

TRANSMITTAL LETTER

May 23, 2003

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

Fellow Texans:

I am pleased to present my performance review of the Rockwall Independent School District (RISD).

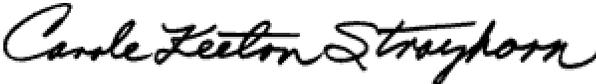
This review is intended to help RISD hold the line on costs, streamline operations, and improve services to ensure that more of every education dollar goes directly into the classroom with the teachers and children, where it belongs. To aid in this task, I contracted with WCL ENTERPRISES.

I have made a number of recommendations to improve RISD'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 77 detailed recommendations that could save RISD more than \$10.8 million over the next five years, while reinvesting more than \$1.8 million to improve educational services and other operations. Net savings are estimated to reach nearly \$9 million that the district can redirect to the classroom.

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

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

Sincerely,



Carole Keeton Strayhorn
Texas Comptroller

c: Senate Committee on Education

House Committee on Public Education

The Honorable Robert F. Deuell, State Senator, District 2

The Honorable Betty J. Brown, State Representatives, District 4

The Honorable Jodie Anne Laubenberg, State Representatives, District

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Executive Summary

Summary of Costs and Savings by Recommendation (Exhibit 4)

In November 2002, Texas Comptroller Carole Keeton Strayhorn began a review of the Rockwall Independent School District (RISD). Based upon more than six months of work, this report identifies RISD's exemplary programs and suggests concrete ways to improve district operations. If fully implemented, the Comptroller's 77 recommendations could result in net savings of nearly \$9 million over the next five years.

Improving The Texas School Performance Review (TSPR)

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 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 students and teachers receive the support and resources necessary to succeed;
- Identify innovative ways to address the district's core management challenges;
- Ensure administrative duties are performed efficiently, without duplication, and in a way that fosters education;
- Develop strategies to ensure the district's processes and programs are continuously assessed and improved;
- Challenge any process, procedure, program or policy that impedes instruction and recommend ways to reduce or eliminate obstacles; and

- Put goods and services to the "Yellow Pages Test": government should do no job if a business in the Yellow Pages can do that job better and at a lower cost.

Finally, Comptroller 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 (512) 475-3676, or see the Legislative Budget Board's Website at www.lbb.state.tx.us.

TSPR In Rockwall ISD

In August 2002, Comptroller Strayhorn selected Rockwall ISD for a school performance review because the district had a dangerously low fund balance and a tax rate among the 10 highest in the state. Work began in the district in November 2002, with interviews and a public forum held at Rockwall High School Cafeteria on November 4, 2002 from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.

The Comptroller's office selected WCL ENTERPRISES, a Houston-based consulting firm, to assist the agency with the review at a cost to the Comptroller's office of \$134,980. 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 had input, TSPR sent surveys to students, parents, teachers, campus and central administrators and support staff.

A total of 942 respondents answered surveys: 149 administrative and support staff; 18 principals and assistant principals; 123 teachers; 127 parents and 525 students completed written surveys as part of the review. Details from the surveys, public forum and focus group sessions 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 (AEIS) and the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS).

RISD selected peer districts for comparisons based on similarities in student enrollment, student performance and community and student demographics. The selected peer districts were Allen, Carroll, Coppell, Eanes, Frisco and McKinney. TSPR also compared RISD to district averages in TEA's Regional Education Service Center X (Region 10), to which Rockwall ISD belongs, and to the state as a whole.

During its six-month review, TSPR developed 77 recommendations for improving operations and saving taxpayers more than \$10.8 million by 2007-08. Cumulative net savings from all recommendations (savings minus recommended investments or expenditures) would reach nearly \$9 million by 2007-08.

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 WCL ENTERPRISES, wish to express appreciation to the RISD Board of Trustees, Superintendent Gene Burton, district employees, students, parents and community residents who helped during the review. Special thanks go to Joy Greenwalt, who served as RISD's liaison. She arranged for office space, equipment and meeting rooms, organized the findings meeting, responded to data requests and accommodated the review team's needs.

Rockwall ISD

RISD is located approximately 30 miles northeast of Dallas. The district's proximity to Dallas, and its attractive setting straddling Lake Ray Hubbard, has made it one of the fastest growing school districts in north Texas. With a growth rate of 28.9 percent since 1998-99, RISD is growing at a rate that is four times the state average and twice the average of districts in Region 10 (**Exhibit 1**).

Exhibit 1
RISD Student Enrollment
1998-99 through 2002-03

District	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	Percent Change 1998-99 to 2002-03
RISD	7,363	7,798	8,468	8,911	9,488	28.9%

Region 10	563,701	577,800	597,160	618,135	635,621	12.8%
State	3,945,367	3,991,783	4,059,619	4,146,653	4,239,911	7.5%

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 1998-99 through 2002-03.

The district encompasses 109.8 square miles and includes all of Rockwall and portions of the cities of Heath, McLendon-Chisholm, Rowlett and Fate. Lake Ray Hubbard divides the district into east and west sections and Interstate 30 into north and south sections. Most residents commute to Dallas for work. Generally, household incomes are higher than average, although a few areas are economically disadvantaged. Approximately 13.2 percent of RISD students are economically disadvantaged.

In 2002-03, RISD is serving 9,488 students in pre-kindergarten through grade 12 in 14 schools: nine elementary schools, two middle schools, a freshman center, one high school and an alternative education center. Student enrollment is 80.2 percent Anglo, 12.8 percent Hispanic, 4.8 percent African American and 2.1 percent Other. The superintendent estimated that more than 80 percent of RISD students would enroll in some form of post secondary education within one year of graduation, compared to the state average of 52 percent and the national average of 59 percent.

Exhibit 2 details the demographic characteristics of RISD, Region 10, the state and RISD's peer school districts.

Exhibit 2
Student Enrollment and Demographics
RISD, Peer Districts, Region 10 and the State
2002-03

District	Student Enrollment	African American	Hispanic	Anglo	Asian Pacific	Native American	Economically Disadvantaged Students
RISD	9,488	4.8%	12.8%	80.2%	1.8%	0.3%	13.2%
Allen	12,508	7.2%	8.6%	78.4%	5.1%	0.7%	6.5%
Carroll	7,186	1.8%	2.8%	91.8%	3.4%	0.2%	1.3%
Coppell	9,891	3.9%	7.9%	73.3%	14.6%	0.3%	4.1%
Eanes	7,119	0.4%	5.1%	88.0%	6.3%	0.2%	2.1%
Frisco	11,144	7.8%	13.2%	72.6%	5.7%	0.8%	9.3%

McKinney	15,155	8.9%	21.1%	67.4%	2.0%	0.5%	22.5%
Region 10	635,621	20.8%	33.1%	41.1%	4.5%	0.5%	45.4%
State	4,239,911	14.3%	42.7%	39.8%	2.9%	0.3%	51.9%

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 2002-03.

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

In 2001-02, TEA rated RISD as Academically Acceptable. The district had no low performing schools and 92.7 percent of students passed all levels of the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS), compared to the state average of 85.3 percent. In 2000-01, TEA awarded gold performance acknowledgements for RISD's Advance Placement/International Baccalaureate (AP/IB) results and its recommended high school program.

In 2002-03, the district employed 1,124.9 personnel, 50.7 percent of whom are teachers. The district's 2002-03 budget was approximately \$70.3 million, an increase of \$4.4 million over the district's \$65.9 million 2001-02 budget. From 1996-97 through 2000-01, the district operated with a very low or negative fund balance; however, in 2001-02, its fund balance rose to \$4.5 million, or 6.9 percent of budgeted expenditures. The return to a positive fund balance is due primarily to an increase of 26.2 cents per \$100 value in the district's tax rate. The district's 2002 tax rate is \$1.84 per \$100 property value; \$1.50 for Maintenance and Operations and \$0.34 for Interest and Sinking Fund. The property value per student is \$329,849.

RISD's greatest challenges include:

- successfully accommodating rapid student growth;
- improving financial management and business services;
- strengthening internal controls; and
- improving academic performance.

Key Findings and Recommendations

Successfully Accommodate Rapid Student Growth

Reorganize central administration. Rockwall ISD is experiencing growing pains - while student enrollment has risen rapidly, the district's organization structure has not kept pace. Many functions such as technology, financial management and human resources are fragmented, making internal control and proper segregation of duties difficult, if not impossible. Workloads also are not distributed equally among senior positions. By reorganizing the central administrative structure, including

changing an assistant superintendent to a director position, hiring an internal auditor and creating a human resources director position, RISD will be better positioned for future growth.

Establish a board policy to formalize the process for developing a school bond program, communicating the program to the public and ensuring accountability for approved bond projects. RISD does not have written board policies or procedures regarding the development of a bond program, communicating information to the public, ensuring the public understands and has adequate opportunities for input, or ensuring accountability measures are in place for all approved bond projects. Failure to have formal board policies and procedures resulted in misunderstandings and citizen complaints about how RISD spent funds from the 1998 bond issue. By formalizing the process, public input and confidence should increase and voters will be assured that what is built is what they approved.

Eliminate the block schedule at Rockwall High School and Utey Freshman Center and convert to a traditional schedule of daily class meetings. RISD's block scheduling may have little impact on teaching effectiveness but it dramatically increases staffing costs because it requires more teachers. A 1999 Texas Education Agency research study entitled *Block Scheduling in Texas Public High Schools* found that other factors were much more closely related to overall student performance than types of scheduling. As RISD enrollment continues to increase, staffing costs will also increase. By converting from the block schedule to a traditional seven period daily schedule with teachers teaching six periods, RISD could hire 25 fewer teachers and save nearly \$1.2 million annually.

Improve Financial Management and Business Services

Reorganize and consolidate all technology functions into one department. The RISD technology organization is fragmented and unable to support the district's instructional and administrative technology needs. Because of the lack of planning, communication and expertise, RISD's technology function has not met management and service delivery expectations. By hiring a chief information officer to oversee all technology functions, RISD's technology services will be better positioned to meet the pressing needs of a rapidly growing district. The annual cost of the reorganization would be \$81,708 beginning in 2004-05.

Establish a bid process that ensures compliance with state laws and board policies and hold individuals accountable for non-compliance. RISD purchases goods and services in a manner that does not comply with board policies, district purchasing procedures and state competitive bid requirements. TSPR reviewed a random sample of purchases and

discovered 33 that equal or exceeded \$25,000 that were not bid in compliance with Texas competitive procurement laws or RISD procedures. One non-competitively bid purchase for technology exceeded \$1.4 million. Purchasing procedures and processes should include an annual bid calendar, a monthly review of purchases by the director of Purchasing, oversight by the chief financial officer and documentation showing compliance with all state laws and board purchasing policies.

Eliminate the use of payment authorizations and implement the use of blanket purchase orders. RISD's excessive use of payment authorizations, or requests to the business office to issue a check to a vendor, circumvents its purchasing procedures by:

- committing funds without proper purchasing authorization;
- purchasing goods/services without using the purchase requisition process;
- paying for items not on the approved list in the district's purchasing policy guidelines; and
- paying for merchandise or services already received rather than using the purchase order process.

TSPR randomly selected one month, October 2002, during which the review team discovered the district approved 469 payment authorizations. RISD's purchasing procedures state that the purchase order should be the primary method used for purchases. Eliminating payment authorizations and implementing blanket purchase orders will strengthen controls over district expenditures.

Reorganize the business office and add one professional accountant position. Business office and asset and risk functions are fragmented with employees lacking expertise in critical areas. Certain business office functions, as well certain asset and risk functions, are divided among various departments due to limited staffing. This division of labor makes it more difficult to adequately perform the necessary oversight, review, financial reporting and budget analysis. By separating and centralizing the district's asset and risk functions and adding the necessary expertise to effectively and efficiently oversee its functions, RISD's business office will operate more efficiently.

Strengthen Internal Controls

Establish procedures for proper segregation of duties over cash and investment handling and related recordkeeping functions. Some of RISD's bank accounts are reconciled by the same individual who performs cash receipt and disbursement functions. Likewise, RISD's assistant business manager performs investment transactions while also reconciling

investment accounts. Neither of these processes properly segregate related duties and both exemplify weaknesses in internal controls. By establishing procedures that segregate related cash management and investment duties, the district's critical internal controls will be strengthened.

Segregate the functions associated with establishing and changing employee wage and deduction information from the payroll calculation functions. RISD has not programmed its payroll software to prevent unauthorized employees from manipulating employee wage and deduction information. No process exists to ensure that payroll clerks enter or change only the data authorized by Human Resources. Because internal controls are lacking, RISD payroll data could be manipulated and payroll checks be issued to nonexistent employees. By segregating functions and limiting access to authorized personnel, payroll data is protected and internal controls strengthened.

Improve Academic Performance

Implement an online curriculum management program. RISD has not included a step in the district administrative processes to monitor the teaching of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) curriculum. There is no district policy in place to ensure that all teachers consistently follow the scope and sequence documents for their grade or subject level. In addition, the district does not have an approved accountability system to guide the principals in monitoring and adjusting this process if teachers do not follow the scope and sequence documents. Purchasing and implementing an online program for managing and storing the scope and sequence documents will enhance academic performance and will cost the district approximately \$10,000 the first year and \$6,000 annually thereafter.

Develop a formal program evaluation process. RISD does not have a formal evaluation process of its educational programs. Although statewide student achievement testing provides feedback on core subjects, RISD has few program evaluations of ancillary programs such as reading skills improvement. As a result, RISD does not know what programs are most effective. Without this information, the district may be spending money on programs of little value to the district.

Develop strategies in district and campus improvement plans to measure the effectiveness of the bilingual/English as a Second Language program. RISD's bilingual/ESL program is not achieving acceptable results - at times scoring below the state average by more than 40 percentage points. The district does not use a consistent method of teaching bilingual/ESL students. RISD's bilingual teachers use a variety of techniques and approaches that are not uniform. By identifying a

successful program that has achieved notable results in other districts and implementing it districtwide, RISD's bilingual students will be better served and the district's TEA rating is likely to improve.

Offer staff development and student training programs at RISD Alternative School that address the needs of returning students with emotional and behavioral problems. RISD does not adequately address the severe emotional and behavioral problems of students placed in its disciplinary alternative education program (DAEP). As a result, the district experienced a DAEP recidivism rate of 14 percent in 2001-02. By providing DAEP staff development and student training programs that address the needs of returning students who exhibit emotional and behavioral problems, RISD could significantly reduce its recidivism rate.

Exemplary Programs and Practices

TSPR identified numerous "best practices" in RISD. Through commendations in each chapter, the 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 could be adapted to meet local needs. TSPR's commendations include:

The RISD Board of Trustees operates effectively through the use of subcommittees and understands its role as a policy maker. All board members understand the line between policy-making and administration. Board meetings are run smoothly, staff presentations at meetings are detailed and the meetings are productive. Ample time is provided for citizen input and any referral of a citizen or board request to staff is handled expeditiously. In July 2001, five standing subcommittees of the board were created to study and address key issues. The subcommittees work well because board members respect each other, do their homework and strive to act in the best interests of the school district.

The superintendent uses a variety of methods to develop a cohesive, informed management team that works well together. The superintendent demonstrates strong team-building skills by involving administrators in district decision-making and administrative staff in evaluating district operations and by planning and organizing staff retreats. Six administrative leadership teams that include principals, administrators and counselors address key issues in their areas. The superintendent also chairs a monthly meeting of principals and a bi-monthly meeting of assistant principals, and organizes cabinet-level discussions of current educational research and trends centering on a monthly book review and discussion period.

RISD keeps the community informed and involved using multiple processes. RISD communicates by e-mailed and printed newsletters, memorandums, "Board Briefs", which provides a summary of each school board meeting, and the district's Web site. Also, each campus selects a campus communicator who publicizes news items for each school and contacts the School and Community Relations department if a news item impacts the district or community. RISD also holds an annual Leadership Forum designed to enhance communication with area businesses, industry and community leaders. In 2002-03, PTA/PTO memberships exceeded 4,600 participants and in 2001-02, more than 1,900 volunteers donated nearly 44,000 hours of service to schools.

RISD partnered with a local university to develop a Master of Education degree program targeted specifically to meet district needs. The district partnered with Texas A&M - Commerce faculty to design a Master of Education program. The courses offered include: teaching diverse and at risk-learners; organizing and managing child-centered classroom environments; and curriculum development and integration. The district provides teachers a scholarship of \$75 per college hour with a maximum of 15 hours per year, equating to approximately 50 percent of the total cost of the program. The teachers, in turn, commit to four years in the district - three to complete the master's program and an additional year.

RISD's cash-flow projections ensure that most of its idle funds are invested in interest-earning investment pools. RISD does a cash flow analysis on a daily, monthly and annual basis. RISD pulls bank account balances daily via modem through banking software, printed and maintained in a binder for reference. The bank account balances, disbursements and deposits are recorded daily into a cash worksheet by bank account. The business manager tracks collateral daily with a notation of the current amount listed by total bank account balances. Each worksheet details one week's transactions resulting in the file maintaining a complete school year's transactions.

The superintendent has improved the district's overall financial condition and has created mechanisms to ensure its continued financial stability. The overall financial condition of the district has steadily improved since July 2001, when the current superintendent began his tenure. He established a school board finance committee to oversee operating results and to determine the budget implications of requested budget amendments, recommended a tax increase to pay for added debt and to fund services to meet district student needs and established a process that includes contracting with the district's architects to provide a full-time project manager for all construction projects. As a result, in 2001-02, RISD had a \$4.5 million general fund balance.

RISD reduced program costs by hiring a full-time maintenance coordinator to service cafeteria equipment. RISD hired a permanent maintenance staff person to routinely work on RISD nutrition equipment and is in the process of a comprehensive inventory of all nutrition equipment. As a result of hiring the full-time maintenance person, the RISD Nutrition Services maintenance expenditures declined by \$41,500 from 2000-01 to 2001-02.

RISD created comprehensive student delinquency, dropout and drug prevention programs with participation from students, staff, parents and the community. RISD is committed to the safety of students and staff and focuses on prevention of inappropriate behavior. Examples of such programs include the D-FY-IT (Drug Free Youth in Texas), a voluntary drug testing program for grades seven through 12; GREAT (Gang Resistance Education and Training), a program taught by School Resource Officers at the middle schools; and WHO (We Help Ourselves), a child victimization awareness program offered in elementary and middle schools and in high school health classes. In addition, RISD has a hot-line for anonymous reporting of drug abuse, and the RISD board recently approved a mandatory drug-testing program that includes extracurricular activities. Refusal to participate in the test constitutes removal of the student from the activity.

Savings and Investment Requirements

Many TSPR recommendations would save money or result in increased revenues that the district could use to improve classroom instruction. The savings estimates identified in this report are conservative and should be considered minimums. In sections where TSPR recommended spending money, the changes should improve efficiency, productivity and effectiveness.

TSPR recommended 77 ways for RISD to save more than \$10.8 million over a five-year period. Recommendations that include additional spending will cost the district more than \$1.8 million during the same period. Implementing all the recommendations in this report could produce net savings of nearly \$9 million by 2007-08 (**Exhibit 3**).

**Exhibit 3
Summary of Net Savings
TSPR Review of Rockwall Independent School District**

Year	Total
2003-04 Initial Annual Net Savings	\$526,746
2004-05 Additional Annual Net Savings	\$2,077,778

2005-06 Additional Annual Net Savings	\$2,105,128
2006-07 Additional Annual Net Savings	\$2,172,928
2007-08 Additional Annual Net Savings	\$2,172,928
One Time Net Savings (Costs)	(\$62,818)
TOTAL SAVINGS PROJECTED FOR 2003-08	\$8,991,566

A detailed list of costs and savings by recommendation appears in **Exhibit 4**. The page number for each recommendation is listed in the summary chart. Detailed implementation strategies, timelines and the estimates of fiscal impact follow each recommendation in this report. The implementation section associated with each recommendation highlights the actions necessary to achieve the proposed results. Some items should be implemented immediately, some over the next year or two and some over several years.

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

Chapter 1

DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

The organization and management of a school district requires cooperation between the elected members of the board of trustees and the staff of the district. The board sets goals and objectives for the district and determines the policies by which the district will be governed. The board also approves the staff's plans to implement those policies, provides the funding sources necessary to carry out the plans and evaluates the results.

BACKGROUND

RISD is located about 30 miles northeast of Dallas. The district's proximity to Dallas-and its attractive setting straddling Lake Ray Hubbard-has made it one of the fastest-growing school districts in North Texas. As shown in **Exhibit 1-1**, RISD enrollment grew 28.9 percent from 1998-99 through 2002-03, four times the state average and twice the average of all the districts in the Regional Educational Service Center X (Region 10).

Exhibit 1-1
RISD Student Enrollment
1998-99 through 2002-03

District	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	Percentage Change
RISD	7,363	7,798	8,468	8,911	9,488	28.9%
Region 10	563,701	577,800	597,160	618,135	635,621	12.8%
State	3,945,367	3,991,783	4,059,619	4,146,653	4,239,911	7.5%

Source: Texas Education Agency (TEA), Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS), 1998-99 through 2002-03.

The district encompasses 109.4 square miles, which is about two-thirds of Rockwall County. The district's jurisdiction includes the entire city of Rockwall and portions of the cities of Rowlett, Heath, McLendon-Chisholm and Fate. Most residents of the district commute to Dallas for work. Generally, household incomes are higher than the state average in a majority of the district. RISD reports that 13.2 percent of its students are economically disadvantaged.

According to the Texas Education Agency's (TEA) Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) report for fall 2002, RISD served 9,488 students in pre-Kindergarten through grade 12. In 2002-03, the district operated 14 campuses: nine elementary schools, two middle schools, a freshman center, one high school and an alternative education center.

The Texas School Performance Review (TSPR) asks school districts to choose similar districts as peers for comparison purposes. RISD chose Allen, Carroll, Coppell, Eanes, Frisco and McKinney independent school districts to serve as peer districts.

In 2001-02, TEA rated RISD as an Academically Acceptable school district. TEA gave five district schools its Exemplary rating. It awarded one school its Recognized rating and classified six others as Academically Acceptable. **Exhibit 1-2** shows the individual school ratings.

Exhibit 1-2
RISD School Accountability Rating
2001-02

School or Facility	TEA Rating
Amanda Rochell Elementary School	Acceptable
Amy Parks-Heath Elementary School	Exemplary
Cullins-Lake Pointe Elementary School	Exemplary
Dorothy Smith Pullen Elementary School	Recognized
Howard Dobbs Elementary School	Acceptable
Nebbie Williams Elementary School	Exemplary
Virginia Reinhardt Elementary School	Exemplary
Dorris A. Jones Elementary School	Not rated, opened Fall 2002
Grace Hartman Elementary School	Not rated, opened Fall 2002
J.W. Williams Middle School	Exemplary
Maurine Cain Middle School	Acceptable
Herman E. Utley Freshman Center	Acceptable
Rockwall Alternative School	Acceptable
Rockwall High School	Acceptable

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

In 2002-03, RISD reported that its student enrollment was 80.2 percent Anglo, 12.8 percent Hispanic, 4.8 percent African American and 2.1 percent Native American or Asian Pacific. **Exhibit 1-3** shows that between 1998-99 and 2002-03, the district's Hispanic, African American, Asian, Pacific Islander and Native American student population grew modestly and the Anglo population decreased slightly.

Exhibit 1-3
Changes in Ethnicity of RISD Student Population
1998-99 through 2002-03

Ethnic Group	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03
African-American	3.4%	3.8%	3.7%	4.3%	4.8%
Hispanic	9.9%	10.2%	11.3%	12.0%	12.8%
Anglo	85.0%	84.2%	83.2%	81.9%	80.2%
Asian/Pacific Islander	1.4%	1.7%	1.6%	1.5%	1.8%
Native American	0.2%	0.2%	0.1%	0.2%	0.3%

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 1998-99 through 2002-03.

In 2001-02, 92.7 percent of the district's students passed all levels of the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS). The state average for 2001-02 was 85.3 percent. The superintendent estimated that more than 80 percent of RISD students would continue their education and enroll in some form of post-secondary studies within one year of graduation, compared with the state average of 52 percent and the national average of 59 percent.

Chapter 1

DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

A. GOVERNANCE

A board of trustees-which sets policies and oversees the management of the schools-governs each Texas school district. Each board derives its legal status from the Texas Constitution and the Texas Legislature. The board must function in accordance with applicable state and federal statutes, controlling court decisions and applicable regulations pursuant to state and federal law. Under Section 11.151 of the Texas Education Code (TEC), each board has specific statutory powers and duties, including:

- governing and overseeing the management of the public schools of the district;
- adopting such rules, regulations and bylaws as it may deem proper;
- approving a district-developed plan for site-based decision-making and provide for its implementation;
- levying and collecting taxes and issue bonds;
- selecting tax officials, as appropriate to the district's need;
- preparing, adopting and filing a budget for the next succeeding fiscal year and filing a report of disbursements and receipts for the preceding fiscal year;
- having district fiscal accounts audited at district expense by a Texas certified public accountant holding a permit from the Texas State Board of Public Accountancy following the close of each fiscal year;
- publishing an annual report describing the district's educational performance, including school performance objectives and the progress of each school toward meeting these objectives;
- receiving bequests and donations or other money coming legally into its hands in the name of the district;
- selecting a depository for district funds;
- ordering elections, canvass the returns, declare results and issue certificates of election as required by law;
- disposing of property no longer necessary for the operation of the school district;
- acquiring and hold real and personal property in the name of the district; and
- holding all powers and duties not specifically delegated by statute to the TEA or the State Board of Education.

The RISD board consists of seven members elected at large for three-year terms. **Exhibit 1-4** shows Rockwall's board membership in May 2003.

Exhibit 1-4
RISD Board Members
May 2003

Board Member	Board Position	Term Expires	Occupation
Lorie Grinnan	President	2005	Civic leader
David Loftis	Vice president	2004	Veterinarian
Brad Lamberth	Secretary	2006	Attorney
Douglas Hamilton	Member	2004	Consultant
David Jackson	Member	2006	Dentist
Leigh Plagens	Member	2005	Retired teacher
Gregg Podleski	Member	2006	Orthopedic doctor

Source: RISD superintendent, May 2003.

The district conducts its board elections annually on the first Saturday in May. RISD provides candidates for board elections with training through workshops conducted by the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB). TASB hosts these training sessions at all Regional Education Service Centers throughout the state. The sessions last about two hours.

The board elects its officers annually after installing newly elected board members. The board meets on the third Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m. in Lecture Hall 232 at Rockwall High School.

RISD uses the policy service provided by TASB to update local and legal policies and provide online maintenance of the policies. For 2002-03, RISD paid TASB \$750 for this service.

RISD employs two law firms for its primary legal services. Strasburger and Price handle personnel issues, employee complaints that go beyond the normal internal grievance process, litigation representation, open records requests that may involve privileged information, construction/contractor issues and land purchases. Ramirez & Associates, P.C. provide legal assistance on matters such as special education.

On special matters, the district also received legal advice from several other firms or individual lawyers. During 2001-02, the district, as part of a class action suit, used Perdue, Brandon, Fielder, Collins & Mott, L.L.P., a law firm that specializes in representing local school districts in property valuation cases, to appeal property values to the state. The district was

successful in its appeal and paid attorneys 10 percent of the additional state funding the district obtained. **Exhibit 1-5** summarizes RISD's expenditures for legal services for 1999-2000 through 2001-02.

**Exhibit 1-5
RISD Legal Expenditures
1999-2000 through 2001-02**

Year	Strasburger and Price, L.L.P.	Ramirez & Associates, P.C.	Perdue, Brandon, Fielder, Collins & Mott, L.L.P.	Other	Total
2001-02	\$33,050.65	\$8,098.31	\$157,239.00*	\$10,335.50	\$208,723.46
2000-01	\$14,099.05	\$5,532.80	\$8,555.00	\$5,132.92	\$33,319.77
1999-2000	\$12,834.01	\$3,636.50	\$11,262.00	\$2,746.25	\$30,478.76

Source: RISD superintendent, November 2002.

**Includes \$149,390 in legal fees, equivalent to 10 percent of the additional state funding the legal appeal earned for the district in revised property values.*

Exhibit 1-6 compares RISD legal fees with that of its peer districts. Although RISD's legal fees appear comparatively high at \$208,723, this amount includes \$149,390 in fees paid to attorneys who successfully appealed state-assessed property values. The fee was equivalent to 10 percent of the additional state funding the district earned by successfully appealing assigned property values in court.

**Exhibit 1-6
Legal Expenses
RISD and Peer Districts
2001-02**

District	2001-02 Enrollment	2001-02 Legal Expenses
McKinney	13,614	\$178,008
Eanes	7,260	\$139,491
Carroll	6,995	\$127,502
Coppell	9,718	\$102,000

Frisco	9,292	\$77,500
Allen	11,668	\$61,647
RISD	8,911	\$208,723*

Source: Budgetary expenditure histories for all peer districts, 2001-02.

*Excluding the one-time legal fee for appealing property valuations in 2001, total legal fees for RISD were \$59,333.46.

The RISD board's-adopted mission statement is "to be an exemplary education entity fostering excellence in all areas and focusing on academic success." The board adopted a series of belief statements to support this mission:

- the standards of measurement for the school district are *excellence* and *exemplary*;
- the quality of the district is dependent upon the quality of the human resource;
- the cornerstone of the district is the academic program;
- the actions of the district are student-oriented, data-driven, research-based and continually improved;
- the district is, among public sector organizations, a model of accountability (planning, organization, fiscal responsibility);
- the sanctity of the school day is paramount;
- the quality of the work environment promotes maximum productivity;
- the modeling of professional and ethical behavior is imperative;
- the critical component for accountability, efficiency and effectiveness is performance-based evaluations; and
- the commitment of the district is to lifelong learning (student, professional, paraprofessional, community).

FINDING

RISD's board and the superintendent developed a series of processes for improving the frequency and quality of their communication. These processes also enhance the working relationships among board members and between board members and staff.

RISD hired its current superintendent, Mr. Gene Burton, in July 2001. One of the new superintendent's first actions was to increase the communication between the superintendent and the board. The superintendent began sending the agenda package to board members one week earlier than his predecessor so that board members would have a full

week to review agenda issues and ask questions. The superintendent complements this formal distribution of information with telephone calls to each board member during the week prior to the board meeting. The superintendent uses these calls to determine if a board member has any questions or needs any information. If so, the superintendent assigns responsibility for a response to specific staff members.

According to board members, this approach "provides the necessary information to make decisions before discussion of the issue at a board meeting." Board members commented:

- "The agenda package is more than ample and very timely;"
- "This superintendent is the best at keeping me informed;"
- "If I have a question, I know that I can call the superintendent, and he will have information made available to me. There is never any effort to hide anything or to keep the board uninformed on an issue;"
- "Information from the staff is ample but not excessive;"
- "The timing of information sent to the board allows time to study and ask questions. It makes me as a board member better prepared for the meeting;"
- "The staff will always produce any requested information;" and
- "There's never a question about access to information. If the [staff] doesn't know the answer, they will research it quickly."

The superintendent also retained the TASB Leadership Team Services to assist RISD in developing team operating procedures for the board and superintendent. TASB worked with RISD in February and March 2002 to identify 11 areas of focus for the district. **Exhibit 1-7** lists the areas that TASB described. The board used TASB's input to create and update board policies. RISD's board and superintendent follow these procedures as they conduct the district's business.

Exhibit 1-7
RISD Team Operating Areas and Associated Procedures

Team Operating Area	Examples of Associated Procedures	Related Policies
The board meeting agenda.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The superintendent and the board president create the agenda, and then present it to the board for approval. • The district must finalize 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BE (legal) Board meetings • BE (local) Board meetings • BJA (local) Superintendent

	<p>its agenda 72 hours before the board meeting. The district can't make further changes unless an emergency or urgent public necessity exists in accordance with the law.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The board president and the superintendent place an item on the consent agenda at their discretion. 	<p>qualifications and duties</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BDAA (local) Officers and Officials: Duties and responsibilities
<p>Board member preparation for board meetings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administration will ensure that it supplies all necessary information to each board member to allow for informed decisions. • The district will deliver draft agendas and information packets to board members approximately one week before board meetings. • Board members will be fully prepared for each board meeting by reading agenda packet well in advance of the meeting. Board members will inform the board president if they have any questions or concerns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BE (local) Board meetings • BBF (local) Board ethics
<p>Board member response to public participation in meetings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The board may listen to the public comments that follow board policy BED (local) but individual board members cannot respond. • If the board decides to respond to a specific comment from the president, the board president will act as its 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BED (local) Board meetings: Public participation

	spokesperson.	
Team communication between board meetings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The superintendent will communicate with each board member via board information packets that will include district events and information, problem areas and subcommittee summary reports. • The superintendent's office will communicate in a timely fashion items of emergency, special need or interest. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BE (legal) Board meetings • BJA (local) Superintendent qualifications and duties
Board member request for non-agenda information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board members will direct individual requests for information not on the agenda through the superintendent. • If board members decide that the information they request is not readily available, the board member can place the item on the next board meeting agenda to determine the board's desire for the information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BBE (local) Board members: Authority
Board member visits to schools other than as a parent.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board members are encouraged to visit any school. • As a courtesy to the administration, board members will inform the superintendent and the principal in advance of the visit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None
Board member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board members will 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DGBA (local)

<p>response to community or employee complaints.</p>	<p>listen respectfully to comments from the community but should remain impartial.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board members should ask if the complainant has tried to address the problem through established district channels. 	<p>Personnel-management relations: Employee Complaints/Grievances</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FNG (local) Student rights and responsibilities: Student and parent complaints
<p>Communicating with the media.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The board president shall be the official spokesperson for the board to the media. • A board member retains the right to speak to the media as an individual and will honor the majority decision in his or her comments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BJA (local) Superintendent qualifications and duties • BDAA (local) Officers and officials: Duties and responsibilities • BBF (local) Board members: Ethics
<p>Board member communication with the media.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board members should support the majority's decisions when addressing the media. Board members should not misrepresent the board's opinion and should refrain from specific comment to members of the media. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BAA (local) Board legal status and duties • BJA (local) Superintendent qualifications and duties • BDAA (local) Officers and officials: Duties and responsibilities • BBF (local) Board members: Ethics
<p>Board member communication with the community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The district will encourage board members to participate in community activities as liaisons between the public and school district. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BBF (local) • GB (local) Public information program

New board member orientation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The district will schedule new board member orientation to occur within two weeks of the date a new board member takes the oath of office. • The superintendent, the board president and at least one incumbent board member will participate in the new member orientation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BBD (local) Board members: Training and orientation
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Source: TASB Developing Team Operating Procedures, Final Report, March 25, 2002.

TASB trained RISD's board members and superintendent to use the new operating procedures after it developed them. The existing board members and the superintendent trained the two new members, whom the community elected in May 2002.

COMMENDATION

The RISD board and superintendent continuously work to enhance their communication and working relationships.

FINDING

The RISD board makes valuable use of subcommittees and performs well as a policy-making body.

After being hired, the new superintendent recommended that the board create three standing subcommittees. Following his recommendation, the board created finance, land acquisition and strategic planning subcommittees. At the time of the superintendent's recommendation, the board had ad hoc committees for constructing and naming buildings. The board chose to make these standing committees as well. **Exhibit 1-8** describes the responsibilities of each of the board's standing committees.

Exhibit 1-8 RISD Board Subcommittees November 2002

Subcommittee	Purpose
Finance	To serve in an oversight capacity regarding the financial

	operations of the district. The committee will not make decisions but will receive detailed financial information and make periodic reports to the full board.
Building	To oversee execution of the 2001 bond package. This committee will serve as a liaison between the board and the administration, architects, construction managers and other entities relating to construction.
Land Acquisition	To locate future sites for new construction that was included in the 2001 bond package. The committee will work closely with the superintendent and real estate professionals.
Strategic Planning	The board adopted a strategic plan in April 2002. This committee will monitor the district's progress toward achieving the adopted goals.
Naming	To complete the naming of the facilities in the 2001 bond package. The committee will use the established naming procedure and refer to the existing database of worthy former educators.

Source: RISD Board of Trustees subcommittees, November 2002.

The subcommittees vary in size, with no more than three board members on one subcommittee. The board president serves as an *ex officio* member of each subcommittee. The subcommittees determine their meeting schedules.

According to board members, the subcommittees allow them to spend time to study issues in depth. Several board members reported that the subcommittees work because they take the extra time to work on issues. Board members do not recall any instance where the board rejected a subcommittee's recommendation.

Board members said in review team interviews that the board works well as a group. Board members try to police themselves to make sure that all members remain positive and the board president ensures that discussion among board members does not become personal.

Board members all reported understanding the line between policy-making and administration. The only time any problem occurs in this area is with first-year board members who are not as well versed in the board's role.

All board members said the staff makes detailed presentations and that the district runs productive board meetings. Board members also said that the staff handles any citizen referral or board request expeditiously.

COMMENDATION

The RISD Board of Trustees operates effectively through the use of subcommittees and understands its role as a policy maker.

Chapter 1

DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

B. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

As specified in Section 11.201 of the TEC, the superintendent serves as the chief executive officer of the district:

- assuming administrative responsibility and leadership for the planning, operation, supervision and evaluation of the district's educational programs, services, and facilities;
- assuming administrative authority and responsibility for the assignment, evaluation and annual performance appraisal of district personnel other than the superintendent;
- making recommendations regarding the selection of personnel other than the superintendent, as provided by Section 11.163 of the TEC;
- initiating the termination or suspension of an employee or the non-renewal of an employee's term contract;
- managing the district's day-to-day operations;
- preparing and submitting a proposed budget to the board of trustees, as provided by Section 44.002 of the TEC;
- preparing recommendations for policies to be adopted by the board and overseeing the implementation of adopted policies;
- developing or causing to be developed appropriate administrative regulations to implement policies established by the board;
- providing leadership for the attainment of student performance in the district based on indicators adopted under Section 39.051 of the TEC and other indicators adopted by the State Board of Education or the district's board;
- organizing the district's central administration; and
- performing any other duties assigned by the board.

FINDING

The superintendent involves senior administrators and all supervisory staff in efforts to develop an effective management team.

Since the superintendent was hired in July 2001, more administrators have become involved in the decision-making process. The superintendent relies on administrative staff to evaluate key issues affecting district operations. The superintendent uses administrative retreats and research in current educational trends to foster discussion, dialogue and teamwork.

RISD's previous superintendent had only one senior member of the central administration staff and fewer than 10 people on his administrative team. Rockwall's current superintendent expanded the administrative team to include all administrative positions with supervisory roles, including principals and central office directors. **Exhibit 1-9** lists the 38 members of the administrative team.

Exhibit 1-9
RISD Administrative Team
2002-03

Position	Department
Superintendent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Superintendent
Assistant Superintendent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy, Planning and Research • Curriculum and Instruction • Human Resources and Operations
Chief Financial Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance
Executive Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District Effectiveness and Compliance • School and Community Relations • Facilities Planning and Construction • Maintenance • Transportation • Technology/Information Systems • Child Nutrition • Purchasing • Operations/Risk Management • Business Manager • Special Programs • Federal Programs • Instructional Services • Maintenance and Facilities • Energy Management/Facility Use
Coordinator/Supervisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment • Student Services • Bilingual/English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) • Mentor Program • Special Education

Principals (14)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High School, Freshman Center, Alternative School, Middle Schools and Elementary Schools
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Source: RISD assistant superintendent, Policy, Planning and Research, November 2002.

In an effort to keep administrative staff current on the latest academic research, the superintendent selects a book each year that members of the administrative team must read and discuss in monthly sessions. For 2002-03, the superintendent chose John C. Maxwell's *The Seventeen Indisputable Laws of Teamwork*. The superintendent encourages administrators to incorporate the book's principles when conducting their responsibilities to improve their management skills.

The superintendent's cabinet consists of all three assistant superintendents, the chief financial officer, the director of School/Community Relations and the executive director of Facilities Planning and Construction. The cabinet meets every Monday morning. Once a month the cabinet meets at a school with all RISD principals. The host principal leads a discussion of two chapters of the book chosen for leadership study.

In 1999, the previous superintendent initiated an annual administrative retreat to strengthen the administrative team. Beginning in 2000, the district incorporated specific themes into these retreats. **Exhibit 1-10** lists the themes the district chose for the last four administrative retreats. The former superintendent limited attendance at the retreat to cabinet members. The current superintendent expanded the retreat to include all 38 members of his administrative team. The current superintendent said by expanding the retreat he seeks to focus all the district departments and schools on building strong management skills.

Exhibit 1-10
RISD Administrative Retreat Themes
1999-2000 through 2001-02

Year	Theme	Speakers
2002	Servant Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Jim Boyd, retired school administrator and certified by Greenleaf Institute on Servant Leadership
2001	Managing Transition: Teams Making the Most of Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • William Rodrigues, vice president and general manager, Dell Computer • David Dunn, associate director for

		Governmental Relations, TASB <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spike Dykes, former head football coach, Texas Tech University • Jim Nelson, commissioner, Texas Education Agency
2000	Teambuilding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elizabeth Barrett, vice president for Operations, The Container Store • Camille Keith, vice president, Special Marketing, Southwest Airlines
1999	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • David Anderson and Ed Flathouse, TEA • W.C. Newberry • Elvia Garcia Donaldson, Attorney, TASB • Bobbie Eddins, executive director, Texas Principals Leadership Initiative

Source: RISD assistant superintendent for Policy, Planning and Research.

The superintendent formed six leadership teams in 2001 and asked principals, administrators and counselors to serve on these teams. He assigned each team a topic for specialized study: the administrator appraisal system; the possibilities of block scheduling; the availability of counseling; the district's graduation requirements and grade point average; the masters degree program with Texas A&M-Commerce; and the technology plan. The teams researched their topics and presented a report to the superintendent and board.

The current superintendent also established monthly meetings of principals and bi-monthly meetings of assistant principals with the assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction. The meetings involve the schools in the district's curriculum design and implementation process. The principals and assistant principals have the opportunity to provide items for discussion at each meeting.

COMMENDATION

The superintendent uses a variety of methods to create a cohesive, informed management team that works well together.

FINDING

In April 2002, RISD administered a survey to assess the opinions and attitudes of all staff members and used it to improve the district's quality of service delivery. The superintendent plans to administer the surveys annually and to include parents and students in future assessments. Through these annual surveys, trends can be identified, monitored and addressed.

A Dallas firm that specializes in strategic planning and communications consulting for school districts, businesses and communities conducted the survey. The firm gave principals and members of the District Education Improvement Committee (DEIC) the district's strategic planning committee the opportunity to suggest possible survey items. The consultants combined input from the two groups with its existing survey instrument to create a unique survey for Rockwall.

The consultants, DEIC members and the principals identified seven categories for the survey: instruction and curriculum; technology; community involvement; extracurricular and co-curricular activities; building atmosphere; building leadership; and students. The consultants prepared a series of statements for each of the seven categories. **Exhibit 1-11** lists the survey categories and provides examples of the statements that appeared in the survey.

Exhibit 1-11
Examples of Statements Used to Assess RISD Employee Attitudes by Category

Category (Number of Statements in Category)	Statement
Instruction and Curriculum (20)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The staff explores new and improved ways to teach. • I am provided with the resources necessary to support instruction at all levels. • Students have opportunities to learn in a variety of ways. • I tell parents what their child is supposed to learn.
Technology (10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology skills are valued at this school. • I am provided adequate technology training. • I incorporate technology into my classroom instruction.

Community Involvement (7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer opportunities are communicated to parents. • Parents feel welcome at this school.
Extracurricular and Co-curricular Activities (6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school administration values extracurricular and co-curricular activities. • All students have opportunities to participate in extracurricular and co-curricular activities at this school.
Building Atmosphere (14)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are provided with a safe learning environment. • Students are disciplined fairly. • The staff works collaboratively to solve problems.
Building Leadership (23)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I receive timely feedback from my principal. • My principal supports the staff. • Discipline policies are effective. • I am encouraged by my principal to use a variety of learning strategies.
Students (10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most students feel free to talk to teachers when they have suggestions, questions or concerns. • Student input is considered regarding decisions made at this school.

Source: RISD Survey of Employee Attitudes, 2002.

In April 2002, RISD distributed the survey to administrators, teachers and support staff at each school. Each school administrator appointed a DEIC member to administer the survey during a faculty meeting. To ensure confidentiality, participants returned completed surveys to a sealed box. The appointed DEIC member at each school delivered the box to the RISD central office where it was collected by the consultants. The district received 667 completed surveys. The respondents indicated their position and length of employment at RISD on the surveys. Some of the surveys were incomplete: 56 respondents did not indicate their position and 69 respondents did not indicate their length of employment at RISD, perhaps to protect their identity and confidentiality. **Exhibit 1-12** describes the position and length of service of respondents at each of the district's schools.

Exhibit 1-12
RISD Respondents To Survey of Attitudes
April 2002

School	Position				Experience			
	Administrator	Teacher	Paraprofessional	Other	Fewer Than Two Years	Between Two and Five Years	Between Six and 10 Years	More Than 11 Years
Elementary Schools								
Rochell	2	44	12	8	21	19	8	18
Parks-Heath	1	35	5	2	3	11	13	16
Cullins-Lake Pointe	0	54	9	2	9	27	10	17
Pullen	2	26	3	3	5	15	6	6
Dobbs	2	33	8	2	9	13	8	12
Williams	0	31	9	1	9	15	9	8
Reinhardt	0	36	5	1	9	11	8	15
Middle Schools								
Williams	3	37	6	5	14	12	15	10
Cain	0	37	12	5	20	13	6	16
High School and Alternative School								
Freshman Center	3	41	7	3	11	25	9	7
High School	6	88	12	5	29	34	14	31
Alternative School	1	4	1	1	7	0	0	0
Total	20	466	89	38	146	195	106	156

Source: RISD assistant superintendent for Policy, Planning and Research, November 2002.

The first statement in each of the seven categories asked the respondent to rate the importance of that category to the quality of education provided to students. Respondents used a four-point scale to rate the importance of the category. A response of four indicated that the category was very important and a response of one indicated the category was relatively unimportant. The consultants totaled these ratings and averaged them in order to rank each of the seven categories in terms of overall importance. **Exhibit 1-13** gives the results of the survey. The survey shows that students were the most important factor in the quality of education the district provides, followed by instruction and curriculum. Respondents said extracurricular and co-curricular activities were the least important contributors to the quality of education.

Exhibit 1-13
Attitude Survey Areas and Associated Importance

Area	Importance
Students	3.84
Instruction and curriculum	3.79
Building leadership	3.77
Building atmosphere	3.74
Community involvement	3.59
Technology	3.37
Extra-curricular and co-curricular activities	3.28

Source: RISD assistant superintendent for Policy, Planning and Research, November 2002.

The last statement in each of the categories, except the student category, asked the respondent for an overall rating of the school's performance in this category. For example, the last statement of the Instruction and Curriculum category was, "Overall the instructional delivery at this school is of high quality." The survey then asked respondents to rate each statement using a four-point rating scale, with four the highest and one being the lowest.

Exhibit 1-14 presents the survey results by category for the entire district.

Exhibit 1-14
RISD Aggregate Results on the Attitude Survey
April 2002

Survey Area	Total Average Score	Average Score on Overall Statement
Instruction and curriculum	3.06	3.26
Technology	2.57	2.33
Community involvement	3.31	3.19
Extracurricular and co-curricular activities	3.07	2.98
Building atmosphere	3.15	3.11
Building leadership	3.04	3.02
Students	3.02	N/A

Source: RISD assistant superintendent for Policy, Planning and Research, November 2002.

Exhibit 1-15 shows the survey results at each educational level in the district: high school, middle school and elementary school.

Exhibits 1-15
RISD Results on the Campus Attitude Survey by Educational Level
April 2002

Survey Area	High School		Middle Schools		Elementary Schools	
	Total Average Score	Average Score on Overall Statement	Total Average Score	Average Score on Overall Statement	Total Average Score	Average Score on Overall Statement
Instruction and curriculum	2.95	3.11	3.06	3.25	3.12	3.36
Technology	2.55	2.26	2.92	2.82	2.48	2.21
Community involvement	3.05	2.95	3.30	3.17	3.46	3.36
Extra and co-curricular activities	3.13	3.04	3.16	3.09	3.00	2.91
Building atmosphere	3.01	3.04	3.16	3.10	3.22	3.16
Building leadership	3.01	3.04	3.16	3.10	3.22	3.16

leadership						
Students	2.89	N/A	2.98	N/A	3.10	N/A

Source: RISD assistant superintendent for Policy, Planning and Research, April 2002.

The district encouraged its staff to use the results of the survey to help formulate the district improvement plan and campus improvement plans for 2002-03. Beginning in 2003-04, the district will require that its staff uses the results of the annual employee attitude survey to formulate strategies and action plans both at the district and school levels.

Continuous quality improvement programs focus on feedback as a basis for continuous improvement. The independent survey process provides RISD with an excellent opportunity to gauge employee needs and evaluate their perceptions about RISD working conditions. RISD can use this feedback to continue improving as a district.

COMMENDATION

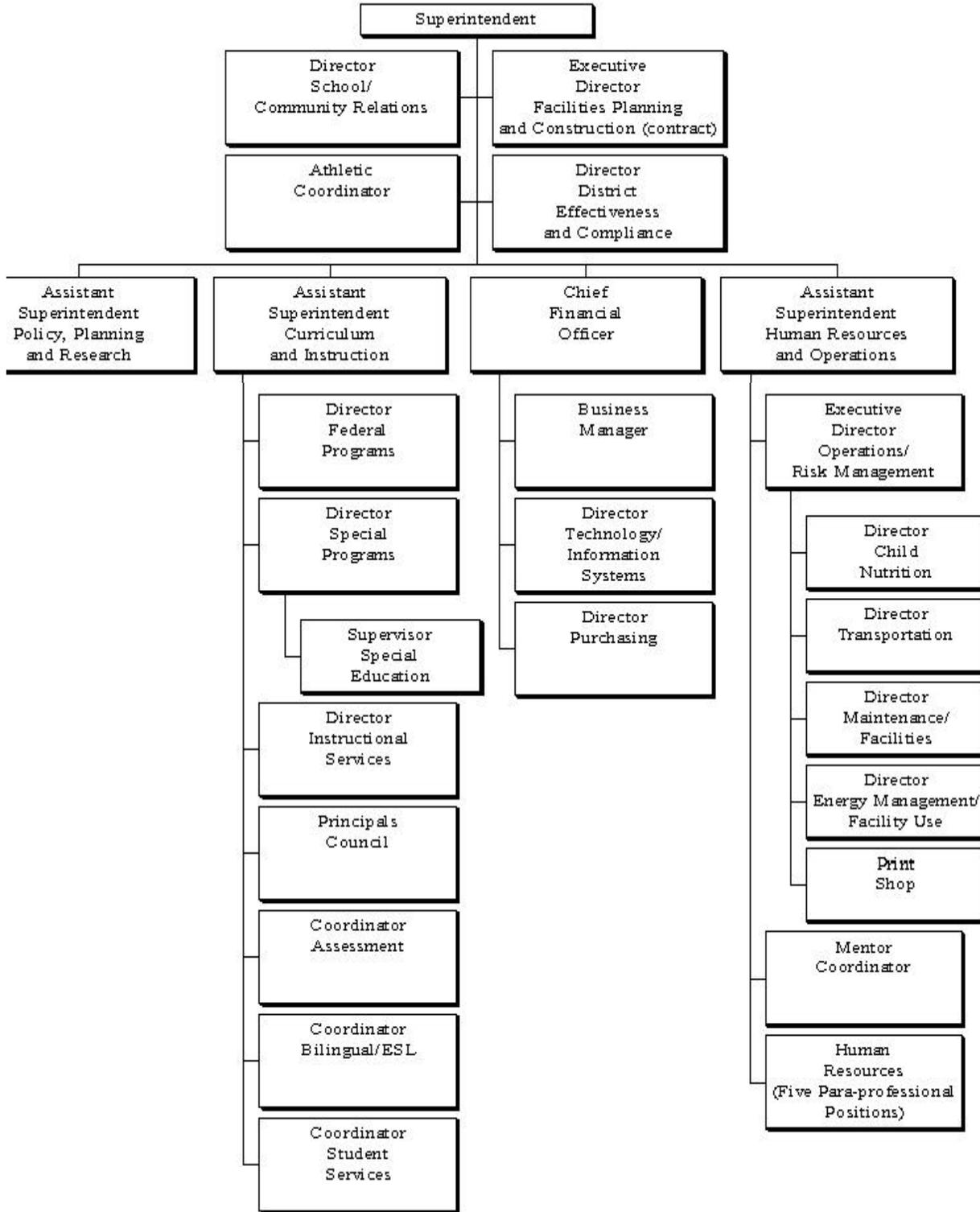
RISD began an annual survey process that seeks input from employees to help improve the quality of district service delivery; the district intends to add parents and students to the process in the future.

FINDING

RISD's current central administrative organization does not distribute the workload equally among senior positions. As a result, certain functions are not being handled efficiently or effectively. Some positions are overloaded while others have minimal supervision or oversight responsibilities, despite similarities in salaries and compensation.

RISD's superintendent manages the district with a senior staff that includes a chief financial officer (CFO) and three assistant superintendents: Curriculum and Instruction; Policy, Planning and Research; and Human Resources and Operations. At the time TSPR reviewed the organization, the (CFO) position was vacant, however, duties were performed by a part-time, interim CFO. **Exhibit 1-16** displays the central administration's organizational structure.

**Exhibit 1-16
RISD Central Administration Organizational Structure
November 2002**



Source: RISD superintendent.

Exhibit 1-17 describes the key responsibilities of the district's senior management positions.

Exhibit 1-17
RISD Senior Management Key Responsibilities

Position	Key Responsibilities
Assistant superintendent, Curriculum and Instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum development and alignment • Instructional delivery • Program evaluation • Program/course development • Student performance • Staff development • Principal assessment program • Supervises six professional positions, 14 principals and two paraprofessional positions
Assistant superintendent, Human Resources and Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment of personnel • Employee benefits • PEIMS (personnel) • Appeals • All operations departments including Child Nutrition, Transportation, Maintenance and Facilities, Energy Management and Facility Use, Print Shop and Human Resources • Supervises two professional positions and five paraprofessional positions
Assistant superintendent, Policy, Planning and Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic planning and annual performance report • School attendance zone (coordinating citizen committees making changes) • Business partnerships • Board policies and procedures (coordinating TASB service) • Supervises one paraprofessional position
Chief financial officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief financial advisor to the board of trustees and the superintendent • Management of all financial, business, purchasing and technology functions in the district • Monthly and annual financial reports • District budget

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliance of all accounting systems with applicable laws and regulations • Supervises three professional positions
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Source: RISD assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations.

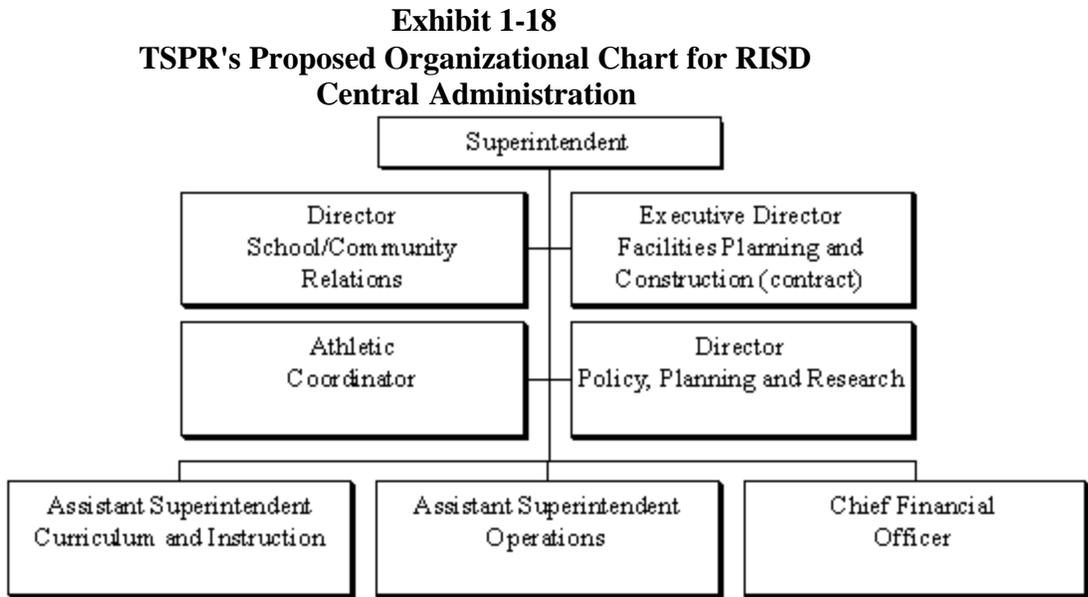
The assistant superintendents for Curriculum and Instruction and Human Resources and Operations have extensive budget and supervisory responsibilities while the assistant superintendent for Policy, Planning and Research has only a secretary reporting to the position and limited budget authority.

The district regularly calls on the assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction and the assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations to handle other critical functions, such as interviewing candidates for principal and assistant principal. As a result, the employees in these positions have little time to undertake special assignments, develop continuous improvement ideas or take long-term responsibility for management support activities.

Recommendation 1:

Reorganize the central administration.

Exhibit 1-18 presents the review team's proposed central administrative organization.



Source: WCL Enterprises, December 2002.

The proposed reorganization eliminates the assistant superintendent for Policy, Planning and Research position and creates the position of director of Policy, Planning and Research. It also changes the position from a line to a staff position that reports directly to the superintendent. The director position is also made responsible for generating data beyond PEIMS for use in program evaluation by the Curriculum and Instruction Department.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent reviews the recommended organization and assigns the assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations to develop an appropriate job description for the new position.	July 2003
2.	The assistant superintendent prepares a job description and reviews it with the superintendent.	August - September 2003
3.	The superintendent approves a job description and requests that the board approve eliminating the position of assistant superintendent for Policy, Planning and Research and creating the position of director of Policy, Planning and Research.	October 2003
4.	The board approves the organizational changes and the superintendent directs the assistant superintendent to post the new position.	November 2003
5.	The superintendent and the assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operation interview candidates and recommend board approval of the best-qualified candidate.	January - February 2004
6.	The board approves the recommendation and directs the superintendent to implement the new organization.	April 2004
7.	The superintendent fills the positions of director of Policy, Planning and Research.	Effective September 1, 2004

FISCAL IMPACT

Eliminating the assistant superintendent for Policy, Planning and Research position would result in an annual savings of \$81,200 in base salary and \$12,180 in benefits (calculated at 15 percent of base salary), or \$93,380. Creating the director of Policy, Planning and Research position would cost the district \$70,124 in base salary and \$10,519 in benefits (calculated at 15 percent of base salary), or \$80,643. The total savings for the reorganization would be \$12,737 each year (\$93,380 - \$80,643 =

\$12,737). The district's current contracts with its administrators do not expire until August 2004. This prevents the district from reorganizing the department until 2004-05.

Position	Salary	Benefits (1)
Added position: Director of Policy, Planning and Research	(\$70,124) (2)	(\$10,519)
Deleted position: Assistant superintendent for Policy, Planning and Research	\$81,200	\$12,180
Total	\$11,076	\$1,661

(1) Calculated at 15 percent of base salary.

(2) Calculated using director of District Effectiveness and Compliance salary as a comparable base salary.

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Reorganize the central administration.	\$0	\$12,737	\$12,737	\$12,737	\$12,737

Chapter 1

DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

C. PLANNING AND SITE-BASED DECISION-MAKING

Effective school systems use long-term plans to guide improvement in the midst of change. School districts begin work on their long-term plans by conducting a needs assessment, identify long goals and the action steps necessary to reach them, and staying focused on activities that enable the district to reach its goals.

School systems spend extensive resources, in both money and time, developing long-term plans. Many districts make the mistake of viewing the completion of the planning document as the culmination of work, not the beginning of a process. However, improvement comes from having an effectively written plan and implementing it.

Once a district has defined its goals and objectives, established priorities, selected appropriate implementation strategies and performance, the district can then budget the resources necessary to reach the performance targets it established in the plan.

School systems with effective planning systems divide the planning process into a series of key components. That include annual school system priorities, school improvement plans, a regular program evaluation cycle, work plans, ongoing evaluation of the personnel implementing the plan, a budget tied to the priorities in the plan and a management information system.

Successful boards adopt annual priorities that are linked to clearly measurable objectives and assigns responsibility for implementation at each level. Districts tie their budgets to each priority to ensure that each priority has adequate resources. This also allows districts to communicate budget information and established priorities to the public. The personnel evaluation system measures how well school system personnel performed in accomplishing its objectives. An annual summative evaluation provides information that can be used for individual and system improvements.

The program evaluation cycle measures the performance of each program taught in the school system. School districts use this information to decide whether they need to modify existing programs or create new ones. Districts also use the information from the evaluation cycle to make decisions about program objectives and activities.

Work plans define the responsibilities for plan implementation and monitoring at all levels of the school system. They provide specific tasks and objectives and identify what department and position the district will hold accountable for completing each task.

Finally, the management information system collects information to determine how well the district achieves its objectives. The information includes input from each of the preceding elements as well as other information pertinent to decision making, such as enrollment and financial projections.

The Texas Education Code (TEC) requires district-level planning and decision-making and has minimum requirements for planning and decision making at the school and district levels. The code requires all school districts to have:

- a comprehensive needs assessment addressing student performance on the standardized tests and any local assessments;
- measurable school system performance objectives for all student populations;
- strategies for improving student performance;
- resources needed to implement identified strategies;
- staff responsible for ensuring the accomplishment of each strategy;
- timelines for monitoring implementation; and
- evaluation criteria for determining whether the strategies are improving student performance.

To satisfy state requirements, the board must establish administrative procedures with the active involvement of the district-level committee. Neither TEA nor the State Board of Education has any rule-making authority in this area. Therefore, it is the responsibility of each school district to interpret and implement the provisions of the state education code in a manner consistent with the statute that will best serve the school district's unique characteristics. State law stipulates that the district and campus plans must be mutually supportive. The plans must also support the state's goals and objectives.

A districtwide committee that includes district staff, principals, teachers and citizens must develop the District Improvement Plan (DIP). RISD closely aligns district improvement planning and site-based decision making. Site-based decision-making (SBDM) committees in RISD develop the campus improvement plans (CIPs). The SBDM committees identify what each school will do in a given year to help achieve district and school objectives. By board policy, the principal at each school chairs the SBDM committee.

Section 21 of the TEC describes certain requirements associated with implementing SBDM in Texas school districts including requirements for annual DIPs and CIPs, composition of district and school decision-making councils, election of representatives to each council, terms of office, meetings and general responsibilities. The major theme is the empowerment of students, parents, teachers, principals and schools.

Each district must provide an administrative procedure for clearly defining the respective roles and responsibilities of the superintendent, central office staff, principals, teachers, district-level committee members and school committee members in six areas: planning, budgeting, curriculum, staffing patterns, staff development and school organization.

RISD adopted a policy in 1997 to create district and school-based, collaborative, decision-making committees to comply with state law. The district has updated the original policy several times since then, most recently in 2002. The policy provides authorization, scope of responsibility, composition of committees, approval processes and electoral processes for membership selection.

The district refers to its district-level planning committee as the District Education Improvement Committee (DEIC). The DEIC consists of 47 members. Two of the committee's members are parents. The committee also includes 27 teachers, 13 school-based professional staff members, one member of the central office staff, two representatives of the business community and two representatives of the district community. The assistant superintendent for Policy, Planning and Research provides the staff support to the DEIC.

School committees must be involved in decisions in planning, budgeting, curriculum, staffing patterns, staff development and school organization. The school committees must approve the portions of the campus plan addressing staff development needs.

Schools approve their campus plans in the spring prior to the close of school for the summer. The DEIC completes the DIP in May and sends it to the board for approval at the beginning of the next school year, usually in August.

FINDING

RISD's board and administration are committed to improving the strategic planning process. RISD approved its first strategic plan on February 26, 1990 for the five-year period of 1990-91 through 1994-95. The plan-labeled a blueprint for "Excellence in Education"-was the culmination of months of work by 200 local citizens and RISD staff. Nine committees

developed specific action plans to enable the district to meet its long-term goals.

In spring 1996, the board and superintendent initiated the strategic plan entitled "2000 and Beyond...Together." The district designed the plan to bring RISD into the 21st century. The district created eight subcommittees to prepare strategies and action plans to accomplish the district's goals. The district included district staff, DEIC members, SBDM committee members, school department heads, teachers, students and community members on the committees.

After the 1996 long-term plan ended in spring 2001, the board directed the superintendent and staff to develop the next strategic plan for the district. From fall 2001 until fall 2002, 10 committees consisting of 151 people plus the three board members, the superintendent and one assistant superintendent met 11 times to prepare the district's current 10-year plan. **Exhibit 1-19** outlines the membership of this work group.

Exhibit 1-19
Membership on Strategic Plan Committees
2001-02

Committee	Membership by Group				Total
	RISD Employees	RISD Principals	RISD Administrators	Community	
Communications	1	0	2	9	12
Curriculum and instruction	6	1	4	9	20
Extracurricular and co-curricular activities	3	1	1	10	15
Facilities	1	2	1	8	12
Finances	0	2	1	11	14
Personnel	11	3	2	3	19
Safety and security	4	2	2	11	19
Student services	5	0	1	10	16
Support services	0	1	4	5	10
Technology	6	0	2	6	14

Total	37	12	20	82	151
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Source: RISD assistant superintendent for Policy, Planning and Research.

Each committee prepared a list of key goals and objectives in their area. **Exhibit 1-20** lists some of these goals and objectives.

Exhibit 1-20
Strategic Plan Committees' Goals and Objectives

Committee	Examples of Goals	Examples of Objectives
Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enact an effective internal and external two-way communication system with all constituents. • Coordinate the method of communication with the target audience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow constituents to comfortably and effectively communicate throughout the system at any level. • Ensure that communication is timely to persons who need the information. • Communicate in a variety of methods/forms to all constituents. • Communicate to multiple locations, including home and work, to all constituents.
Curriculum and instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continually provide a challenging and rigorous curriculum empowering learners to achieve their maximum potential. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish high expectations for all learners. • Research effective instructional methodologies.
Extra and co-curricular activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish and maintain high-quality programs. • Expand opportunities and participation based on the desires 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide top quality programs that will best foster participation and retention. • Ensure parity among programs.

	<p>and interests of students and the community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate periodically to ensure that activities are meeting students' needs. • Supplement activities such as intramural athletics with sports that have maximized enrollment. • Offer additional club or extra-curricular activities where there is student interest.
Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain and upgrade all facilities. • Provide new facilities to meet the program goals of the district. • Develop a plan for communication of facility goal attainment to board of trustees and general public. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain facilities with the district's standard of excellence. • Maintain facilities to ensure optimum safety, health and security. • Develop requirements for landscaping, parking, playgrounds, heating ventilation and air conditioning systems, roofing systems, flooring systems, lighting, energy management, public address systems and technology. • Develop a 10- year construction master plan.
Finances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek opportunities to coordinate with local/state governments to maximize financial efficiency and effectiveness. • Develop and implement a methodology to 	

	<p>maximize non-traditional funding.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate with other city, county and educational entities to share facilities and services for cost reduction. 	
Personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a human resource department supportive to all levels of the organization. • Recruit certified, competent and dedicated professionals from varied cultural backgrounds to instruct diverse learners, exceptional students, second language learners, special needs students and at-risk students. 	
Safety and security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create and develop a Risk Management/Safety Department, provide appropriate resources to implement and enforce department duties and require accountability directly to the superintendent's office. • Annually review, update and periodically test the district's current security plan in coordination with 	

	<p>applicable public safety agencies.</p>	
<p>Student services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students in RISD will conduct themselves in a manner conducive to learning. • All students in RISD will be expected to conduct themselves responsibly and productively. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review zero-tolerance policy. • Provide character education at all levels.
<p>Support services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a support services forum on an ongoing basis to address support issues, review courses of action and provide an avenue of communication within departments and throughout the district. • Recruit actively a quality work force, provide initial and recurring training and develop an incentive program that promotes employee recognition. 	
<p>Technology</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve student achievement through an instructional plan that assures the integration and alignment of district curriculum with technology. • Utilize technology to provide a safe and 	

	secure environment in every classroom.	
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Source: RISD assistant superintendent for Policy, Planning and Research.

Committee members submitted the plan to the board on January 14, 2002. The board adopted the current strategic plan in April 2002. The plan became effective September 1, 2002 and will govern the district's efforts until 2012. RISD requires each school and department to link their goals to the strategic plan.

Using the strategic plan as their basis, board members then adopted board of trustee goals for 2002-03. **Exhibit 1-21** displays the Board of Trustee goals for 2002-03. These goals serve as the DIP goals. The board expects each school and department to link their efforts to these goals.

Exhibit 1-21
RISD Board of Trustee Goals and Objectives
2002-03

Number	Goal	Objective
I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The board of trustees and superintendent will maintain an appropriate governance structure to facilitate the achievement of excellence in all functions of the district. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The superintendent will continue to improve ongoing board communications relative to district issues. • The superintendent will facilitate the "team of eight" concept in planning and implementing a process to provide appropriate training opportunities for enhancement of board members' leadership skills.
II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rockwall ISD will monitor the strategic plan taking the district to 2010 and address infrastructure needs related to the district's rapid growth. The plan will emphasize the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The district will develop a five-year infrastructure plan to accommodate district growth and program enhancement needs.

	<p>10 critical component/goal areas annually: communication, curriculum and instruction, extracurricular and co-curricular activities, facilities, finance, personnel, safety and security, student services, support services and technology.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The district will provide annual accountability reports regarding progress toward goal achievement.
III	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rockwall ISD will continue to demonstrate fiscal responsibility by assuring a positive annual fund balance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The district will explore non-traditional and revenue enrichment funding sources. • The district will maintain alternatives to control expenditures
IV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rockwall ISD will improve the instructional program through content area implementation and integration, with an emphasis on academic achievement/excellence, as the comprehensive curriculum alignment is expanded. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The district will continue to evaluate and modify gifted and talented, pre-Advanced Placement and Advanced Placement (AP) programs that challenge all students to reach their potential. • The district will continue to develop a comprehensive instructional technology plan. • The district will assess the following programs: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. academic course offerings; 2. guidance counseling program; 3. block scheduling; and 4. graduation requirements and GPA calculation. • The district will focus on

		<p>instructional programs in such a way as to obtain the highest level of academic achievement for all students.</p>
V	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rockwall ISD will provide a comprehensive districtwide professional development program, which is student-oriented, research-based, data-driven, and meets the district standard of excellence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rockwall ISD will provide a comprehensive districtwide professional development program, which is student-oriented, research-based, data-driven, and meets the district standard of excellence. The district will continue to collaborate with TAMU-Commerce to implement the in-district graduate degree program. The district will monitor and evaluate the mentor program designed to address needs of first-year teachers. The district will consider extending the program to second-year teachers.
VI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rockwall ISD will develop a comprehensive crisis management plan and evaluation to facilitate safety and security. 	
VII	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rockwall ISD will provide a comprehensive, competitive compensation/benefits program to recruit, maintain and retain employees that are committed to achieving the district mission. 	
VIII	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rockwall ISD will continue 	

	to evaluate and improve external and internal communications.	
IX	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rockwall ISD will focus on the adult/continuing education component of community education with an emphasis on program expansion to accommodate community needs. 	
X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rockwall ISD will enhance the existing extracurricular and co-curricular programs through the continuation of a written annual survey for extracurricular and co-curricular activities, with specific emphasis on consistency among schools. Further, the district will improve the extracurricular and co-curricular programs by increasing opportunities for all students to participate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The district will expand opportunities for students' participation in extracurricular and co-curricular programs, with emphasis on gender equity. The district will monitor and assess the music education program. The district will expand student opportunities in academic programs. The district will expand student opportunities in intramural programs.

Source: RISD assistant superintendent for Policy, Planning and Research.

The timing of the new 10-year plan delayed the creation of the 2002-03 strategic plan. RISD's board approved the 2002-03 strategic plan in April 2002. Typically, the board approves the strategic plan in January.

With the establishment of the district goals and their adoption by the board, the district and campus improvement committees begin gathering information to assess the needs for the district as a whole and at each school. Each school and department prepares a plan for the year. **Exhibit 1-22** presents examples of these plans.

Exhibit 1-22
Examples of RISD DIPs and CIPs

Department/ School	District Goal	Department/ School Goal	Performance Strategies
Facilities	Board of Trustee (BOT) Goal II, Strategic Plan (SP) Facilities Goal I	Rockwall ISD will maintain all facilities to promote maximum productivity.	Provide schematics for all utility services. Identify standards for: energy management, lighting, flooring, parking, HVAC systems, playgrounds, landscaping and roofing.
Human Resources	BOT V, SP Personnel IV	RISD will collaborate with Texas A&M Commerce to implement a three-year commitment to an in-district graduate degree program to be implemented in Fall 2002. RISD will continue to enhance the Master's CORE Program participation.	Complete registration for 2005 CORE group and begin classes. Recruit teachers for 2006 CORE group.
Rockwall High School	BOT II, IV and V; SP Curriculum and Instruction	Rockwall High School will meet the criteria for an Exemplary rating as previously measured by AEIS.	Disaggregate TAAS/TAKS student data to identify students' strengths and weaknesses in reading, writing, math, science and social studies. Offer morning and after school TAKS tutoring.
Cain Middle School	BOT V, VII, VIII And IX; SP Communications I, II; Extra/Co-Curricular Activities I. II: Personnel III:	Maurine Cain Middle School will provide programs that enhance relationships between all members of the learning community.	Develop a school dinner program to be called Cain Café. Provide a teacher-student mentor

	Student Services II, IV, VI, VII	and encourages parental involvement.	program to be called Teachers-N-Teens
Amy Parks-Heath Elementary School	BOT IV; SP Curriculum & Instruction Goal I; Facilities Goal I; Student Services Goals II, IV	Programs and activities that support student's social, emotional and intellectual growth will be provided.	Adoption of hallways by each grade level to enhance cleanliness of the building. Provide tutoring by sixth grade students for younger students.

Source: RISD assistant superintendent for Policy, Planning and Research.

During this portion of the process, principals said that they solicit input from teachers through faculty meetings. Principals also seek input from parents and students by hosting meetings or conducting surveys.

When TEA releases the TAAS data in May, the central administration assembles the information before distributing it to schools. The campus improvement committees meet after they receive the TAAS data and use this information to develop specific educational goals for their schools. At some schools, the committee breaks down into subcommittees to address each of the district goals. At other schools, the approach is less formal, with subgroups developing around a specific issue or goal.

While this process is proceeding, the DEIC prepares its own plan in the spring. In August, the DEIC, each school and department, presents improvement plans for that year to the board for review and approval. Once the board adopts the plans, the district administration, DEIC, principals, department heads and SBDM committees begin implementing strategies for their campus or department. In January, the assistant superintendent for Policy, Planning and Research meets with each principal and department head to conduct a progress evaluation on the current plan. According to principals, this mid-year review helps them re-focus on the goals in the plan and re-think the effectiveness of the strategies.

The assistant superintendent for Policy, Planning and Research prepares a mid-year report summarizing the progress of each school and department in achieving district goals. The assistant superintendent for Policy, Planning and Research presents this report to the board in February.

After the departments and schools have completed the preparation of their plans for the next year, they make a formal assessment of their performance compared with their goals for the prior year. Department heads and schools submit this annual performance assessment report in June along with the next year's plan to the assistant superintendent for Policy, Planning and Research. The district includes the performance report for each department and school in the DIP for the next year.

After the plans for the coming year are submitted, the assistant superintendent for Policy, Planning and Research matches the campus and department plans to the district's strategic plan. The assistant superintendent for Policy, Planning and Research also matches the improvement plans of departments and campuses to the board of trustee goals. The matching process allows the assistant superintendent for Policy, Planning and Research to monitor the school and department planning processes to ensure that they are developing plans, strategies and activities that will accomplish the district's short- and long-term goals.

The district plans to meet future growth needs. The board and superintendent are reviewing demographic projections that indicate the district will grow to about 20,000 students by 2020. The superintendent is reviewing facility needs to accommodate this growth.

COMMENDATION

RISD's planning process involves the community, establishes long-term goals, links department and school efforts to district goals, and provides periodic assessment of accomplishments.

Chapter 2

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

The key purpose of any school system is educating children. Effective and efficient use of a district's financial and human resources and a well-designed instructional program determine how well a district meets this goal. Student performance on standardized tests, student mastery of learning objectives and fluctuating student enrollment affect the development and modification of programs and services provided by a district.

BACKGROUND

As of fall 2002, RISD served 9,488 students in pre-kindergarten through grade 12. RISD's student population grew by 28.9 percent between 1998-99 and 2002-03. **Exhibit 2-1** shows that this is more than double the growth rate in Region 10 and nearly four times the state's average growth rate during the same period.

Exhibit 2-1
Student Enrollment Growth Rates
RISD, Region 10 and the State
1998-99 through 2002-03

District	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	Percentage Change 1998-99 to 2002-03
RISD	7,363	7,798	8,468	8,911	9,488	28.9%
Region 10	563,701	577,800	597,160	618,135	635,621	12.8%
State	3,945,367	3,991,783	4,059,619	4,146,653	4,239,911	7.5%

Source: Texas Education Agency (TEA), Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS), 1998-99 through 2002-03.

RISD serves its students in 14 schools: nine elementary schools, two middle schools, one freshman center, one alternative school and one high school. **Exhibit 2-2** shows the enrollment growth at each campus.

Exhibit 2-2
RISD Campuses, Grade Levels and Enrollment
2001-02 and 2002-03

Campus	Grade Levels	2001-02 Enrollment	2002-03 Enrollment	Percentage Change 2001-02 to 2002-03
Rochell Elementary School	EE-6	827	495	(40.1%)
Parks-Heath Elementary School	K-6	636	641	0.8%
Cullins-Lake Pointe Elementary School	K-6	983	947	(3.7%)
Pullen Elementary School	K-6	627	647	3.2%
Dobbs Elementary School	EE-K-6	615	526	(14.5%)
Nebbie Williams Elementary School	K-6	591	462	(21.8%)
Reinhardt Elementary School	K-6	577	423	(26.7%)
Hartman Elementary School	Pre-K-6	Not open	381	N/A
Jones Elementary School	Pre-K-6	Not open	590	N/A
J.W. Williams Middle School	7-8	818	882	7.8%
Cain Middle School	7-8	624	674	8.0%
Alternative School	7-12	74	106	43.2%
Utley Freshman Center	9	698	752	7.7%
Rockwall High School	9-12	1,841	1,962	6.6%
Total		8,911	9,488	6.5%

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 2001-02 and 2002-03.

For comparison purposes, RISD chose Allen, Carroll, Coppell, Eanes, Frisco and McKinney to serve as peer districts. RISD has a similar ethnic

breakdown as selected peer districts, but has approximately twice as many Anglo students as the state and Region 10 averages (**Exhibit 2-3**).

Exhibit 2-3
Student Enrollment and Demographics
RISD, Peer Districts, Region 10 and the State
2002-03

District	Student Enrollment	African American	Hispanic	Anglo	Asian/Pacific Islander	Native American	Economically Disadvantaged
RISD	9,488	4.8%	12.8%	80.2%	1.8%	0.3%	13.2%
Allen	12,508	7.2%	8.6%	78.4%	5.1%	0.7%	6.5%
Carroll	7,186	1.8%	2.8%	91.8%	3.4%	0.2%	1.3%
Coppell	9,891	3.9%	7.9%	73.3%	14.6%	0.3%	4.1%
Eanes	7,119	0.4%	5.1%	88.0%	6.3%	0.2%	2.1%
Frisco	11,144	7.8%	13.2%	72.6%	5.7%	0.8%	9.3%
McKinney	15,155	8.9%	21.1%	67.4%	2.0%	0.5%	22.5%
Region 10	635,621	20.8%	33.1%	41.1%	4.5%	0.5%	45.4%
State	4,239,911	14.3%	42.7%	39.8%	2.9%	0.3%	51.9%

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 2002-03.

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

Exhibit 2-4 provides RISD's student enrollment and demographics by school.

Exhibit 2-4
RISD Student Enrollment and Demographics by School
2002-03

School	Student Enrollment	African American	Hispanic	Anglo	Asian/Pacific Islander	Native American	Economically Disadvantaged Students
Elementary Schools							
Rochell	495	10.5%	40.2%	47.1%	2.2%	0.0%	42.8%
Parks-Heath	641	2.2%	3.0%	93.1%	1.4%	0.3%	2.0%

Cullins-Lake Pointe	947	5.9%	7.3%	83.6%	2.7%	0.4%	8.8%
Pullen	647	2.0%	10.4%	85.2%	2.2%	0.3%	11.1%
Dobbs	526	6.7%	28.5%	63.7%	0.2%	1.0%	32.3%
Nebbie Williams	462	1.1%	3.9%	93.7%	0.9%	0.4%	5.2%
Reinhardt	423	2.4%	5.9%	90.3%	1.4%	0.0%	7.1%
Hartman	381	2.4%	6.6%	88.2%	2.9%	0.0%	1.8%
Jones	590	9.3%	29.7%	59.2%	1.7%	0.2%	38.0%
Middle Schools							
J.W. Williams	882	4.5%	6.7%	86.5%	1.5%	0.8%	7.0%
Cain	674	5.8%	15.3%	76.9%	1.9%	0.1%	16.5%
High Schools							
Alternative School	106	8.5%	16.0%	74.5%	0.9%	0.0%	10.4%
Utley Freshman Center	752	4.9%	13.2%	80.1%	1.5%	0.4%	13.0%
Rockwall High	1,962	4.4%	9.7%	83.4%	2.2%	0.3%	7.1%

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 2002-03.

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

RISD's student attendance rate remained similar between 1999-2000 and 2000-01. The attendance rate in 2000-01 was above the state and regional averages and comparable to RISD's peer districts. Between 1999-2000 and 2000-01, RISD's student dropout rate declined slightly from 0.9 percent to 0.8 percent. RISD's dropout rate was at the regional average and below the state average in 2000-01. RISD's dropout rate was the highest among its peer districts. **Exhibit 2-5** compares RISD's attendance and dropout rates with its peer districts, Region 10 and the state.

Exhibit 2-5
Attendance Rate and Dropout Rate

**RISD, Peer Districts, Region 10 and the State
1999-2000 through 2000-01**

District	Attendance Rate		Dropout Rate	
	1999-2000	2000-01	1999-2000	2000-01
RISD	96.0%	95.9%	0.9%	0.8%
Allen	96.5%	96.6%	0.3%	0.5%
Carroll	97.3%	97.1%	0.0%	0.0%
Coppell	97.1%	96.9%	0.2%	0.1%
Eanes	96.5%	96.2%	0.4%	0.2%
Frisco	96.4%	96.5%	0.2%	0.0%
McKinney	94.9%	95.6%	0.7%	0.4%
Region 10	95.7%	95.7%	0.9%	0.8%
State	95.6%	95.5%	1.3%	1.0%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 1999-2000 through 2000-01.

From 1998-99 through 2002-03, RISD's student-teacher ratio declined. The district's decline was the fourth-highest decrease among its peer districts. **Exhibit 2-6** shows that RISD's student-teacher ratio remained higher than all its peer districts, Region 10 and the state average.

**Exhibit 2-6
Student to Teacher Ratios
RISD, Peer Districts, Region 10 and the State
1998-99 and 2002-03**

District	1998-99	2002-03	Percentage Change 1998-99 through 2002-03
McKinney	17.0	14.1	(17.1%)
Frisco	15.0	13.5	(10.0%)
Eanes	13.7	13.2	(3.6%)
RISD	16.9	16.6	(1.8%)
Coppell	14.5	14.4	(0.7%)

Carroll	14.4	14.4	0.0%
Allen	15.3	16.1	5.2%
Region 10	16.0	14.7	(8.1%)
State	15.2	14.7	(3.3%)

Source: TEA, AEIS, 1998-99 and 2002-03.

Texas mandates that class sizes in kindergarten through grade 4 be no more than 22 students per teacher. In 2001-02 most, but not all, of RISD's grade levels boasted smaller classes than the peer districts, Region 10 and the state average. **Exhibit 2-7** compares specific grade levels of RISD and the peer districts.

Exhibit 2-7
Average Elementary School Class Size
RISD, Peer Districts, Region 10 and the State
2001-02

Grade	RISD	Allen	Carroll	Coppell	Eanes	Frisco	McKinney	Region 10	State
Kindergarten	17.9	21.2	19.1	18.9	18.7	18.3	18.5	18.9	18.9
Grade One	18.2	20.2	16.8	18.4	17.7	16.0	18.9	18.5	18.1
Grade Two	18.7	19.5	19.4	18.6	19.5	18.3	18.6	18.8	18.5
Grade Three	18.9	18.3	20.7	19.0	19.3	17.9	18.4	18.6	18.9
Grade Four	18.4	18.9	19.6	19.1	18.8	18.4	18.7	19.6	19.5
Grade Five	21.9	24.5	29.7	20.5	20.4	19.6	21.8	22.8	22.2
Grade Six	22.3	23.6	31.0	24.2	21.7	21.4	24.7	22.9	22.3
Mixed Grades	12.0	21.2	N/A	N/A	23.3	13.3	N/A	22.1	24.7

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2001-02.

Exhibit 2-8 shows that RISD's average class size in all types of classes at the secondary level decreased from 1997-98 to 2001-02.

Exhibit 2-8
Change in RISD
Average Secondary School Class Size
1997-98 and 2001-02

Subject	1997-98	2001-02	Percentage Change Between 1997-98 and 2001-02
English	23.5	20.9	(11.1%)
Foreign language	25.3	22.8	(9.9%)
Math	23.5	22.8	(3.0%)
Science	26.1	23.8	(8.8%)
Social studies	28.1	25.6	(8.9%)

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

RISD and Coppell had the largest secondary math classes among peer districts and RISD's secondary science classes were second largest. **Exhibit 2-9** shows that RISD's secondary classes were larger in all subjects than the Region 10 and state averages.

Exhibit 2-9
Secondary School Class Sizes
RISD, Peer Districts, Region 10 and the State
2001-02

Grade	RISD	Allen	Carroll	Coppell	Eanes	Frisco	McKinney	Region 10	State
English/Language Arts	20.9	21.5	21.8	21.6	19.0	19.6	21.4	19.9	20.2
Foreign languages	22.8	22.9	21.2	21.1	17.5	19.5	20.4	20.5	21.2
Math	22.8	22.3	21.4	22.8	18.5	19.2	22.0	20.6	20.4
Science	23.8	24.1	22.9	23.4	20.4	21.1	22.8	22.1	21.6
Social studies	25.6	25.8	24.3	25.1	21.6	22.2	23.5	22.6	22.6

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2001-02.

Chapter 2

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

A. CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

RISD's Curriculum and Instruction Division manages the development of curriculum, the delivery of educational services, special programs and the evaluation of these projects. The division also is responsible for providing principals and teachers with the tools they need to consistently deliver the state adopted curriculum and to prepare students to perform well on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS). In 2002-03, the TAKS replaced the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (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 newly created Office of Statewide Initiatives published the *Superintendent's Brief with Planning Guides for Meeting the Higher Learning Standards* document in August 2002. This document outlines the new higher stakes challenges that superintendents and district administrators will face between 2002 and 2008. The instructional facilitator's planning guide on page five of this document offers a plan for preparing curriculum and staff for the higher learning standards that will be measured by the TAKS. *The Cycle to Raise Learning Expectations 2002 and Beyond* recommends, "insuring alignment of the district curriculum with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), monitoring the teaching of the TEKS and assessing each student's performance by each TAKS objective."

FINDING

RISD's Curriculum and Instruction Division provides campuses with progressive leadership. Using vertical teams from 1998-99 through 2001-02, the district produced vertically and horizontally aligned scope and sequence documents that also were aligned to the TEKS. These documents emphasize specific objectives that will be on the TAKS with bold print. The district arranged the scope documents by nine-week grade reporting periods for the four core academic areas-English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies and Science-in kindergarten through grade 12.

The Curriculum and Instruction Division distributed the scope and sequence documents to each classroom teacher responsible for teaching these subjects. For continuity, the Curriculum and Instruction Division also gives teachers the scope and sequence documents for the grade level above and below the one they teach. These documents provide an avenue for the district to document instructional consistency in each grade level by each of the four core content areas that the state will assess. Each document also lists the vocabulary that teachers need to focus on during each grade-reporting period. **Exhibit 2-10** illustrates the organization of the scope and sequence documents.

Exhibit 2-10
RISD Scope and Sequence Document Organization

TEK Number and Strand	Student Expectations	Specific Examples/Clarification	Vocabulary
The specific TEKS requirements are printed below.	The student expectations are explained in a statement and then printed in the box below.	Teacher created examples and clarifications are printed in the box below.	Required vocabulary is printed in the box below.
Example: (5.1) Number; operation and quantitative reasoning.	Example: The student uses place value to represent whole numbers and decimals. The student is expected to: (A) use place value to read, write, compare and order whole numbers thorough the billions place.	Example: Such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use "er" words like bigger, smaller, taller, shorter and larger in story problems to order whole numbers. • $3000 + 200 + 10 + 1 = 3,211$: three thousand two hundred eleven • Least to greatest: 1001, 1005, 1110 • $52 < 68$ 	Example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Word names from thousandths to billions • Standard form • Expanded form • Word form • Short Word Form • Place Value

Source: RISD assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction.

These documents provide each teacher with district guidelines for consistently teaching all students the state's educational requirements. The documents include examples, clarifications and specific vocabulary.

COMMENDATION

RISD's Curriculum and Instruction Division provides teachers with TEKS- and TAKS- aligned scope and sequence documents arranged by nine-week grade reporting periods.

FINDING

RISD has no management procedure to ensure that all teachers consistently follow the curriculum scope and sequence documents for their grade/subject level.

RISD requires all principals to monitor the teachers at their campus to ensure that the teachers use the scope and sequence documents. According to the assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, most principals require that their teachers put the corresponding TEKS numbers on their lesson plans. The district does not, however, have an approved accountability system to guide the principals in monitoring and adjusting this process if teachers do not follow the scope and sequence documents.

Monitoring activities vary from school to school ranging from "random checks" to "weekly checklists kept for each teacher." **Exhibit 2-11** describes each school's monitoring system.

**Exhibit 2-11
RISD School Monitoring Techniques**

School	Method Used for Monitoring Instruction of Scope and Sequence
Rochell	Teachers turn in lesson plans to the principal. The principal monitors the lesson plans closely to verify compliance with the TEKS. The district hosts team meetings twice a week, again to verify all teachers are following curriculum TEKS criteria. The principal also meets with team leader twice a week to discuss the curriculum. The school keeps a notebook for each teacher with a checklist of the TEKS requirements they need to keep. This school held a fundraiser to purchase materials that augment the TEKS.
Parks-Heath	The principal tracks the use of the scope and sequence documents by discussions with grade levels and inclusion of TEKS in lesson plans. Some grade levels make notes about the TEKS on the

	curriculum documents.
Cullins-Lake Pointe	School administrators monitor teachers' weekly lesson plans. Administrators regularly compare lesson plans to the content listed in each nine-weeks curriculum. When administrators conduct walk-throughs and formal observations, they also check teachers' lesson plans against the district curriculum. School administrators regularly remind teachers that they must follow the district curriculum. Administrators and teachers periodically discuss curriculum scope and sequence documents in grade-level meetings.
Jones	School administrators review weekly lesson plans for compliance with the scope and sequence of the curriculum. Teachers submit the agendas and minutes of their weekly grade level meetings to the principal. The principal attends the grade-level meetings to evaluate teaching and curriculum alignment as much as possible. The principal discuss testing issues as well as student performance with teachers. After a random observation of a class, the principal returns to her office, checks the lesson plan and verifies the curriculum has been taught in proper sequence.
Pullen	Teachers use the RISD aligned curriculum for lesson planning. In their lesson plans, they list the TEKS learning objective for each day. The principal monitors lesson plans weekly and refers to a condensed version of the TEKS for that grade level then correlates it to the nine-week activities in the curriculum guide. In addition, the principal meets periodically with the grade levels to discuss curriculum planning and implementation.
Dobbs	Teachers turn in their lesson plans weekly for the principal to review. Teachers hold grade-level team meetings each week to plan lessons based on the RISD curriculum. The teachers give the principal copies of the minutes of those meetings. From time to time, the principal, assistant principal and/or counselor attend these grade-level meetings. The principal and assistant principal conduct walk-throughs as well as formal observations. School administration also reviews projects, staff development and budgets for curriculum content and shares the information as necessary.
Hartman	Teachers indicate TEKS objectives on their lesson plans. Administrators match required TEKS objectives by nine weeks in the grade-level curriculum documents. Teachers highlight their lesson plans where TEKS information is taught. Teachers make and use checklists. The administration uses AEIS checklists. The principal holds periodic grade-level meetings and has individual conferences with teachers. The principal conducts walk-through

	observations of classes. Teachers attend grade-level team meetings to plan their use of the document and lesson strategies.
Nebbie Williams	The school administration holds periodic team leader meetings to discuss feedback and progress on the TEKS for each nine weeks. The principal and assistant principal evaluate lesson plans and TEKS usage to ensure they fall in the correct nine weeks of instruction. In grade level planning, the team leader guides lesson planning from the curriculum documents. The principal and assistant principal make random appearances in classrooms to ensure guides are being used in planning.
Middle Schools	
Reinhardt	In order to maintain focus on the curriculum guides during faculty meetings, the principal emphasizes the importance of following the documents in order to teach the TEKS, prepare for the TAKS and maintain alignment across the district. Teachers document in their lesson plans where they are in the curriculum guides. The principal periodically checks lesson plans to ensure content and skills are being taught according to the curriculum guides. Teachers meet in grade-level teams to plan their lessons, ensuring that everyone is on target with the curriculum guides. Some grade levels created checklists to ensure coverage of the curriculum requirements.
J. W. Williams	Teachers turn in weekly lesson plans. The plans include how the TEKS is taught and where it is referenced in the curriculum guide. The principal monitors the plans to verify TEKS usage and verifies that teachers follow the lesson plans by conducting periodic walk-throughs. Teams have common planning times so that departments can meet and verify TEKS criteria and incorporate these requirements into finals. Teacher appraisals incorporate correct usage and follow-through of curriculum guide.
Cain	Team leaders monitor lesson plans in weekly team meetings. The school arranges its teams by the four core academic areas: language arts, math, science and social studies.
High School	
Herman E. Utley Freshman Center	Teachers complete and submit lesson plans weekly. School administrators require teachers to write on the plan what TEKS objective they will be working on each day. Departments hold meetings to verify that teachers are following curriculum specifications. Mentor teachers constantly work with new teachers to make sure they are following curriculum criteria.

Rockwall High School	The district has not completed curriculum guides for some of the courses offered at this level. The school does provide basic guidelines to ensure optimum results. The school administration also conducts a review of district, school and departmental benchmark testing; departmental semester exam results and information review; teacher evaluations; review of teacher grade books; and classroom walk-throughs and formal observations. The school provides ongoing instructional staff development opportunities.
RISD Alternative School	Teachers use the district curriculum guides to create lesson plans. The teachers also follow the district's curriculum by aligning with home schools through course syllabi from home schools.

Source: RISD assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction.

RISD's Curriculum and Instruction Division evaluates and redefines the scope and sequence documents on a yearly basis. This process is slow and arduous. The assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction works with the curriculum team, made up of teachers from each grade, each spring and summer in a series of meetings to collect the recommended changes and modifications to the scope and sequence documents. District secretaries manually enter the changes. The district did not completely enter the changes to the scope and sequence documents from the spring and summer of 2002 until November 2002.

In 2000, Kerrville ISD (KISD) implemented OASIS, an automated curriculum system for all content areas in classes from kindergarten to grade 12. OASIS combines KISD's objectives, best instructional practices, resources and up-to-date information about the state's assessment instrument into a single system. OASIS also aligns each KISD objective with the state's assessment instrument Release Test questions, *Clarifying Activities and Assessment in Math* and *Snapshots in Science*. OASIS also includes clarifications from TEA's Educator's Guide and favorite Web sites. In 2001, KISD's curriculum writers updated the best practices and resources in each core area and began the alignment of assessment, enrichment and remediation activities to each KISD objective. The OASIS system allows KISD to quickly update and distribute its scope and sequence documents.

Recommendation 2:

Implement an online curriculum management program.

Good management of instructional programs can provide for systematic monitoring of instructional programs, provide feedback on successful

aspects of curriculum and instruction, identify areas for program revision and benefit overall student achievement.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction assembles the curriculum development team to evaluate online curriculum software packages that include online lesson plan templates.	September - December 2003
2.	The curriculum development team prepares specifications for an online system and presents them to the assistant superintendent for modification and approval.	January 2004
3.	The assistant superintendent approves the specifications and forwards the information to the director of Purchasing to include in a request for proposals (RFP).	January 2004
4.	The director of Purchasing issues an RFP for purchasing the software, loading data from the district scope and sequence documents into the software and training the district staff for using the software.	January - March 2004
5.	The assistant superintendent and curriculum development team review RFP responses and select software.	April 2004
6.	RISD curriculum staff load all curriculum scope and sequence data into the software.	May - August 2004
7.	The selected vendor trains RISD staff in the use of the new online curriculum software and lesson plan program.	September - December 2004
8.	Principals begin monitoring the lesson plans of all teachers' instruction of the district scope and sequences documents.	January 2005
9.	Principals report the progress of their school and the use of the automated system at monthly principal meetings with the superintendent.	February 2005 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

The review team estimates purchasing and implementing an online Web-based program for managing and storing the scope and sequence documents will cost the district \$10,000 the first year and approximately \$6,000 per year after that. The district's costs for the system will be highest during the first year of the project. RISD will spend significant amounts of time and energy during the first year transferring the

information from the scope and sequence documents into the computer system.

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Implement an online curriculum management program.	(\$10,000)	(\$6,000)	(\$6,000)	(\$6,000)	(\$6,000)

FINDING

RISD does not formally evaluate its educational programs. As a result, RISD does not know what programs are most effective.

Statewide student achievement testing in the core subjects provides feedback that enables school districts to evaluate the effectiveness of their core programs. Districts, however, have few program evaluations of ancillary programs, such as those targeted to address a short-term need at one school like reading skills improvement. With no method to evaluate the effectiveness of the program, districts may continue unsuccessful programs or discontinue successful ones.

Districts' program evaluation mechanisms should be comprehensive, focused on program results and effectiveness and be independently conducted. The program evaluation should examine the following issues:

- economy, efficiency or effectiveness of the program;
- structure or design of the program to accomplish its goals and objectives;
- adequacy of the program to meet its needs identified by the school board, governmental agencies or law;
- alternative methods of providing program services or products;
- program goals and objectives clearly linking to and supporting department, division and district priorities and strategic goals and objectives;
- adequate benchmarks and comparisons have been set for student outcomes, program cost efficiency and cost effectiveness;
- compliance with appropriate policies, rules and laws; and
- adequacy and appropriateness of goals, objectives and performance measures used by the program to monitor, assess and report on program accomplishments.

Program objectives are measurable and adequately define the specific effect the program is expected to have on student achievement, especially on student performance.

The 1990 *Spring Independent School District Standard Process for Program Evaluation* describes the standards that Spring Independent School District (SISD) will apply to all its educational programs. Its intent is "to establish program evaluation as an expected, systematic and continuing process integrated with an organized program development cycle." The plan gathers information useful to improving, revising and determining the worth of programs. The plan includes two types of evaluation for these purposes: evaluation designed to improve the implementation of programs in progress and evaluation designed to make judgments regarding the merit of programs.

SISD reviews a select number of programs each year. These program evaluations identify the programs' strengths and concerns. Instructional and administrative staff and the board use evaluation results as the basis for program planning and revision. In addition to these evaluations, SISD evaluates programs periodically through surveys of parents, teachers and students. SISD also surveys graduates at the end of each school year.

SISD based its five-year curriculum evaluation program on *Standards for Evaluation of Educational Programs, Projects and Materials*. The Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation produced this document. The document suggests that districts address the following indicators or measures in the program evaluation process:

- the degree of program implementation;
- student performance;
- the quality of teacher preparation and development;
- teacher satisfaction and concern;
- the use, the quantity and the quality of materials and resources;
- unintended effects;
- student, parent and community satisfaction; and
- adequacy of staffing, facilities and equipment.

Recommendation 3:

Develop a formal program evaluation process.

The assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction should work with central office Curriculum and Instruction Division staff, principals and teachers to develop a program evaluation schedule. The district should adopt a standard report format and establish a timeframe for conducting the evaluations.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction meets	July 2003
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	with central office Curriculum and Instruction staff, principals and teachers to discuss the order of priority in which programs should be evaluated.	
2.	The assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction develops an evaluation schedule, a standard report format and a timetable for completing the evaluations during the first year. The assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction reviews it with central office Curriculum and Instruction Division staff, principals and teachers.	August 2003
3.	The assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction modifies the plan to reflect the input of the participants and presents it to the superintendent for approval.	September 2003
4.	The superintendent approves the plan and authorizes the assistant superintendent to begin the process.	September 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

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Cain	Team leaders monitor lesson plans in weekly team meetings. The school arranges its teams by the four core academic areas: language arts, math, science and social studies.
High School	
Herman E. Utley Freshman Center	Teachers complete and submit lesson plans weekly. School administrators require teachers to write on the plan what TEKS objective they will be working on each day. Departments hold meetings to verify that teachers are following curriculum specifications. Mentor teachers constantly work with new teachers to make sure they are following curriculum criteria.

Rockwall High School	The district has not completed curriculum guides for some of the courses offered at this level. The school does provide basic guidelines to ensure optimum results. The school administration also conducts a review of district, school and departmental benchmark testing; departmental semester exam results and information review; teacher evaluations; review of teacher grade books; and classroom walk-throughs and formal observations. The school provides ongoing instructional staff development opportunities.
RISD Alternative School	Teachers use the district curriculum guides to create lesson plans. The teachers also follow the district's curriculum by aligning with home schools through course syllabi from home schools.

Source: RISD assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction.

RISD's Curriculum and Instruction Division evaluates and redefines the scope and sequence documents on a yearly basis. This process is slow and arduous. The assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction works with the curriculum team, made up of teachers from each grade, each spring and summer in a series of meetings to collect the recommended changes and modifications to the scope and sequence documents. District secretaries manually enter the changes. The district did not completely enter the changes to the scope and sequence documents from the spring and summer of 2002 until November 2002.

In 2000, Kerrville ISD (KISD) implemented OASIS, an automated curriculum system for all content areas in classes from kindergarten to grade 12. OASIS combines KISD's objectives, best instructional practices, resources and up-to-date information about the state's assessment instrument into a single system. OASIS also aligns each KISD objective with the state's assessment instrument Release Test questions, *Clarifying Activities and Assessment in Math* and *Snapshots in Science*. OASIS also includes clarifications from TEA's Educator's Guide and favorite Web sites. In 2001, KISD's curriculum writers updated the best practices and resources in each core area and began the alignment of assessment, enrichment and remediation activities to each KISD objective. The OASIS system allows KISD to quickly update and distribute its scope and sequence documents.

Recommendation 2:

Implement an online curriculum management program.

Good management of instructional programs can provide for systematic monitoring of instructional programs, provide feedback on successful

aspects of curriculum and instruction, identify areas for program revision and benefit overall student achievement.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction assembles the curriculum development team to evaluate online curriculum software packages that include online lesson plan templates.	September - December 2003
2.	The curriculum development team prepares specifications for an online system and presents them to the assistant superintendent for modification and approval.	January 2004
3.	The assistant superintendent approves the specifications and forwards the information to the director of Purchasing to include in a request for proposals (RFP).	January 2004
4.	The director of Purchasing issues an RFP for purchasing the software, loading data from the district scope and sequence documents into the software and training the district staff for using the software.	January - March 2004
5.	The assistant superintendent and curriculum development team review RFP responses and select software.	April 2004
6.	RISD curriculum staff load all curriculum scope and sequence data into the software.	May - August 2004
7.	The selected vendor trains RISD staff in the use of the new online curriculum software and lesson plan program.	September - December 2004
8.	Principals begin monitoring the lesson plans of all teachers' instruction of the district scope and sequences documents.	January 2005
9.	Principals report the progress of their school and the use of the automated system at monthly principal meetings with the superintendent.	February 2005 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

The review team estimates purchasing and implementing an online Web-based program for managing and storing the scope and sequence documents will cost the district \$10,000 the first year and approximately \$6,000 per year after that. The district's costs for the system will be highest during the first year of the project. RISD will spend significant amounts of time and energy during the first year transferring the

information from the scope and sequence documents into the computer system.

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Implement an online curriculum management program.	(\$10,000)	(\$6,000)	(\$6,000)	(\$6,000)	(\$6,000)

FINDING

RISD does not formally evaluate its educational programs. As a result, RISD does not know what programs are most effective.

Statewide student achievement testing in the core subjects provides feedback that enables school districts to evaluate the effectiveness of their core programs. Districts, however, have few program evaluations of ancillary programs, such as those targeted to address a short-term need at one school like reading skills improvement. With no method to evaluate the effectiveness of the program, districts may continue unsuccessful programs or discontinue successful ones.

Districts' program evaluation mechanisms should be comprehensive, focused on program results and effectiveness and be independently conducted. The program evaluation should examine the following issues:

- economy, efficiency or effectiveness of the program;
- structure or design of the program to accomplish its goals and objectives;
- adequacy of the program to meet its needs identified by the school board, governmental agencies or law;
- alternative methods of providing program services or products;
- program goals and objectives clearly linking to and supporting department, division and district priorities and strategic goals and objectives;
- adequate benchmarks and comparisons have been set for student outcomes, program cost efficiency and cost effectiveness;
- compliance with appropriate policies, rules and laws; and
- adequacy and appropriateness of goals, objectives and performance measures used by the program to monitor, assess and report on program accomplishments.

Program objectives are measurable and adequately define the specific effect the program is expected to have on student achievement, especially on student performance.

The 1990 *Spring Independent School District Standard Process for Program Evaluation* describes the standards that Spring Independent School District (SISD) will apply to all its educational programs. Its intent is "to establish program evaluation as an expected, systematic and continuing process integrated with an organized program development cycle." The plan gathers information useful to improving, revising and determining the worth of programs. The plan includes two types of evaluation for these purposes: evaluation designed to improve the implementation of programs in progress and evaluation designed to make judgments regarding the merit of programs.

SISD reviews a select number of programs each year. These program evaluations identify the programs' strengths and concerns. Instructional and administrative staff and the board use evaluation results as the basis for program planning and revision. In addition to these evaluations, SISD evaluates programs periodically through surveys of parents, teachers and students. SISD also surveys graduates at the end of each school year.

SISD based its five-year curriculum evaluation program on *Standards for Evaluation of Educational Programs, Projects and Materials*. The Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation produced this document. The document suggests that districts address the following indicators or measures in the program evaluation process:

- the degree of program implementation;
- student performance;
- the quality of teacher preparation and development;
- teacher satisfaction and concern;
- the use, the quantity and the quality of materials and resources;
- unintended effects;
- student, parent and community satisfaction; and
- adequacy of staffing, facilities and equipment.

Recommendation 3:

Develop a formal program evaluation process.

The assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction should work with central office Curriculum and Instruction Division staff, principals and teachers to develop a program evaluation schedule. The district should adopt a standard report format and establish a timeframe for conducting the evaluations.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction meets	July 2003
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	with central office Curriculum and Instruction staff, principals and teachers to discuss the order of priority in which programs should be evaluated.	
2.	The assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction develops an evaluation schedule, a standard report format and a timetable for completing the evaluations during the first year. The assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction reviews it with central office Curriculum and Instruction Division staff, principals and teachers.	August 2003
3.	The assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction modifies the plan to reflect the input of the participants and presents it to the superintendent for approval.	September 2003
4.	The superintendent approves the plan and authorizes the assistant superintendent to begin the process.	September 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

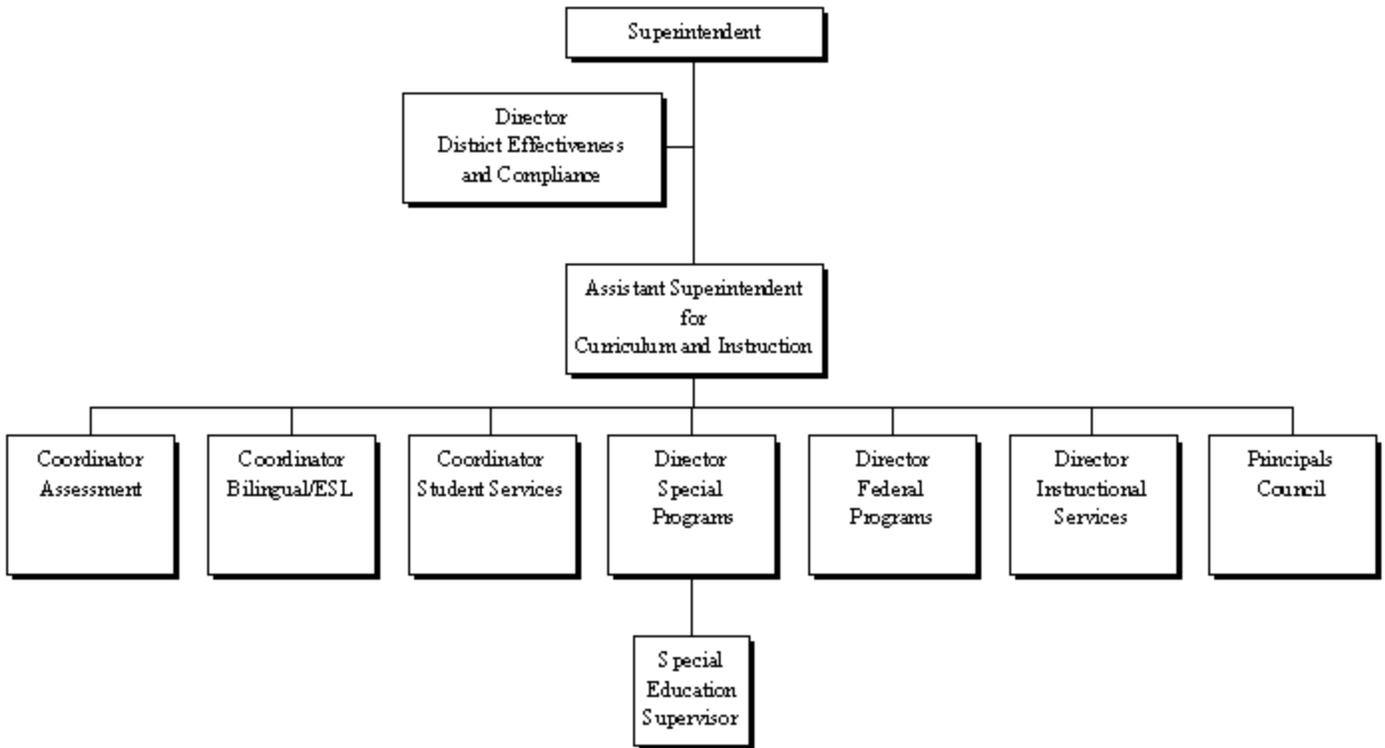
Chapter 2

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

B. ORGANIZATION AND STAFFING

RISD's Curriculum and Instruction Division is organized with six administrative staff members who report directly to the assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction. **Exhibit 2-12** presents the organizational chart of the Curriculum and Instruction Division.

Exhibit 2-12
RISD Curriculum and Instruction Organization
November 2002



Source: RISD assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction.

Exhibit 2-13 lists the responsibilities of each Curriculum and Instruction Division staff member.

Exhibit 2-13
Responsibilities of RISD Curriculum and Instruction Division
2001-02

Position	Key Areas of Responsibility
----------	-----------------------------

Assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum development and alignment • Instructional delivery • Program evaluation • Program/course development • Student performance • Staff development • Principal assessment program • Supervision of six professional positions, all principals and two paraprofessional positions
Director of Federal Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federal programs • Library coordinator • Student handbooks • Grant writing • PDAS-teacher training • Head Start/Early Childhood • Reading initiative/specialists • Textbook adoption
Assessment coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Testing coordinator • Academic Decathlon coordinator • Liaison for Academic Booster Club • Destination Imagination Coordinator • Summer school coordinator • At-risk student identification
Director of Special Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of Special Education • 504 coordinator • Language Science coordinator (Dyslexia program) • Care Team coordinator
Director of Instructional Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gifted/talented program/professional development • Instructional technology • Program evaluation and design • Technology grants (TIF) • Software preview • Long-range plan for technology • Career and Technology programs • Pre AP/ AP programs • Intel program

Bilingual/ESL coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Migrant education • Bilingual education • ESL
Student Services coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nurses • Counselors • Fine Arts programs • Drug Free Schools • Extra curricular activities (not athletics) • Social Services liaison • Pregnancy coordinator
Director of District Effectiveness and Compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare RISD for TEA visit by compiling necessary information

Source: RISD job descriptions and TSPR interviews.

FINDING

The district does not have enough staff to handle some key functions of the Curriculum and Instruction Division. As a result, the assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction must meet with teachers and principals and monitor school and teacher performance on a daily basis. RISD is a rapidly growing district and the assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction has other important senior administrative responsibilities to address. These responsibilities include evaluating scheduling alternatives in secondary schools, planning teacher staffing needs at new schools, evaluating principals and assistant principals and preparing for new testing programs.

RISD is implementing a new curriculum that will seamlessly connect the instruction that children receive as they move from kindergarten to graduation. But the district does not have a position that is responsible for monitoring the implementation of this curriculum. Currently, responsibility for monitoring the program falls to the assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction. The district also does not have a position that is responsible for ensuring consistent application of the curriculum at grade level districtwide and for working with principals and teachers in implementing or changing the system.

Because of the current division of responsibilities, the assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction is the only position that can monitor each program and function to ensure compliance with state and federal requirements, as well as district policies and goals. The duties of

the assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction require her to work with the principals and teachers in the schools as well as make changes to the curriculum.

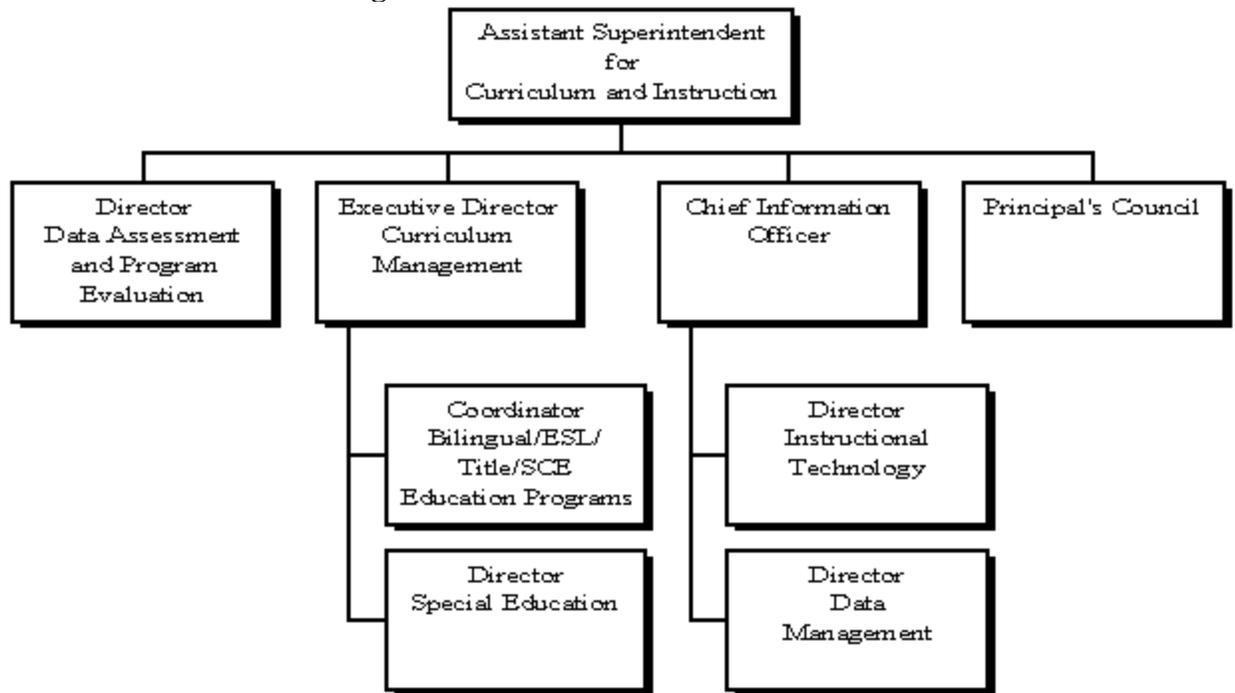
The superintendent also requires the assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction to meet with the principals on a monthly basis and with the assistant principals every other month. The same assistant superintendent also interviews all candidates for vacant principal and assistant principal positions.

Recommendation 4:

Reorganize the Curriculum and Instruction Division to provide additional support to the assistant superintendent.

Exhibit 2-14 shows the recommended organization for the division.

**Exhibit 2-14
Recommended RISD Curriculum and Instruction Division
Organizational Chart**



Source: TSPR.

The recommended organization structure would:

- Add the position of director of Data Assessment and Program Evaluation. This position would be responsible for coordinating

the district testing program, both for the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) and any norm-referenced test, disaggregating all test data and working with principals and teachers to interpret the data and developing strategies to increase student performance. Creating this position will allow the district to eliminate the coordinator of Assessment position.

- Add the position of executive director of Curriculum Management. This position would be responsible for overseeing the implementation of the new curriculum and consistency of its application, overseeing the advance placement/gifted and talented program, adopting textbooks, coordinating the accelerated reader and fine arts programs and supervising the coordinator of Bilingual/ESL education and the director of Special Education.
- Eliminate the director of Federal Programs. The district would transfer responsibilities for the federal title programs and state compensatory education (SCE) programs to the coordinator of Bilingual/ESL education. Since the Bilingual/ESL education coordinator serves a similar population, this change will cause minimal difficulties. The district would also transfer responsibility for new teacher training on the state evaluation system to the mentor coordinator. This position reports to the Human Resources director. Assistant principals at individual schools would supervise Head Start and early childhood programs for their individual schools.
- Eliminate the coordinator of Student Services. The district can transfer responsibility for crisis management plan preparation and implementation to the executive director of Operations/Risk Management. The district can give one existing counselor at the secondary level and one at the elementary level a stipend to serve as lead counselor for their grade level. The lead counselor would coordinate the guidance and counseling program. The district can transfer responsibility for its drug-free program to a teacher at Rockwall High School who is already involved in the program. Finally, the district can transfer responsibility for social services liaison to the security resource officer and the lead counselor at each school.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent reviews the recommended organizational chart and assigns responsibility to the assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations to develop appropriate job descriptions for the positions.	July 2003
2.	The assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations prepares the job descriptions and reviews them	August - September

	with the superintendent.	2003
3.	The superintendent requests the board to approve all new and eliminated positions.	October 2003
4.	The board approves the new and eliminated positions and the superintendent directs the assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations to post the new positions.	November 2003
5.	The superintendent withholds extending new contracts to administrators whose positions are affected by the reorganization.	January 2004
6.	The assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations screens candidates for the positions and refers them to the superintendent or appropriate supervisor for interviews.	January - February 2004
7.	The superintendent, with assistance from senior staff, makes recommendations to the board for candidates to fill positions.	March 2004
8.	The board approves the recommendations and directs the superintendent to implement the new organization.	April 2004
9.	The superintendent fills vacant positions, reassigns existing personnel as necessary and eliminates remaining positions.	September 2004

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation will give the district annual savings of \$54,412 beginning in 2004-05. The calculation of the fiscal impact is listed below.

Position	Salary	Benefits (1)
Added positions:		
Executive director, Curriculum Management	(\$71,050) (2)	(\$10,658)
Director of Data Assessment and Program Evaluation	(\$65,377) (3)	(\$9,807)
Subtotal	(\$136,427)	(\$20,465)
Eliminated positions:		
Coordinator of Assessment	\$57,292	\$8,594
Director of Federal Programs	\$64,779	\$9,717
Coordinator of Student Services	\$61,671	\$9,251
Subtotal	\$183,742	\$27,562
Total savings	\$47,315	\$7,097

1. *Calculated at 15 percent of salary.*
2. *Calculated using business manager position salary.*
3. *Calculated using highest director salary in Curriculum and Instruction Department.*

The district's employee contracts prevent the district from acting on this organizational plan until September 1, 2004.

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Reorganize the Curriculum and Instruction Division to provide additional support to the assistant superintendent.	\$0	\$54,412	\$54,412	\$54,412	\$54,412

Chapter 2

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

C. STUDENT PERFORMANCE (PART 1)

Texas began rating and accrediting districts and schools based upon specific performance measures in 1993. The performance measures include the reading, writing, math and social studies portions of the TAAS and annual dropout rates. TEA sends districts and campuses annual accountability ratings. TEA will not award a district its Exemplary or Recognized rating if the district has one or more low-performing campuses. **Exhibit 2-15** presents TEA's accountability ratings for districts and campuses.

Exhibit 2-15
TEA Accountability Ratings
2001-02

Rating	Applicability/Explanation
Exemplary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District and campus: At least 90 percent passing (reading, writing and mathematics all students and each student group* and social studies all students only) and a dropout rate of 1 percent or less for all students and each student group. • District: At least 90 percent of all students only passing (social studies).
Recognized	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District and campus: At least 80 percent passing (reading, writing and mathematics all students and each student group and social studies all students only) and a dropout rate of 2.5 percent or less for all students and each student group. • District: At least 80 percent of all students only passing (social studies).
Academically Acceptable/Acceptable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District/Campus: At least 55 percent passing (reading, writing and mathematics all students and each student group and 50 percent passing social studies all students only) and a dropout rate of 5

	<p>percent or less for all students and each student group.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District: At least 50 percent of all students only passing (social studies).
Academically Unacceptable/Low-performing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District/Campus: Below 55 percent passing (reading, writing and mathematics all students and each student group and below 50 percent passing social studies all students only) and a dropout rate above 5 percent or less for all students and each student group. • District: Below 50 percent all students only passing (social studies).
Alternative Education (AE): Commended, AE: Acceptable, AE: Needs Peer Review, or AE: Not Rated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campuses that applied and were identified as eligible to be evaluated under alternative education procedures
Charter schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the district level, open-enrollment charter schools receive the label Charter School. At the school level, they are given one of the four rating categories listed above, based on the regular accountability system.
Not rated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These campuses include those that do not serve students within the 1st - through 12th-grade span, such as pre-kindergarten centers and early education through kindergarten schools.
Unacceptable: Special Accreditation Investigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Districts have undergone an investigation as mandated in Chapter 39 of the Texas Education Code.
Suspended: Data Inquiry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District and campus: serious errors in data reporting that affected one or more of the base indicators used for determining accountability ratings. The errors were of such magnitude that the results were

	deemed unsuitable for ratings purposes.
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Source: TEA, AEIS, 2001-02.

*Student groups are African American, Hispanic, Anglo and Economically Disadvantaged.

In 2002, TEA changed the ratings evaluation criteria. TEA increased the TAAS standards for reading, writing and mathematics at the Academically Acceptable/Acceptable level to 55 percent passing for all students; evaluated TAAS social studies results at the "all students" level for grade 8; implemented more rigorous dropout rate standards for Recognized (from 3 percent to 2.5 percent); and made similar changes to the dropout rate standards for Academically Acceptable/Acceptable (from 5.5 percent to 5 percent).

In 2001, the Legislature enacted the Gold Performance Acknowledgment (GPA) system to acknowledge districts and campuses for high performance on additional indicators that do not affect accountability ratings. The GPA system replaces the system of Additional Acknowledgments that were part of the accountability system since 1994. The GPA is similar to the former acknowledgment system in that any district or campus rated Academically Acceptable/Acceptable or higher may be considered for acknowledgment under the GPA system.

All of the previous Additional Acknowledgment indicators are part of the GPA, although the standards for acknowledgment may have changed. The GPA also includes indicators that the state did not previously use for acknowledgments. In 2002, TEA awarded GPA to districts and campuses that met the acknowledgment standard on one or more of nine measures. **Exhibit 2-16** lists the nine measures that qualify schools and districts for GPA recognition.

Exhibit 2-16
TEA Gold Performance Acknowledgment System
2002-03

Measure	Awarded to:
Attendance Rate for Grades 1 - 12	Districts and campuses
Campus Comparable Improvement: Mathematics	Campuses only
Campus Comparable Improvement:	Campuses only

Reading	
Algebra I End-of-Course Examination Results	Districts and campuses with grades 7 and above
Advanced Academic Course Completion	Districts and campuses with grades 9 and above
Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate Examination Results	Districts and campuses with grades 11 and 12
College Admissions Test Results	Districts and campuses with graduates
TAAS/TASP Equivalency	Districts and campuses with graduates
Recommended High School Program Participation	Districts and campuses with graduates

Source: TEA, 2002 Accountability Manual, Section IV-2002 Acknowledgments and Recognitions.

Exhibit 2-17 shows the 2001-02 accountability ratings for RISD, the peer districts and each RISD school. RISD received an Academically Acceptable rating while two peer districts received Exemplary ratings and the other three peer districts received Recognized ratings. For a district to receive a rating of Recognized, scores in reading, writing and mathematics must be at least 80 percent for all students and each student group and at least 80 percent in social studies for all students.

Exhibit 2-17
Accountability Ratings
RISD, Peer Districts and RISD Schools
2001-02

District	Accountability Rating
Allen	Recognized
Carroll	Exemplary
Coppell	Recognized
Eanes	Exemplary
Frisco	Recognized
McKinney	Recognized

RISD	Academically Acceptable
RISD Schools	Accountability Ratings
Rochell Elementary School	Acceptable
Parks-Heath Elementary School	Exemplary
Cullins-Lake Pointe Elementary School	Exemplary
Pullen Elementary School	Recognized
Dobbs Elementary School	Acceptable
Nebbie Williams Elementary School	Exemplary
Reinhardt Elementary School	Exemplary
Hartman Elementary School	Not rated - new school
Jones Elementary School	Not rated - new school
J.W. Williams Middle School	Exemplary
Cain Middle School	Acceptable
Alternative School	AE: Acceptable
Utley Freshman Center	Acceptable (*)
Rockwall High School	Acceptable

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2001-02.

**Paired with Rockwall High School for accountability ratings purposes.*

The following RISD schools also received GPA recognition for particular programs and student performance:

- J.W. Williams and Maurine Cain Middle Schools for Algebra I end-of-course exam results, grades 7-12;
- Amy Parks-Heath and Nebbie Williams Elementary Schools for attendance, 2000-01;
- Amanda Rochell Elementary School for comparable improvement in reading; and
- Rockwall High School for its 2000-01 advanced placement/international baccalaureate program and for students achieving the recommended high school program, Class of 2001.

TEA awarded RISD its Recognized rating every year between 1996-97 and 1999-2000. In 2000-01 and 2001-02, the district earned Academically Acceptable ratings. The primary reason for the shift in ratings was that the Hispanic student population did not achieve an 80 percent passing rate on

the required reading, writing and math tests. In 2001-02, the district implemented new initiatives to address this decline in Hispanic student performance.

School districts must have a sound instructional management system in place to ensure an effective instructional program. Instructional administrators must be accountable for program planning, curriculum, evaluation systems and allocating resources to instructional programs that produce continual student performance improvement.

Texas administers TAAS in reading and mathematics in grades 3 through 8 and grade 10; in reading and mathematics in Spanish in grades 3 and 4; in writing in grades 4, 8 and 10; and in science and social studies in grade 8. The state also administers end-of-course examinations in Algebra I, Biology, English II and U.S. History.

Exhibit 2-18 shows that the percentage of all RISD students passing all sections of the TAAS was higher than the state averages in reading, math, writing, social studies and all tests taken for 2000-01 and 2001-02.

Exhibit 2-18
Percentage of Students Passing TAAS, All Grade Levels
RISD, Region 10 and the State
2000-01 and 2001-02

	2000-01			2001-02		
	RISD	Region 10	State	RISD	Region 10	State
Reading	95.9%	87.7%	88.9%	96.4%	90.6%	91.3%
Math	96.0%	88.6%	90.2%	96.5%	91.7%	92.7%
Writing	94.2%	87.1%	87.9%	93.3%	87.6%	88.7%
Social Studies	87.9%	77.0%	77.0%	90.5%	85.1%	83.7%
All Tests	92.6%	80.6%	82.1%	92.7%	84.3%	85.3%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2000-01 and 2001-02.

Between 1997-98 and 2001-02, the percentage of the district's students who scored passing grades on the TAAS increased in all areas except writing, where student performance declined slightly. **Exhibit 2-19** displays the passing rates for all students and for the different demographic groups. African American student performance increased in all areas except social studies, which declined slightly from 2000-01 to 2001-02. Anglo student performance increased in all areas except writing. Hispanic student performance increased only in math. Economically

disadvantaged student performance declined in all areas except social studies, which increased slightly from 2000-01 to 2001-02.

Exhibit 2-19
Percentage of All RISD Students
Passing TAAS, All Grade Levels
1997-98 through 2001-02

All Students					
Subject	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02
Reading	96.0%	95.5%	95.8%	95.9%	96.4%
Writing	95.3%	94.4%	94.7%	94.2%	93.3%
Math	94.1%	94.0%	95.2%	96.0%	96.5%
Social studies	N/A	N/A	N/A	87.9%	90.5%
All tests	91.3%	90.4%	91.9%	92.6%	92.7%
African American Students					
Subject	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02
Reading	88.4%	93.6%	88.3%	92.9%	92.2%
Writing	83.3%	93.0%	83.7%	91.2%	92.4%
Math	78.8%	84.0%	81.8%	87.9%	87.7%
Social studies	N/A	N/A	N/A	75.0%	72.4%
All tests	75.4%	79.3%	74.6%	84.1%	81.8%
Hispanic Students					
Subject	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02
Reading	89.1%	80.4%	83.9%	79.8%	84.6%
Writing	77.4%	85.0%	77.7%	80.6%	73.8%
Math	85.9%	83.5%	81.9%	82.6%	87.1%
Social studies	N/A	N/A	N/A	71.8%	69.6%
All tests	76.8%	74.2%	74.4%	73.4%	75.8%
Anglo Students					
Subject	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02
Reading	96.7%	96.7%	97.1%	97.7%	97.9%
Writing	97.0%	95.2%	96.6%	95.4%	95.8%

Math	95.2%	95.2%	96.8%	97.7%	98.0%
Social studies	N/A	N/A	N/A	89.8%	93.4%
All tests	92.9%	92.0%	94.1%	94.9%	95.2%
Economically Disadvantaged Students					
Subject	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02
Reading	85.6%	81.2%	83.0%	82.2%	84.6%
Writing	80.7%	87.9%	82.1%	76.7%	72.8%
Math	86.6%	83.5%	82.2%	83.7%	86.1%
Social studies	N/A	N/A	N/A	61.1%	64.7%
All tests	75.9%	72.2%	74.0%	73.3%	75.1%

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

Exhibit 2-20 shows that, in both 2000-01 and 2001-02, the percentages of RISD students in grades 3 through 10 who passed the TAAS exceeded the Region 10 and state averages.

Exhibit 2-20
Percentage of Students Passing TAAS by Grade Level
RISD, Region 10 and the State
2000-01 and 2001-02

Grade/Subject	2000-01			2001-02		
	RISD	Region 10	State	RISD	Region 10	State
3rd-Reading	93.6%	85.3%	86.8%	94.8%	86.4%	88.0%
3rd-Math	91.7%	81.1%	83.1%	92.3%	85.8%	87.4%
4th-Reading	96.4%	88.1%	90.8%	96.9%	90.6%	92.5%
4th-Writing	92.3%	86.9%	89.2%	96.8%	87.4%	89.8%
4th-Math	95.7%	88.0%	91.3%	97.4%	91.8%	94.1%
5th-Reading	96.3%	87.2%	90.2%	96.1%	90.8%	92.7%
5th-Math	98.2%	91.9%	94.6%	98.1%	94.3%	96.2%
6th-Reading	96.5%	85.8%	85.6%	97.3%	88.6%	88.2%
6th-Math	98.9%	91.3%	91.4%	99.1%	94.1%	93.8%
7th-Reading	98.2%	88.3%	89.4%	96.5%	90.9%	91.3%

7th-Math	97.2%	88.1%	89.6%	97.0%	91.8%	92.2%
8th-Reading	96.9%	91.1%	91.9%	98.4%	94.3%	94.3%
8th-Writing	96.5%	85.3%	85.8%	91.2%	84.9%	85.3%
8th-Math	97.6%	91.1%	92.4%	97.8%	92.5%	92.9%
8th-Science	98.1%	90.5%	91.8%	96.6%	93.2%	93.0%
8th-Social Studies	87.9%	77.0%	77.0%	90.5%	85.1%	83.7%
10th-Reading	95.5%	90.2%	90.0%	96.1%	94.7%	94.5%
10th-Writing	94.1%	89.8%	89.1%	93.9%	90.9%	91.3%
10th-Math	94.4%	89.3%	89.3%	95.4%	92.3%	92.2%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2000-01 and 2001-02.

From 1997 through 2001, RISD student scores on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) I increased while the state and regional mean scores declined (**Exhibit 2-21**).

Exhibit 2-21
Mean SAT I Score
RISD, Region 10 and the State
Classes of 1997-98 through 2001-02

Entity	Class of				
	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
RISD	1,026	1,009	1,047	1,048	1,061
Region 10	1,010	1,016	1,013	1,012	1,008
State	992	992	989	990	987

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

Exhibit 2-22 compares the SAT and ACT scores of RISD students with peer districts. RISD's Class of 2001 SAT I scores ranked fourth lowest among selected peer districts. RISD's ACT scores ranked second lowest.

Exhibit 2-22
Mean SAT I and ACT Scores
RISD, Peer Districts, Region 10 and the State
Classes of 2000 and 2001

Entity	Class of 2000			Class of 2001		
	Percentage Tested	SAT Score	ACT Score	Percentage Tested	SAT Score	ACT Score
Eanes	96.9%	1174	24.7	99.4%	1181	24.3
Carroll	97.7%	1087	23.6	N/A	1096	23.8
Coppell	92.5%	1087	22.8	92.4%	1095	22.6
RISD	69.3%	1048	22.0	71.5%	1061	21.4
McKinney	71.6%	1077	21.6	70.2%	1058	22.1
Allen	85.7%	1062	22.9	76.4%	1036	22.0
Frisco	70.8%	1064	20.8	63.3%	1025	21.3
Region 10	64.4%	1012	21.0	62.3%	1008	21.0
State	62.2%	990	20.3	62.9%	987	20.2

Source: TEA, AEIS, 1999 and 2000.

Student Performance - Part 2

Chapter 2

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

D. GIFTED AND TALENTED EDUCATION

Since 1987, state law requires all Texas school districts to maintain educational programs that serve gifted and talented students in all districts and at all grades. Gifted and talented students have high levels of achievement, intellectual and academic ability, creativity, leadership skills and talent in the visual and performing arts. In 1990, the State Board of Education (SBOE) adopted the Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students. In 1996, SBOE updated the plan to incorporate TEC Section 29.123 requirements. The updated plan forms the basis for program accountability for state-mandated services for gifted/talented students.

State law requires districts to have a systematic process for identifying gifted and talented students. TEA issues guidelines for identifying gifted and talented students to ensure that all of these students receive a quality education. The process must include quantitative and qualitative evaluation tools and instruments. The Texas Foundation School Program provides funds for school districts to identify gifted and talented students and establish programs for these students. Gifted and talented programs provide more challenging curriculum for qualified students from various cultural, linguistic and socioeconomic backgrounds.

RISD conducts the selection process for its gifted and talented program several times during the school year. The district began this process to accommodate the rapid growth of the district. The district tests new district elementary students for placement in August of each year. The district conducts testing for kindergarten and students who have moved to the district since August in January. Testing occurs again for students in grades 1 through 6 in May of each year. The district evaluates secondary students for gifted and talented programs before each semester.

Exhibit 2-32 lists the gifted and talented identification instruments that RISD uses. The district modifies its criteria for placement at each grade level.

Exhibit 2-32
RISD Gifted and Talented Selection Instruments
2002-03

Grade Levels and Criteria for Placement	Instruments
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<p>Students from kindergarten to grade 6 must qualify in any three of the four areas to be placed in the gifted and talented program.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screening Assessment for Gifted Elementary Students II (SAGES II) • SAGES II Divergent Production • Kaufman • Brief Intelligence Test • Gifted and Talented Evaluation Scale
<p>Students in grades 7-8 must qualify in any two of the three areas to be placed in the gifted and talented program.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cornell Critical Thinking Test • Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test • Gifted and Talented Evaluation Scale
<p>Students in grades 9-12 must qualify in any two of the three areas to be placed in the gifted and talented program.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watson-Glaser Critical Thinking Appraisal • Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test • Gifted and Talented Evaluation Scale

Source: RISD director of Instructional Services.

RISD uses alternative assessments to screen students with learning disabilities, students with limited English proficiency and students from economically disadvantaged households for gifted and talented programs. RISD administers oral tests to bypass limited English language proficiencies. The district also uses the C-Toni (Test of Oral Language Proficiency), the Naglieri Non-Verbal Assessment and the Slosson tests as alternative assessments.

RISD offers limited English proficient (LEP) students, learning disabled students and/or economically disadvantaged students who have not qualified for the program the opportunity to participate in the gifted and talented classes on a probationary basis. The district considers student scores and extenuating circumstances while evaluating these students. The identification committee makes the recommendation for probationary placement; successful students may remain in the program for a period determined by the committee. **Exhibit 2-33** shows the enrollment figures of the gifted and talented program in Rockwall by grade level and school.

Exhibit 2-33
RISD Gifted and Talented Enrollment by Grade and School
2002-03

Grade	School	Total
12	Rockwall High School	41
11	Rockwall High School	61
10	Rockwall High School	65
9	Utley Freshman Center	75
7	Williams Middle School	41
7	Cain Middle School	29
8	Williams Middle School	44
8	Cain Middle School	41
K-5	Reinhart Elementary School	20
K-5	Dobbs Elementary School	35
K-5	Rochell Elementary School	9
K-5	Cullins-Lake Pointe Elementary School	49
K-5	Amy Parks Elementary School	54
K-5	Nebbie Williams Elementary School	44
K-5	Pullen Elementary School	52
K-5	Jones Elementary School	17
K-5	Hartman Elementary School	26
	District Total	703

Source: RISD director of Instructional Services.

Exhibit 2-34 shows the enrollment of the gifted and talented program in Rockwall by ethnic group.

Exhibit 2-34
RISD Gifted and Talented Enrollment by Ethnicity
2002-03

Student Ethnicity	Total	Percentage of G/T	Percentage of RISD
--------------------------	--------------	--------------------------	---------------------------

Anglo	655	93.7%	79.8%
Hispanic	20	2.8%	13.2%
African American	12	1.7%	4.9%
Asian/Pacific Islander	16	2.0%	1.8%

Source: RISD director of Instructional Services, PEIMS Fall Submission, November 2002 and 2002-03.

FINDING

RISD provides a variety of programs for gifted and talented students. These programs ensure that students have an array of learning opportunities to enrich their learning experiences. The district offers the Selected Academically Gauged Education (SAGE) program in kindergarten through grade 6. The district offers its Talented and Gifted (TAG) program in grades 7 through 12. Elementary schools, middle schools and the high school use different methods of program delivery. **Exhibit 2-35** describes the programs that the district offers.

Exhibit 2-35 RISD Gifted and Talented Program Delivery 2002-03

Program	Description
SAGE - kindergarten to grade 6	Schools pull gifted and talented students out of regular classrooms and advanced classes are taught by a teacher certified to teach gifted and talented students. The teacher develops students' thinking skills using processes and products that RISD selected for its curriculum. The teacher uses creative productive thinking, logical thinking and independent research to maintain a high level of interest and success for the students.
TAG - Grades 7 and 8	Participating students are served through the English language arts and reading classes. The school assigns these classes to a teacher who is certified to teach gifted and talented students.
TAG - Grade 9	UFC offers gifted and talented students in grade 9 a Global Experiences class. This interdisciplinary experience integrates English I and world geography. Students receive one credit in Pre-AP English I and one credit in Pre-AP world geography.
TAG -Grade 10	RHS offers gifted and talented students in grade 10 a world experience class. Students examine the development of the world as represented in art, music, literature, philosophy and

	history to illustrate the interrelationships of these areas. Students receive one credit in Pre-AP English II and AP world history.
TAG -Grade 11	RHS offers students in grade 11 a class called American Perspective. Students methodically examine interrelationships of American history and American literature. The curriculum makes correlations between history, philosophy and literature from colonial times to present. The course fosters self-discipline, organization, critical thinking, reading and analytical writing. Students receive one credit in AP U.S. history and one credit in AP English II.

Source: RISD director of Instructional Services.

At the middle school and high school, the district offers pre-advanced placement (pre-AP) and advanced placement (AP) courses in a variety of classes to address the unique needs of the gifted and talented students.

Exhibit 2-36 describes the courses offered.

Exhibit 2-36
RISD Middle School and High School Pre-AP and AP Courses
2002-03

Grade Level	Courses Offered
Middle School	
Grade 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-AP English • Pre-AP Math • Pre-AP Science • Pre-AP Texas History
Grade 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-AP English • Pre-AP Algebra I • Pre-AP Pre-Algebra • Pre-AP Science • Pre-AP American History
High School	
Grade 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-AP English • Pre-AP Geometry • Pre-AP Biology • Pre-AP World Geography

Grades 10 -12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-AP English II • AP English III • AP English IV • Pre-AP Geometry • Pre-AP Algebra II • Pre-AP Pre-Calculus • AP Calculus • AP Biology II • AP Physics • AP Government • AP U.S. History • AP World History • AP Economics • AP Psychology • AP Computer Science • Pre-AP Spanish • AP Spanish III • AP Spanish IV • AP French II • AP French III • AP French IV • AP German II • AP German III • AP German IV • AP Art III • AP Art IV
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Source: RISD director of Instructional Services.

Exhibit 2-37 shows that RISD students scored above the state and national average on the ACT and SAT exams four of the last five years.

Exhibit 2-37
RISD Average SAT and ACT Scores
1997-98 through 2001-02

Year	RISD Average ACT		Points RISD Scores Above / (Below) Average	RISD Average SAT		Points RISD Scores Above / (Below) Average
	Scores	State	National	Scores	State	National
2001-02	21.4	1.2	0.6	1,061	74	41
2000-01	22.0	1.7	1.0	1,048	58	28

1999-2000	21.3	1.1	0.3	1,047	58	28
1998-99	20.8	0.5	(0.2)	1,009	17	(7)
1997-98	21.1	1.7	0.1	1,026	34	9

Source: TEA, AEIS, 1997-98 through 2001-02. TEA Results of College Admissions Testing in Texas for Graduating Seniors, 1997-98, 1998-99 and 1999-2000 and from RISD assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction.

Exhibit 2-38 shows that RISD students scored well on AP tests for college credit between 1997-98 and 2001-02.

Exhibit 2-38
RISD Students Passing AP Tests to Earn College Credit
1997-98 through 2001-02

Year	Percentage of Students Taking AP Exams	Percentage of Students Awarded College Credit
2001-02	18.4%	53.2%
2000-01	18.4%	41.2%
1999-2000	8.2%	61.4%
1998-99	8.6%	62.4%
1997-98	8.7%	57.8%

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

COMMENDATION

RISD offers a comprehensive gifted and talented program to identified students, contributing to the district's outstanding student performance on national achievement tests.

FINDING

RISD's scope and sequence documents for its advanced placement (AP) courses are not complete. Without these documents, the district cannot ensure that students in these courses receive consistent instruction.

District staff completed work on scope and sequence documents for AP English III, AP Biology II, AP Chemistry, AP Psychology and AP French IV classes during summer 2002. The district plans to complete work on the scope and sequence documents for the rest of its AP courses in 2002-03: AP French III, AP Calculus, AP 3 Studio Design, AP World History, AP Economics, AP Government, AP Computer Science, AP German III and IV, AP French II, AP Spanish III, AP Art IV and AP European History.

The new Texas State Plan requires districts to present evidence that it offers gifted and talented students a curriculum that moves faster and is more complex than the regular curriculum. The plan refers to this as differentiation. Teachers can use a variety of methods to document differentiation. Teachers may indicate in their lesson plans how the instruction is different from the regular curriculum. Districts can include evidence of differentiation in curriculum guides or documents. Classroom schedules may also indicate flexible grouping with differentiated instruction. Districts can also present copies of assignments that indicate students have options in reading assignments and projects as evidence of differentiation.

The director of Instructional Services said that the district does not have differentiation curriculum guide documents at this time. The district has conducted some training in differentiation, but it has no method in place to ensure that the differentiation takes place in each core academic subject classroom.

Recommendation 7:

Use certified gifted and talented education teachers to complete gifted and talented scope and sequence documents and differentiation techniques and integrate them into existing scope and sequence documents.

The improved scope and sequence documents will save RISD teachers time and effort. The document will also help teachers provide gifted and talented students with a challenging curriculum. Teachers can use these materials to document differentiation in their lesson plans. The documents will also give principals a tool for monitoring differentiation at the school.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction assembles a team of trained and certified teachers for creating differentiation techniques to go along with scope and sequences for each core academic subject areas.	September 2003
2.	Teachers work in grade level teams to create the differentiation methods that should be used in each of the core academic subject areas.	September 2003 - May 2004
3.	Teams complete differentiation techniques for each subject at each grade level and submit them to the director of Instructional Services for approval.	May 2004 and Ongoing
4.	Teams will submit approved documents for integration into the district scope and sequence documents.	June 2004 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

RISD will offer teachers stipends for working on the integration and differentiation techniques project. The review team suggests that the district provide stipends of \$25 per hour. The differentiation project will require four teachers per grade level between kindergarten and grade 8. The project will take three years to complete. High school department chairs will assign incomplete Pre-AP and AP scope and sequence documents to four teachers per core academic subject who are willing to work on them.

The district can budget 10 hours per teacher per year for their work on the differentiation strategies. The district can require teachers to turn in time sheets to verify hours. If each teacher works the full 10 per year, the district will owe \$250 to each teacher per year (\$25/hour x 10 hours). With four teachers working at each grade level, the district will incur costs of \$1,000 per grade level per year (\$250/teacher x 4 teachers). The total annual cost for the project is \$13,000 (\$1,000/grade level x 13 grade levels).

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Use certified gifted and talented education teachers to complete gifted and talented scope and sequence documents and differentiation techniques and integrate them into existing curriculum scope and sequence documents.	(\$13,000)	(\$13,000)	(\$13,000)	\$0	\$0

Chapter 2

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

E. SPECIAL EDUCATION

Under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), districts must provide appropriate public education for all children with disabilities regardless of the severity of the disability. The act 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 must develop an individual education plan (IEP) for each of these children with input from regular education teachers. The IEP must provide special education students with curricula that are related to those of children in regular education classrooms.

The 1997 amendments to the IDEA define an effective special education program as having the following elements:

- pre-referral intervention in regular education: When a student experiences an academic problem in the regular education program, an intervention can and should occur to solve the problems. If steps taken to solve the problem by the regular education teacher do not produce results, the problem should be referred to special education staff;
- referral to special education for evaluation: Referring a student to special education means writing an official request supported by documentation. The referral information must include an explanation of steps that have been taken in regular education to solve the student's problem before the referral;
- comprehensive nondiscriminatory evaluation: Once a student has been referred, the district must provide a comprehensive nondiscriminatory evaluation, commonly referred to as an assessment, within a prescribed amount of time;
- initial placement through an Admission, Review and Dismissal (ARD) committee: After the evaluation is complete, a meeting is held to discuss the results of the evaluation, decide if the student qualifies for special education services in one of 12 federal special education categories and, if so, write a plan for the student's education. The ARD committee includes the parent, at least one regular education teacher of the child, at least one special education teacher, a representative of the district who is knowledgeable about the curriculum and district resources, an individual who can interpret the instructional implications of the evaluation results, the child, if appropriate and other individuals who have knowledge or special expertise regarding the child;

- provision of educational services and supports according to a written Individualized Education Plan: The individualized education plan (IEP) developed by the ARD committee includes information about the classes, subject areas, developmental areas and/or life skills courses in which the student will be instructed, how much time will be spent in regular education and related needs like speech therapy or counseling;
- annual program review: Each year after a student's initial qualification and placement, an ARD committee conducts a review to ensure the student's program is appropriate;
- three-year re-evaluation: Every three years, the student undergoes a comprehensive individual assessment. Another ARD committee meeting is held to discuss the results of the re-evaluation and determine if the student still qualifies for special education services in the same category; and
- dismissal from the special education program: If and when a student no longer meets the eligibility criteria, the ARD makes the decision to dismiss the student from special education.

A summary of RISD's special education programs and services appears in **Exhibit 2-39**.

Exhibit 2-39
RISD Special Education Program Services
2002-03

Program/Service	Description
Diagnostic team	Diagnosticians provide psycho-educational services to students.
CARE Teams	A team located at each school addresses ways to assist students who are struggling in the classroom. Their recommendations for helping the student might include tutorials, at-risk programs, remedial programs and referrals.
Speech	Speech pathologists and assistants provide language and articulation services.
Related services	Includes occupational, physical, auditory and visual therapy, orientation and mobility services, in-home training and parent training, counseling services and special education transportation.
Transition Services	Transition services promote movement from school to post-school activities and are based on the individual student's needs, taking into account the student's references and interest. Transition services include instruction related

	services, community experiences, development of employment and if, appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation.
Homebound	Educational services provided at home or at health-related facilities for students who are unable to attend school.

Source: RISD director of Special Programs.

In 2002-03, RISD had 834 students in special education programs. This is 9.4 percent of the district's enrollment. The percent of students enrolled in special education statewide is 12.1 percent. **Exhibit 2-40** shows RISD's enrollment in special education by each of the special education disability categories.

Exhibit 2-40
RISD Special Education Students by Disability Category
2002-03

Disability Category	Number of Students	Percentage of RISD Special Education Students
Other Health Impaired	139	16.7%
Mentally Retarded	31	3.7%
Emotionally Disturbed	64	7.7%
Learning Disabled	345	41.5%
Speech	215	25.8%
Visually Impaired	9	1.1%
Hearing Impaired	*	*
Multi-Handicapped	7	0.1%
Autistic	11	1.3%
Orthopedic Impaired	8	1.0%
Traumatic Brain Injury	*	*
Total	834	100%

Source: RISD director of Special Programs.

*Because the total number of students is five or less, it is not shown to protect the anonymity of the students.

FINDING

RISD developed a pre-referral process for students with special educational needs. The Campus Assistance, Referral and Evaluation (CARE) team carries out this process. The district designed these teams to meet the requirements of the law regarding students it serves in a variety of special programs such as dyslexia, gifted and talented, Title I, ESL/Bilingual, at risk, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

The district also designed these teams to provide a forum for teachers to share ideas and knowledge while creating a more positive environment. Because districts should consider the least restrictive environment for each student, these CARE teams work to move students into the least restrictive environment possible.

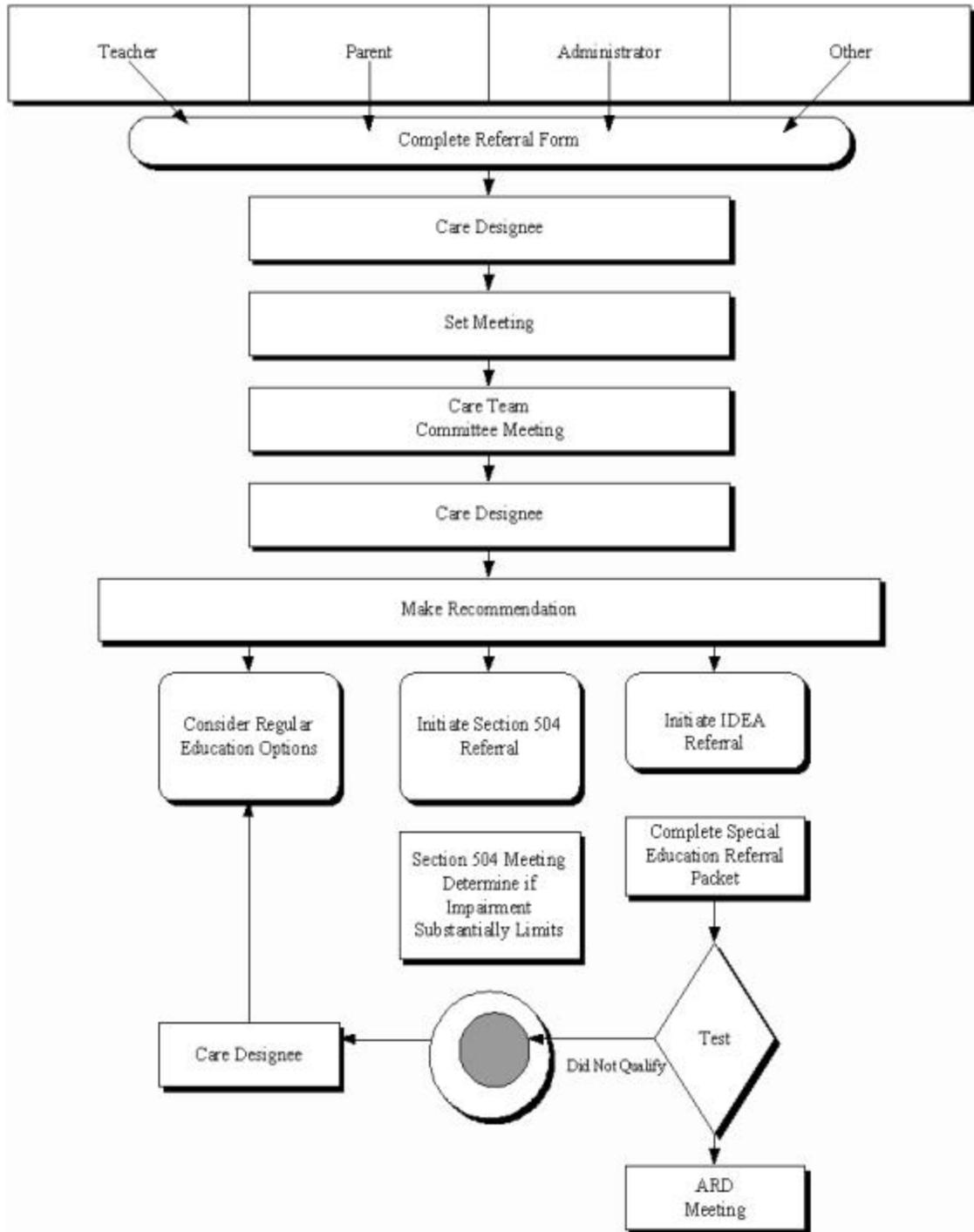
Membership of the CARE teams at each school in Rockwall consists of two general education teachers and the counselor. CARE teams schedule regular meetings and review all new referrals the teachers at their school generate. The teams:

- serve as a teacher assistant team to support teachers experiencing difficulties with selected students;
- perform activities such as screening, identifying and reviewing students recommended for special programs;
- identify students for Section 504 and act as a pre-referral committee for special education;
- request technical assistance from specialists within the district when the membership of the committee must be expanded beyond campus staff members. Diagnosticians and/or psychologists provide assistance;
- document all actions of the committee as outlined by the guidelines by completing CARE forms and maintaining individual student folders;
- identify problem areas for training needs to assist school personnel in dealing more effectively with student learning and behavior problems;
- refer policy issues to the central office CARE Team representative for clarification of issues that cannot be resolved at the campus level; and
- coordinate school intervention planning with services provided by community agencies or assist in obtaining community services for selected students and their families.

TEA mandates that each district develop and use a pre-referral process. RISD took this process several steps further to meet unique needs for

children who are not experiencing success in the regular classroom.
Exhibit 2-41 describes the pre-referral process the CARE teams follow.

**Exhibit 2-41
RISD CARE Team Pre-Referral Process
2002-03**



Source: RISD director of Special Programs.

The CARE team considers four options before making a decision to intervene. The team must consider these options from least restrictive to most restrictive in the following order:

- implement campus modifications for a pre-determined amount of time;
- refer to the dyslexia committee on campus;
- initiate Section 504 referral process; and
- initiate IDEA referral.

COMMENDATION

The Campus Assistance, Referral and Evaluation team evaluation process ensures that students will be referred to the least restrictive environment for services and that the success of these services will be monitored and modified as needed.

FINDING

RISD spends less per eligible student for special education than all but one of the peer districts. In 2002-03, RISD's special education student population totaled 9.8 percent of the district's student population. This percentage is less than the state average of 11.6 percent and less than the regional averages of 10.8 percent. **Exhibit 2-42** shows that RISD has a smaller percentage of students in special education programs than most of the peer districts.

Exhibit 2-42
Special Education Enrollment and Program Budgeted Expenditures
RISD, Peer Districts, Region 10 and the State
2002-03

Entity	Number of Students Enrolled	Percentage of Total Enrollment	Special Education Budgeted Expenditures	Expenditures per Eligible Student
Eanes	741	10.4%	\$6,251,583	\$8,437
Coppell	758	7.7%	\$4,823,134	\$6,363
Carroll	641	8.9%	\$3,513,280	\$5,481
McKinney	1,580	10.4%	\$6,621,556	\$4,191
RISD	934	9.8%	\$3,233,061	\$3,462
Allen	1,344	10.7%	\$4,773,766	\$3,552

Frisco	1,201	10.8%	\$3,670,039	\$3,056
Region 10	68,904	10.8%	N/A	N/A
State	492,973	11.6%	N/A	N/A

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 2002-03.

RISD's expenditures for special education increased 90.1 percent between 1997-98 and 2001-02. The district attributes this increase to increased student enrollment and state funding. The district's special education population increased 44.6 percent during this period. **Exhibit 2-43** shows that the district's per-student expenditures increased 31.5 percent during the same period.

Exhibit 2-43
RISD Actual Expenditures for the Special Education Program
1997-98 through 2001-02

Category	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	Percentage Change 1997-98 through 2001-02
Special education expenditures	\$2,301,916	\$2,868,765	\$3,580,538	\$4,029,322	\$4,375,570	90.1%
Special education students served	599	640	770	825	866	44.6%
Special education expenditures per student	\$3,843	\$4,482	\$4,650	\$4,884	\$5,053	31.5%

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

The special education program provides teachers; aides; diagnosticians; vision, orientation and mobility services; psychologists; speech therapists; transportation; instructional materials and supplies; adaptive and assistive equipment; contract services; and teacher training and workshops. RISD provides services for hearing impaired students through a Regional Day School for the Deaf Cooperative with Mesquite ISD.

Exhibit 2-44 shows the range of special education services that RISD offers to eligible students at each of its schools (See key below exhibit).

Exhibit 2-44
RISD Special Education Services by School
2002-03

School	Types of Special Education Services Offered in RISD												
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Elementary Schools													
Rochell	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Amy Parks-Heath	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Cullins-Lake Pointe	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X
Jones	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Pullen	X				X				X	X	X	X	
Dobbs	X			X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X
Hartman	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	
Nebbie Williams	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Reinhardt	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Middle Schools													
J.W. Williams	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Cain	X			X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
High School													
Utley	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
High School	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Alternative School	X				X				X	X	X		X

Source: RISD director of Special Programs, December 2002.

Key to types of services offered:

- 1. Direct instruction to special education identified students by certified special education teacher*
- 2. Vision Therapy*

3. *Orientation & Mobility Training*
4. *Transportation*
5. *Instructional Materials*
6. *Adaptive and Assistive Equipment*
7. *Contracted Services, Physical Therapy*
8. *Deaf Education*
9. *Speech Therapy*
10. *Inclusion Assistance*
11. *Teacher Training/Workshops*
12. *Occupational Therapy*
13. *Counseling*

COMMENDATION

RISD provides a comprehensive special education program at a lower per pupil cost.

FINDING

RISD's Special Education Department participates in Medicaid reimbursement programs for services provided by the district. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires school districts to provide certain education-related health services to children with disabilities to meet their unique needs. In September 1992, the state amended its Medicaid program to allow school districts to enroll as Medicaid providers and to apply for Medicaid reimbursement for services they are providing to children with disabilities.

Student health and related services (SHARS) is a program available to public schools in Texas; the Texas Department of Health administers the program. This financing program allows local school districts to be partially reimbursed for services provided to children with disabilities. The reimbursable services include assessment, audiology, counseling, medical services, school health services, occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech therapy, psychological services and associated transportation.

School districts can apply for reimbursement for specific services provided to qualified children. These children should be Medicaid eligible, under the age of 21, with one or more disabilities and have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) that prescribes the needed services. According to the Texas Medicaid Provider Procedures Manual from the Texas Health and Human Services Commission, the reimbursement amount is for the federal portion of the fee for each eligible service. Districts must certify that they used state or local funds to pay for the remainder of the cost. Districts can deposit their reimbursements in the general revenue fund and do not necessarily have to spend the reimbursements on special education services. To qualify for SHARS Medicaid reimbursement, districts must file claims within 12 months of the date that it provides the services.

In 1996, the state began another special education reimbursement program, Medicaid Administrative Claiming (MAC), which allows districts to receive federal reimbursement for administrative services provided by the districts that the districts cannot bill through SHARS. The Texas Department of Human Services is the lead agency responsible for the administration of this program. Under this program, the state will reimburse a district with Medicaid funds for certain referral and outreach services the district provides to students within the district, regardless of whether the student is Medicaid-eligible or not. MAC will reimburse the district for providing information and other indirect physical and mental health-related services to the student; assisting the student and family in accessing needed health services; and coordinating the student's health-related services.

RISD received SHARS reimbursements of \$40,000 and MAC reimbursements of \$20,000 for 2002-03. The district's special education director explained that the district recently changed claiming services because the original one took too long. The delay adversely affected the district's reimbursements. The special education director reports that the district's new claiming service provides better service. **Exhibit 2-45** shows SHARS and MAC reimbursements from 1998-99 to 2002-03.

Exhibit 2-45
RISD Reimbursement Fund Activity
1998-99 through 2002-03

Year	SHARS Reimbursements Received	MAC Reimbursements Received	Total Reimbursements Received
2002-03	\$40,000	\$20,000	\$60,000
2001-02	\$70,446	\$22,753	\$87,320
2000-01	\$29,134	\$20,374	\$49,508
1999-2000	\$38,928	\$17,232	\$56,160
1998-99	\$27,027	*	\$27,027

Source: RISD director of Special Programs, 1998-99 through 2001-02 and TEA, PEIMS, 2002-03.

**RISD is not able to retrieve information for 1998-99 due to a change in billing agents.*

Effective January 1, 2003, the enhanced federal matching rate of 75 percent will no longer be available for the administrative activities performed by Skilled Professional Medical Personnel school staff. This will reduce the reimbursements to districts for administrative services that their staff makes in the course of providing medical care to students. RISD only claims minimal services in the area so this change should have a minimal impact on RISD's reimbursement amounts.

COMMENDATION

RISD maximizes Medicaid reimbursement for qualified services to special education students through its internal reporting procedures and participation in cooperatives.

Chapter 2

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

F. BILINGUAL/ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE EDUCATION

Chapter 29 of the Texas Education Code (TEC) requires that students whose home language is different than English and who are identified as limited English proficient (LEP) "shall be provided a full opportunity to participate in a bilingual education or English as a second language program."

Texas requires all school districts with an enrollment of 20 LEP students in the same grade level to offer a bilingual/English as a Second Language (ESL) classes or an alternative language program. Schools must provide bilingual education in pre-kindergarten through the elementary grades. Districts must provide bilingual education, instruction in ESL or other transitional language instruction approved by TEA in post-elementary grades through grade 6. For students in grades 7 through 12, districts must provide only instruction in ESL.

State law requires school districts to identify LEP students and provide bilingual or ESL programs as an integral part of the regular educational program. Texas also requires districts to provide these programs with certified teaching personnel.

Educating students with limited English language proficiency is an important task for Texas public schools. Texas school districts enrolled nearly 500,000 students (12.5 percent of the student body) in bilingual or ESL programs in 1999-2000. TEA's Policy Planning and Evaluation Division created a Policy Research Report entitled "Enrollment Trends in Texas Public Schools" that states, "Of the 666,961 students added to the Texas public education system between 1987-88 and 1997-98, more than 60 percent were students receiving bilingual education/English as a second language services." The report notes that the number of Hispanic students increased by 45 percent in the last decade; this is more than double the growth rate of the total student population. The State Board of Education's Long-Range Plan for Public Education 1996-2000 states "enrollment in the state's bilingual education program is projected to increase by 50 percent over the next five years."

FINDING

From July 2001 through November 2002, RISD improved its bilingual program. The district operates a comprehensive Bilingual/ESL program at three schools to meet student needs. The bilingual program serves eligible

students from pre-kindergarten to grade 6; the ESL program serves students in grades 7 through 12. Rochell, Dobbs and Jones Elementary Schools host bilingual classes for LEP students from pre-kindergarten to grade 6. A certified ESL teacher serves ESL students in grades 3 through 6 at Rochell. Another ESL teacher provides services to ESL students at Dobbs, Reinhardt and Cullins-Lake Point Elementary Schools and Nebbie Williams Middle School in a pullout program. The district hired a full-time director and used a formal needs assessment to determine which areas of the bilingual/ESL program need improvement. **Exhibit 2-46** describes the outcome of the needs assessment.

Exhibit 2-46
RISD Needs Assessment and Resulting Program Improvements
Conducted
2001-02

Assessment Findings	Solutions
Lack of consistency in delivery of instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research program models and select a district-wide model of 50/50 dual language instructional delivery that is referred to as a one-way bilingual immersion program.
Failure to adequately serve secondary students in the English as a Second Language Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add personnel at Utley Freshman Center and Cain Middle School Develop a new home language survey that gives more information to determine migrant and immigrant identification service.
District not serving migrant eligible students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement services for migrant and immigrant students. • Increase and improve LPAC training for identification and available services.
LPAC committees exhibit lack of training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide campus training for staff and parent committee members. • Provide district/campus training to meet state requirements for the LPAC decision-making.
Lack of integration between special education and bilingual education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train interpreters to serve on ARD committees for Spanish speaking parents. • Revise the CARE process to include non-English speaking students who need special

	<p>education services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train diagnosticians to test non-English speaking students. • Increase training for special education staff for serving limited English proficient (LEP) students.
Lack of consistency among testing procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-evaluate all students to ensure proper identification. • Provide training on the LPAC decision-making for TAKS exemption. • Implement a consistent districtwide program for program identification and exit process.
Lack of required modifications in instruction by general education teachers for LEP students as required by Chapter 89 Texas Administrative Code (TAC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide training and strategies for how to modify instruction for LEP students.
Lack of required documentation in cumulative folders of students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue internal audit of all student records. • Provide training for campus personnel on required documentation. • Implement steps to ensure student records comply with to Chapter 89 of TAC.
Limited communication for Spanish speaking parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a district process for translating materials for parent communication. • Communicate expectations to all campuses for increased Spanish materials. • Implement Spanish translation for all districtwide communications, including student handbooks, student code-of-conduct, district communications, etc. • Investigating EDP software program to see if it will translate report cards, progress reports, etc.
Limited participation in adult ESL classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hire a RISD employee to teach adult ESL class through community education.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase communication and public awareness of ESL classes for adult learning opportunities.
Lack of compliance to Chapter 89 of TAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement required norm-reference testing. • Update all student records. • Increase instructional time for bilingual students. • Increase English instruction for bilingual students. • Conduct a district bilingual program
Lack of summer school program as required by Chapter 89 of TAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a summer school program for bilingual students entering kindergarten or first grade. • Conduct a summer school program for LEP students through grade 8.

Source: RISD coordinator of Bilingual/ESL Education.

RISD fulfilled all of the above recommendations.

RISD joined the bilingual/ESL Cooperative at Region 10. RISD also provides staff development for the bilingual/ESL teachers and contracts with Region 10 bilingual/ESL consultants who work at schools with concerns and help with program design. The district also integrated the bilingual program with the Head Start program and investigated other potential community partnerships.

The district made improvements in communication and support between the central office and school personnel who serve the bilingual students. The new coordinator for the bilingual/ESL program developed a support network with other districts in the North Texas area and has developed a working partnership with the bilingual/ESL department at TEA. The coordinator also implemented budget procedures for school administrators to have funds to address their bilingual/ESL program needs.

RISD uses specific criteria for qualifying program students. The district uses one set of criteria for children in pre-kindergarten to grade six and a different set of criteria for students in grades 7 through 12. RISD uses the oral and written versions of the oral language proficiency tests in English or Spanish for assessing students. Entry criteria for bilingual/ESL classes typically include the Home Language Survey, oral language proficiency scores and reading proficiency test scores. Exit criteria for the classes

include scores above the 40th percentile on the reading and language arts sections on the TEA approved norm-referenced English reading or language arts tests; a score of non-LEP on the oral language proficiency post-test; proficient scores on the reading proficiency test in English; passing scores on the state criterion referenced test (reading and writing TAKS tests); and showing mastery of the state curriculum standards in the classroom.

Each school has a Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) with authority over the identification, instructional placement and classification of LEP students. RISD requires each school's LPAC committee to have a chairperson, a parent and the building administrator of each school. The LPAC chairperson creates the temporary student folder to organize the required LPAC documentation, schedules the test administration and prepares for the LPAC meeting. The LPAC chairperson must also record the minutes of each meeting, collect the signed parent letter for permission or denial, place the documentation in student's permanent folder, report the PEIMS information to the PEIMS clerk at the school and communicate the LPAC designation to all school stakeholders.

The LPAC meets within the first four weeks of student enrollment and thereafter every four weeks as necessary to review new students' data. The committee also decides which LEP students in grades 3 through 8 to exempt from TAKS, which LEP students should take the TAKS in English and which students should take the TAKS in Spanish. The LPAC also determines whether students will leave the bilingual program at the end of the year and monitors the academic performance of LEP students.

COMMENDATION

RISD improved the bilingual/ESL program in the district by using multiple strategies to address a wide range of needs.

FINDING

While RISD has made improvements at some campuses, the district has not consistently implemented an instructional delivery model for the bilingual/ESL education program. In 2001-02, RISD organized an advisory committee to review the current model of instruction for the bilingual students in the district. This advisory committee met several times during the school year and visited two Dallas metropolitan area school districts that are experiencing success with both the transitional model and the two-way bilingual model of instruction.

RISD followed the advisory committee decision and adopted a one-way bilingual program for the district. But each school is implementing the new bilingual program differently. In a one-way bilingual program, teachers deliver half their instruction in English and the other half of the instruction in the language that students are most comfortable with. RISD gives its teachers the discretion to choose how to split their classroom time between English and Spanish. Some teachers alternate weeks of English and Spanish; others alternate days of Spanish and English. This practice does not provide consistency across the district.

A major goal of the committee was to identify methods to improve RISD Spanish TAAS scores. Spanish TAAS scores did show significant improvement in 2002. But most scores remain below the state average, in some instances by more than 40 percentage points. **Exhibit 2-47** compares RISD Spanish TAAS test scores to the state averages.

Exhibit 2-47
RISD and the State Spanish TAAS Scores
2000-01 and 2001-02

	RISD	State	RISD	State
Test	2000-01	2000-01	2001-02	2001-02
Grade 3 Reading	42.9%	76.7%	77.8%	76.8%
Grade 3 Math	35.7%	83.5%	77.8%	87.3%
Grade 4 Reading	50.0%	66.4%	33.3%	73.2%
Grade 4 Math	75.0%	76.0%	50.0%	92.2%
Grade 4 Writing	62.5%	89.3%	33.3%	85.1%
Grade 5 Reading	66.7%	71.8%	*	*
Grade 5 Math	66.7%	87.1%	*	*

Source: RISD coordinator of bilingual/ESL education, November 2002.

**RISD did not give the 5th grade Spanish Test in 2001-02.*

RISD's Curriculum and Instruction Division did not include ESL in its scope and sequence documents. The lack of an articulated curriculum adds to the existing inconsistency of the bilingual program.

Valley View ISD (VVISD) has a good system for providing consistent ESL instruction. The principal at Valley View Elementary School explains that the district gives each teacher a definitive transition plan to follow for implementing the bilingual program. The plan tells the teacher where in

the lesson plan to use English and where to use Spanish. The scope and sequence documents include specific vocabulary for both languages. Students at the school receive instruction in their native language and in English beginning in the pre-kindergarten program. VVISD monitors each teacher to ensure consistent delivery of the bilingual model. This approach help VVISD win an "exemplary" rating from TEA for 2001-02.

All of VVISD's teachers-both monolingual English and bilingual teachers-follow the scope and sequence documents precisely. The principal at Valley View Elementary School believes the consistent delivery of the district's ESL program by strong teachers with high expectations provided their school with the tools they needed to become exemplary.

Recommendation 8:

Adopt a consistent delivery method for the bilingual/ESL program that includes a specified written transition plan to be used by each bilingual teacher from pre-kindergarten through grade 6.

Adopting a consistent delivery method, including a specified transition plan, for the bilingual/ESL program allows RISD to ensure consistent, monitored instruction for each student.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The coordinator of Bilingual/ESL programs meets with the Bilingual/ESL staff to review test data and review the one-way bilingual model.	July - August 2003
2.	The Bilingual/ESL coordinator and staff research and review the models of other districts that use a consistent "time"-monitored model.	July - August 2003
3.	The coordinator of Bilingual/ESL programs takes a representative group of bilingual teachers and at least one principal to visit exemplary schools in other districts that are consistently delivering the one-way model in every classroom.	October - December 2003
4.	Teachers who made the visits to other districts report their findings to the entire Bilingual/ESL staff.	January 2004
5.	The coordinator of Bilingual/ESL programs makes a final decision on how to provide consistent delivery of the one-way model of instruction.	February 2004
6.	The coordinator integrates the delivery model into the scope and sequence documents.	March 2004

7.	The coordinator of Bilingual/ESL programs monitors lesson plans to ensure consistent delivery of the bilingual model.	April 2004 and Ongoing
8.	The coordinator of Bilingual/ESL programs monitors the district's Spanish and English TAKS score to ensure that students are scoring at least at the state passing standard or higher.	May 2004 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

RISD has no strategies to ensure that it is using its bilingual/ESL resources to promote a successful program. RISD allocates substantial resources to its bilingual/ESL programs. **Exhibit 2-48** indicates that the district allocates more bilingual/ESL funds per student than all but one peer district.

Exhibit 2-48
Bilingual/ESL Enrollment and Program Budgeted Expenditures
RISD, Peer Districts, Region 10 and the State
2002-03

Entity	Students Enrolled in Bilingual/ESL	Percentage of Total Enrollment	Total Budgeted Expenditures	Expenditure per student
Eanes	75	1.1%	\$202,998	\$2,707
RISD	451	4.8%	\$1,150,400	\$2,551
Carroll	18	0.3%	\$45,322	\$2,518
Coppell	488	4.9%	\$926,106	\$1,898
McKinney	1,225	8.1%	\$2,298,768	\$1,877
Frisco	425	3.8%	\$736,332	\$1,733
Allen	474	3.8%	\$696,659	\$1,470
Region 10	98,876	15.6%	N/A	N/A
State	572,319	13.5%	N/A	N/A

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 2002-03.

The district budgets approximately \$1.2 million annually for bilingual/ESL programs, but its District Improvement Plan (DIP) has no objective to measure the effectiveness of the expenditure. Campus Improvement Plan (CIP) strategies do not specify how to evaluate individual strategies. Only one elementary CIP lists any strategy for supporting and monitoring the effectiveness of the bilingual program. This strategy identifies improvement on the TAKS and Reading Proficiency Test in English (RPTE) as the total measure of success. The limited scope of the strategy gives the school little information on how to improve its ESL program.

Spring ISD (SISD) allocates district resources according to priorities developed in the planning process. This enables the district to meet its objectives through available district funds. The district planning and management system begins with the Five-Year Education Plan, which is emphasized in decision-making at all administrative levels to maintain consistency. The district forms its budget in concert with each plan priority; the district tracks and reports expenditures according to each priority. SISD ties administrator compensation to the achievement of each plan priority. The development of the plan is a collaborative effort involving teachers, administrators, parents and students through surveys, task groups and committees. Seven related activities support and enhance the Five-Year Education Plan. These include: adopting annual priorities, writing and updating campus improvement plans, following a program development cycle to review programs in all subjects, developing a program evaluation system, completing and monitoring administrative work plans, maintaining an updated personnel evaluation system and using a management information system to track and record district progress. All of the activities contribute to creating a well-defined and documented plan for allocating resources.

Recommendation 9:

Develop strategies in district and campus improvement plans to measure the effectiveness of the bilingual/English as a Second Language program.

Including measurable strategies in the campus improvement plans that require data to show effectiveness will provide RISD with the information it needs to continue growing and improving.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction and the coordinator of Bilingual/ESL programs meet with the principals to develop a five-year growth plan for each school's	June 2003
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	bilingual/ESL program.	
2.	Administrators, teachers, parents and students from each school develop annual measurable priorities for their bilingual/ESL programs, and the schools include these priorities in their CIPs.	September 2003
3.	Principals and the school coordinator of the Bilingual/ESL program decide how to evaluate the school's bilingual/ESL program annually.	April 2004
4.	Principals and the coordinator of the Bilingual/ESL program at their school use evaluation data to update the growth plan for their school and the annual priorities for their school the following year.	May 2004 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The coordinator of bilingual/ESL education does not have the language capability to monitor and evaluate bilingual teachers. The coordinator supervises the program and assists administrators in overseeing the quality of instruction in the classrooms of these students. The coordinator has experience as an ESL teacher but has never been a bilingual teacher and is not proficient speaking Spanish.

Teachers in the district's bilingual program conduct 50 percent of the instruction in their classrooms in Spanish. An individual who cannot understand the instruction the programs provide cannot effectively monitor the program and ensure its success.

Recommendation 10:

Contract with an experienced administrator with bilingual certification and Spanish language proficiency to conduct walk-through and formal observations in the bilingual classrooms.

An administrator who can speak and understand the language of instruction should conduct classroom walk-through observations and formal observations. The contractor should share the information collected with the coordinator of the bilingual/ESL program. The two positions can use the information for documentation that effective classroom strategies are used in each classroom and to determine if improvements need to be made.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The coordinator of Bilingual/ESL Programs reviews the skill sets of several bilingual consultants to find out if they suitable to conduct the classroom observations and evaluations for RISD.	September 2003
2.	The coordinator contracts with one of the consultants to provide the observation and walk-through evaluations for the district.	October 2003
3.	The consultant provides the bilingual observation and evaluation services.	January - May 2004 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

Contracting with an experienced bilingual administrator/consultant will cost the district \$500 per day for classroom observation and formal evaluation. The district should contract with the consultant for at least five days per semester for a total cost of \$5,000 per year (5 days x 2 semesters = 10 days per year x \$500 per day).

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Contract with an experienced administrator with bilingual certification and Spanish language proficiency to conduct walk-through and formal observations in the bilingual classrooms.	\$0	(\$5,000)	(\$5,000)	(\$5,000)	(\$5,000)

FINDING

Hispanic families in RISD do not believe that the district addresses their home language communication needs. Poor communication with any group of parents will hinder the students by limiting information that fosters better home involvement. At the focus group meeting with Hispanic parents, the review team identified the following issues:

- the district does not translate report cards, reports or school information into Spanish;
- the district does not offer interpreters at all school meetings for parents;

- schools do not offer tutoring in reading and other subjects for bilingual students;
- schools do not make Spanish books available for students;
- Spanish textbooks were not available in the bilingual classrooms as of November 7, 2002;
- no one at the administration building can communicate in Spanish; and
- Hispanic students are not participating in extra-curricular activities.

Program improvements that the district implemented since summer 2001 have increased services to Hispanic families in RISD. The number of interpreters to the parents at school meetings has increased. Rochell Elementary School and Utley Freshman Center always have interpreters at their meetings. Dobbs Elementary and Cain Middle School have interpreters at most of their meetings. Rockwall High School does not provide interpreters. Cain Middle School and Utley Freshman Center offer regular tutoring to students in Spanish in the core academic subjects. Dobbs, Jones and Rochell Elementary Schools offer reading tutoring in Spanish.

Killeen ISD (KISD) used a variety of informational measures to increase parental understanding of the district's bilingual/ESL programs. KISD reports increased parental participation and satisfaction with the bilingual/ESL program. According to an evaluation conducted in July 1998, KISD's rate of parental refusals for student participation in bilingual/ESL programs exceeded the state average. To increase parental participation in these programs, the district commissioned a video and distributes handbooks and written materials explaining the benefits of bilingual/ESL programs to parents. The handbooks, which outline ESL services and options, are available in four languages. The district also documents participant names and dates during school meetings with parents and conducts interim evaluations of program participation three times a year as benchmarks for improvement.

Recommendation 11:

Develop a Hispanic Parents' Advisory Committee to examine the needs of the Hispanic families in the district and make recommendations to the administration for meeting their unique needs.

This advisory committee will give Hispanic families an avenue to increase communication with the district. Hispanic families can express their specific needs to this group; the committee can communicate the needs to district staff.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The coordinator of Bilingual/ESL Programs assembles a Hispanic Parents' Advisory Committee and schedules regularly monthly meetings that will rotate meetings to all schools in the district.	September 2003
2.	The Hispanic Parents' Advisory Committee meets once a month to make recommendations to the director for publications.	October 2003 - May 2004 and Ongoing
3.	The coordinator of Bilingual/ESL programs meets regularly with school principals to remind them to make sure that they translate everything they send home to Spanish speaking families.	Ongoing
4.	The coordinator of Bilingual/ESL programs makes random spot checks to ensure that all Spanish-dominant families are receiving information from their child's school in Spanish. The coordinator of Bilingual/ESL programs will make reports on the spot checks at principal's meetings.	Ongoing
5.	The coordinator of Bilingual/ESL programs will post agendas and minutes of the advisory committee meetings on the district Web site in English and in Spanish.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 2

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

G. CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION

Texas Education Code (TEC) Section 29.181 emphasizes two goals for career and technology education (CATE) programs. The code states, "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 (TAC) 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 postsecondary education in employment settings."

In July 2002, TEA published a revised document entitled "State Plan for Career and Technology Education 2000-2002." This document outlines the specific guidelines districts must follow in their efforts to offer effective career and technology education programs that prepare students for further education and eventual employment. The plan is based on the premise that a rigorous academic foundation contributes to success in school and in life; that all students should be provided equal opportunities to succeed; and that career and technology education should complement and enhance academic preparation by enabling students to apply academic principles to a variety of community and career situations.

FINDING

RISD provides students a variety of course offerings in seven different areas in the CATE program. The director of Instructional Services manages the district's CATE program.

Exhibit 2-49 shows that RISD enrolled 4.1 percentage points and 4.5 percentage points fewer students in CATE programs than the Region 10 and state averages, respectively. RISD's CATE program enrollment is several points higher than three peer districts.

Exhibit 2-49
CATE Enrollment and Program Budgeted Expenditures
RISD, Peer Districts, Region 10 and the State
2002-03

District	Students Enrolled in CATE	Percentage of Total Enrollment	CATE Expenditures	Expenditures per Student
Eanes	931	13.1%	\$430,168	\$462
Coppell	850	8.6%	\$635,501	\$748
McKinney	2,284	15.1%	\$1,652,524	\$724
RISD	1,490	15.7%	\$930,109	\$624
Frisco	1,117	10.0%	\$738,409	\$661
Allen	3,204	25.6%	\$1,415,480	\$442
Carroll	505	7.0	\$397,898	\$788
Region 10	128,192	20.2%	N/A	N/A
State	841,438	19.8%	N/A	N/A

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 2002-03.

Exhibit 2-50 shows that the district's expenditures for the CATE program increased 49 percent between 1997-98 and 2001-02. The district's expenditures per student increased only 22 percent in the same period even though enrollment increased by 23 percent.

Exhibit 2-50
RISD Actual CATE Expenditures
1997-98 through 2001-02

Category	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	Percentage Change 1997-98 through 2001-02
CATE expenditures	\$560,936	\$662,879	\$710,124	\$757,370	\$837,928	49%
CATE students served	1,225	1,079	1,263	1,369	1,502	23%
CATE expenditures per student	\$458	\$614	\$562	\$553	\$558	22%

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

RISD offers 34 different courses in seven different program areas. The seven program areas are: Agriculture Science, Business Education, Computer Maintenance/Electronics, Family and Consumer Science, Health Science, Marketing Education and Computer-Assisted Drafting. **Exhibit 2-51** shows enrollment for 2002-03 by class and the credits that will generate the approximate funding for the school year.

Exhibit 2-51
RISD CATE Program
Enrollment, Credit and Approximate Funding
2002-03

Program	Enrollment/ Credits	Approximate Funding
Rockwall High School		
Wildlife Management	48-0.5 Credit Class	\$14,454
Agricultural Mechanics	84-0.5 Credit Class	\$25,295
Intro to Horticulture	14-0.5 Credit Class	\$4,215
Animal/Plant Science	20-0.5 Credit Class	\$6,022
Diversified Co-op	79- 3 Credit Class	\$142,455
Totals	245	\$192,444
Interior Design	24-0.5 Credit Class	\$7,227
Individual/Family Life	51-0.5 Credit Class	\$15,358
Nutrition	38-0.5 Credit Class	\$11,443
Mentorship	45- 1 Credit Class	\$27,102
Childcare Management Co-op	11- 3 Credit Class	\$19,835
Totals	169	\$80,966
Medical Terminology	16- 1 Credit Class	\$9,636
Anatomy/Physiology	42- 1 Credit Class	\$25,295
Totals	58	\$34,932
Intro to Computer Aided Design	20- 1 Credit Class	\$12,045

Direct Current Electronics	14- 1 Credit Class	\$8,431
Digital Logic Circuits	4- 1 Credit Class	\$2,409
Computer Maintenance	47- 1 Credit Class	\$28,307
Totals	85	\$51,193
Marketing Yourself	9-0.5 Credit Class	\$2,710
Marketing Co-op	72- 3 Credit Class	\$129,832
Totals	81	\$132,542
Keyboarding	25-0.5 Credit Class	\$7,528
Recordkeeping	23-0.5 Credit Class	\$6,926
Accounting	31- 1 Credit Class	\$18,670
Business Law	56- 1 Credit Class	\$33,727
Business Computer Information Systems	667-1 Credit Class	\$401,720
Business Ed. Independent Study (Internship)	38- 1 Credit Class	\$22,886
Business Image Management	66- 1 Credit Class	\$39,750
Administrative Procedures Co-op	21- 3 Credit Class	\$37,867
Totals	927	\$569,078
Eastfield College (Semester 1)		
Welding	21- 2 Credit Class	\$25,219
Totals	21	\$25,219
Collin County Community College at Rockwall High School		
Criminal Justice	29-0.5 Credit Class	\$8,733
Crime in America	21-0.5 Credit Class	6,323
Totals	50	\$15,057
Utley Freshman Center (Semester 1)		
Personal/Family Development	72- 1 Credit Class	\$43,364
Totals	72	\$43,364

Business Computer Information Systems	191- 1 Credit Class	\$115,035
Totals	191	\$115,035
Grand Total		\$1,127,293

Source: RISD director of Instructional Services.

The state encourages districts to develop School-To-Work arrangements such as Tech Prep. Texas also encourages districts to establish dual credit programs and articulation agreements with post-secondary institutions. Tech Prep programs begin in high school and continue at a post-secondary institution, frequently a community college. These programs provide a coherent sequence of courses involving classroom instruction and on-site training. Participation allows students to enter the work force with both technical skills and practical work experience. Dual credit courses allow students to fulfill graduation requirements and complete college credits simultaneously by registering and taking courses at either the high school or on a college campus. School districts and colleges establish articulation agreements if they determine that alignment exists between specific courses. Students receive high school credit upon course completion and college credit upon enrollment at the college.

RISD has Tech Prep agreements with Collin County Community College. Both the district and the community college are part of the Global EDGE Tech Prep Consortium. The consortium serves 26 school districts in nine counties. The community college offers the following courses as part of this agreement: Keyboarding, Business Computer Information Systems I, Accounting I, Business Image Management and Multimedia, Internetworking Technology I and II, Digital Logic Circuits, Computer Maintenance, Direct Current Electronics, Early Childhood Profession I and II, Technical Introduction to CAD, Introduction to Criminal Justice and Crime in America. Students go to the college campus to take the Criminal Justice and Crime in America courses, but the district receives state funding.

In addition to Collin County Community College articulation agreement, Rockwall High School also has an agreement with Eastfield College for a welding class. Students must go to the college to take this class but the district receives state funding.

COMMENDATION

RISD offers students a variety of courses in the career and technology education program at a reasonable per-student cost.

FINDING

RISD has no process or district policy on how to evaluate its CATE program. State law requires districts to evaluate their career and technology program areas annually. The annual program evaluation should assess the size, scope, quality and effectiveness of the program while ensuring that it complies with state and federal assessment requirements.

The district hired a consultant team in fall 2002 to conduct an annual CATE program evaluation. This evaluation team cited several areas for improvement and the resulting report represents a one-time evaluation of the CATE program for RISD.

A successful comprehensive on-going program evaluation requires detailed planning and guidance from teachers and administrators. The district can create a locally designed instrument or use the one designed by TEA.

KISD uses a comprehensive system to evaluate its CATE program. KISD selected the CATE program for in-depth evaluation in 2001-02. The district formed a CATE Advisory Board that meets monthly. The committee consists of 35 members and includes community members, business leaders and parents. The advisory board provides input into the program and raises funds for scholarships.

The advisory board divides members into two-member teams, based on their expertise, for the program evaluation. The evaluation covers every CATE course. The district trained all members who participated in the evaluation to use the evaluation instrument. The evaluation instrument examines nine aspects of each course: Facilities and Equipment; Instructional Objectives, Occupational Competencies, and Essential Knowledge and Skills; Instructional and Resource Materials; Methods of Instruction; Opportunities for Employment; Enrollment; Local Advisory Committee; Budget; and Summary. Each section of the questionnaire, except the Summary section, includes several statements for a total of 31 statements. The evaluator rates each statement on a five-point scale ranging from Poor or Non-existent (1) to Superior Quality (5). For example, the Facilities and Equipment section has statements such as: "The facility is arranged, organized and maintained to ensure a safe and appropriate environment." In the Summary section, the evaluator identifies the major strengths and weaknesses of the course, develops major recommendations and records any other remarks.

Recommendation 12:

Choose a local or state evaluation instrument to annually evaluate the Career and Technology Education program.

In order to comply with the state requirement to provide annual program evaluation, RISD needs to choose the instrument it wants to use and begin conducting the evaluations of the CATE program. This evaluation information can be used to make programmatic improvements that are needed.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Instructional Services works with the RHS principal and an advisory group of CATE instructors to investigate the available evaluation instruments for adoption by RISD.	September 2003
2.	The CATE advisory group of instructors along with the director of Instructional Services visits Kerrville or other districts that use ongoing evaluation instruments.	October - December 2003
3.	The CATE advisory group along with the director of Instructional Services will choose the evaluation instrument that RISD will use for the CATE program.	January 2004
4.	The CATE advisory group will begin the ongoing evaluation process in RISD.	February 2004 and Ongoing
5.	The director of Instructional Services and the high school principal monitor the evaluation process.	February 2004 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

RISD does not integrate CATE programs and the academic curriculum. Public Law 105-332, Title I, Part C, Section 135 (b) (1) requires districts to integrate career and technology programs with the academic curriculum. The district does not have curriculum integration projects planned for 2002-03.

TEA's Standard Application System for 2002 lists strategies and methodologies that districts may employ to achieve program integration. TEA suggests that teachers in districts may have already developed and used classroom activities in their curriculums that have real world applications. Districts can ask these teachers to work with a CATE teacher in a cooperative agreement. The teachers will work with the students to

show them the relevance of what they are learning in both classes. RISD does not have any activities such as this going on at this time.

TEA's strategies include:

- career and technology education teachers identify academic competencies in basic and higher-order skills to incorporate into the curriculum. These competencies include instructional activities that lead students from theory to application;
- academic teachers identify, develop and implement classroom activities that provide real world career applications;
- academic and career and technology education teachers collaborate in the development, revision and utilization of curriculum and instructional materials designed to achieve integration between their programs;
- the district provides academic, career and technology education teachers joint planning times and coordinated teaching schedules to integrate instruction;
- academic and career and technology education teachers participate in jointly planned staff development activities, including business and industry training;
- the district incorporates academic competencies into career and technology education courses either through administrative directives to teachers, the adoption of new curriculum materials or the development of model curricula;
- academic teachers strengthen the academic components of career and technology education curriculum;
- academic teachers, in some instances, teach individual lessons or modules for career and technology education courses, help career and technology education teachers to develop their own academic exercises or provide additional opportunities for career and technology education students to develop academic skills;
- the district modifies the academic curriculum to incorporate career and technology education applications and examples so the curriculum is more relevant to students;
- the district aligns both academic curriculum and career and technology education curriculum and links the two by using more practical instructional applications in academic courses and more academic skills in career and technology education courses;
- the district institutes School-Within-A-School in which schools pair academic teachers in English, math and science with career and technology education teachers and focus on a particular career concentration such as health science technology. These teacher teams remain with the same group of students over two or three years and coordinate course content and sequence instruction. In some instances, districts have established close relationships with

business and industry operating in career concentrations, thereby providing students with additional motivation, mentors and internships;

- the districts use Career Concentration Cluster, which organize courses (may be from a variety of career and technology education programs and academic areas) around occupational clusters. This facilitates cooperation among academic and career and technology education teachers. Teachers from each of the disciplines provide emphasis appropriate to each student's career goal;
- the district implements labor market-driven career concentrations. This provides districts with a means to deliver coherent sequences of courses for integrating academic and career and technology education instruction; for addressing all aspects of the industries within each career concentration; and for providing career guidance and counseling; and
- the district develops and implements career academies in one or more career concentrations. A strong business and industry component supports identified skills and knowledge integrated into the instruction of all teachers in the academy.

Recommendation 13:

Choose specific projects each year to integrate academic curriculum areas with career and technology programs.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	Rockwall High School principal works with the CATE instructors and the director of Instructional Services to determine what career and technology programs should be integrated with academic curriculum during 2003-04.	August 2003
2.	The Rockwall High School principal and the director of Instructional Services schedule joint meetings with CATE instructors and regular core academic subject teachers to begin the integration process.	October 2003
3.	The director of Instructional Services ensures that meetings are conducted and the teachers keep minutes, agendas and written plans for integration for documentation purposes.	November 2003 and Ongoing
4.	The Rockwall High School principal ensures integration plans are printed and given to appropriate teachers.	Ongoing as Integration Documents are Completed
5.	The high school principal and assistant principals observe	January 2004

and monitor classrooms to ensure that CATE is integrated with regular academic subjects.	and Ongoing
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FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The district does not keep its CATE program current with local workforce needs nor explain the types of careers that students might pursue by taking a course or series of courses.

CATE programs prepare students for further education and eventual employment. It is important that these programs use current information from the local workforce to make decisions about which courses to offer and about the exact skills that schools should teach students to prepare them for careers. Communities change and projecting future jobs is a constantly evolving process. The demographics of Rockwall have changed dramatically over the past 20 years. The community has gone from mostly rural to suburban. Effective administration and guidance for the CATE program requires research and knowledge of work force development.

The district does not have advisory committees for the following programs: Agricultural Science Education, Business Education, Computer Maintenance/Electronics, Family and Consumer Science Education, Health Science Technology and Marketing Education. Rockwall High School offers computer-assisted drafting as a course. But this program lacks a local advisory committee and the instructor is not aware of any career development sequence. The lab in which this course is taught is equipped with the 1997 version of AutoCAD LT, and the computers are five to six years old.

In 1997-98, Austin ISD (AISD) streamlined CATE course options by reorganizing its career programs into eight clusters, 28 pathways and 229 course offerings. The district aligned the programs with TEA's reorganization of career education. AISD established advisory committees for each career cluster. The advisory committee includes representatives from the private sector, AISD administrators, secondary faculty and post secondary faculty. The committees meet regularly to advise the district and evaluate curriculum.

By offering School to Career programs that move students from career exploration to career preparation, AISD allows students the flexibility to move from one pathway to another as their interests and skills change. This gives students the opportunity to learn about different careers before

making life choices. The district offers a Begin School to Career study program from kindergarten to grade 6 with units designed to create career awareness. In middle school, students begin to investigate specific careers. In grades 9 through 10, AISD offers Career Exploration. Students begin to move into specific career pathways in Grade 11, often culminating in a work-site learning experience in the senior year.

Recommendation 14:

Develop a five-year strategic plan for Career and Technology Education that includes rationale for course offerings, course selection sequences, staff allocation, timelines and costs.

A five-year strategic plan will assist RISD in keeping the CATE program current with state requirements and local work force needs. This plan should be a working document that will drive course and staff decisions concerning future needs of the district.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, the high school principal and high school counselors meet to begin the development of the CATE five-year strategic plan that will include rationale for course offerings, course selection sequences, staff allocation, timelines and costs.	August 2003 - January 2004
2.	The high school principal recommends a CATE teacher to serve as lead teacher. The lead teacher will monitor the program and work with the advisory committees.	January 2004
3.	The lead teacher develops the course sequences and includes them in the course guide that is distributed before the school year.	August 2004 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

RISD will need to provide the lead teacher with a daily work period and a stipend. Based upon stipends paid to other RISD high school department heads, the review team calculates that RISD would give the lead teacher a \$2,500 stipend annually.

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Develop a five-year strategic plan for Career and Technology	\$0	(\$2,500)	(\$2,500)	(\$2,500)	(\$2,500)

Education that includes rationale for course offerings, course selection sequences, staff allocation, timelines and costs.					
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Chapter 2

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

H. TITLE I/STATE COMPENSATORY EDUCATION

In addition to regular classroom instruction, other instructional programs provide special support for students at risk of dropping out and students who are not performing on grade level. The federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (Title I) and the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 provide funds for students not meeting performance standards. TEA sends Title I funds to districts based on their number of economically disadvantaged students. TEA typically determines a district's eligibility for Title I programs by examining the number of students eligible for free/reduced-price lunch or breakfast in the district. Districts select the students to serve with the Title I funds based on educational need, not economic status.

The U. S. Department of Education recently re-authorized its Elementary and Secondary Education Act in 2002. The department titled its new document *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB). NCLB challenges public schools, "to ensure that all children have a fair, equal and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and reach, at a minimum, proficiency on challenging state academic achievement standards and state academic assessments." Both Title I funds and State Compensatory Education (SCE) funds fall under the administration of the new NCLB legislation. NCLB compels districts to identify both the qualifying "at-risk" students and schools with large numbers of at-risk students. Districts must provide them with resources they need to serve these students through these federal programs. The federal government intends the funds to be supplemental, which means they should provide resources that would not otherwise be available through the regular program. Title I and SCE funds must enhance the regular program and not replace or supplant regular funds.

Texas state-funded compensatory programs began in 1975 with the passage of H.B. 1126. In 1997, the Legislature amended Section 42.152 of the Texas Education Code (TEC) to include the reporting and auditing of compensatory education funds. The TEC requires that SCE funds, like federal Title I funds, be supplemental in nature. SCE rules allow a great deal of flexibility in student identification and program approaches. As with the federal program, the state funds flow based on the number of economically disadvantaged students; however, districts use the funds to serve students based on need, not economic status. These federal and state special programs provide funds to targeted special populations that often have eligibility crossovers.

In 1979, the Texas Legislature redirected the focus of the state compensatory education program. One change resulting from this redirection was that the state began basing districts' funding allotments on the best six months' enrollment from the preceding school year of students participating in the federal free and reduced-price lunch program.

Between 1979 and 1983, several major changes occurred in the state compensatory education program. The state raised the funding allotment, but continued to base it on the best six months' enrollment from the preceding school year of students participating in the federal free and reduced-price lunch program. Additionally, the Legislature required that districts use student performance data in designing and implementing local compensatory education programs. The State Board of Education revised its rules on compensatory education to eliminate ties to federal compensatory education funds. The board redefined allowable expenditures to include instructionally related activities. The board prohibited non-instructional and administrative expenditures as allowable expenditures.

In 2001, Senate Bill 702 amended the sections of the TEC that govern the State Compensatory Education Program.

Senate Bill 702 changed the state criteria for identifying students at risk of dropping out of school. The new requirements direct school districts to use student performance data resulting from the basic skills assessment instruments and achievement tests administered under Subchapter B, Chapter 39, to design and implement appropriate compensatory, intensive or accelerated instructional services for students at risk of dropping out of school. These services should enable these students to be performing at grade level at the conclusion of the next regular school term.

Senate Bill 702 requires each school district to evaluate and document the effectiveness of the state compensatory education program in reducing any disparity in performance on assessment instruments administered under Subchapter B, Chapter 39, or any disparity in the rates of high school completion between students at risk of dropping out of school and all other district students.

RISD's director of Federal Programs supervises SCE and Title I programs. RISD provides 29 highly diverse supplemental programs for at-risk students. Nine programs target grades students from pre-kindergarten to grade 6; nine programs target secondary students. The district has 11 additional programs that target all students. **Exhibit 2-52** lists these programs and describes their target population.

Exhibit 2-52
RISD SCE and Title I Programs
2002-03

Compensatory Education Strategies	Campus and Grade Level of Implementation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accelerated instruction during the school day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All campuses except Jones and Hartman
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TAKS preparation classes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All campuses except Jones and Hartman
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After-school remediation classes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All campuses except Jones and Hartman
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy Specialists-1/2 time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All elementary campuses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secondary study classes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Williams Middle School, Cain Middle School, Utley Freshman Center, Rockwall High School
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SWARM Program - Students Willingly Accepting Responsible Management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utley Freshman Center

Source: RISD director of Federal Programs.

RISD uses the 13 PEIMS data standards set forth in Education Code 29.081 (d) (g) to identify at-risk students. School counselors conduct the identification process and send the data to the district PEIMS coordinator. Central administration staff compiles the information in a database that they send back to the school administrators. The Campus Assessment, Review and Evaluation Team (CARE Team) works with the staff to monitor the progress of the at-risk students on each campus.

Exhibit 2-53 shows RISD's compensatory education expenditures for 2001-02.

Exhibit 2-53
RISD Schools, At-Risk Students and Compensatory Funding
2001-02

School	Number of Students Who Are Eligible for Free and Reduced-Priced Lunches	Compensatory Funding	Compensatory Expenditures per Eligible Student	Non-Compensatory Instructional Funding	Total Instructional Funding	Total Enrollment	Total Instructional Expenditures per Student
High School							
Rockwall High School	150	\$96,977	\$647	\$5,539,263	\$5,636,240	1,969	\$2,862
Alternative School	17	\$490,241	\$28,838	\$97,051	\$587,292	95	\$6,182
Utley Freshman Center	75	\$126,191	\$1,683	\$2,206,790	\$2,332,981	756	\$3,085
Middle Schools							
J.W. Williams	75	\$101,537	\$1,354	\$2,372,560	\$2,474,097	883	\$2,801
Cain	126	\$123,344	\$979	\$2,118,498	\$2,241,842	686	\$3,267
Elementary Schools							
Rochell	421	\$571,227	\$1,357	\$1,829,477	\$2,400,704	532	\$4,513
Parks	17	\$110,025	\$6,472	\$1,698,481	\$1,808,506	639	\$2,830
Cullins-Lake Pointe	58	\$92,041	\$1,587	\$2,818,439	\$2,910,480	952	\$3,057
Pullen	105	\$180,856	\$1,722	\$1,548,744	\$1,729,600	648	\$2,669
Dobbs	235	\$489,138	\$2,081	\$1,575,781	\$2,064,919	576	\$3,585
Nebbie Williams	24	\$8,179	\$3,674	\$1,852,059	\$1,860,238	466	\$3,992
Reinhardt	32	\$94,730	\$2,960	\$1,659,155	\$1,753,885	422	\$4,156
Total	1,335	\$2,484,486	\$1,861	\$25,316,298	\$27,800,784	8,624	\$3,224

Source: RISD assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction.

RISD identifies three of its schools Title I schools. Rochell Elementary School, a schoolwide project campus, is one of these schools. Dobbs Elementary and Jones Elementary are both targeted assistance schools that receive Title I funds. Under federal law, a district may designate a school as a Title I schoolwide program if 50 percent or more of its students qualify as economically disadvantaged.

The government offers SEC funds to districts under several different Title programs. RISD receives federal funds in five Title programs. **Exhibit 2-54** lists these funds and programs offered under each Title.

**Exhibit 2-54
Federal Title Programs for RISD
2001-02**

Federal Title Program	Amount Received	Strategies Used
Title I, Part A	\$30,353	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salaries for teachers at three schools: Rochell, Dobbs and Jones • Reading and math supplies • Staff development • Summer school salaries
Title II, Part A	\$203,095	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salaries to reduce class size • Staff development • Title II co-op at Region 10 • Supplies
Title II, Part D	\$11,365	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partial salary for district technologist • Supplies
Title V	\$38,160	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Title V co-op with Region 10 • Library materials • Summer school at elementary school for at-risk students
Title IV, Part A	SSA with Region 10	

Source: RISD director of Federal Programs.

Exhibit 2-55 describes the early childhood education that RISD provides for all children.

Exhibit 2-55
RISD Early Childhood Programs
2002-03

Early Childhood Program	Explanation
Early Head Start	Birth to age three program for infants, toddlers and their parents
Head Start	Five multi-age classes for three- and four- year-old children
Pre-Kindergarten	Two half-day classes for four-year-old children based on language and income
Bilingual Pre-Kindergarten	One full day class for bilingual four-year-old children
Tuition Based Pre-Kindergarten	Two half-day classes for four-year-old children, parents pay tuition

Source: RISD director of Federal Programs.

FINDING

RISD has not developed, implemented or approved a policy or procedure to measure the individual effectiveness of supplemental programs offered to the district's at-risk students. According to the director of Federal Programs, the district does not have formal program evaluations or mechanisms to continually modify and upgrade the programs offered through the state compensatory education or Title I or other federal programs.

TEA's *Financial Accountability System Resource Guide (FASRG)* reports in Section 9.2.7, "Evaluation of State Compensatory Education Programs," that school districts must evaluate the effectiveness of their state compensatory education programs and include the results in their district improvement plans. Districts are instructed to evaluate their compensatory programs through the examination of the test performance and high school completion rates of at-risk versus other students. School districts, however, are not required to perform a program-by-program analysis to determine the effectiveness of each program or strategy.

Recommendation 15:

Develop a comprehensive evaluation system to determine the effectiveness of State Compensatory Education and Title I programs.

Comprehensive program evaluation of the SCE and Title I programs will provide the district with data for making program improvements. These evaluations will also allow the district to comply with state regulations.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Federal Programs evaluates all district federal programs that are not producing desired student results.	October 2003
2.	The director of Federal Programs schedules all programs that are not producing desired results for comprehensive evaluation.	October - December 2003
3.	The director of Federal Programs coordinates a program evaluation process including surveys, interviews, additional data collection, cost analysis and quality evaluations.	December 2003 and Ongoing
4.	The director of Federal Programs makes recommendations to the superintendent and board for terminating and modifying programs that are not producing the desired results.	February 2004 and Ongoing
5.	The director of Federal Programs creates a rotating schedule for evaluating all SEC and Title 1 programs.	January 2004

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 2

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

I. GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING

The 1996-2000 Long Range Plan of the State Board of Education includes the board's goal to provide all Texas students with equal access to developmental guidance and counseling. TEC, Chapter 21.356, requires the commissioner of education to develop and periodically update a counselor job description in consultation with the state guidance association.

In 1998, TEA published *A Model Developmental Guidance and Counseling Program for Texas Public Schools*. The guide addresses achieving program balance by allocating resources to the following four components of developmental guidance and counseling.

- Guidance Curriculum - planned lessons covering seven areas including self-confidence development, motivation to achieve, decision-making and problem-solving skills and responsible behavior. School counselors can teach all or some of the curriculum through direct instruction or can consult with teachers who integrate the curriculum into the classroom;
- Responsive Services - interventions on behalf of students whose immediate personal concerns or problems put their continued personal-social, career and/or educational development at risk. Counselors can meet with individuals or groups of students as indicated in the particular setting;
- Individual Planning - guidance for students as they plan, monitor and manage their own educational, career and personal-social development. Counselors can perform activities such as conducting group guidance sessions, interpreting standardized test results and consulting with individual students and their parents regarding colleges and financial aid; and
- System Support - services and management activities that indirectly benefit students. Counselors can consult with teachers, participate in developing campus-based school improvement plans and support parent and community relations efforts.

The guide recommends that school counselors divide their time between these four components depending on the developmental and special needs of the students served. Each district or school will determine the amount of counselor time devoted to each component. Allocations will vary, but **Exhibit 2-56** shows TEA's suggested allocations. RISD does not monitor counselor time formally, so no percentage allocations are available.

Exhibit 2-56
TEA's Recommended Percentage
Distribution of Counselor Services by Level

Service Type	Elementary School	Middle School	High School
Guidance Curriculum	35-45%	35-40%	15-25%
Responsive Services	30-40%	30-40%	25-35%
Individual Planning	5-10%	15-25%	25-35%
System Support	10-15%	10-15%	15-20%

Source: TEA, A Model Developmental Guidance and Counseling Program for Texas Public Schools, 1998.

RISD employs a full staff of certified counselors to serve their schools. **Exhibit 2-57** lists the numbers of counselors based at each school.

Exhibit 2-57
RISD Counselors by School
2002-03

School	Population	Counselors	Student to Counselor Ratio
Rochell Elementary	524	1	1:524
Amy Parks Elementary	636	1	1:636
Cullins-LP Elementary	951	2	1:476
Pullen Elementary	642	1	1:642
Jones Elementary	580	1	1:580
Hartman Elementary	381	1	1:381
Dobbs Elementary	583	1	1:583
Nebbie Williams Elementary	465	1	1:465
Reinhardt Elementary	424	1	1:424
Williams Middle	885	2	1:442
Cain Middle	673	2	1:336
Utlely Freshman	748	2	1:374
Rockwall High	2,002	5	1:400

Alternative School	99	1	1:99
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Source: RISD coordinator of Student Services.

TEC Section 33.002 requires school districts with 500 or more enrolled elementary students to employ a certified counselor for every 500 students.

Counselor-to-student ratios at individual RISD schools vary from one counselor per 99 students at the Alternative School to one counselor per 642 students at Pullen Elementary School. In elementary schools, the ratio varies from 381 students per counselor at Hartman to 642 students per counselor at Pullen Elementary.

FINDING

RISD offers a variety of programs at schools to meet student-counseling needs. RISD's Student Services coordinator serves as a central office contact for the counselors in the district. The coordinator organizes a meeting with them once a month for one hour to discuss issues related to counseling. The coordinator also develops a two-day in-service for the counselors each summer. **Exhibit 2-58** shows the counseling activities in RISD.

Exhibit 2-58 RISD Counseling Activities 2002-03

Program	Description
We Help Ourselves (WHO)	The WHO Program from the Mental Health of Greater Dallas organization focuses on the anti-victimization of children. RISD counselors offer program presentations in kindergarten and grades 2,4,6,7 and high school.
Adventure Challenge-based learning	Challenge Learning is a series of activities customized for the classroom or for professional staff development. The focus is on team building, defining success as related to self and group, determining roles and norms, conflict resolution and development of related group skills such as communication decision-making and problem solving. Counselors provide interactive presentations at their school.
Character Education	Character education is an integral part of the school academic coursework. Each school selects and endorses the program that best meets the needs of their students. School counselors provide the coordination.

Support groups	Counselors bring students with common problems together in support groups. The groups provide peer support, problem-solving opportunities, communication skills development, individual assertiveness promotion and interpersonal relationships development. Counselors at all schools facilitate these groups in conjunction with the Phoenix House at Rockwall High School and the Child Guidance Center at UFC.
Substance abuse counseling	Students who have tested positive in the mandatory drug testing for all students in athletic programs at the high school receive one on one counseling with parent conferencing. School counselors provide the counseling.
Pregnancy related service	The Pregnancy Related Program is designed to assist pregnant and parenting teens to continue meeting their academic requirements while providing support and safety or the physical and psychological well being of the student. School counselors provide the counseling.
Career awareness	All counselors in the district provide information to students and their parents regarding

Source: RISD coordinator of Student Services.

COMMENDATION

RISD provides a comprehensive school guidance and counseling program.

FINDING

The counseling department at Rockwall High School implemented a creative way to advise students and their parents or guardians regarding the importance of higher education, coursework designed to prepare students for higher education, financial aid availability and requirements.

The 2001 Legislature enacted legislation reflected in TEC Section 33.001 and 33.005-33.006 pertaining to the work of the school counselor. Beginning in 2001-02, the legislation requires each counselor at elementary, middle and junior high schools, including any open-enrollment charter school offering those grades, to advise students of the importance of higher education, coursework, financial aid availability and requirements. The legislation also requires the high school counselors to provide information to students and parents during students' first year and senior year in high school regarding:

- the importance of higher education;

- the advantages of completing the recommended or higher high school program;
- the disadvantages of taking courses to prepare for high school equivalency;
- coursework designed to prepare students for higher education;
- financial aid availability and requirements;
- instruction on how to apply for federal financial aid;
- the eligibility and academic performance requirements for the TEXAS grant;
- information concerning the financial aid center operated by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board under TEC Section 61.0776; and
- the automatic admission of students who graduate with a grade point average in the top 10 percent of the student's graduating class to state universities as provided by the TEC Section 51.803.

RISD gives each junior student at Rockwall High School a document entitled *Junior Wallet*. This brightly colored yellow document is kept in a clear plastic portfolio that unfolds for easy viewing. The wallet contains:

- important dates for junior students to remember such as College Career Day and PSAT test dates;
- activities to remember such as visiting the resource center in the counselor's office and checking for college admission requirements;
- Web sites of popular colleges, post secondary options and careers;
- information about financial aid and scholarships including the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) Web site and others; and
- Web sites that contain important testing information.

RISD gives each senior student at Rockwall High School a document entitled *Senior Passport*. This bright orange document is also kept in a clear plastic portfolio that unfolds for easy viewing. The passport contains:

- important dates for senior students to remember including College Career Day, dates to take the SAT or ACT, dates to apply to universities and confirm housing;
- a form students can fill out to help them remember their PSAT scores, TASP status, Plan Test scores, GPA and class rank;
- check boxes students can mark to help them decide if they need to take the SAT, ACT, SAT II, ASVAB, or other Two Year College Assessments;
- a place to write down the courses needed to graduate and determine the credits needed for the graduation plan chosen; and

- Web sites for important testing information; post-secondary options and careers; financial aid and scholarships; and the FAFSA Web site.

COMMENDATION

Rockwall High School counselors provide each junior or a senior student with valuable documents to help them make higher education decisions.

Chapter 2

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

J. ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM

RISD created an alternative education program that houses three different components at the Rockwall Alternative School (RAS) in one site. The Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP) is the program for students who have had chronic or severe behavior problems at high school. Choice High School is an alternative academic program that serves the educational needs of young adults for whom a traditional setting is not appropriate. The Short Term Alternative Program serves students in grades 6 through 12 who are assigned to the program for two weeks because of inappropriate behavior at their home school.

The Alternative School is located in a separate building adjacent to the Utley Freshman Center. The school has one main building that includes administrative offices and one classroom/lab setting. Four other portable buildings complete the school. Choice High School uses the main classroom/lab and two classrooms in one portable. DAEP uses two portables. Short-term Discipline is in a separate building and operates in one large room. The school schedules time for all the programs in the main computer lab. For the most part, the school separates the students in each of these programs from the other program students.

RISD established Choice High School in 1994 to serve students who, for various reasons, are unable to participate in a regular high school program and who are at-risk of dropping out of school. Choice High School serves students 17 to 21 years old. Students must provide recommendations when applying to enter the program. Students consider attendance to Choice High School a privilege.

Choice High School offers a proficiency-based learning system teachers individualize for each student. Students progress at their own rate using computer-assisted instructional technology, textbooks and small group or one-on-one instructional strategies. Choice High School uses the American Preparatory Institute curriculum and the PLATO Learning System (a computer-assisted learning resource).

American Preparatory Institute offers a high school diploma program that is recognized by TEA. The institute's curriculum is individualized, competency-based and delivered through a student-directed instructional system. Students must demonstrate 70 percent mastery of course content to receive credits. Academic courses may not include electives or upper-level courses offered at area schools. The academic program requires a

minimum of 22 credits to graduate. Students must earn a minimum of half a credit a month and pass all sections of the TAAS. Choice High School requires its students to attend school four hours a day, five days a week.

The PLATO Learning System is a computer-assisted instructional program that also offers credit recovery. Students take an online assessment that the system scores and evaluates to create the individualized tutorial within the program. When a student logs onto the system, the program guides the student to the next step in the tutorial. The system assesses the student's progress along the way until the student finishes the course. Teachers can monitor student performance by checking progress on the various lessons completed. Teachers can also use PLATO for tutorial purposes.

As an academic school, Choice High School serves approximately 200 students each year. The students are self-motivated, willing to follow the school's rules and procedures and do not require disciplinary actions. The school has a staff of three full-time teachers and one part-time teacher. The alternative academic school shares a full-time counselor, principal and secretary with the other two alternative education programs at Choice High School. A certified teacher serves special education students as needed. To be admitted to the alternative academic program, a student must be:

- in grades 9-12 and between 16-20 years of age;
- or 18 years of age and have 20 credits and wanting to only attend the two-hour program;
- on the district's list of at-risk students or meeting state criteria for identification of at-risk students;
- seeking a high-school diploma;
- willing to attend two to four hours per day;
- enrolled in two courses at a time;
- willing to attend five days per week;
- willing to follow a curriculum that is module driven requiring self motivation; and
- willing to complete five half-credit courses within each semester.

Students must sign a contract before the district will admit them to Choice High School. Parents of a student whose age places them under the state's mandatory attendance requirements must also sign a contract acknowledging their role in the education of their child and agree to support their efforts through frequent parent/teacher meetings.

DAEP, the district's long-term discipline management program, is also located at Rockwall Alternative School. RISD places students in this program for offenses listed in Chapter 37 of TEC or RISD Code of

Conduct Offenses pertaining to the safety of others. The district created this school to comply with the Safe Schools Act that the Legislature designed to make Texas public schools safe from violent students.

Students must be in grades 7 through 12 to be admitted to DAEP. Minimum length of placement is the remainder of the semester in which the student moves to the program. Students placed during the second and fourth nine-weeks may remain for the following semester. Students remain on the PEIMS roll at the school that sent them to DAEP. The hours for this school are 8:45 a.m. - 3:15 p.m. each school day. RISD provides transportation for these students on a separate bus or parents may provide transportation. Individuals may drive themselves to school after two weeks if they have no discipline infractions. Six full-time employees (FTEs) comprise the staff at this school and they use the same curriculum as Choice High School.

The RISD student discipline policy provides specific guidelines describing offenses that result in DAEP placement. **Exhibit 2-59** presents the types of offenses that can result in placement in the DAEP and the number of students who are in DAEP for these offenses.

Exhibit 2-59
RISD AEP Placements
2001-02

Type of Offense	Number of Placements in AEP
Disruptive behavior	*
Conduct punishable as a felony	6
Assault or terroristic threat	*
Possessed, sold, or used marijuana or other controlled substance	10
Possessed, sold, used, or was under the influence of an alcoholic beverage	17
Persistent Misbehavior	63
Disrespect to teacher/principal	6
Skiping Class	*
Misconduct on Campus	*
Look a-like weapon	*
Other infractions	26

Source: RISD Alternative School Principal.

*Indicates five or fewer students.

The Short Term Discipline Management Component of the RISD Alternative School is located at Rockwall Alternative School but is in a separate classroom. This program serves students in grades 7 through 12 who have committed general misconduct violations. The major offense resulting in short-term placement is persistent misbehavior. The length of stay is 10 school days and the student remains on the PEIMS roll of the sending school. The home school where the student regularly attends sends a curriculum for the student. Students may ride the Alternative School bus or parents may drop off and pick up the students. RISD allows no student drivers in this program. One full-time teacher and one aide staff this program.

RISD has dedicated considerable resources to provide a quality alternative education program. The district staffs all three programs at Rockwall Alternative School with certified teachers to meet the academic needs of the students. The Rockwall Alternative School staff includes 11 full-time teachers, one instructional aide, one secretary and one principal.

Exhibit 2-60 shows the operating costs of Rockwall Alternative School for each of the last two years and the budgeted amount for 2002-03.

Exhibit 2-60
RISD Alternative Education Program Expenditures
2000-01 through 2002-03

Budget Category	2000-01 Actual	2001-02 Actual	2002-03 Budgeted
Salaries and benefits	\$556,847	\$526,652	\$700,308
General supplies	\$10,305	\$4,960	\$10,400
Travel and other	\$1,227	\$1,786	\$7,250
Capital outlay	\$3,899	\$36,458	\$42,144
Total	\$578,279	\$575,522	\$760,102

Source: RISD Alternative School Principal.

Exhibit 2-61 shows the costs for Rockwall Alternative School staff alone.

Exhibit 2-61
RISD Alternative School Staff and Combined Salary by Position
2002-03

Position					
Administrators	Teachers	Counselor	Aides	Secretaries	Total
1	11	1	1	1	15
\$68,485	\$438,450	\$53,260	\$30,430	\$18,330	\$608,955

Source: RISD Alternative School Principal.

Each component of the RISD alternative education program has certified teachers for each of the four core academic subject areas: English, mathematics, social studies and science. Four FTE teachers serve students in the core subjects in the DAEP and 3.5 FTEs serve students in the core subjects at Choice High School.

Exhibit 2-62 shows expenditures for alternative programs in RISD and peer districts. RISD has the second lowest expenditure per student for alternative programs.

Exhibit 2-62
Total and Per Pupil Expenditures for Alternative Programs
RISD and Peer Districts
2001-02

District	Enrollment	Average Daily Enrollment	Number of Full Time Teachers	Total Expenditures	Per Pupil Expenditure
Coppell	104	44	4	\$387,148	\$8,799
Allen	138	45	8	\$576,249	\$4,175
Eanes	103	52	5	\$216,852	\$4,170
Frisco	217	34	9	\$62,809	\$2,894
RISD	375	76	11	\$578,279	\$1,542
McKinney	2,476	96	15	\$1,101,329	\$444

Source: Surveys conducted with peer districts and RISD Alternative School principal, December 2002.

Although RISD's enrollment continues to grow, the enrollment at the Long and Short Term Discipline programs continues to decline. In 2001-02, total enrollment in the Long and Short Term Discipline programs was 141. This is a decrease of 54 students from the 2000-01 enrollment.

Choice High School enrolled 234 students in 2001-02, and 115 students for the 2002-03 as of November 2002. Average daily enrollment for RAS is 76. The review team calculates RAS's teacher to student ratio, based on salary alone, as 1:7.

FINDING

RISD ensures that all students at Rockwall Alternative School receive guidance services for their unique situations by providing a full-time counselor exclusively to the school. Rockwall Alternative School, evaluated under the Alternative Education Accountability Rating System by TEA, received an accountability rating of "Acceptable" in 2002 based on TAAS scores of grade 10 students, attendance, dropout rate and percent of credits earned by long-term students. The comprehensive duties of the Rockwall Alternative School counselor are:

- **Individual Planning:** introducing and orientating new students and parents, making student schedules, monitoring credits for graduation, entering grades on transcripts, updating College and Career Resource Library, assisting students with scholarship applications, consulting with parents, teachers and principal regarding student progress;
- **Responsive Services:** counseling individuals, making referrals to outside agencies for students and parents, managing pregnancy related services, consulting with parents, teachers, and principal where appropriate and assisting the Juvenile Probation Officers to monitor student attendance and grades;
- **Guidance:** providing resource materials for teachers for district character education program, purchasing material for DMC behavior program, coordinating groups for DMC students and facilitating classroom guidance; and
- **Support Services:** serving as chairperson or member of various committees (504, CARE, LPAC, CIC, ARD, Attendance), acting as campus test coordinator, providing in-service training for teachers, identifying at-risk students, GED Chief Examiner, writing monthly article for Counselor Connections Newsletter, completing monthly time studies for counselors and filling in for principal as needed for discipline, truancy court and drug-dog searches.

The district implemented programmatic improvements in the DAEP in 2001-02 that allow students to take more than four basic courses and a self-discipline course. Before the improvements students could not complete enough credits to be academically successful while they attended Rockwall Alternative School. This new program allows students to have eight periods. Rockwall Alternative School offers students individualized counseling for scheduling so that their academic program will progress towards graduation in a timely manner.

In addition to the four basic core academic subjects offered through PLATO and the API Curriculum, both Choice High School and the DAEP now offer a variety of electives to their enrolled students. Choice High School offers Family and Career, Parenting, COOP, Psychology and Keyboarding courses. The DAEP offers Sociology, Individual and Family Living, Child Development, Reconnecting Youth, Record Keeping and Keyboarding programs. The addition of these electives has allowed students to earn sufficient credits while enrolled at Rockwall Alternative School.

COMMENDATION

RISD Alternative School offers each enrolled student individualized guidance counseling to meet the student's identified needs and to promote completion of the student's high school graduation requirements.

FINDING

RISD does not have a specific program in place to address the behavioral/discipline needs of students so that they will not experience the same problems that initially caused their placement at Rockwall Alternative School. As a result, the recidivism rate for students who were in the alternative school in 2001-02 is 14 percent.

RISD conducts a transitional meeting with each DAEP student eligible to return to his or her home school. A transitional facilitator, Rockwall Alternative School counselor, the Rockwall Alternative School principal, a home school administrator or counselor and the student meet to discuss the transitional process. If the committee approves the student's release from Rockwall Alternative School, the transitional facilitator follows up with visits to the student's home school each semester.

The principal indicated that these students have emotional and behavioral problems that lead to their return to Rockwall Alternative School. He also explained that DAEP does not offer a specific program to address the severe issues these students are experiencing. RISD offers students a

program entitled Reconnecting Youth. The school's discipline teachers provide the instruction for this program. The school provides the program through a partnership with an organization called the Phoenix House. Reconnecting Youth serves as the curriculum for self-discipline and does contain an anger management component, but is not addressing the students with severe problems.

At the Christa McAullife Learning Center in Richardson ISD, teachers receive training for handling students who exhibit behavior and discipline problems. The school resource officer and a conciliation specialist from the U.S. Department of Justice provide the training. The recidivism rate for the McAullife School remains under 10 percent each year. The school resource officer describes the training as Conflict and Crisis Intervention for Students.

The school resource officer works with teachers at the school to teach them how to recognize factors that lead up to conflict, bullying, suicide and dysfunctional ways of dealing with anger. The resource officer provides teachers with positive processes for dealing with students who exhibit signs of needing help. The conciliation specialist comes to the school on a regular schedule to work with students to teach them the steps to positive conflict resolution. The school also teaches students how to get along with other students and how to deal with anger. These two programs made a positive difference for the students and teachers at the school.

Recommendation 16:

Offer staff development and student training programs at RISD Alternative School that address the needs of returning students with emotional and behavioral problems.

Offering a program at the Rockwall Alternative School will help staff members address the behavioral needs of these students who will be released from the school. These students demonstrate that they have needs that cause compliance problems in the regular program and that they need help to learn to deal with these problems. Staff development and student training combined should offer solutions to these problems.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Rockwall Alternative School principal meets with the staff at the school to review incident data and discipline violations to look for trends in problems for released students.	September 2003
2.	The principal and staff of the Rockwall Alternative School investigate several consultants who offer training to address	October - December

	the problems identified.	2003
3.	The principal submits a draft of the program to the assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction.	January 2004
4.	The assistant superintendent approves the program and directs the Rockwall Alternative School principal to include the cost in the budget for 2004-05.	February 2004
5.	The principal of the Rockwall Alternative School includes the costs in the budget.	March 2004
6.	The board approves the budget, and the Rockwall Alternative School principal implements the plan.	August 2004
7.	The staff of the Rockwall Alternative School evaluates the plan twice yearly to address changing data and to determine if the plan is making a difference.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

Contracted services funds will be needed to provide staff development for all teachers at Rockwall Alternative School. Estimated costs are \$250 (plus expenses) per day each for two consultants to come to the school at least four times per year. The total annual cost will be \$3,000 (\$250 per day x four days x two consultants +\$1,000 annual expenses for the consultants).

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Offer staff development and student training programs at RISD Alternative School that address the needs of returning students with emotional and behavioral problems.	\$0	(\$3,000)	(\$3,000)	(\$3,000)	(\$3,000)

Chapter 3

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

This chapter reviews the communications and community involvement functions of the Rockwall Independent School District (RISD) in the following sections:

- A. Communications and Public Relations
- B. Community and Business Partnerships
- C. Volunteer and Parental Involvement

Effective communication between the school district and the local community results in valuable community partnerships, increased parental involvement and more school volunteers. Schools and school districts must consider every citizen, parent, teacher, local business, economic development organization, nonprofit organization and retiree as a valuable resource and try to involve them in district activities and decision making.

School districts typically communicate with their stakeholders through publications, community forums, local and area media, board meetings, special events, community access television and Web sites. Communities with excellent school systems attract new businesses, homebuyers and taxpayers. Effective community involvement efforts can enhance the quality of educational programs and exponentially expand the resources of a school district.

BACKGROUND

RISD is a fast growing district located 30 miles northeast of Dallas. The district grew 28.9 percent from 1998-99 to 2002-03. Student demographics shifted during this period increasing the Anglo student population by 22.4 percent and the minority student population significantly more. The African American student population increased by 90.1 percent and the Hispanic student population by at 80.7 percent (**Exhibit 3-1**).

Exhibit 3-1
Changes in RISD Student Demographics
1998-99 through 2002-03

	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	Increase/Decrease 1998-99 to 2002-03

African American	242	283	306	383	460	90.1%
Anglo	6214	6535	7006	7261	7607	22.4%
Hispanic	673	740	902	1008	1216	80.7%
Asian/Pacific Islander	103	129	133	138	173	68.0%
Native American	18	13	12	20	32	77.8%
Economically Disadvantaged	900	914	1125	1295	1256	39.6%

Source: Texas Education Agency (TEA), Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS), 1998-99 through 2002-03.

The superintendent, the director of School and Community Relations, school principals and school Parent Teacher Associations/Parent Teacher Organizations (PTA/PTO) organize RISD's community and parent involvement efforts.

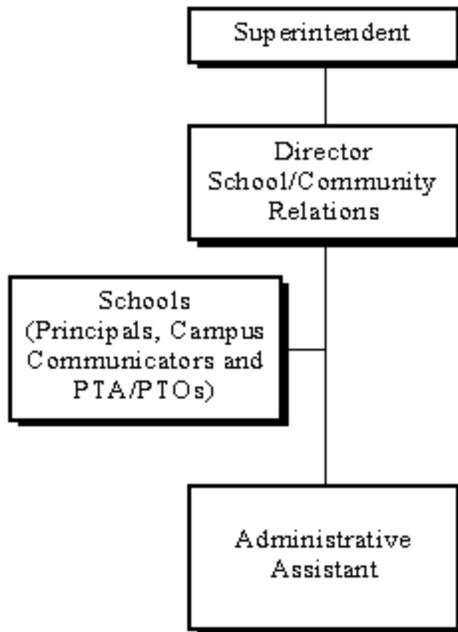
RISD's School and Community Relations Department consists of a director of School and Community Relations and an administrative assistant. In addition to managing the district's public information and community education program, the director serves as the district's information liaison and spokesperson. The director also plans and directs the annual school board elections, bond elections and special events such as Texas Public School Week activities and new school dedications.

The director of School and Community Relations handles requests for information and calls regarding concerns and/or complaints. The director listens, provides information and solutions or directs the complainant to the appropriate department or staff member.

Each principal designates a staff member to serve as a campus communicator. The campus communicators publicize news items for their campus and contact the director of School and Community Relations to promote news items that have districtwide impact or level of interest. PTAs/PTOs publish newsletters or assist principals with the school newsletters and coordinate volunteer activities. **Exhibit 3-2** shows the district's organization of school and community relations.

Exhibit 3-2
Organization of RISD School and Community Relations Functions

2002-2003



Source: RISD's director of School and Community Relations.

RISD chose six peer districts, similar in size and growth, for comparison purposes: Allen, Eanes, Carroll, Coppell, Frisco and McKinney. **Exhibit 3-3** compares the number of staff in RISD's School and Community Relations Department to the number of communications and community relations staff in the peer districts.

Exhibit 3-3
Comparison of School and Community Relations Department Staff
RISD and Peer Districts
2002-03

District	2002-03 Enrollment	Number of Full-Time Employees (FTE)	Staff Positions
RISD	9,488	2 FTE	-director of School and Community Relations -administrative assistant
Allen	12,508	7 FTE	-director of Public Information -Information Services specialist -secretary -director of After School Programs -director of Pre-school Program

			-director of Continuing Education -professional employee responsible for Parents as Teachers Program.
Carroll	7,186	2 FTE	-director of Communications -an administrative assistant
Coppell	9,891	2 FTE	-director of Communications and Public Relations -secretary
Eanes	7,119	1 FTE and 3 half-time employees	-director of Public Information -director of Community Education (half-time) -2 Community Education secretaries (half-time)
Frisco	11,144	3 FTE	-director of Communications -webmaster -clerk
McKinney	15,155	4 FTE and 2 consultants	-executive director of Communications -degreed specialist for Communications -degreed specialist for Volunteers -office manager -consultant for Web site -consultant for Spanish translations

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 2002-03 and telephone survey by WCL ENTERPRISES, November 2002.

In 2001-02, RISD budgeted \$124,813 for community services. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) publication, *Financial Accountability System Resource Guide* (FASRG), describes the rules for Texas school district financial accounting, budgeting, and reporting and related compliance matters. FASRG Section 1.4.3 instructs districts to include expenditures for services or activities relating to the whole community or some segment of the community other than regular public education and adult basic education services in this area.

RISD's community services budget includes 75 percent of the director's salary and 25 percent of the administrative assistant's salary. RISD spends less per pupil for community services than two of its peer districts and less than the state average (**Exhibit 3-4**).

Exhibit 3-4
Community Services Budgeted Expenditures
RISD, Peer Districts and State
2001-02

District	Enrollment	Budgeted Expenditures	Per Pupil Expenditure
Allen	11,668	\$970,102	\$83
Coppell	9,718	\$156,486	\$16
RISD	8,911	\$124,813	\$14
Frisco	9,292	\$120,395	\$13
McKinney	13,614	\$115,611	\$8
Eanes	7,260	\$25,000	\$3
Carroll	6,995	\$0	\$0
State Average	4,146,653	\$81,438,159	\$20

Source: TEA, PEIMS, 2001-02.

Chapter 3

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

A. COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

Public relations, an essential component of school administration, requires effective two-way communication techniques. School districts and schools have a responsibility to tell parents and taxpayers how the district spends their money and to enlist their help in delivering high quality, effective and efficient programs. Effective communication and community involvement programs build trust, confidence and support.

FINDING

RISD's Board of Trustees and superintendent consider communication and community involvement activities as extremely important and make them a high priority for the district. During fall 2001, the board identified improving communications as one of 10 critical components in its strategic plan. Two of the 10 goals in RISD's 2002-03 district improvement plan (DIP) also address community involvement. Under Goal VIII, RISD will continue to evaluate and improve external and internal communications and under Goal IX, RISD will focus on the adult/continuing education component of community education with an emphasis on program expansion to accommodate community needs.

The RISD superintendent, a member of the noon Rotary Club, participates in the Rotary mentoring program and a variety of community activities. The Rockwall City Council appointed RISD's superintendent president of the Economic Development Board. The superintendent also participates in a coalition of district, county, city, utility company officials and the Rockwall Economic Development Board, which meets monthly to share information about area growth and its impact. RISD's superintendent also served on the Rockwall County Library long-range planning committee. In addition during periodic joint meetings of the city councils of Rockwall and Rowlett, the superintendent provides updates on school district activities.

COMMENDATION

RISD's board and superintendent actively promote positive community relations.

FINDING

RISD uses a variety of methods to communicate with parents, community groups and community members on a regular basis.

The director of School and Community Relations works closely with the campus communicators to obtain news articles for district publications and for the two local weekly newspapers, *The Rockwall County News* and *The Rockwall Express*. In addition to the local newspapers, *The Dallas Morning News'* Rockwall-Rowlett metro insert includes articles about RISD activities.

RISD mails the district newsletter, "Rockwall ISD Report" to all addresses in the district twice each year: at the beginning of each school year for the back-to-school issue and at the end of the school year for a graduation issue. The district also posts two additional issues on the RISD Web site. In addition to the district newsletter, each school sends a newsletter home to parents prepared by the principal or PTA/PTO volunteers.

RISD sends news bulletins, announcements and memoranda to parents via the students and also places the information on the district Web site. RISD posts notices for board meetings in the front window of the district's central office.

Each year the annual Executive Leadership forum invites representatives from the area nonprofit organizations, RISD booster and support organizations, Rockwall Chamber of Commerce, Rockwall Economic Development Corporation, city, county and state officials and miscellaneous community leaders and volunteers. The district created the forum to enhance communication with area businesses, industry and community leaders. During the forum, which begins with a breakfast at one of the schools, the superintendent gives a status report of the district. The group then tours three of the district schools. After lunch at the third school, RISD presents a program that includes a video presentation about the district and a speaker. Approximately 300 community members attended the forum last year.

Exhibit 3-5 lists the various methods used by RISD to communicate with parents and the community.

Exhibit 3-5
RISD External Communications

Communication	Description	Method of Distribution	Frequency
School marquees	Announcements of meetings and awards	Postings at schools	Daily

RISD Web site	District and school news	Internet	Available Daily
Dallas Morning News Rockwall-Rowlett insert	Area newspaper	Subscribers	Twice weekly, Wednesday and Friday
Rockwall Express	Local newspaper	Subscribers	Weekly
Rockwall County News	Local newspaper	Subscribers	Weekly
School newsletters	School and PTA/PTO information	Students	Monthly
"The Report on Line" district newsletter	Articles about district/schools	E-mail and Web site	Quarterly
"Rockwall ISD Report" district newsletter	Articles about district/schools	Mailed	Twice a year
Community Education Catalogue	Schedule of courses offered	Mailed	Twice a year
School calendar	Informational	Flyer and newsletter	Yearly
"Information Guide"	District profile, student achievement, finance, curriculum and other basic facts	Hand delivered and mailed	Yearly
Student Handbooks/ English and Spanish	Policies and practices of the schools	Students	Yearly
Executive Leadership Forum	District status and tour of selected RISD schools	Meeting	Yearly
Leadership Rockwall	The superintendent selects an RISD staff member to participate with selected business leaders in leadership workshops. RISD sponsors one of the workshops.	Meetings	Yearly

Postcards	Teachers send postcards with positive comments about student performance	Parents	As appropriate
Rockwall-Heath High School Transition Teams	RISD and community members' partnership to transition from a one high school community to a multiple high school community.	RISD staff members, students and community members	January 2003 until school opens in 2005
Brochures	Program and service information	Available at each school and district offices	As needed
Superintendent letters to parents	Specific/prompt information	Students and Web site	As needed

Source: RISD director of School and Community Relations, November 2002.

Through a written survey, the TSPR solicited input about community and parental involvement from teachers, campus administrators, district administrative and support staff, parents and students. Survey responses indicate that RISD does a good job of communicating with parents on a regular basis. **Exhibit 3-6** shows a majority of the respondents believe "The district regularly communicates with parents."

Exhibit 3-6
RISD Response to TSPR Survey Question:
"The district regularly communicates with parents."

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
Campus Administrators	33%	67%	0%	0%	0%	0%
District Administrative and Support Staff	12%	51%	20%	11%	3%	3%
Parents	17%	57%	6%	13%	3%	3%
Teachers	20%	65%	9%	3%	2%	1%

Source: TSPR Survey Results, November 2002.

COMMENDATION

RISD keeps the community informed and involved using multiple processes.

FINDING

RISD names district facilities after distinguished Rockwall citizens. The board established specific criteria for naming the various district facilities, libraries, interior spaces, streets and lanes controlled by RISD, landscaped and garden areas and athletic facilities. Criteria for selection include substantial and active association with the district, the individual's record of scholarship, creativity, leadership or humanitarian service to the public.

The board president appoints a committee to collect information, review requests and proposals and make recommendations regarding the process of naming an RISD facility. The committee, which exists as long as necessary to name a specific facility or facilities, consists of district administrative staff, faculty and members of the community.

The committee reviews requests and proposals received from various sources or sometimes formulates its own proposal. The committee makes a final recommendation to the Facilities Naming Committee, a permanent standing committee of the board.

After reviewing recommendations of the committee, the Facilities Naming Committee makes recommendations to the board president for inclusion on the board agenda. Prior to the meeting, the board president or designee contacts the individual(s) (or the individual's family if the person is deceased), for permission to recommend the name for school board approval. The entire Board of Trustees approves the name.

The district named its facilities to honor individuals for their commitment to the community and its schools. **Exhibit 3-7** lists RISD's schools and facilities.

**Exhibit 3-7
RISD Namesake Schools and Facilities**

School or Facility	Namesake	Background
Amanda Rochell Elementary School	Amanda Rochell	Prominent civic leader whose daughter and husband donated land for the school.
Amy Parks-Heath Elementary School	Amy Parks	Distinguished local educator who spent her entire 35- year career in RISD.

Cullins-Lake Pointe Elementary School	Doris Cullins	Distinguished local teacher and administrator who served RISD for 42 years.
Dorothy Smith Pullen Elementary School	Dorothy Smith Pullen	Distinguished local educator from Fate who served the district for 40 years.
Howard Dobbs Elementary School	Howard Dobbs	Distinguished local educator, coach, businessman and former mayor of Rockwall.
Nebbie Williams Elementary School	Nebbie Williams	Distinguished local educator who ended her 43-year teaching career in RISD after teaching in county schools.
Virginia Reinhardt Elementary School	Virginia Anderson Reinhardt	Native, lifelong resident and distinguished educator who served RISD for 35 years.
Dorris A. Jones Elementary School	Dorris A. Jones	Teacher and principal for 45 years in RISD and county schools and World War II hero.
Grace Hartman Elementary School	Grace Hartman	Distinguished local educator, artist, civic leader and Rockwall County Library founder who served RISD and county schools for 42 years.
J.W. Williams Middle School	J.W. Williams	Distinguished local educator, coach, administrator and superintendent.
Maurine Cain Middle School	Maurine Cain	Native and local educator for 38 years, 34 in RISD.
Herman E. Utley Freshman Center	Herman E. Utley	Distinguished local educator and administrator with 42 years service, 24 in RISD.
Wilkerson- Sanders Memorial Stadium	J.A. Wilkerson	RISD superintendent, coach and teacher.
	Harvey Sanders	Coach and local businessman.
Hobart Wisdom Stadium	Hobart Wisdom	Teacher, coach and administrator.
Elmer and Reesie Campbell Complex	Elmer and Reesie Campbell	Local residents and avid Rockwall sports fans.

Source: RISD director of School/Community Relations.

RISD holds a formal dedication at each facility honoring the namesake. Individuals honored include a teacher who began teaching in Rockwall County in 1917 and taught for 42 years, an African American teacher and administrator who was instrumental in promoting integration of RISD schools and a former principal who served the district from 1910 to 1969.

COMMENDATION

RISD recognizes the importance of individuals' contributions to the district and community by naming facilities in their honor.

Chapter 3

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

B. COMMUNITY AND BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS

Positive relationships between school districts and their communities increase the effectiveness of the school district and provide mutual benefits. School districts promote positive community relations by conducting regular outreach activities and working with all members of the community.

FINDING

RISD's Community Education Program fosters a collaborative spirit between community members and the school district. The RISD Community Education Program offers a wide variety of continuing education courses at RISD facilities and online. The director of School and Community Relations uses an advisory council of community citizens to assess the needs of the community for course offerings, recruits teachers for the courses, schedules the classes, prints and distributes the course catalogue and registers the participants. The program includes: computer courses, personal enrichment courses, youth courses, online courses; safety courses, and a Texas Cooperative Extension Program course. The program also has adult education courses to help prepare for the General Education Development (GED) test and English as a Second Language (ESL).

RISD provides the facilities for the program while tuition covers the instructors' salaries and other program operating expenses. In 2001-02, RISD conducted 39 courses in the fall and 48 spring courses in the community education program. A total of 4,088 participants enrolled in the courses.

COMMENDATION

RISD promotes life-long learning and good will through its Community Education Program.

FINDING

RISD's Active Seniors Program recognizes senior citizens' past support and encourages their continuing interest and participation in school activities. Any RISD resident 65 years of age or older, or who is a retired Rockwall teacher, is eligible for membership in the program. A membership card entitles program participants to free admittance to school

programs, plays, musical performances and home athletic events (except varsity football games), and offers a 20 percent discount on district community education courses. Membership in the Active Seniors Program totals approximately 100.

Keeping senior citizens involved in school activities provides benefits to RISD. Senior citizens volunteer at the schools and the retired teachers association sponsors the graduation reception at the alternative school.

COMMENDATION

RISD's Active Seniors Program keeps seniors involved in district activities and results in additional volunteers.

FINDING

RISD includes community representatives on district planning committees. RISD ensures community representation on standing committees such as the District Education Improvement Committee (DEIC), Campus Improvement Committees (CIC) and Community Education Advisory Committee. Community members also serve on special focus ad hoc committees, such as the Bond Election Committee, Strategic Planning Committee, Attendance Zone Task Force, Rockwall-Heath High School Planning Committee, Revenue Enhancement Team and a committee formed to evaluate gender equality in the athletic program.

In October 2000, RISD began its 2001 bond initiative with a public forum to review population growth and future facilities needs. The district formed a Bond Election Steering Committee composed of community residents. The steering committee held a forum with the district PTA/PTO membership to solicit volunteers and formed the following seven subcommittees: endorsements/finance, media/publicity, neighborhood network, telephone parent network, voter registration and presentation. More than 120 community members served on the various committees that made 39 presentations to the RISD community.

Prior to opening two new elementary schools, the board formed a Zoning Task Force charged to make recommendations for attendance zones. The Zoning Task Force included the principal, two teachers, a representative from DEIC and the CIC, the PTA/PTO president and a PTA/PTO representative from each of six elementary schools.

The RISD Zoning Task Force formulated several alternatives, held a public forum to present the alternatives and received verbal and/or written

feedback prior to presenting the alternatives to the board. The Zoning Task Force also put maps on the district Web site with instructions for the public to provide input to a campus principal, the central office, or the PTA/PTO presidents.

In 2001-02, RISD involved more than 150 members in developing a strategic plan. Members of the strategic planning committee included:

- present and past board members;
- parents;
- school namesakes;
- district administrators;
- DEIC representatives;
- Alliance of Rockwall Educators;
- PTA/PTO representatives;
- school bond election chairs;
- Zoning Task Force representatives;
- alumni;
- judges and city officials;
- nonprofit organization representatives; and
- presidents of philanthropic organizations.

Prior to completing RISD's strategic plan, the district conducted a public forum to review the process used to formulate the plan, present the draft of the plan and obtain further community input. The district placed forum comments and questions on the RISD Web site.

RISD conducted two meetings with officials and council members from the City of Heath, to discuss the conceptual and schematic design for the new high school. At a third meeting, the district presented the final design to Heath city officials and the community. In order to have an effective and efficient transition from a single high school community to a multiple high school community, RISD created a Central Transition Team, chaired by the executive director of Planning and Facilities, that included members of the superintendent's cabinet. The cabinet members each chair one of the five High School Transition Teams: Communications; Curriculum and Instruction; Finance; School Culture and Personnel.

Each transition team includes members of RISD staff who have responsibilities in the team area, PTA/PTO representatives, a board member/liaison, DEIC representatives, community members and parents. Students serve on three of the committees: Communications, School Culture and Curriculum and Instruction. Each transition team gathers input from all stakeholders to make recommendations to the superintendent and the board.

The RISD board recently formed a Revenue Enhancement Team consisting of district and campus administrators, retired citizens, parents, business representatives and the county's chief appraiser. The superintendent charged the committee with evaluating current district expenditures and exploring alternate sources of revenue, such as creating an educational foundation. The team identifies strategies and prioritizes recommendations to the board.

COMMENDATION

RISD uses committees and public forums to obtain community input in planning and managing district initiatives.

FINDING

Community organizations sponsor activities and provide monetary and in-kind support to RISD and the schools. Each campus establishes partnerships with the area businesses and organizations. Donations include incentives for students, supplies, assistance with fundraising projects, guest speakers, volunteers, counseling, mentoring and scholarships to graduating seniors.

The district has several campus initiatives supported by the community. For example, the Rockwall Noon Rotary sponsors the Rotary Readers program at two elementary schools. Approximately 100 volunteer readers work with children at the campuses one day per week. In addition, the Rockwall Retired Teachers Association sponsors a reception after the Alternative School graduation ceremonies.

Rockwall Alliance for the Arts implemented an "Artist in Residence Program" in collaboration with RISD elementary schools. The alliance funds 50 percent of the cost of hosting a guest musical, theatrical, dance or visual artist in the elementary school for five consecutive days. Each school's PTA funds the remaining artist costs. The PTA and school leadership select the artist and the students to participate in the program. Some schools chose a group of students from several grades while other schools chose an entire grade level to participate in the program. The artist teaches the students his or her particular craft within the context of the student's current curriculum and directs the students to a final production, artwork, or performance that the students then share with parents, teachers and other grade levels.

District initiatives supported or underwritten by various community organizations include the New Employee Breakfast sponsored annually by the Rockwall Chamber of Commerce; RISD Teachers of the Year

Luncheon sponsored by Rockwall Breakfast Rotary and Students of the Month sponsored by Rockwall Rotary clubs.

COMMENDATION

RISD's collaborative partnerships provide benefits to students, employees and parents.

FINDING

The Peer Assistance Leadership Skills (PALS) class at Rockwall High School coordinates a campus United Way Campaign with the district's campaign. Students in the PALS class completely organize the campaign for the high school. The students prepare a plan of action that includes researching how United Way distributes collected funds to local community organizations, preparing an informational flyer to distribute to the students, scheduling presentations to student classes and faculty and soliciting donations.

Over the past 11 years, PALS classes collected \$30,719. In March 2001, United Way of Metropolitan Dallas recognized the group with its Heroes of Hope, Rising Star of the Year award. United Way gives this award to companies or organizations that far exceed expectations and projected campaign goals.

COMMENDATION

RISD's Peer Assistance Leadership Skills (PALS) program provides opportunities for students to learn the value of community service and responsible citizenship.

FINDING

RISD recognizes graduating seniors who perform community service during their senior year.

Students may perform services for civic organizations, nonprofit organizations, their school or their church. An adult representative of the organization must validate each service hour. RISD recognizes each senior student completing 100 hours of community service at the graduation ceremony. The students wear a white cord with their graduation gown. RISD indicates the service award by the students' names in the graduation program. Fifty seniors or 10.7 percent of the 2001 senior class and 9.7 percent of the 2002 senior class received the community service award.

COMMENDATION

RISD encourages community service by recognizing senior students who perform community service.

FINDING

RISD does not have an education foundation to raise funds for academic program enhancements. Without a foundation, RISD has limited funds to recognize creative and exemplary teaching, innovative class projects or establish scholarships. Currently, individual schools recruit businesses to support or underwrite activities. District administrators also contact local businesses and vendors to support district activities such as the administrators' summer retreat and gifts to the teacher of the year.

All of RISD's peers have education foundations. Coppell ISD's educational foundation grant awards have exceeded \$90,000 to date. Students and teachers on every campus and in every grade level benefit from teaching grants funded from foundation proceeds.

The Coppell ISD foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation chartered in June 2000. The foundation enhances education in the district by rewarding creative and original teaching approaches through private sector grants and involvement.

The Coppell foundation's goals include:

- encourage all students to work to their highest potential;
- support staff for innovative teaching efforts;
- recognize staff for exemplary teaching;
- build community awareness for the Coppell ISD Education Foundation; and
- inspire parents and community to participate with the school district in enriching education.

Another peer district, McKinney ISD formed the McKinney Education Foundation in 1991 through the leadership of a McKinney Chamber of Commerce member. Currently, the foundation has more than \$3 million in its permanent endowment fund, which support the following programs: scholarships for MISD high school graduates who intend to further their education, teacher and staff development grants, innovative K-12 classroom project grants, site-based grants and special project grants.

Grape Creek ISD formed an education foundation in 1999 to seek and secure grants, endowments and donations for the enhancement of educational opportunities for persons of all ages in the district. The foundation disburses funds to meet physical or professional development needs, extracurricular programs or special projects. The Grape Creek

Education Foundation will supply a "Help Packet" for a nominal fee to school districts seeking to establish supporting nonprofit organizations.

Recommendation 17:

Establish an educational foundation to supplement funding for educational programs and activities.

By establishing an education foundation, RISD should be able to increase funding for district activities and scholarships.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The board and superintendent identify community leaders to participate in the development of an education foundation.	June 2003
2.	The superintendent appoints RISD staff to assist community leaders in the development of an education foundation.	July 2003
3.	The community leaders, with assistance from RISD staff, research effective school district foundations and develop a mission and governance structure.	August 2003
4.	The RISD school board approves the foundation and appoints the first board members.	September 2003
5.	The foundation board, with assistance from RISD legal support, organizes and establishes itself legally.	October 2003
6.	The foundation board obtains input from RISD district, school administrators and staff on current unmet needs.	November 2003
7.	The foundation board develops a comprehensive plan for the foundation.	December 2003
8.	The foundation board with assistance from RISD begins implementation of the plan.	January 2004
9.	The foundation prepares an annual report to the RISD school board.	January 2005 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 3

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

C. VOLUNTEER AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

School districts that develop a strong base of volunteers create good relations with their communities. School volunteers serve as an important part of a school team, providing young people a valuable role model and offering many other benefits to the students and the schools.

RISD Board Policy GKG (Legal/Local) governs the school volunteer program. Volunteers in the school work directly under the supervision of the principal. RISD performs a criminal history check on prospective school volunteers and informs volunteers when they may begin services.

The director of School and Community Relations prepares a Volunteer Handbook that includes a message from the superintendent, general volunteer information, policy and legal citations, general procedures, tips for working with students, the dos and don'ts of helping and the volunteer information signup form. Principals provide volunteer training at each school.

FINDING

RISD receives exceptional volunteer support from parents and the community. Parent Teacher Associations (PTA) operate on 12 campuses and one campus operates a Parent Teacher Organization (PTO). PTAs are affiliated with state and national groups while PTOs are a local organization. PTA/PTO membership exceeded more than 4,600 participants in 2002-03(**Exhibit 3-8**).

Exhibit 3-8
RISD PTA/PTO Membership
2002-03

School	PTA/PTO Membership
Amanda Rochell Elementary PTA	161
Amy Parks-Heath Elementary PTO	410
Cullins-Lake Pointe Elementary PTA	542
Dorothy Smith Pullen Elementary PTA	460
Dorris A. Jones Elementary PTA	173

Grace Hartman Elementary PTA	390
Howard Dobbs Elementary PTA	269
Nebbie Williams Elementary PTA	355
Virginia Reinhardt Elementary PTA	287
J. W. Williams Middle School PTA	613
Maurine Cain Middle School PTA	353
Utley Freshman Center PTA	230
Rockwall High School PTA	377
Total PTA/PTO Membership	4,620

Source: RISD PTA council president, November 2002.

One representative from each school's organization serves on a district PTA/PTO council. The director of School and Community Relations serves as the liaison between the PTA/PTO and attends all council meetings. The council meets several times during the year to provide members an opportunity to exchange ideas about successful school projects and plan cooperative projects. Each PTA/PTO chooses a volunteer coordinator who works closely with the campus principal to recruit volunteers and assist with the school program.

More than 2,415 parents and community members volunteered or mentored more than 47,322 hours. **Exhibit 3-9** illustrates the number of volunteers, volunteer hours, the number of mentors and mentor hours and the types of activities performed at each school.

Exhibit 3-9
RISD Volunteer Efforts
2001-02

School	Number of Volunteers	Number of Volunteer Hours	Activities Performed	Number of Mentors	Number of Mentor Hours
Amanda Rochell Elementary	295	3,044	Library assistance, office helpers, translations for Spanish, clinic help, copying/laminating.	27	850

			in charge of marquee, fall carnival, yearbook, fundraisers, cafeteria assistance, field day, newsletter, school directory, box-top coordinator		
Amy Parks-Heath Elementary	138	5,639	Tutoring, making teaching materials, helping with bulletin boards, reading with students, library helpers, fundraisers, sorting information for Thursday "To Go Home" folders	35	Hours not tracked
Cullins-Lake Pointe Elementary	Approx. 330	3,660	Assisting in classrooms, binding books, cutting out manipulative materials, assembling lesson packets, stuffing communication folders, field trips, fundraisers, chaperoned camps, student bank program, clinic assistance, supervised in cafeteria, substitute in classrooms, tutors, committees	Approximately 25	Approximately 150
Dorothy Smith Pullen Elementary	202	10,500	Photocopying, lunch and playground duty, PE assistance, art classroom assistance. librari	43	1,548

			aide, book fairs, office helpers, tutoring, laminating, fifth grade camp sponsors, organize science experiment kits, assist with Destination Imagination, work in Accelerated Reader store		
Howard Dobbs Elementary	300	5,800	Clerical, setting up science lab, tutoring, Greater Outdoor Learning Day, fundraiser, fall carnival, Muffins for Mom, Donuts for Dad, school supply drive, classroom volunteers, field trips, teacher appreciation luncheon and treats	45	1,250
Nebbie Williams Elementary	100 on roster, 40 active	1,400	Tutoring, school and PTA newsletter, reading to classrooms, teacher treats, guest speakers, office, classroom and clinic assistance, bulletin boards, counselors for camp, fundraising, carnival, scheduled educational programs, Red Ribbon Week, canned food drive, trips to nursing home, beautification	32	140

			projects, special events, committees		
Virginia Reinhart Elementary	150	8,700	Fundraising, tutoring, organize school and neighborhood events, school decorations, extra-curricular activities, clerical support, teacher appreciation, cafeteria monitors, read to students, newsletter and field trips	8	96
J. W. Williams Middle School	140	1,631	School store, laminating, copy room, choir, library, yearbook, cheerleaders, drill team, concession stand, field trips, art room, counselors office, classroom, tutoring and National Junior Honor Society	2	120
Maurine Cain Middle School	45 +	1,000 +	Library and clinic, offices, school store, tutoring, newsletter, photocopying, parent orientation, field day, fundraising, Cain Café, Spanish Speakers Open House, test day volunteers, teachers aides, teachers' lunch, field trips, school dance, committee	6+	200+

			representatives, yearbook		
Utley Freshman Center	178	1,543	Assisting student council, organizations and clubs, chaperones for dances and field trips, assisting PTA committees, committee members, volunteer orientation training, assisting in offices, clinic and library, copy room and D- FY-IT(drug) testing	3	25
Rockwall Alternative School	21	64	Counseling, graduation decorations, scholarships, job fair, campus improvement committee, bicycle exchange program, parenting classes	12	80
Rockwall High School	40	712	Assist in counselors offices, eye screening, offices, field trips, school dances, prom, after- prom party, academic booster club, special projects	120	Hours not tracked
Totals	1,939	43,693		476	3,629

Source: RISD director of School and Community Relations, November 2002.

Each school recognizes volunteer efforts in various ways, including appreciation breakfasts, luncheons or banquets, individual thank you letters, acknowledgement in the school newsletters, certificates of appreciation, recognition posters hung in the hallway, plaques and gifts to the volunteers of the year.

The following written comments submitted at the TSPR public forum and oral comments made during TSPR focus groups indicate that community members believe community involvement strengthens RISD.

- "Good marks here, parental involvement welcome."
- "This district is very fortunate to have a strong core group of volunteers."
- "We have adult mentor, volunteers coming to our campus."
- "Parental involvement - excellent. Community relations-good. Could be better business-school partnerships. Communications-good."
- "There is tremendous involvement in this community considering the district administration does not communicate very well. At the school level, there is an incredible amount of volunteerism."
- "Community involvement is a strength of the district."
- "We have awesome parent involvement! Our parents are spectacular and extremely involved."
- "RISD does a great job involving the community."
- "RISD has the best community involvement in the area! Great communication with public!"

COMMENDATION

RISD's volunteer initiatives receive support from parents and community members and provide volunteer hours to the district benefiting staff and students.

FINDING

Parents of RISD secondary students formed the Academic Booster Club in 1996 to recognize outstanding academic performance by students. The club, which has 400 families as members, collects \$10 per family in dues.

Each secondary school conducts a ceremony in the fall to honor those students in grade 7 and above who meet specific criteria to qualify for academic letters or certificates for honorable mention. Students receive a letter patch in the shape of the State of Texas the first year they letter. Thereafter the patch is a stripe that includes the year.

To letter in grades 7 and 8, students must achieve 85 or better for the year-end average in honors subjects, 80 or above in Algebra I and 90 or above in other subjects taken the previous year and cannot have a failing grade for any grading period. Students in grades 9 through 12 must achieve 90 or above year-end average of all courses combined.

To receive honorable mention, students in grades 6 through 8 must achieve 85 or above year-end average in each class. Students in grades 9 through 12 must have a year-end cumulative grade average of 85 or above.

Students in grades 7 through 12 who achieve a 95 or better cumulative average also receive a Lantern of Knowledge pin. Students whose average is between 85 and 89 receive certificates.

In addition to the yearly awards, the Academic Booster Club recognizes any senior who lettered six years with a special scholar award patch. In 2000-01, 26 seniors received this award.

The Academic Booster Club also provides scholarships to the SAT Academy that RISD holds to prepare students for the test and will provide a scholarship to a graduating senior who has been a scholar award recipient.

To encourage students to actively participate and compete, the Academic Booster Club recognizes those students who either place or win any academic competitions sanctioned and approved by the school. Examples of competitions include but are not limited to Odyssey of the Mind, Destination Imagination, Academic Decathlon and district level or above Science Fairs.

The Academic Booster Club recognizes one teacher annually at each grade level (grade 7 through 12) as a most inspirational teacher with an engraved trophy. Student recipients nominate teachers who inspired them to perform their best academically and then vote to select one.

COMMENDATION

RISD's Academic Booster Club, organized by parents, recognizes student academic accomplishments as well as the contributions of inspiring teachers.

FINDING

RISD applied for and received a Texas A&M Regents' Initiative Funding grant to improve programs for immigrant students and parents in the district. The grant funds a four-phase project with Texas A&M University-Commerce that researches the following questions:

- How do educational personnel in RISD view parental involvement of non-English language students?

- What are similarities and differences in schools where non-English language students perform successfully on accountability measures and standardized tests?
- How do these similarities and differences connect to student performance outcomes?
- Is RISD doing the things that contribute to immigrant/minority student success and is it involving parents?
- How have notions of parental involvement in RISD changed over time?

By researching views of parental involvement as described by successful program directors, administrators and teachers, RISD, will improve programmatic designs, values and characteristics of its leadership in involving parents of non-English language students.

Additional phases address Hispanic student academic performance, dropout rates, graduation rates and Hispanic enrollment in higher education.

RISD's fundamental goal of the project is to improve the delivery of educational services to Hispanic students in Rockwall.

COMMENDATION

RISD seeks opportunities and grants to research and design successful programs for immigrant and minority students.

FINDING

RISD schools do not track volunteer information consistently, and the district does not have a system for sharing volunteer information, such as names, home and e-mail addresses, areas of interest or results of the criminal history check.

RISD schools track the number of volunteers and their efforts manually or on a spreadsheet. The PTA volunteer coordinator or the staff member responsible for conducting the volunteer background checks sends a note or a spreadsheet with the number of volunteers and volunteer hours to the director of School and Community Relations twice a year. The director of School and Community Relations enters all the information on a single spreadsheet. Schools are not consistent in their record keeping for volunteers and business donations. Some schools track the number of volunteers and mentors, while others do not track mentors.

Participants in TSPR focus groups said that if they volunteer on more than one campus, each campus performs a criminal history check at a cost of 60

cents each, rather than having the information in a database accessible by each campus.

Without a consistent tracking system and database accessible for all schools, RISD volunteers must wait for approval from each school before beginning to work. Schools do not always transfer volunteer information on the parents of students who move to a new school. The new school must then reenter and update volunteer information.

El Paso ISD developed a comprehensive computerized volunteer information management system. The database tracks volunteer hours, monetary donations and in-kind services and produces reports.

Recommendation 18:

Develop a computer database for tracking volunteer information.

By tracking volunteer information in a central database, RISD schools could share volunteer information on parents and community members who volunteer on more than one campus or move from one school to another and eliminate unnecessary waiting periods for volunteers.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the director of School and Community Relations to form a committee of PTA/ PTO representatives, school principals and the director of Technology to develop the specifications for a computerized volunteer information management system.	July 2003
2.	The committee develops the requirements for the system, contacts other school districts to obtain information on model programs and locates a non-copyrighted program the district can use.	August 2003
3.	The director of School and Community Relations searches for a business partner, parent volunteers or district staff and shares information with the director of Technology Information Services to modify the database to meet district needs.	September 2003
4.	The director of Technology Information Services coordinates the installation of the system and related training for staff and volunteers.	October 2003
5.	The campus principal and PTA/PTO presidents select a volunteer to input volunteer data into the database.	November 2003

6.	The campus principal provides an annual report to the director of School and Community Relations who develops a program to recognize schools that achieve their yearly volunteer and parent involvement goals.	June 2004 and Annually Thereafter
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FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 3

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

C. VOLUNTEER AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

School districts that develop a strong base of volunteers create good relations with their communities. School volunteers serve as an important part of a school team, providing young people a valuable role model and offering many other benefits to the students and the schools.

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Dorothy Smith Pullen Elementary	202	10,500	Photocopying, lunch and playground duty, PE assistance, art classroom assistance. library	43	1,548

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			representatives, yearbook		
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Each school recognizes volunteer efforts in various ways, including appreciation breakfasts, luncheons or banquets, individual thank you letters, acknowledgement in the school newsletters, certificates of appreciation, recognition posters hung in the hallway, plaques and gifts to the volunteers of the year.

The following written comments submitted at the TSPR public forum and oral comments made during TSPR focus groups indicate that community members believe community involvement strengthens RISD.

- "Good marks here, parental involvement welcome."
- "This district is very fortunate to have a strong core group of volunteers."
- "We have adult mentor, volunteers coming to our campus."
- "Parental involvement - excellent. Community relations-good. Could be better business-school partnerships. Communications-good."
- "There is tremendous involvement in this community considering the district administration does not communicate very well. At the school level, there is an incredible amount of volunteerism."
- "Community involvement is a strength of the district."
- "We have awesome parent involvement! Our parents are spectacular and extremely involved."
- "RISD does a great job involving the community."
- "RISD has the best community involvement in the area! Great communication with public!"

COMMENDATION

RISD's volunteer initiatives receive support from parents and community members and provide volunteer hours to the district benefiting staff and students.

FINDING

Parents of RISD secondary students formed the Academic Booster Club in 1996 to recognize outstanding academic performance by students. The club, which has 400 families as members, collects \$10 per family in dues.

Each secondary school conducts a ceremony in the fall to honor those students in grade 7 and above who meet specific criteria to qualify for academic letters or certificates for honorable mention. Students receive a letter patch in the shape of the State of Texas the first year they letter. Thereafter the patch is a stripe that includes the year.

To letter in grades 7 and 8, students must achieve 85 or better for the year-end average in honors subjects, 80 or above in Algebra I and 90 or above in other subjects taken the previous year and cannot have a failing grade for any grading period. Students in grades 9 through 12 must achieve 90 or above year-end average of all courses combined.

To receive honorable mention, students in grades 6 through 8 must achieve 85 or above year-end average in each class. Students in grades 9 through 12 must have a year-end cumulative grade average of 85 or above.

Students in grades 7 through 12 who achieve a 95 or better cumulative average also receive a Lantern of Knowledge pin. Students whose average is between 85 and 89 receive certificates.

In addition to the yearly awards, the Academic Booster Club recognizes any senior who lettered six years with a special scholar award patch. In 2000-01, 26 seniors received this award.

The Academic Booster Club also provides scholarships to the SAT Academy that RISD holds to prepare students for the test and will provide a scholarship to a graduating senior who has been a scholar award recipient.

To encourage students to actively participate and compete, the Academic Booster Club recognizes those students who either place or win any academic competitions sanctioned and approved by the school. Examples of competitions include but are not limited to Odyssey of the Mind, Destination Imagination, Academic Decathlon and district level or above Science Fairs.

The Academic Booster Club recognizes one teacher annually at each grade level (grade 7 through 12) as a most inspirational teacher with an engraved trophy. Student recipients nominate teachers who inspired them to perform their best academically and then vote to select one.

COMMENDATION

RISD's Academic Booster Club, organized by parents, recognizes student academic accomplishments as well as the contributions of inspiring teachers.

FINDING

RISD applied for and received a Texas A&M Regents' Initiative Funding grant to improve programs for immigrant students and parents in the district. The grant funds a four-phase project with Texas A&M University-Commerce that researches the following questions:

- How do educational personnel in RISD view parental involvement of non-English language students?

- What are similarities and differences in schools where non-English language students perform successfully on accountability measures and standardized tests?
- How do these similarities and differences connect to student performance outcomes?
- Is RISD doing the things that contribute to immigrant/minority student success and is it involving parents?
- How have notions of parental involvement in RISD changed over time?

By researching views of parental involvement as described by successful program directors, administrators and teachers, RISD, will improve programmatic designs, values and characteristics of its leadership in involving parents of non-English language students.

Additional phases address Hispanic student academic performance, dropout rates, graduation rates and Hispanic enrollment in higher education.

RISD's fundamental goal of the project is to improve the delivery of educational services to Hispanic students in Rockwall.

COMMENDATION

RISD seeks opportunities and grants to research and design successful programs for immigrant and minority students.

FINDING

RISD schools do not track volunteer information consistently, and the district does not have a system for sharing volunteer information, such as names, home and e-mail addresses, areas of interest or results of the criminal history check.

RISD schools track the number of volunteers and their efforts manually or on a spreadsheet. The PTA volunteer coordinator or the staff member responsible for conducting the volunteer background checks sends a note or a spreadsheet with the number of volunteers and volunteer hours to the director of School and Community Relations twice a year. The director of School and Community Relations enters all the information on a single spreadsheet. Schools are not consistent in their record keeping for volunteers and business donations. Some schools track the number of volunteers and mentors, while others do not track mentors.

Participants in TSPR focus groups said that if they volunteer on more than one campus, each campus performs a criminal history check at a cost of 60

cents each, rather than having the information in a database accessible by each campus.

Without a consistent tracking system and database accessible for all schools, RISD volunteers must wait for approval from each school before beginning to work. Schools do not always transfer volunteer information on the parents of students who move to a new school. The new school must then reenter and update volunteer information.

El Paso ISD developed a comprehensive computerized volunteer information management system. The database tracks volunteer hours, monetary donations and in-kind services and produces reports.

Recommendation 18:

Develop a computer database for tracking volunteer information.

By tracking volunteer information in a central database, RISD schools could share volunteer information on parents and community members who volunteer on more than one campus or move from one school to another and eliminate unnecessary waiting periods for volunteers.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the director of School and Community Relations to form a committee of PTA/ PTO representatives, school principals and the director of Technology to develop the specifications for a computerized volunteer information management system.	July 2003
2.	The committee develops the requirements for the system, contacts other school districts to obtain information on model programs and locates a non-copyrighted program the district can use.	August 2003
3.	The director of School and Community Relations searches for a business partner, parent volunteers or district staff and shares information with the director of Technology Information Services to modify the database to meet district needs.	September 2003
4.	The director of Technology Information Services coordinates the installation of the system and related training for staff and volunteers.	October 2003
5.	The campus principal and PTA/PTO presidents select a volunteer to input volunteer data into the database.	November 2003

6.	The campus principal provides an annual report to the director of School and Community Relations who develops a program to recognize schools that achieve their yearly volunteer and parent involvement goals.	June 2004 and Annually Thereafter
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FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 4

PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

This chapter reviews the personnel management of the Rockwall Independent School District (RISD) in the following sections:

- A. Organization and Management
- B. Staffing Formulas and Salary Administration
- C. Recruitment, Hiring Activities and Retention
- D. Staff Development
- E. Grievances and Appraisals

To ensure educational achievement and advancement of its students, a district must attract, hire and retain qualified and talented employees to teach its students and manage district operations. Since personnel costs typically consume 80 percent of the average school district budget, effective personnel management is critical to the success of a school district. Human resource departments now focus on cost containment, strategic decision-making and competition in a rapidly changing environment, projecting future resource needs, the effective use of human talent, continuous measurement and benchmarking to determine the effectiveness of all HR programs.

Personnel management includes staffing analysis, recruiting, hiring, salary and benefit administration and performance evaluation. Effective personnel management also requires compliance with equal employment opportunity statutes and other federal and state laws.

BACKGROUND

The management and placement of employees is a vital part of school district operations. In most public school districts, a Human Resource or personnel department manages employee-related tasks, including:

- developing competitive wage and salary schedules to attract and retain skilled employees and administering salary systems that include placement of positions on the salary schedules and periodic review of the schedules to ensure that they are competitive with other area employers;
- classifying all positions and developing job descriptions and the periodic update/modification of the job descriptions to reflect changes in responsibilities;
- developing and administering training programs for some or all district personnel and comprehensive staff development programs for teachers and administrators;

- developing personnel staffing tables and review of staff allocation formulas;
- administering an employee grievance process;
- maintaining required employee records;
- processing personnel actions and changes;
- administering certification and permit processes;
- issuing contracts and nonrenewal or dismissal notices;
- placing substitutes;
- recruiting and selecting qualified candidates for employment;
- recruiting and placing student teachers;
- developing board policies regarding personnel issues;
- complying with federal and state regulations;
- developing and administering an employee benefits program; and
- preparing periodic reports to address local board and state reporting requirements.

The Texas Education Code (TEC) requires that each school district have a district and campus improvement plan. RISD's District Improvement Plan (DIP) for 2002-03 links board-approved district goals with key activities performed by campuses or departments. **Exhibit 4-1** shows the personnel-related goals, objectives and strategies in the DIP.

Exhibit 4-1
RISD District Improvement Plan
2002-03

	District Goal	Performance Strategies
I	RISD will collaborate with TAMU-Commerce to implement a three-year commitment to an in-district graduate degree program in fall 2002. RISD will continue to enhance the Master's CORE Program participation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete registration for 2005 CORE group and begin classes. • Recruit teachers for 2006 CORE group.
II	RISD will conduct an annual job fair to recruit personnel. Principals will be given the opportunity to interview candidates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information on Web site, newspapers and universities. • Prepare an effective organizational plan for conducting a successful job fair. • Enlist the assistance of RISD professional and support staff to serve

		in various areas.
III	RISD will develop and continue a comprehensive mentor program to assist first-year teachers. Teachers will become more successful in the classroom and more likely to remain in the district.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and implement program. • Evaluate program to ensure induction teachers become successful and committed professionals.
IV	RISD will maintain a competitive employee benefit package to attract personnel and to continue to maintain quality services within the district.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct comprehensive study of benefits at comparable districts.
V	RISD will recruit on national, state and local levels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruit at colleges and universities in fall and spring. • Advertise positions on district Web site, cable network and throughout Region 10. • Advertise positions through state organizations.

Source: RISD 2002-03 District Improvement Plan.

Chapter 4

PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

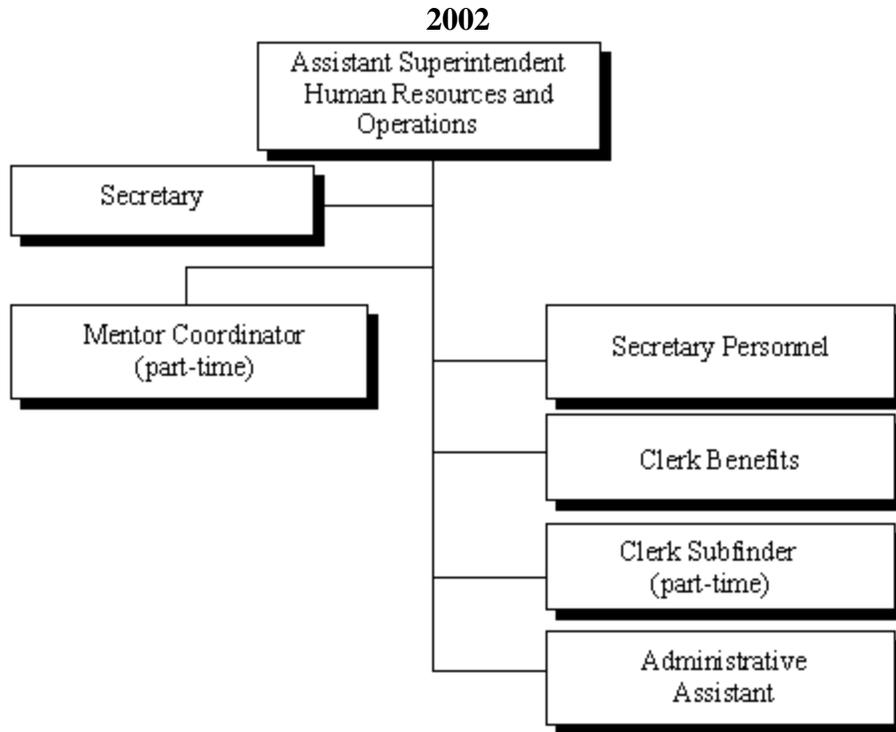
A, ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

The assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations oversees RISD's Human Resources Department. Six staff members assist the assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations with personnel functions, including one secretary to the assistant superintendent, one secretary and one administrative assistant supporting HR, one employee benefit specialist, one part-time subfinder and one part-time mentor coordinator. The assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations directly supervises each employee.

HR functions include managing the district's overall recruitment program, issuing teachers' contracts, creating staff development programs, developing the employee handbooks, administering wage and compensation programs, monitoring the employee appraisal process, filling substitute positions and determining staffing allocations for schools. Since RISD is one of the fastest growing school districts in north Texas, HR must ensure it maintains adequate staffing levels.

Exhibit 4-2 shows the organization of the positions within the RISD Human Resources Department.

Exhibit 4-2 RISD Human Resources Organization



Source: RISD superintendent.

Exhibit 4-3 shows the functions and responsibilities performed by each member of the department.

Exhibit 4-3
Current HR Functions and Responsibilities
RISD Human Resources and Operations

Position Title	Major Areas of Responsibility
Assistant superintendent for Human Resources/ Operations	Employment of personnel; employee benefits; PEIMS (personnel); human resource management; direction and guidance; policy and procedure development; recruitment, classification and compensation functions; leave administration; employee training; recruitment; designee to the superintendent in hearing Level 2 student appeals; direct supervision of each employee. (75 percent of time dedicated to human resources.)
Administrative assistant	Monitors access to HR records; ensures district compliance with state certification and licensing requirements.
Secretary? assistant superintendent	Organizes and manages the routine work activities of an administrative department and provides clerical services to the assistant superintendent and other department

	members. (95 percent of time dedicated to human resources.)
Secretary ? personnel	Processes employment applications for all positions, including substitutes; assists with automated subfinder system; manages district mail operations; assists at the reception desk.
Employee benefits specialist	Coordinates the employee benefits program for the district.
Clerk Subfinder	Maintains and operates the substitute calling system and records for the district. (Part-time position. Of the half day worked, 80 percent dedicated to human resources, 20 percent to data entry for payroll.)
Mentor coordinator	Coordinates districtwide mentoring program for beginning teachers; provides staff development, individualized assistance and coaching to assigned beginning teachers and provides ongoing support; assists in the district recruitment program; plans and coordinates the annual district teacher job fair; develops, recruits and maintains the district masters cohort program. (Part-time)

Source: RISD Human Resources and Operations.

The HR staff relies on principals to participate in recruiting visits, solicit applicants and conduct candidate interviews. In some instances, other departments handle certain HR-related functions exclusively or in conjunction with the assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations (**Exhibit 4-4**).

Exhibit 4-4
RISD HR Management Responsibilities

Responsibility	Department or Position Involved
Recruiting staff	HR, principals, all departments participate
Hiring staff	HR, assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations, assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Development, all departments participate
Background checks	HR
Reference checks	HR, principals, all departments participate
Initial salary determinations	Superintendent, department directors, assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations.

	assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Development.
Salary adjustment calculations	Superintendent, assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations, department directors, Financial Services area
Compensation studies	HR
Attendance monitoring (employees)	All departments
Insurance and Risk Management	Business office, executive director for Operations/Risk Management, HR
Benefits administration	Financial Services area
Employee grievances	All departments, HR
Training / staff development	All departments, Curriculum and Instruction
Termination	All departments, HR, Financial Services area
Planning for staffing levels	Superintendent, assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations, assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Development, board

Source: RISD interviews and job descriptions.

Like most employers, RISD must comply with federal laws governing human resources management. These laws include the Fair Labor Standards Act that governs wages and hourly payments and the Americans with Disabilities Act, which requires employers to provide reasonable accommodation to any employee, or job applicant, who has a disability. Federal compliance requirements also include the Equal Employment Opportunity Act that prevents employers from making hiring and firing decisions based on age, race, religion, gender, or other factors not related to performance. In addition, state laws govern school district HR administration in areas such as employee grievances, due process, termination and contract renewal.

Exhibit 4-5 shows RISD and selected peer district personnel department staffing.

Exhibit 4-5 Personnel Department Staffing

**RISD and Peer Districts
2002-03**

District	Total Staff FTE*	Number of Personnel Department Staff				FTE per HR Staff Total	Functions
		HR Head	Professional	Para-professional	Total		
Frisco	1,580	Assistant superintendent for Human Resources	2	4	6	263	Recruiting, background checks, certification, contracts, attendance, records.
Coppell	1,201	Executive director of Human Resources	1	4	5	240	Recruiting, background checks, certification, contracts, records
McKinney	1,658	Executive director of Human Resources	2	6	8	207	Recruiting, background checks, certification, contracts, staff attendance, records
Eanes	1,100	Assistant superintendent for Human Resources	1	5	6	183	Recruiting, background checks, certification, contracts, attendance, records benefits, workers' compensation, salary schedules, employee calendars, subfinder

							system
RISD	1,125	Assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations	1.6	4.5	6.1	171	Recruiting, background checks, certification, contracts, attendance, records, benefits, workers' comp
Carroll	1,065	Assistant superintendent for Administrative Services	2	6	8	133	Recruiting, background checks, certification, contracts, attendance, subfinder system, service records
Allen	1,438	Assistant superintendent for Human Resources	3	12	15	96	Recruiting, background checks, certification, contracts, attendance, records, payroll, benefits, workers' compensation, some staff development
Total	9,167		12.6	41.5	54.1	1,293	
Average	1,310		1.8	5.9	7.7	185	

Source: Survey conducted by WCL ENTERPRISES.

*FTE-Full-time Equivalent

In response to a written survey conducted by the review team, teachers, principals and assistant principals were very positive about the work of the HR Department in key areas (**Exhibit 4-6**).

Exhibit 4-6
Responses to TSPR Survey
RISD Teachers, Principals and Assistant Principals
November 2002

Statement	Percentage of Respondents Agreeing or Strongly Agreeing	
	Teachers	Principals and Assistant Principals
The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.	70%	100%
The district has an effective employee recruitment program.	57%	89%
The district operates an effective staff development program.	59%	67%
District employees receive annual personnel evaluations.	95%	83%

Source: TSPR survey.

FINDING

RISD's Human Resources Department does not have effective documentation and analysis processes. The review team found after interviewing staff and compiling information on employment candidates, there was no documentation regarding hiring decisions. RISD does not have written guidelines, which could result in inconsistent hiring. For example, principals handle hiring for their individual schools but use different interview formats. The district does not evaluate the principals' interview skills to determine if they need improvement. The district does not analyze its recruiting efforts to determine whether changes in the schedule and scope are warranted. No data is available regarding trip costs, number of interviews conducted, number of offers made or success rates.

Also, RISD does not conduct performance appraisals for school and district administration. Nor does the district monitor compensation in departments, other than teachers, to ensure equity and fair hiring practices.

As explained in Chapter 10, the Transportation Department hires entry-level bus drivers at different salary rates.

The district does not track turnover data to determine whether correctable issues exist to decrease turnover. In fact, overall Human Resources data collection is weak: requests for information are not fulfilled and documentation and analysis are lacking.

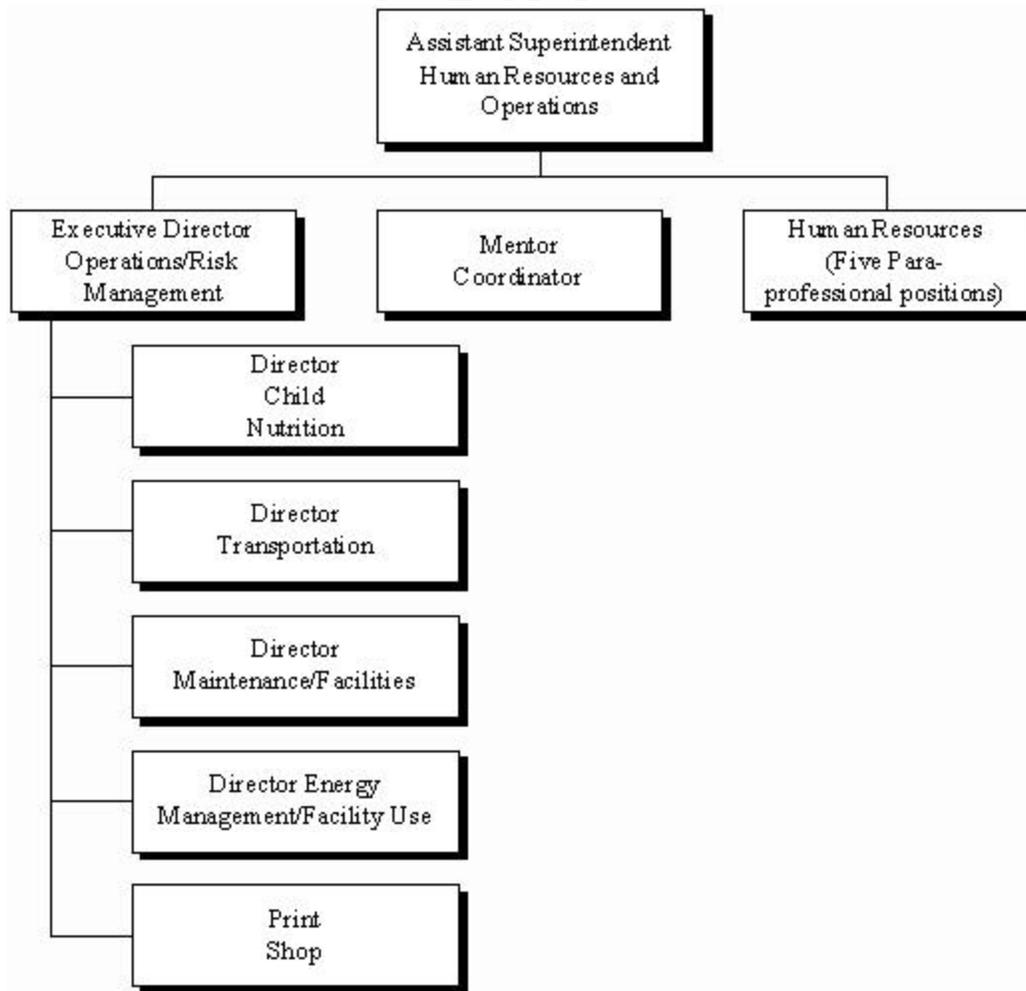
As a result of these conditions, the district could be subject to litigation on poor hiring decisions, discriminatory compensation and other violations of the Equal Pay Act of 1963, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 and Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

No professional position at RISD assumes full-time Human Resource responsibilities. The assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations oversees human resource activities, including wage and salary administration, leave administration, employee training, recruitment and staffing. The incumbent has no prior experience in personnel management at a school district.

The assistant superintendent also supervises the executive director for Operations/Risk Management and oversees Transportation, Child Nutrition, Maintenance, Energy Management and Facility Use and the Print Shop (**Exhibit 4-7**).

Exhibit 4-7
Organizational Responsibilities of the
RISD Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources and Operations

November 2002



Source: RISD superintendent.

The assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations also has extensive budget responsibilities and handles other functions outside the main areas of responsibility, such as interviewing candidates for principal and assistant principal. As a result, this position has limited time available for managing the following human resource responsibilities:

- interpreting and recommending personnel policies and regulations for the district;
- coordinating the district's application and recruitment program and ensuring that the district is represented in a positive and professional manner, including working with principals and other district staff to recruit and select qualified personnel for instructional assignments;
- assisting in development and implementation of orientation for new employees;

- coordinating the district's human resource activities to ensure that human resource practices are legally sound and effective;
- developing and implementing human resource programs, including wage and salary administration, employee benefits, employee training, recruitment and staffing and employee communications;
- ensuring that employment contracts are completed and/or renewed for those employees requiring them;
- directing preparation and revision of job descriptions and the classification of positions in the district compensation plan;
- assisting in development and implementation of the teacher salary schedule and ensuring compliance with the state minimum salary schedule requirements;
- implementing the exempt and nonexempt compensation programs and ensuring compliance with federal wage and overtime laws;
- providing cost analysis of salary and wage adjustments for the budgeting process;
- developing and implementing employee relations programs that ensure effective communications with employees, employee recognition, fair and effective employee complaints and grievances and effective distribution and updating of the employee handbook;
- developing and revising personnel policies, rules and regulations;
- supporting the district's employee appraisal program and ensuring that it is implemented;
- developing and monitoring departmental budget;
- conducting wage and salary studies to ensure that district salaries are in line with the market;
- calculating salary and applicable stipends for every employee each year and making mid-year adjustments to individual salaries as circumstances warrant;
- overseeing the substitute teacher program;
- overseeing all hiring and terminations;
- conducting investigations into equal opportunity and sexual harassment complaints brought by employees;
- monitoring access to human resource records and certification status of applicants and employees;
- overseeing and administering employee health insurance program and other employee benefits (e.g., tax shelter annuity, deferred compensation); and
- conducting criminal background investigations on all successful applicants for positions for which a background check is required.

Job requirements for human resource directors often include formal education and training in human resources and experience documenting and communicating detailed procedures. A skilled and adequately staffed human resources department reduces the risk of unnecessary litigation.

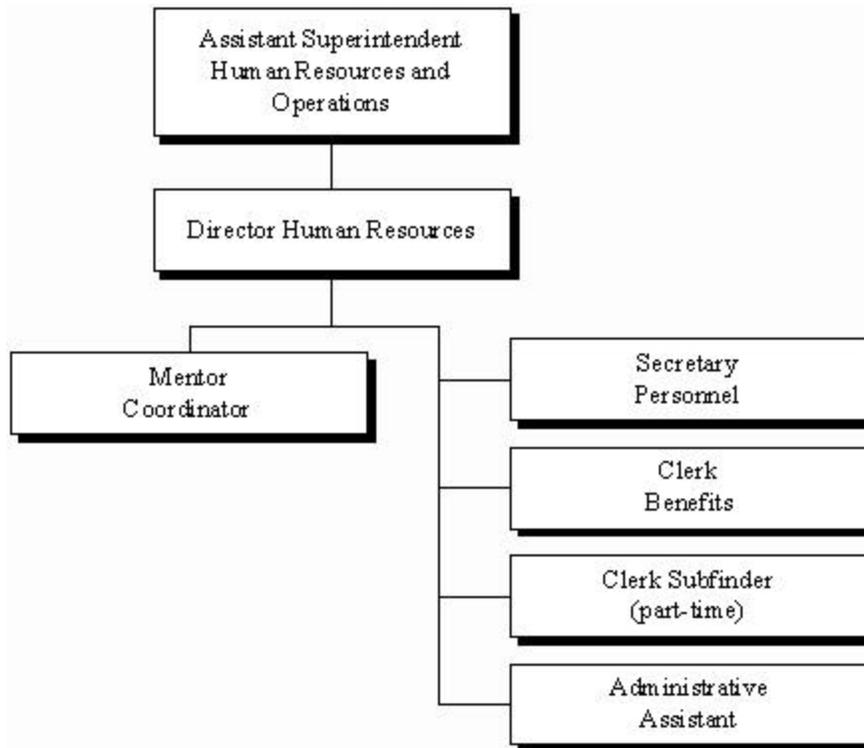
Elgin ISD created a director of Human Resources position to oversee, manage and administer the Human Resources department and created three positions to support the director. The superintendent assigned the director of Human Resources the responsibility of posting all job vacancies and developing procedures for receiving, reviewing and tracking all applications.

Recommendation 19:

Create a position for Human Resources director.

This position, filled by an experienced HR person, should ensure that RISD's recruitment efforts meet the student enrollment growth. This position would oversee all current Human Resources responsibilities and subordinate positions, including the mentor coordinator, who works with new RISD teachers to ensure they receive the classroom support they need. (Exhibit 4-8).

Exhibit 4-8
Recommended RISD Human Resources Organization
November 2002



Source: WCL Enterprises for TSPR.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent reviews the recommended organization and assigns responsibility to the assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations to develop an appropriate job description for the position.	June 2003
2.	The assistant superintendent prepares the job description for the HR director and reviews it with the superintendent.	June 2003
3.	The superintendent reviews the job description for the new position and requests that the board approve the position.	June 2003
4.	The board approves the new position and the superintendent directs the assistant superintendent to post the new position.	June 2003
5.	The assistant superintendent screens candidates for the position and refers them to the superintendent for interviews.	July - September 2003
6.	With the assistance of senior staff, the superintendent makes a recommendation to the board for a candidate to fill the HR director position.	October 2003
7.	The board approves the recommendation and directs the superintendent to proceed with hiring the HR director.	October 2003
8.	The superintendent fills the HR director position.	Effective January 1, 2004

FISCAL IMPACT

The calculation of annual salary for the Human Resources director uses the highest salary for an RISD director, or \$70,124 and benefits at 15 percent, or \$10,519, for an annual cost of \$80,643. Given the importance of the position's responsibilities, the review team estimates the cost for hiring a new director by January 1, 2004 ($\$80,643 \div 12 \text{ months}$) x 8 months = \$53,762).

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Create a position for Human Resources director.	(\$53,762)	(\$80,643)	(\$80,643)	(\$80,643)	(\$80,643)

Chapter 4

PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

B. STAFFING FORMULAS AND SALARY ADMINISTRATION (PART 1)

The Texas Education Agency's (TEA) Financial Accountability System Resource Guide (FASRG), January 2003, section 9.3.2.3, describes school-staffing formulas as "contained in school district local policies and/or district/campus improvement plans (and) provide a benchmark figure that is used to calculate supplemental full-time equivalent (FTE) staff." Districts use staffing formulas for budgeting, as a basis to charge other costs and as guidelines for the efficient use of human resources. Staffing formulas also help determine what services are basic and what are supplemental and eligible for state compensatory or federal funding. FTE is a budget term used to calculate positions needed and the cost of those positions. In positions that are a combination of professional and paraprofessional employees, a paraprofessional position is equal to 0.5 FTE.

RISD uses staffing formulas to guide distribution of staff resources (**Exhibit 4-9**).

Exhibit 4-9
RISD General Staffing Formulas
2002-03

Position/Grade Level	Staffing Formula
Administration	
Principal (all levels)	1.0 per school
Elementary: Assistant principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.0 Cullins-Lake Pointe • Howard Dobbs Elementary School, Amanda Rochell Elementary School • 1.0 North and 1.0 South
Middle School: Assistant principal/dean of students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrollment to 599: 1.0 per school • Enrollment 600-1,200: 2.0 per school • Enrollment 1,201 and above: 3.0 per school

High School: Associate principal	1.0 per school
High School: Assistant principal/dean of students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrollment 599: 1.0 per school • Enrollment 600 to 1,199: 2.0 per school • Enrollment 1,200 to 1,799: 3.0 per school • Enrollment 1,800 to 2,399: 4.0 per school • Enrollment 2,000 to 2,249: 9.0 per school
Classroom teachers (Core Areas)	
Grades K-4 Grades 5-6 Grades 7-9 Grades 10-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1:22 (1.0 teacher per 22 students) • 1:25 • 1:25 • 1:25
Teacher Specialists (Art, Music, Band, PE)	
Art, Music, Band (Elementary)	1.0 per school
Elective Teachers: Middle/Freshman Center/High School	Based on student enrollment and proper authorization. Minimum of 15 students required, maximum class size 25.
Physical Education Teachers/Elementary	1.0 per 650 students (2.0 Cullins Lake-Pointe)
Instructional Technology Specialist	1.0 (CLP, North, South)
Instructional/Teacher Aide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 per 15 teachers - Elementary • 2 per school - all others
Computer Lab Technician	1 per school
Teachers - Additional	
Language Science, Reading Specialist Elementary	1.0 per school
Gifted/Talented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1.0 per school Elementary • 0.5 per school - all others
ESL, Special Education, Title I, Head Start	Based on student needs.

Secretaries/Clerks	
Elementary School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrollment 0 to 499: 2.0 per school • Enrollment 500 to 749: 3.0 per school • Enrollment 750 to 1,000: 4.0 per school
Middle Schools/Freshman Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrollment 0 to 499: 3.0 per school • Enrollment 500 to 749: 4.0 per school • Enrollment 750 to 1,000: 5.0 per school
High School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrollment 0 to 999: 5.0 per school • Enrollment 1000 to 1,299: 6.0 per school • Enrollment 1,300 to 1,599: 7.0 per school • Enrollment 1,600 to 1,999: 8.0 per school • Enrollment 2,000 to 2,249: 9.0 per school
Counselors	
Elementary	1.0 per school; 2.0 Cullins-Lake Point
Middle Schools/Freshman Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrollment to 599: 1.0 per school • Enrollment 600-999: 2.0 per school • Enrollment 1,000 and above: 3.0 per school
High School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1.0 per grade level • D-FY-IT (Drug Free Youth in Texas): 1.0 per school • Testing: 1.0 per school
Library Staff (Elementary/Middle/Freshman Center)	
Librarian	1.0 per school
Library Secretary/Assistant	1.0 per school; 0.5 Cullins-Lake Point

High School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrollment 0 to 1,499: 1.0 per school • Enrollment 1,500 to 2,199: 2.0 per school • Enrollment 2,200 and above: 3.0 per school
Custodians (all schools)	1 custodian for every 20,000 square feet of permanent/portable construction
Health Services ? Nurses	
All Schools	1.0 per school
High School	1.0 per school + 1 Nurse Aide

Source: RISD assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations.

Salary administration involves developing the district's pay practices, recommending appropriate structures for all personnel classifications, conducting annual salary surveys by reviewing data provided by other districts, recommending modifications to the classification and compensation structure and conducting analyses of the impact of proposed salary and wage increases for both the regular system and the performance system.

According to a report released in November 2002 by the National Education Association for 2001-02, the average salaries of Texas teachers dropped from 26th to 30th. The average Texas teacher salary (\$39,232) was \$5,267 below the national average of \$44,499.

RISD had 1,124.9 FTE's at the beginning of 2002-03 (**Exhibit 4-10**). From 1998-99 through 2002-03, student enrollment grew 30.0 percent, while staff FTEs grew 39.0 percent.

Professional staff includes central and school administrators, teachers, nurses, librarians, trainers, counselors, diagnosticians and professional support positions. Paraprofessionals include central and school clerical employees and instructional aides, special educational aides, computer technicians and clinic aides. Classified employees include all Child Nutrition, Transportation, Maintenance, security guards, crossing guards and custodial personnel.

Exhibit 4-10
RISD Employees by Category
1998-99 through 2002-03

Employee Category	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	Percentage Change, 1998-99 to 2001-02
Teachers	428.7	498.9	520.4	524.0	569.9	32.9%
Professional support	50.8	63.0	64.7	96.9	97.6	92.1%
School administration	20.5	23.0	26.0	28.9	33.5	63.4%
Central administration	9.2	12.2	11.8	10.9	13.8	50.0%
Educational aides	60.5	66.3	67.8	73.9	76.5	26.4%
Auxiliary staff	239.5	309.6	287.4	311.6	333.6	39.3%
Total staff	809.2	973.0	978.1	1,046.2	1,124.9	39.0%
Student Enrollment	7,363	7,798	8,468	8,911	9,488	28.9%

Source: TEA, Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) 1998-99 through 2002-03 and RISD superintendent.

RISD participates annually in three salary surveys. The assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations conducts a yearly telephone survey of peer districts for teacher salaries. It reviews comparative data from all districts in Region 10 and also purchases another view of the data targeting 10 districts from Region 10 for a more detailed comparison.

RISD uses survey data to modify district salary schedules to reflect changes made in other districts. The schedules are organized by pay grade for teacher/librarian/nurse based upon years of experience and highest degree earned, for teacher assistant/office assistant and counselor/diagnostician/psychologist/occupational therapist, secretary/attendance clerk/lab technician/library assistant/In School Suspension (ISS)/Student Assessment Center (SAC) coordinator.

Because of financial limitations, the district has not been able to fully implement results of these surveys.

Exhibit 4-11 shows that only beginning teachers in RISD had higher average salaries than the region and state averages. Competition among

the 10 to 15 schools in the Rockwall area creates a highly competitive market for entry-level teachers.

Exhibit 4-11
Average Teacher Base Salary by Years of Experience
RISD, Region 10 and State
1997-98 through 2001-02

Years Of Experience	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	Percentage Change, 1997-98 - 2001-02
RISD						
Beginning Teachers	\$23,881	\$28,832	\$30,660	\$31,462	\$32,903	37.8%
1-5 years	\$25,134	\$27,751	\$30,949	\$32,544	\$33,519	33.4%
6-10 years	\$28,943	\$30,855	\$33,901	\$34,837	\$35,357	22.1%
11-20 years	\$36,950	\$38,183	\$40,803	\$41,252	\$41,396	12.0%
More than 20 years	\$41,229	\$42,582	\$46,560	\$48,235	\$48,780	18.3%
Region 10						
Beginning Teachers	\$25,843	\$27,328	\$30,059	\$30,113	\$32,250	24.8%
1-5 years	\$27,657	\$28,948	\$32,194	\$33,113	\$34,524	24.8%
6-10 years	\$31,016	\$32,179	\$35,373	\$36,065	\$37,272	21.2%
11-20 years	\$37,130	\$38,086	\$41,524	\$42,425	\$43,282	16.6%
More than 20 years	\$44,092	\$45,268	\$49,444	\$51,545	\$52,622	19.3%
State						
Beginning Teachers	\$24,736	\$25,586	\$28,588	\$29,824	\$30,940	25.1%
1-5 years	\$26,787	\$27,748	\$31,013	\$31,987	\$33,093	23.6%
6-10 years	\$30,811	\$31,470	\$34,632	\$35,304	\$36,169	17.4%
11-20 years	\$37,240	\$38,005	\$41,191	\$41,755	\$42,298	13.6%
More than 20 years	\$42,624	\$43,767	\$47,140	\$48,183	\$49,185	15.4%

Source: TEA, Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) 1997-98 through 2001-02.

Exhibit 4-12 compares the stipends RISD offers to teachers in critical shortage areas, difficult-to-fill positions and those with advanced degrees and compares them to selected peer districts.

**Exhibit 4-12
Additional Teacher Stipends
RISD and Peer Districts
2001-02**

Entity	Additional items
RISD	\$3,000 English as a Second Language (ESL) \$3,000 math and science \$1,000 master's degree
Allen	\$1,800 secondary math, science and foreign language \$1,500 emotionally disturbed
Carroll	\$1,000 master's degree \$2,000 doctoral degree
Coppell	None
Eanes	None
Frisco	\$1,200 secondary science, math and ESL \$4,000 bilingual \$2,500 secondary foreign language \$1,000 master's degree \$1,500 doctoral degree \$2,500 speech pathologist
McKinney	\$3,000 bilingual (certified) \$2,000 bilingual (non-certified)

Source: Survey by WCL ENTERPRISES; RISD assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations.

RISD provides supplemental pay to teachers who work additional time beyond the standard 187-day contract or additional time each day or week during the contract period performing athletic, academic or co-curricular duties. The estimated total cost of this supplemental pay, or stipends, for RISD is almost \$700,000 for 2002-03 (**Exhibit 4-13**). The district establishes stipends according to the Texas Association of School Board's (TASB) 2000-2001 *Salaries and Benefits Guidelines*.

Exhibit 4-13
Stipends for Athletic, Academic and Co-Curricular Activities
RISD and Peer Districts
2002-03

District	Type of Stipend						Total
	Athletic		Academic		Co-Curricular		
	Direct Pay	Cost of Extra Days *	Direct Pay	Cost of Extra Days *	Direct Pay	Cost of Extra Days *	
McKinney	\$652,400	\$175,630	\$420,274	\$17,370	\$136,580	\$32,617	\$1,434,871
Allen	\$368,000	\$53,900	\$407,927	\$0	\$209,393	\$2,548	\$1,041,768
Carroll	\$104,600	\$40,700	\$131,950	\$18,500	\$130,235	\$9,250	\$435,235
RISD	\$425,150	\$63,900	\$93,750	\$12,960	\$84,775	\$11,648	\$692,183
Coppell	\$478,905	\$0	\$31,692	\$0	\$147,039	\$0	\$657,636
Eanes	\$229,759	\$49,765	\$53,483	\$3,700	\$119,677	\$24,235	\$480,619
Frisco	\$218,300	\$4,531	\$95,200	\$0	\$135,874	\$1,970	\$455,875

Source: RISD assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations and WCL ENTERPRISES telephone survey of peer districts.
**Cost of extra day estimated using daily rate of a teacher in the district with five years of experience.*

Positions that have the same designation in RISD receive the same stipend, but the stipends vary according to the job. Peer districts vary in the terminology and format for stipend positions and activities. For ease of comparison, the review team divided stipends into three categories: athletic, academic and co-curricular. **Exhibit 4-14** shows these three stipend areas and their related activities.

Exhibit 4-14
Stipend Areas and Activities
2002-03

Stipend Area	Activities/Positions
Athletic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head coaches in sports * • Assistant coaches

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trainers • Assistant trainers
Academic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department chair • Academic team/cluster leader • At-risk campus coordinator • Bilingual or ESL teacher • Speech pathologist • Dyslexia facilitator
Co-curricular	<p>Advisor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Honor Society • Yearbook • Media/newspaper • Band • Orchestra • Choir • Theater/drama • Student council • Drill team • Cheerleaders • Pep squad • Language clubs

Source: RISD assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations and WCL ENTERPRISES telephone survey of peer districts.
 *Sports include basketball, golf, soccer, tennis, track, volleyball, football, swimming and wrestling.

Exhibit 4-15 shows the ranges of direct pay stipends for RISD and its peers.

Exhibit 4-15
Range of Direct Pay Stipends by Activity Area
RISD and Peer Districts
2002-03

District	Type of Stipend		
	Athletic	Academic	Co-Curricular

Allen	\$1,500 - \$8,500	\$900 - \$2,500	\$250 - \$7,000
Carroll	\$1,500 - \$10,000	\$500 - \$1,500	\$300 - \$7,500
Coppell	\$2,937 - \$11,250	\$2,000	\$1,447 - \$9,308
Eanes	\$479 - \$13,703	\$335 - \$4,466	\$81 - \$8,932
Frisco	\$1,500 - \$8,000	\$300 - \$4,000	\$100 - \$7,000
McKinney	\$1,500 - \$8,500	\$200 - \$3,000	\$500 - \$5,500
RISD	\$2,000 - \$13,500	\$300 - \$3,000	\$600 - \$4,000

Source: RISD assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations and WCL ENTERPRISES telephone survey of peer districts.

RISD provides stipends using both direct pay and extra contract days (**Exhibit 4-16**). It is one of four districts that provides extra days in all three stipend areas. For 2002-03, RISD will pay for 505 extra days in all three stipend activity areas: 355 extra days for athletic activities, 72 days for academic activities and 78 for co-curricular activities.

While the amount of the direct pay stipend may remain constant, the cost of the additional contract days changes every time the district grants a pay raise, which is usually annually. So, the cost of stipends will continue to increase. For 2002-03, the estimated cost of RISD extra contract days is \$90,900, or 13.0 percent of total stipend funds.

Exhibit 4-16
Extra Day Stipends by Activity Area
RISD and Peer Districts
2002-03

District	Athletic	Academic	Co-Curricular	Total
RISD	355	72	78	505
Carroll	220	100	50	370
Eanes	269	20	131	420
Frisco	23	No extra days	10	33
Allen	275	No extra days	13	288
Coppell	No extra days	No extra days	No extra days	0
McKinney	910	90	169	1,169

Source: RISD assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations and WCL ENTERPRISES telephone survey of peer districts.

RISD spends an estimated 68.3 percent of its total stipend funds for athletic activities, the second highest percentage among selected peer districts (**Exhibit 4-17**). For academic activities, RISD spends an estimated 15.4 percent of total stipend funds, the fourth highest among the peer districts. For co-curricular activities, RISD spends an estimated 13.9 percent of total stipend funds, which is the second lowest.

Exhibit 4-17
Allocation of Stipends by Activity Area
RISD and Peer Districts
2002-03

District	Type of Stipend						Total
	Athletic		Academic		Co-Curricular		
	Total Cost	Percentage of Total Stipends	Total Cost	Percentage of Total Stipends	Total Cost	Percentage of Total Stipends	
Coppell	\$478,905	72.8%	\$31,692	4.8%	\$147,039	22.4%	\$657,636
RISD	\$472,860	68.3%	\$106,710	15.4%	\$96,423	13.9%	\$675,993
McKinney	\$828,030	57.7%	\$437,644	30.5%	\$169,197	11.8%	\$1,434,871
Eanes	\$279,524	58.2%	\$57,183	11.9%	\$143,912	29.9%	\$480,619
Carroll	\$145,300	33.4%	\$150,450	34.6%	\$139,485	32.0%	\$435,235
Frisco	\$222,831	48.9%	\$95,200	20.9%	\$137,844	30.2%	\$455,875
Allen	\$421,900	40.5%	\$407,927	39.2%	\$211,941	20.3%	\$1,041,768

Source: RISD assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations and WCL ENTERPRISES telephone survey of peer districts.

FINDING

RISD is overstaffed in instructional support positions at its schools, particularly for assistant principal and secretary/clerk positions, diverting potential classroom resources.

Assistant principals, who are considered administrators in RISD, have one-year contracts. Typically, these contracts renew in March of the year

preceding their term, i.e., March 2003 for the 2003-04 year. Secretary/clerk positions do not have contracts.

A comparison of RISD with school staffing minimum standards developed by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) reflects that RISD has nine more assistant principal positions than the standards formula, three at the secondary level and six at the elementary level. RISD has 17.5 more secretary/clerk positions than the SACS standard. SACS accredits more than 12,000 public and private educational institutions, from pre-kindergarten through university levels, in 11 states in the Southeastern United States (including Texas) and in Latin America.

While RISD evaluates instructional support staffing needs based on changes in enrollment and curriculum, the district does not distribute instructional support staff at either the secondary or elementary levels consistently. Some of this inconsistency results from the budget process during which principals can identify and justify additional instructional support staffing needs based on special needs of their students. The distribution of staff is included in **Exhibit 4-18** and **Exhibit 4-19**.

The review team noted several inconsistencies in the assignment of positions at the secondary schools. The high school has an associate principal for Curriculum and Instruction. No other secondary school has an administrator position at that level. Instead, the principal serves in that role at the other schools.

The ratio of students to assistant principal varies widely: at the high school the ratio is 396:1; at the freshman center the ratio is 376:1; at J.W. Williams the ratio is 441:1; and at Cain Middle School the ratio is 337:1. J.W. Williams Middle School has an assistant principal and a dean of students, which is similar to an assistant principal, for 882 students while Cain Middle School has the same staffing, but only 674 students. Cain Middle School has two counselors, four secretaries and one receptionist, but fewer students than J.W. Williams Middle School, which has two counselors, three secretaries and no receptionist.

Exhibit 4-18
RISD School Administrative Staff Distribution, Secondary Schools
2002-03

Position	High School			Middle Schools	
	High School	Alternative School	Freshman Center	J.W Williams	Cain
Enrollment	1,982	106	752	882	674

Principal	1	1	1	1	1
Associate principal	1				
Assistant principal	4		2	1	1
Dean of students				1	1
Counselor	5	1	2	2	2
Athletic coordinator	1				
Librarian	1		1	1	1
Library aide	1				
Secretary	8	1	3	3	4
Office aides			2		
Attendance clerk	2		1	1	1
Receptionist	1			1	1
Total	25	3	12	11	12

Source: RISD assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations.

Staffing Formulas and Salary Administration - Part 2

Chapter 4

PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

B. STAFFING FORMULAS AND SALARY ADMINISTRATION (PART 2)

The elementary schools have similar staffing inconsistencies. Amy Parks-Heath Elementary School and Dorothy Smith Pullen Elementary School have half-time assistant principals, yet their enrollment is more than that of Amanda Rochell Elementary School and Dorris A. Jones Elementary School, which have full-time assistant principals.

The ratio of students to assistant principal varies widely: Amanda Rochell Elementary School is 528:1; Amy Parks-Heath Elementary School-Heath Elementary School is 1,284:1; Cullins-Lake Pointe is 475:1; Dorothy Smith Pullen Elementary School is 1,294:1; Howard Dobbs Elementary School is 583:1, Nebbie Williams Elementary School is 930:1; Virginia Reinhardt Elementary School is 850:1; and Dorris A. Jones Elementary School is 591:1. Grace Hartman Elementary School does not have an assistant principal.

The same inconsistency of students per counselor exists at each school. All elementary schools, regardless of size, receive one counselor. The only exception is Cullins-Lake Pointe, which has two counselors. Dorothy Smith Pullen Elementary School, Grace Hartman Elementary School and Virginia Reinhardt Elementary School have the same number of administrative staff, even though Dorothy Smith Pullen Elementary School has more than 200 more students. Howard Dobbs Elementary School has seven administrative positions with 583 students, while Nebbie Williams has 7.5 for 465 students and Dorris A. Jones Elementary School has 7.5 for 580 students (**Exhibit 4-19**).

Exhibit 4-19
RISD School Administrative Staff Distribution, Elementary Schools
2002-03

Position	Amanda Rochell	Amy Parks-Heath	Cullins-Lake Pointe	Dorothy Smith Pullen	Howard Dobbs	Nebbie Williams	Virginia Reinhardt	Grace Hartman	Dorris A. Jones
Enrollment	528	642	949	647	595	462	425	381	591
Principal	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Assistant principal	1.0	0.5	2.0	0.5	1.0	0.5	0.5		1.0

Counselor	1.0	1.0	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Librarian	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.5	0.5
Library aide			1.0					0.5	0.5
Secretary	1.0	1.0	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Office aides	1.0	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	2.0	1.0	1.0	2.0
Lab technician	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Attendance clerk			1.0						
Total	7.0	7.5	12.0	6.5	7.0	7.5	6.5	6.5	8.0

Source: RISD assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations.

SACS recommends minimum personnel requirements for elementary schools, based on enrollment, in its 2002-2003 *Checklist of Standards for the Accreditation of Elementary Schools*. **Exhibit 4-20** shows the minimum standards for elementary schools (grades 1-4).

Exhibit 4-20
SACS Minimum Personnel Requirements for Elementary Schools

Number of Students	Principal	Professional Administrator or Supervisor Assistants	Library or Media Specialists	Library Aide or Clerk	Secretaries or Clerks
1-263	0.5	0.0	0.5	0.0	0.5
264-439	1.0	0.0	1.0	0.0	1.0
440-659	1.0	0.0	1.0	0.5	1.0
660-879	1.0	0.5	1.0	1.0	1.5
880-1,099	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.5
1,100-1,319	1.0	1.5	1.0	1.0	2.0
1320 +	1.0	2.0	1.0	1.0	2.0

Source: SACS Checklist of Standards for the Accreditation of Elementary Schools, 2002-2003 School Year.

SACS further recommends minimum personnel requirements for guidance services at the elementary school level based on enrollment (**Exhibit 4-21**).

Exhibit 4-21
SACS Minimum Personnel Requirements
for Guidance Services in Elementary Schools

Number of Students	Guidance Professionals
1 - 499	0.5
500 - 749	1.0
750 - 999	1.5
1,000 - 1,249	2.0
1,250 - 1,499	2.5
1,500 +	3.0

Source: SACS Checklist of Standards for the Accreditation of Elementary Schools, 2002-03.

SACS recommends minimum personnel requirements for middle schools (grades 5-8), based on enrollment, in its 2002-03 *Checklist of Standards for the Accreditation of Middle Schools*.

Exhibit 4-22 shows the minimum standards for middle schools.

Exhibit 4-22
SACS Minimum Personnel Requirements for Middle Schools

Number of Students	Principal	Administrative Assistants	Guidance Professionals	Library or Media Specialists	Library or Media Assistants	Secretaries or Clerks
1-249	1.0	0.0	0.5	0.5	0.0	0.5
250-499	1.0	0.5	1.0	1.0	0.5	1.0
500-749	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.5
750-999	1.0	1.0	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.5
1,000-1,249	1.0	1.5	2.5	1.0	1.0	2.0
1.250-	1.0	2.0	3.0	1.0	1.0	2.0

1,499						
1,500 +	1.0	(1.0)	(1.0)	(1.0)	1.0	2.0

Source: SACS Checklist of Standards for the Accreditation of Middle Schools, 2002-2003 School Year.

(1) One full-time equivalent position, where needed, is recommended for each additional 250 students over 1,500.

SACS further recommends minimum personnel requirements for high schools (grades 9-12), based on enrollment, in its *Standards Checklist, Accreditation Standards for Secondary and Middle Schools, 2000*. **Exhibit 4-23** shows these standards.

Exhibit 4-23
SACS Minimum Personnel Requirements for High Schools

Number of Students	Principal	Administrative Assistants	Guidance Professionals	Library or Media Specialists	Library or Media Assistants	Secretaries or Clerks
1-249	1.0	0.0	1.0	1.0	0	1.0
250-499	1.0	0.5	1.0	1.0	0.5	2.0
500-749	1.0	1.0	1.5	1.0	1.0	3.0
750-999	1.0	1.5	2.0	1.0	1.0	3.5
1,000-1,249	1.0	2.0	2.5	2.0	1.0	4.0
1,250-1,499	1.0	2.5	3.0	2.0	1.0	4.5
1,500 +	1.0	(1)	(1)	(1)	1.0	4.5

Source: SACS Standards Checklist, Accreditation Standards for Secondary and Middle Schools.

(1) One FTE position, where needed, is recommended for each additional 250 students over 1,500.

Exhibit 4-24 compares RISD secondary school staffing to the SACS standards. The RISD positions represented are funded only through

Totals	5.0	(1.0)	(1.0)	0.5	2.5	6.0
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Source: SACS standards and RISD assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations.

*Assumes that the high school will use additional positions allowed by SACS standards for enrollment above 1,500 students for campus administrative positions.

RISD staffing at the elementary campuses exceeds the SACS standards among all categories of positions except librarian/media specialist or aide (**Exhibit 4-25**). Principal/assistant principal positions, or campus administrators, exceed the standard by five positions and all but one campus is above the minimum standard. For secretary and clerk positions, the district exceeds the minimum standards by 12.5 positions and all campuses are above the minimum standard.

Exhibit 4-25
Elementary Campus Staffing
RISD vs. SACS Standards

	Amanda Rochell	Amy Parks- Heath	Cullins - Lake Pointe	Dorothy Smith Pullen	Howard Dobbs	Nebbie Williams	Virginia Reinhardt	Grace Hartman	Dorris A. Jones	Totals
Enrollment	528	642	949	647	595	462	425	381	591	5,220
Campus administrator										
Recommended	1.0	1.0	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	10.0
Actual	2.0	0.5	3.0	1.5	2.0	1.5	1.5	1.0	2.0	15.0
Variance	1.0	(0.5)	1.0	0.5	1.0	0.5	0.5	0.0	1.0	5.0
Guidance professional										
Recommended	1.0	1.0	1.5	1.0	1.0	0.5	0.5	0.5	1.0	8.0
Actual	1.0	1.0	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	10.0
Variance	0.0	0.0	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.0	2.0
Secretary/clerk										
Recommended	1.0	1.0	1.5	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	9.5
Actual	2.0	3.0	3.0	2.0	2.0	3.0	2.0	2.0	3.0	22.0
Variance	1.0	2.0	1.5	1.0	1.0	2.0	1.0	1.0	2.0	12.5

Librarian/media specialist or aide										
Recommended	1.5	1.5	2.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.0	1.0	1.5	13.5
Actual	1.0	1.0	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.5	0.5	10.0
Variance	(0.5)	(0.5)	(0.5)	(0.5)	(0.5)	(0.5)	0.0	0.5	(1.0)	(3.5)
Totals	1.5	1.0	2.5	1.0	1.5	2.5	2.0	2.0	2.0	16.0

Source: SACS standards and RISD assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations.

Recommendation 20:

Reduce assistant principal and secretary/clerk staffing.

The SACS standards are designed as minimum standards and do not take into consideration the mix of students on a particular campus, i.e., at-risk, free-and-reduced meals or economically disadvantaged. Allowing for consideration of student composition at specific campuses and the assignment of supervision of Head Start and early childhood programs to the assistant principal and schools with such programs, RISD could reduce campus positions by five.

RISD could reduce campus secretary/clerk staffing by approximately one-half of the 17.5 positions it is currently above SACS standards, or nine positions. RISD may have particular circumstances, such as older schools that are poorly configured and limit communication, which require additional staff. These issues should be evaluated against the standards and identified by school as impacting staffing requirements.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent, the assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction and the assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations review current campus administrator and secretary/clerk staffing and develop a plan to reduce current campus secretary/clerk staffing.	September 2003
2.	The assistant superintendents meet with principals at affected schools to review recommended staffing changes and solicit input for modifications.	October 2003
3.	The assistant superintendents present the final staffing plan with suggested modifications to the superintendent for review and approval.	November 2003

4.	The superintendent approves the plan and recommends it to the board for approval.	December 2003
5.	The board approves the plan and directs the superintendent to implement it.	January 2004
6.	The superintendent reassigns existing personnel, if possible, and does not renew contracts, if necessary, and eliminates remaining positions.	February 2004 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

The fiscal impact assumes that RISD reduces assistant principal positions by five and secretary/clerk staffing by one-half of the 17.5 positions, or nine. The assistant principal positions, which are contract positions, would be eliminated beginning in 2004-05 and the secretary/clerk positions, which are "at will" positions, would be eliminated beginning with 2003-04.

The average salary for an assistant principal, all levels, in 2002-03 was \$52,326. Adding 15 percent for benefits, or \$7,849, total compensation for one individual was \$60,174. Reducing five assistant principal positions would result in annual savings of \$300,870 beginning in 2004-05.

The average salary for a campus secretary/clerk position, all levels, in 2002-03 was \$24,956. Adding 15 percent for benefits, or \$3,743, total compensation was \$28,699. Reducing nine secretary/clerk positions beginning with the year 2003-04 would result in annual savings of \$258,291.

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Reduce assistant principal and secretary/clerk staffing.	\$258,291	\$559,161	\$559,161	\$559,161	\$559,161

FINDING

Of 569.9 FTE teacher positions in RISD in 2002-03, 42, or 7.4 percent, were on some form of temporary or emergency permit (**Exhibit 4-26**). The percentage of teachers on permits has risen consistently and more than doubled since 1997-98.

Exhibit 4-26
RISD Teachers on Permits
1997-98 through 2001-02

Year	Type of Permit			Total on Permits	Total Teacher FTEs	Percentage of Total Teacher FTEs on Permits
	Emergency	Non-Renewable Permit	TCAP			
2002-03	27	3	12	42	569.9	7.4%
2001-02	27	3	1	31	524.0	5.9%
2000-01	29	3	3	35	520.4	6.7%
1999-2000	24	4	2	30	498.9	6.0%
1998-99	18	1	1	20	428.7	4.7%
1997-98	10	0	3	13	387.3	3.4%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 1997-98 through 2001-02 and RISD certification officer.

Uncertified teachers may not be sufficiently trained in the field in which they are teaching. As a result, they may not be able to provide the necessary foundation in these subjects. "Texas Study Links Teacher Certification, Student Success," which summarizes findings from a study at the University of Texas at Austin's Charles A. Dana Center, states that Texas students do better on state exams when their instructors are certified in the subjects they teach.

For 2001-02, RISD had the second highest number of teachers on permits compared to its peer districts (**Exhibit 4-27**). The percentage was less than the regional average, but higher than the state average.

Exhibit 4-27
Teachers on Permits
RISD, Peer Districts, Region 10 and State
2002-03

Entity	Total Teacher	Total Teacher	Percentage of Total
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	Permits	FTEs	Teacher FTEs on Permits
McKinney	66	935.5	7.1%
RISD	31	524.0	5.9%
Allen	37	724.3	5.1%
Frisco	23	666.2	3.5%
Coppell	15	650.9	2.3%
Eanes	9	557.1	1.6%
Carroll	2	507.1	0.4%
Region 10	2,980	41,498.4	7.2%
State	15,057	282,583.1	5.3%

Source: WCL ENTERPRISES telephone survey.

Because of the homogeneity of the student population, strong parental involvement and a low economically disadvantaged population, RISD teacher turnover has been low (**Exhibit 4-28**).

Exhibit 4-28
Teachers Turnover Rate
RISD, Peer Districts, Region 10 and State
2001-02

Districts	2001-02
Allen	19.3%
Carroll	15.8%
Coppell	18.5%
Eanes	15.4%
Frisco	19.9%
McKinney	24.8%
RISD	15.6%
Region 10	18.2%
State	15.7%

Source: Texas Education Agency, AEIS 2001-02

As the district grows and the demographics change, it will become increasingly difficult to compete for teachers with other fast-growing, high-achieving districts given the continuing gap in the number of teacher graduates, the growing demand and salary differences.

At the beginning of 2001-02, the Baltimore (Maryland) City Public School System, historically accustomed to struggling to fill teacher positions, could be selective. Fewer teachers had left their jobs. And the key factor in attracting more new applicants was money, according to the system's human resources director. Baltimore had increased teacher salaries relative to suburban school district salaries and the move paid off.

Recommendation 21:

Develop strategies to increase teacher certification.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent appoints a committee to research strategies and best practices for increasing teacher certification.	July 2003
2.	The committee contacts neighboring districts and Region 10 regarding teacher certification strategies.	August 2003
3.	The committee presents their findings to the superintendent.	September 2003
4.	The superintendent includes any necessary increases in the budget for 2004-05 and presents it to the board for review.	October 2003
5.	The board approves the increase and authorizes the superintendent to include the cost in the budget.	November - December 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

It is assumed the district will provide a \$1,000 stipend for teachers to receive certification training for each year. The estimate is for 42 permits, the current 2002-03 number of teachers on permits.

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Develop strategies to increase teacher certification.	(\$42,000)	(\$42,000)	(\$42,000)	(\$42,000)	(\$42,000)

Chapter 4

PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

C. RECRUITMENT, HIRING ACTIVITIES AND RETENTION

TEA's February 1999 publication, *Texas Teacher Recruitment and Retention Study*, states, "Texas is experiencing a teacher shortage that is a serious and growing problem." Contributing to this shortage are rising student enrollments, decreasing enrollment in teaching programs at institutions of higher education and alternative certification programs and a lack of state and local resources to maintain competitive salaries.

Strong teacher recruitment and retention programs are vital for growing school districts to maintain high academic standards.

FINDING

The RISD Job Fair, first held in April 2002, provided an opportunity for 96 RISD administrators and educators to meet 500 prospective professional staff candidates for classroom teachers, counselors, art, music and PE teachers, librarians, special education teachers and speech therapists. A team of two to three members from each campus, including the principal and teachers participated. Each campus staffed one booth. Following an RISD staff orientation, the candidates arrived to browse and schedule interviews during a three-hour period. Teams conducted 20 to 30-minute interviews.

High school honor society students served as hosts and earned community service hours by greeting attendees at the front door. The students provided packets to the attendees and directed them into the cafeteria to complete registration and application forms.

Packet information included data about the district, a 2002-03 calendar, benefits and insurance information, current pay scale, map of schools with locations of schools and departments with available positions, as well as information and maps from the Rockwall Chamber of Commerce. Each school provided specific information and decorated its booth. The district provided tables with cloth covers, signs with each campus name, signup sheets, writing pens and tickets to give to applicants with scheduled interview times.

Prospective teachers spent the first part of the day browsing the elementary and secondary booths. Uncertified applicants discussed deficiency plans with the Texas A&M University - Commerce's (TAMU-C) Post Baccalaureate (Emergency Permit) Teacher Certification Program

(TCP)/Region 10 station. This time period provided staff with an opportunity to generally screen and recruit potential applicants. After the initial browsing period, interested applicants participated in job interviews.

The district advertised the event on the district's Web site, in the *Rockwall Express*, *Rockwall County News* and the *Dallas Morning News'* Rockwall Section, on school marquees, flyers in student folders, at colleges and universities, with Region 10, on SBEC and Rockwall Web sites and on the RISD Community TV Station.

Human Resources and Operations reminded staff participants that the job fair's focus was to recruit for the district in general and not for individual campuses. RISD did not offer successful candidates a contract to sign at the job fair, but verbally assured those candidates that they would hear quickly about the possibility of employment. RISD ultimately hired 65 teachers from this pool of candidates.

RISD plans to hold a job fair on April 12, 2003 at Rockwall High School. More than 100 RISD employees will be involved in the process to recruit all jobs (professional, paraprofessional, Transportation, Child Nutrition and Maintenance) available in the district. RISD anticipates between 700-1000 applicants.

COMMENDATION

RISD conducted its job fair, that was well-organized, professional, informative and resulted in the hiring of 65 teachers.

FINDING

RISD does not document reasons for new hire recommendations with interview notes, interview evaluations, criteria for selection based on essential functions of the job from the job description and reference checks. The hiring manager retains selection files, if any. Lack of a standardized process leaves the district open to violations of legal requirements associated with candidate interviews and hiring offers.

Human Resources and Operations administer RISD's hiring process and recruitment efforts. The HR office, according to the assistant superintendent of Human Resources and Operations, addresses questions regarding hiring personnel in the district.

RISD posts positions for one week, sends a hard copy to all schools, posts the positions on its Web site, with TASBO, on its cable TV channel and sometimes in the newspaper. Human Resources staff screen the pool of applicants for the minimum skills required for the position. At a minimum,

the principal conducts an interview. The principal makes a recommendation for hire to the assistant superintendent of Human Resources and Operations, who initiates a criminal background check. There is no standard criterion used for this decision. HR reviews certification credentials to determine the accuracy of the offer. The assistant superintendent of Human Resources and Operations and the assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction and the superintendent sign offer letters.

Recommendation 22:

Standardize the hiring process.

Dripping Springs ISD (DSISD) has standardized, documented and maintained a systematic districtwide hiring process. HR monitors and maintains the process and serves as an advisor on the legal requirements related to the hiring process, such as appropriate questioning of applicants. The hiring process is a very inclusive one, which involves a committee of stakeholders to interact with the applicant. While the process is designed to meet all legal requirements, it innovatively uses different methods to determine not only whether an applicant meets the legal qualifications, but also whether the applicant has the creative and personal skills necessary for the job.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations develops a standard process that includes a step-by-step process for all employment related activities.	June 2003
2.	The assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations presents the process to the superintendent for final review and approval.	July 2003
3.	The assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations implements suggested changes and obtains board approval.	July 2003
4.	Following board approval, the assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations has copies of the process distributed to staff involved in hiring.	August 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

RISD does not analyze teacher recruiting events to determine whether the cost achieves results. As a result, rather than targeting events that have proven effective in hiring new teachers, the district may be attending events at which RISD has limited success.

During the past two years, RISD participated in recruiting events at Baylor, Texas A&M - College Station, University of Texas at Austin, North Texas and Texas Women's University, Steven F. Austin State University, Tarleton State University, Angelo State Abilene, Texas A&M - Commerce, Texas Tech, RISD Job Fair and DFW Job Fair-Ball Park. Recruiting trips to colleges and universities require expense and time (including overnight stays and travel). RISD spent \$5,450 during the 2001-2002 recruiting year. This total included recruiting materials, travel expenses, registration and the RISD Job Fair. With the exception of the RISD Job Fair, the district did not retain documentation on travel and registration costs or on the hiring successes.

Spring ISD conducts a thorough evaluation of its recruiting efforts each summer. The district tracks the cost of each recruiting effort in terms of both time and money. At each location, the district notes the number of interviews. Once the district recruits all new teachers, it analyzes the number of new hires from each location/school for both the current year and the last three years. The director of Staff Placement then makes changes to the fall and spring recruiting schedule to reflect the success of the efforts.

Recommendation 23:

Track the cost and success of recruiting events and use the data to modify recruiting strategies.

The district should collect the names of interviewees, offers extended, offers accepted, sources of applications received, the sources of all applications compared with the quality of applicants and all costs associated with each event and candidate. Based on the analysis, the department should adjust recruitment efforts as necessary.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations collects data, on a simple spreadsheet, for all recruiting events held during spring 2003.	June 2003
2.	The assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations analyzes the data following all recruiting events to determine which events were successful in hiring teachers.	July 2003

3.	The assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations creates a list of targeted schools and events for the following recruiting season.	August 2003 and Ongoing
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FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

RISD does not have a standard, unbiased, timely and cost-effective interview system for potential teacher applicants. With growing competition for qualified candidates, an effective process for completing the employment application and communicating results is vital to fill jobs with expedience. Selecting the wrong candidate can prove costly in hiring and replacing individuals.

By using a Web-based talent assessment system, RISD can reduce the time, effort and costs associated with the new teacher interview process.

In 2002 Cedar Hill ISD (CISD) implemented a new Web-based talent assessment system that requires 30 to 45 minutes to complete. The online interview uses a 1-5 Likert scale, with "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" response options, multiple-choice items that reveal candidates' attitudes, beliefs and behaviors and open-ended questions that candidates answer in their own words.

The system's report tracks the candidate's responses and includes a percentile ranking that provides the best prediction of the candidate's potential for teaching success based on the candidate's talent. The system reports percentile rankings to districts through its Web-based reporting site, or transmits scores to the district electronically. Once a candidate has completed the interview, access to the percentile ranking is almost immediately available to the district. The district can integrate percentile rankings into existing applicant tracking systems. The tracking systems record all persons in the applicant pool through every stage of the hiring process.

CHISD principals like the system and the immediate feedback it provides.

Recommendation 24:

Implement a Web-based talent assessment system to reduce hiring time and efforts.

Rapid response to candidates shows the district's interest and enables the district to request immediate acceptance of offers.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent requests that the assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations research improved methods of conducting interviews of applicants.	September 2003
2.	The assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations reports to the superintendent and recommends a program that is a Web-based interview capable of predicting a candidate's potential for teaching success.	October 2003
3.	The superintendent approves the purchase and receives board approval.	November 2003
3.	The assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations works with the technology staff to implement the program.	January 2004
4.	Human Resources and Operations trains appropriate staff in using the program.	February 2004
5.	All candidates for positions in the 2003-04 year use this program.	March 2004 and Ongoing
6.	HR monitors the success of the teachers selected through this method.	August 2004 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

Costs include \$2,600 for initial consulting and system startup costs and \$10,000 for a two-day administrator training seminar for 30 participants. The recurring costs will be approximately \$14 per qualified candidate to complete the online screener. Cost basis is 200 candidates per year (\$14 x 200 = \$2,800).

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Implement a Web-based talent assessment system to reduce hiring time and effort.	(\$12,600)	(\$2,800)	(\$2,800)	(\$2,800)	(\$2,800)

FINDING

RISD does not have a strategy to recruit and hire minority teachers. As a result, the demographics of teachers do not reflect the growing minority student population and may limit available role models for these students (**Exhibit 4-29**).

Exhibit 4-29
RISD Ethnicity of Teachers and Students
2001-02

Ethnicity					
	Anglo	Hispanic	African American	Asian American	Native American
Student	81.9%	12.0%	4.3%	1.5%	0.2%
Teacher	95.1%	3.5%	1.2%	0.0%	0.2%

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

The district does not attend job fairs specific to minorities or recruit from colleges attended by predominantly minority students. With a growing minority student population, particularly Hispanic students, the lack of similar minority teachers limits the number of role models available to students. The teacher population does not match the demographic make-up of its student population.

In the past, RISD has been concerned with name recognition or needed to encourage interest in the district. As recruiting needs increase, the district needs to expand its scope of recruiting activities and include a more diverse candidate pool who might not be aware of RISD.

Cedar Hill ISD (CHISD) creatively recruits minority teachers. The assistant superintendent, School and Community Services participates in recruiting events on targeted college campuses with large classes of graduating minority teacher candidates and solicits members of the community to host minority teacher candidates in their homes during their interview visit to CHISD.

By pursuing minority applicants aggressively, San Marcos Consolidated ISD (SMCISD) realized a 1 percent increase in African-American employment and a 3 percent increase in Hispanic employees in a single year. SMCISD's successful recruitment efforts can be attributed to the board's and superintendent's commitment to increase minority representation, to increase referrals from established sources of candidates

and to open positions immediately instead of waiting until the new school year.

Recommendation 25:

Develop a policy and long-term plan for recruiting and hiring teachers more reflective of student demographics.

The district should identify additional colleges and universities in Texas and adjoining states that graduate large numbers of minority teachers. RISD should identify and survey minority teachers and administrators to identify alumni associations and explore the prospect of using these groups to attract teachers.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations solicits information from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and the State Board of Educator Certification regarding colleges and universities in Texas that graduate a large number of minorities.	October 2003
2.	The assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations reviews the recruitment schedule and identifies opportunities to expand efforts to include additional colleges and universities.	November 2003
3.	The assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations surveys minority teachers and administrators about alumni associations and their potential help in the recruiting process.	January 2004 and Ongoing
4.	The assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations meets with minority administrators and teachers to identify minority community members who could be used in the recruitment effort.	February 2004 and Ongoing
5.	The assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations meets with representatives of community groups to discuss the district's need to attract minority teachers and administrators.	March 2004
6.	The assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations modifies the current recruitment plan and recommends it to the superintendent for approval.	March 2004
7.	The superintendent approves the recommendations with the necessary changes.	April 2004

8.	The assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations implements the plan.	April 2004
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FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

RISD Human Resources and Operations does not collect enough data to analyze teacher turnover, which limits its ability to implement any necessary corrective measures. Turnover is a measure of workforce stability, job satisfaction and the adequacy of programs and incentives designed to retain qualified personnel. Although RISD's turnover is at the low end of the peer districts and there is no pattern to indicate a rise in turnover, its turnover rate of 15.6 percent remains a time and financial burden.

According to the assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations, HR staff mail exit interviews to departing employees. On occasion, principals conduct exit interviews with teachers in person. District administration has not requested that the principals collect specific data regarding reasons for leaving the district. When information is voluntarily given on exit interviews that are completed and returned by the exiting staff member, the data is entered into an excel spreadsheet by HR. Most entries state "no reason" or "relocated."

A report titled "The Cost of Teacher Turnover" prepared by the Texas Center for Educational Research for the Texas State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) as part of the Texas Beginning Educator Support System (TxBess) Initiative in November 2000 stated, "Turnover cost equals 25 percent of the leaver's annual salary + benefits."

Teacher turnover in RISD averaged 14.5 percent over a five-year period. Only one peer district was lower than RISD. (**Exhibit 4-30**).

Exhibit 4-30
Teacher Turnover Rates
RISD, Peer Districts, Region 10 and State
1997-98 through 2001-02

District	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	Average
Allen	21.5%	28.3%	24.8%	25.1%	19.3%	23.8%
McKinney	14.8%	20.7%	20.7%	21.9%	24.8%	20.6%

Frisco	17.2%	16.5%	16.7%	20.0%	19.9%	18.1%
Coppell	14.6%	17.5%	17.6%	18.7%	18.7%	17.4%
Carroll	14.2%	18.7%	12.8%	18.3%	18.3%	16.5%
RISD	11.9%	15.3%	13.2%	16.3%	15.6%	14.5%
Eanes	8.7%	13.0%	12.6%	16.3%	15.4%	13.2%
Region 10	15.2%	19.6%	16.7%	17.7%	18.2%	17.5%
State	13.3%	15.5%	15.0%	16.0%	15.7%	15.1%

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

RISD lost 55 teachers in 2000-01 and 57 in 2001-02. RISD's teacher turnover is currently 15.6 percent and is highest during the first five years of employment. **Exhibit 4-31** shows that the majority of teachers departing RISD had five or fewer years' experience.

Exhibit 4-31
Years of Teaching Experience at Time of Departure from RISD
2000-01 and 2001-02

Years of Experience	2000-01		2001-02	
	Number	Percentage of Departing Teachers	Number	Percentage of Departing Teachers
1	9	16.4%	8	12.3%
2	10	18.2%	8	14.0%
3	6	10.9%	5	8.8%
4	5	9.1%	5	8.8%
5	3	5.5%	4	7.0%
6	3	5.5%	4	7.0%
7	3	5.5%	2	3.5%
8	2	3.6%	3	5.3%
9	2	3.6%	2	3.5%
10+	8	14.6%	11	19.3%
20+	4	7.3%	5	8.8%
Total	55	100%	57	100%

Source: RISD assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations.

Turnover increases recruiting costs and requires training for new hires in RISD classroom management techniques, campus planning and district instructional programs and intervention strategies.

Using the estimated cost of teacher turnover developed by SBEC, **Exhibit 4-32** shows the financial impact of teacher terminations for 2001-02 in RISD.

Exhibit 4-32
Financial Impact of Teacher Terminations in RISD
2001-02

Years Experience When Leaving	Number leaving at each level	Average Salary	Cost of One Termination	Total for All Terminations
1	8	\$33,100	\$9,930	\$79,440
2	8	\$33,200	\$9,960	\$79,680
3	5	\$33,300	\$9,990	\$49,950
4	5	\$33,460	\$10,038	\$50,190
5	4	\$33,760	\$10,128	\$40,512
6	4	\$33,760	\$10,128	\$40,512
7	2	\$33,760	\$10,128	\$20,256
8	3	\$33,760	\$10,128	\$30,384
9	2	\$33,760	\$10,128	\$20,256
10+	11	\$36,460	\$10,938	\$120,318
20+	5	\$43,710	\$13,113	\$65,565
Total	57	\$34,730	\$10,419	\$597,063

Source: Primary analysis based on formula from "The Cost of Teacher Turnover" prepared for the Texas State Board for Educator Certification, November 2000.

Teachers are the largest group of employees in a district and in competitive markets the hardest to recruit. Spring ISD tracks reasons for teachers' departures. Knowing the actual reasons for teacher departures help districts formulate plans for teacher retention. Leaving for other teaching assignments in competitive districts because of higher salaries or supervisory issues highlight potential for changes within the control of the

district, such as programs, incentives, or policies and procedures. Leaving issues unaddressed can contribute to an increase in turnover.

Recommendation 26:

Track reasons for teacher departure to determine if any practical changes can be implemented to reduce turnover.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations provides each principal with a form that requests reasons for departure and directs them to conduct exit interviews with each departing person.	June 2003
2.	The campus principal returns the completed form to HR.	July 2003 and Ongoing
3.	HR enters the data into a spreadsheet and notes the experience level of the departing teacher.	July 2003 and Ongoing
4.	The assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations monitors reasons for departure and presents findings to district leadership along with any appropriate corrective measures.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 4

PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

D. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Texas law requires that school districts offer staff development. RISD offers staff development opportunities through the "Region 10 Education Service Center Continuum of Professional Development Opportunities."

Exhibit 4-33 shows RISD summer 2002 staff development summary by topic, audience course description, length and number of RISD teachers who attended the course.

Exhibit 4-33
RISD Staff Development Summary
Summer 2002

Topic	Audience	Course Description	Length	RISD Attendance
Technology	5th grade teachers	Subject Specific	1 day	18
Technology	6th grade teachers	Subject Specific	1 day	17
Technology	5th and 6th grade teachers	Various Topics	1 day	38
Technology	High school teachers	Distance Learning Video Conferencing	3 days	3
Technology	Campus lab techs	Updates and Upgrades	2 days	15
Technology	All grades	Intel 40 hour course	40 hours	62
Technology	All grades	Intel - 2nd year follow-up	1 day	19
Technology	Diagnosticians and Psychologists	Basic Technology training	1 day	9
Technology	Life Skills, CBI, Speech Therapists, PPCD	Intellitools	1 day	30
Mixed Audience	Special Ed personnel and	Basics of Special Ed and General Legal Updates	1 day	121

	Administrators			
Mixed Audience	All grade level teachers	Ruby Payne - Understanding Poverty	1 day	116
Mixed Audience	Secondary teachers	Differentiated Institute For mixed Ability Classrooms	1 day	72
Mixed Audience	Grades K-4 teachers	Writing through literature	1 day	60
Mixed Audience	Elementary and reading specialists	Write traits program	3 days	47
Mixed Audience	Elementary teachers	4 Block training	2 days	20
Mixed Audience	Elementary teachers	GEMS	1 day	3
Mixed Audience	Elementary teachers	Project Wild	2 days	2
Mixed Audience	All grade level teachers	TEKS	1-4 days	13
Special Groups	Theater Arts teachers	Community Playhouse	1/2 day	4
Special Groups	Theater Arts teachers	Building Sets	1 day	4
Special Groups	Art teachers	Museum Tour	1 day	13
Special Groups	Art teachers	Curriculum Review	1 day	13
Special Groups	Physical Education teachers	Curriculum Review	2 days	10
Special Groups	Counselors	Goals, crisis and drug intervention/prevention, etc.	1 day	22
Special Groups	Counselors	Stress management	1 day	22
Special Groups	Librarians	Alexandria update	1 day	15

Special Groups	Librarians	Reading between the lines	1 day	15
Special Ed	Language science teachers	Dyslexia and Section 504	2 days	9
Special Ed	Diagnosticians and Psychologists	Staying Current	1 day	13
Special Ed	BAC teachers and aides	CPI, Restraint, Time-Out, etc.	1 day	8
Special Ed	Resource teachers and aides	Strategies for the Learning Disabled	1 day	37
Special Groups	Choir teachers	Yamaha Clavinova Instruction and Utilization	1 day	10
Special Groups	Choir teachers	Building the Choir Program	1 day	10
Special Groups	Bilingual teachers and aides	Bilingual Program Design	1 day	14
Special Groups	ESL teachers and aides	ESL Vertical Alignment	1 day	5
Special Groups	PreKindergarten teachers and aides	TEKS to TAKS -	1 day	10
Special Groups	Nurses	Program Updates and Requirements	1 day	16
Special Groups	Coaches and extra curricular Sponsors	CPR and Heat Exhaustion Training	1 day	97
Gifted and Talented	Secondary teachers	Pre-AP/AP Summer Institute	1-5 days	51
Gifted and Talented	All grade level teachers	Gifted and Talented Summer Institute	1-5 days	46
Gifted and Talented	All grade level teachers	Gifted and Talented - Day 1	1 day	25
Gifted and Talented	Elementary teachers	Elementary Gifted and Talented - Day 3	1 day	16

Gifted and Talented	Secondary teachers	Differentiated instruction Pre-AP/AP	1 day	51
Total				1,201

Source: RISD assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, December 2002.

Evaluations conducted at the end of each program show an overall positive evaluation of the program goals, format and knowledge.

FINDING

The district partnered with Texas A&M - Commerce to design a Master of Education (M.Ed.) degree program. A committee composed of RISD faculty and staff and Texas A&M faculty evaluated and assessed the needs of the district's professional staff and designed the program accordingly.

The mission of the Master's Cohort of Rockwall Educators (CORE) program is "to provide RISD educators the foundation on which to elevate excellence in student learning." The program is limited

to 15 elementary and 15 secondary teachers in RISD. All non-elective courses are offered at RISD sites. Nine Cohort Courses (27 hours) for secondary and eight Cohort Courses (24 hours) for elementary focus on:

- teaching diverse and at-risk learners;
- organizing and managing child-centered classroom environments;
- developing and integrating curriculum;
- increasing professional leadership;
- conducting action research; and
- receiving updates on current issues in education.

Applicants determine the electives. All courses are offered on Mondays after school at the district.

Participants who started 2002-03 will take 12 hours, fall, spring and summer; 15 hours in 2003-04 and nine hours in fall and spring 2004-05. Degree completion is May of 2005. There is a four-year commitment attached to this program. Three years in the Masters' Cohort Program and a retention requirement of one year after the program is completed. RISD provides a scholarship to the participants of \$75 per college hour with a maximum of 15 hours per year. This equals approximately 50 percent of the cost and an equal sharing of the financial burden. Teachers who fail to meet the four-year commitment must reimburse the district the scholarship money.

The program requires an application for admission, a personal essay and two letters of recommendation. Participants in each class continue through the three-year program together. No additions are made to that class.

COMMENDATION

RISD partnered with a local university to develop a Master of Education degree program targeted specifically to meet district needs.

FINDING

RISD designed a creative program in the fall 2001 to increase the success of and retention of beginning teachers. The Beginning Educators...Successful Teacher (BEST) mentoring program is designed to improve the teaching performance of first year teachers and is an effective retention tool. Of the 29 induction teachers, 28 continued employment with RISD in 2002-2003; one teacher's family moved out of the district.

The mentoring process focuses on a developmental process in which a new and an experienced educator commit to working and learning together for the support and professional development of the new teacher. The mentors seek to develop collegial relationships with the new teachers to build trusting relationships and, therefore, do not participate in evaluating them. Mentors share teaching resources, classroom management techniques and also provide emotional support. Mentors are encouraged to share materials and are cautioned not to judge or to over control.

RISD has a campus mentor coordinator who recruits, matches and supports mentor/induction teacher relationships. The district mentor coordinator conducts an annual orientation for teacher mentors during which she provides resource materials. She also observes teacher performance of the participants, but does not formally evaluate that performance.

Mentors, who are recommended by the principals, said they are honored to serve as mentors. They receive no stipends. Induction teachers meet every other month. The district honors all program participants during an end of the year reception sponsored by the community.

COMMENDATION

RISD's Beginning Educators...Successful Teacher (BEST) mentoring program improves the success and retention of beginning teachers.

Chapter 4

PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

E. GRIEVANCES AND APPRAISALS

RISD employees are encouraged to discuss problems or complaints with their supervisors or an appropriate administrator at any time. RISD has a formal grievance process that provides all employees with an orderly process for prompt and equitable resolution of grievances. Staff members can access this information in the employee handbook and see the detailed policy on the RISD Web site (www.rockwallisd.com).

According to Local Policy DGBA, "A grievance must specify the individual harm alleged." Initiation of a grievance begins at Level One and continues on if not resolved. **Exhibit 4-34** shows the multiple levels in the process.

Exhibit 4-34
RISD Grievance Process
Summer 2002

Level	Participants	Process	Conference Timing	Response Deadline
Level One	Employee and principal or immediate supervisor	Employee submits the grievance in writing on a specified form that must be filed within 15 days to the time the employee first knew or should have known of the event or series of events about which the employee is complaining.	Conference is held within seven days after receipt of written request.	Seven days following the conference.
Level Two	Employee and superintendent or designee	Employee requests meeting in writing on a district-provided form within seven days following receipt of a response.	Conference is held within seven days after receipt of written request.	Seven days following the conference.

Level Three	Employee and board	Employee requests meeting in writing on a district-provided form within seven days following receipt of a response.	Superintendent or designee informs employee of date, time and place and makes an audiotape record of the proceedings.	Up to and including the next regularly scheduled board meeting.
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Source: TASB policy DGBL (L); RISD Employee Handbook, undated.

Exhibit 4-35 describes all complaints that reached Level II (superintendent review) or Level III (Board of Trustees review) for 2001-02 and 2002-03.

**Exhibit 4-35
RISD Level II Complaints
2001-02 through 2002-03***

Date	Position Bringing Complaint	Reason for Complaint	End Result
March 2003	Auxiliary position	Questioned termination due to job abandonment	In progress
February 2003	Teacher	Principal's evaluation/harassment	Resolved at Level II
January 2003	Principal	Questioned teacher's lack of ethical conduct toward principal	Resolved at Level II
September 2002	Teacher	Elimination of teacher's part-time position	Resolved at Level III
June 2002	Teacher	Administrative management	Resolved at Level II
February 2002	Teacher	Contract non-renewal	Resolved at Level II

Source: RISD assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations, March 2003.

*Through March 2003.

If the grievance concerns the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline, or dismissal of the employee bringing the grievance, the RISD board may hear it in a closed meeting.

RISD's superintendent has assigned the assistant superintendent of Human Resources and Operations to be the designee for Level Two Grievances.

RISD board policy specifically states that all employees be appraised annually and Chapter 21 Subchapter H, sections 352 and 354 of the Texas Education Code (TEC) requires an appraisal at least once during each school year for administrators and teachers.

According to the assistant superintendent of Human Resources and Operations, completed appraisals for professionals and paraprofessionals are kept at central administration and auxiliary appraisals are kept in the office of the director of the specific department. Administrators and supervisors receive verbal and written reprimands for not conducting appraisals.

RISD uses different appraisals for the following categories:

- office and technical staff, bus drivers, custodial staff, Food Service staff, Maintenance staff teacher aides;
- counselors, librarians, nurses; and
- specialists and managers in the Child Nutrition Department.

FINDING

RISD does not evaluate school or district administrative staff performance. Failure to provide these appraisals placed RISD in violation the Texas Education Code and its own board policy. TEC Section 21.354 requires each school district to appraise each administrator annually and states that an administrator may not be paid with district funds if he or she has not been evaluated in the preceding 15 months. RISD policy DNB (Legal) specifically cites the TEC reference and indicates that RISD adopted this policy in October 1998.

In interviews, district administrators said that they either did not have regular appraisals or had never had an appraisal themselves. Some administrators mentioned informal discussions where they discussed their goals and accomplishments.

According to the assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, RISD initiated an effort to develop appraisal instruments for campus administrators in September 2001. A team consisted of four campus administrators, one central office administrator and one assistant principal.

It began with a standard instrument, evaluated its contents and developed content appropriate to the district. Following feedback from other school administrators, in spring 2002, the superintendent approved an extensive instrument that includes a self-appraisal, an intervention plan and a comprehensive tool based on the district's mission statement and aligned with state standards. The district has not yet used this instrument. Future plans include modifying this instrument for district administrators. The superintendent does receive an annual evaluation from the board.

San Antonio ISD (SAISD) formally evaluates all district employees at least once a year. The procedures for evaluating each category of employee are contained in a manual entitled *The SAISD Employee Appraisal Systems*. The manual provides procedures for evaluating all employees, except teachers and principals. Procedures for evaluating teachers and principals are contained in separate manuals.

A personnel officer in the Human Resources Department, who oversees and monitors the appraisal system, sets schedules and deadlines for completion of appraisals. All employee appraisals (an original copy) are returned to Human Resources. The personnel officer is responsible for making sure each employee is evaluated.

Cedar Hill ISD created a workshop to address the need for administrators to clearly understand and be able to communicate standards of performance for employees. *Managing Employee Performance - A Workshop for School Administrators*, first delivered May 30, 2000, covers effective hiring, documenting performance, progressive discipline, elements of good written warnings and an outline of materials covered in the workshop.

Recommendation 27:

Conduct annual campus and district administrator performance appraisals using a standard tool clearly understood by reviewers.

Supervisors who receive training on conducting a performance appraisal need to receive follow up by HR on the quality of the appraisals they conduct. Ongoing feedback to employees is vital and so is ongoing feedback to supervisors. Standards for measurement often change. New ideas and methods of conducting feedback permit supervisors to improve their own skills. Through ongoing training of supervisors, employees realize the importance a district places on performance as the primary mechanism connecting organizational strategies, goals and results.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations to work with the administrative leadership team to make necessary changes in the proposed performance appraisal for campus administrators for use by district administrators.	June 2003
2.	The assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations compiles the information from the previous training program to create a manual that clearly communicates the district's policy on conducting appraisals.	July 2003
3.	The assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations and the assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction arrange a training program for all staff that will be conducting these appraisals.	August 2003
4.	Supervisors of campus and district administrators meet with their staff to clearly identify the appraisal process and set expectations for the review.	August 2003
5.	School and district administrators receive a performance review.	January 2004 and Ongoing
6.	New supervisors receive training along with those needing a refresher.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 5

FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

This chapter reviews the facilities use and management of the Rockwall Independent School District (RISD) in the following sections:

- A. Facilities Planning and Construction
- B. Maintenance
- C. Custodial Services
- D. Energy Management
- E. Community Use of School Facilities

A comprehensive facilities maintenance and energy management program coordinates all the physical resources in a school district. The program must effectively integrate facilities planning with all other aspects of school planning. The most effective and efficient school facility operations and maintenance programs involve strategic planning, design and construction and operate under clearly defined policies and procedures.

Efficient facilities operations help school districts address changes in enrollment and instructional programs and are essential to building public trust and confidence in public school district management.

BACKGROUND

Located in Rockwall County, RISD covers approximately 109.38 square miles. RISD facilities include nine elementary schools, two middle schools, one freshman center, one high school and one alternative center. In addition, the district has a central administrative office and annex and separate facilities for maintenance, food service and transportation. **Exhibit 5-1** shows each school's age, number of classrooms, student capacity - as set by square footage and state standards - and student enrollment.

Exhibit 5-1
RISD School Age, Capacity and Enrollment
2001-02

School	Year Built	Square Feet *	Conventional Classrooms	Maximum Capacity	Enrollment October 2002	Over/(Under) Capacity
Elementary						
Howard	1970	54,256	37	650	595	(55)

Dobbs						
Amanda Rochell	1980	46,360	32	600	528	(72)
Virginia Reinhardt	1985	57,979	35	650	425	(225)
Cullins-Lake Pointe	1988	96,986	55	1,000	949	(51)
Amy Parks-Heath	1995	65,434	36	700	642	(58)
Nebbie Williams	1996	65,500	37	650	462	(188)
Dorothy Smith Pullen	1999	65,500	37	650	647	(3)
Dorris A. Jones	2002	77,913	42	750	591	(159)
Grace Hartman	2002	77,913	42	750	381	(369)
Middle Schools						
J. W. Williams	1974	107,206	38	900	882	(18)
Maurine Cain	1999	145,000	42	1,000	674	(326)
High Schools						
Herman E. Utley Freshman Center	1965	185,489	40	1,100	753	(347)
Rockwall	1993	345,183	73	2,500	1,992	(508)
Other						
Alternative School		10,680	1		106	
Agriculture Center		3,936				
Food Services		2,400				
Maintenance		10,500				
Transportation	2002	4,854				

- South						
Wilkerson-Sanders Stadium		9,740				
Wisdom Stadium		1,500				
Dobbs Annex	1950	35,799				
Transportation - North	1974	27,000				
Administration Building	1982	6,284				
Total		1,503,412	547	11,900	9,627	(2,379)

Source: RISD executive director of Facilities Planning and Construction, December 2002.

*Square footage does not include portable classrooms.

In December 1999, RISD contracted with a professional demographer to provide population data for the district and to suggest possible school boundaries. For a fixed fee of \$24,000, the demographer:

- created a computerized street map, including attendance zone boundaries;
- located each RISD student on the map;
- aggregated student data by small geographic areas, which were combined to form attendance zones;
- added building permit data and the tax roll from Rockwall County Appraisal District;
- prepared district enrollment projections for the next 10 years;
- projected enrollment by school type for the next five years;
- projected school enrollments for the next five years;
- analyzed the relationship between building activity and student growth and between housing characteristics and student growth;
- projected the RISD ultimate enrollment at "build-out" based on analysis of housing absorption rates and land availability; and
- provided all computer files to the district.

In April 2001, RISD contracted with the demographer for \$21,000 to update the plan so the district would have the most current data to realign attendance zones for the opening of two new elementary schools.

Exhibit 5-2 shows RISD's actual enrollment from 1992-93 through 2001-02, the demographer's projected enrollment from 2001-02 through 2011-12 and an RISD extrapolation from 2012-13 through 2020-21.

**Exhibit 5-2
RISD Student Enrollment and Projections
1992-93 Through 2020-21**

Year	Fall Enrollment	Projected Enrollment Change From Prior Year	Percent Change From Prior Year
2020-21	19,922	577	3.0%
2019-20	19,345	577	3.0%
2018-19	18,768	577	3.2%
2017-18	18,191	577	3.3%
2016-17	17,614	577	3.4%
2015-16	17,037	577	3.5%
2014-15	16,460	577	3.6%
2013-14	15,883	577	3.8%
2012-13	15,306	577	3.9%
2011-12	14,729	528	3.7%
2010-11	14,201	566	4.2%
2009-10	13,635	599	4.6%
2008-09	13,036	545	4.4%
2007-08	12,491	547	4.6%
2006-07	11,944	599	5.3%
2005-06	11,345	618	5.8%
2004-05	10,727	595	5.9%
2003-04	10,132	597	6.3%
2002-03	9,535	624	7.0%
2001-02	8,911	443	5.2%
2000-01	8,468	670	8.6%
1999-2000	7,798	435	5.9%

1998-99	7,363	909	14.1%
1997-98	6,454	368	6.0%
1996-97	6,086	321	5.6%
1995-96	5,765	310	5.7%
1994-95	5,455	376	7.4%
1993-94	5,079	220	4.5%
1992-93	4,859	N/A	N/A

Source: Student Demographic Study, Professional Development Institute, May 1997 and Demographic Analysis and Enrollment Projections, Harner and Associates, 2001-02 Update.

Chapter 5

FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

A. FACILITIES PLANNING AND CONSTRUCTION (PART 1)

A school district's long-range master plan is a compilation of district policies, information and statistical data, which provides a basis for planning educational facilities to meet the changing needs of a community. The master plan becomes the district's policy statement for the allocation of resources and offers potential alternatives for facility improvement.

Effective school facilities master planning incorporates the following elements:

- *Facility Capacity*: Districts establish the capacity of each school facility by setting standards that govern student/teacher ratios and the amount of square feet required per student in a classroom. These standards deal with the minimum size of core facilities (such as gyms, cafeterias and libraries) so that schools do not overload these facilities or overuse portable classrooms.
- *Facility Inventory*: An accurate facility inventory is an essential tool in managing the usage of school facilities. Each school inventory identifies the use and size of each room, which enables planners to accurately set the capacity of each school. The school updates the inventory at least once a year.
- *Enrollment Projections*: Effective planning requires accurate enrollment projections, at least five years into the future. Accurate projections require planners to examine neighborhood demographics and track new construction activity in the district. Many school planners work in coordination with county and city planners to track growth patterns.
- *Attendance Zones*: While the use of portable classrooms can temporarily alleviate overcrowding due to fluctuations in enrollment, they can become a deficit to the educational program if the district uses them as a way to handle overloading of core facilities. Therefore, an effective enrollment management plan calls for adjustments in attendance zones whenever they prove necessary. While such adjustments often prove unpopular with parents and students, they are necessary if all students are to have appropriate access to school facilities.

- *Capital Improvement Master Plan*: Effective planning requires the district to anticipate its future needs and balance these against resources. A capital master plan charts future improvements to school facilities and identifies funding sources for them. An effective planning process involves the community at large, identifies district goals and objectives and prioritizes projects based on those goals and objectives.

In February 2001, RISD voters approved a \$139.2 million bond referendum to build the facilities shown in **Exhibit 5-3**.

**Exhibit 5-3
RISD 2001 Bond Initiative**

School/Facility	Project Description	Projected Cost
New Construction		
Elementary #8	New elementary and site	\$12,783,785
Elementary #9	New elementary and site	\$12,783,785
Elementary #10	New elementary and site	\$14,562,252
New Middle School	New middle school and site	\$23,164,700
High School #2	New high school and site	\$54,644,524
Additions/Renovations		
Amy Parks Elementary	Classroom addition	\$725,000
Cullins-Lake Pointe Elementary	Library addition, interior renovations Playground package	\$1,324,800
Rochell Elementary	Restroom addition Playground package	\$286,800
Dobbs Elementary	Millwork improvements	\$150,000
Uteley Freshman Campus	Conversion to a middle school	\$2,000,000
Cain Middle School	Concession/toilets at athletic fields	\$150,000
Williams Middle School	Conversion to administration complex and alternative school	\$2,017,100
Transportation	Construction on H.L. Williams site	\$1,138,425
Food	Office and training facility at current	\$1,312,900

Service/Warehouse	alternative education building; warehouse at current maintenance building	
Maintenance	Revise current food service into maintenance	\$542,750
Wilkerson-Sanders Stadium	600 parking spaces, split with church	\$450,000
Future Land Sites		
Elementary sites	5 future sites	\$1,500,000
Middle school site	1 future site	\$750,000
High school site	1 future site	\$2,250,000
Other		
Contingency	5 percent of construction costs	\$6,628,179
Total	\$139.2 million	

Source: RISD executive director of Facilities Planning and Construction, December 2002.

In addition to the 2001 bond election, RISD has conducted six other bond referendums since 1985, including eight propositions, to build and remodel schools (**Exhibit 5-4**). Five of the eight propositions passed.

**Exhibit 5-4
RISD Bond Election Historical Summary
November 1985 through February 1998**

Election Date	Bond Amount	Purpose	Results of Election
November 1985	\$28,000,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build elementary school. • Purchase high school site. • Build high school. 	Failed
September 1986	Proposition 1: \$20,050,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build high school. 	Failed
	Proposition 2: \$2,450,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build Cullins-Lake Pointe. 	Passed

November 1990	\$21,900,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build high school. • Enlarge and improve Utley Middle School. • Purchase instructional equipment. • Purchase land for Parks Elementary. 	Passed
February 1994	\$8,000,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build Parks Elementary. • Renovate and enlarge J.W. Williams Middle School. 	Passed
February 1995	Proposition 1: \$14,500,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add on to Cullins-Lake Pointe Elementary. • Build Nebbie Williams Elementary. • Renovate existing facilities. • Purchase sites for elementary and middle school. 	Passed
	Proposition 2: \$24,725,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add on to Cullins-Lake Pointe Elementary. • Build middle school. • Add to high school. • Purchase school sites. 	Failed
February 1998	\$48,670,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build Pullen Elementary. • Build Cain Middle School. • Build academic and athletic additions to Rockwall High School. • Upgrade Rochell, Dobbs and Reinhardt Elementary Schools for equity. • Expand Wilkerson-Sanders Stadium. • Build agriculture center. 	Passed

Source: RISD executive director of Facilities Planning and Construction, December 2002.

For the 1998 bond projects, RISD used a construction manager-at-risk method for construction projects. As defined in the Texas Education Code 44.038, a construction manager-at-risk is a sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation or other legal entity that assumes the risk for construction, rehabilitation, alteration or repair of a facility at the contracted price as a general contractor and provides consultation to the school district regarding construction during and after the design of the facility. The construction manager-at-risk is also responsible for all costs that exceed the contract price.

In the course of assessing facilities use and management in RISD, the consulting team used the following peer districts selected by RISD: Allen, Carroll, Eanes, Frisco, Coppell and McKinney.

Exhibit 5-5 shows that RISD's construction costs rank third compared to selected peers. However, RISD includes several features that other districts may not, such as high-efficiency HVAC systems, energy management systems, infrastructure for technology and more complex foundation requirements because of differences in terrain. According to the executive director of Facilities Planning and Construction, these features add about \$22 per square foot to the cost of a school in RISD.

**Exhibit 5-5
Construction Costs Per Square Foot
RISD and Peer Districts
2002-03**

District	Elementary Schools	Middle or Junior High Schools	High Schools
Carroll	\$157	\$195	\$182
McKinney	\$140	\$133	\$125
RISD	\$120	\$130	\$155 (projected)
Frisco	\$114	\$115	\$126
Coppell	\$109	\$88	N/A
Allen	\$99 (2003)	N/A	\$110 (1999)
Eanes	N/A*	N/A*	N/A*

Source: Survey of peer districts, December 2002.

**All construction projects are in progress.*

FINDING

RISD contracts with an architectural firm for the management of construction projects associated with the 2001 bond program. As part of the board-approved contract, SHW Group provides one onsite staff position, the executive director of Facilities Planning and Construction, who reports to the RISD superintendent and whose responsibilities include:

- overseeing site selection and site procurement;
- serving as district liaison with various city municipalities in the district;
- analyzing facility needs resulting from educational program changes, projected and actual growth, changes in regulations, obsolescence, damage and wear;
- developing criteria for facility improvements in consultation with other district staff;
- determining the scope of services required for the design of district facility improvements;
- directing the procurement of furniture and equipment that has to deal with facilities;
- maintaining and strengthening relationships with principals and other district staff;
- soliciting statements of interest and qualifications from consultants as required;
- evaluating capabilities of consultants submitting credentials to perform design and engineering services;
- directing activities of design consultants;
- scheduling design and construction projects, including meeting dates and times and critical completion dates;
- monitoring performance by design consultants;
- reviewing plans and specifications prepared by consultants;
- managing construction projects for the district;
- assessing contractor progress and performance;
- evaluating success of projects in terms of design and construction quality;
- maintaining and design construction files;
- coordinating efforts to improve facilities throughout the district;
- reporting progress on design and construction projects to the administration and the board;
- advising district staff and the board regarding facility planning, design and construction;
- coordinating meetings of the Board of Trustees and the building committee; and
- serving as a liaison with community-based facility committees.

The cost of this service is \$75,000 per year, plus normal benefits and miscellaneous reimbursements, such as mileage. The contract for similar construction management in Cedar Hill ISD cost \$2.3 million for 10 years, or an average of \$230,000 per year.

Exhibit 5-6 shows that the 2001 bond construction projects remain on schedule and \$1.2 million under budget overall. Amy Parks Elementary and Cullins-Lake Pointe Elementary were over budget because, when the 2001 bond program was developed, the architect used the same per-square foot cost as a new elementary school, which is lower than the cost of a building addition or renovation project.

**Exhibit 5-6
RISD 2001 Bond Budget and Timeline Review
December 2002**

Project	Planned Completion	Actual Completion	Original Budget*	Guaranteed Maximum Price + Land	Under/(Over) Budget
New Schools					
Jones Elementary	August 2002	August 2002	\$12,783,785	\$12,043,864	\$739,921
Hartman Elementary	August 2002	August 2002	\$12,783,785	\$12,380,484	\$403,301
New Middle School	May 2003	April 2003**	\$23,164,700	\$22,384,074	\$780,626
Rochell Elementary	January 2002	January 2002	\$286,800	\$293,282	(\$6,482)
Dobbs Elementary	August 2001	August 2001	\$150,000	\$211,367	(\$61,367)
Additions/Renovations					
Cullins-Lake Pointe Elementary	August 2002	August 2002	\$1,324,800	\$1,723,671	(\$398,871)
Amy Parks Elementary	August 2002	August 2002	\$725,000	\$955,063	(\$230,063)
Cain Middle School	February 2003	August 2002	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$0
Transportation Center	April 2003	December 2002	\$1,138,425	\$1,074,548***	\$63,877

Maintenance Center	April 2003	December 2002	\$542,750	\$542,750	\$0
Wilkerson-Sanders Stadium Parking	April 2003	August 2002	\$450,000	\$450,000	\$0
Total			\$53,500,045	\$52,209,103	\$1,209,942

Source: RISD executive director of Facilities Planning and Construction, December 2002.

*Budget includes the cost of the land.

**Projected completion date.

***Cost includes the purchase of the Sids Road facility.

COMMENDATION

RISD's construction management services contract for its 2001 bond program produced on-time construction and savings of more than \$1.2 million to date.

FINDING

RISD uses an effective process to purchase land for school sites at or below fair market value that involves district administrators, the district demographer, the district engineer, the district architect, an independent appraiser, the board-approved real estate broker and the board. **Exhibit 5-7** shows each step of the process and the individual responsible.

Exhibit 5-7 RISD Land Purchase Process 2002-03

Step	Action	Person(s) Responsible
1	Determine the best location for school sites, based on areas of projected student growth.	Demographer and RISD executive director of Facilities Planning and Construction
2	Search for available school sites with enough acreage to meet district requirements. in the	RISD engineer, architect and executive director of

	areas recommended by the demographer.	Facilities Planning and Construction
3	Perform a feasibility study for each site to assess development costs, such as utility needs, environmental concerns, geological issues and vehicle access.	RISD engineer
4	Determine fair market value of the sites, including other land sales in the area.	Independent appraiser, approved by the board
5	Contact landowners anonymously, through a real estate broker, to determine if the land is for sale and the asking price for the land.	Real estate broker, approved by the board
6	Negotiate the price of the land at or below the fair market value established by the independent appraiser.	Real estate broker and RISD executive director of Facilities Planning and Construction
7	If more than one site meets the district's criteria, evaluate the selected sites to determine which tract offers the best value to the district, including sale price, development costs and location.	RISD executive director of Facilities Planning and Construction, architect and engineer
8	Recommend the selected property to the board for purchase.	RISD superintendent and executive director of Facilities Planning and Construction
9	Approve the purchase of the land.	RISD Board of Trustees

Source: RISD executive director of Facilities Planning and Construction, January 2003.

RISD uses an independent appraiser to determine the fair market value of property under consideration for a school site before negotiating a purchase. In fast-growing districts like RISD, land prices can increase very quickly, and some taxpayers may feel the district is paying too much for land.

Land values in RISD have increased significantly since 1999 for several reasons. According to the Rockwall County chief appraiser, the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts determined that property values in Rockwall County in 1999 fell outside the "margin of error" for property values, especially land, and that RISD was in jeopardy of losing \$1.4 million in state revenue due to undervalued property. As a result, Rockwall County property values for land increased in 2000. In addition,

land in Rockwall County is in high demand, resulting in significantly higher land costs.

RISD's cost to purchase the 38.81 acre middle school site reflects the area's increase in land prices. The Rockwall County Appraisal District appraised the middle school site at \$210,820 in 1999. After the Comptroller's review, the property value increased to \$331,290 in 2000 and \$625,770 in 2001. In 2001, the district's independent appraiser valued the property at \$725,000, or \$18,680 per acre, after reviewing the sale of five other comparable land tracts in the same area as the middle school site. **Exhibit 5-8** shows that RISD paid less than the appraised value of the land and less per acre than all but one comparable site, which was a much larger land tract.

Exhibit 5-8
Land Sales Used to Establish Fair Market Value of RISD Middle School Site
January 2001

Land Site	Acres	Cash Equivalent	Price per Acre
Sale 1	32.41	\$725,000	\$22,370
Sale 2	15.628	\$289,118	\$18,500
Sale 3	17.195	\$687,800	\$40,000
Sale 4	42.716	\$790,246	\$18,500
Sale 5	171.275	\$2,270,592	\$13,257
Appraised Value of Middle School Site	38.81	\$725,000	\$18,681
Purchase Price of Middle School	38.81	\$667,801	\$17,207

Source: RISD executive director of Facilities Planning and Construction, November 2002.

Chapter 5

FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

A. FACILITIES PLANNING AND CONSTRUCTION (PART 2)

Since this school site is slightly larger than the standard RISD middle school site, the district negotiated the sale of 12.4 acres to the City of Rockwall for use as a city park, which effectively reduced the cost of the middle school site by \$220,000.

RISD also uses a professional engineer to evaluate each school site for additional development costs, including utility needs, environmental concerns, geological issues and vehicle access. For example, the RISD engineer evaluated four tracts of land for the second high school, looking at the purchase price, cost of obtaining off-site sewer and water, city roadway costs and cost of onsite development. The engineer's analysis (**Exhibit 5-9**) shows that RISD purchased the property with the lowest land cost and the lowest overall cost. The City of Heath offered \$1 million to help purchase Site 2, but after subtracting \$1 million from the total cost, Site 2 would have cost RISD \$479,150 more than the selected site.

Exhibit 5-9
RISD Rockwall-Heath High School Land Site Evaluations
October 2001

Item	Selected Site	Site 2	Site 3	Site 4
Land cost	\$1,326,000 (78 @ \$17,000 per acre)	\$2,000,000 (80 @ \$25,000 per acre)	\$2,000,000 (80 @ 25,000 per acre)	\$1,660,000 (83 @ \$20,000 per acre)
Off-site sewer/water	\$264,075	\$151,725	\$182,325	\$422,362
City roadways	\$720,000	\$1,137,500	\$899,500	\$2,217,050
Onsite development	\$2,300,000	\$2,800,000	\$2,400,000	\$2,400,000
Total	\$4,610,075	\$6,089,225	\$5,481,825	\$6,699,412
State roadways	\$290,000	\$487,500	\$393,750	N/A

Source: RISD executive director of Facilities Planning and Construction, November 2002.

In November 2002, the RISD board approved the purchase of land for the third high school, which RISD projects will open in 2010. The land purchase process for that site began in late 2001 with the selection of three land tracts in an area identified by the district demographer as needing the third high school. The district engineer completed a feasibility study in January 2002, which included a review of site conditions, utilities, roadways and onsite development costs.

The real estate broker anonymously contacted the three landowners and none were interested in selling their property at that time. Subsequent contacts with the landowners indicated one was interested in selling and the landowner provided a minimum price per acre that would be required to purchase the land. RISD contracted with an independent appraiser to determine the fair market value of the property. RISD then made an offer to the landowner that was acceptable. The purchase price of the 75.261-acre tract (net acreage) was \$1.28 million or \$17,000 per acre, which was about the same price per acre as the newest middle school site in the same area.

During each land purchase process, the RISD superintendent regularly updates the board during posted closed sessions of the board, as permitted by Texas Government Code 551.072 and RISD Board Policy BEC. Closed session deliberations of land purchases are permitted because discussions of land purchases in open session can have a detrimental effect on the board's position in negotiations with a third person. For example, a pending land sale in one Texas school district, was discussed in open session, which resulted in a third party purchasing the land before the district could.

Although the RISD board deliberates the purchase of land in closed session, it approves the actual purchase of the land in open session.

COMMENDATION

RISD effectively uses a land purchase process to obtain school sites at or below fair market value.

FINDING

RISD seeks community and staff input for the district construction program, including the design and support for bond issues, construction design and standards, school location and attendance zones.

RISD uses a community bond steering committee to solicit community input. In October 2000, RISD solicited applications from district patrons to serve on a bond steering committee. The superintendent also asked

principals to nominate committee members to represent their school on the committee. In addition, the district invited past board members and past bond committee chairpersons to participate. The district accepted everyone who applied and, as a result, the committee consisted of 130 members.

The committee established seven subcommittees, including endorsements/finance, media/publicity, neighborhood network, parent network, presentation, telephone and voter registration. The committee met one hour weekly from October 9, 2000 through January 29, 2001, with the bond referendum held on February 3, 2001. To keep the community involved, the committee included the parent-teacher organizations in the process and posted questions and answers about the bond program on the district Web site. The committee provided Microsoft PowerPoint presentations and slides for anyone wishing to attend a presentation.

RISD's also used an attendance zone task force to increase community input. In preparation for the opening of Jones Elementary and Hartman Elementary in August 2002, the superintendent established an attendance zone task force consisting of representatives from each district elementary school affected by the rezoning. From each school, the committee included the principal, two teachers, the representative from the district improvement committee, a campus improvement committee representative, the PTO president and a PTO representative.

The RISD demographer presented data on student location and growth to help the committee narrow the zoning options. The committee kept the RISD Transportation Department informed of the options, in case there would be any transportation problems.

The superintendent established another attendance zone task force for the new high school that will open in August 2005. From each elementary and middle school, the committee includes two parents of grade 6 and grade 7 students. From each middle school, the Utley Freshman Campus and Rockwall High School, the committee includes the principal, the district improvement committee representative, a campus improvement committee representative, two teachers, the PTA president and a PTA representative.

Another example of community input involved high school planning meetings with Heath city officials and community members. When RISD purchased the land for the new high school, located in Heath, some community members expressed concern about the location of the school and its impact on the residents near the school site. The superintendent, the executive director of Facilities Planning and Construction and the architect met with the Heath city staff, officials, council members and community

members in April 2002 for input regarding conceptual and schematic design of the new high school. The district met with the Heath community a second time in June 2002 to get a better understanding of the "traditional" schematic design concept preferred by the Heath community. At that meeting, RISD's architect presented a variety of school designs from traditional to modern to stimulate discussions about features. Incorporating the community's input, the architect completed the design for the new high school and presented the plan to the RISD board in August 2002 for approval. RISD held a final meeting with Heath city officials to present the new design.

RISD created a high school transition team composed of community members, parents, city officials and school personnel to define the district's transition from one high school to multiple high schools. Four subcommittees of the main committee help develop recommendations specifically related to four component areas: curriculum and instruction, finance, school culture and personnel. The curriculum and instruction team deals with instructional delivery methods, scheduling and course offerings. The finance team deals with transportation, maintenance, food services, start-up budgets, general budgets, furniture and equipment. The school culture team recommends parent and student organizations, processes for naming mascots and school colors and traditions, while the personnel team deals with time and sequence of hiring staff, beginning with the principal. A fifth subcommittee, communications, serves as the voice of all of the subcommittees and provides all news releases, information about the new high school and board presentations related to the transition team. At the end of the process, the transition team will prepare and present a final report to the board.

RISD also involves teachers in developing construction standards and specifications. When RISD began the process of developing standards and specifications for school construction, the superintendent and the executive director of Facilities Planning and Construction met with a committee of teachers and asked them how they teach in their current classroom environment. Next, they asked the teachers how they would like to teach. Some teachers, for example, might prefer to have moveable walls between classrooms so they could team-teach, while others might need a sink in their classroom for certain art or science activities. Teachers then helped develop the physical specifications to define what they had described.

According to the executive director of Facilities Planning and Construction, involving teachers to this detail can avoid changing the standards every year. The superintendent and the executive director of Facilities Planning and Construction meet weekly with the contractors, architects and director of Maintenance to identify potential cost savings in

the standards and specifications. The executive director of Facilities Planning and Construction makes changes to the standards and specifications only after discussing the changes with the board construction committee.

COMMENDATION

RISD effectively involves community members, district staff and faculty in school construction decisions, including bond elections, attendance zones, school design and location and construction standards and specifications.

FINDING

The superintendent and the executive director of Facilities Planning and Construction met with representatives of the cities of Fate, Rockwall, Heath and McLendon-Chisolm to share the district's long-range facility plan and demographic projections to ensure all future school sites within the cities will have access to utilities, including water, sewer, gas, electricity and telephone. The cities can use this information to reprioritize current construction projects or plan bond elections to finance utility construction for the school sites. Future city planning can avoid delays in school construction projects.

COMMENDATION

RISD shares its long -range facility plans and demographic projections with the cities in Rockwall County, which facilitates planning utility infrastructure for future school sites.

FINDING

RISD uses cooperative agreements to solve problems and save taxpayer money. For example, Heath has a city park adjoining Amy Parks Elementary and both needed more parking spaces. In a cooperative effort, RISD furnished the land for a parking lot expansion and Heath reimbursed the district for 79 percent of the cost of paving the parking lot. Heath and RISD now have the use of more parking spaces, and RISD saved \$192,286.

RISD did not have enough parking spaces for its central football stadium and did not own enough property to expand current parking. The central stadium, which seats 6,015 spectators, had only 717 parking spaces or one parking space for every 8.4 spectators. No property was available to purchase near the site to expand parking. The First United Methodist Church, which is located across the street from the stadium, agreed to a

99-year lease agreement allowing RISD to use 600 of its parking spaces. In return, RISD agreed to reimburse the church \$450,000, the cost of paving the first 282 spaces.

According to the district's architect, the construction of 600 parking spaces requires 4.5 acres of land. Based on land prices of potential school sites south of Interstate 30 on Highway 205 and depending on the proximity to Interstate 30 and the availability of utilities, land costs between \$25,000 and \$50,000 per acre. Therefore, 4.5 acres would cost at least \$112,500 and to pave a parking lot of 600 spaces would cost \$957,000. Had RISD been able to purchase land for a parking lot of 600 spaces, it would have spent at least \$1.07 million. Therefore, the lease contract with the First United Methodist Church saved RISD taxpayers \$619,500.

COMMENDATION

RISD effectively uses cooperative agreements with local municipalities and churches to save district taxpayer money.

FINDING

RISD uses building prototypes to control construction costs. A prototype consists of a building design approved by the board in accordance with the district's current construction standards and specifications and then replicated in multiple locations.

In 1995, RISD and its architect developed building standards that would meet the changing educational needs of RISD elementary students for at least 10 years, including space requirements, school layout, technology integration, library needs and special programs.

RISD's first prototype elementary school was Nebbie Williams Elementary, completed in 1996, followed by Dorothy Smith Pullen Elementary, Dorris A. Jones Elementary and Grace Hartman Elementary. The first prototype middle school was Maurine Cain Middle School, with a second version scheduled for completion in April 2003. **Exhibit 5-10** shows RISD's savings in architectural fees by using prototype buildings will exceed \$1.2 million.

Exhibit 5-10
RISD Savings in Architectural Fees by Using Prototype Schools
December 2002

School	Construction Budget	Normal Fee (6%)	Reduced Fee (4%)	Savings
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Elementary Prototype				
Nebbie Williams	\$6,322,447	\$379,347	N/A	\$0
Dorothy Smith Pullen	\$7,517,722	\$451,063	\$300,709	\$150,354
Dorris A. Jones	\$11,064,285	\$663,857	\$442,571	\$221,286
Grace Hartman	\$11,064,285	\$663,857	\$442,571	\$221,286
Elementary #10	\$12,628,252	\$757,695	\$505,130	\$252,565
Middle School Prototype				
Cain Middle School	\$15,607,443	\$936,447	N/A	\$0
New Middle School	\$20,294,102	\$1,217,646	\$811,764	\$405,882
Total				\$1,251,373

Source: RISD executive director of Facilities Planning and Construction, January 2003.

Benefits of a building prototype include:

- shortening the design and construction lead times on the second and subsequent buildings in a series;
- allowing design and construction bugs to be worked out on the initial construction so they will not occur on subsequent buildings in a series;
- enabling district staff members to go through the complete design process only once with the initial prototype building, reducing the time spent during development of each subsequent building;
- simplifies design since the prototype design fits onto any available site;
- results in lower up-front design costs, along with potentially reduced costs of maintenance because the building materials and equipment are standardized; and
- reduces architectural costs, since when the district duplicates a building design, the architectural firm decreases its fee from 6 percent to 4 percent.

COMMENDATION

RISD uses building prototypes to reduce construction costs, saving taxpayers more than \$1.2 million in architectural fees in recent years.

FINDING

RISD provides a standard set of playground equipment for all elementary schools. The district established the standards to ensure equal access for

all elementary students and to ensure their safety on the playground. Prior to establishing the standard, each school ordered its own equipment, usually through parent support group fundraisers, so playground equipment varied districtwide.

RISD contracted with a playground equipment consultant to develop bid specifications for soft contained playground equipment, inspect the installation of the playground equipment and train RISD maintenance staff to repair and inspect the equipment.

Soft contained play equipment is a play structure made up of multiple components where the user enters a fully enclosed play environment that uses pliable materials. All RISD playground equipment must comply with the American Society for Testing and Materials Standard F1918-98 entitled "Safety Performance Specifications for Soft Contained Play Equipment." Key safety specifications include:

- soft, non-flammable material;
- accessibility of entrances, exits, transfer points and platforms;
- no wood materials;
- no protrusions or entanglement hazards that could injure a child or snag their clothing;
- inclusion of impact-attenuating safety surfacing around the access and egress points;
- no fall heights greater than three feet;
- minimum clearance between equipment and play area border; and
- maintenance and safety inspections provided weekly.

Each school's principal is involved in the bid awards and the location of the equipment at their school. The district selects the color of each set of playground equipment to match school colors.

COMMENDATION

RISD provides equivalent playground equipment for all elementary schools that complies with safety standards for soft contained playground equipment.

FINDING

RISD does not have written policies or procedures regarding the development of a bond program, communication of approved projects to the public and accountability of the approved bond projects. Failure to have these procedures in board policy or administrative procedures resulted in public confusion and citizen complaints about how RISD spent funds from the 1998 bond issue.

For the 1998 bond program, RISD formed a school bond election steering committee to communicate the bond program to the community, but the committee did not have input on which projects would be included in the bond referendum. Instead, the RISD administration established the list of facility needs and the board called the bond election. **Exhibit 5-11** shows the projects included in the 1998 bond referendum, as presented in the slide show used by the school bond election steering committee.

Exhibit 5-11
RISD February 1998 Bond Referendum

Project Description	Projected Cost
Expansion projects	
New elementary school (Dorothy Smith Pullen Elementary)	\$8,350,000
New middle school (Maurine Cain Middle School)	\$17,770,000
High School Academic Expansion	\$5,770,000
Wilkerson-Sanders Stadium Renovation	\$1,970,000
Agriculture Center	\$200,000
Property Acquisition	\$1,900,000
Total Expansion Projects	\$35,960,000
Comparability Projects (Improvements and Upgrades)	
Amanda Rochell Elementary	\$620,000
Howard Dobbs Elementary	\$1,160,000
Virginia Reinhardt Elementary	\$620,000
J. W. Williams Middle School	\$195,000
Herman E. Utley Middle School	\$2,870,000
Rockwall High School	\$5,835,000
Total Comparability Projects	\$11,300,000
Contingency	\$1,410,000
Total Bond Project	\$48,670,000

Source: RISD slide show used by the school bond election steering committee to inform the public about the 1998 bond election.

The board did not vote to approve each project as it came up for construction and it did not vote to approve the guaranteed maximum price for each project. As a result, the public was not able to comment in an open board meeting on whether RISD should build each project or the scope of each project. For example, RISD mailed a brochure to all citizens prior to the election stating that additions to Rockwall High School included 22 new classrooms, four science labs, additional dining space, a multi-purpose center, softball and track fields and more parking space. However, after the election, the board did not vote to approve the details of the final construction plans for Rockwall High School.

To correct this problem, the current superintendent implemented new procedures for the 2001 bond program. In 2001, RISD allowed the bond committee to offer comments on projects that would be included in the bond referendum. After voters approved the bond referendum, RISD hired a contract manager for all of the projects. For each project, the contract manager solicits bid proposals and the board approves each contractor in open session, allowing the public an opportunity to offer input. Each month, the contract manager provides a status report to the board for each project that is underway or complete. This information is posted, by project, on the district's Web site.

School districts with successful bond programs develop written policies and procedures that address:

- community involvement in determining what projects are included in the bond referendum;
- oversight of the program during implementation to ensure that what is built is what the voters approved;
- board approval of construction contracts for each project; and
- continuous communication with the public during all phases of the bond program.

Recommendation 28:

Establish a board policy to formalize the process for developing a school bond program, communicating the program to the public and ensuring accountability for approved bond projects.

The policy should also address whether the wording of bond referendums is general or specific. For example, whether the district should lump all facilities into one proposition, divide the referendum into one proposition for academic facilities and one for non-academic facilities or have a separate proposition for each facility.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The executive director of Facilities Planning and Construction recommends a policy to the superintendent that formalizes the process of developing a school bond program, communicating the program to the public and ensuring accountability for approved bond projects.	October 2003
2.	The superintendent contacts the school attorney and the Texas Association of School Boards to seek legal opinion on the wording of the bond program policy.	November 2003
3.	The superintendent recommends the bond program policy to the board.	January 2004
4.	The board approves the bond program policy.	February 2004
5.	The superintendent begins implementing the policy.	March 2004

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 5

FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

B. MAINTENANCE

The RISD Maintenance Department oversees the maintenance of all school buildings and minor renovation projects. The objective in maintaining school facilities is to provide safe and cost-effective buildings, a sound educational environment, longevity of buildings and equipment and protection of public property investment.

The goal of an effective maintenance department is to:

- extend the life of facilities and maximize potential use;
- increase facilities staff productivity;
- select the most cost-effective methods for operations;
- improve and maintain the aesthetics of facilities;
- implement programs to conserve energy; and
- ensure the safety and security of the buildings and any people on district property.

Efficient and effective maintenance operations in a school district require well-defined processes, including:

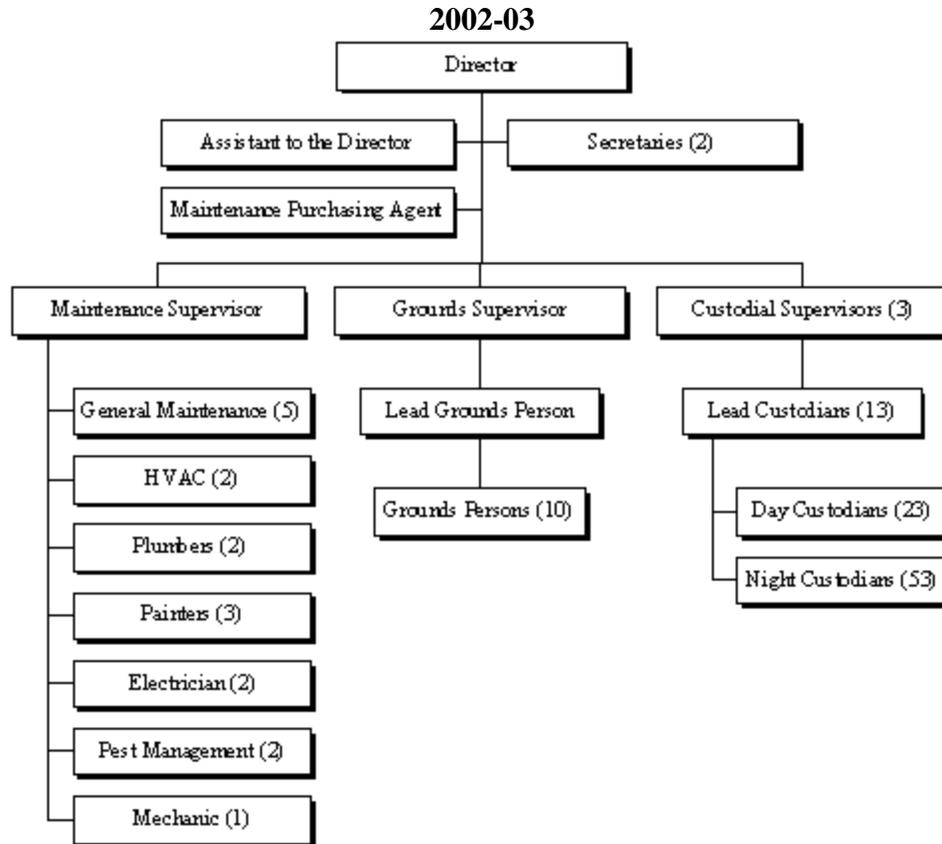
- adequate information to plan and manage daily maintenance operations;
- a work-order system that helps maintenance workers respond quickly to repair requests;
- a preventive maintenance system that ensures maintenance workers will regularly service equipment to minimize down-time; and
- a mechanism to monitor maintenance service levels and obtain periodic feedback about functions that need improvement.

The RISD Maintenance Department employs 127 staff members to maintain 1.5 million square feet of permanent facilities: 21,750 square feet of portable classrooms; 421 acres of land that includes athletic fields, flower beds, parking lots, playgrounds, sidewalks and tennis courts; and maintenance vehicles, tractors and lawn equipment.

Exhibit 5-12 shows the organization and staffing levels in the RISD Maintenance Department.

Exhibit 5-12

RISD Maintenance Department Organization



Source: RISD director of Maintenance, November 2002.

According to TEA's Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS), RISD has the highest per-student costs for maintenance and operations when compared to selected peer districts (**Exhibit 5-13**). However, in 2000-01, RISD did not have enough 1998 bond funds to finish paying for the specified construction projects, so it finished the projects using general operating funds. In October 2000, the board approved a resolution to reimburse the general funds from future bond funds. By April 2001, RISD transferred \$990,072 from the 2001 bond funds to the 2000-01 general operating fund, which represents \$117 per student in 2000-01. This reduces total expenditures per student for regular maintenance and operations to \$749, which is just above the average of the peer districts.

Exhibit 5-13
Maintenance Expenditures per Student (Function 51)
RISD and Peer Districts
1997-98 through 2001-02

Entity	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01 Actual	2001-02 Budgeted	Percentage Change.
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	Actual	Actual	Actual			1997-98 - 2001-02
Eanes	\$574	\$592	\$663	\$723	\$866	51%
Frisco	\$639	\$630	\$639	\$670	\$818	28%
Carroll	\$584	\$666	\$747	\$784	\$798	37%
RISD	\$512	\$599	\$626	\$866 (\$749)*	\$875 (\$758)*	71% (48%)*
Coppell	\$748	\$684	\$669	\$745	\$738	(1%)
McKinney	\$542	\$547	\$551	\$677	\$738	36%
Allen	\$634	\$644	\$714	\$856	\$717	13%

Source: TEA, PEIMS Ad Hoc Reporting Division, 1997-98 through 2001-02.

*Adjusted expenditures reflect the transfer of bond funds to the general operating fund.

FINDING

RISD is planning for future capital maintenance needs by documenting and evaluating all components of district heating and ventilation (HVAC), electrical, mechanical and structural systems and establishing timelines, or cycles, for the replacement of each component. Systems being inventoried include: rooftop units, boilers, central chillers, exterior painting, interior painting, roofs, carpet, gym floors, vinyl flooring, tennis court resurfacing, track resurfacing, electric motors, interior lighting, exterior lighting, cooling towers, breaker panels, fire alarms, public address systems, electrical switch gear and parking lot resurfacing. With this information, RISD can plan and schedule the replacement of components and equipment as part of the annual budget process.

Advantages of establishing replacement cycles include: anticipating replacement costs and identifying funding sources in advance of the need; scheduling system replacements to minimize the disruption to classroom instruction; and replacing systems before they fail and damage other systems to save money.

COMMENDATION

RISD is planning for future capital maintenance needs by documenting and evaluating all components of district heating and ventilation, electrical, mechanical and structural systems and establishing capital replacement cycles.

FINDING

RISD schools enter work orders for maintenance needs online, which improves repair turn-around time. Purchased and supported through Regional Education Service Center X, the application, called Webdesk, resides on a network server in Rockwall High School.

Once the Maintenance Department receives a work order, a maintenance staff member prints the request, stamps it with a date and sends the request to the director of Maintenance who assigns the job to a maintenance worker. The Maintenance Department secretary electronically transfers the request to the technician's workstation. After completing the task, the worker enters the time required and any supplies and materials used and returns a copy with his or her daily timesheet. Maintenance electronically sends a status of the work order to the school for verification and keeps a paper copy of the work order as back-up documentation.

COMMENDATION

RISD effectively uses an online maintenance work order system to reduce the time required to make repairs.

FINDING

RISD does not have a process to evaluate all current and future maintenance services to determine the cost-effectiveness of providing the service in-house or contracting it. Since the district does not evaluate performance, it may be spending too much money for the services.

In 2000-01 and 2001-02, due to a tight budget, RISD issued maintenance tax notes to spread the cost of some major maintenance projects over multiple years and contracted most of those projects instead of hiring additional staff. No evaluation was performed to determine if contracting was more cost-effective.

From 1999-2000 through 2001-02, RISD maintenance payroll expenditures per student dropped 11 percent, placing greater emphasis on contracted services to address maintenance needs. As a result, the RISD Maintenance Department is understaffed compared to industry standards. The Association of Physical Plant Administrators (APPA) developed staffing standards for craft positions based on gross square footage of all facilities in a district. **Exhibit 5-14** shows that RISD's Maintenance Department is understaffed by 30 positions.

Exhibit 5-14
Number of RISD Maintenance Employees Compared to APPA
Standards
2002-03

Craft	Current Staffing	APPA Standard	Recommended Staffing	Variance Above / (Below) Standard
HVAC Mechanic	2	1:45 pieces of equipment (2-25 ton units) (RISD has 675 units = 15 mechanics) 1:8 pieces of equipment (25+ ton units) (RISD has 8 units = 1 mechanic)	16	(14)
Plumber	2	1:390,000 Gross Square Feet (GSF)	4	(2)
Electrician	2	1:380,000 GSF	4	(2)
General Maintenance	5	1:200,000 GSF	7	(2)
Painter	3	1:200,000 GSF	7	(4)
Grounds	11	1:5 acres (intensively maintained) 1:25 acres (routine maintenance)	17	(6)
Total	25		55	(30)

Source: RISD Maintenance Department and Association of Physical Plant Administrators, March 2002.

Note: The gross square feet of RISD facilities, including portable buildings, is 1,525,162 square feet (2002-03).

Exhibit 5-15 shows RISD's maintenance staffing levels rank fourth compared to its peers.

Exhibit 5-15
Maintenance Staffing Levels
RISD and Peer Districts
2002-03

Staff Category	Allen	Carroll	Frisco	RISD	Eanes	McKinney	Coppell
Electricians	3	1	2	2	0	2	3
HVAC Technicians	2	3	7	2	6	2	7
Plumbers	1	0	1	2	2	2	2
Carpenters	1	0	0	0	2	1	2
Locksmiths	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
Pest Management	0	0	1	2	2	2	1
Mechanics	0	0	0	1	5	1	1
General Maintenance	5.5	7	6	5	2	6	4
Painters	0	0	0	3	0	1	0
Grounds - General	5*	12	6	11	10	10	15
Grounds - Athletics	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
Total	20.5	23	24	28	29	30	36

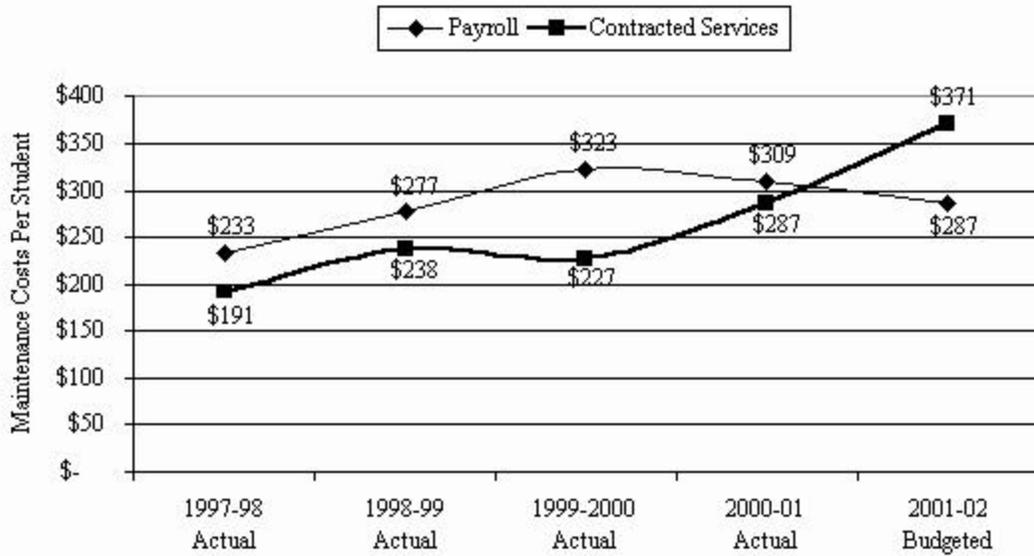
Source: Survey of peer districts, December 2002.

**These workers are contract employees.*

Exhibit 5-16 shows how RISD's maintenance contracted services costs-per-student have surpassed payroll expenditures. Part of this resulted from a significant increase in needed renovation projects, such as school roof and HVAC repair, which were financed over 10 years with maintenance tax notes. RISD contracted out all of these renovation projects. In 2000-01, \$33 of the \$287 per student spent on contracted services related to the maintenance tax note payments. In 2001-02, \$162 of the \$371 per student budgeted in contracted services resulted from the maintenance tax note payments.

Exhibit 5-16
RISD Maintenance Costs Per Student and Payroll Costs
Compared to Contracted Services

1997-98 through 2001-02



Source: TEA, PEIMS Ad Hoc Reporting Division, 1997-98 through 2001-02.

Note: Contracted services costs in 2000-01 and 2001-02 included maintenance tax note payments.

Exhibit 5-17 shows that 49 percent of RISD's maintenance budget pays for contracted services, compared to 38 percent for payroll expenses, the fourth highest compared to its peers.

**Exhibit 5-17
Expenditures for Payroll and Contracted Services
Maintenance Budget
RISD and Peer Districts
2001-02**

District	Payroll	Contracted Services
McKinney	13%	76%
Allen	28%	63%
Frisco	27%	56%
RISD	38%	49%
Carroll	41%	48%
Eanes	46%	44%
Coppell	51%	42%

Source: TEA, PEIMS Ad Hoc Reporting Division, 2001-02.

In a June 2000 review of Galveston ISD, TSPR identified several advantages and disadvantages to private sector contracting (**Exhibit 5-18**).

Exhibit 5-18
Advantages and Disadvantages of Private Sector Contracting

Advantages	Disadvantages
Competition between private contractors can help reduce costs.	The district may have less control of day-to-day operations and procedures.
Contractors often have a broad range of experience that may allow them to solve problems more quickly and effectively.	If contract terms are not clearly defined in advance, the cost of additional services can result in higher-than-expected expenditures.
A private contractor can be required to meet performance standards.	A contractor may under-price a bid to receive the contract and then attempt to raise prices after the contract is awarded.
Incentive clauses can be incorporated in the contract to increase efficiency.	If competition is not adequate, the contractor's price may not reflect the cost savings targeted by the district.
A private contractor can be required to implement an appropriate cost accounting system to monitor and control costs.	Services could be in jeopardy if the contractor defaults or there are contract disputes.
A private contractor can react more quickly to market conditions and set competitive wage rates and conduct a more aggressive recruitment program to fill vacant positions.	
A private contractor may provide better management, training and scheduling.	
If a contractor provides vehicles, the district does not have to purchase or replace school equipment.	

Source: TSPR review of Galveston ISD, June 2000.

In a March 2000 review of San Antonio ISD, TSPR recommended a six-step process for determining the cost benefit for a local vendor providing a service rather than the district (**Exhibit 5-19**).

Exhibit 5-19
TSPR Process to Determine Cost Benefit of Outsourcing District
Services
March 2000

Step	Activity	Description
1	Clearly define the component activity.	A clear definition of the component activity should include a description of its current budget and staffing, existing performance measurements, the location of the function on the district's organization chart and a description of the product or service delivery standards that are currently demanded. This step should include the determination of specifications to be required of potential vendors, based on the expected levels of service needed to meet or exceed the district's standards.
2	Determine total in-house costs.	<p>The district should use generally accepted accounting principles; maintain extensive documentation of all calculations and assumptions; include anticipated increases or decreases in future costs; include all costs, regardless of where they are located for budgeting or appropriation purposes; and include all costs whether or not the cost would be avoided if the service was outsourced.</p> <p>The total in-house cost equals direct costs, plus department indirect costs, plus district indirect costs. Direct costs include salaries and overtime, fringe benefits, supplies and materials, rent, utilities, equipment maintenance and repair and the depreciation of assets. Indirect costs include appropriate percentages of costs for items such as district central support services, personnel and legal services and percentage of costs for a department director with direct oversight of the staff performing the function.</p>
3	Request proposals for alternative providers of service.	The component activities to be put up for competitive bidding should be advertised to the general public. While the district should create appropriate standards for a fair evaluation, a reasonable amount of creativity should be allowed so vendors can propose creative new methods for service delivery that meet or exceed current standards. In addition, existing employees should be allowed time and access to internal resources to prepare bids for alternative. more efficient

		and effective methods of delivering services.
4	Determine total cost to contract.	The total cost to contract is the contractor cost, plus the contract administration cost, plus any one-time conversion costs, plus unavoidable district costs, plus any loss on assets, minus any gain on assets. Contractor costs are the fees and expenses proposed by a qualified vendor to provide the service. Administration costs are the expenses involved in negotiating, executing, monitoring and evaluating the contract, including personnel costs, facility use and equipment charges. Unavoidable costs are those that will continue to be borne by the district even if a particular function has been outsourced. The gain or loss of assets includes buildings, vehicles or equipment that is unnecessary after a successful outsourcing.
5	Request for proposals (RFP) from vendors.	RFP's should be prepared for component activities offering significant potential for savings or service improvements. All competitive cost review information about the specific service should be made public.
6	Determination of savings.	Savings are the difference between total in-house costs and the total cost to contract.

Source: TSPR review of San Antonio ISD, March 2000.

When evaluating the total cost of services, the district should be aware of costs that are often left out in the analysis, including:

- Cross-subsidizing. Some costs of the maintenance department are often borne by other departments and not reported as a department expense, such as technology.
- Failing to allocate overhead. Other departments often share indirect costs, such as insurance, utilities, facilities and administration. A pro-rata share of these costs for the maintenance department should be included in the cost analysis.
- Depreciation costs. Assets such as buildings, computers and heavy equipment lose value over their lifetime and are eventually dumped, sold, overhauled or replaced. The depreciation cost is the value of the asset, plus interest, divided by the asset's useful life in years, less its salvage value when sold.
- Ignoring the cost of capital. Interest expense on borrowed funds should be included in the analysis.

- Excluding or underestimating costs. Key areas include district-paid benefits, legal costs and administration costs. Underestimating costs is especially likely when making projections of future costs.
- Failing to account for higher service levels. Make sure the district is comparing "apples to apples" with what the district is asking the contractor to provide. It would not be fair to compare a higher level of service from a contractor with what the district might spend in-house for a lower quality of service.

Recommendation 29:

Develop and implement a process to evaluate all current and future maintenance services to determine the cost-effectiveness of providing the service in-house or contracting for the service.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Maintenance identifies all maintenance services currently being outsourced.	October 2003
2.	The director of Maintenance and the assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations establish the full cost of providing the outsourced services.	November 2003
3.	The director of Maintenance and the assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations identify the full cost of providing those services in-house.	December 2003
4.	If the cost is less to provide the services in-house, the director of Maintenance and the assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations determine the personnel, supplies and equipment necessary to provide the service and include in the 2004-05 budget.	January 2004
5.	The director of Maintenance and the assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations develop and implement a formal process to evaluate all future service requests to determine if it will be contracted or performed in-house.	February 2004
6.	The board approves the 2004-05 budget.	June 2004

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 5

FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

C. CUSTODIAL SERVICES

Most districts schedule custodial duties when children are not in classrooms. There are many custodial tasks that need to be performed on a regular basis, including:

- regulating the heating and air conditioning equipment;
- unlocking doors, opening windows for ventilation and turning on lights;
- setting up rooms for special activities;
- cleaning restroom facilities, replacing all commodities and making sure dispensers work properly;
- cleaning classrooms, teachers' lounges and other areas;
- performing special tasks within the classrooms based upon teacher requests;
- moving furniture;
- disposing of trash; and
- locking doors and gates, closing windows and turning off lights

Duties of a weekly, monthly or quarterly nature should be defined and scheduled. Tasks that may be included in this qualification include:

- lubricating equipment;
- cleaning interior walls;
- indoor painting;
- waxing floors and cleaning carpeting;
- washing windows and blinds and arranging for the cleaning of draperies; and
- resurfacing floors and refinishing furniture.

FINDING

Based on custodial staffing standards developed by the Association of School Business Officials, International (ASBO), the RISD's custodial operations are overstaffed. As a result, RISD spends more than \$320,000 per year than it should for custodial services.

ASBO bases custodial staffing on an expected average productivity of 2,500 square feet per staff-hour of work, for an eight-hour cleaning period, which equals 20,000 square feet per custodian. ASBO bases custodial productivity on the work standards shown in **Exhibit 5-20**.

Exhibit 5-20
ASBO Recommended Custodial Work Standards

Space	Service	Unit Measure	Work Rate Time
Classrooms (average size)	Routine clean	850 sq. ft.	24 minutes
Offices - resilient floor	Routine clean	1,000 sq. ft.	24 minutes
Offices - carpet	Routine clean	1,000 sq. ft.	24 minutes
Floors	Dust mop	1,000 sq. ft.	12 minutes
	Damp mop	1,000 sq. ft.	20 minutes
	Spray buff - daily	1,000 sq. ft.	20 minutes
	Spray buff - weekly	1,000 sq. ft.	40 minutes
	Spray buff - monthly	1,000 sq. ft.	120 minutes
	Light furniture scrub	1,000 sq. ft.	240 minutes
	Medium furniture scrub	1,000 sq. ft.	300 minutes
	Heavy furniture scrub	1,000 sq. ft.	400 minutes
Bathrooms	3 or less commodes, urinals, and wash basins	Each	4.5 minutes
	More than 3	Each	3.0 minutes
Stairs	Damp mop	1 flight	12 minutes
	Wet mop	1 flight	35 minutes
	Hand scrub	1 flight	48 minutes
	Dust handrails	1 flight	2 minutes
	Dust treads	1 flight	6 minutes
Walls	Wash	1,000 sq. ft.	210 minutes
	Wash heavy soil	1,000 sq. ft.	290 minutes
Blinds	Dust	Each	15 minutes
	Damp dust	Each	30 minutes
	Wash	200 sq. ft.	340 minutes
Windows - single pane	Wash	1,000 sq. ft.	240 minutes

Windows - multi-pane	Wash	1,000 sq. ft.	320 minutes
Light fixtures - fluorescent	Dust	4 ft.	5 minutes
Light fixtures - egg crate	Wash	4 ft.	40 minutes
Light fixtures - open	Wash	4 ft.	20 minutes
Light fixtures - incandescent	Dust	Each	5 minutes
Light fixtures - incandescent	Wash	Each	15 minutes

Source: Custodial Methods and Procedures Manual, Association of School Business Officials (ASBO), 2000.

According to the director of Maintenance, RISD bases its custodial staffing criteria on 15,000-18,000 square feet per custodian in secondary schools and 18,000-22,000 square feet per custodian in elementary schools. RISD's secondary custodial staffing level averages 16,817 square feet per custodian and the elementary staffing level averages 14,740 square feet per custodian (**Exhibit 5-21**). According to ASBO custodial staffing standards, RISD is overstaffed by 19 custodians. At the elementary level RISD exceeds its own custodial staffing standard by eight custodians.

**Exhibit 5-21
RISD Custodial Staffing
2002-03**

Facility	Total Square Feet (*)	Custodians	Square Feet per Custodian	Number of Custodians Recommended (**)	Overstaffed/ (Understaffed)
Elementary					
Amanda Rochell	53,860	5	10,772	3	2
Amy Parks-Heath	65,434	4	16,359	4	0
Cullins-Lake Point	96,986	7	13,855	5	2

Dorothy Smith Pullen	65,500	4	16,375	4	0
Howard Dobbs	56,506	6	9,418	3	3
Nebbie Williams	65,500	4	16,375	4	0
Virginia Reinhardt	59,479	4	14,870	3	1
Dorris A. Jones	77,913	4	19,478	4	0
Grace Hartman	77,913	4	19,478	4	0
Elementary Total	619,091	42	14,740	34	8
Middle School					
Maurine Cain	145,000	10	14,500	8	2
J. W. Williams	110,206	7	15,744	6	1
High School					
Herman E. Utley Freshman Center	189,989	11	17,272	10	1
Rockwall	345,183	19	18,168	18	1
Secondary Total	790,378	47	16,817	42	5
All Central Facilities	112,693	2	56,347		
Total - all facilities	1,525,162	91	16,760	76	15
Total - schools only	1,409,469	89	15,837	70	19

Source: RISD director of Maintenance and ASBO.

*Total includes portable buildings.

**Recommended number is based on 20,000 square feet per custodian.

The average number of square feet cleaned by RISD custodians ranks second lowest compared to the peer districts (**Exhibit 5-22**). Thirty-seven of Allen ISD's custodians and all of McKinney ISD's custodians are employees of an outside contractor.

**Exhibit 5-22
Custodial Staffing Levels
RISD and Peer Districts
2002-03**

District	Total Square Feet of Facilities	Total Number of Custodians	Square Feet per Custodian
Allen	2,255,148	81*	27,841
Coppell	1,593,700	75	21,249
Eanes	1,207,182	59	20,461
McKinney	2,477,916	126**	19,666
Carroll	1,454,450	86	16,912
RISD	1,525,162	91	16,760
Frisco	1,707,799	126	13,554

Source: Survey of peer districts, December 2002.

*Thirty-seven of Allen ISD's custodians are employees of an outside contractor.

**All McKinney ISD's custodians are employees of an outside contractor.

Conroe ISD maximizes the efficiency of its custodial staff using eight-person central custodial teams to clean multiple elementary and intermediate schools each night, instead of assigning a fixed number of custodians to each school. After cleaning one building, each team is transported to another building, so that each team cleans 3-4 schools per night. The team approach gives the custodial coordinator more flexibility in scheduling, especially when there are custodial shortages as a result of illness.

Recommendation 30:

Establish and consistently apply custodial staffing formulas that meet industry standards.

Consistently applying custodial staffing formulas allows the district to balance custodial needs between facilities and keep custodial costs to a minimum. To meet ASBO standards, the district will need to reduce custodial staff by 19.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Maintenance establishes a custodial staffing chart for each school that meets industry standards.	June 2003
2.	The director of Maintenance submits the staffing chart to the superintendent with a list of custodians whose position will be eliminated.	June 2003
3.	The superintendent approves the custodial reduction plan.	June 2003
4.	The assistant superintendent of Human Resources and Operations notifies the custodians whose position has been eliminated.	July 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

The average salary for an RISD custodian is \$14,503 (not including custodial supervisors), plus benefits of \$2,444 = \$16,947. Eliminating 19 custodial positions would save RISD \$321,993 per year.

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Establish and consistently apply custodial staffing formulas that meet industry standards.	\$321,993	\$321,993	\$321,993	\$321,993	\$321,993

Chapter 5

FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

D. ENERGY MANAGEMENT

School energy management should lower operating costs by reducing energy waste while providing a safe, comfortable environment for learning.

FINDING

While RISD has instituted some energy conservation measures, such as installing energy control systems in schools and using a district teacher to visit schools to find opportunities to turn off lights, there is no districtwide, concerted effort to control energy costs. As a result, the district may be spending more for utilities than it should.

The district does not monitor monthly energy bills for accuracy. While the business office keeps track of monthly payment of electricity bills, no one questions missing data or significant changes in bills from month to month. In calendar year 2000, which had the most complete data, Williams Middle School electricity costs for January were never billed and the electric bills for August, September and October were \$90, \$99 and \$105 respectively, compared to an average of \$4,703 for each of the other eight months.

In addition, the district does not compare the energy bill data to previous months and previous years to analyze trends. In September 2000, the electricity bill for Cain Middle School was \$18,020, while the previous month's bill was \$9,632 and the subsequent month was \$9,357.

RISD also does not review the energy usage portion of electric bills. There are two main parts of an electricity bill: the amount of electricity consumed per kilowatt-hour (kWh) and a demand charge, per kilowatt (KW), (kWh)) based on the highest electricity use each month, averaged over a 15-minute period. Demand goes up as electric appliances are turned on. RISD can lower demand by staggering the start-up of equipment such as air-conditioners, ovens and computer labs, resulting in lower electricity bills.

The district does not compile historical energy usage and cost data by school and district. Comparing building and district energy data to national and state standards can help determine the effectiveness of an energy management program in each school and district.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) establishes a benchmark of \$115 per student or less for energy costs and the State Energy Conservation Office (SECO) uses an energy benchmark of \$1.00 per square foot or less. RISD's energy costs in 2000 were \$111 per student and \$0.69 per square foot (**Exhibit 5-23**), which are both below the benchmarks, but the energy cost data is more than two years old or is incomplete or missing due to a change in billing from the electrical provider. In addition, at least three facilities have opened since that time.

Exhibit 5-23
Energy Costs per Square Foot and Per Student
RISD and Peer Districts
2001-02

District	2001-02 Enrollment	Total Square Feet of Facilities	Total Energy Costs	Energy Costs pe Square Foot	Energy Costs per Student
Carroll	7,016	1,454,450	\$1,529,160	\$1.05	\$218
Eanes	7,117	1,207,182	\$1,251,679	\$1.04	\$176
Allen	11,781	2,225,148	\$2,175,757	\$0.98	\$185
McKinney	13,500	2,477,916	(2) \$2,077,279	\$0.84	\$154
Frisco	9,214	1,707,799	\$1,326,120	\$0.78	\$144
Coppell	9,659	1,593,700	\$1,141,817	\$0.72	\$118
RISD	8,468	(1) 1,359,357	(3) \$938,056	\$0.69	\$111

Source: Survey of peer districts, December 2002.

(1) 2001-02 square footage.

(2) 2000-01 energy costs.

(3) Data is from calendar year 2000 since current data is incomplete.

From March 1992 to June 1999, RISD contracted with a Texas-based company to help reduce energy consumption and reduce energy costs. RISD paid a stipend to an RISD staff member to serve as the district coordinator of the program. A representative from the company periodically visited the schools with the district coordinator and pointed out areas where energy could be saved, including turning off lights in empty classrooms, reducing the time air-conditioning systems were on during the day and turning off security lights. The district coordinator

spent about 10 hours per week, before and after school, walking through schools pointing out areas of potential saving, as well as entering utility

bills into a computerized database in order to generate energy reports. The computerized database is an industry-standard software tool dedicated to energy accounting, analysis and reporting and is designed to:

- track energy consumption factors, costs and budgets;
- validate utility bill accuracy;
- monitor energy consumption and cost trends;
- track and monitor weather data variances;
- track and monitor facility occupancy and building operation changes;
- perform statistical analysis;
- determine energy savings/cost avoidance performance; and
- provide a wide range of valuable energy audit reports.

The company received a percentage of any RISD energy savings as compensation for its services.

The contract with the company expired in June 1999, but a part-time district coordinator continues to visit schools to suggest energy savings tips. Technical problems with the computerized software prohibit the district coordinator from using the software to determine the effectiveness of the district's energy efforts. Resolution of the technical problems seems unlikely, since the company that owns the software is currently not providing support to the application.

Districts that are successful in keeping energy costs down typically have implemented an energy management program. In Texas, SECO administers a variety of energy efficiency and renewable energy programs that can significantly reduce energy consumption in school districts. SECO's Energy Management Partnership program has helped more than 400 Texas school districts identify more than \$11 million in energy savings. Savings result from installing:

- energy efficient lamps and ballasts;
- high-efficiency air conditioners;
- computerized energy management systems;
- energy efficient equipment; and
- more efficient maintenance and operation methods, such as turning off lights in unoccupied rooms, changing air-conditioning filters on a regular basis, keeping thermostat covers secure and in place and operating chillers to take maximum advantage of utility demand rates.

SECO's Energy Efficient Partnership Service delivers onsite technical assistance to the districts. Districts pay no fee, but agree to institute energy efficient maintenance and operation procedures and pursue financing for capital energy projects that yield a high return on investment.

SECO provides utility bill analysis, onsite inspection and follow-up meetings and assistance. Program deliverables include: individual energy performance assessments of each facility; energy saving maintenance and operations recommendations; identification of cost-effective capital projects; and assistance in finding financing for these projects.

SECO also offers an Energy Manager Training Program that provides administrative and technical training for school and local government energy managers, school business officials, building operators and others responsible for efficient facility operation. Workshops include topics such as maintenance and operations, master planning, HVAC, indoor air quality, lighting, district's assessment of its own facilities, understanding energy deregulation and how to take advantage of it, energy accounting, financing energy projects and involving building occupants through energy education.

SECO's most visible program is the Texas LoneSTAR Program, which provides low-interest financing for energy projects, such as energy efficient lighting systems, high-efficiency HVAC systems, computerized energy management control systems, boiler efficiency improvements, energy recovery systems and building shell improvements. According to a representative from the LoneSTAR program, the program has provided \$34 million for school financing, which has resulted in \$5 million, or 14.7 percent, savings to the districts.

Recommendation 31:

Request an energy audit and develop a comprehensive energy conservation plan.

The energy audit can help RISD check its utility billing for accuracy and provide utility information that can serve as a benchmark to measure the accuracy of future utility bills. SECO can also help develop a long-range energy conservation plan, provide energy management training for RISD personnel and offer low-interest funding for energy-saving projects.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent contacts SECO to request an energy audit and assistance with developing an energy conservation plan.	June 2003
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2.	SECO begins the energy audit and includes the RISD director of Energy Management and Facility Use in the process.	September 2003
3.	SECO presents the results of the audit to the superintendent and board.	January 2004
4.	SECO helps the district draft an energy conservation plan.	March 2004
5.	The director of Energy Management and Facility Use presents the energy conservation plan to the board for approval.	May 2004
6.	The energy conservation plan takes effect.	June 2004
7.	The director of Energy Management and Facility Use submits quarterly energy conservation reports to the board.	September 2004 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

RISD's energy costs in 2000 were \$938,056. Using SECO to perform an energy audit and recommend a long-range energy conservation program, the district could realize energy savings of at least 5 percent, or \$46,903, per year. While SECO averages about 14.7 percent savings in school districts, the review team conservatively estimates RISD's energy savings at 5 percent because it has already implemented some energy savings programs.

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Request an energy audit and develop a comprehensive energy conservation plan.	\$0	\$46,903	\$46,903	\$46,903	\$46,903

FINDING

RISD does not actively promote student and staff involvement in energy conservation. As a result, the district is not taking advantage of energy cost-saving opportunities.

SECO has developed an Energy Education Outreach Program that helps schools set up student-involved energy projects and develops energy-related educational materials. For example, programs such as Watt Watcher and Watt Team educate elementary students in energy efficiency and promote activities that instill an energy-efficient ethic in all aspects of school operation. Student teams patrol assigned areas of the school, checking for lights left on in unoccupied rooms. Students leave "tickets" and thank you notes for the occupants to remind them to turn off lights when they are not needed. This is a proven method of promoting energy

conservation habits and reduces school energy bills, since lighting accounts for 25 to 40 percent of energy use in schools.

In high schools, the Watt Watcher Program is called Energy Council. Students can expand the program to include school energy audits and serve as mentors for elementary school patrols. The Energy Council can exist as a project of the student council, other existing groups or a new school organization. SECO provides free materials and information for Watt teams.

Spring ISD implemented a rebate program that rewards schools that reduce energy use below the budget amount with a check for half of the savings. Once utility bills are reduced to the point where no additional savings are possible, districts, like the Howard County Public School System in Maryland, provide rewards to schools based on cost avoidance.

Recommendation 32:

Develop a program to actively involve students and staff as part of a districtwide energy conservation plan.

RISD should promote student and staff involvement in energy conservation. Each month, RISD should forward utility expenditure information to schools to make principals and staff aware of energy use and the effect that conservation has on the district's finances. The district can also implement a reward system whereby schools share savings from efficient energy use to encourage student and staff involvement.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Energy Management and Facility Use contacts SECO to obtain curriculum materials related to student involvement in energy conservation.	October 2003
2.	The director of Energy Management and Facility Use meets with school principals to explain the district's energy conservation plan and how to involve students and staff.	November 2003
3.	Principals promote student involvement in selected energy conservation programs.	January 2004
4.	The director of Energy Management and Facility Use forwards energy use reports to the principals each month.	March 2004 and Ongoing
5.	The director of Energy Management and Facility Use meets individually with principals to discuss energy usage in their school and cost-savings strategies.	May 2004 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 5

FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

E. COMMUNITY USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES

The use of school facilities by community groups is common in Texas school districts and in public school systems across the nation. By allowing community groups to use school facilities, schools and school districts connect with the communities. School district policies and procedures should meet the minimum requirements of state law and fees to rent the facilities to these groups should cover all costs associated with opening the facilities.

RISD's community use of facilities is governed by policies GKD (Legal), GKD (Local) and related administrative procedures available on the district's Web site. These policies and procedures include guidelines for rental of facilities to all types of community groups and specific rental rate schedules for all school facilities.

Community groups reserved RISD internal and external facilities 8,118 times during 2001-02 (**Exhibit 5-24**).

Exhibit 5-24
RISD Number of Facility Reservations by Month
2001-02

School	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Total
Rockwall High School	97	114	120	88	68	58	92	87	107	114	45	42	1,032
Cullins-Lake Pointe Elementary	62	70	85	94	60	42	69	74	82	65	32	12	747
Herman E. Utley Freshman Center	46	62	74	62	54	44	55	74	46	66	59	59	701
Maurine Cain Middle School	85	96	78	35	48	28	37	31	67	92	14	10	621

Elementary														
Total	802	967	950	829	644	521	624	667	778	729	343	264	8,118	

Source: RISD facility use coordinator, November 2002.

Community use of RISD facilities increased 17.8 percent from 1999-2000 to 2001-02 (**Exhibit 5-25**).

Exhibit 5-25
RISD Facility Reservations
1999-2000 through 2001-02

School	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	Percentage Increase, 1999-2000 - 2001-02
Rockwall High School	926	932	1,032	11.4%
Cullins-Lake Pointe Elementary	727	727	747	2.8%
Herman E. Utley Freshman Center	589	601	701	19.0%
Maurine Cain Middle School	507	521	621	22.5%
J.W. Williams Middle School	504	520	620	23.0%
Amy Parks Elementary	513	531	611	19.1%
Nebbie Williams Elementary	526	541	601	14.3%
Amanda Rochell Elementary	467	487	587	25.7%
Howard Dobbs Elementary	464	484	584	25.9%
Virginia Reinhardt Elementary	510	515	565	10.8%
Dorothy Smith Pullen Elementary	415	430	505	24.1%
Dobbs Annex	455	485	485	6.6%
Wisdom Stadium	241	246	266	10.4%
Agriculture Center	0	0	126	100.0%
Wilkerson-Sanders Stadium	29	34	34	17.2%
Cain Football Field	28	33	33	17.9%

Total	6,901	7,087	8,128	17.8%
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Source: RISD facility use coordinator, November 2002.

Exhibit 5-26 shows some of the community users of its facilities.

Exhibit 5-26
RISD Facility Users
2001-02

User Group	User Group
"The Rock" Church	Academic Booster Club
AAU Basketball Teams (6)	All Sports Parent Meetings (24 Groups)
AAU Summer Track Program	Antigua Bay Homeowners Association
American Cancer Society	Bootbackers
Behind the Badge	RISD Child Nutrition
Boy Scouts of America	City Elections
Collin County Community College	Community Education Classes
Cub Scouts of America	County Elections
Fall BBI Baseball Teams (3)	Cruise and Blues Car Show
Fantasia Dance Academy	Delta Kappa Gamma
4-H Club	Highland Homeowner Association
Girl Scouts of America	Hunters Education
Heritage Christian Academy Teams (3)	Jacketbackers
Jacketbabes	Lakeside Church of Christ
Janet's Dance Studio	Masters Degree Core Program
Joy Lutheran Church	Mu Alpha Theta
Julie's Dance Academy	National Cancer Society
Key Club	Planet Kidz
Mustang Dancers	Region Ten Developmental Meetings and Courses
Parent and Teacher Organizations (14)	Ridgeview Baptist Church
Rockettes	RISD Band Functions (4 Bands)

Rockwall Christian Academy Teams (3)	RISD Choir Departments (13 Groups)
Rockwall County Juvenile Services	RISD Head Start Programs
Rockwall HS Summer Football Teams (2)	Rockwall Alumni Association
Rockwall I.S.D. Football Teams (13)	Rockwall County Friends of the Library
Rockwall I.S.D. School Board	Rockwall Fire Department
Rockwall Life Church	Rowlett Christian Academy (2 Teams)
Rockwall Youth Football Association	SAGE Gifted and Talented Programs All Schools
Sports Camps RISD (7)	School District Elections
Stingerettes	Special Education RISD
The Dance Academy	Student Council (at all schools)
Wild Life	Top Hat Players
Women's Charity League	Valerie's Dance Shop
YMCA Basketball and Football Teams 100 and 50	Wal-Mart Christmas Party
Young Life	Young Strings

Source: RISD facility use coordinator, November 2002.

FINDING

RISD does not track actual costs of facility rentals to community groups. Without accumulating this type of financial data, there is no accurate method to establish appropriate rental fees. Facility rental revenues increased in 1999-2000 and 2000-01 but increased in 2001-03 (**Exhibit 5-27**).

Exhibit 5-27 RISD Facility Rental Revenue 1998-99 through 2001-02

	1998-99 Actual	1999-2000 Actual	2000-01 Actual	2001-02 Actual	2002-03 Budgeted	Percent Increase From 1998-99 to 2002-03
Facilitv rental	\$25,630	\$31,193	\$36,179	\$24,348	\$30,000	17.1%

revenue						
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Source: RISD business manager, December 2002.

According to the RISD facility use staff, RISD is surveying area districts to update the existing rental schedule. RISD last updated its rental schedule in 1995 (**Exhibit 5-28**).

Exhibit 5-28
RISD Facility Use Fee Schedule
2002-03

Building	Classrooms	Kitchen	Cafeteria	Gym
High School	\$25 plus custodian	Custodian's hourly rate	\$50	\$100
Middle Schools	\$25 plus custodian	Custodian's hourly rate	\$50	\$75
Elementary Schools	\$25 plus custodian	Custodian's hourly rate	\$50	\$50
Auditorium	\$175 minimum plus custodian	N/A	N/A	N/A
Theater	\$175 minimum plus custodian	N/A	N/A	N/A
Lecture Hall	\$100 minimum plus custodian	N/A	N/A	N/A
Health Lecture Hall	\$50 minimum plus custodian	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: RISD facility use coordinator, November 2002.

TEA specifies methodology regarding the determination of rental charges and space related costs for educational service centers under federal cost allocation guidelines. Appropriate budget center cost categories include: utilities, including gas, water, electricity, sewage, garbage and trash collection; janitorial services; security services; and repair and maintenance costs.

Fort Bend ISD, a suburban Houston district, uses the budget categories of salaries, custodial overtime, supplies and materials, conferences and meetings, mileage and travel, allocated utilities and equipment/replacement equipment to track costs associated with rental of its facilities.

Recommendation 33:

Track actual costs of facility rentals and use this data to set rental fees.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The chief financial officer and business manager work with the facilities use coordinator to develop an allocation system designed to measure all relevant costs against revenues received.	January 2004
2.	The facility use allocations are established and included as part of the RISD budget process for 2004-05.	February 2004
3.	The board approves the budget including the allocations.	July 2004
4.	RISD business staff and facilities use staff begin using the new allocation system for community use of RISD facilities.	August 2004
5.	RISD business staff and facilities use staff review annual costs associated with facilities rentals.	August 2005
6.	The facilities use staff recommends changes to RISD facilities use fees to the board for approval.	September 2005
7.	The board approves the new facilities use fees.	October 2005

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 6

FINANCIAL, ASSET AND RISK MANAGEMENT

This chapter reviews the financial, asset and risk management functions of the Rockwall Independent School District (RISD) in the following sections:

- A. Organization, Management and Staffing
- B. Internal Accounting Controls
- C. Cash and Investment Management
- D. Fixed Asset Management
- E. Bond Issuance and Indebtedness

Efficient financial management ensures that a school district receives all available revenue from state and federal resources; maintains a track record of sound financial decisions and budget allocations; issues timely, accurate and informative financial reports; maintains adequate internal controls; employs a skilled, well-trained staff; and maintains a record of favorable reports by external auditors.

Asset management involves the cost-efficient management of the district's cash resources and physical assets. This includes accounting for and safeguarding these elements from theft and obsolescence.

Risk management includes the identification, analysis and reduction of risk through insurance and safety programs to protect district assets and employees. Asset management for a growing district involves proper oversight of capital improvement spending, including multi-year financial and budget planning.

BACKGROUND

All Texas school districts must comply with state financial reporting guidelines as contained in the Texas Education Agency (TEA) *Financial Accountability System Resource Guide* (FASRG). The guide includes the accounting and financial reporting requirements of accepted accounting principles, federally mandated auditing and financial reporting requirements and the specific accounting and financial reporting requirements of TEA. Annual audited district financial statements must include all necessary financial information and related disclosures as prescribed by FASRG.

Also, in 2001, the 77th Texas Legislature enacted SB 218 into law, which requires all school districts to implement a financial accountability rating system beginning in 2003-04. To meet this mandate, TEA has established

the School Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas (School FIRST). The primary goal of School FIRST is to improve school districts' overall financial performance. The primary objective of the rating system is to uniformly and equitably assess the quality of financial management in Texas public schools. A secondary objective is to measure and report the extent to which financial resources in Texas public schools are allocated to the classroom for instructional purposes.

Indicator number 11 of the School FIRST report requires that a district spend more than 54 percent of the operating expenditures on the instruction function. In addition to the funds reported through TEA's Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS), the School FIRST calculation includes Special Revenue funds, Debt Service funds and Construction funds, but excludes Shared Service Arrangement funds. In addition the School FIRST calculation excludes all capital outlay expenditures but includes the community service function. If the RISD expenditures for 2000-01 were reviewed under the School FIRST criteria, the district would show 44.1 percent of the expenditures were allocated to instruction as shown in **Exhibit 6-1**.

The RISD instructional category allocation is lower than the 54 percent required by School FIRST with its allocation of 44.1 percent. Because RISD's student population is growing quickly and it needs new facilities, its "other" category costs of 20.2 percent are higher than state and regional averages because of debt service on recently issued bonds. If these costs were closer to the state average of 10.8 percent, the instructional category for RISD would resemble state and regional averages.

Exhibit 6-1
Total Budgeted Expenditures by Function
as a Percentage of Total Budgeted Expenditures
RISD, Region 10 and the State
2001-02

Function	RISD	Percentage Spent	Region 10	Percentage Spent	State	Percentage Spent
Instruction (11,95)	\$29,098,593	44.1%	\$2,165,887,386	50.8%	\$14,631,385,818	51.0%
Instruction-Related Services (12,13)	\$1,520,317	2.3%	\$127,614,776	3.0%	\$772,745,118	2.7%
Instructional Leadership	\$518,720	0.8%	\$49,471,606	1.2%	\$341,707,491	1.2%

(21)						
School Leadership (23)	\$3,142,922	4.8%	\$221,916,148	5.2%	\$1,503,291,919	5.2%
Support Services - Student (31,32,33)	\$2,453,935	3.7%	\$171,226,424	4.0%	\$1,151,876,566	4.0%
Student Transportation (34)	\$1,277,577	1.9%	\$70,073,282	1.6%	\$745,071,074	2.6%
Child Nutrition (35)	\$1,823,284	2.8%	\$190,071,857	4.5%	\$1,379,203,123	4.8%
Co-curricular/ Extracurricular Activities (36)	\$1,549,518	2.4%	\$72,473,201	1.7%	\$642,534,469	2.2%
Central Administration (41)	\$2,486,762	3.8%	\$146,851,554	3.4%	\$1,017,293,427	3.5%
Plant Maintenance and Operations (51)	\$7,774,179	11.8%	\$432,395,439	10.2%	\$2,899,134,491	10.1%
Security and Monitoring Services (52)	\$265,478	0.4%	\$24,968,085	0.6%	\$171,833,893	0.6%
Data Processing Services (53)	\$722,982	1.1%	\$52,607,730	1.2%	\$314,553,132	1.1%
Other*	\$13,292,949	20.2%	\$534,312,756	12.5%	\$3,097,208,226	10.8%
Total Budgeted Expenditures	\$65,927,216	100.0%	\$4,259,870,244	100.0%	\$28,667,838,747	100.0%

Source: TEA, Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS), 2001-02.

*"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.

After full implementation of the rating system, each district's ratings will be reported to TEA and available to the general public and to other interested persons and entities.

School FIRST performance ratings are based upon each districts' response to a series of questions that can be answered by "Yes" or "No." A high number of "No" answers indicates the district has serious financial performance issues. The rating system contains 21 indicators that are assigned equal points and cover such things as financial allocations, tax collections, financial strength, operating cost management, administrative cost management, personnel management, data quality, compliance with rules and regulations, cash management and overall business management. The ratings and scores are presented in **Exhibit 6-2**.

**Exhibit 6-2
School FIRST
Rating Criteria**

Rating	Score: Number of "No" Answers
Superior Achievement	0 - 2
Above Standard Achievement	3 - 4
Standard Achievement	5 - 6
Substandard Achievement	=> 7 or No to one default indicator
Suspended - Data Quality	Serious data quality issues

Source: TEA, School Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas (School FIRST), 2001.

In addition to the point score, failure to meet the criteria for any one of three critical indicators, or failure to answer "Yes" to two particular criteria will result in an automatic rating of "Substandard Achievement." **Exhibit 6-3** details those five critical indicators.

**Exhibit 6-3
School FIRST
Critical Criteria Indicators**

Criteria Number	Criteria Description	Result of a "No" answer
1	Was total fund balance less reserved fund balance	Automatic

	greater than zero in the General Fund?	Substandard Rating
2	Were there NO disclosures in the annual financial report and/or other sources of information concerning default on bonded indebtedness obligations?	Automatic Substandard Rating
3	Was the annual financial report filed within one month after the deadline, depending on the district's fiscal year end?	Automatic Substandard Rating
4	Was there an unqualified opinion in the annual financial report?	If both 4 and 5 are "No" Automatic Substandard Rating
5	Did the annual financial report NOT disclose any instance(s) of material weakness in internal controls?	If both 4 and 5 are "No" Automatic Substandard Rating

Source: TEA, School FIRST.

Sanctions will be applied to districts that receive a "Substandard Achievement" rating. Additional sanctions could apply if issues arise relating to data quality. Sanctions could result in the assignment of a financial monitor or master by the TEA Accountability Department in accordance with Chapter 39 of the Texas Education Code. Additional sanctions could involve an accreditation investigation that could result in specific requirements for improvements in financial management.

The School FIRST rating system begins a transitional implementation in 2002-03 with TEA sending preliminary and final paper reports to each district and their Regional Education Service Center. Upon full implementation of the rating system in 2003-04, the Board of Trustees will publish an annual report describing the financial management performance of the district.

If the School FIRST rating system had been in place from 1994-95 through 2001-02, RISD would have received an automatic Substandard Achievement rating for five of the eight years due to its deficit fund balance. (**Exhibit 6-4**).

Exhibit 6-4
RISD Total General Fund Balances - Actual
1994-95 through 2001-02

Year	Total General Fund Balance
2001-02	\$4,545,575
2000-01	\$1,147,752
1999-2000	(\$1,072,183)
1998-99	(\$206,966)
1997-98	\$201,895
1996-97	(\$1,433,518)
1995-96	(\$2,266,952)
1994-95	(\$675,490)

Source: RISD audited annual financial and compliance reports filed with TEA, 1995 through 2002.

For more than 10 years, RISD has experienced financial difficulties. The rapid growth in student enrollment; an influx of urban residents attracted to the Rockwall area by its beauty, proximity to Dallas, and low tax rate; and a general unwillingness on the part of the board to increase tax rates to fund the rising expenditures associated with a burgeoning student population contributed to the district's financial difficulties.

As **Exhibit 6-4** shows, before 2000-01, the district had frequent negative general operating fund balances. Historically, RISD has borrowed funds from the depository bank for operating purposes during the fall and paid the money back in January when it collected the bulk of its tax collections. As a result of improved financial conditions in 2002-03, RISD did not have to borrow for operating purposes in advance of significant tax collections, which means the district will save the interest paid in prior years.

At the beginning of the 1990s, the philosophy of most RISD board members was to accept the new growth but not take the necessary steps to accommodate it. While several board members recognized that more effort was needed to keep pace with growth financially, the majority of the board resisted tax increases and opted to keep the tax rate at a minimum. The result was dangerously low or negative fund balances with which to operate the district.

The failure of several bond elections in the 1980s contributed to the board's reluctance to address the growing needs of the district. The bonds, which sought to fund the construction of a second high school, became an emotional and divisive issue in the community. After the bond issues failed, the majority of the board did not want to return to the voters.

In 1999, the board began work on a long-range strategic plan with a goal of demonstrating to the community that the district's rapid growth required additional school facilities. By involving a broad cross-section of the community in the strategic planning process, the board hoped to improve its communication with the public, increase community input into the decision making process and raise the community's level of trust in its ability to plan for the district's needs.

Until recently, however, most board members still believed that RISD could achieve more with less. Although state funding formulas increasingly emphasized greater local taxing requirements, most of the board resisted adjusting to meet the additional funding challenges. Moreover, burgeoning student enrollments with greater ethnic diversity required new programs, staff increases, higher operating costs, new facilities and more repairs to existing facilities. Still, the board decided against raising taxes to offset reductions in state funding. Not until 2001, when a new superintendent and a new board raised the tax rate by 25 cents did the district begin to "catch up" financially.

Texas school districts receive local, state and federal revenue. Local revenues are tied largely to local property values and tax rates. In 2001-02, the local property tax accounted for 76.9 percent of RISD's total revenue base. RISD's development growth and corresponding increase in property values have caused an increase in the proportionate funding of program costs from local property taxes. From 1997-98 through 2001-02, local revenue as a percent of total funding for RISD has increased by almost 7 percent. At the same time, state revenue as a percent of total funding has decreased by 6.3 percent (**Exhibit 6-5**).

Exhibit 6-5
RISD Budgeted Sources of Revenue
as a Percent of Total Budgeted Revenue
1997-98 through 2001-02

Source of Revenue	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	Percentage Change, 1997-98 through 2001-02

Local property tax	70.0%	73.1%	68.8%	73.0%	76.9%	6.90%
Other local and intermediate	5.3%	5.1%	7.5%	5.9%	5.0%	(0.30%)
State	23.4%	20.6%	23.1%	20.0%	17.1%	(6.30%)
Federal	1.3%	1.2%	0.6%	1.1%	1.0%	(0.30%)
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	N/A

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

In 2001-02, Texas school districts budgeted an average of 50.4 percent of their funds from the local property tax and 41.9 percent in revenue from the state. In RISD, those percentages are 76.9 and 17.1 percent, respectively. The averages for the region are 63.3 and 28.9 percent, respectively (**Exhibit 6-6**).

Exhibit 6-6
RISD, Peer Districts, Region 10 and the State
Sources of Budgeted Revenue as Percentage of Total Budgeted
Revenue
2001-02

Entity	Local Property Tax	Other Local and Intermediate	State	Federal
Carroll	89.5%	6.1%	4.3%	0.0%
Frisco	86.3%	5.9%	7.2%	0.6%
Coppell	85.5%	6.9%	7.1%	0.5%
Eanes	84.9%	8.4%	6.6%	0.0%
McKinney	79.5%	5.9%	13.3%	1.3%
RISD	76.9%	5.0%	17.1%	1.0%
Allen	70.4%	8.0%	21.1%	0.5%
Region 10	63.3%	6.1%	28.9%	1.7%
State	50.4%	4.5%	41.9%	3.2%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2001-02.

A comparison with the selected peer districts shows RISD has less business property value than the state, all peer districts and Regional Education Service Center X (Region 10) (**Exhibit 6-7**).

Exhibit 6-7
Property Values by Category as a Percentage of Total Property Value
RISD, Peer Districts, Region 10 and the State
2001-02

Entity	Business	Residential	Land	Oil and Gas	Other
Coppell	52.3%	44.7%	2.9%	0.0%	0.1%
McKinney	28.3%	63.9%	7.1%	0.0%	0.7%
Allen	27.2%	66.4%	6.4%	0.0%	0.0%
Frisco	23.7%	64.3%	11.8%	0.0%	0.2%
Eanes	22.0%	73.7%	4.3%	0.0%	0.0%
Carroll	20.9%	74.5%	4.6%	0.0%	0.1%
RISD	20.3%	69.2%	10.1%	0.0%	0.4%
Region 10	40.5%	54.5%	4.3%	0.1%	0.6%
State	37.9%	50.3%	6.7%	4.0%	1.0%

Source: TEA, AEIS, 2001-02.

Property taxes are the most important source of local revenues. Local property tax rates may include a portion dedicated to maintenance and operations (M&O), which supports the district's general operating needs, and an interest and sinking (I&S) portion, which supports the district's debt service. In 2001-02, RISD levied an M&O tax rate of \$1.50 per \$100 of assessed valuation and an I&S tax of \$0.34 per \$100 of assessed valuation.

Based on local property values assessed by the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts, RISD's calculated maintenance and operations (M&O) property tax rate has increased by 26.4 percent since 1997-98, while the total number of students has increased by 27.8 percent. Local property values have increased by 69.7 percent for this same period. The rapid increase in the M&O tax rate from 2000-01 through 2001-02 shows that RISD sought an expedient way to pay for the increased operating costs associated with a rise in student enrollment. In recent years, comparatively low M&O tax rates have contributed to the district's financial difficulties. RISD has adopted the maximum M&O tax rate of \$1.50 per \$100 property

value for 2001-02, resulting in an improved financial position for this period(Exhibit 6-8).

Exhibit 6-8
RISD Comptroller Tax Rates, Assessed Property Values
and Per-Student Property Values
1997-98 through 2001-02

Category	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	Percent Change from 1997-98
Maintenance and operations tax rate	\$1.19	\$1.27	\$1.29	\$1.37	\$1.50	26.4%
Interest and sinking fund tax rate	\$0.30	\$0.23	\$0.23	\$0.21	\$0.34	13.3%
Total tax rate	\$1.49	\$1.49	\$1.52	\$1.58	\$1.84	23.5%
Total property value (in thousands of dollars)	\$1,589,331	\$1,722,380	\$1,969,248	\$2,358,413	\$2,697,316	69.7%
Total students	6,892	7,250	7,700	8,359	8,810	27.8%
Value per student	\$230,605	\$237,570	\$255,746	\$282,141	\$306,165	32.8%

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

School districts adopt a tax rate each year for general operations and debt service. Calculation of this rate depends on the certified tax roll provided by a central appraisal district (CAD). School districts levy taxes on real and personal property. School districts, including RISD, offer exemptions for homesteads of \$15,000 to all taxpayers and additional exemptions for homesteads of \$10,000 to taxpayers who are at least 65 years old or who are disabled. Land used for agricultural purposes is reduced to agricultural value upon application by the landowner.

RISD received more than \$36 million in 2000-01 from property tax and related collections that provided approximately 77 percent of RISD operating funds. The Rockwall County CAD performs RISD's tax billing and collection function. The CAD handles all six other political subdivision tax collections in Rockwall County except for the county itself, which handles its own tax collections.

RISD's agreement with the CAD is based on a cost of \$4.10 per account, including uncollected delinquent taxes. The annual budget for providing this service to RISD in 2002-03 is \$104,259 (**Exhibit 6-9**). CAD costs are based on the actual costs of personnel, technology and supplies needed to assess and collect taxes.

Exhibit 6-9
RISD and Other Rockwall County
Political Subdivision Tax Collection Costs
2002-03

Jurisdiction	Current Collectable Accounts	Delinquent Collectable Accounts	Total Collectable Accounts	Cost per Account	Total Costs
RISD	23,599	1,830	25,429	\$4.10	\$104,259
City of Rockwall	12,912	791	13,703	\$4.10	\$56,183
Royse City ISD	6,495	1,004	7,499	\$4.10	\$30,746
City of Heath	2,830	172	3,002	\$4.10	\$12,308
City of Royse City	2,463	265	2,728	\$4.10	\$11,184
City of Fate	837	75	912	\$4.10	\$3,740
Total	49,136	4,137	53,273	\$4.10	\$218,420

Source: RISD and CAD Contract for Tax Assessment and Collection, 2002-03.

Other local sources of revenue include interest from time deposits, food service sales and athletic revenues.

State funding is based on formulas approved by the Texas Legislature. The major factor in the funding formulas is average daily attendance (ADA). The formulas also contain additional funding for programs designed to benefit educationally disadvantaged students. Although the formulas and special allocations are set by the legislature, districts can have an impact by applying for special programs funding. RISD state funds were 17.1 percent of total revenues for 2001-02.

RISD also receives federal revenues for services it provides to students. Federal funding is almost entirely obtained through grants. The grants usually fund specific programs or target a group of students with special needs. The money may not be used for normal operating expenditures and are usually reimbursements of funds the district has already spent. In addition, most federal grants require the funding to be used to supplement existing programs. The RISD federal funds accounted for 1.0 percent of the total 2001-02 revenue.

From 1997-98 to 2001-02, RISD's per-student budgeted expenditures have increased 52 percent (**Exhibit 6-10**). Instruction and instructional leadership spending has increased 34.4 percent, while school leadership spending has increased 59.4 percent. The increase in the state average for total expenditures per student during this same period was 23.5 percent.

Exhibit 6-10
RISD Expenditures per Student
1997-98 through 2001-02

Expenditure Category	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	Percentage Change 1997-98 through 2001-02
Instruction and instructional leadership	\$2,502	\$2,587	\$2,939	\$2,935	\$3,362	34.4%
School leadership	\$224	\$253	\$324	\$348	\$357	59.4%
Central administration	\$173	\$210	\$241	\$258	\$282	63.0%
Other operating	\$1,187	\$1,320	\$1,542	\$1,660	\$1,974	66.3%
Total operations	\$4,086	\$4,370	\$5,046	\$5,201	\$5,975	46.2%
Total non-operations	\$836	\$847	\$945	\$1,077	\$1,508	80.4%
Total per student	\$4,922	\$5,217	\$5,991	\$6,278	\$7,483	52.0%
State total per student	\$5,597	\$5,853	\$6,354	\$6,638	\$6,913	23.5%

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

A TSPR survey of RISD parents, teachers, principals, assistant principals and administrative staff regarding RISD's current financial management operations revealed perceptions that the district is adequately addressing the district's financial needs. Survey questions solicited input on site-based budgeting, financial training, financial reports, allocation of financial resources and availability of financial reports to community members. Seventy percent or more of respondents in all categories reported positive perceptions or had no opinion about the survey questions (**Exhibit 6-11**).

Exhibit 6-11
Combined TSPR Survey Results Regarding RISD Financial
Management
2002

Survey Question	Teachers		Principals and Assistant Principals		Administrative and Support Staff		Parents	
	Agree/ No Opinion	Disagree/ No Response	Agree/ No Opinion	Disagree/ No Response	Agree/ No Opinion	Disagree/ No Response	Agree/ No Opinion	Disagree/ No Response
Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers.	71.0%	29.0%	95.0%	5.0%	77.0%	23.0%	82.0%	18.0%
School administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	86.0%	14.0%	84.0%	16.0%	80.0%	20.0%	84.0%	16.0%
The district financial reports are easy to understand and read.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	76.0%	24.0%	79.0%	21.0%
Financial resources are	72.0%	28.0%	95.0%	5.0%	90.0%	10.0%	N/A	N/A

allocated fairly and equitably at my school.								
Financial reports are made available to community members when requested.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	87.0%	13.0%

Source: TSPR survey results, November 2002.

As TEA guidelines recommend, RISD keeps an annual budget calendar to help the district to compile its budget in accordance with required state time frames (**Exhibit 6-12**). State law requires that RISD prepare its budget by August 20 and adopt it by August 31 for the next fiscal year, which begins September 1. The board approves budget amendments during the fiscal year as necessary to ensure spending with appropriate budgetary authority and with the resources available to fund disbursement.

**Exhibit 6-12
RISD Budget Calendar
2002-03**

Date	Activity
March 5, 2002	District budget orientation for school principals
March 21, 2002	District budget orientation for administrators
April 26, 2002	School budgets due to business office
May 8, 2002	Department budgets due to business office
May-June 2002	Meet individual administrators
May-July 2002	Board budget planning workshops
May 2002	Preliminary estimated taxable values from tax office
May 31, 2002	Build proposed budget
July 25, 2002	Certification of 2002 tax appraisal roll from tax office
August 19, 2002	Budget and tax rate adoption

Source: RISD business manager, November 2002.

RISD maintains its accounting records on software systems developed and supported by EDP Enterprises Inc. EDP Enterprises provides similar software and support to many other Texas school districts. RISD uses this software for annual and monthly accounting, payroll, financial reporting, purchasing and fixed assets recordkeeping.

RISD's financial software can generate a variety of reports for business-related areas. Summary reports include a summary of general ledger activity, comparisons of revenue with budget, budget status by organization (department, school, etc.) and budget status by program (technology, athletics, etc.).

Texas school districts have a fiduciary responsibility to protect publicly financed assets. Cash, employees, land, buildings, equipment and borrowing capacity all are school district assets. School districts must protect these assets from financial losses resulting from unforeseen events.

Districts should invest idle cash to maximize returns after board policy, principal preservation and liquidity considerations are met. Districts should also provide affordable health and worker's compensation insurance to employees; safeguard property from loss through damage, theft and unexpected events; and manage debt through timely principal and interest payments, while seizing opportunities to reduce interest costs.

One component of risk management is unemployment compensation. RISD reimburses the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) for unemployment benefits paid to former employees. In lieu of taxes, RISD pays into a fund an amount equal to the benefits paid to the former employees (**Exhibit 6-13**). RISD reports wages for employees and is billed quarterly for the amount of regular benefits and for 50 percent of the extended benefits paid to former employees during the previous quarter. RISD makes no tax payments but is subject to the same penalties as a taxed employer for failure to file reports and/or to make payments on time.

Exhibit 6-13
RISD Payments for Unemployment Benefits
1997-98 through 2001-02

	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02
Unemployment paid to TWC	\$2,223	\$2,046	\$860	\$13,176	\$15,985

Source: RISD executive director of Operations and Risk Management.

The assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations attributes the rapid rise in the unemployment reimbursement rate to an annual 6 percent staff growth, communication among employees about unemployment eligibility and an increase in employees' benefit levels paid by TWC.

Carrying adequate property and casualty insurance is another component of asset and risk management. Property and casualty insurance policies include liability for facilities, equipment and vehicles; personal injury; professional and general liability and loss of property, as illustrated in **Exhibit 6-14**.

Exhibit 6-14
RISD Property and Casualty Insurance Coverage and Premiums
2002-03

Company (Policy Number)	Policy Term	Premium	Coverage
Fireman's Fund (MXA80233805)	09/01/02-03	\$336,043	Commercial package policy on facilities coverage include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$143,619,865 blanket on real and personal property; • \$7,200,000 mechanical, electrical and pressure equipment - Comprehensive coverage (boiler and Machinery); • \$100,000 public employee dishonesty; • \$10,000 deductible (per occurrence) and 90 percent coinsurance except boiler and machinery and public employee dishonesty, \$1,000 deductible; • Equipment breakdown \$1 million limit \$1,000 deductible; • Band, computer, audio-visual equipment, phone system \$7,250,000 limit, \$250 deductible; • Crime \$1,000 deductible.

Fireman's Fund (MXA80233805)	09/01/02-03	Included	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School board liability: • Limit of liability: \$1,000,000 • Each policy period: \$2,000 deductible
Fireman's Fund (MXA80233805)	09/01/02-03	Included	<p>General liability coverage document: policy provides legal liability coverage for bodily injury and property damage claims from the public. Limits of liability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$2 million general aggregate • \$2 million products/completed operations aggregate • \$1 million personal and advertising injury • \$1 million each occurrence • \$10,000 medical payment • \$1,000 deductible
Fireman's Fund (MXA80233805)	09/01/02-03	\$52,371	<p>Automobile liability and physical damage coverage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • collision, specified perils \$500 deductible • collision - no coverage
American International Co. (UST8088427)	09/01/02-03	\$5,381	<p>Underground storage tank, Limits of liability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$1 million each incident • \$1 million aggregate limit • \$5,000 deductible
Employers General	09/01/02-03	\$403,188	<p>Workers compensation, bodily injury by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accident \$100,000 each accident • disease \$100,000 each employee

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> disease \$500,000 policy limit
--	--	--	--

Source: RISD executive director for Operations and Risk Management.

Employee benefits are another aspect of asset and risk management. Employee benefits include comprehensive medical insurance, dental insurance, alternate benefit program, vision care insurance, life insurance, disability insurance, supplemental cancer insurance and a flexible benefit plan under the Section 125 Cafeteria Plan.

RISD provides health insurance benefits under a self-funded insurance plan administered through United HealthCare of Dallas, a firm that specializes in managing benefit plans. Through a self-funded plan, the district elects to retain risks associated with district employee health insurance claims, rather than use an independent insurance company for coverage. With a self-funded health insurance plan, the district creates its own "insurance operation" by charging premiums expected to cover the costs of the plan to other operating funds and district employees. United HealthCare advises the district annually on how much to pay into the plan. The self-funded plan's basic characteristics are similar to those of outside providers. However, the plan is supposed to provide RISD more control over plan provisions, external health service providers and administrative costs charged to plan operations.

RISD purchases insurance coverage to prevent bad experience claims from having a catastrophic effect on the plan's ongoing operations and to protect the district from paying losses from general revenue funds. An individual claim has a stop loss of \$125,000. At this point, the reinsurance policy pays the claim, instead of the claim being paid with district funds. The aggregate stop loss for the district has reinsurance at 125 percent of expected claims, or more than \$3.5 million.

United HealthCare charges fees for these services under the contract. Fees for the services are shown in **Exhibit 6-15**.

Exhibit 6-15
United HealthCare Fee Schedule
2002-03

Services	Fee Per Employee
Choice+ Plan	\$45.42

Source: RISD assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations, December 2002.

Specific and aggregate stop loss insurance rates are shown in **Exhibit 6-16**.

Exhibit 6-16
Specific and Aggregate Stop Loss Insurance Rates
2002-03

Category	Specific Rates	Aggregate Rates
Fee per employee	\$15.75	\$1.36

Source: RISD assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations, December 2002.

RISD provides one option for health insurance. The plan includes network and non-network benefits. Network benefits do not require an annual deductible and generally provide coverage at a higher level than non-network benefits. Network benefits apply when a non-network provider is used for medically necessary emergency health service or is approved through United HealthCare Services, Inc. Non-network benefits apply when services from non-network providers are used. Non-network benefits are subject to an annual deductible and are generally covered at a lower level than network benefits. Non-network benefits require copayments and prior authorization for certain health services, and a claim must be filed for reimbursement.

Significant benefits under the medical expenses plan include:

- a \$30 copayment for an office visit at a network physician;
- a \$35 copayment for a visit to an urgent care center;
- a \$75 copayment for outpatient emergency health services;
- a retail prescription drug card (31-day supply) with \$10 generic copayment/\$25 name-brand copayment/\$50 copayment, if not on the preferred drug list;
- a mail-order prescription drug card (90-day supply) with \$20 generic copayment/\$50 name-brand copayment/\$100 if not on the preferred drug list;
- a \$30 copayment for eye examinations;
- 20 percent of eligible expenses for inpatient hospital and related services; and

- an out-of-pocket maximum of \$3,000 per covered person, not to exceed \$6,000 per family.

Monthly health plan premiums are shown in **Exhibit 6-17**.RISD pays the employee-only premium.

Exhibit 6-17
Monthly Employee Premiums for
RISD Medical Expenses Health Plan
2002-03

Type of Coverage	Premium
Employee only	\$252.23
Employee/child	\$420.33
Employee/spouse	\$520.33
Employee/family	\$700.45

Source: RISD assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations, November 2002.

RISD offers an alternate benefit program for employees who choose not to enroll in the district's health insurance program. RISD pays up to \$350 directly to the employee for verified out-of-pocket medical expenses. RISD also pays the premium for a \$15,000 term life insurance policy for employees and offers dental insurance options for employees. Monthly premiums for the dental plans range from \$17.50 to \$88.50 (**Exhibit 6-18**).

Exhibit 6-18
Monthly Employee Premiums
RISD Dental Plan
2002-03

Type of Coverage	Indemnity Plan	PPO Plan
Employee only	\$17.50	\$26.12
Employee plus one	\$33.76	\$50.78
Employee plus family	\$51.76	\$88.50

Source: RISD assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations, November 2002.

RISD also offers vision insurance options for employees. Monthly premiums under the various vision plans range from \$7.42 to \$19.26 (**Exhibit 6-19**).

Exhibit 6-19
Monthly Employee Premiums
RISD Vision Plan
2002-03

Type of Coverage	Premium
Employee only	\$7.42
Family	\$19.26

Source: RISD assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations, November 2002.

Monthly premiums for the district's medical health plan, indemnity insurance, PPO plan and vision care programs are displayed in **Exhibit 6-20**.

Exhibit 6-20
RISD Monthly Premiums for Benefits Package
2002-03

Type of Coverage	Medial Health Plan Premium	Indemnity Plan Premium	PPO Plan Premium	Vision Plan Premium
Employee only	\$252.23	\$17.50	\$26.12	\$7.42
Employee/child	\$420.33	\$33.76	\$50.78	N/A
Employee/spouse	\$520.33	\$33.76	\$50.78	N/A
Employee/family	\$700.45	\$51.76	\$88.50	\$19.26

Source: RISD assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations, November 2002.

Section 125 of the Internal Revenue Code allows employees to deduct premiums for health, dental, cancer, other life insurance and medical/dependent care reimbursement from their salary before federal income tax is calculated. RISD offers this option to all employees.

Exhibit 6-21 compares RISD's monthly premium costs with selected peer districts. RISD and Eanes ISD pay the entire employee-only premium cost. The amount paid by RISD is the second-highest premium cost among the peer districts.

Exhibit 6-21
Monthly Cost per Person for Medical Insurance
RISD and Peer Districts
2002-03

District	Amount of Premium Paid by the District	Cost to Employee			
		Employee Only	Employee/ Child	Employee/ Spouse	Employee/ Family
Eanes	\$254.14	\$0.00	\$223.64	\$312.10	\$419.11
RISD	\$252.23	\$0.00	\$168.10	\$268.10	\$448.22
Allen	\$235.00	\$55.00	\$210.00	\$290.00	\$450.00
Coppell	\$226.00	\$25.00	\$247.00	\$247.00	\$358.00
Frisco	\$225.00	\$10.00	\$175.00	\$165.00	\$205.00
McKinney	\$225.00	\$25.00	\$210.00	\$240.00	\$400.00
Carroll	\$275.00	\$0.00	\$301.00	\$331.00	\$538.00

Source: RISD and Peer Districts email and telephone survey, December 2002.

In RISD, a third-party insurance company provides workers' compensation coverage. **Exhibit 6-22** shows RISD's experience with workers' compensation claims from 2000-01 through January 31, 2003. Although data for 2002-03 is incomplete and only available through January 31, 2003, costs are increasing.

Exhibit 6-22
RISD Workers' Compensation Claims and Costs
2000-01 through January 31, 2003

Category	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03 (*)
Total injuries	119	106	18
Total cost	\$228,062	\$238,172	\$87,303
Average cost per injury	\$1,916	\$2,247	\$4,850

Source: Employers General Insurance Group, Inc., Statement of Claims Report, 2000-01 through *January 31, 2003.

Exhibit 6-23 shows workers' compensation claims and costs by department or school for 2002-03, through January 31, 2003.

Exhibit 6-23
RISD Workers' Compensation Claims and Costs by Department and School
2002-03 (*)

Department/School	Number of Claims	Costs Incurred by RISD	Average Cost per Claim
Cullins-Lake Pointe Elementary School	1	\$18,000	\$18,000
Maintenance Department	3	\$38,541	\$12,847
Utley Freshman Center	2	\$11,337	\$5,669
Warehouse/Central Receiving	1	\$5,500	\$5,500

Exhibit 6-23
RISD Workers' Compensation Claims and Costs by Department and School
2002-03 (*)

Department/School	Number of Claims	Costs Incurred by RISD	Average Cost per Claim
Transportation Department	2	\$9,323	\$4,662
Pullen Elementary School	1	\$2,501	\$2,501
Cain Middle School	1	\$351	\$351
Child Nutrition Department	1	\$350	\$350
Reinhardt Elementary School	1	\$350	\$350
J.W. Williams Middle School	2	\$700	\$350
Rockwall High School	2	\$350	\$175
Dobbs Elementary School	1	\$0	\$0

Totals	18	\$87,303	\$4,850
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*Source: Employers General Insurance Group, Inc., Statement of Claims Report, 2002-03.
(*) Through January 31, 2003.*

From September 1, 2002 through January 31, 2003, the largest number of claims and the highest costs were incurred by RISD's maintenance department.

Chapter 6

FINANCIAL, ASSET AND RISK MANAGEMENT

A. ORGANIZATION, MANAGEMENT AND STAFFING

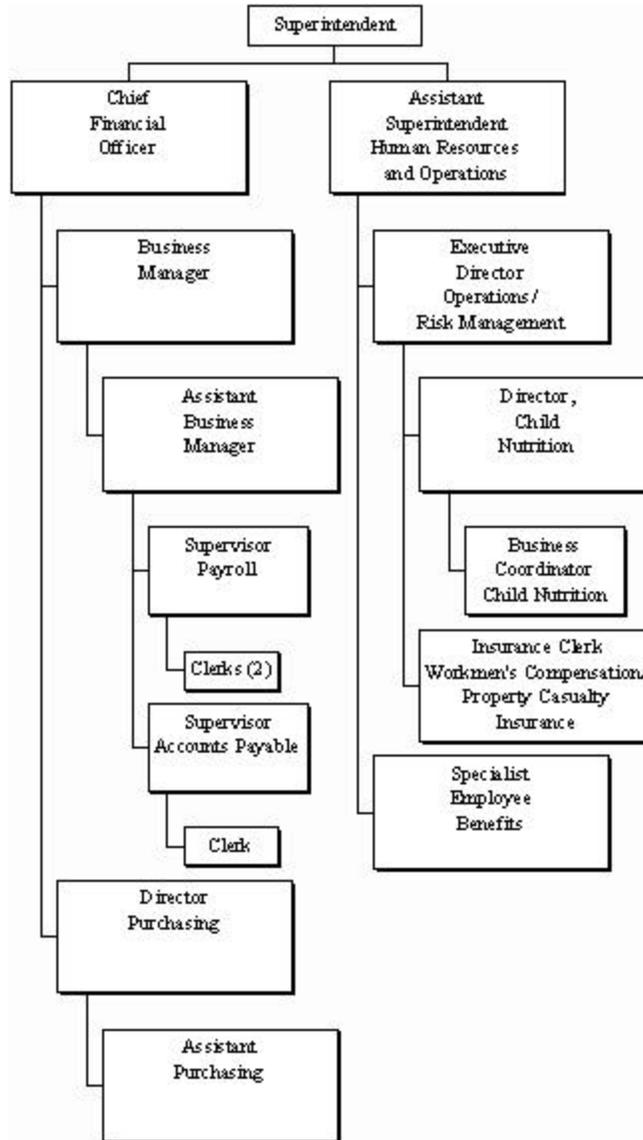
RISD's financial operations and business services are under the direction of the chief financial officer (CFO). The CFO oversees budget, accounting and payroll operations. At the time of the TSPR review, the district was unable to fill this position and retained an interim CFO until a permanent replacement could be found. In February 2003, the district hired a permanent, full-time CFO.

RISD's asset and risk management duties are assigned to several different departments. The CFO and staff operate RISD's cash and investment management. The director of Purchasing manages the district's fixed assets. The executive director of Operations/Risk Management administers the RISD risk management program, which includes workers' compensation and property and casualty insurance coverage. The assistant superintendent of Human Resources/Operations administers unemployment and the self-funded health insurance plan.

RISD's cash management and investment policies are included in CDA (LEGAL) and CDA (LOCAL). The RISD Board of Trustees updated CDA (LOCAL) in May 2000. Trustees review and approve the policy annually and the last review was done in March, 2002. All investments made by the district comply with the Public Funds Investment Act (PFIA) and with all federal, state and local statutes, rules and regulations.

Exhibit 6-24 shows the organization of RISD's financial, asset and risk management operations.

Exhibit 6-24
RISD Financial, Asset and Risk Management Organization
November 2002



Source: RISD superintendent, November 2002.

Management responsibilities for financial, asset and risk management are shown in **Exhibit 6-25**.

Exhibit 6-25
RISD Financial, Asset and Risk Management Responsibilities
November 2002

Position	Financial, Asset and Risk Management Responsibilities
Chief financial officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acts as chief financial advisor to the board and the superintendent. • Directs the receipt, disbursement and safekeeping of all funds. • Analyzes and reviews cash-flow and expenditure projections. • Manages cash and investment operations. • Acts as the designated primary investment officer. • Manages district debt structure and issuance. • Administers all financial affairs of the district. • Ensures the compliance of all accounting systems with applicable laws and regulations.
Business manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervises the business office. • Ensures that financial transactions are processed accurately and on time. • Develops and implements controls and procedures for cash receipts, payroll and accounts payable. • Develops and implements controls for student activity funds. • Develops and implements business office procedures and guidelines. • Acts as the designated secondary investment officer. • Prepares monthly investment reports. • Coordinates and reviews all investment activities. • Prepares cash-flow projections. • Manages bank accounts.
Assistant business manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manages daily cash activities for cash-flow analysis.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performs general ledger activities for deposits and investment transfers. • Reconciles bank accounts and investment accounts. • Issues checks for some bank accounts. • Transfers money from investment pools.
<p>Supervisor and clerks - payroll</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Input employee time and process approximately 1,200 monthly and 300 semimonthly payroll checks. • Prepare direct deposits for approximately 65 percent of all payroll checks. • Process and submit monthly payroll tax returns. • Process and prepare payments for all monthly deduction amounts, including retirement system contributions, child support payments and elective salary deferral plans. • Process and maintain appropriate coding of employee salary and wage information for input into accounting records for budget review. • Maintain and update salary and deduction information for all district employees on RISD's automated system under approval instructions of the RISD Human Resources Department. • Maintain all supporting documentation for vendor payments, including completed and approved multi-part purchase order and manual payment authorization forms. • Prepare weekly disbursement checks for vendors from food service and general operating bank accounts.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research payment and requisition status questions for all vendors and RISD departments. • Process all travel authorizations for staff and students. • Check and correct account coding for input into accounting records for budget review.
Director - Purchasing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directs and manages the purchasing activities of the district. • Develops and implements purchasing procedures to process bids and purchase orders. • Ensures compliance with applicable state laws and regulations. • Coordinates the districtwide distribution of supplies and equipment.
Assistant - Purchasing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receives and processes all properly approved purchase requisitions for purchase order development. • Contacts district personnel and vendors to correct or obtain needed information. • Confirms balances in accounts for all requisitions. • Maintains department physical and computerized files, including the fixed asset system file. • Types all necessary correspondence. • Receives incoming calls, answers questions and directs calls to the proper party. • Keeps informed of and complies with state and district policies and regulations concerning primary job functions. • Inputs adjustments data monthly to computerized inventory file on a monthly basis. • Maintains online vendor file. • Maintains vendor catalog files for

	<p>the department.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helps purchase supplies and equipment for the district by obtaining and evaluating informal quotations. • Assists with preparations of bidding documents, including notice and instruction to bidders, specifications and bid form, following established district criteria and state purchasing regulations. • Assists in initiating contact with vendors to check on supply and equipment availability, and issuing purchase orders and contracts. • Works cooperatively with district personnel to determine appropriate specifications, sources, availability, pricing, shipping and receiving. • Instructs district personnel in proper methods of data entry for online purchasing.
<p>Assistant superintendent, Human Resources and Operations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administers employee evaluation program. • Administers self-insured health insurance program. • Administers exempt and nonexempt compensation programs and ensures compliance with federal laws. • Implements policies and oversees the processes associated with employee complaints and grievances. • Administers employee contracts. • Administers salary schedules and ensures compliance with federal laws. • Ensures that personnel programs are cost effective and that funds are managed prudently.
<p>Executive director. Operations/Risk</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directs risk management. loss

<p>Management</p>	<p>control and safety programs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directs workers' compensation, unemployment, and property and casualty insurance negotiations. • Reviews and responds to all unemployment claims. • Serves as district representative for Texas Workforce Commission and Texas Workers' Compensation Commission hearings. • Complies, maintains and files all physical and computerized reports, records and other documents required for risk management. • Monitors and provides trend analysis to upper management for all lines of insurance. • Monitors insurance program budgets and ensures programs are cost-effective and are managed prudently.
<p>Executive director, Operations/Risk Management, continued</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works with brokers, insurers, service providers and district personnel to design, implement and monitor safety, loss prevention and claims administration programs. • Implements federal, state and board risk management policies. • Provides budgetary advise to upper management regarding asset and risk liabilities. • Develops training options to ensure exemplary risk management operations.
<p>Insurance clerk - Workers Compensation/Property/Casualty Insurance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receives, processes and files accident reports and workers compensation claims. • Establishes and maintains contact with injured employees. • Communicates with workers compensation insurance carrier, doctors, nurses, campuses and health care providers to ensure

	<p>appropriate processing of claims.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assists insurance carriers with claims reviews and investigations.
<p>Specialist - Employee benefits</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administers employee benefit programs such as group health insurance, dental, life and medical reimbursement. • Processes employee benefit enrollment and changes. • Resolves administrative problems with insurance carrier representatives. • Conducts benefits orientation meetings and enrollment. • Prepares and verifies monthly premium statements.
<p>Director - Child Nutrition</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops menus that meet established nutritional requirements for students. • Develops training options and/or improvement plans to ensure the best operation in food service. • Directs and manages the district's food service programs. • Ensures that programs are cost-effective and funds are managed prudently. • Compiles budgets and cost estimates based on documented program needs. • Implements the policies established by federal and state law, State Board of Education rules and the local board policy in food service. • Compiles, maintains and files all reports, records and other documents required. • Assists with the development of a cost-effective and efficient system for procurement of all materials that meet federal procurement and TEA standards. • Initiates purchase orders and bids in

	<p>accordance with budgetary limitations and district policies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishes and directs the process for free and reduced-price lunch applications, following U.S. Department of Agriculture and TEA guidelines for meal eligibility and reimbursement of federal funds. • Ensures that security measures are taken to protect food, supplies and equipment in school cafeterias, lunchrooms and warehouses. • Directs the testing of new products and recipe standardization.
Business coordinator - Child Nutrition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Records cash receipts. • Reconciles the bank account.

Source: RISD assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations and business manager job descriptions, November 2002.

FINDING

The overall financial condition of the district has steadily improved since July 2001, when the current superintendent began his tenure. The new superintendent has taken important and prudent steps to improve the control of resources, budgets and spending.

In fall 2001, the superintendent established a school board finance committee, which convenes monthly to oversee operating results and to determine the budget implications of requested budget amendments. The finance committee consists of the board president, two board members appointed by the board president and the district superintendent. The committee also reviews information that affects school funding such as average daily attendance estimates; property values, tax rates and collections; and long-term planning matters for continued RISD student population growth.

In 2001-02, the superintendent recommended a 25 cent tax increase to pay for added debt and to fund services to meet student needs. The proposed increase was an attempt to overcome years of tax rates that had hindered the district's ability to provide quality services. The superintendent also

established a process that includes contracting with the district's architects to provide a full-time project manager for all construction projects. As a result, the projects initiated by the 2001 bond issue have come in below budget and at or below projected cost.

As a result of the superintendent's and district's efforts, RISD had a \$4.5 million general fund balance for 2001-02.

The superintendent sought to establish an open line of communication with concerned citizens and improved community outreach efforts and training of upper-level RISD staff. The superintendent recommended increasing the maintenance tax rate to \$1.50 per \$100 of property value, which allowed the district to strengthen its financial foundation. Minimal community opposition surfaced against the budget or tax rate increase for 2001-02. RISD adopted the \$1.50 maintenance tax rate again in 2002-03, which will maximize the district's state funding over the next state budget biennium.

In October 2001, the superintendent hired a business manager under the CFO to improve the district's operating results and budget control practices. The business manager is an experienced school finance professional and a Texas Association of School Business Officials (TASBO) Certified Texas School Business Official (CTSBO). To earn the CTSBO designation from TASBO, a school business professional must have three years of school business experience, with at least two consecutive years in one district, and must have been a TASBO member for at least two years before applying for certification. The CTSBO applicant must have completed nine TASBO courses, three courses from each of three areas of specialization. General management courses are not an area of specialization, but a project may substitute for three courses in one area of specialization.

The business manager is one of two finance professionals on the RISD business staff. Although the new business manager was not involved in the 2001-02 budget, the combined efforts of the superintendent and the business department reduced the projected budgeted fund balance deficits, resulting in a positive projected fund balance for 2002-03.

For the district's 2001-02 audit, the superintendent rotated independent auditors. From 1995-96 through 2000-01, RISD had used the same audit firm. The superintendent felt the district would benefit from a fresh audit perspective. Although the new auditors were not the least expensive, the superintendent felt they were the most qualified, a key provision of state purchasing guidelines for professional services.

The new superintendent also helped coordinate the refinancing of two issues of district bonds for a savings of more than \$1.68 million, and negotiated a lease-purchase arrangement for athletic event parking that will limit district costs.

COMMENDATION

The superintendent has improved the district's overall financial condition and has created mechanisms ensuring its continued financial stability.

FINDING

Asset and risk responsibilities are fragmented between the executive director for Operations and Risk Management, the assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations and the business manager. This division of labor makes it more difficult to adequately perform the necessary oversight, review, financial reporting and budget analysis.

Key financial decisions are sometimes made by RISD business clerks or other office personnel lacking expertise and supervision. The TSPR team discovered additional internal control weaknesses in purchasing, bank reconciliation practices, disbursement processing and payroll data maintenance. For example, there are no checks and balances in place to ensure only payroll data authorized by Human Resources is entered for each employee. Under the existing system, it is possible for payroll data to be manipulated by unauthorized individuals and checks to be issued to nonexistent employees.

Insufficient staff, training and supervision could compromise the security and integrity of RISD's business and asset and risk operations. With the increasing complexity of state and local funding requirements, state budget shortfalls, higher health and casualty insurance costs and rapid student population growth, adequate and experienced staffing of the district's financial and asset and risk management is critical.

There is only one professional accountant position in the RISD business area other than the CFO.

According to job descriptions, both the executive director of Risk Management and Operations and the assistant superintendent for Operations and Human Resources are responsible for overseeing the district's operations. The executive director of Operations and Risk Management supervises Maintenance and Facilities, Transportation, Child Nutrition and Facility Use. The assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations has the same primary responsibility. Therefore,

the executive director position adds an extra layer of management and results in additional staffing costs to the district.

Fort Bend ISD has successfully consolidated and streamlined its risk management. The risk manager reports to the associate superintendent of Business and Finance. Insurance programs consist of group health care and employee benefit plans, workers' compensation insurance and property and casualty insurance. Fort Bend ISD's risk manager is responsible for employee health insurance and benefits, workers' compensation insurance, property casualty insurance, Section 125 Flexible Spending Accounts, 403 (b) and 457 retirement plans and the Owner Controlled Insurance Program (OCIP). Fort Bend ISD has achieved the following benefits from this risk management structure:

- comprehensive employee health care benefits and successful management of health plan costs;
- an efficient online benefit enrollment process;
- benefit plan features tailored to employee needs by using employee feedback;
- lower district workers' compensation costs as a result of information gained from a Workers' Compensation Task Force;
- high-quality, low-priced property casualty insurance due to favorable claims experience and aggressive negotiation of insurance contracts; and
- the introduction of an OCIP as part of a 1999 bond referendum with projected savings of \$3.1 million in insurance costs.

Recommendation 34:

Reorganize the business office and add one professional accountant position.

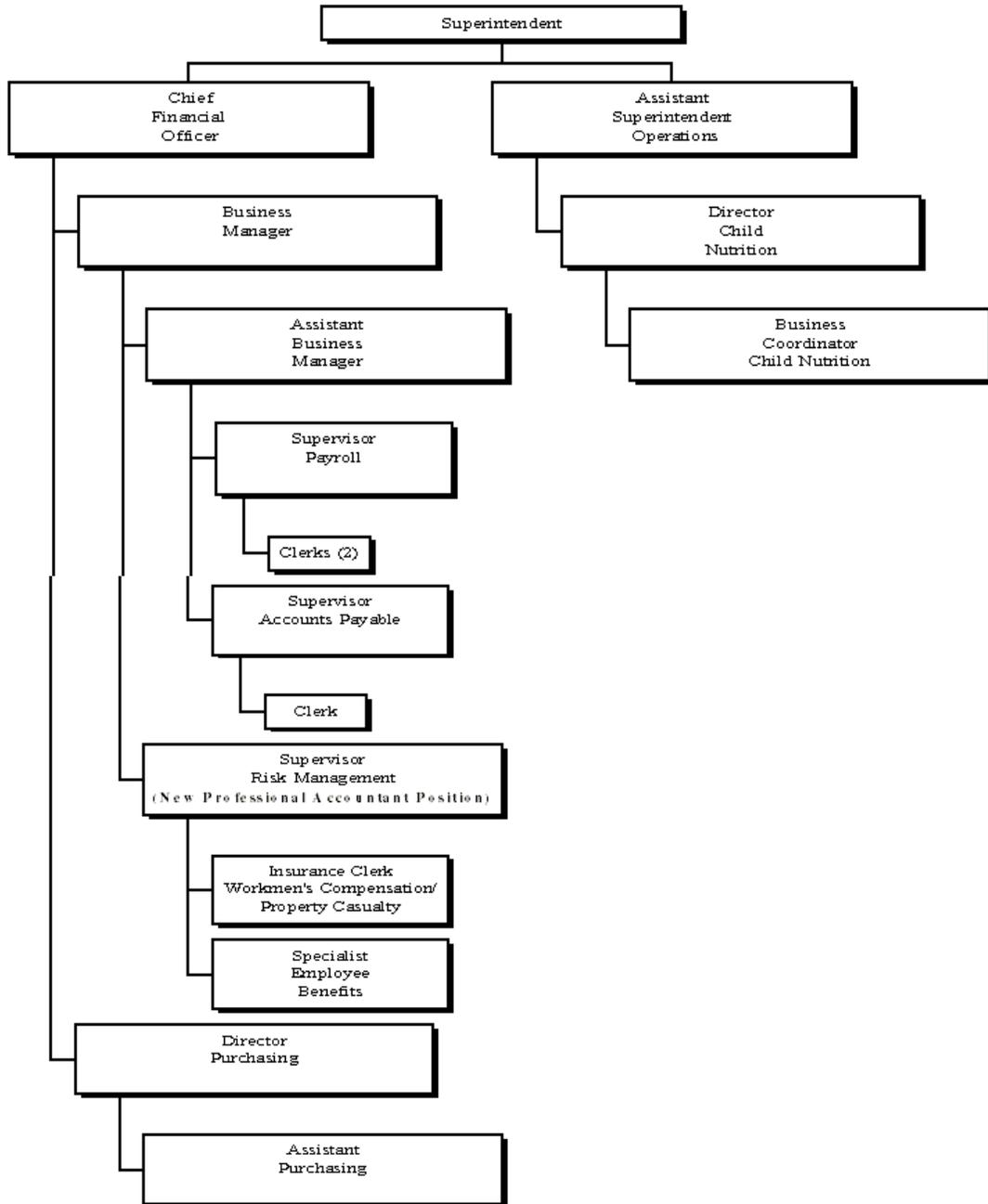
All risk-management, employee-benefit and fixed asset duties would be consolidated under the CFO. The newly created professional accountant position would assume or oversee the risk management responsibilities and report directly to the RISD business manager. The accountant would also help the business manager train and supervise the clerical staff.

The district plans to hire a director of Human Resources. Because oversight responsibility for risk management will be transferred to the newly created professional accountant position and human resources will be assigned to the new director of Human Resources, the executive director of Operations/Risk Management position is no longer necessary and would be eliminated. Remaining district operations should be supervised by the Assistant Superintendent of Operations. Asset and risk

responsibilities associated with Child Nutrition programs would remain under the direction of the Assistant Superintendent of Operations.

The suggested organization is shown in **Exhibit 6-26**.

**Exhibit 6-26
Proposed RISD Asset and Risk Management Organization**



Source: TSPR, November 2002.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent asks the CFO and business manager to	June 2003
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	develop a plan for reorganizing the business office and to develop a job description for an accountant position.	
2.	The superintendent submits the reorganization plan and job description to the board for approval.	July 2003
3.	The board approves the reorganization and the professional accountant position.	July 2003
4.	The CFO and the business manager post a position for the professional accountant through RISD Human Resources.	August 2003
5.	The Human Resources department screens acceptable candidates for interview by the CFO and the business manager.	August 2003
6.	The CFO and the business manager interview candidates and make a selection.	September 2003
7.	RISD hires the new employee under appropriate local policy and fills the posted position.	October 2003
8.	The superintendent does not extend a new contract to the executive director of Operations/Risk Management.	March 2004
9.	The superintendent reassigns existing personnel as necessary and eliminates the position of executive director of Operations and Risk Management.	Effective September 1, 2004

FISCAL IMPACT

Eliminating the executive director of Operations and Risk Management would result in an annual net savings of \$74,013 (\$64,359 in salary plus 15-percent benefits of \$9,654 = \$74,013) beginning in 2004-05.

The fiscal impact assumes that administrator term contracts would end at the completion of the 2003-04, or August 31, 2004, or RISD would have to follow reduction-in-force procedures for any contracts beyond the next fiscal year.

Annual costs should be \$63,032 (\$54,810 annually plus benefits of 15 percent) for the new accountant. Since the new position will start in October 2003, costs for 2003-04 will be \$57,779 ($(\$63,032 \div 12 \text{ months}) \times 11 \text{ months}$).

Net costs for implementing this recommendation would be \$57,779 in 2003-04. However, starting in 2004-05, annual net savings would be \$10,981 ($\$74,013 - \$63,032 = \$10,981$).

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
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Reorganize the business organization and add one professional accountant position.	(\$57,779)	(\$63,032)	(\$63,032)	(\$63,032)	(\$63,032)
	\$0	\$74,013	\$74,013	\$74,013	\$74,013
Net Savings (Costs)	(\$57,779)	\$	\$	\$	\$

Chapter 6

FINANCIAL, ASSET AND RISK MANAGEMENT

B. INTERNAL ACCOUNTING CONTROLS

The TEA FASRG (Section 1.5.1) defines internal accounting controls for Texas school districts. Under this definition, the board, management and other personnel implement internal accounting control to ensure reliable financial reporting and effective and efficient operations that comply with applicable laws and regulations.

A school district's management staff sets internal accounting control based on conditions such as the size of the organization and the number of available personnel. Management considers the relationship between costs and benefits when it establishes internal accounting controls. In addition, the nature of internal accounting controls is such that even appropriate internal control methods and systems do not guarantee that school district objectives will be met, nor do they ensure success. An internal control weakness could subject RISD to inaccurate financial reports or the loss of assets.

FINDING

RISD lacks formal procedures manuals that outline daily, weekly, monthly and annual duties for accounting, payroll and accounts-payable. As a result, the district has no system for ensuring accurate financial reports and safeguarding assets. Without such written procedures, RISD cannot continuously measure the effectiveness and efficiency of its procedures or improve its processes. The RISD business manager has developed written procedures memos for cash handling and for certain payroll procedural matters.

Procedures manuals enable an organization to continue critical functions in the event of staff absences. Written procedures manuals provide a basis for evaluating and improving district processes. When written procedures are evaluated, inefficient steps can be eliminated, reducing the need for staffing.

TASBO has a number of resources that districts can use to structure their manuals, including pro forma procedures manuals for accounting, payroll and accounts payable.

Recommendation 35:

Develop written operating procedures for accounting, accounts payable and payroll.

Using written procedures memos for cash handling and for certain payroll procedural matters that the RISD business manager has developed as a foundation, the district can develop a procedures manual. Initially, the formal procedures can be a series of memos, and RISD can develop other written procedures with the input of all business employees.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The CFO and the business manager instruct clerical employees to prepare a description of daily, weekly, monthly and annual procedures that relate to financial processing activities.	October 2003
2.	Clerical employees complete the procedure descriptions, and the CFO and the business manager review and approve the descriptions as part of the department procedures manuals.	November 2003
3.	Clerical employees update the manuals for changes in processing routines and legal requirements.	January 2003 and Ongoing
4.	The CFO and the business manager work with RISD information technology personnel to make updated procedures manuals and memos available on the district Web site and to establish procedures for the periodic update of this information.	January 2003 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The RISD cash and investment process lacks adequate internal controls, oversight and segregation of related fiduciary duties. The assistant business manager-along with other RISD employees in Child Nutrition and at campuses-reconciles bank accounts and performs cash receipt and disbursement.

The district's assistant business manager performs investment transactions, reconciles the investment account balances to accounting records, reconciles nine of the district's 14 bank accounts and issues checks from two of the accounts: capital projects and maintenance tax notes. The assistant business manager also makes transfers from the investment pools into these accounts.

After the transaction is completed and coded, the assistant business manager enters the transaction into the general ledger and files it with the monthly transactions. Each day, the assistant business manager verifies the transactions by reviewing the bank balances online. At the end of each month, the assistant business manager balances the general ledger to statements received from the investment pools. As the business manager prepares the monthly investment and financial reports, he reconciles the general ledger account balances to the statements. The business manager reviews all investment accounts before closing the month.

The Child Nutrition staff reconciles that department's bank account. The business coordinator in Child Nutrition balances the program's bank account, records cash receipts into the finance system and prepares invoices for payment.

Campus secretaries reconcile bank statements and handle cash receipts and disbursement responsibilities for school activity funds.

Only the CFO, the business manager and the assistant business manager are authorized to complete investment pool transactions in RISD. The CFO position was vacant during the TSPR review process, although some responsibilities were handled by a part-time, interim CFO. The CFO vacancy from July 2002 through January 2003 affected investment transaction duty segregation. Because of this vacancy, the business manager and the assistant business manager had to share all cash- and investment-handling duties in addition to maintaining the related accounting records. The CFO shares in investment-handling activities for construction and maintenance note funds.

The board must approve the addition of individuals to complete investment transactions. If funds require transfer from or to the depository bank, an individual security code is entered into the authorized pool to request a funds transfer. After the transfer amount is determined, the assistant business manager logs the transaction into the daily cash worksheet to show settlement of the transaction on the appropriate day. The person who completes the transfers prints the amount, date and type of transfer for verification.

Although the business manager coordinates and reviews all investment activities, TEA guidelines require proper segregation of investment and cash management responsibilities, including preparation and approval of bank account reconciliations and other cash receipt or disbursement operations.

Exhibit 6-27 shows that RISD procedures do not meet five of the six recommended guidelines from TEA for cash and investment controls.

Exhibit 6-27
RISD Compliance with TEA Policy Suggestions on Cash Controls
November 2002

TEA Policy Suggestions on Controls over Cash	RISD Status
Segregation of responsibilities for cash receipts from cash disbursements.	Does not meet
Segregation of responsibilities for disbursement preparation and disbursement approval from those for recording or entering cash disbursements information on the general ledger.	Does not meet
Segregation of responsibilities for disbursement approval from those for the disbursement, voucher preparation and purchasing.	Meets
Segregation of responsibilities for cash receipt or disbursement record entries from those for general ledger entries.	Does not meet
Segregation of responsibilities for preparing and approving bank account reconciliation from those for other cash receipt or disbursement activities.	Does not meet
If electronic data processing is used, maintain the principle of segregated duties within processing activities.	Does not meet

Source: TEA FASRG and RISD business manager.

Many districts separate asset maintenance and bookkeeping to safeguard district assets from unauthorized use and to enhance accounting information reliability. Districts frequently adopt the TEA FASRG recommendation for segregating responsibilities for collection and deposit preparation from those for recording cash receipts and general ledger entries.

Round Rock ISD (RRISD) includes an internal control statement in its board-adopted local investment policy. This policy sets guidelines and ensures internal control procedures. The policy requires written internal controls and specific procedures that designate who has authority to withdraw funds. The local policy also requires that RRISD design procedures to protect against losses of public funds that arise from fraud, employee error, misrepresentation by third parties, unanticipated changes in financial markets or imprudent actions by employees and officers of the district. RRISD's policy includes:

- separation of transaction authority from accounting and recordkeeping;

- avoidance of collusion;
- custodial safekeeping;
- clear delegation of authority;
- written confirmation of telephone transactions;
- documentation of dealer questionnaires, quotations and bids, evaluations, transactions and rationale;
- avoidance of bearer-form securities; and
- a required review by the district's investment committee and independent auditing firm.

Recommendation 36:

Establish procedures for proper segregation of duties over cash and investment handling and related recordkeeping functions.

Well-designed internal cash and investment control procedures lessen the danger of fraud and mismanagement.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	Using TEA internal control guidelines, the business manager and the CFO review and modify the job descriptions of business office staff. Modifications include providing that the CFO and business manager-as authorized investment officers-initiate all investment transactions, removing access to the investment accounts from the assistant business manager.	June 2003
2.	The business manager assigns bank reconciliation duties to a staff member who has no cash management job responsibilities.	June 2003
3.	The business manager and the assistant business manager train the staff member who will perform the bank reconciliation duties.	July 2003
4.	RISD begins using the revised internal control processes for cash and investments.	August 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The RISD payroll processing system lacks sufficient internal control. Payroll clerks can manipulate wage and deduction information on the payroll processing system, subjecting RISD to inaccurate financial reports and loss of assets.

RISD has not programmed its payroll software to prevent payroll clerks from manipulating employee wage and deduction information. There is no process in place to ensure that payroll clerks enter or change only the data authorized by Human Resources. It is conceivable that RISD could issue payroll checks to nonexistent employees.

The process RISD uses to add wage and deduction information on the payroll processing system includes information that is transmitted and approved by Human Resources. Although there are manual forms based on approval procedures involving the Human Resources area for this function, this is an internal control weakness.

TEA FASRG guidelines (Sections 1.5.1 and 4.6.3.3) state that the calculation of periodic payrolls should be separated from access to wage and deduction information among employees and through processing systems to ensure proper internal controls over this data.

Recommendation 37:

Segregate the functions associated with establishing and changing employee wage and deduction information from the payroll calculation functions.

Only Human Resources should have access to wage and deduction information on payroll processing systems.

The RISD CFO and the business manager should ensure that these functions can be segregated when new financial software systems are upgraded or implemented.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The CFO and the business manager contact the current payroll software provider to learn how to shift incompatible duties from the payroll clerks to Human Resources employees.	October 2003
2.	The CFO and the business manager update procedural methods and documentation to make the necessary changes.	November 2003
3.	Payroll clerks and Human Resources employees are trained in the new procedures.	December 2003
4.	Payroll clerks and Human Resources employees begin to perform routine procedures using the revised control processes.	January 2004

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

RISD's school activity funds bank accounts are not centralized and lack adequate internal controls. Employees at six district schools write checks, sign checks and reconcile bank statements. This process provides access to accounts without adequate internal controls or segregation of duties over maintenance of cash balances and recordkeeping.

Primary responsibility for student activity funds rests with the school principal, the school secretary or budget officer and the student activity sponsor. The school principal is responsible for the proper collection, disbursement and control of all activity funds at the school, including the safekeeping of all cash funds at the school.

The school secretary or budget officer collects and makes deposits, issues checks, maintains student activity account records and reconciles the checking accounts.

All student activity accounts use pre-numbered checks that require the signatures of the school secretary and the school principal. RISD has written procedures for activity fund accounting that include processes for issuing checks and for collecting and depositing money.

The district maintains separate student activity fund bank accounts for these six schools at the depository bank. There are insufficient controls over these funds. The same people who write checks reconcile accounts without central office oversight. All other school activity accounts are in a central bank account and fall under central office purchasing procedures. In September 2002, the balance of these six school activity accounts was \$175,055 (**Exhibit 6-28**).

Exhibit 6-28
RISD Cash Balances in the School Activity Accounts
Maintained at the School Level
September 2002

Bank Account	September 30 Balance	Average Balance for September 2002
Rockwall High School	\$168,915	\$162,655
Herman E. Utley Freshman Center	*	
Maurine Cain Middle School	*	
Cullins-Lake Pointe Elementary School	\$4,735	\$4,735

Dorris A. Jones Elementary School	**	
Virginia Reinhardt Elementary School	\$1,405	\$1,158
Total	\$175,055	\$168,548

Source: RISD bank statements and business manager.

**These accounts were included in the central student activity bank account until October 2002.*

***This is a new school and had no account in September 2002.*

In October 2002, officials from three schools (Howard Dobbs Elementary, Amy Parks-Heath Elementary School and Amanda Rochell Elementary School) moved student activity funds into principal activity funds, which are kept centrally. Dorris A. Jones Elementary School opened its first account as a separate account in October 2002. Herman E. Utley Freshman Center and Maurine Cain Middle School activity funds moved from the central student activity account to separate accounts in October 2002.

The schools use Quicken accounting software for the activity funds. The school secretaries follow RISD's monthly checklist for:

- entering deposits;
- entering payments;
- entering debit/credit memos received on bank statements;
- entering interest earned and bank charges from bank statements;
- completing the sales tax report;
- reconciling bank statements;
- printing and distributing month-end reports; and
- sending activity fund documentation to the business office, if required.

The TEA FASRG recommends that school districts segregate responsibilities for collection and deposit preparation from those for recording cash receipts and general ledger entries. FASRG prescribes two common methods of activity fund accounting. With the centralized method, funds are controlled and disbursed through the district's accounting department. With the decentralized method, funds are accounted for and controlled by the various schools. Some advantages of the centralized method include:

- better internal controls, since all receipts and disbursements flow through one central accounting system rather than systems that can vary from school to school;
- easier access for internal and external audits;
- consistency;
- better control of cash management operations including assurance of proper collateralization of cash and investment balances;
- more consistent district policies and procedures; and
- a reduced need for audit funds.

There is a risk that errors, irregularities or misappropriations of funds could occur and go undetected until an audit occurs.

Mount Pleasant ISD uses an effective, centralized method of accounting for activity funds that strengthens the district's internal controls and fosters efficient fund operations. The district maintains all financial records for these funds in the central accounting office and uses established control processes to disburse all funds, which lessens the potential for errors and inappropriate use of funds. This saves the administrative effort and reduces the need for financial monitoring activities.

Recommendation 38:

Centralize all student activity funds.

The central office should be responsible for all bank reconciliations and other controls over activity fund revenues and expenditures. Disbursements from these funds should be subject to centralized purchasing and disbursement control procedures.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The RISD CFO or business manager prepares a recommendation to centralize activity funds and submits it to the superintendent for approval.	June 2003
2.	The superintendent approves the centralization of activity funds and notifies the schools involved.	June 2003
3.	The business manager trains the district personnel at these schools to use the centralized procedures for administering the school activity funds.	July 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The district has no internal audit process. The review team discovered several internal control issues in purchasing, bank reconciliation practices, disbursement processing and maintenance of payroll data during the course of the review.

Internal audit staff are generally assigned special projects that operational staff members do not have the time or the capabilities to perform. These projects include policy and procedures monitoring with an emphasis on internal and administrative control processes.

The TEA FASRG includes a section on management reviews and internal audits. This type of audit does not satisfy the requirements of the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996 for external reporting purposes, but it may be conducted by an independent certified public accountant, an internal auditor and/or a state auditor.

TEA recommends operational, compliance and financial audits of systems and records that support funding applications, special and criminal investigation assistance, compliance and financial audits of sub-grantees and other operational areas, management and service audits of education service centers.

TEA also provides guidance on how to analyze management issues that affect operational effectiveness. These management and operations analyses pose several important questions that relate to service quality, operational efficiency, organizational positioning and management effectiveness.

Because RISD does not perform internal audits, management processes and internal controls are not continuously monitored for effectiveness, efficiency and improvement.

In evaluating the overall effectiveness of an operation, it is necessary to understand the overall objectives that the operation must ultimately support. These objectives cover the mission, performance, supporting resource allocation and overall management objectives.

Mission objectives include:

- identification of the school district's customers;
- the established school district strategic direction and the operation being audited and whether the operation's strategic direction fully supports the district's requirements and reflects its operating environment;

- whether the operation's organizational structure reflects the needs of the school district and its customers; and
- whether the assignments and reporting responsibilities are appropriate and consistent with the overall role, scope and mission of the activity.

Performance objectives include:

- whether the services provided fill customer service needs;
- identification of the operation's service-level goals and performance measures;
- how activity value, resource utilization and performance are measured;
- whether the organization fulfills its mission; and
- how policies are set, implemented and communicated.

Supporting resource allocation objectives include:

- the resources available to the organization, and the organization's role in their use;
- how specific resources are consumed in the delivery of services;
- whether the school district should seek alternative providers for the area under study;
- whether functions and/or organizational unit responsibilities overlap;
- whether resources are allocated and used appropriately;
- whether proper performance measurement systems are in place; and
- whether current performance measures adequately reflect the mission and goals of the school district and the operation under scrutiny.

Overall management objectives that are related to:

- whether the operation's current structure is efficient and effective in its service delivery and in management coordination and control;
- whether management information is available using up-to-date technology;
- whether planning, budgeting and performance measurement are consistent and internally coordinated; and
- whether there is a method to determine what, when and how improvements in operating practices will be made.

The Texas State Auditor's Office suggests that school districts with 5,000 students or more or an annual budget of \$20 million should have an internal audit function. RISD not only meets but surpasses both criterion.

School districts have begun to realize the importance of the internal audit function for improving financial operations and helping to prevent financial difficulties and compliance problems. TASBO has a standing committee of internal auditors who provide training and professional interaction for school internal auditors. Schools with internal audit departments include Austin ISD, Spring Branch ISD, Cypress Fairbanks ISD and Fort Bend ISD.

Recommendation 39:

Hire an internal auditor.

The internal auditor should report directly to the RISD board or audit committee. The board should discuss and consider issues that are raised in internal audit reports.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The assistant superintendent of Human Resources and Operations works with the RISD finance/audit committee to prepare a job posting for an internal auditor.	September 2003
2.	The assistant superintendent of Human Resources and Operations conducts interviews qualified candidates for the new internal auditor position.	October 2003
3.	The assistant superintendent of Human Resources and Operations recommends a qualified internal auditor candidate to the superintendent and the board for approval.	November 2003
4.	The new internal auditor begins employment.	January 2004

FISCAL IMPACT

Salary and benefits for an internal auditor should be equivalent to a supervisor position in RISD. The annual cost should be \$63,032 (\$54,810 annually plus benefits of 15 percent). Because the new position will start in January 2004, four months into the school year, the costs for 2003-04 will be \$42,021 ($\$63,032 / 12 \text{ months} = \$5252.66 \text{ per month} \times 8 \text{ months} = \$42,021$).

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Hire an internal auditor.	(\$42,021)	(\$63,032)	(\$63,032)	(\$63,032)	(\$63,032)

Chapter 6

FINANCIAL, ASSET AND RISK MANAGEMENT

C. CASH AND INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT

RISD uses the American National Bank of Texas (ANB) as its depository. Texas school districts bid and issue depository contracts for a two-year period; however, the TEC (Chapter 45, Subchapter G) allows a district to renew depository contracts for two additional years if the district considers the service satisfactory. RISD bid for depository services in May 2001; ANB's was the only bid received. The depository contract with ANB ends in August 2003. RISD has 14 bank accounts with the depository.

Bank statements show no fees charged as stated in the depository agreement. The depository bank provides overdraft protection if the total balances of all RISD accounts with the depository bank are sufficient to cover the amount of the overdraft created by payment of these items. If funds in other accounts are not sufficient, the depository bank will pay these items and provide RISD with a line of credit sufficient to cover such overdrafts. This line of credit is subject to routine credit approval policies and procedures.

The depository bank will not charge an overdraft fee or interest unless the overdraft creates a negative collected balance in all RISD accounts combined. The depository bank will pledge to RISD securities equal to 102 percent of RISD balances, less the amount of Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation coverage. The maximum pledge amount is \$20 million.

RISD policy requires daily management of the district's cash portfolio. The district's investment strategies cover operation, debt service and capital project funds.

The district's investment portfolio includes financial instruments that earn the maximum rate of return within RISD's safety and liquidity objectives. The district uses government investment pools for investment purposes. RISD's investment objectives and policies vary with the nature of the fund, using the income generated as a supplementary source of revenue. The investment policy does not cover student activity funds or other funds that are generated by school-related clubs and associations.

Operating funds, including the general fund, special projects funds, special revenue funds, and trust and agency funds, ensure that anticipated cash flows are matched with adequate investment liquidity to meet current district obligations. Securities held should comply with the maturity

requirements of CDA (LEGAL), but in no case should they exceed a dollar-weighted average maturity of 365 days using the stated final maturity dates of each security. Investments should be selected with the following priorities, in order of importance: preservation and safety of principal, liquidity, marketability of the investment if the district must liquidate the investment before its maturity, investment portfolio diversification and yield.

Debt service funds ensure that the liquidity of investments matches scheduled debt service payments. Securities held should comply with the maturity requirements of CDA (LEGAL), but in no case should they exceed payment due dates.

Capital project funds ensure the generation of a dependable revenue stream with sufficient liquidity to meet the payment requirements of the capital project. Securities held should comply with the maturity requirements of CDA (LEGAL), but in no case should they exceed the estimated project completion date. Investments should be selected with the following priorities, in order of importance: preservation and safety of principal, liquidity, marketability of the investment if the district must liquidate the investment before its maturity, investment portfolio diversification and yield.

RISD legal policy dictates that the designated investment officers receive training as required under the Public Funds Investment Act (PFIA). The initial training must contain at least 10 hours of instruction in PFIA responsibilities. The designated investment officer must also attend an investment training session at least once every two years and have no fewer than 10 hours of instruction in PFIA investment responsibilities. Investment training includes education in investment controls, security risks, strategy risks, market risks, investment portfolio diversification and compliance with the Government Code, Chapter 2256. RISD policy designates the CFO as the district's primary investment officer and the business manager as the secondary investment officer. The business manager has met these training requirements.

The investment officer sends reports to the board each month. The reports include information on each pooled fund group: beginning market value for the reporting period, additions and changes to the market value for the period, ending market value for the period and fully accrued interest for the period in compliance with CDA (LEGAL) and CDA (LOCAL).

TEA distributes state funds to school districts on three payment schedules based on the property wealth of the schools. RISD is considered a Category 3 payee. A Category 3 payee is a school district with a wealth per student that is more than the statewide average wealth per student.

Category 3 payees get most of their funding at the beginning of the fiscal year (**Exhibit 6-29**) since these school districts have enough tax revenues to operate, once property taxes are collected. RISD receives payments in September, October and August.

Exhibit 6-29
State Revenue Payment Timing
for Category 3 Payee School Districts
2002-03

Fiscal Year On or Before Date	Percentage of Yearly Foundation Entitlement	Amount of TEA Foundation Payment
September 25	45%	\$1,323,968
October 25	35%	\$1,132,551
August 25	20%	\$1,353,967

Source: TEC and TEA WEB payment summary for RISD.

RISD's state foundation revenue has decreased since 1998-99 from more than \$5.1 million to \$3.8 million (**Exhibit 6-30**).

Exhibit 6-30
RISD State Revenue Payment History
January 2003

	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03 Estimate
Average Daily Student Attendance*	6,716.730	7,215.098	7,742.269	8,236.786	8,512.707
Available School Fund (per capita)	\$2,016,035	\$1,827,362	\$1,991,367	\$1,827,183	\$2,471,036
Textbook Fund - Technology Allotment	\$201,502	\$216,453	\$232,268	\$247,104	\$255,381
Foundation School Fund	\$5,151,361	\$8,521,779	\$7,264,192	\$5,271,536	\$3,810,485
Existing Debt		\$972,920	\$1,070,054	\$1,295,792	\$749,656

Allotment					
Total State Aid	\$7,368,898	\$11,538,514	\$10,557,881	\$8,641,615	\$7,297,699

Source: TEC and TEA Web payment summary for RISD.

*Average daily attendance is based on the number of days of instruction in the school year. The aggregate days' attendance is divided by the number of days of instruction to compute average daily attendance. ADA is used in the formula to distribute funding to Texas public school districts (TEA Attendance Accounting Handbook).

FINDING

RISD performs a daily, monthly and annual cash-flow analysis. This cash-flow analysis allows RISD to manage cash to meet operating costs while maximizing its interest earnings on deposits.

RISD pulls bank account balances daily via modem using banking software and maintains these records in a binder for reference. Bank account balances, disbursements and deposits are recorded daily in an Excel cash worksheet by bank account. The business manager tracks collateral daily with a notation of the current amount that is listed out by total bank account balances. Each worksheet details one week's transactions; the file keeps a record of transactions for a complete school year.

The bank depository did not offer controlled disbursements in the last depository bid. To minimize idle cash, the business manager maintains a separate disbursement file to track daily disbursements in comparison with checks issued or cleared. The business office compares weekly accounts-payable checks issued with daily checks cleared to project cash needs. This worksheet maintains one month's worth of disbursements issued and cleared. Book transfers between other bank accounts (payroll/medical self-insurance, Internal Revenue Code Section 125 and others) are included in this disbursement file to help track disbursements that are not issued via an accounts-payable/payroll check. The data accumulated in the files help to project annual cash flows and to compare projected estimates to actual.

At the end of September 2002, 94 percent of RISD's cash was in Lone Star Liquidity Corporate Fund and 2.3 percent was in Lone Star Corporate Enhanced Fund, resulting in a 96.3 percent investment in pools (**Exhibit 6-31**).

Exhibit 6-31
RISD Schedule of Cash and Investments by Deposit/Investment
as of September 2002

Deposit/Investment	Balance	Percentage of Total Cash and Investments	Average Interest Rate
Checking accounts - Non-interest-bearing	\$1,247,544	2.5%	0.0%
Checking - Interest-bearing	\$638,862	1.2%	0.75%
Lone Star Liquidity Corporate Fund	\$47,438,123	94.0%	1.87%
Lone Star Corporate Enhanced Fund	\$1,148,438	2.3%	2.5%
Total	\$50,472,967	100.0%	

Source: RISD business manager.

COMMENDATION

RISD's cash-flow projections ensure that most of its idle funds are invested in interest-earning investment pools.

FINDING

RISD uses the features of its financial software accounting program to ensure that bills are paid on the latest possible date (**Exhibit 6-32**).

Exhibit 6-32
RISD General Fund Loan History

2000-01	Loan Source	Amount Borrowed for General Fund Expenditures	Amount Repaid
August	Bank Depository	\$1,000,000	
October			\$1,000,000
November	Bank Depository	\$2,000,000	

January			\$2,000,000
2001-02			
September	2001 Bond Funds	\$1,000,000	
October	2001 Bond Funds	\$3,000,000	
January			\$4,000,000

Source: RISD business manager, December 2002.

RISD borrowed money to meet expenses during the last two years. The district anticipated having to borrow for 2002-03, but it did not. The accounts payable department uses an option in the EDP software system that allows staff to enter invoices when they are received and ready for payment, but to designate the due date. For example, on November 11, 2002, the accounts payable department printed checks from the system. All due dates through November 21, 2002 were chosen for processing. On November 12, 2002, the payable listing included \$4,829 of payments not made because the due date is later than November 21, 2002.

COMMENDATION

RISD uses the features of its financial software to maximize cash flow.

FINDING

RISD maintains 14 bank accounts (**Exhibit 6-33**). This creates unnecessary administrative work for the business staff and contributes to the possibility of errors in accounting records and internal control.

Exhibit 6-33
RISD Schedule of Cash and Investments by Fund
September 30, 2002

Description	Interest - Bearing	Amount	Purpose
Capital projects fund	Yes	\$525,952	To deposit and expense bond funds.
Maintenance tax notes	Yes	\$23,875	To deposit and expense maintenance tax notes.
Alternative healthcare	Yes	\$46.54	To deposit funds from the general operating fund to expense the \$300

			benefit towards medical expenses.
General operating fund	No	\$492,185	To deposit tax and other revenues and pay general operating expenses of the district.
Healthcare	No	\$1,899	For deposits and expenses of the self-funded health insurance plan.
Interest and bond debt	Yes	\$12,844	To deposit tax revenue and pay bond payments.
Child nutrition	Yes	\$76,143	To deposit Child Nutrition revenue and pay expenses.
Payroll	No	\$486,930	For payroll disbursements.
Section 125	No	\$5,558	To pay the payroll benefits on the Section 125 plan.
Student activity fund	No	\$80,891	To deposit and disburse student funds.
Rockwall High School	No	\$168,915	To deposit and disburse student funds.
Howard Dobbs Elementary	No	\$5,024	To deposit and disburse student funds.
Cullins-Lake Pointe Elementary	No	\$4,735	To deposit and disburse student funds.
Virginia Reinhardt Elementary	No	\$1,405	To deposit and disburse student funds.
Total		\$1,886,403	

Source: RISD business manager.

In contrast, most of the peer districts have fewer bank accounts, as shown in **Exhibit 6-34**.

Exhibit 6-34
RISD and Peer Districts Number of Bank Accounts
January 2003

District	Number of Bank Accounts
----------	-------------------------

Allen	6
Carroll	8
Coppell	5
Eanes	10
Frisco	13
McKinney	3
RISD	14

Source: WCL ENTERPRISES e-mail and telephone survey.

According to RISD's 2002 audit report, the debt service fund or the interest and bond debt fund is the only fund that the audit report states that RISD maintains in a separate bank account.

Eight different employees in two departments and six schools reconcile the 14 bank accounts. These employees also write checks and make deposits to these accounts. Maintaining these accounts is time-consuming and an ineffective use of staff time.

RISD faces no legal or contractual requirement to use 14 bank accounts. Different bank accounts are not required as long as the district safeguards the integrity of its deposits through a fund-accounting system.

McKinney ISD has three bank accounts: one for the general operating fund, one for the interest and sinking fund for bond payments and one for the self-funded health insurance fund. By using the three bank accounts, McKinney ISD saves administrative time in reconciling bank accounts, reduces errors in processing accounting records and improves internal accounting controls.

Recommendation 40:

Reduce and consolidate the district's 14 bank accounts into five accounts.

Exhibit 6-35 shows one way to consolidate RISD bank accounts. The district might want to gradually reduce the number of bank accounts over a two- to three-year period.

Exhibit 6-35
Recommended Consolidation of RISD Bank Accounts
September 30, 2002

Revised Accounts	Accounts Closed
General Disbursement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital Projects Fund • Maintenance Tax Notes • Alternative Health Care • General Operating Fund • Section 125 • Food Service
Payroll Disbursement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payroll
Self-funded Health Insurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthcare
Interest and Bond Debt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interest and Bond Debt
Student Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rockwall High School • Cullins-Lake Pointe Elementary • Howard Dobbs Elementary • Virginia Reinhardt Elementary

Source: WCL ENTERPRISES.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The business manager closes all excess accounts.	July 2003
2.	The business manager ensures that the fund accounting system safeguards the integrity of the district's deposits.	July 2003 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

RISD's investment policy, CDA (LOCAL), does not list the types of authorized investments in which district funds can be invested, in accordance with the Texas Government Code 2256.005 (b) (4) (A) of the PFIA. RISD's local investment policy offers no guidance in local investment selection to the board or the staff.

RISD policy designates the executive director for Finance as the primary investment officer and the chief accountant as the secondary investment officer, yet the CFO and the business manager also act as the investment officers of the district. RISD had no positions with the title of executive director for Finance or chief accountant at the time of the review.

PFIA requires that districts give a written copy of the investment policies to the person who handles district investment transactions and to the investment pools. The investment pool or the designated investment person must respond in writing to verify receipt and review of the policies. Accuracy of information, such as title, is important for the company or the person who reviews these policies.

According to the PFIA, the governing body of an investing entity must adopt a written investment policy for the investment of its funds and for funds it controls. The adopted investment policy must include a list of the types of authorized investments in which the board's funds may be invested.

Bastrop ISD has an Approved Investment Instruments section in its Local Investment Policy CDA (LOCAL). This section of Bastrop ISD's investment policy provides guidance to board and staff members in making investment decisions regarding local funds. The Approved Investment Instruments section of Bastrop ISD's local investment policy allows these investment types:

- obligations of the United States or Texas or its agencies and instrumentalities and political subdivisions including collateralized mortgage obligations directly issued by a federal agency or instrumentality of the United States, as permitted by Government Code 2256.009;
- certificates of deposit, as permitted by Acts of the 74th Legislative Session, Chapter 32;
- public funds investment pools, as permitted by Government Code 2256.016-2256.019;
- interest-bearing accounts in the district's depository bank; and
- fully collateralized repurchase agreements permitted by Government Code 2256.011.

Recommendation 41:

Amend RISD's investment policy to include a list of the types of authorized investments and update the titles of the investment officers, in accordance with the Public Funds Investment Act.

RISD subscribes to the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) policy service. Through this service, RISD can receive legal review and modifications of CDA (LOCAL) for board consideration.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent, the business manager and the CFO review policy CDA (LOCAL) with TASB policy service.	June 2003
2.	The superintendent, the business manager and the CFO amend policy CDA (LOCAL) in accordance with PFIA.	July 2003
3.	The superintendent presents amended policy CDA (LOCAL) to the board for review.	July 2003
4.	The RISD board approves policy CDA (LOCAL) with any changes made during review.	August 2003
5.	The superintendent, business manager, CFO and board review and updates local investment policy.	Annually

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 6

FINANCIAL, ASSET AND RISK MANAGEMENT

D. FIXED ASSET MANAGEMENT

In governmental fund accounting used by school districts, fixed assets are purchased with the money available within a given fund. TEA defines fixed assets as purchased or donated items that are tangible in nature, have a useful life longer than one year, have a unit value of \$5,000 or more and may be reasonably identified and controlled through a physical inventory system. The district must maintain control and accountability for these items. Fixed asset management involves purchasing and accounting for assets and maximizing the disposal of surplus or obsolete equipment through sale or other means.

According to the TEA FASRG, the emphasis in governmental accounting for fixed assets is on control and accountability. A school district must accumulate data that relate to fixed assets to maintain this control and accountability. These data include quantity, location, condition and life expectancy.

Fixed asset records are necessary to designate who is responsible for the custody and maintenance of individual items and to assist in estimating future requirements. School districts generally acquire fixed assets by using a well-defined authorization procedure. Separate accountability for fixed assets is a specific legal requirement of many federal programs.

The most important reasons for maintaining accurate accounting records of fixed assets are to:

- furnish taxpayers with information about their investments in the district for operations;
- provide the basis for adequate insurance coverage;
- allow the district to assess the need for repair, maintenance or replacement of assets;
- establish a system of accountability for custody of individual items;
- determine future budgeting requirements; and
- identify lost or stolen items so that insurance claims can be filed, additional controls can be instituted and accounting records can be adjusted to reflect the losses.

School districts should maintain detailed subsidiary records to help manage fixed assets. These records should include at least the following information:

- item purchased;
- date of purchase;
- purchase price;
- life expectancy of the asset;
- location of the asset;
- inventory number assigned to the asset;
- fund from which the asset was purchased; and
- any other information that might be useful for control.

The subsidiary record should provide a complete description of the item to permit positive identification and should contain cost, purchase data and location so that the item can be easily tracked.

Adequate accounting procedures and records for fixed assets protect school property. An appropriate fixed asset system should designate responsibility for custody and proper use, provide data for financial control such as financial reports and ensure adequate insurance coverage.

TSPR has found that the most successful districts perform five fixed asset functions:

- tagging all valued assets when they are received, using a bar-code system;
- using accounting codes to track capitalized fixed assets, as well as expensed assets;
- inventorying all assets annually;
- using annual inventory results to set insurance rates; and
- identifying inventory shrinkage and tightening controls when necessary.

The way a district records fixed asset distribution or disposal is a financial matter determined by the district administration. The administration must impose districtwide discipline and accountability to maintain the level of internal control that will ensure adequate protection of fixed assets at all times.

The director of Purchasing designs, directs and monitors RISD fixed asset inventory and records. The purchasing assistant is also the fixed asset clerk. The warehouse manager helps manage fixed assets.

RISD added more than \$14.9 million to its fixed assets during 2001-02 (**Exhibit 6-36**).

Exhibit 6-36
RISD Fixed Asset Activity
2001-02

Asset Description	Balance 8/31/01	Additions	Sales	Balance 8/31/02
Land	\$39,482,807	\$112,123	\$0	\$39,594,930
Buildings and Improvements	\$115,714,323	\$8,362,972	\$0	\$124,077,295
Construction in Progress	\$8,031,655	\$1,591,752	\$0	\$9,623,407
Furniture and Equipment	\$6,577,827	\$4,831,461	(\$6,087)	\$11,403,201
Vehicles	\$2,378,233	\$56,000	\$0	\$2,434,233
Total	\$172,184,845	\$14,954,308	(\$6,087)	\$187,133,066

Source: RISD director of Purchasing.

FINDING

RISD has no written procedures for staff to conduct an annual physical inventory. RISD has subjected itself to the potential for loss of assets and for inaccurate financial reporting by not conducting an annual physical inventory of its fixed assets for 2001-02.

Although the district conducted a comprehensive inventory in 2000-01, RISD has not developed a process for continuing the review and updating the inventory each year. A physical count of the inventory was not completed in 2001-02.

RISD hired a financial management firm to manually enter 2001-02 purchases into the financial accounting system. RISD made additions to the inventory, based on purchase orders and invoices. Inventory items such as computers and audio-visual equipment were tagged. The purchasing assistant enters fixed asset information into the financial management system for 2002-03.

TEA guidelines also state: "Certain fixed assets, such as furniture and equipment, should be inventoried on a periodic basis. Annual inventories taken usually at the end of the school term before the staff members leave are recommended. Discrepancies between the fixed asset/inventory list and what is on hand should be settled. Missing items should be listed and written off in accordance with established policy."

Mount Pleasant ISD performs an annual physical inventory of its fixed assets. The fixed assets clerk prints and distributes a list of assets at each district school for a physical count. School principals or their designees

perform the physical count and report any differences to the clerk. Fixed assets that are obsolete are moved to a warehouse and sold at auction.

Recommendation 42:

Conduct an annual physical inventory of fixed assets.

RISD should establish processes and procedures to ensure that principals and department managers are responsible for the fixed assets under their control.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Purchasing and the CFO develop a procedure for conducting an annual physical inventory.	September 2003
2.	The business manager reviews the procedures for accounting requirements.	November 2003
3.	The CFO trains RISD staff to use the fixed asset management procedures.	January 2004

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

RISD does not have a board-adopted policy that sets the asset-tracking threshold to \$5,000. This causes unnecessary work for the staff and confusion among department managers as to what assets are tracked for financial reporting purposes.

Although the inventory report distinguishes between assets worth more than \$5,000 and assets worth less than the \$5,000 threshold, RISD does not have a written policy that has been adopted by the board. GASB 34 requires districts to disclose their asset capitalization thresholds in externally issued annual financial reports.

GASB 34 does not prescribe a minimum level for asset capitalization. Different classes of assets may have different capitalization policies, and different thresholds may be set for management control purposes or for compliance with laws and regulations. However, districts must disclose the capitalization policy or the value above which asset acquisitions are added to the capital accounts, which is \$5,000 per unit, as suggested by TEA. Note that all capital outlays are capitalized for items worth less than \$5,000 per unit when its value exceeds the district's capitalization rate.

Bastrop ISD requires capitalization of fixed assets with a unit cost of more than \$5,000. Bastrop ISD adopted a policy in October 2001 that set the capitalization threshold for classifying capital assets and infrastructure at \$5,000.

Recommendation 43:

Establish a board policy for the capitalization of fixed assets with a threshold of \$5,000.

RISD should adopt a policy that follows the procedures the district established for the comprehensive fixed asset inventory that was completed in August 2001.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The CFO prepares an updated policy for fixed asset capitalization and submits it to the board for approval.	June 2003
2.	The board reviews and approves the policy.	July 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 6

FINANCIAL, ASSET AND RISK MANAGEMENT

E. BOND ISSUANCE AND INDEBTEDNESS

The CFO coordinates the issuance of bonds and other debt instruments, debt funding and refinancing. The last bond referendum was in February 2001 for \$139 million. RISD issued \$49.97 million of these bonds in March 2001 and \$30 million in August 2002. RISD plans to issue bonds of \$40 million in August 2003 and \$19.195 million in August 2004. RISD sells bonds based on projected spending schedules. The district will sell bonds in increments, as funds are needed.

As of October 2002, RISD had an underlying bond rating of "BBB" from Standard & Poor's and "Baa2" from Moody bond rating agencies. Rating agencies consider this to be a medium-grade bond. The bonds were sold with an "AAA" rating, which is the highest quality, because school district bonds are guaranteed by the Texas Permanent School Fund.

Exhibit 6-37 and **Exhibit 6-38** present the district's outstanding debt through the recent issuance of bonds in September 2002 and the latest refunding in October 2002.

Exhibit 6-37
General Obligation Bond Schedule

Description	Original Issue	Interest Rates	Outstanding Debt
Unlimited Tax Refunding Bonds, Series 1992	\$2,009,978	5.5-5.9%	\$1,617,728
Unlimited Tax School Building and Refunding Bonds, Series 1993	\$14,229,989	5.1%	\$1,340,000
Unlimited Tax School Building Bonds, Series 1994	\$8,000,000	6.75-7.25%	\$715,000
Unlimited Tax School Building Bonds, Series 1994	\$14,500,000	5.00-5.10%	\$1,260,000
Unlimited Tax Refunding Bonds, Series 1998	\$1,189,995	5.99-6.44%	\$1,003,177
Unlimited Tax School Building and Refunding Bonds, Series 1998	\$23,085,000	4.15-5.55%	\$6,408,468
Unlimited Tax School Building and Refunding Bonds, Series 1998	\$71,287,701	4.00-	\$70,699,865

Refunding Bonds, Series 2001		6.00%	
Unlimited Tax School Building and Refunding Bonds, Series 2002	49,900,000	3.00-5.375%	\$49,900,000
Unlimited Tax Refunding Bonds, Series 2002A	\$11,019,996	3-4.5%	\$11,019,996
Total	\$195,222,659		\$143,964,234

Source: RISD bond financial advisors.

**Exhibit 6-38
Limited Tax Debt Schedule**

Description	Original Issue	Interest Rates	Outstanding Debt
Public Property Finance Contractual Obligations, Series 1993	\$1,025,000	5.4-5.5%	\$210,000
Public Property Finance Contractual Obligations, Series 1998	\$2,040,000	4.55-4.85%	\$2,040,000
Maintenance Tax Notes, Series 2000	\$3,420,000	4.65-6.75%	\$3,380,000
Lease Revenue Bonds, Series 1998	\$600,000	5%	\$480,000
Total	\$7,085,000		\$6,110,000

Source: RISD bond financial advisors.

FINDING

RISD monitors its bonded indebtedness in order to refund and issue bonds when it is cost-effective for the district. The financial advisor and the CFO monitor the district's debt. The financial advisor informs the district of debt that qualifies for refunding. Based on interest rates, potential debt tax rates and qualifying debt, multiple scenarios are prepared by the financial advisor to determine potential savings by refunding or reissuance. The superintendent, the CFO, the business manager and the financial advisors review and discuss the scenarios to determine how the district should proceed. If district staff recommends refunding, the superintendent takes the recommendation to the board for approval. Interest rates, potential savings and managing the debt tax rate are the most common factors that determine the recommendation for refunding or reissuance of debt.

RISD completed two bond refundings in the last year for net present value cash savings of \$1.68 million.

In August 2002, RISD refunded a portion of the Series 1998 Unlimited Tax School Building and Refunding Bonds as a part of the sale of \$30 million in new bonds for a total bond sale of \$51 million. In October 2002, RISD refunded \$11 million of the Unlimited Tax School Building and Refunding Bonds, Series 1993. These bonds were not eligible for refunding in August 2002.

COMMENDATION

RISD saves money by routinely monitoring its debt position and by issuing lower-cost new debt to replace older higher-cost debt.

Chapter 7

PURCHASING

This chapter reviews the purchasing of the Rockwall Independent School District (RISD) in the following sections:

- A. Purchasing Policies, Procedures and Compliance
- B. Warehouse Operations
- C. Textbooks

Effective purchasing processes ensure that a district purchases high-quality supplies, equipment and services at the best price, in the right quantity, from the right source and to comply with local and state purchasing guidelines, without sacrificing quality and timeliness.

Effective contract management allows a school district to verify delivery of the terms specified in a contract and ensure that the goods or services provided meet the appropriate quality and cost standards. It also involves building a good working relationship between the district and the contractor. The district must continue managing contracts throughout their term, as well as anticipate future needs and reactions to situations that arise.

BACKGROUND

The Texas Education Code (TEC) provides several methods for procuring goods and services that meet the competitive bidding thresholds (**Exhibit 7-1**). Generally, when districts purchase items valued at \$25,000 or more, or multiple like items with a cumulative value of \$25,000 or more in a 12-month period, they must follow one of the competitive procurement methods.

Exhibit 7-1
TEC Competitive Procurement Methods

Purchasing Method	Description
Competitive Bidding	Requires bids to be evaluated and awarded based solely upon bid specifications, terms and conditions contained in the request for bids, according to the bid prices offered by suppliers and pertinent factors affecting contract performance. Forbids negotiation of prices of goods and services after proposal opening.

Competitive Sealed Proposals	Requires the same terms and conditions as competitive bidding, but allows changes in the nature of a proposal and prices after proposal opening.
Request for Proposals	Generates competitive sealed proposals and involves several key elements, including newspaper advertisement, notice to proposers, standard terms and conditions, special terms and conditions, a scope-of-work statement, an acknowledgment form/response sheet, a felony conviction notice and a contract clause.
Catalog Purchase	Provides an alternative to other procurement methods for the acquisition of computer equipment, software and services only.
Inter-local Contract	Provides a mechanism for agreements with other local governments, the state or a state agency to perform governmental functions and services.
Design/Build Contract	Outlines a method of project delivery in which the school district contracts with a single entity to both design and construct a project.
Job Order Contract	Provides for the use of a particular type of contract for jobs for minor repairs and alterations; typically used for jobs involving manual labor.
Reverse Auctions	Outlines a bidding process that involves submission of bids by multiple suppliers, unknown to each other, in a manner that allows the suppliers to bid against each other.
Construction Management Contract	Outlines the use of a contract to construct, rehabilitate, alter or repair facilities using a professional construction manager.

Source: Texas Education Code (TEC) and Texas Education Agency (TEA), Financial Accountability System Resource Guide (FASRG), Update 10.0, January 2003.

Before school districts accept bids for purchases, the TEC requires school districts to advertise bids valued at more than \$25,000 at least once a week for two weeks in any newspaper published in the county in which the district is located. For purchases between \$10,000 and \$25,000, districts must advertise in two successive issues of any newspaper in the district's county. State law requires advertisements to specify the anticipated purchasing categories and to solicit vendors interested in supplying those categories.

Exceptions to competitive bidding requirements include contracts for professional services. Chapter 2254 of the Texas Government Code

prohibits competitive bidding for professional services such as engineering, architectural and accounting. A two-step procedure is required for the procurement of architectural and engineering services. State law also allows a district to purchase items that are available from only one source, called sole-source purchases under specific circumstances.

Exhibit 7-2 presents RISD's purchasing thresholds and requirements, which follow TEC requirements.

**Exhibit 7-2
RISD Purchasing Thresholds and Requirements
November 2002**

Dollar Amount	Purchase Requirements
Greater than \$25,000, except for produce and fuel	Competitive bidding, sealed proposals, request for proposals, catalogue purchase, interlocal contract, design/build contract, contract to construct using a construction manager or job order contract
Between \$10,000 and \$25,000	Written or telephone quotations from a minimum of three vendors

Source: RISD purchasing manual.

In 1999, the Office of the Attorney General issued Opinion JC-37 stating school district procurement through an interlocal agreement or a cooperative purchasing arrangement satisfies competitive bidding requirements. Texas law also allows school districts to participate in catalog purchasing programs from the Texas Building and Procurement Commission (TBPC) and Qualified Information Systems Vendors (QISV). **Exhibit 7-3** shows the cooperative purchasing programs in which RISD participates.

**Exhibit 7-3
RISD Cooperative Purchasing Programs
2001-02**

Cooperative Program	Location	Fee	Items Purchased
Qualified Information Systems Vendors (QISV)	Texas	Included in TBPC	Computers, computer software, parts and services
Texas Building and	Texas	\$210	Oven for food service

Procurement Commission (TBPC)			
Texas Cooperative Purchasing Network (TCPN)	Region 4 Education Service Center	\$0	Office and maintenance supplies
Multi-Regional Child Nutrition Cooperative Purchasing Program	Region 10 Education Service Center	\$1,787	Commodity processing, full-line grocery purchasing, milk and dairy products, bread and bakery products, snack cakes, ice cream, small wares
Buy Board	Texas Association of School Boards	\$640	Ground maintenance equipment, electricity
Houston-Galveston Area Council	Texas/Houston	Per Purchase Order	School buses

Source: RISD, director of Purchasing.

An effective purchasing system starts with an organization staffed with well-trained people. Roles and related responsibilities must be clearly defined and adapted to meet the unique operating environment of the system. **Exhibit 7-4** shows the organizational structure of the RISD Purchasing Division.

Exhibit 7-4
RISD Purchasing and Warehouse Division
Organization
2002-03



Source: RISD director of Purchasing.

The director of Purchasing reports to the RISD chief financial officer (CFO), who is responsible for the management of all district purchasing. The director of Purchasing directs and manages the purchasing activities of the district, develops and implements purchasing procedures for processing bids and purchase orders and ensures compliance with applicable state laws and regulations. Other duties include coordinating the distribution of supplies and equipment from the central warehouse and fixed assets.

The purchasing assistant ensures prompt and accurate processing of all purchase requisitions for the district, maintains the department's files and assists with fixed assets. RISD issued 6,340 purchase orders during 2001-02.

Chapter 7

PURCHASING

A. PURCHASING POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND COMPLIANCE

Well-written and organized procedures:

- help ensure compliance with board policies and document the intent of those policies;
- protect the institutional knowledge of an organization so that, as experienced employees leave, new employees have the benefit of their predecessors' experience;
- provide the basis for training new employees; and
- offer a tool for evaluating employees based on their adherence to procedures.

RISD documents its requisition and purchase order processes in a purchasing procedures manual that the Purchasing Department distributes to all schools and departments through principal meetings.

RISD uses computerized software for entering purchase requisitions. Users enter the requisition in the system, then send a signed copy of the requisition to the Purchasing Department. Schools or departments cannot enter requisitions into the system if there are insufficient funds in the budget account.

After receiving the signed requisition, the purchasing assistant reviews each requisition to ensure the correct budget coding. The purchasing assistant prints a report of outstanding requisitions daily and compares them to the written requisitions received to verify school/department level approval.

Once the requisition meets all requirements, the purchasing assistant prints purchase orders, which encumbers the funds. After the director of Purchasing reviews the purchase orders for accurate budget codes and bidding requirements, the director and signs them. The purchasing assistant distributes colored copies of the purchase order in the following manner:

- white - vendor (mailed by business office);
- blue - central warehouse;
- goldenrod - central warehouse or school if the school is picking up the purchased good;
- pink - accounts payable files a copy with the invoice and check;
- green - accounts payable files in numeric order; and

- yellow - originator of purchase requisition.

FINDING

RISD purchases goods and services in a manner that does not comply with board policies, district purchasing procedures and TEC competitive bid requirements. Non-compliance with TEC competitive bid procedures could expose the district to litigation from vendors and the employees responsible for purchasing to criminal penalties under TEC Section 44.032 and Chapter 271 of the Texas Local Government Code.

RISD's 2001-02 annual financial report states that RISD did not submit many of its purchases of personal property through the procurement process. The audit states that the district did not appear to be in compliance with TEC procedures.

To test RISD's compliance with procurement laws and procedures, the review team obtained a list of expenditures by vendors for 2001-02. Because RISD's financial software system does not have the ability to group by category, the review team conducted this test by interviewing staff and reviewing purchases. The team reviewed vendor purchase amounts of more than \$20,000. Of the 97 vendors reviewed, 33 of these purchases equaled or exceeded \$25,000, but were not bid in compliance with Texas competitive procurement laws and RISD procedures. One of these procurements equaled or exceeded \$10,000, but the district did not have evidence of formal written or telephone price quotes from at least three vendors.

Exhibit 7-5 presents a summary of the purchase for goods and services not procured through competitive procurement procedures. One non-competitively bid purchase for computers and computer supplies exceeded \$1.4 million.

**Exhibit 7-5
RISD Categories Purchased Without Competitive Procurement
2001-02**

Category	Bid Method Required	Vendor	Purchases
Athletic supplies	Competitive bids	Plano Sports	\$32,289
	Competitive bids	Massey & Brown Sporting Goods	\$22,560
	Competitive bids	Mesquite Sports	\$27,303
Bus refurbishing	Competitive bids	Lear Siegler Services	\$70,503

		Mobility Ct.	
Cell phones	Competitive bids	Cingular Wireless	\$28,672
Cheerleader uniforms	Formal quotes	Varsity	\$22,737
Computer wiring	QISV* quotes or competitive bids	Power Services, Inc.	\$40,326
Computers and Computer supplies	QISV quotes or competitive bids	Amherst, LLC	\$76,160
	QISV quotes or competitive bids	CDW Government	\$136,579
	QISV quotes or competitive bids	M & A Technology	\$1,443,823
Custodial supplies	Competitive bids	Cleancare Inc.	\$89,276
	Competitive bids	ZEP Manufacturing Co.	\$61,263
Duplicating paper, custodial	Competitive bids	Chaney Paper Products	\$147,359
Electrical contractor	Competitive bids	Electric, Inc.	\$92,160
Financial & student software	Competitive bids	EDP Enterprises, Inc.	\$52,445
Furniture	Competitive bids	Indeco Sales	\$38,043
Grounds and landscaping, including athletic fields	Competitive bids	Young's Landscape	\$65,687
	Competitive bids	Dalrock Construction	\$49,928
	Competitive bids	RKJC Enterprises, Inc.	\$125,892
	Competitive bids	Tex-Sand Sport Turf Specialty, Inc.	\$30,680
HVAC, plumbing, electric	Competitive bids	Lassiter, Inc.	\$48,250
	Competitive bids	Cohesive Automation	\$19,087
Instructional supplies	Competitive bids	School Specialty	\$24,314
	Competitive bids	Voyager Expanded Learning	\$77,760
Lease of portable building	Competitive bids	Ramtech Building Systems	\$63,352
	Competitive bids	Ramtech Leasing LTD	\$45,987

Library books	Competitive bids	Follett Library Resources	\$105,306
Maintenance supplies	Competitive bids	Graybar	\$28,009
	Competitive bids	Northeast Texas Distributors	\$23,621
Office supplies	Competitive bids	Rockwall Office Supply	\$29,738
	Competitive bids	Walmart Community BRC	\$55,790
Phone, alarm, security Materials/labor	Competitive bids	Master Sound Co., Inc.	\$70,072
Radios	Competitive bids	Inter-County Communications, Inc.	\$38,659
Transportation parts	Competitive bids	Southwest International Trucks, Inc.	\$26,253

Source: RISD director of Purchasing and EDP financial report from RISD business manager.

** QISV-Qualified Information Systems Vendor.*

Although RISD's procedures manual includes a process for bidding categories of goods or services that exceed the \$10,000 and \$25,000 thresholds, the district did not follow them. RISD did competitively bid service contract awards, such as vending machines and audit services. RISD also competitively bid playground equipment and furniture for new schools. Without the consistent use of competitive bidding, however, RISD may not be obtaining the best prices for all goods and services purchased.

RISD board policy states that the board shall assume responsibility for debts incurred in the name of the district so long as those debts are for purchases made in accordance with adopted board policy and current administrative procedures. The board shall not be responsible for debts incurred by persons or organizations not directly under board control; persons making unauthorized purchases shall assume full responsibility for all such debts (RISD board policy CH (LOCAL)).

The TEA's *Financial Accountability System Resource Guide (FASRG)* states:

"The purpose and intent of competitive bidding is to help public schools secure the best work and materials at the lowest practical prices by stimulating competition. If a district advertises purchasing needs relating to large expenditures, then economies of scale-purchasing in large quantities-will probably result in lower costs either per unit item or in the aggregate. Another reason for competitive bidding is that it is an open process."

The purpose and intent of competitive bidding laws were defined in Sterrett v. Bell, 240 S.W.2c 516, 520 (Texas Civil Appellate-Dallas 1951) as follows:

- "Gives opportunity to bid...on the same undertaking...upon the same thing;"
- "Requires all bidders be placed upon the same plane of equality...each bid; upon the same terms and conditions;"
- "Stimulates competition and prevents favoritism;" and
- "Secures the best work and materials at the lowest practical price."

Killeen ISD (KISD) made its bid process more efficient by establishing an annual calendar that identifies when specific items should be bid during the year. The calendar, based on historical experience, allows the district to purchase items on an as-needed basis, as well as spread the bid process out over the full year, rather than trying to bid multiple items at the same time. Based on prior experience, the Purchasing Department worked with the other departments to develop the calendar.

Recommendation 44:

Establish a bid process that ensures compliance with state laws and board policies and hold individuals accountable for non-compliance.

The procedures should include an annual bid calendar, a monthly review of purchases by the director of Purchasing that results in a report to the CFO stating which categories are approaching bidding thresholds and a vendor listing updated monthly that includes the process of purchasing from each vendor. Any individual found to have violated these policies and procedures should be held accountable for their actions.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Purchasing prepares a list of goods and services purchased without complying with purchasing laws.	June 2003
2.	The director of Purchasing reviews budgets for 2003-04 to	June 2003

	determine if bids or quotes will be needed for any goods or services.	and Annually
3.	The director of Purchasing submits a list of all goods or services requiring bids to the business manager, CFO and superintendent for approval.	July 2003 and Ongoing
4.	The director of Purchasing prepares bids for the categories requiring the competitive bid process.	July 2003 and Ongoing
5.	The director of Purchasing evaluates bids and prepares recommendation to the business manager and superintendent.	September 2003 and Ongoing
6.	The board awards the bids.	September 2003 and Ongoing
7.	The director of Purchasing prepares a list by vendor and category of the bids awarded.	September 2003
8.	The director of Purchasing trains the district's staff on the vendor listing and updates the purchasing manual to include use of a vendor list for purchase requisitions.	September 2003
9.	The director of Purchasing develops a monthly process to evaluate the categories of goods or services that are approaching purchasing volumes that may require competitive bids or quotes.	October 2003
10.	The director of Purchasing implements the monthly process and submits monthly reports to the business manager indicating categories of goods or services that are approaching purchasing volumes that may require competitive bids or quotes.	November 2003 and Monthly Thereafter
11.	The director of Purchasing creates an annual calendar that identifies when specific items should be bid during the year.	January 2004 and Annually
12.	The business manager reviews and monitors bid compliance and reports any non-compliance to the CFO and superintendent.	January 2004 and Ongoing
13.	The superintendent reviews any bids not in compliance and enforces local board policy.	January 2004 and Annually

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

RISD's use of payment authorizations circumvents its purchasing procedures by:

- committing funds without proper purchasing authorization;
- purchasing goods/services without using the purchase requisition process;
- issuing payment authorizations for items not on the approved list in the district's purchasing policy guidelines;
- issuing payment authorizations to request payment for merchandise or services already received rather than using the purchase order process; and
- violating competitive bidding requirements.

RISD's purchasing procedures state that the purchase order should be the primary method used for purchases. In October 2002, the district issued 351 purchase orders and 469 payment authorizations. **Exhibit 7-6** compare the district's payment authorization process with its purchase requisition process.

Exhibit 7-6
Comparison of Payment Authorization and
Purchase Requisition Process

Payment Authorization		Purchase Requisition	
Step	Person Responsible	Step	Person Responsible
Supplies or services ordered by director.	Department director	Purchase requisition completed requesting supplies/services.	Department director
Supplies or services received/completed.	Department director or warehouse	Purchase requisition reviewed by Purchasing Department and approval is given after review of budget balance and bidding requirements.	Director of Purchasing
Payment authorization completed by director with invoice attached and submitted to Purchasing Department.	Department director	Purchase order issued to vendor and materials/services are ordered.	Purchasing Department
Director of Purchasing approves and sends to	Director of Purchasing	Materials/services received by RISD and	Department director or

accounts payable for payment.		proper receiving information sent to accounts payable.	warehouse
Payment made.	Accounts Payable	Invoices received and processed for payment.	Accounts payable
		Payment made.	Accounts payable

Source: RISD purchasing manual and review of payment authorizations.

District procedures allow the use of payment authorizations to pay for membership dues, certification fees, conference workshops and tournament fees, sole source for goods/services required, contract labor, fundraiser fees, postage, parent refunds, field trip fees and utility bills. However, the district has used payment authorizations to purchase goods and services not included on this list. For example:

- the Child Nutrition director, who is responsible for all purchases in the Child Nutrition Department, forwards payment authorizations for the purchases of food items to the Accounts Payable Department;
- the executive director of Facilities Planning and Construction, who is responsible for construction payments, sends payment authorizations to the business manager for processing; and
- the director of Maintenance forwards payment authorizations to the Purchasing Department for approval.

Accounts payable clerks receive the paper copies of the payment authorizations and enter the information into the system. However, the paper copies must have appropriate documentation and signatures before they are entered by Accounts Payable, which becomes time-consuming. Conversely, schools and departments can enter purchase requisitions into the system, which saves time for the Accounts Payable clerks and ensures approval prior to the commitment of funds.

In July 2001, RISD's Maintenance Department contracted with a vendor to connect electrical service to portable buildings for \$32,200 without formally bidding the project. RISD paid the invoice, which was dated July 31, 2001, in December 2001 through the payment authorization process. The director of Purchasing signed the payment authorization in December 2001. Since Accounts Payable did not receive the invoice until December 2001, the invoice was not properly recorded in the district's financial records for the fiscal year ending August 2001.

The Maintenance Department also issued a payment authorization dated March 2002 for repair work invoices dating back to September 2001. The total amount of this payment authorization was \$9,262. On March 27, 2002, the Maintenance Department issued an \$8,500 payment authorization for a March 25, 2002 invoice to fill and grade an eroded area.

RISD purchased student and fixed assets software applications and upgrades from a vendor for \$96,640 in August 2001. The purchase included 11 file servers, battery backups, student/teacher grade book and attendance programs, a fixed assets system, training and the installation of the systems. However, a purchase order was never issued to the vendor for this equipment and software and the district has no documentation showing who approved the order. The documentation attached to the check is a payment authorization dated August 9, 2001. The payment authorization for the equipment and software purchase did not have a signature of an employee authorized to make purchases for the district. Only the director of Technology/Information Systems' signature appears on the payment authorization. The business office issued a check on August 20, 2001 with no purchasing approval. The superintendent and assistant business manager signed the check.

TEA's FASRG has a process for issuing blanket purchase orders as an alternative to numerous payment authorizations. A district issues a blanket purchase order to a pre-approved vendor authorizing purchases from that vendor over a period of time. Blanket purchase orders allow the purchase of items quickly and usually reduce paperwork and related processing costs. However, blanket purchase orders must follow certain criteria: pre-qualification of vendors, limitation on the maximum amount for purchases (usually up to \$500 per month per vendor), a specific time frame for purchases covered by the blanket purchase order (usually one month) and identification of authorized purchasers.

Districts use blanket purchase orders to make supplies, materials or services available "as needed" by user departments. For example, blanket purchase orders may be requested on a regular basis by the Child Nutrition Department for perishable items. Larger districts commonly use these purchase orders to eliminate numerous individual purchase orders for small dollar-value items. User departments request blanket purchase orders and, if central purchase approves them, they are issued to vendors. The user department must issue a new requisition if items are requested beyond the specified time period.

Smithville ISD (SISD) does not allow schools/departments to use payment authorizations. SISD uses monthly blanket purchase orders for maintenance, transportation and food service. SISD uses the purchase

requisition system for workshop registrations to ensure that budgeted funds are available before approval of workshop attendance.

Bastrop ISD (BISD) issues construction purchase orders at the time of the award of a construction contract for the total amount of the contract. This purchase order is copied when a payment request is received. After construction and purchasing approval, it is processed for payment by accounts payable.

Recommendation 45:

Eliminate the use of payment authorizations and implement the use of blanket purchase orders.

RISD should implement use of blanket purchase orders. RISD's Child Nutrition Department should issue monthly blanket purchase orders to vendors with a maximum amount at the beginning of each month. Construction projects should have purchase orders issued at the beginning of the project for the total amount and then copied each time a payment is made to be included as documentation with the payment.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Purchasing and the business manager update RISD's purchasing manual to eliminate payment authorizations and implement blanket purchase orders.	June 2003
2.	The business manager presents the changes to the purchasing manual to the CFO and superintendent for review and approval.	July 2003
3.	The director of Purchasing and the business manger train all departments on the procedures for the elimination of payment authorizations and use of blanket purchase orders.	August 2003
4.	The director of Purchasing informs the business manager of any purchases that do not follow RISD guidelines.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The RISD Technology Department does not follow FASRG guidelines for technology purchases. As a result, RISD may be paying more for these items.

While RISD used vendors on the Texas Building and Procurement Commission's (TBPC's) approved QISV list for the purchases, the district did not provide documentation that showed it used the FASRG catalog purchasing process. The FASRG includes guidelines for the purchase of computer hardware, software and services from the QISV. These guidelines require that at least three QISV vendors be selected to provide quotes.

RISD did not have documentation of receiving cost quotes for technology equipment to show that the purchases followed the catalog purchasing process. In 2001-02, RISD purchased more than \$1.4 million from a single vendor (**Exhibit 7-7**). RISD purchases included computers, laptops, parts, printers, scanners and installation of computers and networks.

Exhibit 7-7
RISD Computer Equipment and Contracted Services
Purchased Through QISV Vendors
2001-02

Vendor	Purchases
Power Services, Inc	\$40,326
Amherst, LLC	\$76,160
CDW Government	\$136,579
M & A Technology	\$1,443,823

Source: RISD director of Technology/Information Systems and EDP financial report from RISD business manager.

In August 2001, RISD purchased \$33,770 of computer equipment through a vendor when purchasing new software. The vendor actually purchased this equipment from another vendor and then resold it to the district. The vendor explained in a letter that its purchase of the servers enabled staff to install the software on the servers prior to implementation at the district. The vendor said considerable savings in manpower were achieved by working on the servers for extended hours in its own environment. Those savings, according to the vendor, were reflected in the final quote given to RISD. The vendor sold the servers to the district at a cost below the price the vendor paid for the servers, but equal to the pricing of another vendor.

RISD did not produce documentation to show that the price paid for the servers was equal to the price RISD would have paid if the district had followed recommended guidelines for purchasing through the state catalog system or through competitive bids.

The director of Technology/Information Services said that RISD received three quotes on all purchases last year, but could not produce any documentation to verify this. The Technology Department said it discarded all quotes except the ones attached to the purchase orders of the vendors awarded. According to the Texas State Library and Archives Commission, informal bid records, such as quotes and estimates, must be retained for one year.

RISD purchased computers for two schools through a Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund (TIF) grant in December 2001. The director of Technology/Information Services produced documentation of three quotes received from vendors in January 2001 when the director was working on the grant application. However, the director of Technology/Information Services ordered the computers in December 2001. RISD received a new quote from one of the three vendors in November 2001. The original quotes from January 2001 were used from the other two vendors.

In another instance, RISD issued a purchase order to this same vendor for \$391,676 for a fiber project/electronic phase two server rebuild. The district did not follow a formal bid process for this purchase. A memorandum shows that the district obtained quotes from four vendors, but only documented the awarded vendor's quote. No other documentation supports the memorandum. The director of Technology/Information Services only compared the catalog pricing for the major equipment included in this project. However, the quotes came from vendor catalogs, not by contacting the vendors. The successful vendor quoted \$89,633, yet the purchase order was awarded for \$391,677. The purchase order included other equipment and costs for installation and labor. These costs were not compared through price quotes. The Purchasing Department processed and approved the purchase order.

Round Rock ISD uses the following thresholds for QISV purchases:

- under \$1,000 - no bid required
- \$1,000 to \$10,000 - three quotes from QISVs
- \$10,000 or over - formal offers from QISVs (sometimes quotes or offers, sometimes requests for proposals)

The FASRG contains the following model for the competitive procurement process for catalog purchases:

- plan/market analysis for best value;
- evaluate information technology purchasing needs;
- contact general services commission for rules and copies of catalogues;

- develop specifications for items or scope of services;
- identify potential vendors (minimum of three);
- distribute specifications or scope of work to identified vendors;
- evaluate vendor responses;
- negotiate prices;
- negotiate optional enhancements to items or services;
- evaluate offers;
- select vendor providing best value;
- obtain final offer or proposal in writing;
- issue purchase order; and
- evaluate vendor performance.

The catalog purchasing guidelines in FASRG are to be used in a general fashion to facilitate objectivity in the purchasing process and to ensure the best value is obtained for the district. FASRG states the purpose and intent of competitive bidding is to help public schools secure the best work and materials at the lowest practical prices by stimulating competition.

Recommendation 46:

Establish procedures for the purchase of computer hardware, software and services.

Written procedures should include thresholds for purchasing through a QISV, written documentation of quotes, forms for receiving quotes from vendors and retention of documentation.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The CFO, business manager, director of Purchasing and director of Technology/Information Services review and update the process of purchasing from QISV vendors that includes written procedures for determining the use of the catalog purchase method or competitive bids for technology purchases and the retention of documentation for quotes.	June 2003
2.	The superintendent reviews and approves technology purchasing procedures.	July 2003
3.	The business manager and CFO monitor compliance with technology purchasing procedures.	July 2003 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

RISD does not obtain board approval for all purchases valued at \$50,000 or more, which violates RISD board policy CH (LOCAL). As a result, the district may be making unauthorized purchases and circumventing internal financial controls.

RISD board policy CH (LOCAL) delegates to the superintendent or designee the authority to determine the method of purchasing, in accordance with legal policy and to make budgeted purchases. However, any purchase that costs or aggregates to \$50,000 or more requires board approval.

RISD requires manual signatures by the superintendent and business manager for all checks that total more than \$50,000. The district signs other checks with an automatic check signer.

The review team examined purchases from 97 vendors and found three purchases exceeding the \$50,000 limit that did not have board approval (**Exhibit 7-8**). Several of the purchases that did not meet competitive bidding guidelines also did not have board approval.

Exhibit 7-8
RISD Purchases Exceeding \$50,000 Threshold
Without Board Approval
2001-02

Vendor	Description of Purchase	Amount
M & A Technology	Computer equipment	\$54,447
M & A Technology	Computer equipment and installation of fiber project	\$391,677
EDP Enterprises, Inc.	Software application upgrade and equipment	\$96,640

Source: RISD business manager.

As one of the fastest growing districts in north Texas, RISD has experienced a 31 percent growth rate since 1998-99. Five years ago, its internal control system of a \$50,000 board-approval threshold may have been sufficient because the volume of purchases was small enough for administrators to manage and maintain control. However, the substantial population growth and corresponding purchasing volume growth, combined with the same level of oversight, greatly increases the district's risks of purchasing violations and unsound fiscal practices.

Laredo ISD's local purchasing policy sets a \$25,000 threshold. Any purchase that costs or aggregates to a cost of \$25,000 or more requires board approval before a transaction may take place.

Recommendation 47:

Revise local purchasing policy to lower the board's approval limit from \$50,000 to \$25,000 and establish a written procedure to implement this policy.

Lowering the threshold to \$25,000 establishes the limit at TEC bidding guidelines.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent prepares an update to local policy CH (LOCAL) lowering the limit to \$25,000.	June 2003
2.	The superintendent presents the new policy to the board for approval.	July 2003
3.	The business manager and CFO write a procedure for the implementation of this policy.	July 2003
4.	The superintendent reviews and approves the procedure.	August 2003
5.	The business manager trains the director of Purchasing and staff in the use of these procedures.	August 2003
6.	The Purchasing Department implements the procedure.	September 2003
7.	The business manager and CFO monitor compliance with this procedure.	September 2003 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

RISD does not have written purchasing procedures for sole source purchases. Without a written procedure, there are no measures for ensuring that the district has made a determination of the validity of sole source exemption purchases.

A sole source purchase is exempt from state purchasing and competitive bidding requirements because the good or service is not available from any other source. RISD policy CH (H) allows sole source purchases in accordance with state purchasing laws.

RISD has relied on verbal representations from vendors in making sole source determinations, rather than making the determinations in accordance with applicable state requirements independently. According to the RISD's director of Purchasing, the district requires no written documentation verifying that a purchase meets all aspects of the sole source requirements under state guidelines.

RISD did not use due diligence in applying its legal policy covering sole source purchases. This resulted in possible state purchasing and bidding compliance violations. These purchases included software support from a vendor for \$25,357 and software applications, installation and training for \$62,870 from another vendor.

RISD made a decision to purchase student, fixed asset and financial accounting software and support without obtaining competitive bids based on a sole source determination. The vendor provided a letter stating that its software was sole source. The district received an email from TEA stating that sole source must be determined by the district. The district did not receive a legal opinion on this purchase decision.

According to FASRG, it is incumbent upon the district to obtain and retain documentation from the vendor that clearly delineates the reasons that the district is making the purchase on a sole source basis.

Round Rock ISD's Financial Information Resource Manual requires documentation for sole source purchases. When the district cannot obtain competitive pricing, sole source purchases must be documented. Acceptable documentation includes a signed statement on company letterhead from the vendor attesting to the fact that the item(s) requested are only available from that vendor and documentation concerning previous attempts to obtain competition. Round Rock has five reasons for using a sole source purchase:

1. There is no competitive product. The good/service is a one-of-a-kind or patented product, a copyrighted publication available from only one source or a unique item such as an artwork.
2. The product is only available from a regulated or a natural monopoly. For example, utilities, gravel from the only pit in the area or some similar situation.

3. The product is a component of an existing system, which is only available from one supplier. The replacement of a component or a repair part may only be available from the original supplier.
4. Non-profit corporations using handicapped workers produce the item. State or local governments often use products made by the blind or otherwise handicapped workers.
5. Prison workers produce the item. The state benefits from the sale of these items.

Recommendation 48:

Develop written procedures for sole source purchasing that follow the guidelines of the Financial Accountability System Resource Guide.

Written procedures should include formal documentation from vendors and documentation of attempts to find competition.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Purchasing and CFO review the sole source purchasing procedures of other districts and the guidelines of FASRG.	June 2003
2.	The director of Purchasing develops a sole source purchasing procedure that follows FASRG guidelines.	June 2003
3.	The director of Purchasing reviews the sole source purchasing procedure with the CFO.	July 2003
4.	The director of Purchasing communicates the new procedures to RISD users and closely monitors compliance.	September 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

RISD does not maximize its cooperative purchasing agreements. A written procedure for cooperative purchasing and a vendor listing of qualified vendors is not included in RISD's purchasing manual. Use of cooperative purchasing can save money, while meeting the state's competitive bidding requirements.

While RISD received cooperative pricing on office supplies of \$123,845 and for maintenance supplies of \$64,411 from vendors, it did not receive cooperative pricing for duplicating paper, custodial supplies and

instructional supplies. Copier paper, which is a large volume district purchase, is available through cooperative purchase, at discounted pricing (**Exhibit 7-9**).

Exhibit 7-9
Cost Comparison of Duplicating Paper for 2001-02
RISD Vendor and Cooperative Vendor

Goods Purchased	Cost from RISD Vendor	Cost from Cooperative Vendor	Difference
8 1/2 x 11 20 lb duplicating paper	\$65,800	\$58,520	\$7,280

Source: RISD invoice, and vendor quote, February 2003.

Cooperative purchasing agreements are useful because they offer some advantages over individual buying. Benefits of cooperative purchasing may be realized by districts of all sizes. A cooperative purchasing arrangement can increase the buying power of a single district through volume discounts. A cooperative may provide districts the opportunity to buy a greater variety of products and services. The district chooses what is best for its needs at lower costs.

Cooperative purchasing can also reduce administrative costs related to performing the purchasing function. Cost savings can include major areas, such as salaries and benefits, supplies, office equipment and contracted services. A cooperative can result in the elimination of redundant costs that may be associated with individual districts performing their own purchasing functions. Although purchasing cooperatives may charge annual fees for overhead costs, many districts can realize savings on both products and administration.

In 2000, Kingsville ISD (KISD) made 57 percent, or approximately \$1.7 million of its purchases, through cooperative purchasing agreements with the state of Texas and its regional education service center. The cooperatives provide the district with catalogs of items. Each school orders items using a purchase order form. Orders made through the cooperatives are clearly marked on the purchase order form to ensure proper coding in the financial system.

Recommendation 49:

Revise purchasing procedures to include a process to maximize cooperative purchasing.

Purchasing from cooperatives should save RISD time and money.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Purchasing revises procedures to include purchasing from cooperatives.	July 2003
2.	The director of Purchasing establishes a listing of vendors, the supplies or equipment available and the process for using each cooperative.	July 2003
3.	The director of Purchasing trains all applicable staff on the methods for purchasing from each cooperative.	August 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 7

PURCHASING

B. WAREHOUSE OPERATIONS

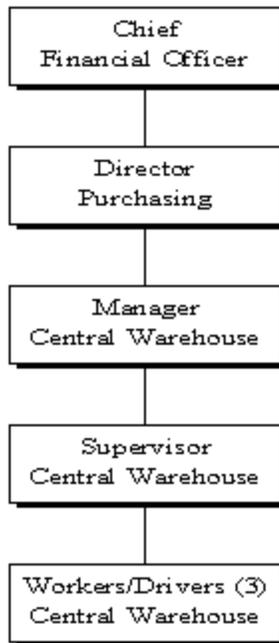
An efficient warehouse operation ensures: complete and timely deliveries to schools and departments; sufficient inventory levels to meet requests; proper accounting and controls of property and equipment; and proper disposal of all surplus or obsolete property and removal from system records.

Located at 1052 Williams Street by Williams Middle School, RISD Central Distribution and Receiving Warehouse operates as a central receiving point for the district. Funds in the 2001 bond referendum will finance renovation and expansion of the warehouse. The plans will increase the size of the warehouse from its current size of 8,400 square feet to 12,000 square feet.

The RISD warehouse staff consists of a manager who reports to the director of Purchasing, a supervisor and three workers/delivery drivers. The warehouse supplies the district with duplicating paper; office supplies, such as envelopes, batteries, binders, markers and tape; custodial supplies, including cleaning chemicals; and some food service supplies. **Exhibit 7-10** shows RISD's warehouse division organization.

Exhibit 7-10 RISD Warehouse Department

2002-03



Source: RISD director of Purchasing.

Warehouse staff transfers food items between schools every Monday. The staff delivers school mail, warehouse office supplies and common carrier freight received at the warehouse. The warehouse staff also picks up and delivers supplies to Region 10. If large deliveries, such as furniture, are shipped directly to a school, the warehouse staff coordinates timing with the vendor so that warehouse personnel are present to accept delivery. Two drivers pick up mail daily from the RISD administration offices to deliver to other campuses. One driver delivers to schools south of I-30, and one delivers to schools north of I-30. A third driver makes large freight, duplicating paper and custodial supplies deliveries.

Exhibit 7-11 shows a comparison of RISD's warehouse staffing to selected peer districts. Frisco and Coppell do not have centralized warehouse operations.

**Exhibit 7-11
Warehouse Department Staffing
RISD and Peer Districts
2002-03**

District	Inventory at 8/31/02	2001-02 Enrollment	Number of Warehouse Department Staff	Payroll Cost
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			Managers/Supervisors/ Specialists	Drivers	Total	
Allen	\$259,668	11,668	2	3	5	\$158,273
Carroll	Unknown	6,995	1	.5	1.5	\$40,000
Eanes	\$474,852	7,260	1	1	2	\$57,672
McKinney	\$71,427	13,614	1	3 drivers 2 receiving clerks	6	\$151,360
RISD	\$62,762	8,911	2	3	5	\$123,907

Source: RISD and Peer Districts email and telephone survey and TEA, Public Education Information Management System, 2002-03.

FINDING

RISD's warehouse personnel conduct a physical inventory at the end of each month. Staff members estimate that the inventory takes approximately three hours. Warehouse staff compares the physical count to the count in the EDP Warehouse Inventory System, noting differences. The director of Purchasing reviews and approves a variance report sent to the business office. The business office personnel adjust any variances in the physical count and the system count online.

In January 2000, RISD reduced inventory by \$189,835 as a result errors in values from previous years. In February 2000, RISD completed a physical inventory and increased inventory by \$26,912. Adjustments at the end of 2001 increased inventory by \$6,594.

In September 2001, RISD began monthly inventories. The total adjusting entry for inventory for August 2002 added \$746 to the inventory balance.

COMMENDATION

RISD minimizes warehouse losses and keeps inventory balances current through monthly physical inventory counts.

FINDING

RISD does not have an automated requisition system for central warehouse purchases. Manual processing of warehouse requisitions is time-consuming.

School and department personnel submit paper requisitions for supplies from the warehouse. Warehouse staff takes the requested items from stock and sort by school for delivery by the drivers. The warehouse supervisor charges the appropriate budget code using the EDP Warehouse Inventory System. As a result, the warehouse makes deliveries before determining if budgeted funds are available. The warehouse must receive direction from the business manager if a school receives supplies but does not have funds available. The business manager must give approval to exceed the budget category.

RISD does not use the remote requisition functions of the EDP Warehouse Inventory System. The remote requisition function of the EDP system allows schools and departments to request items from the warehouse, which reserves the items and reduces the total items available in inventory. The EDP system has the option of electronic approval. Upon approval of the requisition, the system reduces the school's or department's budget. In addition, RISD does not use the EDP system's online catalog feature, which allows schools to obtain current item prices and availability.

In Ysleta ISD, schools and departments request all warehouse items online through an automated system. In addition to an online catalog, the warehouse provides each school and department with one hard copy catalog of available items. The system maintains a perpetual inventory, which constantly updates the overall inventory according to purchases and distribution of supplies and materials. It automatically informs the user when and how much an item needs to be reordered based on the historical use.

Recommendation 50:

Automate warehouse requisitions using the district's inventory software and post the warehouse catalog online.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Purchasing and the director of Technology/Information Systems contact the finance software vendor to discuss implementation of remote warehouse requisition and online catalog process.	July 2003
2.	The director of Technology/Information Systems coordinates implementation with the finance software vendor.	August - October 2003
3.	The director of Purchasing develops written procedures for the implementation of remote warehouse requisitioning.	October - December 2003

4.	The director of Purchasing distributes the written procedures at training sessions for school and department staff involved in warehouse ordering.	January 2004
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FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 7

PURCHASING

C. TEXTBOOKS

TEA selects and purchases most of the textbooks used by Texas school districts. TEA buys textbooks from publishers and lends them to the districts. TEA provides each district with a listing of new state-approved textbooks each year. A district's textbook adoption committee selects the textbooks the district will adopt and orders them from TEA. The number of books allowed per subject and grade level depends on student enrollment information submitted to TEA through the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS).

In RISD, the director of Energy Management and Facilities Use serves as the district's textbook custodian and the district baseball coach. The textbook custodian estimates the number of textbooks needed by the district each year, prepares supplemental textbook orders from TEA during the year, maintains a district textbook inventory, tracks lost textbooks and returns surplus textbooks to TEA. A part-time textbook helper assists the textbook custodian.

The division of Curriculum and Instruction manages the textbook adoption process. After the RISD board has approved the annual textbook adoption, division staff mails the completed forms to TEA and sends a copy to the textbook custodian. The RISD warehouse receives textbooks. Upon the textbook custodian's direction, the warehouse distributes books to the schools or to the textbook storeroom at the Dobbs Annex. Surplus textbooks are stored at the Dobbs Annex at 901 Interurban Road in Rockwall.

Each RISD school has a textbook coordinator to receive the orders. When a textbook shortage occurs at a school, the school textbook coordinator submits a textbook order form to the district textbook custodian identifying the textbooks needed. The district textbook custodian checks the district inventory for availability. If the textbooks are in inventory, the textbook custodian boxes the books and places them on a pallet for the warehouse to deliver to the requesting school. The school signs for the delivery, and the school textbook coordinator adds the books to the inventory school level. The warehouse sends a copy of the delivery slip to the district textbook custodian. The district textbook custodian increases the campus inventory. If the textbooks are not in inventory, the textbook custodian orders the textbooks through TEA using Educational Materials and Textbooks (EMAT), the online ordering system. If the student enrollment numbers warrant, the district textbook custodian places an

order with TEA. However, if enrollment does not warrant the additional books, the textbook custodian informs the school, which must find funds to order the textbooks.

Once the textbooks arrive in the RISD warehouse, the warehouse manager notifies the textbook custodian, who sends instructions on where to ship the textbooks. The school signs the delivery form and forwards a copy to the district textbook custodian to update inventory records. **Exhibit 7-12** shows RISD's inventory of books has increased over the last three years.

Exhibit 7-12
RISD Textbook Inventory Value
1999-2000 through 2001-02

School Year	Number of Books	Value of Books From TEA
1999-2000	55,057	\$2,575,787
2000-01	60,385	\$2,699,488
2001-02	73,084	\$3,273,105

Source: TEA Division of Textbook Administration.

FINDING

RISD does not have an automated system for tracking textbooks at the district level, which makes managing the large textbook inventory difficult.

The review team was not able to review a district inventory, which exceeded \$3.2 million for 2001-02 as shown in **Exhibit 7-12**. The review team also requested reports on lost textbook information for the last three years. However, the textbook custodian did not have this information and requested information from the school textbook coordinators. Since the district does not have a standard process for reporting this information, reports vary from school to school.

Some of RISD's schools submitted a list of books in inventory. The list did not state the total number of books by title that the school is supposed to have in inventory. Some schools sent copies of checks received for lost books. Some schools sent handwritten reports from each teacher or department listing the number of books on hand.

Maurine Cain Middle School had a complete inventory listing that included inventory, number of books lost, number of books needed to order, extra books and student enrollment. Maurine Cain Middle School uses a software program for inventorying textbooks. According to the textbook custodian, only two middle schools have the software program to inventory of textbooks. The textbook coordinator at Herman E. Utey Freshman Center purchased the software and plans to bar code textbooks during the summer and implement use of the software in 2003.

Robstown ISD uses an automated inventory system to maintain and track textbook inventories. The automated inventory system contains the textbook name, edition and current cost. The system is constantly updated with current TEA textbook information. As part of the annual fee, software updates are sent any time TEA adds or deletes textbooks from its list or when textbook prices change. The district tallies the number of each textbook it has and records the number each school has of assigned textbooks. Robstown ISD also conducts random checks to verify that students have the textbooks they are assigned to determine whether textbooks are lost or damaged.

Recommendation 51:

Purchase an automated textbook inventory system for the district and for the schools that do not have an automated textbook system.

The district versions of textbook software helps users in the district track and manage books ordered for and shipped to schools, including their payments for replacement books, new orders and "lost" books. The school version is a comprehensive tool that lets the school administrator know who has what book, when they received it, how it was returned and fees paid or due.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The textbook custodian and Technology Department research available textbook inventory software.	June 2003
2.	The textbook custodian meets with school textbook coordinators to review software options.	June 2003
3.	The textbook custodian recommends the purchase of textbook inventory software to the superintendent, who requests approval from the board.	July 2003
4.	The board approves the purchase of textbook inventory software.	August 2003
5.	The textbook custodian includes the cost for the purchase of	August 2003

	district and school software in the 2003-04 budget.	
6.	The district textbook custodian and director of Technology/Information Systems develop a staggered implementation schedule for the schools.	August 2003
7.	The textbook custodian purchases the software through the Purchasing Department.	September 2003
8.	The textbook custodian and director of Technology/Information Systems begins implementing the software and conducts staff training.	October 2003
9.	The textbook custodian and director of Technology/Information Systems continue training and installing software through schools.	November 2003 - January 2004

FISCAL IMPACT

This fiscal impact of this recommendation includes the estimated cost of the system, annual maintenance fees, scanners, labels and training. The initial system cost includes \$2,590 for software licenses for the district and high school, \$4,455 for nine licenses for the elementary schools, \$3,885 for three scanners for the high school, \$1,000 for labels and \$3,580 for training for a total of \$15,510. Second year costs include \$1,200 in maintenance costs and \$495 for software for the new elementary. Third year costs include \$1,300 for maintenance costs and the initial setup costs for the new high school of \$3,590. Future costs are for maintenance at \$1,400 annually.

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
One-time cost for software, labels and training.	(\$15,510)	(\$495)	(\$3,590)	\$0	\$0
Annual maintenance fees.	\$0	(\$1,200)	(\$1,300)	(\$1,400)	(1,400)
Net Savings/(Cost)	(\$15,510)	(\$1,695)	(\$4,890)	(\$1,400)	(\$1,400)

FINDING

RISD does not submit orders for textbooks in time for books to arrive and be processed before the beginning of school. As a result, some students did not have textbooks at the beginning of school. RISD submitted annual textbook orders in July 2001 and July 2002. RISD students began classes for 2002-03 on August 29, 2002. **Exhibit 7-13** shows the dates of the receipt of textbook shipments from TEA to RISD.

Exhibit 7-13
RISD Textbook Receipt Dates
2002-03

Company	Date Received by RISD
McGraw Hill	8/20/02
Follett Library Resources	8/21/02
DDS Southwest	9/3/02
Greg Abbott Book Dist.	9/4/02
Education Pub.	9/4/02
Houghton Mifflin	9/4/02
Houghton Mifflin	9/13/02
McGraw Hill	9/20/02
McGraw Hill	9/20/02

Source: RISD textbook custodian.

After receipt of the textbooks into the inventory, the books must be processed before being distributed to the schools.

Exhibit 7-14 lists the annual textbook order dates for RISD and peer districts, showing that RISD orders textbooks much later than any of the other districts.

Exhibit 7-14
Annual Textbook Order Dates
RISD and Peer Districts
2002-03

District	Date of Order
Allen	March 21, 2002
Carroll	April 2002
Coppell	March 28, 2002
Eanes	May 2002
Frisco	April 1, 2002

McKinney	April 2002
RISD	July 17, 2002

Source: RISD and Peer Districts email and telephone interviews.

TEA notified districts in February 2002 that the EMAT online system would be operational beginning on March 7, 2002, so districts could begin entering textbook requisitions. The letter states that all annual requisitions should be submitted by April 1, 2002. TEC §31.103 states that a requisition for textbooks for the following school year shall be based on the maximum attendance reports under Subsection (a), plus an additional 10 percent, except as otherwise provided. A school district shall make a requisition for a textbook on the conforming or nonconforming list through the commissioner to the state depository designated by each publisher or as provided by State Board of Education rule, applicable, not later than June 1 of each year. The designated state depository or other storage facility shall fill a requisition approved by the agency at any other time in the case of an emergency.

Recommendation 52:

Implement a process to ensure that textbooks are ordered by April 1 of each year.

In order for textbooks to arrive and be distributed before the opening of school, orders must be placed before June 1.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The textbook custodian evaluates the textbook ordering process.	July 2003
2.	The textbook custodian develops a written procedure for ordering textbooks.	August 2003
3.	The business manager reviews proof of textbook order.	March 2004 and Annually

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

RISD's textbook custodian duties are assigned to a position that does not have adequate time to devote to textbooks. As a result, textbook orders have been submitted late to TEA.

The textbook custodian spends 75 percent of his time on facilities usage, 2 percent on energy management and 23 percent on textbooks. The textbook custodian also coaches baseball. RISD's textbook custodian spends less time on textbook duties than most peer districts(**Exhibit 7-15**).

Exhibit 7-15
Textbook Coordinator Duties and Percent
Of Time Spent on Textbooks
RISD and Peer Districts
December 2002

District	Primary Job Title of Textbook Custodian	Percent of Time on Textbooks	Other Duties
Allen	Director of Administrative Services	30%	Administration of health/nurse program Parental Customer Service District growth Assist in development of technology program and campus improvement plans
Carroll	Curriculum Coordinator for Social Studies, Foreign Languages and Textbooks	17%	Curriculum writing and alignment for K-12 for social studies, foreign languages Develops benchmarks and curriculum Model teaching TAKS preparation
Coppell	Secretary to the Executive Director of Support Services	50%	Payroll, petty cash, inventory control, requisition, purchase orders, budget, deposits for facilities
Eanes	Director of Secondary Curriculum and Instruction	100% beginning and end of school year; as little as 5% during the	Collaborating with secondary schools on curriculum development, Section 504 coordinator.

		school year	assessment director
Frisco	District Textbook Coordinator	40%	Facility rental Records management
McKinney	Coordinator of Textbooks, Attendance, Discipline	60%	Attendance, truancy, discipline including expulsion hearing officer
RISD	Director of Energy Management and Facilities Use	23%	Facilities usage, energy management, baseball coach

Source: RISD and Peer Districts email and telephone interviews, December 2002.

In Ysleta ISD (YISD), the warehouse director oversees the Textbook Services Department, which is located in the central warehouse facility. The department is staffed with a textbook clerk and two employees who assist with textbook deliveries. The receiving/textbook foreman has day-to-day responsibility for the distribution and tracking of textbooks in the district.

The primary functions performed by the YISD Textbook Services Department include: estimating the number of textbooks needed by the district each year; preparing supplemental orders of additional textbooks from TEA; inventorying textbooks; distributing books to individual schools; tracking lost books; and returning surplus books to TEA.

Recommendation 53:

Reassign textbook custodian functions to the Purchasing/Warehouse department.

The staffing level of the warehouse is adequate to perform the tasks of the textbook custodian.

The textbook adoption process should stay with the curriculum division.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent amends the job description of the director of Energy Management and Facilities Use deleting the duties of textbook custodian.	June 2003
2.	The superintendent assigns the responsibilities of textbook custodian to the director of Purchasing with assistance from the warehouse	June 2003

	manager.	
3.	The director of Purchasing and central warehouse manager receive training in EMAT and in textbook ordering and receiving processes from TEA.	July 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 8

CHILD NUTRITION

This chapter reviews the child nutrition operations of the Rockwall Independent School District (RISD) in the following sections:

- A. Organization and Staffing
- B. Operations
- C. Financial Management

School child nutrition operations are expected to provide an appealing, nutritionally sound breakfast and lunch as economically as possible. There are several factors in evaluating a school child nutrition program, including the ratio of meals served per labor hour (MPLH), food costs, the amount of waste, participation in breakfast and lunch programs, the nutritional value and the variety of meals served, the wait time per student served and financial self-sufficiency.

The Texas School Food Service Association (TSFSA) has identified 10 standards of excellence for evaluating school child nutrition programs. The standards state that effective programs should:

- identify and meet current and future needs through organization, planning, direction and control;
- maintain financial accountability through established procedures;
- meet the nutritional needs of students and promote the development of sound nutritional practices;
- ensure that procurement practices meet established standards;
- provide appetizing, nutritious meals through effective, efficient systems management;
- maintain a safe and sanitary environment;
- encourage student participation in child nutrition programs;
- provide an environment that enhances employee productivity, growth, development and morale;
- promote a positive image to the public; and
- measure success in fulfilling regulatory requirements.

These standards are used in this report to assess the operational and financial effectiveness of the RISD Child Nutrition Department in its delivery of nutritious breakfast and lunch meals to students.

BACKGROUND

The RISD Child Nutrition Department operates 13 kitchens and employs 84 people (**Exhibit 8-1**). The kitchen at Herman E. Utley Freshman Center also serves students in the Rockwall Alternative School.

Exhibit 8-1
RISD Kitchen Locations and Staffing Levels
2002-03

Kitchen Location	Number of Staff
Administration	9
Rockwall High School	15
Herman E. Utley Freshman Center	7
J.W. Williams Middle School	6
Maurine Cain Middle School	4
Amanda Rochell Elementary School	7
Amy Parks-Heath Elementary School	4
Cullins-Lake Pointe Elementary School	7
Dorothy Smith Pullen Elementary School	3
Dorris A. Jones Elementary School	5
Grace Hartman Elementary School	4
Howard Dobbs Elementary School	7
Nebbie Williams Elementary School	3
Virginia Reinhardt Elementary School	3
Total	84

Source: RISD Child Nutrition director, November 2002.

For 2002-03, the department's operating expenditure budget is \$2,437,100 (**Exhibit 8-2**). RISD's Child Nutrition operation has experienced poor financial results in recent years. In 2001-02, the program lost \$130,317 and ended the fiscal year with a fund balance deficit of \$93,103. The projected fund balance deficit for the 2002-03 budget is \$77,703. The program receives no overhead allocations for custodial or utility costs from RISD's general fund.

Exhibit 8-2
RISD Child Nutrition Program Financial Operating Results
1998-99 through 2002-03

Description	1998-99 Actual	1999-2000 Actual	2000-01 Actual	2001-02 Actual	2002-03 Budget	Percentage Change from 1998-99
Revenues	\$1,552,843	\$1,773,299	\$2,048,571	\$2,052,247	\$2,452,500	57.9%
Expenditures	\$1,481,758	\$1,853,530	\$2,011,508	\$2,182,564	\$2,437,100	64.5%
Income (Loss)	\$71,085	(\$80,231)	\$37,063	(\$130,317)	\$15,400	(78.3%)
Fund Balance (Deficit) - Beginning	\$9,297	\$80,382	\$151	\$37,214	(\$93,103)	(1101.4%)
Fund Balance (Deficit) - End	\$80,382	\$151	\$37,214	(\$93,103)	(\$77,703)	(196.7%)

Source: RISD Audited Annual Financial and Compliance Reports, 1998-99 through 2001-02 and RISD 2002-03 Annual Budget.

RISD Child Nutrition Department expenditures increased 9.1 percent between 2000-01 and 2001-02 (**Exhibit 8-3**). During this same period, payroll increased by 15.4 percent and benefits increased by 11.9 percent, while the cost of food grew by 5.5 percent. The 53.1 percent decrease in professional and contracted services in 2001-02 is mainly attributed to the recent hiring of a full-time maintenance person.

Exhibit 8-3
RISD Child Nutrition Department
Actual Financial Information
2000-01 through 2001-02

Category	2000-01 Actual	Percentage of Total Expenditures	2001-02 Actual	Percentage of Total Expenditures	Percentage Change
Payroll	\$769,681	38.46%	\$888,291	40.70%	15.4%

Benefits	\$238,129	11.90%	\$266,374	12.20%	11.9%
Professional and Contracted Services	\$72,410	3.62%	\$33,988	1.56%	(53.1%)
Supplies and Materials					
Food	\$705,564	35.26%	\$744,169	34.10%	5.5%
Commodities	\$87,570	4.38%	\$86,195	3.95%	(1.6%)
Other	\$91,394	4.57%	\$109,875	5.03%	20.2%
Travel and Subsistence	\$7,263	0.36%	\$9,092	0.42%	25.2%
Other	\$13,631	0.68%	\$12,822	0.59%	(5.9%)
Capital Outlay	\$15,566	0.78%	\$31,759	1.46%	104.0%
Total Expenditures	\$2,001,208	100.00%	\$2,182,564	100.00%	9.1%

Source: RISD financial records and annual financial and compliance audit reports for 2000-01 and 2001-02.

From 1997-98 through 2001-02, RISD Child Nutrition expenditures increased 62.8 percent, while student enrollment grew by 27.8 percent. Among selected peer districts, RISD's total Child Nutrition expenditure increase (**Exhibit 8-4**) ranks as the fourth highest.

Exhibit 8-4
Child Nutrition Expenditures Comparison
RISD and Peer Districts
1997-98 through 2001-02

District	1997-98 Actual	1998-99 Actual	1999-2000 Actual	2000-01 Actual	2001-02 Budget	Percentage Change, 1997-98 - 2001-02
Frisco	\$702,243	\$1,039,520	\$1,010,385	\$1,692,624	\$2,224,486	216.8%
Carroll	\$927,661	\$1,082,076	\$1,408,035	\$1,700,948	\$1,913,494	106.3%
Allen	\$1,389,276	\$1,547,309	\$1,713,402	\$2,172,742	\$2,436,990	75.4%

RISD	\$1,228,915	\$1,323,489	\$1,481,757	\$1,853,530	\$2,001,208	62.8%
Coppell	\$2,031,879	\$2,266,312	\$2,676,847	\$2,758,083	\$3,190,010	57.0%
McKinney	\$2,008,739	\$2,254,377	\$2,374,018	\$2,718,959	\$3,113,212	55.0%
Eanes	\$2,093,831	\$2,230,643	\$2,114,118	\$2,425,256	\$2,250,184	7.5%

Source: Texas Education Agency (TEA), Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) data, December 2002.

RISD's Child Nutrition Department receives revenues from the sale of meals, from catering services for other RISD departments and from the federally-funded breakfast and lunch programs. RISD submits detailed reports to the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to document reimbursements from the federally funded National School Breakfast and Lunch Programs. **Exhibit 8-5** shows the federal reimbursable rates for eligible meals served at RISD.

Exhibit 8-5
RISD Federal Reimbursement Rates for Breakfast and Lunch
2002-03

Category	Regular Breakfast	Severe Need Breakfast	Regular Lunch/Supper	Two-Cent Supplementary Lunch	Snack Program
Paid	\$0.22	\$0.00	\$0.20	\$0.22	\$0.05
Reduced	\$0.87	\$0.23	\$1.74	\$1.76	\$0.29
Free	\$1.17	\$0.23	\$2.14	\$2.16	\$0.58
Summer program	\$1.17	\$0.23	\$2.14	N/A	\$0.58

Source: RISD Child Nutrition director, November 2002.

Exhibit 8-6 shows RISD meal prices for 2002-03.

Exhibit 8-6
RISD Child Nutrition Meal Prices
2002-03

Meal Type	Elementary	Secondary
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Breakfast	\$.95	\$.95
Breakfast Reduced Price	\$.30	\$.30
Breakfast Adult	\$1.10	\$1.10
Lunch	\$1.75	\$2.00
Lunch Reduced Price	\$.40	\$.40
Lunch Adult	\$2.25	\$2.25

Source: RISD Child Nutrition director, November 2002.

RISD has the third-highest revenue growth among peer districts at 84.6 percent (**Exhibit 8-7**) since 1997-98. This revenue growth has not been sufficient to cover cost increases over the same period.

Exhibit 8-7
Child Nutrition Revenue Comparison
RISD and Peer Districts
1997-98 through 2001-02

District	1997-98 Actual	1998-99 Actual	1999-2000 Actual	2000-01 Actual	2001-02 Budget	Percentage Change from 1997-98
Frisco	\$683,086	\$852,394	\$1,118,490	\$1,663,360	\$2,367,333	246.6%
Carroll	\$967,800	\$1,085,044	\$1,265,795	\$1,481,264	\$1,809,145	86.9%
RISD	\$1,109,708	\$1,298,874	\$1,552,843	\$1,762,999	\$2,048,570	84.6%
Allen	\$1,659,566	\$2,007,716	\$2,064,243	\$2,791,912	\$2,964,633	78.6%
Coppell	\$2,060,327	\$2,446,939	\$2,650,421	\$2,915,904	\$3,436,166	66.8%
Eanes	\$1,775,283	\$2,279,045	\$2,430,226	\$2,505,475	\$2,664,648	50.1%
McKinney	\$2,003,438	\$2,174,012	\$2,328,763	\$2,784,131	\$2,958,524	47.7%

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

The National School Lunch Program (NSLP) is a federally-assisted meal program that operates in public schools and in nonprofit residential child-care institutions. The program provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free lunches to children. In 1998, Congress expanded the NSLP to include reimbursement for snacks served to children up to 18 years of age in after-school educational and enrichment programs.

The Food and Nutrition Service, under the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), administers the program at the federal level. At the state level, the NSLP is administered in public schools by the Texas Education Agency (TEA), which operates the program through agreements with districts.

Districts that participate in the NSLP receive cash subsidies and donated commodities from the USDA for each meal they serve. In return, they must serve lunches that meet federal requirements, and they must offer free or reduced-price lunches to students with family income levels that meet national poverty guidelines. Any child enrolled in a participating school may purchase a meal through the NSLP. Children from families with incomes at or below 130 percent of the poverty level are eligible for free meals. Those with incomes between 130 percent and 185 percent of the poverty level are eligible for reduced-price meals, for which students can be charged no more than 40 cents for lunch. Children from families with incomes more than 185 percent of poverty pay full price, although their meals are still subsidized to some extent. Districts set their own prices for full-price (paid) meals but must operate their meal services as nonprofit programs. Districts can also be reimbursed for snacks served to children through age 18 in after-school educational or enrichment programs.

In Texas, school lunches must meet TEA dietary guidelines, which recommend that no more than 30 percent of an individual's calories come from fat and less than 10 percent from saturated fat. School lunches must provide a third of the Recommended Dietary Allowances of protein, vitamins A and C, iron, calcium and calories. Although school meals must meet federal nutrition requirements, decisions about which foods to serve and how to prepare them are made by the district.

The School Breakfast Program (SBP) is a federal entitlement program that provides states with cash assistance for nonprofit breakfast programs in schools. Food and Nutrition Services administers SBP at the federal level and the TEA and local districts administer the program at the local level in public schools.

Participating schools must serve breakfasts that meet federal nutrition standards and must provide free and reduced-price breakfasts to eligible children. Participating schools receive cash assistance from USDA for each meal served that meets program requirements. Regulations require that all school meals meet the recommendations of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Breakfasts must provide a fourth of the daily recommended levels for calories, protein, calcium, iron, and vitamins A and C. Districts submit a claim to the TEA for meals served.

The School Lunch and Breakfast Agreement is a legal contract between TEA and RISD. The provisions are identical to the provisions of the contract between TEA and the USDA. At the end of each school year, each district must complete a renewal of agreement.

RISD employs a full-time maintenance person to keep all kitchen equipment in good repair. During on-site visits, the review team noted that kitchens were clean and in good working order. In accordance with municipal and federal guidelines, municipal health inspectors from the cities of Heath, Rockwall and Rowlett as well as federal health inspectors visit RISD kitchens routinely to evaluate general conditions and health compliance requirements. Federal inspectors also regularly visit two of RISD's campuses as required by the federally funded Head Start program. RISD formally inspects all school kitchens at least once annually, using similar health compliance guidelines. RISD keeps all inspection reports on file, and the review team noted that all recent inspections indicate full compliance with mandated requirements.

RISD's Child Nutrition Program is subject to TEA Coordinated Review Efforts (CRE). A CRE review is a standardized process developed by the USDA that includes a comprehensive on-site evaluation of a district that participates in Child Nutrition Programs. The purpose of the CRE is to ensure compliance with the USDA and TEA guidelines. TEA last conducted a CRE review at RISD in 1999.

Chapter 8

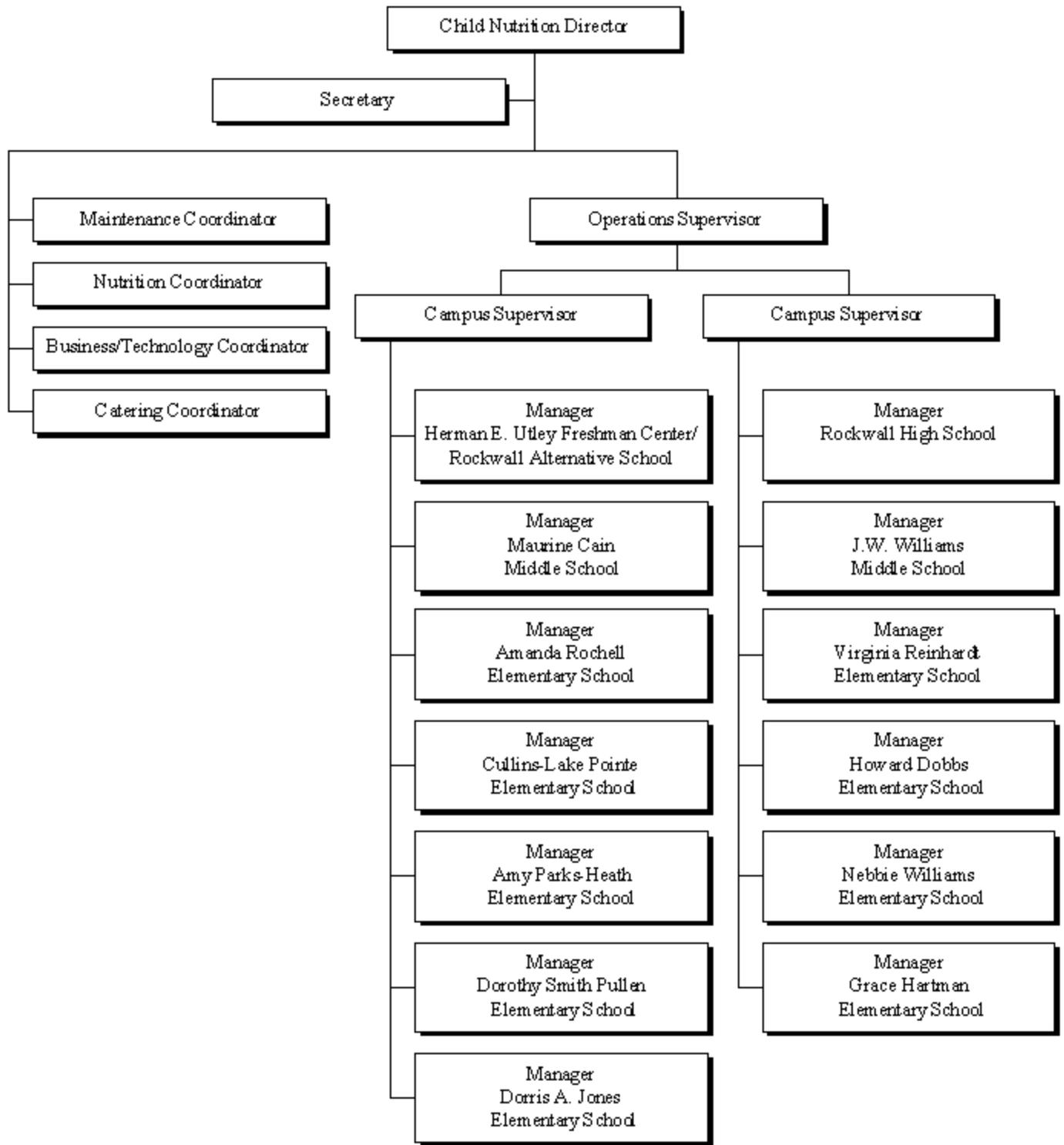
CHILD NUTRITION

A. ORGANIZATION AND STAFFING

The RISD Child Nutrition director reports to the executive director of Operations/Risk Management. The current director has an American School Child Nutrition Association Level Seven Certification and has held the position for three years.

Exhibit 8-8 shows the Child Nutrition organizational chart.

**Exhibit 8-8
RISD Child Nutrition Department
Organization
2002-03**



Source: RISD Child Nutrition director, November 2002.

FINDING

RISD's Child Nutrition director has written a comprehensive employee handbook. The handbook includes job descriptions for all positions and other information pertaining to department employment. The handbook includes the RISD mission statement and a mission statement for the department. The RISD Child Nutrition mission statement is "...to provide balanced, nutritious meals, fundamental to the physical and emotional well being of children. The department is an integral part of the learning process and will strive daily to provide an exemplary atmosphere and excellence in food quality and service."

The handbook includes goals for staff members, information on professional nutrition organizations and application forms, membership dues information, training opportunities, meal service information, employee guidelines, job performance criteria and appraisal forms, risk management information and receipt of acknowledgment forms for employees.

The handbook ensures consistent communications to all Child Nutrition staff to reduce misunderstandings and increase staff adherence to Child Nutrition Department policies and procedures. The handbook is available in English only, as the need for a Spanish version has not been significant at RISD. RISD cross-trains cafeteria employees to assist in other locations when necessary.

COMMENDATION

RISD developed a well-written and informative employee handbook that promotes staff education.

FINDING

RISD Child Nutrition director hired a permanent maintenance coordinator in 2001-02, to reduce costs. The maintenance coordinator works directly for the Child Nutrition director. As a result, RISD Child Nutrition maintenance expenditures declined by \$41,500 from 2000-01 to 2001-02. The maintenance coordinator routinely works on department equipment and is completing a comprehensive inventory of all Child Nutrition equipment. The maintenance coordinator had previously worked for the company that provided contract service for equipment maintenance to RISD.

COMMENDATION

RISD reduced program costs by hiring a full-time maintenance coordinator to service cafeteria equipment.

FINDING

RISD's Child Nutrition program has too many administrative positions, resulting in high program costs. The district has 13 kitchen operations at elementary and secondary schools and employs nine administrative positions (**Exhibit 8-9**).

**Exhibit 8-9
RISD Child Nutrition Administrative Positions
2002-03**

Position
Child Nutrition Director
Operations Supervisor
Nutrition Coordinator
Maintenance Coordinator
Business/Technology Coordinator
Secretary
Campus Supervisor
Campus Supervisor
Catering Coordinator

*Source: RISD Child Nutrition director,
November 2002.*

Including benefits, the total annual cost of these positions is \$294,960. High administrative costs have increased overall cost. Recognizing that the district is growing rapidly, the director has planned for new operations growth with the current staffing plan; however, the director added staff before the program could absorb these additional costs. The number of administrative staff is high in relation to the current number of kitchen operations.

According to *Managing Child Nutrition Programs*, an industry standard in operating school district food service programs, optimal staffing for a district with 15 or fewer kitchens is a maximum of two administrative/supervisory positions, which amounts to a ratio of seven to

eight kitchens for each administrator. According to the authors, the lower the ratio of kitchens to administrative staff, the higher the likelihood that the food service function is overstaffed. RISD has the lowest ratio of kitchens to administrative staff when compared to its peer districts. However, neither RISD nor any of the responding peer districts meet or exceed the optimal seven- or eight-to-one ratio (**Exhibit 8-10**).

Exhibit 8-10
Child Nutrition Administrative Staffing Comparison
RISD and Peer Districts
2002-03

District	Number of Administrative Positions	Number of Kitchens	Administrative Staffing Ratio
Carroll	2	12	6.0
Eanes	2	10	5.0
Frisco	5	18	3.6
McKinney	6	21	3.5
Allen	4.5	14	3.1
RISD	6	13	2.2

Source: RISD Organization Chart and WCL ENTERPRISES telephone survey, January 2002.

RISD has experienced a 28.9 percent growth in student enrollment from 1998-99 through 2002-03. The Child Nutrition director has structured the department for future growth by adding nutrition analysis, equipment maintenance and certain administrative services. At its present volume, RISD's Child Nutrition program cannot afford this level of administrative staffing, and the district does not plan to open another school for at least two years. The program had a deficit of more than \$93,000 at the end of 2001-02, and-based on the current budget-it will experience a deficit that exceeds more than \$77,000 at the end of 2002-03.

Three of the administrative positions do not perform administrative roles: the maintenance coordinator, the business/technology coordinator and the catering coordinator. RISD does not allocate utilities, custodial or maintenance costs from the general fund to the Child Nutrition program.

RISD's maintenance coordinator is experienced in food service equipment maintenance. In addition to repairing and maintaining the cooking

equipment, the maintenance coordinator is trying to standardize equipment for cost savings on parts and maintenance costs and is working on a preventive maintenance process for each school kitchen. The maintenance coordinator does not work on building alterations, such as electrical rewiring or changing room configurations.

The business/technology coordinator processes Child Nutrition invoices for accounts payable processing, assists in the Child Nutrition purchasing function, coordinates Child Nutrition payroll processing and works with Child Nutrition financial information. This position also supports cafeteria managers on the point of sale system and interviews prospective staff for eventual hiring. The business/technology coordinator assists the business office staff with Child Nutrition bank reconciliations, substitutes for cafeteria staff when needed and performs monthly food and supply inventories.

The catering coordinator performs functions similar to cafeteria managers and is a production staff position. The position performs catering duties for other district departments using the kitchens and Child Nutrition staff closest to the catering event. The catering coordinator oversees allocation of food and labor costs to the department that requests the catered event.

There are six other administrative Child Nutrition employees: the director, the secretary, the nutrition coordinator, the operations supervisor and two campus supervisors who oversee kitchen operations. Costs and benefits for all of these positions equal \$214,871.

The secretary handles NSLP meal applications, sends letters to families about the free and reduced meal programs, fills work requests from supervisors and managers, orders and maintains office supplies, helps with RISD Child Nutrition program purchasing and processes correspondence for the director.

The full-time nutrition coordinator:

- creates menus for all Child Nutrition programs, based on sound nutritional concepts;
- conducts computer-based nutritional analysis of school menus, including gathering nutritional information on products, creating standardized recipes and verifying data;
- ensures menus meet USDA guidelines;
- assists with selection and evaluation of food products for menus through taste testing;
- coordinates special events promotion such as National Nutrition Month, National Lunch and Breakfast Weeks, Texas School Lunch and Breakfast Weeks and Five-A-Day;

- creates promotional and informational nutrition fact sheets about the School Child Nutrition program for distribution to students, staff and community;
- acts as liaison between the Child Nutrition Department and the students, staff and community by attending meetings and working with nurses, instructional coordinators, and teachers;
- provides nutrition education materials to district faculty and cafeteria managers;
- teaches nutrition to Child Nutrition staff as needed; and
- performs other duties assigned by the director.

Duplicate duties of the operations supervisor and two campus supervisors:

- train lead personnel in all aspects of cafeteria management, including work schedules, ordering/inventory functions, production records, computer programs, sanitation and safety;
- supervise day-to-day operations, food quality control, customer service and recordkeeping;
- serve as site manager while training the lead person and staff to perform these functions;
- assist at any school or Child Nutrition area as needed;
- help supervisors to complete kitchen reviews, staff evaluations and federal program forms;
- work with other assistant supervisors, supervisors and coordinators for efficient department management;
- approve menu changes and substitutions according to department policy;
- advise on staffing needs and levels for efficient operation of assigned schools;
- act as liaison between the department and the students, staff and community; and
- perform other duties assigned by the supervisor or the director.

In 2001-02, RISD charged campus supervisor wages and benefits to district elementary schools because they acted as supplemental managers, and the director added more responsibility to their job descriptions. Some days campus supervisor hours were directly related to food production; at other times, they performed administrative functions. For 2002-03, RISD considers campus supervisors to be full-time administrative staff.

Recommendation 54:

Establish supervisor/administrative staffing formulas and bring staffing in line with industry standards.

Eliminate the nutrition coordinator position and two of the campus supervisor positions, which would reduce administrative staffing by three positions. The duties of these three positions can be reassigned to the Child Nutrition director and remaining staff or, as in the case of nutrition planning assistance, can be outsourced when necessary.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Child Nutrition director, superintendent and CFO develop a plan to reduce administrative staffing by eliminating the nutrition coordinator position and two campus supervisor positions, including reassignment of necessary job duties to existing staff.	June 2003
2.	The Child Nutrition director revises operating routines and job duties with remaining staff.	July 2003
3.	The Child Nutrition director arranges to outsource of nutrition planning with the current Frisco interlocal agreement or through Region 10.	July 2003
4.	The Child Nutrition Department begins operations using the new organization.	August 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

Eliminating the Nutrition coordinator would result in an annual savings of \$33,961 (\$29,531 in salary plus 15 percent benefits of \$4,430) beginning in 2003-04.

Two existing campus supervisor positions would be eliminated. The fiscal estimates are based on each position's actual salary.

Eliminating one campus supervisor would result in an annual savings of \$24,960 (\$21,704 in salary plus 15 percent benefits of \$3,256) beginning in 2003-04.

Eliminating another campus supervisor would result in an annual savings of \$22,522 (\$19,584 in salary plus 15 percent benefits of \$2,938) beginning in 2003-04.

Total salary savings annually would be \$81,443 (\$33,961 + \$24,960 + 22,522 = \$81,443)

Net cost of outsourcing for nutrition planning would be \$6,500, which is the amount budgeted annually. Net annual savings would be \$74,943 (\$81,443 - \$6,500 = \$74,943).

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Establish supervisor/administrative staffing formulas and bring staffing in line with industry standards.	\$74,943	\$74,943	\$74,943	\$74,943	\$74,943

FINDING

The RISD Child Nutrition Department serves fewer Meals per Labor Hour (MPLH) in seven of its schools than recommended by industry standards. As result, the cost of labor is higher, which results in higher meal costs. RISD reviews MPLH on a monthly and annual basis.

The most common method used in school child nutrition programs to measure productivity rates is the number of meals served per labor hour. Factors that affect MPLH include:

- the type of food production system (on-site production, bulk satellite, pre-plated satellite or assembly-serve);
- level of service (self-service, vending machines, plates served on serving line and made-to-order service);
- menu (number of choices, difficulty or complexity);
- degree of prepared foods purchased (raw ingredients, some convenience foods or all convenience foods);
- type of equipment (amount of automation or lack of automation);
- layout and design of kitchen and serving area;
- production planning (work schedules);
- staffing and scheduling;
- training and skill levels of employees;
- employee motivation;
- size of facility (number of customers and volume of sales); and
- serving schedule.

Exhibit 8-11 shows the industry staffing guidelines for on-site food production using average types of automated equipment. The review team used these guidelines to evaluate RISD's level of food services staffing. The conventional system for preparing meals consists of preparing food on site from scratch with raw vegetables and other ingredients, and it includes washing dishes. The convenience system of meals consists of using processed foods when possible and disposable trays and utensils. RISD's elementary schools are closer to the conventional system, and the secondary schools are somewhere between conventional and convenience systems.

Exhibit 8-11
Staffing Guidelines for On-Site Meal Production
2002

Number of Meal Equivalents	MPLH			
	Conventional System		Convenience System	
Up to 100	8	10	10	12
101-150	9	11	11	13
151-200	10-11	12	12	14
201-250	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+	19	21	22	23

Source: "Managing Child Nutrition Programs," 1999.

Exhibit 8-12 shows MPLH for each RISD school.

Exhibit 8-12
RISD Daily Meals per Labor Hour
2001-02

School	Actual Meal Equivalents	Actual Labor Hours	Actual MPLH	Recommended MPLH*	Variance in MPLH above/ (below)	Recommended Labor Hours	Variance in Hours
Rockwall High School	1,229.5	72.3	17.0	22.0	(5.0)	55.9	16.4
Herman F.	508.0	35.3	14.4	22.0	(7.6)	23.0	12.3

Utley Freshman Center								
J.W. Williams Middle School	465.5	33.0	14.1	18.0	(3.9)	25.8	7.2	
Maurine Cain Middle School	483.9	32.7	14.8	18.0	(3.2)	26.9	5.8	
Virginia Reinhardt Elementary School	340.7	20.5	16.6	16.0	0.6	21.2	(0.7)	
Howard Dobbs Elementary School	502.5	30.8	16.3	17.0	(0.7)	29.6	1.2	
Amanda Rochell Elementary School	883.0	42.0	21.0	20.0	1.0	44.2	(2.2)	
Cullins- Lake Pointe Elementary School	585.9	39.6	14.8	17.0	(2.2)	34.5	5.1	
Amy Parks- Heath Elementary School	428.9	24.6	17.4	17.0	0.4	25.2	(0.6)	
Nebbie Williams Elementary School	388.1	21.7	17.9	16.0	1.9	24.3	(2.6)	
Dorothy Smith Pullen Elementary	467.4	31.6	14.8	17.0	(2.2)	27.5	4.1	

School							
Total	6,283.4	384.1	16.4	200.0	(20.9)	338.1	46.0

Source: RISD Child Nutrition director - Paid Meal Reports, November 2002.

*The recommended MPLH for RISD elementary schools is based on the upper range MPLH for the conventional system. The secondary schools' MPLH is based on the lower range MPLH for convenience systems.

Ysleta ISD used an MPLH formula to eliminate the number of food service positions above the industry MPLH standards. This move reduced labor costs by 16 percent, saving more than \$4 million over five years.

Recommendation 55:

Implement industry meals per labor hour standards and adjust staffing levels to achieve the recommended standard.

Projected meals served, divided by the industry standard MPLH, equals the number of labor hours required for each school. The number of labor hours, times the hourly rate for each child nutrition employee, plus benefits, times the number of days worked per year, equals the annual projected payroll cost for each employee.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Child Nutrition director and assistants implement a staffing reduction plan to include increasing productivity and/or decreasing labor costs.	June 2003
2.	The Child Nutrition director presents the plan to the superintendent for approval.	July 2003
3.	The Child Nutrition director and the cafeteria managers implement the plan for improving each school's MPLH.	August 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

If all schools served the recommended meals per labor hour, RISD could reduce its labor by 46 hours per day. Based on a cafeteria worker's entry-level hourly pay of \$6.52 per hour, and a cafeteria worker working 181 days per year RISD could save \$62,428 (\$54,285 in wages + \$8,143 in benefits) per year. The savings is calculated by multiplying 46 hours times 181 days times the wage rate and benefit percentage. This savings equates

to over seven Child Nutrition worker positions at an average salary and benefits of \$8,710 per year.

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Implement industry meals per labor hour standards and adjust staffing levels to achieve the recommended standard.	\$62,428	\$62,428	\$62,428	\$62,428	\$62,428

Chapter 8

CHILD NUTRITION

B. OPERATIONS

From 2000-01 to 2001-02, average daily participation in the RISD Child Nutrition program has increased from 70.8 percent to 73.8 percent (**Exhibit 8-13**). This increase is consistent for all kitchen locations with significant operations during that period except the Herman E. Utley Freshman Center, which also includes Rockwall Alternative School students.

Exhibit 8-13
RISD Average Daily Attendance and Meal Participation
2001-02 and 2000-01

School	2000-01		2001-02	
	Average Daily Attendance	Average Daily Participation	Average Daily Attendance	Average Daily Participation
Rockwall High School	1,824	63.2%	1,915	64.2%
Herman E. Utley Freshman Center	747	72.2%	819	62.0%
J.W. Williams Middle School	801	49.6%	846	55.0%
Maurine Cain Middle School	621	67.6%	649	74.6%
Virginia Reinhardt Elementary School	549	58.2%	401	85.0%
Howard Dobbs Elementary School	570	88.9%	562	89.4%
Amanda Rochell Elementary School*	746	109.3%	496	178.0%
Cullins-Lake Pointe Elementary School	855	69.3%	916	64.0%
Amy Parks-Heath Elementary School	541	70.1%	609	70.4%
Nebbie Williams Elementary School	507	69.3%	443	87.6%

Dorothy Smith Pullen Elementary School	560	75.1%	617	75.7%
Total	8,321	70.8%	8,273	73.8%

Source: RISD Child Nutrition director - Paid Meal Reports, November 2002.

*Amanda Rochell Elementary School went from 807 ADA May 2002 to 496 ADA in August 2002.

FINDING

RISD participates in an interlocal agreement with 13 other area districts that provides training sessions and support to all Child Nutrition administrators and kitchen managers during the year. Frisco ISD serves as the program's fiscal manager. The agreement costs approximately \$6,500 annually and includes up to 20 days of participation by a Child Nutrition specialist. The agreement is cost-effective because it provides on-site training and support activities in accordance with schedules determined by the Child Nutrition director. Participating member districts are Rockwall, Frisco, Wylie, Royce City, Caddo, Community, Celina, Prosper, Lovejoy, Commerce, Terrell, Anna and Bonham. The agreement provides for a Child Nutrition specialist for all participating districts.

The Child Nutrition specialist remains an employee of Frisco ISD. Participating districts determine training needs and submit requested training dates, and the area trainer coordinates dates and schedules.

COMMENDATION

RISD provides on-site training and support for Child Nutrition staff in a cost-effective manner through an interlocal agreement with other area school districts.

FINDING

RISD's vending machines contain carbonated beverages and snack foods. The vending machines reduce Child Nutrition revenues and provide low nutritional value to students. Estimates provided by RISD's vendor show that visitors, students and staff spend more than \$230,000 annually on vending machine products.

RISD secondary schools have vending machines for student use that are close to the Child Nutrition area and are available to students during meal periods. The review team observed students purchasing food and sodas from the vending machines instead of buying cafeteria meals. Student

access to vending machines during meal periods affects RISD Child Nutrition revenue, and their placement conflicts with USDA compliance requirements and TEA compliance guidelines.

The *TEA Administrators Reference Manual* (ARM) provides policy for competitive food sales during meal periods that prohibit the sale of foods with minimal nutritional value in the Child Nutrition area during breakfast and lunch periods. RISD's last TEA monitoring report in September 2002 listed violations of the Competitive Food Policy at Rockwall High School. According to TEA, direct access by students to these vending machines during meal periods and the location of the machines close to meal areas show noncompliance under current guidelines. According to the RISD Child Nutrition director, RISD submitted a corrective action plan to the TEA findings at Rockwall High School including installing timers on some of the machines near the Child Nutrition area and removing some snack foods from vending machines. TEA accepted the corrective action and closed the compliance finding.

According to Section 20 of the *ARM* (Competitive Foods Policy and Exclusive Beverage Contracts), "competitive foods" means any foods sold to children in competition with the program in Child Nutrition areas. Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value (FMNV) comprise four basic categories:

- any type of carbonated beverage;
- water ices that do not include fruit or fruit juices;
- chewing gum; and
- certain candies, which include hard candy (sour balls, fruit balls, candy sticks, lollipops, starlight mints, after dinner mints, sugar wafers, rock candy, cinnamon candies, breath mints, jaw breakers, and cough drops); jellies and gums (gum drops, jelly beans, jellied and fruit flavored slices); marshmallow candies; fondant (corn and soft mints); licorice; spun candy; and candy-coated popcorn.

According to the TEA, school districts should assess three elements for compliance with FMNV policy. Schools must properly designate the Child Nutrition area for restricting the service of FMNV. The "food-service area" is defined as any area on school premises where program meals (breakfast and lunches) are both served and eaten, as well as any other areas in which program meals are either served or eaten. This includes "eating areas" that are completely separate from the "serving lines" such as hallways, outdoor commons, etc. 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 program meals. "Meal periods" are defined to include both the time of serving and the time the student spends eating the meal.

Schools must also prevent access to FMNV. Schools must not serve or provide access to FMNV during a meal service period in the area where reimbursable meals are served or eaten. 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.

Finally, schools must assess how the Child Nutrition funds are used. Purchases of FMNV for service in the food-service area during meal periods are not an allowable cost. Minor quantities of FMNV (for decorating or garnishing) are allowable costs. If Child Nutrition funds are used to purchase FMNV for sale outside a meal period or outside a food-service area, then funds must be deposited in the Child Nutrition 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.

This policy applies to the National School Lunch Program, the School Breakfast Program and the Snack Program.

The location and type of vending machines in each school are shown below (**Exhibit 8-14**).

Exhibit 8-14
Location and Type of Vending Machines in Schools
December 2002

School	Location	Product Type
Rockwall High School	4 - Cafeteria area 1 - Lounge 1 - Field house 2 - Gym	6 - Carbonated 2 - Noncarbonated
Rockwall Alternative School	1 - Lounge	1 - Carbonated
Herman E. Utley Freshman Center	2 - Hallway 1 - Lounge 1 - Field house 2 - Gym	4 - Carbonated 2 - Noncarbonated
J.W. Williams Middle School	2 - Lobby 4 - Hallway 1 - Lounge 2 - Gym 2 - Field house	8 - Carbonated 3 - Noncarbonated

Maurine Cain Middle School	2 - Lounge 2 - Patio 3 - Closet (patio) 1 - Locker	6 - Carbonated 2 - Noncarbonated
Amanda Rochell Elementary School	1 - Lounge	1 - Carbonated
Amy Parks-Heath Elementary School	1 - Lounge	1 - Carbonated
Cullins-Lake Pointe Elementary School	2 - Lounge	2 - Carbonated
Dorothy Smith Pullen Elementary School	1 - Lounge	1 - Carbonated
Dorris A. Jones Elementary School	1 - Lounge	1 - Carbonated
Grace Hartman Elementary School	1 - Lounge	1 - Carbonated
Howard Dobbs Elementary School	1 - Lounge	1 - Carbonated
Nebbie Williams Elementary School	1 - Lounge	1 - Carbonated
Virginia Reinhardt Elementary School	1 - Lounge 1 - Gym	2 - Carbonated

Source: Coca-Cola Company (RISD exclusive vendor), December 2002.

In Duncanville ISD, the Child Nutrition Department purchases and distributes FMNV and other snack food items as part of the Child Nutrition program. A separate serving line for these items has been established, and the revenues are shared with other school activities. Cypress Fairbanks ISD handles distribution of FMNV in a similar manner using vending machines, resulting in revenue for the Child Nutrition program as well as for other school activities.

Recommendation 56:

Restrict student access to vending machines during meal periods.

Because of requirements that govern vending machine use and access close to food-service areas, RISD should transfer the management of these machines from the principals and the athletics staff to the Child Nutrition director. If TEA notes compliance violations, they will hold the Child Nutrition director responsible for corrective actions.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Child Nutrition director, Child Nutrition managers and principals meet and review Child Nutrition Program policies on vending machines and rules that govern fund raising events during	June 2003
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	meal times.	
2.	The superintendent, the Child Nutrition director, Child Nutrition managers and principals develop new guidelines for use of vending machines and rules that govern fund raising events in the area of the cafeteria.	July 2003
3.	The Child Nutrition director and managers monitor vending and fund raising activities for compliance with the Child Nutrition Program's Competitive Food Policy.	August 2003 and Ongoing
4.	The Child Nutrition director oversees the items that are placed in the vending machines to ensure that the items meet nutritional requirements.	August 2003 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

RISD does not comply with TEA guidelines regarding a 1997 exclusive distribution contract with its soft drink vendor. Under TEA guidelines, RISD's Child Nutrition program does not receive reimbursement from districtwide commission payments for sales of vending products outside the program and does not receive an annual administrative payment provided under the contract. Currently, the annual administrative payment and the commission payments for sales of vending products are put in the general fund. RISD's Child Nutrition program has not received required payments from RISD's campus activity accounts, which are included in the general fund under these requirements. The requirements were included in TEA's March 1999 Policy Change memorandum to districts, as part of *ARM* Section 20. The 1999 TEA-required changes in funding compliance affect exclusive contracts like the one that RISD has with its soft drink vendor.

The soft drink contract earned RISD approximately \$930,000 plus product commissions from the vending machines for the general fund use in 1997-98. The contract also provides for ongoing commissions from vending machines for an annual payment of \$3,000 to the general fund. The contract term extends through 2011-12. As part of this contract, Child Nutrition must purchase exclusively from its soft drink vendor.

USDA requirements incorporated into TEA guidelines for these exclusive contracts provide that if Child Nutrition products, which includes anything

sold by the Child Nutrition Program, are included in the contract, any rebates, commissions, scholarship fund contributions or other payments to the school district or to district-related organizations under the contract must be reimbursed to the nonprofit Child Nutrition account on a prorated basis. (See Reference 7 CFR 210.14 and OMB Circular A-87, Attachment A, and OMB Circulars A-102 and A-110.) School districts with existing contracts in place that include Child Nutrition products must reimburse the Child Nutrition account its prorated share in accordance with these requirements for the current and subsequent school years and must maintain appropriate documentation.

These federal regulations require that Child Nutrition departments receive a specific percentage or pro-rata share of all payments made to the school district by the vendor under the exclusive beverage contract. Allocation of these contributions is determined by dividing the total purchases by students and/or staff, and district purchases and sales under the exclusive beverage contract into the total purchases (or sales) by Child Nutrition Program under the contract.

For Child Nutrition Program reimbursement purposes, the total contributions of cash and other assets received by the district under the exclusive beverage contract include all cash payments, including:

- lump-sum payments;
- scholarship fund amounts;
- student attendance incentives;
- sales promotion bonuses;
- sponsorship fee values and other cash payments;
- the fair market value of donated items such as software packages, sports-related items, computer equipment, athletic incentives such as scoreboards, all other supplies and/or equipment.

Recommendation 57:

Comply with the Texas Education Agency requirements pertaining to the district's commission on vending machine sales and other payments received under the exclusive vending contract with RISD's soft drink vendor.

RISD should obtain the information necessary to make the required calculations directly from the soft drink vendor. The calculations should be estimated as part of the annual budgeting process.

In accordance with federal regulations that are incorporated into TEA guidelines, RISD's Child Nutrition Department is entitled to its pro-rata

share of all payments to the school district in addition to the Child Nutrition sales and commissions starting with 1999-2000.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Child Nutrition director and business manager contact the soft drink vendor and determine the total contributions of cash and other assets received by the district under the contract from August 1999 to present.	October 2003
2.	The Child Nutrition director and business manager obtain from the soft drink vendor the necessary information to calculate the amounts that are to be paid back to the Child Nutrition program from the total contributions of cash and other assets received by the district under the contract.	November 2003
3.	The business manager presents the information to the superintendent and makes a monetary transfer from appropriate funds to the Child Nutrition fund.	January 2004
4.	The business manager updates internal policies and procedures to ensure compliance with TEA and USDA requirements regarding the amounts owed the Child Nutrition program annually and a budget item for this transfer.	February 2004 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact to the district because there will be an increase in the Child Nutrition program with a corresponding decrease in the general fund.

Chapter 8

CHILD NUTRITION

C. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

RISD's Child Nutrition Department has implemented the Prepaid Card System (PCS) Point-of-Sale (POS) system sold and supported by PCS Revenue Control Systems, Inc. The PCS system includes integrated automated food management applications for which PCS Revenue Control Systems, Inc. provides support. The Child Nutrition Program requires a system that does not allow one student to identify the meal status of another student, based on how the information is recorded. The PCS system generates a variety of information on the financial characteristics of the RISD Child Nutrition operation. Based on tracking product sales and program participants, the system provides financial data that can be used to manage the Child Nutrition operation more efficiently.

FINDING

RISD's Child Nutrition Department does not have adequate budget management. As a result, the department budgeted deficit fund balances in four of the last five years (**Exhibit 8-15**).

Exhibit 8-15
RISD Budgeted Child Nutrition Fund Balances (Deficits)
1998-99 through 2002-03

Year	Budgeted Fund Balances (Deficits)
2002-03	(\$77,703)
2001-02	(\$19,406)
2000-01	(\$52,825)
1999-2000	\$95,382
1998-99	(\$10,566)

Source: RISD audited annual financial and compliance reports filed with TEA, 1998-99 through 2002-03.

In the past, actual fund balance deficits in Child Nutrition programs in Texas school districts have been common. Because general fund balances can generally cover actual deficits, either in the next fiscal period or at the

end of a fiscal period, the fund balance deficits have not been an area of concern for TEA. However, with recent projected shortfalls in state and local government resources, it is important to strengthen internal budgeting practices to prevent such deficits from occurring.

The existence of actual fund balance deficits in Child Nutrition operations is a separate matter from actually *planning* to incur a fund balance deficit without a planned transfer from the general fund to cover the deficit. Circumstances may occur that differ from planned results. Planning for a fiscally responsible program, however, is completely within the control of operations managers and governing bodies. As evidenced in its budget, RISD has planned to spend more than the district receives in revenue. The lack of timely budgetary analyses from the central business office for Child Nutrition use contributes to the projected budget deficits. Child Nutrition managers prepare their own financial operations analyses based on PCS data. Financial information in central business office Child Nutrition records may differ from information used by Child Nutrition managers. When Child Nutrition needs budget amendments to operate, the amendments are not cross-checked with central business office records to ensure costs that exceed available resources are not approved.

In many Texas school districts, operating department managers receive timely budget analyses that correspond with subsidiary systems like the PCS system used by RISD Child Nutrition management. These budget analyses ensure that revenues and expenditures are consistent with information generated in remote locations and on central financial records. The receipt of timely budget analysis reports also helps prevent overspending of established budgets and budget amendment requests when resources are not available.

Recommendation 58:

Develop and implement accurate, detailed and timely department budget reports that integrate point-of-sales system data with financial information supported by RISD central financial management staff.

The Child Nutrition Department and the business accounting area must coordinate the budget process and the reporting of required information in a uniform and consistent manner. RISD should hold cafeteria managers responsible for actual expenses and revenues and should follow established methods for communication about variances. The information generated from the PCS system must agree with the district's central financial reporting system data.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Child Nutrition director and the business manager develop a standardized budget report format.	August 2003
2.	The new budget reports are given to the Child Nutrition director each month for review and variance analysis.	September 2003 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

RISD's Child Nutrition policy of allowing all students who do not bring lunch money to school to eat a free regular lunch is costly. This policy supports the department's mission statement to provide children with nutritional elements necessary for success in the classroom. RISD students have the option of bringing cash on a daily basis for lunch or to prepay their lunches. Prepaid lunches are recorded and tracked on the district's PCS system.

Although providing free lunches for children with no lunch money is commendable, many parents never reimburse RISD for these costs. Child Nutrition tracks these meals for eventual reimbursement from parents, and RISD sends weekly notices home and mails letters twice a month to collect the unpaid balances. The balances are also checked when a child withdraws from the district. The cumulative balance owing from this activity on student charge accounts is more than \$15,000 for all RISD facilities (**Exhibit 8-16**).

Exhibit 8-16
Cumulative Unpaid Meal Charge
Balances at RISD Cafeteria Locations
November 2002

School	Balance
Amanda Rochell Elementary School	\$3,694
Dorris A. Jones Elementary School	\$2,914
Maurine Cain Middle School	\$1,674
Howard Dobbs Elementary School	\$1,538
Cullins-Lake Pointe Elementary School	\$1,312
Dorothy Smith Pullen Elementary School	\$389

Amy Parks-Heath Elementary School	\$326
Virginia Reinhardt Elementary School	\$323
Nebbie Williams Elementary School	\$288
Grace Hartman Elementary School	\$160
Herman E. Utley Freshman Center	\$330
J.W. Williams Middle School	\$1,054
Rockwall High School	\$1,348
Total	\$15,350

Source: RISD Child Nutrition director, December 2002.

RISD does not record the unpaid charge balances in its financial records, so the charges have no impact on students who continue to come to school without money for lunch.

There are two distinct issues regarding the free meal policy. First, there is the issue of the uncollected charges contributing to program losses. With the free or reduced status of the student, there is minimal reimbursement due for the meals. Second, there is the issue of accumulating unpaid charges, which creates additional administrative work for cafeteria managers and ultimately for program administrators.

Many schools use a lower-cost alternative to the regular lunch such as peanut-butter-and-jelly or cheese sandwiches. In many cases, school programs consider this alternative a cost of operations and do not track related charges for reimbursement by parents. The downside to this approach is that students may feel singled out or embarrassed and, due to a reduced choice of food items, might not eat. When the student does not eat, the program has not met its goal of providing nutrition to the student.

In Glen Rose ISD, the Child Nutrition Programs Department uses an innovative technique to inform parents when their child's account is low on funds and needs to be replenished. A commercial software system alerts cafeteria cashiers when a child's cash balance for meals is below the amount necessary to purchase two Type A meals. When alerted, the cafeteria cashier will place a stamp on the hand of the elementary school student to remind the parent. A letter sent to parents at the start of each school year explains this procedure, which reduces the risk of interrupted meal participation for elementary school students. By using the hand stamp, the Child Nutrition Programs Department no longer sends letters to notify parents that their student's account is low on funds. This technique eliminates the time spent and the supplies used to generate letters.

Recommendation 59:

Change free meal policies to reduce costly unpaid balances and related administrative efforts of Child Nutrition staff.

Solutions to this problem that have been used by other school districts include putting more pressure on parents to pay the balances, limiting free meals to students who have outstanding balances and/or pursuing the help of accounting staff in tracking and collecting the balances.

According to the TEA publication *Food for Thought: Ideas for Improving School Food Service Operations* (May 1999), deficits for unpaid meals can result in lost revenues, even from staff, when regular systems are not in place to address such situations. TSPR recommends that schools follow a definite policy on the number of days and/or total dollar amount of charges that a student or staff member can accrue. The policy should stipulate what action will be taken when the cap is reached and recommends an annual evaluation of local policies and procedures that affect food services.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Child Nutrition director and the district CFO discuss appropriate alternatives for handling free meals.	July 2003
2.	The Child Nutrition director and the CFO present alternatives to the superintendent for review and approval.	August 2003
3.	The Child Nutrition director institutes approved policies.	September 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

RISD's Child Nutrition operation has no method to track actual costs or revenues for the catering activity and how much it is losing or earning. Without tracking these expenses, there is no accurate way to determine the actual costs of the activity and how much it is losing or earning.

The RISD Child Nutrition program funds a full-time position to handle catering. The catering operation provides services to other RISD departments for breakfast, lunch and dinner meetings. There is no external catering function. The district prices catering events based on labor costs and estimated overhead. RISD Child Nutrition does not maintain actual

profit-and-loss calculations, and measurements such as MPLH are not used for this activity. Prices for internal catering are based on the type of meal served (**Exhibit 8-17**).

**Exhibit 8-17
Catering Prices by Event
November 2002**

Event Type	Price per Person/Item
Continental breakfast	\$1.00 to \$1.75 per person
Breakfast buffet	\$3.50 per person
Lunch boxes	\$5.50 per person
Snacks	\$1.50 per person
Cookies and punch	\$.75 per person
Cookies	\$3.00 per dozen
Cookies and coffee	\$.75 each
Soft drinks	\$.75 each

Source: RISD Child Nutrition director, November 2002.

Comprehensive cost allocation for the catering function is the only way to accurately assess whether the charged rates are sufficient to cover costs incurred. Appropriate budget center cost categories include Child Nutrition staff labor, food, food transportation, utilities (gas, water, electricity, sewage, garbage collection), janitorial services and repair and maintenance.

An example of a separate budget category is shown below (**Exhibit 8-18**).

**Exhibit 8-18
Example Catering Budget Category**

Budget Category	Fiscal Year
Salaries	\$
Custodial Overtime	\$
Total Salaries and Wages	\$
Supplies & Materials	\$

Mileage/Travel	\$
Allocated Utilities	\$
Total Other Charges	\$
Equipment/Replacement Equipment	\$
Total Program	\$

Source: WCL ENTERPRISES.

Recommendation 60:

Establish a separate budget category to track the costs and revenues associated with each catering event.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The district CFO and the Child Nutrition director develop a budget category that is designed to measure all relevant costs against revenues received.	April 2004
2.	The CFO establishes the budget category and includes it as part of the RISD budget development process for 2004-05.	June 2004
3.	The board adopts the budget that contains this category.	August 2004
4.	RISD business staff and Child Nutrition staff begin using the new budget category.	September 2004

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 9

COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

This chapter reviews the computers and technology services of the Rockwall Independent School District's (RISD) in the following sections:

- A. Organization
- B. Technology Policies, Procedures and Planning
- C. Instructional Technology
- D. Infrastructure, Hardware, Software and Telephones

School districts address technology in a variety of ways. Some districts divide technology responsibilities between administrative and instructional departments, while other districts manage the technology functions within a single organizational unit. Some districts have one Information Technology (IT) department with separate functions for hardware and software acquisition, network management and maintenance. Most small school districts do not have a dedicated IT department but have staff responsible for computer-related equipment acquisition, technology maintenance and instructional technology training.

Regardless of size and organizational structure, however, most districts provide the following technology functions: management and oversight of the district's instructional and administrative applications; maintenance of hardware and software; planning, implementation and oversight of local area networks (LAN) and a wide area network (WAN); and training and technical support for computer applications and networks.

Chapter 9

COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

A. ORGANIZATION

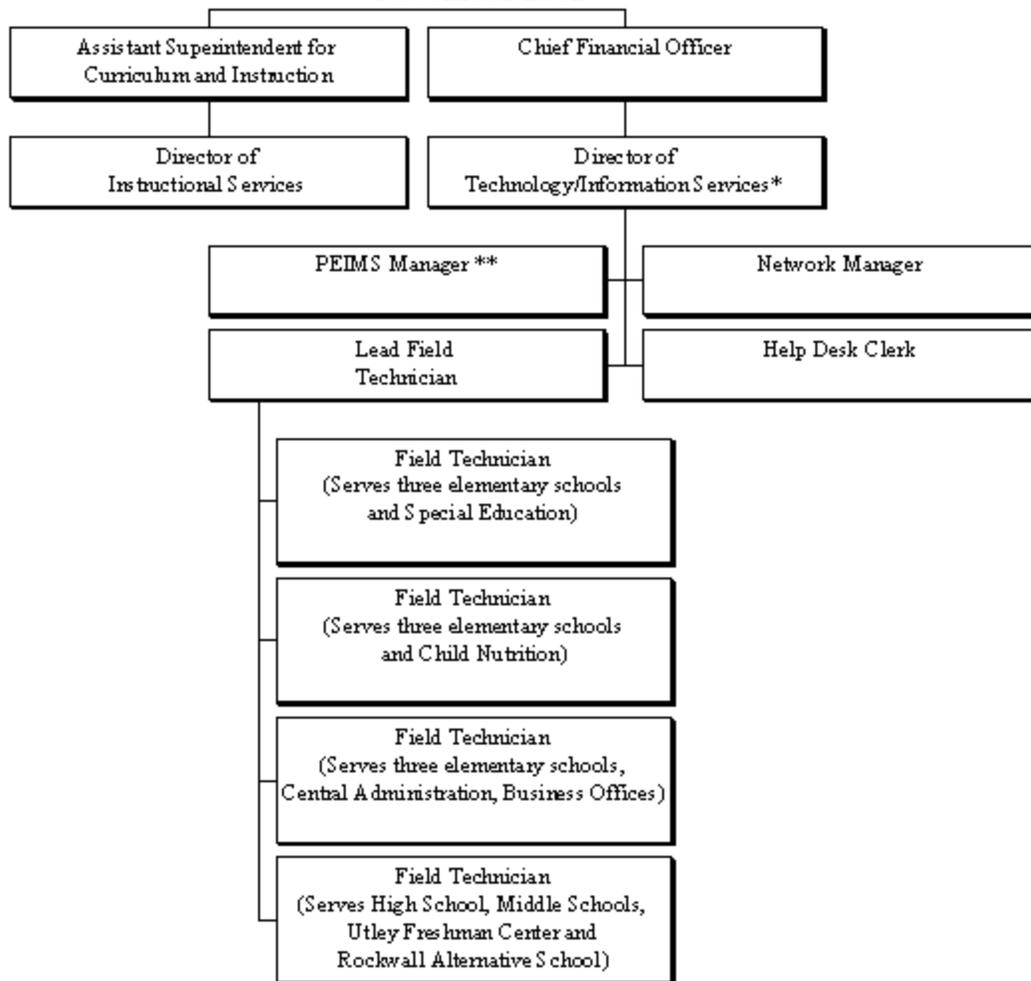
To achieve its technology-related goals, a school district must be organized to use and support existing and new technologies. Technology departments must be familiar with school operations, the networks and software programs used for instructional purposes; and technology-related training needs.

A well-defined mission statement and departmental plan serves as a foundation for a well-managed administrative technology and information services department.

Exhibit 9-1 shows how RISD organizes its technology functions.

Exhibit 9-1 **Organization of RISD Technology Functions**

November 2002



Source: Interview with RISD Technology/Information Services director and RISD director of Instructional Services, November 2002.

** During the review, the chief financial officer position was vacant, and the RISD director of Technology/Information Services reported directly to the superintendent pending hire of the chief financial officer.*

***RISD PEIMS Manager is referred to as a PEIMS/Management Reports Coordinator in the RISD job description, but PEIMS Manager is the working title used by the district for purposes of this organizational chart.*

The Technology/Information Services Department has a total of nine employees, including eight staff and the director of Technology/Information Services. The department provides network and maintenance services for 2,854 computers in the district. The Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) manager reports to the director of Technology/Information Services and collects and reports the district's PEIMS data. The Help Desk clerk is notified of problems and attempts to diagnose and correct problems over the telephone. The clerk also can enter the trouble report into the online open service request system and direct the trouble ticket to the appropriate field technician. The

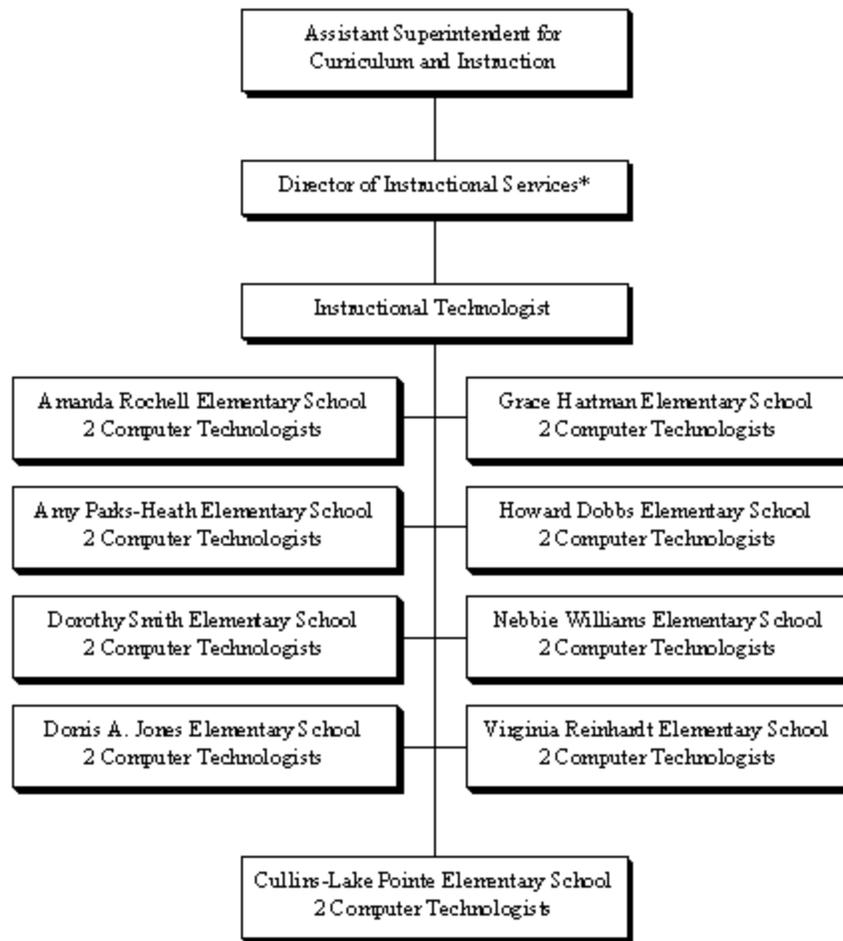
network manager oversees the Microsoft network servers that contain gradebook and attendance information. The lead field technician manages the computer network and the online open service request system. The director of Technology/Information Services assigns one field technician responsibility for maintenance issues at each school. Each school also has one campus lab technician ? except for Cullins-Lake Pointe Elementary School, which has two lab technicians ? who report to the school principal.

The director of Instructional Services coordinates the district's technology training activities, but does not supervise any staff, so the director is the only employee in that function. The director of Instructional Services provides guidance and support for the high school's instructional technologist specialist, the technology facilitator at each of the two middle schools, the alternative school and the elementary school instructional technologist. Although the elementary school technologist is based at Cullins-Lake Pointe Elementary School, the position coordinates instructional technology at all nine of the district's elementary schools. Two teachers at each elementary school serve as their school's instructional technology team. The elementary school technologist at Cullins-Lake Pointe Elementary provides the teams with direction and support. These positions do not report to the director of Instructional Services.

Exhibit 9-2 shows how RISD organizes instructional technology support services for its elementary schools.

Exhibit 9-2
RISD Instructional Technology Support Services for Elementary Schools

November 2002



Source: Interview with RISD instructional technologist for elementary schools, November 2002.

*Note: The director of Instructional Services also coordinates the high school's instructional technologist specialist, the technology facilitator at each of the two middle schools and the technology facilitator at the alternative school. No positions report to the director of Instructional Services.

The RISD Technology Plan 2002 includes an action item for the hiring of instructional technologists—one for each elementary campus and two for the high school. The plan also includes an action item for hiring lab technologists at the middle and high schools. However, this has not occurred.

FINDING

The RISD technology functions are fragmented and unable to support the district's administrative and instructional technology requirements. RISD's technology function is split between two departments. The Technology/Information Services department reports to the chief financial

officer and the Instructional Services department reports to the assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction. The review team noted numerous problems with communication between the two departments. A district survey of school employee attitudes reinforced this observation. The survey asked employees to rank the performance of seven district functions. Respondents ranked the district's technology functions the lowest.

The TSPR review team conducted an additional survey of teachers, principals and assistant principals to gauge the current state of the district's technology functions. The survey results provided in **Exhibit 9-3** show that teachers, principals and assistant principals are dissatisfied with district technology support.

Exhibit 9-3
Responses to TSPR Survey Regarding RISD Technology

Statement	Percentage of Respondents Disagreeing or Strongly Disagreeing with Statement	
	Teachers	Principals and Assistant Principals
Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	50%	50%
The district meets student needs in classes in computer fundamentals.	42%	34%

Source: TSPR survey, November 2002.

Because multiple staff are involved with technology, the district does not have a single position responsible for ensuring proper data management or that possesses the ability to analyze, sort and report collected data to aid and support management decisions. The superintendent also said that obtaining historical or trend information for use in decision-making is difficult and often requires extensive manual calculations.

Exhibit 9-4 lists the primary functions of the Technology/Information Services Department and the review team's assessment of the department's performance in each function. The review team based its assessments on observation, site visits and interviews with district staff.

Exhibit 9-4
RISD Technology/Information Services Department
Primary Functions and Performance Issues Identified by TSPR
November 2002

<p style="text-align: center;">Technology/Information Services Primary Function</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">RISD Performance Issues</p>
<p>Provide structure to deliver technology-related services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate departmental supervision and direction from the chief financial officer due to its vacancy. While the CFO position was vacant, the superintendent reviewed all technology-related invoices. • Field technicians are unable to quickly solve technical problems. For example, between September 2001 to November 2002, technicians took a minimum of six days and a maximum of 102 days to resolve the problems. • The district is not training and using school-based technology personnel to support and complement its district-based field technicians.
<p>Technology planning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The district has not completed a technology plan.
<p>Communication with other departments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not communicate well with other departments. For example, the Technology/Information Services Department and the Human Resources Department are not communicating with each other about new hires or terminated employees regarding password codes. • The Technology/Information Services Department does not communicate well with the district's schools. As a result, some schools have independently purchased equipment and software that are difficult to support. The high school Career and Technology Department manager purchased Office 2000 texts in

	<p>June 2002. However, most of the district's computers use Office XP; as a result, most machines at the high school are not equipped to support Office XP.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Technology/Information Services Department failed to provide the high school's new instructional technology specialist with a Web desk login. This prevented the specialist from entering computer problems into the department's online service request system. • The high school instructional technologist specialist estimates that two-thirds of open work order tickets were problems with video cards or logins for students and teachers. School personnel are not allowed to handle these problems; field technicians are assigned these problems. The school personnel and district personnel are not communicating about problems such as these. • The Technology/Information Services Department director has a security concern about high school students having network access that he has not discussed with appropriate high school personnel.
Applications development/implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The district indefinitely delayed switching all its business applications to Windows-based applications. • Requested information provided by the PEIMS coordinator requires additional processing and time delays.
Customer satisfaction	Customer satisfaction is low. According to surveys, employees are not satisfied with the technology services that the district provides.
Staff Development/Training	The department has not been consistent in providing training to users. District staff expressed concern that the training the department does offer is inadequate.

Source: Interviews with various RISD administrators and staff; "Tickets By Location" field technician performance report for period 9/1/01 through 11/30/02 and an extract from "RISD Technology Plan 2002".

Exhibit 9-5 lists the primary functions of the Instructional Services Department. The exhibit provides the review team's assessment of the department's performance in each function. The review team based its assessments on observation, site visits and interviews with district staff.

Exhibit 9-5
RISD Instructional Services Department
Primary Functions and Performance Issues Identified by TSPR
November 2002

Example of Instructional Services Primary Functions	RISD Performance Issues
Provide structure to deliver technology-related instructional services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate supervision due to the director of Instructional Services reporting to the assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction and having multiple job responsibilities in addition to technology functions. • Fragmented supervisory and accountability lines because the director of Instructional Services does not have responsibility for instructional technologists on the campuses. • Insufficient allocation of resources with one instructional technologist supporting nine elementary schools.
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of committed involvement in the planning process because an outside firm developed the technology plan without the direct involvement of the director of Instructional Services.
Staff Development/Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of competency standards for teachers as the district has not implemented a minimum level of technology competency for teachers. • Insufficient training for teachers as the

	district has been reluctant to develop and mandate technology training for teachers because of the inconsistency of computer network performance.
Instructional Technology/Staff Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Instructional Services Department does not adequately plan, implement and evaluate instructional technology throughout the school district. • The Instructional Services Department lacks a comprehensive training program. • The Instructional Services Department does not offer teacher technology certification. • Each campus has its own training methods. • After school technology training programs for teachers were cancelled because the network was not working.

Source: Interviews with various RISD administrators and staff.

In many districts, the executive director of Technology or chief information officer (CIO) coordinates all aspects of information technology and systems. Typically, the CIO is responsible for technology planning, applications development and implementation, IT infrastructure and architecture, partnerships, customer satisfaction and training.

The review team compared these responsibilities of a CIO against RISD's technology management. **Exhibit 9-6** lists areas where RISD falls short of fulfilling the usual responsibilities of a CIO.

Exhibit 9-6
Comparisons of Sample Chief Information Officer Job Description
and RISD's Technology Performance Identified by TSPR
November 2002

Sample Chief Information Officer Job Description	RISD's Technology Performance
Responsibilities	Technology Performance
Business technology planning process: sponsor collaborative planning processes.	An outside consulting firm developed the RISD Technology Plan in 2002. RISD staff provided input.

Applications development/implementation: new and existing applications for district initiatives and overall coordination for initiatives.	Technology management not taking leadership position in directing implementation of business applications.
IT infrastructure and architecture (computers and networks): ensure that network operates well and make ongoing improvements.	The district is experiencing many problems and delays with the district infrastructure project; the district does not know when the project will be completed.
Partnerships: establish strategic relationships with key IT suppliers and consultants.	The district has limited contacts and relationships with suppliers and consultants.
Customer satisfaction: interact with internal and external clients to ensure continuous customer satisfaction.	Numerous examples exist of users' dissatisfaction with technology services.
Training: provide training for all technology users to ensure productive use of existing and new systems.	The district provides limited training to its technology users.
Skills Needed	Technology Performance
Strong business orientation.	The district staff has not demonstrated business management skills.
Demonstrated ability to use technology to solve business issues while also reducing costs and risk.	The district staff has not demonstrated this ability.
Skilled at identifying and evaluating new technological developments and gauging their appropriateness for the district.	The district staff is aware of new technology developments and their application at the district, e.g., Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP).
Ability to communicate with and understand the needs of non-technical internal clients.	The district staff has not demonstrated this ability.
Strong organizational skills to manage central technology resources and applications.	The district staff has not demonstrated this skill.
Ability to conceptualize, launch and deliver multiple projects on time and within budget.	The district staff has not demonstrated this ability.
Ability to work well with the existing management team by being a good listener.	The district's technology personnel demonstrate limited

a team player and an advocate for technology use.	communication and team skills.
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Source: RISD Technology Plan 2002; interviews with various RISD administrators and staff.

The review team held focus group meetings with different technology users in the district. **Exhibit 9-7** lists the comments that users voiced at these meetings.

Exhibit 9-7
Focus Group Comments on Computers and Information Technology
November 2002

Respondent Area	Comments
Paraprofessional Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department is very understaffed. • Doesn't work well but they are working on it.
Elementary Principals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology needs to be improved. • Older schools need upgrading, especially instructional side. Need to get ahead of the game rather than play catch up.
Counselors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total system not working. • Turn-around help is slow; computer labs out of commission from weeks to months. • Technology staff is understaffed.
Elementary Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have had Math Renaissance program for two years; can't get it installed. • Haven't had printing capability in a month. • District can't meet timelines.
Secondary Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outdated equipment and no availability of printers. • Early emphasis of technology started at elementary, then not followed through.
Business/Community/Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff is not knowledgeable enough. • Information not automated. When

	<p>information is requested, must be manually compiled.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E-mail does not work; can't reach teachers. • Some employees do not know how to use e-mail, therefore do not answer; must train staff in how to use. • Web site is lacking in staying in touch with teachers; no real Webmaster.
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Source: TSPR focus group meetings with RISD staff, November 2002.

To achieve its technology-related goals, a school system must have a flexible organizational structure and communicate critical information in a timely manner. The organizational structure must provide a responsive environment that supports educational technology.

An article entitled "Let's Get Organized!" in the September 15, 2001 issue of *CIO Magazine*, discussed the best methods for organizing information technology departments. The article said, "IT organization charts ought to be less about IT and more about the needs of the company;" and "the closer and more directly IT people interact with end users and customers, the better the results."

In the article "What is a CIO?", the CIO Executive Research Center describes a CIO as a senior executive responsible for all aspects of information technology and systems support. With knowledge of both technology and business processes and a cross-functional perspective, the CIO is usually the individual most capable of aligning the district's technology needs with district goals.

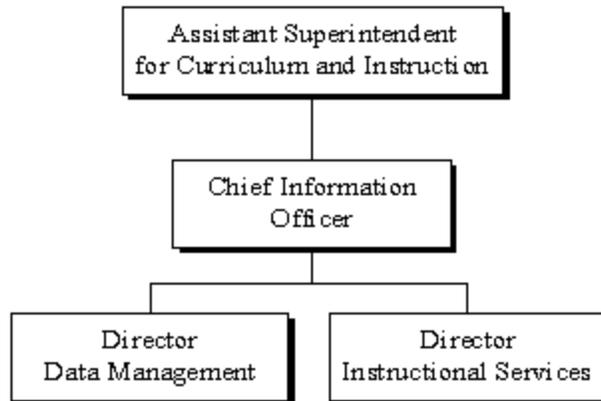
Recommendation 61:

Reorganize and consolidate all technology functions into one department.

The district should hire a qualified chief information officer (CIO) and director of Data Management and eliminate the director of Technology/Information Services position. The CIO should report to the assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction and coordinate all technology functions. Few changes in the responsibilities of the director of Instructional Services position would be required.

Exhibit 9-8 shows the review team's recommendations for reassigning RISD's technology functions.

Exhibit 9-8
Proposed RISD Technology Organizational Structure
November 2002



Source: WCL ENTERPRISES, November 2002.

The chief information officer would:

- coordinate the development and implementation of short-term and long-term RISD technology plans;
- assist schools and administrative departments in developing and implementing plans to address technology needs for such things as attendance taking, grade reporting, scheduling, demographic data and financial information collection;
- develop and implement RISD standards and specifications for hardware and software use;
- manage, direct and assign priorities and personnel to major projects to ensure attainment of RISD and department goals and objectives;
- oversee the installation, maintenance and repair of all RISD computer hardware and software;
- coordinate the development and implementation of an effective RISD data network;
- ensure the timely and accurate reporting of required data to the state;
- develop and implement a disaster recovery plan; and
- develop and coordinate a continuing evaluation of information and technology services and implement changes based on the finding.

The director of Instructional Services would:

- coordinate the development and implementation of a comprehensive staff development plan for the use of instructional technology;

- develop training options and improvement plans to ensure exemplary operations in the technology area;
- provide staff development to teachers and administrators in methods of involving technology in the delivery of curriculum;
- coordinate the writing of curriculum for technology programs and monitor the instructional process in all content areas that use technology; and
- develop and implement a continuous improvement process in the instructional technology program and implement changes based on the findings.

The director of Data Management would:

- manage PEIMS data collection and reporting;
- provide for key data reporting (assessment, statistical reporting and student progress tracking);
- ensure the timely and accurate reporting of required data to the state;
- disseminate to the district information regarding current research and significant developments in technology education at the state and national level; and
- review the policies established by federal and state law and local board policy in the area of technology.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent reviews the recommended organizational chart and assigns responsibility to the assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction to develop appropriate job descriptions for the CIO and director of Data Management positions.	July 2003
2.	The assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction prepares the job descriptions and reviews them with the superintendent.	August - September 2003
3.	The superintendent requests that the board approve the CIO and director of Data Management new positions.	October 2003
4.	The board approves the new positions and the superintendent directs the assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations to post the new positions.	November 2003
5.	The superintendent does not extend new contracts to the director of Technology/Information Services whose position is affected by the reorganization.	January 2004
6.	The assistant superintendent screens candidates for the CIO and	January -

	director of Data Management positions and refers them to the superintendent and assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction for interviews.	February 2004
7.	With the assistance of the assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, the superintendent makes recommendations to the board for candidates to fill positions.	March 2004
8.	The board approves the recommendations and directs the superintendent to implement the new organization.	April 2004
9.	The superintendent fills vacant positions, reassigns existing personnel as necessary and eliminates the director of Technology/Information Services position.	September 2004

FISCAL IMPACT

The district will realize an annual cost of \$81,708 beginning in 2004-05 as shown below:

Position	Salary	15% Benefits
Added positions:		
Chief Information Officer	(\$71,050) (1)	(\$10,658)
Director of Data Management	(\$63,438) (2)	(\$9,516)
Subtotal	(\$134,488)	(\$20,174)
Deleted position:		
Director of Technology/Information Services	\$63,438	\$9,516
Subtotal	\$63,438	\$9,516
Total	(\$71,050)	(\$10,658)

1. Calculated using actual business manager position salary.
2. Calculated using actual director of Technology/Information Services position salary.

The total fiscal impact would be a cost of \$81,708 each year (\$71,050 salaries plus \$10,658 benefits). The district's current contracts with its administrators do not expire until August 2004. This prevents the district from reorganizing the department until 2004-05.

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Reorganize and	\$0	(\$81,708)	(\$81,708)	(\$81,708)	(\$81,708)

consolidate all technology functions into one department.					
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FINDING

RISD does not have a position to monitor and manage the district's technology plan. Although the director of Technology/Information Services maintains a copy of the plan, this position is not assigned to monitor. As a result, the district lacks a way of ensuring that RISD technology needs are being addressed.

The district hired an information services firm to prepare its Technology Plan 2002. The consultants assessed the current condition of administrative and instructional computing in the district and prepared recommendations for the general progress and improvement of technology services in the district.

The information services firm used information from the district's strategic plan along with interviews with administrators and school representatives to develop the technology plan. The central office interview included representatives from instruction, finance, technology and operations. Although the consultants did not interview the director of Instructional Services, the director of Instructional Services did provide the instructional technology goals and objectives of the district's Strategic Plan to the consultants. The consultants made a number of recommendations with priority assignments after reviewing the district's existing technology infrastructure. In addition, the consultant estimated the amount of hardware needed to meet the targets adopted in the state's "Long-Range Plan for Technology, 1988-2000" of a student-to-workstation ratio of 4:1.

The RISD Technology Plan 2002 is a good start toward providing some focus to the district's technology support. The plan's goals/objectives correlate to the district strategic plan and the Texas Long Range Plan. It highlights tasks that are important and need action by the district. The plan considers the number of computers needed by 2004-05 at each campus, but does not consider the growth in student population.

The RISD Technology Plan 2002 does not include criteria or a formal process for computer replacement and funding considerations. The high school used to submit a new computer budget request but now the Technology/Information Services Department recommends computer purchases. The director of Technology/Information Services has established four years as a guideline to define a computer's life cycle.

Exhibit 9-9 lists the district's projected computer needs as determined by the director of Technology/Information Services.

**Exhibit 9-9
RISD Projected Computer Needs
November 2002**

Facility	Total Computers	Current Student Computers	Number of Computers requiring replacement by 2004	Number of computers that the district must purchase by 2004
Rockwall High School	285	262	176	374
Rockwall Alternative School	25	15	10	15
Herman E. Utley Freshman Center	156	97	64	142
J.W. Williams Middle School	148	95	63	172
Maurine Cain Middle School	151	99	104	160
Amanda Rochell Elementary School	214	157	140	188
Amy Parks-Heath Elementary School	143	102	103	160
Cullins-Lake Pointe Elementary School	325	258	200	200
Dorothy Smith Pullen Elementary School	325	258	200	200
Dorris A. Jones Elementary School	293	237	0	0
Grace Hartman Elementary School	293	237	0	0
Howard Dobbs Elementary School	196	148	100	102
Nebbie Williams Elementary School	144	104	100	144

Virginia Reinhardt Elementary School	156	115	100	130
Totals	2,854	2,184	1,360	1,987

Source: RISD director of Technology/Information Services response to WCL ENTERPRISES "Technology Questionnaire - Hardware," November 2002.

In the review team's "Technology Questionnaire - Hardware" document, the director of Technology/Information Services said "An intensive study will have to be completed to determine the required number of computers that will have to be purchased to support the district's adopted elementary paradigm. New computer workstations, printers and network equipment will have to be purchased to support the new elementary school, the new junior high and the new high school which are scheduled to open in the near future." In November 2002, the director of Technology/Information Services estimated the district would have to purchase 1,000 computers each year for the next few years with the majority of those computer purchases being laptop computers, approximating the 1,987 computers that the district must purchase by 2004 in **Exhibit 9-9**.

The RISD Technology Plan 2002 does not include definitive work steps, responsibilities, specific implementation dates or the budget impact of meeting these goals. It does not serve as an action document. For most technology-related purchases, the director of Technology/Information Services makes decisions without communicating with other departments. For example, the high school spent \$3,000 on Office 2000 software and later learned that the Technology/Information Services department was planning to use Office XP.

As noted earlier, no one in the district monitors the technology plan. The superintendent suspended implementation of any action item in the plan until the district's network infrastructure becomes fully operational. The district does not have a technology committee to work with the director of Technology/Information Services and the director of Instructional Services to help improve the use of technology in the district.

A typical technology steering committee fosters communication between the IT department and other district departments. The project faces concerns about a warehouse software module, training, reporting requirements, installation of a purchasing module system demo at campuses without training and its usability for Human Resources.

Exhibit 9-10 lists the usual responsibilities of a technology steering committee.

Exhibit 9-10
Technology Steering Committee Functions

Technology Steering Committee Primary Functions
Discuss district's technology needs and make recommendations, but focus on only one topic per meeting. Topics might include hardware, software, infrastructure, staffing and integration of technology in the curriculum, training, equity, funding, community access and administrative uses.
Research what other districts are doing with technology including making site visits and inviting guest speakers.
Share technology problems or issues with district staff and ensure they are addressed expeditiously.
Share information with district staff on how technology is being used and can be used.

Source: WCL ENTERPRISES.

Dallas ISD (DISD) created an interdepartmental Technology Steering Committee to address districtwide technology needs. The committee consists of key decision makers throughout the district. DISD designed the committee to ensure that the district makes technology decisions only after considering its overall needs.

Recommendation 62:

Create a Technology Steering Committee composed of teachers, principals, administrators, students, parents and community members to upgrade, implement and manage the RISD Technology Plan.

This committee could be a valuable tool for the district as it implements a software upgrade. As a result of this recommendation, on-going input from the teachers, principals, administrators, students, parents and community members will be available. If the goals of the plan are to be useful and realized, the Technology Steering Committee must identify the tasks, develop cost estimates, determine deadlines and monitor accomplishment of each goal.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent and assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction determine the composition of the Technology Steering Committee.	July 2003
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2.	The superintendent and assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction identify district personnel and appoint students, parents and community members to serve on the committee.	August 2003
3.	The superintendent and assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction contact and enlist prospective members for the Technology Steering Committee.	September 2003
4.	The superintendent and assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction determine the Technology Steering Committee's goals and purpose and communicate them to the committee.	October 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 9

COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

B. TECHNOLOGY POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND PLANNING

Policies, procedures and planning are three key elements in effectively managing a school district's 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 perform the activity to comply with policies.

The Texas Education Code requires each school district improvement plan to include provisions for integrating technology into instructional and administrative programs. Districts should develop comprehensive plans by using a well-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.

FINDING

The RISD Technology Department has done an effective job in securing Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund (TIF) grants.

During 1999-2000, Nebbie Williams Elementary School initiated a technology magnet program for students in grades 5 and 6. This program, which is designed to improve the integration of technology into the classroom, uses technology-infused classrooms and focuses on providing technology training for teachers. Although the program was well accepted by teachers and students, administrators expressed concern with the district's computer equipment. In order to sustain the enthusiasm of the students and to motivate the teachers, the director of Instructional Services and the director of Technology/Information Services began actively pursuing TIF grants. As a result, RISD received generous TIF grants that it used to purchase new computers. The TIF grants require recipients to use some of the money to provide technology training. Therefore, the district purchased a new training program: the Intel/Microsoft "Teach to the Future" professional development software for teachers.

Exhibit 9-11 lists the TIF grants the district has received.

**Exhibit 9-11
RISD TIF Grants
November 2002**

TIF Grant	Amount	Name	Purchased	Period
PS6	\$155,504	J.W. Williams Middle School, Herman E. Utley Freshman Center, Rockwall High School	90 computers, nine printers, three digital cameras, three data projectors, three scanners, switches, ports, patch panels, TIF Tech training for 18 persons.	9/1/99 - 11/30/00
PS8	\$339,453	Amanda Rochell Elementary School, Cullins Lake-Pointe Elementary School, Howard Dobbs Elementary School, Nebbie Williams Elementary School, Virginia Reinhardt Elementary School, J.W. Williams Middle School	171 computers, 18 printers, five digital cameras, one server, 97 surge protectors, 23 switches, three MDA fiber cards, six 4-port switches, mice, headphones, TIF Tech training, Videoconference lab equipment (WMS), user interface tablet, videoconference training for four persons.	10/2/00 - 12/31/01
PS9	\$200,000	Herman E. Utley Freshman Center, Rockwall High School	50 laptop computers, two mobile carts, 50 desktop computers, 15 data projectors, six printers, 50 wireless NIC cards, two wireless access points, five port switches, training for six persons per campus.	5/15/01 - 8/14/02
PS10	\$150,000	J.W. Williams Middle School, Maurine Cain Middle School	50 laptop computers, two mobile carts, two printers, two data projectors, two servers, uninterruptible power supply (UPS), access points, D Link switch, state Educational Technology Conference	5/20/02 - 4/30/03
PS11	\$35,000	Rockwall Alternative School	20 computers, one digital camera, one server, one scanner, one printer, one	7/15/02 - 9/30/03

			data projector, training through local funds.	
Special Projects Grant	\$88,000	Amy Parks-Heath Elementary School, Dorothy Smith Pullen Elementary School	60 computers, two servers, four procure switches, six printers, training for six teachers per campus.	8/31/01 - 2/28/03

Source: RISD director, Instructional Services, November 2002.

COMMENDATION

RISD uses Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund grants to obtain hardware and training in an effort to advance technology integration into the classroom.

FINDING

RISD has not developed complete and comprehensive policies and procedures for information technology functions. Written, documented policies and procedures provide clear direction to staff and protect the district from loss of information in the event of staff turnover. Without adequate policies and procedures, RISD staff may carry out functions in an inconsistent manner and increase the risk of data loss. The district has not documented policies and procedures for the following areas: data/program backup/retention periods, data security measures, personal computers acquisition/use and data encryption.

The district has documented the acceptable use of the electronic communications system for secondary and elementary schools, which it posts on the district Web site under "Web site acceptable use procedures."

City staff in Galveston, Texas developed a draft of information technology policies that include personal computer technology, computer accounts and passwords, computer viruses, data protection, use of technology resources, networks and electronic mail, electronic signatures and Internet use.

Exhibit 9-12 lists examples of Galveston's draft information technology policies, scope and responsibilities.

Exhibit 9-12
Example of Galveston's Draft Information Technology Policies
November 2002

Policy	Scope	Responsibilities
City Information - Definition	Business information, documents, software, security measures.	Questions about information integrity or policies directed to Information Technology.
IT protection policy	Applies to all city and subsidiary employees, contractors, consultants, temporaries and other users, including those users affiliated with third parties who access city computer network.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City employees must comply with all city policies and procedures contained and/or referenced in this document regarding computer and system security. • City Information Technology must establish, maintain, implement, administer and interpret city-wide information integrity policies, standards, guidelines and procedures. • City management must ensure that information and information systems are protected by providing a budget and dictating enforcement of policies. • City departmental managers must ensure that appropriate computer and communication system security measures are observed.
Use of technology resources	The use of city technology resources for data processing, communication and electronic office systems.	Use of information and information systems is prohibited without written approval. Violations will subject employees to disciplinary action. Contractors will be subject to the terms of the Non-Disclosure and Confidentiality Agreement.

Networks and electronic mail	All information traveling over the city computer networks not specifically identified as the property of other parties is treated as a city asset.	No responsibility is assumed for the disclosure of information sent over city's systems, and no assurances are made about the privacy of information handled by city internal networks.
Electronic signatures	Approvals or authorizations are typically given in the form of a signature on a paper document. However, many documents that require approval are transmitted electronically. In these cases, a name, or some other unique and recognizable identification code can be considered if certain conditions are met.	The issuer, approver and recipient(s) of a document are aware that this action constitutes an approval or authorization. Sufficient security controls exist to prevent a person from initiating a document or transmitting an approval under a name other than his/her own. The system on which the electronic document is "signed" records the date and time of the transmittal. The electronic document is maintained on file to provide evidence of approval.
Internet policy	City's use of the Internet revealed a need for guidelines to provide uniformity among the city information users.	To communicate with city personnel, an employee must receive authorization to deal directly with personnel in the normal course of the workday and must have authorization for access to e-mail or the Internet.
Computer accounts and passwords	Computer accounts and passwords identify computer users and verify their authorization to perform specific computer tasks.	Computer accounts and the passwords to those accounts must be kept private and confidential. Employees are responsible for the use of and actions performed by their computer accounts. Maintain passwords in accordance with the password guidelines.
Computer viruses	A computer virus is an unauthorized program that replicates itself, attaches itself to other programs and spreads onto various data storage media and/or across a network.	To assure continued uninterrupted service for computers and networks, all computer users must keep approved virus screening software enabled on their computers. Users may not

		bypass scanning processes.
Personal computer technology	This policy governs the acquisition, use, maintenance security and data integrity of the city's personal computer technology.	The Information Technology department of the city is solely responsible for the acquisition of all personal computer hardware and software that is used by the city. Ownership of personal computer hardware and software is vested in Information Technology. No other department is authorized to purchase hardware or software.
Data/program backup and retention periods	Any city information that is stored on the network and computers.	Information Technology department must perform automatic daily backups of all information stored on these systems. Information must be retained for as long as necessary.
Data encryption	When city "critical" or "confidential" information, source code or information entrusted to city by a business partner is transmitted over any public communication network it must be sent in encrypted form.	Any city information user must report the following situation immediately to the Information Technology department: If sensitive city information is lost, disclosed to unauthorized parties or suspected of being lost or disclosed to unauthorized parties.

Source: Director of Finance, City of Galveston, November 2002.

Recommendation 63:

Develop and adopt district technology policies and procedures that include all information technology-related activities.

As a result of implementing this recommendation RISD will have a complete set of IT policies and procedures with clearly defined scope and management responsibilities.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	With input from district administrators, teachers and technology-related staff, the director of Technology/Information Services develops district technology policies and corresponding	July 2003
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	procedures that includes the following areas: use of technology resources, networks and electronic mail, electronic signatures, Internet use, computer accounts and passwords, personal computers, data/program backup and retention periods and data encryption.	
2.	The director of Technology/Information Services presents the new policies to the superintendent and board for approval and presents the procedures to the chief financial officer for approval.	October 2003
3.	The director of Technology/Information Services communicates the policies and procedures to district personnel.	November 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

RISD does not have a disaster recovery plan. The district does not have a formal plan of action to deal with a system failure or natural disaster. A computer disaster could result in lost productivity and an inability to perform important system functions. Critical processes that could be impacted in the event of a disaster in which data was lost include: communications/community relations/security, transportation, payroll, student information processing, accounts payable and human resources, tax collections and online purchasing.

The district does backup all administrative and educational data files on a daily basis. The district keeps two copies of the daily backup. The district stores one backup in a fireproof box in the administration building; a staff member takes a second copy of the backup home at the end of the day. The district keeps a separate copy of each Friday's backup for five weeks. The benefits clerk explained that if the personnel directly involved in the daily procedure are absent or not available, the remaining staff occasionally do not perform the backup of district data.

The RISD Technology Plan 2002 lists "Develop and implement a 'Disaster Recovery Plan'" as an action item on page 44. The document states that the district will complete work on the disaster plan in August 2003. The district may not complete the disaster plan on schedule because of the superintendent's current hold on completing RISD Technology Plan 2002 activities until the district successfully installs its network. The district's lack of a formal plan enabling it to respond to a major system crash puts the district at risk.

However, protecting electronic information is not as straightforward as assigning a technical staff person to verify that the system is protected. Top-level administrators invest time and expertise into the development of a well-conceived, comprehensive and customized security policy applied appropriately throughout an entire organization. This requires the commitment of top-level administrators. **Exhibit 9-13** lists the key elements of a disaster recovery plan.

Exhibit 9-13
Example of Key Elements of a Disaster Recovery Plan

Step	Details
Build the disaster recovery team.	Identify a disaster recovery team that includes key policy makers, building management, end-users, key outside contractors and technical staff.
Obtain and/or approximate key information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an exhaustive list of critical activities performed within the system. • Develop an estimate of the minimum space and equipment necessary for restoring essential operations. • Develop a timeframe for starting initial operations after a security incident. • Develop a list of key personnel and their responsibilities.
Perform and/or delegate key duties.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an inventory of all computer technology assets including data, software, hardware, documentation and supplies. • Set up a reciprocal agreement with comparable organizations to share each other's equipment or lease backup equipment to allow the system to operate critical functions in the event of a disaster. • Make plans to procure hardware, software and other equipment as necessary to ensure that critical operations are resumed as soon as possible. • Establish procedures for obtaining off-site backup records. • Locate support resources that might be needed, such as equipment repair, trucking and cleaning companies. • Arrange with vendors to provide priority delivery for emergency orders. • Identify data recovery specialists and establish

	emergency agreements.
Specify details within the plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify individual roles and responsibilities by name and job title so that everyone knows exactly what needs to be done. • Define actions to be taken in advance of an occurrence or undesirable event. • Define actions to be taken at the onset of an undesirable event to limit damage, loss and compromised data integrity. • Identify actions to be taken to restore critical functions. • Define actions to be taken to re-establish normal operations.
Test the plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test the plan frequently and completely. • Analyze the results to improve the plan and identify further needs.
Deal with damage appropriately.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a disaster actually occurs, document all costs and videotape the damage. • Be prepared to overcome downtime; insurance settlements can take time to resolve.
Give consideration to other significant issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't make a plan unnecessarily complicated. • Make one individual responsible for maintaining the plan, but have it structured so that others are authorized and prepared to implement if it is needed. • Update the plan regularly whenever changes are made to your system.

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, "Safeguarding Your Technology" (<http://nces.ed.gov/pubs98/safetech/>), November 2002.

Glen Rose ISD has an effective disaster recovery plan. The plan includes emergency contacts for the technology staff, the district and vendors. The plan provides protocols for both partial and complete recoveries to ensure that the technology staff is knowledgeable in every aspect of recovery and restoration. The plan designates alternate sites if the existing site becomes unusable.

Recommendation 64:

Develop and test a comprehensive disaster recovery plan that includes all district information technology processes.

As a result of this recommendation, RISD will be able to protect the integrity and security of its data in the event of a disaster. The district will be able to maintain public confidence in its ability to collect, maintain and retain information.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Technology/Information Services establishes a disaster recovery team composed of department representatives from finance, payroll, purchasing, student accounting, human resources and technology.	July 2003
2.	The team develops the Disaster Recovery Plan.	August 2003
3.	The director of Technology/Information Services presents the plan to the superintendent and board for approval.	October 2003
4.	The director of Technology/Information Services communicates the plan to the appropriate personnel.	November 2003
5.	The director of Technology/Information Services runs a scheduled test of the plan.	January 2004
6.	The director of Technology/Information Services reports the results to the superintendent and board.	February 2004
7.	The director of Technology/Information Services updates the Disaster Recovery Plan when the district acquires new hardware or software.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The RISD Technology/Information Services Department does not provide timely technical support services for campuses. Contributing to the slow technical support is the lack of clearly defined job functions and responsibilities of the campus lab technicians. For example, the job functions are unclear about the campus lab technicians' role with identifying and fixing problems with campus computers. This directly

affects the availability of computers for student use. The review team conducted a focus group meeting for teachers from five secondary schools in November 2002. The teachers at the meeting reported that their computer labs had not been operational for weeks.

The review team also received the following comments from RISD staff:

- response to trouble calls and resulting service takes at least a week;
- purchased computer software was not installed for two weeks after it was received;
- service requests initiated on September 5, 2002 by the high school instructional technology specialist were not resolved until November 5, 2002;
- nine service requests affecting student computers in the high school TIF lab during the same two-month period (September - November 2002) remained open;
- three of 10 computers in the alternative education school were not operational during the above period;
- student login problems were not resolved for a 28-day period, affecting 12 high school students; and
- high school staff submitted 12 service requests regarding two computers that remained unusable for a one-year period before the problem was resolved;

The Technology/Information Services Department uses an online service request system that allows users to create a trouble ticket from any school location or from the Technology/Information Service Department's centralized help desk. The online service request system also provides for a real-time database of information that allows users to access online solutions to common problems from any location. The system does not keep track of the types of problems that exist by any kind of category or grouping of problem types. The RISD lead field technician explained the steps of reporting a problem and the steps that the Technology/Information Services Department takes to resolve the problem (**Exhibit 9-14**):

Exhibit 9-14
RIDS Technology/Information Services Department
Steps to Report and Resolve Technology Problems

Step	User
1	Elementary schools contact lab technician; Secondary schools contact instructional technician;
2	Principals generate tickets (input into online system);
3	Identified problem is routed to appropriate field technician;

4	Technician calls to discuss problem with user;
5	IT department determines the appropriate technician to fix the problem;
6	Technician makes school visit, fixes problem;
7	Technician verifies that problem is fixed;
8	Technician prints service request; and
9	User (or lab tech) signs off.

Source: RIDS lead technicians, Technology/Information Services Department.

The online service request system assigns requests to the appropriate field technician and reports service request performance. Schools report on the department's service performance using a trouble ticket report. The department focuses on the time it takes to fix a problem to determine service performance.

Exhibit 9-15 lists trouble ticket performance by location during a 13-month period. As shown in the "Average Age Open" column, the department's service performance for most locations is measured in multiples of weeks or months, not hours. The service performance time ranges from six days, nine hours at Dorris A. Jones Elementary School to 102 days, one hour at Rockwall Alternative School. This service performance record has a direct impact on the availability of computer equipment for student use and learning.

Exhibit 9-15
Service Requests by Location
September 2001 - November 2002

School	Open Tickets	Closed Tickets	Parts Tickets	Total Tickets	Average Age Open	Average Age Closed	Average Age Parts
Rockwall High School	69	996	2	1067	19 days (d) 18 hours (h)	47d 20h	9d 23h
Rockwall Alternative School	15	143	0	158	102d 1h	27d 18h	0
Herman E. Utley Freshman	29	631	1	661	47d 10h	23d 19h	22d 22h

Center							
J.W. Williams Middle School	35	437	2	474	73d 19h	18d 17h	9d 23h
Maurine Cain Middle School	31	545	0	576	38d 16h	24d 2h	0
Amanda Rochell Elementary School	21	426	0	447	23d 0h	16d 16h	0
Amy Parks- Heath Elementary School	21	312	0	333	54d 4h	19d 11h	0
Cullins-Lake Pointe Elementary School	32	954	0	986	42d 19h	18d 0h	0
Dorothy Smith Pullen Elementary School	17	262	0	279	62d 18h	25d 6h	0
Dorris A. Jones Elementary School	9	9	0	18	6d 9h	2d 14h	0
Grace Hartman Elementary School	5	61	0	66	5d 22h	4d 14h	0
Howard Dobbs Elementary School	18	577	0	595	22d 5h	14d 10h	0
Nebbie Williams Elementary School	16	478	0	494	51d 21h	13d 6h	0
Virginia Reinhardt Elementary	13	414	0	427	16d 21h	16d 21h	0

School							
Business Office	0	15	0	15	0d 0h	45d 0h	0
Central Administration	23	310	0	333	39d 1h	19d 23h	0

Source: RISD director of Technology/Information Services; "bigWebDesk" report, September 2001 - November 2002.

The review team calculated a ratio of field technicians to computers for selected peer districts. **Exhibit 9-16** shows that RISD has the third lowest ratio of field technicians to computers among its peer districts, which contributes to the delays.

Exhibit 9-16
Technical Staffing Levels
RISD and Peer Districts
November 2002

District	Enrollment	Number of Employees	Number of Computers	Technology Administration	Field Technicians	Ratio Technicians/Computer
Eanes	7,123	1,100	3,600	2	9	1:900
Frisco	11,070	1,580	3,785	1	5	1:757
Rockwall	9,600	1,164	2,854	3	4	1:714
Coppell	9,885	1,220	2,464	2	9	1:616
Allen	12,600	1,438	4,842	1	9	1:538
McKinney	15,127	1,659	7,000	4	22	1:318

Source: WCL ENTERPRISES telephone survey of RISD peer districts, November 2002.
Note: Carroll ISD, an RISD peer district, did not provide any information.

The lack of clearly defined job functions and responsibilities of the campus lab technicians has impacted the timeliness of the campus technical support. The district has one campus lab technician at each school, except at Cullins-Lake Pointe Elementary. Cullins-Lake Pointe Elementary has two campus lab technicians. Each campus lab technician reports to the school principal. The director of Technology/Information Services developed a training program for the technicians and conducted

weekly training sessions during the second semester of 2001-02. The director of Technology/Information Services is not certain that the campus lab technicians are using what they learned from the training.

District staff expressed additional concerns about the Technology/Information Services Department regarding school technician limitations in resolving reported problems. For example, the director of Technology/Information Services director is reluctant to allow the campus lab technicians to resolve password-related issues. In November 2002, the high school instructional technology specialist was notified of five student login problems. Since only the field technicians in the Technology/Information Services Department have the authority to fix these problems, there was a long delay before the department corrected the problem. The campus lab technicians are capable of fixing problems such as resolving password-related issues on a timelier basis than the field technicians, but they are not given the authority to fix these types of problems. The district's field technicians are the only staff with such authority.

While the RISD Technology Plan 2002 includes adding field technicians, the IT department has not defined the service requests for school personnel without using field technicians. The high school instructional technologist estimated that more than two-thirds of the high school's reported service requests involved either a student password or a video card. Not relying on school personnel to resolve these problems further delays the problem from being fixed which impacts the students' ability to complete their work.

Timely resolution of technical support problems enhances the usefulness of such functions for school districts.

Recommendation 65:

Allow campus lab technicians to resolve basic computer problems to provide more timely campus technical support.

RISD Technology/Information Services should begin to use the online system to quantify the types of service requests it receives. This will determine the impact of using school personnel to handle basic computer problems and eliminate or delay the hiring of additional field technicians.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Technology/Information Services and the lead field technician use the online system to analyze the types of service requests the department receives.	June 2003
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2.	The lead field technician and the field technicians add problem resolution steps for the most common type of problems to the online system knowledge database.	June 2003
3.	The director of Technology/Information Services and the lead field technician analyze service requests by class type.	July 2003
4.	The director of Technology/Information Services prepares a plan, policies and procedures to train designated campus lab technicians for problem resolution	August 2003
5.	The director of Technology/Information Services reviews the plan, policies and procedures with the superintendent.	September 2003
6.	The director of Technology/Information Services meets with school representatives to review the technical support plan and the training schedule.	October 2003
7.	The director of Technology/Information Services and the lead field technician begins the training of designated campus lab technicians to resolve certain types of service requests.	November 2003
8.	Campus lab technicians begin resolving certain types of service requests.	January 2004 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 9

COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

C. INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY

The use of instructional technology enables students to function in today's technology-advanced workplaces and technologically advanced society. Regardless of career choice, all students need the problem solving and critical thinking skills for incorporating technology. A curriculum that incorporates technology expands content and guides students toward a higher potential. School districts serve as the link between the education systems of today and the technology of tomorrow.

FINDING

RISD has developed a draft, but has not implemented technology proficiency standards for all district teachers. If RISD teachers are not proficient in technology, they will be unable to integrate technology into their classes, limiting the students' quality of instruction.

For example, 42 percent of RISD teachers participating in the November 2002 TSPR survey disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statements "the district meets student needs in classes in computer fundamentals" and "the district meets student needs in classes in advanced computer skills."

Each school conducts training in its own way because there is not a standardized district method for how teachers should integrate technology into their classrooms. RISD sets a goal of 12 hours of technology training for teachers but does not mandate this training. A teacher may attend available technology-related courses that the district provides, but the training is not consistent for all teachers, so some teachers may be more advanced in integrating technology into the classroom, while other teachers may be doing very little technology-related functions in the classroom. The director of Instructional Services said that the district lacks a comprehensive technology-training program and some type of technology certification. The director of Instructional Services expressed concern that the only technology training RISD offers its new teachers is limited to operating the gradebook and attendance applications.

Most RISD principals and assistant principals (67 percent) disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement "the district meets student needs in classes in advanced computer skills." These high percentages of disagreement with the positive survey statements indicate a lack of technology training for RISD teachers. **Exhibit 9-17** lists the responses to

technology related statements in the review team's November 2002 survey.

Exhibit 9-17
Survey Responses by RISD Teachers, Principals/Assistant Principals, Parents and Students Responses
November 2002

Statement	Percentage of Respondents Disagreeing or Strongly Disagreeing			
	Teachers	Principals and Assistant Principals	Parents	Students
Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	50%	50%	N/A	50%
Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	18%	33%	N/A	37%
The district meets student needs in classes in computer fundamentals.	42%	34%	16%	N/A
The district meets student needs in classes in advanced computer skills.	42%	67%	23%	26%

Source: TSPR survey, November 2002.

The Texas Education Agency recommends that all active educators strive to meet the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) standards for all beginning educators. SBEC approves new educator standards by general subject area, including technology applications for all beginning teachers and grades 8 to 12. SBEC outlines what teachers should know; and what all teachers can do for each of 11 developed standards. SBEC developed other standards for technology education in grades 6-12. The standard includes a description of what the beginning technology education teacher knows and understands and what the teacher is expected to do. **Exhibit 9-18** lists SBEC's standards and descriptions.

Exhibit 9-18
State Board for Educator Certification Standards
November 2002

Standard	Description
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Number	
I.	All teachers use technology related terms, concepts, data input strategies and ethical practices to make informed decisions about current technologies and their applications.
II.	All teachers identify task requirements, apply search strategies and use current technology to efficiently acquire, analyze and evaluate a variety of electronic information.
III.	All teachers use task appropriate tools to synthesize knowledge, create and modify solutions and evaluate results in a way that supports the work of individuals and groups in problem solving situations.
IV.	All teachers communicate information in different formats and for diverse audiences.
V.	All teachers know how to plan, organize, deliver and evaluate instruction for all students that incorporates the effective use of current technology for teaching and integrating the Technology Applications Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) into the curriculum.
VI.	The computer science teacher has the knowledge and skills needed to teach the Foundations, Information Acquisition, Work in Solving Problems and Communication strands of the TEKS test in computer science, in addition to the content described in Technology Applications Standards I-V.
VII.	The desktop publishing teacher has the knowledge and skills needed to teach the Foundations, Information Acquisition, Work in Solving Problems and Communication strands of the TEKS test in computer science, in addition to the content described in Technology Applications Standards I-V.
VIII.	The digital graphics/animation teacher has the knowledge and skills needed to teach the Foundations, Information Acquisition, Work in Solving Problems and Communication strands of the TEKS test in computer science, in addition to the content described in Technology Applications Standards I-V.
IX.	The multimedia teacher has the knowledge and skills needed to teach the Foundations, Information Acquisition, Work in Solving Problems and Communication strands of the TEKS test in computer science, in addition to the content described in Technology Applications Standards I-V.

X.	The video technology teacher has the knowledge and skills needed to teach the Foundations, Information Acquisition, Work in Solving Problems and Communication strands of the TEKS test in computer science, in addition to the content described in Technology Applications Standards I-V.
XI.	The Web mastering teacher has the knowledge and skills needed to teach the Foundations, Information Acquisition, Work in Solving Problems and Communication strands of the TEKS test in computer science, in addition to the content described in Technology Applications Standards I-V.

Source: SBEC - Educator Standards and Test Frameworks - http://www.sbec.state.tx.us/stand_framework/pdfs/stand_techappall.pdf, November 2002.

The district has taken advantage of the Intel/Microsoft "Teach to the Future" professional development tool for teachers. RISD established a guideline of 12 hours of technology-related training for teachers and provides training classes that increasingly emphasize technology integration into the curriculum. Instructors from Regional Education Service Center X (Region 10) and district teachers provide the training. Since the program's inception, 120 teachers have completed the course.

The district plans to have a new facility available for ongoing teacher training in the fall 2003. The director of Instructional Services expressed an interest in receiving input on the best approaches to training teachers for technology integration. Other school districts have used technology proficiency committees to successfully establish their own standards.

RISD developed a draft copy of technology proficiencies for teachers it calls the "RISD Instructional Technology Commitment/Incentive Proposal." District administrators will review the proposal before being approved. However, the district will not move forward on this project until its network is successfully installed, which is on hold as of the review team's visit, with no definite installation date communicated to TSPR.

Smithville ISD (SISD) established standards for teacher technology proficiency and the integration of technology into student instruction. By establishing definitive standards and deadlines into the curriculum, SISD increased the use of technology in instructional programs.

Cedar Hill ISD (CHISD) has a technology proficiency assessment program for all certified personnel and administrators. Ninety-eight percent of the district's certified personnel and administrators passed the first technology assessment level during the first year. During 1998-99, the district required all new certified personnel and paraprofessionals to pass level I. The district has maintained a passing rate on the assessment

program of 96 to 98 percent each year. During 1999-2000, CHISD implemented a second assessment level of technology proficiencies. For 2000-01, CHISD implemented an incentive program for staff that passed level II of the technology proficiencies. Staff receives a monetary reward at the individual level and campus level. Each professional staff member receives a \$100 voucher when they complete and pass level II. Each campus receives a \$1,000 voucher for every five professional staff members that complete level II. Since the implementation of the level II assessment, 304 certified personnel have passed. The district issued individual and campus vouchers to reward the teachers and campuses. Beginning 2002-03, laptops will be available for use by teachers with a level II technology proficiency.

Recommendation 66:

Implement teacher technology proficiency standards.

The training will help teachers to become fluent, critical users of technology and to prepare students to be life-long learners in an information-based, interactive society.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction and the director of Instructional Services discuss the district-developed technology proficiencies called the Instructional Technology Commitment/Incentive Proposal with district administrators.	June 2003
2.	The assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction and the director of Instructional Services ask district administrators to approve their proposal.	July 2003
3.	With input from teachers, the director of Instructional Services develops the training teachers will need to reach the proficiency levels.	September - October 2003
4.	The assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction and the director of Instructional Services meet with teachers at each school to explain the technology proficiency levels.	November - December 2003
5.	RISD begins the teacher technology proficiency level program.	January 2004

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 9

COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

D. INFRASTRUCTURE, HARDWARE, SOFTWARE AND TELEPHONES

Technology infrastructure provides the underlying system of wiring and electronics that connect the various parts of an organization through a wide area network (WAN). Districts need to have an adequate infrastructure if they are to realize the seamless integration of technology into instruction and administrative processes.

FINDING

RISD did not determine user needs and document the requirements for new software for instructional and business applications before agreeing to a software upgrade with its current vendor. As a result, RISD does not know if the planned software upgrade will meet district needs. The business manager said that the district did not perform a needs assessment and that there are unresolved issues regarding the system upgrade. These issues include a hardware upgrade that the district must make before it installs the new system. District staff were unable to obtain or provide a copy of the contract with the vendor to the review team; so the terms and conditions were not known, in the event a contract exists.

The business manager expressed concern in the software's ability to meet the district's financial needs. The business manager said that the new software lacks an automated budget amendment process; doesn't allow individual schools to view their financial data; lacks an approval process on payment authorizations; has incomplete budgeting and warehouse modules; has a cash management module that allows users to change check information after the check is printed; and the system might not be able to grow with the district.

The district staff began to evaluate software upgrades for business and instructional applications in January 2001. The district included EDP, Region 10, Pentamation and TECS vendor products in its review. The district chose the EDP product because of its low price. The district installed EDP's student software applications, Gradebook and Attendance, in September 2001. The business manager and director of Technology/Information Services are jointly responsible for installation of the business software.

The district placed the EDP implementation program on hold at the request of the district's business manager and chief financial officer. The

director of Technology/Information Services has provided minimal training to these two financial officers, so they are not ready to complete the system installation. The director of Technology/Information Services is responsible for training and data conversion to the new system.

The superintendent said the district plans to hire an outside consulting firm to perform a needs assessment for their voice and data systems, but this had not yet occurred as of the review team's visit.

The National Center for Education Statistics publication *Technology @ Your Fingertips* describes a needs assessment as "an evaluation of the functions you want your technology to have or the needs you hope technology will meet." The publication describes the participants in a needs assessment, the required steps in the process and the functional specifications of what the new system should be expected to do. In addition, the publication provides sample questions for an assessment. These include:

- what are the principal types of information you deal with in your job;
- where does the information come from;
- how is the information collected;
- what types of processing do you need to do on this information;
- what changes can you foresee in your information management responsibilities and requirements in the next three to five years;
- how do you use automated systems today to help you manage information;
- how well or how poorly do the existing automated systems help you; and
- if you could make three improvements what would you choose.

Recommendation 67:

Cancel the purchase of remaining software upgrades and develop a plan to conduct and implement the results of a needs assessment.

As a result of this recommendation, RISD will understand its users' needs, the gaps in the information it currently has and its software and support requirements.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The business manager and the chief financial officer cancel software upgrades from the current software vendor.	June 2003
2.	The business manager and the chief financial officer conduct a	August

	needs assessment to determine user needs.	2003
3.	The business manager and the chief financial officer ensure that a Request for Proposal (RFP) is submitted and evaluate potential software vendors.	
4.	The business manager and the chief financial officer evaluate the proposals as a result of the RFP and select a software vendor that provides a cost-effective solution to the information requirements.	September 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

RISD has not implemented telephone system standards for the district, which means a standard type of telephone service and functions available to staff. As a result, the phone systems at different schools are not compatible. The district's telephone system has high maintenance costs because of the system's increasing age. The system has inadequate functionality, only offers voice mail at two schools and is increasingly unreliable. For example, a user may have to wait to obtain an available outside line because of the limited number of telephone lines.

The current telephone system has 227 lines that technology staff cannot allocate among various locations to handle traffic volume changes. The district relies on three different vendors for system repair-Lonestar Communications, J4 Communications and Master Sound-for average annual maintenance costs of \$36,000. The district expects the maintenance costs to increase as the system ages. Ten district buildings use discontinued equipment that can only be repaired with refurbished parts and 80 percent of the district's phones are not upgradeable.

The information services firm that prepared the RISD Technology Plan 2002 identified replacement of the telephone system as a high priority item that should be done as soon as possible.

During 2001-02, the executive director of Operations and Risk Management and the director of Technology/Information Services developed and sent a Request for Proposal (RFP) to 16 telephone system vendors to gather information about available services and costs. **Exhibit 9-19** lists the telephone system vendors, their products and the vendors that responded to the RFP.

Exhibit 9-19
Telephone System Vendors Contacted
2001-02

Companies Contacted	Telephone System	Vendor Response (As of 11/29/01)
North Central Communications	NEC	Received RFP response.
Venture Net, Inc.	AltiGen	Received RFP response.
Master Sound Co., Inc.	Comdial	Received RFP response.
Lucent Technologies	Definity	No response.
NetVoice	Cisco	No response.
Communications Solutions (Nextira 1)	Nortel	Received RFP response.
J4 Communications	Vodavi	Received RFP response.
Staples Communications	Pulled out of Phone Business After RFP	No response.
Dependable Telecom, Inc.	Millennium	No response.
Southwestern Bell/Nortel	Nortel	Received RFP response.
Thomas Technology, Ltd.	Meridian	No Response.
Centrinity	None listed	No response.
Avaya, Inc.	Definity	Received RFP response.
X-Tel Communications	Samsung	Received RFP response.
Computer Tech	Telecom	Received RFP response.
Fujitsu	Fujitsu	Dropped Texas/phone market.

Source: RISD executive director of Operations/Risk Management, 2001-02

The executive director of Operations and Risk Management and the director of Technology/Information Services described their assessment of the most cost effective telephone technology for the district as a "blended" technology. This technology is a combination of analog and digital systems that includes voice over Internet protocol (VOIP). This approach uses a primary switch with smaller switches at each site.

The executive director of Operations and Risk Management and the director of Technology/Information Services have discussed using outside assistance to develop telephone system standards and an action plan for equipment replacement. The superintendent said the district plans to hire an outside consulting firm to perform a needs assessment of RISD's voice and data requirements.

Recommendation 68:

Develop a plan to implement the results of the telecommunications needs assessment.

As a result of this recommendation, RISD will have a plan for the type of telephone system required for new campuses and a strategy for replacing existing systems.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The executive director of Operations and Risk Management and the director of Technology/Information Services use the outside consulting firm's needs assessment to develop an implementation plan.	June 2003
2.	The executive director of Operations and Risk Management and the director of Technology/Information Services evaluate potential telephone system vendors.	August 2003
3.	The executive director of Operations and Risk Management and the director of Technology/Information Services select a software vendor that provides a cost-effective solution to the district's telephone system requirements.	September 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 10

TRANSPORTATION

This chapter reviews transportation of the Rockwall Independent School District (RISD) in the following sections:

- A. Organization and Staffing
- B. Routing and Scheduling
- C. Safety
- D. Fleet Maintenance and Management

The primary goal of every school district is to transport all students to and from school, as well as approved extracurricular functions, in a timely, safe and efficient manner.

BACKGROUND

The Texas Education Code (TEC) authorizes, but does not require, each Texas school district to provide transportation between home and school; from school to career and technology training locations; to co-curricular activities; and to 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 the general student population or if disabled students require transportation to receive special education services.

The TEC also states that a school district may receive state funding for transporting regular and special program students between home and school and for transporting career and technology students to and from vocational training locations. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) sets the funding rules. Local funds must pay for transportation costs not covered by the state. For the regular transportation program, TEA reimburses qualified transportation expenses according to a prescribed formula based on linear density. Linear density is the ratio of the average number of regular program students transported daily to the number of miles driven daily.

TEA limits state transportation funding for regular program transportation to students living two or more miles from the school they attend, unless the students face hazardous walking conditions on the way to school. The state does not pay for summer school transportation, co-curricular routes between schools during the day and extracurricular transportation, such as trips to after-school and weekend events. Individual schools are required to reimburse the district's Transportation Department for these services.

All special education transportation, except for certain field trips, is eligible for state reimbursement. The Texas Legislature capped reimbursement for special program transportation at \$1.08 per mile. In 2000-01, RISD reported the actual cost for transporting special program students at \$2.07 per mile. Special programs, unlike the regular program, are not able to achieve efficiency by clustering students at bus stops.

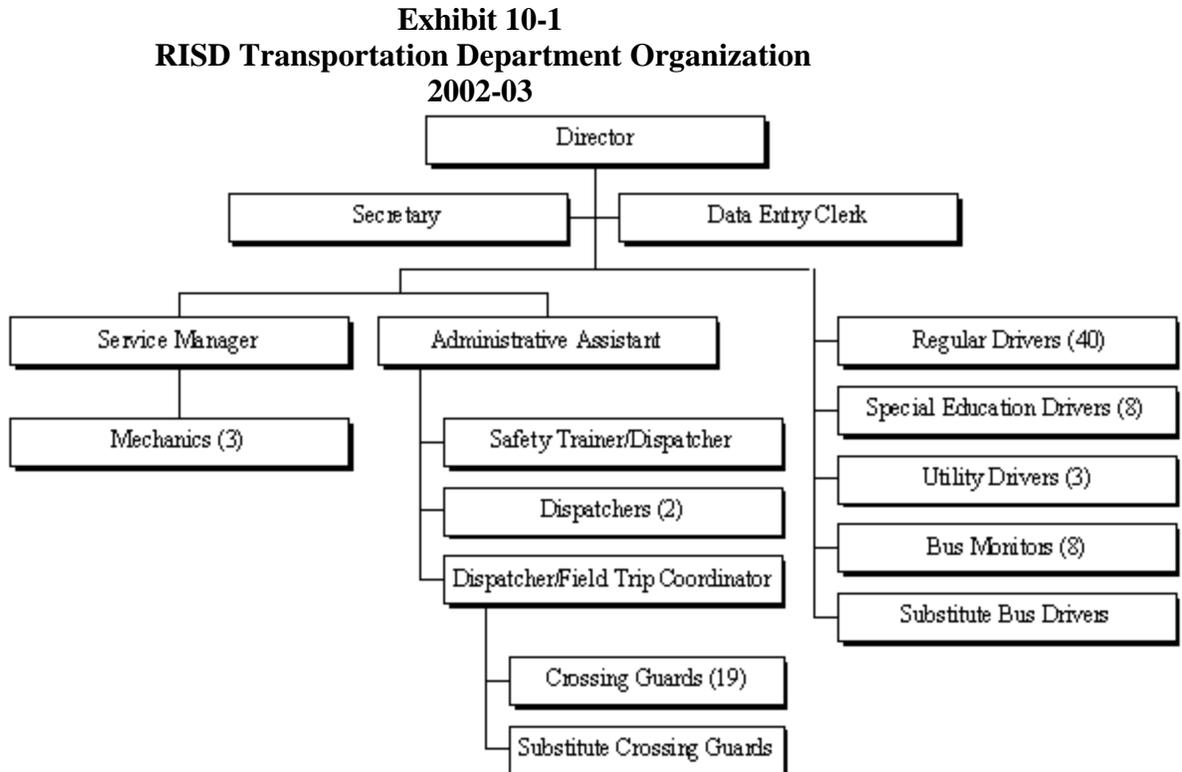
Career and technology education transportation costs are reimbursed based on the previous year's actual cost-per-mile, which was \$2.31 per mile in 2001-02.

RISD's Transportation Department operates 49 routes per day, covering 109.38 square miles, carrying an average of 2,304 students to school and home on regular runs, 23 alternative routes, 90 kindergarten students, 76 Head Start students and 85 students on special education routes. Of the 2,304, 945 students live within two miles of the school. The total ridership of 3,572 represents about 37 percent of the district's 9,616 students in 2002-03.

Chapter 10 TRANSPORTATION

A. ORGANIZATION AND STAFFING

Exhibit 10-1 shows the organization chart for the RISD Transportation Department.



Source: RISD executive director of Operations and Risk Management.

RISD chose six peer districts, similar in size and growth, for comparison purposes: Allen, Eanes, Carroll, Coppell, Frisco and McKinney. **Exhibit 10-2** shows that compared to the peer districts, RISD has the lowest starting pay, the lowest mid-point and the second-lowest maximum pay for bus drivers.

**Exhibit 10-2
Bus Driver Benefits
RISD and Peer Districts
2002-03**

District	Minimum	Mid-	Maximum	Hours	Health
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		Point		Guaranteed Per Week	Insurance Availability
RISD	\$10.00 \$11.00 with experience	\$12.23	\$14.46	20	All drivers.
Allen	\$11.70	\$12.50	\$13.30	20	Self-coverage is available to all drivers. Family coverage is only available to drivers working 30 hours per week or more.
Eanes	\$12.00 \$12.10 with experience	\$15.00	\$18.00	20	All drivers.
Frisco	\$13.39 \$13.65 with experience	\$14.70	\$16.00	25	All drivers.
McKinney*	\$12.00	\$13.25	\$14.50	20	Drivers can purchase health insurance. Contractor pays a portion for some drivers, based on experience.
Coppell**	\$13.00	\$14.88	\$16.76	3 hours per day. (Some drivers do not work every day)	All drivers.

Source: RISD executive director of Operations and Risk Management and telephone interviews with the peer school districts, December 2002.

**McKinney outsources its transportation services to Durham Transportation.*

***Coppell outsources its transportation services to Dallas County Schools.*

FINDING

RISD bus drivers with the same experience are not paid the same hourly rate. According to the executive director of Operations and Risk Management, the previous director of Transportation made arbitrary decisions when setting a new bus driver's pay. The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission enforces laws that prohibit compensation discrimination including the Equal Pay Act of 1963, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 and Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. These statutes require employers to compensate employees without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age or disability.

Exhibit 10-3 shows that RISD pays bus drivers without previous experience five different hourly rates. Although RISD publishes two rates for new drivers (\$10.00 for individuals without a commercial drivers license (CDL) and \$11.00 per hour for individuals with a CDL), the rates the district pays do not adhere to the published rates. The exhibit also shows inconsistencies in pay rates for drivers with experience.

Exhibit 10-3
RISD Bus Driver Pay by Experience
2002-03

Years Experience	Hourly Rate	Comments
27	\$14.46	
22	\$14.46	
15	\$14.46	
13	\$14.46	
12	\$14.46	
11	\$14.46	
8	\$13.45	
7	\$12.94	
6	\$12.94	2 rates
	\$12.43	
4	\$12.94	2 rates
	\$11.42	

3	\$11.93	2 rates
	\$10.91	
2	\$10.41	5 rates
	\$10.91	
	\$10.40	
	\$11.42	
	\$10.15	
1	\$11.16	4 rates
	\$12.18	
	\$10.15	
	\$10.15	
0	\$10.00	5 rates
	\$12.50	
	\$11.00	
	\$10.15	
	\$11.50	

Source: RISD executive director of Operations and Risk Management.

Cypress Fairbanks ISD (CFISD) offers a consistent method to calculate a bus driver's starting pay based on experience. Beginning at two years of experience, CFISD pays a new bus driver 5 percent more than the starting pay. For each additional year of experience, the driver gets an additional 1 percent additional pay, up to a maximum of 18 percent over the starting salary.

Recommendation 69:

Create a compensation plan that pays bus drivers equitably.

Drivers with the same experience should receive the same hourly rate.

Exhibit 10-4 shows an example of a bus driver pay scale that would equalize pay for all RISD bus drivers with the same experience.

Exhibit 10-4
Example of a Bus Driver Pay Scale
2003-04

Driver Experience	Hourly Rate
14+	\$15.33
13	\$15.00
12	\$14.67
11	\$14.33
10	\$14.00
9	\$13.33
8	\$13.00
7	\$12.67
6	\$12.33
5	\$12.00
4	\$11.33
3	\$11.00
2	\$10.67
1	\$10.33
0	\$10.00

Source: WCL ENTERPRISES, April 2003.

If the district implemented a similar scale for 2003-04, while giving each driver another year of experience, 30 drivers would receive an increase in pay ranging from \$0.06 to \$0.87 per hour and 17 drivers would receive a pay cut ranging from \$.12 to \$2.17 per hour.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Transportation recommends guidelines for bus driver pay to the assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations and superintendent for approval.	June 2003
2.	The superintendent submits the proposed driver pay scale to the board for approval.	July 2003
3.	The director of Transportation communicates the new pay scale to the bus drivers.	August 2003
4.	The assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations pays the bus drivers according to the new pay scale.	August 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

The annual net gain or loss of driver income is the difference between the example hourly rate shown in **Exhibit 10-4** and the driver's current hourly rate x 5 hours per day x 177 days worked per year. The annual cost for all drivers is \$1,124.

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Create a compensation plan that pays bus drivers equitably.	(\$1,124)	(\$1,124)	(\$1,124)	(\$1,124)	(\$1,124)

Chapter 10

TRANSPORTATION

B. ROUTING AND SCHEDULING (PART 1)

To receive state funding, all Texas school districts must submit two reports to TEA each year: the *School Transportation Operations Report* and the *School Transportation Route Services Report*. The first of those reports, the *School Transportation Operations Report*, is designed to establish a cost-per-mile to be used for reimbursements in the fiscal year following the report. **Exhibit 10-5** shows that, from 1999-2000 to 2001-02, RISD's costs for regular transportation increased 39.7 percent, and the total route mileage increased 30.2 percent. RISD's cost-per-mile for regular transportation increased 7.5 percent over the same period.

Exhibit 10-5
RISD Summary of School Transportation Operations Reports -
Regular Transportation
1999-2000 through 2001-02

	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	Percent Change
Operations Costs				
Salaries and Benefits	\$850,377	\$769,652	\$912,654	7.3%
Purchased and Contracted Services	\$48,422	\$48,880	\$113,473	134.3%
Supplies and Materials	\$131,764	\$166,883	\$120,583	(8.5%)
Other Operating Expenses	\$18,901	\$51,402	\$163,306	764.0%
Debt Service	\$64,693	\$0	\$288,510	346.0%
Capital Outlay	\$30,474	\$510,109	\$0	(100.0%)
Total Operations Costs	\$1,144,631	\$1,546,926	\$1,598,526	39.7%
Mileage Summary				
Route Mileage	402,351	483,269	503,001	25.0%
Extra/Cocurricular Mileage	105,224	128,250	133,422	26.8%
Non-School Organizations Mileage	2,393	29,530	30,727	1,184.0%
Other Mileage	26,572	29,960	31,189	17.4%

Total Annual Mileage	536,540	671,009	698,339	30.2%
Cost-per-mile - Regular	\$2.13	\$2.31	\$2.29	7.5%

Source: Texas Education Agency (TEA), School Transportation Operations Reports, 1999-2000 through 2001-02.

Exhibit 10-6 shows that from 1999-2000 through 2001-02, RISD's cost for special education transportation increased 60.4 percent, mainly due to the purchase of two special education buses in 2000-01, and the total mileage decreased 12.4 percent. Consequently, RISD's cost per mile for special education transportation increased 83.7 percent over the same period.

Exhibit 10-6
RISD Summary of School Transportation Operations Reports -
Special Transportation
1999-2000 through 2001-02

	1999- 2000	2000-01	2001-02	Percent Change
Operations Costs				
Salaries and Benefits	\$147,829	\$157,338	\$265,258	79.4%
Purchased and Contracted Services	\$5,081	\$9,196	\$2,724	(46.4%)
Supplies and Materials	\$21,694	\$30,742	\$34,397	58.6%
Other Operating Expenses	\$5,636	\$8,703	\$225	(96.0%)
Debt Service	\$0	\$0	\$0	0%
Capital Outlay	\$8,390	\$100,000	\$0	(100.0%)
Total Operations Costs	\$188,630	\$305,979	\$302,604	60.4%
Mileage Summary				
Route Mileage	127,162	132,261	109,054	(14.2%)
Extra/Cocurricular Mileage	5,136	7,549	6,233	21.4%
Non-School Organizations Mileage	0	0	0	0%
Other Mileage	6,936	8,136	6,698	(3.4%)
Total Annual Mileage	139,234	147,946	121,985	(12.4%)

Cost-per-mile - Special	\$1.35	\$2.07	\$2.48	83.7%
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Source: TEA School Transportation Operations Reports, 1999-2000 through 2001-02.

RISD has the second highest cost for regular transportation (**Exhibit 10-7**) and the fourth highest cost for special education transportation (**Exhibit 10-8**) compared with the peer districts.

Exhibit 10-7
RISD and Peer Districts, Comparison of Operations Costs - Regular Transportation
2001-02

School District	Salaries and Benefits	Purchased and Contracted Services	Supplies and Materials	Other Operating Expenses	Debt Service	Capital Outlay	Total Operating Costs
McKinney	\$0	\$2,459,341	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,459,341
RISD	\$912,654	\$113,473	\$120,583	\$163,306	\$288,510	\$0	\$1,598,526
Carroll	\$1,003,881	\$80,116	\$78,454	\$71,316	\$0	\$249,219	\$1,482,986
Frisco	\$1,070,495	\$76,007	\$145,078	\$5,438	\$0	\$89,159	\$1,386,177
Eanes	\$964,158	\$30,429	\$117,488	\$23,135	\$0	\$91,383	\$1,226,593
Allen	\$751,902	\$25,543	\$134,754	\$2,776	\$0	\$294,774	\$1,209,749
Coppell	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: TEA School Transportation Operations Reports, 2001-02.

Exhibit 10-8
RISD and Peer Districts, Comparison of Operations Costs - Special Transportation
2001-02

School District	Salaries and Benefits	Purchased and Contracted Services	Supplies and Materials	Other Operating Expenses	Debt Service	Capital Outlay	Total Operating Costs
McKinney	\$0	\$811,043	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$811,043
Frisco	\$201,136	\$1,233	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$202,369
Allen	\$165,364	\$4,798	\$53,529	\$0	\$0	\$145,187	\$368,878

RISD	\$265,258	\$2,724	\$34,397	\$225	\$0	\$0	\$302,604
Eanes	\$140,471	\$8,495	\$24,589	\$2,669	\$0	\$15,637	\$191,861
Carroll	\$111,542	\$8,901	\$8,717	\$7,924	\$0	\$27,691	\$164,775
Coppell	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: TEA School Transportation Operations Reports, 2001-02.

RISD has the lowest cost-per-mile for regular transportation (**Exhibit 10-9**) and the third highest cost-per-mile for special education transportation (**Exhibit 10-10**). Deadhead miles, as defined by TEA, are those incurred between the location where the district parks the student transportation vehicle and the campus site where the route officially begins and ends.

Exhibit 10-9
RISD and Peer Districts, Comparison of Mileage Data - Regular Transportation
2001-02

School District	Route Mileage *	Extra/ Co-Curricular Mileage	Non-School Organizations Mileage	Other Mileage	Total Annual Mileage	Cost per Mile **
Allen	182,838	83,980	8,150	600	275,568	\$4.39
Carroll	354,000	53,146	6,930	0	414,076	\$3.58
Frisco	323,497	63,756	0	17,000	404,253	\$3.43
Eanes	313,386	83,483	1,355	3,250	401,474	\$3.06
McKinney	763,987	98,358	0	8,496	870,841	\$2.82
RISD	503,001	133,422	30,727	31,189	698,339	\$2.29
Coppell	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: TEA School Transportation Operations Reports, 2001-02.

*Note: Route mileage includes deadhead miles.

**Note: Cost-per-mile is for regular transportation only.

Exhibit 10-10
RISD and Peer Districts, Comparison of Mileage Data - Special Transportation
2001-02

School District	Route Mileage *	Extra/ Co-Curricular Mileage	Non-School Organizations Mileage	Other Mileage	Total Annual Mileage	Cost per Mile **
McKinney	209,037	1,041	0	0	210,078	\$3.96
Carroll	39,333	5,905	770	0	46,008	\$3.58
RISD	109,054	6,233	0	6,698	121,985	\$2.48
Frisco	84,756	1,200	0	5,000	90,956	\$2.22
Allen	159,605	5,777	5,009	300	170,691	\$2.16
Eanes	117,610	3,365	0	300	121,275	\$1.58
Coppell	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: TEA School Transportation Operations Reports, 2001-02.

*Note: Route mileage includes deadhead miles.

**Note: Cost-per-mile is for special transportation only.

Cost-per-rider can also be an indicator of the cost efficiency of a school district's transportation services. RISD has the lowest cost-per-rider for regular transportation compared to the peer districts (**Exhibit 10-11**), but the third highest cost-per-rider for special education transportation (**Exhibit 10-12**).

Exhibit 10-11
RISD and Peer Districts, Comparison of Cost Per Rider - Regular Transportation
2001-02

School District	Total Annual Operating Costs	Annual Ridership	Cost Per Rider Per Day
McKinney	\$2,459,341	353,160	\$6.96
Eanes	\$1,226,593	225,000	\$5.45
Carroll	\$1,482,986	275,940	\$5.37
Frisco	\$1,386,177	281,700	\$4.92
Allen	\$1,209,749	286,760	\$4.22
RISD	\$1,598,526	493,380	\$3.24
Coppell	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: TEA School Transportation Operations Report and Route Services Report, 2001-02.

Exhibit 10-12
RISD and Peer Districts, Comparison of Cost Per Rider - Special Transportation
2001-02

School District	Total Annual Operating Costs	Annual Ridership	Cost Per Rider Per Day
Frisco	\$504,973	17,460	\$28.92
McKinney	\$811,043	34,560	\$23.47
RISD	\$302,604	16,200	\$18.68
Carroll	\$164,775	16,200	\$10.17
Eanes	\$191,861	19,080	\$10.06
Allen	\$368,878	51,300	\$7.19
Coppell	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: TEA School Transportation Operations Report and Route Services Report, 2001-02.

The second state report, the *School Transportation Route Services Report* includes information on ridership and mileage for regular, special and career and technology programs. It also includes a calculation of "linear density" for the regular home-to-school program, which is the basis for transportation funding.

Linear density is the ratio of the average number of regular program students transported daily to the number of miles driven daily. TEA uses this ratio to assign each school district to one of seven groups, with each group receiving a different per-mile allotment. **Exhibit 10-13** shows the categories of allotment, the linear density grouping for each category and the related allotment, as defined by TEA. The higher the district's linear density, the higher the district's state allotment.

Exhibit 10-13
Categories of State Linear Density Reimbursement for Regular Bus Routes

Category	Linear	Allotment
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	Density Grouping	per Mile
7	2.400 - 9.999	\$1.43
6	1.650 - 2.399	\$1.25
5	1.150 - 1.649	\$1.11
4	.900 - 1.149	\$0.97
3	.650 - .899	\$0.88
2	.400 - .649	\$0.79
1	.000 - .399	\$0.68

Source: TEA Handbook on School Transportation Allotments, revised May 2002.

To establish route mileage and daily ridership figures, TEA requires districts to gather mileage and ridership data on the first Wednesday of each month. **Exhibit 10-14** shows that RISD mileage for regular transportation increased 17 percent from 1999-2000 through 2001-02 while special education transportation mileage decreased 8 percent. Ridership for regular transportation increased 10 percent from 1999-2000 through 2001-02, while special education transportation ridership increased 27 percent. State funding increased 14 percent over the same period.

Exhibit 10-14
RISD Summary of Route Services Reports
1999-2000 through 2001-02

	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	Percent Change
Regular Program				
Annual Standard Ridership	448,740	490,860	493,380	10%
Annual Standard Mileage	348,690	359,625	407,382	17%
Linear Density	1.287	1.365	1.211	(6%)
Allotment per Mile	\$1.07	\$1.11	\$1.11	4%
Annual Mileage (incl. hazardous)	407,807	421,119	440,908	8%
Total Daily Ridership	2,767	3,061	3,121	13%
Hazardous Annual Mileage	13,947	13,475	16,143	16%
Hazardous Daily Ridership	143	211	355	148%

Special Program				
Total Daily Ridership	71	51	90	27%
Total Annual Mileage	119,361	96,950	110,083	(8%)
Career and Technology Program				
Total Daily Ridership	126	71	59	(53%)
Total Annual Mileage	8,491	5,257	5,565	(34%)
State Allotment				
Regular Program	\$452,666	\$467,442	\$548,104	21%
Special Program	\$127,716	\$104,706	\$118,890	(7%)
Career and Technology Program	\$16,133	\$11,197	\$12,827	(20%)
Private Program	\$735	\$726	\$816	11%
Total Allotment	\$597,250	\$584,071	\$680,637	14%

Source: TEA School Transportation Route Services Reports, 1999-2000 through 2001-02.

In 2001-02, RISD had the third highest linear density compared to the peer districts and state revenue covered only 34.3 percent of the district's operating costs for regular transportation, which is a higher percentage than the peer districts (**Exhibit 10-15**).

Exhibit 10-15
RISD and Peer Districts, Linear Density and State Transportation
Allotment
Regular Transportation
2001-02

School District	Linear Density (Riders Per Mile)	Allotment per Mile for Regular Transportation *	Total Regular Transportation Allotment	Operation Costs for Regular Transportation	Percent of Operation Costs
RISD	1.211	\$1.11	\$548,104	\$1,598,526	34.3%
Frisco	1.086	\$1.11	\$288,112	\$1,386,177	20.8%
McKinney	0.973	\$0.97	\$485,585	\$2,459,341	19.7%
Eanes	1.061	\$0.97	\$226,362	\$1,226,593	18.5%

Allen	2.25	\$1.25	\$183,200	\$1,209,749	15.1%
Carroll	1.696	\$1.11	\$187,471	\$1,482,986	12.6%
Coppell	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: TEA School Transportation Route Services Report and School Transportation Operation Report, 2001-02.

*Note: State allotment is based on previous year's linear density.

The state allotment for special education transportation is fixed at \$1.08 for all districts. In 2001-02, RISD received its special allotment equal to 39.3 percent of its special education transportation costs (**Exhibit 10-16**), which was the second highest compared to the peer districts.

Exhibit 10-16
RISD and Peer Districts, Percent of Special Education Transportation
Costs Covered by State Allotment
2001-02

School District	Total Special Transportation Allotment	Operation Costs for Special Transportation	Percent of Operation Costs
Eanes	\$89,792	\$191,861	46.8%
RISD	\$118,890	\$302,604	39.3%
Allen	\$143,639	\$368,878	38.9%
Carroll	\$35,729	\$164,775	21.7%
McKinney	\$168,156	\$811,043	20.7%
Frisco	\$88,292	\$504,973	17.5%
Coppell	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: TEA Route Services Report and School Transportation Operation Report, 2001-02.

Chapter 10 TRANSPORTATION

B. ROUTING AND SCHEDULING (PART 2)

FINDING

RISD has many inefficient bus routes, with few riders per mile, which has resulted in a 20 percent decline in the district's linear density from 1998-99 through 2001-02 (**Exhibit 10-17**). RISD also is in jeopardy of having its state transportation allotment-per-mile reduced. If RISD's linear density drops below 1.15, TEA's calculation for the state transportation allotment drops from \$1.11 per mile to \$0.97 per mile. Based on 493,787 regular miles reported in the 2001-02 *Route Services Report*, RISD would lose \$69,131 in state allotment.

**Exhibit 10-17
RISD Linear Density Change
1998-99 through 2001-02**

	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	Percentage Change 1998-99 through 2001-02
Linear Density	1.519	1.287	1.365	1.211	(20%)

Source: TEA Route Services Report, 1998-99 through 2001-02.

Exhibit 10-18 shows that in 2001-02 RISD had 14 bus routes, or 40 percent, with linear densities less than 1.15.

**Exhibit 10-18
RISD Routes, As Reported in the TEA Route Services Report
2001-02**

Route Number	Daily Mileage	Daily Ridership	Bus Size (Passengers)	Riders per Mile
34	63.3	145	71	2.29
31	54.8	119	71	2.17
28	41.2	79	71	1.92

37	11.4	21	71	1.84
11	63.7	105	72	1.69
36	60.3	97	71	1.61
9	81.9	130	71	1.59
13	57.2	89	71	1.56
20	36.9	57	72	1.54
15	68.1	104	72	1.53
2	96.1	135	72	1.40
23	70.9	96	65	1.35
3	75.8	102	71	1.35
26	63.5	85	71	1.34
17	87.7	114	72	1.30
10	61.4	79	72	1.29
25	62.2	77	72	1.24
30	62.1	76	72	1.22
35	54.8	66	71	1.20
8	71.5	86	71	1.20
5	66.8	79	72	1.18
16	98.3	104	72	1.06
1	62.5	65	72	1.04
18	113.5	113	71	1.00
14	75.5	75	71	0.99
33	29.9	27	71	0.90
32	117.9	104	72	0.88
19	100.9	87	72	0.86
22	43.3	36	72	0.83
12	84.6	66	72	0.78
21	30.4	23	72	0.76
4	52.8	34	72	0.64
29	49.1	19	72	0.39

6	111.8	35	71	0.31
7	51.4	12	71	0.23

Source: TEA Route Services Report, 2001-02.

Automated bus routing software helps school districts design more efficient bus routes that can increase the linear density and maximize state transportation funding. The software can help a district design routes and schedules with the least number of buses and the shortest travel distances while still meeting the needs of the eligible student population. Route optimization is especially critical in stop selection, run building and route coupling. Software system includes:

- detailed map development;
- house numbering;
- student address correction;
- travel speeds;
- boundary identification;
- student data import/export capabilities;
- planning and redistricting capabilities;
- transportation cost analysis;
- driver certification tracking;
- GPS reference points;
- special education routing;
- custom reporting;
- automatic bus stop, school and route assignment;
- unlimited user licenses; and
- training for five days in person and eight hours online.

Stop location optimization allows the district to define a hazard, maximum walking distance for students, maximum students at a stop and forbidden or undesirable locations for stops. An automated system will identify and select the minimum number of stops at the best locations to satisfy these requirements. Interactive graphics allow the district to evaluate possible solutions and make revisions and/or corrections.

Run building optimization enables the district to automatically build multiple bus runs to a specific school or cluster of schools. An automated system can maximize vehicle capacity while minimizing time and distance in travel. Computer plots can help evaluate and modify the results as needed.

Route coupling optimization permits the district to combine a specified group of bus runs into bus schedules with the objective of minimizing fleet requirements, travel distance and wait time.

Katy ISD has successfully used automated route planning software for more than 15 years. Katy's director of Transportation says that in a growing district, with new streets constantly being added, it is impossible to keep bus routes running efficiently using a manual system.

Recommendation 70:

Purchase automated bus routing software to improve linear density and maximize the state transportation allotment.

Designing more efficient bus routes can also help eliminate some bus routes, which can reduce the number of buses and drivers needed.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Transportation contacts all vendors who offer bus routing software to get detailed information about their products.	September 2003
2.	The director of Transportation develops bid specifications for bus routing software and submits the specifications to the director of Purchasing.	November 2003
3.	The director of Purchasing solicits bids for the bus routing software.	December 2003
4.	The director of Transportation and the director of Purchasing open and evaluate the bids.	January 2004
5.	The director of Purchasing presents a recommendation for the bid award to the superintendent and board for approval.	February 2004
6.	The director of Purchasing issues a purchase order for the bus routing software.	March 2004
7.	The director of Transportation schedules training on the new software.	April 2004
8.	The director begins to use the bus routing software.	June 2004

FISCAL IMPACT

The vendor's cost for its bus routing software would be \$33,000 initially, then \$3,000 each subsequent year for maintenance.

With more efficient bus routes, RISD would be able to eliminate at least one bus route, saving the cost of one driver. Eliminating one driver would save \$12,448 per year (\$12.23 per hour average pay x 5 hours per day x 177 days per year = \$10,824 + 15 percent benefits of \$1,624 = \$12,624).

Beginning in 2004-05, the net annual savings is \$9,448 (\$3,000 annual maintenance cost and \$12,448 annual savings from eliminating one bus driver).

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
One-time purchase of automated bus routing software.	(\$33,000)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Savings from eliminating one bus driver and annual bus maintenance.	\$0	\$9,448	\$9,448	\$9,448	\$9,448
Net Savings (Cost)	(\$33,000)	\$9,448	\$9,448	\$9,448	\$9,448

FINDING

RISD does not maximize its state transportation funding when claiming reimbursement for hazardous route mileage. As a result, RISD lost an average of \$29,253 per year in unclaimed state transportation revenue for hazardous miles from 1999-2000 through 2001-02.

Exhibit 10-19 shows RISD's hazardous mileage claims for 1999-2000, 2000-01 and 2001-02, the state revenue received by the district from hazardous routes and the revenue that was lost by not claiming more routes as hazardous.

Exhibit 10-19
RISD Hazardous Miles
1999-2000 through 2001-02

Description	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02
Mileage claimed by RISD over two miles	393,860	407,644	424,765
Maximum reimbursable hazardous miles allowed by the state (10 %)	39,386	40,764	42,477
Maximum hazardous dollars allowed for RISD (\$1.11 per mile)	\$43,718	\$45,248	\$47,149
Hazardous riders claimed by RISD	143	211	355
Hazardous miles claimed by RISD	13,947	13,475	16,143
Hazardous dollars claimed by RISD (\$1.11 per mile)	\$15,481	\$14,957	\$17,919

Hazardous dollars not claimed by RISD (\$1.11 per mile)	\$28,237	\$30,291	\$29,230
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Source: TEA Route Services Reports, 1999-2000 through 2001-02.

A hazardous route subjects a student who walks within the two-mile-required radius to hazardous traffic conditions. For example, hazardous conditions might include students crossing a busy highway with no traffic signal or crossing guard, walking down busy streets with no sidewalks or crossing railroad tracks. The state transportation allotment limits a district's hazardous routes to 10 percent of the funding provided to transport students living more than two miles from the school. RISD does not claim enough hazardous miles to meet the 10 percent allowed.

Recommendation 71:

Re-examine all bus routes transporting students within two miles of their school to determine if hazardous conditions exist.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Transportation examines each bus route transporting students within two miles of their school to identify routes that are not classified as hazardous but should be.	June 2003
2.	The director of Transportation recommends a list of all hazardous routes and submits to the superintendent for board approval.	June 2003
3.	The board approves the hazardous routes.	July 2003
4.	The director of Transportation submits the board-approved list of hazardous routes with the annual TEA Route Services Report.	July 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

By classifying the 10 percent state hazardous allotment, if applicable, RISD could receive an average of \$29,253 more per year in state transportation allotment, based on the average of the three years of hazardous dollars not claimed by RISD presented in **Exhibit 10-19**.

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Re-examine all bus routes transporting students within two miles of their school to	\$29,253	\$29,253	\$29,253	\$29,253	\$29,253

determine if hazardous conditions exist.					
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FINDING

RISD buses 945 students living less than two miles from their school, costing the district more than \$500,000 per year. **Exhibit 10-20** shows the 2002-03 under-two-mile bus routes and the number of students transported on each route.

**Exhibit 10-20
Students Transported within Two Miles of the School Due To
Hazardous Conditions
2002-03**

Route Number	Schools Affected	Number of Riders	Hazard
4	Pullen	48	No sidewalks, two lanes, heavy traffic on FM 3097.
5	Rochell	40	Ralph Hall and Mimms Road, four lanes, heavy traffic, and no four-way stop.
6	Reinhardt	37	Highway 66 and Highway 205, heavy traffic.
7	Dobbs	60	Highway 66 and no sidewalks.
8	Williams Middle School, Rockwall High School and Utley Freshman Campus	13	No sidewalks, heavy traffic, Highway 66 and Clark Street, Yellow Jacket apartments.
9	Rockwall High School	2	No sidewalks, heavy traffic, Clark Street.
12	Parks	7	No sidewalks, heavy traffic, no safe areas to walk, Hubbard Road in front of school.
13	Parks	42	No sidewalks, heavy traffic, FM 740 and Hubbard Road.
16	Rochell	71	Ralph Hall and Mimms Road, four lanes of traffic, no four-way stop.
17	Pullen	21	No sidewalks. FM 3097. heavv

			traffic.
20	Hartman and Reinhardt	63	Four lanes, Lakeshore and Masters, no sidewalk.
21	Cullins - Lake Pointe	63	Heavy traffic, Highway 66 and Scenic Drive.
22	Rochell	11	Ralph Hall and Mimms Road, four lanes, heavy traffic.
23	Cain Middle School	7	No sidewalks, Highway 3097, heavy traffic.
26	Cullins - Lake Pointe	24	No sidewalks, construction area.
26	Cain Middle School, Utley Freshman Campus and Rockwall High School	40	No sidewalks, heavy traffic, Highway 66 and FM 3097.
28	Rochell	43	Ralph Hall and Mimms Road, four lanes, no four-way stop.
30	Cullins - Lake Pointe	26	Highway 66 and Scenic Road, heavy traffic.
32	Parks	42	No sidewalks, heavy traffic, Highlands of Heath, FM 740 and Hubbard.
32	Rockwall High School, Utley Freshman Center, Cain Middle School	40	No sidewalks, heavy traffic.
33	Nebbie Williams	44	Construction, Dalton area.
35	Dobbs	23	No sidewalks, Highway 66 and Clark Street, heavy traffic.
36	Nebbie Williams	41	No sidewalks, construction zone, Dalton Road and Highway 205.
39	Hartman	53	No sidewalks, four lanes, heavy traffic, Lakeshore and Masters.
40	Cullins - Lake Pointe	24	Highway 66 and Scenic Drive, heavy traffic.
41	Pullen	51	No sidewalks, heavy traffic, Highway 3097.

2 - Kinder	Pullen	3	No sidewalks, heavy traffic, FM 740 and Hubbard.
17- Kinder	Parks	1	No sidewalks, heavy traffic, intersection of FM 740 and Hubbard.
S6- Kinder	Hartman	5	No sidewalks, four lanes, heavy traffic, Lakeshore and Masters.
	Total Riders	945	

Source: RISD director of Transportation.

In 2001-02, RISD's total transportation budget was \$1.89 million, or \$581 for each of the district's 3,255 bus riders. Assuming the per-student transportation cost remains the same for 2002-03, the cost to transport 945 students is about \$549,000 per year. On the 2001-02 TEA *Route Services Report*, RISD claimed 355 students on routes designated as hazardous. RISD received \$17,919 in state allotment for those routes, leaving the balance of over \$530,000 funded by local taxpayers.

In 2001-02, RISD students on hazardous routes were transported an average of 0.3 miles, based on 16,143 hazardous miles divided by 62,125 annual hazardous riders (355 daily riders x 175 days per year).

Options used by other districts to reduce or eliminate busing within two miles of school include:

- phase out all busing within two miles over several years, starting with high school, then middle school, then older elementary students and all students;
- hire more crossing guards;
- partner with city and county governments to provide sidewalk and bridge projects; and
- charge students living within two miles a fee to ride the bus.

Eagle Pass ISD formed a community committee to suggest ways to get city and community funding to build sidewalks and bridges and to hire more crossing guards, enabling more students to walk to school and save money.

In February 2003, an Eanes ISD administrative team, formed to recommend budget reductions, identified savings of \$160,000 per year by charging a fee for students living within two miles of their school to ride the bus.

Recommendation 72:

Identify alternatives to reduce the cost of busing students within two miles of school.

Eliminating or reducing transportation services can be difficult without obtaining community support. By including all stakeholders in a discussion of the issues and soliciting their input on solutions to the problem, a district can obtain community support. A committee, consisting of district transportation staff, central administrators and parents could develop the alternatives, estimate the financial impact of each alternative and present a recommendation to the superintendent for board consideration. The committee could also solicit input from police agencies for traffic issues; city and county officials to explore options for funding traffic lights, sidewalks, bridges and crossing guards; and housing developers for questions related to subdivision layouts.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent appoints a committee consisting of administrators, transportation staff and parents to identify ways to reduce the cost of busing within two miles of the schools by at least 25 percent.	October 2003
2.	The committee holds its first meeting.	November 2003
3.	The committee submits its recommendations to the superintendent and board for consideration.	January 2004
4.	The board approves a plan to reduce the cost of busing within two miles of the schools.	February 2004
5.	The director of Transportation implements the approved plan.	August 2004

FISCAL IMPACT

A 25 percent reduction in the number of students transported within two miles of their school would save the district \$137,250 ($0.25 \times \$549,000 = \$137,250$) per year. Assuming a phase-in approach, RISD could start with a 10 percent reduction \$54,900 ($0.10 \times \$549,000 = \$54,900$) in 2004-05, a 15 percent reduction \$82,350 ($0.15 \times \$549,000 = \$82,350$) in 2005-06 and a 25 percent reduction \$137,250 ($0.25 \times \$549,000 = \$137,250$) in 2006-07 and 2007-08.

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Identify alternatives to reduce the cost of busing students within two miles of school.	\$0	\$54,900	\$82,350	\$137,250	\$137,250

Chapter 10

TRANSPORTATION

C. SAFETY

Each year, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), approximately 440,000 public school buses travel more than 4 billion miles and daily transport 24 million children to and from schools and school-related activities. School buses make an estimated 10 billion student trips each year.

In a study from 1998 through 1999, NHTSA compared the number of fatalities of children ages five through 18 during normal school transportation hours and found that school buses are 87 times safer than passenger cars, light trucks and vans. This safety record is achieved through bus design and construction, the bus operating condition, the planning of the bus route, the location of the loading zones and the school bus driver. While the construction and safety equipment of school buses is critical, a safe driver is also essential in preventing accidents.

Over the years, school bus driver selection and training activities have improved significantly. In the 1970's, the NHTSA issued standards for school bus driver training. In the early 1990's, the Federal Highway Administration required that all school bus drivers possess a commercial drivers license (CDL). To attain this license, bus drivers must pass knowledge and skills tests, be subject to random drug and alcohol testing, pass a biennial physical examination and pass a criminal background check.

Driving the school bus is not the only task required of school bus drivers. Before a bus leaves for its route, the driver must conduct a physical check of various vehicle systems, such as brakes, tires, lights and steering, to ensure that all systems meet requirements for safe and proper operation. Drivers must also discipline children on the bus and handle any medical or other emergencies that may arise during the trip to and from school or school-related activity. Many drivers must also attend to unique requirements of students with special needs, which frequently require additional training.

FINDING

RISD evaluates all bus drivers behind-the-wheel at least twice each year to verify their skills and effectiveness in managing student discipline. During the evaluation, the Transportation Department's administrative assistant:

- monitors the driver's pre-trip and post-trip inspections, including: lights, tires, emergency doors, windows and hatches, gauges and post-trip walk-through to check for students that might still be on the bus;
- evaluates the driver's appearance, attitude, courtesy and proper use of the radio;
- monitors the cleanliness of the bus;
- evaluates the driver's methods of student discipline and management, including speaking to the students in a friendly manner, addressing students with respect, following the district student discipline management program and general student behavior;
- evaluates the driver's operation of the bus, including observing posted speeds, observing school zones, proper hand position on the steering wheel, complete stops at stop signs, handling of the bus in traffic, proper turns, proper use of mirrors and driving smoothly during acceleration and braking;
- monitors the driver's procedures for loading and unloading students, including setting the air brake at every stop, following the approved bus route, arriving at stops in a timely manner, properly using flashers, ensuring students are seated before continuing, ensuring students remain seated until the bus stops and signaling students on the left side of the street before they cross in front of the bus.

The administrative assistant performs additional evaluations if a driver is involved in an accident and anytime the director of Transportation deems it in the best interest of the district.

COMMENDATION

The RISD Transportation Department monitors and evaluates bus drivers behind-the-wheel at least twice a year.

FINDING

The RISD Transportation Department established an Accident Review Committee to review every accident involving an RISD school bus. The committee includes a bus driver, policeman, mechanic, driver trainer, director of Transportation, executive director of Operations and the driver involved in the accident.

The Accident Review Committee reviews the details and cause of the accident, who was at fault, how the driver might have avoided or prevented the accident, the driver's accident history, the seriousness of injuries to bus passengers and any maintenance issues with the bus. If the

committee finds the driver is at fault, the committee can recommend action against the driver, including additional training, probation and termination. For example, regarding an accident involving a bus backing into a mailbox, the committee determined that the driver did not follow proper backing procedures and did not use the bus mirrors correctly, so the committee required the driver to undergo four hours of additional training specifically pertaining to backing procedures and the proper use of mirrors.

The Accident Review Committee's role has expanded under the new director to include work-related injuries. For example, after a transportation employee tripped over the wheelchair ramp at the entrance of the south transportation center, the committee examined the facility. The committee determined that the ramp was not properly painted with yellow safety lines and requested the ramp be painted. The Accident Review Committee will begin transportation facility inspections to identify other safety problems and recommend actions before they create problems for employees.

COMMENDATION

RISD uses an Accident Review Committee to review all accidents involving school buses and recommend appropriate actions.

FINDING

In order to prevent drivers from inadvertently leaving students on the school bus, RISD instituted the "Empty Sign" Program. At the end of a bus route, a driver must walk to the back of the bus and attach a special card to the inside rear door window, which is visible from outside the bus, indicating that the bus is empty. While walking to the rear of the bus to place the sign, the driver inspects around and under the seats for any student who might still be on the bus.

After all buses have returned from their routes, a supervisor checks the back of all buses to see if all drivers attached their signs. If not, the supervisor immediately checks the bus for students and takes disciplinary action against the driver. During the next pre-trip inspection, the driver removes the sign and keeps it at the front of the bus until the end of his or her route.

COMMENDATION

The RISD Transportation Department effectively uses an "Empty Sign" program to prevent drivers from inadvertently leaving students on the bus.

Chapter 10

TRANSPORTATION

D. FLEET MAINTENANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The RISD bus fleet consists of 62 buses, including 10 special education buses (**Exhibit 10-21**). One spare bus is more than 20 years old; 14 buses are more than 15 years old. In 2001-02, RISD began implementing a program to replace 25 school buses over a five-year period.

Exhibit 10-21
RISD Bus Fleet
2002-03

Bus Number	Year	Passengers	Make	Regular or Special
Spare	1981	71	International	Regular
27	1983		International	Regular
40	1983	71	International	Regular
41	1985	71	Chevrolet	Regular
Spare	1985	19	GMC	Special
7	1987	71	Bluebird	Regular
8	1987	71	International	Regular
14	1987	71	International	Regular
28	1987	71	International	Regular
33	1987	71	International	Regular
34	1987	71	International	Regular
35	1987	71	International	Regular
36	1987	71	International	Regular
37	1987	71	International	Regular
39	1987	71	International	Regular
22 pm	1990	71	International	Regular
S4	1990	19	GMC	Special
Spare	1990	19	GMC	Special

26	1991	71	International	Regular
31	1991	71	International	Regular
Spare	1991	71	International	Regular
S7	1993	47	International	Special
4	1994	72	Bluebird	Regular
10	1994	72	Bluebird	Regular
17	1994	72	Bluebird	Regular
32	1994	72	Bluebird	Regular
Spare	1994	72	Bluebird	Regular
21	1997	72	Bluebird	Regular
2	1998	72	Bluebird	Regular
20	1998	72	Bluebird	Regular
22 am	1998	72	Bluebird	Regular
23	1998	65	Bluebird	Regular
24	1998	65	International	Regular
25	1998	72	Bluebird	Regular
S2	2000	30	International	Special
S3	2000	20	International	Special
S6	2000	20	Chevrolet	Special
1	2001	72	International	Regular
5	2001	72	International	Regular
11	2001	72	International	Regular
12	2001	72	International	Regular
15	2001	72	International	Regular
16	2001	72	International	Regular
19	2001	72	International	Regular
29	2001	72	International	Regular
30	2001	72	International	Regular
S1	2001	53	Freightliner	Special
S5	2001	53	Freightliner	Special

S8	2001	19	GMC	Special
3	2002	71	Freightliner	Regular
6	2002	71	Freightliner	Regular
9	2002	71	Freightliner	Regular
13	2002	71	Freightliner	Regular
18	2002	71	Freightliner	Regular
New	2003	77	Freightliner	Regular
New	2003	77	Freightliner	Regular
New	2003	77	Freightliner	Regular
New	2003	77	Freightliner	Regular
New	2003	77	Freightliner	Regular
New	2003	77	Freightliner	Regular
New	2003	77	Freightliner	Regular
New	2003	47	Freightliner	Regular

Source: RISD executive director of Operations and Risk Management.

FINDING

RISD uses online software to effectively manage district field trips. The Transportation Operations Manager software allows schools to enter field trip requests electronically from their school. The Transportation Department uses the software to:

- log more comprehensive field trip information;
- approve field trip requests;
- calculate and print field trip estimates;
- handle field trip billing;
- automatically assign drivers and buses by rotation, hours averaging or seniority; and
- print field trip management reports.

Prior to purchasing the software, RISD had problems with excessive driver overtime, long lead times to manually request field trips, inadequate communication with requestors and inability to easily generate management reports.

COMMENDATION

The RISD Transportation Department effectively uses online software to manage district field trips.

FINDING

RISD uses synthetic oil in its 1994 and newer buses instead of the conventional petroleum-based lubricants. Synthetic oil offers many advantages over conventional oil, including increased engine protection, longer product life and decreased harm to the environment.

Synthetic oil only needs replacing every 15,000 miles instead of every 4,500 miles for conventional oil, saving the district money. Using conventional oil for oil changes costs about \$64.60, including oil, filter and labor, while a synthetic oil change costs \$130.96. RISD buses travel more than 670,000 miles each year, which would require 145 conventional oil changes or 45 synthetic oil changes. The cost of 145 conventional oil changes would be \$9,625 while the cost of 45 synthetic oil changes is \$5,893, saving RISD \$3,732 per year. The fewer oil changes also enable RISD mechanics to spend more time repairing and maintaining buses rather than changing oil.

Other advantages of the synthetic oils include a wider lubricating range, more thermal stability, virtually no impurities that damage engine parts, lower viscosity, which improves fuel economy and resistance to oxidation, which can leave deposits on engine parts. In addition, synthetic oils have better heat-dissipation, longer product life (which benefits the environment) and lower fuel octane requirements.

COMMENDATION

RISD uses synthetic oil to save money, extend bus engine life and improve fuel mileage.

FINDING

The RISD Transportation Department keeps manual fleet maintenance records instead of automated records, which limits staff's ability to schedule and track preventive maintenance, such as changing oil, checking brakes and inspecting tires. The service manager maintains a good manual file on each bus that includes its maintenance history. However, without someone reviewing folders on a daily basis, preventive maintenance can be neglected causing buses to go beyond manufacturer's recommended maintenance cycles, which could result in untimely breakdowns and potentially affect student safety.

The Transportation Department also keeps fueling records manually, which could result in inaccurate accounting and loss of fuel inventory.

In addition to tracking and scheduling preventive maintenance, an effective automated fleet maintenance program:

- maintains records of work orders and personnel records;
- tracks parts inventories, vendor history and warranties;
- tracks fuel usage, fuel inventory and cost-per-mile; and
- generates management reports, which allow districts to measure and monitor different performance measures to determine if changes are needed in department operations.

Austin ISD uses fleet maintenance software to ensure its Transportation Department performs preventive maintenance on its buses as required by mileage standards. Transportation Department data entry personnel record the vehicle's mileage each time they enter a transportation work order and whenever a driver fuels their vehicle. Each day, the service department generates a report detailing all vehicles due for preventive maintenance. The mechanics prioritize the maintenance schedule based on mileage.

Recommendation 73:

Purchase and implement an automated fleet maintenance system.

RISD should make sure the cost of the software includes adequate training and support.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Transportation meets with the director of Technology and Information Systems to develop the requirements of a fleet maintenance system and determine an estimate of the cost of the system, including installation.	June 2003
2.	The director of Transportation includes the fleet maintenance system in the 2003-04 budget.	July 2003
3.	The board approves the 2003-04 budget.	July 2003
4.	The director of Transportation and the director of Purchasing purchase the fleet maintenance system.	August 2003
5.	The director of Transportation and the director of Technology and Information Systems install the fleet maintenance system.	August 2003
6.	The fleet maintenance company provides training to RISD employees.	August 2003

7.	The Transportation Department begins using the fleet maintenance system.	September 2003
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FISCAL IMPACT

The cost of the fleet maintenance software with a single-user license is \$1,995 plus \$200 per year for maintenance and support.

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
One-time cost of software.	(\$1,995)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Software maintenance and support.	\$0	(\$200)	(\$200)	(\$200)	(\$200)
Net Cost	(\$1,995)	(\$200)	(\$200)	(\$200)	(\$200)

FINDING

The RISD Transportation Department maintenance shop has no computer or diagnostic software to troubleshoot and repair electronic bus engines. RISD personnel must drive buses 60 miles to a contractor to perform engine diagnostics and pay for those services. With the appropriate software and a notebook computer, a technician could diagnose engine problems, perform engine maintenance and change district-selectable engine or vehicle parameters in-house. For example, new buses arrive with their speed governors set at 70 miles per hour, but with the diagnostic software, RISD technicians can quickly and easily change the setting in-house to 55 miles per hour.

Currently, RISD takes an average of two buses per month to the contractor, which requires one employee to drive the bus and another employee to pick up the bus driver. When the contractor completes the repairs, both employees also have to go pick up the bus. RISD pays for parts and labor for all repairs unless the bus is under warranty. According to the RISD Transportation service manager, the district spends more than \$1,000 per month with the contractor for non-warranty service.

Mesquite ISD and Allen ISD successfully use diagnostic software in their transportation departments.

Recommendation 74:

Purchase PC-based software and hardware to perform in-house engine diagnostics.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Transportation Department shop foreman obtains quotes from dealers for the PC-based diagnostic software and notebook computer.	June 2003
2.	The director of Transportation re-allocates funds from the 2003-04 budget that were intended for contract services for the purchase of diagnostic hardware and software.	September 2003
3.	The director of Transportation purchases the diagnostic software and equipment.	September 2003
4.	The vendor provides training to the district on how to use the software.	October 2003
5.	RISD begins using the diagnostic software.	October 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

One manufacturer of RISD's buses offers fleet diagnostic software, including modules for brand engines, for \$5,728. Annual maintenance for the software is \$407 per year. A notebook computer to run the software costs approximately \$2,500. Total cost would be \$8,228.

By using the diagnostic software, RISD will save at least \$1,000 per month, or \$12,000 per year, since it would no longer have to contract for diagnostic bus maintenance. RISD's first-year's savings are estimated for 11 months since the software would not be used until October 2003.

Beginning in 2004-05, the annual net savings is \$11,593 (\$407 annual software maintenance cost and \$12,000 annual savings from not contracting).

Recommendation	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
One-time cost of PC-based software and hardware.	(\$5,728)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
One-time hardware purchase.	(\$2,500)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
RISD savings by not contracting for services.	\$11,000	\$11,593	\$11,593	\$11,593	\$11,593
Net Savings	\$2,772	\$11,593	\$11,593	\$11,593	\$11,593

Chapter 11

SAFETY AND SECURITY

This chapter reviews the safety and security functions of the Rockwall Independent School District (RISD) in the following sections:

- A. Safety and Security
- B. Crisis Management
- C. Discipline Management

School districts must provide safe and secure schools for children, teachers and employees. Community members, administrators, teachers, school staff, students and parents share the responsibility of working together to create a positive and safe environment. In order for districts to provide a safe environment for students and staff, they must develop comprehensive policies and procedures for crisis prevention, intervention and management.

BACKGROUND

In Texas and throughout the country, a steady progression of changes to laws that govern the safety and security of students in public schools has occurred. In 1994, Congress reauthorized the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act, which requires school systems to institute a comprehensive safe and drug-free schools program. In 1997, Congress revised the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, which requires school systems to provide appropriate education services to students with disabilities, and made it easier to remove dangerous or violent students with special needs from the classroom. The law also permits schools to remove students who are involved with drugs or who carry weapons from regular education programs.

Safety and security programs must include elements of prevention, intervention and enforcement and work closely with local law enforcement agencies. Discipline management and alternative education programs are key tools in this process.

A joint U.S. Department of Education National Center for Education Statistics and U.S. Department of Justice Bureau of Justice statistics report, *Indicators of School Crime and Safety 2001*, states:

"The report on school crime and victimization released today offers promising evidence that the efforts of communities, schools, law enforcement officials, faith-based and youth-serving organizations and other local partners can lead to reductions in school violence. Better

awareness of the need for safe schools, stronger programs based on research and tougher policies all have made a difference in our classrooms.

While the school crime trend is moving in the right direction and the number of students bringing weapons to school in particular has dropped by 42 percent, we cannot let up on our efforts. Our young people cannot learn if they do not feel safe and our teachers must be able to teach in classrooms free of violence and disruption. We must continue to work hand in hand with local law enforcement agencies, parents and community and religious groups to ensure that our schools are safe havens for our children and their teachers."

During the past decade, urban crime problems such as gangs have spread to many of the nation's schools. In the past, school districts relied upon existing law enforcement agencies to provide assistance. Those agencies, however, do not always have adequate personnel to effectively patrol city streets in and around schools or provide the level of service needed to safeguard students, employees and district property. To address the growing crime problem, many districts have established their own security forces or collaborated with local law enforcement.

Keeping Texas Children Safe in School, a Texas School Performance Review (TSPR) report issued in January 2000, provides commonsense solutions to help address the safety issues that face most public school districts today. The report describes a model safety plan that includes ways to reduce the potential for violence in schools. According to the report, "Prevention is the foundation laid to deter crime and violence."

Exhibit 11-1 outlines the 10 steps of the TSPR plan, organized around three key areas: prevention, intervention and enforcement.

Exhibit 11-1
Keeping Texas Children Safe in School
January 2000

Element	Measures
Prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look for trouble before it finds you. • Recognize trouble when you see it.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have individuals in the right place and at the right time to intervene. • Have a plan of action appropriate for the occasion and practice it.
Enforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leave no room for double standards. • 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.

RISD's 2002-03 District Improvement Plan (DIP) links board-approved district goals with key activities for each RISD department to perform. **Exhibit 11-2** shows District Goals I and III, the safety and security-related goals, objectives and strategies listed in the DIP under the Department of Operations and Risk Management.

Exhibit 11-2
District Improvement Plan
2002-03

	District Goal	Performance Strategies
I	Implement a safety-training program for all district employees.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish safety coordinators for each school/department. • Train safety coordinators to be trainers for their respective schools/departments. • Require monthly safety presentation at each school and department.
III	Provide staff training opportunities for all Support Services employees and professional staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule and assist with safety training for the Support Services area. • Train safety coordinator to be trainers of safety issues for their respective schools/departments. • Attend appropriate Operations/Risk Management workshops to stay abreast of changes and requirements.

Source: RISD District Improvement Plan, 2002-03.

Exhibit 11-3 lists RISD's safety and security expenditures from 1999-2000 through 2002-03.

Exhibit 11-3
RISD Safety and Security Expenditures
1999-2000 through 2002-03

Category	1999-2000 Actual	2000-01 Actual	2001-02 Actual	2002-03 Budgeted	Percentage Change
School crossing guards*	\$66,231	\$71,878	\$79,786	\$152,500	130.3%
District security salaries*	\$18,818	\$26,162	\$30,010	\$40,760	116.6%
Contracted security	\$31,018	\$350	\$675	\$1,200	(96.1%)
Contracted security (Athletics)	\$0	\$100	\$911	\$0	0.0%
Contracted county truancy officer	\$0	\$0	\$18,000	\$18,000	100.0%
Contract school resource officer	\$70,645	\$95,288	\$94,363	\$97,000	37.3%
Supplies	\$1,435	\$0	\$63	\$0	(100.0%)
Total	\$188,147	\$193,778	\$223,808	\$309,460	64.5%

Source: RISD Business manager, December 2002.

*Expenditures include salary and benefits.

Due to rapid student growth, RISD's safety and security expenditures increased 64.5 percent from \$188,147 in 1999-2000 to \$309,460 in 2002-03. During this same period, the district added two new schools with sophisticated security systems and additional crossing guards.

Chapter 11

SAFETY AND SECURITY

A. SAFETY AND SECURITY (PART 1)

Providing a safe and secure environment for students, teachers and staff is a critical task for any district. Recent instances of school violence in the United States have caused parents, educators, taxpayers and lawmakers to focus on safety and security in public schools.

FINDING

RISD uses technology to improve safety in its new schools. In August 2002, RISD installed improved access security systems in Hartman Elementary and Jones Elementary. To gain entry, the authorized user must place an electronic identification badge next to a sensor near the front of the building, which logs the user onto the system, verifies access privileges and, if the user is authorized, opens one exterior door for 45 seconds.

A second level of access security requires the user to enter a four-digit code on a keypad just inside the building to deactivate the alarm system. Although an unauthorized user with an identification badge might be able to enter the building, if the user does not enter the alarm access code, the alarm will sound.

As a third level of security, video cameras monitor the area near the access door and record anyone who enters through the doorway. Hartman Elementary and Jones Elementary have eight video cameras in locations such as the front entrance and hallways.

RISD plans to install this type of access security in all district schools. The advantage of a badge-access system over a key system is that if a badge is lost or stolen, that badge can be reprogrammed in minutes. When a key is lost or stolen the district has to change all exterior door locks at a significant cost. The cost to re-core all locks in the high school would be \$1,530, at the junior high about \$756 and at the elementary school about \$576.

The one-time cost to add a badge-access system in the newest elementary schools, Jones and Hartman Elementary, was about \$4,000 for each security system and about \$9,600 for the video camera system.

As resources become available, RISD plans to expand this security technology to all schools.

COMMENDATION

Installing electronic access security systems in new schools increases student and employee safety.

FINDING

RISD requires high school students to wear picture identification (ID) badges to enable staff to quickly identify people who are in the school building without authorization and to ensure that the students provide accurate information when questioned by a school official. While always wearing it can be an inconvenience at times for the students, the badge provides a greater of security for students, parents, teachers and administrators.

Because the ID badge contains a bar code, the district uses it for purposes other than security. The badge is used to check out library books, track meal purchases, debit prepaid meal plans and track student use of computer labs.

If students forget their ID badge, they can request a temporary badge, but only one time per month. Students who are caught not wearing their ID badge may be assigned to Saturday school. Students who lose their ID badge must purchase a replacement for \$5.

COMMENDATION

Rockwall High School's use of picture identification badges makes it easier to identify unauthorized adults or students on premises, which improves school security.

FINDING

RISD contracts with the cities of Rockwall and Heath for security. The district's attendance boundaries include the cities of Rockwall, Heath, McLendon-Chisholm, parts of Fate and Rowlett and surrounding rural areas, making it necessary to contract with more than one city. The agreements with Rockwall, signed in September 1997, and with Heath, signed in May 1999, will continue unless they are cancelled by either party with a 30-day notice.

According to the contracts, the police officers' primary responsibilities are ensuring public safety with specific responsibilities set by the chiefs of police using standard operating procedures; planning and presenting programs requested by district or city police personnel; and any additional duties as agreed upon by the police chiefs and the RISD superintendent.

With input from school principals, the two police chiefs establish work schedules and duties of the officers. The cities provide liability and workers' compensation insurance. The superintendent evaluates the contracts annually in conjunction with school principals and the police departments.

The school resource officer (SRO) is a police officer first, commissioned by a police department and the state of Texas. SROs conduct training in DWI prevention, substance abuse prevention, personal safety, gang awareness, family violence prevention, careers in law enforcement, the criminal law/court system, search and seizure, teenage suicide prevention, traffic safety, juvenile law and other approved topics. SROs also speak at adult group meetings such as Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) meetings, faculty/staff meetings and community group meetings. Officers talk to students about the consequences of criminal activity; family issues; and relationships with students, parents, friends and relatives.

SROs are not school disciplinarians. At the principal's request, SROs may help enforce school rules when the safety of students or school staff is threatened, but the SRO's primary tasks are to help develop school-based security plans and to maintain the peace on school property. In addition, SROs provide assistance in custody matters and help deter school crime.

Exhibit 11-4 shows the locations and costs of the school resource officers.

Exhibit 11-4
RISD School Resource Officers
2001-02

School	Number of School Resource Officers	City	Cost for 2001-02
J.W. Williams Middle School	1	Rockwall	\$12,500
Maurine Cain Middle School	1	Heath	\$44,363
Herman E. Utley Freshman Center	1	Rockwall	\$12,500
Rockwall High School	2	Rockwall	\$25,000
Total	5		\$94,363

Source: RISD Student Services Coordinator, December 2002.

While the cities of Rockwall and Heath pay the officers' salaries, RISD reimburses the cities for salaries and benefits. Rockwall's contract includes reimbursement for all benefits as well as for equipment, materials and

supplies. The Heath contract includes reimbursement for three-fourths of all annual benefits and for SRO equipment, materials and supplies.

COMMENDATION

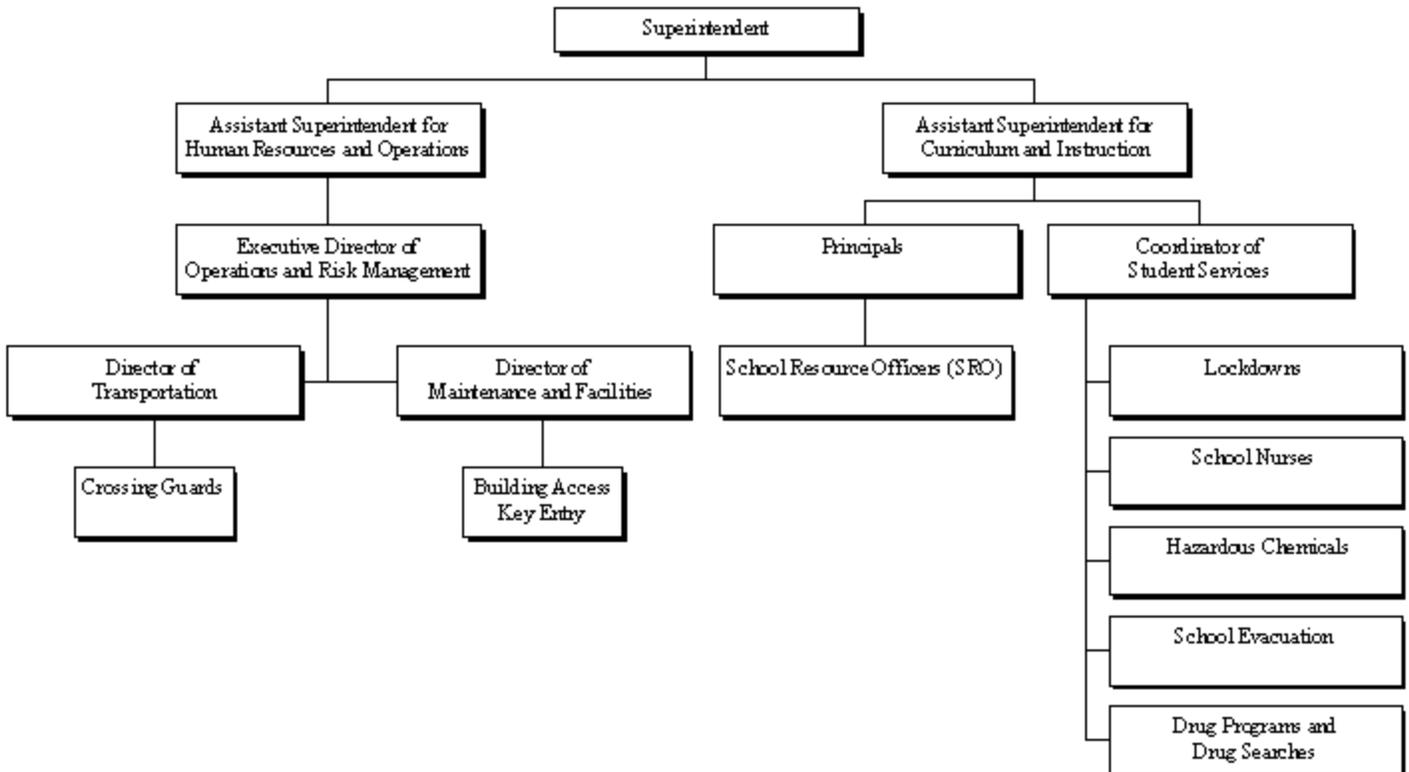
RISD works closely with area cities to provide security at schools.

FINDING

RISD has no single point of contact for its safety and security programs. With no clear assignment of responsibility or authority to implement districtwide initiatives, individuals must focus on their own safety and security requirements without considering districtwide efficiencies.

RISD's executive director of Operations and Risk Management directs the district's risk management, loss control and safety programs. The coordinator of Student Services serves as the main contact with the police and is responsible for prevention, intervention and safe schools. **Exhibit 11-5** shows the organization chart for safety and security services.

**Exhibit 11-5
Safety and Security Services
2002-03**



Source: RISD assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations, December 2002.

Although the supervisory structure for Safety and Security seems large, safety and security issues are a small part of most staff members' overall job responsibilities. For example, although principals manage the SROs, the task actually requires little of their time.

Exhibit 11-6 shows safety and security responsibilities and the department or staff person involved.

Exhibit 11-6
RISD Safety and Security Responsibilities
2002-03

Responsibility	Department or Position Involved
In-class training in DWI prevention, drug and alcohol abuse prevention, personal safety, gang awareness, family violence prevention, careers in law enforcement, criminal law/court system, search and seizure, teenage suicide prevention, traffic safety, juvenile law and other topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Resource Officer (SRO)
Administration and enforcement of school rules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principals, teachers, staff, administration
Custody matters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SRO
Enforcement of local, state and federal laws	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SRO, police departments from the cities of Rockwall and Heath
Security at athletic events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contract security officers
School crossings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of Transportation and school crossing guards
Building access and key entry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of Maintenance and Facilities
Lockdowns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinator of Student Services, principals, school

	administrators, faculty, staff, SROs and police departments from the cities of Rockwall and Heath
Hazardous chemicals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinator of Student Services
Prevention, intervention and safe schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinator of Student Services, SROs, principals, school safety coordinators
Health programs and emergency care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School nurses
Loss control and safety programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive director of Operations and Risk Management
SRO supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principals
Crisis Management Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinator of Student Services
Discipline Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinator of Student Services

Source: RISD interviews and job descriptions, November 2002.

In Robstown ISD, the director of Risk Management has responsibility for districtwide safety and security. The Laredo ISD board consolidated and assigned the responsibility for occupational safety, emergency preparedness and environmental compliance to the superintendent.

Recommendation 75:

Consolidate all safety and security functions under the assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations.

The assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations would coordinate all safety and security programs, monitor school security needs and coordinate the crisis management plan modifications, districtwide and

by school, in concert with changes in security requirements. This assistant superintendent would also be responsible for all issues related to district safety, security, crisis management and discipline management.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent reviews the recommended organization and assigns responsibility for safety and security to the assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations.	July 2003
2.	The superintendent and the assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations revise the job description of the assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations to reflect the responsibility and authority to plan and coordinate districtwide safety and security initiatives.	August - September 2003
3.	The superintendent reviews and approves the revised job description.	October 2003
4.	The assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations assumes the duties included in the new job description.	November 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

RISD does not have a uniform method for reviewing and improving the physical security in its schools on a regular basis. As a result, the district may not notice a problem until a security breach occurs.

The review team found several external security issues at RISD's secondary schools. For example, middle schools do not have security patrols outside the schools or in the school parking lots. Since surveillance of staff and visitor parking is limited to student arrival and departure times, cars in those lots are vulnerable to vandalism during the day. None of the secondary schools has painted lines in the bus loading/unloading area to indicate safe standing areas for students who ride the bus. In addition, if power is lost the secondary schools do not have an alternate power source for emergency lighting.

Exhibit 11-7 shows the results of the external security assessment of RISD's secondary schools.

Exhibit 11-7
RISD Secondary Schools External Security Assessment Results
December 2002

Area	Rockwall High School	Utley Freshman Center	Cain Middle School	Williams Middle School
External security - general				
Exterior lighting	Y	Y	Y	Y
Protective screens or window guards	N	N	N	N
Grounds	Y	Y	Y	Y
Student common areas	Y	Y	Y	Y
Portable buildings	N/A	Y	N/A	Y
Sports or play areas	Y	Y	Y	Y
Surveillance - parking areas				
Student parking				
Individual (e.g., attendant)	Y	N	N/A	N/A
Cameras	N	N	N/A	N/A
Fenced	S	N	N/A	N/A
Gated	S	N	N/A	N/A
ID card entry	P	P	N/A	N/A
Security - patrol constantly or periodically	Y	Y	N/A	N/A
Staff parking				
Individual (e.g., attendant)	A/D	A/D	A/D	A/D
Cameras	N	N	N	N
Fenced	N	N	N	N
Gated	N	N	N	N

ID card entry	N	N	N	N
Security - patrol constantly or periodically	Y	N	N	N
Visitor parking				
Individual (e.g., attendant)	A/D	A/D	A/D	A/D
Cameras	N	N	N	N
Fenced	N	N	N	N
Gated	N	N	N	N
ID card entry	N	N	N	N
Security - patrol constantly or periodically	Y	N	N	N
Deliveries				
School office	Y	Y	Y	Y
Individual department (e.g., band, athletics)	N	N	N	N
Kitchen	Y	Y	Y	Y
Parking roads and signs				
Entrance	Y	Y	Y	Y
Exit	Y	Y	Y	Y
Visitor	Y	Y	Y	Y
Buses	Y	Y	Y	Y
Fire lane(s)	Y	Y	Y	Y
Safety lines for students riding buses	N	N	N	N

Source: WCL ENTERPRISES evaluation of each school, December 2002.

Codes: Y=yes; N=no; S=some; B=both; P=permit required; A/D=during student arrival and dismissal times.

The review team also identified several security issues regarding internal security. Rockwall High School is the only secondary school with video surveillance equipment. On exterior doors, two RISD secondary schools do not post signs directing visitors to report to the office as soon as they enter the school. School officials said the signs were on the door originally, but fell off or may have been removed.

One secondary school does not have a gate to close off parts of the building. As a result, community groups that rent the cafeteria or gym cannot be physically restricted from roaming the building. Two secondary schools do not have burglar alarms.

Exhibit 11-8 shows the results of the internal security assessment of RISD secondary schools.

Exhibit 11-8
RISD Secondary Schools Internal Security Assessment Results
December 2002

Area	Rockwall High School	Utley Freshman Center	Cain Middle School	Williams Middle School
Internal security - general				
ID badges				
Staff	Y	Y	Y	Y
Visitor	Y	Y	Y	Y
Emergency notification system (e.g., public address (PA) system, panic button, two-way telephone)	Y	Y	Y	Y
Building compliance				
Fire				
Extinguishers - location/ current inspection	Y	Y	Y	Y
Drills - held on periodic basis?	Y	Y	Y	Y
Stairway access control	Y	Y	Y	N/A
Monitors assigned	Y	Y	Y	Y
Maps that show evacuation routes in case of fire	Y	Y	Y	Y
Fire alarm boxes	Y	Y	Y	Y

Controlled areas - evacuation				
Alternate site evacuation	Y	Y	Y	Y
Weather	Y	Y	Y	Y
Bomb	Y	Y	Y	Y
Fires	Y	Y	Y	Y
Hostage	Y	Y	Y	Y
Building signs/locations				
Entrances - denoting primary entrance or where primary entrance is located	Y	Y	Y	Y
Exits	Y	Y	Y	Y
Alarms	Y	Y	Y	Y
Visitors - where to report, etc.	Y	Y	S	S
Buses	Y	Y	Y	Y
Property				
Inventory current	Y	Y	Y	Y
Secure file storage for records	Y	Y	Y	Y
Building security				
Access control to hallways and gates	Y	N	Y	Y
Movable partitions to seal off unused hallways or prevent access by facility users after school hours or on days when school is not open (e.g., YMCA, church groups)	N	N	N	N
Doors - automatic or manual lock	B	B	B	B
Doors - locked when room not in use	Y	Y	Y	Y
Storage rooms - locked when room not in use	Y	Y	Y	Y
Restrooms - locked when room not in use	S	S	S	S
Custodial locations and supplies - locked and access restricted	Y	Y	Y	Y

Kitchen - locked and access restricted	Y	Y	Y	Y
Alarm system				
Automatic/manual	Y	Y	Y	Y
Centrally located	Y	Y	Y	Y
Fire/smoke detector(s)	Y	Y	Y	Y
Burglar detector	Y	N	Y	N
Maintenance and periodic tests of system	Y	Y	Y	Y
Emergency lights				
Battery	Y	Y	Y	Y
Alternative electrical supply	N	N	N	N
Communication				
Two-way system in all rooms	Y	Y	Y	Y
Public address system	Y	Y	Y	Y
Video cameras	Y	N	N	N
Student supervision				
Hallways	Y	Y	Y	Y
Corridors	Y	Y	Y	Y
Internal common areas	Y	Y	Y	Y
External gathering places	Y	Y	Y	Y

Source: WCL ENTERPRISES evaluation of each school, December 2002.

Codes: Y=yes; N=no; S=some; B=both; P=permit required; A/D=during student arrival and dismissal times.

Safety and Security - Part 2

Chapter 11

SAFETY AND SECURITY

A. SAFETY AND SECURITY (PART 2)

At the elementary schools, the review team found that only one elementary has external video surveillance, installed because of a vandalism problem at that school; two other elementary schools, Dorris Jones and Grace Hartman, have internal video cameras. Again, surveillance of staff visitor parking is limited to student arrival and departure times. Cars in those lots are vulnerable to vandalism during the day. Elementary schools have no protective screens or window guards. In the bus loading and unloading zones, only one of the elementary schools has painted lines to indicate safe standing areas for students who ride the bus. Elementary schools do not have security patrols around the schools or in the parking lots.

Exhibit 11-9 shows the results of the external security assessment of RISD elementary schools.

Exhibit 11-9
RISD Elementary Schools External Security Assessment Results
December 2002

Area	Rochell	Parks	Cullins - Lake Pointe	Pullen	Dobbs	Williams	Reinhardt	Jones	Hartman
External security - general									
Exterior lighting	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Protective screens or window guards	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Grounds	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Student common areas	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Portable	Y	N/A	N/A	N/A	Y	N/A	Y	N/A	N/A

Individual department (e.g., band, athletics)	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Kitchen	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Parking roads and signs									
Entrance	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Exit	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Visitor	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Buses	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Fire lane(s)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Safety lines for students riding buses	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N

Source: WCL ENTERPRISES evaluation of each school, December 2002.

Codes: Y=yes; N=no; S=some; B=both; P=permit required; A/D=during student arrival and dismissal times.

While assessing elementary schools internal security, the review team found that only the two newest elementary schools have video surveillance equipment in the schools. One elementary school does not have signs on some exterior doors directing visitors to report to the office after they enter the school. Five of the nine elementary schools do not have a gate to close off parts of the building. As a result, community groups that rent the cafeteria or gym cannot be physically restricted from roaming the building. Four elementary schools do not have burglar alarms.

Exhibit 11-10 shows the results of the internal security assessment of RISD elementary schools.

Exhibit 11-10
RISD Elementary Schools Internal Security Assessment Results
December 2002

Area	Rochell	Parks	Cullins - Lake	Pullen	Dobbs	Williams	Reinhardt	Jones	Hartman
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and access restricted									
Kitchen - locked and access restricted	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Alarm system									
Automatic/manual	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Centrally located	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Fire/smoke detector(s)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Burglar detector	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y
Maintenance/periodic test of system	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Emergency lights									
Battery	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Alternative electrical supply	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Communication									
Two-way system in all rooms	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Public address system	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Video cameras	N	N	N*	N	N	N	N	Y	Y
Student supervision									
Hallways	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Corridors	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Internal common areas	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
External gathering places	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

Source: WCL ENTERPRISES evaluation of each school, December 2002.

Codes: Y=yes; N=no; S=some; B=both; P=permit required; A/D=during student arrival

and dismissal times.

Cullins-Lake Pointe Elementary has external video cameras to prevent vandalism.

Some of the older schools, like Howard Dobbs Elementary, have unique security concerns. The split-level layout of the school makes the north side of the building difficult to monitor. Recently, someone broke into the school and stole a camera from the office. The school is next to the middle school football field, so there is a potential for vandalism. Visitors can enter the building and go directly to the school cafeteria without first checking in with the office. There is no fence on the north side of the playground.

A recently formed safety committee, coordinated by the executive director of Operations and Risk Management, focuses only on risk management issues like accident prevention, workers' compensation, blood-borne pathogens and bus safety. The coordinator of Student Services oversees other safety-related committees that deal with crisis management issues like bomb threats, lockdowns and fire drills.

Clear Creek ISD (CCISD) recently completed two reviews of safety and security needs in their schools. As a result, CCISD identified a number of recommendations to address internal and external needs. McKinney ISD, an RISD peer district, completed a safety audit in 2002.

Recommendation 76:

Expand the role of the district safety committee to include an annual assessment of physical security at each school and a recommended plan of action to address security needs.

The committee should compile and review statistical security data for each school, such as incident rates for vandalism and break-ins, to determine the focus of security resources. The committee should also recommend the source of funding for these security measures, such as general operating funds, bond funds and grant funds.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent, assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations, the coordinator of Student Services and the executive director of Operations and Risk Management develop a mission statement for the district safety committee that incorporates the annual assessment of physical security at each school and the development of a recommended plan of action for school security.	September 2003
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2.	The district safety committee meets to review the mission statement and to develop committee goals for the annual assessment of physical security, for gathering and evaluating statistical security data and for funding security needs.	October 2003
3.	The district safety committee presents its goals to the superintendent for approval.	November 2003
4.	The district safety committee begins to assess district facilities and gather statistical security data.	December 2003
5.	The district safety committee begins analyzing the results of the security assessment and statistical security data.	January 2004
6.	The committee recommends a plan of action to the superintendent that addresses security issues, including an estimate of the cost and the source of funds.	February 2004
7.	The superintendent includes the cost of the action plan in the 2004-05 budget.	February 2004
8.	The board approves the 2004-05 budget.	July 2004
9.	The superintendent authorizes the implementation of the action plan.	September 2004
10.	The committee continues to meet periodically to monitor the plan implementation and to address new issues.	December 2004

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 11

SAFETY AND SECURITY

B. CRISIS MANAGEMENT

School safety and security have become important issues at the national, state and local levels. Media coverage has heightened public concerns about incidents at schools throughout the country. TSPR has suggested that districts develop a plan for handling crises. Staff and students should test the effectiveness of a district's emergency plan until responses become automatic and consistent.

Early Warning, Timely Response: A Guide to Safe Schools, published by the U.S. Department of Education in 1998, notes that crisis intervention plans should include the topics listed in **Exhibit 11-11**.

Exhibit 11-11
Topics Included in Crisis Intervention Plans

Topic	Explanation
Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• For teachers and staff in a variety of skills, ranging from dealing with escalating classroom situations to responding to a crisis.
Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reference to district or state procedures. Many states now have recommended crisis intervention manuals available to their local education agencies and schools.
Community Involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Involvement of community agencies, including police, fire and rescue, as well as hospital, health, social welfare and mental health services. The faith community, juvenile justice and related family support systems also have been successfully included in such team plans.
Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provision for the core team to meet regularly to identify potentially troubled or violent students and situations that may be dangerous.

Source: "Early Warning, Timely Response: A Guide to Safe Schools," U.S. Department of Education, 1998.

Schools in Texas routinely practice fire drill procedures; however, they should also practice how to respond to the presence of firearms and other weapons, severe threats of violence, hostage situations and other emergencies. Any crisis commonly causes confusion that can disrupt even the most carefully written plan. Practice leads to automatic, orderly and rational responses in critical situations.

RISD has initiated a number of safety measures, including:

- activating "Call Trace" on district telephones;
- installing fences at elementary schools;
- establishing key policies (no duplication);
- installing video surveillance programs at schools and the Transportation Department;
- implementing the Crime Stoppers program;
- implementing an inspection program for playgrounds;
- providing two-way radios to administrators and cell phones for each principal;
- scheduling an administrator to be on duty at every school event;
- requiring visitors to register in the office at each school;
- providing school resource officers at all secondary schools;
- posting emergency exit procedures in each classroom;
- providing building renovations for security at Rochell, Reinhardt and Utley Freshman Center;
- installing exterior lighting at all schools;
- providing uniforms for all maintenance and cafeteria personnel;
- screening all school employees and volunteers;
- requiring high school students and faculty to wear ID badges;
- adopting a district policy of zero tolerance; and
- encouraging cooperation with law enforcement agencies.

RISD revises district and school crisis management annually and has unannounced annual lock-down drills in cooperation with local police departments and Citizens on Patrol. The district holds frequent practice drills, and each school has a crisis team.

FINDING

RISD lacks a clear, comprehensive districtwide crisis management and emergency plan. As a result, RISD schools exhibit inconsistent performance when conducting practice drills and potential injury could occur in a real crisis.

RISD's District Improvement Plan for 2002-03 and the board's goals include development of a comprehensive crisis management plan and evaluation to facilitate safety and security. Each school currently has its

own emergency management plan that includes emergency phone numbers, guidelines for responding to a school emergency, site evacuation locations, lock-down procedures and other related topics.

Exhibit 11-12 reflects the review team's findings about the district's crisis management plan. The chart includes the elements of an acceptable crisis management plan and whether the district has identified that standard. ("Yes/No" indicates that the standard is being addressed, but not completely.) "Observations" shows TSPR team comments after document review and interviews with RISD personnel. Some portions of the Crisis Management Plan are more complete than other portions. More than 50 percent of the reviewed standards require additional work to complete the plan.

Exhibit 11-12
RISD District Crisis Management Plan Evaluation
2002-03

District Crisis Management Plan	Yes/No	Observations
Crisis Plan (Campus Model)		
Chain of command	Y	Refers to individual school plans.
Before and after school hours	N	
Administrative Roles		
Communication	Y	All school administrators have cell phones.
Transportation	N	
Civil defense	N	
Emergency medical and fire	N	
Law enforcement	N	Some mention contact with police. Roles have not been clearly identified.
Technology support	N	
HAZMAT	N	
Poison Control/Department of Health	N	The district plan and most school plans do not list the poison control number, although it is in the Crisis Management Procedures flip chart.
Plans		

Natural disasters	Y	
Chemicals	N	
Bomb	Y	
Fire	Y	
Violence	Y	
Plans		
Medical	N	
Transportation (accident)	N	
Utility outages	N	
Statistical information	N	
Crisis Plan (Definition of Roles)		
Coordinator	Y	
Public information	Y	
Training	N	Responsibility for training not identified.
Transportation	N	Member of District Crisis Team, but no role defined.
Food service (emergency supplies)	N	Member of District Crisis Team, but no role defined.
Counselor (crisis management)	Y	
On-site monitors	N	
Off-site monitors	N	
Relocation	N	
Statistical information process	N	
Security operations	N	
Training/drills	Yes/No	Crisis management drills are mandated, but the type of drill is not specified.
Districtwide Crisis Plans		
School physical plans	N	
Physical barriers	N	

Utilities (water, electric, gas, phone)	Y	
Inventory	Y	School plans require teachers to carry class rosters, list necessary medications being used by students and, in some cases, emergency phone numbers.
Security countermeasures	N	
Entry routes	N	
Exit routes	Yes/No	Identified in individual school plans.
Emergency routes	Yes/No	Identified in some school plans.
Evacuation plan	Y	Identified in individual school plans.
On-site	Y	Identified in individual school plans.
Off-site	Y	Identified in individual school plans.
Training	Yes/No	"Training" is listed in the procedures but is not explained.
School crisis team	Y	
Technology	N	
Mechanical plan	N	
Fire	Y	
Gas leak	Y	
Explosion	Y	
Toxic fumes (chemical release)	N	
Train derailment	N	
Chemical spill	Y	
Radiation	N	
Airplane crash	Y	
Bomb/bomb threat	Y	
Manmade		
Hostage situation	Y	
Arson	N	

Biological agent	N	
Bomb threat	Y	
Weapons	Y	
Gang activity	Y	
Theft	N	
Rioting	Yes/No	Protest activity defined.
Sit-in	Yes/No	Protest activity defined.
Shooting/sniper	Y	
Kidnapping	Y	
Sexual harassment	Yes/No	Crisis Management Procedures identifies steps.
Bus accident	Yes	
Drugs	Y	
Hurricane	Y	
Tornado	Y	
Flood	Y	
Winter warning	N	
Heart attack/stroke	N	
Death	Y	
Drug overdose	N	
Seizures	N	
Bus accident/breakdown	Yes/No	Accidents are explained, not breakdowns.
Rape	N	
Boiler	N	
Heater	N	
Air conditioner	N	
Post-event plan	Y	Crisis Management Procedures flip chart is available to all employees.

Source: Survey conducted by TSPR audit team, December 2002.

Review and comparison of each school crisis plan showed inconsistencies, redundancies and inefficiencies. In addition, pages are difficult to follow, and data are not readily located.

Plan titles vary at each school. Titles include "emergency management plan," "emergency evacuation plan," "crisis management plan," "emergency procedures," "crisis intervention plan" or "chain of command." **Exhibit 11-13** shows each school, the document title and whether it lists specific topics.

Exhibit 11-13
School Crisis Document
By Location and Type
2002-03

Location	Document	Updated	Chain of Command Listed	On /Off Campus Evacuation Plans	Bomb Threat
Elementary					
Amanda Rochell	Campus Emergency Team	Not dated	Yes	No/Yes	No
Amy Parks-Heath	Emergency Evacuation Plan	September 2002	Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes
Cullins-Lake Pointe	Emergency Management Plan	Not dated	Yes	Yes/Yes	No
Dorothy Smith Pullen	Emergency Management Campus Plan	2002-03	Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes
Dorris A. Jones	Emergency Management Campus Plan	2002-03	Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes
Grace Hartman	Crisis Management Plan	2002-03	Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes
Howard Dobbs	Crisis Management Plan	2002-03	Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes
Nebbie	Emergency	September	Yes	Yes/Yes	No

Williams	Procedures	2002			
Virginia Reinhardt	Administrative Chain of Command	2002-03	Yes	Yes/Yes	No
Middle Schools					
J.W. Williams	Crisis Intervention Plan	September 2002	No	Yes/Yes	Yes
Maurine Cain	Crisis Management Plan	Not dated	Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes
High Schools					
Herman Utley Freshman Center	Emergency Evacuation Center	Not dated	Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes
Rockwall	Emergency Management Plan	2002-03	Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes
Other					
Rockwall Alternative School	Crisis Management Plan	Not dated	Yes	Yes/Yes	Yes

Source: RISD school documents, November 2002.

In February 2003, RISD conducted unannounced lock-down drills at four schools. All four schools received training from the coordinator of Student Services before the lock-down drill. According to the assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, two schools performed at an outstanding level, and two larger schools will require clarification about locking doors and dealing with substitute teachers. Police departments from Rockwall and Heath, citizen teams and school officials participated in a debriefing session. All other RISD principals received results of the event. RISD plans to conduct unannounced drills at its other schools in spring 2003.

Cedar Hill ISD (CHISD) created a comprehensive crisis plan in cooperation with the Cedar Hill Police Department to ensure that team members know their roles during the four levels of heightened alert: Shelter in Place, Alternative Shelter, Building Evacuation and Site

Evacuation. Each level explains the purpose of such an alert, when to use a particular alert level, the commands or signals associated with each level, when to practice drills for each level and when to complete a checklist.

Del Valle ISD's Crisis Management Plan contains guidelines to ensure the safety of students and employees in the event of crises. The district's plan, which is a model for other districts, includes such useful tools as crisis day checklists, emergency procedures, staff assignments for securing buildings and specific plans for each type of crisis.

Preparation prior to any emergency provides staff and parents with a sense of confidence that the district responds quickly to any crisis.

Recommendation 77:

Complete a single crisis management and emergency plan that clearly defines district and emergency organization roles for all schools.

Using one emergency management plan for all locations that contains a complete index and a special supplement for each school would eliminate redundancy and would simplify the use of emergency data by substitutes unfamiliar with the plan.

The supplement should include specific phone numbers and maps for each school and site evacuation location.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent appoints a committee led by the coordinator of Student Services that includes the executive director of Operations and Risk Management and representatives from RISD departments and schools to complete the district crisis management plan and to compile one book that contains all emergency information for each school.	June 2003
2.	The committee meets to complete the plan, and the coordinator presents the final plan to the superintendent for review.	July-September 2003
3.	The superintendent approves the plan and directs the coordinator to monitor its implementation.	September 2003 and Ongoing
4.	The coordinator of Student Services distributes the finished document and conducts training at each facility.	September 2003

5.	The principal periodically reviews the log and monitors hallways to ensure compliance.	September 2003 and Ongoing
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FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 11

SAFETY AND SECURITY

C. DISCIPLINE MANAGEMENT

Discipline management includes student discipline policies, procedures and programs developed and managed by the school district. Policies and procedures include the student code of conduct and delinquency prevention and intervention programs.

Every Texas school district is required to adopt a code of conduct that establishes standards for student behavior and that complies with the provisions of Texas Education Code Chapter 37. RISD's code is contained in its *Secondary Schools Student Handbook and Code of Conduct 2002-2003* and the *Elementary School Student Handbook 2002-2003*. These handbooks include a requirement for the student and the parent to sign and acknowledge the discipline requirements and to accept or reject the use of corporal punishment as a means of behavior modification.

Keeping Texas Children Safe in School states that the student code of conduct is useful only when it applies consistently to all students at all district locations. The RISD Student Code of Conduct states that the district has "zero tolerance" for student misbehavior and assigns a consequence to each violation. The district believes it enforces consequences for misbehavior consistently. Focus group comments showed concern that the zero tolerance rule is not applied if an athlete tests positive for drugs.

Senate Bill 1724 (amending Section 11.253 of the Education Code and passed during the 1999 Legislature) requires each school district to annually report the number, rate and type of violent and criminal incidents that occur at each school, and it requires districts to include a violence prevention and intervention policy in their annual campus improvement plans.

The number of RISD school offenses has fluctuated, with 7,642 in 1999-2000, 10,641 in 2000-01 and 7,793 in 2001-02. **Exhibit 11-14** shows the location and number of offenses within RISD.

Exhibit 11-14
Location of Offenses within RISD by Category
2001-02

Type of Offense	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Total
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Code-of-conduct violations	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	107	0	0	0	112
Disruptive classroom behavior	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	32	34
Assault	34	34	27	22	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	122
Bus conduct violations	9	36	16	0	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	73
Classroom behavior	2,054	299	104	0	39	0	0	66	0	0	0	2,562
Contraband: alcohol, tobacco	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Criminal mischief	22	24	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	59
Detentions	0	0	0	164	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	164
Disrespect	0	0	0	0	0	0	55	0	0	1	8	64
Class disruption	0	0	0	0	0	0	52	0	13	0	24	89
Dress code violations	12	19	0	36	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	68
Failure to comply	1,010	214	8	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1,233
Fighting - no serious injury	0	0	0	0	0	0	42	0	0	0	10	52
Fighting	0	0	0	26	0	0	0	0	21	0	0	47
Harassment	1	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Inappropriate behavior	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	48	3	2	54
Insubordination	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	88	0	0	88
Inappropriate language	0	0	0	0	0	0	25	0	0	0	6	31
Profanity/offensive language	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	10	0	0	12
Miscellaneous	0	0	0	1,089	0	0	0	0	0	7	0	1,096
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	127	0	58	0	18	203
Parking lot	111	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	114
Pocketknife	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3

Failure to follow safety rules	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	6
Substance abuse	42	19	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	64
Supplies - failure to bring to class	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Tardies	0	0	0	149	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	149
Theft	0	0	0	10	0	0	5	0	4	1	2	2	22
Threats	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	5	9
Truancy	1,082	88	8	47	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,245
Vandalism	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	4	0	0	1	1	7
Illegal Weapon	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Total	4,378	743	183	1,546	81	6	309	178	242	13	114	114	7,793

Source: TEA, PEIMS, Student Disciplinary Action Summary, 2001-02.

Schools are listed by number: 1) Rockwall High School; 2) Herman Utley Freshman Center; 3) J.W. Williams Middle School; 4) Maurine Cain Middle School; 5) Rockwall Alternative School; 6) Amanda Rochell Elementary; 7) Cullins-Lake Pointe Elementary; 8) Dorothy Pullen Elementary; 9) Howard Dobbs Elementary; 10) Nebbie Williams Elementary; 11) Virginia Reinhardt Elementary.

During the past two years, the predominant offense at all RISD schools concerned disruptive classroom behavior, followed by failure to comply and truancy. **Exhibit 11-15** shows discipline offenses by type of offense for 2000-01 and 2001-02. The number of offenses has decreased by 27 percent.

Exhibit 11-15
RISD Disciplinary Offenses
2000-01 and 2001-02

Type of Offense	Number of Offenses 2000-01	Number of Offenses 2001-02	Percent Change
Code-of-conduct violations	199	112	(44%)
Disruptive classroom behavior	47	67	43%

Assault	108	100	(7%)
Bus referral (for any reason)	33	22	(33%)
Bus violations	64	73	14%
Cheating	4	0	(100%)
Classroom behavior	4,777	2,529	(47%)
Controlled substance	8	0	(100%)
Contraband (alcohol, tobacco)	14	3	(79%)
Criminal mischief	35	59	69%
Detentions	72	164	128%
Disrespect	122	64	(48%)
Class disruption	71	89	25%
Dress Code	50	32	(36%)
Dress code violation	44	36	(18%)
Failure to comply	1,401	1,232	(12%)
Fighting - suspension	33	26	(21%)
Fighting - no serious injury	89	52	(42%)
Fighting	45	21	(53%)
Fighting - with injury	1	2	(100%)
Harassment	3	4	33%
Inappropriate behavior	39	51	31%
Insubordination	115	88	(23%)
Inappropriate language	53	34	(36%)
Profanity/offensive language	34	10	(71%)
Miscellaneous	1,131	1,089	(4%)
Obscenity	17	2	(88%)
Other	170	151	(11%)
Other, not specified	47	59	26%
Parking lot	120	114	(5%)
Pocketknife	2	3	50%
Failure to follow safety rules	10	7	(30%)

Substance abuse	77	64	(17%)
Supplies - failure to bring to class	2	3	50%
Tardies	368	149	(60%)
Theft	29	22	(24%)
Threats	23	9	(61%)
Truancy	1,174	1,245	6%
Vandalism	8	7	(13%)
Illegal weapon	2	1	(50%)
Total	10,641	7,793	(27%)

Source: TEA, PEIMS, Student Disciplinary Action Summary, 2000-01 and 2001-02.

Exhibit 11-16 indicates that 56 percent of parents, 63 percent of teachers, 50 percent of principals and assistant principals and 67 percent of district administrative and support staff disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, "Drugs are not a problem in this district."

Exhibit 11-16
RISD Survey Responses to Statement
"Drugs Are Not a Problem in This District"

Group	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Reply	No Opinion
Parents	10%	21%	21%	35%	11%	2%
Teachers	7%	17%	21%	42%	11%	2%
District Administrative and Support Staff	2%	17%	19%	48%	12%	1%
Principals and Assistant Principals	11%	39%	33%	17%	0%	0%

Source: TSPR survey, November 2002.

According to the list of RISD disciplinary offenses in 2001-02, there were only 64 reported cases of substance abuse, including 13 for possession of a controlled substance, 19 for possession of alcohol, four for drug abuse, three for possession of a cigarette lighter at school and 24 for possession

of tobacco. The number of reported offenses (64) decreased from 77 in 2000-01.

Bullying is another issue that concerns RISD parents, teachers and counselors. The coordinator of Student Services stated, "Bullying has been addressed by RISD as the most enduring problem to eliminate violence from our schools. This form of violence requires awareness by students and staff with adult intervention." Representatives from every school met during fall 2000 to discuss prevention efforts for a safe school environment. **Exhibit 11-17** shows the district strategies used to address bullying.

Exhibit 11-17
RISD Strategies to Address Bullying
2001-02 through 2002-03

Dates	Strategy
January 2001	Peer mediation was expanded at all grade levels with 20 professional staff members currently in place.
Spring 2001	Two high school counselors attended a workshop about the Houston ISD bullying program and shared the information with the district counselors.
2001-02	<i>Chill Skills</i> , an anger management program with a component on bullying, was presented to every Grade 3 student in the district.
2001-02	Support groups at the high school and alternative school from Phoenix House and Safety Net address bullying.
June 2002	A Williams Middle School counselor gave a presentation on bullying to the district counselors for them to present at a faculty meeting at each school.
August 2002	Each school received the book, <i>Wounded Spirit</i> , to be read by the counselor and shared and discussed with the principals, coaches and teachers.
September-October 2001 and September-October 2002	Middle school counselors had classroom guidance on bullying. The <i>We Help Ourselves</i> program also incorporates bullying prevention.
September-October 2002	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elementary schools addressed bullying at Dobbs by presenting the Morris Brothers program on <i>Bully Buster</i>. • The PE teacher and the counselor at Jones presented

	<p><i>Back Off Bullying</i>,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nebbie and Pullen are using <i>How to Bully Proof Your School</i>; Reinhardt is using <i>Folding Characters</i> • Cullins-Lake Pointe is using the video and discussion of <i>Broken Toy</i>; Libraries have ordered books about dealing with bullying, along with guidance presentations to students and staff at Amy Parks.
June 2002	Counselors established pilot programs on bullying.
June 2003	Counselors will establish specific programs on bullying.

Source: RISD coordinator of Student Services, December 2002.

The TSPR team reviewed incidents of bullying on a school bus mentioned in forum discussions. The team confirmed that a violation of the middle school code of conduct had occurred. In a letter to the review team, the assistant superintendent for Human Resources and Operations stated, "It appears that proper steps were taken to alter the behavior of students violating...(the) Code of Conduct. It appears that a plan is in place to properly intervene with future bullying issues."

The counseling department at the middle school created a program for bullying intervention. Although this program was not in place at the start of the review, the district quickly dealt with the issues after the TSPR team asked how the school encouraged prevention.

There are two components to the program. Staff education raises the level of staff awareness, considers the root causes of bullying, communicates intervention strategies and watches for and reports bullying. Student education increases student awareness, informs students of the harmful effects of bullying, teaches steps to take when they see bullying and encourages students to report bullying incidents.

The administration has established consequences for bullying offenses. Parents are called in every instance. Evaluation of the effectiveness of this program and analysis of the discipline data are ongoing. For example, at J.W. Williams Middle School, assaults declined 58 percent from 64 reported cases in 1998-99 to 27 reported cases in 2001-02. In the first three months of 2002-03, the school reported only five cases of assault.

The Student Code of Conduct follows the district guidelines for meeting the requirements of Texas Education Code Chapter 37, which requires the district to define misconduct that may or must result in a range of specific disciplinary consequences. This code, adopted by the RISD Board of

Trustees, provides information and direction to students and parents about standards of behavior and the consequences of misconduct. Each level of violation results in a progressively more serious form of discipline, including in-school and out-of-school suspension and removal to an Alternative Education Program.

As in any prevention and intervention program, the proper ratio of counselors to student population is important. According to the National Center for Educational Statistics, the nationwide average is one counselor for every 512 students. Tragedies in U.S. schools highlight the importance a counselor plays in providing help to students. Counselors identify antisocial behavior in early grades, permitting proactive intervention in anger management. Because family units are changing and some parents may spend less time with their children, counselors play increasingly important roles in the lives of the students. **Exhibit 11-18** shows RISD counselor distribution by school location, number and ratio of counselors to students. Five schools have ratios that are higher than the national average.

Exhibit 11-18
RISD Counselor Distribution
2002-03

School	Number of Students	Number of Counselors	Ratio
Amanda Rochell Elementary	524	1	524:1
Amy Parks-Heath Elementary	636	1	636:1
Cullins-Lake Pointe Elementary	951	2	476:1
Dorothy Pullen Elementary	642	1	642:1
Dorris A. Jones Elementary	580	1	580:1
Grace Hartman Elementary	381	1	381:1
Howard Dobbs Elementary	583	1	583:1
Nebbie Williams Elementary	465	1	465:1
Virginia Reinhardt Elementary	424	1	424:1
J.W. Williams Middle School	885	2	442:1
Maurine Cain Middle School	673	2	336:1
Herman E. Utley Freshman Center	748	2	374:1
Rockwall High School	2,002	5	400:1

Alternative School	99	1	99:1
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Source: RISD coordinator of Student Services, 2002.

FINDING

RISD is committed to the safety of students and staff and focuses on the prevention of inappropriate behavior through intervention programs designed to prevent drug abuse (**Exhibit 11-19**).

Exhibit 11-19 RISD School Discipline Program Outlines 2002-03

Program	Focus	Description
Character Education	Good citizenship and character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monthly character traits designed from the district for continuity among the schools and the community.
Peer Mediation	Resolve conflict	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Find solutions while acquiring a life skill.
Chill Skills	Anger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A four part series taught by the Drug and Alcohol Specialist on how to deal with anger, communicate effectively and resolve conflicts in a productive nondestructive way.
Challenge/Adventure Based Learning	Team building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Series of customized activities related to team building, defining success/self/group esteem, determining roles and norms, decision-making, communication and problem solving.
Rockwall All Stars for Life Skills/DARE	Life skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eight week prevention program taught by Rockwall, Rowlett and Heath Police Departments.

Project Alert	Substance abuse alert	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sixth Grade Science.
GREAT (Gang Resistance Education and Training)	Gangs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Taught by School Resource Officers at the middle schools.
Botvin's Life Skills	Drug abuse prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research based program presented by Rainbow Days; primary prevention intervention that targets individuals who have not yet developed drug abuse problems.
D-FY-IT (Drug Free Youth in Texas)	Grades seven through twelve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Voluntary drug testing program that rewards students with discounts, activities and prizes.
Mandatory drug testing program	High school athletic program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students participating in athletes programs are subject to drug testing.
WHO (We Help Ourselves)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A child victimization awareness program that is offered in grades one, three, six, eight and in the high school health classes.
Additional classes.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The counseling department offers support groups on grief, divorce, substance abuse, and anger management depending on the needs of the school.

Source: RISD Student Services, November 2002.

Exhibit 11-20 shows the Safe and Drug Free Schools program outline by elementary, middle and high school.

Exhibit 11-20
RISD School Safe and Drug Free Schools Program Outlines
2002-03

Prevention Programs

Elementary School	Middle School	High School
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenge Learning • Chill Skills (anger management) • DARE • Individual Counseling • Parent Education • Peer Mediation • Prevention Newsletter • Professional Development • Project Alert • Red Ribbon Week • Student Support Groups • We Help Ourselves (WHO) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aim for Success (abstinence program) • All School Rallies and Programs • Allied Youth (high school students teaching about the risks of alcohol) • Awesome Alternatives • Botvin's Life Skills Training • Challenge Learning • Community Service Projects • Crime Stoppers • DARE Boosters Lessons • Drug Dog • Drug Free Youth in Texas (D-FY-IT) • Drug Prevention Presentation • Gang Resistance Education (GREAT) • Great American Smoke out • Individual Counseling • Inhalant Week • Peer Assistance and Leadership (PALs) • Peer Mediation • Prevention Newsletter • Professional Development for Faculty • Red Ribbon Week • Referrals • Student Support Groups • Students Teaching About the Risks of Smoking (STARS) • Substance Abuse Counseling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aim for Success (abstinence program) • All School Rallies and Programs • Botvin's Life Skills Training • Challenge Learning • Chill Skill Facilitator for Fourth Grade • Community Service Projects • Crime Stoppers • Drug and Alcohol Survey • Drug Dog • Drug Free Youth in Texas (D-FY-IT) • Drug Prevention Classroom Presentations • Great American Smoke out • Peer Assistance and Leadership (PALs) • Peer Mediation • Prevention Survey • Prom Promise Week • Puppet Presentations for Third Grade • Red Ribbon Campaign • Role Models for DARE and Life Skills • Student Support

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We Help Ourselves (WHO) 	<p>Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Substance Abuse Counseling • We Help Ourselves (WHO)
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Source: RISD Student Services, November 2002.

Since the program's inception, more than 15,000 Rockwall ISD students have participated in the Drug-Free Youth in Texas (D-FY-IT) voluntary drug-testing program for grades 7 through 12, which rewards students with discounts, activities and prizes.

Rotary International adopted this program from the RISD model. The D-FY-IT Governing Board is actively involved at each RISD school to heighten healthy lifestyle choices through monthly activities and weeklong activities for Prom Promise and the Red Ribbon Campaign. Rockwall ISD volunteers, PTA members, school staff, area business people and students work together in this program.

In addition, RISD has a hotline for anonymous reporting of drug abuse. Each student receives a wallet-sized "Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities" card that lists hotline numbers. These contacts include abuse, alcohol and drugs, emergency, national youth crisis, poison control, police, sheriff, runaways and suicide crisis.

In September 2002, the RISD board approved a mandatory drug-testing program for all extracurricular activities. Refusing to participate in the test results in the student's removal from the activity. RISD administrators and the RISD board decided that testing only in the athletic program was far too narrow in scope and that the incentive of a student's continuing to participate in extracurricular activities could act as a deterrent to using drugs.

RISD holds "drug dog" searches performed by a contract service each week at the high school and every other week at the middle schools. The drug dog company sends representatives to pep rallies and other events to endorse the positives in safe, drug-free schools for students.

COMMENDATION

RISD created comprehensive student delinquency, dropout and drug prevention programs with participation from students, staff, parents and the community.

Appendix A

PUBLIC FORUM AND FOCUS GROUP COMMENTS

As part of this review, a community meeting and focus groups were conducted during the early stages of the review process. This appendix contains comments from a public forum held on November 4, 2002 in the cafeteria of Rockwall High School and a series of focus groups with the superintendent and his cabinet, elementary and secondary teachers and principals, counselors, paraprofessionals, business and community representatives, parents of minority students and representatives of minority groups, civic club representatives, PTA/PTO Council, special education parents, gifted and talented education parents, ministerial alliance representatives and representatives of a revenue enhancement group appointed by the board and superintendent. The focus groups were held between November 4 and November 8 at various locations throughout Rockwall.

The following comments convey the public forum and focus groups' perception of Rockwall Independent School District and do not reflect the findings or opinion of the Comptroller or review team. The narrative comments are actual comments received.

DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

- Appears to be run by old-time inner circle in Rockwall.
- Board - doing a great job! Superintendent - doing a great job! School management - [principal] wants to be involved with everything; can't do all things well. Strategic planning - did a nice job planning. Will they follow through with suggestions that were given? Site-based decision-making - we decide, and it gets followed up with. Communication is lacking to staff from this committee.
- Schools should be doing the same. Programs and ideas shared between the schools. Better communications.
- The school board has their priorities in bricks and mortar and have the cart before the horse. We can't afford to hire teachers to fill the classrooms they are building. They do not listen to the taxpayers. Every public meeting is lip service only. I have made several attempts to meet with administration- they always say they will call and never do.
- Strategic planning - this committee worked well last year. Everyone was included and every opinion counted. Site-based decision-making on our campus needs work. Most things are already decided for us. We are told instead of asked.

Superintendent is very visible and approachable. He visits the campuses often along with other assistant superintendents. Board - the board communications are regular each month.

- Superintendent - very accessible, positive, motivated to make good changes in our district. Strategic planning - excellent.
- Board governance and superintendent - great job informing all employees of decisions and news. School management - teachers need to be held accountable for not following TEKS. Strategic planning - great job. Site-based decision-making - great job.
- Board [needs] to be involved more on the basis of what schools actual need. All children should be treated equally.
- I think RISD is on the right track to planning and decision-making. We really need to keep up with the rapid growth of this district.
- They are working to make school decisions. Strategic planning - trying to be prepared for the future.
- In strategic planning - rethink increases in new schools in times of economic downturn. Use portable buildings until better population evaluations. Rethink policy of "our kids need everything," which is not a real life situation. Rethink times of public meeting - make allowances for working people.
- Board governance: is it possible to give teachers more voice in our annual school calendar? By the time teachers received the second draft last year, there was no time to respond positively or negatively.
- Thank you, board members. Great, unselfish giving of your time. Nice of superintendent to even tutor a student! Good always to see him at Rockwall.
- Budget for each school - How are funds used by principals? Monies allotted for library vary from school to school. Why does one new school have a wrought iron fence while all others have chain link fencing?
- I believe the board, superintendent and other administrators are receptive and approachable. The betterment of the district seems to be their foremost concern. The district has an implemented strategic plan, which guides the district.
- I feel we have a supportive school board and a superintendent who really wants to make a difference.
- We initiated this year an academic calendar in which the first semester does not end until after the December holidays. Enough money needs to be left in reserve to enable school to start in mid-August.
- School board appears to operate with hidden agendas, especially when dealing with budget execution. Better checks and balances and accountability needs to be available to citizens, Superintendent and school board needs to operate with more openness and greater consensus.

- Some of the campuses have too little planning for future needs of the district.
- Chain of command works well. Just wish there was more information passed back down that chain with explanation. In such a large school district, it is easy to get lost.
- The district seems to be somewhat top heavy in its management. The ability of the schools to make many decisions is not hindered too much by the administration, but I am concerned that the district doesn't necessarily give direction or help when it's needed. The district has been fortunate that many of the individual schools have quality people in leadership positions. District administration also guides or even leads the school board instead of working with them as representatives of the community. In their defense, the board lets them.
- Last year when they decided on the attendance zone, it was a disgrace!
- Parents/bond voters are promised more quality and better conditions at schools. Deadlines are missed, teachers are not hired for new schools.
- Overall, I think the management is good, with strong, knowledgeable leaders. Only concern revolves around a good-old-boy network, or should I say, neighborhood network as some school managers favor a select group of students. This is the exception, not the rule.
- When the administration is presented with detailed, legitimate concerns, we get nothing but "lip service" and excuses.
- School management - it seems as if there is no accountability for each school's administration.
- Superintendent is in over his head. Management style is inconsistent for effective and efficient administration of district.
- Our last several superintendents have drastically increased administrative positions, which I'm not sure are all needed.
- Best working board I have worked with.
- Board serves on committees or liaisons to specific committees.
- Superintendent focused on students/academic - very active in community - very visible - mentors a student.
- Administrative retreat for all administration is very beneficial.
- Central office administrators serve on campus improvement committees.
- Superintendent's cabinet holds monthly breakfasts at campuses with principals. Includes book study; host principal leads discussion of two to three chapters.
- Superintendent's Cabinet meets weekly 9 - 11 a.m.
- Administration keeps board informed with board packet for monthly meeting and then in middle of cycle each member of

cabinet provides four to six items in their area to keep board members informed.

- Superintendent is setting a good tone for the district.
- Board gives community opportunities for input.
- Site-based management is working - not much input into budget - high school principal has total control of budget.
- Site-based management. Very positive - campus improvement plans are hitting the target - principal responsible for tying budget to plan.
- Majority feel superintendent is doing a good job.
- Would like to see superintendent have a monthly meeting with teacher representatives - not for gripe sessions but for the exchange of ideas.
- Site-based management works well - campus plans must correlate with District Improvement Plan.
- Principal chairs site-based committee.
- RISD operates as a team.
- Administration retreat is very valuable.
- Site-based management follows local policy - business representatives without children are hard to find.
- A real plus in team management.
- Central office is understaffed.
- District is planning 10 years ahead for growth.
- A great team working relationship.
- Rarely have visitors at board meetings.
- Trustees are top notch.
- District has worked hard to be inclusive and to plan ahead - the superintendent is part of a coalition with Chamber of Commerce, city officials, county officials, utility companies, and local economic development board - meets monthly and four times yearly, includes officials from the smaller communities that are part of RISD.
- RISD operates with an open door policy.

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND STUDENT PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- There should be clearly defined guidelines regarding 504 eligibility hearings. The schools have too much input in process. Nothing in writing.
- We believe that the kindergarten and first grade curriculum borders on excess and has a high likelihood of creating a bad attitude in students toward school.
- Our experience with Advanced Placement in middle school has been very bad. The curriculum does not seem in any way related to advancement in the relevant subject.

- It is my impression that the Rockwall schools are clueless at identifying learning differences in students and tailoring teaching modes to effectively teach these students.
- Per AP English - how about having them have a regular writing assignment? Something turned in at least once a month. In kindergarten, we only teach reading one way. Our child didn't learn reading phonetically. The gifted-talented program seems to only notice one type of personality: outgoing, verbal and creative. Shy kids, forget it.
- Gifted and talented - what a joke! When non-GT students help G/T students do their homework, something is wrong. Our elementary G/T program is no more than an express your creativity time.
- TAAS - we teach TAAS too much.
- Principals do not take parent feedback well at times. Too protective of teachers when parent calmly reports problem.
- We need to do a better job of teaching handwriting, starting in kindergarten. The pre-AP course is disappointing.
- TAAS/TAKS - third and fifth grade teachers stressed out because that is all that is taught until the tests are over. Bilingual - how can student "be promoted" without learning the requirements?
- I am continually frustrated with the lack of concern about classroom modification. Teachers have little concern for kids with special needs.
- Many Hispanic children are placed in special education because of language problems.
- [I] believe high standards are important. Have seen expectations communicated that were not in accordance with state requirements, although the expectation was higher. In some respects, the high standard is good; it creates environment to exceed. In other respects, it creates frustration.
- My experience with special education services in RISD is frustrating.
- We do not have a bilingual instrument to test bilingual students for SAGE. The students we recommend for SAGE do not qualify because of language problems. We do not have a bilingual SAGE teacher.
- Weak fine arts program at almost all schools especially high school. No emphasis on fine arts - choir, band or art and poor teaching, thus, no students sign up.
- The school board seems to be concerned about TAAS tests and not much more. Their goals are not high enough. The SAT scores are lower than Plano and several other area schools. The students are not pushed enough.
- I don't feel we are receiving the full budget for the bilingual/ESL students.

- The new pre-AP math curriculum at the middle school is a travesty. The teachers do not explain the subject very well.
- I pay my taxes, I send my child to school, and I still end up having to do 50 percent home schooling to make up for the non-performance of the teaching staff.
- Need to have math textbooks that actually have examples of the problems.
- Too much homework and too many projects. My child's backpack usually weighs 25 pounds (yes, we actually weighed it) due to all his homework.
- Too much emphasis and drilling for TAAS.
- Why can't lesson plan be floating, i.e., if the teacher doesn't get to a topic during the allotted nine weeks, why can't they just start there at the beginning of the next grading period?
- Very concerned with the kindergarten program. The state recommends full day curriculum in order to succeed in the next grades, but we are still a one-half day program. The size of the class is another concern. Twenty-two five-year olds is not my idea of a quality learning experience.
- Need improvement in science courses at middle school level.
- Very good.
- Teachers in general need training to identify and help children with learning differences within the classroom.
- I would like to see the gifted and talented program be improved and become more efficient. I believe that a teacher at each grade level should be G/T-certified.
- I would like to see students grouped by ability to better facilitate the learning process. This would ease the strain on teachers and the frustration for the students.
- Instructions for parents for the first time writing IEPs and preparing for ARDS, before the actual meeting.
- Continue programs for dyslexic students. Teach them how mature teens handle the challenge of reading disabilities and spelling dysfunctions.
- The new curriculum documents are great and so helpful! Our TAAS scores are improving each year. Our teachers and principals are always finding new and creative ways to help our students pass. We have the best G/T and resource program on our campus, and the teachers are awesome.
- RISD does a great job meeting the needs of all students.
- All teachers need to be monitored for proper and required educational service delivery.
- We would like to see more consistency within the district regarding curriculum. The current procedure for participation in the gifted and talented program is flawed, i.e., a child must retest for the program after a change of school.

- Athletes get more accommodations than learning disabled students.
- More time for G/T students to receive instruction and more accelerated curriculum for high achievers.
- Not all faculty is using district curriculum guides. Needs closer supervision.
- I am extremely concerned about the percentage of funds being used for education. I am not opposed to TAAS, but I am opposed to an inordinate amount of time spent "teaching for the test."
- Have textbooks available for all classes by the first week of school.
- Need more services for bilingual. At-risk group needs attention.
- Bilingual is trying to get more organized - better than previous years. Special education - very organized.
- High quality of curriculum and classes offered at the high school. It is very deceptive having a rating of Acceptable at this district. I know personally that my children are getting a much better education in Rockwall than in other area districts.
- This district has the best special education department I have ever worked with. They give me all the support and information I need.
- The vertical alignment for the curriculum is updated and changed to fit the needs of each group.
- TAAS is important but not all consuming.
- Test scores - proud of - do have some areas on which to focus.
- Beginning to make Individual Educational Plans for at-risk students.
- Why can't the district have the report cards translated to Spanish to help communication between the parents and the school?
- In September, grades 1-6 were tested for reading fluency and comprehension. English speaking students not reading on grade level receive tutoring. Why can't bilingual children get the same service with a reading specialist?
- Parents have been asked to serve on LPAC.
- ESL classes are offered for parents, but not available at some schools this year.
- Hispanic student was not in bilingual program, lived in Williams zone, but was not allowed to enroll. Was told the student would be uncomfortable there. Enrolled at Dobbs.
- Not a lot of Hispanic students participating in extracurricular activities - do not know why.
- Getting no information at Pullen in Spanish.
- G/T forms are not in Spanish. Hispanic child did not return forms because parent unaware of how to complete forms.
- Need reports in Spanish - not all Hispanics are in Bilingual/ESL - can a parent mark on the Home Language Survey if they need communication in Spanish?
- Notice for LPAC meetings are not in Spanish.
- Tutoring not available in ESL.

- Bilingual classes are without books.
- Very strong instructional program.
- Community cares.
- Civic club honors student of the month.
- Many private school students returning to public RISD.
- Counselors have a guidance plan - revised last year and re-looking at it this year.
- Staff development is specific to counselor needs.
- At risk adult mentors.
- High school PAL program helps at risk.
- At-risk adopt student program - excellent.
- Curriculum guides are useful and used - all are vertically aligned.
- Not enough bilingual/ESL teachers.
- Staff development is good.
- Special populations do not meet needs- ARD says it meets their needs.
- Staff development ties to instructional improvement- would like to see more choices.
- Curriculum guides vertically aligned and used.
- Accelerated Reader program great on some sites and not operating on other sites.
- Four Block curriculum structure good.
- Kids Hope mentoring program excellent.
- Would like to see scope and sequence on line.
- Voyager Reading program.
- Math and Science labs - learning lab for at-risk Life Skills/motor lab.
- Good G/T plan with parent support group- G/T training program is a one day pullout program.
- Writing IEP for at-risk - before and after school tutoring- Reading specialist - Language/Science program for dyslexics.
- Curriculum guides are revised on a cycle.
- Good line of communication from central to campus.
- Testing coordinator disaggregates test data - ACET program.
- May propose any program that is research-based.
- G/T plan is evolving- there is a parent advisory group- Robin Leon meets regularly with group.
- Bilingual on three campuses ESL on all-50/50 model for bilingual.
- Special Education program - very effective along with Pre-AP, AP , Reading Intervention and Head Start Program.
- Vertical alignment K- 12 is a positive.
- Reading specialist for K-2 at-risk is good.
- Language/Science combined program is effective.
- Inclusion program is working well.
- Affluent Special Education parents know rights - not true of Economically Disadvantaged.

- Goal to have all teachers with 30 hours in G/T training.
- New hires must commit to 30 hr G/T training.
- Mandatory tutoring program is effective - also pull students out of electives for tutoring.
- Choice program for credit recovery - good program.
- Dual credit options with Eastfield College.
- Great strides with ESL.
- Grant- Ninth Grade Initiative used for Nova Net to assist with at-risk.
- Free TAAS tutorials.
- Summer programs for at-risk.
- TAKS Center - a pull out to address at-risk.
- District in denial toward bilingual.
- Textbooks not available for bilingual.
- All newsletters are not translated into Spanish.
- Poor communication with Special Education parents - parent must figure out what is available and then be aggressive.
- Counselor changed what was assigned in ARD without notifying parent.
- Child was in a good program one year - then program is discontinued the next year.
- They only tell you what they want you to know- diagnostician was told not to give info to parent - concern is for students whose parents are not aware or are not supportive.
- Counselor and principal refused testing when parent made request.
- Was not allowed to meet with teacher unless principal was present.
- Refused services when private testing showed need - was told student was not failing, therefore does not need help.
- Elementary Special Education is great.
- Child Find information is not available.
- Child was in Academic support program that was discontinued - now child in resource using 9th grade texts when reading level is 4th grade.
- Need SE identification training for teachers.
- Inconsistent programs across the district - one elementary offers full day kindergarten to at-risk and all other students in zone; another elementary only to at-risk.
- Would like to see standardized tests other than TAAS given to see how RISD students compare.
- RISD provides a SAT academy.
- G/T teacher was guiding force to get this organization together.
- Is the G/T program being funded at the appropriate level?
- G/T program needs standardization across the district.
- There is no differentiation in Pre-AP and AP program.

- There needs to be a partnership between the regular teacher and G/T teacher- no new material in regular class while students are in G/T.
- Program is not challenging enough.
- There needs to be enrichment in the regular classroom.
- Why do G/T students have to take TAAS review?
- Why are transfer students not placed in program until RISD tests?
- Look at G/T identification process.
- Teaching to the test is a concern.
- Why aren't the arts covered in G/T program?
- Bilingual program is not what it should be.
- Need better leadership in bilingual.
- Is TAAS remediation necessary for all - should focus only on those who need it.
- School district is doing a great job.
- A wide variety of athletic offerings - gymnastics-soccer-wrestling.
- Why is the district tolerant of religion in the classroom?
- Concern about Special Education placement of minority students.
- Believe RISD one of best districts in Metrople1
- Dollars are going in the correct direction.
- Instructional program produces great achievers - 80 percent go to higher education.
- Principals care about kids - a real sense of community.
- Teachers available before and after school.
- Dyslexia - ball gets dropped.
- Advanced students always get the better teachers when the at-risk are in need of the best.
- Libraries are not funded appropriately.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Good marks here. Parental involvement welcomed.
- At my campus, I see good business-school partnerships, good mentor programs.
- Only parental involvement is PTA or bilingual parent night - would like to see more.
- Communications are very controlled. Information on the Web site, reports about anything are always what a great job we are doing.
- Very little teacher to parent communication.
- This district is very fortunate to have a strong core group of volunteers. These volunteers have pulled through and delivered funds for programs, technology and academic recognition.
- I think we need to get better in the area of business-school partnerships. Our local businesses support schools a lot in small ways. We could use partnerships with larger companies as well.

- We have adult mentor, volunteers coming to our campus. Would love to have more. Communication could be better inside and out.
- Parental involvement - excellent. Community relations - good. Could be better business-school partnerships. Communications - good.
- Very good publications from RISD. School well covered in local newspapers. Community education program is well run, good community participation.
- There is tremendous involvement in this community considering the district administration does not communicate very well. At the school level, there is an incredible amount of volunteerism.
- There is great communication between the school and parents but hardly any between district administration and community. It is as if the administration does not want input from parents and the community other than what is legally required.
- Parents not informed when textbooks are one to two months late.
- As a taxpayer with no school age children, I receive little or no direct information on school board/superintendent strategic plans, problems or budget issues.
- Community involvement is only evident in the athletic programs or social activities. The community is not asked or involved in school projects like lectures, demonstrations of products, workshops, etc. The school seems very closed and unwelcoming to ideas, activities other than sports and dances.
- RISD has the best community involvement in the area! Great communication with public!
- We have awesome parent involvement! Our parents are spectacular and extremely involved. The communications are always perfect. The teachers are kept informed daily.
- RISD appears to be the typical East Texas school district where all the emphasis in the community is on athletics. Very little is heard about academic accomplishments.
- I have had only positive parental involvement. The community supports us and any business approached has been very generous.
- We are required to have every home communication/notice provided in Spanish, which I agree with, but we need to have a translator at our school in order to facilitate this. The translation at the district is overwhelmed - takes three weeks to translate and doesn't do anything that isn't extremely important.
- RISD does a great job involving the community.
- Would like to see more mentoring for at-risk students. Need better communication internal and external.
- Some problems with communication - technology does not work, especially email.

- I support and commend the community involvement in our district, but I would hate to see it mandated by the federal government. It only works when it is truly from the heart.
- Volunteers very active.
- Need to focus on Hispanic volunteers.
- Partnerships with city for use of parks.
- Only one school interprets meetings in Spanish.
- Most communication from school is not in Spanish.
- No one in Administration building to translate for the Hispanic parents when there is a concern with the superintendent.
- Bilingual director is not bilingual.
- Community involvement is a strength of the district.
- Volunteer program excellent- every teacher has multiple volunteers.
- Newsletters at two schools in Spanish.
- New student orientation at all schools one week prior to start.
- Some schools send home-school connection.
- Counselor connection e-mailed intra-district.
- Grade level newsletters.
- PTA newsletters.
- Brochure about counseling.
- Cain Middle School has coffee for parent meetings with principal.
- Head Start parent meetings.
- High school welcoming club.
- High school HOOL provides Senior Passport information and junior wallet information.
- Present scholarship information in the classroom - all local scholarships in one packet for students to pick up - have big red notebook in office for students to use for scholarship opportunities.
- Financial aid night.
- Individual senior conferences.
- Good - could have more bilingual communication.
- Volunteers - sufficient.
- Many scholarships from community involvement.
- Communication to staff is timely e-mail good when working.
- Central uses a red folder to send items that need immediate attention.
- Teachers send postcards to parents with positive comments.
- Business community very supportive - sponsor many scholarships.
- Students who record 100 hours of community service are recognized at graduation.
- Most secondary schools involved in helping underprivileged- high school raises dollars for United Way - some schools have canned food drives - Angel trees.
- Board briefs are special.

- RISD is open to community and community involvement- a great partnership between PTA and schools- a lot of parent involvement.
- Volunteer orientation is required initially and is recommended yearly.
- Great mentor program.
- Need district support for reaching bilingual parents - difficult to get information translated into Spanish - causes a delay.
- If you volunteer at more than one campus, you must complete a form for background check- why not have a central file?
- Cain Middle School provides a separate Open House for bilingual parents.
- District is a good listener but then not afraid to do what is right for students.
- Did a great job with the naming of the new high school.
- District holds many community meetings.
- Need more communication about moving Administration to J.W. Williams- what else will be housed there?
- Used community members on committee to study equality of male and female athletic program.
- RISD works cooperatively with other agencies such as Helping Hands.
- Parent meetings are held at county library.
- Business and community organizations fund many programs.
- Schools and district are very receptive.
- Good communication from the schools and district.
- Provide campus tours for large group of residents.
- District provides space for city band to practice.
- Superintendent attended county library long range planning meetings.
- Chamber of Commerce sponsors new teacher welcome.
- District provides space for county library to provide tutoring.
- Library mentors assist with Community Education GED classes.
- Rotary and Chamber are very supportive of the schools.
- Administration is good with communication.
- Booster clubs very active - athletic and academic.

PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

- Administration salaries are too high for amount of work done.
- Too many administrators, not enough support staff.
- More education for teachers, including assessments to see if they can really handle the challenge of children with disabilities.
- Great recruitment and hiring.
- Salaries for veteran teachers not keeping up!
- More teachers, smaller classes.
- Staff development for the most part has been good.

- Salaries could be better, but when measured with the insurance the school picks up, it makes up for it.
- Why does the high school only have one librarian and one aide?
- Hiring practices - good, need money to hire more.
- Staff development - RISD works closely with Region 10 to provide staff development for teachers.
- With the state physical education time requirement in place, RISD and others will have to increase budgets, hire extra teachers and increase gym size.
- The job fair was an excellent idea. Let's do that again.
- RISD gets a lot of first year teachers. It would benefit our district to get more experienced teachers. Teachers need to be aware of who is being interviewed.
- Salary could be more comparable to other large/growing districts.
- I look forward to the district expanding staff development. The district is growing and really could benefit from this.
- The district is big enough to start offering job share to employees.
- Recruitment - we work hard to recruit quality teachers. Great input is put into the staff's input on recruits. Salary - we didn't receive the raise we were told about! Staff development - we work closely with Region 10. Our principal tries to make our training relevant to our needs and wants.
- More concern about aid to teachers, especially special education. Need more help with inclusion procedures.
- Staff development - have meetings more specific to grade or special class needs.
- Higher salary for instructional aides.
- Hiring practices - not enough teachers were hired - district office said it was because we couldn't find the teachers to hire. Others said that the district didn't have the funds to hire.
- We don't have very many bilingual office aides or assistants in the schools. They also pay office aides or paraprofessionals very poorly.
- Why do we have coaches getting paid a teaching salary and a coaching stipend when they don't teach a class? They do either lunch duty or SAC.
- Salaries will need to be raised in order to compete with other schools in the Metrople2
- Need staff development for special education, 504 and classroom modification.
- For the most part, this area is a bright spot. Although the salary is average, when put together with other benefits, I believe this a great environment for teachers.
- They don't have enough money to hire enough teachers. Money is spent on the wrong things. Spend too much on coaches.

- [Need] minority people in administration. It would be good if they were bilingual.
- Hired easily! Great experience. Salary, as always, could be better. Staff development - no training to mention. I'm a paraprofessional - office staff - I feel that I've been given a job to do with no training, but I'm held accountable for the final reports.
- Don't recruit at that many universities.
- Local job fair last year was very successful.
- Mentor program is good - last year 29 in program - lost only one.
- Job fair was excellent.
- Open door policy in personnel is excellent.
- Would like to be notified of policy changes on-line.
- Concerned about counselor pay scale.
- Concerned that ineffective staff not terminated.
- Good pool of applicants.
- Local job fair very effective.
- BESST mentoring program is outstanding.
- Look at North and South schools' staffing patterns.
- Vacancies are posted on Local Cable TV 41.
- Look at coaches' salaries.
- UIL academic coach had no previous experience- a school this size should have better staff.
- Not enough teachers hired for new schools - two teachers pulled from a school at beginning and then the school had to be staffed with substitutes.
- High school doesn't have enough counselors.
- Why do two schools have to share a G/T teacher? Students' time in G/T less than last year.
- Concern about the small number of minority teachers and administration.

Public Forum Comments - Part 2

Appendix A

PUBLIC FORUM AND FOCUS GROUP COMMENTS

FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

- Regarding planning for future athletic programs and facilities, who, specifically, makes decision how monies are delegated? I believe that it is unfair that only the traditional sports are supported.
- Facilities planning - poor. Building capacity - completely lacks foresight. Maintenance - needs much better supervision. Custodial services and energy management - these are taken care of at the schools and seem to be fine.
- The district is always playing catch-up. This is a growing district, years away from build out, and it is important for the board and administration to stay ahead of the game.
- An area where we've done well. We successfully passed last two bond elections, but we don't want to be all show "facilities" with no substance.
- Our grounds could use improvement.
- Poor control of the air conditioning. The building of the facilities, however, does seem to be well done.
- Have seen building used for lots of community meetings. Have not seen district policies to govern.
- Custodial staff seems good - have received compliments on how clean.
- Great job - custodial services. Energy use - could conserve more energy by monitoring heating/air. Facilities planning - great job. Building capacity - great job building schools with growth of town.
- Why does maintenance department continue to buy refurbished parts for old equipment? Wouldn't it be more cost effective to buy a new one instead of two to three refurbished ones?
- Appropriate seating for children who do not remain in wheelchairs or who are in walkers.
- Why are tennis courts at the high school not used? What is the cost of maintaining them?
- Bus area has too many kids to supervise easily.
- Facilities planning - why upgrade only certain schools? Certain elementary schools still have portables and other schools receive new classrooms.
- It is not a good use of energy to cut off heating and cooling by certain times. Employees should not be penalized by working longer or coming in on weekends by working in the heat of summer or cold of winter.

- Our building was not built to hold [grades] K-6. When sixth [grade] was moved down to elementary, it created overcrowding. The maintenance of our building is lacking. We still have leaks that we've had since the building opened.
- Maintenance - seems to be good for the most part at our campus. Building capacity - okay/good. Custodial services - good. Energy use - good.
- Parking lot very unsafe due to overcrowding in area.
- Smart thinking using the architectural plans repeatedly!
- The new school buildings are beautiful and were much needed due to the growth of RISD.
- We need to be bringing the oldest schools up to par with the newest.
- In light of a new high school on the horizon plus numerous other schools in the district, I think the community deserves better information before, during and after construction regarding planning and cost.
- Build each building for long-term ease of maintenance and operations. Look for opportunities to increase building usage, including year-round school classes.
- Met with teachers for input in new facilities- also community members and homeowners.
- Custodial services are great.
- Custodial services very good.
- Great to have work orders online.
- Buildings and grounds kept extremely well - great communication with departments.
- It is very convenient to have work orders on line - easily tracked.
- Maintenance and custodial are very responsive.
- Pleased that district encourages use of good materials in construction of schools to aid in up-keep and life of materials.
- District does an awesome job of cleanliness - students respect property.
- District paid more than twice the value on tax rolls for high school and middle school sites.
- Used same design for several schools - saves dollars.
- One bond issue failed due to building of indoor practice field - too much money spent in athletics.
- Schools are very well maintained.
- Schools are immaculate and bathrooms are always clean.

ASSET AND RISK MANAGEMENT

- Health insurance for district employees is a tremendous asset for attracting quality employees. The district policy on this should continue.

- The school board is putting us into way, way too much debt too fast. They are not spending our bond money frugally or carefully.
- Bond package that went to the construction of the all-weather sports facility at the high school was hidden from voters; [RISD] never disclosed this shameful waste of money.
- Health insurance doesn't cover much.
- Could we know what our bond rating is?
- Very bad health insurance. The dental plan is worthless.
- When someone is hurt on the job, why is workers' compensation explained to them instead of having to call Austin and be treated like you shouldn't use the system?
- Health insurance was not explained this year.
- I am so glad [RISD] provides me with health insurance. Thank you.
- How can we be one of the richest or highest taxed districts in the area and be poor? Where is our money being invested? Who is ultimately responsible for investments and proper use of funds?
- Thanks for the health insurance.
- Health insurance is good. RISD does a great job of staying competitive in this area.
- Current health care coverage appears very costly because RISD pays full single employee rates.
- They pay for employee's insurance, unlike most other districts.
- I think it is such a positive aspect for RISD to have health insurance 100 percent coverage absolutely free.
- Health insurance - wonderful! 403(b) - wonderful! Staff on campuses should be compensated for extra duty, volunteer [work].
- Passing rate of last bond issue was 2 to 1.
- Received an upgrade in bond rating from one of the bonding companies.
- Only one person attended budget and tax rate hearing.
- Refinanced the 1993 issue of bonds which will save the district \$700,000.
- Bond election was an indicator of community support for the schools - hasn't always been there.
- Refinancing of bonds an excellent move to save dollars.
- Two bond issues failed- never had a fund balance because district was trying to keep tax rate low so bond issue would pass therefore the district fell way behind.
- Need to better educate about tax rates - amazed at the different opinions in group.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

- I would like to see the district focus their time, money and concerns on the needs of the local students and community. It is

very unfortunate when our time and dollars are being spent on meeting the demands of state and federal mandates with the constant threat of having funding withdrawn when, or if, we are not compliant.

- There is too much administrative cost.
- From a parent perspective, all of our schools do not seem to be created equal. It seems that the "squeaky wheel", or parents with time and money are vocal and get their schools the money. I'm fine with the higher taxes if I could feel that my child was getting his fair share.
- I think all sports, male and female, should be given the same amount of emphasis and money. Some sports are obviously set apart as more important than others.
- I am very concerned about our school taxes. Some of us would like to retire here, but as things are going now, retired teachers will not be able to afford to stay in this district.
- [The] budget should show variance from state averages, and explanations should be provided by department chiefs to the board.
- Shift funds from sports programs that exclude those with physical or mental differences. Include or provide equal alternatives.
- Although I'm sure the financial reporting and internal audits are per legal requirements, I feel these are items that are being kept from public scrutiny. We have the highest tax rate allowed and our schools' computer systems aren't usually online until months after school starts. New schools open without basic supplies and without working cafeterias. The district does not provide many things that they should have the money for, i.e., books in the library, computers (that work the first day of school). Instead of budgeting for athletic drug testing, budget for academic supplies.
- Do we get financing for ADA? We changed attendance collection time from 10:00 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. Did the school board even approve this? We lose ADA, don't we, with every student arriving at 8:31 or later. Trying to promote positive behavior from parents is a noble goal, but was this a sound financial decision?
- RISD doesn't spend money wisely. They cut costs at the budgeting stage only to spend more later on. They also focus on the wrong things.
- HELP! How do we get out of this mess? Being capped on the M&O rate will academically kill this district. We finally have a progressive board and administration that wants to improve academics, yet our hands are tied, and the increase in new homes won't fund improvement - if we were lucky it would only fund the status quo. When you look at the results we've achieved academically given the low student/dollars ratio, it's amazing.
- The school taxes are too high for the education the kids are getting.

- [I] question recent events whereby the vending machine procedure changed. It was each school shared in the profits, and the principals were given the money for use. The superintendent changed it to one central system. It appears this may prove to be a method of less money for student use.
- I'm on the inside. I know a little more than the average parent about the campus budget. Communication with employees needs to improve, especially those handling the actual campus budget. The business manager has been a great asset. She is working diligently to improve this area.
- I want my tax dollars to stay in my district to educate my kids. There are enough financial shenanigans to watch out for without giving the district another excuse for poor financial management.
- There is no internal audit function - the district is open to fraud, waste and abuse. Currently, there is not a permanent, qualified business manager - the district does not have a CPA or MBA. Board operates in a vacuum.
- Bond issues: hidden items in the bond not fully disclosed to the public. The district does not explain the need to increase the property tax rate.
- Budgets for libraries are very slim and none for some schools. Things look good outside, but get in to the age of books and how much staff is used to staff libraries.
- Last May during a DEIC meeting, I asked the question: What is our bond rating? Due to the fact we have nothing in reserve. The question was never answered. In fact, the assistant superintendent dismissed the total meeting.
- Tax rate and resulting tax revenue are among the highest in the state per student, yet instructional dollars spent per student are in the lower one-half in the state. We must understand where spending is not in line. How does RISD compare against established benchmarks? We moved here from Clear Creek ISD, and the emphasis on education and academic support for the students is far less evident in this district.
- Budgeting/fiscal operations: Why do we start school when no funds are available until September 1?
- Each school varies greatly as to what is purchased for the departments at different schools. I can't get testing materials or forms because there "just isn't any money."
- RISD Web site boasts how frugal the district is, but we have one of the highest tax bases in the area. Where are these funds going?
- Budget: Times are tough. There are a few salaries at central office that can be dispersed into teaching position to help out. Student ratios go down, and it could help the campuses that have more challenging clientele.

- Taxes are too high for what we get! Less central office, more money on students.
- Is improving - should have a positive fund balance for close of 2001-02.
- District spends more money on athletics than instruction.
- Libraries do not meet state standard.
- All teachers said that libraries were fine.
- District gives a notebook with all the codes- per pupil allotment and can make special requests.
- Budget process starts early and we receive per pupil allotment -can make special requests.
- We never see where the dollars are spent - especially bond dollars.
- Where are Coke contract dollars going?
- Fund balance was used to take care of asbestos problem at Dobbs several years ago.

PURCHASING

- The district did not use the competitive bid process in the building of some new schools and is not using it in some areas of the new high school.
- Books and workbooks are purchased, but don't make it to the classroom.
- Students are asked to purchase class supplies and receive an extra grade and are therefore penalized if they don't spend money for school supplies. This process gives teachers "multiple years" worth of supplies but each year they ask students to buy more. Where's all this stuff going?
- Schools should have all textbooks when the school year begins.
- Supplemental books need to be evenly distributed between classrooms.
- Sadly understaffed at central office, but they do a great job getting it done! Purchasing through internal warehouse needs updated system to account or bill. Hard on campus level to balance purchases in books.
- I believe great improvements can be made here. It is sad that teachers start school without supplies and have to reach into own pockets for classroom needs.
- Allow students to buy a set of textbooks for home use to eliminate the pain of carting heavy books back and forth to school.
- Make technology purchases (that is advantage of bulk purchase rates) of software and hardware available to students.
- I know that an architect's blueprinting is rolled into a design and construction bid. Separate it out and you will save at least 30 percent on reproduction cost.

- Our library does not have funds to purchase Spanish books for our bilingual children. Is this fair?
- Construction contracts should be separate from design. Bidding should include complete drawing set with a requirement for firm, fixed price.
- Problems here that need improving.
- Not bidding everything that should be.
- November 7th and still no Bilingual textbooks in some bilingual classes.
- No additional reading and math books in Spanish and English.
- Is there a certain amount of dollars that bilingual teachers should get to purchase materials for bilingual students?
- One of the new campuses received books, the other did not.
- Not enough texts for a month - had to share.
- Bilingual books still not here.
- One new school received all textbooks (Principal had them delivered to her home)- other did not - other campuses had trouble with textbook arrival.
- 7th Grade Spanish books arrived two weeks ago - seven weeks late.
- AP at High School lacking textbooks.
- No large print books or books on tape for visually impaired.

FOOD SERVICE

- Another bright spot for the district.
- Food is decent, quality is good. There are too many sweets offered. Too many choices for elementary school.
- They amaze me! Overall great job. Central nutrition office needs to communicate changes to campuses and parents, i.e., not selling foods with sugar percentage.
- Food is nasty and lines take way too long.
- Food quality is poor and the costs are very high.
- The food at the elementary level is terrible: cold, burned, not enough, etc.
- Lots of carbohydrates - not healthy, just fattening. They need to balance out the food groups, but I also know that our students will not eat anything healthy.
- [Need] healthy food choices - more like home cooking and less like fast food.
- Charge more! Raise taxes if need be.
- Take candy and colas out of lower grades. Teach children at school about the value of real food.
- I feel we are getting a great deal for our money with our school lunches.

- Some children aren't getting adequate time to eat due to cafeteria workers.
- Junk food should not be provided as an option for children to purchase. Only nutritious foods should be provided!
- The amount and size of servings has gone to nearly nothing. After years of eating in school café, the quality of food has caused nearly all teachers to refuse to eat in café.
- Better food! Fruits, vegetables, more nutrition, less fat.
- Runs smoothly. Manager and workers very polite and helpful to adults and students.
- Manager and workers at my campus are great. Seems well organized. Helpful.
- No food to be delivered by parents.
- I believe in limiting snack selection and purchase. I'm glad that is being done more currently than in the past. Nice to see healthy alternatives, also!
- Leave snacks out of the elementary schools.
- Would like more variety. Service is great as is the facility.
- With four lunch periods at the high school, by last lunch period the food is dry or cold.
- Many students eat in café- a good deal for the price.
- All the teachers eat in the café- that says something.
- When child has no money, child does not get to eat.
- Why are they serving pizza for breakfast?
- High school - kept leftover pizza from day before for breakfast- when employee questioned practice, employee was terminated.

COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

- The IT staff at the district level does not always seem knowledgeable or qualified.
- I am concerned that there is not enough utilization of available technology.
- We still do not have software for our computer lab. We will not get any software because there is no money. We also do not have our computers working in our classrooms.
- Help! Not only are we understaffed, but total procedural set up needs an overhaul. We are extremely behind in technology or the use of it.
- Old technology, out of date teaching materials. Very behind the times.
- Why does the district continue to buy updates that are not compatible to classroom computers?
- Classroom computers were down almost nine weeks and no one would repair [them].

- Seem to be way behind. Purchased a ton of equipment and it sat in classrooms - not functional for a least one whole semester.
- RISD has not demonstrated any type of strategic plan to justify the money spent or to know if they are on track with meeting the technology needs of the district.
- Our existing technology is inadequate in both the instructional and administrative areas. If a PC has problems in a teacher's classroom, the district does not have adequate resources to get the problems fixed. The IT staff is not properly trained and is truly an embarrassment.
- All of last year our computer lab was not working.
- Technology is behind for students with disabilities. The computers were not delivered when school started.
- New technology is added before teachers learn how to use the old.
- We have multiple labs, techs and resources for technology, but no support on campuses for problems. Techs are supposed to be equipped and knowledgeable.
- Make sure every campus has updated working technology. May need to increase technology staff to keep technology current.
- Hardware needs to be repaired and installed in a more timely manner.
- Computers do not work. Technology department must be understaffed or not staffed correctly. Slow response.
- Computers - fix them! Technology department is very understaffed. It takes very long to get hardware and software issues resolved. Web site is great!
- Not enough trained specialists to deal with problems. It takes forever for anything to be resolved.
- Needs a great deal of improvement. Changing the network during the school year rather than during the summer when no classes are going on did not make sense. Our technology person on campus should be given more freedom to get things going for our school.
- Why can't the lab tech be given more responsibility on their campus to help out?
- We live in a technology world. Our computer facilities are very substandard. The networking and maintenance are constant problems. There are not enough high level classes.
- Computer technology staff must be incompetent since as of November, computers are not up in all schools. Email not up. System not ready for grades at new schools.
- The district is growing and needs to make technology a top priority.
- We are heading in a great direction. The Internet and email is so much faster and smoother. Our computer tech is wonderful and helpful. It is great to have two computers in my classroom this year in second grade.

- Technology is bringing us up to speed with fiber optics, better servers, etc. They need more staff, but are doing the best they can for what they have.
- It would be nice if all schools had access to computer labs.
- Technology is not going away. We need more computers in the classroom, in the labs, and we need to have all students have more time on the computers.
- Trying to get help with computers - have to go outside the district for employees and use parents to come in and trouble shoot as well as help with programs that were chosen by the district.
- No equality between the elementary schools on computer technology. Extreme frustration on the computer tech's part because something is always not working and there is not a quick fix. Holds up the learning for students.
- Need to look at proper way to finance.
- Instruction and MIS need attention.
- TIF grants are \$1 million plus.
- Department is very understaffed.
- Doesn't work, but they are working on it.
- Computer labs have been down for weeks.
- E-mail does not work at times.
- Printer in one classroom works - next classroom does not - not enough printers.
- Technology needs to be improved.
- Need after school technology training.
- Older schools need upgrading - especially instructional side- need to get ahead of the game rather than play catch up.
- Total system not working.
- Turn around help is slow- computer labs out of commission from weeks to months.
- Technology staff- understaffed.
- Some campuses have TV in each classroom, while others have to share between all teachers in grade level.
- Technology will be good when it gets there.
- As predictable as the Texas weather.
- 1st graders are required to type in 28 characters for login.
- If not computer literate- no trouble shooters.
- Have had Math Renaissance for two years, can't get it loaded.
- Haven't had printing capability in a month.
- Technology plan is well developed - district can't meet timelines.
- Entire school does not work - other schools have intermittent problems.
- No keyboarding program at some schools.
- Outdated equipment and no availability of printers.
- Early emphasis of technology started at elementary - then not followed through.

- Poor communication from district to campus- Career Tech purchased Office 2000 texts- paid for in June and now told computers will have Office XP - most machines at high school not equipped to support Office XP.
- Staff is not knowledgeable enough.
- District says it is going to spend dollars then we never see it.
- Information not automated - when information is requested, must be manually compiled.
- E-mail does not work - can't reach teachers.
- Some employees do not know how to use e-mail, therefore do not answer - must train staff in how to use.
- Web site is lacking to stay in touch with teachers - no real webmaster.
- Some schools give morning announcement via TV, while other schools must share one TV per grade level.
- E-mail addresses are not valid - causes a problem with communication.

TRANSPORTATION

- Why are part-time drivers allowed to work over 40 hours and get overtime when regular drivers' hours are being cut?
- Transportation dispatchers do not have to have a commercial drivers license or be familiar with bus routes or Rockwall County.
- Should be building schools where kids can walk to school. Way too much busing.
- Students should have seat belts.
- Drivers seem to be very friendly and careful drivers.
- Changed bus routes, but did not inform parents or students.
- The buses are always breaking down.
- The bus drivers do not "write up" students who misbehave, therefore the school is unaware of fighting, cussing, etc. on the bus.
- Why do school buses stop at every house and/or street? Wouldn't it be more cost effective to stop about every five corners and let students walk to the bus?
- Better than last year.
- Doing good.
- Time schedule of pick-ups/drop-offs is inconsistent.
- Our bus drivers are very polite and helpful to us and our students. Transportation on field trips is awesome. The drivers always have maps and directions to where we are going!
- The transportation, maintenance and scheduling seems fine.
- Not enough qualified drivers. Many scheduling problems. Drivers do not know the directions before the trips.

- The transportation department cannot tell you what bus a child is on or if a child should be on the bus.
- I am a teacher and have had many students complain about the bus drivers and the lack of order on the bus.
- More buses to serve school, not second run of buses.
- I think all bus drivers need an aide to ride along. A bus driver can't pay attention to the road, the children, etc. all at the same time. It's not only the special needs children who need aides.
- Bus discipline is a problem.
- Transporting all students.
- Aging fleet.
- Purchased buses last two years.
- At Jones Elementary, one bus transports all the Hispanic children to their neighborhood and another bus transports Anglo children to the same area.
- My street is zoned for Dobbs, but rest of families on my street go to Williams.
- If less than 15 students for field trip, can't get a bus- no longer using vans so teacher is transporting in personal auto.
- District provides late busses for after school sessions for at-risk and for extracurricular practice.
- Career/Tech budget charged to transport students to site for daily class.
- Buses on time.
- Bus drivers teach safety on campus.
- Has been a challenge without a director.
- Department is very safety conscious.
- No overcrowding on buses.
- Middle school counselors would like to see buses arrive earlier for tutoring.
- Transportation does a lot of training for safety.
- Buses overcrowded.
- Two mechanics - fleet has doubled and still two mechanics.
- Need professional help in routing - some busses have 72 riders, others 12.
- We purchase used buses that other districts feel are outdated.
- [It took] six weeks to get bus schedule straightened out.
- Late every day.
- Broken buses.
- Three accidents at bus stop because bus does not wait for students.
- Head Start students on bus with much older students.
- Bus driver can see children running to catch bus and doesn't wait for them.
- Bus came 30 minutes later than the printed schedule.
- Given several schedules with different times.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

- Student discipline policies at the local level are adequate. Some state-mandated policies are ridiculous. Safety and security programs are taken serious and practiced adequately.
- Rigid and arbitrary enforcement of certain policies, specifically cell phones.
- As an employee, I feel under trained for emergencies. I've seen administrator responses that I feel were too relaxed.
- Very poor. Very difficult to get in touch with the administration. The school board also doesn't take threats seriously.
- The check system in some of the elementary schools is ridiculous. A child can receive checks or marks for minor infractions and still be under the unsatisfactory mark at the end of a grading period.
- What discipline?
- Policies are upheld and discipline is used fairly. Campus security (number of doors) is la4
- How can a parent make the school hold up to the written policy stated in the handbook and what recourse do they have to follow to see that students not return to that particular class or school?
- Even the brand new schools don't have "in your face" front offices. Every office is off to the side, and the less scrupulous would go right past it.
- Truancy Officer (assistant principal) needs more help.
- Alternative education - need to look at districts with success in this area. Our system has too many holes.
- Our custodian checks and locks every door every day. We carry walkie-talkies to recess and bus duty. We practice fire drills, tornado drills and lock down drills. Our students feel safe. We feel safe as teachers. Visitors check in and wear badges.
- The students and other individuals are very safe at the schools. I feel that the discipline policies are fair and effective. I do wish that each class had a crisis chart. Right now they are only in the workrooms.
- Relations with police - good. Discipline policies are clear, but executed differently campus to campus. Safety coordinator on each campus. Crisis charts sent out recently to update campuses.
- There is a need at the high school for a person to deal with after dance issues.
- Policies are great. Many are not carried out. It is sad to see that some schools have lock downs and fire drills and other procedures, but do not practice them.
- Relations with law enforcement seem excellent. I only see it from elementary level but DARE program is appreciated.
- Not all student discipline policies are enforced or they are not enforced equally.

- Teachers need to follow the same discipline policies! Local law enforcement (SROs) need to help monitor schools, work halls. Be seen!
- I would like to see the district issue the same procedure for check-in/check-out for everyone.
- We are still saying we have no drug problem! We do not enforce discipline rules that are set up - clothes, earrings, etc.
- Not sure discipline is administered fairly.
- Character Education districtwide - good.
- Bus drivers teach safety on campus.
- Effective discipline management plan and administered fairly.
- Training at campuses good.
- Drills for strangers on campus.
- Custodians lock all but one door as soon as bell rings.
- One of first districts to have harnesses for Head Start children.
- Very attuned to parents.
- New schools have all electronic doors.
- Safety drills include law enforcement.
- Look at bus discipline.
- Safety is superb- when I came on campus, security was there immediately.
- Why only drug testing for sports?
- RISD has a hot-line for anonymously reporting drug use.
- Need a program to address bullying and violence.
- Not allowed to go to G/T class was used as a discipline technique for a G/T student.
- Check on diversity in alternative school.
- RESPECT program at high school is excellent.
- If district has zero tolerance, how does that align with drug testing positive being referred for counseling?
- Due to Bilingual program being on limited number of elementary campuses- parents felt that discipline was a problem in middle school because bilingual students did not know the students from other schools.

Appendix B

TEACHER SURVEY RESULTS

n=123

Demographic Data

1. Gender (Optional)	Male	Female	No response				
	13%	82%	5%				
2. Ethnicity (Optional)	Anglo	African American	Hispanic	Asian	Other	No Response	
	87%	2%	5%	0%	2%	4%	
3. How long have you been employed by Rockwall ISD?	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	20+ years	No Response	
	54%	23%	8%	7%	8%	1%	
4. What grade(s) do you teach this year?	Pre-Kindergarten	Kindergarten	First	Second	Third		
	1%	6%	9%	9%	10%		
	Fourth	Fifth	Sixth	Seventh	Eighth		
	7%	9%	7%	7%	6%		
	Ninth	Tenth	Eleventh	Twelfth			
	6%	7%	8%	7%			

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.	11%	35%	45%	7%	1%	2%
2	School board members listen to the opinions and desires of	12%	50%	28%	7%	2%	2%

	others.						
3	School board members work well with the superintendent.	19%	48%	30%	2%	0%	2%
4	The school board has a good image in the community.	20%	59%	15%	4%	1%	2%
5	The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	24%	52%	11%	10%	2%	2%
6	The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	23%	46%	20%	10%	0%	2%
7	Central administration is efficient.	10%	43%	11%	25%	7%	3%
8	Central administration supports the educational process.	17%	54%	8%	13%	6%	2%
9	The morale of central administration staff is good.	15%	46%	33%	5%	0%	2%

B. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
10	Education is the main priority in our	33%	47%	3%	8%	2%	6%

	school district.						
11	Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.	20%	48%	7%	19%	3%	3%
12	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	25%	45%	19%	8%	2%	2%
13	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	11%	27%	33%	23%	4%	2%
14	The district provides curriculum guides for all grades and subjects.	30%	47%	7%	11%	2%	2%
15	The curriculum guides are appropriately aligned and coordinated.	20%	48%	7%	17%	5%	2%
16	The district's curriculum guides clearly outline what to teach and how to teach it.	15%	37%	11%	28%	7%	3%
17	The district has effective educational programs for the following:						
	a. Reading	23%	57%	8%	10%	0%	2%
	b. Writing	21%	53%	8%	15%	0%	2%

	c. Mathematics	21%	54%	11%	11%	0%	2%
	d. Science	21%	48%	17%	11%	0%	2%
	e. English or Language Arts	21%	59%	11%	6%	1%	2%
	f. Computer Instruction	9%	32%	12%	39%	7%	1%
	g. Social Studies (history or geography)	20%	54%	16%	8%	0%	2%
	h. Fine Arts	19%	59%	15%	5%	2%	2%
	i. Physical Education	20%	61%	14%	3%	1%	2%
	j. Business Education	7%	32%	54%	5%	1%	2%
	k. Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	6%	24%	50%	14%	5%	1%
	l. Foreign Language	11%	41%	37%	5%	2%	2%
18	The district has effective special programs for the following:						
	a. Library Service	15%	50%	19%	13%	3%	1%
	b. Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	23%	62%	7%	2%	5%	1%
	c. Special Education	25%	57%	7%	7%	2%	1%
	d. Head Start and Even Start programs	22%	34%	41%	2%	0%	2%
	e. Dyslexia program	23%	40%	27%	7%	2%	1%

	f. Student mentoring program	19%	48%	21%	9%	2%	2%
	g. Advanced placement program	21%	45%	29%	2%	2%	1%
	h. Literacy program	11%	44%	34%	9%	1%	1%
	i. Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	14%	29%	33%	20%	4%	1%
	j. Summer school programs	20%	54%	14%	11%	2%	1%
	k. Alternative education programs	10%	35%	40%	10%	4%	2%
	l. "English as a second language" program	7%	46%	24%	19%	2%	3%
	m. Career counseling program	3%	31%	46%	14%	5%	2%
	n. College counseling program	7%	31%	49%	7%	5%	2%
	o. Counseling the parents of students	6%	34%	39%	16%	2%	2%
	p. Drop out prevention program	6%	24%	54%	11%	2%	2%
19	Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	18%	41%	22%	14%	2%	2%

20	Teacher turnover is low.	7%	45%	15%	23%	8%	2%
21	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	17%	48%	10%	19%	4%	2%
22	Teacher openings are filled quickly.	19%	57%	9%	10%	2%	3%
23	Teachers are rewarded for superior performance.	2%	21%	13%	46%	17%	2%
24	Teachers are counseled about less than satisfactory performance.	8%	44%	27%	18%	2%	2%
25	Teachers are knowledgeable in the subject areas they teach.	20%	65%	5%	7%	2%	2%
26	All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.	7%	34%	7%	25%	25%	2%
27	The student-to-teacher ratio is reasonable.	7%	56%	3%	24%	8%	2%
28	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	32%	54%	6%	5%	2%	2%

C. Personnel

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
29	District salaries are competitive with similar positions in the job market.	1%	28%	2%	43%	24%	2%
30	The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.	11%	59%	15%	11%	4%	2%
31	Temporary workers are rarely used.	4%	49%	33%	10%	3%	2%
32	The district successfully projects future staffing needs.	4%	40%	17%	29%	8%	2%
33	The district has an effective employee recruitment program.	7%	50%	27%	9%	5%	2%
34	The district operates an effective staff development program.	8%	51%	4%	24%	11%	2%
35	District employees receive annual personnel evaluations.	34%	61%	2%	2%	0%	1%
36	The district rewards competence and experience and spells out qualifications	2%	27%	15%	36%	20%	1%

	such as seniority and skill levels needed for promotion.						
37	Employees who perform below the standard of expectation are counseled appropriately and timely.	5%	39%	31%	19%	5%	2%
38	The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	5%	33%	52%	7%	2%	2%
39	The district's health insurance package meets my needs.	14%	48%	11%	16%	10%	1%

D. Community Involvement

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
40	The district regularly communicates with parents.	20%	65%	9%	3%	2%	1%
41	The local television and radio stations regularly report school news and menus.	6%	25%	37%	27%	3%	2%
42	Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school	20%	54%	8%	15%	2%	1%

	programs.						
43	District facilities are open for community use.	25%	55%	15%	4%	0%	1%

E. Facilities Use and Management

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
44	The district plans facilities far enough in the future to support enrollment growth.	13%	46%	7%	22%	11%	1%
45	Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff and the board provide input into facility planning.	13%	46%	20%	16%	4%	1%
46	The architect and construction managers are selected objectively and impersonally.	7%	27%	59%	5%	2%	1%
47	The quality of new construction is excellent.	13%	49%	26%	11%	1%	1%
48	Schools are clean.	32%	63%	1%	2%	0%	2%
49	Buildings are properly maintained in a	22%	50%	4%	20%	4%	1%

	timely manner.						
50	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	12%	46%	4%	32%	5%	1%
51	Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	17%	50%	16%	13%	3%	1%

F. Financial Management

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
52	Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers.	6%	41%	24%	20%	7%	3%
53	Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	11%	34%	41%	7%	4%	3%
54	Financial resources are allocated fairly and equitably at my school.	7%	45%	20%	16%	9%	3%

G. Purchasing and Warehousing

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
55	Purchasing gets me what I need when I need it.	3%	55%	13%	22%	4%	2%
56	Purchasing acquires the	4%	43%	34%	11%	4%	3%

	highest quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.						
57	Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for the requestor.	4%	54%	16%	18%	2%	6%
58	Vendors are selected competitively.	5%	31%	54%	5%	2%	3%
59	The district provides teachers and administrators an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment.	5%	54%	19%	19%	1%	3%
60	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	12%	56%	9%	17%	2%	3%
61	Textbooks are in good shape.	11%	68%	9%	6%	2%	4%
62	The school library meets the student needs for books and other resources.	11%	54%	7%	20%	5%	3%

H. Food Services

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
63	The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	5%	45%	19%	20%	8%	3%

64	Food is served warm.	9%	62%	15%	8%	3%	3%
65	Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.	11%	72%	3%	9%	2%	3%
66	Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	14%	54%	15%	12%	2%	3%
67	Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	17%	67%	7%	2%	2%	4%
68	Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	20%	57%	11%	7%	2%	3%
69	Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	22%	68%	4%	2%	0%	3%

I. Safety and Security

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
70	School disturbances are infrequent.	24%	65%	2%	7%	0%	2%
71	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	17%	50%	20%	11%	1%	2%
72	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	7%	17%	21%	42%	11%	2%
73	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	11%	46%	15%	22%	4%	2%
74	Security	15%	49%	32%	3%	0%	2%

	personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.						
75	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	14%	43%	37%	4%	0%	2%
76	A good working arrangement exists between the local law enforcement and the district.	18%	66%	14%	0%	1%	2%
77	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	14%	54%	10%	14%	7%	2%
78	Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	11%	67%	10%	7%	3%	2%

J. Computers and Technology

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
79	Students regularly use computers.	15%	50%	4%	24%	6%	2%
80	Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	9%	37%	3%	35%	15%	2%
81	Teachers know	15%	61%	5%	14%	4%	2%

	how to use computers in the classroom.						
82	Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	14%	62%	6%	10%	7%	2%
83	The district meets student needs in classes in computer fundamentals.	11%	37%	8%	33%	9%	2%
84	The district meets student needs in classes in advanced computer skills.	6%	23%	28%	27%	15%	2%
85	Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	18%	53%	7%	15%	6%	2%

The following comments convey the perception of Rockwall Independent School District teachers and do not reflect the findings or opinion of the Comptroller or review team. The narrative comments are the actual comments received.

Verbatim: Teachers Survey Comments

- The quality of education is good at this time, however, many teachers (quality teachers) are considering leaving the district for higher salaries, better health benefits, and paid educational opportunities for masters and doctorate programs that are open to all employees, not a selected group.
- Technology is a challenge. More would be accomplished if the computers worked more of the time.
- Rockwall is a wonderful district to work for, however, they are slow in some areas like staff development opportunities.
- There are no student computers in classrooms.
- I would like to see more emphasis on enhancing media resources for students.

- Rockwall needs to recognize the great need for Spanish translators. Bilingual teachers should not be asked to translate letters or flyers for the school, they have children they need to be teaching.
- We are too worried about teaching to the TAKS. The kids that go to college are not prepared.
- Some schools have TV's in every room, and some do not.
- Schools are given the same budget, so schools in better neighborhoods can raise extra funds to support supplies needed in classrooms, while the lower income schools rely on the teachers to pay for extra stuff out of their pockets.
- The central office is top heavy, we have the "good old boy" system in place.
- I would prefer to see fewer coaches in the social studies departments. This would help with class size and lessen the workload for teachers in this department who are not coaches.
- I have a daughter with two learning disabilities and I am concerned about her educational development. RISD has provided a system and staff to help her achieve normalcy in academic endeavors as well as fine arts. The administration in the district cannot be thanked enough.
- Textbooks need to be issued from the warehouse in a timely manner in the future. State adopted textbooks need to be provided to decrease curriculum development "implementation" problems and maximize quality instruction.
- The administration in RISD needs to be evaluated for its lack of "encouragement" to its staff and negativity.
- I like how the district has implemented a mentor program to lend support to rookie teachers. I feel that this will help retain teachers for the district and provide stability for all students.
- Rockwall is a great district to work for, I do feel that we have many wonderful teachers who do extraordinary things with children.
- We have been in school for a month and we still do not have computers up and running in all schools.
- Not enough people are managing computer breakdowns, so children are not at the computers as much as the state mandates in TEKS.
- Servers are down constantly.
- Technology is a big issue. Our server is not adequate and requires constant revamps. The system provided for records in the counseling and registrar's office is still a DOS system that is hardly navigable. We have only last year received one computer per teacher. We have two computer labs and two portable labs that do not always function because of the server issue. When we call for assistance, we are given the run around and told that they will get to it in 48 hours which translated means three weeks.

- Technology is a nightmare. It is supposed to be technology support, there is no support about it. The technology department does not respond to campus needs at all. Campus techs need to be empowered to actually do things (change passwords, add software, etc.)
- I applaud Rockwall for wanting to be progressive in their approach to education. However, I do see a discrepancy between what is expected of the classroom teacher to provide in the classroom and the lack of technological support from administration. Foresight has been lacking to provide the district with the needs of our rapidly growing school community. What good does it do to the "latest" computers if the technology staff cannot keep up with the demands to have the network up and running?
- The scope and sequence needs to be horizontally and vertically aligned to eliminate children being taught the same units yearly in the lower grades. I have only been with the district for a short time, but strongly believe that a district of this size and socioeconomic stature should have a strong curriculum in place.
- Overall, Rockwall does a nice job in providing services for children. However, I feel a dyslexic teacher or language science teacher is needed for K-2, services are not offered until 3rd grade. Helping children at an earlier age would benefit the child and classroom teacher.
- Overall- very good.
- I believe that it would be beneficial for RISD to offer more professional development opportunities. We as teachers need continuous training that will ensure our improvement. Also, I know of other districts that offer an hourly pay as an incentive to go for training. Suggestion-Rockwall needs a districtwide Kindergarten coordinator so that we are all on the same page.
- My children are receiving a great education in Rockwall ISD. The district has made great strides in the last two years to plan for future growth, recruit and maintain quality teachers, and prepare its children for the 21st century.
- The superintendent does an excellent job of facilitating and leading our district. I have a great deal of respect for him and the way he manages our district. Before teaching full time, I was a substitute for many years throughout the district. I have worked in almost every school. We have an excellent district.
- I feel very blessed to work in Rockwall ISD. I am currently serving my fourth year as a teacher here and wouldn't think of going anywhere else. However, I do believe that there is always room or areas of improvement. There are several issues in our district which need more attention and evaluation. I feel that communication is sometimes vague and unsupportive. My biggest and most crucial concern is a few things which need to be "in

writing" as district policy. Rockwall tends to try and set rules at the last minute without making them upfront and policy. Overall the district is great and I enjoy my students each day.

- Rockwall is a good district to work in as a teacher.
- This is a great school district to work for as an instructor. Better planning needs to be implemented to allow for our overwhelming student growth in population.
- The district has always had such great potential, but money and the lack thereof is responsible for many decisions that are made-end results-education suffers (especially for the "regular" student.)

Appendix C

PRINCIPAL AND ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL SURVEY RESULTS

n=18

Demographic Data

1.	Gender (Optional)	Male	Female	No Response			
		44%	56%	0%			
2.	Ethnicity (Optional)	Anglo	African American	Hispanic	Asian	Other	
		100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	
3.	How long have you been employed by Rockwall ISD?	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	20+ years	No Response
		50%	22%	28%	0%	0%	0%
4.	What grade(s) do you teach this year?						
	Pre-Kindergarten	Kindergarten	First	Second	Third		
	28%	44%	44%	44%	44%		
	Fourth	Fifth	Sixth	Seventh	Eighth		
	44%	44%	44%	28%	28%		
	Ninth	Tenth	Eleventh	Twelfth			
	0%	22%	17%	17%			

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.	39%	50%	11%	0%	0%	0%
2	School board members listen to the opinions	39%	56%	6%	0%	0%	0%

	and desires of others.						
3	School board members understand their role as policymakers and stay out of the day-to-day management of the district.	39%	56%	6%	0%	0%	0%
4	The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	50%	44%	6%	0%	0%	0%
5	The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	39%	44%	17%	0%	0%	0%
6	Central administration is efficient.	6%	56%	17%	11%	0%	11%
7	Central administration supports the educational process.	28%	56%	6%	6%	0%	6%
8	The morale of central administration staff is good.	28%	44%	11%	6%	0%	11%
9	Education is the main priority in our school district.	50%	44%	0%	0%	0%	6%
10	Teachers are given an	44%	44%	6%	0%	0%	6%

	opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.						
11	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	28%	39%	28%	6%	0%	0%
12	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	6%	33%	28%	33%	0%	0%
13	The district provides curriculum guides for all grades and subjects.	56%	39%	0%	6%	0%	0%
14	The curriculum guides are appropriately aligned and coordinated.	33%	56%	0%	6%	0%	6%
15	The district's curriculum guides clearly outline what to teach and how to teach it.	22%	50%	11%	17%	0%	0%
16	The district has effective educational programs for the following:						
	a. Reading	28%	61%	0%	11%	0%	0%
	b. Writing	28%	56%	0%	17%	0%	0%
	c. Mathematics	22%	67%	0%	11%	0%	0%
	d. Science	22%	67%	0%	11%	0%	0%

	e. English or Language Arts	22%	72%	0%	6%	0%	0%
	f. Computer Instruction	0%	72%	0%	28%	0%	0%
	g. Social Studies (history or geography)	22%	56%	6%	17%	0%	0%
	h. Fine Arts	17%	83%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	i. Physical Education	17%	83%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	j. Business Education	0%	50%	44%	6%	0%	0%
	k. Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	0%	44%	50%	6%	0%	0%
	l. Foreign Language	6%	50%	28%	17%	0%	0%
17	The district has effective special programs for the following:						
	a. Library Service	17%	56%	17%	11%	0%	0%
	b. Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	17%	67%	17%	0%	0%	0%
	c. Special Education	22%	67%	6%	6%	0%	0%
	d. Head Start and Even Start programs	17%	44%	39%	0%	0%	0%
	e. Dyslexia program	28%	50%	17%	6%	0%	0%
	f. Student mentorinø	0%	72%	22%	6%	0%	0%

	program						
	g. Advanced placement program	17%	50%	33%	0%	0%	0%
	h. Literacy program	6%	56%	22%	11%	0%	6%
	i. Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	11%	28%	39%	22%	0%	0%
	j. Summer school programs	11%	67%	17%	6%	0%	0%
	k. Alternative education programs	11%	50%	22%	17%	0%	0%
	l. "English as a second language" program	6%	61%	17%	17%	0%	0%
	m. Career counseling program	11%	28%	44%	17%	0%	0%
	n. College counseling program	11%	39%	44%	6%	0%	0%
	o. Counseling the parents of students	17%	44%	28%	11%	0%	0%
	p. Drop out prevention program	11%	22%	44%	22%	0%	0%
18	Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	33%	50%	6%	11%	0%	0%
19	Teacher turnover is low.	28%	61%	6%	6%	0%	0%

20	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	28%	72%	0%	0%	0%	0%
21	Teachers are rewarded for superior performance.	0%	39%	11%	50%	0%	0%
22	Teachers are counseled about less than satisfactory performance.	0%	94%	6%	0%	0%	0%

B. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
23	All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.	6%	39%	6%	39%	11%	0%
24	Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	50%	50%	0%	0%	0%	0%
25	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	39%	56%	0%	0%	6%	0%

C. Personnel

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
26	District salaries	11%	50%	0%	33%	6%	0%

	are competitive with similar positions in the job market.						
27	The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.	11%	89%	0%	0%	0%	0%
28	Temporary workers are rarely used.	17%	56%	22%	6%	0%	0%
29	The district successfully projects future staffing needs.	6%	44%	17%	28%	0%	6%
30	The district has an effective employee recruitment program.	28%	61%	6%	6%	0%	0%
31	The district operates an effective staff development program.	17%	50%	22%	11%	0%	0%
32	District employees receive annual personnel evaluations.	22%	61%	17%	0%	0%	0%
33	The district rewards competence and experience and spells out qualifications such as seniority and skill levels needed for	6%	28%	28%	39%	0%	0%

	promotion.						
34	Employees who perform below the standard of expectation are counseled appropriately and timely.	6%	78%	17%	0%	0%	0%
35	The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	6%	67%	28%	0%	0%	0%
36	The district's health insurance package meets my needs.	28%	61%	0%	11%	0%	0%

D. Community Involvement

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
37	The district regularly communicates with parents.	33%	67%	0%	0%	0%	0%
38	Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.	28%	56%	6%	11%	0%	0%
39	District facilities are open for community use.	50%	44%	6%	0%	0%	0%

E. Facilities Use and Management

Survey	Strongly	Agree	No	Disagree	Strongly	No
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	Questions	Agree		Opinion		Disagree	Response
40	Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff and the board provide input into facility planning.	22%	72%	6%	0%	0%	0%
41	Schools are clean.	61%	39%	0%	0%	0%	0%
42	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	44%	44%	0%	11%	0%	0%
43	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	22%	56%	0%	22%	0%	0%
44	Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	33%	56%	0%	11%	0%	0%

F. Financial Management

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
45	Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers.	17%	67%	11%	6%	0%	0%
46	Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	0%	67%	17%	17%	0%	0%
47	Financial	17%	67%	11%	6%	0%	0%

	resources are allocated fairly and equitably at my school.						
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G. Purchasing and Warehousing

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
48	Purchasing gets me what I need when I need it.	11%	67%	11%	6%	0%	6%
49	Purchasing acquires high quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.	11%	61%	22%	6%	0%	0%
50	Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for the requestor.	11%	67%	17%	6%	0%	0%
51	The district provides teachers and administrators an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment.	6%	67%	11%	17%	0%	0%
52	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	17%	78%	0%	6%	0%	0%
53	Textbooks are in good shape.	17%	83%	0%	0%	0%	0%
54	The school library meets student needs	6%	72%	6%	17%	0%	0%

	for books and other resources.						
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H. Food Services

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
55	The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	6%	67%	6%	22%	0%	0%
56	Food is served warm.	6%	94%	0%	0%	0%	0%
57	Students have enough time to eat.	22%	72%	0%	6%	0%	0%
58	Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.	17%	78%	0%	6%	0%	0%
59	Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	11%	83%	0%	6%	0%	0%
60	Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	22%	78%	0%	0%	0%	0%
61	Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	17%	78%	0%	6%	0%	0%
62	Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	28%	72%	0%	0%	0%	0%

I. Transportation

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
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63	The drop-off zone at the school is safe.	22%	78%	0%	0%	0%	0%
64	The district has a simple method to request buses for special events.	17%	83%	0%	0%	0%	0%
65	Buses arrive and leave on time.	11%	72%	6%	11%	0%	0%
66	Adding or modifying a route for a student is easy to accomplish.	6%	39%	28%	22%	6%	0%

J. Safety and Security

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
67	Students feel safe and secure at school.	33%	67%	0%	0%	0%	0%
68	School disturbances are infrequent.	50%	50%	0%	0%	0%	0%
69	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	33%	50%	17%	0%	0%	0%
70	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	11%	39%	33%	17%	0%	0%
71	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	11%	61%	22%	6%	0%	0%
72	Security personnel have a good working	28%	39%	33%	0%	0%	0%

	relationship with principals and teachers.						
73	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	28%	39%	33%	0%	0%	0%
74	A good working arrangement exists between the local law enforcement and the district.	44%	39%	17%	0%	0%	0%
75	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	44%	56%	0%	0%	0%	0%
76	Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	17%	78%	0%	6%	0%	0%

K. Computers and Technology

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
77	Students regularly use computers.	22%	50%	6%	22%	0%	0%
78	Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	11%	39%	0%	50%	0%	0%
79	Computers are new enough to be useful for	6%	78%	6%	11%	0%	0%

	student instruction.						
80	The district meets student needs in computer fundamentals.	6%	61%	0%	28%	6%	0%
81	The district meets student needs in advanced computer skills.	0%	17%	17%	61%	6%	0%
82	Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	0%	67%	0%	33%	0%	0%
83	Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	6%	67%	0%	22%	6%	0%

The following comments convey the perception of Rockwall Independent School District principals and assistant and do not reflect the opinion of the Comptroller or review team. The narrative comments are the actual comments received.

Verbatim: Principals Survey Comments

- District technology needs additional employees to meet the increasing technology demands/problems in the district.
- District needs additional curriculum personnel/staff development coordinator with secondary experience.
- District needs to devote some energy to celebrating the successes of our students and our staff.
- This district is not problem-free, but is highly effective and takes care of children.
- We are focused on improvement.

Appendix D

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT STAFF SURVEY RESULTS

n=149

Demographic Data

1.	Gender (Optional)	Male	Female	No Response				
		16%	82%	2%				
2.	Ethnicity (Optional)	Anglo	African American	Hispanic	Asian	Other	No Response	
		87%	1%	5%	0%	3%	3%	
3.	How long have you been employed by Rockwall ISD?		1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	20+ years	No Response
			48%	26%	13%	5%	7%	1%
4.	Are you a(n):	Administrator	Clerical Staffer	Support Staffer (i.e., transportation, food services, etc.)			No Response	
		26%	33%	36%			6%	
5.	How long have you been employed in this capacity by Rockwall ISD?		1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	20+ years	No Response
			54%	24%	12%	3%	3%	3%

A. District Organization and Management

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
1	The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.	10%	44%	38%	5%	1%	2%
2	School board members listen	12%	45%	26%	13%	2%	2%

	to the opinions and desires of others.						
3	The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	28%	44%	15%	7%	3%	3%
4	The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	27%	40%	19%	9%	2%	2%
5	Central administration is efficient.	15%	48%	14%	15%	5%	3%
6	Central administration supports the educational process.	20%	54%	10%	9%	3%	4%
7	The morale of central administration staff is good.	17%	38%	29%	12%	2%	2%

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.	30%	52%	5%	11%	1%	1%
9	Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and	15%	46%	30%	7%	1%	2%

	materials that they believe are most effective.						
10	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	13%	47%	33%	4%	1%	3%
11	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	6%	29%	38%	21%	4%	2%
12	The district has effective educational programs for the following:						
	a. Reading	14%	62%	15%	6%	1%	2%
	b. Writing	10%	64%	18%	4%	1%	2%
	c. Mathematics	13%	62%	15%	6%	1%	2%
	d. Science	13%	64%	16%	4%	1%	2%
	e. English or Language Arts	14%	65%	16%	2%	1%	2%
	f. Computer Instruction	9%	50%	19%	16%	3%	2%
	g. Social Studies (history or geography)	9%	68%	17%	2%	0%	3%
	h. Fine Arts	11%	59%	18%	9%	1%	1%
	i. Physical Education	11%	66%	15%	5%	1%	2%
	j. Business Education	9%	47%	32%	7%	3%	2%
	k. Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	7%	32%	32%	19%	7%	2%
	l. Foreign Language	11%	58%	24%	5%	0%	2%

13	The district has effective special programs for the following:						
	a. Library Service	10%	50%	21%	15%	1%	2%
	b. Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	17%	57%	19%	5%	1%	1%
	c. Special Education	19%	55%	16%	7%	1%	2%
	d. Head Start and Even Start programs	15%	54%	28%	1%	0%	1%
	e. Dyslexia program	15%	42%	25%	12%	3%	3%
	f. Student mentoring program	11%	46%	32%	8%	1%	1%
	g. Advanced placement program	13%	48%	31%	6%	0%	2%
	h. Literacy program	6%	44%	38%	6%	3%	4%
	i. Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	4%	36%	34%	19%	5%	2%
	j. Summer school programs	11%	59%	25%	4%	0%	1%
	k. Alternative education programs	7%	54%	28%	8%	2%	2%
	l. "English as a second language"	9%	53%	23%	13%	1%	2%

	program						
	m. Career counseling program	8%	31%	38%	20%	1%	1%
	n. College counseling program	9%	35%	39%	13%	2%	2%
	o. Counseling the parents of students	10%	28%	40%	15%	4%	2%
	p. Drop out prevention program	5%	28%	42%	18%	3%	4%
14	Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	11%	45%	23%	13%	7%	1%
15	Teacher turnover is low.	9%	36%	23%	26%	4%	1%
16	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	13%	42%	18%	21%	5%	1%
17	Teacher Openings are filled quickly	13%	51%	19%	13%	3%	1%
18	Teachers are rewarded for superior performance.	6%	23%	26%	34%	10%	1%
19	Teachers are counseled about less than satisfactory performance.	3%	34%	44%	17%	1%	1%
20	All schools have equal access to educational	7%	46%	15%	23%	9%	0%

	materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.						
21	The student -to-teacher ratio is reasonable.	5%	54%	17%	18%	6%	0%
22	Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	32%	59%	8%	1%	1%	0%
23	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	18%	53%	24%	4%	1%	0%

C. Personnel

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
24	District salaries are competitive with similar positions in the job market.	3%	19%	9%	40%	27%	1%
25	The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.	9%	52%	11%	21%	5%	2%
26	Temporary workers are rarely used.	3%	42%	30%	16%	5%	3%
27	The district successfully projects future staffing needs.	3%	32%	24%	26%	13%	3%
28	The district has an effective	3%	34%	38%	18%	5%	3%

	employee recruitment program.						
29	The district operates an effective staff development program.	7%	44%	19%	23%	4%	3%
30	District employees receive annual personnel evaluations.	9%	60%	10%	13%	5%	2%
31	The district rewards competence and experience and spells out qualifications such as seniority and skill levels needed for promotion.	1%	19%	21%	37%	19%	3%
32	Employees who perform below the standard of expectation are counseled appropriately and timely.	19%	52%	15%	15%	0%	0%
33	The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	0%	33%	41%	19%	7%	0%
34	The district's health insurance package meets my needs.	0%	33%	48%	15%	4%	0%

D. Community Involvement

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
35	The district regularly communicates with parents.	12%	51%	20%	11%	3%	3%
36	local television and radio stations regularly report school news and menus.	3%	19%	39%	28%	7%	3%
37	Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.	19%	45%	21%	10%	3%	2%
38	District facilities are open for community use.	22%	52%	19%	3%	1%	3%

E. Facilities Use and Management

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
39	Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff and the board provide input into facility planning.	14%	40%	25%	14%	4%	3%
40	The architect and construction managers are selected objectively and impersonally.	9%	27%	50%	7%	4%	4%

41	Schools are clean.	32%	64%	2%	2%	0%	1%
42	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	22%	52%	5%	15%	5%	1%
43	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	14%	44%	8%	26%	7%	1%
44	Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	17%	57%	9%	9%	5%	3%

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.	8%	34%	35%	17%	3%	3%
46	Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	6%	36%	38%	13%	2%	4%
47	The district's financial reports are easy to understand and read.	3%	30%	43%	15%	5%	3%
48	Financial resources are allocated fairly and equitably at my school.	5%	38%	47%	3%	2%	4%

G. Purchasing and Warehousing

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
49	Purchasing gets me what I need when I need it.	10%	49%	17%	18%	4%	1%
50	Purchasing acquires high quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.	6%	43%	31%	11%	5%	3%
51	Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for the requestor.	5%	43%	24%	21%	4%	2%
52	The district provides teachers and administrators an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment.	6%	52%	26%	12%	2%	2%
53	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	9%	50%	26%	13%	2%	1%
54	Textbooks are in good shape.	9%	58%	27%	3%	2%	1%
55	The school library meets student needs for books and other resources.	13%	48%	20%	13%	4%	1%

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.	17%	40%	27%	15%	0%	1%
57	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	2%	17%	19%	48%	12%	1%
58	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	3%	44%	21%	24%	7%	1%
59	Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	13%	54%	28%	3%	1%	1%
60	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	13%	52%	32%	3%	0%	1%
61	A good working arrangement exists between the local law enforcement and the district.	33%	48%	7%	4%	7%	0%
62	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	15%	52%	7%	19%	7%	0%

I. Computers and Technology

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
63	Students	37%	56%	4%	4%	0%	0%

	regularly use computers.						
64	Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	37%	52%	7%	4%	0%	0%
65	Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	26%	63%	4%	7%	0%	0%
66	The district meets student needs in computer fundamentals.	37%	63%	0%	0%	0%	0%
67	The district meets student needs in advanced computer skills.	33%	67%	0%	0%	0%	0%
68	Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	26%	59%	7%	7%	0%	0%
69	Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	48%	48%	4%	0%	0%	0%

The following comments convey the perception of Rockwall Independent School District administrative and support staff and do not reflect the opinion of the Comptroller or review team. The narrative comments are the actual comments received.

Verbatim: Staff Survey Comments

- From what I have observed, I think Rockwall could use more levels of a particular subject, such as math.

- The district needs to stop catering to the rich folks in our area. Parents run this school district, they need to put our children's educational needs first.
- Special education classrooms need more educational materials. We have many different age and ability levels in our classroom, but not enough books, workbooks, etc. to meet the many different needs.
- There are a few schools that do not care as long as the students pass the TAAS. Most of the fun learning has been taken out of the classroom and replaced with drills and paper work to better their scores on the state test.
- Bus driver salaries are below what they should be for work completed timely and efficiently.
- To speak at a school board meeting, you have five minutes if you sign up, but the board cannot ask or answer questions that are not brought before them.
- We need personnel added for technology maintenance.
- I personally have had problems with the personnel office failing to update my file when I brought in updated resumes and failing to provide the updated information to hiring principals.
- The buses are too crowded.
- The next pay increase should go to non-teaching persons. Principals in the secondary schools need to be more aware of what is going on in the classrooms.
- Teachers need the opportunity to attend workshops to keep teaching and learning fresh.
- What good are the computers if the technology people do not know how to maintain them or teachers do not know how to use them effectively.
- We lose many good teachers to other districts due to lower salaries.
- Morale is very low in Rockwall. There was a day when it was a privilege to work here, but the community has changed and it is not the privilege that it was many years ago.
- They put too much emphasis and spend too much money on football and football coaches.
- We are not teaching our children how to use computers.
- Aides are very underpaid and schools are understaffed with aides.
- Classroom items frequently disappear after teachers lock the doors at night and before they open the doors the next morning.
- Many long periods of time pass prior to fulfilling maintenance work orders.
- RISD does well in many areas, but the administrators at the central office have too many different jobs to be effective. We need to restructure.
- High school counseling needs a complete overhaul. Counselors' attitudes are indifferent and students do not receive the assistance

they need. Counselors could benefit from customer service training.

- The district, historically, has not made technology a priority and consequently has under-budgeted the program.
- Minorities are not well represented- no administrators, no coaches, and there are very few minority teachers.
- Have a computer technology person stay on one campus at a time and fix all the problems and then move on to the next campus.
- All employees should have an employee handbook detailing leave policies, etc.
- 226-day employees should receive notification at the beginning of each school year as to how many days over 226 the current calendar represents so they will know how many days off (vacation days) they have. It varies from year to year, written notification should be provided.

Appendix E

PARENT SURVEY RESULTS

n=127

Demographic Data

1.	Gender (Optional)			Male	Female	No Response	
				24%	71%	6%	
2.	Ethnicity (Optional)	Anglo	African American	Hispanic	Asian	Other	No Response
		81%	0%	6%	3%	2%	7%
3.	How long have you lived in Rockwall ISD?			0-5 years	6-10 years	11 years or more	No Response
				38%	25%	32%	5%
4.	What grade level(s) does you child(ren) attend (circle all that apply)?						
	Pre-Kindergarten	Kindergarten	First	Second	Third		
	3%	6%	7%	7%	8%		
	Fourth	Fifth	Sixth	Seventh	Eighth		
	7%	9%	6%	6%	9%		
	Ninth	Tenth	Eleventh	Twelfth			
	9%	7%	6%	10%			

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.	3%	34%	54%	6%	2%	2%
2	School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.	4%	31%	54%	9%	1%	2%

3	The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	7%	35%	52%	4%	0%	2%
4	The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	6%	31%	55%	6%	1%	2%

B. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
5	The district provides a high quality of services.	22%	54%	8%	11%	2%	3%
6	Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.	10%	39%	37%	10%	1%	2%
7	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	12%	48%	31%	8%	1%	1%
8	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	6%	28%	54%	9%	2%	1%
9	The district has effective educational programs for the following:						

	a. Reading	22%	65%	6%	7%	0%	1%
	b. Writing	20%	64%	6%	9%	0%	1%
	c. Mathematics	19%	67%	5%	7%	2%	1%
	d. Science	17%	61%	10%	9%	1%	1%
	e. English or Language Arts	19%	67%	8%	5%	1%	1%
	f. Computer Instruction	16%	48%	14%	16%	6%	1%
	g. Social Studies (history or geography)	17%	62%	10%	9%	1%	1%
	h. Fine Arts	17%	56%	17%	8%	2%	1%
	i. Physical Education	21%	62%	10%	4%	2%	1%
	j. Business Education	11%	38%	39%	8%	2%	2%
	k. Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	5%	28%	47%	13%	4%	3%
	l. Foreign Language	12%	48%	25%	10%	3%	2%
10	The district has effective special programs for the following:						
	a. Library Service	13%	52%	19%	10%	2%	3%
	b. Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	17%	48%	19%	13%	2%	1%
	c. Special Education	11%	35%	42%	7%	2%	3%
	d. Head Start and Even Start	9%	29%	55%	4%	1%	2%

	programs						
	e. Dyslexia program	8%	15%	61%	12%	2%	2%
	f. Student mentoring program	9%	30%	48%	11%	1%	2%
	g. Advanced placement program	14%	35%	45%	5%	0%	2%
	h. Literacy program	9%	27%	55%	4%	2%	3%
	i. Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	7%	14%	61%	10%	6%	2%
	j. Summer school programs	11%	26%	52%	6%	2%	2%
	k. Alternative education programs	6%	26%	60%	5%	2%	2%
	l. "English as a second language" program	8%	21%	64%	4%	2%	2%
	m. Career counseling program	6%	19%	55%	17%	2%	2%
	n. College counseling program	6%	22%	52%	16%	3%	1%
	o. Counseling the parents of students	8%	28%	36%	20%	6%	2%
	p. Drop out prevention program	4%	13%	66%	9%	6%	2%
11	Parents are immediately	25%	41%	19%	9%	5%	1%

	notified if a child is absent from school.						
12	Teacher turnover is low.	9%	46%	30%	12%	2%	2%
13	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	13%	52%	17%	10%	6%	2%
14	A substitute teacher rarely teaches my child.	12%	56%	9%	19%	2%	3%
15	Teachers are knowledgeable in the subject areas they teach.	17%	72%	6%	3%	0%	2%
16	All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.	13%	42%	18%	17%	8%	2%
17	Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	29%	64%	2%	2%	0%	3%
18	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	22%	48%	22%	3%	1%	4%
19	The district provides a high quality education.	23%	57%	7%	9%	2%	2%
20	The district has a high quality	24%	60%	6%	6%	3%	2%

	of teachers.						
21	The district regularly communicates with parents.	17%	57%	6%	13%	3%	3%
22	District facilities are open for community use.	13%	41%	35%	7%	2%	2%
23	Schools have plenty of volunteers to help students and school programs.	24%	45%	21%	6%	2%	2%

C. Facilities Use and Management

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
24	Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff, and the board provide input into facility planning.	13%	39%	29%	12%	4%	3%
25	Schools are clean.	39%	57%	2%	2%	0%	1%
26	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	29%	55%	5%	6%	1%	4%
27	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	22%	50%	17%	8%	1%	2%
28	The district uses very few portable buildings.	16%	56%	12%	11%	4%	2%

29	Emergency maintenance is handled expeditiously.	16%	43%	36%	1%	2%	2%
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D. Asset and Risk Management

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
30	My property tax bill is reasonable for the educational services delivered.	6%	42%	12%	26%	12%	2%
31	Board members and administrators do a good job explaining the use of tax dollars.	3%	34%	26%	20%	14%	2%

E. Financial Management

	Survey Questions	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.	3%	16%	63%	9%	3%	6%
33	Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	2%	17%	65%	8%	2%	6%
34	The district's financial	3%	20%	56%	11%	4%	6%

	reports are easy to understand and read.						
35	Financial reports are made available to community members when asked.	3%	21%	63%	6%	1%	6%

F. Purchasing and Warehousing

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
36	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	20%	57%	11%	7%	2%	2%
37	Textbooks are in good shape.	24%	61%	10%	2%	1%	2%
38	The school library meets student needs for books and other resources.	18%	52%	10%	12%	5%	3%

G. Food Services

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
39	My child regularly purchases his/her meal from the cafeteria.	22%	31%	9%	21%	15%	2%
40	The school breakfast program is available to all	22%	42%	28%	6%	1%	2%

	children.						
41	The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	9%	38%	21%	22%	7%	2%
42	Food is served warm.	11%	50%	24%	10%	3%	2%
43	Students have enough time to eat.	8%	46%	8%	22%	15%	2%
44	Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.	7%	56%	7%	18%	10%	2%
45	Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	7%	36%	24%	23%	8%	2%
46	Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	15%	62%	16%	4%	2%	2%
47	Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	13%	55%	17%	11%	3%	2%
48	Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	17%	66%	13%	2%	1%	2%

H. Transportation

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
49	My child regularly rides the bus.	23%	23%	16%	18%	18%	2%
50	The bus driver maintains discipline on	13%	28%	45%	6%	5%	3%

	the bus.						
51	The length of the student's bus ride is reasonable.	13%	25%	39%	10%	9%	3%
52	The drop-off zone at the school is safe.	19%	45%	29%	0%	2%	5%
53	The bus stop near my house is safe.	20%	43%	27%	1%	5%	4%
54	The bus stop is within walking distance from our home.	24%	43%	27%	1%	2%	3%
55	Buses arrive and depart on time.	17%	36%	32%	8%	3%	3%
56	Buses arrive early enough for students to eat breakfast at school.	12%	18%	54%	6%	6%	4%
57	Buses seldom break down.	9%	34%	43%	9%	2%	3%
58	Buses are clean.	10%	38%	43%	4%	2%	4%
59	Bus drivers allow students to sit down before taking off.	11%	32%	44%	6%	3%	3%
60	The district has a simple method to request buses for special events.	6%	21%	69%	1%	0%	3%

I. Safety and Security

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
61	Students feel safe and secure at school.	26%	66%	2%	5%	0%	1%
62	School disturbances are infrequent.	21%	60%	12%	5%	1%	2%
63	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	17%	47%	20%	12%	1%	2%
64	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	10%	21%	21%	35%	11%	2%
65	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	13%	39%	25%	18%	4%	2%
66	Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	13%	41%	42%	1%	1%	2%
67	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	10%	45%	39%	3%	0%	2%
68	A good working arrangement exists between the local law enforcement and the district.	24%	48%	27%	0%	0%	2%
69	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	13%	47%	25%	6%	6%	2%

70	Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	11%	46%	28%	9%	3%	2%
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J. Computers and Technology

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
71	Teachers know how to teach computer science and other technology-related courses.	6%	49%	28%	12%	4%	2%
72	Computers are new enough to be useful to teach students.	8%	66%	17%	5%	3%	2%
73	The district meets student needs in computer fundamentals.	8%	53%	22%	11%	5%	2%
74	The district meets student needs in advanced computer skills.	7%	33%	35%	17%	6%	2%
75	Students have easy access to the internet.	8%	50%	30%	7%	4%	2%

The following comments convey the perception of Rockwall Independent School District parents and do not reflect the opinion of the Comptroller or review team. The narrative comments are the actual comments received.

Verbatim: Parents Survey Comments

- Why do we build a weight room for the students, then if your child is not on the football team, he is not allowed to use the weight room?

- Overall, I am pleased with the performance of RISD. My children are receiving a good education. It would be nice to receive more information on school board activities (minutes of meetings, long-range planning, future bond proposals) so we are not surprised by another indoor air-conditioned practice field for the football team.
- RISD seems to be more reactive than proactive. Although we live in a community with many resources, the district offers only basic educational offerings. The course offerings are geared only to fulfilling college entrance without developing the student as an eager learner - only a goal obtainer. Cultural diversity is only given mouth service. There are dedicated teachers, but they aren't given strong curriculum or alternative learning experience opportunities.
- In the elementary grades, more effort should be made to have science and social studies everyday. More frequent and better use of computers would give our students a greater advantage.
- The kindergarten program should be extended to a full day. The state curriculum is set for a full day with the students only getting 2.5 hours per day of training-it's not enough.
- The main problem is growth is faster than the district can respond.
- The band program does not feel that allowances should be made for handicapped children.
- I would like to see extracurricular activities at the elementary level (i.e. baseball, football, cheerleading, etc.). Also, more buses are needed to meet the number of children in certain areas. Many times I see my child and many others having to stand due to lack of room (that is with three kids to a seat).
- I feel that children do spend too much time in the lunch line and have little time to eat their meals, unless they bring it from home.
- I believe our school taxes are too high. We are retired, raising a granddaughter and don't know if we can stay in Rockwall due to the high taxes.
- Our schools seem to have more resources for athletics than they do computers for students to use on a daily basis.
- Pre-planned dress days are too frequent and too demanding on lower income parents. School extracurricular activities are often too expensive, giving high-income families a strong advantage.
- My children are adopted and have many emotional, educational, and behavioral issues. Cullins Lake Pointe has provided a wonderful, safe nurturing environment to help my children thrive.
- My answers are based on not only having a 12 year old, but I have three others that have gone to Rockwell schools. Two ended up getting a GED because of advice of high school counselors. Both had good grades, but had had serious illnesses. No home school programs were suggested even though several were offered to pregnant females. You might note that the only child of mine that graduated was female.

- I feel that the elementary schools should have Accelerated Reading.
- We moved here from Dallas ISD for the school system. Right now the high school is too crowded and the middle schools are also too crowded.
- School teachers are very accessible, but school counselors are not.
- My daughter is in Pre-K, I wish that we could receive daily reports from school to let the parents know what is going on at school with our kids.
- The elementary schools put way too much emphasis on TAAS. Teachers are not given enough freedom to teach.
- The fine arts department is lacking considerably in funds and support.
- The substitute teacher salary is below other local schools, so turnover is high.
- I am seriously concerned with the students' safety. There has been no attempt to put school zones, crosswalks, or crossing guards on Lakeshore (which is a major street).
- There are several classes that do not have enough books for the class. Some teachers are not certified in the classes they are teaching.
- We think that RISD is fabulous; we would like to see foreign languages introduced in elementary school.
- We need more bilingual teachers.
- The process for a teacher when they apply for a teaching position needs some additional screening.

Appendix F

STUDENT SURVEY RESULTS

n=525

Demographic Data

Totals may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

1. Gender (Optional)	Male	Female	No Response			
	48%	50%	2%			
2. Ethnicity (Optional)	Anglo	African American	Hispanic	Asian	Other	No Response
	77%	5%	8%	1%	7%	3%
3. What is your classification?	Junior	Senior	No Response			
		40%	59%	1%		

A. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
1	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	9%	49%	20%	15%	5%	1%
2	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	5%	43%	27%	18%	5%	1%
3	The district has effective educational programs for the following:						
	a. Reading	17%	59%	12%	8%	3%	2%
	b. Writing	15%	57%	13%	10%	3%	2%
	c. Mathematics	21%	56%	10%	9%	3%	1%
	d. Science	17%	58%	13%	8%	2%	2%
	e. English or	19%	61%	13%	5%	2%	1%

	Language Arts						
	f. Computer Instruction	17%	49%	18%	11%	4%	2%
	g. Social Studies (history or geography)	19%	58%	14%	6%	1%	1%
	h. Fine Arts	18%	49%	22%	7%	2%	1%
	i. Physical Education	22%	46%	20%	7%	3%	1%
	j. Business Education	10%	42%	33%	12%	3%	1%
	k. Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	10%	40%	34%	12%	3%	1%
	l. Foreign Language	18%	51%	16%	10%	4%	1%
4	The district has effective special programs for the following:						
	a. Library Service	13%	39%	27%	12%	7%	1%
	b. Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	15%	46%	27%	7%	3%	1%
	c. Special Education	14%	40%	40%	2%	2%	1%
	d. Student mentoring program	13%	43%	33%	6%	3%	1%
	e. Advanced placement program	21%	51%	22%	3%	2%	2%
	f. Career counseling program	8%	33%	36%	15%	7%	2%
	g. College	10%	35%	30%	16%	7%	2%

	counseling program						
5	Students have access, when needed, to a second nurse.	31%	54%	6%	6%	2%	1%
6	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	18%	51%	14%	12%	2%	3%
7	The district provides a high quality education.	19%	42%	20%	14%	5%	1%
8	The District has high quality teachers.	13%	42%	20%	18%	6%	2%

B. Facilities Use and Management

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
9	Schools are clean.	25%	54%	8%	9%	3%	1%
10	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	24%	54%	12%	8%	2%	1%
11	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	15%	42%	16%	20%	7%	2%
12	Emergency maintenance is handled timely.	16%	46%	26%	8%	3%	3%

C. Purchasing and Warehousing

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
13	There are enough	16%	48%	11%	20%	4%	2%

	textbooks in all my classes.						
14	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	18%	58%	12%	9%	3%	1%
15	Textbooks are in good shape.	7%	38%	18%	28%	8%	1%
16	The school library meets enough needs for books and other resources.	12%	42%	20%	15%	9%	2%

D. Food Services

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
17	The school breakfast program is available to all children.	19%	47%	24%	7%	2%	1%
18	The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	4%	23%	20%	29%	22%	1%
19	Food is served warm.	10%	45%	22%	17%	6%	2%
20	Students have enough time to eat.	4%	24%	12%	30%	30%	1%
21	Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.	6%	35%	17%	26%	15%	1%
22	Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	8%	30%	17%	29%	15%	1%

23	Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	9%	56%	22%	10%	2%	2%
24	Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	11%	40%	21%	19%	8%	1%
25	Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	11%	48%	23%	12%	4%	1%

E. Transportation

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
26	I regularly ride the bus.	4%	6%	31%	11%	44%	4%
27	The bus driver maintains discipline on the bus.	2%	9%	76%	5%	6%	1%
28	The length of my bus ride is reasonable.	2%	8%	77%	5%	7%	1%
29	The drop-off zone at the school is safe.	3%	17%	73%	3%	3%	2%
30	The bus stop near my house is safe.	3%	15%	74%	2%	4%	1%
31	The bus stop is within walking distance from our home.	5%	15%	73%	2%	5%	1%
32	The bus stop is within walking distance from our home.	2%	7%	77%	6%	6%	1%

33	Buses arrive early enough for students to eat breakfast at school.	1%	6%	77%	6%	8%	1%
34	Buses seldom break down.	4%	8%	77%	5%	4%	2%
35	Buses are clean	2%	10%	74%	7%	6%	1%
36	Bus drivers allow students to sit down before taking off.	4%	8%	76%	6%	5%	1%

F. Safety and Security

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
37	I feel safe and secure at school.	13%	59%	13%	9%	3%	2%
38	School disturbances are infrequent.	10%	49%	20%	16%	4%	1%
39	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	25%	46%	19%	6%	3%	2%
40	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	5%	10%	17%	36%	31%	1%
41	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	6%	33%	25%	27%	7%	2%
42	Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	10%	43%	37%	6%	3%	1%
43	Security	6%	32%	36%	14%	11%	1%

	personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.						
44	A good working arrangement exists between the local law enforcement and the district.	9%	39%	42%	4%	5%	1%
45	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	5%	30%	22%	23%	18%	2%
46	Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	5%	30%	40%	16%	8%	1%

G. Computers and Technology

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
47	Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	7%	33%	9%	34%	16%	2%
48	Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	5%	36%	21%	25%	12%	1%
49	Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction	8%	49%	18%	13%	10%	1%
50	The district	10%	54%	18%	11%	5%	2%

	offers enough classes in computer fundamentals.						
51	The district meets student needs in advanced computer skills.	8%	39%	26%	15%	11%	1%
52	Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	10%	45%	15%	18%	11%	1%

The following comments convey the perception of Rockwall Independent School District students and do not reflect the opinion of the Comptroller or review team. The narrative comments are the actual comments received.

Verbatim: Students Survey Comments

- Our school is not bad per say, it just could be a lot better.
- Food price keeps going up every year. It's too expensive.
- Awesome.
- The library needs more information. We are banned from so much on the Internet, we have to refer to books they do not have. The government program is very excellent. The food needs to be more for the amount of money paid. They are giving us less amounts and charging us more. They also need a better variety of foods. The school should allow an outside restaurant to come in and offer us their food.
- The cafeteria food is gross and non-nutritious. The computers at this school are always freezing because their memory is full. That is really annoying. The teachers here do not have the capabilities to teach us to the full extent like books or curriculum.
- Working hard to make me a better person. I am grateful.
- More desks. More books.
- I believe there are a select number of teachers who do not have any idea what they are doing. For instance, I do not think that if a teacher does not have a teacher license then they should not be able to teach.
- My primary problems with Rockwall High School are involved with the technology program and lunches. Our networks are always down denying access for students. Lunches are also a problem. We are only provided with imitation products that neither

look nor taste good. They do not seem very healthy to me and since no one wants to eat the "healthy" things, everyone mostly buys from the vending machines.

- The books we read in English have lost their value. I think if we chose more interesting novels we would not complain. "The Crucible", "The Scarlet Letter", "A Raisin in the Sun", all these lack the social meaning originally meant to influence us. The computers are always down and old. Money is misspent on sports.
- Teach us stuff to benefit us in the future.
- The teachers show favoritism and it creates an unpleasant atmosphere for the other students. Some coaches get whatever they want, while other teams that are better than the football team get nothing. Also, the cafeteria ladies and librarians should be nicer. The cafeteria food looks and tastes gross. The cheese falls off the pizza! Come on, fix that!
- RHS has not enough books for classes. In half the classes I am in, we do not have books or enough desks. Drugs are horrible and it seems like it is ignored. The school is worried about things that don't matter. The big things are ignored.
- I feel like the district has laws that can be strict or absolutely stupid! Get rid of ID's. They serve no use, except getting a lunch. Someone can easily walk into the school with a gun. What are ID's for then? Some teachers I have are boring and way off to students.
- The teachers at RHS and the freshman center do not communicate at all. Pre-AP and Global Studies are often loaded with far more homework than is even remotely reasonable.
- I think the school should hire better teachers and have a better scanning process for teachers when they apply. We have too many irresponsible teachers on staff. I also think that ID's are not appropriate for what they are used for. They don't help the school be safer and it costs everyone money. It is just a way for the school to raise money for the football team.
- The main problem in this school is the cafeteria. The food in the last two lunches is cold, the first lunch is too early, they need more lines because it takes almost 20 minutes to get through a line, this gives us five to 10 minutes to eat. The food isn't even that good, and the ladies serving it don't wear gloves.
- The food at our school is not good at all. It is all fat and nothing healthy. The salads are soggy and brown. The ladies are not nice. The pizza is all grease. The computers never want to log in and when they do, they lock up. Half of the teachers here can't teach to the fullest either.
- I think it is the best school around. I know several people moving in just to attend Rockwall schools. I can't think of a place I'd rather be.
- Our computer system needs improvement.

- The ID rules are ridiculous and getting a Saturday detention for not wearing your ID is not appropriate.
- Parking lot attendant is not nice. Food needs improving.
- I feel sometimes that principals look for the stupid stuff and get the kids in trouble, when a lot worse stuff is going on.
- I really like and enjoy Rockwall schools. I would really like it if the locks on the girl's bathroom stalls could be fixed.
- ID's are stupid. They serve no point.
- The computers frustrate me because they're always down and our work is being erased. I think they need a better computer service.
- The education is good. The district needs to fix the computer systems because every day the computers go out and the server is down, cannot print, cannot go on the Internet. What is the point of going to the computer class? Another is ID's- if we do not have them on in the halls, automatically Saturday school. Everyone forgets! Besides that I will always have good memories - as being my last year!
- Some teachers have the attitude that the only reason they teach is because it's the only job they could get with their degree. I can tell this by the environment in which we learn. They do not try to make learning fun. I think kids will learn more if they enjoy class and the curriculum. I understand that everything isn't fun, but school should be sometimes. A teacher on a power trip is not fun either. I don't regularly get into trouble so listening to me would be appreciated.
- The schools are either too hot or too cold; lunch capacities need to be evened out.
- Less money should go towards our football team and be focused on other unrecognized sports and theatre. It should also be used on our computers.
- New teachers need more training on performing their skills to teach. Cafeteria food needs to lower prices to more affordable prices.
- Our arts and computer opportunities are slightly short due to a lack of funds and the majority of our money is spent on the athletics program. We have an indoor field that is not necessary.
- Teachers act tired and fed up with students making an uncomfortable learning environment, thus hindering educational performance.
- Our music program and course offerings for music are well below par at best. I would like to see some music theory classes. The discipline at our school is ridiculous. You get Saturday school for not wearing your ID.
- I feel that the ID and tardy rules are absolutely ridiculous. A Saturday school is not a suitable punishment for not wearing the

ugly ID one time. Also, there should be a lacrosse team because it is progressively getting more popular in the southern states.

- I wish many of the teachers could be more organized with more structured work. In AP classes I wish the homework could be more balanced instead of cramming.
- We need a better computer tech to keep computers running.
- Teachers need to learn how to use computers.
- More parking areas.
- The fine art program needs more funding, but all of it is going towards the athletic (football) program.
- I believe that Rockwall ISD should have more opportunities for students to study other cultures and have more options of elective courses.
- I feel the need to have more counselor and student time to plan for the future whether college bound or not.
- There needs to be more buses.
- Longer periods of time for lunches.
- Athletics is plural not singular. Funding should go to all sports. Football is not all sports.
- You get into more trouble for having facial hair than you do for skipping. There should be a better system of punishment.
- Look more closely at the math department. Other than that I love all my other teachers.
- With class sizes and congestion in the hallways there is not enough time to use the restroom or get from your locker at one side of the school to your class at the other side. Give us more time! Seniors should have off-campus lunch.
- I cannot understand the lunch ladies.
- ID's are pointless and would never stop an intruder.
- I am very privileged to get to go to a school as well run as Rockwall HS.
- We have a lot of good teachers, but there are a few that are horrible teachers and good people.
- My lunch is too late. I eat at 1:40 on A days and B days. Classes are too long to concentrate on one subject.
- With the class sizes and congestion in the hallways, there is not enough time to use the restroom or get from your locker at one side of the school to your class at the other side. Give us more time.
- Seniors should have off campus lunch.
- The computers at our school are not any good, all we do is play games. We have not learned anything.
- We should use computers more because our world is using more and more technology. The drug usage is somewhat high and should be dealt with a little better.

- I think that the school district is a good one, but the only complaint I have is the safety in the school. Lately there have been more drug busts and more violent outbreaks and I just do not feel very safe.
- The cafeteria ladies do not speak English, the bathrooms are always dirty, the teachers are nice, but some do not help enough to help students pass.
- I feel that we are lucky to have a nice facility to get our education. The teachers are nice and very helpful.
- ID's are useless because if an intruder wanted to come, he would.
- There is too much praise for the football team and not for other sports.
- Computers break down and are never fixed.
- The IT department in this district is absolutely horrible. Some of the computers are so old they do not allow the curriculum to be taught appropriately.
- School food is too expensive.
- Spend more money on soccer and maintaining our soccer field.
- I do not agree with the system of bathroom breaks and how they are not allowed, it makes this school seem like a prison.
- I think that we should bring in outside food sources because the quality of food has gone down.
- Teachers should have a list of people who bought dance tickets in case they are not students and are rudely rejected.
- I think that having four classes a day is good for my education. If I had eight classes a day, I think my grades would drop a lot.
- Some teachers need to be evaluated more frequently.
- There are too many people on the school bus and there is not enough room to sit down. There is not enough time to eat lunch and lunch is scheduled too late.
- There needs to be more computers in the library and they need to be fixed on time.
- There are not enough parking spaces and the school is always kept too cold.
- The computer network in RISD is horrible.
- The food needs to improve, more parking areas, not late lunches, more lenience towards seniors for off campus lunch.
- The Internet server is always down. The school cafeteria should be replaced with fast foods.
- Teachers need to learn how to work the computers.
- Principals punish kids too much for the little stuff.
- The curriculum is not interesting enough to keep people from sleeping through it.
- You can get in more trouble for facial hair than skipping. They ought to let us have a certain amount of facial hair, it does not distract anybody's learning.
- Athletics need to focus on all sports, not just football.

- Some of the bus drivers need to learn that discipline slips are for when someone is doing something wrong, not whenever they feel they want to hand them out.
- Lunches need to be longer, we wait in line for 15-20 minutes just to eat and then are late to class because we could not finish or we have to waste our lunch to get to class on time and then we get disciplined for being late.
- The only thing that I would change would be the quality of food in the cafeteria.
- Look more closely at the math department. Other than that I love all my other teachers.
- The only problem that I have encountered is the wide-range use of drugs and inadequate punishment for those caught with drugs on them.
- The computers frustrate me because they are always down and our work is being erased.
- I really like Rockwall schools.
- I do not like the ID rules and the Saturday School punishment for not wearing an ID is ridiculous.
- Our computer system needs improvement.
- I think that RHS is the best school around, I know people that are moving over here just to go to RHS.
- The food at our school is not healthy as it is very full of fat.
- The food in the cafeteria is cold by the time you get to the last two lunch periods.
- RHS does not have enough books for classes, in half of my classes we do not even have books at all.