute of Internal Auditors, Inc. Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing (Standards) and the Code of Ethics (Ethics) to ensure appropriate internal audit function performance. These Standards and Ethics can be used as part of the evaluation for the function. The internal auditor generally:

- reviews the operations of the district to ensure efficient use of resources, the safeguards in place to protect district assets, the district's activity funds, and bid processes and procedures;
- conducts special reviews requested by the board or administration;
- evaluates compliance with laws, rules, regulations and policies;
- provides advice and counsel to the board and district management on operations;

- plans and executes the internal audit schedule based on risk assessments; and
- acts as the liaison for the external auditor and coordinates district audit activities.

The independence of internal audit is determined by its reporting relationship within the district. The independence of internal audit increases as the reporting relationship moves higher up in the district's organization. Independence is difficult to achieve when the internal audit function reports to a level of management that has responsibility for the daily operations of the district. For example, if the function reported to an assistant superintendent level position, the audits and the resulting reports on operations controlled by that position might be impaired because of the reporting relationship. Since the board has no direct responsibility for any operations within the district, the function is most independent when it reports to the board. This reporting relationship also enhances the board's ability to receive unbiased and unfiltered reports on district operations and special investigations.

For projects in which the district wanted independent advice and counsel, GPISD hired Deloitte Touche LLP, at a cost of more than \$47,000. Deloitte Touche LLP has provided reports and assistance in the areas of the bank depository bid, an investigation of an employee grievance, the development of a business continuity plan and a report concerning district employees that also operate businesses. A competent internal auditor with the highest level of independence could have provided most, if not all, of these services. In addition, the external audit firm can rely on an internal auditor's work to help reduce audit fees.

The Texas State Auditor's Office (SAO) conducted a management audit of public schools. In SAO Report No. 3-010, the SAO recommends that districts with annual expenditures of more than \$20 million or enrollment of 5,000 students or more employ an internal auditor. The SAO views internal auditors as a tool for districts to improve operations.

Many school districts benefit from employing an internal auditor and achieve cost savings associated with implementing recommendations that increase efficiency in district operations. These districts also benefit through the reduction in losses due to theft or fraud as a result of improved internal controls. Some districts have been able to reduce their reliance on external firms for consulting services by using the internal audit function instead.

Recommendation 43:

Hire an internal auditor who reports functionally to the board and administratively to the superintendent.

The internal auditor should develop an audit plan based on a risk assessment of the district. The risk assessment should determine the areas where the highest risk of loss of assets exists or areas where noncompliance with laws is most probable in the district. In addition, the internal auditor should coordinate the district's internal and external audit activities. This will ensure that the district has the appropriate level of internal control to protect its assets.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent requests and receives approval from the board to hire an internal auditor and amend the budget to include funding for the position.	May 2003
2.	The superintendent directs the executive director of Human Resource Services to develop and post a job description that contains adherence to, and responsibility for, carrying out the internal audit duties in accordance with the Standards and Ethics.	June 2003
3.	The superintendent requests information from the Institute of Internal Auditors and other districts and develops and recommends a charter for the internal auditor to the board for approval and receives approval.	June 2003
4.	The superintendent selects and recommends a candidate to the board for approval in accordance with district hiring practices.	July 2003
5.	The board votes to hire the auditor and amend the budget to provide funding for the position.	August 2003
6.	The internal auditor conducts a risk assessment of the district, develops the internal audit plan, presents the plan to the board for review and approval and receives approval.	September 2003
7.	The internal auditor develops procedures to implement the audit plan.	October 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

The fiscal impact of this recommendation is based on the midpoint of pay grade AB24 of the district's Administrative Business Job Classification. The annual cost to the district would be \$70,603 [(The midpoint of pay grade AB24 is \$289 a day x 229 days) plus (the variable benefit rate of 2.42 percent of \$66,181, or \$1,602, + \$2,820 fixed benefit rate for health and dental insurance)].

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Hire an internal auditor who reports directly to the board.	(\$70,603)	(\$70,603)	(\$70,603)	(\$70,603)	(\$70,603)

Chapter 7

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

E. Tax Collection

Local school districts levy property taxes that provide a source of funds. The tax consists of a maintenance and operations (M&O) component and an interest and sinking (I&S) component. In most school districts, the M&O component of the tax cannot exceed \$1.50 per \$100 of assessed property value and voters authorize the I&S component of the tax to pay the bonded debt when they pass a bond referendum. GPISD is not limited to \$1.50 for the M&O rate since voters authorized a total rate of \$1.95 per \$100 of assessed property value in 1964. The combined total of the M&O and I&S tax rates cannot exceed this limit.

County appraisal districts appraise all property that school districts tax. All school districts adopt a tax rate applied to the assessed value, minus tax exemptions, to determine the amount of taxes levied. GPISD offers an optional 20 percent homestead exemption for district taxpayers. The optional exemption reduces both the tax collections and the state revenue the district receives by approximately \$6 million in total. If the district repealed the optional homestead exemption, it would equate to a 20 cents per \$100 of assessed property value increase in the tax rate without the tax rate changing.

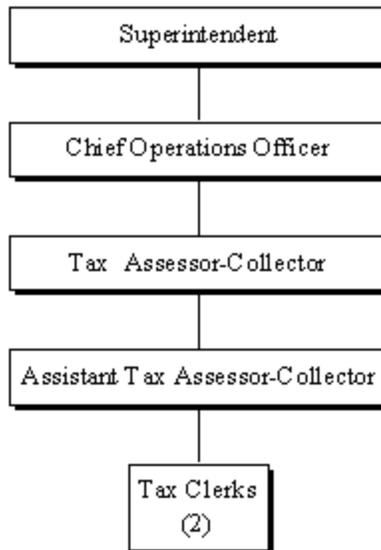
From 1998-99 to 2002-03, the district's tax base grew 12.4 percent or 3.1 percent annually. The district anticipates additional growth in the tax base for 2002-03 through the supplemental rolls it historically receives from the Harris County Appraisal District during the course of the year. Increases in the value of the property in the district has contributed to the tax base growth.

At 97 percent concentration, GPISD cannot add much taxable property to the tax rolls in the future. The district estimates its I&S tax rate will peak at 26 cents per \$100 of assessed property value in 2005-06. Based on the unique flexibility the district has with its tax rate, the M&O tax rate could increase to \$1.69 per \$100 of assessed property value as the total tax rate cannot exceed \$1.95 per \$100 of assessed property value. This, coupled with the district's ability to eliminate the 20 percent homestead exemption and receive additional tax and state revenues, mitigates the concerns of a stagnant tax base related to the district being 97 percent built out.

Some school districts collect their own taxes and others contract with another entity. The GPISD Tax Office collects all taxes for the district and

a tax attorney collects delinquent taxes. **Exhibit 7-7** presents the organization of the GPISD tax office.

Exhibit 7-7
GPISD Tax Office Organization
September 2002



Source: GPISD Tax Office.

The GPISD Tax Office oversees collection of all taxes for the district. A company hired by the district prints and mails the tax statements. The district Tax Office:

- receives all tax payments, issues receipts to the taxpayer and prepares deposits for pickup by a courier service;
- enters all value changes into the database;
- prints and mails out tax notices for supplemental rolls;
- prepares tax certificates and refunds for changes in the tax roll;
- establishes and monitors payment agreements with taxpayers;
- monitors and maintains all suits filed by the delinquent tax attorney;
- prepares information for and monitors constable sales of foreclosed properties;
- handles resale resolutions for properties struck off the tax roll; and
- develops quarterly tax collection reports for the board.

The district uses the Appraisal and Collection Technologies software system to account for its taxes. The system provides for current and delinquent tax collection, supplements and adjustments processing, online and batch payment processing, refunds, special exemptions, comments and notes, change logging, delinquent attorney support, a comprehensive

audit trail and an extensive reporting system. The Tax Office said the system meets its needs and is efficient in collecting the district's taxes.

The district contracts with Perdue, Brandon, Fielder, Collins & Mott, LLP for appeal and audit services related to property tax values used for determining state funding. The contract states the firm will receive 10 percent of additional state aid received as a result of an appeal of the property values and a fee of 7.5 percent of additional state aid received as the result of a self-report appeal or audit. The district is auditing five years of property tax values and estimates it will receive an additional \$2.3 million in state aid for those years if TEA has funds available.

In 2001-02, the district collected \$49,404,029 in current year taxes and an additional \$1,067,532 in delinquent taxes. The tax levy was \$51,140,793 for a collection rate of 96.6 percent. Total collections, including penalty, interest and delinquent taxes were \$51,155,716 for a total collection rate of 100 percent of the levy. **Exhibit 7-8** presents the current and delinquent tax collections, tax levy and percentage of levy collected for 1998-99 through 2001-02.

Exhibit 7-8
GPISD Tax Collections, Tax Levy and Percentage of Levy Collected
1998-99 through 2001-02

	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02
Tax Collections*	\$45,335,972	\$44,657,697	\$46,966,957	\$50,471,560
Tax Levy	\$45,737,947	\$45,235,155	\$48,258,785	\$51,140,793
Percentage Collected	99.1%	98.7%	97.3%	98.7%

Source: GPISD Annual Audit Reports, 1998-99 through 2000-01; GPISD Comparative Annual Collection Report, September 2002.

**Tax collections represent current and delinquent taxes.*

As of August 31, 2002, the district had total delinquent taxes due of \$6.2 million equivalent to 12.1 percent of the 2001-02 levy. Of the 2001-02 levy, \$1.7 million of the \$51.1 million levy or 3.3 percent was outstanding on August 31, 2002.

Exhibit 7-9 presents the taxable value of property, the tax rates and the levy for GPISD for 1998-99 through 2002-03. The district expects the 2002-03 taxable values to increase through supplemental rolls as it has in prior years.

Exhibit 7-9
GPISD Taxable Value, Tax Rates and Tax Levy
1998-99 through 2002-03

Item	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	Percent Change From 1998-99
Taxable Value (1,000's)	\$2,740,649	\$2,813,931	\$2,866,541	\$3,052,399	\$3,079,062	12.4%
M&O Tax Rate	1.4511	1.4768	1.5000	1.5300	1.5400	6.1%
I&S Tax Rate	0.2257	0.1367	0.1835	0.1535	0.1735	(23.1%)
Total Tax Rate	1.6768	1.6135	1.6835	1.6835	1.7135	2.2%
Tax Levy	\$45,737,947	\$45,235,155	\$48,258,785	\$51,140,793	\$52,215,654	14.2%

Source: GPISD Annual External Audits, 1998-99 through 2000-01; GPISD Tax Office.

The district's property tax base for 2002-03 is 54 percent industrial (mainly energy-related), 29 percent residential, 15 percent commercial and 2 percent undeveloped based on district estimates. **Exhibit 7-10** presents a categorical breakdown of the property tax base.

Exhibit 7-10
GPISD Tax Base Property Categories
2002-03

Property Category	Property Value	Percent of Total Value
Residential	\$922,200,000	29.0%
Undeveloped	\$63,600,000	2.0%
Commercial	\$477,000,000	15.0%
Industrial	\$1,717,200,000	54.0%
Total	\$3,180,000,000	100.0%

Source: GPISD 2002-03 Proposed Budget.

Since 1998-99, tax collections have increased by 23 percent and total revenues have increased by 31.3 percent in the general fund. The district's reliance on property taxes has decreased from 43.1 percent in 1998-99 to 40.4 percent for the 2002-03 budget. **Exhibit 7-11** presents the amount of local taxes, including penalty and interest, the district collected compared to total revenue in the general fund.

Exhibit 7-11
GPISD General Fund Tax Collections, Including Penalty and Interest
and Total Revenues
1998-99 through 2002-03

	1998-99 Actual	1999-2000 Actual	2000-01 Actual	2001-02 Budget	2002-03 Budget
Taxes	\$39,564,590	\$41,646,511	\$42,333,094	\$46,359,138	\$48,657,980
Total Revenues	\$91,716,009	\$101,332,893	\$108,653,759	\$113,527,008	\$120,411,683
Percentage of Taxes To Total Revenues	43.1%	41.1%	39.0%	40.8%	40.4%

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 1998-99 through 2001-02; GPISD Budget 2002-03.

GPISD receives funding from the state through the Existing Debt Allotment (EDA) and the Instructional Facilities Allotment (IFA) to assist the district with funding debt service payments. The Legislature established the EDA as a funding mechanism to reduce the tax burden related to debt service. The IFA was established to assist low wealth districts with funding for debt service to enable those districts to build new facilities and renovate existing ones. In GPISD, these two allotments have reduced the reliance on property taxes in the debt service fund from 93.5 percent in 1997-98 to 50.5 percent for 2002-03. **Exhibit 7-12** presents information about the sources of revenue for the debt service fund.

Exhibit 7-12
GPISD Debt Service Fund Revenues
1997-98 through 2001-02

Revenue Type	1997-98 Actual	1998-99 Actual	1999-2000 Actual	2000-01 Actual	2001-02 Budget	Percent Change From 1997-98
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Taxes	\$5,346,089	\$6,326,176	\$4,215,245	\$5,527,657	\$5,161,194	(3.5%)
State	\$372,526	\$1,091,585	\$3,822,128	\$4,013,518	\$5,062,026	1,258.8%
Total	\$5,718,615	\$7,417,761	\$8,037,373	\$9,541,175	\$10,223,220	78.8%
Percentage of Taxes to Total	93.5%	85.3%	52.5%	57.9%	50.5%	(43.0%)

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 1997-98 through 2001-02.

FINDING

GPISD has included performance measures in its contract with the delinquent tax attorney. The district contracts with Dexter Joyner, an attorney, to collect the district's delinquent taxes. The attorney receives a fee of 15 percent of the delinquent taxes collected, which is added to the delinquent tax, penalty and interest due the district. The district collects the delinquent tax payments and remits the fee to the attorney. Taxes become delinquent on February 1 and are collected by the district until July 1 of the year following the levy of the tax in October when the taxes are turned over to the delinquent tax attorney for collection.

The delinquent tax attorney produces and mails the delinquent tax notices within 30 days of the taxes becoming delinquent. The delinquent tax attorney also produces and mails the delinquent tax notices to the taxpayers at least once a quarter. The delinquent tax attorney has the option to produce and mail the statements more frequently. The attorney also conducts title searches on all properties that sold to recoup the taxes. The delinquent tax attorney files suit on the district's behalf to collect the delinquent taxes, including court costs, if they are not paid. The tax assessor-collector said the taxpayer also pays title fees and other costs associated with the delinquent tax suit.

The contract sets two specific collection targets and the dates when the delinquent tax attorney's performance will be evaluated. The first target is for the delinquent tax attorney to collect 23 percent of the taxes that became delinquent July 1, 2002 by April 30, 2003. The second target is for the delinquent tax attorney to collect 27.5 percent of the taxes that became delinquent on July 1, 2002 by June 30, 2003.

The contract specifies that the collection percentage will be determined by subtracting 10 and 20-year write-offs, bankruptcies, appraisal district adjustments, credits for installment agreements, judgments and pending sales from the base delinquent balance on July 1, 2002 to determine adjusted delinquent taxes.

The collected total of base taxes will be divided by the adjusted delinquent taxes to calculate the actual collection rate. That rate will be compared to the target rate for that date. If the targets are not met, the contract with the delinquent tax attorney is subject to nonrenewal.

COMMENDATION

Tax collection performance measures contained in GPISD's delinquent tax collection contract have resulted in increased accountability.

Chapter 8

PURCHASING

This chapter reviews the purchasing and warehousing functions of Galena Park Independent School District (GPISD) in the following sections:

- A. Purchasing and Contract Management
- B. Warehousing and Textbook Operations

Effective purchasing and warehousing functions provide school districts with supplies, materials, equipment and services of acceptable quality, when districts need them and at the lowest possible prices. Purchasing includes those activities associated with the acquisition of supplies, materials, services and equipment. Warehousing ensures proper storage and delivery of goods needed by schools and departments. Textbook operations include the acquisition and delivery of textbooks to the schools and periodic inventory of textbooks. Contract management includes the procurement and evaluation of services from external entities.

BACKGROUND

In GPISD, the chief operations officer supervises purchasing, warehousing and textbook operations. The coordinator of Textbook and Warehouse Services and the senior purchasing coordinator report directly to the chief operations officer.

Chapter 8

PURCHASING

A. Purchasing and Contract Management (Part 1)

Section 3 of the Texas Education Agency's (TEA) *Financial Accountability System Resource Guide* (FASRG) Update 9.0, September 2002 describes purchasing as a major management process with links to overall accountability initiatives. The FASRG describes these links as:

- *Strategic Link* - The overall mission of purchasing is to use available fiscal resources to obtain the maximum product or service for the resources spent;
- *Operational Link* - Purchasing supports instructional delivery, administration and other services. Performance and goal achievement throughout the school district depends on its effectiveness; and
- *Tactical Link* - The purchasing process influences day-to-day financial functions including budget management, accounting and accurate financial reporting.

The interconnections described by TEA stress the importance of an effective purchasing program. The FASRG lists the challenges inherent in schools' purchasing function including: compliance with numerous statutes, policies, legal interpretations and procedures; the diverse nature of the public education organizational environment; the consistent oversight by interest groups; and the many "gray" areas relating to purchasing methods and procedures.

Texas school districts must comply with the Texas Education Code (TEC), Chapter 44, Subchapter B in the procurement of goods and services.

Exhibit 8-1 presents a summary of the requirements in TEC Chapter 44.

Exhibit 8-1 **TEC Chapter 44 Purchasing Requirements** **October 2002**

	Purchases of or More Than \$25,000	Purchases Between \$10,000 and \$25,000
Procurement methods	Competitive bidding Competitive sealed proposals Request for proposals Catalog purchases	Use methods for purchases at or more than \$25,000 Or Obtain quotes from the vendor list established by the district

	Interlocal contracts Design/build contracts Job order contracts Construction management contracts Reverse auctions	
Exceptions	Produce and vehicle fuel Sole source Professional services such as architect, attorney or fiscal agent Emergency repairs	Produce and vehicle fuel must be purchased using the purchasing methods above
Factors to consider	Purchase price Vendor reputation Quality of goods or services District's needs Vendor's past performance Historically underutilized businesses Long-term cost Other relevant factors listed in request for bids or proposals	Lowest responsible bidder

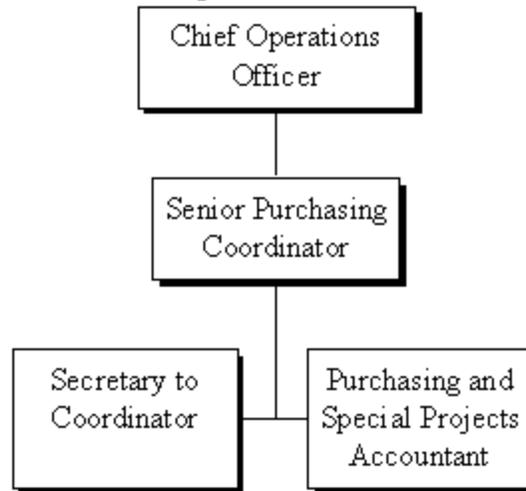
Source: Texas Education Code (TEC) Sections 44.031 through 44.033.

TEC Section 44.032 provides for criminal penalties for certain practices that might be used to avoid the requirements of Section 44.031(a) or (b). Component purchases are purchases of component parts for an item that in normal purchasing practices would be made in one purchase. Separate purchases are separate purchases of items that would normally be bought in one purchase. Sequential purchases are purchases made over a period of time that would normally be bought in one purchase.

GPISD Board Policy CH (LEGAL) mirrors procurement requirements contained in TEC Section 44. Board Policy CH (LOCAL) delegates purchasing authority to the superintendent but requires advance board approval for any purchase that costs or aggregates to \$25,000 or more. The policy also states "persons making unauthorized purchases shall assume full responsibility for all such debts."

Exhibit 8-2 presents the organization of the Purchasing Department at GPISD.

Exhibit 8-2
GPISD Purchasing Department
September 2002



Source: GPISD Purchasing Department, September 2002.

GPISD has a decentralized purchasing function delegating approval authority to budget managers, principals at schools and department managers. The purchasing function is integrated into the Delta financial management software. Authorized school or department users enter purchase requisitions into Delta. The appropriate budget manager approves or disapproves the requisition online. If the school or department level budget manager approves the purchase order, and if the existing budget line item has sufficient funds to allow the transaction, the senior purchasing coordinator approves the requisition online, and a purchase order is printed. If a requisition results in a line item exceeding the approved budget, a budget amendment must be adopted before the purchase order can be processed.

For items stocked in the warehouse, a copy of the purchase order becomes a "pick ticket." Warehouse clerks fill the order from the pick ticket and warehouse drivers deliver the order to the requesting school or department. For orders from an outside vendor, the Purchasing Department staff mails or faxes the purchase order to the vendor. The warehouse receives most goods ordered from outside vendors, logging in the boxes and delivering them to the appropriate school or department. After inspecting and accepting the delivered goods, staff enter the information in the Delta system.

The Delta system alerts Accounts Payable regarding incomplete orders, and the staff follows up on outstanding purchase orders.

FINDING

GPISD uses its financial management software to enter purchase requisitions and process purchase orders quickly. The system has electronic approvals for budgetary and purchasing control. The department budget manager electronically approves a requisition if the Delta system indicates sufficient funds in the budget. The senior purchasing coordinator reviews the requisition for compliance and then issues a purchase order. GPISD budget managers and the senior purchasing coordinator review pending purchase requisitions several times each day and promptly approve or deny requisitions to prevent backlogs.

The review team examined all purchase orders approved between September 3, 2002 and October 31, 2002 for processing timeliness. Since this time frame is near the beginning of the school year, this sample has longer processing times than other, less busy times of year.

Exhibit 8-3
GPISD Purchase Order Processing
September 3, 2002 through October 31, 2002

Days from Purchase Requisition Data Entry to Purchase Order Printing	Number of Purchase Requisitions	Percentage of Purchase Requisitions
0	1,115	41.6%
1	725	27.0%
2	148	5.5%
3	190	7.1%
4	146	5.4%
5	93	3.5%
6-10	137	5.1%
11-15	67	2.5%
Over 15	61	2.3%
Total	2,682	100.0%

Source: GPISD Delta financial management system.

As shown in **Exhibit 8-3**, 68.6 percent of requisitions entered were processed as purchase orders within one day. A total of 90.1 percent of requisitions were processed as purchase orders within five days.

COMMENDATION

GPISD's financial system with electronic approvals allows budget managers and the senior purchasing coordinator to approve purchase requisitions quickly.

FINDING

GPISD uses cooperative purchasing to efficiently and cost effectively purchase its goods and services. The senior purchasing coordinator identifies potential cooperative agreement partners and evaluates goods and services available from each. If the items and services available from the potential cooperative agreement partner are reasonably priced and if the cost to participate in the cooperative is reasonable, the senior purchasing coordinator obtains and completes the forms necessary to add GPISD to the cooperative. **Exhibit 8-4** shows GPISD's membership in several cooperative purchasing agreements.

Exhibit 8-4
GPISD Cooperative Purchasing Agreements
November 2002

Agreement	Annual Cost	Examples of Items Purchased
BuyBoard, sponsored by Texas Association of School Boards, Texas Association of Counties and Texas Municipal League	None	Tractor and other grounds maintenance equipment, transportation equipment, library books
Harris County Department of Education	None	Printing and records management services, kitchen equipment, office supplies, instructional and art supplies
Houston-Galveston Area Council Cooperative Purchasing Program	None	Grounds maintenance equipment
Texas Building and Procurement Commission Cooperative Purchasing Program	\$250	Copiers, office and instructional supplies, buses, industrial equipment, communications equipment, furniture, automobiles, janitorial supplies
Texas Cooperative Purchasing Network, established by Region IV Education Service Center	None	Industrial supplies, instructional furniture and supplies (includes contracts with Office Depot and Xerox)

Texas Local Government Purchasing Cooperative	None	Industrial equipment
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Source: GPISD Purchasing Department.

Through these cooperative agreements, the district can buy products at competitive, reasonable prices without the time, effort and expense of individual competitive procurement processes. The senior purchasing coordinator estimates that GPISD saved \$40,500 in 2001-02 by participating in cooperative purchasing arrangements.

COMMENDATION

GPISD participates in cooperative purchasing arrangements, saving staff time and \$40,500 in 2001-02.

FINDING

GPISD does not have strong internal controls over procurement card purchases. In September 2002, GPISD implemented a procurement card program to replace field purchase orders for non-routine purchases. Previously, the district issued field purchase orders in packets of 50 to each school or department budget manager. According to the purchasing policy manual, the district could use field purchase orders to make emergency purchases up to \$300. The policy prohibited multiple field purchase orders from going above the \$300 limit or circumventing the established purchasing process. Vendors could send field purchase orders directly to the Accounts Payable Department for payment and, as a result, were not routed through the Purchasing Department.

During 2001-02, GPISD paid 232 field purchase orders totaling \$42,296. The review team examined vendor data and amounts paid for all 232 field purchase orders. Of the 232 field purchase orders, 24 or 10.3 percent exceeded the \$300 limit and did not comply with the district's policy. The total dollar value of the field purchase orders exceeding \$300 was approximately \$13,245.

Exhibit 8-5 shows details of the noncompliant field purchase orders.

**Exhibit 8-5
GPISD Field Purchase Orders Exceeding \$300 Limit
2001-02**

Vendor	Field Purchase	Check Number	Amount
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	Order Number		
Lab Safety Supply	024481	317187	\$303.22
Sunburst Communications	024729	316987	\$307.91
Sam's Club Direct	023568	318456	\$334.09
Ceramic Store Inc.	023885	319733	\$341.23
Texas Art Supply	023868	317626	\$355.10
Institute/Educational Development	024322	325595	\$358.00
K Mart #7594	023573	317421	\$380.45
TTU Outreach And Extended Studies	024732	316994	\$408.00
Access Video Integration	022993	319698	\$411.00
McDonald's #2132	203621	335237	\$439.87
John F Clark Company, Inc	023452	317820	\$442.00
Electronics Outlet	024860	319271	\$517.00
Pro Ed	024726	316963	\$518.70
Sam's Club Direct	024120	317992	\$535.85
Southern Importers	023566	318459	\$548.10
Micro Center A/R	024978	317524	\$573.69
The Learning Tree	200446	335682	\$599.21
Richardson's Books, Inc.	022467	317887	\$599.95
S.A.V.E. Books For Libraries	200521	331605	\$600.00
Mascot Metropolitan, Inc	202305	328274	\$600.00
Professional Turf Product	024492	316964	\$686.31
Lakeshore	203632	335797	\$747.97
Rice University	024748	318702	\$760.00
University Interscholastic League	022350	317912	\$1,877.00
Total			\$13,244.65

Source: GPISD Delta Financial Management System, October 2002.

Violations continued from 2001-02 into 2002-03. For example, 2002-03 sequential field purchase order numbers 201044 and 201045 were used on

the same day to purchase televisions from Sam's Club. Televisions are available on bid but were purchased from a local vendor. This example also violates the prohibition against using more than one purchase order to exceed the \$300 limit. The purchase order form alerts vendors not to accept multiple field purchase orders above \$300.

In another example from 2002-03, field purchase order number 203129 to Arne's Wholesale Warehouse for \$550 to purchase meeting supplies and administration birthday, also exceeded the \$300 field purchase order limit, even though the purchase order form notes the \$300 limit and states that purchases greater than \$300 will not be processed. Accounts Payable processed payment to the vendor.

The senior purchasing coordinator and Accounts Payable supervisor are unaware of any formal disciplinary action taken against employees who did not comply with the established field purchase order requirements. No employee has been required to reimburse the district for purchases that violated district policy.

Sometimes an organization's employees use emergency or field purchase orders to circumvent an inefficient purchasing process. However, since GPISD processes 68.6 percent of requisitions within one day, its purchasing process does not appear to be inefficient. In addition, in a survey of 30 principals and assistant principals, 97 percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "Purchasing gets me what I need when I need it." More than three-quarters of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that "Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for the requestor."

In September 2002, GPISD began replacing field purchase orders with a procurement card system. Procurement cards are designed to maintain control of expenses, while reducing administrative costs associated with authorizing, tracking and paying small recurring purchases. Procurement card policies specify the roles and responsibilities of cardholders and their budget managers.

According to GPISD's procurement card policy, the cards may be issued to any employee with the approval of their principal or departmental budget manager. The district limits purchases to \$300 per transaction and \$2,000 per month. Restaurant charges are limited to \$250 per transaction. GPISD policy authorizes the chief operations officer to adjust limits based on demonstrated need.

Violations of the purchasing card policy can result in revocation of the card and/or disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

The policy contains a list of approved vendor types. Selected examples of the types of approved vendors are shown in **Exhibit 8-6**.

Exhibit 8-6
Selected Allowable GPISD Procurement Card Vendor Types
October 2002

Approved Vendor
Travel Related: All Airlines, Rental Agencies, Hotels, Travel Agencies and Tour Operators
Auto Store, Home Supply Stores, Equipment, Furniture and Home Furnishings Stores
Service Stations
Computers, Computer Peripheral Equipment and Software
Eating Places, Restaurants
Artist Supply Stores, Craft Shops, Fabric, Needlework, Piece Goods and Sewing Stores
Hardware Equipment and Supplies
Drug Stores, Pharmacies and Discount Stores
Grocery Stores, Supermarkets and Bakeries
Electronic Sales
Sporting Goods Stores, Game, Toy and Hobby Shops
Religious Goods Stores
Book Stores

Source: GPISD Manual, Revision 0207, October 2002.

Exhibit 8-7 lists selected vendor types that are blocked from use.

Exhibit 8-7
Selected Blocked GPISD Procurement Card Vendor Types
October 2002

Blocked Vendor
Veterinary Services
Horticultural and Landscaping Services
General Contractors, Residential and Commercial

Electrical Contractors
Air Conditioning, Heating, Plumbing Contractors
Carpentry Contractors
All Entertainment Providers (motion picture theaters, bowling alleys, golf courses and amusement parks)
Railroads
Limousines and Taxicabs
Bus Lines
Cruise Lines
Automobile and Boat Dealers
Automotive Body Repair and Paint Shops
Telecommunication Service
Cable and Other Pay Television Services
Financial Institutions Automated Cash
Personal Care Services (dry cleaners, laundry, photographic studios, barber and beauty shops, babysitting, dating and escort services)
Advertising Services
Stenographic and Secretarial Support Services
Computer Programming, Data Processing
Professional/Organizations Services (doctors, dentists, hospitals, schools, colleges, charitable and social service organizations and accounting services)
Court Costs, Fines, Bail and Bond Payments
Clothing Stores
Other Retail Stores (music stores, caterers, bars, leather goods and luggage, package stores, cosmetic stores and pet shops)

Source: GPISD Manual, Revision 0207, October 2002.

Although the new procurement cards will eliminate some of the weaknesses of field purchase orders, the current procurement card policy lacks sufficient controls to ensure compliance with laws and board policy. As currently designed, the GPISD procurement card program is decentralized and lacks sufficient controls to ensure compliance with laws and board policy. The school business manager or department budget manager approves employees' applications for procurement cards,

reviewing individual cardholders' transactions to ensure legitimate transactions. Managers also appropriately classify the transactions and keep a manual log of transactions to prevent exceeding limits. The policy does not contain procedures to verify that monitoring activities are conducted regularly and on time or that instances of noncompliance are reported and handled appropriately.

An effective procurement card program centralizes the approval of cardholders, restricts cardholders to employees or job positions specifically approved by the board, lists examples of appropriate types of transactions and imposes limits based upon particular positions. For example, one type of appropriate transaction for a coach might be the purchase of meals for a high school athletic team on an out-of-town trip. The same transaction would not be appropriate, however, for an elementary school principal or central administrative director when it's not related to district business. Some organizations do not allow employees to carry procurement cards at all times, but rather require them to check cards out for specific purchases and uses.

Recommendation 44:

Revise GPISD procurement card policy and procedures to strengthen controls.

GPISD should build additional controls into the procurement cards beyond the existing controls limiting the total amount that can be spent and the types of vendors that can be used. Revisions to the policy and procedures should limit the cards to employees specifically authorized by the board, should limit usage to specific transaction types approved by the board and should customize limits and transaction types to particular positions and employees. Under the revised policy and procedures, the board should approve, in advance, any exceptions or waivers to the new policy limits and controls, allowed vendors or allowed transactions.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The purchasing and special projects accountant identifies procedure and policy revisions needed to address internal control weaknesses.	June 2003
2.	The purchasing and special projects accountant revises the procurement card procedures and policies.	July - August 2003
3.	The superintendent, chief operations officer, director of Finance and Budget, senior purchasing coordinator and accounts payable supervisor review and comment on the revised procedures and policy.	August 2003

4.	The purchasing and special projects accountant revises the proposed procedures as appropriate based upon comments received and submits revised procedures and policies to the board for approval.	September 2003
5.	The board reviews and approves the revised procurement card procedures and policy.	September 2003
6.	The purchasing and special projects accountant periodically verifies that the procurement card procedures and policies are being followed and that employees are being held accountable.	January 2004 and Quarterly
7.	The purchasing and special projects accountant periodically reports to the board to verify employee compliance.	February 2004 and Quarterly

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

GPISD does not have a formal procurement process to ensure compliance with state law and board policy. According to board policy and state law, purchases valued at \$25,000 or more in the aggregate must be made using a competitive procurement method unless specific exceptions apply. Purchases of personal property between \$10,000 and \$25,000 require use of a competitive procurement method or obtaining quotes from vendors.

The current Delta financial management system does not have the capability to enter commodity codes to automatically track purchase levels. The senior purchasing coordinator keeps an ongoing manual list of items that may potentially exceed \$25,000 in the aggregate, which includes a total for paid and outstanding purchase orders for those items. The senior purchasing coordinator frequently speaks with personnel in the Construction, Maintenance, Grounds and Transportation Departments to monitor the level of purchases.

Because GPISD's purchasing philosophy is decentralized, the district does not require that the senior purchasing coordinator be involved in all procurement aspects although the senior purchasing coordinator's job description lists responsibility for preparing bidding documents and assisting district personnel relating to purchasing services and materials. The district's decentralized philosophy allows purchases to be made in user departments without Purchasing Department involvement. Examples of this include construction procurements and services such as health insurance and the bank depository contract. For this reason, the senior

purchasing coordinator said that she could not verify compliance for many types of purchases.

The review team selected samples to test for compliance with purchasing laws. Vendors were selected from the Delta financial system based upon total purchases during 2001-02. The review team reviewed a sample of 49 vendors with total purchases between \$10,000 and \$25,000. For 47 percent, or 23 of the 49 vendors sampled, the senior purchasing coordinator was unable to provide documentation to verify compliance with state law and board policy. **Exhibit 8-8** shows the vendors with total purchases between \$10,000 and \$25,000 lacking Purchasing Department involvement.

Exhibit 8-8
Vendors With Total GPISD Purchases Between \$10,000 and \$25,000
With No Purchasing Department Documentation
2001-02

Vendor	Description	Amount
Decorative Plants	Plants	\$10,195.20
Uvalde Ace Hardware	HVAC test/balance	\$10,195.48
Butch's Waterproofing Co.	Damp/waterproofing	\$10,216.20
Ebsco Curriculum Material	Library magazine subscriptions	\$10,500.97
Pump Service & Repair	HVAC pump repair	\$11,697.38
Davis And Davis Business Equipment	Office equipment repair	\$12,426.30
Delegard Tool Co	Vocational supplies and equipment	\$12,728.02
Aramark Uniform Services, Inc	Uniform rental	\$13,037.18
Butler Business Products	Instructional supplies	\$14,935.80
Projection Direct	Media equipment for boardroom	\$15,251.00
Toromont Process Systems	Chiller repair	\$15,936.01
Nova Technical Services, Ltd.	Cabling	\$16,579.50
Performing Arts Supply	Costumes	\$16,783.04
The Bob Pike Group	Science dept. staff development	\$16,783.62
Roach Kubota & Equipment, Inc.	Equipment repair	\$17,242.80
Wornell Paint Contractors	Painting	\$17,494.33

Midwest Technology Products	Instructional furniture	\$17,755.55
Home Depot GECF	Building materials	\$19,482.84
Southern Insulation Contractors	HVAC insulation	\$19,720.00
MKP Consulting	Enrollment forecasts	\$20,000.00
Scott Stephens & Associates, Inc.	Appraisal services	\$20,000.00
Aamco Transmissions 10890	Transmission repair	\$21,052.82
All Play	Playground equipment	\$22,646.00

Source: GPISD Delta financial management system, GPISD Purchasing Department, October-November 2002.

Chapter 8

PURCHASING

A. Purchasing and Contract Management (Part 2)

The review team selected 70 vendors with total 2001-02 payments greater than \$25,000 for detailed review. Of these 70 vendors, 15 contained no documentation to outline the competitive process followed in the Purchasing Department. **Exhibit 8-9** lists vendors payments lacking documentation for 2001-02.

Exhibit 8-9
Vendors with GPISD Purchases Greater Than \$25,000
Lacking Purchasing Department Documentation
2001-02

Vendor	Description	Amount
Anytime Security & Investigations	Security at construction sites	\$27,832.75
Apartments Directions, Inc	Apartment locators for new teachers	\$28,000.00
Franklin Covey	Day planners	\$29,007.34
Patsy Lemke	Psychological consultant services	\$30,973.51
Southwest Houston Tire Sales, Inc.	Tires	\$31,391.12
RCI Technologies, Inc.	Fixed asset management services	\$39,960.72
K Mart #7594	Miscellaneous instructional	\$46,235.60
Kroger-Southwest KMA	Groceries (instructional)	\$47,103.55
Pasco Brokerage Inc.	Groceries for food service	\$58,114.10
Datavox	Telephone system	\$67,265.08
Sam's Club Direct	Miscellaneous instructional	\$77,971.18
Nextel Communications	Cellular service	\$109,127.14
Educational Software Solutions of Texas, Inc.	Designed software	\$127,870.00
Novanet	Software license	\$150,260.00
New Frontier Consulting Inc.	Phone system consultant	\$208,264.98

Source: GPISD Delta financial management system, GPISD Purchasing Department, October-November 2002.

Some of the items lacking documentation in the Purchasing Department may have been competitively procured in another GPISD department without Purchasing Department involvement or knowledge. However, without a formal policy requiring the Purchasing Department to be involved in supervising and monitoring purchases and retaining documentation centrally, GPISD cannot be assured of complying with state law and board policy for all purchases.

Effective districts monitor and ensure compliance with purchasing law whether they are centralized or decentralized. Some districts have a strong centralized purchasing function to ensure compliance with applicable laws and policies. Dallas ISD requires purchasing agent approval for all purchases exceeding \$1,000. In its policy, Dallas ISD also designates the executive director of Purchasing as the sole authorized individual to make purchases on behalf of the district.

Other districts have decentralized the purchasing function, but have controls to ensure compliance. One example of an effective control is an automated system that tracks purchases by commodity code and has the capability to report commodity codes and totals at predefined levels to ensure that purchases in the aggregate do not exceed statutory limits. Even in districts with decentralized procurement processes, however, purchasing department personnel are still responsible for ensuring controls and monitoring are adequate.

Recommendation 45:

Develop and implement a process that prevents non-compliance with procurement laws and holds individuals who violate the system accountable for their actions.

The district should form a work group with representatives from the purchasing department and user departments to develop a process that strengthens procurement compliance. The district's process should include a policy and procedures outlining the Purchasing Department's roles and responsibilities as well as the user department's roles and responsibilities for each type of procurement. A clear system of accountability should be established and department heads and principals should be held accountable for ensuring compliance at all levels of the organization.

For example, the process for construction procurements might include steps where the user department would develop the specifications, but the Purchasing Department would verify and issue them and be the sole point

of contact for questions from vendors that could be referred to the user department for clarification. The policy and procedures should also outline how quotes should be obtained, routed to the Purchasing Department for verification and confirmation and then approved for purchase. The procedures should also designate the Purchasing Department to be a central repository for all solicitation and contract documentation.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent establishes a work group with representatives from the Purchasing Department, such as the senior purchasing coordinator and the purchasing and special projects accountant, and user groups including principals and department heads.	April 2003
2.	The senior purchasing coordinator and purchasing and special projects accountant analyze procurement information to determine areas where compliance needs to be strengthened and present findings to the committee.	May - June 2003
3.	The committee reviews the findings and develops a formal process outlining the roles and responsibilities of the Purchasing and user departments necessary to ensure compliance.	June - July 2003
4.	The committee presents the proposed process to the superintendent for review and comment.	July 2003
5.	The committee incorporates superintendent feedback into the proposed process and presents it to the board for approval.	August 2003
6.	The senior purchasing coordinator implements the process.	August 2003 and Ongoing
7.	The purchasing and special projects accountant monitors compliance under the new process and reports findings to the superintendent and the board.	November 2003 and Quarterly

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The GPISD Purchasing Department does not have the staff to effectively fulfill all of its responsibilities. The Purchasing Department consists of a senior purchasing coordinator, a secretary and a purchasing and special projects accountant. The purchasing and special projects accountant

previously served as the GPISD internal auditor, but transferred to the newly created position in the Purchasing Department in September 2002. Temporary part-time employees occasionally assist the Purchasing Department during extremely busy periods, such as the beginning of the school year. The senior purchasing coordinator reports to the chief operations officer. The Purchasing Department also oversees district fixed assets.

The June 2002 job description for the senior purchasing coordinator and the September 2002 job description for the purchasing and special projects accountant contain essentially the same 27 major responsibilities and duties, as shown in **Exhibit 8-10**.

Exhibit 8-10
Responsibilities and Duties of the Senior Purchasing Coordinator
and the Purchasing and Special Projects Accountant
September 2002

Number	Responsibility/Duty
1	Monitor purchase requisitions to assure compliance with federal/state statutes, district policies and good business practices.
2	Approve the purchase requisitions of the Galena Park Independent School District and assign purchase orders for both general operating and student activity.
3	Responsible for all inter-governmental competitive purchasing agreements and their related procedures.
4	Prepare bidding documents, including (but not limited to) notice to bidders, instructions to bidders, newspaper advertisements for bids, specifications and form a proposal.
5	Assist district personnel relating to purchasing services and materials and the expenditure of funds.
6	Assist in the implementation of purchasing policies established by federal law, state law, State Board of Education rule and board policy.
7	Evaluate vendor's bids and make recommendations to the chief operations officer.
8	Recommend district's reaction to suppliers' problems related to delivery on any other part of the purchase agreement.
9	Expedite purchase orders of awarded bids in order to assure prompt delivery to the district and prompt payment to the vendor.
10	Develon and maintain relationships with anppropriate suppliers'

	representatives and keep up-to-date supplier information.
11	Advise others in the development of quotations, requisitions or other related documents.
12	Develop and maintain appropriate records such as bid files, purchase orders, vendors and bidder lists.
13	Account for district's fixed assets and property management subsidiary ledger.
14	Ensure compliance with all provisions of TEA <i>Financial Accountability System Resource Guide</i> as pertaining to fixed asset control.
15	Stay abreast of purchasing operations.
16	Attend meetings of the Board of Trustees and make required reports.
17	Send fixed asset inventory file regarding the acquisition, transfer, loss of fixed assets due to burglary, vandalism, theft, fire or accident and any other changes to the inventory.
18	Prepare all bid documents, advertise in accordance with regulations, maintain a vendor register, seek bidders, open sealed bids, tabulate and make recommendations to the board.
19	Inform applicable employees of bid awards along with specific prices and conditions.
20	Initiate bid acceptance or rejection both by mail and/or in some cases by phone or fax.
21	Negotiate terms and other items with vendors as necessary.
22	Comply with all applicable state and local laws and regulations affecting purchasing operations of the district.
23	Develop goals and objectives for the purchasing department.
24	Develop and maintain written policies and procedures regarding purchasing and inventory control functions.
25	Develop and maintain a computerized list of qualified vendors.
26	Prepare regular and special reports as required by the Board of Trustees and Cabinet.
27	Perform all other duties as assigned.

Source: GPISD Purchasing Department.

The chief operations officer and the senior purchasing coordinator said that the purchasing and special projects accountant will be assigned lead

responsibility for construction project purchasing, fixed assets and the district's new procurement card program during 2002-03.

The September 2002 job description for the secretary to the senior purchasing coordinator contains 16 major responsibilities and duties, as shown in **Exhibit 8-11**.

Exhibit 8-11
GPISD Secretary to Senior Purchasing Coordinator Responsibilities
and Duties
September 2002

Number	Responsibility/Duty
1	Receive and verify funding for encumbrance for all manual purchase requisitions.
2	Maintain vendor files on computer and distribute vendor listings to appropriate personnel when necessary.
3	Vendor all purchase requisitions if necessary.
4	Process approved purchase requisitions and distribute original and copies to appropriate recipients as purchase orders.
5	Research inquiries from vendors and/or district personnel concerning purchase orders.
6	File necessary forms with vendors to maintain tax-exempt status.
7	Maintain file copies of all purchase orders, including emergency orders issued via phone and walk-through.
8	Handle all correspondence for the department, including correspondence for all bids (award letters, non-award letters and bid tabulations).
9	Mail vendor profile information forms to prospective vendors and maintain file. Update all information in Delta Software program.
10	Responsible for acting as a resource person for 22 campuses, central office personnel and customers that need purchasing information.
11	Responsible for all purchase requisitions issues to the Texas Building and Procurement Commission (State Bid Contracts).
12	Reserve conference room for bid openings.
13	Create and update annual bid calendar.
14	Maintain file of vendors who reply to the annual quote advertisement.
15	Responsible for all district store purchasing cards.

16	Responsible for all district pagers.
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Source: GPISD Purchasing Department.

The senior purchasing coordinator expressed concern regarding the small purchasing staff compared to the workload at GPISD. The Purchasing Department processes approximately 14,000 purchase orders every year. To justify an April 2002 request for additional personnel from the Purchasing Department's previous supervisor, the senior purchasing coordinator contacted nearby districts and obtained purchasing department staffing information. Compared to contacted districts, GPISD had the smallest purchasing department staff and the highest ratio of students per purchasing staff member in April 2002. In addition, only GPISD's Purchasing Department had responsibility for fixed assets (**Exhibit 8-12**).

**Exhibit 8-12
GPISD Senior Purchasing Coordinator Survey of
Other Districts' Purchasing Departments
2001-02**

District	Enrollment	Number of Purchasing Staff	Number of Students per Staff	Fixed Assets Responsibility
GPISD*	19,346	3	6,445	Yes
Spring	23,034	4	5,759	No
Goose Creek CISD	18,003	4	4,501	No
Spring Branch	31,659	9	3,518	No
Deer Park	11,428	4	2,857	No
Pasadena	42,577	15	2,838	No
Humble	24,684	10	2,468	No

Source: GPISD Purchasing Department.

**GPISD data, AEIS, 2001-02.*

In April 2002, GPISD had the smallest purchasing department staff size and the highest ratio of students per purchasing staff member. GPISD was the only purchasing department contacted that also had responsibility for fixed assets.

In addition, the review team surveyed peer districts in October 2002 to compare staffing and workload. **Exhibit 8-13** presents the results of a TSPR survey of peer districts' purchasing departments.

Exhibit 8-13
Comparison of Peer Districts' Purchasing Departments
2002

District	2001-02 Enrollment	Staff Size	Estimated Annual Purchase Orders	Number of Purchase Orders per Staff	Fixed Assets Responsibility
Aldine	53,201	7	10,000	1,429	No
Pasadena	43,476	10	23,000	2,300	No
Humble	25,239	10	11,648	1,165	No
GPISD	19,336	3	14,753	4,918	Yes
Goose Creek CISD	18,274	4	26,000	6,500	No

Source: TEA Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS), 2001-02; GPISD Purchasing Department, and peer district surveys, November 2002.

Similar to the comparison completed in April 2002, GPISD processed the second highest number of purchase orders per staff member, more than the three remaining peer districts combined and was the only Purchasing Department that also had responsibility for fixed assets.

Because of insufficient staff, the senior purchasing coordinator performs many routine and clerical tasks normally assigned to paraprofessional staff. The senior purchasing coordinator estimates that 50 to 60 percent of her time is spent performing routine or clerical tasks such as those shown in **Exhibit 8-14**.

Exhibit 8-14
Examples of Routine Tasks Performed by Senior Purchasing
Coordinator
November 2002

Task
Online approval of routine purchase requisitions
Helping secretary process and mail approved purchase orders

Preparing routine pre-bid documents such as newspaper advertisements and notice to bidders
--

Preparing first drafts of bid tabulations

Source: GPISD Senior Purchasing Coordinator, November 2002.

As a result of insufficient staffing, most of the senior purchasing coordinator's time is required for routine tasks, and other critical functions such as negotiating procurements to ensure the district receives the best possible prices; supervising the district's procurement processes; monitoring user departments' purchases to ensure compliance with state law and board policy; establishing an effective fixed assets function; and consulting with district staff on procurement-related problems are either under-emphasized or not performed at all. For example, the senior purchasing coordinator did not participate in negotiating prices for the 1,660 computers purchased from a Qualified Information Systems Vendor (QISV) in November 2001. Although a QISV purchase does not require negotiation, negotiation is a standard practice when purchasing large volumes of equipment such as computers. Through negotiation, the district might have been able to receive lower prices.

Exhibits 8-8 and 8-9 showed that the Purchasing Department could not verify compliance and lacked documentation of a competitive process for 23 of 49 sampled vendor purchases between \$10,000 and \$25,000 and for 15 of 70 vendor purchases exceeding \$25,000.

Without adequate staff dedicated to routine purchasing tasks as well as higher-level, purchasing managerial tasks, GPISD cannot ensure it complies with policies, laws and regulations while obtaining the best possible prices for goods and services.

Recommendation 46:

Hire a purchasing analyst for the Purchasing Department.

The purchasing analyst should be responsible for routine duties currently being performed by the senior purchasing coordinator. These include reviewing purchase requisitions online, approving routine purchase orders, preparing routine pre-bid documents, preparing first drafts of bid tabulations and assisting with distribution of approved purchase orders. The senior purchasing coordinator could focus on monitoring and supervising the overall GPISD procurement process.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The executive director of Human Resource Services, with input from the senior purchasing coordinator, creates a job description for a purchasing analyst.	May 2003
2.	The senior purchasing coordinator develops a revised organizational plan for the Purchasing Department, with a suggested reallocation of job duties.	May 2003
3.	The chief operations officer approves the revised Purchasing Department organization and includes the new position in the proposed 2003-04 budget.	June 2003
4.	The superintendent approves the purchasing analyst job description and the revised Purchasing Department organizational plan.	June 2003
5.	The board approves the new position in the 2003-04 budget.	August 2003
6.	The Human Resource Services Department advertises the position and coordinates the interview process.	September 2003
7.	The chief operators officer interviews and selects a qualified candidate.	October 2003
8.	The purchasing analyst begins work in the Purchasing Department.	November 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

The fiscal impact is based on the midpoint salary for pay grade CP46 or \$27,860 plus benefits. GPISD total fringe benefits of \$3,494 consist of two components: variable and fixed benefits. The variable benefit component is calculated as 2.42 percent of salary and equals \$674 (\$27,860 x 2.42 percent). Fixed benefits are calculated as \$235 per month for health and dental insurance or \$2,820 annually (\$235 x 12 months). Total fringe benefits are \$3,494 (\$674 variable benefits plus \$2,820 fixed benefits). The salary and benefits for this position is \$31,354 (\$27,860 plus \$3,494). Ten-twelfths of that amount, or \$26,128 (10/12 x \$31,354) will be spent in 2003-04 since the analyst will not begin work until November 2003.

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Hire a purchasing analyst for the Purchasing Department.	(\$26,128)	(\$31,354)	(\$31,354)	(\$31,354)	(\$31,354)

FINDING

The Purchasing Department is not actively involved in monitoring contracts after they are executed. No central list of GPISD contracts exists, making it difficult to determine what contracts are in effect. The chief operations officer said that if such a list existed, it would have several hundred entries. The district also does not file all contracts in a central location to facilitate review of the contract terms and conditions or assess contractor performance.

GPISD's Purchasing Department relies on the various user departments to monitor contract performance and resolve problems with the goods or services provided. For example, the Transportation Department has not been satisfied with cellular telephone service provided by Nextel and has taken preliminary steps to develop a request for proposal to replace the existing service. The Purchasing Department was not informed of problems and was not involved in documenting or evaluating contractor performance or in determining the appropriate course of action to take.

To ensure receipt of quality goods and services, effective organizations monitor contract terms and conditions and verify performance against the contract terms. While many organizations and districts rely on user departments as the initial point to monitor and document contractor performance and compliance, their process includes the involvement of the purchasing department in assisting the user department with assessing and documenting non-compliance and with developing and initiating corrective actions with the vendor.

Recommendation 47:

Establish and implement a districtwide contract monitoring process that involves the Purchasing Department.

Establishing a contract monitoring process with Purchasing Department involvement will include the development and implementation of formal contract monitoring procedures to better allow the district to monitor and evaluate the services it receives from vendors and contractors. The first step in establishing a contract monitoring function is to develop a comprehensive list of all contracts currently in effect, with the contractor's name, date of the contract, a brief description of the goods and/or services being provided, the amount and payment terms of the contract, the contract expiration date and the name and title of the GPISD employee in charge of administering and monitoring the contract.

The next step will be to work with user departments in the proper monitoring and documentation of contractor performance and the notification procedure to be followed when performance does not comply with the terms of the contract.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the assistant superintendent for Support Services and the chief operations officer to develop a contract monitoring process.	June 2003
2.	The assistant superintendent for Support Services and the chief operations officer obtain input from applicable department managers, the senior purchasing coordinator and other resources such as legal counsel as appropriate.	July 2003
3.	The assistant superintendent for Support Services and the chief operations officer develop a formal process and procedures for contract monitoring.	August - October 2003
4.	The assistant superintendent for Support Services and the chief operations officer present the proposed process and procedures to the superintendent for review and comment.	November 2003
5.	The assistant superintendent for Support Services and the chief operations officer revise the proposed process and procedures based on the superintendent's feedback and present the contract monitoring process and procedures to the board for approval.	December 2003
6.	The superintendent directs department managers and the senior purchasing coordinator to implement and monitor the contract monitoring process to ensure its effective implementation and enforcement.	January 2004 On going

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

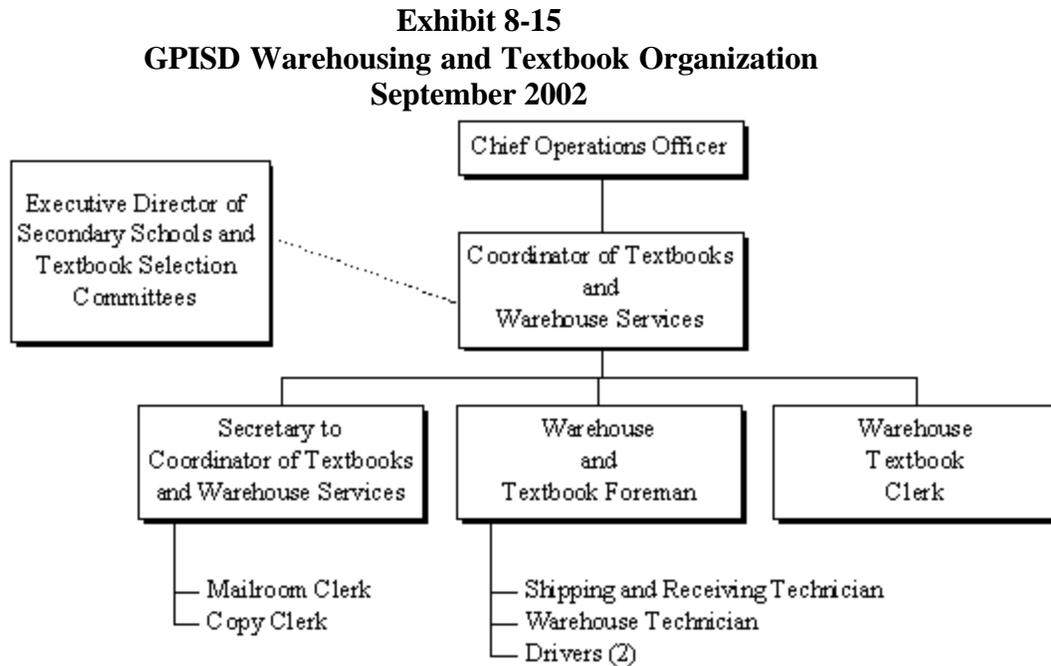
Chapter 8 PURCHASING

B. Warehousing and Textbook Operations

GPISD has two warehouse facilities. The new administration building on Woodforest Boulevard contains 7,602 square feet of space for the warehouse, copy and mailrooms, department storage bins and food service commodities. The district uses the old warehouse on Holland Street, with 6,071 square feet, for textbooks and bulk storage of paper, cleaning supplies and other items that turnover quickly.

The coordinator of Textbook and Warehouse Services ensures staff follow proper requisition procedures, oversees efficient distribution of textbooks, supplies, food service commodities, mail and large print jobs to schools and departments and maintains an accurate inventory of textbooks and goods. The coordinator also handles auctions of surplus materials for the district.

Exhibit 8-15 shows the organization of the warehousing and textbook functions.



Source: GPISD coordinator of Textbooks and Warehouse Services, September 2002.

The warehouse publishes an annual catalog that is also available online. GPISD employees enter purchase requisitions into the Delta software

system. For items stocked in the warehouse, a copy of the order becomes the pick ticket. A warehouse clerk fills the order, which warehouse drivers deliver to the requesting school or department. The warehouse receives most goods ordered from outside vendors, logging in the boxes and delivering them to the appropriate school or department. After inspecting and accepting the delivered goods, the staff that entered the original purchase requisition enters receipt of the product in the Delta system.

FINDING

GPISD analyzes usage data to keep appropriate levels of stock in its warehouse facilities. Walk-through inspections showed clean facilities with well-organized storage spaces that were not overly crowded.

The coordinator of Textbook and Warehouse Services analyzed past usage data and established automatic reorder points for popular catalog items. **Exhibit 8-16** presents examples of reorder points for selected GPISD warehouse items. Weekly stock reports identify items below or nearing the reorder point. Staff complete purchase orders to replenish stock.

Exhibit 8-16
Selected GPISD Warehouse Reorder Points
2001-02

Stock Item	Reorder Point	Reorder Quantity
Drawing paper, 12 X 18	40	100
Tagboard, manila, 18 X 24	70	150
Cumulative folders / 100 package	2,500	5,000
Chalkboard erasers	50	576
Hanging folders, letter size	20	50
Highlighters, yellow	200	1,000
Steno Pads	50	288

Source: GPISD Textbook and Warehouse Services Department.

The review team examined warehouse records for selected items for inventory turnover. **Exhibit 8-17** presents the number of sample items received at the warehouse and the number of items distributed from the warehouse during the time periods shown:

Exhibit 8-17
GPISD Warehouse Levels and Distributions for Selected Stock Items
2001-02

Item	Number Issued per Month (6 Month Average)	Number in Stock October 28, 2002	Number of Months Supply in Stock
AA batteries, 4-pack	221	686	3.1
Art paste	8	80	10
Duplicating Paper, 8 1/2 X 11	6,241	12,478	2.0
HP 51645A printer cartridge	147	72	0.5
Paper towels	172	0	On order
Scissors, 7 inch	91	67	0.7
8 tab dividers	205	274	1.3

Source: GPISD Textbook and Warehouse Services Department.

COMMENDATION

GPISD maintains appropriate quantities of goods in its warehouse facilities and reorders fast-moving items at predetermined points to ensure adequate stock without overstocking.

FINDING

GPISD implemented ongoing inventory procedures to safeguard and monitor warehouse stock. Warehouse staff conducts two complete manual inventories every year. In addition, each week, the warehouse secretary selects two items at random and has warehouse clerks count the items. Clerks are not told what stock level is shown in the Delta financial management system. If the manual count does not match the count shown in Delta, clerks recount the stock. While the district has not identified serious warehouse shortages, minor overages and shortages have been entered into the financial system with the approval of the coordinator of Textbooks and Warehouse Services. The cycle inventory counts increase the likelihood that serious discrepancies will be identified quickly and help keep the automated inventory counts in agreement with the actual inventory counts.

COMMENDATION

GPISD conducts weekly random cycle counts to monitor inventory levels and safeguard warehouse stock.

FINDING

GPISD ensures representation from teachers in the textbook selection process. The executive director of Secondary Schools oversees textbook selection. All schools are represented on the committees. Each elementary grade level nominates teachers and each secondary school subject area nominates teachers to serve on committees. Principals and the executive director of Secondary Schools approve the nominations and finalize committee assignments. Committee members must agree to follow textbook adoption procedures, attend committee meetings and textbook hearings. **Exhibit 8-18** presents selected steps in the GPISD textbook adoption timeline.

Exhibit 8-18 Selected Textbook Adoption Procedures and Timeline 2001-02

Activity	Date
Distribute Textbook Adoption Procedures to principals	October 11
Teacher nomination forms due to principals	October 23
Nomination forms returned to executive director of secondary schools	October 24
Superintendent requests board approval of district textbook committee	November 13
Notify subcommittee members of selection and board approval	November 15
Final date for publishers to ship samples to textbook committee members	December 1
First subcommittee meeting for each subject/course before this date, arranged by each chairperson	January 11
Second subcommittee meeting for each subject/course before this date, arranged by each chairperson	January 25
Third subcommittee meeting for each subject/course before this date, arranged by each chairperson; select textbooks for recommendation	February 15
Chairpersons submit subcommittee recommendations to	February 20

appropriate director	
Request board approval for subcommittee recommendations for all textbooks to be adopted	March 18
Give list of new textbooks to be adopted to director of Communications for publication in local newspapers and display in board room.	March 19

Source: GPISD Textbook and Warehouse Services Department.

Publishers may only contact subject area coordinators, not committee members or other district staff. Committee recommendations are decided by a majority vote; committee recommendations have never been overridden. The executive director of Secondary Schools and principals interviewed commented that this system has virtually eliminated teacher complaints about textbook selection.

COMMENDATION

GPISD involves teachers in the textbook selection process.

FINDING

GPISD reduced lost textbook costs through annual inventories, incentives for reducing costs, aggressive payment collection and purchase of used textbooks to replace lost ones. Through its efforts, GPISD reduced its costs by two-thirds during the past three-year period. **Exhibit 8-19** presents summary information on textbook costs from 1999-2000 through 2001-02.

Exhibit 8-19
GPISD Textbook Inventory History
1999-2000 through 2001-02

Year	Textbook Losses	Payments to TEA
1999-2000	\$71,527	\$36,638
2000-01	\$44,739	\$24,085
2001-02	\$21,216	\$9,113

Source: GPISD Textbook and Warehouse Services Department.

Assistant principals at each school oversee textbook inventory. Middle and high schools use the Hayes Textbook Inventory Program (TIP) software.

Elementary schools keep manual textbook records. School textbook coordinators and the coordinator of Textbooks and Warehouse Services inventory textbooks at each school at the end of each school year. The school textbook custodian then initiates efforts to locate lost books. Overages collected at one school are distributed to schools with corresponding shortages. The district sends letters home to parents of children who have not returned books. The TIP software generates letters for secondary schools while elementary schools prepare letters manually.

Charges GPISD collects from parents for lost textbooks are placed in the campus student activity account. Once the district finalizes the inventory process, it transfers funds from the school student activity accounts to the district student activity account to purchase replacement textbooks and pay TEA as required. The coordinator of Textbooks and Warehouse Services obtains bids from used textbook vendors and purchases used textbooks to replace lost books whenever possible.

In 2001-02, GPISD provided incentives for schools to reduce textbook losses. The district based awards on the level of the school, rewarding high schools with a textbook loss below \$500, middle schools with a textbook loss below \$250 and elementary schools with a textbook loss below \$50. **Exhibit 8-20** lists schools receiving financial awards, which were based on the number of employees at each school.

Exhibit 8-20
GPISD Textbook Loss Reduction Awards
2001-02

School	Award
North Shore High School	\$900
Woodland Middle School	\$300
Cobb Sixth Grade Center	\$500
Havard Elementary School	\$500
Jacinto City Elementary School	\$500
Macarthur Elementary School	\$400
Pyburn Elementary School	\$400
Tice Elementary School	\$500

Source: GPISD Textbook and Warehouse Services Department.

For 2001-02, one elementary school had no missing textbooks, and several others had under \$50 in lost textbooks. North Shore High School reduced

its lost textbook charges from more than \$18,000 in 1999-2000 to just \$474 in 2001-02.

COMMENDATION

GPISD has reduced its lost textbook costs through aggressive collection measures and an incentive program.

Chapter 9

FOOD SERVICE

This chapter reviews the food service operations of Galena Park Independent School District (GPISD) in the following sections:

- A. Staff Management and Development
- B. Meal Participation
- C. Financial Management and Operations

An effective school food service program provides students with nutritionally-balanced, appealing and reasonably-priced meals served in a safe, clean and accessible environment. Successful school food service programs achieve customer satisfaction and contain costs while complying with applicable federal, state and local board regulations and policies.

The Texas School Food Service Association (TSFSA), a professional organization for school food service employees, established *10 Standards of Excellence* for evaluating school food service programs. The standards identify the requirements needed for an effective food service program and include standards of planning, sanitation, compliance with procurement and regulatory requirements, nutritional practices and professional development.

BACKGROUND

GPISD's Student Nutrition Services Department participates in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP) and the After School Snack and Summer Feeding federal programs. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) administers these programs for all state schools. GPISD annually contracts with TEA through the School Lunch and Breakfast Agreement to participate in these programs. As part of the contract, TEA coordinates review of GPISD annually. The agency conducted GPISD's last coordinated review in March 2002.

To participate in the NSLP and SBP, schools must offer free or reduced-price breakfasts and lunches to eligible children. Family income levels determine a child's eligibility. Children from families with incomes at or below 130 percent of the federal poverty level qualify for free meals. Children from families with incomes between 130 and 185 percent of the poverty level qualify for reduced-price meals. Schools that participate in the NSLP and SBP receive donated commodities and cash reimbursements for each reimbursable meal served. A reimbursable breakfast or lunch consists of meat, bread, milk, fruit and vegetables in specified amounts. The meals served for reimbursement must comply with recommendations

of the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, jointly developed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

In addition to the federal programs, Student Nutrition Services also operates and manages snack bars selling a la carte items at its secondary schools; a catering program; an employee cafeteria located in the district administration building; and concession sales for events held at the district's football stadium.

Since 1997-98, GPISD's Student Nutrition Services Department has steadily increased the number of meals served annually and now serves more than 2.9 million meals and snacks each year. **Exhibit 9-1** shows the meals served for the five-year time period from 1997-98 through 2001-02. During this period, the district served 28.2 more breakfasts and 19.8 percent more lunches. Participation rates show that larger numbers of students are participating in the meal programs daily.

Exhibit 9-1
GPISD Student Nutrition Services Department Meals Served
1997-98 through 2001-02

Meal	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	Percent Change 1997-98 to 2001-02
Lunches	1,687,726	1,769,834	1,846,061	2,000,875	2,022,363	19.8%
Breakfast	724,603	756,218	864,738	935,345	929,026	28.2%
After School Snacks	N/A	N/A	73,138	56,555	88,918	21.6%*
Average Daily Attendance	17,035	17,492	17,382	17,715	18,072	6.1%
Average Daily Lunch Participation Rate	56.3%	57.2%	59.7%	63.8%	65.1%	8.8%**
Average Daily Breakfast Participation	24.2%	24.4%	25.4%	29.8%	29.9%	5.7%**

Rate						
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*Source: TEA Child Nutrition Programs District Profiles, 1997-98 through 2001-02.
 * After school snacks percent change is from 1999-2000 to 2001-02.*

The district serves reimbursable meals at 19 cafeterias located in 11 elementary schools, three middle schools, a shared elementary/middle school, one grade 6 school and three high schools. The secondary schools a la carte snack bars also sell snacks. Three district cafeterias prepare meals for the district's alternative schools and programs that do not have separate cafeterias. North Shore High School's cafeteria prepares meals for the Accelerated Center for Education (ACE), PEP and Center for Success alternative schools and programs. Cunningham Middle School's cafeteria prepares meals for another of the district's alternative schools, High Point High School. Galena Park Elementary School's cafeteria provides meals to the Early Head Start program. The district enforces a closed campus policy that prohibits students from leaving school grounds for meals at all its schools.

GPISD's Student Nutrition Services uses the approved "offer-versus-serve" method to serve students. This method reduces waste by allowing students to select from menu items while still fulfilling the reimbursable meal requirements of NSLP and SBP. Students choose items offered rather than have a pre-selected number of items served that might not appeal to them and ultimately be discarded. The district also uses a three-week cycle menu-a menu that repeats items during a cycle or period of time-for its elementary breakfasts and elementary and secondary lunches. The district may alter the menu to account for the timing and amount of donated commodities.

Student Nutrition Services uses an automated point-of-sale (POS) system from PCS Revenue Control Systems, Inc. to process its applications for free and reduced-price meals, analyze nutritional content of recipes and menus and track and report its food service sales and student participation data. Student Nutrition Services issues all students account numbers, which they enter into keypads located on the serving line. By using account numbers, the district treats each student the same and the district maintains the confidentiality of a student's eligibility for paid, free or reduced-price meals.

Students and their families complete annual applications to determine their eligibility for free and reduced-price meals. The district includes meal application letters in the student information packets on the first day of school. Students return the completed applications to teachers, the school's front office or sometimes the cafeteria. Schools forward the completed

applications to the Student Nutrition Services where they are reviewed for completeness and accuracy. If the application is complete and correct, the Student Nutrition Services secretary processes it and updates the POS system to reflect the information on the application. Then, the district mails the parents a letter about the status of their application. In 2002-03, GPISD identified more than 90 percent of eligible applicants.

Local, federal and state revenue sources fund GPISD's food service operations. Funding sources include: federal and state reimbursements for the NSLP and SBP; after school snack and summer feeding programs; a la carte sales; adult meal payments; and catering fees from special events and concession stands. The largest revenue source results from federal reimbursement. **Exhibit 9-2** compares federal revenue trends for GPISD and its peers from 1996-97 through 2000-01.

Exhibit 9-2
Food Service Federal Revenue
GPISD and Peer Districts
1996-97 through 2000-01

District	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	Percent Change From 1996-97
Aldine	\$10,274,028	\$11,066,883	\$13,268,027	\$14,293,470	\$15,330,267	49.2%
Galena Park	\$3,136,474	\$3,382,947	\$3,569,759	\$3,955,208	\$4,372,991	39.4%
Humble	\$1,231,983	\$1,333,918	\$1,474,620	\$1,537,779	\$1,606,730	30.4%
Goose Creek Consolidated	\$2,961,682	\$3,179,300	\$3,357,996	\$3,558,360	\$3,733,260	26.1%
Pasadena	\$7,565,065	\$7,541,092	\$8,083,412	\$8,729,058	\$8,617,981	13.9%
Peer Average	\$5,508,190	\$5,780,298	\$6,546,014	\$7,029,667	\$7,322,060	32.9%

Source: TEA, F33 Reports, 1996-97 through 2000-01.

During the five-year period, Aldine had the largest percentage increase in federal revenues with 49.2 percent followed by GPISD at 39.4 percent. Pasadena had the lowest increase at 13.9 percent. GPISD's rate of increase during the period exceeded the peer district average of 32.9 percent by 6.5 percentage points.

Exhibit 9-3 shows that GPISD's Student Nutrition Services operations have been self-supporting for the past three years. Student Nutrition Services generated a profit for all three years and its contribution to the fund balance more than doubled from 1998-99 to 2000-01. The department's ending fund balance in 2000-01 was approximately \$2.3 million. During the three-year period, revenues increased 19.7 percent while expenditures increased 16.1 percent.

Exhibit 9-3
GPISD Student Nutrition Services Department Revenue and Expenditures
1998-99 through 2000-01

Revenue and Expenditure Categories	1998-99 Actual	1999-2000 Actual	2000-01 Actual	Percent Change 1998-99 to 2000-01
Local	\$2,188,405	\$ 2,367,017	\$2,544,164	16.3%
State	\$59,411	\$62,957	\$64,905	9.2%
Federal	\$3,887,146	\$4,239,814	\$4,737,456	21.9%
Total Revenues	\$ 6,134,962	\$6,669,788	\$7,346,525	19.7%
Payroll	\$2,792,846	\$2,964,451	\$3,252,382	16.5%
Contracted Services	\$185,220	\$287,784	\$302,115	63.1%
Food and Supplies	\$2,836,810	\$2,956,310	\$3,197,477	12.7%
Other Operating Expenditures	\$18,278	\$18,832	\$20,647	13%
Capital Outlay	\$57,741	\$98,732	\$64,629	11.9%
Total Expenditures*	\$5,890,891	\$6,326,068	\$6,837,197	16.1%
Net Profit/Loss	\$244,071	\$343,720	\$509,328	108.7%
Fund Balance (Beginning)	\$1,197,397	\$1,441,468	\$1,785,188	49.1%
Fund Balance (Ending)	\$1,441,468	\$1,785,188	\$2,294,516	59.2%

Source: GPISD Annual Financial and Compliance Reports, 1998-99 through 2000-01 for total revenues, total expenditures and fund balance information. Expenditures by

category information from TEA, Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) 1998-99 through 2000-01.

**Note: Expenditure category information from PEIMS may not sum to total expenditures from annual financial report because of rounding and other differences.*

The district has a central warehouse located in the administration building. The district uses a portion of the warehouse to temporarily store frozen commodities until they are distributed to individual cafeterias. Student Nutrition Services has a refrigerated delivery truck with a lift gate to deliver items once a week to individual schools. Vendors make weekly deliveries to schools. Milk vendors deliver daily; bread vendors bring four deliveries a week. Produce vendors deliver once or twice a week depending on the size of the school.

In addition to a central warehouse, the administration building also contains a multi-purpose cafeteria kitchen area. This kitchen not only prepares food for the employee cafeteria, but also serves as the preparation and staging location for the Student Nutrition Services catering program. Student Nutrition Services uses the kitchen as a laboratory for demonstrations and taste testing of new vendor food products.

The district does not employ a dietitian to perform nutritional analysis of its menus. Instead the director of Student Nutrition Services uses a module of the POS system to analyze the nutritional content of individual recipes and menus. Although the district uses disposables at its secondary schools and at the administration building, it mostly uses the conventional food preparation method. The conventional method includes the preparation of some foods from raw ingredients on the premises, the use of some bakery bread and prepared pizza and the washing of dishes.

Chapter 9

FOOD SERVICE

A. Staff Management and Development

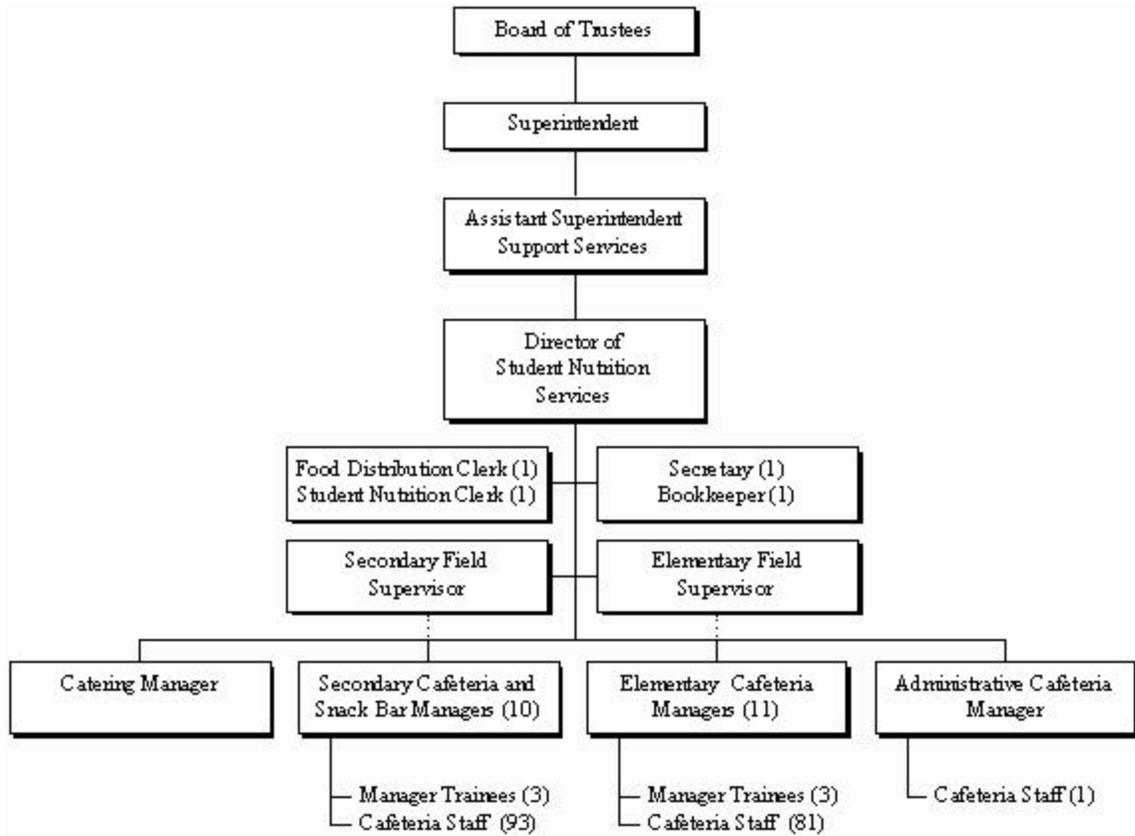
As shown in **Exhibit 9-4**, the director of Student Nutrition Services heads the department and reports to the assistant superintendent for Support Services. The director of Student Nutrition Services, hired by GPISD in 1996, has a degree in business administration and 20 years of school food service experience.

The director of Student Nutrition Services supervises 10 central office staff, including the elementary and secondary field supervisors, catering manager, administrative office building cafeteria manager and its single staff member, one secretary, two clerks and a bookkeeper. The director also supervises cafeteria managers at each of the district's school cafeterias. The secondary and elementary field supervisors provide supervisory support to the director of Student Nutrition Services by conducting weekly, unscheduled reviews of the cafeterias under their supervision to monitor temperature, food quality and serving.

Exhibit 9-4

GPISD Student Nutrition Services Department Organization

2002-03



Source: GPISD Student Nutrition Services Department.

In 2002-03, there are 176 cafeteria staff members at 19 school cafeterias and the cafeteria in the administration building. **Exhibit 9-5** shows the department staffing by cafeteria.

Exhibit 9-5
GPISD Student Nutrition Services Department Staffing by Cafeteria
2002-03

School	Manager	Manager Trainee	Cafeteria Staff (Specialists and Aides)	Total
Administration Café			2	2
Cimarron Elementary	1		9	10
Cloverleaf Elementary	1	1	9	11
Cobb Sixth Grade Campus	1		12	13

Cunningham Middle School	1		9	10
Galena Park Elementary	1		7	8
Galena Park High	1		7	8
Galena Park High Snack Bar	1		6	7
Galena Park Middle	1		10	11
Green Valley Elementary	1	1	6	8
Havard Elementary	1		7	8
Jacinto City Elementary	1	1	7	9
MacArthur Elementary	1		7	8
North Shore Elementary	1		8	9
North Shore High	1		11	12
North Shore High Snack Bar	1		6	7
North Shore Middle School	1	1	12	14
North Shore Senior High	1	1	12	14
Purple Sage Elementary	1		7	8
Pyburn Elementary	1		7	8
Tice Elementary	1		7	8
Woodland Acres Elementary and Middle School*	1	1	8	10
Totals	21	6	176	203

Source: GPISD director of Student Nutrition Services.

*Note: Woodland Acres Elementary and Middle School share a kitchen.

Most cafeteria staff is full time, working an average of 6.5 hours per day. As shown in **Exhibit 9-5**, there is a manager at each cafeteria and a manager trainee at three elementary and three secondary schools. Secondary schools have the largest workforces.

Exhibit 9-6 compares GPISD management staffing to that of its peer districts: Aldine, Goose Creek Consolidated, Pasadena and Humble ISDs.

Exhibit 9-6 **Student Nutrition Services Department Management Staffing**

**GPISD and Peer Districts
2002-03**

Position	Aldine	Pasadena	Galena Park	Humble	Goose Creek Consolidated
Director	1	1	1	1	1
Assistant Director	1	1		1	2
Area Supervisors	5	4	2	2	2
Cafeteria Managers	60	50	21	30	21
Assistant Cafeteria Managers/Manager Trainees	5	4	6	4	15
Catering Manager	1	0	1	0	1
Totals	73	60	31	38	42
Director/Assistant Director to Cafeteria Manager Ratio	1:30	1:25	1:21	1:15	1:7
Area Supervisor to Manager Ratio	1:12	1:12.5	1:10.5	1:15	1:10.5

Source: GPISD peer district surveys, September 2002.

GPISD management to staffing ratios is comparable to its peers. GPISD has the third highest director/assistant director to cafeteria manager ratio at one to 21, behind Aldine ISD's ratio of one to 30 and Pasadena ISD's ratio of one to 25. GPISD is tied with Goose Creek Consolidated ISD with the lowest area supervisor to manager ratio at one to 10.5. Humble ISD has the highest ratio at one to 15.

FINDING

GPISD has an effective manager trainee program that provides a pool of trained individuals to fill vacancies and cover manager absences. The manager trainee program, which is designed to train staff who want to advance, was in effect before the arrival of the current director of Student Nutrition Services in 1996. Staff must apply to be accepted as a manager trainee. To be eligible, staff must have a level two TSFSA certification and be pursuing a level three certification. Student Nutrition Services assigns trainees to a cafeteria after they are selected. The director of

Student Nutrition Services upgraded the position in the summer of 2001 so that it would be comparable to a snack bar manager.

The director of Student Nutrition Services said that the department assigns trainees to elementary and secondary schools and snack bars. The number of trainees each year may vary. The director of Student Nutrition Services reviews the number of managers eligible for retirement and may adjust the number of trainees. Cafeteria manager teach their trainees to perform manager duties such as completion of production sheets; use of the computer POS system to generate reports; preparation of daily deposits; and ordering commodities and supplies. The department rotates the trainees annually so that they gain a broader understanding of different types of cafeterias.

As a result of this program, GPISD has been able to provide trained, experienced staff to fill in when managers are absent because of vacation or illness. The program also provides a pool of trained and readily available staff that can be promoted quickly to fill vacant manager positions. This maintains productivity and continuity in the food service operations. Ten of the 21 managers in 2002-03 began as manager trainees.

COMMENDATION

GPISD's manager trainee program provides trained, experienced and readily available staff who provide backup for absent managers and fill vacant manager positions.

FINDING

The Student Nutrition Services Department uses monetary incentives to increase employee productivity and reduce employee absence. The director of Student Nutrition Services implemented two monetary incentives, the superior attendance incentive and the safety incentive, which reduce employee absenteeism.

The director of Student Nutrition Services began the district's superior attendance program in 1997-98. The initial program provided a monetary incentive of \$25 and a certificate to recognize employees who missed one day or less each year. The school board authorized the director of Student Nutrition Services to implement the incentive as long as there were sufficient food service funds to pay for the program.

The director of Student Nutrition Services analyzes the program annually. In 2001-02 the director increased the award to a \$35 incentive plus a certificate. The program's awards seem to improve employee attendance. The majority of cafeteria managers interviewed by the review team said

that absenteeism was not a problem and several of the managers identified the superior attendance award as a positive incentive to promote attendance.

The director of Student Nutrition Services created a similar monetary incentive program to focus attention on workplace safety. The district had a safety program in place when the director was hired in 1996 that awarded pins and other small prizes for safety. In 1997 the director of Student Nutrition Services proposed adding a monetary incentive of a \$25 gift certificate to employees every three months if the employee had no accidents and successfully completed a safety-training program every three years. In addition to the individual award, cafeterias can win a plaque if they stay accident free for a year.

The director of Student Nutrition Services worked with the director of Safety and Risk Management and gained the approval of the director of Finance and Budget to offer the incentive. Volunteers from each cafeteria became safety captains with the responsibility of attending monthly safety committee meetings and informing the cafeteria staff about the safety program. During the first years of implementation, Student Nutrition Services reviewed the program and found that individuals were not reporting accidents in order to stay eligible for the award. To address this, Student Nutrition Services conducted an employee education program to remind employees to report all accidents. The department also altered its program so that all employees who had no accidents requiring a doctor's visit could receive the incentive. Department staff feels that the problem has been addressed. Cafeteria managers interviewed by the review team said all accidents are reported.

The Student Nutrition Services Department budget for the safety program in 2002-03 is approximately \$15,000. The director of Student Nutrition Services said that the department increased the incentive budget in response to the larger number of employees who qualify for the award.

The program is justifiable since it reduces the costs associated with employee absence due to accidents, including the costs of substitutes and workers' compensation claims. When an employee is absent for more than five days because of an accident; the employee receives disability pay equal to two thirds of his or her salary. The cafeteria must also hire a substitute to fill in for the employee resulting in additional cost. The per-employee cost of the incentive is less than the cost of employing a substitute for two days.

Since 1998-99 more than half of the district's cafeterias have been accident free annually and the department experiences fewer than 12 accidents a year that require a doctor visit.

COMMENDATION

The GPISD Student Nutrition Services Department monetary incentives that promote employee safety and attendance increase staff productivity and decrease departmental costs by reducing employee absence.

FINDING

The Student Nutrition Services Department offers an incentive plan that promotes professional development and certification. GPISD's Voluntary Educational Incentive Plan provides hourly employees with an additional 20 cents per hour for each additional level of certification achieved above the level required by the employee's job category. For example, the Student Nutrition Specialist I position requires a TSFSA level one certification. An employee in this position who earns a TSFSA level three certification would earn an additional 40 cents an hour. Managers receive \$360 yearly for each additional level of certification they earn above job requirements.

Although the incentive plan existed prior to the director of Student Nutrition Services' employment in 1996, the qualifications and eligibility for the incentive were unclear. The director of Student Nutrition Services formed a committee of department staff in 1997-98 to study the issue and make recommendations. The committee rewrote the job descriptions for Student Nutrition Services staff and tied the incentive to the education and certification requirements in the revised job descriptions. The director of Student Nutrition Services reviewed and approved the revised job descriptions and proposed incentives and submitted them to the Human Resource Services Department for review and concurrence. The director of Student Nutrition Services reviews the plan annually and proposes adjustments to the plan based on state certification requirements, market factors and budget availability.

Training is key to a successful school food service program. According to *School Foodservice Management for the 21st Century*, the advantages of training include: low employee turnover and absenteeism; fewer accidents; lower production costs; high sanitation habits; high morale; and increased productivity. Managers interviewed by the review team spoke of the incentive program and its positive effect on employee training. Approximately 21 percent, or 43 of 203 employees have achieved certification above the requirements identified in their job description.

COMMENDATION

GPISD Student Nutrition Services Department's educational incentive plan results in staff obtaining additional professional development and certification, increasing productivity.

FINDING

GPISD uses an employee handbook with Spanish translations of key policies to effectively communicate department information and employee performance expectations to both English and Spanish speaking staff. The GPISD Student Nutrition Services Department Staff Handbook is updated annually. The manual contains the Student Nutrition Services Department's mission statement and employee job descriptions. It also outlines policies and procedures on a wide range of topics including: hiring, use and evaluation of substitutes; safety and sanitation requirements; dress and attendance standards; payroll and hiring procedures; and procedures for personnel actions such as transfers, promotions and hearing complaints. The handbook also contains a department organization chart, cafeteria manager contact information, the district school calendar and a map showing the location of district schools.

The bilingual format of the employee manual makes it accessible to most of the department's employees.

The director of Student Nutrition Services reviews the handbook with employees during employee in-service training each year. To promote accountability, employees sign the acknowledgement form in the handbook to certify that they have received the handbook, understand the handbook policies and understand that repeated violations of the policies will be cause for disciplinary action or termination.

The handbook ensures that policies are consistently communicated. This reduces misunderstandings and increases staff compliance.

COMMENDATION

The GPISD Student Nutrition Services Department Handbook communicates employee expectations and department policies and procedures to all food service staff in English and Spanish.

FINDING

Student Nutrition Services conducts an annual logo design contest that promotes teamwork and increases employee morale. The department uses the winning logo on department publications and uniforms for the year. All department employees can participate in the contest, started by the director of Student Nutrition Services in 1996-97. After the late April

deadline, Student Nutrition Services managers meet and select the winning design. The department announces the winner at a banquet and awards the winner a \$25 gift certificate and a plaque in May.

The logo contest promotes creativity, encourages teamwork, increases morale through employee recognition and provides Student Nutrition Services with a unifying theme for the year.

COMMENDATION

The GPISD Student Nutrition Services Department logo design contest increases employee morale and teamwork through employee recognition and a unifying yearly theme.

FINDING

GPISD adopted a district level Meal per Labor Hour (MPLH) formula, but does not have specific standards for each cafeteria to meet. GPISD tries to maintain an average of 15 to 17 MPLH at each cafeteria. The director of Student Nutrition Services sends out MPLH calculation sheets to cafeteria managers on a monthly basis to monitor performance. The director of Student Nutrition Services uses the calculation sheets to continuously evaluate individual cafeteria performance against the district standard to determine efficiency and to make staffing decisions. The department uses this analysis to allocate and transfer staff.

MPLH is a standard used to measure the productivity of school districts, hospitals, restaurants and other food services operations. MPLH is the number of meal equivalents served in a given period divided by the total hours worked during that period. Meal equivalents are lunches plus an equivalent number of breakfast and a la carte sales. **Exhibit 9-7** shows the conversion rates used to calculate GPISD meal equivalents.

Exhibit 9-7
Conversion Rate for GPISD Meal Equivalents
2002-03

Category	Conversion Rate
Lunch Meal	One lunch equals one equivalent
Breakfast Meals	Two breakfasts equal one equivalent
A la Carte Sales	Every two dollars in sales equals one equivalent

Source: GPISD director of Student Nutrition Services.

Exhibit 9-8 outlines the MPLH industry standards that the review team used to evaluate GPISD's staffing. When the MPLH rate is lower than the recommended rate, either the number of meals served is low or the number of hours worked is high. The number of hours worked is a function of two controllable variables: the number of staff employed and the hours worked per worker. To achieve the recommended MPLH, the food service operation would have to increase the number of meals served or reduce the number of staff or the hours worked by each staff member.

**Exhibit 9-8
Recommended Meals per Labor Hour**

Number of Equivalents	Meals per Labor Hour (MPLH)			
	Conventional System		Convenience System	
	Low Productivity	High Productivity	Low Productivity	High Productivity
Up to 100	8	10	10	12
101 - 150	9	11	11	13
151 - 200	10-11	12	12	14
202 - 250	12	14	14	15
251 - 300	13	15	15	16
301 - 400	14	16	16	18
401 - 500	14	17	18	19
501 - 600	15	17	18	19
601 - 700	16	18	19	20
701 - 800	17	19	20	22
801 - 900	18	20	21	23
901 up	19	21	22	23

Source: School Foodservice Management for the 21st Century, 5th Edition.

Exhibit 9-9 compares GPISD's September 2002 MPLH for each school kitchen to the conventional system industry standard. The review team used the conventional system to evaluate GPISD's productivity because it is the method most used by GPISD kitchens. Conventional preparation requires more staff than convenience preparation because it uses fewer processed items with more items, such as raw vegetables and homemade breads, prepared from scratch. GPISD calculates its MPLH by taking the

average meal equivalents served and dividing it by the average hours worked.

Exhibit 9-9
GPISD Meals per Labor Hour Comparison
September 2002

School	Average Meal Equivalents Served	Average Hours Worked	GPISD MPLH	Industry MPLH Standard	MPLH Variance +/-
Cimarron Elementary	1,095	68.5	16.0	19	(3.0)
Cloverleaf Elementary	1,331	78	17.1	19	(1.9)
Cobb Sixth Grade Campus	1,258	81	15.5	19	(3.5)
Cunningham Middle School*	1,076	71.5	15.0	19	(4.0)
Galena Park Elementary**	678	52.5	12.9	16	(3.1)
Galena Park High/Snack Bar	1,518	103.5	14.7	19	(4.3)
Galena Park Middle	1,070	74.5	14.4	19	(4.6)
Green Valley Elementary	809	55	14.7	18	(3.3)
Havard Elementary	838	54.5	15.4	18	(2.6)
Jacinto City Elementary	875	60.5	14.5	18	(3.5)
MacArthur Elementary	714	51	14.0	17	(3.0)
North Shore Elementary	929	58.5	15.9	19	(3.1)
North Shore High/Snack Bar***	2,001	122	16.4	19	(2.6)
North Shore Middle School	1,254	80.5	15.6	19	(3.4)
North Shore Senior High	1,571	98	16.0	19	(3.0)
Purple Sage Elementary	841	54.5	15.4	18	(2.6)
Pyburn Elementary	822	53	15.5	18	(2.5)
Tice Elementary	872	55	15.9	18	(2.1)

Woodland Acres Elementary and Middle School****	949	67.5	14.1	19	(4.9)
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Source: GPISD director of Student Nutrition Services. Industry standards are from School Foodservice Management for the 21st Century, 5th Edition.

**Includes meals prepared for High Point High School.*

***Includes meals prepared for Early Head Start Program.*

****Includes meals prepared for ACE.*

*****Woodland Acres Elementary/Middle School is combined because they share a kitchen.*

GPISD has an internal standard of 15 to 17 MPLH, which has been adjusted from industry MPLH for factors that affect productivity. For example, inefficient cafeteria design limits the efficiency of kitchen staff. The shared kitchen, but separate serving lines, at Woodland Acres Elementary and Middle School force the district to staff both serving lines for cafeterias adjacent to one another, but separated by the shared kitchen. At Galena Park High School, the location of the snack bar down the hallway from the cafeteria also requires additional staffing.

The district also chose to increase the number of serving lines to speed service to students. This decision requires additional staffing and reduces the district MPLH. Another reason for the adjustment to the industry MPLH is the extra serving lines at a number of schools that were created by converting dish window space, the area where dirty trays are returned to a serving area.

Exhibit 9-10 compares GPISD MPLH to an adjusted standard of 16 MPLH. The review team used the adjusted MPLH standard to compensate for the physical limitations of GPISD's cafeterias. The review team used a separate standard of 15 MPLH for two schools-Galena Park Elementary and MacArthur Elementary-because these cafeterias serve fewer meals.

Exhibit 9-10 shows that, overall, the department works close to the expected efficiency. Four cafeterias meet or exceed the standard. Seven cafeterias are within one MPLH of the standard. Of the remaining cafeterias, Galena Park Elementary has the lowest MPLH at 12.9 followed by MacArthur Elementary at 14 and Woodland Acres Elementary and Middle Schools at 14.1.

Exhibit 9-10
GPISD Meals per Labor Hour Comparison to Internal District
Standards
September 2002

School	Average Meal Equivalents Served	Average Hours Worked	GPISD MPLH	District MPLH Standard	MPLH Variance +/-
Cimarron Elementary	1,095	68.5	16.0	16	0.0
Cloverleaf Elementary	1,331	78	17.1	16	1.1
Cobb Sixth Grade Campus	1,258	81	15.5	16	(0.5)
Cunningham Middle School*	1,076	71.5	15.0	16	(1.0)
Galena Park Elementary**	678	52.5	12.9	15	(2.1)
Galena Park High/Snack Bar	1,518	103.5	14.7	16	(1.3)
Galena Park Middle	1,070	74.5	14.4	16	(1.6)
Green Valley Elementary	809	55	14.7	16	(1.3)
Havard Elementary	838	54.5	15.4	16	(0.6)
Jacinto City Elementary	875	60.5	14.5	16	(1.5)
MacArthur Elementary	714	51	14.0	15	(1.0)
North Shore Elementary	929	58.5	15.9	16	(0.1)
North Shore High/Snack Bar***	2,001	122	16.4	16	0.4
North Shore Middle School	1,254	80.5	15.6	16	(0.4)
North Shore Senior High	1,571	98	16.0	16	0.0
Purple Sage Elementary	841	54.5	15.4	16	(0.6)
Pyburn Elementary	822	53	15.5	16	(0.5)
Tice Elementary	872	55	15.9	16	(0.1)
Woodland Acres Elementary and Middle	949	67.5	14.1	16	(1.9)

School****					
Totals	20,501	1,339.5	15.2	15.9	(0.7)

Source: GPISD director of Student Nutrition Services.

*Includes meals prepared for High Point High School.

**Includes meals prepared for Early Head Start Program.

***Includes meals prepared for ACE.

****Woodland Acres Elementary/Middle School is combined because they share a kitchen.

The review team used the difference between the standard and the actual MPLH to calculate the number of excess labor hours each school uses.

Exhibit 9-11 compares the number of hours worked at each GPISD cafeteria to the labor standard set by the adjusted MPLH. Districtwide, GPISD uses 52.1 more hours than the standard. Individually, six cafeterias either exceeded the standard by using fewer hours than allowed by the standard or were within one hour of the standard.

Of the remaining cafeterias, four were significantly higher than the standard. Galena Park High used 8.6 hours more than the standard followed by Woodland Acres Elementary and Middle Schools at 8.2, Galena Park Middle School at 7.6 and Galena Park Elementary School at 7.3.

Exhibit 9-11
GPISD Comparison of Actual Hours Worked
To the Adjusted Standard
September 2002

School	Average Meal Equivalents Served	GPISD Average Hours Worked	Allowed Hours at 16 MPLH+	Hours Above/ Below Standard
Cimarron Elementary	1,095	68.5	68.4	0.1
Cloverleaf Elementary	1,331	78	83.2	(5.2)
Cobb Sixth Grade Campus	1,258	81	78.6	2.4
Cunningham Middle School*	1,076	71.5	67.3	4.2
Galena Park Elementary** +	678	52.5	45.2	7.3

Galena Park High/Snack Bar	1,518	103.5	94.9	8.6
Galena Park Middle	1,070	74.5	66.9	7.6
Green Valley Elementary	809	55	50.6	4.4
Havard Elementary	838	54.5	52.4	2.1
Jacinto City Elementary	875	60.5	54.7	5.8
MacArthur Elementary +	714	51	47.6	3.4
North Shore Elementary	929	58.5	58.1	0.4
North Shore High/Snack Bar***	2,001	122	125.1	(3.1)
North Shore Middle School	1,254	80.5	78.4	2.1
North Shore Senior High	1,571	98	98.2	(0.2)
Purple Sage Elementary	841	54.5	52.6	1.9
Pyburn Elementary	822	53	51.4	1.6
Tice Elementary	872	55	54.5	0.5
Woodland Acres Elementary and Middle School****	949	67.5	59.3	8.2
Totals	20,501	1,339.5	1,287.4	52.1

Source: GPISD director of Student Nutrition Services.

**Includes meals prepared for High Point High School.*

***Includes meals prepared for Early Head Start Program.*

****Includes meals prepared for ACE.*

*****Woodland Acres Elementary and Middle School are combined because they share a kitchen.*

+Galena Park Elementary and MacArthur Elementary Allowed Hours are based on 15 MPLH because of low meal equivalents served.

GPISD began using MPLH as a tool for measuring productivity, determining efficiency and making adjustments to staffing in 1996. While GPISD monitors MPLH and has adopted standards at a district level, it does not have specific targets for individual schools. Efficient school districts set targets for individual schools and make adjustments to meet

the targets. By using the MPLH standard, school districts identify appropriate staffing levels and contain labor costs.

Since 1995 Spring Branch ISD has used MPLH as a tool for measuring productivity and to make changes necessary to increase productivity. San Angelo ISD used MPLH to reduce 11 part-time positions by approximately four hours each since 1994-95. This change saves the district more than \$41,000 annually in salary costs. In another example, Comal ISD Student Nutrition Services Department's MPLH analysis led it to reduce seven full-time staff in August 2000 through attrition. Comal ISD estimates that it will save approximately \$575,000 over five years.

Recommendation 48:

Adopt individual cafeteria staffing standards, continue to monitor performance against the standard and develop a plan to bring staffing levels to adopted standards.

The director of Student Nutrition Services should identify specific targets for individual schools based on unique physical layouts and number of serving lines maintained. The department should use these targets to create a plan to achieve the target MPLH at each cafeteria. Department staff needs to continuously monitor each cafeteria's MPLH to keep the cafeterias performing at their target MPLH.

Since MPLH is calculated by taking total meal equivalents divided by the number of hours used to generate those equivalents, the district can achieve its standards through a combination of labor reductions and/or increased revenues. Increasing productivity to an acceptable level can be achieved by reducing hours worked for some or all cafeteria staff or eliminating staffing levels through attrition or termination at cafeterias that do not meet the adopted standard. In addition to labor reductions, the strategies should also focus on ways to increase the number of meals served at cafeterias that are below the MPLH standard.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Student Nutrition Services works with cafeteria managers to identify MPLH standards for each cafeteria and to develop a plan to increase productivity and reduce labor to meet the standards.	April-May 2003
2.	The director of Student Nutrition Services presents the standards and the plan to the assistant superintendent for Support Services for adoption.	May 2003
3.	The director of Student Nutrition Services and cafeteria	August 2003

	managers implement the plan for improving productivity and adjust labor to meet the adopted standards.	
4.	The director of Student Nutrition Services and cafeteria managers analyze each school's MPLH performance monthly to evaluate productivity and make adjustments based on the analysis.	August 2003 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

The district can realize annual savings of \$87,606 by meeting its MPLH targets. The review team calculated the savings based on its plan of reducing staffing levels by 52.1 hours each day for 177 serving days. The review team used the department's average salary of \$9.50 an hour for non-managerial staff for the calculation ($\$9.50 \times 52.1 \text{ hours a day} \times 177 \text{ serving days} = \$87,606$). The district can eliminate the extra hours by closing department positions, reducing staff hours or a combination of both.

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Adopt individual cafeteria staffing standards, continue to monitor performance against the standard and develop a plan to bring staffing levels to adopted standards.	\$87,606	\$87,606	\$87,606	\$87,606	\$87,606

Chapter 9

FOOD SERVICE

B. Meal Participation

Increasing student meal participation benefits a school district not only because it ensures that students receive properly balanced, nutritious meals to perform well, but also because it increases the amount of federal reimbursements the district receives.

As in many districts, a higher percentage of GPISD students participate in the lunch program than in the breakfast program. In addition to its lunch serving lines, GPISD operates snack bars and sells a la carte items in its elementary and secondary schools.

GPISD receives reimbursements through the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program for student lunch and breakfast costs. The government designated several district schools as severe need schools, making them eligible for severe need breakfast reimbursement. Schools qualify as severe need schools if they serve at least 40 percent of meals to children eligible for free or reduced-price meals. In 2002-03, districts that served 60 percent or more free and reduced-price lunches in 2000-01 receive a 2-cent supplemental lunch reimbursement.

Exhibit 9-12 shows the federal reimbursement rates to participating districts for 2002-03.

Exhibit 9-12
Reimbursement Rates
2002-03

Program	Full Price	Reduced-Price	Free
Reimbursable Lunches	\$0.20	\$1.74	\$2.14
Reimbursable Breakfasts	\$0.22	\$0.87	\$1.17
Breakfast Severe Needs (additional)		\$0.23	\$0.23
After school snacks	\$0.05	\$0.29	\$0.58

Source: TEA memorandum dated July 8, 2002.

In addition to federal reimbursements, Student Nutrition Services receives revenue from paid student and adult meals. As shown in **Exhibit 9-13**, GPISD's meal prices compare favorably to those of its peers. GPISD ties

with Goose Creek Consolidated for the second lowest student breakfast prices at \$0.65, almost one half that of Humble at \$1.20. GPISD has the second lowest elementary school lunch price at \$1.35 and the lowest secondary student lunch price at \$1.45. Humble has the highest elementary student lunch at \$1.85 and Pasadena has the highest secondary student lunch price at \$2.25 for high school students.

Exhibit 9-13
Meal Price Comparison
GPISD and Peer Districts
2002-03

District	GPISD	Aldine	Goose Creek Consolidated	Humble	Pasadena
Elementary Student Breakfast	\$0.65	\$0.50	\$0.65	\$1.20	\$1.00
Secondary Student Breakfast	\$0.65	\$0.60	\$0.65	\$1.25/\$1.30*	\$1.25
Adult Breakfast	\$1.00	\$0.90	\$1.00	\$1.55	\$1.50
Elementary Student Lunch	\$1.35	\$1.25	\$1.35	\$1.85	\$1.75
Secondary Student Lunch	\$1.45	\$1.50	\$1.60	\$2.00	\$2.00/\$2.25*
Adult Lunch	\$2.20	\$2.00	\$2.25	\$2.50	\$2.75
Visitor Lunch	\$2.35	\$2.00	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.75

*Source: GPISD Peer District surveys and GPISD director of Student Nutrition Services.
 High school student prices.

Exhibit 9-14 compares GPISD's annual meal participation rates to its peers for the five-year time period from 1997-98 through 2001-02. In 2001-02, GPISD has the second highest average lunch and breakfast participation rates when compared to its peers. Aldine ISD has the highest participation rates for both lunch and breakfast with rates approximately 5 percent higher for breakfast and 11 percent higher for lunch than GPISD.

GPISD increased its participation rates the most during the five-year period. GPISD's breakfast participation rates increased 5.72 percent and its lunch rates increased 8.77 points. By comparison, Pasadena ISD experienced a negative breakfast and lunch participation rate change.

Exhibit 9-14
Average Annual Meal Participation Rates
GPISD and Peer Districts
1997-98 through 2001-02

District	GPISD	Aldine	Goose Creek Consolidated	Humble	Pasadena
Breakfast Participation Rates					
1997-98	24.17%	29.95%	24.70%	5.87%	24.51%
1998-99	24.42%	36.60%	25.03%	6.07%	22.48%
1999-2000	25.38%	36.93%	25.42%	6.78%	23.75%
2000-01	29.83%	35.70%	26.87%	7.04%	22.11%
2001-02	29.89%	35.39%	27.84%	6.89%	21.65%
Percent Change (1997-98 to 2001-02)	5.72%	5.44%	3.14%	1.02%	(2.86%)
Lunch Participation Rates					
1997-98	56.29%	55.71%	51.08%	30.57%	52.24%
1998-99	57.16%	74.22%	55.14%	33.80%	48.72%
1999-2000	59.67%	77.47%	57.06%	34.75%	53.22%
2000-01	63.81%	77.19%	58.22%	33.67%	50.98%
2001-02	65.06%	76.87%	59.40%	33.50%	51.86%
Percent Change 1997-98 to 2001-02)	8.77%	21.16%	8.32%	2.93%	(0.38%)

Source: TEA, Child Nutrition Programs District Profile Reports for GPISD and peer districts, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001 and 2002.

Exhibit 9-15 displays GPISD participation rates by school for 2001-02. GPISD has the highest lunch participation rates at its elementary schools with most schools above 70 percent. Lunch participation drops significantly from elementary to middle and high school. High school lunch participation rates range from approximately 37 percent at Galena Park and North Shore High Schools to 41.2 percent at North Shore Senior High School. Woodland Acres Middle School has the highest middle school lunch participation rate at 66.3 percent followed by Cobb at 57.2 percent. Cunningham and North Shore Middle Schools have lunch

participation rates at 46.7 and 45.6 percent respectively. Breakfast participation rates at all schools are significantly lower than lunch participation rates and vary significantly from 9.4 percent at North Shore High School to 78 percent at Pyburn Elementary.

Exhibit 9-15
GPISD Meal Participation Rates by School
August 2001 through May 2002

School	Annual Breakfast Attendance (95 Percent ADA)	Annual Breakfasts Claimed	Breakfast Participation Rate	Annual Lunch Attendance (95 Percent ADA)	Annual Lunches Claimed	Lunch Participation Rate
Cimarron Elementary	179,096	55,414	30.9%	179,106	145,262	81.1%
Cloverleaf Elementary	179,445	67,584	37.7%	179,445	166,886	93.0%
Cobb Sixth Grade Campus	175,506	77,973	44.4%	173,502	99,266	57.2%
Cunningham Middle *	163,321	55,819	34.2%	161,325	75,291	46.7%
Galena Park Elementary	121,108	34,008	28.1%	121,117	99,970	82.5%
Galena Park High	268,446	27,081	10.1%	265,485	99,199	37.4%
Galena Park Middle	168,635	46,394	27.5%	166,739	93,813	56.3%
Green Valley Elementary	150,298	43,080	28.7%	148,615	108,715	73.2%
Havard Elementary	161,821	43,631	27.0%	160,928	106,020	65.9%
Jacinto City Elementary	139,541	55,594	39.8%	137,963	115,986	84.1%
MacArthur Elementary	109,720	35,376	32.2%	108,484	87,815	80.9%
North Shore	153,377	50,754	33.1%	153,392	129,361	84.3%

Elementary						
North Shore High **	350,245	33,079	9.4%	346,422	129,134	37.3%
North Shore Middle	193,167	43,515	22.5%	190,987	87,040	45.6%
North Shore Senior High	273,649	36,540	13.4%	270,682	111,624	41.2%
Purple Sage Elementary	139,734	34,565	24.7%	138,150	108,065	78.2%
Pyburn Elementary	116,130	90,583	78.0%	115,464	86,176	74.6%
Tice Elementary	141,042	61,312	43.5%	139,485	108,407	77.7%
Woodland Acres Elementary	65,874	24,812	37.7%	65,140	59,130	90.8%
Woodland Acres Middle	73,204	30,578	41.8%	72,395	48,029	66.3%
Totals	3,323,359	947,692	28.5%	3,294,826	2,065,189	62.7%

Source: GPISD PCS Revenue Control Systems Inc. Breakfast and Lunch Edit Check Reports, August 2001-May 2002.

**High Point High School meals and attendance are included in Cunningham Middle School since it provides High Point's meals.*

***ACE meals and attendance are included in North Shore High School since it provides ACE's meals.*

Note: Participation rates do not include snack bar and a la carte sales. The district adjusted attendance to reflect a 95 percent Average Daily Attendance (ADA) rate that occurred in 2001-02.

FINDING

Several of the district's elementary schools have a unique method of encouraging good behavior and maintaining discipline in the cafeterias. The review team observed one elementary school using conduct cups to encourage good cafeteria behavior. Staff places the conduct cups, three different-colored plastic cups, on the end of each cafeteria table. At one of the cafeterias the review team visited, the blue cup represented appropriate and acceptable behavior, while the red and yellow cups represented unacceptable actions or behaviors. If the table keeps a blue conduct cup for one week, the class will receive a treat at the end of the week, such as eating lunch in the classroom with the teacher and watching a video.

With this method, the school holds an entire class accountable for the behavior of its members. At the cafeterias that used conduct cups, the students were well-behaved and showed appropriate cafeteria behavior. Students sat at their tables and ate their lunches until they were dismissed. The review team observed no unruly behavior, and the staff maintained discipline in the cafeteria. In addition to the direct observation, the review team conducted surveys about GPISD food service. The survey asked teachers to respond to the statement, *Discipline and order are maintained in the cafeteria*. A majority of the respondents, 82.3 percent, either agreed or strongly agreed to the statement.

COMMENDATION

GPISD's use of conduct cups encourages good cafeteria behavior.

FINDING

GPISD implemented a free breakfast in the classroom program at one of its elementary schools that increased the school's breakfast participation. In August 1999, GPISD implemented Pyburn Elementary's program, Breakfast for All. Breakfast for All serves students breakfast both in the cafeteria and in the classroom. The cafeteria sends breakfasts for grades 3 through 5 to the classroom where students eat, while it serves the remaining students in the cafeteria.

At Pyburn Elementary, the faculty is cooperative and committed to the breakfast in the classroom program. Each day, a designated student for each class in grades 3 through 5, goes to the cafeteria to pick up the breakfast for his or her class. An insulated carrier contains hot items and an ice chest with wheels contains the milk and juice. When students finish breakfast, they return the carriers and ice chests to the cafeteria with the unused food, milk and juice. They also return a marked roster, signed by the teacher that identifies the students who received a breakfast. Using the roster, the cashier rings up the meals in the POS system.

Student Nutrition Services made changes to its initial program design to address problems with trash, spills and food temperature. For example, the department stopped serving items like pancakes and waffles in favor of doughnuts, buns and pigs in a blanket that generate less mess. The cafeteria staff worked with teachers to ensure they understood the 'offer versus serve' concept and that a student took all items required for a reimbursable meal before it was recorded on the roster. Teachers receive a free meal for their assistance in recording the reimbursable meals. Because milk and juice sometimes leaked out of trash bags, the department purchased trash barrels on wheels to prevent leakage when collecting classroom trash. The department purchased insulated carriers and ice chests to maintain appropriate food temperatures.

As a result of this program, Pyburn Elementary had the highest elementary school breakfast participation rates in 2001-02 with 78 percent participation. This is almost twice as much as the elementary school with the next highest participation rate: Tice at 43.5 percent.

COMMENDATION

GPISD's free breakfast in the classroom program increased student meal participation at Pyburn Elementary.

FINDING

The district has not extensively implemented free breakfast in the classroom programs to increase elementary student breakfast participation. The district allows cafeteria managers to offer a free breakfast to all students one day a year, and it serves free breakfast to all students at Pyburn Elementary and to pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students at Tice Elementary. In addition, Pyburn Elementary serves breakfast both in the cafeteria and in the classroom. Tice Elementary serves breakfasts to all students in its cafeterias.

As a result of these programs, these two schools had the highest elementary school breakfast participation rates in 2001-02 with 78 percent for Pyburn and 43.5 percent for Tice (**Exhibit 9-15**). Breakfast participation rates for other elementary schools ranged from 24.7 percent at Purple Sage to 39.8 percent at Jacinto City.

The director of Student Nutrition Services said that staff and faculty commitment is key to making a free breakfast for all program work. The director also said that each school makes the decision to offer free lunches or breakfast to all students. For the breakfast program, Student Nutrition Services requires that all children be offered a breakfast, not just those who show up in the morning before school. Student Nutrition Services has

offered free breakfast to kindergarten and pre-kindergarten students at all elementary schools if the principal has the students go to the cafeteria after other classes have eaten. Most principals have not taken advantage of the offer.

Many school districts significantly increased their breakfast participation by offering alternatives such as a free breakfast for all or breakfast in the classroom programs. For example, Midland ISD implemented the Breakfast Express program that is almost identical to Pyburn's breakfast in the classroom program. In the initial pilot program period, the district tripled the number of breakfasts served from an average of 8,000 to 25,000. Midland teachers say that the breakfast program improves their students' learning and decreases tardiness.

Mercedes ISD (MISD) conducts another similar program, Breakfast in the Classroom. The USDA awarded the program a 2001 Best Practice Award in the Promoting a School Breakfast Program category. After surveying students, MISD found that many would rather spend time with their friends or were not awake enough to eat breakfast in the cafeteria. To address this, the district staff developed its Breakfast in the Classroom program and piloted it in 1997 at one of its elementary schools. The district now offers breakfast in the classroom at all schools. Its overall participation has increased from 44.5 percent in 1995 to 88.3 percent in 2002.

El Paso ISD implemented breakfast in the classroom in five elementary schools. In addition, EPISD instituted a universal free breakfast in all schools on a pilot basis for three weeks in March 2000. Average daily participation increased 27 percent for the month.

Recommendation 49:

Develop and implement a free breakfast in the classroom program at all elementary schools to increase student breakfast participation.

The director of Student Nutrition Services should establish a committee composed of principals, cafeteria managers, custodial staff and teachers to develop the breakfast in the classroom program. The committee should use the Pyburn Elementary school program as a model and customize the program to each school.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Student Nutrition Services solicits interest in the program by contacting elementary principals and speaking at site-based decision-making and Parent Teacher Association	April-May 2003
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	meetings to promote the benefits of the program based on the experience at Pyburn Elementary.	
2.	The director of Student Nutrition Services establishes a committee of school principals, the elementary field supervisor, cafeteria managers, teachers and custodial staff to design a free breakfast in the classroom program for elementary schools.	May 2003
3.	The director of Student Nutrition Services and the committee review the Pyburn Elementary program to identify lessons learned during implementation and to customize the programs for implementation at other elementary schools.	August - September 2003
4.	The committee develops a plan to implement the free breakfast in the classroom program beginning in January 2004.	October 2003
5.	The committee presents the free breakfast in the classroom program implementation plan to the superintendent and board for approval.	November 2003
6.	The committee develops handouts and letters and sends them to parents to notify them of the program.	November - December 2003
7.	The director of Student Nutrition Services implements the program.	January 2004
8.	The director of Student Nutrition Services and the committee evaluate success of the program.	April - May 2004
9.	The director of Student Nutrition Services works with the committee to modify program based on evaluation results.	August 2004
10.	The director of Student Nutrition Services monitors program success and reports results to principals, the superintendent and the board.	Quarterly

FISCAL IMPACT

This fiscal impact calculation assumes the district can achieve a target of 55 percent breakfast participation at all elementary schools without a breakfast in the classroom program. The review team excluded Pyburn Elementary participation from the calculation since its participation rate exceeds 55 percent, at 78 percent. In 2001-02, the district's other elementary schools had a combined average breakfast participation rate of approximately 32.8 percent and had average daily attendance (ADA) of 1,541,056.

By achieving the 55 percent target, the district can increase its annual revenues by \$81,265 beginning in 2003-04. With a 55 percent participation rate, the district will increase the number of meals served annually by 341,451 [(1,541,056 ADA x .55 targeted participation rate)-(1,541,056 ADA x .3284306 current participation rate) = 341,451].

In 2001-02 the federal government reimbursed GPISD \$1,127,768 for the 947,692 breakfasts it served that year. GPISD received an average of \$1.19 in federal reimbursements for each breakfast it served (\$1,127,768 divided by 947,692 = \$1.19). This figure includes the additional reimbursement given to severe need campuses.

The review team multiplied the average reimbursement by the number of additional breakfasts served to calculate that the increased breakfast participation would earn GPISD additional gross annual revenues of \$406,327 (341,451 x \$1.19). The review team estimates that 80 percent of the gross revenues-\$325,062-will be spent on additional food and labor costs (\$406,327 x .80). After the district subtracts these costs from the gross revenue, it will realize a net profit of \$81,265 (\$406,327 additional revenue - \$325,062 additional food and labor costs).

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Develop and implement a free breakfast in the classroom program at all elementary schools to increase student breakfast participation.	\$81,265	\$81,265	\$81,265	\$81,265	\$81,265

FINDING

The district does not use alternative breakfast service methods to increase participation rates at its high schools. The district only offers breakfast at serving lines in its high schools. It does not offer alternate methods such as "grab-and-go," extended or additional breakfast periods or breakfast in the classroom delivery. As a result, the district's breakfast participation rate at its high schools remains very low. In 2001-02, Galena Park High School's participation rate was 10.1 percent, North Shore High was 9.4 percent and North Shore Senior High was 13.4 percent.

Many school districts significantly increased their breakfast participation by offering alternatives to the cafeteria breakfast. Three of the four peer districts selected by GPISD for this review-Aldine, Pasadena and Goose Creek-offer a "grab-and-go" delivery for breakfast.

Mount Pleasant ISD implemented a second breakfast program during its morning activity period. This program increased revenues and allows students who arrive late to school another opportunity to eat breakfast.

El Paso ISD started "grab-and-go" breakfasts in four high schools. The wider variety of menu items, expansion of meal service hours, extensive training and emphasis on customer relations increased these schools' breakfast participation rates.

Water Valley ISD has an innovative breakfast program. Each morning, the superintendent delivers breakfast burritos to the high school, which sell out each morning. The popular program gives the students an opportunity to develop a closer relationship with the superintendent while increasing participation and revenues.

Recommendation 50:

Design and implement programs to increase high school breakfast participation.

The director of Student Nutrition Services should establish a working group composed of principals, teachers, students and cafeteria managers to develop programs and various strategies to increase high school breakfast participation. The committee should solicit student input to understand why students are not eating breakfast, establish breakfast participation targets and develop alternatives to meet the targets. The alternatives could range from implementing "grab and go" service from carts to additional breakfast periods or full-service breakfast in the classroom programs.

For each alternative proposed, the working group should identify issues associated with implementing the alternative and develop a plan with customized strategies that meet the unique needs of each school. The committee should ask other districts with successful alternative breakfast programs to share their experiences. The district should pilot test the alternatives at selected schools and evaluate the results. The district can use the lessons it learns in the pilot schools to improve the program before it starts it in all high schools.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Student Nutrition Services establishes a working group of school principals, teachers, students and cafeteria managers to identify target breakfast participation rates and to develop alternatives to meet these target rates.	April 2003
2.	The working group solicits student feedback to identify why	April -

	students are not eating breakfast and how various alternatives would improve participation.	October 2003
3.	The director of Student Nutrition Services contacts other school districts with alternative delivery programs to obtain implementation and participation information.	May 2003
4.	The working group meets to review the experiences of other school districts.	June 2003
5.	The working group develops a plan that includes strategies for each school and presents the plan to the superintendent and board for approval.	July 2003
6.	The director of Student Nutrition Services implements strategies identified in the plan at pilot schools.	August 2003
7.	The director of Student Nutrition Services and the working group evaluate the success of the programs in the pilot schools.	November 2003
8.	The director of Student Nutrition Services modifies strategies based on evaluation results and prepares to implement strategies at all high schools.	December 2003
9.	Student Nutrition Services staff implement strategies at all high schools.	January 2004
10.	The director of Student Nutrition Services monitors program success and reports results to principals, the superintendent and the board.	Quarterly

FISCAL IMPACT

This fiscal impact calculation assumes the district can achieve a combined target of 25 percent breakfast participation at Galena Park, North Shore, ACE, High Point and North Shore Senior High Schools. In 2001-02, these schools had a combined average breakfast participation rate of approximately 11.6 percent. They served 105,316 meals and had average daily attendance of 905,803. The district can increase its annual revenues by \$26,427 beginning in 2004-05 by raising breakfast participation to 25 percent. To do this, the district will increase the number of meals served annually by 121,135 $[(905,803 \times .25)-(905,803 \times .116268)]$.

Cafeteria revenues depend on the number of free, reduced-price and paid meals served. In 2001-02, 73.6 percent of the students participating were eligible for free meals, 6.6 percent were eligible for reduced-price meals and 19.8 percent were paid in full. The number of increased free meals would be 89,155 (73.6 percent x 121,135 meals), the number of increased reduced-price meals would be 7,995 (6.6 percent x 121,135 meals) and the

number of increased paid meals would be 23,985 (19.8 percent x 121,135).

Higher participation will increase the districts revenue from School Breakfast Program (SBP) reimbursements and from paid meals. SBP reimburses districts at rates of \$1.17 for free, \$.87 for reduced-price and \$.22 for paid meals. The review team estimates that SBP reimbursements will increase by \$116,544. This is the sum of reimbursements for all meals: \$104,311 for free ($\$1.17 \times 89,155 \text{ meals} = \$104,311$) plus \$6,956 for reduced-price ($\$.87 \times 7,995 \text{ meals}$) plus \$5,277 for paid meals ($\$.22 \times 23,985 \text{ meals}$).

The district will see increased revenues from paid meals also. The review team calculates an increase of \$15,590 by multiplying the secondary student breakfast price of 65 cents by the increase in paid meals ($\$.65 \times 23,985 \text{ meals}$).

By adding revenues from SBP reimbursements and paid meals, the district will realize additional gross revenues of \$132,134 ($\$116,544 + \$15,590$).

The review team estimates that 80 percent-\$105,707-of the increased revenue will be spent on additional food and labor costs. ($\$132,134 \times .80 = \$105,707$). After subtracting the increased costs from the increased revenue, the district will realize profits of \$26,427 ($\$132,134 \text{ additional revenue} - \$105,707 \text{ additional food and labor costs} = \$26,427$).

In the first year the district would only be able to capture one-half of the savings because the implementation will not begin until January. The full implementation will begin in 2004-05.

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Design and implement programs to increase high school breakfast participation.	\$13,214	\$26,427	\$26,427	\$26,427	\$26,427

FINDING

Student Nutrition Services does not routinely conduct a formal survey of students and staff to gain feedback to improve its operations. The last student surveys the district conducted were at Tice Elementary in 2000-01 and before the opening of North Shore Senior High School. However, the director of Student Nutrition Services said that cafeteria managers and field supervisors informally talk with students on a daily basis to gain information about what they like and don't like. The district prefers soliciting feedback from students individually because it feels that

students don't take surveys seriously. The department does receive formal feedback from parents about food quality and service. Each month, members of the parent advisory committee complete survey forms.

Student Nutrition Services conducts food-tasting events to gain student feedback about a particular product. The district held a pizza taste testing at North Shore Senior High School; tried a calcium-fortified fruit juice at three middle schools; and hosted a taco and chalupa taste test at Jacinto Elementary School.

The review team surveyed parents, teachers, principals and students with questions about food quality, service and environment. As shown in **Exhibit 9-16**, approximately 40 percent of parents and teachers and 35.8 percent of students rated the cafeteria food presentation and taste favorably. More than 80 percent of teachers and parents, 67 percent of students and more than 70 percent of principals rated cafeteria staff helpfulness and friendliness positively. More than 80 percent of parents, principals and teachers agreed or strongly agreed that the cafeteria facilities were clean and sanitary. Approximately 58 percent of students rated cafeteria cleanliness positively.

Students, teachers and parents disagreed strongly about serving times. Almost half of the parents and teachers and more than 70 percent of principals agreed that students did not wait in line longer than 10 minutes. However, just 25 percent of students agreed with this statement. When asked if students had enough time to eat, approximately 60 percent of parents and 80 percent of principals agreed, while just 25 percent of students agreed.

Exhibit 9-16
Food Service Survey Results
September 2002

Survey Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.					
Teachers	7.4%	33.8%	17.6%	30.9%	10.3%
Students	7.5%	28.3%	19.2%	20.0%	25.0%
Parents	12.1%	27.3%	30.4%	24.2%	3.0%
Principals	12.9%	58.1%	12.9%	12.9%	3.2%
Food is served warm.					
Teacher	16.2%	39.7%	11.8%	23.5%	8.8%

Students	11.7%	35.0%	25.8%	14.2%	12.5%
Parents	15.2%	51.5%	15.2%	12.1%	3.0%
Principals	19.4%	64.5%	3.2%	12.9%	0.0%
Students have enough time to eat.					
Teacher	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Students	5.8%	19.2%	10.9%	22.5%	40.8%
Parents	18.2%	42.4%	0.0%	24.2%	12.1%
Principals	25.8%	61.3%	0.0%	12.9%	0.0%
Students wait in food lines no longer than ten minutes.					
Teacher	13.2%	35.3%	10.3%	30.9%	10.3%
Students	9.2%	15.8%	14.2%	28.3%	31.7%
Parents	15.2%	39.4%	12.1%	15.2%	12.1%
Principals	41.9%	35.5%	3.2%	19.4%	0.0%
Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.					
Teacher	30.9%	51.5%	5.9%	8.8%	2.9%
Students	20.8%	45.8%	21.8%	8.3%	2.5%
Parents	15.2%	66.7%	9.1%	3.0%	3.0%
Principals	38.7%	35.5%	3.2%	19.4%	3.2%
Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.					
Teacher	27.9%	60.3%	2.9%	7.4%	1.5%
Students	11.7%	45.8%	25.0%	9.2%	7.5%
Parents	24.2%	51.5%	18.2%	3.0%	0.0%
Principals	38.7%	58.1%	0.0%	3.2%	0.0%

Source: GPISD TSPR Surveys. Note: Percentages may not add to 100 percent because of rounding and "no responses."

Regular surveys allow school food service directors to gain feedback and identify areas for improvement. Without survey information, food service directors do not have the information needed to address areas that affect student interest and participation such as menu choices, food quality and price.

All of the peer districts selected by GPISD for this review use some form of student survey. Goose Creek Consolidated ISD surveys students at random elementary schools in menu planning meetings or at student council meetings. Humble ISD does an end-of-the-year survey at its high schools. Students receive a cookie for completing and returning the surveys. Aldine ISD does surveys at individual schools for specific food items and Pasadena ISD surveys a cross section of the student population twice a year.

Tyler ISD prepared and circulated a questionnaire to solicit feedback from students and faculty on the acceptability of lunch and breakfast meals. Cafeteria staff made changes, and breakfast and lunch participation increased by 13 percent and 9 percent respectively in the first two years of implementation. Since then, meal participation grew 1 percent in 1997-98 and 3 percent in 1998-99.

Falls City ISD (FCISD) Food Service program has achieved success with its menus by using surveys. The Falls City English Honors Class conducted a study in February 2001 reviewing FCISD food service menus. Their study recorded students' least and most favorite meal preferences. Cafeterias used the survey results to adjust menus.

Recommendation 51:

Survey students to gain feedback to improve food service operations.

The director of Student Nutrition Services should develop and conduct annual districtwide student surveys. The director of Student Nutrition Services could work with elementary and secondary teachers to get students involved in developing and administering the survey as a class project to encourage student involvement and minimize costs. The surveys could be paper-based as well as Web-based to facilitate responses. To encourage completion and return of the surveys, the department could offer cookies or a small treat. The director of Student Nutrition Services should review the survey results and use them to work with cafeteria managers to implement changes to improve operations.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Student Nutrition Services identifies and contacts teachers to work jointly on developing a student survey as a class project.	April 2003
2.	The director of Student Nutrition Services works with designated teachers to develop surveys as a class project for the upcoming year and to identify a timeline for conducting	April - May 2003

	surveys.	
3.	The director of Student Nutrition Services works with cafeteria managers to identify and develop a promotion for the surveys.	August - September 2003
4.	Cafeteria managers promote the surveys with prizes or food items for completing and returning the surveys.	October - November 2003
5.	Designated classes conduct surveys during cafeteria promotion and compile results.	November - December 2003
6.	The director of Student Nutrition Services reviews the survey results with cafeteria managers.	January 2004
7.	The director of Student Nutrition Services publishes survey results.	January 2004
8.	The director of Student Nutrition Services meets with cafeteria managers to develop strategies to address findings and issues identified by the surveys.	February - March 2004
9.	The director of Student Nutrition Services and cafeteria managers implement strategies.	April 2004 and Ongoing
10.	The director of Student Nutrition Services updates survey findings.	Annually

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 9

FOOD SERVICE

C. Financial Management and Operations

In general, school districts expect food service operations to be financially self-sufficient and run like a business. To do this, food service operations need a thorough planning and budget development process and a financial accounting system that provides accurate and timely financial information to assist in managing revenues and expenditures.

GPISD's Student Nutrition Services Department had an operating budget of approximately \$7.1 million in 2001-02. **Exhibit 9-17** compares GPISD's food services budget with the budgets of its peer districts.

Exhibit 9-17
Food Service Budget Comparisons
GPISD and Peer Districts
2001-02

Expenditure Category	GPISD	Aldine	Goose Creek Consolidated	Humble	Pasadena
Salaries and Benefits	\$3,567,914	\$8,574,000	\$3,514,500	\$3,523,919	\$6,187,650
Contracted Services	\$135,436	\$1,035,000	\$215,000	\$58,833	\$448,000
Food and Supplies	\$3,346,696	\$10,732,000	\$2,643,000	\$3,131,562	\$7,235,770
Other Operating Expenditures	\$23,128	\$217,000	\$601,000	\$50,783	\$36,000
Capital Outlay	\$74,674	\$0	\$48,500	\$63,840	\$1,100,000
Total Expenditures	\$7,147,848	\$20,558,000	\$7,022,000	\$6,828,937	\$15,007,420
Expenditures as Percent of Total Budget					
Salaries and Benefits	49.9%	41.7%	50.0%	51.6%	41.2%
Contracted Services	1.9%	5.0%	3.1%	0.9%	3.0%
Food and Supplies	46.8%	52.2%	37.6%	45.9%	48.2%
Other Operating Expenditures	0.3%	1.1%	8.6%	0.7%	0.2%
Capital Outlay	1.0%	0.0%	0.7%	0.9%	7.3%
Expenditures Per Student					
Enrollment	19,336	53,201	18,274	25,239	43,476
Expenditures per student	\$370	\$386	\$384	\$271	\$345

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 2001-02 for expenditure information and TEA Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) 2001-02 for enrollment information.

Note: Percentages may not total to 100 percent because of rounding.

When compared to its peers, GPISD ranks in the middle in most categories. GPISD has the third highest food service budget, behind Aldine ISD and Pasadena ISD. At 49.9 percent, GPISD's salary and benefit expenditures as a percent of budget ranks third behind Humble ISD at 51.6 percent and Goose Creek Consolidated ISD at 50 percent. Similarly, GPISD's food and supplies expenditures as a percent of total budget (46.8 percent) rank third among the peer districts. Aldine ISD (52.2 percent) and Pasadena ISD (48.2 percent) devote more of their budget to this category. With 19,346 students, GPISD has the second lowest total enrollment. Aldine ISD has the highest enrollment with 53,201 students and Goose Creek Consolidated ISD has the lowest enrollment with 18,274 students. GPISD ranks third among the peers in expenditures per student at \$370. Aldine ISD had the highest per student expenditures at \$386 followed by Goose Creek Consolidated ISD at \$384. GPISD's expenditures per student are roughly 40 percent higher than Humble ISD, which had the lowest expenditures per student at \$271.

FINDING

The Student Nutrition Services Department works with school principals on preventive measures to ensure compliance with the federal Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value (FMNV) policy. Federal regulations prohibit the sale of foods of minimal nutritional value (FMNV) in the food service area during meal periods. FMNV include carbonated beverages, water ices, chewing gum and certain types of candies.

In April 2002, TEA distributed a FMNV policy change that reemphasized the requirements prohibiting FMNV in, or adjacent to, foodservice areas and established financial penalties for FMNV violations. TEA based its policy on a United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) January 2001 policy memorandum **Exhibit 9-18** shows the elements necessary for compliance with FMNV as identified by the TEA policy.

Exhibit 9-18 Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value Compliance Elements 2002

Policy Compliance Element Descriptions	
1.	<p>Schools must properly designate the foodservice area for the purpose of restricting the service of FMNV.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The foodservice area is defined as any area on school premises where program meals (breakfast and lunch) are <u>both</u> served and eaten, as well as any areas in which program meals are <u>either</u> served <u>or</u> eaten. This includes eating areas that are completely separate from the serving lines such as hallways, outdoor commons, etc. b. Schools may not design, or designate, their foodservice area in such a way as to encourage or facilitate the choice or purchase of FMNV as a ready substitute for, or in addition to, program meals. c. Meal periods are defined to include both the time of serving and the time the student spends eating

	the meal.
2.	<p>Schools must prevent access to FMNV.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Schools must not serve or provide access to FMNV during meal service periods in the area(s) where reimbursable meals are served and/or eaten. b. Schools must price a reimbursable meal as a unit. Any FMNV provided with a reimbursable meal "at no additional charge" is in fact being sold as part of the meal and therefore violates the prohibition against selling FMNV in the foodservice area during meal periods.
3.	<p>Schools must assess how the school foodservice funds are being used.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Purchases of FMNV for service in the foodservice area during meal periods are <u>not</u> an allowable cost. Minor quantities of FMNV (for decorating or garnishing) are allowable costs. b. If foodservice funds are used to purchase FMNV for sale outside the meal period(s) or outside the foodservice area(s) during meal periods, then funds must be deposited in the foodservice account in a sufficient amount to cover all direct and indirect costs relating to the purchase and service of the FMNV. Records documenting the recovery of these costs must be maintained and available for review.

Source: TEA, *New Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value Policy*, April 22, 2002.

USDA requires that schools that violate the FMNV guidelines must take corrective action and restore any improperly used or lost funds to the food service account. USDA recommends that corrective action include not allowing reimbursement for all meals served on the day the violation was observed and that the lost income be made up from a source other than food service funds.

To ensure compliance with the FMNV requirements, the director of Student Nutrition Services shared the latest FMNV policy information with all school administrators at the district back-to-school meeting in July 2002. In August 2002, the director of Student Nutrition Services distributed a follow up memo to school administrators that included FMNV policy clarifications. In September 2002, the director of Student Nutrition Services and the secondary field supervisor met with principals at the high schools to review layouts of the buildings and agree to the designated food service areas.

GPISD awarded a new exclusive vending machine contract in 2002. In late September of that year the director of Student Nutrition Services and other district officials met with the vendor's representative. The meeting's participants reviewed FMNV requirements and discussed placement of the vending machines and compliant products. The director of Student Nutrition Services held a similar meeting that month with the vendor that was awarded the beverage contract.

Student Nutrition Services elementary and secondary field supervisors review and approve the vending machine items and placement for compliance as the machines are installed. After the vending machines are installed, elementary and secondary field supervisors meet with principals to define the food service areas. The principals and the field supervisors both sign the layout indicating their agreement.

The field supervisors monitor vending machines located in the food service area on an ongoing basis to ensure that all vending items are compliant.

The review team found all schools in compliance with the FMNV guidelines. Beverage machines located in the food service area contained only fruit beverages or water and snack machines contained only compliant items.

COMMENDATION

GPISD Student Nutrition Services Department staff collaborated with school principals to develop preventive measures that ensure compliance with federal FMNV requirements.

FINDING

GPISD's Student Nutrition Services Department allocates all appropriate overhead costs for its operations and reduces the costs paid from the general operating fund. Federal law dictates that food service profits can only be used for food service operations. The Student Nutrition Services budget funds the following operation support items:

- utilities (these are allocated based on a percent of facility use);
- capital equipment such as a delivery van and cafeteria tables;
- kitchen renovations;
- computer equipment;
- fees for printing checks;
- garbage removal;
- delivery truck and fuel;
- printing, reproduction and postage costs;
- equipment maintenance technicians,
- contracts and parts;
- promotional materials; and
- technical support.

The Student Nutrition Services Department does not fund custodial services since cafeteria staff is responsible for the majority of cleaning and trash removal in the cafeterias. The director of Student Nutrition Services works jointly with the director of Finance and Budget to analyze costs annually and adjusts budget allocations as appropriate.

GPISD's allocation of food service funds for overhead costs is more extensive than other school districts. The review team surveyed GPISD peer districts and asked them to identify which of the typical general fund expenses they paid from food service funds. **Exhibit 9-19** shows the survey results. When compared to its peers, GPISD covers more types of overhead costs with its food service funds.

Exhibit 9-19
Overhead Cost Comparisons
GPISD and Peer Districts
2002-03

Type of Expenditure Covered By Food Service Budget	GPISD	Aldine	Goose Creek Consolidated	Humble	Pasadena
Water/wastewater	X				
Gas/Utilities	X	X	X		
Custodial Support					X
Trash/Waste Removal	X	X			
Maintenance (district staff)	X	X		X	X
Maintenance (service contracts)	X	X	X	X	X
Promotional Items/Advertising	X	X	X	X	

Source: GPISD Peer district surveys.

As a result of the cost allocations, GPISD's Student Nutrition Services Department budget contributes more than \$250,000 annually to the district's overhead costs. This means that the general operating fund pays less of these costs, leaving it with more money to support classroom functions.

COMMENDATION

GPISD's allocation of overhead costs to its Student Nutrition Services budget leaves more money in the general fund to support classroom functions.

FINDING

GPISD's Student Nutrition Services Department uses pre-numbered, wraparound security fasteners on its locked bank bags to provide added security for its daily cash receipts. Wraparound security fasteners are plastic strips with a locking head on one end and a tip on the other. When the tip is inserted into the locking head, the strip cannot be removed unless it is cut.

Each day when cafeteria managers prepare their daily deposits, they write the number of the security fastener on the deposit slip and place the deposit slip and cash receipts into a zipped, locked bank bag. The cafeteria manager inserts the security fastener into the lock and secures the bag until armored security services personnel retrieve the bag and deliver it to the bank. Bank personnel can tell a bag has been tampered with if the fastener is missing.

GPISD started using the security fasteners in 1996 when the director of Student Nutrition Services noticed too many discrepancies between the deposit slip submitted and the receipts counted at the bank. The director of Student Nutrition Services estimated that discrepancies sometimes occurred two to three times a week. Because cafeteria managers, the armored security service and bank employees handled the bank bags, the director could not pinpoint the problem. The director of Student Nutrition Services approached the director of Finance and Budget and suggested purchasing the security fasteners. The

director of Finance and Budget located a vendor that sold the fasteners. The fasteners cost about \$.08 apiece.

The use of fasteners has reduced discrepancies from one to two a week to an average of one a month. Student Nutrition Services staff and the armored security service are also more comfortable because the bank bag is tamper proof until the bank opens the bag to process the deposit.

COMMENDATION

GPISD's use of security fasteners on its bank bags provides added security and reduces shortages in its daily cash deposits.

FINDING

GPISD's Student Nutrition Services Department has an effective method for providing after-hours and emergency access to locked cafeteria facilities while maintaining facility security. GPISD stores spare keys in lock boxes in its cafeterias. The keys allow limited access to kitchen facilities and equipment when cafeteria staff is unavailable.

Lock boxes were installed in September 2002 to address concerns from principals and maintenance staff who could not provide contractors or maintenance staff access to mechanical rooms located in the kitchen unless cafeteria staff was available. The lock boxes provide Student Nutrition Services control of locked freezers and coolers to protect inventory while providing access to kitchen areas for repairs or emergencies.

The lock boxes cost \$22 each and contain keys to the kitchen and freezers. Only authorized personnel, such as maintenance staff, have access to the lock boxes. The lock boxes allow access when there is an emergency or when cafeteria staff is unavailable. The lock boxes also maintain security of the kitchen area and freezers by minimizing the number of keys needed. The boxes also reduce the chance that keys will be misplaced or given to individuals who don't require access.

COMMENDATION

GPISD's lock boxes provide after hours and emergency access while maintaining kitchen facility and freezer security.

FINDING

Student Nutrition Services has a unique method of dispensing napkins that reduces paper costs and waste. Rather than stack napkins at the end of the serving line for students to use, GPISD uses napkin dispensers at 13 of its 20 cafeterias. GPISD initially installed cartridge napkin dispensers at Galena Park Middle School in 2001-02 to test the cost effectiveness of the dispensers. The dispensers are mounted on a wall at the end of the serving line. Students pull napkins from the dispenser instead of from a stack at the end of the serving line. Students grab fewer napkins from the dispensers. The cafeteria manager at Galena Park Middle School estimates that the cafeteria uses approximately 6,750 napkins a week with the dispenser. Before the dispenser was installed, the cafeteria used approximately 12,000 napkins a

week. The director of Student Nutrition Services estimates that the district saves \$363 annually at this one school and that districtwide savings are approximately \$7,500 annually.

By installing the napkin dispensers, the district saves money and reduces waste. Since the dispensers are located away from the service line, the lines move faster and look neater. Cafeterias now use the space on the service line to display promotional items.

COMMENDATION

GPISD uses mounted napkin dispensers in cafeteria serving lines that result in significant savings and less waste.

FINDING

GPISD's process to ensure it meets fund balance compliance requirements of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) does not include a cash flow projection of revenues and expenditures integrated with a pre-defined spending plan with threshold targets to release funds. GPISD needs to have these mechanisms in place so that the district continues to meet NSLP's definition of operating a non-profit food service department.

Section 1.3.2.4 of TEA's *Financial Accountability System Resource Guide* (FASRG) states that a school district may not have a fund balance exceeding three months' average food service operations expenditures. This guideline is based on NSLP guidelines. **Exhibit 9-20** shows that the Student Nutrition Services Department's fund balance for 2000-01 exceeded the three-month limit. To calculate the allowable fund balance, total expenditures are divided by the number of months of operation times three. GPISD is in operation 9.5 months of the year.

Exhibit 9-20
GPISD Student Nutrition Services Department
Excess Fund Balance Calculation
2000-01

Fund Balance Calculations	2000-01 Actual
Total Expenditures	\$6,720,406
Actual Fund Balance	\$2,292,070
Allowable Fund Balance*	\$2,122,233
Amount in Excess of Fund Balance Limit*	\$169,837

Source: GPISD Annual Financial and Compliance Reports, 2000-01 for total expenditures and fund balance information.
*TSPR calculation.

GPISD exceeded its allowable fund balance by approximately \$170,000. TEA cited GPISD for excessive fund balance during a coordinated review the agency conducted in March 2002. GPISD immediately corrected the deficiency by submitting a budget adjustment for cafeteria equipment.

According to TEA's *Child Nutrition Programs Administrator's Reference Manual for 2002*, schools need to stay under the allowable fund balance in order to maintain the NSLP provision that requires participating schools to operate a non-profit food service program. If a district's fund exceeds the allowable balance, the school district must either reduce the balance or have an acceptable plan to reduce the surplus within a year. The district must submit the reduction plan to TEA's Child Nutrition Program Division.

While GPISD corrected the excessive fund balance when it was noted, the district did not create an integrated process with cash flow projections that would prevent further occurrences. The director of Student Nutrition Services identifies potential uses for excess funds during the annual budget process, and monitors the fund balance through monthly un-audited statement of operations reports and submits budget adjustments to transfer fund balance as necessary to cover needs. These un-audited statements must be used carefully since they do not reflect reimbursements that have been claimed, but payments not received and projected expenditures, such as payroll for the summer months that do not have offsetting revenue generation. The audited statement of operations that reflects the actual fund balance for compliance purposes is not available until after the fiscal year closes, usually in November or December of the following fiscal year.

Effective school districts constantly monitor fund balance limits. As thresholds are approached, the districts put the funds to pre-determined uses. GPISD increases its risk of non-compliance as long as it does not have a mechanism to identify excess fund balances.

Recommendation 52:

Modify the Student Nutrition Services fund balance monitoring process to prevent excess fund balances.

The director of Student Nutrition Services should work with the director of Finance and Budget to forecast revenue and expenditure cash flows. The director of Student Nutrition Services should use these forecasts to adjust the monthly statement of operations reports to more accurately reflect the amount of fund balance available and project the three-month fund threshold.

The director of Student Nutrition Services should integrate the adjusted statement of operations reports with the plan that identifies uses for excess funds. The director should use the same report to determine when and how budget adjustments should be processed.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Student Nutrition Services works with the director of Finance and Budget to develop cash flow projections to incorporate into monthly statement of operations reports.	April 2003
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2.	The director of Student Nutrition Services prepares a plan identifying proposed uses for funds that exceed the fund balance limit and the process for releasing funds through budget adjustments.	May 2003 and Annually
3.	The director of Student Nutrition Services monitors fund balance trends by incorporating cash flow projections into the monthly statement of operations reports.	June 2003 and Monthly
4.	The director of Student Nutrition Services works with the director of Finance and Budget to submit budget adjustments according to the process identified in the plan.	July 2003 and Ongoing
5.	The director of Student Nutrition Services updates items identified in the plan to reduce excess fund balance.	August 2003 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

GPISD does not have POS capability in all of its snack bars to integrate with the cafeteria serving line system to track participation and sales. In 1998-99, the district purchased and installed its POS system from PCS Revenue Control Systems, Inc. to track meal participation at all of its cafeteria serving lines. However, only the snack bars at Woodland Middle School and Cobb Sixth Grade Campus have the POS system. The remaining snack bars use cash registers to track the amount of sales.

GPISD could gain additional tracking capabilities and reduce staff labor time by installing the POS system at all snack bars. Students could pre-pay their accounts and purchase snack bar items by entering their account numbers instead of paying cash. This would speed snack bar serving lines. Also, the district would have a system for tracking sales, instead of maintaining the POS system for cafeterias and spreadsheets for snack bars without the POS system. The district could also use the end of day sales reports in the POS system to reconcile and track deposit amounts more efficiently. The POS system would also provide the district with reports about the most popular snack bar items.

Recommendation 53:

Implement the point-of-sale system at all district snack bars.

The director of Student Nutrition Services should contract with PCS to purchase and install the POS system in the remaining district snack bars. The food service fund balance should be used to purchase and install the POS so district funds aren't used.

The review team estimates that the total cost of implementing the POS system in all snack bars is \$69,810. GPISD will have to purchase new 26 POS systems to replace each cash register currently in use. The three middle schools have five registers each for a total of 15. Galena Park High School has six registers and North Shore High School has five registers for a total of 11 systems. The district will need to install one network drop at each school. Each drop costs \$250 for a total cost of \$1,250 (5 x \$250 =

\$1,250). Each school will also need a computer with remote access software to run the POS system. Total cost for the computers is \$7,200 ((\$1300 a computer + \$140 software copy) x 5 schools = \$7,200).

Each POS station needs a register (\$1,995 each) and a keypad (\$325 each) making each station cost \$2,320. Twenty-six stations will cost \$60,320 (\$2,320 station x 26 stations = \$60,320). The district will need to give 26 staff members a two-hour training on the POS system at the cost of \$20 an hour. Training costs will total \$1,040 (2 hours x 26 staff x \$20 per hour).

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Student Nutrition Services develops a two-year plan to implement the POS in district snack bars that includes costs.	April 2003
2.	The director of Student Nutrition Services works with the senior purchasing coordinator to purchase additional POS equipment and installation services from the POS vendor.	May 2003
3.	The POS vendor installs the initial systems according to the phased plan.	June-July 2003
4.	The director of Student Nutrition Services trains staff in the use of the system.	August 2003
5.	Snack bar staff begins using the system.	August 2003
6.	The director of Student Nutrition Services monitors use and provides follow-up training and assistance.	August 2003 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

Because GPISD can use its food service fund balance, this recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

GPISD does not have alarm monitoring capability on all of its freezers. Thirteen schools currently have walk-in freezers with alarm monitoring capabilities. The district will be installing alarm monitoring on the two new schools getting walk-in freezers-Tice and Purple Sage Elementary Schools. Four schools-MacArthur Elementary, North Shore Elementary, Jacinto City Elementary and Galena Park Middle Schools-do not have automatic alarm monitoring. For schools with alarm monitoring, the security monitoring company calls a pre-defined contact list at the district and reports the situation if the temperature of a freezer or cooler rises above a certain level.

Without automatic alarm monitoring, the district has no means of knowing of a potential freezer problem after-hours or during holidays. Without notification, the district cannot take steps to fix the problem or transfer food before it spoils.

Efficient districts provide alarm monitoring for all freezers and coolers to prevent loss from equipment malfunction. Kerrville ISD monitors its alarms through the phone company. The phone company notifies district personnel of freezer problems so that they can take steps to keep food from spoiling.

Recommendation 54:

Implement freezer alarm monitoring at all district schools.

The director of Student Nutrition Services should work with the senior purchasing coordinator to purchase and install alarms at the schools without them and to modify the alarm monitoring service contract to include the new locations.

The one time total cost of implementing the alarms in six kitchens is \$6,000. The cost estimate is based on the cost for six alarm units-model TMDD200-from the district's existing vendor. The vendor sells each alarm for \$1,500 (4 alarms x \$1,500 per alarm = \$6,000). The review team assumed that monthly monitoring costs would not increase and did not include that cost in the fiscal impact.

The district has available food service fund balance. GPISD should use this balance to purchase the alarms, requiring no expenditure of the district's general fund.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Student Nutrition Services contacts the senior purchasing coordinator to develop specifications and obtain bids for alarm equipment.	April 2003
2.	The alarm equipment vendor installs the alarm systems.	June-August 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

Because GPISD can use its food service fund balance, this recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Student Nutrition Services financial analysis process is labor intensive. The district's POS system does not have a financial reporting module and the district's financial system does not have user-friendly report writing or export features. Student Nutrition Services staff use spreadsheets to work around these shortcomings. The POS system does allow data stored in the POS to be extracted into spreadsheets to facilitate financial analysis.

However, the spreadsheets are not integrated and reside in multiple locations. For example, in generating the monthly profit and loss statements for each cafeteria, the bookkeeper must consult all the sources of information outlined in **Exhibit 9-21**.

Exhibit 9-21
GPISD Student Nutrition Services Department Profit and Loss Calculation
Source Data
2002

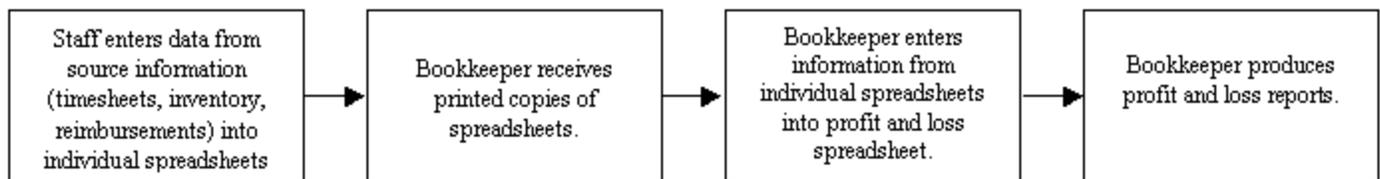
Profit and Loss Item	Data Source	Data Location
Labor Costs by Category	Timesheet Information	Spreadsheet completed by Student Nutrition Secretary
Operating Expenditures	GPISD financial system reports	GPISD financial system printed report with manual adjustments by bookkeeper for timing of payments.
Reimbursement Income and snacks	Reimbursement Claims	Spreadsheet maintained by Student Nutrition Clerk
USDA Commodity Usage and Inventory	Inventory reports	Spreadsheet maintained by Food Distribution Clerk
Sales Income	Deposit slips from individual cafeterias	Spreadsheet maintained by bookkeeper with reconciliation of deposit amounts to information in POS system.

Source: GPISD Student Nutrition Services bookkeeper.

As seen in **Exhibit 9-21**, the source data are maintained on individual computers within the Student Nutrition Services Department. The spreadsheets are not in a shared location and the data are not linked.

Exhibit 9-22 shows the process for generating the profit and loss statement. Staff enters data from a report or supporting documentation into a spreadsheet on the computer at their desk. Because the spreadsheets are not stored in a shared folder and are not linked, when the bookkeeper is ready to calculate the profit and loss statement, she asks each person for printed copy of the spreadsheet that contains the source information. Then the bookkeeper takes the information from the source spreadsheets and enters it into the spreadsheet that calculates the profit and loss report for each cafeteria. This report is shared with cafeteria managers at their monthly meeting.

Exhibit 9-22
Manual Profit and Loss Report Process
2002



Source: Interviews with Student Nutrition Services bookkeeper.

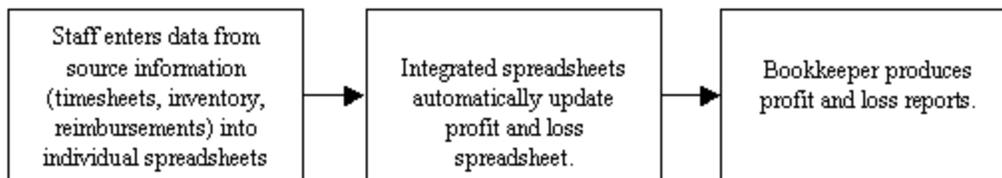
With a manual process and data that are not integrated, a significant amount of staff time is used to enter data that could be used to perform other tasks. With duplicate entry, the risk of incorrect data entry or calculation errors is also increased.

Recommendation 55:

Streamline the financial analysis and reporting process by linking all source information into the profit and loss statements.

Student Nutrition Services can significantly streamline the profit and loss statement process if it integrates and links the spreadsheet information and stores all files in a shared folder that all department staff can use. If Student Nutrition Services fully integrated the data, the process would be simplified as described in **Exhibit 9-23** and the duplicate data entry would be eliminated.

**Exhibit 9-23
Integrated Profit and Loss Report Process
2002**



Source: Interviews with Student Nutrition Services bookkeeper.

The director of Student Nutrition Services should work with the bookkeeper to develop formats that will link all source information into the profit and loss statements. The director of Student Nutrition Services should identify information that can be extracted from the district POS system directly into spreadsheets and work with bookkeeper to develop the extraction program.

The director of Student Nutrition Services should also request that the Technology Department staff set up a shared folder on the network so that all files can be linked and used.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Student Nutrition Services meets with the bookkeeper to develop linked spreadsheet reports and specifications for data extracts from the POS system.	April 2003
2.	The director of Student Nutrition Services requests that a shared folder be set up on the network to allow access to all spreadsheets for linking data.	April 2003
3.	The director of Student Nutrition Services and the bookkeeper copy files to the shared folder and link the spreadsheet information.	May - June 2003
4.	The bookkeeper uses linked spreadsheets to generate profit and loss reports.	July 2003 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 10

TRANSPORTATION

This chapter reviews the Galena Park Independent School District (GPISD) transportation functions in the following sections:

- A. Organization and Management
- B. Routing and Scheduling
- C. Safety and Training
- D. Fleet Maintenance

The primary goal of every school district transportation department is to transport eligible students to and from school and approved extracurricular functions in a timely, safe and efficient manner.

BACKGROUND

Chapter 34 of the Texas Education Code authorizes, but does not require, Texas school districts to provide transportation for students in the general population to and from home, school, career and technology training locations and extracurricular activities. The federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires a school district to provide transportation for students with disabilities if the district also provides transportation for students in the general population or if students with disabilities require transportation to special education services. In 2001-02, GPISD operated a total of 77 routes, consisting of 48 regular program routes and 29 special program routes.

Texas school districts are eligible for state reimbursement for transporting students in regular programs, special programs and Career and Technology Education (CATE) programs. The legislature establishes funding rules and the Texas Education Agency (TEA) administers the program. TEA requires each eligible school district receiving state reimbursement to provide two annual school transportation reports, the School Transportation Route Services report and the School Transportation Operations report. The School Transportation Route Services report documents miles traveled and the number of riders by program and subprogram. The School Transportation Operations report documents total miles, costs and fleet data. The mileage numbers used in this chapter are derived from these TEA reports. This chapter refers to five different types of mileage: standard regular miles, odometer miles, reimbursable route miles, route miles with deadhead and extracurricular miles. These types of mileage are described in the chapter as they are used.

State funding for regular program transportation is limited to the transportation of students living two or more miles from the school they attend. The state does not reimburse districts for transporting students living within two miles of the school they attend unless they face hazardous walking conditions on the way to school, such as the need to cross a four-lane roadway without a traffic signal or crossing guard. The state will reimburse districts for transporting students on hazardous routes within two miles of school; however, the reimbursement for transporting students on hazardous routes may not exceed 10 percent of the total annual reimbursement for transporting only two-or-more-mile students. A school district must use local funds to pay for transportation costs the state reimbursement does not cover.

For the regular program, the state reimburses districts for qualifying transportation expenses based on linear density, which is the ratio of the average number of regular program students transported daily on standard routes to the number of route miles traveled daily for those standard routes. Standard route miles and riders are a subprogram of the regular program and do not include miles or riders for alternative, bilingual, desegregation, magnet, parenting, year-round or hazardous area service. TEA uses this ratio to assign each school district to one of seven linear density groups. Each group is eligible to receive a maximum allotment per mile.

Exhibit 10-1 shows the state approved linear density groups and the related allotment per mile.

**Exhibit 10-1
State Approved Linear Density Groups 2001-02**

Linear Density Group	Allotment / Mile
2.40 and above	\$1.43
1.65 to 2.40	\$1.25
1.15 to 1.65	\$1.11
0.90 to 1.15	\$0.97
0.65 to 0.90	\$0.88
0.40 to 0.65	\$0.79
Up to 0.40	\$0.68

Source: Texas Education Agency (TEA), Handbook on School Transportation Allotments, revised June 2002.

Exhibit 10-2 shows the linear densities for GPISD and four peer districts. Because the peer school districts selected by GPISD for the overall review were not comparable for transportation and skewed the peer average calculations and comparisons, different school districts were selected. Factors used to select transportation peers included linear density, regular program students bused, regular program miles operated, the number of regular program buses and regular program operating cost.

**Exhibit 10-2
GPISD and Peer Districts Linear Density Comparison
2000-01**

District	Standard Regular Riders*	Standard Regular Miles	Linear Density	Eligible Allotment / Mile for 2001-02**
Mission	242,100	124,434	1.946	\$1.43
Port Arthur	420,840	188,004	2.238	\$1.25
South San Antonio	358,020	100,980	3.545	\$1.43
Ysleta	503,460	190,476	2.643	\$1.43
Peer Average	381,105	150,974	2.524	\$1.43
GPISD	626,040	224,874	2.784	\$1.43

Source: TEA, School Transportation Route Services Reports, 2000-01.

** Annual riders calculated by multiplying average daily riders by 180 school days.*

*** Allotment rates are based on the previous year's linear density.*

In 2000-01, GPISD was in the highest linear density group, which entitled the district to a reimbursement of \$1.43 for each reimbursable route mile for regular program miles. The district's actual operations cost, defined as total annual costs less debt service and capital outlay, was \$3.35 per odometer mile in 2000-01. Odometer miles are all miles traveled, including mileage for maintenance, extracurricular miles and miles driven to and from a route, known as deadhead. GPISD has the second highest linear density of all of the peer districts.

Reimbursement for special program transportation is not based on linear density. The per mile allotment rate for special programs is set by the Legislature. All transportation for special program students, except certain extracurricular trips, is eligible for state reimbursement at \$1.08 for each route mile. In 2000-01, GPISD's actual cost for special program transportation was \$1.59 per odometer mile.

The reimbursement per mile for the CATE program is based on the cost for regular program miles for the previous fiscal year as reported by the district in the TEA School Transportation Operations report.

Reimbursable route miles are defined as the verified mileage for serving eligible student riders between their respective residences and their respective schools of regular attendance, beginning at the first school served and ending at the last school served. GPISD operated 358,590 regular program reimbursable route miles, 406,132 special program reimbursable route miles and 23,913 CATE program reimbursable route miles in 2000-01. GPISD did not operate any private program reimbursable route miles in 2000-01. **Exhibit 10-3** shows a comparison of reimbursable route miles for GPISD and the peer districts. In subsequent exhibits and analysis, CATE and private program data are included as part of regular and special program transportation.

Exhibit 10-3
GPISD and Peer Districts' Reimbursable Route Miles by Category
2000-01

District	Regular Reimbursable Route Miles	Special Reimbursable Route Miles	CATE Reimbursable Route Miles	Private Program Reimbursable Route Miles
Mission	249,300	50,040	18,702	0
Port Arthur	352,380	235,478	67,356	7,539
South San Antonio	103,140	93,780	7,200	0
Ysleta	382,446	754,323	69,750	890
Peer Average	271,817	283,405	40,752	4,215
GPISD	358,590	406,132	23,913	0

Source: TEA, School Transportation Operations Report and School and Transportation Route Services Reports, 2000-01.

In 2000-01, the state allocated \$1,014,292 in transportation funding to GPISD. **Exhibit 10-4** compares total annual operations cost and the state allotment for regular program and special program transportation in 2000-01 for GPISD and the peer districts. GPISD receives the peer average percent reimbursement for regular program transportation and the highest percent reimbursement of the peer group for special program transportation.

Exhibit 10-4
GPISD and Peer Districts State Allotment Comparison
2000-01

District	Regular Program			Special Program		
	Operations Cost*	State Allotment	Percent State	Operations Cost*	State Allotment	Percent State
Mission	\$2,029,877	\$312,139	15%	\$111,007	\$54,043	49%
Port Arthur	\$1,586,738	\$640,386	40%	\$712,239	\$254,316	36%
South San Antonio	\$466,166	\$180,250	39%	\$246,692	\$101,282	41%
Ysleta	\$2,587,269	\$655,993	25%	\$3,065,601	\$895,997	29%
Peer Average	\$1,667,513	\$447,192	27%	\$1,033,885	\$326,410	32%
GPISD	\$2,160,661	\$575,669	27%	\$778,032	\$438,623	56%

*Source: TEA, School Transportation Operations Report and School Transportation Route Services Reports, 2000-01. *Operations cost excludes capital outlay and debt service.*

Exhibit 10-5 shows GPISD's annual riders, annual odometer miles and number of buses compared to peer districts for 2000-01.

Exhibit 10-5
GPISD and Peer Districts Operating Statistics
2000-01

District	Regular Program			Special Program		
	Annual Riders*	Total Odometer Miles	Total Buses	Annual Riders*	Total Odometer Miles	Total Buses
Mission	720,720	419,852	51	17,100	102,320	8
Port Arthur	702,540	561,924	47	54,180	267,155	16
South San Antonio	382,320	130,275	44	42,120	113,234	27
Ysleta	842,220	832,092	86	200,160	878,373	104

Peer Average	661,950	486,036	57	78,390	340,271	39
GPISD	832,860	645,675	56**	62,640	490,393	37**

Source: TEA, School Transportation Operations Report and School Transportation Route Services Report, 2000-01.

* Annual riders calculated by multiplying average daily riders by 180 school days.

**At the time of the review, the district had 97 buses.

Exhibit 10-6 compares 2000-01 transportation cost efficiency and effectiveness indicators for GPISD and the peer districts based on TEA data. Cost per odometer mile is determined by dividing total annual operations cost, less debt service and capital outlay, by total annual odometer miles. Cost per rider is determined by dividing total annual operations cost less debt service and capital outlay, by total annual riders. Total annual riders are determined by multiplying average daily riders by 180 school days.

Exhibit 10-6
GPISD and Peer Districts Cost Efficiency and Effectiveness Indicators
2000-01

District	Regular Program		Special Program	
	Cost/ Odometer Mile	Cost/Rider	Cost/ Odometer Mile	Cost/Rider
Mission	\$4.83	\$2.82	\$1.08	\$6.49
Port Arthur	\$2.82	\$2.26	\$2.67	\$13.15
South San Antonio	\$3.58	\$1.22	\$2.18	\$5.86
Ysleta	\$3.11	\$3.07	\$3.49	\$15.32
Peer Average	\$3.59	\$2.34	\$2.35	\$10.20
GPISD	\$3.35	\$2.59	\$1.59	\$12.42
Percent Different from Peer Average	(7%)	11%	(33%)	22%

Source: TEA, School Transportation Operations Report and School Transportation Route Services Report, 2000-01.

The GPISD cost per regular program odometer mile is 7 percent lower than the peer average, and the cost per regular program rider is 11 percent higher than the peer average. The GPISD cost per special program odometer mile is 33 percent lower than the peer average and the cost per special program rider is 22 percent higher than the peer average.

Exhibit 10-7 compares service effectiveness, or productivity indicators, for GPISD and peer districts based on TEA data. **Exhibit 10-7** uses route miles with deadhead, a subset of odometer miles. Route miles are all miles operated to provide student transportation between home and school, and for career and technology programs. Route miles are not limited to reimbursable route miles. The riders per route mile with deadhead are determined by dividing total annual riders by total annual route miles with deadhead. Total annual riders are determined by multiplying average daily riders by 180 school days. The riders per bus are determined by dividing average daily riders by the total number of buses.

Exhibit 10-7
GPISD and Peer Districts Service Effectiveness Indicators
2000-01

District	Regular Program		Special Program	
	Riders/ Route Mile (with deadhead)	Riders/Bus	Riders/ Route Mile (with deadhead)	Riders/Bus
Mission	3.18	79	0.17	12
Port Arthur	1.65	83	0.21	19
South San Antonio	3.53	48	0.45	9
Ysleta	1.75	54	0.23	11
Peer Average	2.53	66	0.27	13
GPISD	2.06	83	0.13	9
Percent Different from Peer Average	(18%)	25%	(50%)	(25%)

Source: TEA, School Transportation Operations Report and School Transportation Route Services Report, 2000-01.

GPISD regular program riders per route mile with deadhead are 18 percent lower than the peer average, and riders per bus is 25 percent higher than the peer average. GPISD special program riders per route mile with

deadhead are 50 percent lower than the peer average, and riders per bus are 25 percent lower than the peer average.

Exhibit 10-8 documents a four-year history of student riders per route mile with deadhead for GPISD.

Exhibit 10-8
GPISD Regular and Special Program Transportation Riders per
Route Mile (with Deadhead)
1997-98 through 2000-01

	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	Percent Change 1997-98 through 2000-01
Regular Program					
Annual Riders	947,520	1,390,500	1,064,520	832,860	(12%)
Route Miles (with Deadhead)	387,122	411,556	370,826	403,902	4%
Riders per Route Mile (with Deadhead)	2.45	3.38	2.87	2.06	(16%)
Percent Change	N/A	38%	(15%)	(28%)	
Special Program					
Annual Riders	45,000	81,900	77,400	62,640	39%
Route Miles (with Deadhead)	371,319	350,457	451,028	470,704	27%
Riders per Reimbursable Route Mile (with Deadhead)	0.12	0.23	0.17	0.13	8%
Percent Change	N/A	93%	(27%)	(22%)	

Source: TEA, School Transportation Route Services Reports, 1997-98 through 2000-01.

Regular program riders per route mile with deadhead increased 38 percent from 2.45 to 3.38 from 1997-98 to 1998-99, and then decreased to 2.06 in 2000-01. Regular program riders per route mile with deadhead decreased 16 percent from 1997-98 to 2000-01. The number of regular program riders decreased 12 percent compared to a 4 percent increase in route miles with deadhead from 1997-98 to 2000-01. Special program riders per

route mile with deadhead increased 10 percent from 1997-98 to 2000-01. The number of special program riders increased 39 percent compared to a 27 percent increase in route miles with deadhead from 1997-98 to 2000-01.

Exhibit 10-9 documents a four-year history of transportation riders per bus for GPISD.

**Exhibit 10-9
GPISD Regular and Special Program Transportation Riders per Bus
1997-98 through 2000-01**

	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	Percent Change 1997-98 through 2000-01
Regular Program					
Daily Riders	5,264	7,725	5,914	4,627	(12%)
Buses	44	52	53	56	27%
Riders/Bus	120	149	112	83	(31%)
Percent Change	N/A	24%	(25%)	(26%)	
Special Program					
Daily Riders	250	455	430	348	39%
Buses	31	36	37	37	19%
Riders/Bus	8	13	12	9	17%
Percent Change	N/A	57%	(8%)	(19%)	

Source: TEA, School Transportation Operations Report and School Transportation Route Services Report, 1996-97 through 2000-01.

Regular program riders during the four-year period ranged between 83 and 149 riders a bus. Over the four-year period, the number of buses increased 27 percent, and the riders per bus decreased 31 percent. Special program riders ranged between 8 and 13 riders a bus during the four-year period. The percent growth in special program riders is approximately equal to the percent increase in the number of buses.

Exhibit 10-10 documents a four-year history of the total miles of transportation service GPISD provided by category of service. The four-year history includes route miles with deadhead. Route miles include deadhead, but exclude extracurricular miles. Extracurricular miles include student transportation for field trips and extracurricular activities such as athletics, band and University Interscholastic League (UIL) events.

Exhibit 10-10
GPISD Annual Miles of Service
1997-98 through 2000-01

	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-2001	Percent Change 1997-98 through 2000-01
Regular Program					
Route Miles (with deadhead)	387,122	411,556	370,826	403,902	4%
Extracurricular Miles	137,908	174,111	234,815	237,059	72%
Other Miles*	4,477	3,959	4,419	4,714	5%
Annual Regular Miles	529,507	589,626	610,060	645,675	22%
Special Program					
Route Miles (with deadhead)	371,319	350,457	451,028	470,704	27%
Extracurricular Miles	11,388	53,589	23,750	17,018	49%
Other Miles*	1,174	1,327	1,472	2,671	128%
Annual Special Miles	383,881	405,373	476,250	490,393	28%
TOTAL	913,388	994,999	1,086,310	1,136,068	24%

Source: TEA, School Transportation Operations Reports, 1996-97 through 2000-01.

*Other miles include all miles other than route miles, mileage to and from routes and extracurricular miles.

From 1997-98 to 2000-01, total regular program miles increased 22 percent, route miles increased 4 percent and extracurricular miles increased 72 percent. From 1997-98 to 2000-01, total special program

miles increased 28 percent, route miles increased 27 percent and extracurricular miles increased 49 percent.

Exhibit 10-11 shows the percent of students transported compared to total enrollment. GPISD transports a higher percentage of students compared to the peer average.

Exhibit 10-11
Percent of Enrolled Students Riding the Bus
GPISD and Peer Districts
2000-01

District	Enrollment	Average Daily Riders	Percent of Enrolled Students Riding the Bus
Mission	12,464	4,099	33%
Port Arthur	10,945	4,204	38%
South San Antonio	9,984	2,358	24%
Ysleta	46,394	5,791	12%
Peer Average	19,947	4,113	21%
GPISD	18,885	4,975	26%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2000-01. Riders from TEA, School Transportation Route Services Reports, 2000-01.

Exhibit 10-12 compares the total and extracurricular transportation miles of peer districts with GPISD. GPISD's extracurricular miles are comparable with peer districts.

Exhibit 10-12
Transportation Extracurricular Miles
GPISD and Peer Districts
2000-01

District	Total Odometer Miles*	Extracurricular Miles*	Percent Extracurricular
Mission	522,172	171,769	33%
Port Arthur	829,079	149,450	18%
South San Antonio	243,509	41,549	17%

Ysleta	1,710,465	331,526	19%
Peer Average	826,306	173,574	21%
GPISD	1,136,068	254,077	22%

Source: TEA, School Transportation Operations Report, 2000-01. *Includes both regular and special program transportation.

Exhibit 10-13 compares the transportation cost of the peer districts with GPISD as a percentage of total district expenditures. GPISD spends a slightly higher percentage on student transportation than the peer average.

Exhibit 10-13
Transportation Cost as a Percentage of Total Budgeted Operating Expenditures
GPISD and Peer Districts
2000-01

District	Total District Expenditures	Transportation Operations Cost*	Percent of Total Expenditures
Mission	\$81,403,328	\$2,140,884	2.6%
Port Arthur	\$69,702,027	\$2,298,977	3.3%
South San Antonio	\$71,030,790	\$712,858	1.0%
Ysleta	\$273,841,128	\$5,652,870	2.1%
Peer Average	\$123,994,318	\$2,701,397	2.2%
GPISD	\$123,549,882	\$2,938,693	2.4%

Sources: Total expenditures from AEIS data, 2000-01; Transportation operations cost from TEA School Transportation Operations Report, 2000-01.

*Includes both regular and special program transportation.

A four-year history of transportation cost data for GPISD provided by TEA, is shown in **Exhibit 10-14**.

Exhibit 10-14
GPISD Regular and Special Program Transportation Cost Data
1997-98 through 2000-01

	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	Percent Change 1997-98 through- 2000-01
Operation Cost*					
Regular Program	\$1,854,556	\$1,736,899	\$1,704,486	\$2,160,661	17%
Percent Change	N/A	(6%)	(2%)	27%	
Special Program	\$505,571	\$957,337	\$976,012	\$778,032	54%
Percent Change	N/A	89%	2%	(20%)	
Total	\$2,360,127	\$2,694,236	\$2,680,498	\$2,938,693	25%
Odometer Miles					
Regular Program	529,507	589,626	610,060	645,675	22%
Percent Change	N/A	11%	3%	6%	
Special Program	383,881	405,373	476,250	490,393	28%
Percent Change	N/A	6%	17%	3%	
Total	913,388	994,999	1,086,310	1,136,068	24%
Cost per Odometer Mile*					
Regular Program	\$3.50	\$2.95	\$2.79	\$3.35	(4%)
Percent Change	N/A	(16%)	(5%)	20%	
Special Program	\$1.32	\$2.36	\$2.05	\$1.59	20%
Percent Change	N/A	79%	(13%)	(23%)	
Annual Riders					

Regular Program	947,520	1,390,500	1,064,520	832,860	(12%)
Percent Change	N/A	47%	(23%)	(22%)	
Special Program	45,000	81,900	77,400	62,640	39%
Percent Change	N/A	82%	(5%)	(19%)	
Total	992,520	1,472,400	1,141,920	895,500	(10%)
Cost per Rider*					
Regular Program	\$1.96	\$1.25	\$1.60	\$2.59	33%
Percent Change	N/A	(36%)	28%	62%	
Special Program	\$11.23	\$11.69	\$12.61	\$12.42	11%
Percent Change	N/A	4%	8%	(2%)	

Source: TEA, School Transportation Operations Report and TEA School Transportation Route Services Report, 1997-98 through 2000-01.

*Operations cost excludes capital outlay and debt service.

Regular program operations costs increased 17 percent from 1997-98 to 2000-01. Regular program odometer miles increased 22 percent from 1997-98 to 2000-01. Ridership decreased 12 percent during the same four-year period. Regular program cost per odometer mile dropped 16 percent from 1997-98 to 1998-99 and dropped another 5 percent from 1998-99 to 1999-2000, but increased by 20 percent from 1999-2000 to 2000-01. Cost per odometer mile decreased 4 percent overall from 1997-98 to 2000-01. Regular program cost per rider varied over the four-year period, from a low of \$1.25 in 1998-99 to a high of \$2.59 in 2000-01.

Special program operations costs increased significantly during the four-year period, with an 89 percent increase from 1997-98 to 1998-99 and an overall increase of 54 percent from 1997-98 to 2000-01. Special program odometer miles increased 28 percent during the four-year period. Special program riders increased 82 percent from 1997-98 to 1998-99, but have declined since then for an overall increase of 39 percent from 1997-98 to

2000-01. Cost per odometer mile increased 79 percent from 1997-98 to 1998-99 and then declined for a 20 percent increase during the four-year period. Cost per special program rider increased 11 percent.

The director of Transportation said several factors caused these variations. In 1997-98, the district inadvertently overcharged fuel to the regular program, while the special program was undercharged for fuel. In 1998-99, the district correctly allocated fuel costs. In 1999-2000, the district moved about one-half of the GPISD buses from Galena Park High School parking to North Shore High School, greatly reducing deadhead miles. In 2000-01, the new sixth grade campus opened and all sixth graders living north of Interstate Highway 10 had to be transported north of the highway every day. Also in 2000-01, construction started on the GPISD stadium near North Shore High School, and therefore all buses had to once again park at Galena Park High School in the southern part of the district, increasing deadhead miles. With the opening of the new Transportation Department facility in 2001-02, the district moved all its buses to a central location.

Exhibit 10-15 summarizes four-year costs for GPISD transportation operations costs by object of expenditure, as defined by TEA in the instructions for the annual TEA School Transportation Route Services report.

Exhibit 10-15
GPISD Transportation Operations Cost by Type of Expenditure
1997-98 through 2000-01

Object	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	Percent of Total 2000-01	Percent Change 1997-98 through 2000-01
Salaries and Benefits	\$1,978,757	\$2,156,374	\$2,220,822	\$2,365,956	81%	20%
Percent Change	N/A	9%	3%	7%	N/A	N/A
Purchased Services	\$82,365	\$110,171	\$93,385	\$101,025	3%	23%
Percent Change	N/A	34%	(15%)	8%	N/A	N/A
Supplies	\$198,595	\$242,751	\$270,103	\$354,505	12%	79%

and Material						
Percent Change	N/A	22%	11%	31%	N/A	N/A
Other Expenses	\$100,410	\$184,940	\$96,188	\$117,207	4%	17%
Percent Change	N/A	84%	(48%)	22%	N/A	N/A
Total Operations Cost	\$2,360,127	\$2,694,236	\$2,680,498	\$2,938,693	N/A	25%

Source: TEA, School Transportation Route Services Reports, 1997-98 through 2000-01.

Total operations costs increased 25 percent from 1997-98 to 2000-01. This increase is attributable to a 20 percent increase in salaries and benefits and a 79 percent increase in supplies and material during the four-year period. Salaries and benefits represent 81 percent of all transportation expenses.

Chapter 10

TRANSPORTATION

A. Organization and Management

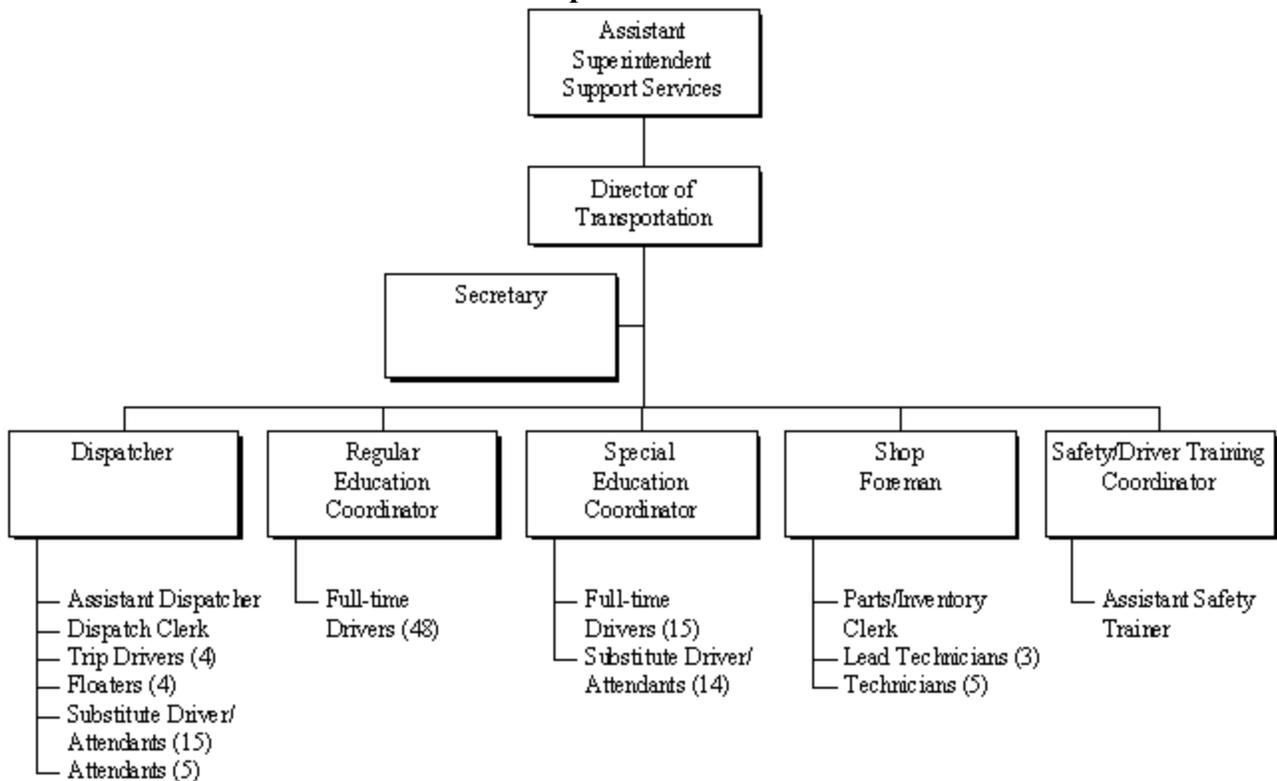
The Transportation Department is responsible for providing transportation for GPISD students between home and school and on extracurricular trips such as athletic competitions and UIL events. The Transportation Department also maintains and services the district's school buses and other vehicles. The director of Transportation has been at GPISD for about 10 years and was previously employed by the Ysleta ISD Transportation Department after retiring from military service. The director of Transportation reports to the assistant superintendent of Support Services.

The Transportation Department has comprehensive policies and procedures, with an employee handbook that is updated annually. The handbook contains clear expectations and evaluation procedures for employees, including bus drivers, bus attendants, dispatchers and shop employees. Policies on dress code, absence reporting, accident reporting and filing a complaint are clear. The section on safety spells out specific general safety rules such as turning on amber loading lights 300 feet before the bus stop and applying the parking brake before loading or unloading students. The handbook also contains general procedures to be followed during emergencies such as severe weather and school bus evacuations.

Exhibit 10-16 shows the organization of the Transportation Department.

Exhibit 10-16 **GPISD Transportation Organization**

September 2002



Source: GPISD Transportation Department.

GPISD has several types of bus drivers. Full-time drivers have assigned daily bus routes for either regular or special education. Trip drivers are assigned to extracurricular trips. Floaters, with the most seniority, are used on any route to cover absences. Part-time substitute driver/attendants are part-time employees with commercial driver's licenses (CDL's) who are available to drive if needed, but mainly serve as bus attendants until a full-time position becomes available. Part-time employees do not receive benefits and do not have a minimum hourly guarantee. The department trains all drivers in special education and wheelchair techniques so they can drive any regular or special education route.

The dispatcher, dispatch assistant and dispatch clerk check drivers in and out, arrange coverage for all regular and special education routes, schedule buses and drivers for extracurricular trips, record driver absences and bill for extracurricular trips. The dispatcher also supervises the part-time substitute drivers/attendants, floaters and trip drivers.

The shop foreman and technicians perform maintenance on the buses and other district vehicles. The shop foreman and technicians also have CDL's. They are available to drive buses in an emergency, but so far have not been required to drive during the 2002-03 school year. Lead technicians are more experienced and earn a higher rate of pay than technicians. The parts/inventory clerk processes and charges for parts used in repairs, monitors fuel usage and enters data into the vehicle maintenance information system.

The regular education coordinator oversees the scheduling and operation of student transportation for the regular education program. He supervises the regular education drivers and attendants, monitors drivers in the field and investigates complaints and accidents. The special education coordinator performs the same functions for transportation of special education students. She also attends special education meetings as needed.

The safety/driver training coordinator conducts initial screening interviews, organizes and implements the district's initial and ongoing training programs, works with insurance companies after accidents, leads the Accident Review Board and investigates accidents. The assistant safety trainer assists in training drivers and implementing the ongoing safety program. She also monitors bus videotapes randomly.

FINDING

The Transportation Department created a career ladder for bus drivers as a recruitment and retention tool. The career ladder gives full-time bus driver positions value and shows respect for bus driver skills. Competition for full-time positions helps the district acquire and maintain motivated, quality drivers. All driver positions are filled.

The Transportation Department hires all new driver employees as substitute drivers/attendants. All new substitute drivers/attendants are required to obtain their CDL before they can become full-time. Once a substitute driver obtains the CDL, the driver qualifies for a full-time driver or attendant position when a position becomes available. Benefits of full-time employment include an hourly guarantee, health benefits and preference for extra work, such as extracurricular trips. **Exhibit 10-17** presents details on the career ladder.

**Exhibit 10-17
GPISD Bus Driver Career Ladder
2002-03**

Position	Beginning Hourly Salary	Benefits	Hourly Guarantee	Required for Progression
Part-time substitute driver/attendant	\$7.50	No	No	CDL
Part-time substitute driver/attendant with CDL	\$10.06	No	No	Full-time opening
Full-time driver	\$10.65	Yes	Yes	N/A

Source: GPISD Transportation Department.

Exhibit 10-18 compares GPISD Transportation Department salaries to peer districts.

**Exhibit 10-18
GPISD and Peer Districts Bus Driver Salaries
2002-03**

District	Fulltime Bus Driver Hourly Salary	Fulltime Bus Attendant Hourly Salary
Aldine	\$10.24	\$7.25
Goose Creek	\$10.00	\$7.00
Humble	\$11.01	\$7.94
Pasadena	\$10.30	\$7.85
GPISD	\$10.65	\$7.50

Source: GPISD Transportation Department.

The GPISD initiated the career ladder program five years ago to improve driver recruitment and retention. Comments received during a bus driver focus group were very supportive and complimentary of the career ladder program and included the following:

- We know just what we need to do to move up.
- We get good pay and good raises.
- We have enough staff to do a good job.
- Other districts can't get drivers. We have a waiting list of applicants.

Exhibit 10-19 presents information on GPISD Transportation Department resignations since 1999-2000. Resignations have dropped significantly since 2000-01.

Exhibit 10-19
GPISD Transportation Department Employee Resignations
1999-2000 through 2002-03

Year	Total Staff	Resignations	Percentage of Resignations
1999-2000	104	12	11.5%
2000-01	117	17	14.5%
2001-02	117	13	11.1%
2002-03*	122	3	2.5%

Source: GPISD Transportation Department.

*Data for 2002-03 is as of 12-05-2002.

COMMENDATION

The career ladder program for bus drivers in the Transportation Department helps the district recruit and retain bus drivers.

FINDING

The Transportation Department charges other departments for maintaining their vehicles, maintaining district grounds and warehouses and extracurricular trips. The district charges the cost of parts and labor directly to the specific department whose vehicles the Transportation Department technicians fixed. The district charges parts at cost and labor at the hourly rate of the technician performing the work.

Extracurricular trips are charged to the appropriate school or department at a rate of \$1.25 per mile and \$10.00 per hour. Rates are reviewed annually. In 2000-01, revenues from extracurricular trips exceeded actual costs, and therefore some extracurricular costs were charged back to the Transportation Department during 2001-02. If revenues exceed costs for 2002-03, the district will lower rates for 2003-04.

COMMENDATION

The Transportation Department operates as an internal service cost center.

FINDING

The Transportation Department uses route assignments to reward employee longevity and attendance. The Transportation Department assigns routes at the beginning of each year based upon seniority in the department and driver absences. Drivers request routes and, if more than one driver requests the same route, the department awards the route to the driver with the combination of the most seniority and fewest absences the previous year. The department also awards summer routes based upon seniority and absences.

Assignments for extracurricular trips are also assigned with preference to drivers with no absences that week. Bus drivers interviewed said that these policies give them strong incentives to be at work every day.

COMMENDATION

The Transportation Department uses route assignments as incentives for attendance.

FINDING

The Transportation Department responds quickly to complaints and solicits feedback from departments that use its services. The Transportation Department sent customer service surveys to all principals, assistant principals and department heads at the end of the 2001-02 school year. Summary survey results are shown in **Exhibit 10-20**.

Exhibit 10-20 GPISD Transportation Department Customer Service Survey Results

2001-02
N=33 respondents

Survey Question	Yes	Somewhat	Needs Improvement
Have Transportation Department supervisors been responsive to your needs in a positive and timely manner? (6 supervisors listed. Aggregate responses shown.)	175	9	3
When you telephone us, is our office staff polite and helpful? (6 employees listed. Aggregate responses shown.)	163	4	1
Do our drivers perform their duties in a safe, conscientious manner?	30	1	N/A
Are our drivers courteous and helpful to the sponsors on trips?	31	N/A	N/A
Are the buses provided for your trips on time and clean?	26	N/A	N/A

Source: GPISD Customer Service Survey.

The regular and special education coordinators investigate any complaint against a driver or attendant. If videotapes from the bus involved are available, the coordinator views the tape. Depending on the specific complaint, the coordinator then discusses the incident with the Transportation Department employees involved as well as with parents, principals, teachers and administrative staff as appropriate. One principal interviewed said that within hours of learning of the complaint, the Transportation Department supervisor viewed the tape and resolved the complaint. This principal called the Transportation Department's response time "awesome."

Of the 33 parents responding to a TSPR survey, 6 percent disagreed with the statement, "Buses arrive and depart on time." None of the responding parents disagreed with the statement, "Buses seldom break down." and 6 percent disagreed with the statement, "The length of the student's bus ride is reasonable." Of the 30 principals and assistant principals responding to the survey, 86 percent agreed that buses arrived and left on time and 100 percent agreed that the district has a simple method for requesting buses for special events.

COMMENDATION

The Transportation Department emphasizes customer service.

FINDING

Overtime in GPISD's Transportation Department is high. **Exhibit 10-21** shows overtime for 1997-98 through 2001-02. Overtime costs were obtained from function 34 transportation costs reported in the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) for the years 1997-98 through 2000-01 and from the Transportation Department for 2001-02.

Exhibit 10-21
GPISD Transportation Department Overtime
1997-98 through 2001-02

Year	Overtime	Percent Change from Previous Year
1997-98	\$53,740	N/A
1998-99	\$107,251	99.6%
1999-2000	\$154,588	44.1%
2000-01	\$162,303	5.0%
2001-02	\$139,468	(14.1%)
Total	\$617,350	N/A

Source: TEA, Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS), 1997-98 through 2000-01; GPISD Transportation Department 2001-02.

As seen in **Exhibit 10-21**, overtime more than tripled from 1997-98 to 2000-01. The director of Transportation attributed the increases to driver shortages, new schools opening and increases in after school and extracurricular activities. Beginning in 2000-01, the driver shortage declined, but after-school and extracurricular activities continued to increase. All driver positions at GPISD are currently filled.

Effective school districts analyze overtime and hire enough drivers to minimize overtime. Since the Fair Labor Standards Act covers bus drivers and attendants, the district must pay them time and a half when their workweek exceeds 40 hours. Although some overtime is unavoidable, the Transportation Department would like to maximize paying drivers at the regular rate rather than the overtime rate.

Recommendation 56:

Reduce overtime costs by hiring three drivers and four substitute drivers/attendants.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Transportation monitors and analyzes overtime levels and patterns for 2002-03.	April - May 2003
2.	The director of Transportation determines the number of additional staff needed to reduce overtime costs.	May 2003
3.	The director of Transportation includes additional positions in the budget request for 2003-04.	May 2003

4.	The superintendent and board members approve the proposed Transportation Department budget for 2003-04.	June 2003
5.	The department of Human Resource Services advertises to fill the additional positions.	June 2003
6.	The director of Transportation conducts interviews and selects new employees.	July 2003
7.	New employees begin work in the Transportation Department.	August 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

At an average regular hourly salary of \$10.36 [(\$10.06 plus \$10.65)/2, see **Exhibit 10-17**] and an overtime hourly salary of \$15.54 (\$10.36 x 1.5), the 2001-02 overtime of \$139,468 represents about 8,975 hours (\$139,468 / \$15.54) of overtime, mainly for bus drivers and attendants. Assuming that the average driver or attendant works 1,260 hours (35 hours per week x 36 weeks) in a school year, the 8,975 hours are roughly equal to seven employees (8,975 total hours / 1,260 hours per employee).

GPISD could hire an additional three drivers at an estimated annual cost per driver of \$17,640 [(\$10.65 per hour x 1,260 hours = \$13,419) plus benefits totaling \$4,221 (\$2,820 for health and dental insurance and \$1,401 for Medicare, unemployment and worker's compensation)]. The total annual cost for three drivers would be \$52,920 (\$17,640 x 3).

An additional four full-time equivalent substitute part-time driver/attendants would cost an estimated \$12,676 annually per driver/attendant (\$10.06 per hour x 1,260 hours = \$12,676). The total annual cost for four substitute drivers would be \$50,704 (\$12,676 x 4).

Assuming a future overtime level of \$140,000 if no additional positions are added, projected annual savings are (\$140,000 minus \$52,920 minus \$67,766). Existing staff could train new employees. No additional buses would be needed because, although the distribution of routes and trips would change, the total number of trips and routes would not change.

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Reduce overtime costs by hiring three drivers and four substitute drivers/attendants.	\$19,314	\$19,314	\$19,314	\$19,314	\$19,314

Chapter 10

TRANSPORTATION

B. Routing and Scheduling

The Transportation Department is responsible for providing transportation for students between home and school each morning and afternoon. For 2001-02, GPISD reported an average of 5,412 students rode buses every day, or 28 percent of the student enrollment of 19,336.

FINDING

The Transportation Department operates a total of 97 buses, with 58 used for regular education programs and 39 used for special education transportation. Buses operate three to four runs per route, with the average run taking 20 to 25 minutes. Route start times and bell times are shown in **Exhibit-10-22**.

Exhibit 10-22
GPISD Route Start Times and Bell Times
2001-02

Level	Route Start Time	Bell Times
Elementary School	7:00 am - 3:10 pm	7:45am - 3:00 pm
Middle School	7:30 am - 3:40 pm	8:15 am - 3:30 pm
High School	6:30 am - 2:30 pm	7:20 am - 2:20 pm

Source: GPISD Transportation Department.

Because bell times are staggered, the director of Transportation estimates GPISD needs 77 fewer buses and 77 fewer drivers than if bell times were not staggered. Fewer buses and drivers amount to nearly \$5.3 million in annual savings for the district, \$4 million saved on buses and \$1.3 million saved on employees. The average purchase price of a bus during 2000-02 and 2001-02 was \$51,909. Staggered bell times enabled GPISD to operate its transportation program without spending nearly \$4 million on 77 additional buses. The average annual cost for a substitute driver/attendant is \$16,819 [\$10.06 per hour x 1,260 hours = \$12,676] plus benefits totaling \$4,143 (\$2,820 for health and dental insurance and \$1,323 for Medicare, unemployment and worker's compensation (\$12,676 x 1,044)]. Savings in driver salaries and benefits total nearly \$1.3 million per year (\$16,819 x 77).

COMMENDATION

GPISD reduces the number of buses and drivers required by staggering bell times.

FINDING

The Transportation Department does not fully use its existing routing software to efficiently schedule routes. GPISD purchased Transfinder software in 1999 for \$19,915. The director of Transportation and the assistant superintendent of Support Services said that no one submitted a request for proposal when the district bought the software, but the director of Transportation remembers obtaining quotes from vendors of other routing software. The documentation for these quotes, however, could not be found because file boxes for 1999 were archived without an inventory of contents for each box. The systems analyst recalls an informal comparison was done to Edulog software, which would have cost about \$30,000 at the time. The district chose Transfinder because it was compatible with ArcView, the district's boundary planning software. The district uploads demographic information from SASI, the student information system, into Transfinder at the beginning of each year and about every three months thereafter.

The systems analyst and a part-time clerk are the only GPISD employees who are familiar with Transfinder. The Transportation Department coordinators evaluate existing routes each year and plan new routes. The district has used Transfinder to enter existing routes and print route descriptions, but

employees have not used the software to evaluate existing routes or to plan new ones. New routes are planned manually and then entered into Transfinder. The coordinators said they have not received training on all components of Transfinder, and they do not have a manual. However, annual updates to the software include a compact disc with a revised user's manual. GPISD paid \$2,750 in May 2000 and \$2,750 in May 2001 for maintenance, technical support and upgrades for Transfinder. The February 1999 contract and license agreement includes 32 hours of training and unlimited telephone support. Transportation Department personnel were unable to locate records from the vendor about past training, but the director of Transportation recalls the vendor provided all 32 hours of training.

The use of routing software to plan new routes and evaluate existing routes helps ensure that the district designs and implements the most efficient routes. Operating costs decline as inefficient routes are revised or eliminated. Employees responsible for designing routes should receive

more comprehensive training in Transfinder to maximize use of the software.

Recommendation 57:

Evaluate and fully implement all components available in the Transfinder software.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Transportation, systems analyst and coordinators discuss existing barriers to full use of Transfinder software.	April 2003
2.	The director of Transportation, assistant superintendent of Support Services, director of Technology and systems analyst discuss existing barriers to full implementation of Transfinder software.	April 2003
3.	The director of Transportation and systems analyst evaluate various Transfinder capabilities and determine which capabilities should be implemented.	May 2003
4.	The director of Transportation and systems analyst develop a plan to implement selected Transfinder components and train appropriate personnel.	June 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

Some school districts have shown a 7 percent to 15 percent reduction in the number of routes needed when moving from a manual to a computer routing system. According to **Exhibits 10-5** and **10-6**, GPISD operated 645,675 regular program miles during 2000-01 at a cost per mile of \$3.35 and 490,393 special program odometer miles at a cost per mile of \$1.59. Using a conservative estimate of a 5 percent reduction in operating miles, GPISD could save approximately \$147,137 per year by fully implementing Transfinder routing software [(645,675 miles x \$3.35 cost per mile x 5 percent = \$108,150.56) plus (490,393 miles x \$1.59 cost per mile x 5 percent = 38,986.24)].

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Evaluate and fully implement all components available in Transfinder software.	\$147,137	\$147,137	\$147,137	\$147,137	\$147,137

FINDING

The Transportation Department's special program is less efficient than comparable peer districts. **Exhibit 10-23** shows selected efficiency measures for GPISD compared to peer district averages.

Exhibit 10-23
Special Program Transportation Efficiency Indicators
GPISD and Peer Districts
2000-01

Measure	GPISD	Average of Peer Districts	Percent Above/Below (Below) Peer Average
Cost per Rider	\$12.42	\$10.20	21.8%
Riders per Route Mile (with deadhead)	0.13	0.27	(51.8%)
Riders per Bus	9	12	(25.0%)

Source: TEA, School Transportation Operations Report and School Transportation Route Services Reports, 2000-01.

GPISD transports fewer special program students per bus and per route mile and has higher costs per rider than peer districts.

Exhibit 10-24 presents historical data on riders, mileage and costs of GPISD's special program transportation riders, mileage and costs.

Exhibit 10-24
GPISD Special Program Transportation Historical Performance
Measures
1997-98 through 2000-01

Measure	1997-98	1998-99	1999- 2000	2000-01	Percentage Increase 1997- 98 through 2000-01
Daily riders	250	455	430	348	39%
Annual riders	45,000	81,900	77,400	62,640	39%
Number of buses	31	36	37	37	19%
Odometer miles	383,881	405,373	476,250	490,393	28%

Operations cost	\$505,571	\$957,337	\$976,012	\$778,032	54%
Cost per odometer mile	\$1.32	\$2.36	\$2.05	\$1.59	20%
Cost per rider	\$11.23	\$11.69	\$12.61	\$12.42	11%

Source: TEA, School Transportation Operations Report and School Transportation Route Services Reports, 1997-98 through 2000-01.

As noted earlier, GPISD special program transportation costs were understated for 1997-98 and were overstated for 1998-99 because of errors in reporting the proportion of fuel regular and special programs used. The number of special program riders peaked in 1998-99, as did reported operations costs and costs per odometer mile. Total odometer miles continue to increase each year, with costs per odometer mile at a high of \$2.36 in 1998-99 and dropping to a low of \$1.59 in 2000-01. Costs per rider peaked in 1999-2000 and dropped slightly in 2000-01. The director of Transportation stated that the decrease for 2000-01 was due to a one-year bus parking relocation caused by district construction.

Special education students are placed in educational settings according to an individualized education program (IEP) developed by the student's Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) Committee, composed of a student's parent(s) and school personnel. With ARD committee agreement, school districts often elect to transport students to specialized programs used cooperatively by several districts because the cost of transporting students and contracting for cooperative services is less than the cost of providing equivalent services within the district. The special education coordinator for GPISD's Transportation Department attends some, but not all, ARD Committee meetings, including most that involve transportation out of the district.

GPISD operates 29 special program bus routes, with eight routes or 27.6 percent of the special routes going to cooperative programs outside GPISD, as listed in **Exhibit 10-25**.

Exhibit 10-25
GPISD Transportation Routes Outside District for Special Programs
2002-03

Route Number	Destination
262	East Harris County Cooperative for Deaf Education, Pasadena

269	Association for Developmentally Disabled, Houston
270	East Harris County Cooperative for Deaf Education, Baytown
286	Triple E Workshop, Houston
288	New Day Treatment, Houston
291	Academic and Behavior Center East (middle and high school), Houston
293	East Harris County Cooperative for Deaf Education, Baytown
294	Avondale and CRI, Houston (mental retardation services)

Source: GPISD Transportation Department.

GPISD does not have agreements with any other school districts for shared transportation services.

Recommendation 58:

Periodically review and evaluate alternatives to improve efficiency and minimize the cost of special program transportation.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The executive director of Special Programs, director of Transportation and special education coordinator develop a plan to include Transportation Department representation in ARD committee meetings.	March 2003
2.	The executive director of Special Programs, with input from the special education coordinator and director of Transportation, annually performs a cost analysis that compares the cost of special program services currently provided out of the district, including the cost of student transportation, to the cost of providing equivalent services in the district.	March 2003 and annually thereafter
3.	The executive director of Special Programs and Superintendent review the cost analysis and identify possible opportunities to cost-effectively provide special education programs within GPISD as well as any additional opportunities to cost-effectively cooperatively provide special education programs outside GPISD.	April 2003 and annually thereafter
4.	The director of Transportation and special education coordinator identify possible alternatives to share	May 2003 and ongoing

	transportation services for special education students with other local school districts.	thereafter
5.	The director of Transportation recommends potential shared services arrangements for special education student transportation to the assistant superintendent of Support Services and superintendent.	June 2003 and ongoing thereafter

Shared service arrangements could take several different forms. GPISD might provide transportation for other districts' students for a fee. GPISD might contract with other districts to transport GPISD students. GPISD and other districts could transport each other's students to different locations outside the district.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 10

TRANSPORTATION

C. Safety and Training

FINDING

The Transportation Department has procedures in place to respond quickly to accidents and emergencies. Each regular education route has designated GPISD student bus captains who receive training in emergency procedures and evacuation from the bus in case a bus driver is incapacitated or an accident occurs. Each of the department's coordinators carries an emergency/evacuation kit at all times containing materials needed in case of an emergency or accident. The kits include bullhorns, bus identification signs, tape and student rosters by route.

The coordinators and director of Transportation developed an evacuation plan for each school, with the Transportation Department's responsible for quickly transporting students away from the school. Coordinators and school personnel conduct periodic evacuation drills. An Accident Review Board made up of the Transportation Department three coordinators, risk manager and representative drivers and mechanics reviews every accident, including those where GPISD employees are not at fault, and those with no injuries or vehicular damage. All Transportation Department employees are required to have cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and first aid training every year.

COMMENDATION

GPISD's procedures help ensure student safety and driver competence.

FINDING

The Transportation Department promotes ongoing employee training. A full-time safety/driver training coordinator manages the training program. The district requires new employees to obtain a CDL to become a full-time driver. This includes 20 hours of Regional Education Service Center IV (Region 4) bus driver training. The GPISD safety/driver training coordinator is an instructor for the Region 4 training program. GPISD customizes training based on the new employee's background and progress. Training always includes at least one full day of training on special needs student transport and two to three weeks of behind-the-wheel and ride-along training with designated driver trainers.

The safety/training coordinator developed a driver training manual and comprehensive check-off sheets to ensure that each new driver completes all required tasks. The New Employee Training Guide includes 56 skills and tasks. Each task must be dated and initialed as completed by both the trainee and trainer. New substitute driver/attendants continue on-the-job training as attendants and substitute drivers until a full-time driving position becomes available.

All drivers and attendants are required to attend annual in-service training and monthly safety meetings. Some monthly safety meetings include a formal agenda and topics. Others consist of open discussion of drivers' and attendants' safety concerns in the district. Drivers who miss a safety meeting must attend a makeup meeting and are not eligible for extracurricular trip assignments until they are up to date. Each employee must attend two days of formal in-service training before school starts each year. Each employee is formally evaluated annually. The evaluation process includes a ride along by the safety/training coordinator.

In addition to driver training, the director of Transportation also encourages training for other staff. Coordinators said the director of Transportation supports paid training for them, from organizations such as the Texas Association for Pupil Transportation and Region 4. GPISD pays for the fees for technicians who take the tests to receive Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) certification. The National Institute of Automotive Service Excellence is a nonprofit organization formed to improve the quality of vehicle repair and service through the testing and certification of repair and service professionals. After passing at least one exam and providing proof of two years of relevant work experience, the test taker becomes ASE certified. ASE has seven certifications for school bus mechanics:

- Body systems and special equipment (Test S1);
- Diesel engines (Test S2);
- Drive train (Test S3);
- Brakes (Test S4);
- Suspension and steering (Test S5)
- Electrical/electronic systems (Test S6); and
- Air conditioning systems and controls (Test S7).

Mechanics meeting the experience requirement and holding certifications for tests S1 through S6 earn the certificate of Master School Bus Technician. All lead technician mechanics at GPISD have air brake (Test S4) and air conditioning (Test S7) certification through ASE. According to the shop foreman, all lead mechanics plan to pursue Master School Bus Technician certification.

COMMENDATION

GPISD provides comprehensive training for new driver/attendants and encourages continuing training for all Transportation Department employees.

FINDING

Coaches who drive buses on extracurricular trips do not receive refresher training or undergo periodic driving evaluations. Any coach with a CDL is allowed, but is not required, to drive their teams on a GPISD bus. New coaches who have a CDL and want to drive must first have a "check ride" with a Transportation Department trainer. However, coaches who drive are not required to attend safety meetings or have periodic refresher training. The director of Transportation and safety/training coordinator are planning a voluntary program of refresher training for coaches.

Effective school district transportation programs require anyone driving buses to undergo periodic evaluations or training updates. Without refresher training for all drivers, GPISD risks allowing an employee without the necessary skills and knowledge to drive district buses and transport students.

Recommendation 59:

Develop a required refresher training program for employees outside the Transportation Department who drive buses and ensure that all drivers attend.

The Transportation Department should require all personnel who drive buses to undergo yearly refresher training including an annual driving test. Refresher training is within the scope of the coaches' and safety/training coordinator's existing duties and would not require additional staff.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Transportation and safety/training coordinator develop alternatives for refresher training for coaches.	April 2003
2.	The director of Transportation and safety/training coordinator meet with a focus group of coaches to obtain input on refresher training needs.	May 2003
3.	The director of Transportation and safety/training coordinator develop a proposed refresher training program.	May 2003
4.	The director of Transportation distributes the proposed refresher	June

	training program to appropriate departments for comment.	2003
5.	The director of Transportation and safety/training coordinator revise the program as indicated.	July 2003
6.	The superintendent approves the mandatory refresher training program.	July 2003
7.	The safety/training coordinator implements the refresher training program and monitors attendance to ensure all drivers attend.	August 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 10

TRANSPORTATION

D. Fleet Maintenance

The Transportation Department is responsible for maintaining all district vehicles, including school buses, vans and general services vehicles. The Transportation Department does all repairs in-house except for bodywork, glass replacement and transmission repairs. The department solicits bids for parts each year through the Purchasing Department. For other items, the department obtains three quotes in compliance with district policy.

Maintenance facilities include eight interior maintenance bays, including one with a lift, a parts inventory room and office, general and tire storage areas, an upholstery room and an automated bus washer. The maintenance staff includes:

- One shop foreman - supervises technicians and manages maintenance function;
- One parts/inventory clerk - manages parts inventory and performs data entry;
- Three lead technicians - major and minor bus repairs, preventive maintenance;
- Two technicians - minor bus repairs, general services vehicle repairs and preventive maintenance;
- One service technician service - preventive maintenance;
- One technician - upholstery repair; and
- One assistant technician - general tasks including pickup and deliveries and unskilled labor.

Technicians work staggered schedules, providing coverage from 4:30 a.m. until 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. The three lead technicians are each assigned responsibility for specific buses, with assignments balanced according to the age of the buses.

As of September 2002, the transportation fleet consisted of 97 vehicles including 53 71-passenger buses, two transit buses, five 35-passenger buses, 35 24-passenger buses and two 16-passenger buses. The general services fleet of 93 vehicles included 33 vans, 42 pickup trucks, 17 one-ton and larger trucks and one compact sedan. The general services vehicles were assigned mainly to grounds, warehouse and maintenance activities.

The Transportation Department has a comprehensive preventive maintenance program. Drivers inspect their Buses are inspected daily by

their drivers with the inspection documented on a checklist. Each bus undergoes standardized service every 3,000 miles including oil changes, belt and hose checks and replacements, cooling system checks, tire evaluations, and brake and exhaust system inspections. A complete annual inspection is done and documented on each bus.

GPISD uses a vehicle maintenance information system, ExtraFleet2000, to track vehicle maintenance. Bus mileage and all maintenance activities are entered into the software and reports are generated showing maintenance due on each bus at certain points of time. At the time of the review, the parts inventory was being entered into ExtraFleet2000. When complete, parts used from inventory on each job will be automatically processed in the work order system.

FINDING

The Transportation Department effectively monitors and controls fuel consumption. The Transportation Department controls fuel dispensing and monitors fuel mileage using the PetroVend K800 Automated Fueling System. The fueling area is monitored by camera 24 hours a day, seven days a week. To obtain fuel, a driver must insert a key and enter the vehicle's mileage. Mileage entered must be within reasonable ranges programmed into the software. If the mileage figure entered is not reasonable given the particular vehicle's mileage characteristics and last fueling date, the driver will not be able to obtain fuel. The shop foreman periodically verifies mileage entered into the system. Drivers check out keys for school buses each morning and return them to the dispatch office at the end of the day. Each bus and driver has a unique key.

The Transportation Department automatically charges the regular or Special Education Program for fuel used based on the bus receiving fuel. The department automatically charges fuel used in vehicles assigned to other departments to that department. The parts/inventory clerk enters vehicle mileage and fueling data into ExtraFleet2000 daily. Although integration is possible, the shop foreman prefers to manually enter the data because it takes a short amount of time and allows him to review all fuel transactions. This way, he can identify quickly a vehicle that registers excessive mileage or uses more than the expected amount of fuel.

COMMENDATION

GPISD uses an automated fuel system to control, track and evaluate fuel usage.

FINDING

The Transportation Department replaces older buses before needed based on service miles. GPISD policy is to generally replace gasoline buses after 10 years and diesel buses after 12 years, but may adjust the time frame based upon the specific bus' condition and mileage. Over the last five years the district replaced an average of 7.4 buses per year which translates to replacing buses on a 13 year cycle. Old buses are disposed of through public auction. New buses are purchased through a Texas Association of School Boards cooperative or on state contract through the Texas Building and Procurement Commission.

According to a report from the National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services entitled "School Bus Replacement Considerations," safety is identified as an issue with older buses. Older buses do not adhere to new requirements in the Federal Vehicle Motor Vehicle Safety Standards or follow federal requirements or recommendations with respect to fuel efficiency and vehicle emissions. The Texas Department of Transportation bid specifications for medium duty transit buses, similar in durability characteristics to school buses, require a daily service life of seven years and 200,000 miles. Bid specifications for school buses procured by the Houston Galveston Area Council specify a 10+ year life expectancy. The Florida Department of Education recommends a useful school bus life of 10 years and 200,000 miles.

Exhibit 10-26 shows the average mileage per bus by program during 2000-01. Using these mileage figures, a regular education bus would have a service life of 17 years (200,000 miles/11,530). A special education bus would have a service life of 15 years (200,000/13,254).

Exhibit 10-26
GPISD Average Bus Mileage
2000-01

Program	Total Odometer Miles	Total Buses	Average 2000-01 Mileage
Regular Education	645,675	56	11,530
Special Education	490,393	37	13,254

Source: TEA, School Transportation Route Services Report, 2000-01.

Exhibit 10-27 presents summary information on the GPISD bus fleet. The average age of GPISD buses is now 6.8 years.

Exhibit 10-27
GPISD Bus Inventory by Model Year
June 2002

Model Year	Number	Age	Average Total Mileage
1987	4	15	181,874
1988	6	14	157,969
1989	1	13	155,979
1990	10	12	163,826
1991	4	11	140,343
1992	8	10	138,223
1993	6	9	121,999
1994	1	8	89,086
1995	10	7	100,400
1996	5	6	84,527
1997	5	5	70,359
1998	7	4	34,705
1999	9	3	48,159
2000	2	2	34,956
2001	12	1	23,072
2002	7	New	5,104
Total	97	N/A	90,671
Average Age		6.8 yrs	N/A

Source: GPISD Transportation Department.

With a 15-year replacement cycle and a fleet of 97 buses, the district could buy an average of 6.5 new buses each year.

Recommendation 60:

Establish a 15-year bus replacement schedule.

The district should establish a 15-year bus replacement schedule which will allow the district to purchase one less new bus each year. A 15-year

replacement for a fleet of 97 buses would require the purchase of an average of 65 buses per year instead of the 7.4 that the district averaged over the last five years. Although GPISD regular education buses could last 17 years based on annual mileage, a 15-year cycle balances safety concerns with savings. Excessive mileage or deterioration on specific buses could continue to be considered on an individual basis.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Transportation recommends and the board approves a 15-year, 200,000 mile replacement schedule for buses.	May 2003
2.	The director of Transportation purchases an average of 6.5 new buses each year.	July 2003 and annually thereafter

FISCAL IMPACT

The average price of the seven new buses GPISD purchased in 2001-02 was \$50,408. The district sold six old buses at auction in 2001-02 for an average of \$2,092. Assuming that GPISD purchases one less bus per year and sells one less bus per year at auction, GPISD will save \$48,316 per year (\$50,408 minus \$2,092 used bus auction proceeds).

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Establish a 15-year bus replacement schedule.	\$48,316	\$48,316	\$48,316	\$48,316	\$48,316

Chapter 11

SAFETY AND SECURITY

This chapter reviews the safety and security of the Galena Park Independent School District (GPISD) in the following sections:

- A. Student Discipline Management
- B. Security Management
- C. Safety Programs

Children cannot learn in an unsafe environment. Developing safe schools is a community effort that requires cooperation among school districts, parents and municipal and county governments. Districts that provide a safe environment for students and staff develop comprehensive policies and procedures for crisis prevention, crisis intervention and crisis management. Providing a safe school requires more than security services. Effective programs must include prevention, intervention and enforcement. Effective discipline management and alternative education programs are key tools in this process.

BACKGROUND

GPISD is located in the city of Galena Park, an urban community minutes from downtown Houston. The district crosses several jurisdictions. Several law enforcement agencies patrol the community surrounding GPISD, including the Galena Park Police Department, the Jacinto City Police Department, the Houston Police Department, the Harris County Constables Office and the Harris County Sheriff's Office. The Harris County Constables Office provides school-based law enforcement services to the district.

In *Keeping Texas Children Safe in School*, the Texas School Performance Review (TSPR) notes that the most effective districts have a safety plan that includes prevention, intervention and enforcement strategies. Effective programs include the steps shown in **Exhibit 11-1**. School districts that apply these measures in a comprehensive system achieve significant results.

Exhibit 11-1
Keeping Texas Children Safe in School
January 2000

Strategy	Steps to Be Taken
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Prevention	Know your goals and objectives: where your district is going and what you want to accomplish.
	Establish clear expectations for students, parents, teachers and administrators.
	Address warning signs before they turn into trouble.
Intervention	Look for trouble before it finds you.
	Recognize trouble when you see it.
	Have individuals in the right place and at the right time to intervene.
	Have a plan of action appropriate for the occasion and practice it.
Enforcement	Leave no room for double standards.
	Ensure that discipline management extends inside and outside the classroom.
	Alternative programs are not just a matter of compliance with the law; they are many students' last chance at success.

Source: TSPR, Keeping Texas Children Safe in School, January 2000.

The safety and security of children are priorities for parents, educators, taxpayers and the rest of the community. The Texas Legislature is assisting the safe school effort by legislating a number of safety and accountability standards for Texas schools. State law requires school districts to adopt a student code of conduct that provides students and parents with clear behavior expectations and consequences for violation. Districts must solicit the advice of a district-level committee in developing the code of conduct. Students who engage in serious misconduct must be removed from regular education settings and placed in disciplinary alternative education programs (DAEPs), or placed in special class or a program at the school or a district-provided alternative school.

Specific information about the arrest or criminal conduct of students must be shared between law enforcement and local school districts. In counties with a population of 125,000 or more, school districts, the juvenile board and juvenile justice systems must establish a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program (JJAEP), under the jurisdiction of the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission. The JJAEP provides for the education of incarcerated youths and youths on probation. Students who are 18 years of age are no longer considered juveniles under criminal law and cannot be sent to a JJAEP for a serious violation of the law.

Chapter 11

SAFETY AND SECURITY

A. Student Discipline Management

In its publication *Early Warning, Timely Response*, the U.S. Department of Education defines a well-functioning school as one that fosters "learning, safety, and socially appropriate behaviors.... These schools have a strong academic focus and support students in achieving high standards, foster positive relationships between school staff and students, and promote meaningful parental and community involvement. Most prevention programs in effective schools address multiple factors and recognize that safety and order are related to children's social, emotional and academic development."

Like other Texas school districts, GPISD has adopted a student code of conduct that provides standards for conduct and discipline. Students and parents must sign an acknowledgment that they have read and understood these rules. The district discipline management plan provides guidelines and appeals processes for the different levels of disciplinary action. The GPISD Student Code of Conduct categorizes offenses in four levels.

Exhibit 11-2 presents examples for each category of offense and the consequences for each level of violation.

Exhibit 11-2
Categories of Offenses Outlined in the GPISD Student Code of
Conduct
2002-03

Category	Examples of Offenses	Disciplinary Options
Level I	Truancy Forgery Possession of tobacco Violation of the dress code Failure to serve detention Presence in an unauthorized area Engaging in acts of public display of affection Bringing an unauthorized vehicle to school Other (misbehavior on bus, misuse of food, cheating, soliciting, horseplay, persistent offenses, offensive contact)	Detention Grade penalty Exclusion from activities Restitution Temporary removal from class Saturday detention In-school suspension Removal (permissive) to an alternative setting Removal from school transportation
Level II	Persistent offenses Fighting Theft	Detention Grade penalty Exclusion from activities

	Gang activity Possession of a stink bomb Possession or use of a laser pointer Possession of a weapon Criminal mischief Other (extortion, perjury, hazing, "mooning," gambling)	Restitution Temporary removal from class Saturday detention In-school suspension Removal (permissive) to an alternative setting Removal from school transportation
Level III	Felony conduct Terrorist threat Gang violence Public lewdness Paint-sniffing Sells or delivers marijuana/alcohol Assault Retaliation	DAEP or High Point if nonviolent DAEP or High Point DAEP or High Point DAEP or High Point DAEP or High Point DAEP if not a felony, High Point if a felony DAEP or High Point DAEP or High Point
Level IV	Felony drugs/alcohol False alarm or report Aggravated assault Aggravated sexual assault Possession of a firearm Possession of an illegal knife Possession of a prohibited weapon Arson Murder Persistent offenses while at DAEP Felony criminal mischief Off-campus felony	DAEP or High Point DAEP or High Point High Point or JJAEP High Point or JJAEP

Source: GPISD Student Code of Conduct 2002-03.

The district has several levels of disciplinary alternatives. Students may be removed from regular classes to a disciplinary alternative learning area at their home school. Another alternative is that students may be suspended and placed in a GPISD-provided DAEP or in a community-based DAEP such as High Point that is under contract with GPISD. For felony offenses, a student may be expelled and placed in the JJAEP operated by Harris County.

GPISD's disciplinary code distinguishes between misbehavior with discretionary consequences and misbehavior with mandatory consequences. Texas statutes define disciplinary consequences for some offenses, which are incorporated into the code of conduct. State law gives additional protection to some student populations by requiring additional meetings and specific disciplinary plans. Students with identified disabilities are also protected by law from the regular disciplinary process.

Unless the behavior is a major violation of the penal code or code of conduct, discretionary discipline is first administered at the student's home school.

While principals have clear guidelines for administering discipline, they have some flexibility to determine an appropriate consequence for misbehavior. One disciplinary consequence is removal from class and assignment to a segregated disciplinary class at the student's home school. This is commonly referred to as in-school suspension (ISS). **Exhibit 11-3** shows the number of students who received more than one in-school suspension in a single school year.

Exhibit 11-3
Students Receiving More Than One In-School Suspension
1999-2000 through 2001-02

School	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	Percent Change Increase/ (Decrease)
Galena Park High School	168	74	110	(35%)
North Shore High School	184	171	200	9%
North Shore Senior High School	160	103	174	9%
ACE	0	0	0	0%
Galena Park Middle School	134	92	103	(23%)
North Shore Elementary	320	185	183	(43%)
Woodland Acres Middle School	131	123	130	(1%)
Cunningham Middle School	180	102	115	(36%)
Cobb Sixth Grade School	N/A	141	194	38%*
Cimarron Elementary	1	0	0	(100%)
Cloverleaf Elementary	20	0	0	(100%)
Galena Park Elementary	2	2	2	No change
Green Valley Elementary	15	0	0	(100%)
Jacinto City Elementary	9	1	0	(100%)
MacArthur Elementary	1	0	1	No change
North Shore Elementary	17	16	4	(76%)
Pyburn Elementary	7	3	0	(100%)

Woodland Acres Elementary	7	2	1	(86%)
Tice Elementary	4	5	0	(100%)
Purple Sage Elementary	30	4	10	(67%)
Havard Elementary	36	6	5	(86%)
Total	1,426	1,030	1,232	(14%)

Source: GPISD Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) coordinator, 2002.

*Calculated as percentage change from 2000-01 through 2001-02.

The number of students with repetitive in-school suspensions declined by 14 percent districtwide from 1999-2000 through 2001-02. The largest declines were at the elementary level.

The district tries to manage discipline at the home school, which is reflected in the reduction of the number of repeat offenders who are referred to a DAEP. **Exhibit 11-4** compares student referrals to the district's DAEP for select offenses. With the exception of felony conduct, weapons and assault-related behavior, referrals for serious offenses have generally decreased.

Exhibit 11-4
Comparison of Student DAEP Referrals for Misbehavior
1999-2000 through 2001-02

Offense	Totals for Selected Offenses			Percent Increase/ (Decrease)
	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	
Felony Conduct	1	2	3	200%
Weapons	10	16	14	40%
Threats/Retaliation	13	11	11	(15%)
Assault/Fighting	14	21	27	93%
Arson	8	0	0	(100%)
Gang Related Behavior	18	7	7	(61%)
Serious/ Persistent Misbehavior	100	77	58	(42%)
Vandalism/Mischief	38	36	14	(63%)

Alcohol/ Drugs	97	83	112	15%
Aggravated Sexual Assault	3	0	1	(67%)
Totals	302	253	247	(18%)

Source: GPISD, DAEP Student Assignment Report, 2002.

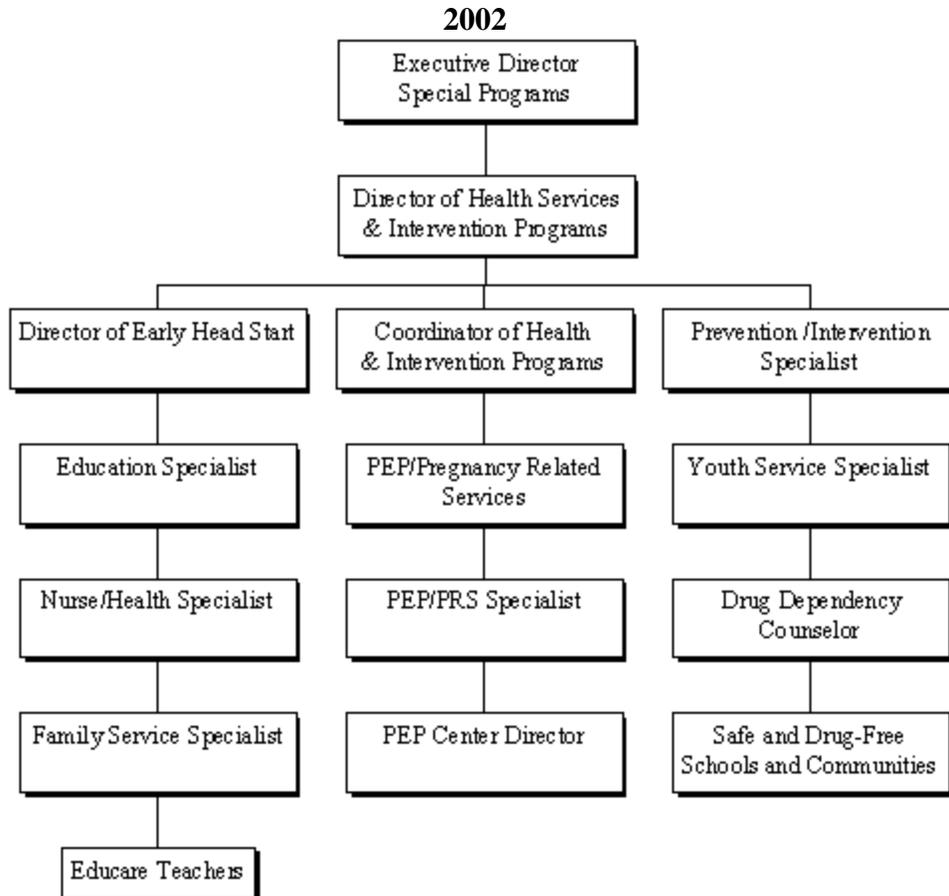
Besides in-school suspensions and referrals to the district's DAEP, GPISD has two additional placement options for disciplining students, High Point an external DAEP, and the Harris County JJAEP. The Harris County Department of Education's DAEP, High Point, provides a more structured environment for students who have committed serious offenses. Harris County's JJAEP is for students under the age of 17 who have committed an offense and are answering to charges in the juvenile justice system.

GPISD contracts for space in High Point at a rate of \$6,600 per space. Each year, the district estimates the number of High Point spaces needed, based on discipline records from the prior year. From 1999 to 2002, GPISD reserved 80 spaces each year, but each year they used only 76. In 2002-03, the district reduced the number of reserved spaces by 30 to 50 spaces for a total contract amount of \$330,000. By reducing the need for space, GPISD reallocated the savings to start their high-school programs that help at-risk students to recover graduation credits. This targeted intervention will help to reduce the need for the High Point spaces.

Under the terms of the High Point contract, the district can sell unused spaces to other area districts. However, since the Harris County Department of Education refunds the money the district paid for the unused spaces, the district has not resold any spaces.

In addition to its disciplinary programs, GPISD also provides numerous intervention programs to identify and help students before behavior becomes a reportable incident. GPISD's Health Services and Intervention Department coordinate these programs. **Exhibit 11-5** shows the organization of the Health Services and Intervention Department.

Exhibit 11-5
Organization of the GPISD Health Services and Intervention
Department



Source: GPISD Special Programs Organization Chart, 2002.

As part of the effort to reduce student misbehavior, the district provides several intervention and leadership programs. For example, GPISD sponsors a peer leadership initiative that provides student-to-student support in resisting peer pressure. GPISD's DAEP, the Center for Success, has an after-school program called "Shape Up," which encourages self-esteem and respect for others. Another program, the Pride Team, consists of drug-free students from Galena Park High School who perform with an anti-drug message for the district and community.

To assist students with behavioral or family problems, GPISD contracts with the Harris County Community Youth Services (CYS) to provide five counselors, or youth service specialists. The youth service specialists offer crisis counseling, mental health assessments, individual counseling and group counseling to students and families. District counselors, administrators, family relatives, law enforcement agencies or other agencies make referrals. Harris County and GPISD share the cost of the CYS contract.

In individual schools, GPISD sponsors anti-drug and anti-violence programs with Safe and Drug-Free Schools (SDFS) funding. Such programs include Peer-Assisted Leadership (PAL) and the Pride Team. To help reduce violence, the GPISD Health Services and Intervention Department provides training in conflict resolution, anger management, peer mediation, intervention management and discipline management.

Another intervention program is the Accelerated Center for Education (ACE), the district's alternative learning program, which is not discipline based. ACE provides an alternative setting for students who learn best in nontraditional school settings. To be assigned to ACE, a student must meet specific at-risk criteria that include: failing one or more portions of the most recent TAAS; failing classes that could negatively alter the student's chance of graduating within a four-year period from his or her regular campus; having a child or expecting one; and being two or more years below grade level in reading or math as measured by standardized testing.

ACE students work on a self-paced curriculum to meet graduation requirements. Space is limited, so ACE gives priority to students who have good attendance records at their home school.

FINDING

The district's truancy effort is enhanced by ongoing confirmation of student addresses. The GPISD Assisting Student Attendance Program (ASAP) uses contract deputy constables. These constables work with the truancy officer to reduce truancy by helping with attendance issues, with school dismissal and with verifying the student addresses that were provided to the school during registration. Five deputies conduct home visits for the program.

The school gives the ASAP deputy constables a list of the students who are absent without explanation, and their addresses as they appear on school records. The deputy constable visits each address, informing parents that their son or daughter was absent that day. Sometimes a parent will call and ask the deputy constable to get a student out of bed and make him or her go to school.

ASAP deputy constables confirm the student's address as they make their home visits. If the address is incorrect or the student does not live at the address, the deputy constables notify the school to update its records. If contact with the parents has been unsuccessful, ASAP deputy constables work with the school-assigned deputy constables to contact a student at school. Deputy constables do not contact first-time absentees or families that have pending truancy charges.

If a deputy cannot locate a student at the address provided, the parents are contacted to ensure that the student actually resides in the district. The process of reducing truancy by making home visits also helps to keep the district's student information current.

COMMENDATION

The district maximizes truancy efforts by confirming contact addresses of GPISD students.

FINDING

GPISD's Center for Success (CFS) disciplinary alternative education program helps reduce the number of repeat offenses through a number of specialized intervention programs. Students are assigned to CFS for serious or persistent misbehavior, as defined in the student code of conduct. In 1998, the CFS changed its focus from a punitive to a remedial program. The district recognized the need to provide a rehabilitation component and added two full-time counselors to the program.

At CFS, counselors provide group and individual counseling to students who attend each day. Social services are also made available to students. CFS brings in motivational speakers and provides parenting classes for students who have children as well as for the parents of students who attend CFS. The curriculum matches state testing protocols and aligns with regular district classes so returning students do not fall behind academically.

To promote team building, CFS built a "ROPES" course. "ROPES" course is a challenge course developed in a wooded area with a variety of group problems to be solved. The course provides physical challenges that build character and self-esteem with each accomplishment. The program is designed to motivate students through field learning experiences in a way that connects them to classroom learning experiences. Tasks that incorporate trust, communication, teamwork, problem solving and self-confidence are designed for the particular group attending. The course is also available to other GPISD schools, but one day each week is reserved for CFS students.

Another intervention effort is the CFS "Shape-Up" after-school program, funded by grant funds. The Shape-Up program was designed to reduce the behavior characteristics that got the student assigned to the facility. Since 37 percent of students assigned to CFS have engaged in drug or alcohol related misbehavior, the program provides speakers and tours of facilities that provide a real look at the problems associated with drug and alcohol abuse.

While CFS is not a boot camp, it does provide a very structured environment. Students must wear a uniform and they are not allowed on other district property unless they are attending an event with the center. A criminal trespass warning is given at orientation to reinforce the policy. Parents must attend the orientation so they understand the expectations of the program. Students are assigned to CFS for a period of eight to 20 days for general misbehavior. Students who return face a 30-day assignment. Repeated assignment increases the length of the student's stay at CFS. To ensure students are not assigned for minor misbehavior, the CFS principal must approve the placement.

The CFS program has five levels of achievement. All students start at Level III. If the student misbehaves at CFS, he or she can be dropped to a lower level. If the student is achieving the student may move to a higher level. CFS teachers meet to determine if a student needs to move to another level. Privileges are lost if a student moves down to Level I or Level II. For example, a student must have lunch in isolation from other CFS students if he or she is moved from Level III to Level II. By moving to Level IV, students may receive early release back to their home schools. **Exhibit 11-6** explains the level system.

Exhibit 11-6
Center for Success Level System
2002

Category	Explanation	Consequences
Level I	This is the lowest level and the most serious. There are no privileges. At this level, students are suspended. A parent conference is required for the student to be readmitted.	Three-day suspension No privileges from higher levels Possible citation Possible expulsion Possible assignment to High Point Possible JJAEP placement Meals are eaten in isolation
Level II	All privileges from Level III are lost at this level, and extra days may be added to the student's stay at CFS.	Possible suspension of 1 or 2 days Loss of

		privileges Possible citation Parent conference Extra days at CFS Isolated meals
Level III	Everyone enters at this level. Students can progress up or down, but they remain at this level for the first five days at CFS. If their behavior is acceptable, students may become eligible to move up. Students must write a persuasive essay on why they should be moved up.	Entry level Meals in cafeteria Students may use computers
Level IV	At this level, students have earned positive consequences for behavior. They are first in line for snack machines, for the cafeteria, and for going home. They get an extra trip to the snack machine. They are eligible for early release back to the home school.	Early release possibility Vending machine privileges Extended computer time First in line
Level V	This level contains the most privileges. Students are first in lines and can order lunch from the snack bar. Students at this level may be teacher assistants or peer tutors. They are eligible for early release.	Highest level Early release Teacher assistant Extra computer time Literary Café privileges Vending machine/snack privileges Peer tutoring

Source: GPISD Center for Success, Student Handbook, 2002.

After visiting several other districts' DAEP programs, GPISD developed its level system, incorporating successful elements from the other programs.

Exhibit 11-7 shows performance measures for CFS. The percent of minority students who are assigned to CFS is lower than the percent of minority students who are represented in the district's general enrollment. Discretionary placements represent 62.8 percent of the total placements. The decision to assign a student to CFS depends on the student's behavior.

Some types of misbehavior have several disciplinary choices, but some misbehavior requires assignment to a DAEP.

During the three-year period from 1999-2000 through 2001-02, the recidivism rate dropped from 10.3 percent to 7.7 percent. The average length of stay increased from 17.9 to 18.9 days.

Exhibit 11-7
Center for Success Performance Measures
Comparison 1999-2000 through 2001-02

Indicators	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02
African American Students	30.6%	25.6%	27.2%
Hispanic Students	45.8%	52.7%	56.3%
Anglo Students	23.1%	21.6%	16.4%
Asian Students	0%	0%	0%
Special Education Students	20.6%	23.4%	27.5%
Mandatory Placements	42.2%	39.4%	37.2%
Discretionary Placements	57.7%	60.5%	62.8%
Recidivism Rate	10.3%	6.3%	7.7%
Average Length of Stay	17.9 days	18 days	18.9 days
Total Number of Students	329	332	323

Source: GPISD, DAEP Student Assignment Reports, 1999-2000 through 2001-02.

The CFS focuses on the student's successful return to the home school. Students who are returning to their home schools participate in a reintegration program. The home school is called the day before the student returns so preparations can be made. CFS sends a withdrawal sheet to the home school showing the students' grades while in the program. Parents and students have to meet with the assistant principal of the home school, and CFS counselors visit students at the home school to monitor their progress.

COMMENDATION

The district's DAEP reduces recidivism by providing skill building, counseling, reintegration and other programs to supplement the educational curriculum.

FINDING

GPISD does not have sufficient communication with the High Point alternative school for the educational follow-up that a student's successful return to the home school will require. High Point is a DAEP run by the Harris County Department of Education. Area districts contract for space at High Point as part of their progressive discipline plans. High Point is more structured than GPISD's DAEP, the Center for Success, but it is a step below a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program.

High Point contract terms set minimums for communication between High Point and the district. The Harris County Department of Education must furnish GPISD with a weekly statement of student attendance and must update the district on student progress at least once a semester. In return, GPISD must provide student records to High Point. GPISD administrative staff is expected to monitor and evaluate student progress, including at least one site visit annually. The terms of the contract do not appear to have been negotiated through the senior purchasing coordinator in GPISD's Purchasing Department; the terms are largely standardized language with blanks for the amount of spaces and money owed.

In interviews, district administrators said that it was difficult to obtain information from High Point. Examples they gave ranged from unreturned phone calls to information provided on the wrong student. Administrators wanted information such as student performance on standardized tests taken at High Point to make a student's transition back to the home school successful.

If a home school cannot obtain information on the student's educational progress, the school cannot prepare to make up any deficiencies. Fort Worth Independent School District, for example, contracts with outside providers for alternative education programs, and closely monitors contracts for compliance and quality of education for the students in attendance with monthly reports and site visits.

Recommendation 61:

Amend the High Point contract to require at least two progress reports to the home school administrator per student per semester.

The executive director of Special Programs should work with the senior purchasing coordinator to determine the required level of reporting. The executive director of Special Programs and the senior purchasing coordinator should develop the addendum contract language to amend the High Point contract terms for progress reporting.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The executive director of Special Programs contacts the High Point representatives to discuss a change to the progress report provision.	May 2003
2.	The executive director of Special Programs works with the senior purchasing coordinator to draft an addendum to the contract.	June 2003
3.	The executive director of Special Programs and the senior purchasing coordinator provide the suggested changes to the superintendent for recommendation to the board.	July 2003
4.	The board approves the addendum.	July 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 11

SAFETY AND SECURITY

B. Security Management

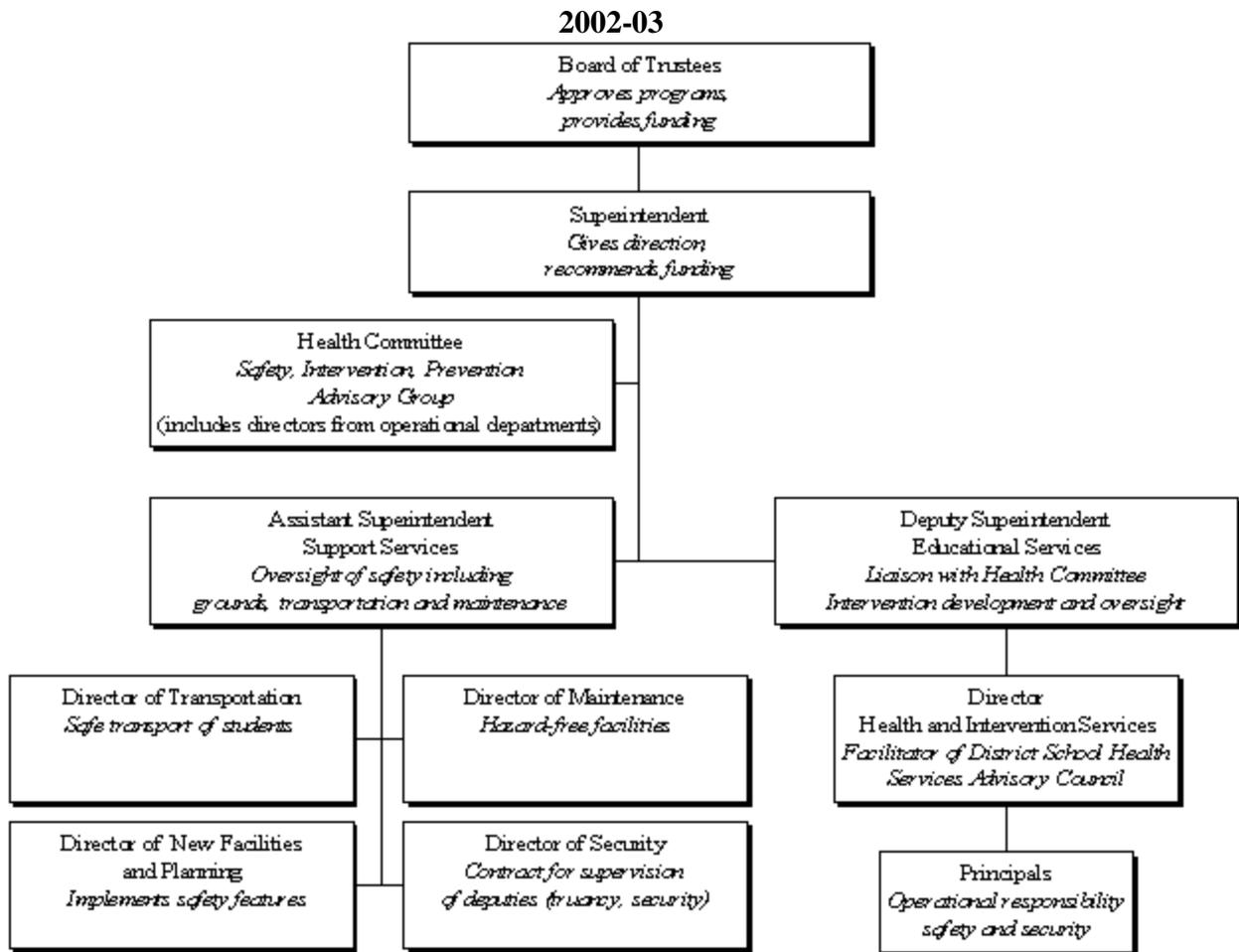
Schools do not always have the funding for an aggressive and complete security program. The U.S. Department of Justice report, *Security Concepts and Operational Issues*, states that security operations often require a balance among effectiveness, affordability and acceptability. Many effective measures are just too expensive. Schools must also balance the need for stronger security measures with the need for an open, inviting learning environment. While razor wire, electronic fencing and thorough security searches upon entry provide a secure environment in a penal institution, these measures will not provide the atmosphere sought in an educational environment.

Schools can provide effective security operations without applying every security approach at every school. Effective security operations are designed depending on who or what needs protection, the type of security threat and facility constraints. Periodic inspections help ensure adopted measures are enforced and can help identify weaknesses.

Safety and security are the responsibility of many individuals within GPISD. **Exhibit 11-8** shows the districtwide responsibilities for providing a safe, secure learning environment.

Exhibit 11-8

GPISD Organization of Safety and Security Responsibilities



Source: Interviews with GPISD principals and directors, GPISD organization chart, 2002.

GPISD is committed to providing safe and secure schools. In interviews, school administrators said that the district meets their security needs. The district has a crisis plan to cover emergencies. Secondary schools have video cameras. All schools have fire and burglar alarms and communication through intercom, telephone or radio. Security equipment is periodically reviewed for replacement to ensure that the technology has not become obsolete.

Security operations are supervised by a certified peace officer provided under contract with Harris County. The district uses three evening security guards and 22 contract deputy constables to provide security services to the district. Deputy constable assignments are divided into two geographic areas and are presented in **Exhibit 11-9**.

Exhibit 11-9
Assignment of Contract Deputy Constables
2002-03

North Side	South Side
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Supervisor: one deputy sergeant	Supervisor: one deputy sergeant
North Shore Senior High - two deputies	Galena Park High School - two deputies
North Shore High School - two deputies	
North Shore Middle School - one deputy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Havard Elementary • North Shore Elementary 	Galena Park Middle School - one deputy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Galena Park Elementary • Mac Arthur Elementary
Cunningham Middle School - one deputy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tice Elementary • Purple Sage Elementary 	Woodland Acres Middle School - one deputy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Woodland Acres Elementary • Pyburn Elementary
Cobb Sixth Grade Campus - one deputy	Daytime rover: one deputy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Morning traffic • Special needs • Completes shift at middle school • Relief for absences
Afternoon/Evening Shift: three deputies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High schools • Traffic • Cloverleaf Elementary, Cimarron Elementary and Green Valley Elementary • ASAP truancy program • Work with truancy deputy 	Afternoon/Evening Shift: three deputies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High schools • Finish day on campus • ASAP truancy program • Work with truancy deputy
Truancy: one deputy	Truancy: one deputy

Source: GPISD director of Security.

Deputy constables are assigned to specific schools. This enhances school security by giving officers knowledge of their assigned schools through interaction with staff, students and parents. Deputy constables enforce state attendance laws as well as state criminal laws.

Exhibit 11-10 compares the GPISD security program to selected peer programs. GPISD has more officers than Pasadena ISD and Humble ISD. GPISD's student-to-officer ratio is 1,017.7, less than half that of Pasadena ISD and Humble ISD.

Exhibit 11-10
Comparison of Security at Selected Peer Districts
2002-03

Measures	GPISD	Pasadena ISD	Humble ISD
Student Enrollment*	19,336	43,476	25,239
Contract Deputies or District Police Department	Contract Deputy Constables	Police Department	Police Department plus contract deputy
Number of Officers	19	17	11
Number of Supervisors	3	7	2
Peace officers assigned to truancy duty	2	0	0
Students per Officer	1,017.7	2,557.4	2,294.4

Source: GPISD director of Security 2002-03 and TEA Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS), 2001-02.

Note: Contract deputies do not devote 100 percent of shift time on district duties but split time between district county law enforcement duties.

**Indicates 2001-02 enrollments.*

In addition to the contract deputy program, GPISD has other measures to ensure student security. The Transportation Department trains bus drivers in traffic laws and student discipline. Drivers have radios for emergency communication with the district. Buses have video cameras for additional security and are reviewed to determine if drivers need additional training. Drivers check the bus from front to back to make sure all students have left the bus at the final destination.

GPISD also provides an anonymous information hotline for students, parents and employees who have tips or concerns about district safety. Tips are recorded and the director of Security responds to the information provided. Tip line information can be found on the district's Web site.

FINDING

GPISD has a comprehensive districtwide program to secure its schools from unauthorized visitors. While individual schools adopt standards that are appropriate for their building and population, many safety procedures are adopted across the district. For example, during the

school day, all district schools lock unneeded doors. One entrance is open to the public and is in the area of the main office within view of the receptionist and office workers.

The district has adopted a new key standard, which uses a patented key blank that cannot be duplicated without special equipment. Keys are logged when assigned at the beginning of the school year and are collected at the end of the school year. Key holders must pay to replace lost keys. The new administration building has electronic locks that open with an assigned identification card.

Buildings are clearly marked with signs that direct visitors to the office. Visitor tags or building passes are issued to visitors, who must sign out when they leave the facility. Staff has been trained to identify appropriate passes and to escort people who do not have them to the office. Uniforms identify students at elementary and middle schools. Teachers wear or carry photo identification cards. Auxiliary staff, such as maintenance staff, wears uniforms. Employee vehicles must have parking-lot tags.

The district contracts with the Harris County Department of Education for a Facilities Safety Review. The review includes a security auditor who makes periodic, unannounced safety audits. Several times a year, a security auditor attempts to gain unauthorized entry into schools and observes the school operations to see if safety policies are carried out. If they are not, the security auditor documents the infractions as "findings." Examples of infractions would be if a student lets the auditor in through a locked door or students are standing in an area unsupervised and are easily accessible to a passing vehicle. Schools then review the findings and make corrections.

The Harris County Department of Education has four levels in its Facilities Safety Review. Levels are accomplished at 12-month intervals. At each level, the department performs a safety audit and issues a report. Level one establishes the baseline for necessary improvements. Additional level reviews check progress against prior findings and the success of implementation. GPISD is one of only two districts in Harris County that has completed level three.

As part of the contract for the safety review, the Harris County Department of Education's Center for Safe and Secure Schools will provide access awareness training to the district's school administrators and staff. After the six training sessions are complete, the center conducts a review of each of the 23 GPISD schools to test the awareness level and procedures. This training is scheduled for 2002-03 and will cost the district \$5,300.

In 2001, the state legislature recognized the importance of safety audits by requiring the Texas School Safety Center to develop a self-audit checklist for use by Texas schools. GPISD recognized the importance of safety audits by contracting with a professional school safety specialist to provide a higher level of review and then to correct any deficiencies.

COMMENDATION

The district has a comprehensive program to increase awareness and to reduce the risk of unauthorized persons having access to district property.

FINDING

GPISD has identified safety threats that are unique to the district and has made provisions to address the concerns. The district is located near the Houston Ship Channel, and chemical plants and refineries line the channel area. If a plant has a spill or an explosion, toxic chemicals can become airborne, which would require area evacuations.

GPISD is aware of the potential danger and has developed a special procedure for this specific safety threat. Each school is equipped with an emergency shutoff button that closes down the school air-handling system. The doors are locked and the school is sealed from outside air. No one is allowed in or out until it is determined to be safe out of doors.

An important step in any safety plan is to recognize the potential threats. Districts routinely address the more obvious threats such as intruders, weapons or drugs. GPISD has taken a step beyond the usual to ensure that students are safe from threats that are specific to its geographic area. Safe districts identify unique or special safety challenges and make plans that minimize the risk of occurrence or potential for impact.

COMMENDATION

The district has recognized and addressed the unique safety concerns of its geographic area with a specific crisis management plan.

FINDING

While the district has a complete crisis plan, it does not have scheduled crisis drills to test all components of the crisis plan. Schools regularly perform fire and weather drills. Due to their proximity to the Houston Ship Channel and chemical and refining plants, schools hold hazardous material spill drills. Schools will also practice lockdown procedures, but they do not drill on other risks. One district administrator observed, "We don't have time to drill, we are getting practice on the real thing."

The proximity to the Texas coast places the district at risk for hurricane and flood emergencies. The fact that volatile manufacturing plants and refineries are nearby puts the district at risk for hazardous materials emergencies. Drills test the plans that are in place to manage potential crises and to ensure that staff and students know what to do if such an emergency occurs.

In discussing the hazardous materials risk, school administrators said that the crisis plan lockdown procedures do not allow them to let parents pick up children. During one hazardous materials threat, parents were at the door demanding entry because they were unaware of the policy. Another administrator observed that during one chemical scare, local law enforcement notified the school but had not considered what to do about the children who had just left to go home. During a different emergency, the director of Transportation noted that the bus communication link did not allow a simultaneous call to all bus drivers, which hampered notification.

Being tested during an actual emergency is a helpful learning experience, but it is not a substitute for practice. Emergency drills identify plan weaknesses while there is time to correct them. For example, drilling with local law enforcement could reveal issues like children walking home from school during a chemical spill. Contingency plans can be developed to address identified problems.

The Kingsville ISD holds an annual drill that includes all district departments and area emergency service responders. Spring ISD schedules a variety of emergency drills and documents the drills performed. Drills foster better lines of communication with local crisis responders and keep a district's crisis response plan in peak condition.

Recommendation 62:

Develop a drill schedule that includes emergency responders and other district personnel.

Drill scenarios can be school or community based, but they should include community emergency response providers as appropriate. The drill should include observers who take notes about problems and how they were solved. A session should follow the drill to debrief participants and to find permanent solutions to the problems that were encountered. Parents may want to participate in the drill process, and they should be notified of procedures that will affect them during a real or practice emergency. Whether simple or elaborate, not every type of drill will be covered each school year.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Security meets with principals to determine the likely scenarios for drills and how frequently they should be held.	April 2003
2.	The director of Security provides a draft schedule to the assistant superintendent for Support Services, discussing possible participation by administrative staff and outside emergency services agencies.	May 2003
3.	The assistant superintendent for Support Services meets with the superintendent for approval on the types and frequency of drills scheduled.	June 2003
4.	The superintendent approves the drill schedule.	June 2003
5.	Principals and staff perform drills according to the schedule and document areas that need improvement.	August 2003
6.	The director of Security meets with staff and other drill participants to discuss weaknesses that were observed during drills and to develop solutions to address the weaknesses.	August 2003 and Ongoing
7.	The director of Security continues to develop an annual drill schedule and to monitor school performance on those drills.	August 2003 and Annually

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 11

SAFETY AND SECURITY

C. Safety Programs

A safe school district effectively manages its resources and aggressively plans for potential situations. District students and employees should be educated on the safety rules and regulations. Procedures must be in place for the timely reporting of emerging threats and for prompt response to potentially dangerous situations.

Many of the safety programs in GPISD focus on the secondary schools. While elementary schools have some criminal or safety incidents, elementary students are not usually engaged in the same types of misbehavior that happen at the secondary schools. GPISD elementary schools take appropriate safety measures such as requiring students to wear uniforms, locking extraneous outside doors during the school day and identifying visitors. In 1999, the district added elementary spaces to the district's DAEP, the Center for Success, which provides a strong disciplinary option for elementary schools.

Exhibit 11-11 shows sample safety measures at district high schools.

Exhibit 11-11
Sample Security Measures at High Schools
2002-03

Security Method	Galena Park High School	North Shore Senior High	North Shore High (9/10)	Security Purpose
Identify Visitors	Badge	Badge	Badge	Intruder Alert
Identify Staff	ID card	ID card	ID card	Intruder Alert
Identify Students by ID or uniform	ID card	ID card	ID card	Intruder Alert, Minimize Gang Association
Master Key Control	Yes	Yes	Yes	Asset Security
District Security Personnel	Contract Deputy	Contract Deputy	Contract Deputy	Truancy, Incident Management, Trespassers

Limited Points Entry	Yes	Yes	Yes	Intruder Alert
Use Hall Lockers	Yes	Yes	No	Weapons, Drugs
Clear Back-packs	Clear or Mesh	Clear or Mesh	Clear or Mesh	Weapons, Drugs
Security Alarms	Yes	Yes	Yes	Asset Security
Security Scanners	No	No	Once a semester	Weapons, Contraband

Source: Interviews with GPISD principals and assistant principals.

Exhibit 11-12 shows a sample of safety measures at district middle schools.

Exhibit 11-12
Sample Security Measures at GPISD Middle Schools
2002-03

Security Method	Galena Park Middle School	Woodland Acres Middle School	Cunningham Middle School	North Shore Middle School	Security Purpose
Identify visitors	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Intruder alert
Identify Staff	ID badge	ID badge	ID badge	ID badge	Intruder Alert
Identify Students by ID or uniform	Uniform	Uniform	Uniform	Uniform	Intruder Alert, Minimize Gang Association
Master Key Control	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Asset Security
District Security Personnel	Contract Deputy	Contract Deputy	Contract Deputy	Contract Deputy	Truancy, Incident Management, Trespassers
Limited Points of Entry	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Intruder Alert

Use Hall Lockers	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Weapons, Drugs
Clear Backpacks	Clear or Mesh	Clear or Mesh	Clear or Mesh	Clear or Mesh	Weapons, Drugs
Security Alarms	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Asset Security
Security Scanners	No	Yes, when needed	Have but don't really use	No, but have access if needed	Weapons, Contraband

Source: Interviews with GPISD principals and assistant principals.

GPISD contracts the school safety function to Harris County deputy constables through the contract deputy program. Officers are provided under separate contracts with Harris County Constable Precincts 2 and 3. Deputy constables split their time between district duties and county law enforcement duties such as traffic. The percentage of time split between county and district duties is negotiated in each contract. As part of the contract deputy program, constables are assigned to work with truant students. The deputy constables make house calls on absent students and work with families to address reasons for missing school.

The objectives of the contract deputy program are to protect the safety, property and welfare of persons, to preserve the peace, to suppress disturbances, to prevent unlawful acts, to collect and preserve evidence and to testify in court. The key duties of contract deputies are to patrol assigned schools, to respond to calls, to escort district personnel in potentially hostile situations, to write effective legal incident reports, to apprehend offenders, to file appropriate charges and to enforce all laws.

The director of Security determines each deputy's job assignment and hours. The director of Security controls the use of overtime in the security department, which must be approved before deputies work the overtime hours. Deputy constables may also provide security at after-hours events or extracurricular activities, at the request of school administrators.

Originally, GPISD used off-duty law enforcement officers from area agencies to perform security functions. This resulted in approximately 180 different officers' working various shifts. Sometimes several officers would cover a single school day at a single location. Officers are now assigned to specific schools. Parents and staff believe that the contract deputy program is effective. As one public forum participant noted, safety

and security are "very good, with the same constable working each school daily. This allows them the ability to get to know the children."

The district also uses school crossing guards for student safety, funded by the district's participation in the city of Houston Child Safety School Crossing Guard reimbursement program. Funds for the reimbursement program are obtained through school zone traffic fines and are required by statute to be shared with school districts.

The review team surveyed GPISD students about district safety and security. **Exhibit 11-13** shows student perceptions of school safety.

Exhibit 11-13
TSPR Survey of GPISD Grades 11 and 12 Students
2002

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I feel safe and secure at school.	18.3%	51.7%	12.6%	13.3%	3.3%
School disturbances are infrequent.	12.5%	41.7%	28.3%	10.0%	6.7%
Gangs are not a problem in this district.	26.7%	35.8%	19.2%	12.5%	5.0%
Drugs are not a problem in this district.	5.8%	28.3%	29.2%	22.5%	14.2%
Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	5.8%	25.8%	35.9%	21.7%	10.8%
Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	10.8%	45.8%	33.4%	6.7%	2.5%
Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	10.8%	40.0%	31.7%	10.8%	6.7%
A good working relationship exists between local law enforcement and the district.	10.8%	44.2%	41.7%	2.5%	0.8%
Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	10.0%	34.2%	28.2%	13.3%	13.3%

Source: TSPR survey of district students.

Note: Totals may not sum to 100 percent because of "no responses."

The majority of respondents had positive perceptions about their safety. When asked the statement, *I feel safe and secure at school*, 70 percent of the students either strongly agreed or agreed with the statement. More than half the students who responded to the survey (54.2 percent) said that school disturbances are infrequent.

To deter the possession of weapons and drugs at district schools, GPISD contracts with a company that provides dogs that are trained to locate drugs and devices that use gunpowder. **Exhibit 11-14** shows the incidents of weapons and assaults in the secondary schools.

Exhibit 11-14
Incidents of Weapons and Assaults
GPISD Secondary Schools
1999-2000 through 2001-02

Incident	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02
Retaliation against employee	6	4	2
Used/possessed firearm	0	1	4
Used/possessed illegal knife	6	7	0
Used/possession prohibited weapon	3	1	18
Terrorist threat	20	10	15
Assault against employee/volunteer	7	14	11
Assault not against employee/volunteer	0	0	4
Aggravated Assault against employee/volunteer	7	1	1
Aggravated Assault not employee/volunteer	7	7	1
Total	56	45	56

Source: GPISD Disciplinary Reports 1999-2002.

Although the growth in prohibited weapons increased, the number of weapons offenses is low when compared to the number of students. The number of aggravated assaults, which is an assault with either serious bodily injury or an assault with a weapon decreased in 2001-02. The number of weapons incidents in 2001-02 is still well below 1 percent of the student population.

FINDING

GPISD has an advisory committee that brings together district departments to provide a districtwide focus on health and safety issues. The School Health Services Advisory Council (SHSAC) was established in 1996 as part of the district's Safe and Drug Free Schools initiative. The council has about 25 members, including district staff with duties that affect school safety. The council consists of parents, students, mental and medical health professionals, law enforcement members, community and business leaders, social services professionals, college representatives and elected officials.

Smaller working subcommittees address areas of specific concern. Safety and security issues are resolved in subcommittee, and solutions are brought to the entire council. SHSAC meets four times a year, and subcommittees meet at least three times a year. SHSAC works with school site-based decision-making teams to resolve issues of mutual concern.

Subcommittees make recommendations to SHSAC on budgetary items. SHSAC then makes recommendations to the board. SHSAC has the authority to address and approve grants, curriculum, expenditures and procedures necessary to implement state and federal mandates. The council monitors performance in health services, intervention and SDFS programs.

By involving operating departments in the safety and security oversight process, planning and implementation of individual solutions involve the affected departments. Issues receive a comprehensive review. Advice from the council takes into consideration the districtwide impact of programs and expenditures.

COMMENDATION

The district develops safety program recommendations through a districtwide committee that includes the operating departments that implement these programs.

FINDING

GPISD expanded the student helper concept to include safety tasks. Schools have traditionally used students as library aides or office aides. GPISD uses student safety teams as additional safety resources. Students identify and direct visitors to the office, act as an emergency means of communication if radio or other methods are unavailable, and make the initial entry into the school welcoming as well as safe. Students receive course credit as they learn responsibility and basic job skills.

For example, North Shore Middle School assigns a safety team student to monitor visitor traffic through the school's main entrance. These students politely greet visitors and direct them to the office. When the review team member visited the school, the safe team student opened the door and directed the reviewer to the office. The simple action of holding the door provided a welcoming entrance while ensuring the visitor proceeded directly to the office.

Students who want to be on the safety team must have certain qualities, such as leadership and maturity. Counselors screen students to ensure that they approach their safety responsibilities with the proper attitude. The use of student safety teams provides additional assistance to schools, a welcoming atmosphere for visitors and a learning experience for the students.

COMMENDATION

GPISD uses students as additional safety "eyes and ears" while they welcome visitors to their schools.

FINDING

The district has purchased safety equipment without adequately testing it under field conditions. For example, when the contract for radio service abruptly ended in December 2001, mobile paging telephones were purchased. The phones were cheaper than radios, which helped the district to save approximately \$2,048 per month on airtime. However, the phones do not work inside certain schools. One school keeps all 14 assigned phones, which cost approximately \$700, in boxes in a storage closet. Another school uses the phones, but administrators have to leave the building to transmit clearly.

The phones were supposed to have a function that allows simultaneous group calls to multiple phones, but this function does not work properly. Once in group-mode, the signal fades, making it hard to hear the transmission. During emergencies, each phone must be dialed individually, taking time to distribute important information.

The telephones were chosen because replacing the radio service with a district-owned transmitter would have taken six months, leaving the district without emergency communication during the spring 2002 semester. The district was also concerned about the cost of putting up its own transmitter. Because of the telephone problems, GPISD is again interested in having its own radio transmitter. The transmitter will provide an adequate level of emergency communication throughout the district. The process requires obtaining an FCC license, which can take time.

Failure to test the telephones under district conditions provided a false sense of security to the district and delayed a permanent solution.

In another example, the fire alarm in one middle school sends false alarm signals. Repeated attempts to correct the failure have been unsuccessful. The alarm was tested after installation and was accepted by the district. Additional equipment links to the alarm system. The linked equipment is being blamed for the alarm problems.

District alarm systems are usually purchased through the contractor who is building the facility. If the district is purchasing a system that is not part of a facilities contract, the director of Security actively participates in the bidding process. The district's Security Department is responsible for reviewing and revising security equipment bid specifications. Maintenance is responsible for repair once an item is purchased, so the director of Security requests their input during the bid process. Sometimes a vendor will provide equipment for field-testing or will provide a list of installations in case the district wants to contact a user of the equipment. Not all equipment is field-tested under a variety of district specific conditions.

It is a general practice in law enforcement agencies to conduct field-tests of safety equipment before making a purchase. Field-testing reduces the risk of problems with emergency safety and security equipment. This practice can be applied to Texas school districts.

Recommendation 63:

Include a field-test procedure in the bid process when purchasing safety or security equipment.

The director of Security should work with the senior purchasing coordinator to incorporate field-testing as a standard part of the bid process for specified safety equipment. Types of safety equipment that should be field-tested before purchase include cameras, radios or other equipment used during an emergency. Where field-tests are impractical, such as a large system purchase, a list of customers should always be requested. District staff should call or visit these customers with the equipment to see if it performs as promised, works with other equipment or add-on components, and any problems encountered in daily operations. The district should develop a procedure to be built into its facilities contracts that allows more active participation in the specification and selection process.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Security drafts standard language for a provision that requires a period for field-testing safety related equipment.	April 2003
2.	The director of Security drafts standard language for a provision that requires vendors to provide a comprehensive list of customers who are using the same equipment that is under consideration by the district.	April 2003
3.	The director of Security presents draft language to the assistant superintendent for support services for comments.	May 2003
4.	The director of Security develops a procedure for field-testing equipment under a variety of circumstances.	June 2003
5.	The director of Security gives the procedure to the Purchasing Office to incorporate into the bid process.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The district does not periodically check the criminal histories of its employees. State law authorizes and in some cases requires districts to perform background checks on new employees to ensure that students are not at risk for victimization. The district contracts with Regional Education Services Center IV (Region 4) for access to a database that checks backgrounds on prospective employees. The director of Human Resource Services-Secondary is responsible for seeing that criminal history checks are made on prospective and new employees. The new employee criminal history check is extensive, searching courthouse records throughout the nation. After an employee is hired, GPISD does not check criminal history again.

A Texas Department of Public Safety criminal history check costs \$3.15 through their online system. Texas Education Code Section 22.083 allows a school district to request criminal history information from any local law enforcement agency.

Using periodic criminal history checks, districts can prevent potential problems from becoming actual criminal complaints. Fort Worth ISD checks each employee's background every year as a preventive measure. Fort Worth ISD performs the background checks in partnership with a local law enforcement agency.

Recommendation 64:

Schedule periodic background checks for existing employees.

In scheduling the background checks, the district should use their access to the Region 4 database.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Human Resource Services-Secondary develops a schedule for updating employee criminal histories.	May 2003
2.	The executive director of Human Resource Services-Secondary submits the schedule to the superintendent for review and recommendation to the board.	June 2003
3.	The superintendent submits the schedule for board approval.	July 2003
4.	The director of Human Resource Services-Secondary implements the schedule as adopted.	July 2003 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

GPISD does not track and review dispositions on truancy cases to determine if legal requirements for distributing the fines associated with the case are met. GPISD has an active truancy program that includes filing misdemeanor charges against truant students and their parents. Each school makes the decision on whether or not to file truancy charges. When a case is filed, school clerical staff stores the case information. In an interview with one principal, the process of tracking case filings included documentation of the disposition. **Exhibit 11-15** shows truancy charges filed in Justice of the Peace courts for 1999 through 2002.

**Exhibit 11-15
Truancy Charges in Justice of the Peace Courts
1999-2000 through 2001-02**

Location	Number of Charges 1999-2000	Number of Charges 2000-01	Number of Charges 2001-02
Galena Park High School	100	40	158
North Shore High School	292	198	163
North Shore Senior High School	480	734	387

Galena Park Middle School	6	4	14
North Shore Middle School	74	488	285
Woodland Acres Middle School	6	2	0
Cunningham Middle School	55	147	149
Cobb 6th Grade Campus	n/a	208	138
Elementary Schools	92	80	86
Total	1,105	1,901	1,380

Source: GPISD Truancy Reports, 1999-2002.

A substantial number of cases were filed between 1999 and 2002, although GPISD information does not distinguish between cases that were filed against students and cases that were filed against parents.

Administrators said that truancy cases were generally handled by placing the student on probationary status, and charges were dismissed if the student began to attend class regularly. Administrators were supportive of this approach. The Texas Education Code Sec. 25.093 requires districts to file charges against parents who do not require their children to attend school. The statute also requires that districts collect truancy case disposition data and that one half of the fines collected by the justice or the municipal court be deposited in the operating fund of the school district where the child attends school.

The district has not received any fine money from truancy cases. The Justice of the Peace courts may be dismissing all truancy cases on deferred disposition with no fines assessed. However, GPISD does not have a tracking mechanism to determine the case disposition by type of case to ensure that all truancy fine revenue is properly received.

Many Texas districts receive truancy fine money. North Forest ISD works closely with area justice courts to ensure fines are received. The NFISD truancy officer tracks cases and dispositions, which bring in approximately \$20,000 per year.

Recommendation 65:

Develop a district procedure to track truancy case dispositions.

The procedure should include providing information on expected fines and disposition to the chief operations officer, who oversees the district's business functions so that the expected fines can be compared against actual amounts received.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The chief operations officer meets with the Justice of the Peace to determine the amount of fines collected.	May 2003
2.	The chief operations officer requests that any funds that have not been transferred to the district be transferred.	June 2003
3.	The chief operations officer drafts procedures for capturing and reporting truancy case dispositions.	July 2003
4.	The chief operations officer monitors the procedure for compliance and process improvement.	July 2003 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 12

COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

This chapter reviews the computer and technology services provided by the Galena Park Independent School District (GPISD) in the following sections:

- A. Infrastructure, Software, Hardware and Operations
- B. Organization, Staffing and Budgeting
- C. Policies, Procedures and Planning

Technology departments provide comprehensive technology needs ranging from installation and maintenance of hardware, software and network infrastructure to technology training. Responsibilities vary from district to district, but the GPISD Technology Department provides administrative and instructional functions.

An organizational structure that encourages the use and support of new technologies helps a school district achieve its technology-related goals. Additionally, a clearly defined plan, based on appropriate goals and objectives, clearly assigned roles and responsibilities, well-defined procedures for developing new applications and a customer service focus to meet and anticipate user needs, guides a district's technology operations

BACKGROUND

Administrative and instructional operations are vital roles of a school district's information technology department. The department participates in the instructional technology planning process to ensure new technology initiatives support the learning process and are integrated into the curriculum. The department also supports existing and new applications with technology training.

Important technology service elements include network support services, which support the district's information technology infrastructure. This infrastructure includes a wide area network (WAN) connecting district facilities, local area networks (LANs) in schools and administrative offices and, in some cases, the telephone system.

Chapter 12

COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

A. Infrastructure, Software, Hardware and Operations

Technology infrastructure is the underlying system of cabling, telephone lines, hubs, switches, routers and other devices that connect the various parts of an organization through a WAN. This infrastructure links users with people and information throughout the organization, as well as beyond.

A WAN provides users with electronic mail, Internet access and connects its LANs. A LAN connects all users within a single building. LAN users are connected to other district users through a WAN connection. A WAN is usually protected by a firewall that prevents unauthorized users outside the district from accessing information or people inside the district.

GPISD's WAN supports about 100 servers and more than 5,650 networked computers. Each classroom is connected to the Internet and the district's fiber optic backbone permits high-speed access to each school. The district has fault tolerant servers for its financial and student data systems to prevent interruption of service, data loss or data corruption if a hardware problem occurs or during maintenance servicing. The critical systems are backed up daily and weekly. **Exhibit 12-1** shows the district's network configuration.

Adobe Acrobat	Document processing
Adobe Acrobat Reader	Document processing
Backup Exec	System backup
Bess Proxy	Internet filtering
Call Manager	Internet protocol Telephones
Classroom	Attendance software
Delta	Business applications
FAMP	Fixed asset management
FileMaker Pro	Database Management System
Fleet 2000	Maintenance (transportation)
FoxPro	PDAS database
DSMP32	Student nutrition - free and reduced application processing
GradeSpeed	Elementary grade book
GroupWise	E-mail and productivity
Internet Explorer	Internet browser and email client
Intrgrade Pro	Secondary grade book
Kronos	Time clock software
Lexia	Special education
McAfee	Antivirus
Netscape	Internet browser and email client
PC Anywhere	Student nutrition
PCS Meal Accountability	Student nutrition point-of-sale (POS) system
PetroVend	Fuel management (transportation)
Quick Works Express-Data Card	District identification cards
Radionics PC9000	Door access control
Radionics Ram II and IV	Burglar alarm control and maintenance
Radionics Vision Source	CCTV surveillance systems
SASI	Student accounting system
SQL Server	Database Management System
TIPS (from Hayes Software)	Textbook inventory

Transfinder	Scheduling (transportation)
TUN Emul	Terminal emulation
Unity	Internet protocol telephones
Winocular	Human resources

Source: GPISD Technology Department, September 2002.

In addition to administrative software, specialized education packages include Accelerated Reader, Accelerated Math, STAR Reading, STAR Math, NovaNet and Jostens.

FINDING

GPISD initiated an aggressive campaign to acquire computers for classrooms and labs. The district technology plan developed a computer acquisition plan for 2001-02 which allocated bond funds to purchase computers for every school. GPISD implemented a districtwide standard of at least four computers for every classroom and one computer for every five students. To develop the standard, the district identified the following information for each school: number of classrooms, number of students and number of student computers. Classroom and student ratios determined the number of computers required to meet the district's standard. The district used the ratio that resulted in the greatest number of computers. For example, if 20 computers met the classroom ratio, but 25 met the student ratio, the district used the student ratio as the basis for its computer purchase. In November 2001, GPISD purchased 1,660 computers for about \$2 million. **Exhibit 12-3** shows the computer allocation and ratios from the district technology plan and includes Computer and Technology Education (CATE) computers.

Exhibit 12-3
GPISD Computer Acquisition Plan
2001-02

School	Number of Students	Number of Classrooms	Number of Student PCs	Number of CATE Computers	PCs Purchased 11/2001	Total PCs	Computer to Classroom Ratio	Computer to Student Ratio
Cimarron Elementary	1,016	60	82	0	158	240	4:1	1:4.2
Cloverleaf Elementary	993	69	106	0	170	276	4:1	1:3.6
Galena Park Elementary	698	31	97	0	43	140	4.5:1	1:5
Green Valley Elementary	921	61	122	0	122	244	4:1	1:3.8
Havard	913	48	219	0	25	244	5.1:1	1:3.7

Elementary									
Jacinto City Elementary	818	49	87	0	109	196	4:1	1:4.2	
MacArthur Elementary	627	43	74	0	98	172	4:1	1:3.6	
North Shore Elementary	849	57	113	0	115	228	4:1	1:3.7	
Purple Sage Elementary	782	40	147	0	25	172	4.3:1	1:4.5	
Pyburn Elementary	537	36	86	0	58	144	4:1	1:3.7	
Tice Elementary	787	46	77	0	107	184	4:1	1:4.3	
Woodland Acres Elementary	411	23	76	0	25	101	4.4:1	1:4.1	
Cunningham Middle	872	55	145	39	75	259	4.7:1	1:3.4	
Cobb Sixth Grade	1,001	59	395	0	20	415	7:1	1:2.4	
Galena Park Middle	988	48	163	11	35	209	4.4:1	1:4.7	
North Shore Middle	1,121	64	130	34	126	290	4.5:1	1:3.9	
Woodland Acres Middle	398	23	68	2	35	105	4.6:1	1:3.8	
Accelerated Center for Education (ACE)	171	8	41	0	4	45	5.6:1	1:3.8	
Center for Success*	0	0	0	0	4	4	N/A	N/A	
Galena Park High School	1,608	65	210	258	112	580	8.9:1	1:2.8	
North Shore High School	1,842	81	204	165	164	533	6.6:1	1:3.5	
North Shore	1,461	65	402	286	30	718	11:1	1:2	

Senior High								
Totals	18,814	1,031	3,044	795	1,660	5,499	5.3:1	1:3.4

Source: GPISD 2001-05 District Technology Plan and GPISD director of Technology.

*Center for Success is the disciplinary alternative education program and has no fixed classroom or fixed enrollment.

GPISD actually surpassed its districtwide standard with current ratios of 5.3 computers for every classroom and one computer for every 3.4 students. The district significantly reduced its student-to-workstation ratio to 3.4 students to one computer and is close to achieving the Texas Education Agency (TEA) mid-term goal of a student-to-workstation ratio of 3:1 by the end of 2002.

COMMENDATION

GPISD's aggressive acquisition of computers significantly improved student-to-workstation ratios.

FINDING

GPISD's decision to standardize and purchase only one brand of computer is not cost competitive. The district purchased 1,660 IBM computers in November 2001 at a cost of \$1,200 each. The price included software licenses, delivery and complete set-up in the schools. The computers ordered were IBM Netvista A40 models with 64 megabytes of Random Access Memory (RAM), a 10.1 gigabyte hard drive and a 15-inch monitor. The computers were pre-loaded with Windows 98 operating system and Office 2000 software.

The district defined its standard computer hardware configuration as IBM. The director of Technology said the district held a formal bid process in 1997 and IBM systems were the least expensive. The director of Technology said the district field tested other computers, such as Compaq and other non-name brands or clones in Fall 2000. According to the director of Technology, the district chose to stay with IBM equipment because the field tests showed other units were either incompatible with GPISD systems or not as reliable.

Before the November 2001 computer purchase, the director of Technology said the district negotiated with IBM for special pricing. The district requested IBM make the pricing available to several Qualified Information System Vendors (QISV). Purchases from QISV vendors do not need to be competitively bid, but prices can be negotiated. The district received informal price quotations from two QISV vendors, Micro Systems Engineering (MSE) and Analytical Computer Systems. The director of Technology said the district chose MSE based on price, service and past experience with the vendor.

The director of Technology said there were many reasons for purchasing IBM computers versus other brands, such as reliability, a consistent platform, compatibility issues, availability of equipment, delivery and support issues. The director of Technology also said technicians working on only one type of machine minimizes repair and down time. Several district staff, though, reported problems with lockups and shutting down when using machines that were part of the November 2001 purchase.

The price of computers is volatile and options vary considerably among computer manufacturers, so exact comparisons to the November 2001 purchase price are not possible. However, comparisons provide a relative perspective on price differences and potential savings.

Exhibit 12-4 compares prices for machines similar to those purchased in November 2001, using October 2002 prices. Base computers, with very similar options and no additional software other than the operating system, were compared. The November 2001 purchase price included software. Compared to IBM's price, HP/Compaq's price is 13.7 percent lower, Dell's price is 23.6 percent lower and Gateway's price is 33 percent lower.

Exhibit 12-4
Computer Price Comparisons
October 2002

Characteristic	IBM Netvista A30p	Dell Dimension 2300	Gateway 300L	HP/Compaq Evo D310
Monitor	15"	15"	15"	15"
Hard Drive	40GB 7200 rpm	40GB 7200 rpm	40GB 5400 rpm	40 GB 7200 rpm
Operating System	XP Professional	XP Professional	XP Professional	XP Professional
RAM	128MB	128MB	256MB**	128MB
Disk Drive	3.5"	3.5"	3.5"	3.5"
Operating Speed	1.8GHz	1.8GHz	1.8GHz	1.8GHz
Processor	Pentium 4	Celeron	Celeron	Celeron
Service Agreement	3-year on-site	3-year on-site	3 year on-site***	3-year on-site
Cache	512K	512K	128K	256K
network	Pro/100	10/100 PCI	10/100	Pro/100
CD-ROM	48x-20x	48x	48x	48x
Price*	\$939	\$717.80	\$629	\$810
Price Differential****	N/A	.764	.67	.863

Source: IBM, Dell, Gateway and HP/Compaq Web sites.

Note: HP/Compaq price comparison is December 2002.

**No special offerings or negotiations, no tax or shipping (free in some cases, but not considered).*

*** Only available for limited time, no 128 option noted.*

*** Service agreement does not appear to be at the same level as IBM or Dell.
 ****Price differential is calculated as the other vendor's prices divided by the IBM price.

Exhibit 12-5 estimates savings and the number of extra computers that might have been purchased, assuming the price differential for hardware was roughly the same in November 2001 as it was in October 2002 and that software costs would have been equal for all brands selected.

**Exhibit 12-5
 Computer Price Comparisons
 Estimated Savings Calculations**

Characteristic	IBM Netvista A30p	Dell Dimension 2300	Gateway 300L	HP/Compaq Evo D310
October 2002 Price	\$939	\$717.80	\$629	\$810
Price Differential		.764	.67	.863
November 2001 price	\$1,200	\$917*	\$804*	\$1,036*
Price Savings per unit	\$0	\$283	\$396	\$164
Number of Units Purchased	1,660	1,660	1,660	1,660
Total Cost	\$1,992,000	\$1,522,220	\$1,334,640	\$1,719,760
Cost Savings	\$0	\$469,780	\$657,360	\$272,240
Number of Units purchased for \$1,992,000	1,660	2,172**	2,477**	1,922**
Number of Additional Units	0	512	817	262

Source: Texas School Performance Review (TSPR) calculation. Note: HP/Compaq price comparison is December 2002.
 *Calculated as the November 2001 price times the October 2002 price differential.
 **Calculated as \$1,992,000 divided by the estimated November 2001 price and rounded down to the nearest number.

If price differences in October 2002 represent the approximate price differences in November 2001, the district could have saved between \$272,000 and \$657,000 by purchasing 1,660 non-IBM computers. With a budgeted expenditure of \$1,992,000, the district could have purchased between 260 and 800 additional computers for the same amount of money it spent for the IBM machines.

Recommendation 66:

Perform cost-benefit analysis and purchase cost-competitive computers.

The director of Technology and Technology Department staff should work with the senior purchasing coordinator and the director of Finance and Budget to develop and perform a cost-benefit analysis. The cost-benefit analysis should consider two options: remaining with just one type of equipment or expanding to multiple vendor platforms.

The analysis should be performed annually and should document not only purchase cost, but also reliability issues and costs associated with supportability and maintainability since IBM uses proprietary parts and other vendors do not. The district should develop a reliability testing process for proposed vendors that includes outside verification of results to promote open competition and opportunity.

The analysis results should form the basis of the district's computer purchase strategy. The director of Technology should work with the senior purchasing coordinator to implement the strategy to ensure the greatest competition.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Technology works with Technology Department staff, the senior purchasing coordinator and the director of Finance and Budget to develop criteria for a cost-benefit analysis.	May - June 2003
2.	The director of Technology, Technology Department staff, the senior purchasing coordinator and the director of Finance and Budget perform cost-benefit analysis and document results.	July - August 2003 and Annually
3.	The director of Technology and the senior purchasing coordinator develop and implement the purchase strategy based on cost-benefit analysis results.	August 2003 and Annually

FISCAL IMPACT

Competitive pricing for computers could save the district approximately \$2.2 million during the five-year period from 2003-04 through 2007-08 based on the estimated unit cost savings and number of computers to be purchased. Unit cost savings are calculated by multiplying the November 2001 actual price of \$1,200 times the October 2002 HP/Compaq price differential of .863 ($\$1,200 \times .863 = \$1,036$), to determine the price savings if purchased from another vendor (**Exhibit 12-5**). Based on the November 2001 purchase price of \$1,200 minus the estimated price of \$1,036, there is an estimated savings per unit of \$164 ($\$1,200 - \$1,036$).

The district will be purchasing additional new and replacement computers during the time period from 2003-04 through 2007-08 as shown in **Exhibit 12-6**.

**Exhibit 12-6
GPISD Estimated Computer Purchases
2003-04 through 2007-08**

Computers/Year	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Estimated Number of New Computers to be purchased	440	462	485	509	535
Estimated Number of Replacement Computers to be purchased	1,500	2,285	2,399	2,519	2,645
Total Number of Computers to be purchased	1,940	2,747	2,884	3,028	3,180

The estimated savings per year are as follows: \$318,160 in 2003-04 (1,940 computers x \$164 savings per unit); \$450,508 in 2004-05 (2,747 computers x \$164 savings per unit); \$472,976 in 2005-06 (2,884 computers x \$164 savings per unit); \$496,592 in 2006-07 (3,028 computers x \$164 savings per unit); and \$521,520 in 2007-08 (3,180 computers x \$164 savings per unit).

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Perform cost-benefit analysis and purchase cost-competitive computers.	\$318,160	\$450,508	\$472,976	\$496,592	\$521,520

Chapter 12

COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

B. Organization, Staffing and Budgeting

Galena Park ISD's Technology Department consists of one director and 17 staff who handle districtwide hardware, software and telecommunications support. **Exhibit 12-7** shows the Technology Department organization structure. The director of Technology heads the Technology Department and is responsible for supervising staff, planning, grant development and budget development. The director of Technology supervises the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) coordinator, system programmer, system analyst and the network manager.

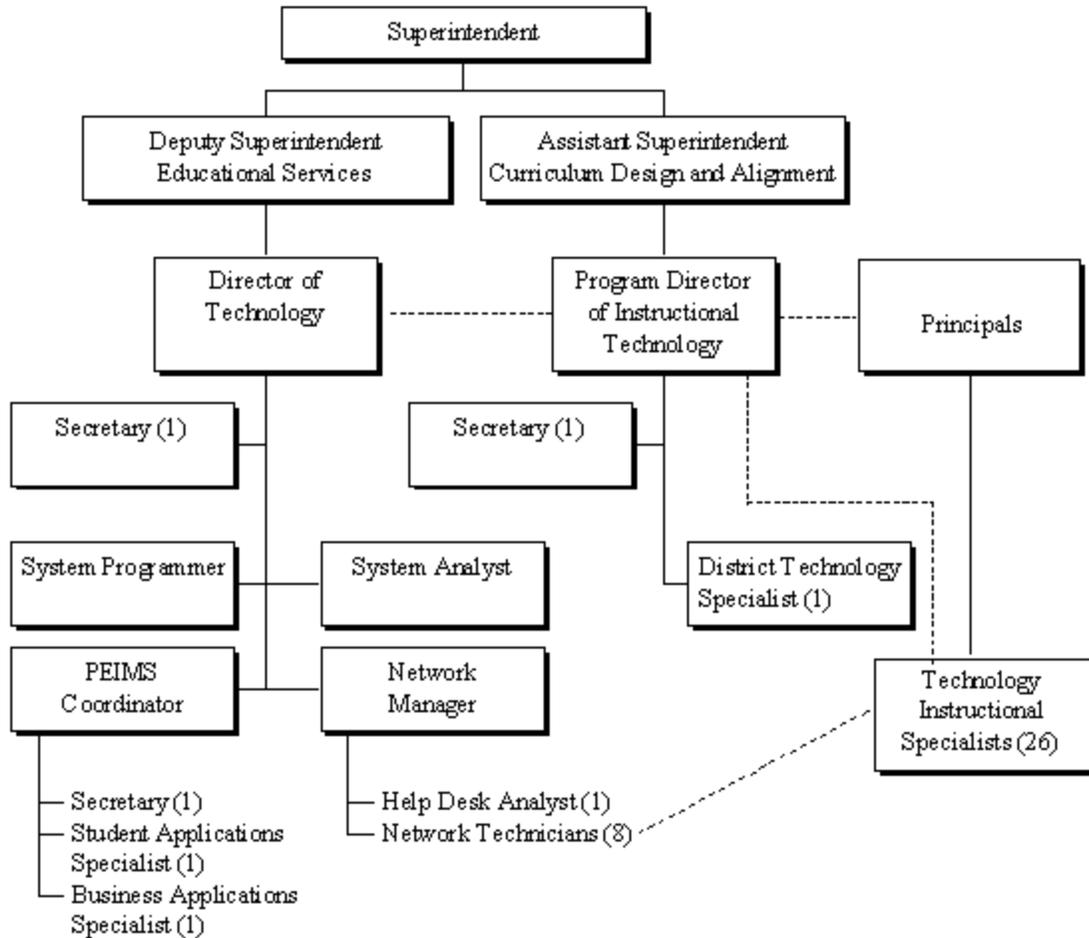
The district's PEIMS coordinator submits annual reports to TEA on student demographics, academic performance, personnel, financial and organizational information. A business applications specialist and a student applications specialist assist the PEIMS coordinator.

The system programmer manages the district's Delta financial system, as well as supporting the network and managing the e-mail server. The system analyst provides technical support for student software, such as the SASI system, Classroom and Intergrade Pro.

The network manager supports the network infrastructure, including the district's WAN and its telephone system. The network manager is also responsible for scheduling and supervising the network technicians and the help desk analyst.

GPISD has a distinct chain of reporting for instructional technology. The program director of Instructional Technology, who reports to the assistant superintendent for Curriculum Design and Alignment, coordinates the instructional technology function. Additionally, GPISD uses certified teachers, called technology instructional specialists, to train and coordinate the integration of technology into instruction for their respective schools; set up software programs to improve instruction, provide diagnostic support; and handle routine technical problems. The technology instructional specialists also coordinate their efforts with the network technician assigned to their respective schools. Principals supervise the technology instructional specialists. The program director of Instructional Technology coordinates with principals and provides support for technology instructional specialists as needed. The director of Technology said the instructional technology reporting structure was created in 2001-02.

**Exhibit 12-7
GPISD Technology Organization
2002-03**



Source: GPISD director of Technology, September 2002.

GPISD selected four Texas school districts as peer districts for comparison purposes: Aldine, Goose Creek Consolidated, Humble and Pasadena.

Exhibit 12-8 compares the size and staffing of GPISD's Technology Department to its peers.

GPISD compares favorably to its peers in level of administrative staff. Each district has a director and a secretary. Humble ISD has an assistant director and Aldine ISD has three directors besides the executive director of Technology Services. In instructional support, GPISD has one central program director supported by a secretary and a district technology specialist. Several of the peers, Pasadena, Humble and Goose Creek Consolidated, have central training staff. Each district has school-based instructional specialists, with usually one specialist for each school.

Exhibit 12-8
Technology Department Staffing and Structure
GPISD and Peer Districts
October 2002

District	Administrative	Technology Support	Instructional	
			Central Office	School Based
GPISD	Director of Technology Secretary	PEIMS Coordinator and Specialists (3) PEIMS Secretary (1) Network Manager (1) Network Technicians (8) Help Desk Analyst (1) System Analyst (1) System Programmer (1)	Program Director Secretary (1) District Technology Specialist (1)	Technology Instructional Specialists (26)
Pasadena	Executive Director Secretary	Student Services Staff (6) Financial Services Staff (6) Operations (3) Systems Software (1) Telecommunications (2) Networking (9) Technical Services (16) Electronics Repair (6)	Executive Director Technology Trainers (5)	Technology Liaisons (50)
Humble	Director Assistant Director Secretary	Systems Analyst (2) Network Administration (4) Desktop Support (12) Help Desk (2)	Director Instructional Specialists (6) Secretary Facilitator Technology assistant	Site Technology Contact Person (31)
Aldine	Executive Director Directors (3)	Telecommunications (4) Networking (9)	Program Director	Campus Technology Specialists

		Computer Repairs (12) Technology Information Systems/Programming (13) Technology Projects (6)		(64)
Goose Creek Consolidated	Director Secretary/ Procurement	Help Desk (1 full-time, 1 part-time) Networking and Peripherals (6) Workstation Support (6 full-time, 2 part-time) Application Support (5) User Access (1)	Director Secretary (1) Trainers (4)	Campus Technology Specialists (23)

Source: Peer district surveys and GPISD Technology director.

From 1998 to 2002, GPISD applied for and received two major types of state and federal technology grants to assist the district in building infrastructure and purchasing computers for classroom use. The Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund (TIF) grant helps schools integrate technology into their curriculum. The E-Rate discount grant, or the federal Universal Service Fund for Schools and Libraries, provides discounts to schools and libraries with telecommunications services. These services can include local telephone service, high-speed data communications lines, Internet access and internal connections. The federal E-Rate discount provides 20 to 90 percent of the cost of purchasing telecommunications services, Internet access and internal connections. The discount level is based upon the percentage of students in the district eligible for participation in the federal free and reduced-price school lunch program.

As seen in **Exhibit 12-9**, GPISD received almost \$1.9 million in TIF funds during the period from 1997-98 through 2001-02. The TIF grant funds, in all but one year, were used to purchase student workstations at all district schools. The district used 2000-01 TIF grant funds to upgrade network infrastructure at three middle schools and one high school. The district applied for more than \$27 million in E-Rate discounts in 2001-02. The E-Rate projects will be used for various infrastructure and connectivity projects. The 2001-02 E-Rate funds are for projects such as the consolidation and re-location of servers to the administration building, the

design and development of a turnkey centralized help desk function and documentation of policies and procedures.

**Exhibit 12-9
GPISD Grant Funding
1997-98 through 2001-02**

Fund Source	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	Totals
TIF	\$320,000	\$238,000	\$600,000	\$300,000	\$438,000	\$1,896,000
E-Rate	\$346,210	\$374,838	\$348,303	\$513,202	\$27,132,164*	\$28,714,717
Totals	\$666,210	\$612,838	\$948,303	\$813,202	\$27,570,164	\$30,610,717

*Source: GPISD director of Technology. *E-Rate funds applied for, but not yet awarded to district.*

Exhibit 12-10 compares GPISD budgeted operating expenditures to its peers. GPISD's total budgeted expenditures and budgeted expenditures per student are the lowest among its peers. Aldine ISD has the highest budgeted expenditures per student at \$129 per student. GPISD's budgeted expenditures are less than one third that amount at \$40 per student.

**Exhibit 12-10
Budgeted Operating Expenditures
GPISD and Peer Districts
2001-02**

Expenditure Category	GPISD	Aldine	Goose Creek Consolidated	Humble	Pasadena
Salaries and Benefits	\$510,825	\$1,668,663	\$739,384	\$699,248	\$1,626,626
Contracted Services	\$135,920	\$3,015,664	\$362,247	\$479,467	\$642,500
Supplies and Materials	\$71,100	\$1,640,700	\$55,428	\$64,357	\$516,000
Other Operating Expenditures	\$51,700	\$117,700	\$37,350	\$8,456	\$32,000
Capital Outlay	\$5,000	\$396,500	\$42,200	\$8,442	\$47,275

Total Expenditures	\$774,545	\$6,839,227	\$1,236,609	\$1,259,970	\$2,864,401
Expenditures as Percent of Total Budget					
Salaries and Benefits	66%	24.4%	59.8%	55.5%	56.8%
Contracted Services	17.5%	44.1%	29.3%	38.1%	22.4%
Supplies and Materials	9.2%	24%	4.5%	5.1%	18%
Other Operating Expenditures	6.7%	1.7%	3%	0.7%	1.1%
Capital Outlay	0.6%	5.8%	3.4%	0.7%	1.7%
Expenditures Per Student					
Enrollment	19,336	53,201	18,274	25,239	43,476
Expenditures per student	\$40	\$129	\$68	\$50	\$66

Source: Budget information is from the Texas Education Agency (TEA), Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS), 2001-02 and enrollment information is from the Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS), 2001-02.

GPISD increased its technology spending by 5.6 percent, from \$626,000 to \$708,000, during the five-year period from 1996-97 through 2000-01 (**Exhibit 12-11**). Salaries and benefits account for the greatest percentage increase, though offset by decreases in the other categories. Actual expenditures per student increased 5.6 percent from \$35.54 in 1996-97 to \$37.52 in 2000-01.

Exhibit 12-11
GPISD Technology Expenditures
1996-97 through 2000-01

Expenditure Category	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	Percent Change (1996-97 through 2000-01)
Salaries and	\$258,823	\$337,424	\$408,629	\$465,458	\$510,313	97.2%

Benefits						
Contracted Services	\$244,797	\$113,367	\$128,219	\$85,057	\$126,878	(48.2%)
Supplies and Materials	\$68,713	\$61,042	\$27,421	\$36,408	\$27,707	(59.7%)
Other Operating Expenditures	\$16,027	\$27,994	\$30,508	\$26,518	\$9,338	(41.7%)
Capital Outlay	\$37,425	\$104,912	\$62,929	\$126,909	\$34,331	(8.3%)
Totals	\$625,785	\$644,739	\$657,706	\$740,350	\$708,567	13.2%
Enrollment	17,610	17,806	18,167	18,506	18,885	7.2%
Expenditure Per Student	\$35.54	\$36.21	\$36.20	\$40.01	\$37.52	5.6%

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

FINDING

GPISD has a comprehensive technology training approach that helps ensure effective use of technology in management and instruction. While teachers and computer lab instructors interact directly with students, properly trained administrative staff also contributes to the overall effectiveness of instruction.

The GPISD technology plan includes proficiency requirements for all teachers, clerical staff and administrators and timetables for completion. There are three levels of proficiency. Employees must achieve one level of proficiency each year by February 1. Teacher proficiency levels include: management, basic software skills and integration of skills into the classroom. GPISD provides frequent training opportunities to help staff meet the proficiency requirements, and many training documents are located on the district's Web site. **Exhibit 12-12** shows proficiency expectations.

Exhibit 12-12 GPISD Technology Proficiency Requirements 2001-05

Proficiency Requirement	Proficiency Indicator	Proficiency Level/Group
GPISD	Score of 80 percent or better on the	Level I: Teachers.

Security Test	GPISD security test	Clerical, Administrative
Basic Computer Skills	Skills include: login to network; execute programs; mouse skills; basic troubleshooting; and saving files to a disk	Level I: Teachers, Clerical, Administrative
Attendance	Skills include: check attendance and print progress reports (secondary teacher)	Level I: Teachers
Gradebook	Skills include: setup, maintain and print reports; backup; and export grades each grading period (secondary teachers)	Level I: Teachers
Email A	Skills include: receive, send and reply to e-mail; send and receive attachments; and setup and utilize an address book	Level I: Teachers, Clerical, Administrators
PDAS	Ability to use software	Level I: Principals only
Patty Wooten (Benchmark Data)	Execute the following functions: interpret Home screen; execute a variety of queries; change and distinguish between layouts; sort information; and print reports	Level I: Administrators
Microsoft Word A	Execute the following functions: font selections, bullets, alignment; copy and paste; select tool bars, drawing tool bar; tables; spell check, Thesaurus; save and print files; and file management	Level I: Clerical, Administrators Level II: Teachers
Microsoft PowerPoint A	Execute the following functions: select and/or create slide layouts; select themes; work with text boxes, title bars, bullets; insert graphics; and apply slide transitions and animations	Level II: Teachers, Clerical, Administrators
Internet A	Execute the following functions: key site locations; search engines-boolean search, mega	Level II: Teachers, Administrators
Email B	Execute the following functions: flag, sort and prioritize; create, edit and file bookmarks; signature file	Level II: Teachers, Clerical, Administrators
Microsoft Excel A	Execute the following functions: utilize and navigate through the workbook	Level II: Clerical

	<p>window; work with Office Assistant; create, save and print an Excel worksheet; use automatic fill; enter and format a title; enter column headings and adjust column width; edit and move data; complete simple calculations; and customize the "Enter" key</p>	
Microsoft Word B	<p>Execute the following functions: tables, sorting and formatting lines; envelopes and labels; insert symbols, pictures and columns; format pages; and find and replace</p>	Level II: Clerical, Administrators
Internet/Composer B	<p>Execute the following functions: save pictures from the Web; print pages in gray scale; send an Internet page through email; use hyperlinks; and create a Web Quest and/or scavenger hunt appropriate to the subject area</p>	Level III: Teachers, Administrators
PowerPoint-Subject Area Integration - C	<p>Create instructional PowerPoint presentation for students and/or create a research project lesson plan for student use</p>	Level III: Teachers, Administrators
Microsoft Excel-B	<p>Execute the following functions: use number formats; use AutoSum; sort, format, edit and hide columns; use formulas with order of calculations in Excel; use numbers, formulas and functions; charts and graphs</p>	Level III: Clerical
Microsoft PowerPoint B	<p>Execute the following functions: link and embed slide objects; enhance slides by working with template presentations; insert sound; insert comments; create handouts and speaker notes; and create continuously running presentations</p>	Level III: Clerical
Microsoft Word C	<p>Execute the following functions: mail merge; track changes; protect document; table of contents; AutoCorrect; AutoText; bookmarks; insert comments and insert file; and text shading</p>	Level III: Clerical

Source: GPISD District Technology Plan.

GPISD places at least one technology instructional specialist at each school to assist teachers and administrative staff. The technology instructional specialist helps train teachers and staff who arrive after the beginning of the year. Summer training opportunities are also available for district staff.

Training, through the Regional Education Service Center IV (Region 4), helps technology instructional specialists maintain a sufficient level of skills to support teachers and staff. The technology instructional specialists provide training and technical support for the district's core set of software programs, which are used for most managerial and instructional tasks and are called district standard programs. The technology instructional specialists also provide technical support and training for teachers who use school-specific programs. Technology instructional specialists receive an annual \$1,000 stipend which ensures that qualified personnel are available to support technology and training needs.

A review of evaluations of the training programs reveals a high degree of satisfaction with the training provided. Teachers and technology instructional specialists are included in the decision-making process to develop proficiencies. Level III, Integration, is scheduled to be offered in 2003.

The frequency and depth of training, as well as the support provided by the technology instructional specialists, keep staff current and proficient on skills necessary for effective integration of technology into instruction.

COMMENDATION

GPISD's training program ensures staff is proficient in crucial computer management and instructional skills.

FINDING

The organizational structure of GPISD's Technology Department is not aligned to efficiently support technology functions. The Technology Department is composed of two distinct, separate reporting structures, one for instructional technology and one for infrastructure and software technical support. The director of Technology said the district revised the department's structure in 2001-02. Under the new structure, the program director of Instructional Technology reports to the assistant superintendent for Curriculum Design and Alignment instead of the director of Technology.

The district believes this structure with the director of Technology reporting to the deputy superintendent for Educational Services is

functional and appropriate in supporting the district's mission of educating students and believes it should remain as is because of the numerous interactions between technicians and technology instructional specialists in resolving technical issues.

However, with the new structure, the district created a focus and a reporting structure for instructional technology that supports the mission of educating students. The change also resulted in the remaining functions in this area, which have an operations and support service focus instead of an instructional focus, remaining under instructional management.

Many districts align functions and reporting structures to group similar operations. For example, the management of a help desk function and tracking of technology work orders is very similar to the management and tracking of maintenance work orders. Both types of operations generally receive calls to a central area where the call is logged, the problem prioritized, a work order is generated and a technical person dispatched to diagnose and repair the problem. Once the problem is fixed, the work order is marked as completed and closed in the work order system. The work orders are tracked to make sure problems are prioritized and quickly resolved. Both organizations respond quickly to emergencies and have a customer service focus. Aligning similar operations also facilitates resource sharing and coordinated planning. For example, technology infrastructure issues affect facilities planning and construction and vice versa.

The technology support functions are separate from the instructional technology functions in two of the peer districts. Goose Creek Consolidated ISD's director of Technology Management Systems oversees computer support functions and the director of Instructional Technology is a resource for the instructional division. The director of Technology Management Systems reports to the assistant superintendent of Business and the director of Instructional Technology reports to the assistant superintendent of Instruction.

Pasadena ISD also has two separate functions. The executive director of Management Information Systems, who supervises hardware issues and personal computer workstations support, reports to the associate superintendent of Business and Finance. The executive director of Instructional Technology, who supports the integration of technology into curriculum and instruction, reports to the associate superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction.

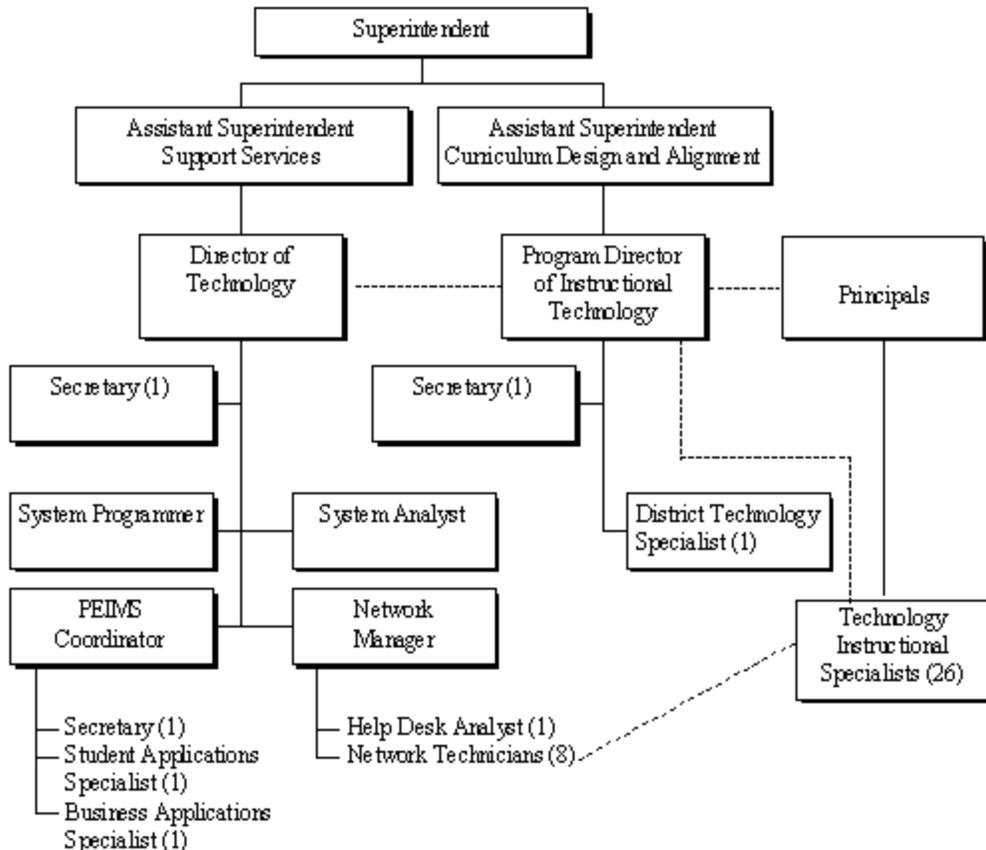
Recommendation 67:

Align non-instructional Technology Department functions with other support services functions.

Since the district separated the instructional technology function from the technology infrastructure support function, the district should align the technology infrastructure support functions under an administrator with similar support services functions, such as the assistant superintendent for Support Services. **Exhibit 12-13** shows a proposed organization structure with the realignment of functions. The only change concerns the reporting relationship between the director of Technology and director's immediate supervisor. Under the proposed organization structure, the director of Technology would report to the assistant superintendent for Support Services instead of the deputy superintendent for Educational Services.

Under the proposed organization structure, there would still be interactions between the instructional technology function and the technology infrastructure support function, such as network technicians interacting with technology instructional specialists or the director of Technology interacting with the Program Director of Instructional Technology.

**Exhibit 12-13
Proposed Technology Department Structure
December 2002**



Source: TSPR.

The superintendent should develop a plan outlining the duties, roles and responsibilities of the staff in a realigned Technology Department and how staff is to interact with the instructional technology function.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent reviews Technology Department functions and reporting relationships of Technology Department staff.	April 2003
2.	The superintendent develops a plan reassigning non-instructional Technology Department functions to the Support Services Department and identifies new reporting relationships and interactions with instructional technology functions.	May 2003
3.	The superintendent submits plan to the board for approval.	June 2003
4.	The board reviews and approves the Technology Department realignment to the Support Services Department.	July 2003
5.	The superintendent reassigns staff.	August 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The Technology Department does not have a documented formal cross training policy or plan to ensure that technical staff is fully cross trained on networks, servers and critical software. The director of Technology identified cross training as an area for improvement. The network technicians interviewed by the review team said that there was no formal policy for backup training. Most said that they could back each other up for hardware issues because they essentially perform the same functions, just at different locations. However, some technicians said there are specialized software packages at their schools that other technicians are not cross trained on and would have to learn.

There are more examples of the lack of cross training or backup. The system analyst who uses specialized software in boundary planning said that no backup support exists in his area. The PEIMS coordinator said there is no backup for the functions performed by the business applications specialist. The network manager said that individually, there was no one who was cross trained to perform her duties, but felt that a

combination of personnel could provide backup. However, one of the technicians who provides backup for the network manager did not know the locations of all of the cabinets and switches in the event that backup was required in this area.

When only one individual is fully trained and knowledgeable in critical software and network infrastructure, the district increases its vulnerability if that individual is unavailable or leaves. Effective districts develop policies that identify critical software and hardware operations and provide for cross training which ensures that knowledgeable staff is available as backup when primary support personnel are unavailable.

To achieve cross-training of its staff, Aldine ISD designates a primary and secondary support person to support networks and individual applications. The district also uses "train-the-trainer" techniques to expand the number of staff knowledgeable about its networks and software applications. When training for particular equipment or an application is scheduled, the district sends the designated primary and secondary support personnel. After returning from training, the primary and secondary support personnel use "train-the-trainer" to train additional district staff.

Recommendation 68:

Cross-train Technology Department staff in critical software and functions.

The director of Technology should develop a cross-training plan that ensures Technology Department staff is cross trained in all critical hardware and software systems. The plan should identify key systems, the individuals who will back up each system, the basic levels of knowledge and proficiency required for each system and tasks and deadlines to achieve the required proficiency within a year of implementation. Strategies should include: using the "train-the-trainer" method during staff development days, sending staff to outside training or even trading jobs for short periods.

The plan should be updated periodically and staff cross-trained as new systems and software are acquired to ensure there is backup for new systems.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Technology works with Technology Department staff to develop a cross-training plan that ensures staff is cross trained in critical systems within a year.	April-June 2003
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2.	The director of Technology implements plan and monitors progress to achieve proficiency by deadlines.	July 2003 and Ongoing
3.	The director of Technology updates plan annually based on new technologies and systems acquired.	August 2003 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The Technology Department does not have formal individual staff training plans which ensure technical staff has the required skills and expertise to support the district's networks, servers and software applications. The director of Technology said there is no formal training plan, just an informal practice for providing each person one week of formal training a year. The training could be commercial training, community college courses or training provided in the district. GPISD uses Region 4 for training and has agreements with San Jacinto College North to pay for an employee who takes certain technology courses.

The director of Technology estimates two thirds of the training provided is topic or need based. For example, when the district installs new equipment, Technology Department technical staff receives training for that specific piece of equipment. Individuals generate the remaining one third of training provided based on their interests. The district allocates training funds, but does not tie the expenditure funds to individual training plans for staff. From 1997 to 2001, the district spent an annual average of \$21,475 for training.

The district does not have a requirement to "train-the-trainer" when staff receives new training, which would share the knowledge among Technology Department technical staff and stretch training and staff development dollars.

When interviewed about training, several Technology Department technical staff said they would like additional training opportunities. One network technician said it would be nice to have training on specialized software that schools purchase. The network technician said the district sends teachers and technology instructional specialists to training, yet technicians are required to support software on which they have not been trained and must learn it on the spot when a problem occurs.

A formal development plan for technical staff that includes an assessment of needed skills and expertise in emerging technologies would enable the

Technology Department to effectively support and maintain new technology and software when it is implemented. Otherwise, long-term morale issues may develop if staff is expected to maintain software and equipment for which they received no training.

Effective school districts work with staff to identify training and development that is mutually beneficial for both the district and the individual. Districts also reward staff for ongoing training leading to certifications and degrees. Fort Bend ISD, for example, promotes staff development by offering a \$1,500 annual stipend to its technical staff for each approved technical certification test completed. This program promotes staff development as well as staff retention.

Recommendation 69:

Develop and implement individualized, comprehensive training plans for Technology Department staff.

The director of Technology should develop a comprehensive training plan for each position in the Technology Department. Based on an assessment of the individual's skills and expertise, the plan should include training strategies that meet the individual's personal goals and objectives, as well as district needs. The district has training funds available, but does not tie the funds to individual plans. After developing plans, the director of Technology should tie budgeted training funds to individual plans by allocating existing and available budgeted funds for staff training to pay for training. Individual training plans should also identify cross training goals to ensure multiple personnel are trained to cover critical tasks.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Technology assesses individual Technology Department staff skills and develops a comprehensive training plan with each staff member.	April-June 2003
2.	The director of Technology identifies available budgeted funds within annual training budget to implement individual staff development plans.	July 2003 and Annually
3.	The director of Technology implements staff training plans.	August 2003
4.	The director of Technology updates individual plans as needed based on new technologies and systems acquired.	September 2003 and Annually

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 12

COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

C. Policies, Procedures and Planning

Policies, procedures and planning serve as three key elements in effectively managing a school district technology department. Planning provides the overall roadmap for a district to follow in developing and implementing technology. Policies outline the district's organizational philosophy regarding technology and tell employees what types of activities are acceptable and why. Procedures describe how employees are to perform the activity to comply with policies.

The Texas Education Code, Section 11.252, 3 (D), requires each school district improvement plan include provisions for integrating technology into instructional and administrative programs. Districts should develop comprehensive plans by using a defined process that includes representatives from all stakeholder groups. The plans should identify available financial resources and address the administrative needs as well as the instructional needs of the district.

GPISD has a district technology plan for the 2001 to 2005 timeframe approved by the GPISD board of trustees in January 2001 and the TEA in May 2001. The plan, which was last revised in June 2001, contains a mission statement and philosophy, technology goals and objectives, the district technology standards, staff development proficiencies, a technology budget and hardware acquisition plan and budget. GPISD also has several policies and standards to guide employees in technology matters, such as the district technology standard and the acceptable use policy.

FINDING

The district technology plan does not include detailed strategies or implementation schedules linked to budgets. The district's latest technology plan for 2001 to 2005 was revised in June 2001. The plan includes a mission statement, vision, goals and objectives, staff development proficiencies, a long-range budget and hardware acquisition plan.

Exhibit 12-14 shows there are four goal areas outlined in the plan: telecommunications and information technology, instructional software, staff development and continuous improvement. For each goal area, there are three to five objectives listed. The plan includes detailed activities to meet technology proficiency goals for elementary, middle, high school

and teacher development, but overall the plan does not provide a definitive implementation plan with strategies and detailed timelines for meeting the four goal areas and their associated objectives.

Exhibit 12-14
GPISD Technology Goals and Objectives
2001-05

Goal Area/Statement	Objectives
<p>Telecommunications and Information Technology: GPISD will enhance the quality of instruction through districtwide implementation of state-of-the-art telecommunications and information technology hardware and its integration as an essential part of the district environment.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Upgrade the existing WAN backbone to provide 1-gigabit (fiber optic) service to every campus and administrative location in support of voice, data and video. 2. Relocate all campus file servers into a consolidated data center located in the new administration facility. 3. Ensure that all hardware acquired meet district instructional goals and are consistent with the latest industry standards. 4. Implement a phased approach to acquisition of new computers and peripheral hardware such that the goal of having the equivalent of five computers per classroom is met by the end of the five-year plan. 5. Develop and implement a plan for maintaining, securing and protecting the district's hardware investment.
<p>Instructional Software: GPISD will enrich the quality of instruction by acquiring and maintaining appropriate software that can be integrated into the classroom environment.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure that all software is aligned in such a way that all components of the curriculum are compatible and consistent with district objectives.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Ensure that instructional software is operational and accessible in classrooms and computer lab settings. 3. Provide training on the use and procedures for implementation of available software to teachers and Technology Instructional Specialists (TIS) and implementation procedures.
<p>Staff Development: GPISD will increase districtwide staff development programs to insure consistent and effective use of hardware and software to enhance student success.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure that TIS personnel at each campus facilitate and track campus staff development, technology integration and technology curriculum alignment. 2. Provide District level staff development during in-service, after school and summer. 3. Offer community and family-directed activities, such as the District Technology Festival, to display campus technology integration projects for parents and the community.
<p>Continuous Improvement: GPISD will continue to monitor and update the technology plan in a way that new technology developments are carefully evaluated and prioritized so that appropriate and cost-effective hardware and software are included.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure that the use of district technology is evaluated such that useful practices can be continued and unnecessary equipment software and techniques can be eliminated. 2. Ensure that new developments in technology are assessed and studied before their acceptance as part of the district standard. 3. Ensure that continuous evaluation and monitoring take place and working in

	<p>conjunction with the Evaluation Department, ensure that feedback is timely and continuous.</p>
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Source: GPISD 2001-05 District Technology Plan.

The director of Technology said that detailed plans with implementation schedules and timelines are not routinely developed, but on a project basis, such as when the district moved to its new administration building location. The director of Technology said that progress is reported on the status of projects and initiatives to the board, principals, and the department of instruction.

The most effective technology plans contain clear goals, objectives and action plans for technology projects. They assign individual responsibility for implementation steps and set deadlines and include measurements to evaluate progress. Del Valle ISD revised its technology plan to address staff development and training. The plan contains technology department activities and assignments. In March 1998, Socorro ISD revised its technology plan to include cost estimates and measurable objectives.

Recommendation 70:

Incorporate detailed strategies with associated schedules and costs into the district technology plan.

The director of Technology should modify the technology plan to include specific strategies for achieving each of the objectives outlined in the technology plan. Each strategy should identify the individual responsible for the strategy, a schedule for completion, a cost estimate and measures to track the plan's implementation.

The director of Technology should also provide formal implementation progress reports to the superintendent and board. The director of Technology could also post progress reports on the district Web site to inform the board, district employees and community members about the district's progress in achieving its technology goals and objectives.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Technology works with the technology planning committee, Technology Department staff and representatives from schools and administration to identify	May 2003
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	specific tasks and strategies for each objective in the technology plan.	
2.	The director of Technology works with the technology planning committee to identify cost, funding sources, responsibilities and deadlines for completion.	May-June 2003
3.	The director of Technology updates the technology plan and presents it to the superintendent and board for approval.	June 2003
4.	The director of Technology submits quarterly progress reports to the superintendent and board and posts reports to district Web site.	August 2003 and Quarterly

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

GPISD's technology planning process does not include stakeholders from disciplines outside the instructional technology area. The Galena Park Independent School District 2001-2005 District Technology Plan was developed by a planning team composed of seven principals, an assistant principal, four technology instructional specialists, two teachers, the deputy superintendent for Educational Services and the program director of Instructional Technology. There were no representatives on the committee from support service areas such as transportation, food service or maintenance or from the financial services area. There was also no representation from community stakeholder groups, such as parents or business leaders.

As a result, the technology plan focused on achievement of instructional goals without addressing administrative functions that support classroom instruction. GPISD's technology plan contains goals and strategies for instructional technology, but does not address effective use of technology to automate or streamline administration. Improved automation and integration of administration can streamline operations and eliminate manual paper processes that drain district resources from the classroom.

Regardless of district size, successful technology planning requires the input and support of multiple stakeholders. The Texas School Performance Review's *Helping Schools Make Technology Work: Managing Information Technology From Classrooms to Lunchrooms* recommends that a technology plan be a joint effort with input from the board, administration, teachers and business leaders with expertise in the field.

In 2000, Dallas ISD (DISD) formed a Technology Steering Committee (TSC) to address strategic needs and execute comprehensive and large-scale technology initiatives. The TSC is composed of high-level DISD executives and managers across departments and consists of key decision makers throughout the district. The TSC ensures information technology decisions are made only after considering the district's overall needs. For example, the chief technology officer advises the TSC on technology issues, but does not get a vote.

TSC members include: director of Research and Evaluation, director of Compliance, director of Assessments, chief technology officer, director of Management Services, chief financial officer, executive director of Purchasing, associate superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, area superintendents, associate superintendent of Student Support, assistant superintendent of Math and Sciences, interim associate superintendent of Human Resources and the president of the Parents Teachers Association.

Recommendation 71:

Expand the technology planning committee and process to include input from support service, financial, community and parent groups.

The director of Technology should work with district administrators to identify key stakeholder groups to be represented on the committee. The director of Technology should also research options that provide for review and input from parent and business groups before the plan is brought before the board of trustees for approval.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Technology works with district administrators who are part of the superintendent's cabinet to identify key stakeholder groups for representation on the committee and nominees for participation in the committee.	April 2003
2.	The director of Technology contacts stakeholder groups identified by district administrators and asks them to provide representatives for the technology planning committee.	May 2003
3.	The director of Technology convenes the committee to discuss technology issues.	June 2003 and Quarterly
4.	The committee meets to discuss and update the technology plan.	August 2003 and Annually

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The district disaster recovery plan does not contain detailed recovery procedures. The district's business continuity plan was developed by Deloitte and Touche LLP. The plan contains many of the key elements needed in a disaster recovery plan, such as identification of the disaster recovery team; scenarios that activate a disaster recovery; high level procedures to be followed based on the disaster scenario; and identification and prioritization of processes as critical or secondary.

As identified in the plan, critical processes, also called tier one processes, include: communications/ community relations/security, transportation, payroll and IT backup services. Secondary or tier two processes include: student information processing, accounts payable, human resources, tax collections and online purchasing.

The business continuity plan does provide high-level procedures outlining the steps involved with the recovery effort, but the document does not provide the step-by-step, detailed procedures identifying how data recovery will be completed for each type of system. The business continuity plan assumes that training and testing will reduce reliance on written procedures. Part III of the plan states, "Training should complement testing to the extent that trained personnel should be able to perform the recovery procedures without the aid of the document."

Detailed procedures are a key element of any disaster recovery plan and should be in the plan itself or, at a minimum, referenced in the plan. Detailed procedures should be located at the recovery site so recovery team members have a reference document to assist them in recovering systems quickly and efficiently. The National Center for Education Statistics' *Safeguarding Your Technology* recommends that actions required to restore critical functions and actions required to reestablish normal operations be specified in the plan.

Recommendation 72:

Add detailed recovery procedures to the district's disaster recovery plan.

The director of Technology and Technology Department staff should modify the disaster recovery plan to add detailed step-by-step procedures

that identify the recovery process for the tier one and tier two systems identified in the plan.

Since the disaster recovery plan is a public document and the district may want to protect sensitive recovery procedures, the district could develop detailed procedures independently, store them at the recovery sites and reference them in the recovery plan.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Technology works with Technology Department staff to develop detailed recovery procedures for tier one and tier two processes and systems identified in the business continuity plan.	May - June 2003
2.	The director of Technology distributes copies of the detailed recovery procedures to designated sites for use in disaster recovery.	July 2003
3.	The director of Technology updates the business continuity plan and protects sensitive system recovery information by referencing only the detailed procedures in the plan.	August 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The district lacks an automated process to centrally track technology problems electronically which would assist in managing computer support more efficiently. Technology problems at GPISD are tracked at various levels. Administration building users call the help desk to report problems. The help desk analyst records problems in both an Access database and in Track It software.

At the schools, users report problems to the school's technology instructional specialist who first tries to resolve the problem. If the technology instructional specialist is unable to resolve the problem and it is an emergency, it is reported to the help desk. If the problem is not an emergency, the specialist puts it on a list for the network technician. Technicians cover certain schools on certain days. They address any problem lists when they visit their respective school.

There is no requirement for centrally reporting and tracking problems or a method or procedure to ensure problems are consistently reported or tracked. Many technology instructional specialists have handwritten forms

they use to record problems. Others generate a computerized list using Microsoft Word or Excel. The format to record the problems varies from school to school.

At Cloverleaf Elementary, for example, users complete a handwritten form. The form has the date, location, description of the problem, reporting teacher, time received and disposition. The form has a place for the technology instructional specialist and the technician to sign. Galena Park Elementary School uses a computer problem list. The list has a priority column, the room number or location of the problem, a description of the problem and the completion date. Several other schools have similar forms that include the date, room number, description of the problem, contact person and the technician's comments on resolution.

Consistent, automated tracking would enable the network manager to determine if problems are common throughout the district or isolated to one school; whether the workload among technicians is balanced; or how productive the technicians are in providing support. The network manager cannot identify the cause of the problem and develop strategies to prevent future problems without this information.

The district plans to use pending E-Rate funds to upgrade its centralized help desk function. The proposed work statement is for a turnkey help desk system. However, the district does not have automated workload statistics to facilitate designing how the help desk should function and how technician assignments should be made.

Well-managed technology support operations record all problems using consistent reporting methods and problem-tracking software. By tracking and sharing problems and resolutions, the technology support department can provide responsive solutions and increase the technicians' ability to solve unfamiliar problems. Technology support managers also benefit from a complete record of staff activity and can prioritize assignments to efficiently allocate staff.

Three peer districts for this review, Humble, Goose Creek Consolidated and Pasadena ISDs, have central help desk functions. Humble and Goose Creek Consolidated ISDs use commercial software to track problems and Pasadena ISD uses an in-house Access database to track problems.

Recommendation 73:

Implement a centralized problem-reporting process using consistent procedures and problem-tracking tools.

The director of Technology should assign Technology Department staff to modify the existing Access database to capture additional information. Information should include: user name; location; problem priority such as emergency, high, medium or low; the type of problem such as hardware, software, Internet or printer; the date the problem was resolved; and the problem resolution. The modified database should be located on a central server to allow the individual technology instructional specialist at each school to enter problems into the system or, at a minimum, to enter the problems off-line and send them to the help desk for uploading into the database.

The director of Technology should establish a policy that requires staff to report each problem in the database to improve technology support. The director of Technology, the network manager and the technology instructional specialists should work jointly on establishing procedures for consistent reporting and use of the database.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Technology works with the network manager to identify the types of information that should be captured in the Access database.	April 2003
2.	The director of Technology assigns Technology Department staff to modify the existing help desk Access database and develop training materials for its use.	April 2003
3.	The assigned Technology Department staff modifies the Access database to incorporate the additional types of information to be tracked and develops training materials for its use.	May 2003
4.	The director of Technology establishes a policy for problem tracking that requires technology instructional specialists and Technology Department staff use the modified help desk Access database to report all technology problems.	May 2003
5.	The director of Technology, the network manager and the technology instructional specialist from each school work jointly on procedures for reporting problems using the database.	May-July 2003
6.	The assigned Technology Department staff, the director of Technology and the network manager conduct training for database users.	July 2003
7.	The director of Technology implements the tracking policy and Technology Department staff and technology instructional specialists begin using the database to report	August 2003 and Ongoing

	problems.	
8.	The director of Technology and the network manager analyze problems reported and use the information to develop strategies to improve technician allocation and technology support.	September 2003 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Appendix A

PUBLIC FORUMS AND FOCUS GROUP COMMENTS

(PART 1)

As part of the review process, the review team held a public forum and focus groups to obtain input. During the public forum parents, teachers and community members participated by writing personal comments about the 12 major review areas; and in some cases, talking in person to review team members. Teachers, principals, community leaders and parents participated in three small focus groups where the 12 areas under review were discussed.

Comments below illustrate community perceptions of GPISD and do not reflect the findings and opinions of the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts or the review team. The following comments are organized by area of review.

DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

- Power is firmly entrenched in the hands of superintendent. She rules the school board and the trustees. Teachers work hard, the district is recognized and no one thinks about teachers for two years! State money should be handled better! Will TEA oversee PDAS? We should have a board of oversight so that teachers who don't fit the status quo are not summarily dismissed for invalid reasons or suffer professional defamation.
- District has changed for the better. The superintendent is dedicated. Like a family. District is good about keeping the taxes down. Board working well now, did have destructive board members.
- Very well organized. Some controversy, but now everybody is proud of the district. Brand new school s and some are over capacity again. Can't keep up with the growth.
- Overall, group was very positive about working in this district -- positive about the superintendent, overall leadership, and quality of work relationships.
- Site-base group does what the principal wants. They're told they have no choice. The board is governed by the superintendent. Voting practices are extremely suspect. People in charge work for administration. If you try to work for certain candidates (on your own time) your picture will be taken. Campus management can be very uncomfortable, both physically and emotionally. Example - the a/c was turned off in one room from the first day (August 19).

The assistant principal in charge was told more than once. Finally a teacher ran into the district a/c man and the problem was fixed in one day. Teachers receive little to no support from administration on some campuses. Even though initial salaries are high, there's about a 25 percent loss of teachers each year.

- Upgraded buildings, pregnant girls stay in school, board works well, always listening, superintendent has been a big success. Great System!
- Superintendent listens to principals
- Plusses for the district - Extremely supportive leadership, safe school. We get teacher support, lots of grants available. There is freedom and flexibility. The administration empowers us. We have the best of facilities. In terms of education - there are lots of materials.
- Would like to see a polling place for Galena Park school board elections at the community building in Jacinto City so that voters can vote both for the mayor and school board. You're losing voters by having a different polling place.
- Representatives should be educators on the board. Superintendent should give more to the teachers and staff support for becoming recognized and obtaining Exemplary status.
- Campuses with "Exemplary" status not compensated - merely a "Thank you."
- I don't feel we have any communication with the board. If you want to address an issue during a board meeting you'd had to have submitted a request prior to the meeting. Does everybody know that? We didn't. Well what good is that? We haven't seen high administrators in school performances. It is time for changes!
- Site-based is chaired and dictated by the campus principals. School board members appear to not be able to exercise their opinions. Publicly slashed for speaking out. Too many (top heavy) in central office with undecided positions. Positions are not posted. Positions filled according to who you know and not what you know. Salary discrepancies with some number of experienced years.
- The principal and assistant principal at MacArthur elementary,- They are wonderful! They had an open position for three weeks and allowed me to teach - I loved it!
- I wish principals had more resources (\$) and had the ability to place funds where they feel would be more useful.
- Minimal finances or improvements have been focused on the Galena Park side of the ISD. Superintendent doesn't distribute any funds awarded the district for superior educational improvement (TAAS scores) to all the employees who help achieve this goal.
- I feel Galena Park ISD is using their money wisely - they remodeled the old Randall's store instead of constructing a new administration building. By comparison, HISD remodeled the

superintendent's offices - and spent a lot of money on this and then decided to place it on the market.

EDUCATION SERVICES DELIVERY

- Just right.
- Special Education needs a complete overhaul. PASS Progress is not student-centered. In need of Special Education coordinators with expertise in the area. Entirely too much paperwork for Special Education. Too much nepotism. Overcrowded resource classes. Not enough Special Education aides in classes. Look into 504 program. Parents not always notified that students are placed in Special Education classes.
- Parental Involvement. Some parents said that there are some language problems in some PTA meetings and school meetings. They felt some parents do not come because they do not feel comfortable. Few PTA officers are Hispanic.
- PTA provides translating services.
- Academic program is even across district - from one side of the track to the other.
- Good curriculum guides.
- They have a health clinic at Cloverleaf. It is open all year and it serves the entire community.
- Lots of instructional focused activities.
- Special computers for these kids. Overall they have good services.
- The school does an excellent job. "Cut above" compared to Katy and other districts. Good business partnerships
- Special education program is exemplary for all children. We support all children, and kids are treated the same way.
- CATE - Teachers have everything they need and get what they need when they ask for it. Several CATE programs with colleges and businesses - like an internship with a local dealership - kids need to have work experience as part of the CATE program. They feel they are ahead of other districts.
- Alternative education teacher - Very proud of program. They have NovaNet, and looking to buy Plato. Lots of training for teachers
- Galena Park ISD's elementary schools are Recognized and have incentives for children who are improving, birthdays, anything to motivate them. They give incentives to students for staying after school for tutoring. They are using the money for the kids. Galena Park puts their kids first. I can't say enough good things about MacArthur Elementary!
- Personally I don't think they are equal because our BCIS classes are way overcrowded and there are enough computers but they're all broken or something is wrong with them. And administration doesn't do anything about it. The band especially needs more

dollars. The New Arrival center has a cabinet of snacks in their class because "you can't learn if you're hungry." Half the school is hungry. Why don't all the classes have snacks closet in them? They are spending \$4,000 dollars to go to the Nutcracker.

- Parents need to be more active. Need to screen teachers for dedication. Not enough counselors. Don't believe in social promotions. Believe in vocational ed for many students.
- The new arrival center gets over budgeted and they merely go on too many field trips. I know from personal experience that if someone wants or needs to learn a language they will regardless of conditions and field trips. The Jacketeers are also over budgeted. The band seems to be under budgeted and more money there would immensely help to the constructive program.
- Program - Special Education - My concerns are about the students that are labeled. Should they be separated from the rest of the class because of certain behaviors? I also think that the teachers should pair each student with a buddy that would help to encourage these students.
- I feel that the curriculum is aligned to the TEKS. Student Performance (TAAS) - Teachers expectations are too low; inadequately prepared teachers; teachers cheating to reach the campus goals. G/T - Too many teachers take for granted that these students already know everything and they fail to adequately prepare their students for the next grade. Special Education - Too many uncertified teachers.
- Not all programs are treated the same. Curriculum is TAAS devoted!
- Didn't get good notice that my daughter was in danger of failing. I got the letter in May - it was supposed to be out in February. Need more diverse teaching staff. They need to understand the culture of the students they teach. Education should be equal - no matter who you are.
- Curriculum was geared toward TAAS, but since it's gone things may change. Teachers were told by district administrators to teach only those TEKS that were directly connected to TAAS. TAAS scores are very suspect. Students with virtually no English skills made scores of 79, while others with good skills made low 70's. At one campus, the Reading Department dissolved because "The scores were so good. It is no longer needed." Not enough research is done before the district spends scads of money on questionable programs, and very little is done to check up on those programs. Some alternative programs (example NovaNet in night school) were so poor that teachers were given notice (written) that students in those programs were not well enough prepared to move up to the next level of that subject.

- I'm thankful that Galena Park ISD allows me to be a substitute teacher - I have about 52 hours of college credit and I worked in HISD for 10 years as a teacher's aide, but they require 60 hours of college credit to be a substitute. I'm qualified to teach and Galena Park recognizes that but Houston ISD does not!
- Over-emphasis on "teaching to the test" by hiring outside consulting firms to coach teachers on coaching the students on how to "guess" at the best answers. So much emphasis was put on TAAS that it was common for elementary students to cry worrying about how they did, and some even talked of suicide. Funds were spent on parties and trips for students who did well.
- I am extremely concerned about the curriculum for students, not only G.P., but all districts. I am so tired of my child's instruction being TAAS/TEKS based. Even teachers are sick of teaching the test. Our children need to learn the basics. I want my child to be able to compete academically throughout her academic years. I am by no means confident that she can. Just this past week, they tested the children two days that I know of, most of the day for district and state tests. When do the teachers have time to teach? I am becoming more convinced that I will have to move my child to private school. Especially with the money that I spend at Sylvan Learning Center so that she can understand the work that she is not getting the attention on in the classroom. I feel this testing system is setting up our children for failure. Some children simply test poorly - some adults for that matter. I brought this to the attention of my child's teacher. What I asked was "why is a child making A's and B's in the classroom and then failing TAAS." Something's wrong with that scenario. I would like to hear the benefits of the TAAS test and why it's so important to each child.
- Very concerned about a teacher at my daughter's school. She is in the AP program at North Shore Middle School but the district has hired a teacher who only has an associate's degree to teach English classes. Other parents have complained of unqualified teachers at their children's schools. What are they doing with the district's money?
- Education at GPISD is for the birds. As a graduate mostly what they did was teach TAAS. Students have been known to cry and talk of suicide over how they did on the TAAS. They brought in firms to coach the teachers on how to teach the test. I think the TAAS should be done away with and another better test created that is not taught to the students.
- Why doesn't the GPISD put as much emphasis on math, science and social studies as it does on language arts?
- Look at absentees on TAAS day. Look at exemption (Special Education and LEP) rates.

- The teachers have told me they don't give homework to average students because "Most of them will not turn it in." My student needs homework to re-enforce what is being taught.
- My daughter scored in the 95th percentile in math on TAAS and received Reading recognition but did not qualify for the GT program. After three years I went to the office because she had been placed in a low-performing class. They moved her to another class and retested for the GT and she qualified and was placed in the program. Why did it take so long for them to see her abilities? She is just one of many.
- I am the mother of one of the children that goes to first grade in Green Valley Elementary. He is in the ESL program and G.A.D. program. I help his teacher every Wednesday which allows me to see some of the problems that exist in the school. I know that children don't have enough books so they can learn both languages - English and Spanish. That's why they have to share the books - which are English, Spanish, and ESL. I think that if our children are tomorrow's future the way to help them is by providing the necessities so they can learn faster and easier. If this school is in an Exemplary district, why don't they provide the necessary things in order for the teachers to work better? Thank you for your attention.
- I also want to note that the air conditioner in the classroom is incredibly loud. It makes a terrible noise and I think this should be fixed. I think the teacher is excellent, but with an air conditioning system like the one she has, anybody can lose his or her temper. Why, if this is an exemplary school, aren't there enough textbooks and supplies for teachers and students?

PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

- The personnel department is usually very friendly and informative. From a salary standpoint my responsibilities warrant additional monies that don't seem to be forthcoming. Staff development is left to district departments but I think there should be some oversight to ensure that staff development sessions are beneficial and are not dominated by "favored" teachers.
- Teachers are aggressively recruited at high initial salaries, but if you've been here awhile you'll lose money. There are no incentives for loyalty. Staff development is usually not of high quality. Recognized the teachers that have been here 10 - 11 years may experience some burn out, they are not rewarded like they should. Some teachers did not get a step and feel resentful.
- Wish List -Extra pay for schools being recognized as Exemplary or Recognized. Maybe some monetary reward money for improved performance.

- Extra pay for schools that meet a specific goal. Money should go to every person in the building.
- Many teachers do not like the signing bonus. Veteran teachers think it is unfair.
- Salaries and stipends are not equal. Too many gray areas. Inadequate to reduce class size. Secondary (Fine Arts) classes entirely too large. Special Education stipends and qualifications (unmatched). Teachers with longevity do not get a fair share of the compensation pie.
- Would be nice to have a sick leave pool.
- Recruitment - Too many uncertified teachers. Students are suffering because this district is merely a training facility. Salary - New teachers are making more than experienced teachers. GPISD spends lots of money on hiring, but little on retaining good teachers.
- Based on who you know not what you know! Too many "created" positions for administrators who obviously don't need to be there making large dollars spending large amounts of dollars, who can get in big trouble but nothing will happen to them.
- When a person recruits someone for the job, there should be a follow-up on the incentive pay. Salary in GPISD just barely pays the rent for an aide that has worked in the district for five years.
- Personnel brags on searching all over for teachers - taking trips to Spain and all over the U.S., while my wife's application as a special education teacher, certified in grades 1-12, collected dust. She lives across the street from a school that hired teachers fresh out of college from out of state. At the same time, summer and fall 2001, the district's Personnel Department page on their web site was never functioning, and no one in the office had current job openings information.
- To Whom This May Concern: I am a substitute teacher in the Galena Park District. I would like the teachers to get incentive pay for a good job in the district with the students.
- I've had my application in for a teaching position in Special Education-Life Skills for over 10 years. I wasn't hired, but the school district could afford to go world-wide to hire instead of hiring me, one living within the district.
- Recruiting teachers is pitiful. The district would rather go to out of state and to Europe to recruit teachers and has bragged about doing so. My mother subbed for 10 years in GPISD and was qualified to teach Special Educational and they never gave her a job when they were in need of teachers. She lives across the street from North Shore Elementary. My father was looking for a job last year and GPISD's web set was down for three months. My mother has found a job with Harris County Department of Education and is very happy and now she wants nothing to do with Galena Park.

- GPISD is recruiting teachers from other countries and paying for their living expenses so that they will teach in their schools. I worked with such a teacher who came from India who could not communicate with the students so I was put in as a teacher's aide and taught these students. These are the hiring practices that I hope you look into. As for salary-as a teacher's aide I might as well be volunteering. I can do the same work and more willingly than some of these teachers who have been teaching for 20 years and are just burned out. These teachers make a good amount of money but they're not earning it. District office should be reviewed. They're making too much money. Every time you look at their phone list another position has been created for say an ex-principal or assistant principal. This needs to be stopped.
- Some teachers let their aides do all the work and they just draw high salaries.
- I've been told that there are two substitute vice principals that do not have a college degree and they are not certified.
- The transition in the district to obtain diversity in staff is just taking too long.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- I feel the district is doing well in these areas.
- Unless a school is inviting parents I don't see others. Not much information is sent to the community.
- Student Code was translated, but we have not see it yet. Lots of things are translated at the local level. Not much from the district office. There is always someone available at the school.
- The Multicultural Fair is great - Some people complain that too many functions are on the north side of town, but this is where the better facilities are located. They do hold facilities at the new agriculture building since it was recently opened. Perhaps we could achieve a better balance.
- There is always someone, somewhere involved. Many teachers have lived in this community all of their lives and are committed to improving the lives of all children. They are proud to be here.
- I think that they try real hard to get people involved.
- You should better explain terms to lay people. Many people don't know what Exemplary means - they think it's bad. You should communicate it so everyone can understand what it means.
- Parental Involvement - There should be incentive programs for parents. Each community should be receiving the same literature and flyers pertaining to any elections. The communities for Galena Park and North Shore are separated because of the type of homes that are being built in the North Shore area.

- District promotes only those programs which will bring money or good publicity. Example: very few people know about tonight's forum.
- I don't feel that enough effort is put into parental involvement. This area is largely the responsibility of the teacher in that "he" is required to call parents (a load of 125 or more) every six weeks. Some of the students need to be heavily mentored, especially by businesses in the area. Teachers are not aware of the "full picture" of what is going on here. The only time our aid is solicited is when we are told to thank some obscure business or person for contributing their time. Teachers can receive "secret" criticisms and are not allowed to respond in a timely manner.
- Although parents are told they are welcomed, when they express a genuine concern, they are made to feel unwanted. Just send your money, come to programs but do not ask questions.
- Lack of recognition for ethnic specific months - rather call it multi-ethnic month.
- Organization of school board meetings and requirements that questions be submitted in writing, for a written response later, makes it very difficult to bring up questions or concerns in a timely manner. The board meetings are basically self-congratulatory exercises, where issues are never openly discussed, and the superintendent, not the board, is totally in control.
- This area has many businesses, I have not been made aware of any support from specific business for Green Valley. Since I work in non-profit and specifically special events, I know that there are many corporate/business partnerships around the city. How can Green Valley Elementary benefit or even begin to develop these types of partnerships/support?
- The district does not seem to do enough to get parents involved.
- I think some students are going to Galena Park that don't live here. I don't think their addresses are checked. I see students get off the school bus at apartments and then cross the street and get on a city bus. We have a beautiful district and I think a lot of people would like to have their children here.

Appendix A

PUBLIC FORUMS AND FOCUS GROUP COMMENTS

(PART 2)

FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

- Need sound proofing - voices carry - unbearable.
- Bond programs have been fair to all areas.
- Facilities are very clean but maintenance is slow. Mold removal in one of our school s hasn't occurred after three years of complaining. Maintenance employees are very nice and professional.
- Administration would do fine hiring more custodians. Buildings are too large with few people to handle - that's abusive. Buildings: why is it that Galena Park high school and NSSH don't look even closely alike? What is the difference in the buildings? GPISD is not HISD. Galena Park ISD is small compared to HISD, that's why is hard to understand the difference in buildings. It's clear where GPISD spends more. There should be enough classrooms for each teacher that is hired. No teacher should have to carry her materials for class from room to room. Custodial Services - should be able to keep the grounds around the school s clean.
- GPISD rank excellent in this area.
- GPISD have wonderful instructional learning facilities. Custodial and teaching staff takes pride in their facilities.
- I think they should fix the tampon things. I also think they should clean up better, as in sweep and stuff.
- The taxpayers just built a \$26 million stadium. This is an excessive amount to spend on a facility. Money would be better spent on the students directly. Not an efficient way to spend money. Some of the school board members are benefiting financially from selling insurance to the district. A board member should not gain financially from the district. In fall 2000, students were supposed to make a film about safety and security. The students were told they would be paid \$100 to participate and the students were never paid. The company said they sent checks of \$50 to each child but no child has received a check. The district is more interested in putting money into the facilities rather than in books and programs and supplies. Overall Galena Park is doing a good job. It is one of the better districts in the area.
- School district's new administration building shows an excessive amount of spending. There is a full cafeteria and a weight room. I'm concerned the district is not spending money wisely and losing

focus of the most important things. I am pleased with the faculty as a whole. They discipline in the right manner and keep the students focused.

- I voted against the \$120 million bond package. The money is being spent differently if you live in Galena Park or North Shore. In Galena Park, the FFA parking lot is gravel. This wouldn't have happened in North Shore. You should treat everyone the same no matter where they live.
- Did we really need an agriculture facility which will serve less than 1 percent of the district's students? Hallways are very crowded at GPHS.
- I want information! I have lived here for many years. The district has built a brand new stadium - in the northern part of town. The stadium in this part of town is very old - They don't want to fix anything - There has never been any remodeling here - I see that they have made/done lots of remodeling on the other and nothing is done here - There is so much to do - I don't want to complain, but I'm tired of this - We paid taxes for many years - It's our fault for not coming - I have distanced myself from the school - Yes there is discrimination - I don't expect any changes! I've been here since 1969.
- New Havard Elementary was overcrowded the day it opened - the number of students should have been better foreseen. How many thousands of dollars were spent on "professional quality, state of the art" astro-turf for the new stadium, while playground equipment at Cloverleaf and Woodland Acres is non-existent? How many thousands of tax dollars were lost by converting the old Randall's into the new headquarters? How many thousands were spent on very expensive new furniture?
- Inadequate parking in new elementary school.
- The money spent on the Randall's building should have been spent on employee raises instead.
- When they build a school it is built for the needs of today and not for the future. So when the school opens it is already overcrowded. The schools are not kept clean.
- Why has the nine to 10 campus NSHS been neglected? Part of the school has been closed for more than four years. After the new stadium, new pool facility, bus barn, two credit unions (within five miles of each other), and the newly purchased administration. Building has been added. GPISD finally decided to start construction on the closed area of the school. This school is overcrowded-to say the least! The lockers are screwed closed (unused) because of overcrowding in the halls.
- West campus (grade 9-10) of North Shore was supposed to be refurbished. Using the same old cafeteria-too crowded. Why not

use the building next door? Why didn't they use money to extend the cafeteria?

- Also, the air conditioner in Room 105 makes a horrible noise and I think it should be fixed. I know the teacher is an excellent teacher but with an air conditioner like that it's enough to make anybody nervous.
- The cafeteria is too small for the number of students that are served. Several students are sent to the patio to have lunch. The patio is not covered, exposed, and is not air-conditioned.
- Galena Park High School - the cafeteria exit doors are too small for all students to exit.

ASSET AND RISK MANAGEMENT

- District offered insurance packages (premiums) that ate up our salary. The rush for all district employees to sign up for or change insurance was not enough time for individuals.
- The change in insurance and in rates was poorly communicated to the employees this year. No explanation in the process of enrollment. We were all dropped into this cafeteria and you moved around hoping to get the information and services you needed.
- Health insurance is very expensive to afford! Health insurance should separate employees that have only one child and no children. It is unfair that you pay the same amount of money as employees with seven children.
- GPISD - rank 'Excellent' in this area.
- The insurance premiums are too high. They went through the roof last year.
- District did not gather enough information for its employees health insurance therefore many are having no choice but to go to an HMO or cancel their insurance totally.
- My spouse works for GPISD, and she had to drop her health insurance because she could not afford it. That is a shame - working for a school district that can't provide affordable coverage for their employees.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

- New stadium is great and so is the Agriculture Center, but there are still temporary buildings in use and one campus has 19 floating teachers. Money should be spent on education first, then on extracurricular buildings. Budgeting at campus level is extremely secretive, which makes one wonder-Why? Money is spent on books and computer programs which teachers are then not allowed to use and which are ultimately thrown away. School board

members have large contracts with the district, creating conflict-of-interest concerns.

- There are no apparent problems in this area.
- Spending all the money on North Shore. When our band students (GP) went over to the stadium, they were not allowed to perform. Galena Park is not given equal treatment. Spent too much money on administration building instead. It's not fair that they spend all the money on North Shore. Why can't we use the stadium at Galena Park high school instead of having to drive to North Shore? Galena Park high school needs expansion. The cafeteria at Galena Park high school is too crowded.
- School taxes should be based on the community that you live in and not where all the new buildings are being built.
- As taxpayers and as parents we have concerns as to how money flows within the district. We attend most meetings at several different campuses. All of GPISD's programs don't benefit equally. For instance, one specific program spends lots of money for this very reduced group of kids. To us all kids should benefit the same way. The new Arrival Center children get to have very special privileges that none of the rest of the students have. That's a big concern right there. What's the total cost of the new administration building? What's the cost of the new stadium? Why hasn't some of the money been allocated in schools? Financially, we want to know if GPISD works towards children or overspend dollars in food, decorations and private businesses.
- Dr. Shirley Neeley addressed all employees of the district in August, at a pep rally, which her office organized. Well, at this pep rally Dr. Neeley arrived in a helicopter, which was flying around for awhile, I'm sure this cost taxpayers a pretty penny. There was also an ad in the *Houston Chronicle* a full page ad that cost \$3,600 per zip code. I'm sure this was taxpayer money as well. Please look into these spending practices.
- Taxes in GPISD are as high as they can go and that is wrong. They should be lowered.
- My daughter is in the varsity drill team (Scarlets). This year the team is at 86 girls. There was not enough school furnished outfits for that many girls. The school wants the parents of the girls to pay for the extra outfits (\$250 each). Why can't the GPISD school district pay for these? They obviously have the money. Look around at what all they have built.
- Why doesn't the district apply the \$1,000 from the State directly to insurance costs instead of taxing it through teacher paychecks?
- Why did employees sign a statement saying they wanted the \$1,000 applied to insurance benefits rather than having considered part of their salary if the intent of the district was to apply it to

salaries as a raise thus making the \$1,000 subject to taxes rather than a pre-tax application to insurance benefits?

- Zoning at Purple Sage - want to ask who was homeowner and who was renter. What do they want with this info? Look at 1994-95 re-zoning patterns.
- My school taxes are very high. I was one month late on my school taxes and a lien was put on my house. I had to pay court cost or be sued by some lawyer.

PURCHASING

- The district is doing well in these areas.
- School board members with large contracts (business contracts) with the district will abstain from votes on their own contracts, but will support each other's contracts. The superintendent has ultimate power over the board. They have voted her the right to overrule them. At the campus level, administrators will order department chairs to order certain books, but the books never arrive. If you are not a "favorite" teacher, your textbooks may be very difficult to find, or you may not have any. Everything is extremely secretive - funds disappear then re-appear in a different location.
- Many times there were not enough textbooks for everyone to have one. Then we had to leave them in the classroom. Sometimes when we got books half the semester had gone by and the books were out of date to start with.
- Reinstate the Insurance Committee to evaluate costs and different plans and bids for employee insurance.
- The students can't take home any books unless a parent checks them out.

FOOD SERVICES

- Could be a little more appealing. Less fat.
- The facilities should be able to keep food hot. The meals for students should be of good quality.
- I think there should be a water bottle machine in the snack bar area.
- Not long enough lunch hours. Summer feeding program is good.
- Very Unhealthy. School board is biased to Pepsi products and will not use any other brand. This seems to be wrong. However, I think all soda should be removed and water and juices. Remove the junk machines or put more healthy products in the machines. Lunches are high in carbohydrates with at least two to three bread products. Kitchen staff is friendly to the children and professional. There should be a way to get food for a hungry students or ill students without money on a temporary basis.

- The cafeteria is too little for so many students. We have to run through crowded halls to get here and even if we got any food we have but five to eight minutes to find a seat, which are nonexistent due to space. Food availability is also in question as food choices are narrowed to one because of too many students and too little food. In short all of us (students) are wondering why we have a new administration building and a new home stadium - that's in North Shore! - when the stadium and Administration building we had were fine? We're wondering why our halls are so crowded, so lacking in resources, why it takes so long to get anything fixed and why so much money was wasted on the administration building and stadium when it would have been better spent on the school itself!
- There's too many kids, and too little of a cafeteria. We should make the school a bit bigger because the halls are way too crowded. And when we get here we have too little time to get to a seat because the seats are taken and it takes too long to get here through the halls. The availability of food is questionable. Because it depends on where your class is to decide whether you get something of your choice, or something you have to eat because you're too hungry to complain. And in C lunch students hardly get anything. A and B lunch have a bit more but that's because there's an abundance then. The quality of food is not bad, but not something I want to eat everyday, also it's too repetitive. Monday its spaghetti, Tuesday tacos, Wednesday-hamburgers, Thursday-Managers Choice, Friday-pizza. Same as always! At least mix it up! Nutrition is not as good as they make it seem. Most of it is incredibly greasy. There's no nutrition in grease, as far as I know. And when we have chicken, sometimes it's overcooked. Sometimes it's under cooked. They need to watch the cooking. But mostly there's not much nutrition in it.
- We try to send lunches for our kids. We don't think cafeteria food is nutritious. It's way too fattening and not nutritious at all.
- Food served not warm/hot. Too much junk food available for students at the snack bar.
- I think the food service is good. We have a good variety of foods, nuggets, pizza, cheese sticks, ice cream, cokes, fruit drinks, and candy. I heard that they were thinking of taking the coke machines out, and I think it would be unfair, because we need the drinks to boost our energy to get through the day. The teachers don't want us falling asleep during class. And a healthy diet, vegetables, for lunch. Today's child society, we are not really into the healthy stuff, so if you don't force it, maybe we will eat it. I eat a salad at lunch, not because I'm on a diet but because it tastes good. But sometimes we want to eat snacks and junk food. Lines in cafeteria

and snack bar are too long. Some food in cafeteria is good. Some bad. Depends.

- I feel that the cafeteria facilities are severely deficient. The facility should be enlarged to accommodate the present student body of about 1,600. If financial resources are not available, then add at least one more lunch period to facilitate overcrowding. The menu consists of too many carbohydrates on the "free" lunch plate for students. The orange juice is overpriced! (The workers are usually very accommodating and friendly!)
- In the 9th and 10th grade campus (NSHS) there are not enough food options. The students have 30 minutes and by the time they stand in line and finally get food, its time to get back to class. Most eat from the machines. My student has complained and nothing has been done.
- At Green Valley we have a nice, new, bright cafeteria. However, I am still packing a lunch daily. I have looked at the food and would not eat it. Certainly there are ways to provide better quality food to our children. We know that the kids love fun food (i.e., hot dogs, pizza, etc.) How about adding spaghetti, lasagna etc. I know that this is a difficult area to improve upon, and it has gotten better.
- The food in the cafeteria is terrible. Many times we were fed food that was several days old. The food at the snack bar is more nutritious than the cafeteria.
- The schedule for lunch is not working and it needs to be redone.

TRANSPORTATION

- At Galena Park High school the bus pickup area is not covered. They should have a canopy for protection.
- Not enough buses. In need of bus aides.
- Overall, no complaints. For field trips, they have to be back by 1:30, in order for the buses to continue their routes. This is very inconvenient at times - they cannot go on long field trips.
- Very good.
- Buses to San Jacinto College.
- Adequate buses. Safety number 1 - children safety is number 1.
- Overcrowded buses. The older children cannot sit three to a seat. Often there are not enough seats for all the children in Galena Manor and Fidelity. This is very unsafe.
- I'm concerned about the placement of the bus stop at Woodland and Blackrock and the one north of Woodline. It concerns me because the children have to wait for a bus by the Wal-Mart at 6:30 in the morning.
- Many of the buses are falling apart and the drivers do not know how to drive. They would run off the road every day. The routes were laid out too far apart and too widely dispersed.

- Elementary students walking in the traffic from Cloverleaf to North Shore Elementary. No bus service in Cloverleaf. No sidewalks in Clover/open ditches.
- Air-conditioned buses should be provided to school events or field trips that are far away from the district.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

- Student Discipline - principals and teachers need to follow through with student code of conduct. Safety - campuses are doing a great job - badges, lock doors, entrances, parent sign-in. Local law enforcement - great working relationship with police department.
- Science labs - have inadequate facilities for management of dangerous chemicals. Roof leaks often, making slippery floors.
- Top Parent Concerns: Safety and Parent education.
- 911 emergency response crew for staff and students. Good overall. Well prepared for weather related emergencies. Work well with Galena Park police.
- Lots of drills. They have intruder drills. Spend one year working on this with the constable. We have "safe teams" - they walk around with walkie-talkies.
- There is a district and campus level crisis management plan.
- Very good, with the same constable working each school daily. This allows them the ability get to know the children. I am concerned when the district policy allows a minor child to be removed from the school property without parent notification. This occurred at Galena Park Middle school last school year.
- Campuses don't always adhere to their own discipline policy. Students not always disciplined as needed. What applies for one student does not apply for others with the same offense. Too easy for outsiders to roam building without questioning. Deputies on some campuses handle students totally inappropriate (too harsh). Physical restraint is excessive when not necessary.
- I feel safe. I really feel comfortable here.
- Parents should not walk the hall without an escort because we have some parents that look for other students that bother their kid.
- My concern is teacher and student safety. What is the law concerning notification of children found with a gun? I had an incident with a student who was threatened. On Monday he brought a gun to school. His teachers were not notified. The rules on confidentiality should apply to the teachers who are teaching that student. Not knowing this information jeopardizes the student's teachers and the students in that classroom. Also, when he was sent to the alternative school his teachers and the other students assumed he was involved with drugs instead of just trying

to protect himself. He was socially ostracized to a certain extent when he returned to school.

- Very big difference in crossing guards - deputy sheriffs or constables - provided for elementary schools. Cloverleaf has none, while Green Valley has two. Contract with constables smacks of cronyism.
- There is a policeman that is the gang task force person and he said some of the principals won't let him go to the school and talk to the students about gangs. It is especially bad at North Shore Middle School.
- As a graduate of North Shore High School a GPISD school, I did not feel safe with the deputy constables securing the schools. My freshman year we had deputy sheriff's securing the school but soon as Dr. Neely became superintendent that changed.
- To Whom This May Concern: My concern is the young kids drive too fast in the neighborhood. Also, the students should be more disciplined.
- Why don't elementary schools in GPISD have two assistant principals per campus? There is a great need and concern. Why no implementation or attention to student welfare? Big safety issues at Green Valley's pick-up and drop-off. I suggested that we develop a task force to look at alternatives for pick-up and drop-off. We need to also meet with the Sheriff's Department First of all, the school speed zone seems to mean nothing to motorists. Law enforcement could write tickets all day long in front of Green Valley. It would be great to issue citations for those adults who cannot follow rules for drop-off and pick-up. People are getting way too angry, usually because a few don't follow the rules. I have expressed a good deal of concern regarding this for both the morning and afternoon drops and pick-ups. The safety of our children is first and foremost. The school has done well in the discipline of students (at least last year). It's still early in the school year, but hopefully, they will maintain good discipline control. We really need to look at ways to improve external school safety (drop-off/pick-up).
- High school - a lot of gang activity not organized gangs. Different races, example girls block stair well making other kids detour or be cussed at etc. Threats of death - this is happening in school. This is a big problem.
- There is a conflict of interest. Why does the precinct, where the superintendent's husband works, contract with the district for police assistance?
- We would like to see the security guards more visible. Many times, they are just standing, chatting, while the kids are misbehaving.
- When a child is accused of committing an infraction, a constable interviews him before the parents are notified. Lots of time, the

story changes in favor of the school or the district so that they look good.

COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

- Technology training is too superficial and teaching sessions are not well thought out. Every time I've attended one, there has been no review of objectives taught, inadequate textbook or lesson guides and I am always left in a "fog" afterward. If we were allowed a reference book(s) the sessions would be more informative. No one pays attention to evaluations. In some classrooms the equipment is antiquated and no plans are forthcoming to switch out equipment. We have a predominately Hispanic enrollment. We should have Spanish software!
- District training. All teachers must meet competencies. There are free, available lessons.
- GPISD has a very nice technology department.
- Super job!
- We should be able to go on the Internet when we have free time. We won't print anything we don't need. If someone happens to do so they should get written up or something.
- There are computer classes only for teachers but not the aides.
- Many times the technology available for the students was not as up to date as that available to the faculty and staff of particular schools.

Appendix B

PARENT SURVEY RESULTS

Demographic Data/Survey Questions

Demographic Data

*Totals may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

1.	Gender (Optional)	No Response	Male	Female			
		11.7%	41.2%	47.1%			
2.	Ethnicity (Optional)	No Response	Anglo	African American	Hispanic	Asian	Other
		15.2%	18.2%	3.0%	54.5%	6.1%	3.0%
3.	STATEMENT			No Response	0-15 years	16-10 years	11 or more years
	How long have you lived in Galena Park?			12.0%	36.4%	6.1%	45.5%
4.	What grade level(s) does your child(ren) attend?						
	Pre-Kindergarten	Kindergarten	First	Second	Third		
	9.1%	9.9%	29.7%	22.8%	12.9%		
	Fourth	Fifth	Sixth	Seventh	Eighth		
	29.7%	3.8%	34.6%	22.3%	33.0%		
	Ninth	Tenth	Eleventh	Twelfth			
	41.5%	17.6%	7.7%	7.7%			

A. District Organization and Management

	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
1.	The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.	9.1%	48.6%	24.2%	12.1%	3.0%	3.0%
2.	School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.	9.1%	57.6%	15.2%	12.1%	3.0%	3.0%
3.	The superintendent is a	18.2%	51.5%	21.2%	6.1%	0.0%	3.0%

	respected and effective instructional leader.						
4.	The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	15.2%	48.5%	21.1%	6.1%	6.1%	3.0%

B. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
5.	The district provides a high quality of services.	27.3%	51.5%	9.1%	6.1%	3.0%	3.0%
6.	Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.	12.1%	39.4%	39.4%	6.1%	0.0%	3.0%
7.	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	12.1%	24.2%	39.5%	12.1%	9.1%	3.0%
8.	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	6.1%	36.4%	45.4%	6.1%	3.0%	3.0%
9.	The district has effective educational programs for the following:						
	a) Reading	30.3%	57.6%	0.0%	6.1%	3.0%	3.0%
	b) Writing	27.3%	69.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.0%
	c) Mathematics	30.3%	57.6%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%
	d) Science	27.3%	63.6%	3.1%	3.0%	0.0%	3.0%
	e) English or Language Arts	27.3%	66.7%	0.0%	3.0%	0.0%	3.0%
	f) Computer Instruction	24.2%	60.6%	6.2%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%
	g) Social Studies	27.3%	63.6%	3.1%	3.0%	0.0%	3.0%

	(history or geography)						
	h Fine Arts	27.3%	60.6%	9.1%	0.0%	0.0%	3.0%
	i) Physical Education	33.3%	48.5%	6.1%	6.1%	3.0%	3.0%
	j) Business Education	21.2%	51.5%	24.3%	0.0%	0.0%	3.0%
	k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	18.2%	33.3%	42.5%	3.0%	0.0%	3.0%
	l) Foreign Language	21.2%	36.4%	27.2%	6.1%	6.1%	3.0%
10.	The district has effective special programs for the following:						
	a) Library Service	21.2%	57.6%	9.1%	9.1%	0.0%	3.0%
	b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	18.2%	54.5%	12.2%	9.1%	3.0%	3.0%
	c) Special Education	27.3%	27.3%	33.3%	9.1%	0.0%	3.0%
	d) Head Start and Even Start programs	12.1%	33.3%	45.5%	3.0%	0.0%	6.1%
	e) Dyslexia program	12.1%	24.2%	48.5%	6.1%	3.0%	6.1%
	f) Student mentoring program	15.2%	27.3%	39.3%	9.1%	6.1%	3.0%
	g) Advanced placement program	24.2%	48.5%	15.2%	9.1%	0.0%	3.0%
	h) Literacy program	21.2%	36.4%	39.4%	0.0%	0.0%	3.0%
	i) Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	15.2%	33.3%	36.4%	9.1%	3.0%	3.0%
	j) Summer school programs	24.2%	48.5%	9.1%	9.1%	3.0%	6.1%
	k) Alternative education programs	15.2%	48.5%	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%	3.0%
	l) "English as a second language" program	18.2%	48.5%	21.2%	6.1%	3.0%	3.0%
	m) Career counseling	15.2%	42.4%	27.3%	12.1%	0.0%	3.0%

	program						
	n) College counseling program	12.1%	36.4%	36.4%	9.1%	3.0%	3.0%
	o) Counseling the parents of students	18.2%	45.5%	12.1%	15.1%	6.1%	3.0%
	p) Drop out prevention program	12.1%	30.3%	39.5%	12.1%	3.0%	3.0%
11.	Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	30.3%	33.3%	21.3%	9.1%	3.0%	3.0%
12.	Teacher turnover is low.	12.1%	30.3%	36.4%	18.2%	0.0%	3.0%
13.	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	12.1%	36.4%	21.2%	21.2%	6.1%	3.0%
14.	A substitute teacher rarely teaches my child.	9.1%	51.5%	15.2%	21.2%	0.0%	3.0%
15.	Teachers are knowledgeable in the subject areas they teach.	21.2%	54.5%	12.2%	9.1%	0.0%	3.0%
16.	All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.	18.2%	42.4%	15.1%	15.2%	6.1%	3.0%
17.	Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	36.4%	45.5%	6.0%	3.0%	6.1%	3.0%
18.	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	12.1%	51.5%	18.2%	9.1%	3.0%	6.1%
19.	The district provides a high quality education.	24.2%	57.6%	6.1%	9.1%	0.0%	3.0%
20.	The district has a high	27.3%	45.5%	12.1%	9.1%	3.0%	3.0%

	quality of teachers.						
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C. Community Involvement

	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
21.	The district regularly communicates with parents.	15.2%	60.6%	3.0%	15.2%	3.0%	3.0%
22.	District facilities are open for community use.	12.1%	30.3%	36.4%	12.1%	3.0%	6.1%
23.	Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.	3.0%	42.4%	27.4%	24.2%	0.0%	3.0%

D. Facilities Use and Management

	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
24.	Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff, and the board provide input into facility planning.	3.0%	30.3%	42.4%	18.2%	0.0%	6.1%
25.	Schools are clean.	39.5%	51.5%	3.0%	0.0%	3.0%	3.0%
26.	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	36.4%	33.3%	15.2%	9.1%	3.0%	3.0%
27.	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	30.3%	33.3%	18.2%	9.1%	6.1%	3.0%
28.	The district uses very few portable buildings.	18.2%	18.2%	27.2%	21.2%	9.1%	6.1%
29.	Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	24.2%	39.4%	21.2%	6.1%	6.1%	3.0%

E. Asset and Risk Management

Statement		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
30.	My property tax bill is reasonable for the educational services delivered.	3.0%	54.5%	21.3%	12.1%	6.1%	3.0%
31.	Board members and administrators do a good job explaining the use of tax dollars.	9.1%	18.2%	36.4%	24.2%	9.1%	3.0%

F. Financial Management

Statement		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
32.	Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers.	6.1%	27.3%	54.5%	9.1%	0.0%	3.0%
33.	Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	3.0%	36.4%	51.5%	6.1%	0.0%	3.0%
34.	The district's financial reports are easy to understand and read.	3.0%	27.3%	51.4%	6.1%	6.1%	6.1%
35.	Financial reports are made available to community members when asked.	3.0%	21.2%	60.6%	0.0%	6.1%	9.1%

G. Purchasing and Warehousing

Statement		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
36.	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	15.2%	57.6%	12.1%	9.1%	3.0%	3.0%

37.	Textbooks are in good shape.	18.2%	48.5%	12.1%	12.1%	6.1%	3.0%
38.	The school library meets student needs for books and other resources.	15.2%	63.6%	6.0%	6.1%	6.1%	3.0%

H. Food Services

	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
39.	My child regularly purchases his/her meal from the cafeteria.	18.2%	45.5%	9.0%	18.2%	6.1%	3.0%
40.	The school breakfast program is available to all children.	42.4%	45.5%	9.1%	0.0%	0.0%	3.0%
41.	The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	12.1%	27.3%	30.4%	24.2%	3.0%	3.0%
42.	Food is served warm.	15.2%	51.5%	15.2%	12.1%	3.0%	3.0%
43.	Students have enough time to eat.	18.2%	42.4%	0.0%	24.2%	12.1%	3.1%
44.	Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.	15.2%	66.7%	3.0%	12.1%	0.0%	3.0%
45.	Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	15.2%	39.4%	12.1%	15.2%	12.1%	6.0%
46.	Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	18.2%	60.6%	6.1%	12.1%	0.0%	3.0%
47.	Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	15.2%	66.7%	9.1%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%
48.	Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	24.2%	51.5%	18.2%	3.0%	0.0%	3.1%

I. Transportation

	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
49.	My child regularly rides the bus.	18.2%	30.3%	9.1%	21.2%	18.2%	3.0%
50.	The bus driver maintains discipline on the bus.	6.1%	24.2%	60.7%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%
51.	The length of the student's bus ride is reasonable.	9.1%	27.3%	54.5%	6.1%	0.0%	3.0%
52.	The drop-off zone at the school is safe.	12.1%	39.4%	39.5%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%
53.	The bus stop near my house is safe.	9.1%	33.3%	39.5%	12.1%	3.0%	3.0%
54.	The bus stop is within walking distance from our home.	12.1%	54.5%	27.4%	0.0%	3.0%	3.0%
55.	Buses arrive and depart on time.	12.1%	39.4%	39.4%	6.1%	0.0%	3.0%
56.	Buses arrive early enough for students to eat breakfast at school.	9.1%	24.2%	45.5%	18.2%	0.0%	3.0%
57.	The district has a simple method to request buses for special events.	6.1%	36.4%	54.5%	0.0%	0.0%	3.0%
58.	Buses seldom break down.	3.0%	39.4%	54.6%	0.0%	0.0%	3.0%
59.	Buses are clean.	3.0%	42.4%	48.6%	3.0%	0.0%	3.0%
60.	Bus drivers allow students to sit down before taking off.	6.1%	42.4%	45.5%	3.0%	0.0%	3.0%

J. Safety and Security

	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
61.	Students feel safe and	27.3%	54.5%	6.1%	9.1%	0.0%	3.0%

	secure at school.						
62.	School disturbances are infrequent.	21.2%	48.5%	15.2%	9.1%	3.0%	3.0%
63.	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	12.1%	30.3%	18.2%	30.3%	6.1%	3.0%
64.	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	3.0%	30.3%	15.2%	36.4%	12.1%	3.0%
65.	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	9.1%	30.3%	18.2%	27.3%	12.1%	3.0%
66.	Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	21.2%	42.4%	24.3%	9.1%	0.0%	3.0%
67.	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	21.2%	42.4%	30.4%	3.0%	0.0%	3.0%
68.	A good working arrangement exists between local law enforcement and the district.	27.3%	45.5%	24.2%	0.0%	0.0%	3.0%
69.	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	24.2%	33.3%	24.3%	9.1%	6.1%	3.0%
70.	Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	12.1%	36.4%	27.3%	18.2%	3.0%	3.0%

K. Computers and Technology

	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
71.	Teachers know how to use computers in the	18.2%	42.4%	24.2%	6.1%	6.1%	3.0%

	classroom.						
72.	Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	15.2%	57.6%	18.1%	6.1%	0.0%	3.0%
73.	The district meets student needs in classes in computer fundamentals.	15.2%	51.5%	21.2%	6.1%	3.0%	3.0%
74.	The district meets student needs in classes in advanced computer skills.	12.1%	39.4%	27.3%	12.1%	6.1%	3.0%
75.	Students have easy access to the Internet.	18.2%	36.4%	36.3%	6.1%	0.0%	3.0%

Appendix B

PARENT SURVEY RESULTS

NARRATIVE COMMENTS

The narrative comments below reflect the perceptions and opinions of parent survey respondents.

- Galena Park is in the new age of technology and learning techniques. There are few changes to work on but overall performance is better than most surrounding districts. Academically we measure up. Making sure our schools within the district are getting the same treatment and material in a timely manner is still a problem.
- Thank you for letting me know about this survey. I wish that our school district continues improving in everything. Thanks. May God bless you.
- [Translation from Spanish] In my opinion there are too many students in one classroom for one teacher. There should be a change in the food - provide food that is less greasy and don't provide white flour-based foods on a daily basis.
- [Translation from Spanish] My opinion concerning the education is that it is acceptable. The teachers, classrooms, and the facilities are acceptable. I would like to suggest that they put more security in the elementary schools due to the recent kidnappings.
- They are good.
- They are good.
- GPISD has shown that the purchase of the new administration building, new athletic facilities, new bus barn and the two credit unions have higher priority over the students' needs. There are several schools that are in desperate need of improvements. The Grade 9-10 campus is a strong example of neglect. This school is dangerously overcrowded. The west side of the school was closed for need of repair several years ago. Construction just started this fall. Some teachers at this campus are not meeting the needs of the students. I asked why my child does not have homework and was told that "most of the students will not turn it in - so why give it." I feel that homework is needed to reinforce what they are teaching. The students that need and will complete homework are neglected. Lunch lines are so long that students resort to eating junk out of the machines. More food options/food carts are needed. It takes the full thirty-minute lunchtime to get their food and then there is no time to eat. GPISD has shown what the priorities are and it is not the students!

- The educational performance of Galena Park ISD is perfect. Residents in GPISD are lucky. They don't have to be worried about the education that their children received at GPISD. Thanks to its effective organization and management, there are no gangs and drugs problems in the ISD. The students received education from highly qualified teachers in the safe and new facilities.
- Food is cold. They could do a better job.
- I am very pleased with all the new facilities and buildings, however better planning for growth should be considered. Being proactive instead of reactive saves money long term. There is far too much focus on the TAAS testing! Learning should be the focus for our children and the children learning based on values should be what is important to our teachers, not committees so they can move up in their careers! Teacher evaluations should be based on multiple inputs - students, parents, performance, peer input, etc. Parent development workshops would help parents understand what should be accomplished by their children and how they can help and do to support their child.
- Parents do not have enough access to the superintendent. The different counselors and office personnel want to extinguish the fire before letting a parent talk to the superintendent.
- [Translation from Spanish] My opinion is excellent except for the police security that is in place at my daughter's school, given the recent problem with kidnapping in and outside of school. I think it is urgent that they increase security inside and outside of schools. One never sees a policeman in the schools. I hope they take a quick action on this issue.
- [Translation from Spanish] In the Cobb Sixth Grade Center- there is nobody that speaks Spanish - even just for general information - there is none.
- I believe there are too many older teachers making a whole lot more money and putting less effort toward teaching than a new teacher with young energetic input and new ideas. I think we should focus on that issue. Another is Special Ed. These teachers get paid big money and really do nothing more than any other teacher. I've heard the district has recruited teachers from other places and has paid for living expenses on our tax money that is a big concern. Spending should be looked into. This district has too many high ranking positions that pay too much while all they do is sit behind their desk and supervise - kind of like to many chiefs and not enough Indians.
- [Translation from Spanish] Everything seems good to me.
- Our family believes that GPISD has a strong administrative staff and excellent leadership skills are shown by the superintendent. All of our children are in the Gifted and Talented program and they fully enjoy all the various learning resources available. Each of our

children is functional in computer technology skills. We especially appreciate the school management and cleanliness at Harvard Elementary and North Shore Middle Schools. I would like to see more traffic management at the drop off zone at North Shore Middle as it appears unsafe with children moving between cars.

- We certainly don't feel the board members and high level administrators have their hearts equally divided by all children. There is a noticeable difference between the High schools - GPHS and NSHS and NSSH. The buildings are so much different and that makes a negative impact on kids who attend GPHS. Too much expense on a new stadium and a new administration building (too fancy). High level administrators too busy doing their own thing playing golf, traveling-spending whose money? Taking care of their own businesses during working hours? Our kids lack of new buildings (GPHS needs lots of work), don't you think monies should be dedicated and moved into classrooms and schools? Why support a program like "NAC", spending tons of money on a very reduced amount of students and not serve equally all students? Thanks for your concern!
- Scarlet/Dance Program needs to be re-evaluated and more "adult" supervision. It's the responsibility of the teacher to teach, discipline and direct students. Not the officers.
- My main concern as a parent is the size of school my two oldest children go to. They attend North Shore Middle School and will attend North Shore High School and Senior High. I feel that these schools are too large. They don't allow enough students to participate in extra curricular activities. They could have double the children participating in activities and still have two 4A or small 5A schools. The district has enough students to have three small high schools and it has been shown that a small school environment is better for children than the mega school my children are attending. I feel that their individual needs are not being met because the district puts more emphasis on a winning team than on the participation of individual students. Extracurricular activities have been shown to increase academic performance and keep kids out of trouble. The district "dropped the ball" in this particular case because of the way they set up the high schools in the North Shore area. As my 12 year-old son put it, "I'd rather play for a losing team than watch a winning team".
- So far we're very pleased with the Galena Park school district. With three boys in school, we haven't had a problem. Thank you.

Appendix C

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT STAFF SURVEY RESULTS

Demographic Data/Survey Questions

Demographic Data

*Totals may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

1.	Gender (Optional)	No Response	Male	Female			
		12.0%	25.9%	62.1%			
2.	Ethnicity (Optional)	No Response	Anglo	African American	Hispanic	Asian	Other
		15.5%	62.1%	6.9%	12.1%	0.0%	3.4%
3.	How long have you been employed by Galena Park ISD?	No Response	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	20 + years
		6.9%	19.0%	29.3%	13.8%	13.8%	17.2%
4.	Are you a(n):	No Response	Administrator	Clerical Staffer	Support Staffer	Other	
		6.9%	53.4%	15.5%	24.2%	0.0%	
5.	How long have you been employed in this capacity by Galena Park ISD?	No Response	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	20 + years
		7.0%	29.3%	37.9%	17.2%	5.2%	3.4%

A. District Organization and Management

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
1.	The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.	20.7%	22.4%	3.4%	1.7%	5.2%	46.6%
2.	School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.	19.0%	17.2%	8.6%	0.0%	5.2%	50.0%

3.	The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	15.5%	5.2%	1.7%	0.0%	5.2%	72.4%
4.	The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	34.5%	3.4%	1.7%	0.0%	5.2%	55.2%
5.	Central administration is efficient.	37.9%	3.4%	6.9%	0.0%	7.0%	44.8%
6.	Central administration supports the educational process.	32.8%	3.4%	3.4%	0.0%	5.2%	55.2%
7.	The morale of central administration staff is good.	29.3%	15.5%	1.7%	1.7%	5.2%	46.6%

B. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
8.	Education is the main priority in our school district.	29.3%	1.7%	1.7%	0.0%	5.2%	62.1%
9.	Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.	31.0%	15.5%	5.2%	0.0%	5.2%	43.1%
10.	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	32.8%	17.2%	1.7%	1.7%	5.2%	41.4%
11.	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	34.5%	19.0%	1.7%	1.7%	5.2%	37.9%
12.	The district has effective educational programs for the following:						
	a. Reading	39.7%	5.2%	1.7%	0.0%	5.1%	48.3%

	b. Writing	37.9%	6.9%	3.4%	0.0%	5.2%	46.6%
	c. Mathematics	36.2%	5.2%	3.4%	0.0%	5.2%	50.0%
	d. Science	36.2%	5.2%	5.2%	0.0%	5.1%	48.3%
	e. English or Language Arts	40.4%	5.3%	1.8%	0.0%	5.1%	47.4%
	f. Computer Instruction	43.1%	6.9%	3.4%	0.0%	5.2%	41.4%
	g. Social Studies (history or geography)	39.7%	6.9%	3.4%	0.0%	5.2%	44.8%
	h. Fine Arts	36.2%	6.9%	3.4%	0.0%	6.9%	46.6%
	i. Physical Education	44.8%	5.2%	1.7%	0.0%	5.2%	43.1%
	j. Business Education	43.1%	6.9%	3.4%	0.0%	5.2%	41.4%
	k. Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	32.8%	10.3%	5.2%	0.0%	5.1%	46.6%
	l. Foreign Language:	50.0%	6.9%	3.4%	0.0%	5.2%	34.5%
13.	The district has effective special programs for the following:						
	a. Library Service	39.7%	22.4%	0.0%	0.0%	5.1%	32.8%
	b. Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	44.8%	5.2%	0.0%	0.0%	5.2%	44.8%
	c. Special Education	37.9%	5.2%	5.2%	1.7%	5.2%	44.8%
	d. Head Start and Even Start programs	37.9%	17.2%	3.4%	0.0%	7.0%	34.5%
	e. Dyslexia program	34.5%	17.2%	6.9%	1.7%	6.9%	32.8%
	f. Student mentoring program	31.0%	25.9%	12.1%	1.7%	5.2%	24.1%
	g. Advanced placement program	32.8%	22.4%	5.2%	0.0%	5.1%	34.5%
	h. Literacy program	27.6%	29.3%	5.2%	0.0%	5.1%	32.8%
	i. Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	32.8%	12.1%	3.4%	3.4%	5.2%	43.1%

	j. Summer school programs	46.6%	6.9%	3.4%	1.7%	5.2%	36.2%
	k. Alternative education programs	36.2%	13.8%	1.7%	1.7%	5.2%	41.4%
	l. English as a Second Language program	36.2%	13.8%	6.9%	0.0%	5.2%	37.9%
	m. Career counseling program	39.7%	20.7%	8.6%	1.7%	5.2%	24.1%
	n. College counseling program	31.0%	22.4%	12.1%	1.7%	5.2%	27.6%
	o. Counseling the parents of students	36.2%	25.9%	8.6%	0.0%	5.2%	24.1%
	p. Dropout prevention program	34.5%	20.7%	1.7%	3.4%	5.2%	34.5%
14.	Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	41.4%	22.4%	3.4%	1.7%	5.2%	25.9%
15.	Teacher turnover is low.	32.8%	24.1%	13.8%	1.7%	5.2%	22.4%
16.	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	37.9%	20.7%	6.9%	1.7%	5.2%	27.6%
17.	Teacher openings are filled quickly.	36.2%	27.6%	3.4%	1.7%	5.2%	25.9%
18.	Teachers are rewarded for superior performance.	32.8%	22.4%	15.5%	3.4%	5.2%	20.7%
19.	Teachers are counseled about less than satisfactory performance.	31.0%	25.9%	3.4%	1.7%	7.0%	31.0%
20.	All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.	32.8%	15.5%	1.7%	1.7%	5.2%	43.1%

21.	The student-teacher ratio is reasonable.	29.3%	13.8%	8.6%	5.2%	5.2%	37.9%
22.	Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	44.8%	3.4%	0.0%	1.7%	5.3%	44.8%
23.	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	37.9%	17.2%	3.4%	3.4%	5.3%	32.8%

C. Personnel Management

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
24.	District salaries are competitive with similar positions in the job market.	46.6%	1.7%	10.3%	3.4%	5.2%	32.8%
25.	The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.	51.7%	3.4%	6.9%	0.0%	5.2%	32.8%
26.	Temporary workers are rarely used.	31.0%	25.9%	15.5%	3.4%	8.7%	15.5%
27.	The district successfully projects future staffing needs.	34.5%	17.2%	8.6%	1.7%	5.2%	32.8%
28.	The district has an effective employee recruitment program.	36.2%	10.3%	5.2%	3.4%	5.2%	39.7%
29.	The district operates an effective staff development program.	44.8%	8.6%	5.2%	1.7%	5.2%	34.5%
30.	District employees receive annual personnel evaluations.	46.6%	3.4%	0.0%	0.0%	5.2%	44.8%
31.	The district rewards competence and experience and spells out qualifications such as seniority and skill	32.8%	13.8%	15.5%	6.9%	6.9%	24.1%

	levels needed for promotion.						
32.	Employees who perform below the standard of expectation are counseled appropriately and timely.	34.5%	25.9%	8.6%	3.4%	6.9%	20.7%
33.	The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	41.4%	17.2%	3.4%	0.0%	5.2%	32.8%
34.	The district's health insurance package meets my needs.	34.5%	19.0%	15.5%	8.6%	5.2%	17.2%

D. Community Involvement

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
35.	The district regularly communicates with parents.	37.9%	41.4%	10.3%	3.4%	1.7%	5.3%
36.	The local television and radio stations regularly report school news and menus.	17.2%	36.2%	22.4%	17.2%	1.7%	5.3%
37.	Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.	17.2%	31.0%	20.7%	19.0%	6.9%	5.2%
38.	District facilities are open for community use.	31.0%	37.9%	13.8%	8.6%	3.4%	5.3%

E. Facilities Use and Management

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
39.	Parents. citizens.	32.8%	31.0%	12.1%	13.8%	5.2%	5.1%

	students, faculty, staff and the board provide input into facility planning.						
40.	The architect and construction managers are selected objectively and impersonally.	27.6%	19.0%	36.2%	8.6%	1.7%	6.9%
41.	Schools are clean.	56.9%	32.8%	3.4%	1.7%	0.0%	5.2%
42.	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	51.7%	31.0%	5.2%	6.9%	0.0%	5.2%
43.	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	44.8%	34.5%	5.2%	10.3%	0.0%	5.2%
44.	Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	53.4%	34.5%	5.2%	1.7%	0.0%	5.2%

F. Financial Management

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
45.	Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers.	29.3%	32.8%	29.3%	3.4%	0.0%	5.2%
46.	Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	24.1%	29.3%	36.2%	5.2%	0.0%	5.2%
47.	The district's financial reports are easy to understand and read.	20.7%	31.0%	36.2%	6.9%	0.0%	5.2%
48.	Financial reports are made available to community members	24.1%	27.6%	36.2%	5.2%	1.7%	5.2%

	when asked.						
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G. Purchasing and Warehousing

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
49.	Purchasing gets me what I need when I need it.	37.9%	29.3%	19.0%	6.9%	1.7%	5.2%
50.	Purchasing acquires the highest quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.	36.2%	29.3%	19.0%	6.9%	3.4%	5.2%
51.	Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for the requestor.	37.9%	25.9%	24.1%	3.4%	1.7%	7.0%
52.	The district provides teachers and administrators an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment.	41.4%	29.3%	22.4%	1.7%	0.0%	5.2%
53.	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	41.4%	32.8%	17.2%	3.4%	0.0%	5.2%
54.	Textbooks are in good shape.	39.7%	29.3%	17.2%	6.9%	1.7%	5.2%
55.	The school library meets students' needs for books and other resources for students.	24.1%	46.6%	20.7%	3.4%	0.0%	5.2%

H. Safety and Security

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
56.	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	5.3%	24.6%	17.5%	36.8%	8.8%	7.0%

57.	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	5.2%	25.9%	15.5%	34.5%	12.1%	6.8%
58.	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	13.8%	25.9%	17.2%	27.6%	8.6%	6.9%
59.	Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	50.0%	32.8%	8.6%	1.7%	1.7%	5.2%
60.	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	43.1%	36.2%	12.1%	3.4%	0.0%	5.2%
61.	A good working arrangement exists between the local law enforcement and the district.	44.8%	43.1%	6.9%	0.0%	0.0%	5.2%
62.	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	37.9%	36.2%	5.2%	12.1%	3.4%	5.2%

I. Computers and Technology

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
63.	Students regularly use computers.	34.5%	46.6%	8.6%	5.2%	0.0%	5.1%
64.	Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	34.5%	39.7%	13.8%	6.9%	0.0%	5.1%
65.	Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	25.9%	53.4%	12.1%	3.4%	0.0%	5.2%
66.	Computers are new	31.0%	50.0%	12.1%	0.0%	1.7%	5.2%

	enough to be useful for student instruction.						
67.	The district meets students' needs in computer fundamentals.	34.5%	43.1%	13.8%	1.7%	1.7%	5.2%
68.	The district meets students' needs in advanced computer skills.	29.3%	39.7%	17.2%	6.9%	1.7%	5.2%
69.	Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	36.2%	37.9%	15.5%	3.4%	1.7%	5.3%

Appendix C

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT STAFF SURVEY RESULTS

Narrative Comments

The narrative comments below reflect the perceptions and opinions of administrative and support staff survey respondents.

- I think that the district stressed TAAS results too much. Although this is important, more important is each child having the opportunity to learn. The emphasis should not solely be on a TAAS score, but on the children learning and growing as a person.
- Dr. Neeley is a great leader - an inspiration to all of us. She is child-oriented. Anything that is needed to enhance student performance is approved. Innovative programs are often implemented following careful consideration. Administrators are given great leeway in application of personal educational philosophies.
- All staff have worked hard to strive for our Exemplary status.
- GPISD is now the largest Exemplary school district in Texas. We have been able to achieve this through a concentrated focus on the instructional needs of individual students. We would not have reached these levels of student performance without intentionally providing the staffing ratios that currently exist and without providing the necessary support staff (assistant principals, counselors, instructional specialists at the district and campus level in technology and core curriculum) to support teachers in the classroom.
- The district is top heavy with managers and administrative types who are selected not on ability but more of a who's who selection process.
- I have been an educator for thirty years...the last six years in Galena Park. I have worked in two other districts and the Regional Service Center...and I can tell you that this district WAS exemplary before we earned the rating last week. The leadership of our superintendent, Shirley Neeley, is a model for the rest of us. This is what had made working in this district such an extraordinary experience. It is such a pleasure to work in a first class organization. Our morale is very high. I would ask that you not pick us apart. Perfect we may not be, but we are truly awesome! You will definitely see that for yourself.
- This district has made excellent progress improving student academic performance for all students. The narrowed gap between student subgroups reflects the commitment to every student's success. Now, as an Exemplary district, the effort will continue to

strengthen all students' skills. GPISD is a progressive community focused on student centered organization that is a model to be copied by many

- This is the 5th Texas school district I have worked for in my career. Galena Park ISD is by far the best overall school district of these five.
- Overall GPISD is a great district to work for and I feel the best interest of the student is its first and foremost purpose.
- I believe that the Special Education Department and material is not good for certain children. ADHD and Dyslexic children need more help than Galena Park is willing to give. When my children went through the school system they didn't get what they needed. My child is having trouble getting and keeping a job. They need Alpha-Phonic tapes to help them.
- Thank you for choosing us for this survey, but I cannot tell you or know much about what goes inside the schools. I'm a bus driver. I know more about what's going on in the transportation department I don't have any kids any more in school. But I think from what I heard is that we have an average school district. I have heard from parents they'd rather send their kids to GPISD than HISD.
- My children graduated from GPISD with a great education - both of them went to college and now have a career. During the time they were in GPISD the teachers and administrators worked a lot with them to prepare for college. They are proud to come from a district that not only taught them about education from books, but also showed them how to get along with lots of different people. I feel the district has also improved more since they have graduated. It's a great place to work and learn!
- Living and working in GPISD affords me the best of both worlds - While employed by such an awesome district, my children have reaped the benefits of exemplary programs! The choice to live here has been rewarded time and time again by GPISD, but most recently by the 4.0 grade average that my daughter (a 1999 NSHS graduate) has maintained in pursuing a highly competitive college degree in accounting. (Bachelors AND Masters!) Quite prepared for higher education!
- GPISD is an "Exemplary" district in every aspect from the top down. Our superintendent is one of a kind. Her aspirations for the district match the enthusiasm she exhibits. District administrative personnel are extraordinary. They set the tone for district expectations and "propel" those expectations exceptionally. Support personnel are dedicated to providing the best services available in order to enhance learning environments. Teachers, faculties, and staffs are the best! They are exceptionally qualified in the field of education and are extremely committed to educating

each and every child. GPISD students are inclusively number "1", as evidenced by individual and educational accomplishments.

- I believe we had an effective educational process in this district. I do, however, believe that there are areas where the district could use more discretion when approving certain expenditures.
- GPISD is an excellent school district.
- We need programs for drugs and gangs - Ex gang member/drug user - young enough to relate to students - talk and give experiences of bad - experience of recovery - tell of success! Or just being ALIVE! We need this even in the elementary level.
- We are a great team!
- I think our school is run by the principal's secretary and PEIMS clerk and school secretary instead of our principal. They have been there forever and think they know it all.
- In every aspect, GPISD is a first-class, exemplary school district!
- GPISD has made phenomenal strides to make huge gains in student performance through hard, smart work. I challenge any group of educators to perform as well as GPISD has with the challenges our student population face.
- The district is focused on one priority - effective student performance!
- Our district will not have accomplished what it should until 100 percent of our student population is successful; we always recognize the need to improve. At the present time, however, we are pleased with the progress that students, teachers, parents, community members and administrators have made in the area of student performance. We share the Governor and President's belief that economically disadvantaged and second language learners cannot only learn but can excel. This year's "Exemplary" rating reflects the commitment and hard work of all of GPISD.
- Galena Park ISD is an Exemplary district. Students, staff and families have done a great job of striving for excellence.
- Galena Park ISD is a district that takes pride in the fact that growth and changing needs sets challenges that puts the district in a proactive mode to do what it takes to provide upgrading and planning for the future. We are a leader in hiring and retaining quality teachers. The GPISD Education foundation funds innovative teaching grants for our teachers who go beyond to teach their students.
- Office staff (clerical) needs good working computers. Please check insurance - it got very high in this school year. Also salary in clerical is very poor. We are under paid. The work itself is demanding when you have to do different jobs for low pay. For example, I am a secretary for Assistant Principals (3). I take care of kids in the office, cover the front desk (very often). Also, I cover the clinic and take care of students when the nurse is at meetings,

lunch or when a sub is in the clinic. I am also a translator for everything and everybody. Please, in order for an employee to be happy everything has to be divided equally. I also have been registering for the past seven years. As you can see I do need the job that's why I had lasted for so long with the district.

Appendix D

PRINCIPAL AND ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL SURVEY RESULTS

Demographic Data/Survey Questions

Demographic Data

*Totals may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

1.	Gender (Optional)	No Response	Male	Female			
		9.7%	35.5%	54.8%			
2.	Ethnicity (Optional)	No Response	Anglo	African American	Hispanic	Asian	Other
		13.3%	70.0%	6.7%	10.0%	0.0%	0.0%
3.	How long have you been employed by Galena Park ISD?	No Response	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	20+ years
		3.2%	22.6%	16.1%	35.5%	6.5%	16.1%
4.	What grades are taught in your school?						
	Pre-K to 4th	5th and 6th	7th and 8th	9th to 12th			
	76.2%	6.5%	12.9%	16.1%			

A. District Organization and Management

	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
1.	The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.	67.7%	29.0%	3.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
2.	School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.	58.1%	41.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
3.	School board members understand their role as policymakers and stay out of the day-to-day management of the	58.1%	29.0%	3.2%	9.7%	0.0%	0.0%

	district.						
4.	The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	80.6%	12.9%	3.3%	3.2%	0.0%	0.0%
5.	The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	71.0%	22.6%	6.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
6.	Central administration is efficient.	16.1%	45.2%	6.5%	16.1%	12.9%	3.2%
7.	Central administration supports the educational process.	38.7%	41.9%	6.5%	9.7%	3.2%	0.0%
8.	The morale of central administration staff is good.	16.1%	35.5%	35.5%	9.7%	3.2%	0.0%

B. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
9.	Education is the main priority in our school district.	77.4%	19.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.2%
10.	Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.	64.5%	29.0%	3.3%	3.2%	0.0%	0.0%
11.	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	22.6%	54.8%	16.1%	6.5%	0.0%	0.0%
12.	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	29.0%	54.8%	9.8%	3.2%	0.0%	3.2%
13.	The district provides curriculum guides for all grades and subjects.	58.1%	35.5%	3.2%	3.2%	0.0%	0.0%

14.	The curriculum guides are appropriately aligned and coordinated.	54.8%	45.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
15.	The district's curriculum guides clearly outline what to teach and how to teach it.	48.4%	45.2%	0.0%	6.4%	0.0%	0.0%
16.	The district has effective educational programs for the following:						
	a) Reading	64.5%	29.0%	3.3%	3.2%	0.0%	0.0%
	b) Writing	67.7%	22.6%	0.0%	9.7%	0.0%	0.0%
	c) Mathematics	74.2%	22.6%	3.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	d) Science	64.5%	25.8%	3.2%	6.5%	0.0%	0.0%
	e) English or Language Arts	64.5%	29.0%	3.3%	3.2%	0.0%	0.0%
	f) Computer Instruction	41.9%	41.9%	6.5%	9.7%	0.0%	0.0%
	g) Social Studies (history or geography)	41.9%	48.4%	3.2%	6.5%	0.0%	0.0%
	h) Fine Arts	41.9%	48.4%	3.2%	6.5%	0.0%	0.0%
	i) Physical Education	45.2%	48.3%	0.0%	6.5%	0.0%	0.0%
	j) Business Education	29.0%	32.3%	32.3%	3.2%	0.0%	3.2%
	k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	41.9%	22.6%	32.3%	0.0%	0.0%	3.2%
	l) Foreign Language	19.4%	48.4%	29.0%	3.2%	0.0%	0.0%
17.	The district has effective special programs for the following:						
	a) Library Service	41.9%	22.6%	16.2%	16.1%	0.0%	3.2%
	b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	48.4%	41.9%	0.0%	6.5%	0.0%	3.2%

	c) Special Education	61.3%	29.0%	0.0%	9.7%	0.0%	0.0%
	d) Head Start and Even Start programs	22.6%	35.5%	29.0%	6.5%	0.0%	6.4%
	e) Dyslexia program	16.1%	74.2%	3.2%	3.2%	0.0%	3.3%
	f) Student mentoring program	19.4%	48.4%	16.1%	16.1%	0.0%	0.0%
	g) Advanced placement program	48.4%	32.3%	16.1%	0.0%	0.0%	3.2%
	h) Literacy program	25.8%	45.2%	25.8%	3.2%	0.0%	0.0%
	i) Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	41.9%	35.5%	16.1%	6.5%	0.0%	0.0%
	j) Summer school programs	25.8%	58.1%	6.4%	9.7%	0.0%	0.0%
	k) Alternative education programs	45.2%	41.9%	9.7%	3.2%	0.0%	0.0%
	l) "English as a second language" program	38.7%	54.8%	0.0%	6.5%	0.0%	0.0%
	m) Career counseling program	16.2%	29.0%	41.9%	12.9%	0.0%	0.0%
	n) College counseling program	6.5%	41.9%	38.7%	9.7%	0.0%	3.2%
	o) Counseling the parents of students	16.1%	32.3%	35.5%	16.1%	0.0%	0.0%
	p) Drop out prevention program	19.4%	29.0%	41.9%	6.5%	0.0%	3.2%
18.	Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	22.6%	67.7%	3.2%	6.5%	0.0%	0.0%
19.	Teacher turnover is low.	16.1%	67.7%	3.3%	12.9%	0.0%	0.0%
20.	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	25.8%	48.4%	6.5%	16.1%	3.2%	0.0%
21.	Teachers are rewarded	9.7%	32.3%	0.0%	45.1%	12.9%	0.0%

	for superior performance.						
22.	Teachers are counseled about less than satisfactory performance.	38.7%	51.6%	3.2%	6.5%	0.0%	0.0%
23.	All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.	29.0%	51.6%	3.3%	16.1%	0.0%	0.0%
24.	Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	71.0%	29.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
25.	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	51.6%	35.5%	3.2%	6.5%	3.2%	0.0%

C. Personnel

	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
26.	District salaries are competitive with similar positions in the job market.	51.6%	38.7%	6.5%	3.2%	0.0%	0.0%
27.	The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.	41.9%	54.9%	0.0%	3.2%	0.0%	0.0%
28.	Temporary workers are rarely used.	19.4%	51.6%	9.7%	16.1%	3.2%	0.0%
29.	The district successfully projects future staffing needs.	35.5%	51.6%	3.2%	6.5%	3.2%	0.0%
30.	The district has an effective employee recruitment program.	51.6%	38.7%	3.2%	6.5%	0.0%	0.0%
31.	The district operates	32.3%	51.6%	6.4%	9.7%	0.0%	0.0%

	an effective staff development program.						
32.	District employees receive annual personnel evaluations.	71.0%	25.8%	0.0%	3.2%	0.0%	0.0%
33.	The district rewards competence and experience and spells out qualifications such as seniority and skill levels needed for promotion.	16.1%	32.3%	12.9%	29.0%	6.5%	3.2%
34.	Employees who perform below the standard of expectation are counseled appropriately and timely.	23.3%	60.0%	6.7%	3.3%	6.7%	0.0%
35.	The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	33.3%	60.0%	0.0%	6.7%	0.0%	0.0%
36.	The district's health insurance package meets my needs.	0.0%	51.6%	6.4%	22.6%	19.4%	0.0%

D. Community Involvement

	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
37.	The district regularly communicates with parents.	45.2%	48.4%	6.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
38.	Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.	12.9%	38.7%	9.6%	32.3%	6.5%	0.0%
39.	District facilities are open for community use.	35.5%	58.1%	3.2%	3.2%	0.0%	0.0%

E. Facilities Use and Management

	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
40.	Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff and the board provide input into facility planning.	12.9%	67.7%	0.0%	16.1%	3.3%	0.0%
41.	Schools are clean.	64.5%	35.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
42.	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	54.8%	32.3%	3.2%	6.5%	3.2%	0.0%
43.	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	41.9%	41.9%	0.0%	9.7%	6.5%	0.0%
44.	Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	64.5%	22.6%	3.2%	9.7%	0.0%	0.0%

F. Financial Management

	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
45.	Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers.	45.2%	48.3%	0.0%	6.5%	0.0%	0.0%
46.	Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	25.8%	51.6%	0.0%	22.6%	0.0%	0.0%
47.	Financial resources are allocated fairly and equitably at my school.	32.3%	58.1%	3.1%	6.5%	0.0%	0.0%

G. Purchasing and Warehousing

	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
48.	Purchasing gets me what I need when I need it.	22.6%	71.0%	3.2%	3.2%	0.0%	0.0%
49.	Purchasing acquires the highest quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.	16.1%	58.1%	16.1%	9.7%	0.0%	0.0%
50.	Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for the requestor.	22.6%	54.8%	6.5%	12.9%	3.2%	0.0%
51.	The district provides teachers and administrators an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment.	35.5%	58.0%	0.0%	6.5%	0.0%	0.0%
52.	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	41.9%	48.4%	3.3%	3.2%	0.0%	3.2%
53.	Textbooks are in good shape.	41.9%	54.8%	3.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
54.	The school library meets the student needs for books and other resources.	38.7%	45.2%	6.4%	6.5%	3.2%	0.0%

H. Food Services

	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
55.	The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	12.9%	58.1%	12.9%	12.9%	3.2%	0.0%
56.	Food is served warm.	19.4%	64.5%	3.2%	12.9%	0.0%	0.0%
57.	Students have enough time to eat.	25.8%	61.3%	0.0%	12.9%	0.0%	0.0%
58.	Students eat lunch at	35.5%	58.0%	0.0%	6.5%	0.0%	0.0%

	the appropriate time of day.						
59.	Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	41.9%	35.5%	3.2%	19.4%	0.0%	0.0%
60.	Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	45.2%	54.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
61.	Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	38.7%	35.5%	3.2%	19.4%	3.2%	0.0%
62.	Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	38.7%	58.1%	0.0%	3.2%	0.0%	0.0%

I. Transportation

	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
63.	The drop-off zone at the school is safe.	41.9%	54.9%	0.0%	3.2%	0.0%	0.0%
64.	The district has a simple method to request buses for special events.	58.1%	41.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
65.	Buses arrive and leave on time.	41.9%	41.9%	0.0%	16.2%	0.0%	0.0%
66.	Adding or modifying a route for a student is easy to accomplish.	29.0%	29.0%	19.4%	16.1%	6.5%	0.0%

J. Safety and Security

	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
67.	Students feel safe and secure at school.	41.9%	54.8%	0.0%	3.3%	0.0%	0.0%
68.	School disturbances are infrequent.	45.2%	51.6%	3.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
69.	Gangs are not a	19.4%	35.5%	9.6%	35.5%	0.0%	0.0%

	problem in this district.						
70.	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	12.9%	25.8%	9.7%	48.4%	3.2%	0.0%
71.	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	9.7%	41.9%	6.5%	38.7%	0.0%	3.2%
72.	Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	51.6%	41.9%	6.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
73.	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	41.9%	41.9%	12.9%	3.3%	0.0%	0.0%
74.	A good working arrangement exists between local law enforcement and the district.	61.3%	32.3%	3.2%	3.2%	0.0%	0.0%
75.	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	58.1%	35.5%	0.0%	3.2%	3.2%	0.0%
75.	Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	29.0%	48.4%	16.1%	6.5%	0.0%	0.0%

K. Computers and Technology

	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
77.	Students regularly use computers.	51.6%	45.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.2%
78.	Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the	61.2%	32.3%	0.0%	6.5%	0.0%	0.0%

	classroom.						
79.	Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	67.7%	32.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
80.	The district meets student needs in classes in computer fundamentals.	51.6%	41.9%	3.3%	3.2%	0.0%	0.0%
81.	The district meets student needs in classes in advanced computer skills.	38.7%	32.3%	12.9%	12.9%	0.0%	3.2%
82.	Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	41.9%	58.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
83.	Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	61.3%	32.3%	3.2%	3.2%	0.0%	0.0%

Appendix D

PRINCIPAL AND ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL SURVEY RESULTS

Narrative Comments

The narrative comments below reflect the perceptions and opinions of principal and assistant principal survey respondents.

- Galena Park ISD is a true family that cares about their employees and children in the district.
- Our district has made great strides to improve the performance of all our students. Campuses are given a lot of leeway to make decisions based on their specific needs. Central administration (content areas, specifically) needs to plan staff development in collaboration so teachers are not attending 2-3 sessions each week.
- I like the things that are happening in Galena Park ISD.
- When I began my career in GPISD, our district was nowhere close to what we've accomplished recently. I believe this is due to the leadership of our superintendent. She has created a sense of community within our community. Before her leadership and expertise, this was not the case.
- The educational performance is excellent. The top leadership is fantastic! The campus personnel are very well set up for student success. The district focus is on instruction! There are too many employees at central administration who claim no area of accreditation. Only superintendent and principals are held accountable and replaced. This set up causes principals to want higher paying, much less accountable central administration positions.
- I have been very impressed with the training of staff and administrators, updated technology, well-kept facilities and the many special programs available in Galena Park. I have worked in three 5-A districts in my 18 years here in Houston and GPISD is impressive. It is a district that clearly puts students first because the programs attend to specific needs of the students in the district.
- Principals in Galena Park have the freedom to create and utilize innovative techniques and teaching strategies that attribute to student success. The superintendent is totally supportive and listens to principals in reference to what is in the best interest of our campus. As a result of our efforts Galena Park is a TEA Exemplary District.
- Exemplary!
- Education is a priority in our school district. Our teachers, faculty, support members all have training and staff development to help with the educational priorities. Our facilities are awesome!

Buildings are kept up and tidy. Our New Teacher/Mentor program is very strong. Helping new teachers has been a strength and an educational priority. Campus strengths are strong teams and planning.

- The district must understand that different schools have different needs. We have ethnicity differences and also systems differences i.e., 9-10 bldg, 11-12 building and 9-12 building on opposite sides of the district with totally different sizes and ethnicity. Some autonomy must exist and it doesn't.
- Because of our superintendent, Dr. Neeley, many educational advances have taken place in GPISD. She allows campus administration to drive policy and plans. Central office administration serves the campus needs; not the other way around. GPISD scores are exemplary due to her visionary leadership. I am fortunate to be a part of the team!
- One principal utilizes unethical employee evaluation practices, harassment and maintains a condescending attitude towards minorities and parents, administrators and teachers. Students, especially minority students are targeted for harassment - which is supported by this principal. Students who may not do well on standardized exams are systematically purged-either to special ed. or forced to withdraw, citing "lack of guardianship."
- I strongly feel that GPISD provides the support and resources to effectively meet the needs of my students and staff! I "choose" to be a principal in this district.
- We have an excellent school and a great district. All students are challenged at their level. Input is taken from all groups and excellent teachers and administrators are working here in GPISD. The needs of kids are put first.
- I believe that our district is one of the best. Our superintendent takes great pride in expecting the best out of not only the students, but also the administration, faculty and staff. Her expectations are very high and the school district demonstrates only the "Best."
- I think our district is the best in the state. The superintendent has set high educational goals for all and she has accepted no excuses for students not achieving. Our teachers give 110% every day making sure each student is loved and well educated. We work hard at making sure no child is left behind. We are beating the odds stacked against our children with a high rate of poverty, along with a high number of second language learners. Our district should not be able to compete academically. Our students are not only competing they are excelling - making our district the largest exemplary district in the state.

Appendix E

TEACHER SURVEY RESULTS

Demographic Data/Survey Questions

Demographic Data

*Totals may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

1.	Gender (Optional)	No Response	Male	Female			
		9.0%	14.9%	76.1%			
2.	Ethnicity (Optional)	NoResponse	Anglo	African American	Hispanic	Asian	Other
		13.7%	57.6%	12.1%	10.6%	1.5%	4.5%
3.	How long have you been employed by Galena Park ISD?	No Response	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	20+years
		0.0%	38.8%	23.9%	17.9%	6.0%	13.4%
4.	What grades do you teach this year?						
	Pre-Kindergarten	Kindergarten	First	Second	Third		
	4.5%	10.7%	35.6%	31.6%	52.6%		
	Fourth	Fifth	Sixth	Seventh	Eighth		
	59.5%	76.6%	6.0%	7.7%	16.4%		
	Ninth	Tenth	Eleventh	Twelfth			
	9.0%	26.8%	17.9%	25.8%			

A. District Organization and Management

Statement		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
1.	The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.	11.8%	33.8%	48.5%	5.9%	0.0%	0.0%
2.	School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.	11.8%	29.4%	45.6%	13.2%	0.0%	0.0%

3.	School board members work well with the superintendent.	30.9%	36.8%	30.8%	1.5%	0.0%	0.0%
4.	The school board has a good image in the community.	29.4%	42.6%	17.7%	8.8%	0.0%	1.5%
5.	The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	42.6%	36.8%	7.3%	11.8%	0.0%	1.5%
6.	The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	41.2%	36.8%	10.2%	8.8%	1.5%	1.5%
7.	Central administration is efficient.	16.2%	44.1%	11.7%	22.1%	5.9%	0.0%
8.	Central administration supports the educational process.	22.1%	50.0%	13.1%	11.8%	1.5%	1.5%
9.	The morale of central administration staff is good.	20.6%	38.2%	32.4%	8.8%	0.0%	0.0%

B. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
10.	Education is the main priority in our school district.	32.4%	45.6%	4.4%	14.7%	2.9%	0.0%
11.	Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.	26.5%	47.1%	7.3%	14.7%	2.9%	1.5%
12.	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	10.3%	47.1%	26.4%	10.3%	5.9%	0.0%
13.	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	11.8%	48.5%	29.4%	5.9%	4.4%	0.0%

14.	The district provides curriculum guides for all grades and subjects.	30.9%	51.5%	5.8%	7.4%	4.4%	0.0%
15.	The curriculum guides are appropriately aligned and coordinated.	23.5%	48.5%	7.5%	17.6%	2.9%	0.0%
16.	The district's curriculum guides clearly outline what to teach and how to teach it.	19.1%	52.9%	8.9%	17.6%	1.5%	0.0%
17.	The district has effective educational programs for the following:						
	a) Reading	28.4%	52.2%	10.4%	4.5%	4.5%	0.0%
	b) Writing	26.9%	50.7%	10.5%	11.9%	0.0%	0.0%
	c) Mathematics	28.4%	53.7%	11.9%	6.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	d) Science	23.9%	43.3%	16.4%	14.9%	1.5%	0.0%
	e) English or Language Arts	26.9%	53.7%	9.0%	10.4%	0.0%	0.0%
	f) Computer Instruction	16.2%	50.0%	11.7%	22.1%	0.0%	0.0%
	g) Social Studies (history or geography)	19.4%	47.8%	13.4%	17.9%	1.5%	0.0%
	h) Fine Arts	19.1%	55.9%	11.8%	8.8%	4.4%	0.0%
	i) Physical Education	20.6%	54.4%	17.6%	7.4%	0.0%	0.0%
	j) Business Education	11.8%	35.3%	48.5%	4.4%	0.0%	0.0%
	k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	17.9%	38.8%	35.8%	6.0%	0.0%	1.5%
	l) Foreign Language	11.8%	41.2%	38.2%	8.8%	0.0%	0.0%
18.	The district has effective special programs for the						

	following:						
	a) Library Service	13.4%	49.3%	20.9%	13.4%	3.0%	0.0%
	b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	19.4%	59.7%	6.0%	11.9%	3.0%	0.0%
	c) Special Education	22.4%	53.7%	6.0%	11.9%	4.5%	1.5%
	d) Head Start and Even Start programs	13.4%	37.3%	44.8%	1.5%	1.5%	1.5%
	e) Dyslexia program	19.1%	47.1%	11.7%	14.7%	5.9%	1.5%
	f) Student mentoring program	14.7%	30.9%	33.8%	11.8%	5.9%	2.9%
	g) Advanced placement program	13.4%	46.3%	31.3%	9.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	h) Literacy program	13.4%	41.8%	29.9%	11.9%	3.0%	0.0%
	i) Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	16.2%	42.6%	26.5%	8.8%	5.9%	0.0%
	j) Summer school programs	22.1%	47.1%	14.6%	10.3%	5.9%	0.0%
	k) Alternative education programs	10.3%	42.6%	38.2%	5.9%	1.5%	1.5%
	l) "English as a second language" program	19.1%	52.9%	14.8%	7.4%	2.9%	2.9%
	m) Career counseling program	8.8%	26.5%	50.0%	10.3%	4.4%	0.0%
	n) College counseling program	8.8%	30.9%	48.6%	8.8%	2.9%	0.0%
	o) Counseling the parents of students	8.8%	33.8%	36.8%	13.2%	5.9%	1.5%
	p) Drop out prevention program	8.8%	29.4%	47.0%	7.4%	5.9%	1.5%
19.	Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	13.2%	47.1%	17.6%	20.6%	1.5%	0.0%
20.	Teacher turnover is	7.4%	27.9%	16.2%	33.8%	14.7%	0.0%

	low.						
21.	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	11.8%	25.0%	20.6%	33.8%	8.8%	0.0%
22.	Teacher openings are filled quickly.	13.2%	51.5%	10.3%	23.5%	0.0%	1.5%
23.	Teachers are rewarded for superior performance.	5.9%	30.9%	4.4%	33.8%	25.0%	0.0%
24.	Teachers are counseled about less than satisfactory performance.	13.2%	50.0%	20.7%	13.2%	2.9%	0.0%
25.	Teachers are knowledgeable in the subject areas they teach.	20.6%	54.4%	13.2%	10.3%	0.0%	1.5%
26.	All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.	11.8%	39.7%	5.9%	25.0%	17.6%	0.0%
27.	The student-to-teacher ratio is reasonable.	11.8%	42.6%	5.9%	23.5%	16.2%	0.0%
28.	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	20.6%	63.2%	7.4%	8.8%	0.0%	0.0%

C. Personnel

	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
29.	District salaries are competitive with similar positions in the job market.	27.9%	50.0%	1.5%	10.3%	10.3%	0.0%
30.	The district has a good and timely program for orienting new	22.1%	58.8%	5.9%	10.3%	2.9%	0.0%

	employees.						
31.	Temporary workers are rarely used.	5.9%	30.9%	23.5%	35.3%	4.4%	0.0%
32.	The district successfully projects future staffing needs.	10.3%	36.8%	27.9%	20.6%	4.4%	0.0%
33.	The district has an effective employee recruitment program.	13.2%	52.9%	16.3%	13.2%	4.4%	0.0%
34.	The district operates an effective staff development program.	20.6%	48.5%	8.9%	19.1%	2.9%	0.0%
35.	District employees receive annual personnel evaluations.	30.9%	66.1%	0.0%	1.5%	1.5%	0.0%
36.	The district rewards competence and experience and spells out qualifications such as seniority and skill levels needed for promotion.	7.4%	23.5%	14.7%	33.8%	20.6%	0.0%
37.	Employees who perform below the standard of expectation are counseled appropriately and timely.	10.3%	38.3%	27.9%	20.6%	2.9%	0.0%
38.	The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	13.2%	38.2%	32.4%	10.3%	5.9%	0.0%
39.	The district's health insurance package meets my needs.	10.3%	32.4%	14.6%	20.6%	22.1%	0.0%

D. Community Involvement

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
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40.	The district regularly communicates with parents.	14.7%	64.7%	10.3%	10.3%	0.0%	0.0%
41.	The local television and radio stations regularly report school news and menus.	5.9%	19.1%	19.1%	39.7%	16.2%	0.0%
42.	Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.	5.9%	25.0%	10.3%	42.6%	16.2%	0.0%
43.	District facilities are open for community use.	14.7%	42.6%	22.1%	16.2%	4.4%	0.0%

E. Facilities Use and Management

	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
44.	The district plans facilities far enough in the future to support enrollment growth.	8.8%	26.5%	4.4%	35.3%	25.0%	0.0%
45.	Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff and the board provide input into facility planning.	13.2%	23.5%	26.5%	29.4%	7.4%	0.0%
46.	The architect and construction managers are selected objectively and impersonally.	7.4%	14.7%	60.2%	10.3%	5.9%	1.5%
47.	The quality of new construction is excellent.	14.7%	54.4%	10.3%	16.2%	4.4%	0.0%
48.	Schools are clean.	29.4%	58.8%	1.5%	8.8%	1.5%	0.0%
49.	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	22.1%	55.9%	1.4%	19.1%	1.5%	0.0%

50.	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	14.7%	48.6%	2.9%	30.9%	2.9%	0.0%
51.	Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	22.1%	58.8%	4.4%	11.8%	2.9%	0.0%

F. Financial Management

	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
52.	Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers.	14.7%	38.2%	20.6%	20.6%	5.9%	0.0%
53.	Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	10.3%	41.2%	32.4%	13.2%	2.9%	0.0%
54.	Financial resources are allocated fairly and equitably at my school.	10.3%	25.0%	16.2%	35.3%	13.2%	0.0%

G. Purchasing and Warehousing

	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
55.	Purchasing gets me what I need when I need it.	13.2%	42.6%	14.8%	26.5%	2.9%	0.0%
56.	Purchasing acquires the highest quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.	5.9%	41.2%	29.4%	17.6%	5.9%	0.0%
57.	Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for the requestor.	10.3%	41.2%	27.9%	14.7%	5.9%	0.0%

58.	Vendors are selected competitively.	10.3%	17.6%	61.8%	5.9%	2.9%	1.5%
59.	The district provides teachers and administrators an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment.	14.7%	51.5%	11.8%	19.1%	2.9%	0.0%
60.	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	23.5%	60.3%	2.9%	10.3%	1.5%	1.5%
61.	Textbooks are in good shape.	22.1%	57.4%	8.7%	5.9%	4.4%	1.5%
62.	The school library meets the student needs for books and other resources.	22.4%	47.8%	4.5%	14.9%	10.4%	0.0%

H. Food Services

	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
63.	The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	7.4%	33.8%	17.6%	30.9%	10.3%	0.0%
64.	Food is served warm.	16.2%	39.7%	11.8%	23.5%	8.8%	0.0%
65.	Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.	14.7%	55.9%	2.9%	16.2%	10.3%	0.0%
66.	Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	13.2%	35.3%	10.3%	30.9%	10.3%	0.0%
67.	Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	17.6%	64.7%	7.4%	5.9%	4.4%	0.0%
68.	Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	30.9%	51.5%	5.9%	8.8%	2.9%	0.0%
69.	Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	27.9%	60.3%	2.9%	7.4%	1.5%	0.0%

I. Safety and Security

	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
70.	School disturbances are infrequent.	10.3%	69.1%	1.5%	16.2%	2.9%	0.0%
71.	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	4.4%	19.1%	26.5%	44.1%	5.9%	0.0%
72.	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	2.9%	10.3%	32.4%	45.6%	8.8%	0.0%
73.	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	4.4%	19.1%	20.6%	45.6%	10.3%	0.0%
74.	Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	22.1%	52.9%	14.7%	10.3%	0.0%	0.0%
75.	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	22.1%	52.9%	14.7%	10.3%	0.0%	0.0%
76.	A good working arrangement exists between local law enforcement and the district.	17.6%	45.6%	29.4%	7.4%	0.0%	0.0%
77.	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	26.5%	51.5%	19.1%	2.9%	0.0%	0.0%
78.	Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	19.1%	39.7%	7.4%	20.6%	13.2%	0.0%

J. Computers and Technology

Statement	Strongly	Agree	No	Disagree	Strongly	No
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		Agree		Opinion		Disagree	Response
79.	Students regularly use computers.	16.2%	66.2%	5.9%	8.8%	2.9%	0.0%
80.	Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	16.2%	60.3%	2.9%	13.2%	7.4%	0.0%
81.	Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	20.6%	55.9%	2.9%	17.7%	2.9%	0.0%
82.	Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	25.0%	60.3%	2.9%	7.4%	4.4%	0.0%
83.	The district meets student needs in classes in computer fundamentals.	16.2%	51.5%	10.3%	17.6%	4.4%	0.0%
84.	The district meets student needs in classes in advanced computer skills.	13.2%	33.8%	32.4%	16.2%	4.4%	0.0%
85.	Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	26.5%	66.2%	4.4%	2.9%	0.0%	0.0%

Appendix E

TEACHER SURVEY RESULTS

Narrative Comments

The narrative comments below reflect the perceptions and opinions of teacher survey respondents.

- I feel the district spends an enormous amount of money on non-academic areas. This district has an extremely high teacher turnover. We need to pay teachers more and there should be a greater difference with experience teachers than those who are inexperienced. I also feel you should pay teachers more who have certifications. We need technology in all schools not just the new ones.
- I believe that every student and teacher should receive free meals at all schools. I have seen students given a sandwich because he didn't have any money and I have seen teachers also go without eating due to time and money. One thing about GPISD is that it has become highly populated by Hispanics yet very few Hispanics are involved on the board or in administration. Schools in GPISD are very old and need major repairs and needs of schools are (not enough bathrooms, areas to eat, specialized teachers-arts, P.E....)
- Galena Park is a great school district with many great programs. However, the student growth population overwhelms many of the schools (elementary).
- The board and superintendent are proactive for the welfare of students and positive towards teachers. Whenever a bond issue is floated teacher, administrators, etc. have input in school design. Then dollars get in the way and plans for room size are reduced and scaled back. Every new school built in the last 10 years should have considered growth. They are bulging to capacity when they're completed. Class size is quoted as 1:17 it must include every employee in the administration building. Texas should only count teacher (classroom) to student ratio for a reality check. Are Texas teachers inferior or underrated? The State of Texas needs to raise teacher salaries to at least the average for the nation. Insurance lobbyists should not dictate teacher insurance rates. You (as a state) should pool all school district employees across the state so teachers can have a reasonable premium. \$600 for medical insurance/month for an employee with a wife and 2 children is not reasonable. 1/3 of your bi-monthly paycheck for insurance is "white collar" crime. "Remember teacher insurance legislation" may soon be as synonymous with Texas as "Remember the Alamo" or ENRON! I can't afford district insurance and do not have it.

- I work at an "Exemplary" elementary school in a technology position. I know how hard we work to educate our very low socio-economic community's children - with great success. I sometimes feel that central office is over-staffed, inattentive to the real needs of teachers "in the field" and unable to respond and assist in a timely manner.
- Most of our problems come from ineffective leadership at the building (campus) level. Principals hire friends, neighbors, church friends, family, whether they are qualified or not. (One teacher was hired at a fellow hairdresser shop while principal did her interview at the shop.) Positions are "made up" so friends etc...can have higher jobs at administration level.
- Mr. Kenneth Wallace, principal at North Shore Senior High School, is one of the best principals I've ever had. He tries to maintain a high academic standard in a highly secure atmosphere. He works just as hard as the teachers do and he appreciates teachers' efforts. The district is now rated "Exemplary" because of the teacher's efforts and not because of central administration's continued elementary-based influences. Central administration has too many administrators who are elementary trained people. The district needs to recruit Texas teachers. Too much tax money is spent going on out-of-state and out-of-country recruitment when Texas teachers can't get a job in their own state. This district likes out-of-state and out-of-country teachers because they are cheaper even though they get bonuses. These teachers who are not Texas certified have a high turn-around rate while a Texas teacher will stay longer on the job. Administrators like the paid recruitment-vacation. More money needs to be spent for more classroom computers. Most classrooms have 35 plus students and only three computers yet students are expected to be computer literate and so are the overworked teachers. All inservices should be during normal working hours. Teachers should not be required to attend inservices after the normal working day.
- Great place to work!
- It's the best!
- We have a super number one district!
- Overall expectations for students are lower than needed. Students repeat some instruction year after year and miss other areas of instruction; vertical alignment needed. New programs have attempted to make more students well prepared for college, but overall program is more "basic." 9-10 / 11-12 campus split at NS schools is not effective - too much discrepancy between level of expectations (academic and discipline, dress code, etc.) at two campuses. 9-10 campus creates two-year freshmen and does not encourage maturity of 10th graders.

- I am a special education resource teacher in an elementary school and answered the questions based on my experiences and knowledge. I feel that our students/teachers do not get the same support services and materials (i.e., computers), as do the regular education students.
- Portable buildings are needed so teachers can make better preparation in their own classrooms. Teachers need to be able to utilize their own classroom so good instruction could always be implemented. Hire more administrators and good ones with all hours instead of friends or buddies.
- Keeping pace with the tremendous growth in this district has proven difficult. GPISD, however, has met this challenge head on, and made tremendous strides in student progress as a result. The district administration as well as the building administrations have made every effort to meet student needs and acknowledge and deal with the needs of special populations such as at-risk and learning disabled students. If anything is to be done differently, the only thing I would suggest is more responsibility for learning to be placed on the student. GPISD has been very innovated in providing programs for this end.
- I feel education is a priority in our district. We have made great strides in the past few years. We do have a couple of problems though. One is that the administrators hire all of their relatives instead of better, qualified people. Another problem (major) is when an administrator gets mad at someone and then fires or demotes them without fair due process. All administrators stick together even if it is not fair. There is no "fair" process or grievance procedure. It is predetermined. Check records or former employees.
- Increased administrative (central office) personnel with unclear job descriptions. Special Education field trips drastically reduced. Monetary rewards to teachers of Exemplary campuses should be mandated by state. Special Education classes with multiple disciplinaries are larger than some regular classes. Manner in which our program deals with ED students is ineffective. Top quality educators experience switched positions without consent and replaced with less qualified educators. Too much nepotism. Positions are filled that are never posted.
- Galena Park has done a superb job of educating all of its students within the past five years! We are very proud of our students.
- I love my school district and I love working for my school district, but it is not perfect. We pay too much for health insurance and it goes up every year. The schools on the poorer side of the school district do not have all the amenities that the new buildings on the rich side have.

- I have been in the district for two years and my impressions are that some bilingual money is not allocated fairly in all campuses, and also budget in general. While in some schools teachers get extra budget, in mine we only get the normal budget at the beginning of the school year. In my campus pre-k is not included in any fieldtrip and kindergarten has only one fieldtrip in the whole year, although other campuses include pre-k and have at least three fieldtrips.
- GPISD has a great superintendent, and I believe suffers from the same political issues that any other school would. I think there should be more of a mentoring program in the elementary school. GPISD works hard to correct the current problems. There are lots of great things that this district does that the public does not see because of stereotypes.
- I'm really concerned about the food the students are served. Several campuses have problems with food being served that is still frozen on the inside and milk that is bad, but not out of date. In addition, fried foods and those with high fat content seem to be the main course. Are we not worried about our children's health and well-being? Serving broccoli stems (not florets) with cheese is not what I'd call healthy and potato "something" (fries, tots, mashed, etc.) is not my idea of balanced nutrition on an every day basis. You can't teach kids who fall asleep or are so sluggish they can't function - Healthy kids - Healthy minds.
- Bilingual Education money needs to be allocated specifically to Bilingual Education teachers and students -- not to be used to fund other expenses on a school or district level. Teachers who are continuing university course work should receive some compensation/reward for doing so! Professional development hours above what is required on the teacher's current cycle should be carried over to the subsequent cycle. Nothing is worse than taking course work and finding out that the district is not even going to give you credit for doing so.
- I feel that GPISD is the best school district in the area, and probably the state. They use their money efficiently and wisely.
- More staff development on group relations. Principals should realize veteran teachers should not be given the most powerful positions on campus all the time. Less seasoned teachers should be placed in high positions (team leader, TAKS specialists, e.g.) also, bigger does not always mean better - less experienced teachers should have a chance to advance also.
- I feel that our central administration is too top heavy - too many people without enough accountability! The insurance provided through the district took an outrageous increase - any raise we received was consumed by the insurance - the district used a broker instead of taking bids - because it was quicker and easier -

teachers and aides (employees) were the losers - some aides can't even carry insurance because of the increase - this was an injustice!

- I have taught in Galena Park ISD for 25 years. I have seen many improvements in the district over that period of time. Our superintendent is supportive of teachers and the schools. My principal, Marsha Masi, has excellent rapport with teachers and students alike. She is supportive of the Advanced Placement programs. She is positive and serves as an excellent role model.
- My elementary school has a very high teacher turnover. I get tired of training a teacher only to have her/him leave the next year. We have many first year teachers every year.
- The district operates in a response mode rather than an innovative mode. We perform to the "test" or "review" rather than follow a vision of excellence.
- An issue of fairness - and equitable treatment. Differences made from school to school faculty members to faculty members student to student. Some schools, students and faculty are made to feel they are better than others. The feelings are perpetuated at highest level of administration.
- I feel that Galena Park hires many unqualified teachers just to put a "warm body" in the classroom. In turn, those of us who have degrees in education and first hand teaching experience are grouped in with these people and treated like we are as inexperienced and incompetent as they are. It is frustrating to be lectured to and scolded because someone on my team can't teach. I think teacher retention would be better if experienced, educated teachers were treated as professionals who can use their own brains to plan for and implement appropriate teaching strategies.
- I am proud to work for this district. The superintendent knows teachers by first name. There is a genuine desire to do what is needed for the students!
- Although the district was rated Exemplary, there are some students who graduate from high school and cannot read. Discrimination still exists. The board (school) should have voted teachers a bonus in addition to the legislative salary increase. We have done the most work without administration support and continue to be criticized.

Appendix F

STUDENT SURVEY RESULTS

Demographic Data/Survey Questions

Demographic Data

*Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

1.	Gender (Optional)	No Response	Male	Female			
		0.9%	38.3%	60.8%			
2.	Ethnicity (Optional)	No Response	Anglo	African American	Hispanic	Asian	Other
		2.5%	15.8%	12.5%	65.0%	3.3%	0.9%
3.	What is your classification?	No Response	Sophomore	Junior	Senior		
		2.5%	0.0%	22.5%	75.0%		

A. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

Statement		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
1.	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	14.2%	43.3%	25.9%	13.3%	3.3%	0.0%
2.	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	19.2%	46.7%	20.8%	10.8%	2.5%	0.0%
3.	The district has effective educational programs for the following:						
	a) Reading	20.8%	45.0%	25.0%	5.0%	2.5%	1.7%
	b) Writing	24.2%	50.8%	18.3%	4.2%	1.7%	0.8%
	c) Mathematics	33.3%	53.3%	8.4%	3.3%	1.7%	0.0%
	d) Science	28.3%	50.8%	10.9%	7.5%	0.8%	1.7%
	e) English or Language Arts	32.5%	52.5%	9.2%	5.0%	0.0%	0.8%
	f) Computer Instruction	19.2%	49.2%	23.3%	7.5%	0.8%	0.0%

	g) Social Studies (history or geography)	31.7%	50.8%	10.0%	4.2%	1.7%	1.6%
	h) Fine Arts	25.0%	49.2%	17.4%	6.7%	1.7%	0.0%
	i) Physical Education	21.7%	45.8%	22.6%	5.8%	3.3%	0.8%
	j) Business Education	17.5%	51.7%	25.8%	4.2%	0.0%	0.8%
	k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	26.7%	51.7%	14.1%	4.2%	0.8%	2.5%
	l) Foreign Language	25.0%	50.0%	15.8%	6.7%	1.7%	0.8%
4.	The district has effective special programs for the following:						
	a) Library Service	20.0%	44.2%	20.8%	9.2%	5.0%	0.8%
	b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	29.2%	42.5%	16.6%	9.2%	2.5%	0.0%
	c) Special Education1	24.2%	39.2%	32.4%	2.5%	1.7%	0.0%
	d) Student mentoring program	11.7%	47.5%	28.3%	9.2%	3.3%	0.0%
	e) Advanced placement program	32.5%	45.8%	15.0%	4.2%	2.5%	0.0%
	f) Career counseling program	15.0%	46.7%	23.3%	10.8%	4.2%	0.0%
	g) College counseling program	17.5%	46.7%	18.3%	10.8%	6.7%	0.0%
5.	Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	21.7%	49.2%	12.4%	12.5%	4.2%	0.0%
6.	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	15.0%	45.8%	18.4%	15.8%	5.0%	0.0%
7.	The district provides a high quality education.	16.7%	43.3%	26.7%	8.3%	5.0%	0.0%
8.	The district has high quality teachers.	16.7%	45.0%	22.5%	10.0%	5.0%	0.8%

B. Facilities Use and Management

Statement		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
9.	Schools are clean.	18.3%	44.2%	14.2%	15.8%	7.5%	0.0%
10.	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	15.8%	42.5%	24.2%	10.8%	5.0%	1.7%
11.	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	13.3%	34.2%	21.7%	20.8%	10.0%	0.0%
12.	Emergency maintenance is handled timely.	11.7%	44.2%	31.6%	8.3%	4.2%	0.0%

C. Purchasing and Warehousing

Statement		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
13.	There are enough textbooks in all my classes.	11.7%	32.5%	8.4%	28.3%	18.3%	0.8%
14.	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	10.0%	45.8%	15.0%	17.5%	11.7%	0.0%
15.	Textbooks are in good shape.	5.0%	29.2%	16.7%	25.8%	22.5%	0.8%
16.	The school library meets student needs for books and other resources.	11.7%	45.0%	24.1%	11.7%	6.7%	0.8%

D. Food Services

Statement		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
17.	The school breakfast program is available to all children.	18.3%	41.7%	29.2%	7.5%	3.3%	0.0%
18.	The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	7.5%	28.3%	19.2%	20.0%	25.0%	0.0%

19.	Food is served warm.	11.7%	35.0%	25.8%	14.2%	12.5%	0.8%
20.	Students have enough time to eat.	5.8%	19.2%	10.9%	22.5%	40.8%	0.8%
21.	Students eat lunch at the appropriate times of the day.	8.3%	55.0%	15.9%	10.8%	10.0%	0.0%
22.	Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	9.2%	15.8%	14.2%	28.3%	31.7%	0.8%
23.	Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	9.2%	49.2%	31.6%	6.7%	2.5%	0.8%
24.	Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	20.8%	45.8%	21.8%	8.3%	2.5%	0.8%
25.	Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	11.7%	45.8%	25.0%	9.2%	7.5%	0.8%

E. Transportation

	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
26.	I regularly ride the bus.	9.2%	14.2%	35.0%	14.1%	26.7%	0.8%
27.	The bus driver maintains discipline on the bus.	6.7%	19.2%	61.6%	6.7%	5.0%	0.8%
28.	The length of my bus ride is reasonable.	8.3%	21.7%	62.5%	1.7%	5.0%	0.8%
29.	The drop-off zone at the school is safe.	8.3%	25.0%	60.9%	2.5%	2.5%	0.8%
30.	The bus stop near my house is safe.	9.2%	21.7%	63.3%	2.5%	2.5%	0.8%
31.	The bus stop is within walking distance from our home.	10.0%	18.3%	64.2%	2.5%	3.3%	1.7%
32.	Buses arrive and leave on time.	5.0%	20.8%	62.6%	5.0%	5.8%	0.8%
33.	Buses arrive early	7.5%	17.5%	67.5%	2.5%	4.2%	0.8%

	enough for students to eat breakfast at school.						
34.	Buses seldom break down.	8.3%	18.3%	64.3%	5.0%	3.3%	0.8%
35.	Buses are clean.	5.8%	21.7%	60.9%	7.5%	3.3%	0.8%
36.	Bus drivers allow students to sit down before taking off.	10.8%	22.5%	58.4%	5.0%	2.5%	0.8%

F. Safety and Security

	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
37.	I feel safe and secure at school.	18.3%	51.7%	12.6%	13.3%	3.3%	0.8%
38.	School disturbances are infrequent.	12.5%	41.7%	28.3%	10.0%	6.7%	0.8%
39.	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	26.7%	35.8%	19.2%	12.5%	5.0%	0.8%
40.	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	5.8%	28.3%	29.2%	22.5%	14.2%	0.0%
41.	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	5.8%	25.8%	35.9%	21.7%	10.8%	0.0%
42.	Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	10.8%	45.8%	33.4%	6.7%	2.5%	0.8%
43.	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	10.8%	40.0%	31.7%	10.8%	6.7%	0.0%
44.	A good working arrangement exists between the local law enforcement and the	10.8%	44.2%	41.7%	2.5%	0.8%	0.0%

	district.						
45.	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	10.0%	34.2%	28.2%	13.3%	13.3%	0.8%
46.	Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	6.7%	31.7%	41.6%	16.7%	2.5%	0.8%

G. Computers and Technology

	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
47.	Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	10.8%	41.7%	16.7%	20.8%	10.0%	0.0%
48.	Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	8.3%	54.2%	18.3%	14.2%	4.2%	0.8%
49.	Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	8.3%	51.7%	20.8%	10.0%	9.2%	0.0%
50.	The district offers enough classes in computer fundamentals.	11.7%	50.0%	16.6%	14.2%	7.5%	0.0%
51.	The district meets student needs in advanced computer skills.	10.0%	45.0%	21.7%	10.0%	13.3%	0.0%
52.	Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	13.3%	40.0%	21.7%	15.0%	9.2%	0.8%

Appendix F

STUDENT SURVEY RESULTS

Narrative Comments

The narrative comments below reflect the perceptions and opinions of student survey respondents.

- I feel that all through my high school experience I have been wanting a challenge and I'm still waiting. I feel that since this school district is very concerned and in depth with getting paid; drop-out rate and absences, that the school district has forgotten about education. I believe that if a student enrolled in Galena Park ISD drops out and chooses to not have a future, that is their problem. Galena Park ISD does not have to drop its education standards just to keep students in school. Also, it is proven that America keeps choosing to lower education standards because students keep dropping out and America is "too nice." For example, somebody has found a 7th grade exam from approximately 1912. This same exam was taken by college students today. But what I find extremely funny is that not one college student passed this exam. In 1912, if you did not pass this exam, you didn't go the next grade. Right now, you are probably telling yourself that this is the college's problem, but let me ask you, "Where did the college students come from before they went to college?" I hope not elementary school. Thanks.
- I believe the district's funds are not equally distributed through out all the departments. I strongly believe that more funds should go to the GPHS Drama department to further advance the program. Thanks.
- No opinion.
- They can have longer lunches and find a way to shrink the lunch line. They can also fix the vending machines.
- I feel I attend school in a very safe and organized school district, and I am proud to tell people which school I attend.
- North Shore is a heck of a lot more educational than Galena Park. It is a great campus.
- This is a very successful district, but in order to allow the student to improve and excel there needs to be a happy medium between work and play. Allow us to advance reasonably and instead of teaching us by the book we need more one on one time. Longer lunches are also needed.
- There isn't enough time for lunch because of the long line wait. The food is cold half of the time not tasty. The television should be working and not difficult to maintain.

- The district in my opinion offers one if not the best Food Production and Catering Programs in the Houston area. With the technology and tools they have given students a chance to practice their culinary skills. Also they have provided a great intern at the Ayalt. In my opinion the teacher should have a bigger room and more time to teach her students.
- The district in my opinion is very well focused and should be rewarded. Though there is always room for improvement.
- The school spends way too much money on football! If the school spent half as much on academics, which it should seeing how it's a school, then our educational system would improve!
- I feel North Shore has good educational performance but I think it would work better if there were more hands-on classes. For example, last year we had Anatomy and Physiology which was good because we had hands-on with cat and goat hearts. Also we now have Hospitality which is also a wonderful hands-on class. I feel students learn more by these classes.
- I believe that school should start a little later than it does. The only plus to coming to school early is getting out early and even earlier if you're a senior.
- I am in A/P Economics and my teacher is short almost 30 textbooks. The district told my mom that they have no intention of getting us books. We must use copies of the book, while the two other A/P class periods have books. I also do not like the fact that A/P English we must buy almost every novel we read. Regular students do not have to purchase any books. This may not seem like much, but with three children in A/P the cost adds up for my parents.
- The only thing there is a problem with is at lunch, the lines are long. You wait approximately 15 minutes to get food. Then you have 15 minutes to eat a full meal. It's hard to finish because you are in a rush and it is unhealthy to eat like that. Textbooks aren't in the best shape, and there really isn't a way to get a hold of a computer if needed for a school project. We need a computer for the projects and some people cannot afford them. Some students (seniors) cannot read or spell fluently. Drug dogs don't come around enough to check people, and if one person is caught then they get kicked out and nothing happens to the other kids who get away with it.
- GPISD educational performance is good; it's what goes on that is not. One time last year students were unable to receive help from a teacher after school because another mother and daughter spent a large amount of time demanding help on assignments. The problem cannot be fixed by the principals of our school or district superintendent because the mother is good friends with all of them.

- I feel that we should get the classes we ask for. I asked for the class medical terminology so I could get started on learning the field I want to get in to, which is medicine. But instead I got Introduction to Media Technology, which is cool and was my second choice. So when we pick a class I hope we can get it.
- I feel that I am in a safe district, but just as everyone else we all have our flaws. One thing I don't understand is why do they go all the way to the Philippines and Switzerland to get teachers when they are right under your nose. For example: I have a father who graduated from West Point University and he majored in computer engineering, but when he applied you guys did not call him back. Other than that everything else is all right.
- Teachers at North Shore are great but they are few and far between at Galena Park!
- Some teachers don't even know History and are not happy to teach so therefore we are not happy to learn (in some classes).
- I believe that our educational performance is good, but no matter what, there is ALWAYS need for improvement! No district is perfect but I believe we come dangerously close! As far as athletics are concerned, I believe we should let the cheerleaders compete nationally again!
- I do not think that we are learning in classes. All my teachers do not know how to teach.
- I think educational performance is poor and I think that I could do a better job than they could.
- It's not about how many teachers, but how they do their job and if it is good enough for today's youth.
- Too many students. Too little space in the halls. Not enough time to eat (10 minutes is not enough, you end up with a stomach ache).
- I do not care for this.
- Very, very, good educational performance at Galena Park H.S.
- Very, very good education.
- What I don't like about this school is the fact that they try to make you apply to rules that don't have to exist - which is stupid. And then they you make take off your shirt or skirt when you wear a red one.
- The school of GPHS has many of these things but it's not a safe environment for special education students. GPHS to me doesn't meet many of the students' need. I wish it would be a better school. The students that give the school problems are still here and that also is not safe.
- No comment.
- I wish someone would actually read these surveys because I think certain needs are not being met. And, if someone does read these surveys then they are not taken serious enough.

- I feel we should have more time to eat and/or have more places to purchase food. Not many people eat because they don't have the time, when they finally receive their food, to eat.
- No comment.
- The school is corrupted in several areas. First of all school officials should identify bad students from the good students. It's not fair that good students are violated with strong discipline instead of students who act idiotic everyday...YOU NEED TO OPEN YOUR EYES GPISD.
- It's all good.
- Between one and 10 I would give it a four.
- The school should have better ways to deal with all the after-school programs and they should try to make the school conduct in the classrooms better.
- More job-related programs to take care of the interests of students such as Apparel II and III, more business classes - updated and more advanced, and maybe internships even. More college introduction prep.
- They prepare us too much for TAAS and don't teach us other important things. All they care about in this school is money. They don't prepare us for a life in a real world.
- Our schedule times when we go to class are confusing this year, because we only have two advisories per week then our time changes everyday.
- The school does not prepare students enough for the SATs. They have sessions on Saturdays, but we have important things to do.