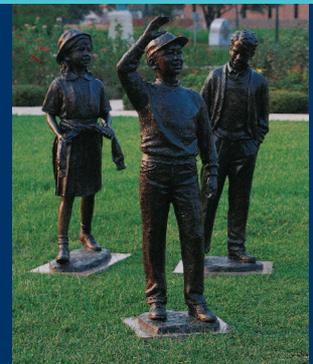


Edcouch-Elsa Independent School District



LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD

AUGUST 2006



LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD

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August 31, 2006

Mr. Michael Sandroussi
Superintendent, Edcouch-Elsa Independent School District

Dear Mr. Sandroussi:

The attached report reviews the management and performance of the Edcouch-Elsa Independent School District's (EEISD's) educational, financial, and operational functions.

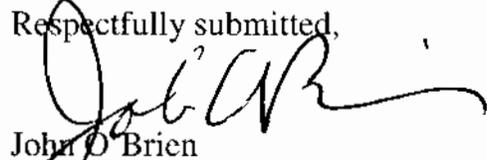
The report's recommendations will help EEISD improve its overall performance as it provides services to students, staff, and community members. The report also highlights model practices and programs being provided by EEISD.

The staff of the Legislative Budget Board appreciates the cooperation and assistance that your staff and Texas Public School Consulting, Inc. provided during the preparation of this report.

Please note that the LBB will be recommending that the Texas Education Agency conduct an investigation regarding governance issues that surfaced during the course of this management and performance review.

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

Respectfully submitted,


John O'Brien
Deputy Director
Legislative Budget Board

cc: Mr. Juan Jose Ybarra, Jr.
Mr. Felix Garza
Mr. Saul Garcia

Mr. Domingo Rodriguez
Ms. Esperanza Salinas
Ms. Florestela Rodriguez
Mr. Manuel Hernandez, Jr.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Edcouch-Elsa Independent School District's (EEISD's) school review report notes 8 commendable practices and makes 80 recommendations for improvement. The following is an Executive Summary of the significant accomplishments, findings, and recommendations that resulted from the review. A copy of the full report is available at www.lbb.state.tx.us.

SIGNIFICANT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- EEISD staff ensures most organizations the district partners with fully understand their role and responsibilities in providing services for students and families by using contracts or Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs). EEISD uses a proactive approach in seeking out new initiatives and is highly responsive to requests from groups to provide or extend services to its stakeholders.
- The district uses an effective process to curb truancy and increase attendance. The district monitors its program regularly for improvement and maintains a good working relationship with outside entities who are involved in the process.
- EEISD set up a formal drug education program in 2003—04 that incorporates community resources, curriculum integration, and intervention activities at all grade levels.

SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS

- EEISD's Board of Trustees continues to overlook its role as a policy-making body and overreach its responsibility by interfering with the daily operations of the district.
- EEISD lacks a plan for managing the district fund balance.
- EEISD has not performed a curriculum audit, developed a districtwide curriculum plan, or fully documented its curriculum.
- EEISD lacks a board policy that provides direction for the management of curriculum to establish processes, procedures, and timelines for curriculum review, development, and implementation.

- EEISD does not use a selection or monitoring process for legal services.
- EEISD does not use the services of an actuary or any other method to determine the extent of its liability in its self-funded benefit programs.
- EEISD's personnel functions are decentralized and inefficient.
- EEISD does not use locally developed or industry standards to determine staffing requirements for schools or departments.

SIGNIFICANT RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation: Cooperate with the Texas Education Agency (TEA) regarding the recommendation of the Legislative Budget Board that TEA conduct an investigation of EEISD under the provisions of the Texas Education Code §39.074, On-Site Investigations, and §39.075, Special Accreditation Investigations.

EEISD's Board of Trustees continues to overlook its role as a policy-making body and overreach its responsibility by interfering with the daily operations of the district. EEISD board adopted three different employment policies in three years, demonstrating a preoccupation of the board with hiring issues. The EEISD Board of Trustees has not seriously addressed governance issues identified by the TEA in 2002 and 2004; the district political environment continues to have operational implications beyond the prudent scope of a Board of Trustees. The continuing political conflict distracts the board from engaging in priority matters such as goal-setting and budget planning and reflects negatively on the credibility of the board to effectively govern the district. The TEA investigation should review the EEISD Board of Trustees continuing interference in school district daily operations and the continuing tendency to overreach its responsibility and overlook its role as a policy-making body. TEA should investigate the actions and environment leading to the adoption of three different employment policies in three years. EEISD should share information with the TEA as they conduct an investigation.

Recommendation: Develop a plan to actively manage the fund balance. EEISD lacks a plan for managing the district fund balance. Interviews with board members

revealed they have no knowledge of what comprises the fund balance, there is no plan to determine what an optimum fund balance should be or how to allocate an excess fund balance. Currently, the budget adoption and amendment process does not include an assessment of the impact to fund balance. EEISD budget managers, principals and department heads submit budget amendment justifications to the Business Office, which then approves amendments within functional areas. As required by state law, the Business Office then submits these amendments to the board for consideration at monthly meetings. The budget worksheet the board uses to evaluate amendments offers no analysis of impact to fund balance. The board should have knowledge of what the fund balance is, a plan to determine what the optimum fund balance for EEISD should be, and for what purpose any excess fund balance could be used. The EEISD superintendent should develop a plan to actively manage the fund balance. The Business manager should develop a presentation on the status of the fund balance. After receiving the report, the board, superintendent, and Business manager should develop a fund balance management plan. The plan should include a procedure for informing the board of the impact on fund balance of budget amendments. The procedure should include providing the board and superintendent with a report showing the beginning fund balance, the impact of the amendment, and the ending fund balance.

Recommendation: Conduct a curriculum management audit to direct curriculum management and quality control. The district has not performed a curriculum audit, developed a districtwide curriculum plan, or fully documented its curriculum. EEISD's instructional programs lack standardized benchmarking, monitoring, and data analysis of student performance. Benchmark tests have not been field tested for consistency across grade levels, student performance data has not been analyzed, and K–12 programs are not being monitored for progress. Consequently, scores for 2004–05 all Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) tests taken were at a 46 percent passing rate compared to the state average of 62 percent passing rate. In 2004–05 Garcia Elementary School was rated Academically Unacceptable by the TEA due to low grade 5 science scores. A combination of the high school's low math scores, the junior high school's low math and reading scores contributed to these campuses not meeting Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). EEISD should complete benchmark tests in all subject areas and analyze student scores on TAKS subtests, with particular attention being given to mathematics in

grades five and ten, and science in grades five and ten, to ensure that the written, taught, and tested curriculum are properly aligned. EEISD should also contact the Regional Education Service Center I (Region 1) and professional organizations that conduct curriculum audits to obtain quotes for services.

Recommendation: Adopt a board policy that provides direction for the management of curriculum to establish processes, procedures, and timelines for curriculum review, development, and implementation. EEISD lacks a board policy that provides direction for the management of curriculum to establish processes, procedures, and timelines for curriculum review, development, and implementation. EEISD has five policies related to curriculum; however, none of these policies provide for curriculum management or how the district should develop and implement curriculum. The district lacks policy statements that include; requiring written documents in all subject areas and courses; outlining the curriculum development processes; establishing exceptions regarding the coordination of curriculum, instructional materials program assessment; the providing of staff training; and the establishment of a direct link between the budget development process and curriculum. Developing and adopting a board policy will provide direction for managing the curriculum, and to establish processes, procedures, and timelines for curriculum review, development, and implementation. District staff should also develop a three to four year curriculum management plan that focuses on student achievement and closing the achievement gaps of all subpopulations. The district should seek assistance from the other districts to obtain copies of local curriculum management policies. The district should then consider which elements of the policies are relevant locally and adopt or adapt a policy to meet the district's local needs.

Recommendation: Assess needs for legal services, initiate a selection process, negotiate a competitive contract, and monitor costs annually. EEISD does not use a selection or monitoring process for legal services. A 2004 study Region 1 conducted compared legal costs for all Texas school districts. EEISD reported expenditures of \$292,643, an average per student of \$53.48 and the 36th highest total legal costs among Texas school districts. The district should comprehensively assess its needs for legal services, initiate a selection process, negotiate a competitive contract, and monitor costs annually. The board should direct the superintendent to assess district needs for legal

services. The superintendent should seek input regarding business issues, construction, personnel matters, and student discipline. With this information, the board should decide the scope of services to be provided and determine its expectations of the attorney. Once the service needs and expectations are defined, the district should initiate a selection process. At a minimum, the board should request and review the qualifications of several attorneys and law firms, not limiting itself to the immediate area. The district should require firms to present their fee structures, along with proposals to assist the district in controlling costs. These proposals might include staff and board training, to assist the district in avoiding litigation. Any contract executed should include performance measures, so that there is a method of evaluating attorney performance and monitoring costs.

Recommendation: Secure the services of an actuary to determine the extent of the district's liability in both the health and workers' compensation self-insurance funds. EEISD does not use the services of an actuary or any other method to determine the extent of its liability in its self-funded benefit programs. EEISD relies on a third party administrator (TPA) to determine employee rates for the plan's funding. As claims are processed, the TPA provides a claims and disbursement report via email. The district does not keep a list of prior fiscal year claims presented for payment after the close of the fiscal year to identify the extent of claims that have been incurred. The superintendent said the Teacher Retirement System of Texas (TRS) health plan, TRS ActiveCare, is too expensive and the reason EEISD chooses to self-fund the medical program. Likewise, the decision to self-insure its workers' compensation program was made due to the excessive cost of a fully funded workers' compensation program. The Business manager should request proposals for actuarial services to analyze the health and workers' compensation self-funded programs. Based on the completed actuarial studies, the district should develop a budget to adequately fund the outstanding liabilities of both programs.

Recommendation: Centralize and organize personnel functions under the director of Personnel and provide appropriate staffing to accomplish these functions in a coordinated and efficient manner. EEISD's personnel functions are decentralized and inefficiently coordinated. While the assistant superintendent for Personnel and director for Personnel practice dual oversight of the personnel function, their responsibilities are further dispersed

throughout several departments. No one monitors and reports: information regarding the number of students per classroom, district trends regarding teacher absenteeism, the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) or auxiliary applications to ensure completeness, teachers or substitute teacher applicants, and no one ensures the district adheres to compensation guidelines regarding hiring rates. In addition, the superintendent has ultimate hiring authority for all staff, including final approval for all salary and stipends further adding an additional layer of staff involvement. To ensure consistency in the application and hiring processes for all staff, the director of Personnel should have the primary responsibility of managing personnel functions and the hiring and placement responsibilities for auxiliary personnel and paraprofessionals should move from the assistant superintendent for Personnel to the director of Personnel. To further centralize the personnel functions, personnel responsibilities currently under the director of Student Services should be performed in the Personnel Department to improve coordination, prevent duplication and ensure that all tasks are done in a systematic manner. Leave and compensation administration, and certification verification should be moved to the Personnel Department as well. Finally, one payroll clerk should be reassigned to the Personnel Department and a Personnel specialist position should be created to perform the duties currently being performed on a part time basis by the assistant superintendent and the director of Student Services.

Recommendation: Develop, adopt and implement staffing policies that use local and industry standards to determine staffing allocations for schools and departments and eliminate excess positions. A series of recommendations exist throughout the report regarding staffing allocation standards. EEISD does not use locally developed or industry standards to determine staffing requirements for schools or departments. Currently, staffing levels are determined on an as needed basis. According to industry standards EEISD is overstaffed by 77 positions and understaffed by 12 positions for a net savings of nearly \$6.5 million in the following areas:

POSITION	CHAPTER	RECOMMENDATION	STAFF RECOMMENDED FOR ADDITION (ELIMINATION)	ANNUAL SALARIES AND BENEFITS SAVINGS (COST)	5 YEAR SAVINGS (COST)
SAT/ACT Teacher	1	8	1	(\$43,989)	(\$218,445)
Counselors	1	10	3	(\$169,194)	(\$845,970)
Librarians	1	11	3	(\$152,334)	(\$761,670)
Library Aides	1	11	(2)	\$22,340	\$44,680
Assistant Superintendent for Personnel	2	15	(1)	\$85,649	\$428,245
Business Manager	2	15	(1)	\$94,942	\$474,710
Assistant Superintendent for Business Operations	2	15	1	(\$94,942)	(\$474,710)
Director of Technology	2	15	1	(\$73,896)	(\$369,480)
Principals	4	24	(1.5)	\$90,771	\$453,855
Personnel Compensation Clerk	4	23	1	(\$47,583)	(\$237,915)
Clerk/Secretaries	4	24	(13.5)	\$291,681	\$1,458,405
Educational Aides	4	24	(15)	\$288,660	\$1,443,300
Custodians	5	39	(15)	\$380,940	\$1,904,700
Purchasing Coordinator	7	52	1	(\$61,614)	(\$308,070)
Child Nutrition Staff	9	59	(23)	\$263,582	\$1,317,910
Bus Drivers*	10	64	(6)	\$175,350*	\$876,750
Technology Strategist	11	71	(1)	\$65,834	\$329,170
Security Supervisor	12	78	(1)	\$44,954	\$224,770
DAEP Teacher	12	78	1	\$44,954	\$224,770
Security Guards	12	79	(9)	\$232,253	\$1,161,265
TOTALS			(77)	\$1,306,690	\$6,467,930

*Calculation for bus driver positions include salaries, benefits, buses, and bus insurance.

The director of Personnel should work with the assistant superintendents, principals and appropriate department heads to develop internal staffing allocation formulas for all personnel to use in conjunction with reviews of enrollments and other factors, and should present these to the superintendent and the board for approval. The director of Personnel should then apply these standards to the staff on each campus and department to identify needed positions and excess positions and distribute staff equitably based on these standards. The district should develop a workforce reduction plan to address overstaffing. The district should declare a hiring freeze for positions that are overstaffed such as educational aides until the district determines the number and placement of such positions based on standards.

Due to the large number of overstaffed positions in EEISD, the net impact of nearly \$6.5 million over five years should begin in 2007–08 through 2011–12 to allow the district sufficient time to assess its current staffing, enrollment changes, and review industry standard allocation formulas. The district should then set local policy to follow industry standard formulas when staffing departments or create appropriate formulas internally to equitably staff all departments throughout the district.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- Edcouch and Elsa are located 20 miles north of the International border with Mexico and are situated contiguously between McAllen and Harlingen.
- EEISD's 2005-06 enrollment at 5,472 students has consistently increased by about 3 percent annually. The district student enrollment is 99.6 percent Hispanic.
- Superintendent Michael Sandroussi has served EEISD since January 2003.
- EEISD has a total of 844.9 employees: 38.9 percent teachers and 18.1 percent educational aides.
- TEA rated the district Academically Acceptable in 2004–05. Of EEISD's eight campuses, six campuses received an Academically Acceptable rating; the sixth grade campus received a rating of Recognized; and Santiago Garcia Elementary campus received a rating of Academically Unacceptable.
- EEISD has a Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas (FIRST) rating of "Above Standard Achievement."
- EEISD has a 46 percent TAKS passing rate, while the state average is 62 percent. Edcouch-Elsa High School and Carlos Truan Junior High School failed to meet federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for 2004–05. Based on Preliminary 2006 AYP results, Edcouch-Elsa High School failed to meet NCLB Adequate Yearly Progress, placing the school in Stage 1 School Improvement.
- EEISD is a member of Regional Education Service Center I (Region 1) in Edinburg, Texas.
- Region 1 services provided to EEISD include:
 - training for EEISD district site-based teams
 - staff development consortium
 - serving as the fiscal agent for the sale of Weighted Average Daily Attendance (WADA)
 - EEISD attends the annual textbook hearing held by Region 1
 - EEISD purchased a variety of computer services
- On December 14, 2005 the United States District Attorney's Office indicted the EEISD board president for charges all related to his official duties as the EEISD school board president:

- one count of conspiracy
- one count of violating the Travel Act in 2000 and 2004 to promote state bribery
- and three counts of extortion under color of official right
- On February 23, 2006, the EEISD board president was re-arrested for witness tampering, and resigned from the board on March 2, 2006.
- TEA performed two governance investigations of EEISD in 2002 and 2005.
- The legislators for EEISD are Senator Eddie Lucio, Jr. and Representative Aaron Peña.

SCHOOLS

- Edcouch-Elsa High School
- Carlos Truan Junior High School
- Edcouch-Elsa 6th Grade campus
- Santiago Garcia Elementary
- Kennedy Elementary
- Ruben C. Rodriguez Elementary
- Lyndon Baines Johnson Elementary
- Early Childhood Center
- Hidalgo County Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program (JJAEP)

FINANCIAL DATA

- Total actual 2003–04 expenditures: \$45.4 million.
- The 2005–06 budget was projected to reduce fund balance by \$1.5 million, to approximately \$4 million by the end of the fiscal year. One significant issue is fund balance fluctuation. The fund balance as a total of budgeted expenditures was reported to TEA as 4.9 percent in August 2005, this same fund balance was reported as 13.4 percent in December 2005.
- 2004–05 Tax Rate: \$1.60 (\$1.47 Maintenance and Operations and \$0.13 Interest and Sinking).
- In 2005 EEISD had total property wealth of \$168,407,403; final wealth per student of \$30,776 and student wealth per WADA of \$19,732.

- In 2003–04, 49.2 percent of total actual expenditures were for instruction; 56 percent of actual operating expenditures were for instruction (excluding debt service and capital outlay); and the instructional expenditure ratio (general funds) was reported at 61 percent.

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

At the end of the chapters, a page number reference identifies where additional general information for that chapter’s topic is available. Each chapter concludes with a fiscal impact chart listing the chapter’s recommendations and associated savings or costs for 2007–08 through 2011–12.

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

The table below summarizes the fiscal implications of all 80 recommendations contained in the report.

FISCAL IMPACT

	2007–08	2008–09	2008–10	2010–11	2011–12	TOTAL 5-YEAR SAVINGS (COSTS)	ONE TIME SAVINGS (COSTS)
Gross Savings	\$2,338,965	\$2,338,965	\$2,338,965	\$2,338,965	\$2,338,965	\$11,694,825	\$0
Gross Costs	(\$808,191)	(\$790,266)	(\$786,066)	(\$621,832)	(\$621,832)	(\$3,628,187)	(\$128,149)
TOTAL	\$1,530,774	\$1,548,699	\$1,552,899	\$1,717,133	\$1,717,133	\$8,066,638	(\$128,149)

CHAPTER 1

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

EDCOUCH-ELSA INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

CHAPTER 1. EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

Edcouch-Elsa Independent School District (EEISD) is located at the intersection of State Highway 107 and Farm Road 1015, 18 miles northeast of McAllen in southeastern Hidalgo County. The agrarian town of Edcouch is home to 3,604 Texans. Ninety-five percent of the population is Hispanic, most are under the age of 50, and many are migrant workers. Unemployment rates typically fluctuate between 20 and 32 percent as the growing and harvesting seasons change. Elsa is located at the intersection of State Highway 107 and Farm Road 88. The population of Elsa is approximately 5,760. Both Edcouch and Elsa have little industry, although Elsa has attracted many more businesses. These dynamics converge to present significant challenges for students and educators as they strive to compete in state and federal accountability for student performance.

EEISD serves students in eight schools: one early childhood center, four elementary schools, one sixth grade campus, one junior high school, and one high school. In 2004–05, the district enrollment was 5,472 students. The students are predominately Hispanic comprising 99.6 percent of the total school enrollment. The principals report directly to the superintendent and the assistant superintendent for Curriculum provides leadership for the district’s instructional program.

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) provides annual comprehensive information on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) results through its Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS). The district was rated “*Academically Acceptable*” for 2004–05 by TEA. Six schools received an “*Academically Acceptable*” rating; one school received a rating of “*Recognized*” and Garcia Elementary, received an “*Academically Unacceptable*” rating. Edcouch–Elsa High School and Truan Junior High School failed to meet federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for 2004–05.

Regional Education Service Center I (Region 1) serves the EEISD. The peer districts this review uses for comparative purposes are Progreso ISD, Southside ISD, Rio Grande City ISD, and Roma ISD.

According to the 2004–05 AEIS report, EEISD has the second lowest instructional expenditures per student among its peers and the lowest percentage of expenditures for regular education. EEISD has the highest percentage of expenditures for Career and Technology Education (CTE) and the second highest percentage of expenditures for compensatory education and special education. EEISD ranks lowest in expenditures for Bilingual/English as a Second Language (ESL) and third lowest expenditures for gifted and talented (G/T) (**Exhibit 1-1**).

**EXHIBIT 1-1
INSTRUCTIONAL EXPENDITURES
EEISD AND PEER DISTRICTS
2004–05**

DISTRICT	TOTAL INSTRUCTIONAL EXPENDITURES	INSTRUCTIONAL EXPENDITURES PER STUDENT	PERCENTAGE		PERCENTAGE SPECIAL		PERCENTAGE BILINGUAL/ESL		PERCENTAGE COMPENSATORY	
			REGULAR PROGRAM EXPENDITURES	PERCENTAGE G/T PROGRAM EXPENDITURES	EDUCATION PROGRAM EXPENDITURES	PERCENTAGE CTE PROGRAM EXPENDITURES	PROGRAM EXPENDITURES	PROGRAM EXPENDITURES		
Progreso	\$9,074,157	\$4,301	66.2%	0.2%	8.3%	4.4%	3.0%	12.5%		
Southside	\$19,966,839	\$4,271	66.5%	0.5%	11.6%	3.4%	5.1%	10.2%		
EDCOUCH- ELSA	\$21,700,444	\$4,068	63.4%	0.8%	13.4%	5.9%	2.5%	11.6%		
Roma	\$24,572,640	\$3,949	69.9%	0.4%	6.1%	3.3%	3.2%	13.2%		
Rio Grande City	\$44,485,819	\$4,698	63.9%	0.4%	14.3%	3.6%	2.7%	11.5%		

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS), 2004-05.

ACCOMPLISHMENT

- EEISD provided 30 hours of training required for teachers of gifted and talented (G/T) students to all teachers in the district, rather than limiting the training requirement to only teachers of G/T students.

FINDINGS

- EEISD has not performed a curriculum audit, developed a districtwide curriculum plan, or fully documented its curriculum.
- EEISD lacks a board policy that provides direction for the management of curriculum to establish processes, procedures, and timelines for curriculum review, development, and implementation.
- EEISD lacks a plan to ensure schools that do not meet AYP develop research-based strategies for success.
- EEISD's Curriculum Department is not organized for efficiency and effectiveness.
- EEISD lacks a comprehensive evaluation system to determine the effectiveness of the district's compensatory education and Title I programs.
- EEISD lacks an accountability system to monitor the academic progress of students in the bilingual program.
- EEISD lacks a plan to thoroughly monitor retention rates.
- EEISD lacks effective American College Test (ACT)/Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) test preparation strategies and resources to assist students in preparation for college entrance exams.
- EEISD lacks a guidance and counseling program as TEA recommends.
- EEISD's counselor allocations do not meet established standards for staffing and the district is understaffed by three counselors.
- EEISD does not monitor campus library collections or staff its libraries according to the enrollment needs and the *School Library Programs: Standards and Guidelines for Texas*.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Recommendation 1: Conduct a curriculum management audit to direct curriculum management and ensure quality control.** EEISD should complete benchmark tests in all subject areas and analyze student scores on TAKS subtests, with particular attention to mathematics in grades 9 and 10 and science in grades 5 and 10 to ensure that the written, taught, and tested curriculum are properly aligned. EEISD should contact Regional Education Service Centers and professional organizations that conduct curriculum audits to obtain quotes for services.
- **Recommendation 2: Adopt a board policy that provides direction for the management of curriculum to establish processes, procedures, and timelines for curriculum review, development, and implementation.** The district should also develop a three to four year curriculum management plan that focuses on student achievement and erasing the achievement gaps of all subpopulations. The district should seek assistance from the other districts to obtain copies of local curriculum management policies. The district should then consider which elements of the policies are relevant and adopt or adapt a policy to meet the districts local needs.
- **Recommendation 3: Develop a two-year school improvement campus plan for any schools not meeting Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) as prescribed by Stage One School Improvement Requirements of the 2005 AYP Guide.** Truan Junior High School and Edcouch-Elsa High School should develop two-year plans that address the core academic subjects and include research based strategies to address specific causes of the school's failure to meet AYP as prescribed by *Stage One School Improvement Requirements* of the 2005 AYP Guide. These plans are separate from Campus Improvement Plans (CIPs) and should focus on the following action: use data to make informed decisions; provide professional development in the content areas of reading and mathematics; and ensure that curricula and teacher training are grounded in "scientifically based research" and have proved effective in addressing the specific problems that caused the school to be identified as not meeting AYP.
- **Recommendation 4: Reorganize curriculum department responsibilities among senior managers to enhance student performance,**

program effectiveness and departmental efficiency.

Under the reorganization, the district should eliminate the title of Bilingual/Gifted and Talented director and create the title of director of Special Populations with the duties defined for the following programs: Bilingual/ESL, G/T, Even Start, and Migrant. The title of high school curriculum strategist should be eliminated and the title of secondary curriculum coordinator should be created. The role of the director of Student Services should be redefined to include responsibility for the Special Education Department. The title of director of Federal Programs should be changed to director of Compensatory Education and responsibilities should include the Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP). The job description for the director of Special Education should include responsibility for dyslexia and 504 programs.

- **Recommendation 5: Develop a comprehensive evaluation system to determine the effectiveness of compensatory education and Title I programs.** Comprehensive program evaluation of the compensatory education and Title I programs will provide the district with data for making program improvements. An effective evaluation will allow EEISD to develop and implement instructional strategies to target at-risk students. Student performance should be assessed frequently and programs modified to ensure their effectiveness in improving student performance to close the gap between at-risk and not at-risk students. The Federal Programs director should ensure that staff positions for compensatory education are coded correctly and ensure that schools report the personnel accurately in order to comply with compensatory education regulations.
- **Recommendation 6: Develop an accountability system to monitor the academic progress of students in the bilingual program.** In addition, the district should also evaluate the Transition Model for bilingual education to determine its effectiveness in meeting the instructional needs of all English Language Learner (ELL) students necessary to increase their achievement in all subject core areas. The district should develop ELL benchmark tests to periodically evaluate the academic progress of students in the bilingual program and to improve their performance and mastery of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and TAKS. By regularly evaluating the

students in the bilingual program, EEISD can identify and address problems that the students are experiencing before they have to take the TAKS test. Addressing weaknesses in the bilingual program on a regular basis should lead to increased student achievement.

- **Recommendation 7: Develop a system to monitor retention and develop an instructional plan to reduce student retention rates and increase the promotion rates of students.** EEISD should set higher standards in reading at the primary level to avoid higher retention rates in later grades. The assistant superintendent for Curriculum should work with campus administrators as a team, to review retention by school and program. Data should be disaggregated by subgroup, to determine how instructional plans should be revised to meet the needs of retained students. The focus should be on implementing evidence-based prevention and intervention strategies to promote social and cognitive competence and facilitate the academic success of all students.
- **Recommendation 8: Create a greater focus on the American College Test (ACT)/ Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) preparation and exam by offering an additional student preparation course during the district's regular school day to improve the performance on college entrance exams.** The district should make the ACT/SAT a primary goal and should allocate funding to hire a fulltime teacher to teach a course in preparation for taking these college entrance exams.
- **Recommendation 9: Develop a district guidance and counseling program that covers the four components and seven strands recommended by the Texas Education Agency (TEA).** The assistant superintendent of Curriculum, director of Student Services, and counselors should begin to research programs from successful districts to use as a guide for incorporating best practices into EEISD's counseling services.
- **Recommendation 10: Ensure that all campuses meet the Texas Education Code (TEC) Section 33.006 and the Texas School Counselor Association's staffing recommendation to provide adequate services to all EEISD students, parents and staff.** The district should add three fulltime counselors and eliminate administrative responsibilities

for all counselors to allow more time to devote to counseling.

- Recommendation 11: Develop a system to monitor campus library collections and staffing standards according to the *School Library Programs: Standards and Guidelines for Texas*.** The district should also ensure that the seven campus libraries that are *Below Acceptable* meet the “*Acceptable*” standard for staffing. The district should increase the school library collections at the Early Childhood Center to meet the *School Library Programs: Standards and Guidelines for Texas* “*Acceptable*” standards. To meet the “*Acceptable*” staffing standard according to state guidelines, EEISD should increase the half-time librarian positions to fulltime positions at the Sixth Grade Campus, the Early Childhood Center and all elementary campuses.

DETAILED ACCOMPLISHMENT

GIFTED AND TALENTED

EEISD provided 30 hours of training required for teachers of gifted and talented (G/T) students to all teachers in the district, rather than limiting the training requirement to only teachers of G/T students. Training all teachers in G/T, increased the number of bilingual gifted students the district’s program serves.

The district continued the initiative to train all teachers in the 30 hours of G/T training. The district now has a G/T program at all grade levels. Grades K–5 maintains a pull-out program that allows gifted students to spend most of their time in a regular heterogeneous classroom, and then pulled out for a given period of time from their regular education program to receive G/T instruction. Instruction in the pull-out program is a differentiated curriculum that creates

multiple paths so students of different abilities, interests or learning needs experience equally appropriate ways to absorb, use, develop and present concepts as a part of the daily learning process and provides opportunities for peer teaching and cooperative learning. The 6th grade campus and the junior high school, implements G/T classes in the four core areas: mathematics, science, social studies and language arts. The high school continues to provide an array of services for G/T students through Pre-Advanced Placement (AP) courses, Advanced Placement (AP) courses, concurrent enrollment, early high school graduation and credit by examination.

In 2004–05, the EEISD G/T program served 576 students, or 10.5 percent of the students in the district. **Exhibit 1-2** provides a comparison of G/T instructional expenditures and student participation for EEISD with peer districts. The percentage of total budgeted expenditures was the highest among the peer districts and lower than the state. EEISD receives funding for the G/T programs from a combination of state, federal, and local funds. The district ranked third highest for students served. The number of G/T teachers in EEISD was the second highest among its peer districts and the state.

The Texas Education Code (TEC) states school districts “shall adopt a process for identifying and serving gifted and talented students in the district and shall establish a program students in each grade level.” In addition, it requires the State Board of Education (SBOE) to “develop for those and periodically update a state plan for the education of gifted and talented students” for accountability purposes “to measure the performance of districts in providing services to students identified as gifted and talented.” The SBOE plan, adopted in 1996 and revised in 2000, provides direction

**EXHIBIT 1-2
G/T EDUCATION EXPENDITURES
2004–05**

DISTRICT	STUDENTS		TEACHERS		BUDGETED INSTRUCTIONAL EXPENDITURES	
	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE	AMOUNT	PERCENTAGE
EDCOUCH–ELSA ISD	576	10.5%	10.6	3.3%	\$183,045	0.6%
Southside ISD	1048	21.6%	4.9	1.6%	\$102,914	.05%
Progreso ISD	73	3.6%	0	0%	\$19,612	0.2%
Rio Grande City ISD	962	10.1%	44.3	6.7%	\$180,675	0.4%
Roma ISD	430	6.9%	0	0%	\$87,059	0.4%
STATE	337,650	7.7%	6,452.8	2.2%	\$367,749,046	1.6%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) Summary report, 2004-05.

for the refinement of existing services and the creation of additional curricular options for G/T students.

The Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students establishes three levels of performance measures, *Acceptable*, *Recognized* and *Exemplary*, for five program areas: student assessment, program design, curriculum and instruction, professional development, and family-community involvement. Acceptable performance measures are those required by state law or rule. The *Recognized* and *Exemplary* measures are provided as “viable targets that local district educators seeking excellence, both for their district and for its students, may strive to attain.” The district is moving towards the *Recognized* status by training all teachers.

DETAILED FINDINGS

STUDENT PERFORMANCE (REC. 1)

EEISD has not performed a curriculum audit, developed a districtwide curriculum plan, or fully documented its curriculum. The district lacks strong benchmarking, monitoring, and data analysis of student performance. The performance of EEISD students on certain TAKS subtests is below the average of peer district students, the region, and the state as a whole. The state uses TAKS to measure statewide curriculum in reading at grades 3–9, in writing at grades 4 and 7; in English Language Arts at grades 10 and 11; in mathematics at grades 3–11; in science in grades 5, 10 and 11, and social studies at grades 8, 10 and 11. In addition, in 2004–05, the state classified Garcia Elementary School as *Academically Unacceptable* while six of EEISD’s schools were rated *Acceptable* and one school was rated *Recognized*. No schools were rated *Exemplary*.

State accountability ratings refer to the district and campus rating assigned by the 2005 state accountability system. Districts and campuses are evaluated on performance on the TAKS, State Determined Alternative Assessment (SDAA II), completion rate and annual dropout rate. Possible ratings are *Exemplary*, *Recognized*, *Academically Acceptable*, and *Academically Unacceptable*.

The Academically Acceptable standard varies by subject, while the Recognized and Exemplary standards remain the same for all subjects:

- *Exemplary*: At least 90 percent of students tested passing every subject;
- *Recognized*: At least 79 percent of students passing for every subject;
- *Academically Acceptable – Varies by Subject*:
 - o Mathematics - 35 percent of student passing;
 - o Reading/ELA - 50 percent of the students passing;
 - o Science - 25 percent of the students passing;
 - o Social Studies - 50 percent of the students passing; and
 - o Writing - 50 percent of the students passing.

Exhibit 1-3 shows EEISD’s accountability ratings for years 2002–03 to 2004–05.

Garcia Elementary School’s campus rating of *Unacceptable* was due to the school’s 2004–05 Grade 5 science scores. An *Acceptable* rating would require Grade 5 science scores to be 25 percent passing. Science TAKS is only given at grades 5,

**EXHIBIT 1-3
AEIS ACCOUNTABILITY RATINGS
2002–03 TO 2004–05**

SCHOOL	2002–03 AEIS RATING	2003–04 AEIS RATING	2004–05 AEIS RATING
Edcouch-Elsa High School	<i>Recognized</i>	<i>Academically Acceptable</i>	<i>Academically Acceptable</i>
Edcouch-Elsa Junior High School	<i>Academically Acceptable</i>	<i>Academically Acceptable</i>	<i>Academically Acceptable</i>
6th Grade Campus	<i>Academically Acceptable</i>	<i>Recognized</i>	<i>Recognized</i>
LBJ Elementary	<i>Exemplary</i>	<i>Academically Acceptable</i>	<i>Academically Acceptable</i>
Ruben Rodriguez Elementary	<i>Academically Acceptable</i>	<i>Academically Acceptable</i>	<i>Academically Acceptable</i>
Kennedy Elementary	<i>Academically Acceptable</i>	<i>Academically Acceptable</i>	<i>Academically Acceptable</i>
Santiago Garcia Elementary	<i>Academically Acceptable</i>	<i>Academically Acceptable</i>	<i>Academically Unacceptable</i>
Early Childhood Center	Not Rated	Not Rated	Not Rated

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2002-03 to 2004-05.

10, and 11. **Exhibit 1-4** shows a comparison of all EEISD campus science scores.

**EXHIBIT 1-4
TAKS SCIENCE SCORES
2004-05**

SCHOOL	GRADE	PERCENT OF STUDENTS PASSING
Garcia Elementary School	Grade 5	21%
Kennedy Elementary School	Grade 5	38%
Rodriguez Elementary School	Grade 5	29%
LBJ Elementary School	Grade 5	43%
Edcouch-Elsa High School	Grade 10	25%
Edcouch-Elsa High School	Grade 11	68%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2004-05.

Before 2003–04, the district had no standardized districtwide curriculum documents and no curriculum management audit to monitor the curriculum. EEISD has since implemented a process for aligning the written, taught, and tested curriculum. However, the district continues to lack strong benchmarking, monitoring, and data analysis of student performance. The data it uses is not sufficiently systematic to provide informed decisions related to curriculum development and instruction to improve student achievement. In interviews with principals, the review team noted that there is inconsistent use of test and other data to improve student achievement growth. While some principals are aggressive and “data focused,” others lack either interest and/or skill in using data to construct plans to pursue strategies that are likely to improve student achievement.

In addition, curriculum planning took place during the summers of 2003 through 2005 by using the TEKS for Leaders Training. Stipends were provided to staff working during the summers to align the curriculum to the TEKS and write curriculum guides to replace the previous pacing guides. In summer of 2003, curriculum teams worked on creating curriculum-pacing guides and curriculum bundles as provided by the TEKS for Leaders I Model. Plans to write curriculum guides were based on the most effective instructional process for the 36-week instructional timeline and the five local benchmark assessments. Instructional

leaders were also trained with the TEKS for Leaders II Model. While these efforts were implemented, it is still difficult to monitor whether teachers use appropriate curriculum guides since the district’s curriculum guides are in various formats.

Established in 2003–04 to assess student progress in mastering the curriculum, benchmark testing occurs three times during the year. Benchmarks used were a combination of efforts developed by campus and district staff and revised a second time in 2004–05 to align with a new assessment calendar and instructional timeline for the 2004–05 year. However, these benchmark tests were not field tested for reliability and consistency among and across grade levels. The district benchmarks do not assess the effectiveness of instructional strategies and do not monitor student progress effectively. A clear set of measurable goals is not evident. Without a consistent method for monitoring instruction, it is difficult to ensure consistency across grade levels and from classroom to classroom.

Also administrators and teachers are not using the student performance data to set goals, measure progress, or pinpoint instructional strength and weaknesses to identify students who need additional support. The power of benchmarks should be how educators use the results to enhance instruction and provide specific instructional support for students. District benchmark assessments of academic objectives are a strong supplement to state tests and measure student performance on the entire curriculum as a deep level of understanding. The assessments begin prior to grade 3.

Exhibits 1-5 through **1-7** show an assessment of the academic scores of students in EEISD taking TAKS tests for 2004–05. **Exhibit 1-5** shows the percentage of students in grades 3–5 passing TAKS as compared with peer districts, region, and the state. EEISD students scored lower than the region and the state average in all tests taken. EEISD students scored second lowest in grades 3 and 4 and third highest in grade 5 among peer districts in reading. EEISD students also scored lower than the state and region in grades 3 and 5 in reading.

Mathematics scores show EEISD students scored second lowest in grades 4 and 5 and third highest in grade 3 among peer districts. EEISD students in grades 3–5 scored lower than the region and state in mathematics.

EEISD students scored highest in grade 4 writing among peer districts but lower than the state. In science, grade 5

**EXHIBIT 1–5
PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS PASSING TAKS
GRADES 3–5
2004–05**

GRADE/DISTRICT/CAMPUS/ REGION/ STATE	READING	MATHEMATICS	WRITING	SCIENCE	SOCIAL STUDIES	ALL TESTS TAKEN
GRADE 3						
EDCOUCH–ELSA	78%	70%				63%
Progreso	84%	75%				50%
Rio Grande City	84%	78%				65%
Roma	67%	66%				56%
Southside	83%	60%				55%
REGION 1	83%	76%				67%
STATE	89%	82%				76%
GRADE 4						
EDCOUCH–ELSA	63%	72%	90%			53%
Progreso	48%	78%	87%			47%
Rio Grande City	69%	79%	84%			61%
Roma	65%	77%	83%			55%
Southside	71%	57%	86%			43%
REGION 1	72%	78%	90%			64%
STATE	80%	82%	91%			70%
GRADE 5						
EDCOUCH–ELSA	57%	64%		33%		25%
Progreso	49%	77%		60%		39%
Rio Grande City	64%	74%		65%		48%
Roma	52%	60%		34%		27%
Southside	76%	81%		75%		57%
REGION 1	68%	76%		58%		47%
STATE	75%	80%		64%		55%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS Report, 2004-05.

scored lowest among peer districts, the region and the state average.

Exhibit 1-6 shows the percentage of students in grades 6–8 passing TAKS in EEISD as compared with peer districts, the region, and the state. EEISD students scored second highest in grade levels 6 and 7, and third highest in grade 8 in reading among peers districts but lower than the region and state in grades 6–8 reading.

Mathematics scores show that EEISD students scored highest in grades 6 and 7, and second highest in grade 8 among peer districts. EEISD students scored lower than the region in grade 8 and lower than the state in grades 6–8.

EEISD students scored higher than the region in grades 6 and 7 in mathematics.

Grade 7 writing scores were the highest among peer districts and lower than the region and state. Social studies scores in grade 8 were third highest among peer districts and lower than the region and state.

Exhibit 1-7 shows the percentage of students in grades 9–11 passing TAKS in EEISD as compared with peer districts, region and the state. EEISD students scored second highest at grade levels 10 and 11 for reading among peers and second lowest at grade 9, and lower than region and state averages at grades 9 and 10.

**EXHIBIT 1–6
PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS PASSING TAKS
GRADES 6–8
2004–05**

GRADE/DISTRICT/CAMPUS/ REGION/ STATE	READING	MATHEMATICS	WRITING	SCIENCE	SOCIAL STUDIES	ALL TESTS TAKEN
GRADE 6						
EDCOUCH–ELSA	75%	71%				65%
Progreso	80%	40%				40%
Rio Grande City	72%	67%				59%
Roma	71%	67%				59%
Southside	69%	40%				36%
REGION 1	79%	67%				62%
STATE	86%	73%				69%
GRADE 7						
EDCOUCH-ELSA	68%	58%	83%			53%
Progreso	59%	29%	76%			26%
Rio Grande City	69%	55%	81%			48%
Roma	65%	53%	83%			47%
Southside	68%	35%	79%			31%
REGION 1	73%	56%	86%			51%
STATE	81%	65%	89%			60%
GRADE 8						
EDCOUCH-ELSA	69%	47%			79%	42%
Progreso	62%	30%			83%	26%
Rio Grande City	76%	56%			84%	52%
Roma	66%	47%			84%	43%
Southside	71%	26%			65%	24%
REGION 1	75%	54%			80%	49%
STATE	84%	62%			85%	58%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS Report, 2004-05.

Grade 9 scores in mathematics were third highest among peer districts with grade 10 the lowest and grade 11 second lowest among peer districts. All grade levels were below the region and state average.

Grade 10 was lowest and grade 11 second lowest in science, and below region and state averages. Grade 10 was lowest and grade 11 third highest among the peer district in social studies; grade 10 was lower than the region and grades 10 and 11 were lower than the state average in social studies.

A curriculum audit process determines the degree of alignment of the written, taught, and tested curriculum. It is also reveals the extent to which the administrators and

professional staff of a school, in conjunction with district officials, have developed and implemented a sound, valid and operational approach for high student achievement performance. An audit includes five standards found in: control, direction, equity, feedback, and productivity. Each standard covers a component of the audit process that determines the effectiveness and efficiency of the instructional program.

Many districts use effective instructional program management systems that provide systematic monitoring of instructional programs, ongoing feedback on successful aspects of the curriculum and instruction, and improved overall student achievement. Administrators are accountable

**EXHIBIT 1-7
PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS PASSING TAKS
GRADES 9–11
2004–05**

GRADE/DISTRICT/CAMPUS/ REGION/ STATE	READING	MATHEMATICS	WRITING	SCIENCE	SOCIAL STUDIES	ALL TESTS TAKEN
GRADE 9						
EDCOUCH-ELSA	66%	35%				33%
Progreso	70%	32%				32%
Rio Grande City	67%	39%				35%
Roma	63%	44%				39%
Southside	76%	32%				30%
REGION 1	73%	46%				43%
STATE	83%	58%				56%
GRADE 10						
EDCOUCH-ELSA	61%	32%		25%	70%	18%
Progreso	48%	42%		33%	79%	23%
Rio Grande City	49%	42%		26%	73%	19%
Roma	54%	43%		41%	71%	26%
Southside	79%	33%		40%	84%	26%
REGION 1	63%	48%		39%	78%	29%
STATE	68%	59%		55%	85%	40%
GRADE 11						
EDCOUCH-ELSA	83%	71%		68%	92%	55%
Progreso	78%	72%		76%	90%	52%
Rio Grande City	82%	74%		73%	94%	56%
Roma	82%	77%		79%	91%	62%
Southside	91%	68%		65%	95%	54%
REGION 1	83%	77%		73%	91%	60%
STATE	88%	81%		81%	95%	69%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS Report, 2004–05.

for ensuring that the resources allocated to instructional programs produce continual improvements in student performance.

Texas best practices also indicate that monitoring, compilation, analysis and use of data ensure measurement of the entire curriculum. **Exhibit 1-8** shows a comparison of a district that is missing the mark and one on target for monitoring and measuring curriculum.

The district should conduct a curriculum management audit to direct curriculum management and ensure quality control. EEISD should complete benchmark tests in all subject areas and analyze student scores on TAKS subtests, with particular

attention to mathematics in grades 9 and 10 and science in grades 5 and 10 to ensure that the written, taught, and tested curriculum are properly aligned. The fiscal impact for a complete curriculum audit would be a one-time cost of \$27,000 per a contracted organization specializing in school audits. The cost is broken down to \$24,000 for the audit plus travel expenses for two auditors at \$1,500 per auditor's expenses or $(\$24,000 + [\$1,500 \times 2 = \$3,000]) = \$27,000$.

CURRICULUM MANAGEMENT (REC. 2)

EEISD lacks a board policy that provides direction for the management of curriculum to establish processes, procedures, and timelines for curriculum review, development,

**EXHIBIT 1-8
BEST PRACTICES OF HIGH PERFORMING SCHOOLS
CRITERIA MEASUREMENT OF CURRICULUM
2005**

DISTRICT MISSING THE MARK	DISTRICT ON TARGET
<p>Assume that the state tests are sufficient.</p> <p>District assessment data are used only minimally and are not disaggregated to provide full and accurate picture of all schools, teachers or students.</p> <p>No assessments are in place prior to the first assessment in Grade 3.</p> <p>Student data is not integral to all decision-making.</p> <p>The information provided by monitoring systems does not provide any guidance about where interventions are needed.</p> <p>No action is taken based on assessment results.</p>	<p>District benchmark assessments, aligned to district and state academic standards, are developed as a strong supplement to state tests.</p> <p>District assessment data are continually studied disaggregated to determine performance by school, by teacher, gender, ethnicity, or any other grouping that may be significant to the district.</p> <p>K-12 progress monitoring assessments are implemented.</p> <p>Data use is an expectation for all decision making.</p> <p>Reports from monitoring systems provide enough information about needed instructional interventions.</p> <p>On-going action is taken based on assessments. Follow-up reviews and reporting occurs.</p>

SOURCE: Just 4 Kids Organization, Best Practices of High Performing Schools, 2005.

and implementation. EEISD has five policies related to curriculum; however, none of these policies provide for curriculum management or how the district should develop and implement curriculum. The five (LEGAL) policies in place pertaining to curriculum are:

- EGA (LEGAL) Curriculum Development: Innovative and Magnet Programs;
- EHA (LEGAL) Curriculum Design: Basic Instructional Program;
- EHB (LEGAL) Curriculum Design: Special Programs;
- EHAA (LEGAL) Basic Instruction Program: Required Instruction (All Levels); and
- EHAC (LEGAL) Basic Instructional Program: Required Instruction (Secondary).

The district contracts with Texas Association of School Boards, Inc. (TASB) for its policy document development. TASB codes all policies according to major areas of school district operations. Any policy designated in the policy manual as (LEGAL) is one developed by TASB to comply with the legal sources of authority defining local district governance. Local policies developed by or for the district are to reflect the decisions of the local Board of Trustees and are designated (LOCAL). TASB issues updates to ensure that the district's policies remain current.

EEISD's existing policies only define the curriculum, not curriculum management. The district lacks policies that include statements that:

- outline the curriculum development processes;
- require written documents in all subject areas and courses;
- establish exceptions regarding coordination of curriculum, instructional materials, assessment programs, provide staff training; and
- establish a direct link between the budget development process and curricular priorities.

Instead of formal policies to establish curriculum management, the district developed solutions such as curriculum teams, benchmark assessments, and timelines to begin aligning its curriculum with TEKS and TAKS. The district also created curriculum guides that were not entirely useful to all grade levels. The secondary guides lack specificity to ensure consistent high achievement for all students. While the district took these steps to ensure that the curriculum objectives selected were rigorous and met or exceeded state standards, the steps lack formal directives for future administrators to follow when they try to standardize a curriculum management program.

Many districts, such as East Central ISD, include well-written board policies on curriculum management in their policy manuals. An EG (LOCAL) Curriculum Development policy is one that establishes common standards for what is being taught, how it is to be presented in written form, and how it should be evaluated.

The district should adopt a board policy that provides direction for the management of curriculum to establish processes, procedures, and timelines for curriculum review, development, and implementation. District staff should develop a three- to four-year curriculum management plan that focuses on student achievement and erasing the achievement gaps of all subpopulations. The district should seek assistance from the other districts to obtain copies of local curriculum management polices. The district should then consider which elements of the policies are relevant and adopt or adapt a policy to meet the district’s local needs.

ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS (REC. 3)

EEISD lacks a plan to ensure schools that do not meet AYP develop research-based strategies for success. Edcouch-Elsa High School students did not meet TAKS performance standards in mathematics while the Carlos Truan Junior High School students did not meet TAKS performance standards in reading and mathematics as required by the NCLB Act; consequently, both schools did not meet AYP for 2004–05. Failure to meet AYP results when a district or a campus does not meet AYP standards on one or more indicator components. Under the federal law, every public school must meet Adequate Yearly Progress goals for the school as a whole as well as for individual subgroups of students, such as those with limited English capabilities or disabilities. All students and each student group meeting the minimum size requirement for students enrolled for the full academic year must meet the following performance standards:

- Reading/Language Arts: 53 percent of students counted as proficient, and

- Mathematics: 42 percent of students counted as proficient.

In addition, the district seems to lack a cohesive planning methodology specifically to assist schools who do not meet AYP. Campus administrators stated in focus groups, “The high school is having problems with mathematics. We need to make more strides and continue to improve the curriculum. Something is missing. The students are not as well prepared as they should be. Even with the programs, the scores have not improved but dropped. We need more resources in math and more curriculum development. We need more investigation at a higher level to determine what is missing”

Exhibit 1-9 shows a comparison of the state and federal accountability standards by indicator.

Carlos Truan Junior High School and Edcouch-Elsa High School met the *Acceptable* standard in reading and mathematics for the State Accountability Standards, however, the junior high school did not meet the Federal Accountability Standards in reading and mathematics and the high school in mathematics only.

Exhibit 1-10 shows the AYP standard required for mathematics and the junior high campus scores that prevented the campus from making AYP. All students and all subgroups must meet the AYP standard. The Anglo and ELL subgroups were below the AYP standard for mathematics.

Exhibit 1-11 shows the AYP standard for reading needed for meeting AYP and the junior high campus scores that kept the campus from making AYP. All students and all subgroups must meet the AYP standard. The Anglo and ELL subgroups were below the AYP standard for reading.

**EXHIBIT 1-9
COMPARISON OF STATE AND FEDERAL ACCOUNTABILITY (AYP) BY INDICATOR
2004–05**

	STATE ACCOUNTABILITY	AYP
TAKS Subjects & Standards	Reading/English Language Arts ELA Exemplary 90%/Recognized 70%/Acceptable 50%	Reading/ELA Meets AYP 53% Mathematics Meets AYP 42%
Grades	3-11 (English); 3-6 (Spanish)	3-8, and 10 (English); 3-6 (Spanish)
Student Groups	All Students African American Hispanic Anglo Economically Disadvantaged	All Students African American Hispanic Anglo Economically Disadvantaged Special Education English Language Learner (ELL)

SOURCE: Adequately Yearly Progress (AYP) Guide 2004-05.

**EXHIBIT 1-10
TRUAN JUNIOR HIGH MATHEMATICS
ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS
2004-05**

	ALL STUDENTS	AFRICAN AMERICAN	HISPANIC	ANGLO	ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGE	SPECIAL EDUCATION	ELL
PERFORMANCE: MATHEMATICS							
AYP Standard	42%	42%	42%	42%	42%	42%	42%
Campus score	52%	*	52%	40%	52%	52%	30%

*Numbers less than five have not been cited due to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) 34CFR Part 99.1 and Texas Education Agency procedures OP 10-03.

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, Adequate Yearly Progress Campus Data Table, 2005.

**EXHIBIT 1-11
TRUAN JUNIOR HIGH READING
ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS
2004-05**

	ALL STUDENTS	AFRICAN AMERICAN	HISPANIC	ANGLO	ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGE	SPECIAL EDUCATION	ELL
PERFORMANCE: READING/ LANGUAGE ARTS							
AYP Standard	53%	53%	53%	53%	53%	53%	53%
Campus score	67%	*	67%	40%	66%	57%	42%

*Numbers less than five have not been cited due to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) 34CFR Part 99.1 and Texas Education Agency procedures OP 10-03.

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, Adequate Yearly Progress Campus Data Table, 2005.

Exhibit 1-12 shows the AYP standard required for mathematics and the high school campus scores that prevented the campus from making AYP. All students and all subgroups must meet the AYP standard. With the exception of special education, all subgroups were below the AYP standard for mathematics.

Since this is the first year that Edcouch-Elsa High School and Truan Junior High have not met AYP, the district is not required by law to comply with any federal compliance standards. However, failing to meet AYP for two consecutive

years means the district must receive technical assistance, while its students must have the option of transferring to other higher performing public schools.

The NCLB Act of 2001 (Public Law 107-110) signed into law January 8, 2002, indicates that accountability provisions formerly applied only to districts and campuses receiving Title I, Part A funds, now apply to all districts and campuses. All public school districts, campuses, and the state are evaluated annually for AYP. AYP requirements in NCLB are based on the following:

**EXHIBIT 1-12
EDCOUCH-ELSA HIGH SCHOOL
MATHEMATICS AYP
2004-05**

	ALL STUDENTS	AFRICAN AMERICAN	HISPANIC	ANGLO	ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGE	SPECIAL EDUCATION	ELL
PERFORMANCE: MATHEMATICS							
AYP Standard	43%	43%	43%	43%	43%	43%	43%
Campus score	34%	*	34%	*	36%	58%	21%

*Numbers less than five have not been cited due to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) 34CFR Part 99.1 and Texas Education Agency procedures OP 10-03.

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, Adequate Yearly Progress Campus Data Table, 2005.

- All Schools: A single statewide definition of AYP applies to all districts and campuses, including Title I and non-Title I districts and campuses, alternative education campuses, and open-enrollment charter schools.
- All Students: All students must be tested and all results must be included in the AYP calculation. After 2002–03, reading/language arts and mathematics results for all students will be included in the AYP calculation, including results for special education students tested on the State-Developed Alternative Assessment (SDAA); Locally Determined Alternative Assessment (LDAA) for students exempted from the TAKS and SDAA by the Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) committee or the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC); and Reading Proficiency Tests in English (RPTE) for English Language Learner (ELL) students exempted from the TAKS by the LPAC.
- Standards: Baseline performance standards for reading/language arts and mathematics measures are determined using the methodology required in NCLB. The standards must increase over time to reach 100 percent by 2013–14.
- Other Measures: High schools must meet a graduation rate set by the state. States will individually identify an additional measure for elementary and middle/junior high schools.
- Participation: Districts and campuses must meet test participation standards as well as performance standards for students tested.
- Student Groups: All African American, Hispanic, Anglo, economically disadvantaged, special education, and ELL students must meet the same performance and participation standards. States will individually develop minimum size criteria for evaluation of student groups.

EEISD should develop a two-year school improvement campus plan for any schools not meeting AYP as prescribed by *Stage One School Improvement Requirements* of the 2005 AYP Guide. Truan Junior High School and Edcouch-Elsa High School should develop plans to address the core academic subjects and include research based strategies that address specific causes of the school's failure to meet AYP. These plans are separate from Campus Improvement Plans (CIPs) and should focus on the following action: use data to make

informed decisions; provide professional development in the content areas of reading and mathematics; and ensure that curricula and teacher training are grounded in “scientifically based research,” and have proved effective in addressing the specific problems that caused the school to be identified as not meeting AYP.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE (REC. 4)

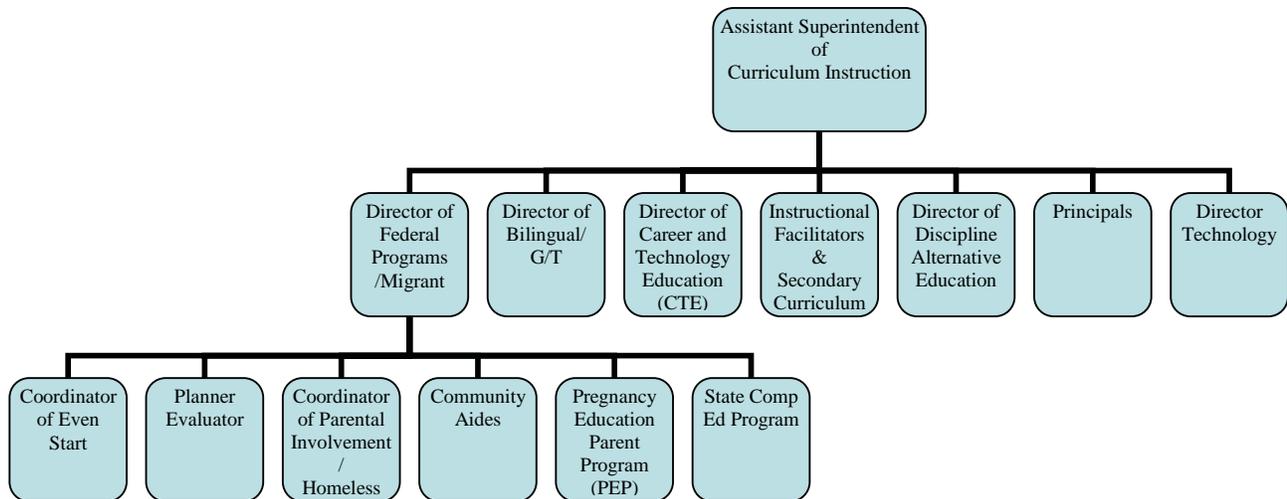
EEISD's Curriculum Department is not organized for efficiency and effectiveness. The department's organization interferes with the development of curriculum, delivery of educational services and evaluation programs. Departmental personnel report to the assistant superintendent for Curriculum and are responsible for a wide array of duties. The assistant superintendent for Curriculum reports directly to the superintendent and is responsible for overseeing all of the district's instructional programs and assessments.

Exhibit 1-13 shows the instructional organization with positions and responsibilities currently assigned to EEISD's Department of Curriculum and Instruction.

According to the organizational chart, the district provided to the review team, **Exhibit 1-13**, the district's current structure includes five directors, eight facilitators and eight principals. All of these positions report directly to the assistant superintendent of Curriculum Instruction. Interviews with district staff, however, indicated in contrast, that principals report to the superintendent and instructional facilitators report to the campus principals. With the exception of the director of Discipline Alternative Education Program (DAEP), each of the directors reporting to the assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction has a wide variety of responsibilities that appear unrelated. In addition, the position of director of Technology is vacant and the district has never filled the position. Chapters 2 and 11 of this report include more information regarding this position.

The assistant superintendent of Curriculum Instruction is responsible for elementary and secondary curriculum, summer school, staff development, curriculum teams and assessment. The director of Bilingual/G/T is not only responsible for her area but also in charge of the dyslexia program and 504 screening, which are responsibilities more in line with those of the of special education department. The director of Career and Technology Education (CTE) is also the district's grant writer for competitive grants.

**EXHIBIT 1-13
EEISD CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION ORGANIZATION
2005**



SOURCE: EEISD Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, November 2005.

Eight instructional facilitators report directly to the assistant superintendent of Curriculum Instruction. The instructional facilitators were referred to as supervisors before 2005–06. No job description was available for the supervisor positions; however, through staff interviews the review team determined that the eight supervisor positions actually act as assistant principals at each campus. Staff interviews indicated that instructional facilitators perform assistant principal duties and are unable to complete the curriculum duties in their assigned subject areas.

According to the district, the superintendent formed curriculum teams to align curriculum guides in all subject areas. These teams then assigned subject area responsibilities to each of the eight campus instructional facilitators. These facilitators were to become the “specialist” for the subject assigned. The eight positions were allocated as follows:

- one facilitator for reading;
- two facilitators for math;
- one facilitator for social studies;
- two facilitators for science;
- one facilitator for writing; and
- one facilitator for the non-subject areas of At-risk and ELL students, and students who took the State Developed Alternative Assessment (SDAA).

There are positions throughout the department whose duties are contradictory to their titles and do not give adequate support to students’ needs under the present organizational structure. For example, the director of Federal Programs also coordinates the Migrant Program and supervises the Even Start Program, the State Compensatory Education Program, Planner/Evaluator, Parental Involvement, Community Aides and Pregnancy, Education and Parenting (PEP) Programs. Even Start and Migrant programs deal with numerous bilingual parents and students. Job descriptions, in some cases, also do not match the reporting structure shown in the organizational chart.

The Planner/Evaluator is responsible for district data and curriculum assessment but is several layers removed from the assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction who typically reviews data trends and curriculum assessment. The director of Special Education is not assigned to the Curriculum Department but instead reports to the assistant superintendent of Personnel (Support Services) as does the director of Student Services who does not appear on the district’s current organizational chart and has oversight of librarians, nurses, counselors, and handles all certification of instructional staff. The position also acts as the district’s discipline and grievance hearing officer.

EEISD should reorganize curriculum department responsibilities among senior managers to enhance student performance, program effectiveness and departmental efficiency. The assistant superintendent of Curriculum

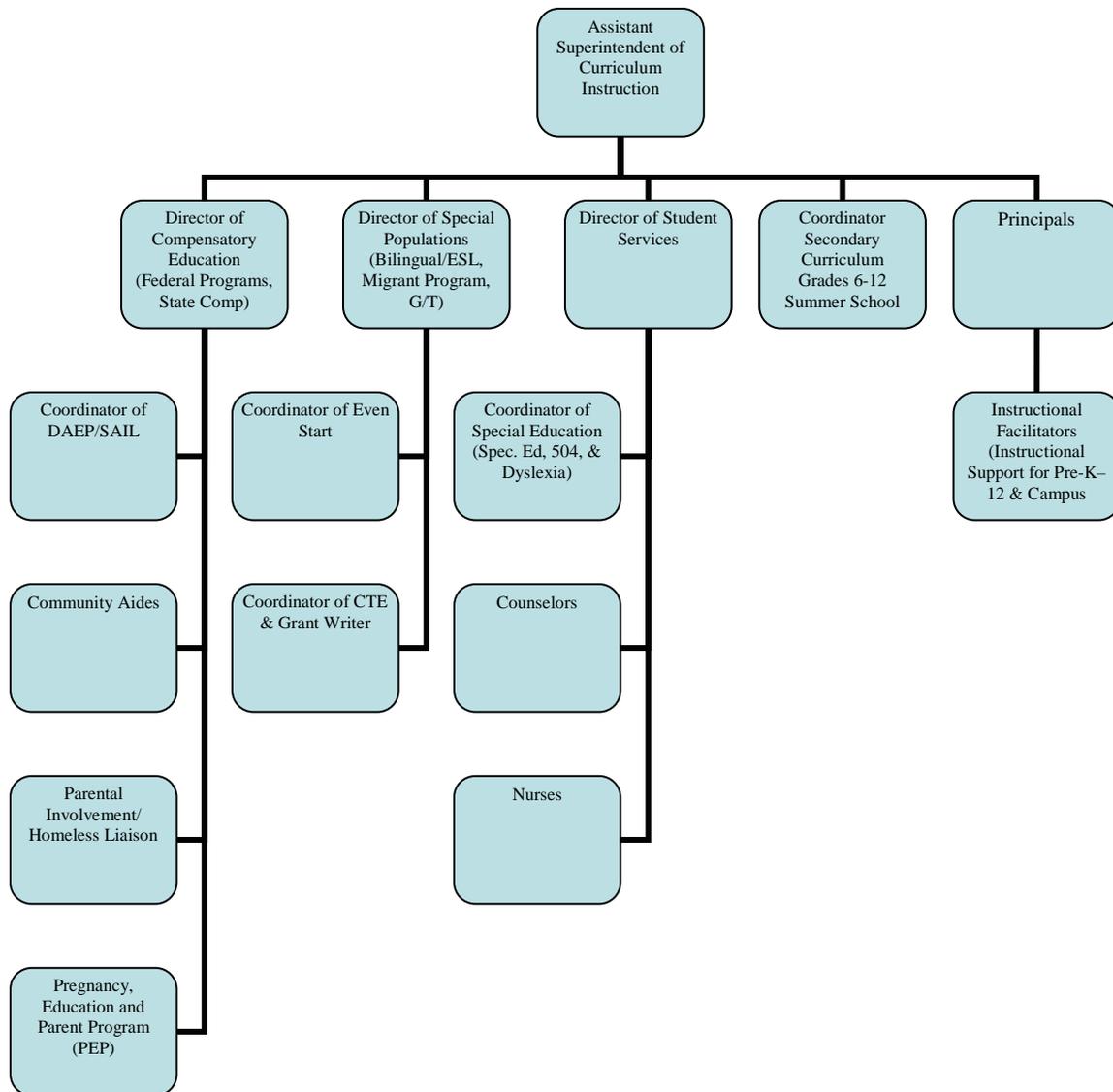
Instruction with assistance from the director of Personnel and input from staff, will need to revise job descriptions to reflect the new duties and responsibilities of department staff. Changes to the organization will reflect title changes, added or deleted responsibilities and in some instances, reporting structures. Under the reorganization shown in Exhibit 1-14, the following changes are recommended:

- eliminate the title director of Bilingual/G/T and create a title change to director of Special Populations with responsibilities for the following programs: Bilingual/ESL, G/T, Even Start, Migrant Program, eliminating

the responsibilities of dyslexia and the 504 program. The coordinator of CTE and grant writer is in direct report to the director of Special Populations;

- eliminate the title of secondary curriculum strategist and create a title change to coordinator of Secondary Curriculum to include responsibility for summer school. Summer school was formerly a responsibility of the assistant superintendent of Curriculum Instruction. This position is in direct report to the assistant superintendent of Curriculum Instruction;

**EXHIBIT 1-14
RECOMMENDED CURRICULUM DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION**



SOURCE: Texas Public School Consulting, Inc, December 2005.

- redefine the role of director for Student Services to include responsibility for the Special Education Department, reporting directly to the assistant superintendent of Curriculum Instruction. Previously the position reported to the assistant superintendent of Personnel (Support Services);
- create a title change from director of Special Education to coordinator of Special Education to also include the responsibility for dyslexia and 504 screenings. The dyslexia program and 504 screenings were formerly the responsibility of the director of Bilingual G/T programs;
- eliminate the title of director of Federal Programs/Migrant and create a title change to director of Compensatory Education to include responsibility for Federal Programs, and continued supervision of the DAEP Program; Community Aides and Parental Involvement;
- create a title change from the director of the DAEP/Students Assistance in Life (SAIL) to coordinator of DAEP/SAIL, this position has sole responsibility for this program; and
- create a title change from director of CTE/Grant writer to coordinator of CTE/Grant writer.

By reorganizing the responsibilities of several positions, making title changes to be reflective of the position’s duties, and redirecting reporting structures to more appropriate functional areas, the department will improve planning and communication while reducing duplication of efforts. Changing titles, responsibilities and duties and will not affect the current pay structures of existing positions.

COMPENSATORY EDUCATION/TITLE I PROGRAMS (REC. 5)

EEISD lacks a comprehensive evaluation system to determine the effectiveness of the district’s compensatory education and Title I programs. The district also cannot ensure that it uses State Compensatory Education (SCE) and Title I resources to supplement rather than supplant the regular education program and to close the gap between at-risk and not at-risk students. The performance of EEISD at-risk students lagged behind the performance of the students not at-risk. At-risk students are those who meet one or more of the 13 eligibility criteria as defined under Section 29.081 of the TEC.

EEISD uses compensatory education funds to provide special support for students who are at-risk of dropping out and students who are not performing at grade level. State Compensatory Education (SCE) funds like Title I funds are to be supplemental in nature, which means that these funds are to be added to the regular program but cannot take the place of or supplant regular funds. The law requires districts to use student performance for designing and implementing appropriate compensatory, intensive or accelerated instructional programs so that these students will perform at grade level by the end of the following school year. The law also requires each district to evaluate and document the effectiveness of the state compensatory education program in reducing any disparity in performance.

The district is not closing the gap between at-risk and not at-risk students at all grade levels. Library aides, nurse’s aides, and an LVN are funded from compensatory education funds. These are supplanting rather than supplementing the educational programs and therefore not consistent with state laws. Facilitators are coded as instructional when, in fact, the duties they are performing are administrative. Their coding does not reflect the duties they perform. Discrepancies between what is reported to the Federal Programs director by schools and what is actually entered in payroll shows a lack of monitoring program and personnel positions. The district is not only out of compliance with statutory mandates, but more importantly misdirects funds critically needed in areas that would academically benefit the at-risk population the most.

In 2004–05, EEISD had 3,804 students, or 69.6 percent, classified as at-risk. **Exhibit 1-15** shows a comparison of at-risk students in EEISD to the peer districts and state. EEISD had the highest percentage of at-risk students among selected

**EXHIBIT 1-15
NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF AT-RISK STUDENTS
2004–05**

DISTRICT	NUMBER OF AT-RISK STUDENTS	PERCENTAGE OF AT-RISK STUDENTS
EDCOUCH-ELSA	3,804	69.5%
Rio Grande City	6,593	69.1%
Progreso	1,404	69.0%
Roma	4,163	68.0%
Southside	2,875	59.4%
STATE	2,005,807	45.8%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2004-05.

peer districts and the district’s percentage of at-risk students ranked higher than the state averages.

Exhibit 1-16 shows the compensatory education expenditures for EEISD and its peer districts. The EEISD 2004–05 compensatory education budget was \$2,527,638, ranking it third among its peers in compensatory education expenditures, as a percentage of the total budgeted expenditures, and fourth highest for compensatory education expenditures per student. It is also noted that EEISD has the lowest Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) percentage of SCE teachers among its peers.

EEISD allocated SCE funds for eight campus administrative positions, which included seven instructional facilitators and one DAEP director, 16 teachers, 25 instructional aides, nine library aides, two community aides, and one half time counselor position for a total of 60.5 allocated positions. The Payroll Department is actually funding 59 positions, many of which do not match the records of the Federal Programs director, which indicates incorrect coding of personnel positions. For example, the high school shows 19 FTEs yet the actual payroll list shows 14 positions being funded, Truan Junior High shows five and one-half FTEs yet the actual payroll positions show 2 positions. **Exhibit 1-17** shows the number of positions funded by SCE in EEISD.

EEISD co-funds a variety of programs with SCE and Title I, Part A funds. EEISD shows 15 supplemental programs for at-risk students. Eleven programs target Pre-K–5 students and thirteen programs target secondary students. **Exhibit 1-18** shows the compensatory education programs in EEISD.

Texas school districts use compensatory education funds to provide instructional services to students at risk of failure.

Texas began to fund compensatory programs in 1975. In 1997, Section 42.152 of the TEC was amended to include reporting and auditing systems covering the appropriate use of compensatory education allotment funds. Section 42.152 of the TEC also requires state compensatory education (SCE) funds, like federal Title I funds, to be supplemental in nature. In other words, a district must add these funds to the regular program; the funds cannot take the place or supplant regular funds. SCE fund rules allow a great deal of flexibility in identifying students and creating successful programs.

In 2001–02 state law changed, restricting the amount of SCE funds that a district can use to fund basic services for disciplinary alternative education programs not to exceed 18 percent of the total amount of SCE funds allotted to the district. Districts must also integrate SCE budgetary appropriations into the district and campus planning process, identify in their district and campus improvement plans the designated funding source, the amount of SCE funds budgeted and the number of FTE staff funded by SCE appropriations.

In addition, the Federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and the Improving America’s Schools Act provide funds for students who do not meet performance standards. TEA distributes Title I, Part A funds of ESEA to provide high-poverty school districts with extra resources to help improve instruction and ensure that poor and minority children have the same opportunity as other children to meet state academic standards. Funds are distributed based on the Census Bureau’s school district estimates of economically disadvantaged school-age children. Disadvantaged students are typically those who are eligible for free or reduced-priced lunch or breakfast. TEA distributes funds based on the number of economically disadvantaged students, but students served do not need to be economically disadvantaged.

**EXHIBIT 1–16
COMPENSATORY EDUCATION EXPENDITURES
2004–05**

DISTRICT	BUDGET EXPENDITURES	PERCENT OF TOTAL BUDGET	AMOUNT PER STUDENT	COMPENSATORY EDUCATION TEACHERS (FTE'S)	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL FTE'S
Progreso	\$1,130,051	12.5%	\$536	47	11.3%
Southside	\$2,053,613	10.2%	\$439	6.9	2.2%
EDCOUCH-ELSA	\$2,527,638	11.6%	\$474	0.0	0.0%
Roma	\$3,237,638	13.2%	\$520	0.0	0.0%
Rio Grande City	\$5,126,053	11.5%	\$541	13.9	2.1%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2004-05.

**EXHIBIT 1-17
EEISD AT-RISK STUDENTS
STATE COMPENSATORY EDUCATION POSITIONS
2004-05**

SCHOOL	NUMBER OF FTE'S	POSITIONS	POSITIONS ON ACTUAL PAYROLL
EE High School	19	1 Facilitator 1 DAEP Director 10 Teachers 7 Aides	1 Facilitator 1 DAEP Director 8 Teachers 2 Aides 1 Social Worker 1 DAEP Secretary
Truan Junior High	5.5	1 Facilitator .50 counselor 1 English Teacher 3 Aides	1 Facilitator 1 Teacher
6th Grade Center	4.0	1 Facilitator 2 Aides 1 Teacher	1 Facilitator 3 Aide
Garcia Elementary	7.0	1 Facilitator 1 Teacher 5 Aides	1 Facilitator 1 teacher 5 Aides
JFK Elementary	8.0	1 Facilitator 1 Teacher 6 Aides	1 Facilitator 1 Teacher 6 Aides
Rodriguez Elementary	6.0	1 Facilitator 1 Teacher 4 Instructional Aides	1 Facilitator 1 Teacher 4 Aides
LBJ Elementary	6.0	1 Facilitator 1 Teacher 4 Aides	1 Facilitator 1 Teacher 5 Aides
Early Childhood Center	5.0	5 Aides	5 Instructional Aides 1 Community Aide 1 Library Aide
Administrative (Non Campus)			1 Inventory clerk 1Planner/ Evaluator 1 District Liaison 1 Media Aide

SOURCE: EEISD Federal Programs Director, November 2005.

The law allows a school to be designated as a Title I, Part A school-wide program if 40 percent or more of students at the school, or in the attendance zone, are low income. The program mandates school districts use Title I funds for activities that scientifically-based research suggests will be most effective in helping all students meet state standards. Under Title I, Part A districts must coordinate and integrate Title I, Part A services with other educational services to increase program effectiveness, eliminate duplication, and reduce fragmentation of instructional programs.

In 2004-05, EEISD had the second highest percentage of students classified as economically disadvantaged among its peers are shown in **Exhibit 1-19**. EEISD's 91.1 percentage

of economically disadvantaged students was higher than the state average of 54.6 percent.

EEISD received \$3,078,360 in Title I, Part A funds in 2004-05. It uses Title I, Part A funds to pay teachers' salaries, paraprofessional salaries, tutoring for elementary school students, staff development, library books, and instructional materials for each campus, summer school support, and community and parental involvement personnel and activities. **Exhibit 1-20** shows the Title I, Part A funded positions in EEISD. Title I Part A full-time positions again do not coincide with those numbers of FTEs on the actual payroll.

**EXHIBIT 1-18
COMPENSATORY EDUCATION PROGRAMS
2004-05**

COMPENSATORY EDUCATION STRATEGIES	CAMPUS AND GRADE LEVEL OF IMPLEMENTATION
At-risk Counselor	High School
Plato Credit Recovery	High School
Community Aides	All Campuses
HOSTS Mentoring Program	All Campuses
Teacher Aides (Reading and Math Intervention)	All Campuses
Library Aides	All Campuses
Instructional Facilitators	All Campuses
After School Tutoring/ Extended Week	All Students
Summer School	All Students
Flexible Scheduling	Early Childhood Campus
Middle School Concept Teachers	Junior High School
Class Size Reduction	Elementary and High School
ESL	Grades 6-12
Bilingual	Grades PK-5
Dyslexia	Grades K-12

SOURCE: EEISD Federal Programs Director, November 2005.

**EXHIBIT 1-19
ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED ENROLLEMNT
EEISD, PEER DISTRICTS AND STATE
2004-05**

DISTRICT	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Progreso	1,937	95.2%
EDCOUCH-ELSA	4,987	91.1%
Roma	5,620	89.6%
Rio Grande City	8,287	86.9%
Southside	3,854	79.6%
STATE	2,394,001	54.6%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2004-05.

While the district receives all these funds, student performance on the TAKS test for the district’s at-risk students in grades 3–11 are consistently lower than the performance of students who are not at-risk as shown in **Exhibit 1-21**. Scores for at-risk students are far below students who were not at-risk in all subject areas. Grade four writing is the closest to closing the gap by scoring only 8 percent below the not-at-risk students.

**EXHIBIT 1-20
TITLE I, PART A FUNDED POSITIONS
2004-05**

POSITION	FTES	FTES ON ACTUAL PAYROLL
Teacher	36	15
Instructional Aides	16	39
Community Aides	7	7
Nurse Aide	2	2
LVN	1	1
Parental Involvement Secretary	1	0
Reading Strategist	0	1
Math Strategist	0	1
Parental Involvement Director	1	1
Federal Programs Secretary	1	1
TOTAL	65	68

SOURCE: EEISD Compensatory Education Payroll and director of Federal Programs, 2004-05.

The United States Department of Education recently reauthorized Elementary and Secondary Act of 2002, now called the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, challenges the nation’s 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 NCLB. Districts must identify both the qualifying “at-risk” students and schools with large numbers of “at-risk” students and provide them with resources they need through these federal programs. Funds are intended to be supplemental, which should provide resources that would not be available through the regular program. Both Title I and SCE funds must enhance the regular program and not replace or supplant regular funds.

Section 29.081 of the Texas Education Code requires each school district to evaluate and document the effectiveness of the compensatory education instruction in increasing academic achievement of students listed as “at-risk” of dropping out of school. A student at-risk of dropping out of school includes each student who is 21 years of age and who:

**EXHIBIT 1-21
TAKS PERFORMANCE OF AT-RISK STUDENTS
2004-05**

GRADE LEVEL	AT-RISK STUDENTS 2004-05	NOT AT-RISK STUDENTS 2004-05	PERCENTAGE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AT-RISK AND NOT AT-RISK STUDENTS 2004-05
GRADE 3			
Reading	84%	97%	(13%)
Mathematics	63%	92%	(29%)
GRADE 4			
Reading	56%	79%	(23%)
Mathematics	65%	85%	(20%)
Writing	87%	95%	(8%)
GRADE 5			
Reading	58%	94%	(36%)
Mathematics	53%	84%	(31%)
Science	21%	53%	(32%)
GRADE 6			
Reading	65%	100%	(35%)
Mathematics	69%	98%	(29%)
GRADE 7			
Reading	36%	89%	(53%)
Mathematics	22%	82%	(60%)
Writing	63%	96%	(33%)
GRADE 8			
Reading	46%	93%	(47%)
Mathematics	19%	76%	(57%)
Social Studies	63%	96%	(33%)
GRADE 9			
Reading	48%	92%	(44%)
Mathematics	10%	69%	(59%)
GRADE 10			
English/LA	49%	89%	(40%)
Mathematics	16%	72%	(56%)
Science	11%	58%	(47%)
Social Studies	61%	96%	(35%)
GRADE 11			
English/LA	67%	94%	(27%)
Mathematics	41%	89%	(48%)
Science	41%	86%	(45%)
Social Studies	80%	99%	(19%)

SOURCE: Edcouch-Elsa Planner/Evaluator, November 2005.

- is in preK–grade 3 and did not perform satisfactorily on a readiness test or assessment instrument administered during the current school year;
- is in grade 7–12 and did not maintain an average equivalent to 70 on a scale of 100 in two or more subjects in the foundation curriculum during a semester in the current or preceding school year;
- was not advanced from one grade level to the next for one or more school years;
- did not perform satisfactorily on the TAKS test;
- is pregnant or is a parent;
- is a student of Limited English Proficiency;
- has been placed in an alternative education program in the preceding or current school year;
- has been expelled during the preceding or current school year;
- is currently on probation, deferred prosecution or other conditional release;
- was previously reported through PEIMS to have dropped out of school;
- is in the custody or care of the Department of Protective Regulatory Services;
- is homeless; or
- resided in the preceding school year or resides in the current school year in a residential placement facility in the district.

EEISD should develop a comprehensive evaluation system to determine the effectiveness of compensatory education and Title I programs. Comprehensive program evaluation of the compensatory education programs will provide the district with data for making program improvements. An effective evaluation will allow EEISD to develop and implement instructional strategies to target at-risk students. Student performance should be assessed frequently and programs modified to ensure their effectiveness in improving student performance to close the gap between at-risk and not at-risk students. The Federal Programs director should ensure that staff positions for compensatory education are coded correctly and ensure that schools report the personnel accurately in order to comply with compensatory education regulations.

BILINGUAL/ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNER (ELL) (REC. 6)

EEISD lacks an accountability system to monitor the academic progress of students in the Bilingual program. The Bilingual director coordinates the EEISD Bilingual/English Language Learner (ELL) program. In 2004–05, EEISD served 2,479 ELL (formerly known as Limited English Proficient/LEP) students or 45.3 percent of the district’s population. This significant number of ELL students presents challenges at every campus for recruitment, ongoing teacher training, and resource allocations. As required by the state, the district serves all enrolled ELL students, with parent permission, in either the required bilingual education program or the English as a Second Language (ESL) program. The Bilingual director indicated that 99 percent of the elementary teachers were bilingually certified, yet the 2004–05 EEISD Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) report states that the district has 2.2 bilingual teachers. **Exhibit 1-22** shows the 2004–05 EEISD enrollment for ELL.

EXHIBIT 1-22
STUDENT ENROLLMENT FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNER 2004–05

GRADE LEVELS	TOTAL ENROLLMENT	ELL ENROLLMENT	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL ENROLLMENT
Elementary	2,820	1,618	57.4%
Middle School	1,130	444	39.3%
High School	1,522	417	27.4 %
TOTAL	5,472	2,479	45.3%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2004-05.

EEISD implemented a District Instructional Model and Transition Plan during the 2003–04, which is a move away from the Developmental Bilingual program that the district used in previous years. The EEISD Transitional Bilingual program moves students with a quick progression to all or most instruction in English. Students may begin to make the transition into English reading at the beginning of first grade when they have had bilingual literacy instruction since pre-K or kindergarten. The end of first grade marks a complete transition to English reading. The transitioning period will vary depending on the needs of the student. Reading instruction in Spanish continues during transition. Survey comments indicate that teachers, parent and principals are supportive of the Bilingual/ESL program and the majority of the teachers are doing their best to embrace the new model the district implemented.

The Texas Administrators Code (TAC) Chapter 89 requirement for program content and design states, “the district shall modify the instruction, pacing and materials to ensure that ELL students have a full opportunity to master the essential knowledge and skills of the required curriculum.” The EEISD bilingual program has not provided an adequate program for ELL students to master the TEKS in that it lacks an evaluation component. All districts in the state are also required to conduct periodic assessment of instruction to determine program impact and student outcomes in all subject areas. EEISD lacks an evaluation process in place to determine program effectiveness for its Bilingual/ELL program. The only accountability system used is the results of the annual TAKS state assessment and in 2004–05 ELL TAKS results in reading, writing and mathematics indicate that ELL students have not mastered the TEKS and have consequently not closed the achievement gap between this population of students and all other students in the district.

While elementary ELL students are making gains in passing the TAKS reading test, the percentage is significantly lower than that of all students. ELL students in grade 4 had a 1 percent decrease in reading, grade 3 had a 3 percent increase and grade 5 had an 8 percent increase. Grades 3–5 performed lower in reading than Region 1 and the state.

The percentage of EEISD middle school ELL students passing TAKS reading is significantly lower as compared to all students. ELL students in grade 6 had a 21 percent increase, grade 7 had a 15 percent increase, and grade 8 had a 1 percent increase in reading. ELL students in grades 6–8 performed lower in reading than Region 1 and the state.

The percentage of EEISD high school ELL students passing TAKS reading is significantly lower as compared to all students. ELL students in grade 9 had a 7 percent increase, grade 10 had a 3 percent decrease, and grade 11 had a 12 percent increase in reading. ELL students in grades 9–11 performed lower in reading than Region 1 and the state.

The percentage of EEISD elementary school ELL students passing TAKS math is lower as compared to all students. ELL students in grade 3 had a 9 percent decrease, grade 4 had a 9 percent increase, and grade 5 had a 17 percent increase in math. ELL students in grades 3–5 performed lower in math than Region 1 and the state.

The percentage of middle school ELL students passing TAKS mathematics is significantly lower as compared to all students. ELL students in grades 6–8 performed lower than the Region 1 and the state. Grade 6 showed an increase

of 15 percentage points but is still 21 percentage points below the district percentage of 71 percent. Grade 7 had an increase of 6 percentage points while grade 8 had no change from 2003–04.

The percentage of high school ELL students passing TAKS mathematics is significantly lower as compared to all students. ELL students in grades 9–11 performed lower than the Region 1 and the state. Grade 9 showed a decrease of 2 percentage points, grade 10 had an increase of 5 percentage points and grade 11 had an increase of 25 percentage points. ELL students in grades 9–11 performed lower in mathematics than students in Region 1 and the state.

The percentage of ELL students passing TAKS writing is significantly lower as compared to all students. ELL students in grades 4 and 7 performed lower in writing than students in three comparable peer districts, as well as the region and state. In the comparison data for 2003 and 2004, the district has made progress with the ELL population in writing as evidenced by the increase of 23 percentage points in grade 4 and an increase of 22 percentage points in grade 7. This data indicates improvement in English reading and that bilingual teachers are giving comparable emphasis to both reading and writing in grade 4. **Exhibit 1-23** shows the TAKS passing rates for the EEISD ELL students.

The comparison of ELL students and non-ELL students’ academic achievement shows little improvement in closing the gap between the two groups. **Exhibit 1-24** shows the academic gap between ELL and none ELL students in the 2004–05 TAKS scores.

During the teacher focus group, teachers said that the “bilingual program is lacking; there really is not any kind of system to give the students what they need to learn. The Bilingual program is not fully implemented.” Principal focus group comments also included “bilingual instruction needs to be looked at. We must offer students every possible way of instruction. Areas of staff development, approaches, and areas of philosophy need to be identified. Teachers are not as confident in teaching bilingual education.”

The lack of accountability and monitoring its bilingual programs has caused the district’s ELL students to perform below the region and state average on TAKS.

School districts are required by TAC Chapter 89 to identify ELL students and provide bilingual/ESL programs as an integral part of the regular educational program. The goal of the bilingual program is to enable English Language Learner

**EXHIBIT 1-23
ELL STUDENTS
2004-05 TAKS PASSING RATES**

GRADE LEVEL	READING		MATHEMATICS		WRITING	
	2003-04	2004-05	2003-04	2004-05	2003-04	2004-05
GRADE 3						
EEISD ELL Students	69%	72%	72%	63%		
EEISD All Students	74%	78%	76%	70%		
REGION	82%	83%	78%	75%		
STATE	88%	89%	82%	83%		
GRADE 4						
EEISD ELL Students	60%	59%	61%	70%	75%	87%
EEISD All Students	70%	63%	69%	72%	85%	90%
REGION	74%	72%	73%	78%	86%	90%
STATE	81%	80%	79%	82%	88%	91%
GRADE 5						
EEISD ELL Students	30%	38%	36%	53%		
EEISD All Students	52%	57%	55%	64%		
REGION	63%	68%	68%	76%		
STATE	74%	75%	73%	80%		
GRADE 6						
EEISD ELL Students	33%	54%	35%	50%		
EEISD All Students	71%	75%	65%	71%		
REGION	68%	79%	60%	67%		
STATE	79%	86%	68%	73%		
GRADE 7						
EEISD ELL Students	16%	31%	19%	25%	50%	59%
EEISD All Students	55%	68%	46%	58%	81%	83%
REGION	68%	73%	53%	56%	87%	86%
STATE	76%	81%	61%	65%	89%	89%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2004-05.

students to become competent in the comprehension, speaking, reading and composition of the English language. Such programs are required to emphasize the mastery of English language skills as well as mathematics, science, and social studies. They are also required to use certified teachers to ensure that these students have the full opportunity to master the TEKS required by the state to assess their achievement of the TEKS.

EEISD should develop an accountability system to monitor the academic progress of students in the bilingual program. The district should also evaluate the Transition Model for bilingual education to determine its effectiveness in meeting

the instructional needs of all ELL students necessary to increase their achievement in all subject core areas. The district should develop ELL benchmark tests to evaluate the academic progress of students in the bilingual program periodically and to improve their performance and mastery of the TEKS and TAKS. By regularly evaluating the students in the bilingual program, EEISD can identify and address problems that the students are experiencing before they have to take the TAKS test. Addressing weaknesses in the bilingual program on a regular basis should lead to increased student achievement.

**EXHIBIT 1-24
ELL AND NON-ELL STUDENT
CHANGE IN ACADEMIC GAPS
2004–05**

GRADE LEVEL	READING	MATHEMATICS	WRITING	SCIENCE
Grade 3	+3%	-9%		
Grade 4	-1 %	+9%	+23%	
Grade 5	+8%	+17%		-12%
Grade 6	+21%	+15%		
Grade 7	+15%	+6%	+22%	
Grade 8	+1%	No increase or decrease		
Grade 9	+7%	-2%e		
Grade 10	+3%	+5%		-11%
Grade 11	+12%	+25%		

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2004-05.

The district Bilingual director should ensure that the bilingual teachers are actually teaching all of the TEKS written for each grade and subject level. While the district provided curriculum guides, the guides need to describe exactly when and how teachers should teach each TEKS. Accountability measures for teachers responsible for using the curriculum need to be instituted through benchmark testing. Data assessment and evaluation of benchmark test results will help identify the weaknesses in the written, taught, and tested curriculum. Benchmark tests will also identify areas where students need more instruction.

Focused training on the content and use of the district’s Instructional Model and Transition Plan for teaching ELL students should be considered a priority for staff development. EEISD should contact Region 1 to assist them

in training offerings for sheltered instructional areas for the bilingual learner. EEISD should consider having trainers come to the district to provide ongoing training for all teachers that instruct bilingual students. The district may use part of the Limited English Proficient Student Success Initiative (LEP/SSI) \$500,000 grant funding obtained in January 2006 to assist the district in providing further training for their teachers. The grant provides intensive programs of instruction for students with limited English proficiency, and provides training materials and other teacher training resources to assist teachers in enabling ELL students to meet state performance standards.

RETENTION (REC. 7)

EEISD lacks a plan to thoroughly monitor retention rates. Retention rates have increased in grades kindergarten, 1, 3, and 5 from 2003–04 through 2004–05. Retention refers to the practice of holding back a student at the end of an academic year and requiring the student to repeat a grade level. Grade retention has traditionally been defined as “the practice of requiring a child to repeat a particular grade or requiring a child of appropriate chronological age to delay entry to kindergarten or first grade.” Exhibit 1-25 shows the district’s retention rates for 2004–05. When compared with its peer districts and the state, grade 1 has the second highest retention rate compared to peers and is 2.6 percent higher than the state average. Grade 2 has the third highest retention rate among peer districts and 1.3 percent above the state average. Grade 3 has the third highest retention rate among peer districts and is 3.0 percent above the state. Grade 4 has the lowest retention rate among peer districts and is 1.4 percent below the state. Grade 5 is the fourth highest among peer districts and equal to the state average. Grades 6–8 have no retentions.

**EXHIBIT 1-25
RETENTION RATES
COMPARED TO PEER DISTRICTS AND THE STATE
2004–05**

DISTRICT	GRADE K	GRADE 1	GRADE 2	GRADE 3	GRADE 4	GRADE 5	GRADE 6	GRADE 7	GRADE 8
Rio Grande City	3.5%	7.4%	6.2%	3.3%	0.8%	0.3%	0.2%	1.1%	1.4%
EDCOUCH-ELSA	0.0%	8.6%	4.9%	5.7%	0.3%	0.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Roma	1.2%	5.6%	6.3%	1.1%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.9%	0.5%
Southside	5.5%	6.1%	4.0%	6.6%	1.1%	1.1%	0.6%	2.8%	2.0%
Progreso	0.0%	9.5%	3.5%	6.9%	1.4%	0.0%	3.0%	2.2%	3.0%
STATE	2.9%	6.0%	3.6%	2.7%	1.7%	0.9%	1.5%	2.3%	1.7%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2004-05.

The Curriculum Department was unable to provide documentation of a system used to track retention of students per campus per grade level or districtwide. EEISD retention appears to be used as a remedy for student failure without regard to other targeted interventions or remediation. Students are placed back in the same environment in which they previously did not succeed and the district retention rates have continued to increase. In addition, the district does not disaggregate data to conduct a through analysis of occurring trends within a population of students who are performing poorly and are at risk of retention.

State law requires children who do not pass the grade 3 reading portion of the TAKS to be retained in grade 3. The district outlines promotion and retention guidelines in the Student Handbook. District guidelines state that a student will be promoted only based on academic achievement or demonstrated proficiency in the subject matter of the course or grade level. District policy EIE states that whether the student is retained or promoted, an educational plan for the student will be designed to enable the student to perform at grade level by the end of the next school year. The high school principal stated that counselors prepare a personal graduating plan for secondary students and present that plan to parents at registration. Those parents not attending registration are later contacted by the district to discuss the plan in conference sessions.

The research on retention at all age levels and across studies is based on group data. While there may be individual students who benefit from retention, no study has been able to predict accurately which children will gain from being retained.

EEISD should develop a system to monitor retention and develop an instructional plan to reduce student retention rates and increase the promotion rates of students. EEISD should set higher standards in reading at the primary level to avoid higher retention rates in later grades. The assistant superintendent for Curriculum should work with campus administrators as a team, to review retention by school and program with data disaggregated by subgroup to determine how instructional plans should be revised to meet the needs of retained students. The focus should be on implementing evidence-based prevention and intervention strategies to promote social and cognitive competence and facilitate the academic success of all students.

COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMS (REC. 8)

EEISD lacks effective American College Test (ACT)/Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) test preparation strategies and resources to assist students in preparation for college entrance exams. EEISD students have low performance scores on college entrance exams. EEISD's performance on the ACT was 4.3 points lower than the state average and 1.4 points lower than the region. Its average ACT score was the second lowest among peer districts. The average district SAT score of 799 was 188 points below the state average and 96 points below the regional average and ranked lowest among its peers. The low performance scores indicate that the students are not adequately prepared to take college entrance exams. **Exhibit 1-26** shows average scores for college entrance examinations for EEISD, peer districts, region and state.

EEISD offers SAT academies throughout the school year to teach students the strategies and skills needed to increase their SAT scores. These academies are open to students in grades 10–12. The dates for the academies are provided to students in monthly newsletters and school flyers. A parental involvement meeting was held in the fall to inform parents about the services provided through the guidance and counseling office and to discuss college entrance exams and college placement. In addition, the high school principal mentioned that in 2005–06 an SAT preparation class was taught during “zero” period or 7:30AM to assist students in getting ready for the exam, however, only 15 students attended the class since it was not offered during the regular school schedule. She stated that more students would attend if the class was taught at another time but funding for a teacher to teach such a class was not budgeted.

One of the high school's CIP and DIP performance objectives is to increase secondary students' participation by 25 percent in various programs to promote post secondary education by 2006–07. The CIP listed four actions to meet this objective:

- provide special programs to increase the number of students taking and scoring higher on the college entrance exams;
- provide Princeton Review Courses;
- provide “SAT Word of the Day;” and
- increase AP enrollment.

EEISD has a high participation rate on college entrance exams, but low scores; this does not reflect that counselors

**EXHIBIT 1-26
COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMINATION SCORES
CLASS OF 2004**

DISTRICT	PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS TAKING EXAMINATIONS	PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS MEETING THE CRITERIA	AVERAGE SAT SCORE OF STUDENTS PASSING EXAM	AVERAGE ACT SCORE OF STUDENTS PASSING EXAM
Rio Grande City	66.1%	3.2%	891	16.0
EDCOUCH-ELSA	66.1%	2.5%	799	15.8
Roma	65.6%	4.7%	914	16.9
Southside	51.7%	2.9%	805	17
Progreso	50.0%	1.6%	*	15.4
REGION 1	57.2%	9.1%	895	17.2
STATE	61.9%	27.0%	987	20.1

*Numbers less than five have not been cited due to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) 34CFR Part 99.1 and Texas Education Agency procedures OP 10-03.

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS Report, 2004-05.

are working closely with students and parents to increase their awareness of the importance of post-secondary education and preparing for college entrance exams especially since the district is understaffed in the counseling area. Providing guidance for students is especially important for districts that have large numbers of economically disadvantaged students. EEISD has an economically disadvantaged student population of 91.1 percent, which is 36.5 percent above the state average.

Texas districts encourage secondary students to take college entrance exams before graduation by initiating a PSAT/SAT program targeted younger students, typically students in middle school. These programs give students the experience of taking tests, as well as a score that can be used as a guide for improvement when they are in high school.

EEISD should create a greater focus on the American College Test (ACT)/ Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) preparation and exam by offering an additional student preparation course during the district’s regular school day to improve the performance on college entrance exams. The district should make the ACT/SAT a primary goal and should allocate funding to hire a fulltime teacher to teach the class.

In addition, the district should increase efforts in counseling for students beginning in the Sixth Grade Campus and the junior high school and should make students and parents more aware of the ACT/SAT to post secondary education and the instructional resources that are available to them.

The fiscal impact includes hiring a fulltime teacher and the costs of materials for students preparing to take ACT/SAT

testing. An average teacher salary is \$38,910 plus benefits of 3.80 percent (\$1,479) and \$3,600 for medical insurance, (\$38,910 + \$1,479 + \$3,600 = \$43,989).

Materials and teacher training for an ACT/SAT preparation course is estimated to cost the district \$50,000 annually for materials and \$1,500 for a one-time teacher training. Student materials are estimated to cost \$250 per student packet x 200 students or \$50,000 annually. Teacher training is estimated at a one-time cost of \$1,500. Total annual cost to the district includes \$43,989 teacher salary + \$50,000 for materials or \$93,989 plus a one-time training cost of \$1,500 for teacher training.

GUIDANCE PROGRAM (REC. 9)

EEISD lacks a guidance and counseling program as TEA recommends. Counselors are unable to divide their time between the four state recommended components and seven strands of a comprehensive school guidance program. During interviews with the review team, high school counselors indicated they spend a large portion of their time with administrative scheduling duties. Counselors said they were concerned that they spend so many hours building schedules, making changes to ensure that students were in the appropriate classes, computing grade point averages (GPA’s) and class ranks, and maintaining student records, that they are unable to focus their efforts on consulting and guidance activities. Elementary school counselors said that their administrative duties vary from campus to campus depending on the needs of each campus principal. The Elementary counselors also do classroom guidance lessons, individual and group counseling as needed, act as the

principal's representative at Admission, Review and Dismissal (ARD) meetings for special education students (only when the principal or instructional facilitator are unable to attend), attend 504 meetings, LPAC meetings and Gifted and Talented Screening (G/T) meetings. Secondary counselors estimated they spend 15 to 20 percent of their time in direct contact with students, whereas elementary counselors estimated 80 to 90 percent of their time is spent in direct contact with students.

In addition, there is no evidence in EEISD that its guidance program is organized around the recommended areas needed to support a comprehensive guidance and counseling program. The four components of the recommended program are:

- guidance curriculum;
- responsive services;
- individual planning; and
- system support.

The seven strands that are incorporated in the four components to provide guidance content in a systematic way to all students include:

- self-confidence development;
- motivation to achieve;
- decision making;
- interpersonal effectiveness (including social skills);
- communication skills;
- cross cultural effectiveness; and
- responsible behavior.

The lack of a developmental guidance and counseling program does not provide counselors with the necessary guidelines to provide a support system (guidance program development and counselor professional development), consultation with teachers and administrators, parent education, and school improvement planning. The lack of a defined guidance program also does not provide students with the information and instruction related to skills needed in everyday life.

During the 2001 Legislative session, the Legislature amended the TEC Sections 33.001, 33.005, and 33.006. These sections require all school counselors to assume responsibilities for working with school faculty and staff, students, parents and

the community to plan, implement and evaluate a developmental guidance and counseling program. According to law, a developmental guidance and counseling program shall include:

- a guidance curriculum to help students develop their full educational potential;
- a responsive services component to intervene on behalf of any student whose immediate personal concerns or problems put the student's continued educational, career, personal or social development at—risk;
- an individual planning system to guide a student as the student plans monitors and manages the student's own educational career, personal or social development; and
- a system support to support the efforts of teachers, staff, parents and other members of the community in promoting the educational, career, personal and social development of students.

A Model Developmental Guidance and Counseling Program for Texas Public Schools: A Guide for Program Pre-K–12th Grade contains information necessary for complying with state law and recommends that school counselors divide their time between the four components in a counseling program. Allocations of time spent on each component will depend on the development and special needs of students served as well as what determinations are made by each district or school within the district. TEA's suggested allocations are shown in **Exhibit 1-27**.

The district should develop a district guidance and counseling program that covers the four components and seven strands recommended by the TEA. The assistant superintendent of Curriculum, director of Student Services, and counselors should begin to research programs from successful districts to use as a guide for incorporating best practices into EEISD's counseling services.

GUIDANCE STAFF (REC. 10)

EEISD's counselor allocations do not meet established standards for staffing and the district is understaffed by three counselors. In November 2005, EEISD reported a 15 counselors for an overall counselor to student ratio of 1:365. Four high school counselors are designated to serve the freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior classes, one counselor is dedicated to serving the Migrant students, one counselor is assigned to CTE students, and one counselor is assigned to DAEP. Two counselors are assigned to the junior

**EXHIBIT 1-27
TEA
RECOMMENDED DISTRIBUTION OF
COUNSELOR SERVICES**

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

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, Model Development Guidance and Counseling Program for Texas Public Schools.

high school, one counselor is assigned to the Sixth Grade Campus and four counselors are assigned to each of the four elementary schools and one to the Early Childhood Center. **Exhibit 1-28** shows counselor caseload information for each EEISD school.

EEISD’s staffing ratio for the high school, junior high school, sixth grade campus, and two of the four elementary campuses meet established staffing standards, however, two of the elementary schools and the Early Childhood Center are below minimum standards for staffing. **Exhibit 1-29** shows the counseling staff of each EEISD campus and the recommended staffing standard according to the Texas School Counselor Association.

Time management is one of the greatest concerns of counselors. Counselors cited that consultation time for parents, teachers, and administrators to enhance their work with students is limited. Besides assessment, counselors are assigned numerous non-guidance duties such as scheduling, paraprofessional tasks, and discipline.

Inadequate staffing results in counselors at the elementary schools having less time to meet individual and small groups and address student needs and concerns. Secondary and elementary counselors are unable to work with school and community personnel to bring together resources for their students.

TEC Section 33.006 states that “the primary responsibility of the school counselor is to counsel students to fully develop each students’ academic, career, personal and social abilities, as well as, “participate in planning, implementing, and evaluating a comprehensive developmental guidance program, consult with students, school staff, parents and other community members, coordinate people and resources in the school, home and community, assist staff to interpret standardized test results, and deliver classroom guidance activities.” To achieve counselor responsibilities, the American School Counselor Association recommends a maximum ratio of one counselor for each 250 students. The Texas School Counselor Association, Texas Association of Secondary School Principals and the Texas Elementary Principals and Supervisors Association have recommended a ratio of one counselor for each 350 students.

The district should ensure that all campuses meet the TEC Section 33.006 and the Texas School Counselor Association’s staffing recommendation to provide adequate services to all EEISD students, parents and staff. The district should add three fulltime counselors and eliminate administrative responsibilities for all counselors to allow them more time for counseling.

The fiscal impact of adding three fulltime counselor positions is calculated by multiplying an average counselor salary of

**EXHIBIT 1-28
COUNSELOR AND COUNSELOR CASELOAD BY CAMPUS
2004–05**

SCHOOL	COUNSELORS	ENROLLMENT	STUDENTS PER COUNSELORS
Edcouch-Elsa High School	4	1,521	1:507
Carlos F. Truan Junior High School	2	756	1:378
Sixth Grade Campus	1	374	1:374
Ruben Rodriguez Elementary School	1	461	1:461
LBJ Elementary School	1	472	1:472
Kennedy Elementary School	1	572	1:572
Santiago Garcia Elementary School	1	504	1:504
Early Childhood Center	1	811	1:811

NOTE: Exhibit excludes the Migrant program, CTE, and the DAEP counselors.
SOURCE: EEISD Student Services Director, November 2005, AEIS, 2004-05.

**EXHIBIT 1-29
COUNSELING STAFF AND
RECOMMENDED STAFFING STANDARDS
NOVEMBER 2005**

SCHOOL	COUNSELORS	RECOMMENDED NUMBER OF COUNSELORS	ADDITIONAL COUNSELORS NEEDED
Edcouch-Elsa High School	4	4.3	0.3
Carlos F. Truan Junior High School	2	2.0	0
Sixth Grade Campus	1	1.0	0
Ruben Rodriguez Elementary School	1	1.3	0.3
LBJ Elementary School	1	1.3	0.3
Kennedy Elementary School	1	1.6	0.6
Santiago Garcia Elementary School	1	1.4	0.4
Early Childhood Center	1	2.3	1.3
TOTAL	12	15.2	3.2

SOURCE: EEISD Student Services Director, November 2005; Texas Education Agency Counselor-to-Student Ratio of 1:350.

\$50,865 by 3.80 percent for benefits = \$1,933 rounded and adding \$3,600 for health insurance to determine the annual cost of \$56,398 for one counselor (\$50,865 +\$1,933 + \$3,600 = \$56,398). The total fiscal impact for three counselor positions would be \$169,194 (\$56,398 x 3 counselors= \$169,194 annually).

LIBRARY STANDARDS (REC. 11)

EEISD does not monitor campus library collections or staff its libraries according to the enrollment needs and the *School Library Programs: Standards and Guidelines for Texas*. The district does not meet the *Acceptable* level guidelines for both staffing and collection size in accordance with the *School Library Programs: Standards and Guidelines for Texas*. As new campuses are added and existing campuses are adjusted to house different grade levels, library collections and staffing are not adjusted to meet the needs of the new enrollment configuration.

School library collections are not balanced. At least nine items are provided per student at the Early Childhood Center; 20 items or more are provided per student at the elementary level; at least 22 items per student are provided at the middle school level; and 18 items are provided per student at the high school level.

Staff interviews identified that librarians work on the same 187-day contract as teachers. The library program requires the librarian to manage acquisitions, process, organize, distribute, maintain, and inventory all resources. Libraries are also not “closed” early at the end of the year nor do they have a delayed “opening” at the beginning of the school

year. Librarians are unable to adequately prepare, distribute, and collect media materials due to the contracted days and must spend time working on weekends to open and close the library within the required contract.

The high school has two certified librarians and four elementary campuses have a half-time certified librarian. All of the EEISD libraries, except the high school and junior high school, are below the staffing standard for the *Acceptable* level as prescribed by the *School Library Programs: Standards and Guidelines for Texas*. The high school meets the *Recognized* standard. Based on a comparison of the current librarian staffing levels with the *Acceptable* standard on all other campuses, the district is lacking three fulltime librarians and is overstaffed by 1.5 library aides.

Exhibit 1-30 shows the library collection size at each school, the number of students, the number of items per student, and whether the collection meets, does not meet, or exceeds the *Acceptable* standard.

Exhibit 1-31 shows the state library staffing standards compared to the EEISD library staffing.

While student achievement is the objective of the school library program, the EEISD library media programs do not provide a balanced, carefully selected, and systematically organized collection of print and electronic library resources that are sufficient to meet students’ needs of mastering TEKS student expectations in all subject areas. Certified library support personnel do not staff libraries proportionate to student population throughout the entire instructional day. The lack of staff limits the librarians’ support of

**EXHIBIT 1-30
LIBRARY COLLECTION BY SCHOOL
2003-04**

SCHOOL	ENROLLMENT	DISTRICT COLLECTION SIZE	ACCEPTABLE STANDARD COLLECTION SIZE	DISTRICT COLLECTION PER STUDENT	ACCEPTABLE STANDARD COLLECTION PER STUDENT	STANDARD RATING
Edcouch-Elsa High School	1,521	27,471	18,252	18.0	12	Acceptable
Carlos Truan Junior High School	756	17,347	12,096	22.9	16	Acceptable
Sixth Grade Campus	374	6,388	5,984	17.0	16	Acceptable
Rodriguez Elementary	461	11,602	9,220	25.1	20	Acceptable
LBJ Elementary	472	12,561	9,440	26.6	20	Acceptable
Kennedy Elementary	572	14,029	11,440	24.8	20	Acceptable
Santiago Garcia Elementary	504	11,500	10,080	22.8	20	Acceptable
Early Childhood Center	811	7,356	16,220	9.0	20	Below Acceptable

SOURCE: EEISD Director of Student Services, November 2005, and School Library Programs: Standards and Guidelines for Texas, 2004.

**EXHIBIT 1-31
EEISD STAFFING AND ENROLLMENTS PER CAMPUS AND STATE LIBRARY STAFFING STANDARDS
2004-05**

SCHOOL	ENROLLMENT	DISTRICT STAFF	ACCEPTABLE STANDARD	STANDARD RATING
Edcouch-Elsa High School	1,521	2 certified librarians + 2 aides	1 certified librarian + 1.5 aides	Above Acceptable
Carlos Truan Junior High School	756	1 certified librarian + 1 aide	1 certified librarian + 1 aide	Acceptable
Sixth Grade Campus	374	0.5 certified librarian + 0 aide	1 certified librarian + 0.5 aide	Below Acceptable
Ruben Rodriguez Elementary	461	0.5 certified librarian + 1 aide	1 certified librarian + 0.5 aide	Below Acceptable
LBJ Elementary	472	0.5 certified librarian + 1 aide	1 certified librarian + 0.5 aide	Below Acceptable
Kennedy Elementary	572	0.5 certified librarian + 1 aide	1 certified librarian + 0.5 aide	Below Acceptable
Santiago Garcia Elementary	504	0.5 certified librarian + 1 aide	1 certified librarian + 0.5 aide	Below Acceptable
Early Childhood Center	811	0.5 certified librarian + 1 aide	1 certified librarian + 1 aide	Below Acceptable

SOURCE: EEISD Director of Student Services, November 2005, and School Library Programs: Standards and Guidelines for Texas, 2004.

TEKS-related learning by being unable to accomplish the following adequately:

- identifying existing library resources (print and electronic) to support the curriculum;
- purchasing resources to support the curriculum;
- providing ongoing access to library resources for curriculum support;

- aligning the learning objectives of the library’s information literacy program with the TEKS student expectations;
- collaborating with classroom teachers to design and deliver instruction for curriculum support; and
- designing professional development for administrators, classroom faculty and overall school community.

The NCLB Act, Subpart 4 - Improving Literacy Through School Libraries, emphasizes the importance of libraries. NCLB considers libraries as resources for improving the literacy skills and academic achievement of students by providing students with increased access to up-to-date school library materials, a well equipped, technologically advanced school library media center, and well trained, professionally certified school library media specialists.

The School Library Programs: Standards and Guidelines for Texas was revised July 17, 1997 to include provisions of the TEC Section 33.021. The *School Library Programs: Standards and Guidelines for Texas* defines an Acceptable school library collection as balanced with a current collection of 9,000 books, software, and electronic resources such as Internet access for schools, or at least 20 items per student at the elementary level; at least 16 items per student at the middle school level; at least 12 items per student at the high school level.

In addition, the *School Library Programs: Standards and Guidelines for Texas* defines "Acceptable" professional staffing levels as follows:

- 0–500 Students - At least one certified librarian per campus;
- 501–1000 Students - At least one certified librarian per campus;
- 1001–2000 Students - At least one certified librarian per campus; and
- 2001+ students - At least one certified librarian per campus.

The *School Library Programs: Standards and Guidelines for Texas* defines *Acceptable* paraprofessional staffing levels as follows:

- 0–500 Students - At least 0.5 paraprofessionals;
- 501–1000 Students - At least one paraprofessional;
- 1001–2000 Students -At least 1.5 paraprofessionals; and
- 2001+ students - At least two paraprofessionals.

The district should develop a system to monitor campus library collections and staffing standards according to the *School Library Programs: Standards and Guidelines for Texas*. The district should also ensure that the six campus libraries that are *Below Acceptable* meet the *Acceptable* standard for staffing. The district should work to increase the school library collections at the Early childhood Center to meet the *School Library Programs: Standards and Guidelines for Texas* "Acceptable"

standards. To meet the "Acceptable" staffing standard according to state guidelines, EEISD should increase the half-time librarian positions to fulltime positions at the Sixth Grade Campus, the Early Childhood Center and all elementary campuses.

The fiscal impact of adding three fulltime librarian positions is calculated by multiplying an average librarian salary of \$45,451 by 3.80 percent for benefits = \$1,727 rounded and adding \$3,600 for health insurance to determine the annual cost of \$50,778 for one librarian (\$45,451 + \$1,727 + \$3,600 = \$50,778). The total fiscal impact for three librarian positions would be \$ (\$50,778 x 3=\$152,334).

The *Acceptable* standard for library aides districtwide is six positions, however, EEISD has eight library aides. It is therefore recommended that two positions be eliminated for an annual savings of \$44,680 or (\$22,340 x 2 aides). The average library aide salary = \$16,974 x 10.40 benefit rate or \$1,766 plus \$3,600 insurance for a total of \$22,340 (\$16,974 + \$1,766 + \$3,600).

The 2004 average price of children and young adult selections is \$19.18 and 8,864 items are required for the Early Childhood Center to meet the acceptable standard for a five-year cost of \$170,012 rounded (\$19.18 x 8,864), which will be implemented over a five-year period at \$34,002 per year (\$170,012 ÷ 5 years = \$34,002).

The total annual net cost for implementing this recommendation is \$141,656 annually (\$34,002 + \$152,334 = \$186,336 minus a savings of eliminating 2 library aides at \$44,680 = \$141,656).

For background information on Educational Service Delivery, see p. 231 in the General Information section of the appendices.

FISCAL IMPACT

RECOMMENDATIONS	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) SAVINGS	ONE TIME (COSTS) SAVINGS
CHAPTER 1: EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY							
1. Conduct a curriculum management audit to direct curriculum management and ensure quality control.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$27,000)
2. Adopt a board policy that provides direction for the management of curriculum to establish processes, procedures, and timelines for curriculum review, development, and implementation.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
3. Develop a two-year school improvement campus plan for any schools not meeting Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) as prescribed by Stage One School Improvement Requirements of the 2005 AYP Guide.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
4. Reorganize curriculum department responsibilities among senior managers to enhance student performance, program effectiveness and departmental efficiency.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
5. Develop a comprehensive evaluation system to determine the effectiveness of compensatory education and Title I programs.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
6. Develop an accountability system to monitor the academic progress of students in the Bilingual program.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
7. Develop a system to monitor retention and develop an instructional plan to reduce student retention rates and increase the promotion rates of students.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

FISCAL IMPACT (CONTINUED)

RECOMMENDATIONS	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	TOTAL 5-YEAR	ONE TIME
						(COSTS) SAVINGS	(COSTS) SAVINGS
8. Create a greater focus on the American College Test (ACT)/ Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) preparation and exam by offering an additional student preparation course during the district's regular school day to improve the performance on college entrance exams.	(\$93,989)	(\$93,989)	(\$93,989)	(\$93,989)	(\$93,989)	(\$469,945)	(\$1,500)
9. Develop a district guidance and counseling program that covers the four components and seven strands recommended by the Texas Education Agency (TEA).	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
10. Ensure that all campuses meet the Texas Education Code (TEC) Section 33.006 and the Texas School Counselor Association's staffing recommendation to provide adequate services to all EEISD students, parents and staff.	(\$169,194)	(\$169,194)	(\$169,194)	(\$169,194)	(\$169,194)	(\$845,970)	\$0
11. Develop a system to monitor campus library collections and staffing standards according to the School Library Programs: Standards and Guidelines for Texas.	(\$141,656)	(\$141,656)	(\$141,656)	(\$141,656)	(\$141,656)	(\$708,280)	\$0
TOTALS-CHAPTER 1	(\$404,839)	(\$404,839)	(\$404,839)	(\$404,839)	(\$404,839)	(\$2,024,195)	(\$28,500)

CHAPTER 2

DISTRICT LEADERSHIP, ORGANIZATION, AND MANAGEMENT

EDCOUCH-ELSA INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

CHAPTER 2. DISTRICT LEADERSHIP, ORGANIZATION, AND MANAGEMENT

School district management requires understanding and support of the various roles of leadership among the elected board members, the superintendent, and district staff. The board of trustees' role is to establish instructional and operational goals, adopt policies to govern the district, approve implementation plans, employ and evaluate the superintendent, and adopt a budget along with an appropriate tax rate. The superintendent's role is to manage the daily operations of the district, organize the central office support, and ensure the development of district plans and budgets.

Edcouch-Elsa Independent School District (EEISD) is governed by an elected seven-member board. Trustees are elected by place for three-year terms with elections held annually in May. **Exhibit 2-1** shows board members, with the year each was initially elected to office.

Elected in May 2006, Felix Garza and Saul Garcia assume the roles of Vice-President and Secretary, respectively. The election held on May 6, 2005 returned one incumbent and brought two new members to the board. Aaron Gonzalez was elected to a third term, while Juan Jose Ybarra, Jr. and Manuel Hernandez, Jr. were elected for the first time. Mr. Ybarra was elected vice president the same evening he was seated for his first term.

Superintendent Michael Sandroussi has served EEISD since January 2003. Mr. Sandroussi came to EEISD from

Skidmore-Tynan Independent School District, where he served as superintendent from 2000–02. Previously, he was the principal of Calallen High School in Corpus Christi, Texas. Prior to Mr. Sandroussi's tenure, EEISD had four superintendents or interim superintendents in two years.

Edcouch and Elsa have a two-party system, BEE Club (Better Edcouch-Elsa) and DACO (Delta Area Civic Organization). Candidates for the Board of Trustees run as a slate based on party affiliation. In recent years the resulting majority has exercised its power in the area of hiring policy, which has been changed three times in three years.

FINDINGS

- EEISD's Board of Trustees continues to overlook its role as a policy-making body and overreach its responsibility by interfering with the daily operations of the district.
- EEISD lacks a strategic planning process to set district goals.
- EEISD lacks a comprehensive administrative procedures manual for conducting all functions and operations of the district.

EXHIBIT 2-1
EEISD BOARD MEMBERS AND TERMS
2005

NAME	YEAR ELECTED	PLACE	PROFESSION
Aaron Gonzalez, President***	1999	3	Insurance Agent
Juan Jose Ybarra, Jr., Vice President****	2005	1	Manager, Public Housing
Domingo Rodriguez, Secretary*****	2001	7	Self-employed
Leonel Lozano*****	2000	5	Staffing Consultant
Florestela Rodriguez	2003*	4	Retired
Esperanza Salinas	1999, 2004**	7, 6	Teacher
Manuel Hernandez, Jr.	2005	2	Contractor

*Originally appointed on 6/28/2002.

**Elected to two non-consecutive terms.

*** Resigned March 2, 2006.

**** Assumed position of President upon resignation.

***** No longer Secretary as of May 2006 election, assumed role of general trustee.

***** No longer a member of the school board.

SOURCE: EEISD Superintendent Office, November 2005.

- EEISD's organizational structure does not achieve clear lines of functional responsibility, accountability, and communication.
- EEISD's board does not monitor its required continuing education.
- EEISD does not use a selection or monitoring process for legal services.
- EEISD lacks a procedure to ensure all principals have employee approval discretion for their individual campus.
- EEISD's district site-based decision-making (SBDM) committee is not involved in ongoing, or formative evaluation of the district improvement plan (DIP).

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Recommendation 12: Cooperate with the Texas Education Agency (TEA) regarding the recommendation of the Legislative Budget Board that TEA conduct an investigation of EEISD under the provisions of the Texas Education Code §39.074, On-Site Investigations, and §39.075, Special Accreditation Investigations.** The TEA investigation should review the EEISD Board of Trustees continuing interference in district daily operations and the continuing tendency to overreach its responsibility and overlook its role as a policy-making body. TEA should investigate the actions and environment leading to the adoption of three different employment policies in three years. EEISD should share information with the TEA as they conduct an investigation.
- **Recommendation 13: Initiate a process of strategic planning by reviewing the mission statement and becoming engaged in setting district goals.** The board should direct the superintendent to research various methods of strategic planning and bring a recommendation to the board for adoption, along with a calendar, so as to accomplish the process in timely fashion. Performance-based evaluation and budgets tied to resulting district priorities should be featured in the process. District goals and budget impact should be referenced in every agenda item prepared by the administration for the board's consideration.
- **Recommendation 14: Develop a comprehensive administrative procedures manual for conducting all functions and operations of the district.** The superintendent should direct central office administrators to assemble existing written procedures in their areas of responsibility. Policy should be reviewed and gap areas identified, so that procedures can be written to address those areas. Existing procedures should be evaluated for conformity with current policy and practice, as well as federal and state laws, rules, and regulations. The Technology Department should serve in a prominent role to coordinate publication, so that all procedures are produced in a standard format that can be ultimately used electronically.
- **Recommendation 15: Reorganize central administration along functional lines, with appropriate responsibilities and accountability, including evaluation of subordinates.** Specific job descriptions should be written, with the "report to" line being the name of the immediate supervisor. When the job descriptions are written, specific annual objectives tied to district goals can be established by each administrator's supervisor and incorporated into the evaluation process. The district should eliminate the position of assistant superintendent for Personnel (Support Services), placing responsibilities for the employment of at-will employees under the director of Personnel. Responsibility for the operational areas of food service, maintenance, transportation and security should be placed under the supervision of the assistant superintendent for Business and Operations, while adding a purchasing coordinator to the department. The director of Personnel should report to the superintendent. A Technology director should be selected and placed in central management in a position equal to the assistant superintendents. This will assure the coordination of technology across all areas of the district. The current position of Planning/Evaluation coordinator should be assigned PEIMS responsibility within the Technology Department. Board minutes should be the responsibility of the superintendent's secretary. Special education should be aligned under the assistant superintendent for Curriculum. Regular meetings of the leadership team will focus district effort on the accomplishment of goals, and encourage teamwork and accountability throughout the organization.
- **Recommendation 16: Fulfill training requirements for Legislative updates, participate in**

team-building, assess training needs based on the Framework for Board Development, and publicly announce training hours as required by *19 Texas Administrative Code 61.1*. The board should select a provider and dedicate the needed time to conduct a self-evaluation, continuing education needs assessment, and team building with the superintendent. Education Service Center Region I (Region 1) provides facilitation of team building sessions, as does TASB, and many other qualified providers. Conducting a self-evaluation signal the community that the board's intent is to work together for the best interests of the district. As a result of the needs assessment, the board should establish an annual training calendar with sessions to be attended by the entire board. Topics such as budget training can be provided by members of the district staff. Additionally, the superintendent and the board president should develop a method of tracking all board continuing education hours by tier.

- **Recommendation 17: Assess its needs for legal services, initiate a selection process, negotiate a competitive contract, and monitor costs annually.** The board should direct the superintendent to assess district needs for legal services. The superintendent should seek input in regard to business issues, construction, personnel matters, and student discipline. As the fiscal agent for the Mid-Valley Special Education Co-Op, the superintendent should include special education needs. With this information, the board should decide the scope of services to be provided and determine its expectations of the attorney. Once the service needs and expectations have been defined, the district should initiate a selection process. At a minimum, the board should request and review the qualifications of several attorneys and law firms, not limiting itself to the immediate area. Costs may be proposed as retainer (current EEISD practice), hourly rates, purchase of a set amount of hours, or a variety of combinations. The district should require firms to present their fee structures, along with proposals to assist the district in controlling costs. These proposals might include staff and board training, to assist the district in avoiding litigation. Any contract executed should include performance measures, so that there is a method of evaluating attorney performance and monitoring costs.

- **Recommendation 18: Develop a procedure to ensure principals are involved in the interviewing and selection of campus staff.** The superintendent should also assign responsibility for the employment of paraprofessionals and auxiliary staff to the director of Personnel, and assure that written procedures are communicated to all district staff, the board and the public, and monitored for compliance.
- **Recommendation 19: Involve the district SBDM committee throughout the year in evaluating the programs and strategies included in the DIP.** Sub-committees of the district SBDM committee should be assigned to specific actions and initiatives. Working together with the central office administrator for that area, the sub-committee should gather data in accordance with the formative criteria specified in the DIP. Formative evaluation reports should be part of each district SBDM committee meeting as scheduled monthly throughout the year. Minutes should be kept of district SBDM committee meetings, and disseminated to district staff and the board via the district website, so that the staff and community can become well-informed as to the substance and direction of the district level planning process.

DETAILED FINDINGS

GOVERNANCE ISSUES (REC. 12)

EEISD's Board of Trustees continues to overlook its role as a policy-making body and overreach its responsibility by interfering with the daily operations of the district. EEISD board adopted three different employment policies in three years, demonstrating a preoccupation of the board with hiring issues.

When EEISD's current superintendent was hired in December 2002, board policy for hiring was consistent with the provisions of the superintendent's contract, authorizing him to hire at-will personnel and to recommend the employment of professional personnel. However on February 18, 2004, the board adopted a new policy authorizing the board to hire all personnel and removing all hiring authority from the superintendent. The superintendent's contract though was not amended to reflect this policy change. The superintendent's contract states, "Specifically, it shall be the duty of the Superintendent to recommend for employment all professional employees of the district subject to the board's approval. It shall be the further duty of the superintendent to employ all other personnel consistent with

the board's policies." Another provision of the superintendent's contract, section (VIII, 8.3 Conflicts), states "In the event of any conflict between the terms, conditions, and provisions of the Employment Contract and the provisions of the board's policies, or any permissive state or federal law, the terms of this Contract shall take precedence over the contrary provisions of the board's policies or any such permissive law during the term of the contract." These same provisions remain in the superintendent's current contract signed May 18, 2005 yet the board continues not to honor the provisions in the contract.

Board members continue to get involved not only in the process of hiring but in the placement of personnel. For example, after the May 2004 board election, the board directed the superintendent to remove responsibilities from the assistant superintendent for Personnel (Support Services) and to move him from the central office to another facility. According to the assistant superintendent for Personnel (Support Services), "the board controlled it all". In interviews with this administrator, he stated that "Board members called me directly to give directions about who to hire." Texas Education Code (TEC) 11.201(d), board Policy BJA (LEGAL), and the superintendent's contract section (II, 2.1 Duties), give the superintendent authority to organize the central office staff.

On April 25, 2005 the EEISD Board of Trustees updated its own policy on board member ethics. In part, it states:

As a member of the Board, I shall promote the best interests of the District as a whole and, to that end, shall adhere to the following ethical standards:

- I will make no personal promise or take private action that may compromise my performance or my responsibilities.
- I will consistently uphold all applicable laws, rules, policies, and governance procedures.
- I will focus my attention on fulfilling the Board's responsibilities of goal setting, policymaking, and evaluation.
- I will avoid personal involvement in activities the Board has delegated to the superintendent.

On May 17, 2005, the same day the Board of Trustees seated the new members, the board approved a change in board policies DC (LOCAL) and DCD (LOCAL) authorizing the superintendent to hire all personnel, both professional and at-will.

Fourteen former employees filed grievances in regard to their dismissal immediately following the May 2005 election, claiming political retaliation.

The former employees filed grievances which were denied at Level III, on October 20, 2005. The complainants then filed a federal lawsuit January 12, 2006.

In interviews with board members, the review team noted that three board members who were seated as the minority members in power, stated that their belief was that the firings were politically motivated. These same board members also commented on the hiring of four persons who were related to the four board members in the power majority. The director of Personnel also confirmed the hiring of the four board member's relatives since May 2005. In reference to the employment of these individuals, the superintendent stated "There's a perception that's probably not good, but the board members don't pressure me."

On July 27, 2005, the board again reinstated the superintendent's sole authority to hire. The board then took action to reinstate the District Alternative Education Program (DAEP) director. The superintendent advised the board not to take action on this item given the legal ramifications related to governance issues with the Texas Education Agency (TEA). Additionally, the board's attorney advised that only the superintendent could make recommendations for employment purposes to the Board of Trustees, however, the board reinstated the employee over the objections of the superintendent and the board's attorney by a four to three vote.

EEISD's board has a history of governance issues. Two TEA governance complaints and subsequent investigative reports occurring in 2002 and 2004 revealed that one of the findings in the December 2002 Final TEA Investigative Report, substantiated the allegation that "several board members micromanage the district." The report states, "... the (TEA) investigative team learned that one or more board members asked a district director to make certain personnel changes in the director's department. The director complied with at least some of the requested changes. Administrators told the on-site investigative team that board members contact them personally for assorted reasons such as personal complaints, concerns of parents, student transfers, staff assignments, and playground equipment. When board members circumvent the superintendent and contact district staff with concerns such as [these], they are in violation of 11.051 and 11.201 of the Texas Education Code (TEC)."

The 2002 report required several Improvement Actions: board and superintendent training on the duties and responsibilities, team building and Robert's Rules of Order. No documentation of compliance was provided to the review team. The TEA report said, "The Agency is concerned about the governance and financial findings in the report. Therefore, the investigative team recommends a monitor be assigned to the district to guide the actions of the board and administration. However, the recommendation to assign a monitor will be held in abeyance for a period of 90 days...." The current superintendent was hired during that 90 day period of time and a monitor was subsequently not assigned.

The 2004 complaint, made by board members, also alleged (among several issues) that board members interfere with, or micromanage, the daily operations of the district. The allegation was substantiated in the TEA report. The final report from TEA in response to the 2004 complaint was received in the district on March 4, 2005 and required four Improvement Actions to take place within 60 days. The report was not made public until May 25, 2005; however, the superintendent said that TEA's Governance Division granted verbal permission for an extension.

- The first Improvement Action, that all board members should attend board training that "focuses on the duties and responsibilities of board members and superintendents," took place on June 22, 2005.
- The second Improvement Action, that all board members should participate with the superintendent, as a group, in a team-building session, took place on July 27, 2005. Board minutes state "[Consultants] from Region 1 conducted a detailed training as requested by TEA and the board followed along with the materials provided them."
- The third Improvement Action required the board to "review and update district policy and determine the need for administrative regulations so that the administration may implement policy." The superintendent stated that the board has not conducted a policy review, or reviewed the need for administrative regulations.
- The fourth Improvement Action required the district to submit copies of board agenda and minutes to TEA. The district complied.

The final report from the TEA written in response to the 2004 governance complaint, also states, "When Board

members interject their presence into district operation, they interfere with the day-to-day management of the district in violation of TEC Section 11.151(b); Section 11.163; Section 11.201(a) and (d); Edcouch-Elsa ISD Policy DC (LEGAL); Policy DC (LOCAL); and Policy BBE (LEGAL) and overstep their authority as board members." The TEA letter concluded, "There is a lack of understanding or acceptance of the board's roles and responsibilities among board members of Edcouch-Elsa ISD, which is strongly aggravated by the political climate of the district. The tendency of board members to act outside the scope of their authority and the current inability of the board members to respect the role and responsibilities of the administration clearly indicate a serious governance problem."

While the board has read the findings of the TEA reports and complied with a portion of the corrective actions, continuing interference in daily operations indicates that the board has not taken the improvement actions seriously. The EEISD Board of Trustees has not seriously addressed governance issues identified by the TEA in 2002 and 2004; the district political environment continues to have operational implications beyond the prudent scope of a Board of Trustees. The continuing political conflict distracts the board from engaging in priority matters such as goal-setting and budget planning and reflects negatively on the credibility of the board to effectively govern the district.

On December 14, 2005, EEISD's board president was arrested on a three count federal indictment alleging conspiracy to commit extortion, mail fraud, bribery related to a funded government program, and interstate travel in aid of a bribery scheme. The United States Department of Justice press release states that the board president is accused of accepting bribes for "favorable treatment and official votes and influence regarding EEISD contracts for the design and construction of schools," alleged to have occurred in 2000 and 2001. The EEISD board president was re-arrested on February 23, 2006 for allegedly tampering with witnesses associated with the previous charges. The United States Attorneys office requested and was granted detention of the EEISD board president without bond on the new criminal charges pending further criminal proceedings.

Finally, surveys conducted by the review team among principals and administrative/support staff that asked if school board members understood their role as policymakers and stayed out of the day-to-day management of the district revealed that of the principals responding to the survey, 44 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed, and thirty-three

percent had no opinion. In the case of administrators/support staff responding to the same question, 33 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed, and 37 percent had no opinion. According to interviews with the superintendent and board members, Board Operating Procedures, including a rule strictly limiting unaccompanied campus visits by board members, have been imposed by the superintendent since the May 2005 election.

A 2000 publication of the National School Board Association, *The Key Work of School Boards*, seeks to focus school board efforts on student achievement, not on the day-to-day operations of the district. According to the publication, “The way board members treat each other influences the staff’s perceptions and attitudes, with a consequent affect on workplace climate. Because that workplace is usually a school, board members’ relationship skills and behaviors ultimately have an influence on the classroom environment and on student learning.”

EEISD should cooperate with the TEA regarding the recommendation of the Legislative Budget Board that TEA conduct an investigation of EEISD under the provisions of the Texas Education Code §39.074, On-Site Investigations, and §39.075, Special Accreditation Investigations. The TEA investigation should review the EEISD Board of Trustees continuing interference in district daily operations and the continuing tendency to overreach its responsibility and overlook its role as a policy-making body. TEA should investigate the actions and environment leading to the adoption of three different employment policies in three years. EEISD should share information with the TEA as they conduct an investigation. EEISD board members should remove themselves as individuals from the hiring process, and communicate the process to their constituents.

GOAL SETTING (REC. 13)

EEISD lacks a strategic planning process to set district goals. EEISD’s Board of Trustees has not participated in goal-setting since 2003. The district site-based team, with some direction from the superintendent, sets goals in EEISD. With the exception of two goals given to the superintendent by the board in writing in 2003, all EEISD board members and the superintendent agree that the board does not set goals for the district. The goals presented to the superintendent in 2003 include financial management and instructional management.

Concerning financial management, the superintendent was directed to look at the district’s budget and give

recommendations to the board to adopt a balanced budget, create internal systems to efficiently spend public funds, and implement financial strategies to build the fund balance. Concerning instructional management, the superintendent was directed to implement systems that would lead the district to “Recognized” then “Exemplary,” under the TEA’s Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS).

The superintendent states that these goals continue to guide his efforts. The superintendent reported to the board in general terms with respect to these areas during his evaluation on February 11, 2005. With respect to financial management, he reported “The superintendent has focused on the district’s budget since he began working in the district and he is constantly looking at improving the facilities. The fund balance in the district has grown tremendously in less than (sic) two years.” With respect to instructional management, he reported “The superintendent has closely coordinated the instructional program with administrators in the district to promote excellence in the area of academics and extracurricular events. The superintendent has spent extensive time on the campuses by meeting with all site base teams and conducting weekly campus visits in an effort to implement processes that will affect student achievement. Cross grade level meetings and the focus on bilingual education has also been an initiative to address the needs of our English language learners.”

The district’s mission statement states: The mission of the Edcouch-Elsa ISD is to produce responsible graduates who can compete confidently in a dynamic global society by providing an individualized, nurturing educational foundation that draws strength from our community’s spiritual roots and rich cultural heritage as we face the challenge of the new millennium.

The instructionally related goals included in the DIP were developed by the district site based committee and adopted by the board as part of the consent agenda on September 21, 2005. By adopting the DIP as part of the consent agenda, the EEISD board simply acknowledges goals that others have set, and sets them aside for another year.

The district Technology Plan was also developed by a staff committee. Board members did not indicate familiarity with its contents. The district Technology Plan contains a goal, consistent with the State Technology Plan, for a four-year replacement schedule for instructional computers. At the current dollar amount budgeted for replacement, the district falls far short of its goal.

The governing body of a school district has a responsibility to create a vision and communicate that vision clearly to the staff and the community. Board Policy BBF (LOCAL): Ethics states, under Commitment to Service “I will focus my attention on fulfilling the Board’s responsibilities of goal setting, policymaking, and evaluation.” A board that participates in goal setting has pride of ownership in those goals and in their accomplishment. When the board takes a leadership role in establishing goals and relating their decisions to those goals, unity and a common sense of purpose will emerge among board members, superintendent, staff, and community. The board develops an interest in budgeting for district priorities and evaluating the effectiveness of the programs. When the board does not take a leadership role, a district’s efforts tend to be fragmented. Elements of the District Improvement Plan and Technology Plan may have little support, budget wise or effort wise, if the board is not actively involved.

The Framework for Board Development, adopted by the State Board of Education, and contained in EEISD board Policy BBD (EXHIBIT) states, “The Board is the educational policy-making body for the district. To effectively meet the challenges of public education, the board and the superintendent must function together as a leadership team. Each leadership team must annually assess its development needs as a corporate body and individually to gain its understanding of the vision, structure, accountability, advocacy, and unity needed to provide educational programs and services that ensure the equity and excellence in performance of all students.”

The first area addressed by the Framework is:

- **Vision:** The board ensures creation of a shared vision that promotes enhanced student achievement.
 - The board keeps the district focus on the educational welfare of all children.
 - The board adopts a shared vision based on community beliefs to guide local education.
 - The board ensures that the vision supports the state’s mission, objectives, and goals for education established by law.
 - The board ensures that the district’s vision expresses the present and future needs of the children and community.

- The board demonstrates its commitment to the vision by using the vision to guide all board deliberations, decisions, and actions.

The second area addressed by the Framework is:

- **Structure:** The board provides guidance and direction for accomplishing the vision.
 - The board focuses its actions on policy making, planning, and evaluation.

Aside from the two general goals given the superintendent in 2003, goal setting in EEISD is done by the district site-based team, with some direction from the superintendent. As the governing body, the board has a responsibility to establish broad goals that will guide the development of the District Improvement Plan and the operational functions of the district. Creating a shared vision can be a nebulous process without structure. Many boards use a process of strategic planning to develop a vision and goals to guide the district.

The Texas School Performance Review lists the Top Ten Ways to Improve Public Schools; number seven is entitled “Have a Vision; Plan How to Get There; Live It” which states, “Strategic planning enables a district to define its goals and objectives, establish priorities, and determine specific implementation strategies. The process begins as a school district assesses its strengths and weaknesses, both in the instructional and support areas. Priorities are set, meaning that some goals will be targeted immediately, while others will be deferred until additional resources become available... Districts that make the best use of their resources and achieve high student performance rates generally practice some form of strategic planning that looks at all district operations, links support functions to the achievement of instructional goals, and has a direct link to the annual planning and budgeting process. Effective strategic planning includes:

- knowing your customers and understanding their priorities through surveys or focus groups of students, parents, teachers, administrators and community leaders;
- direction and focus from the school board and a steering committee to set priorities or major goals;
- broad-based and diverse committees set up to address the established priorities and develop activity plans to address each priority;

- two-way communication between the governing body and the committees during the plan development period;
- decisive governance that uses the recommendations of the committees to the greatest degree possible;
- performance-based annual monitoring and adjusting of activity plans; and
- budgets requiring expenditures to be tied directly to the overall goals and priorities of the district.

Ysleta ISD established a mission statement that can be repeated verbatim by most district employees. Programs and activities of the district are measured against the mission statement during critical decision-making periods. Mission statements help formulate policy, focus on goals and objectives, and help set priorities for successful outcomes. These statements are reaffirmed by district employees and provide a target for performance measures and goals.

In September 1999, using a facilitator from the Texas Association of School Boards, Inc. (TASB), the Elgin ISD board and superintendent began a formal strategic planning process when the board approved eight strategic goals for the district. The goals represented the priorities identified by board members, district staff and responses to a questionnaire submitted by 5,000 families in the Elgin community. The strategic planning process addressed the following issues confronting the Elgin ISD schools: a growing population; the need for new and/or renovated facilities; the need to strengthen the curriculum and program offerings to meet the needs of all students; the challenge to recruit, retain, and reward quality teachers and staff; and the need to involve staff, parents, and residents in the district's decision-making process. The board and superintendent developed a vision statement, a set of core values, a mission statement, eight strategic goals and a series of expected student outcomes.

The EEISD board should initiate a process of strategic planning by reviewing the mission statement and becoming engaged in setting district goals. The board should direct the superintendent to research various methods of strategic planning and bring a recommendation to the board for adoption, along with a calendar, so as to accomplish the process in a timely fashion. Performance-based evaluation and budgets tied to resulting district priorities should be featured in the process. District goals and budget impact should be referenced in every agenda item prepared by the administration for the board's consideration.

The fiscal impact of implementing this recommendation is \$8,400. Based on the Texas Association of School Administrators' Strategic Planning External Facilitation fees the total fiscal impact is estimated at \$4,200 per year for 2007–08 and 2008–09, ($\$4,200 \times 2 = \$8,400$).

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES (REC. 14)

EEISD lacks a comprehensive administrative procedures manual for conducting all functions and operations of the district. While EEISD has developed some administrative procedures manuals, departments such as Transportation, Maintenance, and Food Service do not have procedure manuals. The Business Office published a procedures manual for the first time for 2004–05, but did not update it for 2005–06. The PEIMS coordinator published a Leaver/Dropout Policy Manual, but it has not been updated since 2002–03. An Employee Handbook has been published and disseminated in hard copy to some employees, but the Personnel Department lacks written procedures that guide the hiring process. The Curriculum Department has written procedures for some areas, such as Limited English Proficient (LEP) identification and LPAC procedures, gifted and talented (G/T) identification, and Section 504 procedures, but is lacking comprehensive procedures guides. The Technology Department provides written guidance to users in several formats, but lacks comprehensive written procedures.

Many procedures are addressed in administrative staff meetings with as many as 46 agenda items, along with handouts. The handouts contain numerous procedural directives for a myriad of district operations such as student discipline, crisis management, board and media relations, teacher appraisal, and safety; however, the handouts are not organized, indexed, or bound.

A lack of written procedures results in inconsistent interpretation and application of policy and administrative directives. Employee accountability for failure to address procedures is difficult when procedures do not exist, are not updated or centrally organized into an accessible format. A lack of a documented procedure may result in missing critical tasks and exposes the district to grievances or litigation.

A well-organized comprehensive administrative procedures manual takes time initially to compose, but results in increased efficiency districtwide. Administrative time spent in verifying procedures and responding to "how-to" questions is greatly reduced, as is the potential for procedural mistakes which require time for correction. Administrative meeting time can

focus on instructional issues, rather than on procedural review. New employees have a ready guide for procedures in all areas of district operation. Well-defined procedures reduce the opportunity for policy to be applied differently from campus-to-campus or employee-to-employee.

EEISD board Policy BP (LEGAL) defines the duties of the superintendent (in part):

1. managing the day-to-day operations of the district as its administrative manager;
2. preparing recommendations for policies to be developed by the board and overseeing the implementation of adopted policies; and
3. developing or causing to be developed appropriate administrative regulations to implement policies established by the board.

Many districts recognize the importance of developing a comprehensive written set of procedures for conducting district operations. These districts disseminate the procedures, provide training, and update the procedures annually. If the procedures manual is in hard copy, it can be produced in a three-ring binder, so that new pages can be easily inserted or replaced. District forms can be included for ease in copying. Some districts have put their manuals on CDs, which can be updated and reissued each year. Others have developed web-based manuals, readily accessible, and easy to search.

Fort Bend ISD maintains its administrative procedures and regulations online through its Intranet, which is commonly referred to as “the pipeline.” The procedures are organized using the same alphabetical indexing system that is used in the board policy manual to ensure consistency for legal policy, local policy, and related administrative procedures and regulations. Each department manager is responsible for updating the department’s administrative procedures. The director of Administrative Services coordinates updates to ensure the site is current.

EEISD should develop a comprehensive administrative procedures manual for conducting all functions and operations of the district. The superintendent should direct central office administrators to assemble existing written procedures in their areas of responsibility. Policy should be reviewed and gap areas identified, so that procedures can be written to address those areas. Existing procedures should be evaluated for conformity with current policy and practice, as well as federal and state laws, rules, and regulations. The Technology Department should serve in a prominent role to

coordinate publication, so that all procedures are produced in a standard format that can be ultimately used electronically. The first year’s investment of time will be considerable; subsequent updates will be routine.

CENTRAL OFFICE ORGANIZATION (REC. 15)

EEISD’s organizational structure does not achieve clear lines of functional responsibility, accountability, and communication. The organizational chart provided to the review team is, according to the Personnel director, two years old. The superintendent said, “We need to fix the organizational chart and the job descriptions.” The director of Personnel started revising job descriptions last year, but stated that many are “vague and inaccurate.” Some key jobs do not have a job description. Current organization is shown in **Exhibit 2-2**.

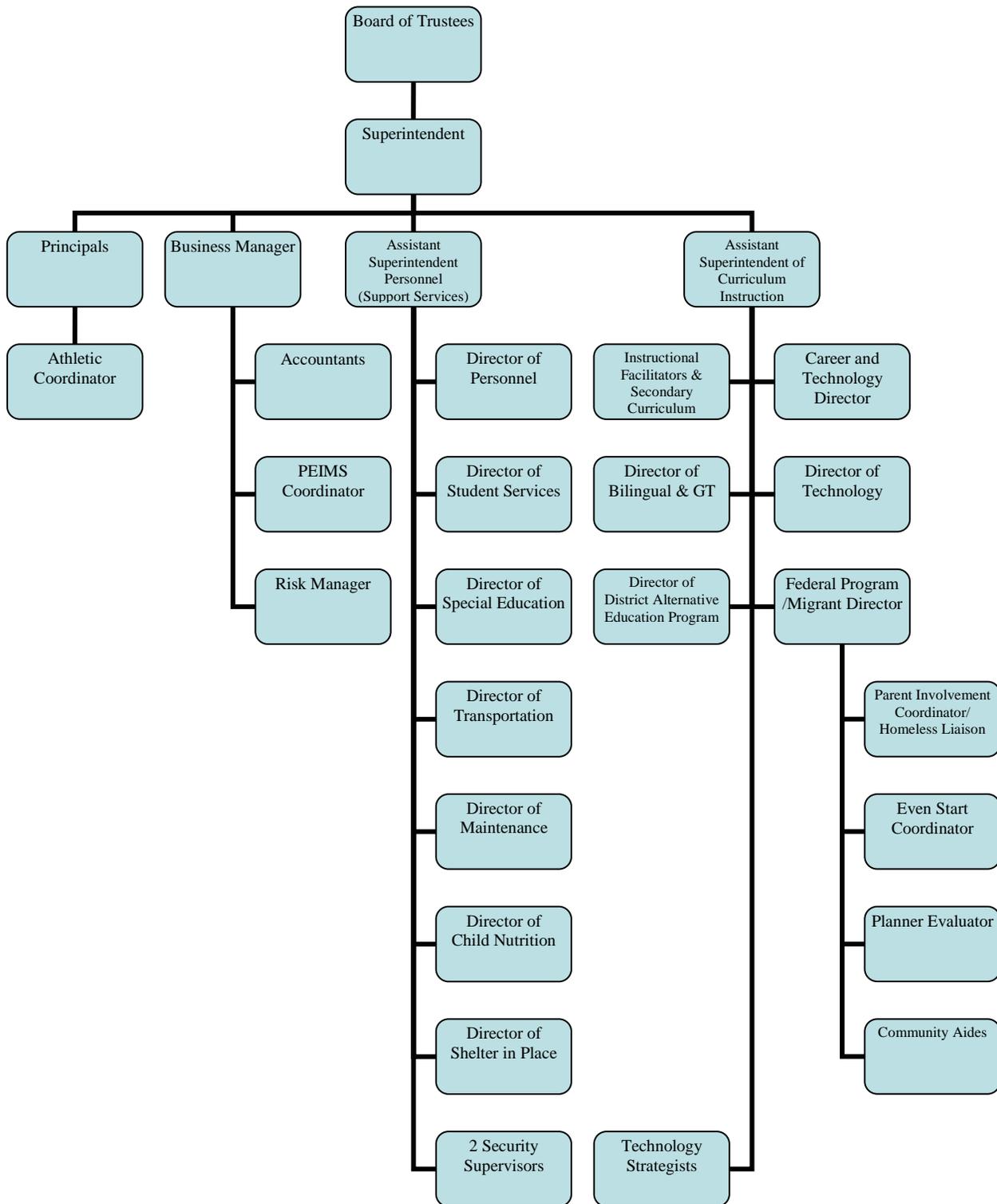
Currently, the superintendent, as chief executive officer, reports to the board. The organization chart shows that the assistant superintendent for Personnel (Support Services), the Business manager, the assistant superintendent for Curriculum, and the principals report to the superintendent, while other administrators report to the assistants. However, existing job descriptions show that the following positions, some not identified in the previous organization chart, report directly to the superintendent:

- assistant superintendent of Curriculum Instruction
- assistant superintendent for Personnel (Support Services)
- Business manager
- federal programs director
- bilingual director
- gifted and talented director
- director of Career and Technology Education
- director of Special Education
- director of Personnel
- director of Transportation
- director of Maintenance

There were no job descriptions provided for the following positions:

- Technology director (Organization Chart)
- dyslexia coordinator

**EXHIBIT 2-2
EEISD ORGANIZATION**



SOURCE: EEISD Superintendent office and staff interviews, November 2005.

- 504 coordinator
- migrant coordinator
- security

The assistant superintendent for Personnel (Support Services) is not located in the central office and does not direct the activities of the Personnel department, with the exception of auxiliary personnel. The Special Education director is shown under the direction of the assistant superintendent for Personnel (Support Services), but in practice, the director reports directly to the superintendent. Although the job description of the director of Athletics shows him reporting to the assistant superintendent for Personnel (Support Services), the organization chart shows him reporting to principals. The director of Athletics stated that he does report to the high school principal.

A Technology director appears on the district organization chart, but the district has never filled this position. Technology services are managed by two non-administrative technology strategists who are housed in the Technology Center. The Technology Center is located away from the central office and has no director. While the superintendent has stated expectations for district wide technology development, the effort is hampered by a lack of administrative coordination. Further information regarding the reorganization of the Technology function will be discussed in the Computers and Technology chapter.

The director of Personnel is shown as supervising the certification specialist, although there is currently no one with that title. The administrator who has responsibilities in both Personnel (including certification) and Students Services reports directly to the superintendent.

The superintendent held “Edcouch Elsa Time” meetings with central office staff when he first took the position, but has not held them recently. Key decision-makers, as identified by the superintendent, do not meet together. The superintendent normally meets with the principals and central office staff once a month, with agenda items prepared by assistants and department heads.

The current organizational structure hinders accountability and efficiency. The superintendent’s current practice of having some administrators under the assistant superintendents report directly to him partially removes the assistants from accountability for the performance of the individuals in those positions. When administrators in subordinate positions receive their direction from the

superintendent without the knowledge of the supervisor, confusion and duplication of effort occur. Gaps or overload may also occur, resulting in less than optimal functioning. Such is the case in EEISD in regard to public information, records management, purchasing, and certain personnel and student services. The effect of this style of management, which limits communication, is to limit the power of collaborative planning and cooperation in moving the district forward.

The highest paid administrator in the district, aside from the superintendent, is the assistant superintendent for Personnel (Support Services), who has limited duties as compared to most district administrators. Lack of balance is seen in the absence of an administrator with responsibility for technology. District staff acknowledges the importance of instructional and administrative technology, but no one has been given authority and accountability for technology development.

Organizational structures are designed to achieve clear lines of functional responsibility, accountability, and communication.

The district should reorganize central administration along functional lines, with appropriate responsibilities and accountability, including evaluation of subordinates. Specific job descriptions should be written, with the “report to” line being the name of the immediate supervisor. When the job descriptions are written, specific annual objectives tied to district goals can be established by each administrator’s supervisor and incorporated into the evaluation process. The district should eliminate the position of assistant superintendent for Personnel (Support Services), placing responsibilities for the employment of at-will employees under the director of Personnel. The director of Personnel should report to the superintendent. The district should eliminate the Business Manager position, placing responsibility for the operational areas of child nutrition, maintenance, transportation and security under the supervision of the assistant superintendent for Business and Operations. The district should eliminate a technology strategist position and hire a technology director. The technology director should be placed in central management in a position equal to the assistant superintendents. This will assure the coordination of technology across all areas of the district. Board minutes should be assigned to the superintendent’s secretary. Regular meetings of the leadership team will focus district effort on the accomplishment of

goals, and encourage teamwork and accountability throughout the organization.

The recommended organization structure is seen in **Exhibit 2-3**.

The elimination of the position of assistant superintendent for Personnel (Support Services) at a salary \$105,524 (\$98,193 + \$3,731 benefits [\$98,193 x 3.80 percent] + \$3,600 health contribution = \$105,524), the elimination of the business manager position at a salary of \$94,942 (\$88,000 + \$3,342 benefits [\$88,000 x 3.80 percent] + \$3,600 health contributions = \$94,942), the addition of an assistant superintendent for Business and Operations at a salary of \$94,942 (\$88,000 + \$3,342 benefits [\$88,000 x 3.80 percent] + \$3,600 health contributions = \$94,942) and the addition of a Technology director at a salary of \$73,896 (\$67,723 + \$2,573 benefits [\$67,723 x 3.80 percent + \$3,600 health contributions = \$73,896) will result in an annual cost of \$31,628 (\$105,524 + \$94,942 – \$94,942 – \$73,896 = \$31,628).

BOARD TRAINING REQUIREMENTS (REC. 16)

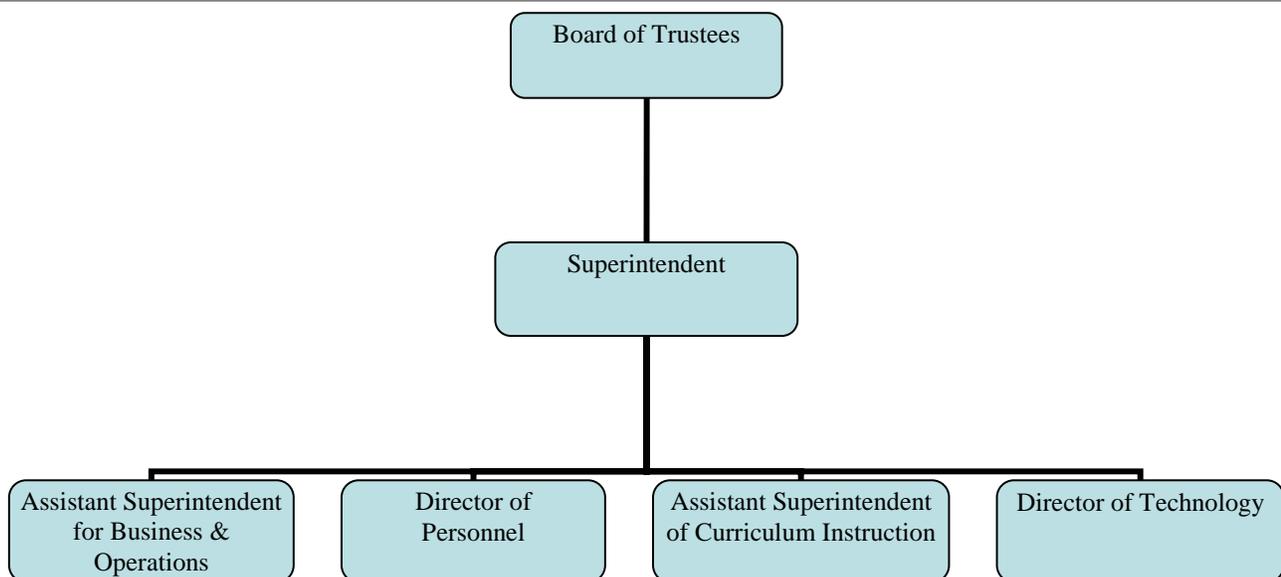
EEISD’s board does not monitor its required continuing education. EEISD board members did not assess their continuing education needs, met training requirements for the 2005 Legislative Update, annual team building, and the annual compliance statement does not meet the requirements of Texas Administrative Code (TAC). The standards and

requirements are set by the Texas State Board of Education and contained in TAC (19) 61.1 and EEISD board policy. During interviews, board members indicated that they were allowed three or four trips annually, of their choosing. The superintendent’s secretary keeps copies of certificates when members of the board provide them. Hours are reported to the Texas Association of School Boards, Inc. (TASB), which provides reports that can be downloaded for district records. There is no internal method for tracking or monitoring hours.

Exhibit 2-4 lists training hours for each board member from January 2004 through October 2005. TASB reports hours by “tiers.” This is a convenient way to track hours in accordance with the various requirements.

Tier I records hours of training received that fulfill the requirement for orientation to the TEC and the Legislative Update required after each legislative session. The orientation should be three hours; the update length is not specified in code. Five board members have received the orientation training; the two members have until April 2006 to complete that requirement. None of the board members have received the required Legislative Update training. Tier I should also reflect the required local district orientation. Although the training has not been reported to TASB for inclusion in the reports, the superintendent provided documentation that the two new board members did receive local orientation.

**EXHIBIT 2-3
RECOMMENDED EEISD ORGANIZATION**



SOURCE: Texas Public School Consulting, Inc., December 2005.

EXHIBIT 2-4
EEISD BOARD MEMBER TRAINING
JANUARY 2004 THROUGH OCTOBER 2005

BOARD MEMBER	TIER I TEC /UPDATE	TIER II TEAM-BUILDING	TIER III ASSESSED NEEDS	TOTAL
Aaron Gonzalez	3/0	0	27.5	30.5
Leonel Lozano	3/0	6	24.75	33.75
Florestela Rodriguez	3/0	0	27.75	30.75
Domingo Rodriguez	3/0	0	23.5	26.5
Esperanza Salinas	3/0	6	38.5	47.5
Juan Jose Ybarra, Jr.*	0/0	0	9.5	9.5
Manuel Hernandez, Jr.*	0/0	0	16.75	16.75

SOURCE: EEISD Superintendent's office, November 2005. *Elected May 2005.

Tier II records hours of training in fulfillment of the team building requirement. Two board members received team building training in December 2004. The board as a corporate body has not met this requirement.

Tier III represents additional hours of continuing education that board members attend. EEISD board members, with the exception of one who was called to military service, have fulfilled the hourly requirements of Tier III. Board members individually select meetings they wish to attend, usually attending sessions at the annual Texas Association of School Administrators (TASA)/TASB the TASB summer leadership academy, and the Region 1 annual board training meetings.

The board attended, as a group with the superintendent, the training required on the duties and roles of the board and superintendent, as a result of the 2004 TEA governance investigation. The TASB document records that training as three hours; however, board minutes indicate that the training concluded after one hour and 26 minutes. The entire board also attended a one-hour, 30-minute team-building session, also required in resolution of the governance complaint. Region 1 is responsible for providing EEISD training. Interviews with Region 1 staff revealed that the EEISD board was told that the training did not fulfill the board's requirement for team building.

Board minutes of January 19, 2005 state that "Chairman Daniel Hernandez also read aloud the board continuing education and training that each board member had attained thus far and also that board members needed to continue their board member training." As recorded, these board minutes do not fulfill the requirements, which are intended to inform the public, as it approaches the spring election, whether individual board members, and the corporate body, are in compliance.

Each trustee must complete training required by the State Board of Education (SBOE) and Texas Education Code (TEC) § 11.159. The SBOE has adopted Chapter 19 of the TAC, which is also contained in EEISD board Policy BBD (LEGAL). **Exhibit 2-5** shows the board Policy BBD (LEGAL).

Without the legislative orientation and update, the board is not current in matters of education law, and will be at a disadvantage in consideration of EEISD policies and practices. The purpose of requiring team building is to encourage boards to assess their continuing education needs, evaluate their own performance, and set goals. The board has not availed itself of these opportunities, and as result, does not engage in vital activities such as goal-setting and budget planning. The board has not requested budget training, and thus does not participate in such vital tasks as determining appropriate uses for fund balance, nor does it relate budget adoption to district goals. A board that does not invest the time and effort needed to become a team generally will not naturally evolve as a cooperative group focused on the needs of the district.

The board should fulfill training requirements for Legislative updates, participate in team-building, assess its training needs based on the Framework for Board Development, and publicly announce training hours as required by *19 TAC 61.1*. The board should select a provider and dedicate the needed time to conduct a self-evaluation, continuing education needs assessment, and team building with the superintendent. Region 1 provides facilitation of team building sessions, as does TASB, and many other qualified providers. Conducting a self-evaluation will signal the community that the board's intent is to work together for the best interests of the district. As a result of the needs assessment, the board should establish an annual training

**EXHIBIT 2-5
EEISD BOARD POLICY BBD (LEGAL)**

TOPIC	DESCRIPTION
Required Training	<p>Each Trustee must complete any training required by the State Board of Education. Education Code 11.159</p> <p>Continuing education for Board members includes orientation sessions, an annual team building session with the Board and the Superintendent, and specified hours of continuing education based on identified needs.</p>
Local Orientation	<p>All Board members shall receive a District orientation and an orientation to the Texas Education Code.</p>
New Members	<p>New Board members shall participate in a local orientation session within 60 days before or after their election or appointment. The purpose of this orientation is to familiarize new Board members with local Board policies and procedures and District goals and priorities.</p> <p>All newly elected Board members shall receive the orientation to the Texas Education Code within the first year of service. The orientation shall be delivered by regional education service centers and shall be three hours in length.</p>
Sitting Members	<p>All sitting Board members shall receive a basic orientation to the Texas Education Code and relevant legal obligations. The orientation will have special but not exclusive emphasis on statutory provisions related to Texas school district governance. The orientation shall be delivered by regional education services centers and shall be three hours in length. Topics shall include, but not be limited to, Texas Education Code, Chapter 26 (Parental Rights and Responsibilities), and Texas Education Code, Section 28.004 (Local School Health Advisory Council and Health Education Instruction). [See BDF, EHAA, FNG]</p>
Legislative Updates	<p>After each session of the Texas Legislature, each Board member shall receive an updated session from a regional education service center or any registered provider to the basic orientation to the Texas Education Code. The update session shall be of sufficient length to familiarize Board members with major changes in the Education Code and other relevant legal developments related to school governance. A Board member who has attended a basic orientation session given by a service center that incorporates the most recent legislative changes is not required to attend an additional legislative update.</p>
Team Building	<p>An entire Board, including all Board members, shall annually participate with the Superintendent in a team building session facilitated by the regional education service center or any registered provider. The team building session shall be of a length deemed appropriate by the Board, but generally at least three hours. The purpose of the team building session is to enhance the effectiveness of the Board-Superintendent team and to assess the continuing education needs of the Board-Superintendent team. The assessment of needs shall be based on the framework for governance leadership and shall be used to plan continuing education activities for the governance leadership team for the upcoming year.</p>
Continuing Education	<p>In addition to the orientation and team building training, all Board members shall receive additional continuing education on an annual basis, in fulfillment of assessed needs and based on the framework for governance leadership. [See BBD(EXHIBIT)] The continuing education sessions may be provided by the regional education service centers or other registered providers.</p> <p>To the extent possible, the entire Board shall participate in continuing education programs together.</p>
First Year	<p>In their first year of service, Board members shall receive at least ten hours of continuing education in fulfillment of assessed needs. Board members may fulfill up to five of the required ten hours of continuing education through online instruction, provided that the training is designed and offered by a registered provider, incorporates interactive activities that assess learning and provide feedback to the learner, and offers an opportunity for interaction with the instructor.</p>
Subsequent Years	<p>Following the first year of service, Board members shall receive at least five hours of continuing education annually in fulfillment of assessed needs. Board members may fulfill the five hours of continuing education through online instruction, provided that the training is designed and offered by a registered provider, incorporates interactive activities that assess learning and provide feedback to the learner, and offers an opportunity for interaction with the instructor.</p>
Presidents	<p>The Board President shall receive continuing education related to leadership duties of the Board President as some portion of the annual requirement.</p>

**EXHIBIT 2-5 (CONTINUED)
EEISD BOARD POLICY BBD (LEGAL)**

TOPIC	DESCRIPTION
Local Training	At least 50 percent of the annual continuing education shall be designed and delivered by persons not employed or affiliated with the Board member’s District. No more than one hour of the required continuing education that is delivered by the District may use self instructional materials.
Annual Compliance Announcement	Annually, at the meeting at which the call for election of Board members is normally scheduled, the President shall announce the name of each Board member who has completed the required continuing education, who has exceeded the required hours of continuing education, and who is deficient in the required continuing education. The President shall cause the minutes to reflect the information and shall make this information available to the local media.

SOURCE: EEISD board Policy BBD (LEGAL).

calendar with sessions to be attended by the entire board. Topics such as budget training can be provided by members of the district staff. Additionally, the superintendent and the board president should develop a method of tracking all board continuing education hours by tier.

ATTORNEY SELECTION AND FEES (REC. 17)

EEISD does not use a selection or monitoring process for legal services. EEISD utilizes the services of three law firms: Linebarger, Goggan, Blair, and Sampson, LLP collect delinquent taxes on a contingency fee basis; Buechler and Associates, P.C. supply the EEISD co-op special education legal services; and the board’s attorney and district’s general counsel, including for the superintendent, is Gustavo L. Acevedo, Jr. The district incurred legal costs for the board and superintendent totaling \$191,852 and \$100,791, respectively.

The general counsel is contracted under an \$18,000 monthly retainer. This contract includes an increase of \$3,000 per month, as approved by the board in July 2005, for a total of \$216,000 for 2005–06. Legal costs for the district are calculated only for general counsel and special education legal services. Fees for tax collecting legal services are deducted from the delinquent taxes collected by the firm, which is standard practice in Texas. The district receives the remainder of delinquent taxes collected. EEISD is the fiscal agent for the Mid-Valley Special Education Cooperative, which has its own governing board. As such the Mid-Valley Special Education Cooperative retains legal services at an annual cost of \$65,000.

The EEISD Board of Trustees lacks a process for the selection of legal services. Current board members state that the current general counsel has been under contract for several years. None recall how he was selected. In interviews, one board member recalls that the prior attorney was “even more expensive,” and that is why they changed. Board

minutes of June 22, 2005 read: “[The board’s attorney] approached the board for a \$3,000 increase in the monthly retainer for his legal services.” Motion was made and unanimously approved. When the review team inquired about the rationale for the increase, board members responded that the attorney said he had not had a raise in three years.

There is an additional contingency contract for insurance litigation that provides the board’s general counsel a portion of any recovery, which will be in addition to his monthly retainer fee. The contract was signed by the board president and secretary on June 28, 2005, although board minutes indicate that the contract was approved for the law firm of Jolly and Jolly. The EEISD board expects its general counsel to attend all board meetings, although the current board has not discussed the need for this service, nor do minutes reflect that the board has reviewed its legal needs and costs.

EEISD has the highest legal costs among its peer districts, as shown in **Exhibit 2-6**.

A study conducted by the Region 1 in 2004 compared legal costs for all Texas school districts. EEISD reported expenditures of \$292,643, using enrollment of 5,472, EEISD is incurring legal costs at an average per student of \$53.48. The same comparative study shows EEISD having the 36th highest total legal costs among Texas’ school districts.

According to Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) reports, Texas school districts spent more than \$51 million from their maintenance and operations budgets on legal services in 2005. This expenditure equates to \$11.63 per child for each of the 4,383,871 Texas students.

A lack of a selection process for legal services will result in disproportionate and often excessive legal costs. Not having a monitoring process for legal services places the district at a

**EXHIBIT 2-6
COMPARABLE LEGAL COSTS FOR 2004**

DISTRICT	BOARD LEGAL COSTS	SUPERINTENDENT LEGAL COSTS	TOTAL LEGAL COSTS
EDCOUCH-ELSA	\$191,852	\$100,791	\$292,643
Rio Grande City	\$135,166	\$0	\$135,166
Progreso	\$79,997	\$30,219	\$110,216
Southside	\$0	\$73,018	\$73,018
Roma	\$0	\$32,918	\$32,918
STATE AVERAGE			\$54,215

SOURCE: Public Education Information Management System, district audits.

significant disadvantage when legal service contracts are up for renewal and informed decisions about services rendered and future remuneration are at issue. By encumbering high legal fees in retainer form for routine services to the board, the district has significantly less money available for the classroom.

Guidance in selecting an attorney can be found in *Selecting and Working with a School Attorney: A Guide for School Boards*, published by the National Association of School Boards.

The district should assess its needs for legal services, initiate a selection process, negotiate a competitive contract, and monitor costs annually. The board should direct the superintendent to assess district needs for legal services. The superintendent should seek input in regard to business issues, construction, personnel matters, and student discipline. As the fiscal agent for the Mid-Valley Special Education Co-Op, the superintendent should include special education needs. With this information, the board should decide the scope of services to be provided and determine its expectations of the attorney. Once the service needs and expectations have been defined, the district should initiate a selection process. At a minimum, the board should request and review the qualifications of several attorneys and law firms, not limiting itself to the immediate area. Costs may be proposed as retainer, which is the current EEISD practice, hourly rates, purchase of a set amount of hours, or a variety of combinations. The district should require firms to present their fee structures, along with proposals to assist the district in controlling costs. These proposals might include staff and board training, to assist the district in avoiding litigation. Any contract executed should include performance measures, so that there is a method of evaluating attorney performance and monitoring costs.

The district can achieve a cost savings of \$160,616 in legal fees per year. This savings is calculated by using double the

2005 state average of \$11 per student or \$22 per student, as a guide to budget for legal costs totaling \$120,384. ($\$22 \times 5,472 \text{ students} = \$120,384$). At current contracted attorney costs of \$281,000 for board general counsel and special education, the district can realize a savings of \$160,616 per year ($\$216,000 \text{ general counsel} + \$65,000 \text{ special education equals } (\$281,000 - \$120,384 = \$160,616)$).

PRINCIPALS' APPROVAL AUTHORITY FOR STAFF APPOINTMENTS (REC. 18)

EEISD lacks a procedure to ensure all principals have employee approval discretion for their individual campus. EEISD does not include the principal in the interview process, therefore excluding them from the selection of campus personnel.

During interviews, campus principals said that this practice is still in place. One principal commented in regard to hiring paraprofessionals and auxiliary staff, "We don't have a say-so in that. We don't deal with assistants [paraprofessionals]. We don't see applications." Another principal said, "We do not hire paras (paraprofessionals) or auxiliary people. Those are sent to our campus. I have said, 'I don't want this person.' I was told it was not up to me. I don't talk to the superintendent about it because of the chain of command." A central office administrator said, "The school district is not in compliance. There is no input from the campus. (The administrator in charge) screens and places people. Board members talk to him. I know of only one principal that interviews candidates." Another principal remarked, "Our custodians and teaching assistants have more power than the teachers." One principal said in regard to paraprofessionals and auxiliary staff, "They usually send somebody over, custodians and security mostly. If they're causing problems somewhere else, they send them here. It's very political. I don't think it will ever change." The superintendent expressed his belief that principals approve all staff and said that "No principal has complained."

On December 12, 2002, the TEA issued a report to EEISD as a result of a governance complaint. One of the findings was as follows: The [TEA] investigative team learned from campus principals that, at times, the administration of EEISD assigns employees to campuses without the input or approval of the respective campus principals. Section 11.163 (a) of the TEC states, “The Board of Trustees of each independent school district shall adopt a policy providing for the employment and duties of district personnel. The employment policy must provide that...each principal must approve each teacher or staff appointment to the principal’s campus...” Further, TEC §11.202(b) states, “Each principal shall...approve all teacher and staff appointments for that principal’s campus...” When the administration assigns employees without the approval of the campus principal, the assignments are in violation of TEC §11.163 and §11.202.

EEISD’s interim superintendent rebutted the TEA finding, saying, in response to the TEA report, “...this additional finding misinterprets the law... When administration assigns employees to campuses it is incumbent upon the principal to object or provide input. If an employee was placed at a campus and the principal did not want that employee, then it is incumbent upon the principal to assert their right to veto the assignment.”

The intent of the law as written in the TEC is to empower principals to gather a cohesive staff that will actively contribute to the mission and goals of the campus. For example, the campus site-based team may have very specific skills in mind for a particular position that will enhance student achievement. Employees selected and assigned without regard for the principal’s approval may not meet the campus’ needs or in a worst-case scenario, the unapproved employee may damage the school’s ability to meet its goals. This practice is not conducive to line/staff accountability or to the principals’ efforts to use site-based decision-making.

The superintendent should develop a procedure to ensure principals are involved in the interviewing and selection of campus staff. The superintendent should also assign responsibility for the employment of paraprofessionals and auxiliary staff to the director of Personnel, and assure that written procedures are communicated to all district staff, the board, the public, and monitored for compliance. The director of Personnel should involve principals in the interviewing and selection of campus staff.

DISTRICT SITE-BASED COMMITTEE (REC. 19)

EEISD’s district SBDM committee is not involved in ongoing or formative evaluation of the DIP. The district SBDM committee’s ability to affect decision-making, with respect to instructional programs and strategies, is limited. According to agendas provided to the review team, the district SBDM committee meets two or three times a year, as shown in **Exhibit 2-7**.

**EXHIBIT 2-7
SBDC MEETING HISTORY**

SCHOOL YEAR	DATES
2002-03	March 4 March 12
2003-04	March 10 April 8 May 10
2004-05	August 30 April 5 May 3
2005-06	September 13 November 2

SOURCE: Agendas provided by EEISD Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, November 2005.

Evaluation of the DIP is listed on only three meeting agendas:

- August 31, 2004;
- May 5, 2005; and
- September 15, 2005.

According to district staff, the annual, or summative, district SBDM committee evaluation of the 2004–05 DIP began at the May 5th meeting, and concluded at the September 15th meeting. The district SBDM committee was divided into groups to assess progress in regard to goals from the DIP. The evaluation form provides four following scoring options, with a space for comments:

- goal accomplished;
- considerable progress;
- some progress; and
- no progress.

While specifics, in terms of student achievement and strategy effectiveness, may have been discussed in the district SBDM committee meetings, they are not evident in the evaluation form, which becomes part of the next year’s improvement

plan. Minutes are not kept of the district improvement planning meetings, so it is difficult to ascertain the depth of discussion. **Exhibit 2-8** shows an example of the 2004–05 evaluation report, demonstrating its brevity and vagueness, which is contained in the 2005–06 plan as follows.

The 2005–06 DIP specifies formative, or ongoing, evaluation measures and timelines, listed by month only, for each action or initiative. The staff member listed as being responsible for the formative evaluation is, in most cases, the central office administrator in charge of the particular program. There is no schedule for 2005–06 district SBDM committee meetings, or indication in the DIP, that the SBDC will participate in formative evaluation.

The construction of the EEISD DIP leaves formative evaluation to the central office staff during the school year. There is no reporting requirement attached to the formative evaluation criteria or timelines. While it may be assumed that formative evaluation is discussed among the administrative staff members, the district SBDM committee members are not included until the summative end of year evaluation.

While the EEISD district SBDM committee is engaged in significant areas of decision-making, such as approving waiver requests to TEA, developing the school calendar, and reviewing grants, its role in the ongoing evaluation of instructional and instructional support strategies has been minimal.

Failure to vigorously evaluate programs or initiatives usually leads to their perpetuation, whether they are productive or not. If there is some increase in student performance, success is often attributed generally to them, and, as is the case in the EEISD plan, additional programs not specified in the DIP may be implemented with the hope that “more is better.” The lack of specificity in monitoring and evaluation leads to a lack of specificity in performance objectives and initiatives in the Plan, which is potentially limiting academic improvement. A district SBDM committee that is well-

informed about every aspect of the DIP and has a vital role in making ongoing decisions about student achievement initiatives is a powerful force for district improvement.

EEISD board Policy BQ (LEGAL), developed from TEC §11.251(b) states: The board shall adopt a policy to establish a district- and campus- level planning and decision-making process that will involve the professional staff of the district, parents of students enrolled in the district, business representatives, and community members in establishing and reviewing the district’s and campuses’ educational plans, goals, performance objectives, and major classroom instructional programs.

Among the items required by EEISD Board Policy BQ for inclusion in the DIP are: Timelines for ongoing monitoring of the implementation of each improvement strategy; and formative evaluation criteria for determining periodically whether strategies are resulting in intended improvement of student performance.

TEA published a *Resource Guide on Site-Based Decision Making and District and Campus Planning*, portions of which are contained in the *EEISD Guide to District Integrated Planning and Decision-Making Process, 2005–06*. Excerpts include: Plans should include measurable checkpoints and incremental timelines to ensure that outcomes are monitored frequently. Formative (or frequent, ongoing) evaluation should provide the opportunity and basis for corrective actions during the implementation of the plans, even if it becomes necessary to re-define objectives and strategies midstream. One of the major purposes of the DIP is to give direction to the district as to the best use of human and monetary resources toward improving student achievement.

The district should involve the district SBDM committee throughout the year in evaluating the programs and strategies included in the DIP. Sub-committees of the district SBDM committee should be assigned to specific actions and initiatives. Working together with the central office

**EXHIBIT 2-8
EEISD 2004–05 DISTRICT SBDM COMMITTEE EVALUATION REPORT**

GOAL	SCORE
GOAL 1: STUDENT LEARNING	
3. (Some Progress) 1.1 By the end of the 2004-05 school year, students will demonstrate an increase in all TAKS tests to a minimum of 90% mastery to obtain/ maintain “Exemplary Status.”	Comments: There was evidence of improved scores in all sub-populations. We did not reach 90 percent mastery.

SOURCE: EEISD 2004-05 district SBDM committee Evaluation Report.

administrator for that area, the sub-committee should gather data in accordance with the formative criteria specified in the DIP. Formative evaluation reports should be part of each district SBDM committee meeting as scheduled monthly throughout the year. Minutes should be kept of district SBDM committee meetings, and disseminated to district staff and the board via the district website, so that the staff and community can become well-informed as to the

substance and direction of the district level planning process.

For background information on District Leadership, Organization, and Management, see p. 241 in the General Information section of the appendices.

FISCAL IMPACT

RECOMMENDATIONS	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) SAVINGS	ONE TIME (COSTS) SAVINGS
CHAPTER 2: DISTRICT LEADERSHIP, ORGANIZATION, AND MANAGEMENT							
12. Cooperate with the Texas Education Agency (TEA) regarding the recommendation of the Legislative Budget Board that TEA conduct an investigation of EEISD under the provisions of the Texas Education Code §39.074, On-Site Investigations, and §39.075, Special Accreditation Investigations.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
13. Initiate a process of strategic planning by reviewing the mission statement and becoming engaged in setting district goals.	(\$4,200)	(\$4,200)	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$8,400)	\$0
14. Develop a comprehensive administrative procedures manual for conducting all functions and operations of the district.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
15. Reorganize central administration along functional lines, with appropriate responsibilities and accountability, including evaluation of subordinates.	(\$31,628)	(\$31,628)	(\$31,628)	(\$31,628)	(\$31,628)	(\$158,140)	\$0
16. Fulfill training requirements for Legislative updates, participate in team-building, assess training needs based on the Framework for Board Development, and publicly announce training hours as required by 19 Texas Administrative Code 61.1.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

FISCAL IMPACT (CONTINUED)

RECOMMENDATIONS	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) SAVINGS	ONE TIME (COSTS) SAVINGS
17. Assess needs for legal services, initiate a selection process, negotiate a competitive contract, and monitor costs annually.	\$160,616	\$160,616	\$160,616	\$160,616	\$160,616	\$803,080	\$0
18. Develop a procedure to ensure principals are involved in the interviewing and selection of campus staff.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
19. Involve the district SBDM committee throughout the year in evaluating the programs and strategies included in the DIP.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
TOTALS-CHAPTER 2	\$124,788	\$124,788	\$128,988	\$128,988	\$128,988	\$636,540	\$0

CHAPTER 3

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

EDCOUCH-ELSA INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

CHAPTER 3. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Local school districts were established to be responsive to community needs including those of students, parents, taxpayers, residents, businesses and special interest groups. The success of a school district's efforts to involve the community in its schools depends in large part on how well the district understands the unique characteristics of its community and how responsive it is to the characteristics. The district also has responsibility for informing the community of the goals, accomplishments and needs of the district to encourage community support and assistance in accomplishing the work of the district. In many communities, the district must reach out beyond schoolhouse walls to provide students and families with instruction, support and assistance in accessing other community resources and services.

Edcouch-Elsa Independent School District (EEISD) communicates with its parents and community in a variety of ways including district and campus newsletters, flyers and a district website. The superintendent is the district's primary spokesperson. The district has a public information coordinator; but lacks a public relations department or person specifically charged with communicating with the public. The superintendent and his staff work with numerous community agencies for the benefit of students and families. Businesses in the area work with the district and support district and campus activities by providing donations and incentives for students and their families. The district employs a full time Parent Involvement director who promotes and coordinates many of the district's parental involvement initiatives and ongoing activities.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- EEISD provides a good communication process with the community and parents by publishing a newsletter four times per year in both English and Spanish and by encouraging campuses to provide newsletters on a frequent basis.
- EEISD staff ensures most organizations the district partners with fully understand their role and responsibilities in providing services for students and families by using contracts or Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs).

FINDINGS

- EEISD lacks a coordinated effort in developing and implementing a parent involvement program districtwide.
- EEISD lacks written procedures or provides employee training regarding open records requests.
- EEISD lacks coordinated planning and effort in website development.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Recommendation 20: Establish a task force at each campus which will develop a plan to increase parental involvement.** The task force should include administrators, teachers, educational aides, and parents from the school. The task force should focus on identifying relevant research and methodologies that have proven effective in increasing parental participation and involvement in districts similar to EEISD. Study sessions on individual areas of interest should be held and shared with other campus educators. The task force should develop recommendations regarding the type of parental programs that should be implemented and the training and resources needed. This information should be presented to the campus improvement committee to ensure that appropriate action is taken to accomplish the plan. If the plan requires district action, the principal should provide this information to the superintendent and other appropriate district staff for further action and approval.
- **Recommendation 21: Develop administrative procedures in response to the Public Information Act provisions.** The superintendent and the Business manager should draft these procedures and the attorney should review and finalize them. Procedures should include forms and a tracking process that will facilitate compliance with the requirements of the law. The response form should be revised to include a response date and the superintendent's designee should maintain a log that clearly denotes the date a request was made, the subject of the request, whether it meets the criteria for public information, and the date of the response. The district should post the required

sign in a prominent place in the district offices. A copy of the required sign can be obtained at the website of the Texas Attorney General. Administrators and their secretaries should be trained regarding the provisions of the law and the district procedures. Board members and the public information coordinator for the district should complete the required open meetings and open records as mandated by sections 551.005 and 552.012 of the Government Code before January 2007.

- **Recommendation 22: Establish a Web Advisory Committee to make recommendations regarding the implementation of district and campus websites.** The Technology strategist who is currently working with website implementation should serve as committee chairperson, and should include representation on the committee from various stakeholder groups. Campus and department administrators, master technology teachers, parents and representatives from the community should be included. Input regarding website development should be solicited from staff and community members knowledgeable about the process. The committee should present its recommendations to the superintendent and the board for approval.

DETAILED ACCOMPLISHMENTS

PARENT NEWSLETTERS

EEISD provides a good communication process with the community and parents by publishing a newsletter four times per year in both English and Spanish and by encouraging campuses to provide newsletters on a frequent basis. The district publishes a bilingual quarterly newsletter, *El Informe*, which serves as a communication tool to inform parents and the community of past and future events. Additionally, *El Informe* provides parents with information concerning programs, school attendance times, and suggestions concerning ways parents can help students at home. Newsletters are an excellent tool for informing parents who do not actively participate in campus activities or events. The district newsletter also serves to highlight students who have achieved certain goals or accomplishments. Campuses are also encouraged to provide newsletters on a frequent basis.

The district newsletter reaches many parents who would otherwise not be informed about critical community information. For example, the first edition this year provided information regarding the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) tutorials for students who are out of school

but still need to pass their TAKS exam. *El Informe* also provides required parental notifications such as the Texas Student Success Initiative (SSI) information. The publication has numerous articles that encourage parental participation in their children's education. The first issue of *El Informe* stressed the importance of volunteering in the schools. The district Parent Involvement director researches and writes the newsletter. She also translates and formats the newsletter and takes all the photographs appearing in the publication. The district provides a \$6,000 budget to cover the printing cost for 6,000 copies, which are circulated quarterly.

Several campuses in EEISD also produce and publish newsletters on a regular basis. Newsletters from at least three campuses were provided to the review team. Most of these are published every six weeks and some are translated to Spanish. At the Sixth Grade Campus, each team writes and sends home a newsletter each week; the newsletter generally contains information about events, homework schedules and student recognitions. These newsletters allow parents to prepare students for important events and assignments.

The district clearly placed an emphasis on communication with parents. Surveys conducted by the review team show that 72.7 percent of the teachers and 100 percent of the principals agree or strongly agree that the district regularly communicates with parents. Better communication is the key in building a more effective community of parents. Parents who do not come to school frequently can keep informed through newsletters that their children bring home. Publishing and circulating information to parents in the appropriate language provides an invaluable resource, which can convey best practices to increase the capacity of families to improve student performance.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

EEISD staff ensures most organizations the district partners with fully understand their role and responsibilities in providing services for students and families by using contracts or Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs). The superintendent, as the primary spokesperson for the district, is proactive in seeking out new initiatives and is highly responsive to requests from groups to provide or extend services to students in the district. During a community focus group meeting held for this review, community leaders representing a variety of agencies were highly complimentary of the district's approach in securing services for students. A person attending stated, "Administrators have been involved in the decision-making. The hallmark of this district is that

they take a very considerate approach, look at their needs and resources and tailor it (the partnership) to meet their needs.” The district recognizes that financial constraints prevent it from providing many services needed and partners with these groups, via a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or a signed contract, which specify the roles and responsibilities of all parties involved. Several of the partners and services provided are listed as follows:

- **Llano Grande Center for Research and Development:** This school and community based non-profit organization agrees to provide the following services to EEISD students:
 - college preparation advising;
 - leadership training;
 - personal growth opportunities;
 - desktop publishing training;
 - video production training; and
 - research methodology training.

The Llano Grande Center for Research and Development also agrees to act as a resource to staff and faculty working with EEISD students and to act as a liaison between community members and the district and between the business community and the district. Additionally, the organization agrees to continue generating positive publicity for the district via local, state, national and international media. This year Llano Grande is also offering teacher innovation grants of \$500 to teachers who present teaching/learning proposals consistent with the Llano Grande philosophy of teaching. The district in turn, agrees to provide continued use of two rooms at the high school to Llano Grande. The district also agreed to bus high school students to the Llano Grande facility on Monte Cristo Road for services.

- **Communities in School (CIS) of Hidalgo County:** This non-profit corporation provides comprehensive dropout prevention/intervention services to 100 at-risk students. CIS implements the CIS case management state model including a needs assessment, plan of action and service delivery program for the students and their families. Services include remedial instruction, health and social service referrals, parent involvement, and enrichment. CIS will provide one full time social worker at the high school. EEISD agrees to provide available and reasonable facilities for the program, bus

services in support of activities, and a sum of \$20,500 for services in the contract.

- **AmeriCorps Youth Harvest:** This grant program is housed in EEISD and the district is the fiscal agent. The program works with carefully selected seniors who serve as tutors for elementary and junior high students who are having difficulty with math and reading. The tutors also provide tutoring services at the Boys and Girls Club and the public library after school, resulting in a total of 900 hours assisting students over a ten month period. The district currently has ten mentors who receive a living allowance for the work they perform. They also receive intense training on how to work with students. The district agrees to provide a fee of \$1,520 per student for services.

The district works cooperatively with many other agencies to bring services to youth in a community where services are not readily available. For example, district staff works closely with Insure a Kid, an organization that provides information and support to ensure that every child in the district has the benefit of some type of medical insurance or health service. Nurses and community aides from EEISD have been trained by the project staff to assist with this effort. According to the project director, the district has been very successful in getting the word out to parents and in completing all the details of the project work plan.

The district also maintains a partnership with the University of Texas-Pan American (UTPA) in the form of an interagency cooperative contract for the UTPA Mother Daughter Program. The program “permits five female students identified by their counselors and their mothers, from each campus served, to take part in the intervention program with the purpose of encouraging and supporting the completion of high school and the pursuit of higher education through academic and personal development and leadership training.”

Because of these program agreements and contracts, EEISD students benefit from services from organizations with high quality programs. Organizations like Llano Grande, which are committed to today’s youth, can enrich and extend student’s experiences so they can function as tomorrow’s leaders. Busy high school teachers and other staff welcome this type of partnership because students benefit. Furthermore, the staff benefits indirectly from these programs because they are also exposed to services that promote leadership development in students. Other

programs also provide services to students who otherwise might not have succeeded in the current educational system. Programs for at-risk youth often prevent dropouts and therefore help the district and the community. The district benefits from these programs by providing services to students that should help raise test scores, reduce dropouts, and improve the overall standards in the district.

DETAILED FINDINGS

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT (REC. 20)

EEISD lacks a coordinated effort in developing and implementing a parent involvement program districtwide. The lack of these efforts has contributed to minimal parent participation including lack of volunteer programs and Parent Teacher Organizations (PTO). The district employs a Parent Involvement director; however, this individual primarily researches and writes the district newsletter. The publication has numerous articles that encourage parental participation in their children's education.

Only one of the schools, the high school, has a place designated to provide parents with a specific space where they can meet, work together, and receive training. Only one of the district's campus plans had the establishment of a parent involvement center as a strategy for improvement. There was no mention in any of the other campus plans of specific personnel dedicated to work with parents. In addition, only four of the campus plans listed recruitment of volunteers as a strategy with two plans mentioning establishment of a PTO as follows: "organize collaborative efforts between community resources and parents to promote volunteerism and parent teacher organization." None of the plans provided strategies that would serve to improve the staff's capacity to involve parents.

EEISD employs at least one community aide position at each campus. This position, however, has been established for the primary goal of improving student attendance and individuals in these positions do not work with parents to improve parental involvement or provide training. The community aide interviewed by the review team, saw the job as supporting the school and teachers by following up with parents who did not send their children to school and who needed to come in to deal with discipline or other types of problems.

The review team examined five campus improvement plans for 2005–06 and three for 2004–05. All plans addressed the three objectives under goal three of the district improvement

plan, which states "Parents and community will be active partners in the education of our students and in the continuing improvement of the education system." The objectives stated under goal three were the following:

- 3–1: Parents will be involved in the decision making of the district and campus policies.
- 3–2: Increase forms of communication between school and home to include all families in the district.
- 3–3: Provide programs that strengthen parenting skills which enable parents to provide educational assistance to their children.

Of the eight plans reviewed, two had strategies that were identical to those listed in the district plan with no attempt to identify activities at the campus level to achieve the objectives. The majority of the plans include objectives and strategies that were vague and that would be difficult to evaluate for completeness. For example, under objective 3–1 dealing with improving parental involvement in decision making, one campus listed general strategies such as "provide opportunities for parents to participate in parent/teacher conferences and disseminate Title I parent teacher compact." Other strategies listed included many that would be considered part of the school's normal operations rather than strategies for improvement. Examples included:

- recommend students needing assistance for the tutorial program and notify parent of the tutorial recommendation;
- set up parent/teacher conferences to review student data and classification; and
- distribute the Code of Conduct.

Evaluation of the campus improvement plans in EEISD consists of rating each objective under the goals as: 1=goal accomplished; 2=considerable progress; 3=some progress; and 4=no progress. This level of evaluation does not provide sufficient information to help the schools in determining how successful they were in completing individual objectives or strategies to develop new objectives and strategies for the following year. An example of an evaluation from one campus under objective three, which rated completion of the objective as a "2" for considerable progress made, stated: "Parent meetings and collaborative opportunities are facilitated through various means with a learner centered theme."

All principals the review team interviewed said that despite numerous parent activities on their campuses, parent

participation was low. All of the principals stated that they had no PTO on their campuses and all described their parent volunteer programs as very small (two to four volunteers) or non-existent. All principals indicated that only the same handful of parents participated as school volunteers and others seemed to be unwilling to make any long term commitments to the schools. Each principal expressed that parents on their campus did not want to join PTO for the same reason. One principal commented that the parents only came together if there was a common problem that all of them wanted resolved. Of the teachers surveyed by the review team, 69.7 percent agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “parent involvement and training activities are widely available throughout the district,” but 66.7 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed that schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs. One school board member interviewed said that parent involvement was low throughout the district, estimating that only 10 to 15 percent of parents are involved with the schools.

Parents in EEISD appear reluctant to attend parental activities, to participate on committees, and to volunteer at their children’s schools. One principal said that some parents are “wary of coming in.” Another principal said that teachers could do more to improve parent involvement but that the school does not get around to doing parental involvement activities. This principal also indicated that not having measurable objectives made it more difficult to address this area. Although campuses do have a parent involvement budget, the amount for discretionary spending is low (\$1,100 and \$1,500 for secondary campuses) and is generally spent on refreshments and door prizes according to two principals. Staff training on how to work with parents is available only at the beginning of the year at a general session. An elementary principal commented that although the teachers had repeatedly indicated the need for training in this area on the staff development needs survey, the district does not provide any in-depth training regarding this matter.

The lack of a coordinated effort prevents schools from achieving improved parental involvement. The lack of effective planning prevents campuses from identifying specific impediments to increasing parental participation and from following up by developing specific objectives and strategies. The lack of specific and clear strategies to address the establishment of a PTO or a volunteer program encourages the current environment, which is no PTO or volunteer program at any campus. Other factors contributing to the district’s poor parental involvement include the lack of

a designated space for parents to work; and the lack of staff development to build capacity in working with parents, has also contributed to poor parental involvement throughout the district.

The Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, in its publication, *A New Wave of Evidence—The Impact of School, Family, and Community Connections on Student Achievement*, reviews research studies and presents their findings, which overwhelmingly indicate that parents should be encouraged to be active partners in their children’s education. These studies show that parents, with training, are willing and able to implement practices linked to improved achievement. Studies, which look at high-performing schools in low-income areas, found that parents were highly engaged.

Many schools plan carefully to develop strategies that address the specific characteristics and needs of their families and provide activities that result in positive outcomes. These schools recognize that the first step in the process is to develop the capacity of school staff to work with families so that goals, objectives, and strategies are insightful and attainable. Some schools also frequently identify a parent space within the school for parents to meet, work, and identify an individual within the staff that serves as the parent’s main source of information, training, and assistance.

San Benito ISD has established a model parent involvement program that has earned the Texas Association of School Board’s highest honor, the Texas Outstanding Parent Program Award. Through this program, parent centers are located at each campus and eight parent educators work at schools with parents to help them become partners in the education of their students. According to the director of the program, the parent educators recruit and work with the volunteers at each school and also coordinate parent training in basic literacy and English as a Second Language classes. Parents also receive training on how to effectively work with their children. The district provides transportation and childcare for parents attending the parent centers. All funds for this program are provided from Title I funds.

EEISD should establish a task force at each campus which will develop a plan to increase parental involvement. The task force should include administrators, teachers, educational aides and parents from the school. The task force should focus on identifying relevant research and methodologies that have proven effective in increasing parental participation and involvement in districts similar to EEISD. Study sessions

on individual areas of interest should be held and shared with other campus educators. The task force should develop recommendations regarding the type of parental programs that should be implemented and the training and resources needed. This information should be presented to the campus improvement committee to ensure that appropriate action is taken to accomplish the plan. If the plan requires district action, the principal should provide this information to the superintendent and other appropriate district staff for further action and approval.

OPEN RECORDS REQUESTS (REC. 21)

EEISD lacks written procedures or provides employee training regarding open records requests. The Business manager is responsible for responding to open record requests. In interviews with the review team, the Business manager said that he deals promptly with all requests submitted unless they are of a “sensitive nature”, generally open record requests of a sensitive nature are sent to the superintendent. In some cases the superintendent may respond, in other cases the superintendent requests an attorney’s opinion and response. The Business manager confirmed in the interviews that there are no written procedures regarding open records requests, but clarified that all administrators were aware of procedures. He stated that the superintendent communicated these procedures during meetings with administrative staff.

The Business manager maintains a file of written requests, but does not maintain a log of requests and responses. The information submitted to the review team concerning responses to requests only contained a listing of type of information requested, response time for completion, and charges for the records. There were no request dates or response dates indicated in the information submitted. The actual request form contains a space for the date received, but not a space for the date of response.

The review team also noted that there were no signs posted as required by Policy GBAA (LEGAL), which requires that the district prominently display a sign that contains basic information about the rights of a requestor, the responsibilities of the board, and the procedures for inspecting or obtaining a copy of public information under Government Code Chapter 552. The policy also indicates that this sign be displayed at one or more places in the district administrative offices where it can be plainly visible to the public and employees of the district and list the positions whose duties include responding to public information requests.

In interviews with central office administrators, they indicated that they were not aware of open records procedures but were aware that the Business manager or the superintendent handled such requests. Campus administrators stated during their interviews that they were not aware of how these requests should be handled, the timelines associated with the requests, or to whom the requests should be forwarded. One administrator responded that he would handle the request promptly himself. Other administrators said that they would call central office to find out what to do about the request. In addition, a board member interviewed did not know the procedures the district uses to respond to open records requests.

In recent years, school districts experienced an increase in the number of open records requests from parents, community members, media, and the public in general. Although according to the Business manager requests for public information have not inundated EEISD, there have been requests that the district must handle as per the Public Information Act requirements. At the community open house, a local citizen reported to the review team that he had twice requested information regarding salaries of certain staff members under the Public Information Act but had not received the information. Additionally, the review team received information that the district did not provide information regarding salaries to a newspaper reporter that requested information. The Business manager, however, said that all requests had been addressed.

The lack of information regarding open records procedures could result in mishandling of requests and missed timelines. Lack of tracking also leads to missed deadlines and inefficiency in responding to a request. The lack of appropriate tracking makes it difficult for the district to defend itself in cases where they are challenged regarding response time.

Board policies GBA (LEGAL) and GBAA (LEGAL) provide very specific information regarding the provisions of the Texas Government Code, Section 552 and related Texas Education Codes 21.355 and 26.0085. Policy GBA (LEGAL) stipulates at great length the categories of public information that can be disclosed and those that are excepted from disclosure to the public. Policy GBAA (LEGAL) provides in great detail the procedures the district must follow including providing appropriate signage, time for response, and the process to follow regarding requesting an Attorney General’s decision if the district wishes to withhold information from public disclosure on information it considers to be within

one of the exceptions to required disclosure. Regarding time for response, Policy GBAA states “If the superintendent or designee cannot produce the public information for inspection or duplication within ten business days after the date the information is requested, the superintendent or designee shall certify that fact to the requestor and set a date and hour within a reasonable time when the information will be available for inspection or duplication.”

Many districts maintains clear procedures to respond to provisions in the Texas Government Code and board policy and ensures that the board and all appropriate staff members are instructed regarding these policies and procedures. Once a district establishes procedure it must monitor them to ensure compliance. Districts work diligently to obtain and maintain the public’s trust. A positive relationship benefits the district in all aspects of operation. Establishing a good system of responding to the public’s requests for information improves communication and trust. Government Code 551.005 and 552.012 require that all public officials in place before January 1, 2006 and each public information coordinator who assumed responsibilities must complete required training on open meetings and open records prior to January 1, 2007.

Brownsville ISD has a highly efficient process for tracking open records requests. The secretary in the Public Information Office is in charge of documenting requests received. The department created a tracking spreadsheet, which includes the date of request, the person making the request, the type of request, the department the request was referred, the compliance due date, a check mark if more than 10 days was required, and fees associated with the request. The department monitors the time and calls to remind the receiving department if needed. The department prepares a monthly spreadsheet with this information and compiles a year-to-date report.

The district should develop administrative procedures in response to the Public Information Act provisions. The superintendent and the Business manager should draft these procedures and the attorney should review and finalize them. Procedures should include forms and a tracking process that will facilitate compliance with the requirements of the law. The request form should be revised to include a response date and the superintendent’s designee should maintain a log that clearly denotes the date a request was made, the subject of the request, whether it meets the criteria for public information, and the date of the response. The district should post the required sign in a prominent place in the

district offices. A copy of the required sign may be obtained at the website of the Texas Attorney General. Administrators and their secretaries should be trained regarding the provisions of the law and the district procedures. Board members and the public information coordinator for the district must complete the required open meetings and open records training as mandated by sections 551.005 and 552.012 of the Government Code before January 1, 2007.

WEBSITE (REC. 22)

EEISD lacks coordinated planning and effort in website development. The district Technology strategist indicated that the website is for communicating upcoming events and complying with regulations such as those involving AEIS and school reporting. The district Technology strategist also indicated the website provides online grades to parents and that to date 226 parents requested access to the online grade book.

The 2005–06 Technology Plan lists the following strategies regarding webpage creation and maintenance:

- Strategy 4.2.2: All teachers will create a class webpage displaying classroom information, student projects, activities and contact information.
- Strategy 4.2.3: Campus webpage will be updated and maintained on a weekly basis by campus Master Technology Teachers.
- Strategy 4.2.4: District webpage will be maintained and updated on a weekly basis by the District Webmaster.

No additional information regarding implementation, to achieve these strategies, was provided in the plan. Currently, one of the district Technology strategists is performing the duties of a district webmaster in addition to other duties. The Technology Department staff set up the links to the campus and department pages, but the campus or department must maintain the pages. The Technology staff provides training for the person that is designated as the webmaster for the site and provides ongoing support and assistance. Not all of the sites have identified webmasters. The Technology strategist said that the district site based decision-making committee identified technology as a significant improvement goal, both for staff development and webpage development. However, although a month’s worth of staff development on creating web pages was provided this year, there was little participation in the classes. Staff indicated they do not have the time nor do they see the need for the web pages.

The district's website describes the district's educational mission but provides limited information about the district including location, size, or other demographic information that might be valuable to the person seeking information about the district. The district website provides a limited number of announcements of upcoming events but does not include the district academic calendar. The website does provide information links in the following areas: board agendas, AEIS Report, online grade book, employment, online policies, Trouble Tracker (an online system to assist with technology implementation), and library resources. The district employee handbook is available online. The website provides links to the campuses and department web pages. A review of the departmental websites shows that only fifty percent of the departments listed have active websites. The following departments do not have any information available:

- Athletic department;
- Business Office;
- Career and Technology;
- Curriculum and Instruction;
- Evaluation and Planning;
- Even Start;
- Federal Programs; and
- Student Services.

Several departments such as Personnel and Parent Involvement contain only minimal information. The Personnel Department site only contains a list of vacancies, information about staff in the department, and applications that can be downloaded. Information about salaries, benefits and other information, which are important to applicants and employees, is not provided. The parent involvement website has not been updated for over one year since October 15, 2004, and does not contain any information relevant to parents.

As a result of its limited website, the district is missing opportunities to communicate vital information to the public. When information is not readily available, parents and employees remain uninformed and thus uninvolved or are then subjected to making inquiries to campus and departmental personnel. This form of communication causes information to be conveyed in a less than optimal manner. Furthermore, the community's perception of the

district is highly influenced by the way the district presents itself to the public. A poorly developed and out of date website may cause the public to form a negative impression about the district.

Hamilton ISD has a well designed website that includes information on each campus and extensive district information such as:

- district calendar;
- grading calendar;
- five-year ACT testing trends;
- district and campus improvement plans;
- district enrollment data;
- district site-based committee; and
- student handbooks and code of conduct.

Excellent webpage development starts with extensive planning to determine the goals, objectives, and strategies that can be accomplished using the district's resources. Many districts are clear regarding the action steps required to reach webpage development and maintenance goals and objectives. If training of staff is required, the district will commit the resources necessary to accomplish this requirement. District leadership holds the staff accountable, not only for obtaining available training, but also for creating and maintaining the websites as indicated on the plan. Districts with successful and comprehensive district and campus websites have district leadership that fully supports webpage development activities and make it a priority for each campus and department to have a fully developed webpage.

The district should establish a Web Advisory Committee to make recommendations regarding the implementation of district and campus websites. The Technology strategist who is currently working with website implementation should serve as committee chairperson, and the committee should include representation on the committee from various stakeholder groups. Campus and department administrators, master technology teachers, parents and representatives from the community should be included. Input regarding website development should be solicited from staff and community members knowledgeable about the process. The committee should present its recommendations to the superintendent and the board for approval.

For background information on Community Involvement, see p. 242 in the General Information section of the appendices.

FISCAL IMPACT

RECOMMENDATIONS	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	TOTAL	ONE TIME
						5-YEAR (COSTS) SAVINGS	(COSTS) SAVINGS
CHAPTER 3: COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT							
20. Establish a task force at each campus, which will develop a plan to increase parental involvement.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
21. Develop administrative procedures in response to the Public Information Act provisions.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
22. Establish a Web Advisory Committee to make recommendations regarding the implementation of district and campus websites.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
TOTALS-CHAPTER 3	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

CHAPTER 4

PERSONNEL

EDCOUCH-ELSA INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

CHAPTER 4. PERSONNEL

Management of personnel is a critical function of a school district because personnel costs are a school district's largest expense, accounting for the majority of operational expenses. According to the 2003–04 Texas Education Agency's (TEA) Financial Budget report, Edcouch-Elsa Independent School District's (EEISD) payroll costs for that year were 77.45 percent of the district's annual expenditures. In 2003–04, EEISD had 844.9 employees: 38.9 percent teachers, 5.9 percent professional support, 1.3 percent campus administration, 0.8 percent central administration, 18.1 percent educational aides, and 35.0 percent auxiliary employees.

Several administrators in different departments perform EEISD personnel functions. The assistant superintendent for Personnel is responsible for hiring auxiliary and paraprofessional personnel and has oversight responsibility for the Personnel Department. The director of Personnel is responsible for the hiring process of professional personnel, contract renewal, employee records management, performance management, and employee relations. The director of Student Services is responsible for certification verification and tracking, new employee and substitute orientation, Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) approvals and some employee grievances. The Business Office is responsible for administering employee leaves and benefits as well as compensation.

FINDINGS

- EEISD's personnel functions are decentralized and inefficiently coordinated.
- EEISD does not use locally developed or industry standards to determine staffing requirements for schools or departments and is overstaffed in assistant principal, clerical/secretarial positions, and educational aide employee categories.
- EEISD's Personnel Department lacks written procedures to guide department staff and district administrators in performing critical personnel related tasks regarding contracts, job postings and day-to-day department business.
- EEISD's Personnel Department has not fully implemented the personnel management and reporting

tools available in the personnel module of the district's software system, the Regional Service Center Computer Cooperative (RSCCC), to facilitate planning and operations.

- EEISD provides flat rate stipends to non-exempt employees for specified assignments instead of payment based on the number of hours worked on the second assignment and may be in violation of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).
- EEISD does not actively recruit teachers, is not proactive in targeting qualified teachers particularly in hard to fill areas, and does not market the district as an employer of choice.
- EEISD lacks policy or procedures that provide guidelines to determine which applicants to exclude from employment based on information obtained from criminal history background checks.
- EEISD lacks a position control system to maintain accountability of positions and to provide the district with an effective budgeting tool.
- EEISD lacks standardized procedures for records management, has not provided records management training to the Personnel staff, and does not appropriately store or safeguard records.
- EEISD lacks a process for developing and updating job descriptions.
- EEISD does not consistently follow compensation guidelines for new auxiliary and paraprofessional employee salaries.
- EEISD lacks a centralized tracking system that ensures employee training is meeting program requirements or individual needs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Recommendation 23: Centralize and organize personnel functions under the director of Personnel and provide appropriate staffing to accomplish these functions in a coordinated and efficient manner.** The director of Personnel should have the primary responsibility of managing these personnel functions.

Hiring and placement responsibilities for auxiliary personnel and paraprofessionals should move from the assistant superintendent for Personnel to the director of Personnel. This arrangement will ensure consistency in the application and hiring processes for all personnel. The personnel responsibilities currently under the director of Student Services should be redistributed and performed in the Personnel Department to improve coordination, prevent duplication and ensure that all tasks are done in a systematic manner. The director of Personnel should reassess the disbursement of personnel duties the director of Student Services performs among personnel staff. For example, the director of Personnel could conduct new and substitute teacher training and orientation, as well as employee grievances and approval of FMLA requests. Training of new teachers on PDAS should be the duty of the new compensation and leave clerk. Leave administration as well as compensation administration should move to the Personnel Department to centralize the personnel functions further. To accomplish these tasks, the superintendent should follow through with the recommendation in the District Leadership Organization and Management chapter, which eliminates the assistant superintendent for Personnel position. The director of Personnel should report directly to the superintendent. The superintendent should meet with all administrators who are presently handling these duties to ensure a smooth transition of functions from one department to another and reassign staff as appropriate. One payroll clerk should be reassigned to Personnel as indicated in the Finance chapter. Additionally, the Personnel Department should hire one full time position to perform the duties now performed on a part-time basis by the assistant superintendent and the director of Student Services as well as the additional responsibilities moved into the department.

- **Recommendation 24: Develop, adopt and implement staffing policies that use local and industry standards to determine staffing allocations for schools and departments and eliminate excess positions.** The superintendent should direct the director of Personnel to eliminate the excess number of clerical positions and assistant principal positions at the high school. These positions were identified by using the Southern Association of Colleges and States (SACS) standards. The director of Personnel should work with

the assistant superintendents, principals and appropriate department heads to develop internal staffing allocation formulas for other personnel, including teachers and educational aides, to use in conjunction with reviews of enrollments and other factors, and should present these to the superintendent and the board for approval. The Personnel director should then apply these standards to the staff on each campus and department to identify needed positions and excess positions and distribute staff equitably based on these standards. The district should develop a workforce reduction plan to address overstaffing. This plan should include procedures and criteria for identifying employees that the district may need to terminate. The district should declare a hiring freeze for positions that are overstaffed such as educational aides until the district determines the number and placement of such positions based on standards. The district's attorney should review the plan to ensure it addresses all appropriate legal issues.

- **Recommendation 25: Develop written administrative procedures to guide district staff in performing critical personnel tasks.** The director of Personnel should take the lead in reviewing all personnel policies and developing guidelines to meet policy requirements. The director should identify all key personnel tasks and develop internal procedures to ensure the department complies with all timelines and legal mandates. The director should meet with district administrators to get feedback regarding areas of concern in personnel administration and address these areas through development and dissemination of districtwide procedures to assist staff in accomplishing personnel tasks. The director should provide training to staff on these procedures.
- **Recommendation 26: Fully implement the personnel module of the district's business software system.** The Personnel director should contact the Regional Education Service Center I (Region 1) to get more information on the system and to schedule training for himself and the other staff members in Personnel. The director should coordinate with the Business manager and the other Business Office staff to develop a plan to determine how to manage the data and requests. They should develop departmental procedures and implementation steps, and identify reports and other outcomes that the system can generate.

- **Recommendation 27: Discontinue the use of flat rate stipends for non-exempt employees.** The director of Personnel along with the Athletic director should work with all non-exempt employees currently receiving a stipend to develop an arrangement whereby extra duties are paid according to overtime compensation regulations. District administrators must review all alternatives for providing coaching assignments without violating FLSA. If the district decides to continue using non-exempt personnel, it must develop and approve a procedure for payment that meets the FLSA requirements and communicate the details of the procedure to employees. If the district determines that this procedure would be cost prohibitive to the district, it must assign the extra jobs to exempt personnel.
- **Recommendation 28: Develop and implement a highly focused recruitment plan that takes a more proactive approach in filling teacher vacancies with well-qualified applicants.** An analysis of positions, that have been difficult to fill over the last three years should be conducted to determine which areas need more concentration of effort. The director should develop a recruitment schedule for the year after reviewing potential recruitment fairs to determine which may provide the best opportunities to meet district hiring needs for the next year; school administrators should accompany him whenever the number of applicants warrants extra assistance. The director should also meet with all fall and spring semester student teachers assigned to EEISD schools to encourage them to apply in the district. The director should become closely involved with staffing meetings in the spring to identify projected staffing needs. The Personnel Department webpage should provide more information including district salaries and benefits and a brochure should be developed to provide district information.
- **Recommendation 29: Develop, approve and implement a policy and administrative regulations that provide clear guidelines for review and decision-making regarding criminal history backgrounds of persons the district intends to hire.** The director of Personnel should review policies and procedures in place in other districts. The director should establish a committee to assist in developing the policy and procedures regarding criminal history checks. The committee should consist of the assistant superintendents, several principals and a representative from the security department. Once the policy and procedures are complete, the committee should submit them to the superintendent and board for approval. The district's attorney should be closely involved with the entire development and approval process.
- **Recommendation 30: Research and adopt a system for position control.** Staff should work closely with Region 1 to determine a timeline for adopting and implementing the position management module of the RSCCC system. Personnel staff should continue to increase their use of the software applications available from Region 1 to better prepare for implementation of the position management module, which will be available soon. Although there are numerous other position control systems available commercially, the advantages of the RSCCC system is that it is a product specifically for school districts in Texas and it will be updated routinely to meet changes made by the Texas Education Agency and the Texas Teacher Retirement System. The other advantage is that the district is already paying for the district software and the position management module. The Personnel director should meet with the Business manager and appropriate staff to design a districtwide plan that will support the use of this system.
- **Recommendation 31: Attend records management training and establish standardized procedures for employee records management and locate and use a facility suitable for storing district records.** The Personnel director should identify appropriate training opportunities in records management such as those offered by professional organizations like Texas Association of School Boards, Inc. (TASB) through the Regional Education Service Centers for the director and Personnel staff. The director should develop records management procedures for the department and staff should audit employee records for compliance. Personnel staff should purge records as appropriate. When the district has a secure facility to house its records, Personnel staff should transfer inactive files to this facility. EEISD should locate an appropriate facility to store its records as soon as possible to prevent any possible loss of records. The district should continue to work with its record management consultant but should

also explore the possibility of maintaining records on microfilm or other electronic media.

- **Recommendation 32: Develop a process for developing and updating job descriptions.** The director of Personnel should research how other districts and industries develop and update effective job descriptions and should develop a proposal regarding the new job descriptions to present to the superintendent and upper level management. The director should include methods and forms as well as a schedule for completion. The proposal should demonstrate involvement of appropriate staff to create specific job descriptions based on job analyses. The director of Personnel should submit all job descriptions to the superintendent and the board for approval as they are completed.
- **Recommendation 33: Develop district compensation guidelines and use them consistently to determine hiring salaries and ensure starting salaries are equitable.** The director of personnel should research compensation guidelines other districts use and consult with TASB in the development of compensation guidelines. Consultation through TASB is recommended since the district already uses TASB compensation services for its employee salary studies. After it develops its compensation procedures, the district should follow these closely unless there are clear and substantive reasons for departure from the normal procedures. The superintendent should continue to approve any starting salaries above the midpoint and should require a written rationale for these recommendations.
- **Recommendation 34: Develop a centralized system for tracking and recording employee training to ensure staff development is meeting program requirements and individual needs.** The superintendent should meet with the director of Personnel, the assistant superintendents for Curriculum and Personnel and several program directors to discuss how centralization can improve the present system for recording and tracking staff development. To implement the new tracking system, the district should develop procedures. The director of Personnel should work with the Technology department staff to identify which software to use. The district should purchase database software and train Personnel staff to use the

software. Reports should be provided to management and employees as identified in the procedures.

DETAILED FINDINGS

PERSONNEL STAFFING (REC. 23)

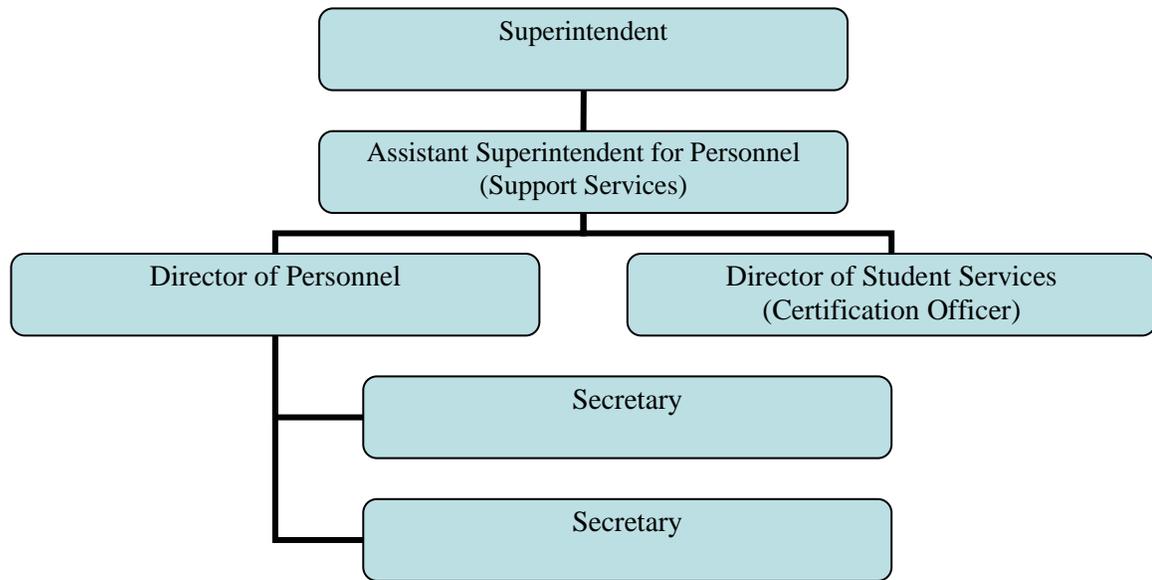
EEISD's personnel functions are decentralized and inefficiently coordinated. A number of administrators and departments share personnel responsibilities. **Exhibit 4-1** shows the Personnel Department organization chart the review team received from the director of Personnel. The chart shows a certification officer position that is now a director of Student Services position; this director continues to perform certification verification responsibilities as well as other personnel duties.

EEISD has experienced several changes regarding staff responsible for personnel functions over the past few years. In 2005–06, the superintendent had the ultimate responsibility for hiring all personnel for the district and final approval for all salary and stipend determinations. Currently, the assistant superintendent for Personnel and a director for Personnel oversee the personnel function. The assistant superintendent for Personnel has held this position since 1999, but for a period from early 2004 to May 2005, did not have major oversight or direct responsibilities over Personnel. According to the assistant superintendent for Personnel, the then Board of Trustees majority removed these responsibilities due to the director's political affiliations. Since May 2005, however, he has been responsible for hiring, salary assignments, and placement of all auxiliary and paraprofessional personnel as well as having oversight responsibilities over the Personnel Department.

The director of Personnel has been in that position for approximately one and a half years. He had formerly been director of Personnel from 2001–02 but was removed from this assignment and reassigned to another administrative position from 2002–04 due to district politics, according to an interview with a central office administrator. Presently as the director of Personnel, this individual and the two Personnel secretaries under his supervision, have the following major responsibilities:

- overseeing the application process for all employees;
- conducting criminal history checks;
- processing of new employees including salary assignments;

**EXHIBIT 4-1
PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATIONAL CHART
2005–06**



SOURCE: EEISD Personnel Department, November 2005.

- processing all changes in employment status and salary adjustments;
- maintaining personnel records;
- overseeing the performance management and contract renewal process; and
- providing assistance with employee grievances and complaints and approving leave requests.

The current director of Student Services, who also serves as the district’s certification officer, was the director of Human Resources from 2000–01 when he became Superintendent for approximately one year. Following this period, he was again assigned as director of Human Resources until 2003. Even in his current role as director of Student Services, this individual has retained many human resources functions. Besides the major responsibility of ensuring that administrators, teachers, and paraprofessionals meet state certification requirements and requirements imposed by the No Child Left Behind Act, this staff member is responsible for:

- new teacher orientation;
- substitute teacher orientation;
- placement and management of student teachers;

- training of new teachers on the Professional Development and Appraisal System (PDAS);
- assisting with employee grievances and complaints; and
- approving FMLA requests.

Although this director has many critical personnel responsibilities, he does not report to the director of Personnel and has many other non-personnel related responsibilities in the organization.

In addition, the Business Office has major responsibilities for compensation administration. Actual salary computations based on days of employment are the responsibility of the PEIMS coordinator, who also calculates promotion rates and all other changes in compensation based on data submitted by the director of Personnel. Staff in the Business Office also track all employee leave time and oversee employee benefits including health insurance and workers compensation.

Campus administrators are responsible for reviewing applications, checking references, and interviewing teaching candidates when positions become vacant. According to these administrators, they are not involved with screening and selecting auxiliary and paraprofessional staff; the assistant superintendent for Personnel performs these tasks.

While dividing responsibilities with other departments and campuses occurs frequently in districts, this fragmentation of services requires extensive coordination and oversight. In EEISD, the frequent changes in leadership in the personnel area contributed to an organizational structure that is not well coordinated and inefficient. With the present system, important personnel duties do not receive adequate attention or are not performed at all. For example:

- No one closely monitors staff-to-student ratios to ensure the most efficient use of staff resources. The Personnel Department does not receive or review reports, which provide information regarding the number of students per classroom. The assistant superintendent for Curriculum does monitor these reports to ensure that student numbers do not exceed those required by law in Pre-kindergarten through fourth grade classrooms.
- No one monitors and reports district trends regarding teacher absenteeism. Historically, the district has not analyzed this information and the director of Personnel indicated he has never been asked to provide an analysis or a plan for improvement.
- No one actively tracks FMLA to ensure compliance with laws and regulations. According to the payroll clerk, the district has not placed any employees on FMLA in three years.
- No one monitors auxiliary applications to ensure completeness. Employee files reviewed showed that several applications did not have all required information. Some applicants did not provide information regarding education, work experience or references.
- No one actively recruits teacher and substitute teacher applicants. Although there are 190 individuals on the substitute list, 112 or 59 percent have only a GED or high school diploma.
- No one ensures the district adheres to compensation guidelines regarding hiring rate.
- No one developed retention strategies to address teacher turnover. Although teacher turnover was over 17 percent for 2003–04 as determined by the review team based on PEIMS data analysis, no one in the district was aware of this fact and had not done any planning to address the high turnover rate.

Although there are three administrators with personnel responsibilities, the three do not meet on a frequent or consistent basis to formulate departmental objectives, plans

or procedures. When asked, one of the administrators indicated that the staff is small and so they can discuss issues over lunch. The lack of formal communication and planning prevents development of a clear focus for the department and contributes to personnel functions not being addressed or being performed inefficiently. The lack of direct report responsibility of the director of Student Services to the director of Personnel also results in lack of communication and less than efficient services.

In recent years, many Personnel Departments have evolved to include a broader spectrum of responsibilities and services than ever before. Personnel Departments are typically responsible for the following:

- recruiting;
- assessing and documenting credentials;
- employee retention;
- processing of promotions, transfers, resignations and other employment changes;
- maintaining personnel records;
- managing contract renewal and preparing and distributing contracts;
- determining compensation schedules;
- forecasting personnel needs;
- managing the employee evaluation process;
- handling employee complaints and grievances;
- administering the district's leave and benefits programs;
- supervising the substitute teacher program; and
- ensuring that employment laws and regulations are followed.

Many districts have Personnel Departments that are well organized and have the proper number of staff necessary to accomplish the comprehensive personnel functions required in a well-coordinated and effective manner. Having adequate personnel staffing which reports to one director of personnel allows districts to centralize the personnel duties and thus improve oversight, efficiency, and services to employees. The human resources industry monitors the ratio of personnel staff to employees served for various organizations. Comprehensive industry surveys conducted report that 1 to 100 is the most common ratio of full-time Personnel staff to

every 100 employees served by the Personnel Department. However, it is common that this ratio does vary somewhat by industry served. EEISD's ratio of 1:227 is high. (This ratio is derived by adding 25 percent of the assistant superintendent for Personnel, 50 percent of the director for Student Services, and 100 percent of the director of Personnel and the two Personnel secretaries for a total of 3.75 staff.) The total number of staff in EEISD according to the 2004-05 AEIS report is 816.4, but there are an additional 35 employees hired under the JR3 program (a contracted temporary employee firm) that are not listed in the report, bringing the actual number of staff to 851.4.

EEISD should centralize and organize personnel functions under the director of Personnel and provide appropriate staffing to accomplish these functions in a coordinated and efficient manner. The director of Personnel should have the primary responsibility of managing these personnel functions. Hiring and placement responsibilities for auxiliary personnel and paraprofessionals should move from the assistant superintendent for Personnel to the director of Personnel. This arrangement will ensure consistency in the application and hiring processes for all personnel. The personnel responsibilities currently under the director of Student Services should be redistributed and performed in the Personnel Department to improve coordination, prevent duplication and ensure that all tasks are done in a systematic manner. The director of Personnel should reassess the disbursement of personnel duties the director of Student Services performs among personnel staff. For example, the director of Personnel could conduct new and substitute teacher training and orientation, as well as employee grievances and approval of FMLA requests. Training of new teachers on PDAS should be the duty of the new compensation and leave clerk. Leave administration as well as compensation administration should move to the Personnel Department to centralize the personnel functions further. To accomplish these tasks, the superintendent should follow through with the recommendation in the District Organization and Management chapter, which eliminates the assistant superintendent for Personnel position. The director of Personnel should report directly to the superintendent. The superintendent should meet with all administrators who are presently handling these duties to ensure a smooth transition of functions from one department to another and reassign staff as appropriate. One payroll clerk should be reassigned to Personnel as indicated in the Finance chapter. Additionally, the Personnel Department should hire one full time position to perform the duties now performed on a

part-time basis by the assistant superintendent and the director of Student Services as well as the additional responsibilities moved into the department. This position's duties should also include: compensation administration, leave administration, training, and certification verification. The district should develop a job description for this position. **Exhibit 4-2** shows the proposed Personnel Department organization:

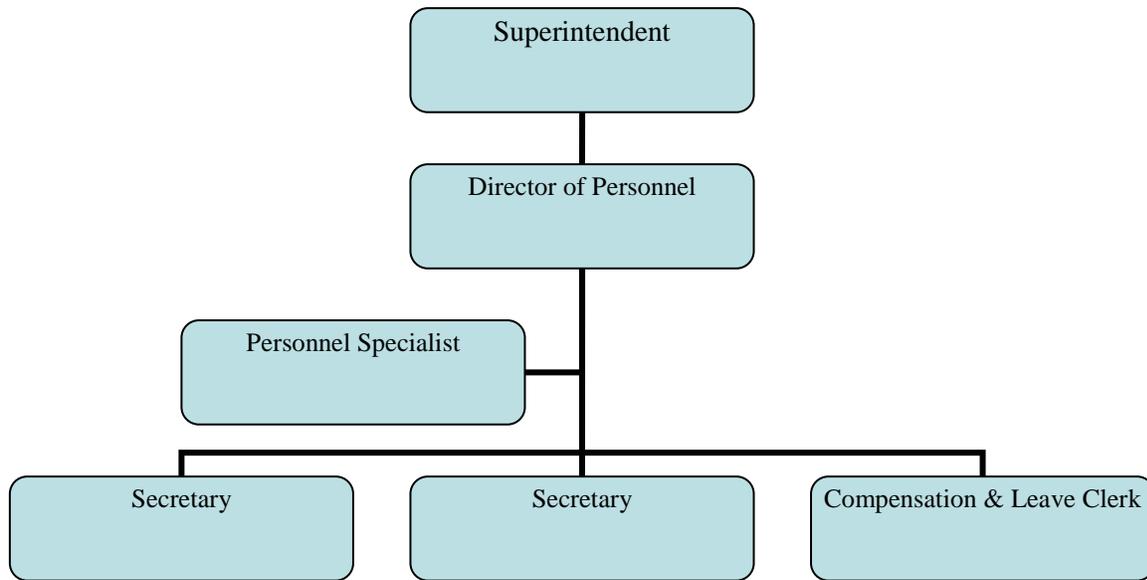
The fiscal impact of adding one personnel specialist will be approximately \$47,583 per year (\$39,840 base salary + \$4,143 benefits [\$39,840 X 10.40 percent benefits] + \$3,600 health contribution = \$47,583.

STAFFING STANDARDS (REC. 24)

EEISD does not use locally developed or industry standards to determine staffing requirements for schools or departments and is overstaffed in assistant principal, clerical/secretarial positions, and educational aide employee categories. When a vacancy occurs in an auxiliary position such as bus drivers, custodians, maintenance workers, cafeteria workers, security guards, clerical positions or educational aide positions, the principal or department supervisor notifies the assistant superintendent of Personnel of the vacancy. The assistant superintendent notifies the Personnel Department to post the position or to fill the position with a person in the applicant pool for that position. Positions are currently filled as vacancies occur. If a new position in auxiliary is added, the determination is made by the assistant superintendent based on perceived need not on previously established formulas or standards and the Personnel Department is not involved in the decision. According to one central office administrator, if a position is already there, it is filled even though it may not be needed; therefore, many people are hired "that we don't need." Principals stated that sometimes there have been positions added without a request from their campuses; these additional personnel are either auxiliary or paraprofessional employees. This year there have been a number of positions added in the auxiliary area including a security guard, an electrician, a maintenance worker and a security supervisor; a total of 32 auxiliary employees have been hired since mid-May 2005 to replace employees who have left the district.

According to the superintendent, the EEISD reduced the number of educational aides in the district. The district accomplished this reduction by significantly reducing the number of permanent substitutes that were initially assigned due to need and then were maintained on a permanent basis.

**EXHIBIT 4-2
PROPOSED EEISD PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION
2005-06**



SOURCE: Texas Public School Consulting, Inc., January 2006.

According to a central office administrator, the superintendent reduced the number of educational aides when he first came, by not replacing all of the vacant positions, but the following year they were rehired due to political affiliations, not because of need. Although several administrators indicated that the district has more paraprofessionals and auxiliary staff than needed, it never used staffing formulas or developed a workforce reduction plan. There is no system for allocating staff except on a case-by-case basis. There has been no attempt to develop staffing standards in the auxiliary and paraprofessional areas. Interviews with several central office administrators indicated that in their opinion board of trustees members promise these jobs to individuals who support them, and that this system will continue to prevail.

EEISD has not developed allocations for elementary and secondary campuses. The superintendent indicated the district elementary campuses are staffed as required by law and others are staffed to ensure that classrooms are “manageable.” He further indicated that at the secondary level, there are 25–27 students in classes. He stated that the assistant superintendent for Curriculum Instruction is the person who analyzes teacher-to-student ratios and who makes recommendations regarding needed teachers at the schools.

The Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) data for 2003–04 shows that for that year EEISD had a student

enrollment of 5,334. This data also shows that for that same year, the district had 142.7 educational assistants; when ten additional assistants are added from those employed under the district’s contracted temporary vendor; the number of educational aides is 152.7. EEISD does not report the extra positions supplied by the contracted vendor and, therefore, these positions are not submitted as employees under PEIMS. These figures indicate that there is one educational aide for every 34.9 students in the district. **Exhibit 4-3** shows that EEISD has the highest percentage of educational aides in the total workforce when compared to all the peer districts and the state. Elementary schools have at least 20 educational aides assigned per campus. EEISD’s educational aides make up 18.1 percent of the total workforce as compared to 10.2 percent for the state and 12.3 percent for the region. The average percentage of the four peer districts is 12.4 percent and the average percentage of the three peer districts from the region is 14.5 percent. If the 14.5 percent is applied to 844.9, the total number of employees in EEISD (AEIS, 2003–04), the number of educational aides calculated would be 122.5 or 30.2 educational aides fewer than are currently employed.

Exhibit 4-3 also shows that EEISD has a large percentage of auxiliary personnel in its workforce having the second largest percentage of all peer districts, the region and the state. Specific chapters in this report will address the numbers

**EXHIBIT 4-3
PERCENTAGE OF STAFF BY MAJOR EMPLOYEE GROUP
PEER DISTRICTS, REGION, AND STATE
2003-04**

STAFF	EDCOUCH-ELSA	PROGRESSO	RIO GRANDE	ROMA	SOUTHSIDE	REGION	STATE
Total Personnel	100%	100	100	100	100	100	100
Professional Staff	46.9	54.8	46.8	50.6	61.8	54.4	62.0
Teachers	38.9	43.9	37.9	42.0	49.4	43.6	50.4
Professional Support	5.9	6.7	6.9	4.8	8.2	7.7	7.8
Educational Aides	18.1	15.3	11.6	16.6	6.1	12.3	10.2
Auxiliary	35.0	30.0	41.6	32.8	32.1	33.3	27.8

NOTE: The percentages noted for EEISD have been recalculated to add contract employees.

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, Academic Excellence Indicator System, (AEIS), 2003-04.

in each major employee category. In addition, **Exhibit 4-3** shows that EEISD has the next to the lowest percentage of teachers in the workforce. When compared to peer districts, EEISD also has the lowest percentage of total professional staff.

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS/CASI) developed staffing standards for principals, assistant principals, librarians, and support staff based on school enrollment numbers. SACS CASI accredits more than 13,000 schools and school systems throughout the United States and overseas. **Exhibit 4-4** shows SACS accreditation standards for principal, assistant principal, and support staff positions in elementary, middle, and high schools.

Exhibit 4-5 shows data comparing the number of current assistant principals in EEISD and the recommended number based on SACS standards. This exhibit also shows that compared to SACS standards, the district is overstaffed by 1.5 assistant principals at the high school. The district has instructional facilitators at each elementary, sixth grade center and junior high campus. These locations share the facilitators with the central office and spend about half their time assisting principals with administrative and instructional support. If every facilitator were counted as an administrator acting in the capacity of an assistant principal for half time, then the district would also have an additional 0.5 overage in this area. Reduction of administrators in the elementary, sixth grade center and junior high schools is not indicated considering the dual role assumed by these administrators.

Exhibit 4-6 compares EEISD staffing of support staff for administration, library media or technology to SACS

standards. When compared to SACS standards, the district is overstaffed by 13.5 clerical/secretarial positions.

Efficiently staffed districts develop and implement staffing policies that use local and industry standards to determine staffing allocations across schools and departments. Standards help districts in making staffing decisions based on student enrollment or other consistent factors such as building square footage. Standards help district officials to distribute staff equitably in a highly defensible manner that they can easily explain. Staffing campuses and departments based on formulas and standards also reduces effort in reviewing rationales presented by principals and department heads for additional personnel. As student enrollment changes and/or new facilities are added, districts can add or reduce staff based on formulas that are applied districtwide. The Texas School Performance Review (TSPR) has identified equitably allocating resources as the number one solution for district improvement. TSPR states that staffing or productivity standards supported by board policies have the following benefits:

- Employees are more likely to be distributed equitably among all schools and locations, and staffing decisions are more likely to be based on demonstrated need.
- School boards, superintendents and administrators have fewer special requests. When special requests are received, district officials have staffing criteria on which to evaluate real needs.
- Budgeting is more consistent.
- Savings can be achieved by monitoring the standards and establishing goals.

**EXHIBIT 4-4
SACS/CASI ACCREDITATION STANDARDS FOR CAMPUS PRINCIPALS, ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS, AND SUPPORT STAFF
2005**

ENROLLMENT	PRINCIPAL	ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	SUPPORT STAFF FOR ADMINISTRATION, LIBRARY MEDIA, OR TECHNOLOGY
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STAFFING STANDARDS			
1-249	1	0.0	0.5
250-499	1	0.0	1.0
500-749	1	0.5	1.5
750-999	1	1.0	2.5
1000-1249	1	1.5	3.0
1250-1499	1	2.0	3.0
1500-up	1	2.0*	3.0
MIDDLE SCHOOL STAFFING STANDARDS			
1-249	1	0.0	1.0
250-499	1	0.5	2.5
500-749	1	1.0	4.0
750-999	1	1.5	4.5
1,000-1,249	1	2.0	5.0
1,250-1,499	1	2.5	5.5
1,500-up	1	2.5*	6.0
HIGH SCHOOL STAFFING STANDARDS			
1-249	1	0.0	1.0
250-499	1	0.5	2.5
500-749	1	1.0	4.0
750-999	1	1.5	4.5
1,000-1,249	1	2.0	5.0
1,250-1,499	1	2.5	5.5
1,500-up	1	2.5*	6.0

* One additional position may be added where needed for each additional 250 students over 1,500.

SOURCE: Southern Association of Colleges and Schools; Elementary, Middle and High School Accreditation Standards 2005.

- School districts faced with financial changes can make equitable budget cuts by adjusting the ratios.

EEISD should develop, adopt and implement staffing policies that use local and industry standards to determine staffing allocations for schools and departments and eliminate excess positions. The superintendent should direct the director of Personnel to eliminate the excess number of clerical positions and assistant principal positions at the high school. These positions were identified by using the Southern Association of Colleges and States (SACS) standards. The director of Personnel should work with the assistant superintendents, principals and appropriate department heads to develop internal staffing allocation formulas for other personnel, including teachers and educational aides, to use in conjunction with reviews of enrollments and other factors, and should present these to the superintendent and

the board for approval. The Personnel director should then apply these standards to the staff on each campus and department to identify needed positions and excess positions and distribute staff equitably based on these standards. The district should develop a workforce reduction plan to address overstaffing. This plan should include procedures and criteria for identifying employees that the district may need to terminate. The district should declare a hiring freeze for positions that are overstaffed such as educational aides until the district determines the number and placement of such positions based on standards. The district's attorney should review the plan to ensure it addresses all appropriate legal issues.

EEISD should eliminate 13.5 clerical/secretarial positions for a cost savings of \$291,681 (\$21,606 x 13.5). An average paraprofessional salary including benefits of \$21,606

**EXHIBIT 4-5
CAMPUS ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS
EEISD VERSUS SACS/CASI STANDARDS**

CAMPUS	ENROLLMENT	ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS		
		EEISD	SACS	OVER (UNDER)
Early Childhood Center	815	.5	1.0	(.5)
Garcia Elementary	504	.5	.5	0
Kennedy Elementary	572	.5	.5	0
LBJ Elementary	472	.5	0	.5
Rodriguez Elementary	472	.5	0	.5
6th Grade Campus	374	.5	.5	0
Truan Junior High	756	1.5	1.5	0
Edcouch-Elsa High School	1,521	4	2.5	1.5
TOTALS	5,486	8.5	6.5	2

SOURCE: EEISD enrollment counts, office of assistant superintendent of Curriculum Instruction, : Southern Association of Colleges and Schools; Elementary, Middle and High School Accreditation Standards 2005 and EEISD Employee listing, superintendent's office, November, 2005.

(\$16,310 + \$3,600 for health insurance contribution + \$1,696 or (\$16,310 x 10.40 percent = \$1,696) for other benefits. The district should eliminate 1.5 assistant principal positions at the high school for a cost savings of \$90,771 (\$60,514 x 1.5=\$90,771). The average salary plus benefits for an assistant principal is \$60,514 (\$54,830 average salary +\$3,600 for health insurance contribution + \$2,084 (\$54,830 x 3.80 = \$2,084) for other benefits.

EEISD should also conservatively eliminate 15 of the 30.2 overstaffed educational aide positions. To account for any specific campus staffing needs, the annual savings for educational aides is estimated at \$288,660 approximately one-half the total identified if all 30.2 educational aides were eliminated. An average educational aide salary of \$19,244 or (\$14,170+ \$3,600 for health insurance contribution + \$1,474 for other benefits [\$14,170 X 10.40 percent]) x 15 = \$288,660.

The total annual cost savings for eliminating these positions will be \$671,112 or (\$291,681 + \$90,771 + \$288,660).

PERSONNEL PROCEDURES (REC. 25)

EEISD's Personnel Department lacks written procedures to guide department staff and district administrators in performing critical personnel related tasks regarding contracts, job postings and day-to-day department business.

**EXHIBIT 4-6
CAMPUS SECRETARY/CLERKS
EEISD VERSUS SACS/CASI STANDARDS
2003-04**

CAMPUS	ENROLLMENT	SECRETARY/CLERKS		
		EEISD	SACS	OVER (UNDER)
Early Childhood Center	815	4	2.5	1.5
Garcia Elementary	504	3	1.5	1.5
Kennedy Elementary	572	3	1.5	1.5
LBJ Elementary	472	3	1.0	2
Rodriguez Elementary	472	3	1.0	2
6th Grade Campus	374	4	2.5	1.5
Truan Junior High	756	5	4.5	.5
Edcouch-Elsa High School	1,521	9	6.0	3
TOTALS	5,486	34	20.5	13.5

SOURCE: EEISD enrollment counts, office of assistant superintendent for Curriculum Instruction, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools; Elementary, Middle and High School Accreditation Standards 2005, and EEISD Employee Listing, Office of the Superintendent, November, 2005.

The Personnel director stated that the department does not currently have written procedures that provide information regarding personnel operations. He also stated the department lacks a calendar for each upcoming school year to ensure timely performance of human resources tasks. The Personnel secretary has been there for several years and has institutional knowledge regarding activities that must be performed at a certain time on an annual basis. Personnel staff performs departmental tasks according to previously established practices; they do not have forms for some routine personnel activities such as personnel recommendations or personnel changes and must rely on memos from administrators for the information required. There are no written procedures in place to provide principals with information regarding the contract renewal process and timelines, and there is no procedure in place to assist the secretary in determining what contract should be provided for each person following board of trustees' approval. The secretary follows through by issuing teachers either a probationary contract, if teachers have served only one year on a probationary contract or a two-year term contract if they have served two years on a probationary contract. According to the director, all teachers new to the district have a probationary period of two years regardless of how many years they have taught in another district. The practice is not consistent with Texas Education Code (TEC) §21.102 which states "the probationary contract

period may not exceed one year for a person who has been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five of the eight years preceding employment by the district.”

There are also no written procedures available regarding other functions such as posting of vacancies, hiring, transfers, or stipend assignments. Although Board Policy DC (LOCAL) states, “the superintendent or his designee shall establish guidelines for advertising employment opportunities and posting notices of vacancies,” there are no established written guidelines. District compensation guidelines were also not available, although the PEIMS coordinator did provide TASB hiring and promotion guidelines that the coordinator uses to provide salary calculations.

The Personnel Department lacks written procedures for district staff to follow in areas such as interviews, evaluations, progressive discipline, and terminations. Although principals are expected to check on references for applicants, set up interview committees, and conduct interviews, no written procedures have been provided to guide them with these tasks.

Lack of written personnel procedures makes it difficult to operate Personnel Departments in the most efficient manner. The lack of written procedures often contributes to erroneous practices, which are contrary to existing legal mandates and policy requirements. The lack of written procedures in processing new hires, contract renewal, employee discipline, termination and compensation, results in inequitable treatment of employees that can result in employees filing grievances and lawsuits. Currently, 15 former district employees are filing a lawsuit against EEISD for wrongful termination. The lack of systematic districtwide hiring procedures may result in noncompliance with federal laws such as the Civil Rights Act and the American with Disabilities Act, especially since principles report they did not receive formal training on interviewing procedures. Written procedures also provide district administrators with information regarding employees responsible for specific tasks and identify who can authorize actions or approvals. Without these procedures, valuable time is lost in trying to determine how to conduct personnel actions; it is also more difficult to train new employees and to hold employees accountable for specific job-related actions.

Efficient Personnel Departments have written procedures for performing required and essential personnel tasks. These procedures provide the framework and structure for standardizing personnel operations, and reduce individual

discretion and subjective interpretation of these functions. Many districts have a process for review and revision of these regulations. Districts frequently revise these regulations when changes occur in departmental operations or in personnel policy or law. The introduction of a new online application, for example, may require changes to the procedures for how Personnel staff review applications and provide them to campus administrators. New rules passed by the Legislature or new leadership at the district or departmental level may require that procedures be modified. Using administrative procedures facilitates communication, training and uniform application of new procedures.

Written procedures provide Personnel staff with specific guidelines for tasks that are often questioned by numerous people, including applicants, employees, board members, and media. Having a well-conceived written procedure allows Personnel staff to implement tasks in a consistent and defensible manner. It also reduces the amount of time staff may spend researching or questioning appropriate actions to take. Enough detail should be available to enable a newly hired employee to perform a given task with minimal supervision.

Effective Personnel Departments provide written procedures to assist district administrators involved in personnel functions such as hiring, evaluating and terminating employees; these procedures assist staff to complete these tasks while complying with applicable laws and deadlines. Galena Park ISD developed a manual that provides administrators with written procedures regarding the teacher selection process, interview techniques, conducting reference checks, and other step-by-step guidance for a professional and legally compliant hiring process. South San Antonio ISD uses and regularly updates a detailed, comprehensive manual, which includes copies of personnel forms, checklists, and procedural information to assist managers in maintaining compliance with personnel laws and local guidelines.

The Personnel Department should develop written administrative procedures to guide district staff in performing critical personnel tasks. The director of Personnel should take the lead in reviewing all personnel policies and developing guidelines to meet policy requirements. The director should identify all key personnel tasks and develop internal procedures to ensure the department complies with all timelines and legal mandates. The director should meet with district administrators to get feedback regarding areas of concern in personnel administration and address these areas through development and dissemination of districtwide

procedures to assist staff in accomplishing personnel tasks. The director should provide training to staff on these procedures.

PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE SYSTEM (REC. 26)

EEISD's Personnel Department has not fully implemented the personnel management and reporting tools available in the personnel module of the district's software system, the Regional Service Center Computer Cooperative (RSCCC), to facilitate planning and operations. The Personnel Department secretary indicated that the new RSCCC computer software system has been in place for almost one year, but the district has not used the personnel module. Upon hiring of an applicant, the secretary enters demographic information, years of experience, certification, and date of hire. When employees leave, the secretary enters date of separation. Personnel staff does not enter any salary information. When requests for employment verifications are hand-written, she verifies date of entry and sends to payroll for salary verification. When the review team asked if only Personnel staff had "read only" permissions for salary information, the secretary did not know but did confirm that viewing was possible. Once the new hire is processed, the secretaries in the Personnel Department forward a paper copy of the salary information including base salary for position and supplemental pay information. The PEIMS coordinator in the Business Office calculates and enters the data into the RSCCC software system. The PEIMS coordinator processes all reports regarding salaries, new hires, stipends, distribution codes, and employee rosters by specific sites. The Personnel Department staff does not run reports from the system, although they can use the system to complete information for employee service records. Personnel staff is unable to generate related reports such as employee turnover rates, certification status, reason for terminations, employee education, and employee by campus rosters. The Personnel secretary still types all employee contracts manually since the employee-contract-status field is not entered on the database.

The certification officer maintains and track information regarding certification by using Excel spreadsheets despite that the software program the department uses could track this information. The Personnel secretary currently types a report provided to the superintendent, such as Staff Recommendations for Employment, which the system could easily generate when it is fully implemented. Personnel-related questions that should be available on screen, such as contract status, are in an employee file, which requires

someone to manually search through files. Staff also uses time to create individually typed contracts instead of contracts provided through an automated system. Business Office staff spends valuable time answering questions and providing employee verification data because the Personnel Department does not provide it.

Lack of full implementation of the personnel software system reduces the effectiveness of the Personnel Department operations and impedes reporting that might reveal trends such as employee turnover by site or other important factors that might be helpful to the district.

Many school districts ensure that their Personnel Departments have effective management tools at their disposal. These districts have identified and are fully implementing efficient computer software applications that help them maintain and track vital employee information. The RSCCC system is a system that districts across Texas use to facilitate business and personnel functions efficiently. Many school districts, such as Randolph ISD and Lackland ISD in San Antonio, make full use of all personnel screens to facilitate employee information tracking, personnel department operations, and to generate reports. Districts using the system improve communication with campus and departmental staff by generating rosters and reports including current assignment, education, and certification data.

EEISD should fully implement the personnel module of the district's business software system. The Personnel director should contact the Regional Educational Service Center Region I (Region 1) to get more information on the system and to schedule training for himself and the other staff members in Personnel. The director should coordinate with the Business manager and the other Business Office staff to develop a plan to determine how to manage the data and requests. They should develop departmental procedures and implementation steps, and identify reports and other outcomes that the system can generate.

STIPENDS FOR NON-EXEMPT EMPLOYEES (REC. 27)

EEISD provides flat rate stipends to non-exempt employees for specified assignments instead of payment based on the number of hours worked on the second assignment and may be in violation of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). Review of stipends that are paid to monthly employees revealed that at least twelve non-exempt employees are receiving a stipend to perform duties outside of the scope of their full time job. All of the stipends are provided for coaching responsibilities and all but one involve employees

whose primary assignment is that of educational aide. The majority of these educational aides work at either the high school or junior high and may also be involved in an athletic period during the day. The only non-exempt employee who is not an educational aide is a custodial supervisor/warehouseman who has responsibility for coaching two sports and has inventory duties assigned. The athletic director/football coach stated that the reason that these individuals are involved in coaching sports is because there are not enough teachers who want to coach. He is unable to fill all the after school coaching slots unless he resorts to hiring the non-exempt personnel. He said that all employees are expected to coach for the number of hours required to get the job done; there is no special tracking of hours for individuals who are non-exempt. The Business manager admitted that he was aware of the practice, had discouraged it, but that it is still occurring.

Districts that pay a stipend rather than an hourly wage to a non-exempt employee run the risk of a violation of the federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) if the amount of the stipend is not based on the number of hours required to complete the task. For example, if an educational aide works seven and one-half-hours per week at \$10 per hour and is also a basketball coach who receives \$2,000 for coaching, the district must calculate the two rates of pay—one for the classroom assignment and one for the coaching assignment. The district will have difficulty calculating the rate of pay for coaching if they do not know how many hours per week the person serves as a coach. The district's practice is inconsistent with the FLSA if the employee is working more than 40 hours per week and is not receiving overtime compensation. District attorneys advise school districts to avoid the complexity of overtime compensation in cases such as these and not assign supplemental duties to non-exempt employees.

The FLSA requires employers to pay overtime for hours worked in excess of forty hours in a given work week, but it exempts employees in bona fide professional, administrative or executive positions. The FLSA sets minimum standards for calculating employee pay including overtime provisions for non-exempt employees. With few exceptions, FLSA requires a non-exempt employee receive overtime pay at a rate of an hour and a half earned for each hour worked for the hours worked in excess of forty.

Many school districts have discontinued the use of stipend-based assignments for non-exempt employees to avoid the complexity of overtime compensation regulations. If the

district chooses to continue the practice, FLSA violations must be avoided by keeping careful records of the hours a non-exempt employee works in all assignments and by paying an hourly rate rather than a stipend.

EEISD should discontinue the use of flat rate stipends for non-exempt employees. The director of Personnel along with the Athletic director should work with all non-exempt employees currently receiving a stipend to develop an arrangement whereby extra duties are paid according to overtime compensation regulations. District administrators must review all alternatives for providing coaching assignments without violating FLSA. If the district decides to continue its practice of using non-exempt personnel, the district must develop and approve a procedure for payment that meets the FLSA requirements and communicate the details of the procedure to employees. If the district determines that this procedure would be cost prohibitive to the district, it must assign the extra jobs to exempt personnel.

RECRUITMENT (REC. 28)

EEISD does not actively recruit teachers, is not proactive in targeting qualified teachers particularly in hard to fill areas, and does not market the district as an employer of choice. The director of Personnel indicated that he does not attend any college recruitment events or any area job fairs. He further stated that to his knowledge, EEISD has never been involved in visiting sites to identify potential teacher candidates or to provide district information to interested candidates. The Personnel Department lacks a budget for recruiting and lacks a recruiting brochure. The district relies on job postings to inform potential applicants of jobs available in the district and is not proactive in targeting sites that may provide candidates in high need areas such as math and science. The Personnel secretary indicated that she receives a large number of applications throughout the year, most of them in the spring or summer. She stated that the majority of these applications are from applicants in an alternative certification program. The secretary maintains a spreadsheet with applicant names, certification status, and area of interest, which she uses to identify candidates for jobs as they become available. She sends the list of candidates who meet the requirements to principals who then review the applications and set up interviews. The district hired more than fifty percent of the teachers for 2005–06 from the alternative certification programs. This includes the ten teachers hired from the Teach for America program.

Although EEISD receives sufficient teaching applications to fill the great majority of positions, principals indicate that the applicant pool does not always contain a sufficient number of quality applicants, especially in areas such as math and science. According to a new hire report requested by the review team, there have been 47 teachers hired for the 2005–06 school year. According to the director of Personnel, this number is considerably higher than in other years. AEIS reports show that in the previous two years the district added only 12.9 and 7.6 teachers over the two year period respectively, for a total of 20.5. This greater demand for teachers requires a greater applicant pool with a higher number of well qualified, certified applicants.

The Consortium of State Organizations for Texas Teacher Education indicates that there is ample evidence that teachers who come into the classroom with in-depth preparation in content areas and in instructional sciences are more likely to stay in the classroom and develop better student outcomes. The Texas Public Policy Foundation further adds in its report, “Better Salaries for Teachers in the Public Schools (2005),” that while important for all students, highly effective teachers are even more important for low performing students who gain significantly more academic benefit from effective teachers than do students of average or even above average abilities. It becomes critical then, for a district like EEISD that is struggling to improve academic achievement of its students, that without aggressively recruiting and competing for the best qualified teachers available, poor performance may be the result.

Many school districts have a well coordinated and targeted recruitment program, which results in the identification of a greater number of talented applicants than a passive approach. These school districts identify recruitment sites that will likely have the greatest number of applicants in the areas that historically are needed in the district. Each year the Personnel staff analyzes the recruitment results and determines which sites have been the most productive in terms of teachers hired from those sites; changes in the recruitment plan for the following year are made based on this analysis and the types of teachers needed. Early identification of staffing needs for the following year is crucial to the success of the program. Districts able to project the type and number of new growth units as well as units required due to resignations, scheduling or programmatic changes, are able to recruit early and identify and communicate with the best applicants at the college and job fairs. Districts ensure that recruiters assigned to go to these recruitment

sites are well prepared and effective at answering questions about the district and have current information regarding issues such as salary and benefits. Information about the district should also be made available in the form of a district brochure or compact disc since candidates for jobs are interested in factors such as district programs, teaching condition and community environments. Districts can also follow up with a well publicized district job fair at which principals and campus teams can meet the candidates and do in depth interviews with promising candidates. Nacogdoches ISD has a well orchestrated recruitment plan that minimizes position vacancies at the beginning of the year.

EEISD should develop and implement a highly focused recruitment plan that takes a more proactive approach in filling teacher vacancies with well-qualified applicants. An analysis of positions that have been difficult to fill over the last three years should be conducted to determine which areas need more concentration of effort. The director should develop a recruitment schedule for the year after reviewing potential recruitment fairs to determine which may provide the best opportunities to meet district hiring needs for the next year; school administrators should accompany him whenever the number of applicants warrants extra assistance. The director should also meet with all fall and spring semester student teachers assigned to EEISD schools to encourage them to apply in the district. The director should become closely involved with staffing meetings in the spring to identify projected staffing needs. The Personnel Department webpage should provide more information including district salaries and benefits and a brochure should be developed to provide district information.

An annual recruitment budget of \$2,000 for mileage and fees starting in 2007–08 through 2011–12 would be sufficient for the director to visit colleges in the area. Total costs would be \$10,000 for the next five years or $(\$2,000 \times 5 \text{ years} = \$10,000)$.

CRIMINAL HISTORY CHECKS (REC. 29)

EEISD lacks a policy or procedures that provide guidelines to determine which applicants to exclude from employment based on information obtained from criminal history background checks. The district obtains criminal history information on all professional applicants and on all classified and auxiliary applicants it is considering for a position. The district policy DC (LOCAL) stipulates only “the District shall obtain criminal history record information on a person the district intends to employ.” The policy does not define or

qualify in any manner the types of offenses that would preclude a person from consideration for district employment. There are no administrative guidelines that define the process for conducting the criminal history checks, reviewing the information, communicating with the applicant, or providing an appeal to a negative hiring decision based on this information.

Presently, one of the personnel secretaries is primarily responsible for conducting the criminal history check on applicants. The Department of Public Safety database is used to obtain the criminal history. According to the director of Personnel, the district will soon be contracting with the Regional Education Service Center Region I (Region 1) to use a national database, which will be far more inclusive. Once the secretary receives information regarding a “hit” or possible problem regarding an arrest or conviction, the secretary shares the information with the director of Personnel who reviews the data. The director then excludes from the applicant pool any person convicted or is pending charges for child abuse, child molestation or child neglect. Applicants with records other than those can be considered for employment.

Lack of a policy or procedures has resulted in the hiring of individuals who have been convicted of serious offenses and who may pose a threat to the safety of students. Review of applications revealed that there has been at least one employee recently hired in the custodial area who was convicted of a serious offense. One central office administrator indicated that he knew of one auxiliary employee who had been hired even though he had been convicted of a felony. Although these employees are not teachers, they have contact with children, sometimes unsupervised by professional employees. During the site-based focus group, a comment was made that the district was hiring people who had problematic criminal histories. A comment was also made by a board member that “of the employees that have been hired lately, some would fail the drug test.” Comments were also submitted at the community open house meeting that indicated that there is a concern regarding the criminal histories of some of the people hired. One comment made was that the district does not investigate criminal histories because it is all “purely politics. They do not care who the person is. If you vote, you have a job.” Negligent hiring is defined as the hiring of an employee who the employer knew or should have known, based on employee’s background, posed a risk to others in the workplace.

Districts with effective hiring practices have developed both policies and administrative regulations that provide guidance to hiring officials in reviewing criminal histories to determine which applicants should not be considered for employment. Although some policies do not have the detail needed to conduct these reviews in a comprehensive and thorough manner, administrative regulations can set out criteria that can be applied uniformly to all cases. These regulations can assist the administrators in Personnel in making decisions and can provide a tool that allows the administrator to have a clear rationale for exclusion of applicants. Regulations should also allow for an appeal of the decision to allow the applicant to present any information that might provide clarification or new information that may influence the former decision.

Northside ISD has developed both policy and administrative regulations to assist in this process. NISD policy provides general information regarding the process of conducting, reviewing and following up on criminal history checks and states that an applicant will not be employed until the district has obtained a criminal history record and reviewed it under guidelines set forth in the policy and the regulations. Austin ISD has a short but explicit regulation, DC (regulation) which specifies the types of criminal and job infractions which will make applicants ineligible for employment with the district. This regulation states that the district will not employ any applicant who has been determined to meet any of the criteria listed below:

- prior felony conviction(s);
- prior conviction(s) of a misdemeanor offense within the last five years involving offenses of moral turpitude (acts that are generally or ethically considered morally wrong, including crimes that involve dishonesty, fraud, deceit, misrepresentation, or deliberate violence) or offenses involving drugs and/or alcohol;
- felony or misdemeanor charges that are pending against an applicant involving offenses of moral turpitude or offenses involving drugs and/or alcohol;
- prior non-renewal of a contract;
- prior termination; and
- resignation in lieu of proposed non-renewal, termination, or after having received written notification of contractual difficulty.

EEISD should develop, approve and implement a policy and administrative regulations that provide clear guidelines for

review and decision-making regarding criminal history backgrounds of persons the district intends to hire. The director of Personnel should review policies and procedures in place in other districts. The director should establish a committee to assist in developing the policy and procedures regarding criminal history checks. The committee should consist of the assistant superintendents, several principals and a representative from the security department. Once the policy and procedures are complete, the committee should submit them to the superintendent and board for approval. The district's attorney should be closely involved with the entire development and approval process.

POSITION CONTROL (REC. 30)

EEISD lacks a position control system to maintain accountability of positions and to provide the district with an effective budgeting tool. The EEISD Personnel Department does not maintain a record of authorized positions to control the active, vacant and proposed positions within the district and does not maintain a specific record containing related financial and funding source data for every position. The district fills positions on a case-by-case basis as determined by an identified or perceived need and lacks a system in place that prevents new units from being added if not previously authorized in the budget. There is no formal system for allocating financial resources according to staffing needs. There is also no set number of approved positions for each campus or department. Principals request positions based on increased student enrollment or when educationally related or compliance issues emerge. Although principals and the assistant superintendent for Curriculum do meet in the spring to project staffing needs for the following academic year, the Business Office does not link these positions to the annual financial budget during each budget cycle. Although positions are approved primarily during the summer, review of board of trustees' minutes showed that position approval is requested throughout the year.

Without a position control, the district lacks an effective system to allocate financial resources to the district staffing needs. Lack of a system often results in overstaffing and overspending. The position control system provides specific staffing position limitations based on previously identified criteria and budgetary constraints, and forces adherence to these numbers unless extenuating circumstances occur. This results in better management of district resources as well as more equity in staffing. Lack of a management tool with approved positions by site could result in inequities in staffing.

The most effective school districts use position control systems that link to budgetary resources. Business staff works closely with the superintendent, personnel administrators and school/department administrators to identify financial resources to fund their needs. The number of new staff needed is identified based on previously identified criteria, such as staffing formulas or special campus needs, and are presented to the board of trustees' for approval with the annual budget. With a well-planned system, the number of positions added during the year and brought to the board for approval should be minimal.

A position control system that the Personnel Department closely monitors results in improved equity in salaries and supplements. It also allows the Personnel Department to monitor any movement of positions by campus administrators, thus reducing problems with incorrect certifications or funding sources. Districts using position control as a tool for maintaining accountability for district positions and for integrating this information with payroll and budget functions are more efficient in staffing and budgeting. The human resources component of the Regional Education Service Center Region XX (Region 20) Internet-based Texas Computer Cooperative Software (iTCCS) has a highly effective position management module many districts across the state are currently using, including Mission and Edinburg ISDs in Region 1. Although EEISD currently uses the system, RSCCC does not yet have a position management module in place. There are plans to implement the module within the next two years according to the consultant for position management at Region 20. The system would provide similar functions as the ones available in the iTCCS system. This system maintains a specific record for each regular staff position by establishing a unique record for each position, whether occupied or vacant. Each record has related financial and funding source data, information regarding stipends, incentive pay and supplemental pay, if applicable. The system requires Personnel staff to initiate all transactions involving personnel changes; it calculates pay changes resulting from employment status changes and allows payroll to review calculations to improve efficiency and accuracy of transactions. The module supports the budget process by presenting various staffing scenarios and associated costs to allow districts to plan more efficiently. It also allows Personnel staff to update all payroll records in mass according to pay calendar dates once the board of trustees' approves the increase in compensation.

EEISD should research and adopt a system for position control. Staff should work closely with Region 1 to determine a timeline for adopting and implementing the position management module of the RSCCC system. Personnel staff should continue to increase their use of the software applications available from the Region 1 to better prepare for the implementation of the position management module, which will be available soon. Although there are numerous other position control systems available commercially, the advantages of the RSCCC system is that it is a product specifically for districts in Texas and it will be updated routinely to meet changes made by the TEA and the Texas Teacher Retirement System. The other advantage is that the district is already paying for the district software and the position management module. The Personnel director should meet with the Business manager and appropriate staff to design a districtwide plan that will support the use of this system.

RECORDS MANAGEMENT (REC. 31)

EEISD lacks standardized procedures for records management, has not provided records management training to the Personnel staff, and does not appropriately store or safeguard records. The Personnel Department maintains both active and inactive personnel records in the central administrative building. Some employee records are in fireproof files while others are in regular file cabinets that are kept locked for security. Review of employee files showed that the department maintains documents in the files loosely without any dividers to indicate the various categories of documents. The Personnel Department lacks written standards to ensure that it maintains all employee documentation. The secretaries in charge of file maintenance have never had training on records management to ensure that files are compliant with federal and state requirements. The files reviewed were professional employee files and were all similarly organized with applications, employee eligibility documents, and evaluations in place. Copies of staff development attended were also part of the file for teachers who submitted these records. The files, however, did not contain professional contracts; these are all maintained together by campus. There was no compensation data in the files; even "set-up" sheets that provide information indicating how an employee's salary is determined are only in payroll files. All personnel action memoranda are in the payroll files and there is no way to track an employee's pay history without the payroll file. The present record keeping process does not allow for the removal of documents from the active files,

transfer and retention of documents in inactive storage, and destruction of documents or record placement in permanent archives.

The review team also visited the site where the district stores its inactive records and found that the facility was not suitable for storing district records. EEISD has designated three large rooms located on the site of a former elementary school. The rooms were recently vandalized and boxes with important records were strewn through out each room in a totally disorganized manner. Although shelving was available, it was apparent that not enough shelving space was available to maintain all the boxes in the rooms. The team observed boxes labeled as containing the following types of files: accounts payable, special education records, personnel records, inactive permanent record cards, student records, payroll history records and journals as well as many other types of records and correspondence. It was obvious that the records are not safeguarded since vandals walked in and thrown boxes all over the rooms. The rooms are also not fireproof and records could have easily burned and/or destroyed.

Although the district lacks a proper storage facility, the district has contracted with Records Consultants, Inc. (RCI), a consulting company that provides the service of processing inactive records and developing records retention plans in accordance with the Records Retention Scheduled established by the Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC). RCI assists the district in the inventory and identification of records that are eligible for destruction, assists with the records and organization of those records that must be retained, and prepares all necessary documents to be forwarded for approval by TSLAC. The Business manager is the Records Management Officer for the district.

Proper record maintenance is an essential component of efficient personnel management and is critical to protecting the rights of staff and reducing the district's liability in cases of employee disputes. Personnel staff can use properly maintained records to review past evaluations and disciplinary history to determine employment decisions. Review of salary history is often critical in explaining compensation to employees and in providing a defense for a current salary dispute. Not having clear standards for employee records management may result in records that do not contain the information necessary to make good employment decisions or that cannot be used effectively when employee dispute occurs. Additionally, not having all records properly stored in

a fireproof room or fireproof file cabinets increases the possibility of loss of records vital to the district and to the employees.

EEISD also faces serious problems if records such as property deeds, easements, legal opinions that the district must be retain permanently are lost due to the district's inability to properly store or safeguard these records.

School district personnel departments have records management standards and staff who are knowledgeable about the standards and the critical role they play in personnel management. These departments have procedures which designate what documents must be maintained in the personnel file and which documents should be filed in separate files. They also maintain personnel files organized so that information can be easily found and retrieved. Classification folders that include dividers and fasteners are the most efficient; the use of this system also allows file clerks to easily spot records that are missing. South San Antonio ISD uses comprehensive and detailed color-coded checklists to improve the accuracy of personnel records and ensure that all information is included. Additionally, districts with good records management have records located in a fireproof location with controlled access. Efficient districts not only process inactive files and develop a records retention plan; they also maintain these records in a safe records storage facility that is fireproof, waterproof, and pest infestation resistant. They maintain this facility in good order to ensure easy accessibility of records when needed.

Personnel Department staff should attend records management training and establish standardized procedures for employee records management and locate and use a facility suitable for storing district records. The Personnel director should identify appropriate training opportunities in records management such as those offered by TASB through the Regional Education Service Centers for the director and Personnel staff. The director should develop records management procedures for the department and staff should audit employee records for compliance. Personnel staff should purge records as appropriate. When the district has a secure facility to house its records, Personnel staff should transfer inactive files. The district should locate an appropriate facility to store its records as soon as possible to prevent any possible loss of records. The district should continue to work with its record management consultant but should also explore the possibility of maintaining records on microfilm or other electronic media.

The review team estimated a one-time cost of training the Personnel Department staff is at \$375 assuming training is available regionally (\$125 per workshop x 3 staff members). An approximate cost of \$1,000 for 1000 classification folders for employee files will be required. A one-time cost of obtaining a temporary clerical person to help set up the new filing system is estimated at \$560 (\$7 per hour x 80 hours). Total cost for implementing this recommendation is a one time cost of \$1,935 (\$375 + \$1,000 + \$560 = \$1,935).

JOB DESCRIPTIONS (REC. 32)

EEISD lacks a process for developing and updating job descriptions. The district has job descriptions for the majority of positions although descriptions for some critical positions, such as assistant superintendent for Personnel, were not available. The job descriptions follow the format recommended by TASB with many of the descriptors taken directly from those in their model job descriptions. These generic models, intended as guides for the district, do not reflect accurate and complete descriptions of the actual responsibilities of existing district positions. For example, although there is a job description for a certification officer, the director for Student Services, who has no job description, performs many of the duties of the certification officer. Several of the job descriptions did not list the educational requirements or were not clear in the statement of the educational requirement. The shop foreman position, for example, did not list any type of educational requirement, while the risk manager position listed the following as a requirement: High School or GED diploma needed, and public administration with accounting, insurance or risk management experience.

Job descriptions for many of the central office administrators were incomplete or inaccurate. They do not contain information on pay grade or date revised. Some of them contain a primary purpose and major responsibilities that are not part of the job. For example, the primary purpose for the director of Personnel states "responsible for the development of human resource programs to include wage and salary administration, leave administration, employee training, recruitment and staffing, and employee communications." In practice, however, he is not responsible for all of these functions as some are the responsibility of the Business manager who lacks wage and salary administration listed under his job description although he has primary responsibility for this function. The PEIMS coordinator, who is responsible for salary calculations for employees, does not have this important responsibility

identified in this job description. In many instances, the person to whom the person reports to does not match the information on the organizational chart. The director for Special Education, for example, reports to the superintendent on the job description, but to the assistant superintendent for Personnel on the organizational chart; the director of Athletics reports to the assistant superintendent of Personnel on the job description and to the superintendent on the organizational chart. Security guards report to the principals according to the job descriptions, but to the security supervisors on the organizational chart.

According to the director of Personnel, the Personnel secretary updates job descriptions when changes are necessary. This is not a formal process and does not occur on a consistent basis. The district does not use job descriptions to identify and delegate job responsibilities. Employees are expected to perform the duties of the job as identified by their supervisors.

EEISD staff does not use job descriptions to distinguish between essential and nonessential responsibilities and to provide an overview of work expected in a position. They are not advised of the responsibilities through a formal process and consequently may not be aware of many of the duties for which they should be held accountable. The lack of use of job descriptions in the workplace may lead to duplication of efforts, ineffective personnel deployment and inconsistencies in operations.

The lack of current and accurate job descriptions indicates that hiring officials do not make use of these descriptions to develop questions and make decisions based on the actual match between the applicant's skill sets and the duties required in the job. As a result, it is more difficult for them to focus on legitimate and nondiscriminatory job requirements and to select the best candidate for the job based on appropriate experience, education and job skills. Using current job descriptions, which are inaccurate and incomplete to inform candidates of the actual job functions and qualifications, will cause miscommunication. Inaccurate and/or poorly developed job descriptions that do not specify duties and responsibilities of positions as well as equal pay, workplace safety and overtime eligibility increase the risk of employment lawsuits.

Many personnel departments have a process to develop and update job descriptions to ensure that they are consistent with the organizational structure. Districts also update job descriptions to reflect job duties accurately and qualifications

that are assigned to the position and to delete duties that were removed. Updates should occur at least every three years, as duties change or as new laws pass, which affect the job descriptions. This updating also ensures that critical functions, which are no longer part of job responsibilities, are assigned to another staff position as appropriate.

School districts use a template to develop, update and maintain job descriptions to produce descriptions, which are consistent and personalized and contain important elements such as qualifications required, wage/hour status, and pay grade. They also involve persons outside of the Personnel Department to update the documents to encourage awareness and "buy-in" into the process and promote accuracy by including staff members who have more knowledge of the actual jobs. Employees who have job descriptions that clearly delineate their job responsibilities can perform more effectively and efficiently because they know the duties for which they will be held accountable. Clarity in job descriptions reduces duplication of effort and confusion concerning operational expectations. A well developed job description should serve as the basis for the employee evaluation and can assist supervisors in development of growth plans. The job description should also provide information to help validate selection criteria for jobs and to determine compensation and classification. Spring ISD maintains updated and accurate job descriptions to provide employees with a guide for understanding their jobs. The Personnel and Support Services Department creates and updates job descriptions after conducting focus groups with employees in each position. A job analysis is developed through this cooperative process.

EEISD should develop a process for developing and updating job descriptions. The director of Personnel should research how other districts and industries develop and update effective job descriptions and should develop a proposal regarding job descriptions to present to the superintendent and upper level management. The director should include methods and forms as well as a schedule for completion. The proposal should demonstrate involvement of appropriate staff to create specific job descriptions based on job analyses. The director of Personnel should submit all job descriptions to the superintendent and the board for approval as they are completed.

COMPENSATION GUIDELINES (REC. 33)

EEISD does not consistently follow compensation guidelines for new auxiliary and paraprofessional employee salaries.

According to the PEIMS coordinator, who calculates salaries in EEISD, the district has not developed local compensation procedures to guide the district in salary determinations. The district does use the TASB compensation guidelines for determination of hiring and promotion rates. The district uses hiring and promotion/reclassification worksheets to assist in arriving at these decisions.

EEISD maintains a step based pay schedule for classroom teachers, librarians and nurses. For all other employees, the district assigns positions to pay ranges with minimum, midpoint and maximum base pay rates. The district maintains three pay schedules: administrative/professional, clerical/technical and manual trades. Each pay schedule has several pay grades with assigned positions under each pay grade. For example, the manual trades pay schedule has seven pay grades. Pay grade one has a minimum hourly rate of \$6.56 per hour, a midpoint of \$8.00 per hour, and a maximum of \$9.44 per hour. Employees listed under this pay grade are bus monitors, cafeteria workers, crossing guards, and custodians. The highest pay grade in this schedule is pay grade seven, which lists the following positions: custodial supervisor, transportation assistant, field supervisor and security supervisor.

Hiring rates for new employees, which the district is currently using, state the following:

Hiring rates for persons other than teachers and librarians will be set in accordance with these guidelines:

1. New hires in positions that require little or no previous job experience will be placed at the minimum of the pay range whenever possible.
2. Persons with previous job experience or special skills may be hired at a rate up to the midpoint of the pay range. Starting pay will be determined with consideration given each new employee's qualifications for the job and previous salary history.

1–3 years =	0–4	percent	above	the	
				minimum	
4–6 years =	4–8	percent	above	the	
				minimum	
6–10 years =	8–12	percent	above	the	
				minimum	
10+ years =	up to the midpoint				

3. Whenever possible, new employees will not start at pay rates above other district employees with comparable experience in the same position.
4. Salary credit for work experience that is directly job related will be given as follows:
5. All starting salaries above the midpoint of a pay range must be approved by the superintendent.

When a new hire is recommended in EEISD, the recommendation comes from the Personnel Department accompanied with information including pay grade, previous years of experience, pay type, number of workdays, and start date. The Personnel Department sends this information to the PEIMS coordinator who is the person in the Business Office who handles salary calculations. The PEIMS coordinator then determines what the salary would be following hiring guidelines and sends this information to the Personnel Department. The Personnel director and the assistant superintendent for Personnel then approve or reject the calculation. If the salary is to be changed, the department follows up with a memo to the PEIMS coordinator indicating the revised salary recommendation. The PEIMS coordinator makes the change and submits the salary information to the superintendent for approval. According to staff interviewed, changes from the compensation guideline based recommendations occur regularly, usually in auxiliary and paraprofessional salaries.

When a district does not follow compensation guidelines on a consistent basis, salary inequities result. A review of salaries for new employees indicated a number of significant departures from the compensation guidelines the district currently uses. For example, at least eight custodians, one maintenance worker, and one security guard hired after May 2005 had hiring rates higher than the maximum rate of pay for their respective positions. For example, a security guard position according to the district pay scales is on a pay grade 3, which has a maximum daily rate of \$93.92 when the hourly rate of \$11.74 is multiplied by 8 hours. When the daily rate of \$93.92 is multiplied by 260 days that security guards work, the annual maximum salary is \$24,419. One of the security guards hired this year was hired at a salary of \$27,000, which is significantly over the maximum pay for the position. This salary is higher than that of all existing security guards and the two head security guards employed by the district. A cursory review of the salaries for new paraprofessional employees showed several were above the maximum salaries for their pay grades. One teacher-aide hired was assigned a

salary of \$30,000 for 187 days. This amount is significantly above the maximum for that position, which is at a rate of \$11.64 per hour. When this rate is multiplied by eight hours, the daily rate is \$93.12; when this amount is annualized for 187 days, the maximum salary for this position is \$17,413. Knowledge of these high salaries has raised concerns from employees; one comment made in the teacher focus group was, “We have heard that there are paraprofessionals making more than teachers.” One board of trustees’ member commented that lately the district was hiring hourly employees “at an extremely high rate.” Several administrators indicated during interviews that politics influence pay decisions. One indicated, “There are people out there that make promises” that if helped during election time, they will make sure the person will be compensated well.

Many school districts have compensation plan procedures that provide the district with specific guidelines to use for pay administration. To be effective, a district must update these guidelines regularly and administer them properly. Board policy DEA (LOCAL) states, “The superintendent shall administer and maintain pay systems in accordance with administrative procedures for the district compensation plan.” Well-developed administrative procedures assist the district in making fair and equitable salary decisions and lessen salary administration subjectivity. Adherence to these guidelines, except in cases where there are extraordinary circumstances, preserves the integrity of the district’s pay system and allows employees to feel they are compensated fairly based on position and what experience and skill they bring to the district. Exceptions to compensation guidelines for hiring are for situations when a prospective employee brings considerable technical and/or professional skills to a position that is difficult to fulfill or is critical to the district.

EEISD should develop district compensation guidelines and use them consistently to determine hiring salaries and ensure starting salaries are equitable. The director of personnel should research compensation guidelines other districts use and consult with TASB in the development of compensation guidelines. Consultation through TASB is recommended since the district already uses TASB compensation services for its employee salary studies. After it develops its compensation procedures, the district should follow these closely unless there are clear and substantive reasons for departure from the normal procedures. The superintendent should continue to approve any starting salaries above the midpoint and should require a written rationale for these recommendations.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT (REC. 34)

EEISD lacks a centralized tracking system that ensures employee training is meeting program requirements or individual needs. Staff development is provided by departments or at the campus level; the great majority of the training is coordinated by the assistant superintendent for Curriculum and/or the directors or coordinators of the various programs such as special education, bilingual education and gifted and talented.

Every spring, the Curriculum Department distributes a needs assessment survey to determine the staff development topics of interest for teachers at each campus. The Curriculum Department tallies the results of the survey and identifies the top five areas for each campus. For example in 2004–05, three of the four elementary schools indicated the topics of bilingual, technology, and discipline training as important. The district’s three secondary campuses all identified special education related topics such as inclusion and differentiated instruction as topics of interest. Campus staff is asked to indicate the best time for development training. Three of the four elementary schools indicated that summers would be the best time for training. The assistant superintendent for Curriculum said that results of the needs assessment are brought to the District Site-Based Committee (DSBC) to determine what should be presented for the following year.

According to the assistant superintendent for Curriculum, the results of these needs assessments as well as staff development topics required by legal mandates are for developing the staff development plan for the following year. The review team examined the district offerings and found that many training sessions are offered during the pre-service week as well as throughout the year. These offerings reflect some of the topics of interest listed in the needs assessment, but many are those required by legal mandates and district identified needs based on test scores. For example, the district has extensive staff development offerings during the year on the Sharon Wells program for math improvement and the New Jersey Writing Project for writing improvement across the district. According to principals, teachers are often pulled from the classroom to attend these workshops. The central administration determines which teachers to pull in the appropriate grade level. The assistant superintendent indicated that the district does not provide the training during the summer due to a limited budget. She further stated that the district uses Title II monies to purchase training from Region 1 through membership in the Staff Development Consortium.

Departments such as Special Education work with the Curriculum Department to provide funding and identify experts in the field to present quality staff development for teachers and administrators. During the year, the department not only conducts ongoing training on inclusion, but also develops and publishes teacher newsletters online, which contains research based instructional strategies for teachers. The director for Special Populations, who coordinates all required training for the gifted and talented program, showed the review team large binders containing the training provided for teachers and administrators and the tracking system she uses to ensure the district complies with staff training requirements. Although this system is highly organized and accessible, most of the staff development information that other departments provide is in folders containing the name of the session and the sign-in sheet for that session. The Technology Department also provides extensive staff training. The board-adopted Technology Plan stipulates that all teachers will complete 16 hours of technology staff development aligned with State Board of Educator Certification (SBEC) standards. The department provided copies of sign-in sheets showing attendance; however, according to the Technology strategist, only 25 percent of the staff completed the mandated hours.

The director for Student Services provides orientation training for teachers new to the profession on the Professional Development and Appraisal System (PDAS) as required by the Texas Administrative Code. This training, which occurs at the beginning of each school year for new hires, is not available at the district level for late hires. If the district hires a teacher after the first three weeks of school, the principal at the hiring school trains the teacher. This training is approximately six and one half hours long. Tracking of this training is difficult when it does not occur at a central level.

The Personnel Department does not coordinate staff development for the district and does not track any of the training other departments provide. The director of Personnel and the director of Student Services give presentations at the one-day new teacher orientation. Both directors also give presentations on sexual harassment training. The Personnel secretary stated that the department does file certificates for training attended in the employee files for those teachers who submit them.

Without a centralized record keeping system for staff development, a district has difficulty in verifying compliance with all mandated training and is cannot provide a listing of training attended for all employees. Without centralized

records, information regarding staff development attendance and compliance is only available by locating the department or campus providing the training and reviewing their sign-in sheets, which is an inefficient process. Not having a process that provides an annual listing of workshops attended impedes teachers from tracking and maintaining records that show their certification renewal status.

Many school districts have a process to help them track staff development, which assists the district in ensuring compliance with required staff development and assists individual employees in maintaining a record of their own professional development. Large school districts like Northside ISD often use systems specifically dedicated to manage the staff development registration and attendance function such the Electronic Registration Online system provided by E-schools solutions. Smaller school districts manage the process in a variety of ways including the use of database software to organize, manage and share all of the staff development information. Having one department that gathers, inputs course and attendance data and provides reports to individuals and management facilitates the process and provides consistency and accuracy. Information can be centralized on one database, and always accessible. Since many departments in a district provide staff development opportunities, Personnel Departments often coordinate and track staff development.

EEISD should develop a centralized system for tracking and recording employee training to ensure staff development is meeting program requirements and individual needs. The superintendent should meet with the director of Personnel, the assistant superintendents for Curriculum and Personnel and several program directors to discuss the present system for recording and tracking staff development and how centralization can improve it. To implement the new tracking system, the district should develop procedures. The director of Personnel should work with in the Technology department staff to identify the appropriate software to use. The district should purchase database software and train the appropriate Personnel staff to use the software. Reports should be provided to district staff as identified in the procedures.

The one-time cost for a software database program is \$134. If four copies are purchased for the Personnel Department, the cost would be \$536 ($\$134 \times 4 = \536).

For background information on Personnel, see p. 243 in the General Information section of the appendices.

FISCAL IMPACT

RECOMMENDATIONS	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	TOTAL	ONE TIME
						5-YEAR (COSTS) SAVINGS	(COSTS) SAVINGS
CHAPTER 4: PERSONNEL							
23. Centralize and organize personnel functions under the director of Personnel and provide appropriate staffing to accomplish these functions in a coordinated and efficient manner.	(\$47,583)	(\$47,583)	(\$47,583)	(\$47,583)	(\$47,583)	(\$237,915)	\$0
24. Develop, adopt and implement staffing policies that use local and industry standards to determine staffing allocations for schools and departments and eliminate excess positions.	\$671,112	\$671,112	\$671,112	\$671,112	\$671,112	\$3,355,560	\$0
25. Develop written administrative procedures to guide district staff in performing critical personnel tasks.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
26. Fully implement the personnel module of the district's business software system.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
27. Discontinue the use of flat rate stipends for non-exempt employees.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
28. Develop and implement a highly focused recruitment plan that takes a more proactive approach in filling teacher vacancies with well qualified applicants.	(\$2,000)	(\$2,000)	(\$2,000)	(\$2,000)	(\$2,000)	(\$10,000)	\$0
29. Develop, approve and implement a policy and administrative regulations that provide clear guidelines for review and decision-making regarding criminal history backgrounds of persons the district intends to hire.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
30. Research and adopt a system for position control.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
31. Attend records management training and establish standardized procedures for employee records management and locate and use a facility suitable for storing district records.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$1,935)
32. Develop a process for developing and updating job descriptions.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

FISCAL IMPACT (CONTINUED)

RECOMMENDATIONS	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) SAVINGS	ONE TIME (COSTS) SAVINGS
33. Develop district compensation guidelines and use them consistently to determine hiring salaries and ensure starting salaries are equitable.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
34. Develop a centralized system for tracking and recording employee training to ensure staff development is meeting program requirements and individual needs.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$536)
TOTALS-CHAPTER 4	\$621,529	\$621,529	\$621,529	\$621,529	\$621,529	\$3,107,645	(\$2,471)

CHAPTER 5

FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

EDCOUCH-ELSA INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

CHAPTER 5. FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

Edcouch-Elsa Independent School District's (EEISD) Maintenance Department provides support for students and staff from several locations in the district. The department operates approximately 836,529 square feet of air conditioned facilities, including eight instructional campuses and three administration/athletic facilities. The Maintenance director's office is located in the western area of the district, where all trades, except carpentry, receive their daily work order assignments. The carpentry shop is in the central area of the district near the central administration facilities.

A director and secretary, five athletic park workers, six grounds crewmembers, three carpenters, and 15 technical trade persons comprise the Maintenance Department. One supervisor; four electricians; two heating, air conditioning and ventilation (HVAC) specialists; two plumbers; two welders; two floor persons; one landscaper; and one tractor operator comprise the technical trades.

Two supervisors located in the central portion of the district direct and support 55 custodians spread across the campuses. The supervisors ensure that campus custodians receive necessary cleaning supplies, paper products, and equipment. Each campus has a custodial lead person who reports to the campus principal for daily assignments and who is in charge of the custodial staff for that campus.

ACCOMPLISHMENT

- EEISD used the Instructional Facilities Allotment (IFA) to save almost 92 percent on its debt service payments.

FINDINGS

- EEISD lacks a comprehensive facilities long-range master plan or documented planning process in place to provide for any future facility needs.
- EEISD lacks a documented, active preventive maintenance program or procedures to schedule, budget for, or coordinate resources to maintain the district's facilities and equipment.
- EEISD's Maintenance Department does not effectively distribute and manage staffing allocations across the department based on the work requested.

- EEISD does not use industry standards or its own custodial staff formulas to equitably allocate custodial staff.
- EEISD uses an inefficient custodial cleaning system requiring the majority of cleaning duties to be performed while school is in session.
- EEISD does not have local policies in place to allow use of all construction project delivery methods state law allows.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Recommendation 35: Develop a comprehensive facilities long-range master plan for future facilities needs.** EEISD can contract the services of a professional facilities planner, such as an architect firm, who can assist with creating a facilities long-range master plan. The scope of work can be an integral part of planning new schools and, therefore, not be expensed as a stand-alone cost item. The superintendent should form a committee to include community members, staff and board of trustee members to assess the existing facilities, prioritize the facility needs, and recommend facility improvement projects. This plan can be preserved for future growth periods and as district leadership determines the need for additional facilities or program changes, the district can refer to and modify this document as needed. Should the district decide to expense the professional facilities planner as a stand-alone item, the district can base the cost of writing a facilities long-range master plan on the square footage and acreage addressed in the plan.
- **Recommendation 36: Develop and implement a preventive maintenance program that provides direction for regular facility and equipment review and repairs.** The program should provide a schedule of detailed work assignments and prioritize equipment and building maintenance to extend the life of the district's property and facilities. In addition, when selecting equipment to include in a preventive maintenance plan, EEISD should determine the critical equipment required for sustained operations.

- **Recommendation 37: Establish a process for periodic review and update of staff distribution among the trades based on analysis of work order backlog, degree of difficulty, skill of the work force, and district needs.** The director should adjust and distribute staff positions to handle the work backlog effectively by converting one carpenter position to a HVAC position and converting an electrical position to a plumber. The district needs to be mindful of the ever-changing needs and aging of its equipment and facilities. As buildings and systems get older, more expertise in certain areas is needed to offset problematic systems and to maintain building performance expected by the customer.
- **Recommendation 38: Establish custodial staffing standards based on industry standards and safety and security needs and periodically adjust custodial staffing accordingly.** If EEISD implements rigid benchmark staffing levels, the district could realize a reduction of approximately 19 custodial positions. Considering the safety and security concerns regarding employees being alone on duty at certain times in the smaller campuses, a more realistic reduction of 15 positions is possible.
- **Recommendation 39: Establish a custodial work schedule to meet district needs by minimizing overtime work and reducing the summer (260-day work calendar) custodial staff by 35 custodians, for a total of 20 summer custodians.** The district should schedule custodians to perform some cleaning activities for after-school session to eliminate need for daily overtime. A second or “after-hour” shift will be better able to clean classroom areas in an uninterrupted fashion resulting in quicker, more efficient cleaning processes. This will also save the district overtime hours currently being paid to all custodians.
- **Recommendation 40: Adopt local policies, CVC (Construction Manager-Agent), CVD (Construction Manager-at-Risk), CVE (Design-Build), and CVF (Job Order Contracting) to incorporate the remaining four project delivery methods into its construction contracting options.** To effectively implement these additional project delivery methods, EEISD should request the Texas Education Agency (TEA) Facilities Department to provide training to the superintendent and Business manager or ask TEA to suggest where training can

be found. Many districts take advantage of state-wide conferences hosted by the Texas Association of School Administrators (TASA), the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) or the Texas Association of School Business Officials (TASBO) to obtain such training. The superintendent and Business manager can train the board of trustees or the board members can receive training at their annual conference. These policies will enable the district to make a comprehensive decision regarding which delivery method provides the “best value” and to benefit from more sophisticated project delivery methods.

DETAILED ACCOMPLISHMENT

INSTRUCTIONAL FACILITIES ALLOTMENT (IFA) PROGRAM

EEISD used the Instructional Facilities Allotment (IFA) to save almost 92 percent on its debt service payments. The IFA program provides state assistance to school districts in making debt service payments on qualifying bonds or lease-purchase agreements. The district saved approximately \$2.2 million during the 2004–05 fiscal year by using this program.

Under Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Chapter 61 and Texas Education Code (TEC) Chapter 46, districts may apply for state funding to assist with construction projects. EEISD applied for IFA and was approved for three separate IFA allotments. The amount of state assistance is a function of the district’s wealth per student and is defined by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) *2003 Snapshot of District Wealth* available at <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/snapshot/2003/propwealth.html>. The state gives preference to low wealth school districts in approving IFA applications.

Districts can only use the IFA to construct or remodel instructional facilities. The schools constructed under this program comply with TEA standards regarding minimum classroom sizes per TAC 61.1033, *School Facilities Standards Constructed before January 1, 2004*. Similarly, classrooms, cafeterias, and libraries are sized appropriately for the student population of each campus built under this program. A partial list of EEISD eligible projects include:

- building a new elementary school;
- building a new middle school;
- remodeling the high school and an elementary school;
- building a career and technology center; and

- building new kindergarten rooms.

By taking advantage of IFA assistance, the district will realize a savings of approximately \$2,185,602 annually. This amount is adjusted throughout the year as the district’s average daily attendance and property value are adjusted. **Exhibit 5-1** shows information from the TEA 2004–05 IFA Payment Report.

DETAILED FINDINGS

FACILITIES LONG RANGE MASTER PLAN (REC. 35)

EEISD lacks a comprehensive facilities long-range master plan or documented planning process in place to provide for any future facility needs. The Business manager stated past student growth was addressed through a community “Blue-Ribbon Committee.” While that committee produced well-built, appropriately-sized schools, and grade level groupings seen today, the district staff could not produce documentation from that committee or “corporate memory” from past facilities planning. **Exhibit 5-2** shows district growth for the last six years.

Exhibit 5–2 indicates a yearly growth of 105 to 172 students and a total growth of 660 students from 1999–2000 through 2004–05. This growth represents an increase of 2.7 percent in 2000–01 and 2001–02, 2.2 percent in 2002–03, a high of 3.3 percent in 2003–04, and an increase of 1.9 percent in 2004–05.

While EEISD constructed new facilities in the past as noted in their use of IFA allotment funds in 2004–05 (new elementary, new middle school, new Career & Tech Center,

and new kindergarten rooms), the lack of a long-range plan can produce inadequate, sporadic results and less-than-efficient facilities for a district that is growing. The district’s failure to maintain documentation from the last planning effort and its lack of a long-range plan limits its ability to respond to future growth periods. Critical planning assumptions such as attendance boundaries, enrollment projections, program assessments, grade-level groupings, building capacities, infrastructure needs and other master planning elements will need to be determined before a proper plan can be realized. This lack of historical planning information will also require the district to expend excessive funds and time for each capital growth period.

Facilities planning involves a formal planning process and a formal facilities master plan that serves as a guide for the construction and renovation of facilities. The planning process allows for receiving input from students, parents, teachers, taxpayers, and other parties within the school district. The process consists of the following areas:

- an executive summary that provides an overview of the information covered and recommendations;
- historical information recognizing district and community demographic growth over a certain period including an economic look upon which to base future projections;
- an inventory of existing facilities, real estate, and a condition assessment of each;
- a description of existing maintenance practices supporting the facilities and infrastructure;

**EXHIBIT 5-1
EEISD 2004–05 INSTRUCTIONAL FACILITIES ALLOTMENT REPORT**

DESCRIPTION	IFA ROUND 1	IFA ROUND 4	IFA ROUND 6	TOTALS
2004-05 IFA Eligible Debt Service	\$1,010,065	\$1,116,048	\$254,198	\$2,380,311
2004-05 State Share (91.82%)	\$927,442	\$1,024,755	\$233,404	\$2,185,602
2004-05 Local Share (8.18%)	\$82,623	\$91,293	\$20,793	\$194,709

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency 2004-05 Instructional Facilities Allotment (IFA) Payment Report.

**EXHIBIT 5-2
EEISD STUDENT ENROLLMENT GROWTH
1999–2000 THROUGH 2004–05**

	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
Enrollment	4,812	4,946	5,081	5,195	5,367	5,472
Change (+ or -)		+134	+135	+114	+172	+105
Percent Change (+ or -)		+2.7%	+2.7%	+2.2%	+3.3%	+1.9%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency PEIMS Reports, 1999-2000 through 2004-05.

- a description of the planning methodology and planning concepts used by the district or planning committee;
- a detailed facilities master plan out to an agreed-upon (or directed) length of time that states the improvement goals for the organization for the defined period; and
- an implementation plan for the coming years. In the case of a school district, this can cover the next (or several) bond election(s) and will also include a discussion of the district's budget capability to serve bonded debt.

Small districts that do not have a planning staff in-house outsource several phases of a long-range master plan to include:

- Demographics: Obtaining accurate growth information from local municipalities and/or a professional demographer like Pan American University's Data and Systems Center, which produces *Profiles of General Demographic Information for Rio Grande Valley Counties and Cities*, that includes "Population Estimates and Projections for Counties and Cities in the surrounding area and counties."
- Equipment assessment: Accurate facilities assessment requiring equipment engineering expertise to properly examine mechanical, electrical, and plumbing equipment and to determine expected remaining life and replacement cost estimates and sequence of equipment items to replace.
- Structural assessment of outdated buildings: A structural engineer to determine if buildings are structurally sound, need demolition, repair, remodeling or new construction, and so forth.

EEISD should develop a comprehensive facilities long-range master plan for future facilities needs. The scope of work can be an integral part of planning new schools and therefore not be expensed as a stand-alone cost item. The superintendent should form a committee to include community members, staff and board members to assess the existing facilities, prioritize the facility needs and recommend facility improvement projects. This plan can be preserved for future growth periods and as district leadership determines the need for additional facilities or program changes, the district can refer to and modify this document as needed. Should the district decide to expense the professional facilities planner as a stand-alone item, the district can base the cost of writing a facilities long-range master plan on the square footage and acreage addressed in the plan.

PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE PROGRAM (REC. 36)

EEISD lacks a documented, active preventive maintenance program or procedures to schedule, budget for, or coordinate resources to maintain the district's facilities and equipment. According to the Maintenance director, the department's staff receives its work schedule from the director, who hands out work order assignments in response to daily emergency telephone calls and paper copy work orders received manually from the campuses. There is not a work production scheduler to assist in scheduling or prioritizing the work. The district also lacks procedures in place to assess the district's equipment condition, periodically review work order requests, or evaluate work order completion status.

As an example, **Exhibit 5-3** shows a portion of the work orders received for 2005–06. The column labeled "Date Completed" is lacking information for numerous work orders. Upon reviewing the full work order list for 2005–06 through October 27, 2005, only 115 out of 356 work orders (approximately 32 percent) had any information regarding work order completion status.

During the review team's visit in November 2005, the district was replacing a chilled water system in the high school. The vendor indicated that preventive maintenance had not been performed regularly on the chiller, air-handling equipment, ductwork (cleaning), and pumping equipment, which caused the unit to wear out earlier than necessary.

To summarize the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) *Planning Guide for Maintaining School Facilities*, sound preventive maintenance plans contain common components. Among these are:

- lists of equipment that will receive preventive maintenance inspection and/or work;
- detailed inspection checklists for each equipment item;
- planned equipment inspection and repair schedules; and
- anticipated cost and budget planning information.

Lack of a preventive maintenance plan will cause equipment to wear out earlier than planned, increase costs to the district over the life of the facility, cause an ensuing increase in the amount of unplanned work, and will make for an inefficient workforce. Lack of timely preventive maintenance activities also may cause premature equipment replacement projects and emergency replacement activity to occur.

**EXHIBIT 5-3
EEISD WORK ORDER LOG SEGMENT
2005–06**

WORK ORDER NUMBER	POSTED DATE	INITIATED DATE	OFFICE OR CAMPUS	DESCRIPTION OF REPAIRS OR WORK TO BE DONE	ASSIGNED TO EMPLOYEE	DATE COMPLETED
932		8/23/05	High School	Need to re-key closet doors to Rooms B5, B9, B12, B4 & doors A3, D3	Employee A	
933		8/18/05	Junior High	Need 2 keys made for gym area	Employee A	
934		8/18/05	Junior High	Room 305 needs cabinet replaced	Employee A	
935		8/18/05	Junior High	Rooms 404 & 405, door knob repairs	Employee A	
936		8/18/05	Junior High	Boys RR in 1st hall needs stall door replaced	Employee A	
937		8/17/05	6th Grade Campus	Need copies of keys for Room 122 & two subs	Employee A	completed
1	9/30/2005	7/23/05	LBJ Elementary	Two ballast in Room C7 need to be checked	Employee B	completed
2		8/24/05	CATE	ROTC flag pole need to be refurbished	Employee C	
3		9/1/05	Daycare	Need to install washer/dryer	Employee D	
4		9/1/05	Daycare	Washer would not attach	Employee E	
5		9/1/05	Junior High	1st hall-water fountain leak	Employee E	
6		9/1/05	6th Grade Campus	Room 107, Band hall - ant problem needs to be taken care of ASAP	Employee F	
7		9/1/05	LBJ Elementary	A4 door needs to be fixed, both doors in the gym need to be fixed	Employee A	completed
8		9/2/05	RCR Elementary	Repair boys RR in the gym and girls RR toilet and sink in gym	Employee E	
9	10/4/2005	9/7/2005	RCR Elementary	Repair boys RR at gym overflowing (3rd)	Employee E	
10		9/7/05	Early Childhood	Electrical outlet doesn't work in nurses office	Employee B	completed
11		9/7/05	RCR Elementary	Check breaker in C-5 and in Hall C	Employee D	
12		9/8/05	Junior High	A/C duct leaking in Room 104	Employee G	completed

SOURCE: EEISD Director of Maintenance, November 8, 2006.

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) *Planning Guide for Maintaining School Facilities* states that most school districts resort to “breakdown maintenance.” They wait until something breaks, then rush to fix or repair it. EEISD fits into this paradigm and the mechanical maintenance work would be characterized as reactive in nature. The planning guide goes on to describe routine maintenance, emergency maintenance, preventive maintenance, and predictive maintenance, and lists them in order of maintenance complexity as shown in **Exhibit 5-4**. While most school districts are not adequately staffed and cannot afford predictive maintenance, all school districts are

engaged in emergency and routine maintenance and will save valuable Maintenance and Operation funds with aggressive preventive maintenance programs in place.

EEISD should develop and implement a preventive maintenance program that provides direction for regular facility and equipment review and repairs. The program should provide a schedule of detailed work assignments and prioritize equipment and building maintenance to extend the life of the district’s property and facilities. In addition, when selecting equipment to include in a preventive maintenance

**EXHIBIT 5-4
MAINTENANCE SPECTRUM**

NO MAINTENANCE	EMERGENCY MAINTENANCE	ROUTINE MAINTENANCE	PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE	PREDICTIVE MAINTENANCE
Low		Overall Efficiency		High

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), "Planning Guide for Maintaining School Facilities."

plan, EEISD needs to determine the critical equipment required for sustained operations.

MAINTENANCE STAFFING (REC. 37)

EEISD's Maintenance Department does not effectively distribute and manage staffing allocations across the department based on the work requested. The Maintenance Department staffing is currently distributed in the trade disciplines as shown in **Exhibit 5-5**.

As of November 2005, the department received 356 work orders as shown in **Exhibit 5-6**. Only 115 work orders were labeled as completed while 241 were still open or listed as incomplete. Of the 356 work orders received, the HVAC and plumbing trades received 177 work orders and 108 were listed as incomplete. Approximately 27 percent of all work orders received involved campus HVAC systems while 23 percent of all work orders received involved plumbing systems or equipment. However, the district does not analyze its work orders to determine where the majority of the work, and therefore staff, is needed.

The department has a significant HVAC and plumbing workload and backlog, and has a small number of staff assigned to those shops to handle that workload. While the combined HVAC and plumbing trades received 50 percent

of the department's work orders, each of these shops have only two staff assigned for a total of four out of 23 trade positions in the department. These numbers do not include the athletic park positions.

The carpenter shop, with three staff assigned, spends a significant amount of its time making custom furniture for offices and classrooms in the district. Of the 44 work orders the shop received as of November 2005, eight of these involved building desks, cabinets, shelves, or a combination of all three. In the meantime, the work order backlog examined shows 33 Carpenter Shop work orders as incomplete.

Exhibit 5-7 shows the survey results of the survey administered by the review team while onsite. While those surveyed indicated a higher level of satisfaction regarding emergency maintenance than that observed for routine maintenance and repairs, the percentage of "Disagree" and "Strongly Disagree" for repair timeliness and building maintenance would suggest the customers are generally not satisfied with the overall maintenance effort.

HVAC and plumbing are disciplines that can significantly affect customer satisfaction when those systems are not performing as desired due to their effect on classroom

**EXHIBIT 5-5
MAINTENANCE TRADE STAFFING ALLOCATIONS
2005-06**

DIRECTOR	MAINTENANCE CREW	CARPENTER	YARD CREW (GROUNDS)	ATHLETIC PARKS
1 Director	1 Supervisor	1 Lead Man	1 Lead Man	1 Lead Man
1 Secretary	2 Electricians	2 Helpers	5 Helpers	4 Helpers
	2 Elect Helpers			
	1 HVAC			
	1 HVAC Substitute			
	2 Plumbers			
	2 Welders			
	2 Floors persons			
	1 Landscaper			
	1 Tractor Operator			

SOURCE: EEISD Director of Maintenance Interview, November 7, 2005.

**EXHIBIT 5-6
DISTRIBUTION OF WORK ORDERS RECEIVED
AS OF NOVEMBER 7, 2005**

TRADE AREA	WORK ORDERS	COMPLETED WORK ORDERS	INCOMPLETE WORK ORDERS
HVAC	96	45	51
Plumbing	81	24	57
Carpentry	44	11	33
Hardware	42	18	24
Electricity	41	8	33
General	32	8	24
Grounds	8	0	8
Roofing	5	0	5
Sprinkler System	5	1	4
Painting	2	0	2
TOTAL	356	115	241

SOURCE: EEISD Maintenance Department, November 2005.

**EXHIBIT 5-7
PERCEPTIONS OF MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR SERVICE
2005-06**

SURVEY QUESTION: BUILDINGS ARE PROPERLY MAINTAINED IN A TIMELY MANNER	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Principals	22.2%	33.3%	0.0%	44.4%	0.0%
Teachers	9.1%	48.5%	15.2%	18.2%	9.1%
Students	9.1%	38.2%	23.6%	20.0%	9.1%
Administrative Support Staff	8.8%	52.6%	14.0%	21.1%	3.5%
SURVEY QUESTION: REPAIRS ARE MADE IN A TIMELY MANNER	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Principals	11.1%	44.4%	0.0%	44.4%	0.0%
Teachers	12.1%	36.4%	9.1%	24.2%	18.2%
Students	7.3%	25.5%	21.8%	29.1%	16.4%
Administrative Support Staff	5.3%	29.8%	31.6%	22.8%	10.5%
SURVEY QUESTION: EMERGENCY MAINTENANCE IS HANDLED PROMPTLY.	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Principals	33.3%	66.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Teachers	12.1%	51.5%	9.1%	18.2%	9.1%
Students	10.9%	52.7%	21.8%	7.3%	7.3%
Administrative Support Staff	12.3%	49.1%	21.1%	10.5%	7.0%

SOURCE: Review Team Edcouch-Elsa Survey, November 2005.

comfort and building performance. If those trades have significant backlogs of work, it would suggest that equipment is not performing as desired and not put back in operation promptly.

Many districts regularly review and assess excessive backlogs in important trade areas. Management is aware of changing needs as buildings and equipment age, and make staffing

adjustments when necessary to focus the work force on the needs.

EEISD should establish a process for periodic review and update of staff distribution among the trades based on analysis of work order backlog, degree of difficulty, skill of the work force, and district needs. The director should adjust and distribute staff positions to handle the work backlog

effectively by converting one carpenter position to a HVAC position and converting an electrical position to a plumber. The district needs to be mindful of the ever-changing needs and aging of its equipment and facilities. As buildings and systems get older, more expertise in certain areas is needed to offset problematic systems and to maintain building performance expected by the customer.

There is a staff of 23 in the areas mentioned, excluding the maintenance supervisor, athletic parks lead employee, and four athletic park helpers. **Exhibit 5-8** shows a recommended redistribution of staff.

The fiscal impact of a redistribution of work force in this case would be a salary impact due to converting a carpenter position at an average salary of \$25,831 (\$20,137 + \$2,094 [20,137 x 10.4 percent benefits] + \$3,600 health contribution = \$25,831) to an HVAC position at an average salary of \$31,965 (\$25,693 + \$2,672 benefits + \$3,600 health contribution = \$31,965) for an annual increase of \$6,134 (\$31,965 - \$25,831 = \$6,134). An average unskilled versus skilled position salary increase is shown. Converting an electrician position to an HVAC position should be at approximately the same salary range.

CUSTODIAL STAFFING (REC. 38)

EEISD does not use industry standards or its own custodial staff formulas to equitably allocate custodial staff. The district has two custodial supervisors who oversee eight head

custodians and 53 custodial employees. Each custodial position lists cleaning responsibilities that outline the areas to be cleaned and the time allotted to clean each area. Some custodians also have responsibilities that include crossing guard duty, yard care duty, and raising/lowering flags. During the summer, custodians perform major cleaning tasks and paint areas of the schools that are in need. The supervisors stated during an interview that the district uses a ratio of one custodian per 100 students to determine the number of required custodians.

EEISD has approximately 836,529 square feet of buildings that the custodial staff maintains. The department employs 61 custodians, resulting in approximately 13,714 square feet of cleaning area per campus custodial person or 6,286 square feet less than the industry standard of 20,000 square feet per custodian. The **Exhibit 5-9** shows the average square feet cleaned per custodian in EEISD.

Based on the industry standard, the number of custodians needed for 836,529 square feet is 41.8 custodians. EEISD's custodial staffing levels are above accepted industry benchmark staffing levels by 19.2 positions. This analysis excludes the two custodial supervisors.

In addition, EEISD's total student enrollment is 5,472. The district's method of applying one custodian per 100 students should result in the district employing 55 campus-assigned custodians rather than the current number of 61. Using

**EXHIBIT 5-8
RECOMMENDED MAINTENANCE STAFFING DISTRIBUTION
2005-06**

TRADE	WORK ORDERS RECEIVED	COMPLETED WORK ORDERS	INCOMPLETE WORK ORDERS	CURRENT STAFF ASSIGNED	RECOMMENDED STAFFING
HVAC	96	45	51	2	3
Plumbing	81	24	57	2	3
Carpentry	44	11	33	*3	*2
Hardware	42	18	24	*	*0
Electrical	41	8	33	4	3
General	32	8	24	***6	5
Grounds	8	0	8	6	6
Roofing	5	0	5	0	1
Sprinkler System	5	1	4	0	0
Painting	2	0	2	0	0
TOTAL*	356	115	241	*23	*23

** Assumes Carpenter Shop takes care of Hardware Work Orders.
 *** Includes welders, floor persons, landscaper, and tractor operator.
 SOURCE: EEISD Maintenance Department, November 2005.

**EXHIBIT 5-9
CUSTODIAL STAFFING
2005-06**

BUILDING	SQUARE FEET	NUMBER OF CUSTODIANS	SQUARE FEET PER CUSTODIAN
Administration	9,905		
High School and CATE Bldg	199,228	14	14,231
Truan Junior High	119,672	9	13,297
LBJ Elementary	62,055	5	12,411
Edcouch Elementary	98,080	7	14,011
Tax Office/Sp Ed	11,314	1	11,314
Stadium Field House	12,540	1	12,540
JFK Elementary	85,014	6	14,169
Early Childhood Development	92,118	7	13,160
Rodriguez Elementary	68,492	6	11,415
6th Grade Campus	78,111	5	15,622
EEISD CUSTODIAN PER SQ FT	836,529	61	13,714
INDUSTRY BENCHMARK	836,529	41.8	20,000

SOURCE: EEISD Maintenance Department, November 2005.

student enrollment as a determinant of custodial staffing is not the normal industry staffing method.

The lack of using custodial industry standards to appropriately staff schools can result in overstaffing or in the inequity of labor distribution at the various campuses.

The National Center for Education Statistics' *Planning Guide for Maintaining School Facilities* provides square footage expectations for various levels of cleaning in educational buildings. The **Exhibit 5-10** shows cleaning standards used for staffing guidelines commensurate with desired cleaning levels and uniqueness of campus facilities.

However, safety considerations for smaller buildings such as elementary schools may result in an added staffing position rather than having only one individual on duty for extended periods or at night. Large buildings, such as high schools and middle schools, achieve an economy of scale in staffing, while small buildings might lose that economy in the interest of employee safety and security.

The United States Environmental Protection Agency provides checklists for building maintenance that are available at <http://www.epa.gov/iaq/schools/tfs/building.html>. These include custodial duties for a variety of cleaning activities. Additionally, *SchoolDude.com* has a custodial manual available at http://www.schooldude.com/knwb/k_fili/custodial that

**EXHIBIT 5-10
NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS
GUIDELINES FOR CUSTODIAL SERVICES**

LEVEL OF CLEANING	DESCRIPTION	*EXPECTED SQUARE FOOTAGE	WORK PERIOD
Level 1	Hospital environment, Corporate Suite	10,000-11,000	8 Hrs
Level 2	Upper level for schools, Special Ed areas, Restrooms, Kinder areas, Food Service, etc	18,000-20,000	8 Hrs
Level 3	Norm for most school areas, acceptable by most professionals, does not pose health issues	28,000-31,000	8 Hrs
Level 4	Below acceptable levels for schools, every other day cleaning, once-a-month dusting, etc	45,000-50,000	8 Hrs
Level 5	Unhealthy frequency of cleaning duties, trash can and vacuuming weekly, etc	85,000-90,000	8 Hrs

* Actual square footage of cleaning will vary depending on type of flooring and wall covers, number of windows, and so forth.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics and the National Cooperative Education Statistics System 2003.

indicates time allotted per cleaning task. **Exhibit 5-11** shows specific custodial tasks and how long it should take to complete each of them. The manual also includes training practices on the variety of custodial duties so standards to desired cleanliness levels can be achieved.

Exhibit 5-11 allotments provide enough time to for staff to complete the duties specified, assuming they are using proper equipment and supplies, efficient methods and diligence. These time allotments are not to be rigid for each cleaning area because of varying conditions, but the suggestions serve as reliable guides for the custodial staff.

Many school districts will compare actual time taken for the prescribed cleaning steps to the School Dude Custodial Training Manual suggested time per task, and determine an

appropriate amount of time to spend on each task. A district can use prescribed cleaning methods to achieve these times and cleanliness.

EEISD should establish custodial staffing standards based on industry standards and safety and security needs and periodically adjust custodial staffing accordingly. If EEISD implements rigid benchmark staffing levels, the district could realize a reduction of approximately 19 custodial positions. Considering the safety and security issues mentioned above regarding employees being alone on duty at certain times in the smaller campuses, a more realistic reduction of 15 positions is possible.

The fiscal impact of eliminating 15 custodial positions is calculated by adding the average salary of \$25,396 (\$19,743

**EXHIBIT 5-11
CUSTODIAL MANUAL TIME ALLOTMENTS FOR SPECIFIC CUSTODIAL JOBS
2005-06**

TASKS	ALLOTMENT (MINUTES)
Sweeping the average class room (700-800 sq. ft.), emptying pencil sharpener, cleaning chalk rail and emptying waste basket	12
Dusting furniture in the average class room, 25-30 pupil desks, teacher's desk, chair, table, bookcase and window sills	5
Cleaning room door and entrance glass to class room	3
Mopping toilet room and dressing room floors	2
Cleaning toilet stalls and door, each stall	1
Cleaning toilet bowls, seats and metal fixtures each bowl	1
Cleaning urinals, each urinal stall	1
Cleaning wash bowls and fittings, each wash bowl	2
Cleaning sinks and fittings, each sink	1
Cleaning drinking fountains and fittings, each fountain	1
Cleaning mirrors, each	2
Cleaning window glass, per 10 sq. ft. (inside)	1
Cleaning window glass, per 5 sq. ft. (outside)	1
Cleaning blackboards, each 100 sq. ft.	5
Cleaning erasers, using machine, per doz.	1
Putting out and taking in flag, each operation	5
Disposing of trash, per day	10
Dusting and removing spots on wainscoting and locker doors, for each 1000 sq. ft. of wall area	10
Sweeping gymnasium, for each 1000 sq. ft. of floor area	5
Sweeping halls and corridors, for each 1000 sq. ft. of floor area (twice daily)	5
Sweeping outside walks to entrances, each 1000 sq. ft.	5
Picking up paper and other litter around building, special attention given to entrances (daily)	15
Picking up paper and other litter in the parking lot (daily)	5

SOURCE: http://www.schooldude.com/knwh/k_fili/custodial, December 2005.

+ \$2,053 [\$19,743 x 10.4 percent benefits] + \$3,600 health contribution = \$25,396) and multiplying 15 times the total average compensation for a total of \$380,940 annual savings (15 X \$25,396 = \$380,940).

CUSTODIAL SCHEDULING (REC. 39)

EEISD uses an inefficient custodial cleaning system requiring the majority of cleaning duties to be performed while school is in session. According to interviews with the custodial supervisors, the campus custodians work approximately nine hours per day beginning at 6:00 AM or 7:00 AM. The last custodians finish at approximately 6:30 PM. To ensure all-day coverage and to limit the workday to eight and one-half to nine hours, the custodians sometimes take a two-hour lunch break. The district does not have a night (or second) shift except for scheduled school activities, such as athletic events, meetings, and so forth. Campus custodians work 45–47 hours each week, assuring that virtually every custodian receives some amount of overtime hours. While the custodial supervisors are in charge of overall custodial staffing, materials, and assignment of cleaning duties, the custodians take their daily instructions from the campus principal.

EEISD has 55 custodians that work 260 days within a calendar year. While it is a common practice to have some of the custodial staff remain employed through the summer months, EEISD is currently scheduling 55 custodians for 80 days (260 calendar workdays –180 scheduled school days = 80 extra days per custodian) beyond the school calendar. The district incurs 4,440 extra days (55 x 80 = 4,440) of custodial pay in excess of the 180 scheduled school days. EEISD’s custodial workforce performs almost all of its assigned duties during the school day when students occupy campuses. While the campus’ floor surfaces are generally in good condition requiring normal cleaning functions, custodians have to work around the building occupants, reducing the time available for classroom cleaning.

Exhibit 5-12 shows survey responses from the district’s students, teachers, principals, and administrative support regarding their perceptions about school cleanliness.

Approximately 38 percent of student respondents indicate dissatisfaction in the cleanliness of schools. During the community open house the review team conducted, a teacher stated: “The school isn’t cleaned very well. I always have to clean my classroom before school. The kids don’t like to use the restrooms here in the building – the athletes go all the way to the field house to use the restroom. The restrooms are always out of toilet paper and soap.” This comment suggests that the custodians are not servicing classrooms and restrooms adequately and that the current practice of performing all cleaning activities between 6:00 AM and 6:30 PM is not efficient. In addition, as indicated by the custodial supervisors, nearly all custodians work 45–47 hours per week and are receive five to six hours of overtime pay each week.

District policy DEA (LOCAL) currently defines the workweek as “12:00 AM Saturday until 11:59 PM Friday.” It also states that “employees who are paid on a salary basis are paid for a 40-hour workweek and do not earn additional pay unless the employee works more than 40 hours. Compensation for overtime hours shall be awarded at one and a half times the employee’s regular rate of pay or by time and a half earned in compensatory time.”

EEISD should establish a custodial work schedule to meet district needs by minimizing overtime work and reducing the summer (260-day work calendar) custodial staff by 35 custodians, for a total of 20 summer custodians. This reduction represents 35 custodians working 80 days less than the current operation. **Exhibit 5-13** shows the potential savings from eliminating 35 custodian staff positions during the summer.

EEISD should schedule custodians to perform some cleaning activities after school session to offer uninterrupted

**EXHIBIT 5-12
PERCEPTIONS ON SCHOOL CLEANLINESS
2005-06**

SURVEY QUESTION: SCHOOLS ARE CLEAN	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Students	9.1%	38.2%	14.5%	30.9%	7.3%
Teachers	9.1%	63.6%	9.1%	18.2%	0.0%
Principals	11.1%	66.7%	11.1%	11.1%	0.0%
Administrative Support	10.5%	63.2%	12.3%	8.8%	5.3%

SOURCE: Review Team Edcouch-Elsa Survey, November 2005.

**EXHIBIT 5-13
ANNUAL SAVINGS FROM REDUCING
CUSTODIAL SUMMER STAFF FROM 55 TO 20**

REDUCTION OF SUMMER CUSTODIANS	DAYS SAVED BY REDUCING SUMMER CUSTODIAL STAFF (35 CUSTODIANS X 80 FEWER DAYS)	TOTAL HOURS SAVED (2,800 X 8 HOURS PER DAY)	TOTAL POTENTIAL SAVINGS @ \$9.28 PER HOUR (22,400 HOURS X \$9.28 PER HOUR)
35	2800	22,400	\$207,872

SOURCE: ????

cleaning periods and greater efficiencies. A second shift can provide an opportunity to eliminate the current practice of paying overtime each week to most members of the custodial staff. If EEISD implements a second (night) custodial shift under current policy, there would be no added cost unless the district chose to implement a “night premium” pay structure. A second shift operating under current policy would serve to reduce or eliminate the current four to five hours of weekly overtime pay each custodian receives since they would perform this work at normal pay rates. **Exhibit 5-14** shows what a potential savings would be to eliminate one hour of overtime pay per custodian (55 total custodians) for a 260-day work calendar.

To remain conservative, this fiscal impact considers the savings included in the previous recommendation. The fiscal impact of reducing the custodial staff to 20 summer custodians is an estimated annual cost savings of \$118,784 (20 custodians x 80 days x 8 hours per day = 12,800 hours), (12,800 hours x \$9.28 average salary = \$118,784).

The fiscal impact of reducing custodial staff hours by 1 hour of overtime per day for a 260-day work calendar is an estimated annual cost savings of \$144,820 (40 custodians x \$13.92 overtime rate = \$557 rounded saved daily), (\$557 x 260 days = \$144,820) for a total combined savings of \$263,604 or (\$118,784 + \$144,820).

CONSTRUCTION PROJECT DELIVERY METHODS (REC. 40)

EEISD does not have local policies in place to allow use of all construction project delivery methods state law allows. The district has local policies in place for two of the six state-approved delivery methods, CVA (LOCAL) Facilities

Construction Competitive Bidding and CVB (LOCAL) Facilities Construction Competitive Sealed Proposals. The district lacks local guidance in place regarding the other four project delivery methods used in industry today. These include Construction Manager-Agent, Construction Manager-at-Risk, Design-Build, and Job Order Contracting.

Each construction project delivery method has its advantages and disadvantages and all are not equally useful on the broad range of construction projects. Three of the project delivery methods, Construction Manager-Agent, Construction Manager-at-Risk, and Design Build, are for new construction. These methods can also be useful for major remodeling/renovation projects. The last method, Job Order Contracting (JOC), cannot be used for new construction but school districts use it for major maintenance activity, renovation, and building alteration. JOC also provides a district the ability to have a general contractor virtually “on retainer” should the need arise for fast services, such as after an emergency (storm damage, flooding, fire, and so forth.) or where quick building expertise is needed. It also gives small districts quick access to specific building expertise through a bid process that will have a known cost per unit of work.

Without a comprehensive policy in place providing guidance for use of the other project delivery methods, EEISD is limiting itself in determining “best-value” for its construction program and assuring that it receives the “best-value” during construction projects. Without policies in place, the district does not have access to newer, more sophisticated project delivery methods school districts commonly use. It is vital for a district to be able to restore facilities as soon as possible

**EXHIBIT 5-14
POTENTIAL CUSTODIAN OVERTIME ANNUAL SAVINGS**

NUMBER OF CUSTODIANS	AVERAGE CUSTODIAL HOURLY PAY RATE (AVERAGE PAY /260 DAYS/8 HRS PER DAY)	ONE HOUR OF OVERTIME PAY FOR 40CUSTODIANS (\$13.92* X 40)	TOTAL ANNUAL OVERTIME PAY REDUCTION BY 1 HOUR FOR 40 CUSTODIANS (@ DAILY RATE X 260 DAYS)
40	\$9.28	\$557	\$144,820

*Overtime rate calculated \$9.28 x 1.5 = \$13.92.
SOURCE: EEISD Payroll Records, November 2005.

should an emergency arises, particularly when a district does not have additional classroom facilities.

The Texas Education Code (TEC) Chapter 44 describes the Fiscal Management rules for the state's school districts. TEC Section 44.031 describes purchasing contracts and requires districts to use the purchasing method that provides the "best value" to the district when acquiring goods and services over \$25,000. This rule suggests that districts be aware of and examine all project delivery methods when deciding which to use for construction of new facilities.

According to TEC, there are six contracting methods school districts can use regarding construction, renovation, remodeling, repair, alteration or rehabilitation of a facility. These are outlined in TEC Sections 44.036 – 44.041 and include the following:

- competitive bidding;
- competitive sealed proposals;
- construction manager-agent;
- construction manager-at-risk;
- design-build; and
- job order contracting.

EEISD should adopt local policies, CVC (Construction Manager-Agent), CVD (Construction Manager-at-Risk), CVE (Design-Build), and CVF (Job Order Contracting) to incorporate the remaining four project delivery methods into its construction contracting options. To implement these additional project delivery methods effectively, EEISD should obtain training for the superintendent and Business manager or ask TEA to suggest where training is available. Many districts take advantage of state-wide conferences hosted by the Texas Association of School Administrators (TASA), the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) or the Texas Association of School Business Officials (TASBO) to obtain such training. The superintendent and Business manager can either train the board or the board members can obtain training at their annual conference. These policies will enable the district to make a comprehensive decision regarding which delivery method provides the "best value" and to benefit from more sophisticated project delivery methods.

The fiscal impact of this recommendation is a one-time training cost of the superintendent and Business manager. The fiscal impact of this recommendation is estimated at a

one-time cost of \$1,630. The training can be obtained by attending workshops or a conference through a professional association at an estimated cost of \$250 plus an estimated \$565 travel per person. ($\$250 + \$565 \text{ per person} \times 2 \text{ persons} = \$1,630$).

For background information on Facilities Management, see p. 244 in the General Information section of the appendices.

FISCAL IMPACT

RECOMMENDATIONS	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) SAVINGS	ONE TIME (COSTS) SAVINGS
CHAPTER 5: FACILITIES MANAGEMENT							
35. Develop a comprehensive facilities long-range master plan for future facilities needs.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
36. Develop and implement a preventive maintenance program that provides direction for regular facility and equipment review and repairs.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
37. Establish a process for periodic review and update of staff distribution among the trades based on analysis of work order backlog, degree of difficulty, skill of the work force, and district needs..	(\$6,134)	(\$6,134)	(\$6,134)	(\$6,134)	(\$6,134)	(\$30,670)	\$0
38. Establish custodial staffing standards based on industry standards and safety and security needs and periodically adjust custodial staffing accordingly.	\$380,940	\$380,940	\$380,940	\$380,940	\$380,940	\$1,904,700	\$0
39. Establish a custodial work schedule to meet district needs by minimizing overtime work and reducing the summer (260-day work calendar) custodial staff by 35 custodians, for a total of 20 summer custodians.	\$263,604	\$263,604	\$263,604	\$263,604	\$263,604	\$1,318,020	\$0
40. Adopt local policies, CVC (Construction Manager-Agent), CVD (Construction Manager-at-Risk), CVE (Design-Build), and CVF (Job Order Contracting) to incorporate the remaining four project delivery methods into its construction contracting options.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$1,630)
TOTALS-CHAPTER 5	\$638,410	\$638,410	\$638,410	\$638,410	\$638,410	\$3,192,050	(\$1,630)

CHAPTER 6

ASSET AND RISK MANAGEMENT

EDCOUCH-ELSA INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

CHAPTER 6. ASSET AND RISK MANAGEMENT

Texas school districts have a fiduciary responsibility to protect publicly financed assets provided to educate children. Asset management involves managing the district's cash resources and physical assets in a cost effective and efficient manner. This management includes providing a system of controls for the collection, disbursement and use of cash as well as accounting for assets and safeguarding them against theft and loss. Asset management for a growing district involves proper oversight of capital improvement spending, including multi-year financial and budget planning. An effective asset management program provides a district with investments that earn the maximum interest rate available while safeguarding funds and ensuring liquidity to meet the district's fluctuating cash flow requirements.

A risk management program can further protect the district's assets, including income, staff and property, by limiting the district's exposure to loss through a formalized decision-making and management process. The decision-making process involves the following steps:

- identifying risk exposures to property, liability, finances and personnel within the district;
- analyzing the risk exposures;
- selecting and applying the proper risk management technique, loss control and/or risk financing; and
- monitoring and making adjustments as needed.

Risk management controls costs by reducing losses through preventive measures and ensuring that the district is adequately protected against significant losses with the lowest possible insurance premiums. A successful risk management program can conserve district resources so more money is available for education of the students.

Edcouch-Elsa Independent School District's (EEISD) cash and asset management is a shared responsibility with the superintendent, Business manager, assistant superintendent for Personnel, and campus principals. The superintendent and Business manager are designated investment officers. The district maintains 33 checking accounts and one investment account. The Business Office maintains 23 of the accounts while campuses and departments maintain the remaining accounts. The district's warehouse receiving staff is responsible for receiving and marking all items that are

fixed assets. Fixed asset items are then delivered to the requesting campus or department. Each year district staff performs a physical inventory of fixed assets. The Business manager, risk manager and insurance clerk are responsible for the risk management function, which includes the purchase and management of the property and casualty coverages, employee benefits administration, workers compensation, and a district safety program. The district chose to self-fund its employee major medical plan and workers compensation program, assuming the liability of all claims instead of purchasing insurance.

ACCOMPLISHMENT

- EEISD established a district safety program to address workers' compensation claims and safety hazards in the district, which resulted in a safer environment for employees and students.

FINDINGS

- EEISD's Business Office does not centralize idle account balances, optimally invest excess cash, maintain cash flow control, or ensure the greatest return with minimal intervention.
- EEISD does not maintain appropriate documentation for its cafeteria plan to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Internal Revenue Code (IRC) Section 125 and limit liability exposure to the district and staff.
- EEISD does not prepare cash flow projections to determine cash requirements and the amount of funds available for investment.
- EEISD has not developed employee benefit procedures to ensure benefit programs are competitive, administered appropriately, and comply with benefit laws.
- EEISD does not use the services of an actuary or any other method to determine the extent of its liability in its self-funded benefit programs.
- EEISD does not effectively manage the self-funded medical plan to ensure contractual agreements are advantageous to the district, the third party administrative (TPA) services are provided in accordance with

agreements, and program communication complies with benefit laws.

- EEISD does not monitor TPA services, analyze losses, or adequately address liability exposures in its self-funded workers' compensation program.
- EEISD lacks internal controls and oversight in the management of its activity funds.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Recommendation 41: Centralize funds to minimize idle balances, invest excess cash, control cash flow, and ultimately gain the greatest return with minimal manual intervention.** The Business manager should reduce the number of bank accounts the Business Office manages from 23 to five. A General Fund-Special Revenue Funds-investment account should be set up as a concentration-sweep account. The existing investment account should be deposited into the new account. All deposits for General Fund and Special Revenue Funds should be made to the investment concentration account. All General Fund and Special Revenue Funds disbursements should clear through the payroll or accounts payable zero-balance accounts, which automatically draw the amount of funds needed to cover checks each day from the investment concentration account. A concentration bank account with zero balance sweep accounts reduces administrative work by eliminating the need to request transfers between funds and then manually post the transactions to the accounting system. It also increases the opportunity to earn interest on all available funds. The Business manager should have more time to keep abreast with TexPool or other authorized investment rates to assess if earnings would be maximized by investing outside the depository as allowed in the district's depository contract. The Business manager should prepare a periodic report for the superintendent demonstrating fund balances are optimizing potential market return.
- **Recommendation 42: Ensure compliance with the Internal Revenue Code rules for cafeteria plans.** The district staff, with the assistance of legal counsel, should develop a cafeteria plan document in compliance with the IRC Section 125 and a summary plan document for employees with a corresponding election agreement. These documents should be presented to and adopted by the board. A request for

proposals (RFP) should be issued for TPA services for the cafeteria plan and selection should be based on a fee for service and criteria outlined in the RFP. The risk manager should develop employee communication with the district's legal counsel that accurately describes the cafeteria plan benefits and provides an explanation of rules and regulations regarding election to participate and revocation of participation during the plan year. The risk manager should monitor the TPA services to ensure compliance with IRC Section 125 and other benefit laws. The risk manager and insurance clerk should take advantage of workshops and seminars that provide updates on IRS Code Section 125 requirements at professional association conferences.

- **Recommendation 43: Develop a cash flow spreadsheet by using historical bank data including trends of cash receipts and cash disbursements.** The Business manager should review the example cash flow projection spreadsheet found in the Financial Accountability System Resource Guide (FASRG.) The Business manager should designate one of the Business Office staff to complete and maintain the spreadsheet. The projection should be prepared for each day, month and year. The spreadsheet should be updated to reflect actual data as it is available and the projection spreadsheet should be used in determining the amount and length of investments. The Business manager should review the spreadsheet daily and use it to make investment decisions.
- **Recommendation 44: Develop employee benefit procedures to guide the district in the selection and administration of benefit programs and require staff to obtain appropriate training on compliance with benefit laws.** The Business manager, risk manager, and insurance clerk should identify the current processes necessary for the administration of the district's employee benefit program and create operating procedures for the department and campuses. The Business manager and risk manager should evaluate the current benefit programs to determine benefit needs and identify duplicate benefit programs that have minimum participation. The district should advertise an RFP for supplemental coverage based on the evaluation. The insurance committee should assist with the review of the proposals and develop recommendations for the superintendent and board of trustees' approval. Each benefit program should submit a contract or agreement

to legal counsel for review before board approval. The Business Office should compile a list of authorized agents for selected benefit plans for the campuses along with vendor guidelines. The risk manager and insurance clerk should receive annual training on benefit laws and compliance requirements. Central office and designated campus staff should receive additional training on employee benefit procedures annually. The employee handbook should be updated to include available benefits and procedures regarding eligibility, enrollments, and change requirements.

- **Recommendation 45: Secure the services of an actuary to determine the extent of the district's liability in both the health and workers' compensation self-insurance funds.** The Business manager should request proposals for actuarial services to analyze the health and workers' compensation self-funded programs. Based on the completed actuarial studies, the district should develop a budget to adequately fund the outstanding liabilities of both programs.
- **Recommendation 46: Contract with an independent insurance consultant to assist in the management of its self-funded medical program.** The consultant can develop specifications for a fully insured plan and TPA services and request proposals to determine if a fully insured plan would be more cost effective for the district. If the district decides to continue to self-fund the medical program, the consultant can provide the expertise that is needed to coordinate the purchase of adequate stop loss coverage, develop employee communication, and review the funding and plan design based on plan experience, medical trends and an actuarial study. The consultant can also coordinate a legal review of the TPA agreement. This ensures the contract represents the best interest of the district and incorporates performance guarantees to protect the district and plan participants. Loss reports and claim processing can be monitored on a monthly basis to assure the TPA complies with the contract and meeting performance guarantees. The consultant can develop and update employee communication, including the summary plan document, assisting the district with compliance with benefit laws and regulations and providing plan participants current information needed to use the plan effectively.

- **Recommendation 47: Contract for the services of an independent insurance consultant to assist with the management of the self-funded workers' compensation program.** The Business manager should assign the responsibility of managing the workers' compensation program to the risk manager. The risk manager and consultant should develop specifications for proposals for TPA services and advertise for proposals before reviewing the current contract with ICON Benefit Administrators, Inc. which is affective through 2008–09. TPA proposals should be evaluated on several criteria, including cost, administrative services that include online software, appropriate staffing levels, medical auditing and a proven service reputation with other districts. A TPA contract should be reviewed by legal counsel and negotiated before recommendation for approval by the board, and it should include performance guarantees, assign liability to the TPA for failure to perform services, and eliminate any clause requiring the district to hold harmless and indemnify the TPA for their actions. The consultant and risk manager should develop a process for ongoing monitoring of the TPA, claim audits, a routine review of loss reports, and the development of a loss control program specifically tailored to the needs of the district. Annual funding should be based on the projected claim costs, reserves for incurred claims and all administrative costs including staff salaries, consultant fees, actuarial studies, TPA services and stop loss coverage.
- **Recommendation 48: Centralize all activity fund accounting and manage all activity transactions through the Business Office accounting system.** Having transactions flow through the Business Office will ensure consistency and proper internal controls; therefore, limiting the opportunity for mismanagement and/or loss. This responsibility should be reassigned to the accountant who handles bank reconciliations and oversees student activity accounts. Centralizing activity funds requires placing the funds in the correct categories. The accountant should work with the schools to determine the correct class of funds as outlined in the FASRG Site Based Decision Making (SBDM) Module, Section 5.5.1, Major Classes of Activity Fund Operations. Activity fund balances should be obtained from school records and should be checked for accuracy. Once the correct class is determined, the accounts with beginning balances should be set up in the district's Regional Service Center Computer Cooperative

(RSCCC) accounting system. The transactions for the funds should flow through the Business Office in the same manner as all other district transactions.

DETAILED ACCOMPLISHMENT

DISTRICT SAFETY PROGRAM

EEISD established a district safety program to address workers' compensation claims and safety hazards in the district, which resulted in a safer environment for employees and students. A district safety committee was formed to address safety issues. The committee is chaired by the risk manager and consists of 38 representatives from the campuses and central office. Campus representatives include an administrator, teacher, and head custodian. The committee tries to meet on a monthly basis and agendas usually address any current safety issue within the district or general topics such as fire safety, bloodborne pathogens, staph infections, and hazard communication. The committee representatives are responsible for taking information back to their campuses and training the employees at their location. The safety presentations are conducted by a contracted loss control representative through the workers' compensation TPA, who serves as a safety resource for the district. The TPA agreement includes a set amount of loss control hours as part of the workers' compensation program, which can be used for safety training and safety inspections.

The campus administrators also set up campus safety committees. These campus committee members serve as safety patrols and are responsible for conducting campus "walk-throughs" to identify campus/building safety hazards. When a safety hazard is identified, the administrator will submit a work order for repairs. In addition, the contracted loss control representative will conduct unannounced on site safety inspections at the campuses or assist with safety recommendations. The loss control representative provides needed expertise in various areas, such as chemical safety, electrical hazards, food service safety and playground inspections. The representative submits findings identified with recommendations in writing to the risk manager. Recommendations are classified as follows:

- Critical: Condition, activity or operation observed presents an eminent danger of causing catastrophic loss.
- Essential: The unsafe condition, activity or operation observed needs to be corrected for the member to meet acceptable standards from a safety standpoint.

- Desirable: The condition, activity or operation observed can be changed to make an improved safety situation.

Reports include district location, date, hazard identified, and recommendation with classification regarding severity. A review of sample recommendations submitted by the loss control representative included the following:

- Gymnasium: To reduce potential hand/body lacerations, replace broken push bar exposing jagged edges to gym door. Classification: Critical
- Electrical Room: Conduct periodic housekeeping of electrical rooms to reduce lint accumulation and potential fire ignition hazard. Classification: Critical
- Kitchen: Ensure all campuses freezer/cooler daily temperature reading documentation is signed by authorized employee. Signatures are missing. Classification: Essential
- Kitchen: The Material Safety Data Sheet manual (MSDS) shall contain an index and Table of Contents for employee reference on the use of a chemical and/or for first aid administration. Classification: Essential
- Library: To reduce potential hand/finger burn injuries, place a "Caution-Hot" sign to laminating machine workstation. Classification: Essential
- Playground: To reduce a potential fall hazard, place six to nine inches in depth of pea gravel and/or mulch to cushion a fall in Special Needs swing area. Swing area has a hard surface. Spread gravel to even slide surface discharge area, to cushion dismount. Classification: Essential
- Playground: To reduce a potential trip/fall hazard and/or body injury, remove brick protruding from landscape by PE room rear entrance/exiting door. Classification: Essential
- Boys Dressing Room: To reduce potential hand lacerations, replace/repair/remove the broken water fountain with missing push bar. Classification: Essential
- Computer Lab: To reduce potential trip/fall hazards, secure computer floor wiring with plastic ties. Computer lab is congested. Classification: Essential

The loss control representative requests the risk manager to notify the representative of any action taken to correct the identified safety issues and recommends that action be taken

within 15 days. Any issues that are classified as critical should be corrected immediately. The risk manager sends a copy of the communication to the superintendent, director of Personnel, Business manager, and principal. In addition to issues identified by the principals and loss control representative, the risk manager will also respond to safety concerns identified by community members, parents and staff.

The district’s workers’ compensation program experienced a reduction in losses since 2002–03. **Exhibit 6-1** shows the number of employee injuries for the past three years. In 2002–03, there were 115 employee injuries. In both 2003–04 and 2004–05, there was a 15 percent reduction in employee accidents.

EEISD reduced the number of workers’ compensation claims and made an ongoing commitment to creating a safer environment for employees and students because of the district safety committee’s work with the risk manager, loss control representative, and campus safety committees.

**EXHIBIT 6-1
WORKERS’ COMPENSATION CLAIMS
2002-05**

FUND YEAR	EMPLOYEE INJURIES
2002-03	115
2003-04	97
2004-05	82

SOURCE: Texas Political Subdivision, EEISD Workers’ Compensation Claim For 2000-03, as of August 29, 2005 and American Administrative Group, EEISD Workers’ Compensation Claims Summary 2003-05, as of October 31, 2005.

DETAILED FINDINGS

BANK ACCOUNT INVESTMENTS (REC. 41)

EEISD’s Business Office does not centralize idle account balances, optimally invest excess cash, maintain cash flow control, or ensure the greatest return with minimal intervention. Funds flowing through the State Comptroller’s office to the district are electronically deposited into an investment account. The district deposits all other funds in their respective bank accounts. The Business manager manually transfers funds, as needed, from the investment account to payroll and other accounts. Journal entries reflecting the transfers are manually written and posted to the accounting system.

The district maintains 33 checking accounts and one investment account. The Business Office maintains 23 of

the accounts while campuses and departments maintain the 10 remaining accounts. An accountant reconciles the 23 bank accounts assigned to the Business Office each month. This process takes between seven and 10 days a month. **Exhibit 6-2** shows the EEISD’s checking balances as of November 30, 2005.

The Business Office does not prepare a periodic investment return report for the superintendent or board of trustees to demonstrate if the current return exceeds TexPool or other authorized investment pool rates. TexPool is a public funds investment pool as Government Code 2256.016 permits. In addition, the district does not diversify investments as allowed in Board policy CDA (LOCAL). EEISD entered

**EXHIBIT 6-2
BANK ACCOUNT BALANCES
NOVEMBER 30, 2005**

BANK ACCOUNT	NOVEMBER 30, 2005 BALANCE
Athletic Fund	\$39,163.48
Cafeteria Account	\$97,933.74
Computer Fund	\$142,826.26
Construction Fund	\$0.00
Construction Fund Series 2000	\$26,425.31
EEISD/CED	\$3,513.19
Employee Welfare Benefit	\$269,648.19
General Fund	(\$12,836.07)
Health & Dental	\$167.10
Health Claims Clearing	\$503.18
Health Claims-ICON	(\$679,380.26)
Interest & Sinking Fund 1997	\$1,440.45
Interest & Sinking Fund 2000	\$1,296.57
Interest & Sinking Fund 2002	\$1,161.10
Interest & Sinking Fund 2005	\$1,282.42
Interest & Sinking-Unlimited Bond Interest	\$1346.67
Investment Account	\$3,920,689.85
Memorial Book Fund	\$6.68
Payroll Account	(\$633,534.22)
Ruben Rodriguez Parent Advisory	\$258.87
School Administration Employee Fund	\$906.58
School Based Health Clinic	\$7,500.82
Worker’s Compensation	\$34,668.94
TOTAL	\$3,224,988.85

SOURCE: EEISD bank balances, November 2005.

into a new depository contract beginning September 1, 2005. All checking accounts earn interest at the rate of the 13-week Treasury Bill (T-Bill) as quoted in the Wall Street Journal on the first business day of each month.

Exhibit 6-3 shows the TexPool and TexPool prime rate versus the 90-day Treasury Bill rate.

The manual management of the 23 accounts results in the creation of administrative work for the Business manager and the accountant. The time the Business manager spends transferring funds from the investment account to other accounts, and the time the accountant spends preparing and posting journal entries and bank reconciliation is not efficient. The accountant spends approximately 56.8 hours per month that could be spent on other Business Office tasks. The district is not maximizing yield on its investments nor is it diversifying its investments to ensure liquidity.

All investments made by the district shall comply with the Public Funds Investment Act (Texas Government Code Chapter 2256, Subchapter A) and all federal, state and local statutes, rules or regulations. The district's CDA (LOCAL) policy gives authority to the investment officers of the district to invest in public funds investment pools and other instruments as permitted by Government Code 2256.016. These include the following investment types:

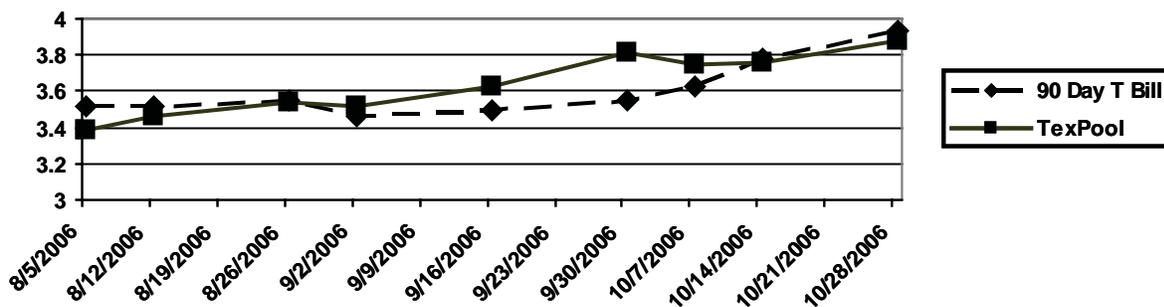
- obligations of, or guaranteed by, governmental entities as permitted by Government Code 2256.009;
- certificates of deposit and share certificates as permitted by Government Code 2256.010;
- fully collateralized repurchase agreements permitted by Government Code 2256.011;

- a securities lending program as permitted by Government Code 2265.0115;
- banker's acceptances as permitted by Government Code 2256.012;
- commercial paper as permitted by Government Code 2256.013;
- no-load money market mutual and no-load mutual funds as permitted by Government Code 2256.014;
- a guaranteed investment contract as an investment vehicle for bond proceeds, provided it meets the criteria and eligibility requirements established by Government Code 2256.015; and
- public funds investment pools as permitted by Government Code 2256.016.

Kingsville ISD maintains two checking accounts for normal business operations resulting in lower bank service fees and less employee time administering the accounts. In addition, the opportunity for investments is maximized by having excess cash in one concentration account.

The district should centralize funds to minimize idle balances, invest excess cash, control cash flow, and ultimately gain the greatest return with minimal manual intervention. The Business manager should reduce the number of bank accounts the Business Office manages from 23 to five. A General Fund-Special Revenue Funds-investment account should be set up as a concentration-sweep account. The existing investment account should be deposited into the new account. All deposits for General Fund and Special Revenue Funds should be made to the investment

EXHIBIT 6-3
TEXPOOL V. 3-MONTH TREASURY CONSTANT MATURITY 2006



SOURCE: TexPool Website and Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve Website 2006.

concentration account. All General Fund and Special Revenue Funds disbursements should clear through the payroll or accounts payable zero balance accounts which automatically draw the amount of funds needed to cover checks each day from the investment concentration account. A concentration bank account with zero balance sweep accounts may be more expensive; however the reduction of administrative work by eliminating the need to request transfers between funds and then manually post the transactions to the accounting system outweighs any additional costs. It also increases the opportunity to earn interest on all available funds. The Business manager should have more time to keep abreast with TexPool or other authorized investment rates to assess if earnings would be maximized by investing outside the depository as allowed in the district's depository contract. The Business manager should prepare a periodic report for the superintendent demonstrating fund balances are optimizing potential market return.

The following list shows the recommended bank accounts the Business Office should consider. All Interest and Sinking Fund accounts are combined, the Construction Fund accounts are combined, the Health Insurance Clearing Fund accounts are combined, the Workers' Compensation Fund remains as it is and all other accounts become part of the investment/concentration account.

- Interest & Sinking Fund
- Construction Fund
- Health Claims Clearing
- Workers' Compensation
- Investment/Concentration/Zero Balance Accounts

The fiscal impact assumes the increased costs for the sweep account will offset the fees incurred by the district for the recommended reduction of 18 bank accounts. The review team calculated the fiscal impact of increased interest resulting from this recommendation by aggregating the November 2005 bank balances (\$3,224,989) and applying the difference between the November 2005 T-Bill Interest rate and the November 2005 TexPool Prime Interest rate (4.02% - 3.86 % = 0.16 %). The estimated increase in interest earnings is \$5,160 annually ($\$3,224,989 \times 0.16\% = \$5,160$).

CAFETERIA PLAN (REC. 42)

EEISD does not maintain appropriate documentation for its cafeteria plan to ensure compliance with the requirements of

the Internal Revenue Code (IRC) Section 125 and limit liability exposure to the district and staff. Cafeteria plans are authorized under the IRC Section 125 and allow employers to provide the option of purchasing some fringe benefits before taxes are calculated, saving both the employer and employees on taxes. The district offers a cafeteria plan benefit providing employees the option of placing their benefit premiums on the cafeteria plan, in addition to medical and dependent reimbursement accounts. The district staff could not provide the review team with the original board resolution adopting the cafeteria plan. The Business manager did provide a Flexible Fringe Benefit Program Agreement effective March 1, 1987 through September 30, 1987. Subsequent documents were not provided except for a Flexible Spending Account Plan Service Agreement effective September 23, 2003, which did not have a signature for the vendor.

In July 2005, the district advertised a request for proposals (RFP) for TPA services for the district's cafeteria plan and for tax deferred annuities and deferred compensation plans. In addition, the RFP included a request for "voluntary employee benefits" but did not have any specifications for those benefits. The RFP stated the proposals should include the following scope of service for the cafeteria plan administration:

- work directly with staff and insurance committee to design and/or maintain a cafeteria plan document;
- make arrangements to meet all legal requirements of IRC Section 125;
- educate EEISD employees on concept of cafeteria plan;
- be responsible for enrollment of employees on all campuses;
- provide up-to-date information to employees;
- assist in processing of claims;
- investigate delays on properly submitted claims;
- file tax information with Internal Revenue Service;
- maintain appropriate accounting records;
- assist administration with resolution of employee problems as they arise;
- provide EEISD with a staff that is easily accessible;

- assist administration in determining that District policy is adhered to in product distribution;
- assume responsibility for all needed forms and documents;
- provide a consolidated billing identifying all participating employees and their contributions;
- disburse contributions to the various carriers and vendors on a monthly basis;
- provide a monthly reconciliation of contribution receipts and disbursements;
- arrange for approved changes in employees' payroll deductions;
- assume responsibility for compliance with all applicable state and federal statutes and regulations;
- provide medical and dependent care reimbursement on an automatic draw basis; and
- assist in the development of a program, which best serve the employees needs.

The district awarded a contract to First Financial Administrators, Inc. to provide TPA services for the district's Section 125 Cafeteria Plan and Section 403(b) and 403(b) (7) plans. District staff did not provide the review team with a copy of the evaluation of the proposals submitted in response to the RFP nor the board of trustees' agenda approving the contract. The TPA's response to the RFP questionnaire stated that the TPA will provide the cafeteria plan and Section 403(b) and 403(b) (7) compliance and administration, and consolidated billing services for no fee if their marketing company, First Financial Capital Corporation, is selected to provide the Section 125 voluntary products to employees on an exclusive basis. The TPA also stated that "it does not market products, and therefore, does not collect commissions from vendors. Commissions are paid to offset administrative and enrollment services for voluntary and/or district paid insurance plans marketed by First Financial Capital Corporation." The TPA's proposal states upon award of the contract the TPA will meet with district staff to develop all necessary legal documents, including the implementation or revision of the district's Section 125 plan document. The proposal further states the TPA will establish an enrollment schedule with the district and an agenda for employee education and enrollment meetings. In December 2005, the district received their TPA agreement signed on

November 28, 2005 by the TPA representative. The effective date of the agreement was November 1, 2005. This agreement included an amendment to the existing cafeteria plan document, although the district did not provide the original or "existing" cafeteria plan document during the review team's visit. In addition, the district did not provide any evidence that legal counsel reviewed the agreement, plan document amendment, or employee communication. Furthermore, the TPA conducted an open enrollment for the district's cafeteria plan during the months of August and September, before the execution of the contract.

The insurance clerk maintains a supply of the TPA's employee communication distributed to staff during the open enrollment period in August. The material was provided to each employee and to new employees as hired. The communication states "Not all of your benefit options qualify for section 125. Cancer coverage, heart and stroke coverage, and dental all qualify. Disability insurance does not qualify." **Exhibit 6-4** shows the benefits listed in the TPA's cafeteria plan open enrollment communication packet.

EXHIBIT 6-4
CAFETERIA PLAN BENEFIT OPTIONS
NOVEMBER 2005

BENEFIT PROGRAMS

- American Fidelity Disability Insurance
- American Fidelity Long Term Care Insurance
- American Fidelity Accident Plan
- American Fidelity Hospital Gap Insurance
- American Fidelity Supplemental Cancer Insurance
- Allstate Supplemental Heart and Stroke Insurance
- LifeRe Vision Insurance
- Texas Life Permanent Life Insurance
- Un-reimbursed medical and dependent care accounts

SOURCE: EEISD Business Office, November 2005.

Although the communication states the disability insurance plan does not qualify as an option for the district's cafeteria plan, it is the first benefit listed on the menu of options. The district did not provide a cafeteria election form to the review team to determine if disability premiums were allowed on the district's plan or not. If an employee places their disability plan under the cafeteria plan, any benefits they receive from the plan are taxable. There was no employee communication informing participants of the tax liability for disability plans included under the cafeteria plan. Only the brochures of the

plans marketed by the TPA's "marketing company" are included in the cafeteria plan open enrollment materials distributed to each employee and new employees. In addition, the employee packet does not include an explanation of rules and regulations regarding election to participate, revocation of participation during the plan year or terms of the medical and dependent care reimbursement accounts. The district did not provide any evaluation documents used to select these products for payroll deduction or evidence that the district's insurance committee reviewed these products.

The EEISD Employee Handbook provides only a generic statement of the cafeteria plan, without any specific information on participation requirements, opportunities to make election changes or specific benefits offered in EEISD that qualify for placement under the cafeteria plan. The handbook includes the following information:

Employees may be eligible to participate in the cafeteria plan (Section 125) and, under IRS regulation, must either accept or reject this benefit. This plan enables employees to pay certain insurance premiums on a pretax basis (i.e., disability, accidental death and dismemberment, cancer and dread disease, dental and additional term life insurance). A TPA provider handles employee claims made on these accounts.

New employees must accept or reject this benefit during their first month of employment. All employees must accept or reject this benefit on an annual basis and during the specified period.

The handbook description of the cafeteria plan does not include the medical reimbursement or dependent care accounts that are available to employees. It does state the disability insurance premiums are eligible to be placed under the cafeteria plan.

If an employee wishes to change an election agreement during the year, the staff contacts the TPA. According to staff, the TPA is responsible for communicating the plan requirements and benefits to the employees. The staff has not attended training on cafeteria plan regulations and is not familiar with the impact benefit laws have on the plan; consequently, they cannot effectively monitor the TPA's service and ensure compliance with the IRC Section 125.

The district allowed the TPA's marketing company to gain a competitive advantage over other vendors providing employee benefit products in the district. Employees receive

only brochures on the TPA's marketing company's specific products during the required one on one employee meetings for the cafeteria open enrollment. In addition, the TPA only lists their products on the "menu of options" for the cafeteria plan.

The district is the sponsor of the cafeteria plan and is ultimately responsible for complying with the IRC Section 125 requirements. This responsibility requires appropriate documentation and employee communication. During the review team's visit, the district could not provide a copy of the TPA's written agreement outlining all of the responsibilities assumed by the TPA in the plan administration along with the TPA's assumption of liability incurred due to failure to meet those responsibilities. The agreement was signed in November and returned to the TPA for signatures. Consequently, the district allowed the TPA to conduct an open enrollment for a cafeteria plan and market benefits in August and September without a signed agreement outlining the company's responsibilities and designating liability for any failure to deliver services or products. Review of the agreement in December noted that the agreement does not incorporate the original requirements of the RFP and TPA proposal as part of the contract. Failure to review all employee communication regarding benefits and the cafeteria plan resulted in employees receiving conflicting information, such as whether disability benefits qualify for the district's cafeteria plan or not. No communication was identified that provided employees information on the income tax impact of placing a disability plan on a cafeteria plan. Without legal review of the cafeteria plan document, TPA agreement and all employee communication regarding the cafeteria plan, there are no assurances that the district is in compliance with the IRC Section 125 requirements.

Failure to comply with the IRC Section 125 requirements can result in penalties to the district. When the district does not meet compliance requirements, it can also adversely affect employees.

The Internal Revenue Code Sections 79, 105, 106, 125, 129, 213 and 401 created the cafeteria plan benefit that allows the district and employees significant tax savings. Contributions authorized by an employee salary reduction agreement are not subject to federal and local income taxation. To offer this benefit, a district must comply with the IRC requirements for administration and documentation of all cafeteria plans. The IRC Section 125 requires the cafeteria plan document to include:

- a description of each benefit available under the plan and the period of coverage;
- a description of the eligibility rules for participants;
- procedures for holding elections under the plan, including when elections may be made and revoked and elections referring to a period when the employees make decisions about enrollment;
- the manner in which employer contributions may be made, such as by salary reduction agreement between the employer and employee, by non-elective employer contributions or by both;
- a statement regarding the maximum amount of employer contributions available to any participant; and
- the plan year.

Many school districts are knowledgeable of the IRC requirements for cafeteria plan administration and required plan documentation. This documentation includes a written plan document, summary plan descriptions, and salary reduction agreements. Districts that outsource their cafeteria plan's administration ensure the following:

- the TPA is licensed to do business in Texas;
- the TPA has a good track record and history of cafeteria plan administration;
- a contract is issued stating what the district wants accomplished;
- the TPA or outsource representative accepts responsibility for its administration and indemnifies and holds the district harmless for the TPA's failure to meet administrative compliance issues with IRS;
- the TPA does not confuse the roles of "enroller" with that of marketer; and
- the TPA protects the district employee's rights.

To ensure compliance with the IRC Section 125 for cafeteria plans, school districts develop a cafeteria plan document with the assistance of legal counsel for board approval. The document will include the board approved benefit options that can be placed under the cafeteria plan. Written employee communication will include a corresponding summary plan document with employee election agreements and change forms. Contracting with a third-party administrator includes requesting proposals, evaluating submitted proposals to

assure all services are included, and a written agreement that identifies the district and TPA responsibilities and addresses liability issues. The written agreement includes a hold harmless clause that protects the district from administrative errors resulting from the TPA staff. The district does not allow the agent for the TPA to market products while counseling employees on cafeteria plan elections during the annual enrollment period. The district staff monitors the TPA to ensure compliance with the IRS Code Section 125 and other benefit laws.

EEISD should ensure compliance with the Internal Revenue Code rules for cafeteria plans. The district staff, with the assistance of legal counsel, should develop a cafeteria plan document in compliance with the IRC Section 125 and a summary plan document for employees with a corresponding election agreement. These documents should be presented to and adopted by the board. As the term of the current TPA contract approaches conclusion, a RFP should be issued for TPA services for the cafeteria plan and selection should be based on a fee for service and criteria outlined in the RFP. The risk manager should develop employee communication with the district's legal counsel that accurately describes the cafeteria plan benefits and provides an explanation of rules and regulations regarding election to participate and revocation of participation during the plan year. The risk manager should monitor the TPA services to ensure compliance with IRC Section 125 and other benefit laws. The risk manager and insurance clerk should take advantage of workshops and seminars that provide updates on IRS Code Section 125 requirements at professional association conferences.

The implementation of this recommendation is based on annual training the staff on IRC Section 125 requirements for cafeteria plans and employee communication. The training is usually conducted in Austin by the Texas Association of School Business (TASB) and is presented at no cost to member districts. The district would be responsible for related travel expense. The review team estimated the associated travel expense to be \$543 for two days X 2 staff members = \$1,086. The district's general counsel can conduct the appropriate review of documents since it is on a retainer. Any TPA fees can be charged back to the employee based on the benefits they select to be placed on the cafeteria plan.

CASH FLOW (REC. 43)

EEISD does not prepare cash flow projections to determine cash requirements and the amount of funds available for

investment. Cash flow projections are planning tools for forecasting future cash requirements. Cash flow projections are crucial to effective cash management because they can identify cash inflows and outflows so the district can invest the available funds.

The Business manager stated his investment decisions are based upon the cash needs necessary to cover payroll and accounts payable. The district invests in certificates of deposits in its depository. Cash flow forecasting involves identifying the amount of money available each day, month and year and estimating the amount of revenue, the source of the revenue and the date of anticipated receipt. It also involves the amounts and dates of anticipated expenditures. By not having a cash flow spreadsheet, the district cannot analyze and develop an investment strategy. An investment strategy is crucial in maximizing investment earnings.

The Texas School Performance Review publication, *Banks to Bonds*, states that when a district develops its investment strategy, all assets should be considered and placed in interest-earning vehicles if possible. The publication recommends that a cash flow analysis be used to determine the amounts of cash that will be needed and the length of time that funds can be invested.

The Texas Education Agency *Financial Accountability System Resource Guide* (FASRG), Section 1.2.1 Cash and Investments, states the following:

Cash and investments often represent one of the largest assets on a school district's balance sheet. The investment of excess school district funds should be made with judgment, care, prudence, discretion, and with diligent management. A cash flow projection report is an important management tool that directs decisions about the maturity of various investment instruments, in accordance with projected uses of cash to liquidate financial obligations. The investment of public funds should never be made for speculative purposes, but rather with consideration for the probable safety of principal and probable return on such investments.

This FASRG section includes an example of a cash flow projection spreadsheet many districts use.

The district should develop a cash flow spreadsheet by using historical bank data including trends of cash receipts and cash disbursements. The Business manager should review the example cash flow projection spreadsheet found in the

FASRG. The Business manager should designate one of the Business Office staff to complete and maintain the spreadsheet. The projection should be prepared for each day, month and year. The spreadsheet should be updated to reflect actual data as it is available and the projection spreadsheet should be used in determining the amount and length of investments. The Business manager should review the spreadsheet daily and use it make investment decisions.

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS OPERATING PROCEDURES (REC. 44)

EEISD has not developed employee benefit procedures to ensure benefit programs are competitive, administered appropriately, and comply with benefit laws. The district's employee benefits administration is assigned to the Business Office. The Business manager is responsible for the overall program and the risk manager and insurance clerk handle the daily operations. Although the job description for the risk manager does not include any employee benefit responsibilities, the risk manager is responsible for supervising the insurance clerk, reviewing the health plan check register, assisting employees with claim resolution, working with the district's insurance committee, and serving as a back-up to the insurance clerk. In addition, all insurance agents are required to meet with the risk manager to obtain an approval letter to market their benefit programs on campuses at the beginning of the school year. The risk manager stated that they do not screen any of the agents or their benefit products. The sole purpose of the agent meeting with the risk manager is to maintain a record of who comes to the district for the superintendent. The risk manager stated that "the district cannot discriminate against a particular vendor," consequently, no one is denied access to the campuses and everyone is allowed to market their products at the campuses once they receive a letter. The district does not verify the financial stability of any of the carriers providing life insurance, disability, cancer, or catastrophic plans that employees purchase through payroll deductions. Furthermore, the district does not address guarantees for coverage and liability issues related to the employee benefit programs with the carriers or insurance agents. District staff could not provide the review team with copies of any agreements or contracts for any of the supplemental employee benefit programs.

The insurance clerk is responsible for processing employee applications and change forms, communicating benefits to new employees, setting up payroll deductions for the supplemental plans, and assisting employees with routine concerns such as claim questions and benefit clarifications.

Employee enrollment changes to the major medical and dental plans are completed online, but the supplemental benefit programs such as life insurance, disability and cancer plans require employees to submit completed enrollment and change forms to the clerk, who faxes them to the insurance companies. The clerk is also responsible for reconciling the monthly billings from the vendors after the monthly and biweekly payrolls are run. The reconciliation process is inefficient because there are approximately 60 vendors on payroll deduction for supplemental plans and annuities. The risk manager has cross-trained on these responsibilities.

The district lacks administrative regulations or procedures to guide employees in administering benefit programs and ensuring compliance with various benefit laws. The risk manager and insurance clerk do not receive regular training on benefit related laws such as the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA), Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconstruction Act (COBRA), Internal Revenue Service Code (IRS) Section 125 Cafeteria Plan, and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). Training in these areas is not available locally and would require travel throughout the state. The risk manager obtained training predominantly in the area of risk management and workers compensation through professional associations. There is no evidence of districtwide training for employees who communicate benefits at the campuses, including administrators and paraprofessional staff. Employees have not received training on FMLA benefits. Neither the insurance clerk nor the Personnel secretary is familiar with the requirements of FMLA. There have been only two documented FMLA leaves since 2002. The district's employee handbook does not provide accurate information on the benefit programs the district offers, nor does it provide information on COBRA or HIPAA rights. In addition, it does not include election and change requirements for the cafeteria plan or procedures for tax sheltered annuities.

EEISD established an employee insurance committee that includes administrators, teachers and at-will employees representing the various campuses and departments. The committee members serve on a three-year cycle to provide continuity from year to year. The committee provides employee input into the district benefit programs. Although the district is not always able to take action on the concerns brought forward by committee members, the risk manager stated that they have made some progress. One concern discussed was the issue of single parents paying the same

health care premium, whether it was for coverage for one child or several children. The district implemented a reduced premium for coverage for one child only on the district's health plan for the current year. While the committee serves as an excellent avenue for obtaining employee input on benefit programs, participants at the Site Based Decision Making focus group stated that it seemed like most issues brought to the committee were a "done deal" and that they were just informing the committee of a change or benefit.

Operating without written benefit procedures puts the district at risk for non-compliance with benefit laws and plan requirements. A lack of procedures causes the insurance clerk, personnel, payroll, and campus staff to operate without guidelines for processing and communicating benefits consistently and following plan requirements. Failure to comply with plan requirements can jeopardize employee coverage under a benefit plan. In addition, the absence of operating procedures can result in staff failing to comply with benefit laws. This noncompliance can create liability exposures for both the district and employee, with possibilities of assessed penalties or fines. For example, if the district does not require the annuity companies to inform the employee of the maximum exclusion allowance set by the Internal Revenue Service for tax sheltered annuities, both the district and the employee can be liable for the any excess taxes that were not paid. The district has additional liability exposures when procedures are not developed to ensure compliance with such laws as FMLA, COBRA and HIPAA.

Without established guidelines for review and evaluation criteria, the district may fail to request proposals periodically for competitive benefit programs. When several vendors are allowed to offer the same product within a district, it can result in higher premiums because the program participation is spread among several companies. Without a screening or verification process to confirm a vendor's financial stability, licenses, reputation for claims service and benefit payments, increases the employees' and the district's risk for doing business with a company that may not be financially sound. Without contracts or agreements for each company, the district has not identified the expectations for service in exchange for premium payments nor has liability been assigned to the company if it fails to provide coverage for a claim. It is reasonable for employees to assume that the district reviewed each company for financial stability and service reputation, before authorizing the agent to sell the product on campus and approve payroll deductions. In addition, the district allowed several vendors to market

similar or like products to the employees, creating a significant burden on the insurance clerk to process all of the enrollment forms during the months of August and September and reconcile the monthly billings.

Employee benefit procedure manuals incorporate the requirements of benefit laws such as FMLA, COBRA, and HIPAA to assure district compliance. The Family Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA), entitles eligible employees to take up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave in a 12-month period for specified family and medical reasons. Employees retain certain rights pertaining to benefits while on FMLA. The law states the following:

- During any FMLA leave, an employer must maintain an employee’s coverage under any group health plan, as defined in the Internal Revenue Code, on the same conditions as coverage would have been provided if the employee had been continuously employed during the entire leave period.
- The same group health plan benefits provided to an employee prior to taking FMLA leave must be maintained during the FMLA leave.
- If the employer provides a new health plan or benefits, or changes health benefits or plans, while an employee is on FMLA leave, the employee is entitled to the new or changed plan/benefits to the same extent as if the employee were not on leave.
- Notice of any opportunity to change plans or benefits must also be given to an employee on FMLA.
- An employee may choose not to retain group health plan coverage during FMLA leave. However, when an employee returns from leave, the employee is entitled to be reinstated on the same terms as prior to taking the leave, including family or dependent coverages.
- An employee’s entitlement to benefits other than group health benefits during a period of FMLA leave (e.g., holiday pay) is to be determined by the employer’s established policy for providing such benefits when the employee is on other forms of leave (paid or unpaid, as appropriate).

The Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconstruction Act of 1986 (COBRA) provides former employees, retirees, spouses, former spouses, and dependent children the right to temporary continuation of health coverage at group rates. Qualification for continued coverage is based on coverage loss due to specific “qualifying” events. Under COBRA, a

group benefit plan is defined as “a plan that provides health care benefits for the employer’s employees and their dependents through insurance or another mechanism such as a trust, health maintenance organization, self-funded pay-as-you-go basis, reimbursement or combination of these.” Health care benefits available to COBRA beneficiaries may include the following:

- inpatient and outpatient hospital care;
- physician care;
- surgery and other major medical benefits;
- prescription drugs; and
- any other health care benefits, such as dental and vision care.

Individuals who qualify for and elect COBRA continuation coverage must pay for COBRA continuation coverage. When a qualifying event occurs such as termination of employment or reduction of hours, the employer must notify the plan administrator or insurance company. When other qualifying events occur such as divorce or a dependent child losing eligibility, the employee must notify the Plan administrator within 60 days of the event.

Employers must provide initial notice to employees of their rights under COBRA, usually when they are hired. When an employee is no longer eligible for health coverage, the employer must provide the employee with specific notice regarding their rights to COBRA continuation benefits. Spouses and dependent children covered under a qualified benefit have an independent right to elect COBRA coverage upon an employee’s termination or reduction in hours.

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) include the HIPAA Privacy Rule that protects all “individually identifiable health information held or transmitted by a covered entity.” This information is referred to as “protected health information (PHI)” and is information, including demographic data, which relates to the following:

- the individual’s past, present or future physical or mental health or condition;
- the provision of health care to the individual; or
- the past, present, or future payment for the provision of health care to the individual, and that identifies the individual. It may include name, address, birth date, and Social Security Number.

The HIPAA Privacy Rule identifies the following administrative requirements for covered entities:

- **Privacy Policies and Procedures:** A covered entity must develop and implement written privacy policies and procedures that are consistent with the Privacy Rule.
- **Privacy Personnel:** A covered entity must designate a privacy official responsible for developing and implementing its privacy policies and procedures, and a contact person or contact office responsible for receiving complaints and providing individuals with information on the covered entity's privacy practices.
- **Workforce Training and Management:** Workforce members include employees, volunteers, and trainees. A covered entity must train all workforce members on its privacy policies and procedures, as necessary and appropriate for them to carry out their functions. The entity must have and apply appropriate sanctions against workforce members who violate its privacy policies and procedure or the Privacy Rule.
- **Mitigation:** A covered entity must mitigate, to the extent practicable, any harmful effect it learns was caused by the use or disclosure of protected health information by its workforce.
- **Data Safeguards:** The entity must maintain reasonable and appropriate administrative, technical, and physical safeguards to prevent intentional or unintentional use or disclosure of protected health information in violation of the Privacy Rule and to limit its incidental use and disclosure pursuant to otherwise permitted or required use or disclosure.
- **Complaints:** The entity must have procedures for individuals to complain about its compliance with its privacy policies and procedures and the Privacy Rule.
- **Retaliation and Waiver:** The entity may not retaliate against a person for exercising rights provided by the Privacy rule.

The Texas Department of Insurance publication *Insurance Decisions for Texas Schools* states districts that self-fund medical programs should consult with legal counsel annually to ensure compliance with the HIPAA requirements. It further states that penalties for HIPAA noncompliance can be severe. These penalties include up to \$25,000 for multiple violations of the same provision within a calendar year, and up to \$250,000 and/or imprisonment up to 10 years for

knowing misuse of individually identifiable health information.

Many school districts develop procedures for managing employee benefit programs. These procedures include requesting proposals for programs and selecting benefit options that provide the best coverage at the most affordable price. They include guidelines for benefit administration to ensure consistency in employee communication, vendor guidelines for marketing within the district, and compliance with benefit laws. Benefit options and employee rights are clearly communicated to all district staff. Staff responsible for benefit administration receive adequate training on legal updates on a routine basis. This training includes campus based personnel who assist with benefit communication at the schools.

The district should develop employee benefit procedures to guide the district in the selection and administration of benefit programs and require staff to obtain appropriate training on compliance with benefit laws. The Business manager, risk manager, and insurance clerk should identify the current processes necessary for the administration of the district's employee benefit program and create operating procedures for the department and campuses. The Business manager and risk manager should evaluate the current benefit programs to determine benefit needs and identify duplicate benefit programs that have minimum participation. The district should advertise an RFP for supplemental coverage based on the evaluation. The insurance committee should assist with the review of the proposals and develop recommendations for the superintendent and board of trustees' approval. Each benefit program should submit a contract or agreement to legal counsel for review before board approval. The Business Office should compile a list of authorized agents for selected benefit plans for the campuses along with vendor guidelines. The risk manager and insurance clerk should receive annual training on benefit laws and compliance requirements. Central office and designated campus staff should receive additional training on employee benefit procedures annually. The employee handbook should be updated to include available benefits and procedures regarding eligibility, enrollments, and change requirements.

The review team estimated the fiscal impact of this recommendation at \$1,842 annually. The training can be obtained by attending workshops or a conference through a professional association usually in Austin at an estimated cost of \$250 per person plus estimated travel costs of \$671

for three days (\$921 per person x two staff members = \$1,842).

SELF-INSURANCE LIABILITIES (REC. 45)

EEISD does not use the services of an actuary or any other method to determine the extent of its liability in its self-funded benefit programs. The district self-funds its workers' compensation and major medical programs. Under a self-funded plan, the district assumes the risk of loss and pays all claims rather than paying an insurance company to assume the risk.

The superintendent stated that the high cost of health care is the reason EEISD chose to self-fund the medical program, which includes three options: a state comparable plan, high option plan, and low option plan. The superintendent said the Teacher Retirement System of Texas (TRS) health plan, TRS ActiveCare, is too expensive. As part of the employee benefit package, the district pays the employee only premium for the district's low option plan. **Exhibit 6-5** shows a comparison of the district's health care contributions to the TRS ActiveCare premiums for the years 2004 through 2006.

The Business manager stated that the district does not use an actuary to determine needed funding for the medical plan, but relies on the third-party administrator, ICON Benefit Administrators, Inc., to determine the employee rates for the plan's funding. An actuary is a person professionally trained to conduct statistical studies to determine the probability of future claims in a medical plan and to estimate the cost for those claims. The evaluation considers membership, plan design, administrative costs, historical claims and health care

trends. Based on the analysis, an actuary will develop funding recommendations for payment of future claims and administrative costs, and identify what reserves and cost containment measures are needed to ensure the benefit plan remains financially sound.

The employee share of the medical contribution has not increased since 2002, as shown in **Exhibit 6-6**. The district's contribution to the medical plan recently increased from \$270 per employee for 2002–05 to \$300 per employee for 2005–06. In addition to the increase in the district employee contribution for 2005–06, the district is offering a separate premium rate for an employee with one child versus an employee with more than one child.

The TPA advised the district to increase their monthly contribution per employee from \$270 to \$300 in an effort to fund the 2005–06 medical program closer to the TPA's estimated maximum liability exposure rather than the expected claim limit. **Exhibit 6-7** shows the self-funded program's contributions and payments for 2003–04 and 2004–05 by plan.

The contributions for the low option plan have offset the claim payments for both the state comparable and high options for both plan years.

As claims are processed, the TPA provides a claims and disbursement report via email to the Business manager, who reviews the report. Disbursement of funds is made only after the district's risk manager completes a second review. Claims are presented and disbursements are normally made on a weekly basis. Funds are dispersed from a district bank

**EXHIBIT 6-5
HEALTH CONTRIBUTIONS VERSUS STATE PLAN CONTRIBUTIONS
2004 THROUGH 2006**

COVERAGE CATEGORY	EEISD 2005–06			TRS CARE 2005–06			EEISD 2002–04			TRS CARE 2004–05		
	STATE COMP	HIGH	LOW	OPTION 1	OPTION 2	OPTION 3	STATE COMP	HIGH	LOW	OPTION 1	OPTION 2	OPTION 3
Employee Only	\$460	\$380	\$300	\$249	\$331	\$446	\$430	\$350	\$270	\$249	\$331	\$419
Employee & Spouse	\$805	\$640	\$475	\$566	\$753	\$1,014	\$775	\$610	\$445	\$566	\$753	\$952
Employee & Child	\$686	\$551	\$416	\$396	\$527	\$710	\$688	\$553	\$418	\$396	\$537	\$667
Employee & Children	\$718	\$583	\$448	\$396	\$527	\$710	\$688	\$553	\$418	\$396	\$537	\$667
Employee & Family	\$980	\$795	\$610	\$623	\$828	\$1,115	\$950	\$765	\$580	\$623	\$828	\$1,047

SOURCE: EEISD Business Office and Teacher Retirement System of Texas, November 2005.

**EXHIBIT 6-6
EMPLOYEE CONTRIBUTIONS TO MEDICAL PLAN
2002-06**

COVERAGE CATEGORY	EEISD 2005-06			EEISD 2002-05*		
	STATE COMPARABLE	HIGH	LOW	STATE COMPARABLE	HIGH	LOW
Employee Only	\$160	\$80	\$0	\$160	\$80	\$0
Employee & Spouse	\$505	\$340	\$175	\$505	\$340	\$175
Employee & Child	\$386	\$251	\$116	\$418	\$283	\$148
Employee & Children	\$418	\$283	\$148	\$418	\$283	\$148
Employee & Family	\$680	\$495	\$310	\$680	\$495	\$310

* The district maintained a medical plan contribution of \$270 from 2002-05. In 2005, the district and employee contribution will increase.
SOURCE: EEISD Business Office, November 2005.

**EXHIBIT 6-7
SELF-FUNDED MEDICAL PROGRAM
CONTRIBUTIONS VS PAYMENTS
2003-05**

PLAN	PARTICIPANTS	CONTRIBUTIONS	MEDICAL CLAIMS	RX CLAIMS	TOTAL CLAIMS PAID	BALANCE
2003-04						
State Plan	19	\$108,408	\$147,597	\$0	\$147,597	(\$39,189)
High Plan	49	\$287,356	\$444,320	\$0	\$444,320	(\$156,964)
Low Plan	784	\$2,708,757	\$1,386,429	\$0	\$1,386,429	\$1,322,328
All Plans*	-	-	-	\$341,378	\$341,378	(\$341,378)
Total Plans	852	\$3,104,521	\$1,978,346	\$341,378	\$2,319,724	\$784,797
2004-05						
State Plan	14	\$61,869	\$62,766	\$0	\$62,766	(\$897)
High Plan	45	\$207,721	\$259,226	\$0	\$259,226	(\$51,505)
Low Plan	814	\$3,099,797	\$1,922,639	\$0	\$1,922,639	\$1,177,158
All Plans*	-	-	-	\$379,265	\$379,265	(\$379,265)
Total Plans	873	\$3,369,387	\$2,244,631	\$379,265	\$2,623,896	\$745,491

NOTE: All Plans* denotes RX Claims that are not paid per plan, but combined for all three plans.
SOURCE: ICON Self-Funded Health Benefit Loss Summary Reports for 2003-04 and 2004-05, November 11, 2005

account established specifically for this purpose. This account is funded through payroll deductions and funding amounts are determined each time payroll is processed. This method ensures that claims are paid as invoices are received. The district does not try to identify the extent of claims that have been incurred, but have not been presented or reported for payment, by keeping a list of prior fiscal year claims presented for payment after the close of the fiscal year.

The district purchases stop loss insurance or reinsurance for the self-funded medical program. Stop loss insurance protects the district against unforeseen catastrophic claims that would cost more than is budgeted in the medical plan and result in undue financial burdens on the district. There are two types of stop loss insurance or reinsurance. Specific

stop loss insures against a single catastrophic claim that exceeds a dollar limit, sometimes referred to as a deductible, chosen by the district and agreed upon by the insurance carrier. The specific coverage would reimburse the district for the covered expenses beyond that dollar limit. The second type, aggregate stop loss, insures the district against all claims exceeding a specific dollar limit chosen by the district. If all the claims payable exceed the aggregated limit, the coverage would reimburse the district for the excess over any specific stop loss payments. For the plan year 2004-05, the district purchased specific stop loss insurance at a \$125,000 limit subject to a maximum limit per covered person of \$875,000 and an aggregate stop loss insurance

with an attachment point of \$3,378,202, subject to a maximum reimbursement limit of \$1,000,000.

The stop loss insurance contract period is a 15/12 month contract. It provides coverage for claims that are incurred three months before the effective date of the stop loss contract and through the current contract year, and paid within the twelve-month contract period. Incurred means a claim that is “incurred” or is received by the TPA provider during the reinsurance contract period. If a claim is not “incurred” within the 15 month period, it is not eligible for reimbursement from the stop loss carrier. Paid means a claim that is “paid” during the contract period. If a claim is not “paid” during the 12 month contract period, it is not eligible for reimbursement from the reinsurance carrier.

The district’s 2000–01 financial statement footnote disclosed a health insurance liability of \$110,080, while the 2001–02 financial statement disclosed a \$686,449 deficit in the health insurance fund. Subsequent audit reports have not disclosed information on the internal service fund or claims liability. The district’s auditors failed to issue a management letter that would have made the administration and board aware of this situation. This oversight leaves the administration and the board unaware of the district’s true financial condition.

The district also self-insures its workers’ compensation program. According to the Business manager, the decision to self-insure was made due to the excessive cost of purchasing a fully funded workers’ compensation program. The self-insurance plan is an expense of the district and is processed through the district’s payroll system. The TPA, ICON Benefit Administrators, Inc. helps the district establish rates for various categories of employees. For example, a teacher would have a much lower workers’ compensation rate than a food service worker, who is more apt to be injured on the job. The staff enters the rate information into the payroll deduction system. The district’s expense for workers’ compensation costs is determined and posted each time payroll is run. The liability is then paid by a bank transfer into the worker’s compensation bank account. The TPA pays claims as they are received. The district reimburses the TPA from the workers’ compensation bank account, by transferring funds to the TPA in \$25,000 increments. The Business manager receives a report from the TPA, which contains the estimate of reserves necessary to meet these claims. The Business manager stated that he has not set aside any funds to meet the reserve requirement or secured the services of an actuary to determine the extent of the district’s

liability. The district purchased specific stop loss coverage at \$400,000 for the workers’ compensation program.

Without an actuarial study, the district fails to identify major medical claims that have been incurred but not reported. This situation exposes the district to significant liability, which it could avoid by establishing appropriate reserves and purchasing adequate stop loss insurance that covers an extended period beyond the end of the plan year. School district health insurance claims have a tendency to increase during the summer months because many teachers and campus level staff schedule elective surgery during the summer. Most of the invoices for these procedures have not been paid by August 31, which is the end of the district’s fiscal year. As a result, these claims remain outstanding at year-end and are considered a liability of the district. This liability is not disclosed in the district’s financial records. Furthermore, the stop loss insurance does not cover these claims once the policy period ends.

Based on the Texas Labor Code, Title 5 Workers’ Compensation §408.021, the district’s workers’ compensation coverage must cover claims related medical bills and some indemnity benefits for life. Consequently, the district is liable for these ongoing claims even if it discontinues its self-insurance program and purchases a fully funded workers’ compensation insurance policy in the future. If the district continues the self-funded workers’ compensation program, the number of claims incurred, but not paid, will increase as time passes, causing the district’s claims liability to increase. Furthermore, the district is not budgeting for these outstanding claims. The district does not comply with the requirements of the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) 10, requiring annual computation of district self-insurance liabilities.

The Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) establishes generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) for governments including public school districts. The Texas Education Agency’s (TEA) Financial Accountability System Resource Guide (FASRG) 1.1.1 GAAP and Legal Compliance states, “Guidelines for financial accounting and reporting are derived from GAAP.” GASB statement number 10 requires state and local government entities to report an estimate of loss from a claim in a self-insurance program as an expenditure and liability if it is probable (probable means the future event is likely to occur) that an asset has been impaired or a liability has been incurred as of the date of the financial statements. Also, the loss must be reasonably estimated.

GASB 10 also requires that a governmental entity use a single fund to account for its risk financing activities and that it should be either the general fund or an internal service fund. EEISD accounts for its health self-insurance in an internal service fund. The workers' compensation is accounted for in the general operating fund. The district is in violation of the GASB 10 requirement that all risk financing activities be accounted for in a single fund.

FASRG 1.2.9.3, Financial Statement Presentation and Disclosure, requires that the amount of deficit fund balance of individual funds be disclosed in the footnote to the financial statements for those funds that are not evident in the basic financial statements.

The Texas Education Code (TEC) authorizes school districts to provide self funded health plans for employees. TEC §22.005 states the following:

- (a) The board of trustees of a school district may establish a health care plan for employees of the district and dependents of employees.
- (b) The board shall establish a fund to pay, as authorized under the plan, all or part of the actual costs for hospital, surgical, medical, dental, or related health care incurred by employees of the district or any dependent whose participation in the program is being supported by deductions from the salary of an employee. Under the plan, the fund also may be used to pay the costs of administering the fund. The fund consists of money contributed by the school district and money deducted from salaries of employees for dependent or employee coverage. Money for the fund may not be deducted from the salary of a school district employee unless the employee authorizes the deduction in writing. The plan shall attempt to protect the school district against unanticipated catastrophic individual loss, or unexpectedly large aggregate loss, by securing individual stop-loss coverage, or aggregate stop-loss coverage, or both, from a commercial insurer.
- (c) The board may amend or cancel the district's health care plan at any regular or special meeting of the board. If the plan is canceled, any valid claim against the fund for payment of health care costs resulting from illness or injury occurring during the time the plan was in effect shall be paid out of the fund. If the fund is insufficient to pay the claim, the costs shall be paid out of other available school district funds.

The Texas Department of Insurance publication *Insurance Decisions for Texas School Districts* states that it is important for a self-funding district to be certain it has sufficient resources to pay health claims that arise.

Port Arthur ISD contracted with an actuary to determine the appropriate annual premiums to be paid to the health insurance fund. The district was estimating contributions each year without professional assistance, resulting in overestimation of \$1.5 million over a period of years. This overestimation occurred when the district was in dire financial condition. Underestimation can be equally devastating when the reserves prove insufficient to meet current and future needs.

The Business manager should secure the services of an actuary to determine the extent of the district's liability in both the health and workers' compensation self-insurance funds. The Business manager should request proposals for actuarial services to analyze the health and workers' compensation self-funded programs. Based on the completed actuarial studies, the district should develop a budget to adequately fund the outstanding liabilities of both programs.

The review team estimated the cost of this service for the first year to be \$7,500 per plan, for a total first year cost of \$15,000 for two plans or (\$7,500 x 2 = \$15,000). The cost of actuarial services decreases in subsequent years if the district requests a study on an annual basis. The cost of actuarial studies in the following years is estimated to be \$4,000 per plan, for a cost of \$8,000 per year. The cost of the actuarial services can be paid from the health plan and workers' compensation funds since it is considered an administrative cost.

SELF-FUNDED MEDICAL PLAN MANAGEMENT (REC. 46)

EEISD does not effectively manage the self-funded medical plan to ensure contractual agreements are advantageous to the district, third party administrative (TPA) services are provided in accordance with agreements, and program communication complies with benefit laws. The district elected to self-fund its employee health coverage due to the high cost of the state plan, TRS ActiveCare. Effective 2002, the district contracted with ICON Benefit Administrators, Inc., a TPA provider, to administer the self-funded medical plan. Employers contract with TPAs to pay and manage medical claims, procure reinsurance coverage and to establish cost containment programs that include provider networks, utilization review, pre-certification, large claim management,

hospital audits and prescription drug management. In addition, services may include general counsel to guide the employer in HIPAA privacy laws, benefit plan interpretations, subrogation, and development of summary plan documents. The initial service agreement for the 2002–03 plan was the only agreement available during the review team’s visit. There are no additional signed agreements for plan years 2003–04, 2004–05 and 2005–06 that provide renewal rates. The TPA’s duties and responsibilities outlined in the agreement include:

- provide recommendations and assist the district in the administration of the medical plan as it may be requested and authorized from time to time;
- carry out the following in accordance with policies, interpretations, rules, practices and procedures adopted by the District:
 - apply such rules for purposes of determining eligibility for participation or benefits;
 - prepare employee communications;
 - within the scope of its professional ability, assist the district in the preparation of reports by government agencies;
 - calculate benefits;
 - orient new participants and advise participants of their rights and options under the Plan; and
 - process claims;
- honor any assignment of benefits of a person eligible for benefits under the Plan to any person or institution which is a proper and qualified assignee under the terms of the Plan;
- arrange for the purchase of policies of insurance, if available, to provide any of the benefits provided for in the Agreement and the Plan, including policies of stop-loss, excess loss or aggregate deductible or a similar type of insurance to protect the Plan;
- assist in preparation of any report, tax return or similar filing by any government agencies pertaining to the operations or management of the plan;
- render monthly reports to the district which shall include:
 - plan disbursements, by category, made and authorized by the TPA;

- a statement of the fees payable to the TPA
- a statement of premiums for any insurance purchased; and
- any other costs incurred by the plan; and
- maintain a fidelity bond at the lesser of an amount of not less than 10 percent of the amount of funds handled by the TPA during the year or the minimum required by state law.

The TPA agreement did not include performance measurements or guarantees, nor did it indemnify the district for any liability incurred as a result of the TPA’s failure to process claims in a timely manner or in accordance with the benefit plan. Interviews with the Business manager, risk manager and insurance clerk revealed that the TPA does not provide loss reports on a routine basis for an ongoing review of the TPA performance in timely claim payments and implementation of cost containment measures. In addition, the staff did not provide any loss reports on large claims to determine whether any claims had reached the specific stop loss limit for reimbursement during the past three years, or reports to monitor the TPA’s claim processing times, subrogation, benefit denials, and savings from cost containment measures.

The district did not receive the 2004–05 stop loss policy for signatures from the TPA until February 1, 2005, although the effective date of coverage was retroactive to September 1, 2004. The district could not provide documentation or evidence of stop loss coverage for the current 2005–06 plan year during the review team’s visit in November 2005.

The annual open enrollment period for the self-funded medical plan is during August and September. The TPA provides representatives to conduct employee meetings in the district. New employees receive benefit information through the district’s insurance clerk. The new employee benefit material provided to the review team did not include a health plan benefit booklet, summary plan document (SPD), or a provider network list. The insurance clerk could not provide the review team a benefit booklet for the health plan when requested during the onsite visit. The clerk stated that the district printed booklets a few years ago and distributed them to employees, but they have not printed any additional booklets because of printing cost. Summary plan descriptions are important disclosure documents prepared by the plan that describe, in understandable terms, the rights, benefits and responsibilities of participants and beneficiaries

in medical programs. The TPA provider gave the district an electronic copy of the benefit booklet and a hardcopy for printing in 2002 and 2003. An interview with a campus administrator confirmed the district provided benefit plan booklets for employees two or three years ago. The administrator calls the TPA provider when they need clarification on benefits, and agreed this approach would be a problem for some of the operations personnel, such as custodians, transportation, maintenance, and food service employees. During the annual open enrollment for the

medical program, employees receive the following information on the three health care options shown in **Exhibit 6-8** to base their decision on selecting a health care option. The insurance clerk also provides this information to new employees when hired.

Employees do not receive a summary plan document detailing benefits or their provider network during enrollment. The handout does include telephone numbers for the TPA and pre-certification company, along with websites for the

**EXHIBIT 6-8
SUMMARY OF MEDICAL PLAN BENEFITS
EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 1, 2005**

TYPE OF SERVICE	STATE COMPARABLE PLAN		HIGH PLAN		LOW PLAN	
	IN NETWORK	OUT OF NETWORK	IN NETWORK	OUT OF NETWORK	IN NETWORK	OUT OF NETWORK
Office Visit Co-Pay	\$15	70%	\$20	60%	\$25	50%
Calendar Year Deductible Individual/Family	\$500/\$1,500	\$750/\$2,250	\$750/\$2,250	\$1,000/\$3,000	\$1,000/\$3,000	\$3,000/\$9000
Out of Pocket Maximum Individual/Family	\$1,000/\$3,000	\$2,000/\$6,000	\$2,000/\$6,000	\$4,000/\$12,000	\$3,000/\$9,000	\$6,000/\$18,000
Coinsurance	90%	70%	80%	60%	70%	50%
Preventive Care \$400 Calendar Year Maximum	100% after \$10 co-payment	70% after deductible	100% after \$10 co-payment	60% after deductible	100% after \$10 co-payment	50% after deductible
Retail RX 30 Days Generic/Formulary Non-Formulary *Generic mandatory if available	10/20/30		10/20/30		10/20/30	
Mail Order RX 90 Days Generic/Formulary Non-Formulary *Generic mandatory if available	15/30/45		15/30/45		15/30/45	
Chiropractic Services 30 Visits per Calendar Year	100% after \$15 co-payment	70% after deductible	100% after \$20 co-payment	60% after deductible	100% after \$25 co-payment	50% after deductible
Emergency Room	\$50 copy plus deductible & coinsurance	\$50 co pay plus deductible & coinsurance	\$75 co pay plus deductible & coinsurance	\$75 co pay plus deductible & coinsurance	\$100 after co pay plus deductible & coinsurance	\$100 after co pay plus deductible & coinsurance
Hospital per Confinement Deductible	None	Additional \$250 after calendar year deductible	None	Additional \$250 after calendar year deductible	None	Additional \$250 after calendar year deductible

Claim filing deadline 180 days

Dependents are covered until age 25. On your dependents 25th birthday they will be terminated automatically so please make sure they will have other coverage.

SOURCE: EEISD Business Office, November 2005.

preferred provider network, lab vendor, and prescription vendor.

The district does not request proposals for stop loss insurance to ensure that it is receiving the most comprehensive and competitive quotes. The district depends on the TPA to solicit stop loss insurance for the medical plan. The TPA and service agent of record may receive commissions on the stop loss insurance. Based on the service agreement, the agent of record receives a 15 percent commission on both the specific and aggregate stop loss insurance. The TPA may receive an “override commission” and/or “production bonus” from the insurance carrier based upon the volume of business or potential volume of business the TPA provides to the carrier. The amount paid by the commission increases with the stop loss premium increase. Consequently, allowing the TPA and agent to select the stop loss carrier may not be in the best interest of the district since a high premium is advantageous to the TPA and agent.

The TPA service agreement does not include any performance guarantees to ensure claims are paid in a timely manner and in accordance with the plan document, or that cost containment measures are consistently implemented. The TPA does not provide loss reports on a monthly basis for the district staff to monitor large claims, cost containment measures and timely payment of claims. The stop loss insurance only reimburses claims that have been incurred and paid by the TPA within the contract period and does not provide coverage for a run-off period should the district decide to terminate the self-funded plan and purchase a fully insured medical program in the future. Currently, the district purchased a 15/12 incurred and paid policy, providing protection through the end of the plan year. Any claims that are incurred in the 12-month plan year or three months before the plan year but paid after the 12-month plan period will not be covered under the specific or aggregate stop loss policies. The district will not have any protection against late filed claims by medical providers. If the TPA does not pay claims within the contract period, the stop loss carrier will not reimburse the district for a claim that would normally qualify under the stop loss agreement. The service agreement does not hold the TPA responsible for failing to make timely payments.

The district does not provide summary plan documents or benefit booklets to new employees or to employees during the annual open enrollment period. The district distributed employee benefit booklets two years ago, but has not provided new booklets since that time. Employees must

make plan selections based on a one page summary comparison of the three plan options. Consequently, employees may not have information on the details of the medical plan, such as procedures that require pre-certification, medical claim reimbursement details including in network and out of network benefits, prescription coverage, plan terminology, claim procedures and appeal rights, and plan exclusions. A list of the providers on the preferred provider network was not available to the review team. Furthermore, without an updated summary plan document, the district cannot provide documentation that it is in compliance with annual notification of employee rights under benefit laws, such as the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconstruction Act of 1985 (COBRA) and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). In addition, the district has not elected to exempt the self-funded plan from certain requirements of HIPAA as allowed for nonfederal governmental self-funded plans. This exemption would enable the district to limit some liability exposure to the self-funded medical plan created by the federal law. Without the exemption, the district must ensure employees receive communication regarding special enrollment periods, limitations on preexisting conditions exclusion periods, in addition to other requirements.

By electing to self-fund its employee health care coverage rather than contracting with an insurer, the district becomes its own insurance company, accepting the full financial risk of coverage and responsibility for communicating plan benefits and legal rights to the plan participants. Without the use of an independent insurance consultant, the district is relying solely on the staff’s knowledge and the advice of the TPA provider for estimating funding levels, obtaining stop loss insurance, communicating benefits to employees, and meeting legal compliance issues.

Employee communication is critical to the successful management of a medical plan. The Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA) requires plan sponsors to provide a copy of the summary plan document (SPD) to plan participants upon enrollment and upon written request of a plan participant or beneficiary. A SPD informs the participants of their rights, benefits and responsibilities covered in the plan, in addition to eligibility requirements and how to obtain benefits. The SPD serves as a communication tool to educate the participant on cost containment measures and on legal rights under COBRA and HIPAA. SPDs should be available in paper form along with provider networks. Districts also post benefit booklets

on their website or provide a link to the TPA's website where the SPD can be posted.

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) requires group health plans to comply with the following:

- Limitations on pre-existing condition exclusion periods
 - Generally, a pre-existing condition exclusion period may not exceed 12 months, and must be reduced by prior health coverage an individual has had.
- Special enrollment periods: Group health plans are required to provide special enrollment periods for individuals who do not enroll in the plan because they have other coverage, but subsequently lose that coverage. If the plan provides dependent coverage, it must provide a special enrollment period for new dependents (and the employee if not already enrolled) within 30 days after a marriage, birth, adoption or placement for adoption.
- Prohibitions against discriminating against individual participants and beneficiaries based on health status: A group health plan may not discriminate in enrollment rules or in the amount of premiums or contributions it requires an individual to pay based on certain health status-related factors.
- Standards relating to benefits for mothers and newborns: Group health plans offering health coverage for hospital stays in connection with the birth of a child generally may not restrict benefits for the stay to less than 48 hours for a vaginal delivery, and 96 hours for a cesarean section.
- Parity in the application of certain limits to mental health benefits: Group health plans offering mental health benefits may not set annual or lifetime dollar limits on mental health benefits that are lower than limits for medical and surgical benefits. These requirements do not apply to benefits for substance abuse or chemical dependency.
- Required coverage for reconstructive surgery following mastectomies.

HIPAA does permit state and local governmental employers that self-fund health plans to elect to exempt a plan from these requirements. HIPAA also requires the group plan to provide covered employees and dependents with a "certificate of creditable coverage" when they cease to be covered under the Plan. There is no exemption from this requirement.

TEC §22.005 authorizes school boards to self-fund health plans for employees. The code requires districts to purchase stop loss coverage to protect the school district against unanticipated catastrophic claims or an unexpected large aggregate loss. The statute also states that the district is responsible for the payment of claims out of other school district funds, should the health fund be insufficient.

Many school districts will use professional insurance consultants or advisors to provide the expertise required to manage their self-funded plan. A consultant will obtain an independent actuarial study on the plan to determine expected claim costs, administrative costs, and adequate reserves for incurred but not reported claims or claim run-off. The actuarial study will also be used to determine the amount of specific stop loss coverage and contract period needed to cover any run-off claims from the previous plan year or if the employer decides to terminate the plan. A consultant can develop specifications for an RFP for stop loss coverage, solicit proposals on behalf of the district, evaluate proposals received and develop a recommendation for stop loss coverage for the district. Since the consultant is paid based on a fee for service, rather than a commission on the insurance premiums, the consultant avoids any conflict of interest when recommending a particular carrier.

Successful self-funded medical programs will implement the same strategies as a fully insured program, including the development of a plan design and cost containment measures that address or target areas of significant liability exposures. These areas are identified through the actuarial study and loss reports for plan utilization and large claims. Monthly loss reports allow the district and consultant to continually monitor the medical plan and identify areas of exposure and develop strategies to minimize losses. A key to medical cost containment is an effective TPA provider contracted to manage and pay the claims. An agreement with a TPA provider will outline specific responsibilities and include performance guarantees to ensure those responsibilities are carried out. The agreement will also include a hold harmless and indemnification clause to protect the district from the provider's failure to carry out the responsibilities, including failure to pay claims within the stop loss insurance contract.

EEISD should contract with an independent insurance consultant to assist in the management of its self-funded medical plan. The consultant can develop specifications for a fully insured plan and TPA services and request proposals to determine if a fully insured plan would be more cost effective for the district. If the district decides to continue to

self-fund the medical program, the consultant can provide the expertise that is needed to coordinate the purchase of adequate stop loss coverage, develop employee communication, and review the funding and plan design based on plan experience, medical trends and an actuarial study. The consultant can also coordinate a legal review of the TPA agreement. This will ensure the contract represents the best interest of the district and incorporates performance guarantees to protect the district and plan participants. Loss reports and claim processing can be monitored on a monthly basis to ensure the TPA complies with the contract and meeting performance guarantees. The consultant can develop and update employee communication, including the summary plan document, assisting the district with compliance with benefit laws and regulations and providing plan participants current information needed to use the plan effectively.

The review team estimated the recommendation to cost the district \$20,000 for the first year and \$10,000 per year thereafter. The average consultant’s fees is \$125 per hour at an estimated of 160 hours for the first year (\$125 X 160 hours = \$20,000). Services for following years include assisting the district with monitoring the program and problem resolution at an estimated 80 hours per year for an annual cost of \$10,000 (\$125 X 80 hours = \$10,000). This recommendation can be funded out of the internal service fund for the health plan since it is a related administrative cost.

SELF-FUNDED WORKERS COMPENSATION PROGRAM (REC. 47)

EEISD does not monitor TPA services, analyze losses, or adequately address liability exposures in its self-funded workers’ compensation program. School districts are required by law to extend workers’ compensation benefits to employees. A district can provide these benefits through self-funding, purchasing an insurance policy, or entering into an interlocal agreement with other political subdivisions

providing self-insurance. EEISD participated in the Texas Political Subdivision’s Self-funded Workers’ Compensation program through an interlocal agreement from 2000 through 2003. Due to high renewal rates, the Business manager advertised an RFP for workers’ compensation coverage in 2003. In response to the high quotes received for that RFP, the district decided to self-fund its workers’ compensation program and contract with ICON Benefit Administrators, Inc., for TPA services. By self-funding, the district accepts the full financial risk of insurance and pays claims with its own funds for workers compensation coverage.

The district requested proposals again in July 2004. **Exhibit 6-9** shows the quotes received for the district for workers’ compensation coverage in 2004.

The district did not provide any additional evaluation criteria it used for selecting and recommending to contract with ICON Benefit Administrators, Inc. for TPA services for 2004–05, such as administrative services, online software applications, staffing levels, medical auditing or service reputation with other districts. Selection was based on cost alone according to the documentation submitted to the review team.

In August 2005, the Business manager recommended the district renew their contract with the TPA for 2005–06. The rationale provided for the recommendation was that the renewal rates will decrease by \$10,596 for the 2005–06 school year, as stated by the insurance agent, Insurance Associates of the Valley. The recommendation noted that the school district paid \$953,212 in 2004–05, based on an email received from the TPA provider. The district did not provide any supporting documentation for the email or the recommendation from the agent, explaining how the \$953,212 was determined. This information conflicts with the actual loss reports provided to the review team. **Exhibit 6-10** provides a summary of EEISD’s workers’ compensation incurred claims compared to payments made for each year.

**EXHIBIT 6-9
2004 WORKERS’ COMPENSATION BID PROPOSALS**

COMPANY	ICON BENEFIT ADMINISTRATORS	TEXAS WORKERS’ COMPENSATION SOLUTIONS	TEXAS POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS	TEXAS WORKERS’ COMPENSATION SOLUTIONS
Type of Plan	Self-Funded	Self-Funded	Fully Insured	Fully Insured
Cost	\$690,514	\$719,544	\$882,648	\$952,055
Market Stability Fee	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$ 85,685
Total Annual Contributions	\$690,514	\$719,544	\$882,648	\$1,037,740

SOURCE: EEISD Business Office, November 2005.

**EXHIBIT 6-10
WORKERS' COMPENSATION CLAIM HISTORY
2000-05**

YEAR	CLAIMS	OPEN CLAIMS	PAID TO DATE LOSSES	INCURRED LOSSES
2000-01	148	1	\$513,343	\$514,163
2001-02	143	2	\$477,365	\$488,204
2002-03	115	7	\$582,047	\$646,917
2003-04	97	16	\$691,875	\$826,882
2004-05	82	14	\$116,697	\$327,175

SOURCE: Texas Political Subdivision, EEISD Workers' Compensation Claim For 2000-03, as of August 29, 2005 and American Administrative Group, EEISD Workers' Compensation Claims Summary 2003-05, as of October 31, 2005.

Incurred means a claim that is "incurred" or is received by TPA provider.

Exhibit 6-10 shows as of August 29, 2005, the district incurred a total of \$327,175 in losses and paid a total of \$116,697 for the 2004-05. The TPA agreement states, effective September 1, 2004, it will provide claims administration "for an annual fee of \$56,500. Our rate is payable with an initial fee of \$37,375, which includes Insurance Associates of the Valley broker fee. There are three additional quarterly payments due in the amount of \$6,375 each." The agreement provides quotes for claims administration for three years, as shown in **Exhibit 6-11**.

The **Exhibit 6-11** shows a total of \$87,500 for administrative set up, broker fees and claims administration for 2004-05. The loss reports showed a total of incurred losses at \$327,175 for that same period. Total cost for 2004-05, based on documentation district staff provided for incurred claims and administrative costs, is \$414,675.

In 2003-04, the district plan experienced a catastrophic claim. The district failed to purchase excess specific stop loss

**EXHIBIT 6-11
ICON WORKERS COMPENSATION ADMINISTRATIVE FEES
2004-07**

SERVICES	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Annual administration set up fee & initial broker fee	\$31,000	*	*
Annual claims administration fee	\$56,500	\$59,890	\$63,483

* Initial broker fee and setup fee only.

SOURCE: ICON Benefit Administrators Plan Supervisor Agreement, Exhibit B, Effective September 1, 2004.

insurance coverage for the 2003-04 workers' compensation program, which may have offset some of the claim costs. Specific stop loss insures against a single catastrophic claim that exceeds a dollar limit. The district purchased specific stop loss coverage at \$400,000 per claim for 2004-05 and 2005-06 through the TPA. The district did not request proposals for stop loss insurance for the plan to determine if a more competitive coverage was available.

The contract with the third-party administrator does not protect the district from liability resulting from the TPA's errors in claim processing. The contract provided to the review team does not provide a date the contract was signed, but has an effective date of September 1, 2004. An attachment for cost containment services was signed January 5, 2005. The contract states that the TPA will use its best efforts to process claims in accordance with the Texas Workers' Compensation Act (Act). The TPA will notify the district of any payment in excess of the amount payable under the terms of the Act, but according to the contract, the TPA shall not be responsible for collecting any such overpayment. The contract specifically designates the responsibility for the recovery of any such overpayment and all expenses incurred in connection with the recovery of such overpayment to the district. Furthermore, the contract states the district agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the TPA against any and all damages, liabilities, losses, settlements, claims, and court costs incurred by the TPA in performance of its duties other than those resulting from "gross negligence or willful misconduct" by the TPA. The TPA's contract does indemnify the district against the TPA's gross negligence and willful misconduct. Further review reveals the contract does not provide any performance guarantees or standards required of the TPA for which the district can monitor the TPA's performance. The contract also provides the TPA with a discretionary settlement authority to adjust, settle, or resist all claims up to \$500,000.

The TPA does not provide any online reporting capabilities for the district. Initial injury reports and follow-up reports must be completed manually and sent to the TPA via facsimile. The risk manager cannot view the status of claims online. The TPA's current software does not work at the district and the risk manager stated the TPA's computer system had a recent virus that resulted in the loss of district information regarding recent claims submitted to the TPA. The risk manager stated it was fortunate that the district had maintained hardcopies of the reports. Furthermore, the TPA does not provide the district with monthly loss reports to

monitor its claim activity or to identify areas to target loss control, such as frequency by accident type, employee class, or location.

The district hired a fulltime risk manager at the beginning of the 2003–04 school year, who is a licensed adjuster. The risk manager takes an aggressive approach to investigating all accidents and implemented a districtwide safety committee, which meets on a monthly basis to review safety concerns, receive safety training, and identify safety issues with the contracted loss control consultant. There is no evidence that the risk manager is evaluating the TPA's services or setting any type of service expectations, including online reporting capabilities, monthly loss reports, and access to online claim status. The TPA is not required to provide loss reports and there is no ongoing analysis of the district's losses to identify specific risk management techniques needed to reduce losses and protect the district from catastrophic losses.

Failure to evaluate proposals for TPA services based on several criteria instead of cost alone can result in contracting services that are less than adequate or that do not meet the needs of the district. A TPA may provide services at a lower cost because they are providing lesser services than their competitors. Once a claim occurs, aggressive management of the claim can result in significant cost savings to the district's self-funded workers' compensation program. Claim management includes qualified adjusters and an up-to-date claims processing software system to manage the claims. The district does not have online reporting available. This deficiency results in an inefficient process and requires an excessive amount of time of district staff to manually complete and report initial claims information and additional follow-up reports. It also prevents online monitoring of individual claim status and access to monthly loss reports to determine program trends and identify timely loss control techniques. Contracting with a TPA that can provide up-to-date technology may save the district in claim costs, which often result in offsetting any additional costs for those services.

If the EEISD does not review timely loss runs, it cannot identify program trends. These trends can be used with periodic actuarial studies to assist the district in projecting future claims and setting appropriate funding levels for claims payments and adequate reserves. In addition, loss reports can assist the staff in identifying the areas of greatest exposure to risk, such as employee groups, locations, and accident types, regardless of the size of the district.

If a third-party contract is reviewed and signed after the effective date of the contract, the district is already receiving services under the contract before negotiating the terms of the contract. Due to late timing, the district may be forced to accept the terms of the TPA's contract or be left without services. This can lead to a contract that is more favorable to the TPA rather than protecting the district from the TPA's failure to carry out the terms of the contract. Contracts that require the district to hold harmless and indemnify a third-party from future claims are considered a gift of public funds, which is prohibited in Texas for public schools. Contracts that do not include performance standards and guarantees place the district at risk for paying for services that may be less than adequate or nonexistent. Setting a TPA's discretionary settlement authority at \$500,000 for claims authorizes the TPA to negotiate settlements up to that amount with the district's money without input from the district.

Districts that implement successful self-funded workers' compensation programs often will contract with an insurance consultant to provide guidance to the district, perform certain management services, and monitor the program. The consultant is not a broker or insurance agent in accordance with the Attorney General Opinion JC-0205. Consultant services may include assisting the district with the selection of a TPA, contract negotiations, and obtaining actuarial services and stop loss coverage. Selection of a TPA is based on criteria that include several factors besides cost. TPA service agreements are negotiated before board approval and should include clauses that protect the district from liability exposure resulting from the activities of the contractor, in addition to performance guarantees. Effective TPAs will have online reporting capabilities. Online reporting would include providing the district with the capability to submit all required workers' compensation reports online, accessibility to individual claims to monitor status, and the ability to generate loss reports tailored to the district's needs. These loss reports are used to monitor the TPA's performance, identify program loss trends, and develop loss prevention strategies specific to the program needs.

East Central ISD (ECISD) has self-funded their workers' compensation program since 1989. The district employed a fulltime risk manager to manage the program. A percentage of the salaries for staff who work with the program is paid through the workers' compensation fund as part of the administrative costs. Program management includes requesting proposals for TPA services and stop loss coverage.

The district's current TPA selection was based on cost, service capabilities, medical auditing services and the TPA's experience with other school districts. The risk manager negotiated a contract in which liability for any errors in claims processing is the responsibility of the TPA and there are no clauses stating the district will hold harmless and indemnify the TPA. The TPA provides the district online reporting capabilities in which the district can generate loss reports at any time tailored to their needs. The district's staff monitors the TPA on a daily basis and reviews check registers for duplication of payments and questionable payments. Quarterly meetings occur with the TPA to review open claims and identify actions to take on claims. The district purchases specific and aggregate stop loss insurance for protection against catastrophic claims and an actuarial study is conducted every two to three years to re-evaluate the plan's funding. When comparing the program costs to state manual rates and fully insured programs, the district realized a savings through self-funding its program. ECISD had demonstrated many of the elements required to successfully manage a self-funded workers' compensation program.

The district should contract for the services of an independent consultant to assist with the management of the self-funded workers' compensation program. The Business manager should assign the responsibility of managing the workers' compensation program to the risk manager. The risk manager and consultant should develop specifications for proposals for TPA services and advertise for proposals before reviewing the current contract with ICON Benefit Administrators, Inc. which is affective through 2008-09. TPA proposals should be evaluated on several criteria, including cost, administrative services that include online software, appropriate staffing levels, medical auditing and a proven service reputation with other districts. A TPA contract should be reviewed by legal counsel and negotiated before recommendation for approval by the board, and it should include performance guarantees, assign liability to the TPA for failure to perform services, and eliminate any clause requiring the district to hold harmless and indemnify the TPA for their actions. The consultant and risk manager should develop a process for ongoing monitoring of the TPA, claim audits, a routine review of loss reports, and the development of a loss control program specifically tailored to the needs of the district. Annual funding should be based on the projected claim costs, reserves for incurred claims and all administrative costs including staff salaries, consultant fees, actuarial studies, TPA services and stop loss coverage.

The review team estimated the recommendation to cost the district \$15,000 for 2008-09 and \$6,250 per subsequent years. The average consultant's fees is \$125 per hour at an estimated of 120 hours for the first year ($\$125 \times 120 \text{ hours} = \$15,000$). Services for following years include assisting the district with monitoring the program and problem resolution at an estimated 50 hours per year for an annual cost of \$6,250 ($\$125 \times 50 \text{ hours} = \$6,250$). This recommendation can be funded out of an internal service fund for workers' compensation since it is a related administrative cost.

STUDENT ACTIVITY ACCOUNTS (REC. 48)

EEISD lacks internal controls and oversight in the management of its activity funds. Each campus independently manages activity funds including the bank accounts. District departments maintain three additional activity checking accounts. Campus secretaries, clerks and bookkeepers are responsible for making deposits, writing checks and reconciling bank statements. The campuses maintain the accounts by manual entry, spreadsheets, or other software that they have selected. The district implemented a Student Activity Fund policy manual in 1999. The district does not conduct ongoing training on the management of student activity funds and the manual is not distributed to all campuses.

The lack of oversight over activity funds places the district at risk of theft or fraud, which can result in loss of funds and negatively impact student activities.

The TEA FASRG, Site-Based Decision Making (SBDM) Module, Section 5.5.1 states the following advantages of centralized activity fund accounting:

- better internal controls, assuming that the school district has good internal controls, as all receipts and disbursements flow through one central accounting system rather than systems that can vary from school site to school site;
- easier access for performing internal and external audits;
- consistency in the manner in which repetitive matters are handled;
- better control of cash management operations including assurance that proper collateralization of cash and investment balances is occurring;
- more consistency in applying district policies and procedures; and

- lessened requirements to perform an audit of funds if the school principal and/or finance clerk is replaced.

FASRG SDBM Section 5.5.1, Major Classes of Activity Fund Operations, states “A school district should consider the following questions to determine the proper method and fund in which activity funds should be accounted:

- Does local board policy allow for recall of excess or unused fund balances into the general fund for general school district use? If so, these activity funds should be accounted for in the general fund, and revenues and expenditures should be budgeted.
- Do other persons besides the students involved in the activity fund (teachers, sponsors, principals, administrators, etc.) have access to activity fund money to use in a manner that does not directly benefit the students involved in the activity fund? If so, this money should be accounted for the Fund 461: Campus Activity Funds.
- Do the activity fund financial decisions rest solely with the students? If so, this money should be accounted for in Fund 865 - Student Activity Account which serves as an agency account for student club or class funds.”

Mount Pleasant ISD centralizes the management of all activity funds to maintain effective internal controls and efficient account operations. When activity funds do not have appropriate internal controls, funds are at possible risk for mismanagement and theft. Centralizing activity funds accounting ensures consistency in applying district policies and procedures; more control over cash management operations; consistency in conducting routine functions; reduced need for audits; and easier access to financial information for audits.

The district should centralize all activity fund accounting and manage all activity transactions through the Business Office accounting system. Having transactions flow through the Business Office will ensure consistency and oversight; therefore, limiting the opportunity for mismanagement and/or loss. This responsibility should be reassigned to the accountant who handles bank reconciliations and oversees student activity accounts. Centralizing activity funds requires placing the funds in the correct categories. The accountant should work with the schools to determine the correct class of funds as outlined in the FASRG SDBM Module, Section 5.5.1 Major Classes of Activity Fund Operations. Activity fund balances should be obtained from school records and should be checked for accuracy. Once the correct class is

determined, the accounts with beginning balances should be set up in the district’s Regional Service Center Computer Cooperative (RSCCC) accounting system. The transactions for the funds should flow through the Business Office in the same manner as all other district transactions.

For background information on Asset and Risk Management, see p. 245 in the General Information section of the appendices.

FISCAL IMPACT

RECOMMENDATIONS	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) SAVINGS	ONE TIME (COSTS) SAVINGS
CHAPTER 6: ASSET AND RISK MANAGEMENT							
41. Centralize funds to minimize idle balances, invest excess cash, control cash flow, and ultimately gain the greatest return with minimal manual intervention.	\$5,160	\$5,160	\$5,160	\$5,160	\$5,160	\$25,800	\$0
42. Ensure compliance with the Internal Revenue Code rules for cafeteria plans.	(\$1,086)	(\$1,086)	(\$1,086)	(\$1,086)	(\$1,086)	(\$5,430)	\$0
43. Develop a cash flow spreadsheet by using historical bank data including trends of cash receipts and cash disbursements.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
44. Develop employee benefit procedures to guide the district in the selection and administration of benefit programs and require staff to obtain appropriate training on compliance with benefit laws.	(\$1,842)	(\$1,842)	(\$1,842)	(\$1,842)	(\$1,842)	(\$9,210)	\$0
45. Secure the services of an actuary to determine the extent of the district's liability in both the health and workers' compensation self-insurance funds.	(\$15,000)	(\$8,000)	(\$8,000)	(\$8,000)	(\$8,000)	(\$47,000)	\$0
46. Contract with an independent insurance consultant to assist in its self-funded medical plan.	(\$20,000)	(\$10,000)	(\$10,000)	(\$10,000)	(\$10,000)	(\$60,000)	\$0
47. Contract for the services of an independent consultant to assist with the management of the self-funded workers' compensation program.	\$0	(\$15,000)	(\$6,250)	(\$6,250)	(\$6,250)	(\$33,750)	\$0
48. Centralize all activity fund accounting and manage all activity transactions through the Business Office accounting system.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
TOTALS-CHAPTER 6	(\$32,768)	(\$30,768)	(\$22,018)	(\$22,018)	(\$22,018)	(\$129,590)	\$0

CHAPTER 7

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

EDCOUCH-ELSA INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

CHAPTER 7. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

School districts must practice sound financial management to maximize the effectiveness of limited resources, and to plan for future needs. Effective financial management ensures that internal controls are in place and operating as intended, that technology is maximized to increase productivity, and that timely reports help management reach its goals.

The district is required to manage its financial operations in conformity with the regulations and requirements of the Texas Education Agency's (TEA) *Financial Accountability System Resource Guide (FASRG)*, and to report their data to the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS). Using the data submitted by a district, the TEA publishes the Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas (FIRST). The FIRST rating is used to improve the management of a school district's financial resources. For fiscal years 2001–02 and 2002–03, the Edcouch-Elsa Independent School District (EEISD) received a FIRST rating of *Above Standard Achievement*. In 2003–04, the district's FIRST rating increased to *Superior Achievement*.

The district's General Fund budget for the 2005–06 school year includes \$38.7 million in expenditures, of which \$20 million was budgeted for instructional services. The revenue budget was \$37.2 million, which comes from local, state and, federal sources. The state classifies EEISD as a low wealth district and, as such, \$31.5 million of EEISD's revenue is provided by the state. The 2005–06 budget was projected to reduce the fund balance by \$1.5 million.

ACCOMPLISHMENT

- During 2005, EEISD worked with its financial advisors to take advantage of lower interest rates and refinanced \$23,415,000 in outstanding building bonds.

FINDINGS

- EEISD lacks a coordinated budget preparation and adoption process that involves the stakeholders, board, and employees in budget planning.
- EEISD lacks a plan for managing their fund balance.
- EEISD contracts with its employees to perform services in violation of state and federal guidelines.

- EEISD's Business Office is not functionally and efficiently organized.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Recommendation 49: Develop a budget process that includes stakeholder training and revision of its existing budget calendar.** The Business manager and PEIMS coordinator should attend budget training offered by one of the state's professional organizations. The superintendent and Business manager should develop a plan and budget for board and administrator training. Program directors should work with campus principals and their campus improvement committees to explain the expenditure constraints of their program, and coordinate their programs with campus goals. The Business manager should work with the superintendent and board to revise the district's budget calendar and budget guidelines, incorporating the requirements of EEISD Policy CE (LOCAL). The superintendent, Business manager, and other administrators should work with the board to develop a multi-year budget addressing EEISD's educational goals and capital requirements. The Business manager should work with the superintendent, the board, and district stakeholders to determine expenditures, and should also provide budget development training to district personnel, and prepare presentations and handouts for the board and district stakeholders.
- **Recommendation 50: Develop a plan to actively manage the fund balance which considers the district's long-range needs.** The Business manager should develop a report on the fund balance status. After receiving the report, the board, superintendent, and Business manager should develop a fund balance management plan. The plan should include a procedure for informing the board of the effect of budget decisions, including amendments, on the fund balance. It should also provide the board and superintendent with a report on the beginning fund balance, the effect of the amendment, and the ending fund balance. In this manner, the staff would monitor the fund balance and make the board aware of the district's financial position on an ongoing basis.

- Recommendation 51: Direct Business Office staff to process all extra duty payments through the payroll system.** The Business manager should inform supervisors that all extra duty pay must be processed through payroll in compliance with Internal Revenue Service (IRS), Texas Teacher Retirement System (TRS), and Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) requirements. Accounts payable clerks should be provided with a listing of employees, and instructed that all payments to individuals should be checked against the list to ensure that payment to employees are properly processed through the payroll system.
- Recommendation 52: Reorganize the Business Office and increase operational efficiency by moving the maintenance, transportation, and food service operations under the Business Office.** In addition, the district should centralize the purchasing operation under the Business Office, create the position of, and hire, a purchasing coordinator, and assign one of the accounts payable clerks to the purchasing office. The senior accountant should assume the responsibility for managing all of the district's accounting functions. The Personnel Department should assume responsibility for compensation management and leave accounting; this can be accomplished by moving one of the payroll clerks from the Business Office to the Personnel Department.

DETAILED ACCOMPLISHMENT

BOND REFINANCING

During 2005, EEISD worked with its financial advisors to take advantage of lower interest rates and refinanced \$23,415,000 in outstanding building bonds. The refinancing will reduce EEISD's overall bond interest costs and save taxpayers approximately \$1,001,302.

At the end of Fiscal Year 2004, EEISD had three outstanding bond issues. These three bond issues have interest rates that

range from a low of three percent to a high of 6.5 percent. **Exhibit 7-1** displays information regarding the district's outstanding bond issues as of August 31, 2004.

The district's financial advisor contacted EEISD's Business manager in early April 2005 concerning the possibility of refinancing a portion of EEISD's outstanding bonds. The Business manager discussed the proposal with the superintendent, who then placed the item on the board agenda for April.

At the regular board meeting in April 2005, the superintendent asked the board to consider refinancing a portion of EEISD's outstanding building bonds. After a briefing by the district's financial advisors on saving money by using the proceeds of a new bond issue sold at current lower rates to retire older bonds sold at higher interest rates, the board unanimously passed a resolution authorizing the superintendent or Business manager to refinance the old bonds on behalf of the district.

The district refunded a total of \$23,415,000 in outstanding debt. The refund included \$10,000,000 of Series 1997 Unlimited Tax School Building Bonds and \$13,415,000 of Series 2000 Unlimited Tax School Building Bonds. The True Interest Cost (TIC) on the refunded Series 1997 Bonds was 4.9 percent, while the TIC on the Series 2000 Bonds was 5.6 percent. The new Series 2005 Unlimited Tax Refunding Bonds has an actual TIC of 4.5 percent. The refund saved the district \$1,849,441 in total debt service costs. The savings is computed to be \$1,001,302 on a net present value (NPV) basis. NPV is computed by taking the \$1,849,441 saving in debt service costs and restating it as current dollars, considering inflation and the rate of return. Since EEISD receives an Instructional Facilities Allotment (IFA) from the state, the taxpayers of Texas will share in the savings. The IFA program provides state assistance to school districts in making debt service payments on qualifying bonds or lease-purchase agreements. EEISD has taken advantage of this program and, as a result, the state pays approximately 92

**EXHIBIT 7-1
EEISD BOND ISSUE STATUS
END OF FISCAL YEAR 2004**

ISSUE	INTEREST RATE PAYABLE	AMOUNT OF ORIGINAL ISSUE	RETIRED	PAYABLE AT THE END OF THE FISCAL YEAR
Unlimited Tax Building Bonds Series 1997	4.25 - 6.50%	\$14,000,000	\$2,310,000	\$11,690,000
Unlimited Tax Building Bonds Series 2000	4.95 - 6.13%	\$16,315,000	\$1,015,000	\$15,300,000
Unlimited Tax Building Bonds Series 2002	3.00 - 4.30%	\$2,925,000	\$350,000	\$2,575,000

SOURCE: EEISD Annual Financial Report for the fiscal year ended August 31, 2004.

percent of EEISD’s debt service costs. It is estimated that state taxpayers will realize a savings of \$919,195 on a present value basis, while EEISD taxpayers will realize a present value savings of \$82,107.

DETAILED FINDINGS

BUDGET PROCESS (REC. 49)

EEISD lacks a coordinated budget preparation and adoption process that involves the stakeholders, board, and employees in budget planning. The Business manager prepares revenue estimates for the district. State revenues account for more than 83 percent of the district’s budget. The Business manager uses the State Aid Template provided by Regional Education Service Center XIII (Region 13) to estimate state revenues. These estimates are based on the current year’s average daily attendance (ADA), and do not include a growth estimate. The Business manager uses this conservative approach to ensure that expenditures do not have to be cut during the school year. Local tax revenue accounts for only 7 percent of EEISD’s budget. The Business manager estimates

local tax revenues after receiving the certified property values from the Hidalgo County Appraisal District.

The Business manager allocates regular program funding to the campuses based on their ADA. **Exhibit 7-2** contains the campus budget allowances for 2005–06. The principals and the campus improvement committees (CIC) collaborate to ensure funding is allocated appropriately to support the campus improvement plan. The Business manager also allocates additional funds for specific programs and functions, such as Reserve Officer Training Corps, band, cheerleading, libraries, and counselors.

Campus principals, department heads, and program coordinators receive a budget worksheet form to use in distributing their budget allocation, an example of which is found in **Exhibit 7-3**. The form contains the account code, description, current year’s amended budget, expenditures to date, and a blank line for entry of the proposed budget amount. Completed forms must be sent to the PEIMS coordinator in the Business Office by a predetermined cutoff date. The PEIMS coordinator then enters the

**EXHIBIT 7-2
CAMPUS BUDGET ALLOWANCES
2005–06**

CAMPUS	ALLOCATION PER STUDENT	2003–04 ACTUAL ADA	TOTAL PER STUDENT BUDGET ALLOCATION
High School	\$250	1,347.539	\$336,885
Junior High	\$200	714.969	\$142,994
Grade 6	\$150	356.684	\$53,503
Garcia Elementary	\$130	487.566	\$63,384
Kennedy Elementary	\$130	565.588	\$73,526
Rodriguez Elementary	\$130	460.865	\$59,912
LBJ Elementary	\$130	451.163	\$58,651
Early Childhood	\$130	585.735	\$76,146
TOTALS		4,970.109	\$865,001

SOURCE: 2005-06 EEISD Projected Budget Handout.

**EXHIBIT 7-3
BUDGET WORKSHEET EXAMPLE
2005–06**

ACCOUNT CODE	DESCRIPTION	2004–05 AMENDED BUDGET	EXPENDITURES TO DATE	*PROPOSED BUDGET
111-11-6329-00-001	Other Reading Material	\$1,500	\$1,484	
111-11-6399-00-001	General Supplies	\$3,000	\$2,387	
111-11-6411-00-001	Travel & Subsistence Employee	\$1,100	\$1,364	
111-11-6399-00-001	Furniture & Other Equipment	\$13,915	\$13,915	

*Blank line for entry of the proposed budget amount.

SOURCE: 2005-06 EEISD Budget Worksheets for High School.

information from the form into the district's Regional Service Center Computer Cooperative financial software system.

EEISD has a process that allows budget managers to amend their original budget. Requests are submitted to the Business Office on a paper form and must include justification for the amendment. The superintendent approves amendments within functional areas. Amendments between functions are submitted to, and approved by, the school board as required by state law. The school board considers budget amendments at each of its monthly meetings.

A campus principal may request a budget supplement to purchase equipment, or to fund special needs that exceed the basic budget allocation. These requests also must be made in writing and sent to the Business Office. The Business manager reviews each request and, if there are sufficient funds available, forwards them to the superintendent's office. The superintendent makes the final determination if the requested amount should be included in EEISD's budget. For example, Lyndon Baines Johnson Elementary School made a special request to purchase 30 erasable boards. The special request was approved by the superintendent and included in the budget for 2004–05.

The Business Office does not coordinate budget planning or training with the Board of Trustees or district personnel. The Business Office is not following EEISD Policy CE (LOCAL), which states "Budget planning shall be an integral part of overall program planning so that the budget effectively reflects the district's programs and activities and provides the resources to implement them. In the budget planning process, general educational goals, specific program goals, and alternatives for achieving program goals shall be considered, as well as input from EEISD and campus-level planning and decision-making committees. Budget planning and evaluation are continuous processes and shall be a part of each month's activities."

In some cases, the campus improvement committee is not presented with an opportunity to coordinate special population or program budgets with campus goals. Funding which is based on special populations or programs is budgeted by the relevant program director or coordinator. For example, the Special Education Department receives the majority of state funds designated for special education and works directly with special education staff to provide for special needs students. Some special program budget managers, such as the Title I director, meet with campus principals and staff to receive their input on how Title I

funds should be allocated, while other budget managers, like the bilingual director, work with campus subject matter specialists in planning their budget. The Business manager said that allowing program directors and coordinators to control special program general operating fund budgets helps ensure that EEISD complies with the state's 85 percent direct program spending requirements.

The budget calendar prepared by the Business Office excludes budget meetings for administrators, with the exception of the superintendent, Business manager, and Personnel director. **Exhibit 7-4** displays EEISD's budget calendar and shows the lack of coordination between budget managers.

The superintendent and Business manager conduct budget workshops consisting of a general overview of the budget for the Board of Trustees. During these sessions, board members receive information on revenue sources and the effect of ADA on state revenue. However, they do not receive campus-level briefings, a listing of capital requirements, or simple budget scenario presentations demonstrating fund balance effect. The workshops lack multi-year budget planning, and are not attended by campus principals or program administrators. The district adopted a deficit 2005–06 budget with \$38.7 million in expenditures and \$37.2 million in revenues; with expenditures exceeding revenues by \$1.5 million.

Budget managers such as campus principals, directors, and coordinators do not receive budget training and must rely on a printout of the budget codes provided by the Business Office to complete their budget worksheets. The printout contains a description of the type of expenditures, such as supplies, contracted services, and employee travel, but does not contain an explanation of the various functional categories like instruction, instructional administration, and maintenance. One campus principal said that he keeps a copy of his budget with hand-written remarks identifying what each function represents.

EEISD's computer system has the capability to allow budget managers to request their own reports online, but this capability is not currently in use in the district. Budget managers have requested the training and computer equipment to generate their own online reports. The Business Office stated that they are planning to work with the Regional Education Service Center I (Region 1) and the district's Technology Department to implement an online capability within the next year. Principals and other budget managers

**EXHIBIT 7-4
EEISD BUDGET CALENDAR
2005–06**

TARGET DATE	ACTIVITY/PROCESS	RESPONSIBILITY
February	Plan budget strategies, contact Texas Association of School Boards, Inc. (TASB) for salary increase figures, and compile General Fund preliminary funding figures.	Superintendent, Business manager, and accountant
March	Prepare and distribute preliminary worksheet to principals and directors.	Business manager and accountant
April	Prepare preliminary payroll budget using TASB proposed increase. Receive budget worksheets from campus principals.	Business manager and accountant
May	Receive budget worksheets from directors and coordinators. Receive and review report of preliminary property values.	Business manager, accountant, and Appraisal District
June	Prepare and distribute preliminary budget worksheet for special revenue budgets. Start inputting budget data into budget software system.	Business manager and accountant
July	Prepare preliminary personnel staffing and proposed salary schedule. Conduct budget workshop on revenue and expenditure projections.	Business manager, Personnel director, superintendent, and Board of Trustees
August	Finalize personnel staffing and proposed salary schedule and conduct budget workshop to review updated figures.	Business manager, Personnel director, superintendent, and Board of Trustees
August	Budget workshop to review updated figures.	Superintendent, Business manager, Board of Trustees
August	Advertise Official Public Budget and Tax Rate hearing.	Business manager
August	Conduct Official Public Budget and Tax Rate Public Hearing. Adopt budget and tax rate.	Superintendent, Business manager, Board of Trustees
August	Distribute Official Budget to staff.	Business manager

SOURCE: EEISD Budget Calendar, November 2005 (condensed).

presently keep track of their expenditures with a computer-generated report, showing the budget, encumbrances, expenditures, and the remaining balance. These reports can be requested at any time from the Business Office.

The Texas Education Code (TEC) requires school districts to adopt a budget prior to August 20, if the district’s fiscal year ends on August 31, as is the fiscal year-end for EEISD. The TEC also requires a public hearing to adopt the proposed budget and tax rate. The hearings may be conducted on the same night, but notice of the hearings must be published in a local newspaper no earlier than the 30th day, or later than the 10th day, before the date of the hearing. The district published the public notice for both hearings on August 20, 2005, 11 days prior to date of the hearing. EEISD then conducted the proposed budget and tax rate hearing, attended by six school district administrators. They heard no public comments, and the hearing lasted 20 minutes.

TEA’s *EASRG*, §2.3 *Budget Process Overview* states the budget process is comprised of three major phases: planning, preparation, and evaluation:

- The budgetary process begins with sound planning. Planning defines the goals and objectives of campuses and the school district and develops programs to attain those goals and objectives. Once these programs and plans have been established, budgetary resource allocations are made to support them.
- Budgetary resource allocations are the preparation phase of budgeting. The allocations cannot be made, however, until plans and programs have been established. Finally, the budget is evaluated for its effectiveness in attaining goals and objectives.
- Evaluation typically involves an examination of how funds were expended, what outcomes resulted from the expenditure of funds, and to what degree these outcomes achieved the objectives stated during the planning phase. This evaluation phase is important in determining the following year’s budgetary allocations.

EEISD’s budget process lacks many of the elements of a good budget process. First, EEISD fails to consider campus or district goals or objectives in the budget process. Campus

budget allocations are based on ADA, while special program budgets such as bilingual education, compensatory education, and special education are tied to state funding amounts. Neither allocation method is based on campus or district goals and objectives. Personnel are not assigned, or allocated, based on educational objectives, and long-term maintenance and equipment needs are not considered.

Second, the budget development process is centered in the administrative office and does not involve the school board or campus administrators. District and campus-level committees are not trained or briefed on the budget and have little knowledge of the development or evaluation process.

Failure to involve and train district personnel, the school board, and stakeholders in the budget process has caused dissatisfaction with the budget process, and financial management in general. These feelings were expressed in the financial sections of the principal and teacher surveys, and in comments made at forums conducted by the review team. **Exhibit 7-5** contains selected questions from the employee

surveys, and comments made at the community open house.

Many districts begin the budget planning process by training the board, superintendent, and Business Office professionals in budget development. Only after receiving this instruction can a district proceed to develop a comprehensive and inclusive budget process, which includes a planning calendar and stakeholder involvement.

Budget training is available from professional organizations. One such organization holds an annual two-day budget academy for chief financial officers and school district business officials. The training includes the development of a school district budget from concept to adoption and beyond. In addition, the organization offers a certification course entitled *Budget and Financial Planning*. This course is designed for business officials, superintendents, and board members and covers the following subjects:

- budgetary approaches;
- the budget development process;
- communicating the budget;

**EXHIBIT 7-5
SELECTED SURVEY RESULTS AND
PUBLIC COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSE COMMENTS
2005–06**

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT PRINCIPAL SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers.	0%	55.6%	11.1%	33.3%	0%
Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	0%	44.4%	11.1%	44.4%	0%
Financial resources are allocated fairly and equitably at my school.	22.2%	33.3%	33.3%	0%	11.1%
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT TEACHER SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers.	0%	55.6%	11.1%	33.3%	0%
Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	0%	44.4%	11.1%	44.4%	0%
Financial resources are allocated fairly and equitably at my school.	22.2%	33.3%	33.3%	0%	11.1%

COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSE COMMENTS

There are teachers that do not realize what their department has to work with.

The fund balance in 2005 was \$5 million. Has the district increased staffing and wages at the cost of the fund balance?

The school district needs to be more open about its financial management. It is a mystery to teachers who do not understand how decisions are made. The district should be more proactive about sharing information with the public. Conflicting information is presented by opposing political parties.

Purchased a pickup with custom paint. The money could have been spent on the students.

SOURCE: Review Team Edcouch-Elsa Survey and Community Open House Comments, November 2005.

- roles and responsibilities;
- legal requirements (funds to be budgeted);
- forecasting;
- multiyear projections;
- fund balance;
- grant/construction programs;
- truth in taxation; and
- fiscal year change.

This course is available online, or arrangements can be made to have the course taught locally.

A good budget calendar incorporates the elements of the budget development process. *EASRG*, §2.7.2.2: *Preparation of the Budget Calendar* offers the following three steps that can be used to prepare a budget calendar:

- Determine the level of detail needed. A district may have several budget calendars with varied levels of detail provided. A general calendar may be presented to the school board while a detailed calendar may be used in the budget guidelines for use at the campus level. If several calendars are used, they should be summarized in a district master calendar to ensure that all the activities and dates are consistent and compatible.
- Identify all the activities that must be included in the calendar and arrange them in chronological order.
- Assign completion dates to each activity on the calendar. Completion dates should be assigned working backward through the activities from the legally mandated date for presentation of the preliminary school district budget to the school board by August 20. Dates should also be assigned to ensure that sufficient time is allowed for the completion of each activity on the calendar. Budget calendars should also contain a column that show who is responsible for each activity listed.

The *EASRG* also provides a sample budget calendar. The sample may be modified to suit district needs. **Exhibit 7-6** is an example of a budget calendar that has been modified to meet the requirements of a district the size of EEISD.

Dripping Springs ISD has developed a planning process, which begins in October and includes the board, stakeholders, administrators, and staff in the development process. Their process includes:

- board review of the mission and approval of school improvement plans;
- four board budget workshops;
- a budget review team composed of the superintendent, assistant superintendents, directors, campus administrators, and teachers;
- a slide presentation that includes comparative data from other districts;
- presentation of the budget to community leaders; and
- a public hearing and adoption.

EEISD should develop a budget process that includes stakeholder training and revision of its existing budget calendar. The Business manager and PEIMS coordinator should attend budget training offered by one of the state's professional organizations. The superintendent and Business manager should develop a plan and budget for board and administrator training. Program directors should work with campus principals and their campus improvement committees to explain the expenditure constraints of their program, and coordinate their programs with campus goals. The Business manager should work with the superintendent and board to revise the district's budget calendar and budget guidelines, incorporating the requirements of EEISD Policy CE (LOCAL). The superintendent, Business manager, and other administrators should work with the board to develop a multi-year budget addressing the district's educational goals and capital requirements. The Business manager should work with the superintendent, the board, and district stakeholders to determine expenditures, and should also provide budget development training for district personnel, and prepare presentations and handouts for the board and district stakeholders.

Implementing this recommendation will cost approximately \$1,850 the first year for two persons to attend training, and \$925 per year thereafter for one person to attend training. One example of a budget academy is the two-day Texas Association of School Business Officials Budget Academy held in Austin, Texas for \$275 per person, plus an estimated \$650 for travel. Sending the Business manager and PEIMS coordinator to this training will cost \$1,850 the first year ($\$275 + \$650 = \$925 \times 2 \text{ persons} = \$1,850$). The Business manager should provide local training to allow the board, principals, directors, secretaries, Business Office paraprofessionals, and other district personnel to acquire the necessary knowledge without additional travel expense.

**EXHIBIT 7-6
BUDGET CALENDAR EXAMPLE**

TARGET DATE	ACTIVITY/PROCESS	RESPONSIBILITY
01-10-0X	Budget process approved	Superintendent
01-15-0X	Projected enrollments	Business manager and PEIMS coordinator
02-15-0X	Staffing requirements determined	Superintendent and Personnel director
03-6-0X	Budget process outlined to principals and staff	Superintendent and Business manager
03-6-0X	Additional training provided to new principals and administrators	Business manager
03-8-0X	Beginning of campus budget preparation	Principals/staff
03-8-0X	Beginning of special program and support service budget preparation	Special program and support departments
03-25-0X	Review of final campus budget by Campus Improvement Committees (CIC)	Principals
04-1-0X	Completion of campus budgets	Principals
04-6-0X	Completion of special program and support service budgets	Special program and support service administrators
04-8-0X	Initiate review of campus budgets and non-allocated requests	Superintendent and assistant superintendents
05-18-0X	Review projected revenue estimates	Superintendent and Business manager
05-19-0X	Initiate superintendent's review of preliminary district budget	Superintendent
05-21-0X	Review personnel staffing and proposed salary schedule	Superintendent, assistant superintendents, Personnel director, and Business manager
05-22-0X	Review of building maintenance, renovation, and future construction schedules	Superintendent, assistant superintendents, Maintenance director, and Business manager
06-1-0X	Complete superintendent's review of preliminary district budget, personnel requirements, facility requirements, and projected revenue	Superintendent, assistant superintendents, and Business manager
06-8-0X	Complete first draft of district budget	Business manager
06-9-0X	Review first draft of district budget	Superintendent
06-16-0X	Budget workshop	School Board and administrative staff
06-24-0X	District Improvement Committee (DIC) and Administrative budget meeting	Input from DIC and other district employees
07-16-0X	Budget workshop	School Board and administrative staff
07-30-0X	Complete final budget draft	Superintendent and Business manager
08-6-0X	Preliminary public budget hearing	School Board, superintendent, and Business manager
08-13-0X	Official public budget hearing	School Board, superintendent, and Business manager
08-27-0X	Budget adopted	School Board

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, Financial Accountability System Resource Guide Modified Budget Calendar.

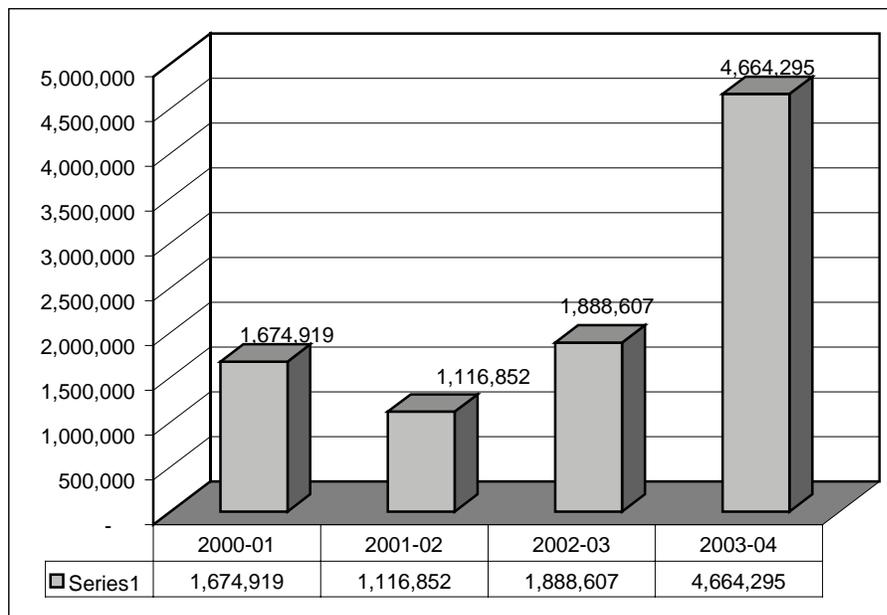
FUND BALANCE MANAGEMENT (REC. 50)

EEISD lacks a plan for managing their fund balance. The fund balance for the General Fund has varied from 2000–01 to 2003–04 between a low of \$1,116,852 and a high of \$4,664,295 (Exhibit 7-7). The district's school board has no knowledge of what makes up the fund balance, and there is no plan to determine what an optimum fund balance for

EEISD would be, or for what any excess fund balance should be used.

The chart illustrates the district's fund balance decline in 2001–02. The superintendent said the decline resulted from using fund balance for change orders on construction projects.

**EXHIBIT 7-7
EEISD GENERAL FUND BALANCE
2000-01 THROUGH 2003-04**



SOURCE: EEISD Annual Financial Reports, 2000-01 through 2003-04.

In adopting the 2005-06 budget, the superintendent presented the board with a proposed \$1.5 million deficit budget. The deficit was explained to the board as resulting from an additional \$1.5 million needed to implement the TASB salary study recommendation. The board adopted the budget per the superintendent’s recommendation, which will have a negative effect on fund balance.

Fund balance is the gross difference between a fund’s assets and liabilities reflected on the balance sheet, and is similar to retained earnings in financial accounting. The fund balance is normally comprised of the following three elements:

- Reserved fund balance designates the portion of fund balance not available for appropriations or expenditures, and includes items such as inventory and food service. It also includes funds legally restricted for a specific use, such as a reserve for encumbrances.
- Designated unreserved fund balance is an amount set aside or designated by management to reflect tentative plans, or commitments of district resources. Designations require board action to earmark fund balance for bona fide purposes that will be fulfilled within a reasonable period of time. Examples would be designations for self-insurance or capital replacement.

- Undesignated unreserved fund balance is the difference between the unreserved fund balance and the designated unreserved fund balance. This portion of the fund balance is usually available to finance monthly operating expenditures.

Unreserved fund balance is a source of available funds during the period when the district is not receiving state revenues or local taxes; this normally happens in the period between late August and late October. During this period districts with adequate fund balance can continue operations without resorting to a loan. In addition, one primary criterion of rating agencies for school bonds is the relative amount of undesignated unreserved fund balance. Bond rating agencies view undesignated unreserved fund balances as a reflection of the financial strength of school districts, showing concern when district fund balances decrease. Although EEISD did not need to borrow short term funds during 2004-05, in past years their lack of fund balance reserves required the district to obtain short-term loans to meet payroll prior to receiving state revenues or local taxes.

EASRG §1.2.9.2, Unreserved Fund Balance, states, “Prudent financial management requires accumulating undesignated unreserved fund balance in the General Fund in an amount

that is adequate to cover net cash outflows that occur in virtually all school districts during most of the fiscal year.”

EASRG §6.2.2.1, Optimum Fund Balance, explains that “TEA has set a rule of thumb to compute the optimum fund balance in the General Fund. The rule of thumb calls for the computation of the optimum undesignated unreserved fund balance to equal the estimated amount to cover cash flow deficits in the General Fund for the fall period in the following fiscal year plus estimated average monthly cash disbursements of General Fund for the nine months following the fiscal year.” The instructions for determining an optimum fund balance are contained in the *EASRG Financial Accounting and Reporting module, Appendix 3 – Fund Balance and Cash Flow Worksheet*. The completed worksheet is included as an unaudited exhibit in a district’s Annual Financial Report. **Exhibit 7-8** contains the optimum fund balance calculations taken from the EEISD Annual Financial Reports for fiscal years 2000–01 through 2003–04.

The chart shows that EEISD did not maintain an optimum fund balance during three of the four years presented.

The EEISD superintendent should develop a plan to actively manage the fund balance which considers the district’s long-range needs. The Business manager should develop a report on the fund balance status. After receiving the report, the board, superintendent, and Business manager should develop a fund balance management plan. The plan should include a procedure for informing the board of the effect of budget decisions, including amendments, on the fund balance. It should also provide the board and superintendent with a report on the beginning fund balance, the effect of the amendment, and the ending fund balance. In this manner, the staff would monitor the fund balance and make the

board aware of the district’s financial position on an ongoing basis.

The board should know what the fund balance is, have a plan to determine what the optimum fund balance for EEISD should be, and for what any excess fund balance should be used. EEISD could use the fund balance for board designations such as the purchase of capital assets, a contingency for self-insurance, or a set aside for renovations. The board should be aware of the fact that the district’s health insurance fund experienced deficits of \$165,369 during the 2000–01 school year, and \$686,449 in the 2001–02 school year. The board should determine the liability for run-off claims in the health insurance fund, and obtain an estimate of incurred, but not paid, claims in the workers’ compensation fund. The board should engage these claims as contingent liabilities of the district, and designate fund balance to cover their payment if there are not sufficient retained earnings in the self-insurance fund to cover these liabilities.

CONTRACTING WITH EMPLOYEES (REC. 51)

EEISD contracts with its employees to perform services in violation of state and federal guidelines. Some employees performing certain extra duties are paid through the district’s accounts payable system. For example, the district paid a diagnostician as a contractor for performing assessments during the summer months. Payment was made through and assigned a contracted services budget code. The employee was paid the total amount invoiced for the duties performed with no withholding of federal income tax, Medicare, or Teacher Retirement System (TRS) funds.

**EXHIBIT 7-8
EEISD OPTIMUM GENERAL FUND BALANCE CALCULATIONS
2000–01 THROUGH 2003–04**

EXPLANATION	FISCAL YEARS			
	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
Beginning Fund Balance	\$1,674,919	\$1,116,852	\$1,888,607	\$4,664,295
Reserved Fund Balance	\$563,949	\$412,421	\$354,658	\$183,713
Designated Fund Balance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Amount designated to cover fall cash flow deficits	\$322,419	\$590,095	\$0	\$0
Estimate of one month cash disbursement	\$2,791,814	\$2,720,066	\$2,500,000	\$3,058,156
Optimum Fund Balance	\$3,678,182	\$3,722,582	\$2,854,658	\$3,241,869
Excess (Deficit) Unreserved Fund Balance	(\$2,003,263)	(\$2,605,730)	(\$966,051)	\$1,422,426

SOURCE: EEISD Annual Financial Reports, 2000-01 through 2003-04.

The majority of payments for extra duty assignments are paid through the district's payroll system. However, a review of 2004 calendar year Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Forms 1099-MISC disclosed that during this time EEISD paid a number of employees as contractors. IRS Form 1099-MISC is issued to vendors that are not incorporated and have earned at least \$600 during the fiscal year. **Exhibit 7-9** displays EEISD employees who were given an IRS Form 1099-MISC for performing contractor duties during the 2004 calendar year.

**EXHIBIT 7-9
EXAMPLE OF EEISD EXTRA DUTY PAYMENT
DURING THE 2004 CALENDAR YEAR**

NORMAL DUTY ASSIGNMENT	EXTRA DUTY PAY
Diagnostician	\$600
Diagnostician	\$800
Librarian	\$600
NGS clerk	\$1,438
Speech pathologist	\$1,400
Teacher/band	\$600
Teacher	\$1,091
TOTAL	\$6,529

SOURCE: EEISD 2004 IRS Forms 1099-MISC.

The NGS clerk is classified as nonexempt under FLSA; as such, if the clerk was performing normal duties on an extra duty basis, these duties are subject to the overtime requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

Penalties for violating the FLSA can subject both EEISD and individual supervisors to large fines and criminal penalties. An IRS article published April 5, 2004, entitled *IRS Warns Business, Individuals to Watch for Questionable Employment Tax Practices* states "Employers who misclassify employees as independent contractors will be liable for the employment taxes on wages paid to the misclassified worker and subject to penalties. Generally if the payer has the right to control what work will be done and how it will be done, the worker is an employee." In addition, the IRS Commissioner said, "Failure to pay employment taxes is stealing from the employees of the business." An example would be the failure to include these wages for unemployment computation, which could affect the amount of an unemployment claim. Also, TRS computes retirement benefits based on the average of a person's wages. Withholding any wages can affect future retirement benefits.

FLSA requires that nonexempt employees be paid overtime at one and one-half times their regular rate of pay for all hours over 40 hours worked in a workweek. Nonexempt employees generally include secretaries, food service workers, custodians, maintenance workers, bus drivers, and security personnel. *EASRG, §5.5.4.9, Supplemental Payments to Employees for Services*, states, "Payments for auxiliary services discharged by the employee in addition to their normal, specified duties and performed outside of regular work hours should be made through the district payroll office. A district should process all employee extra duty payments through the district's payroll system. This action would bring a district into compliance with state and federal requirements and allow eligible employees to receive the proper overtime payment."

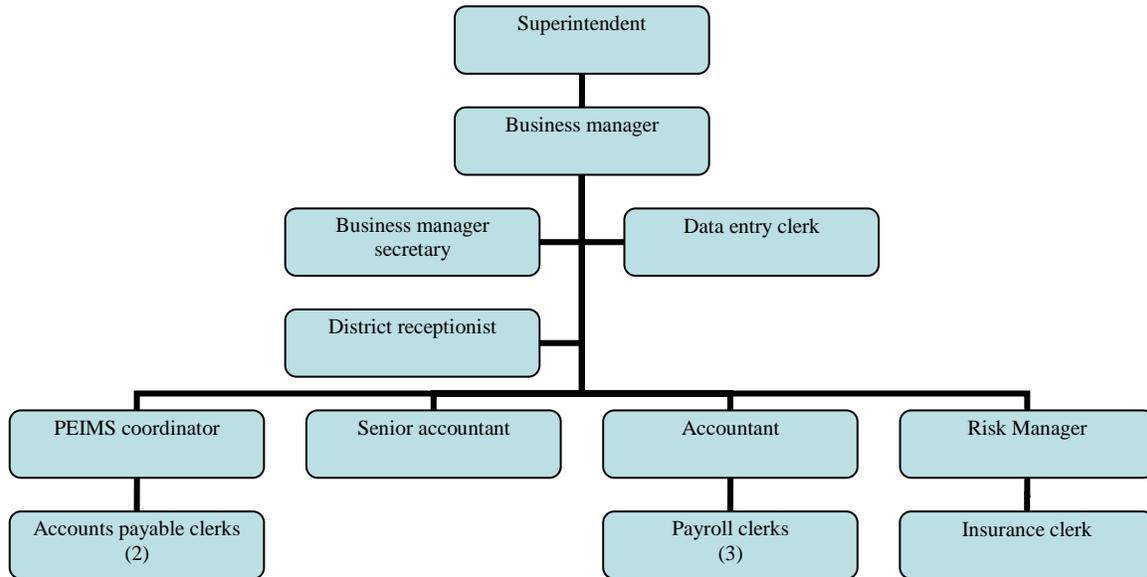
The Business manager should direct Business Office staff to process all extra duty payments through the payroll system. The Business manager should inform supervisors that all extra duty pay must be processed through payroll in compliance with IRS, TRS, and FLSA requirements. Accounts payable clerks should be provided with a list of employees, and instructed that all payments to individuals should be checked against the list to ensure that payment to employees are properly processed through the payroll system.

This recommendation can be implemented for approximately \$160 annually. This assumes that the 2004 IRS Forms 1099-MISC represent all of the district's employees paid as contractors during the year. The district would be liable for its share of Medicare, which is 1.45 percent, and for workers' compensation, which is approximately 1 percent. Thus, the district's share of withholding is \$160 annually (\$6,529 total extra duty pay for 2004 x 2.45 percent = \$160).

BUSINESS OFFICE ORGANIZATION (REC. 52)

EEISD Business Office is not functionally and efficiently organized. Business Office personnel report to the Business manager and are responsible for accounting, financial reporting, payroll processing, computing salaries, leave management, auditing, accounts payable, purchasing, cash management, bank reconciliations, and elections. The Business manager also supervises the risk manager and district receptionist. The senior accountant does not have direct supervisory responsibilities. The PEIMS coordinator supervises the account payable clerks, while the accountant supervises the payroll clerks. **Exhibit 7-10** displays the current organizational chart for the Business Office and

**EXHIBIT 7-10
EEISD BUSINESS OFFICE ORGANIZATION**



SOURCE: EEISD Business Office, December 2005.

indicates that the Business manager is responsible for direct supervision of four professional positions.

The senior accountant’s current duties include reconciling tax receivables, managing special revenue funds, and performing other general accounting functions. The accountant’s duties include overseeing district payroll, leave accounting, and reconciling district bank accounts. The PEIMS coordinator collects the district’s PEIMS data, and transmits the data to TEA. Additionally, the PEIMS coordinator assists the Business manager in preparing the budget, computing salaries, and supervising accounts payable. The Business manager accomplishes most other business-related duties.

EEISD currently places maintenance, food service, transportation, and security services under the assistant superintendent of personnel. This precludes an efficient line of communication between the individuals responsible for these areas and the Business Office. The current arrangement leaves the district unaware of operational department problems as they occur. In addition, the assistant superintendent for personnel does not currently provide any financial or programmatic oversight for these operational departments.

The current organization does not include a coordinator of purchasing. EEISD has a decentralized purchasing process, allowing principals and district administrators to perform

many purchasing duties. Currently, purchase orders are prepared at campus or office locations, sent to the central office for approval by the Business manager, then sent back to the campus or office location for mailing. Invoices are either sent to the campus or department that prepared the purchase order or picked up directly from the vendor, and then are forwarded to the Business Office for payment. The Business manager is responsible for preparation of the district’s competitive bids.

Currently, much of the Business manager’s time is spent on routine matters such as preparing journal vouchers, signing purchase orders, and signing off on payroll calculations. As a result, EEISD does not prudently manage the fund balance, and the purchasing operation is not being accomplished efficiently. This has caused the following problems:

- district personnel are purchasing from vendors that have not received board approval, and are not on the district’s approved vendor list;
- EEISD is not receiving the cost-savings benefits offered through cooperative purchasing arrangements;
- payment to some vendors is delayed;
- accounts payable clerks enter purchase orders into the system and also process purchase orders for payment to the detriment of internal control. *FASRG, §3.3.5, Control Environment*, states “The purchasing director, along with

the finance director, and ultimately the superintendent are responsible to ensure that duties among purchasing and accounting personnel are properly segregated to provide a checks-and-balances environment;"

- contracts are not being managed;
- the Board of Trustees is not involved in managing the fund balance; and
- the Business manager cannot spend the time necessary to manage business and operational functions.

EASRG, §3.3.3, Maximizing Efficiency, states, "A centralized purchasing function is essential to efficiency in purchasing for the following reasons:

- it provides for the coordination and consolidation of smaller purchases into larger volume purchases for the entire district;
- vendors and the business community have a single central contact within the district;
- the Purchasing Department and its personnel have experience and are trained in purchasing, sourcing, pricing, and vendor relations which saves the district money and allows for a more efficient process; and
- the Purchasing Department and its personnel are trained in state and federal laws and local board policies applicable to purchasing providing for better compliance."

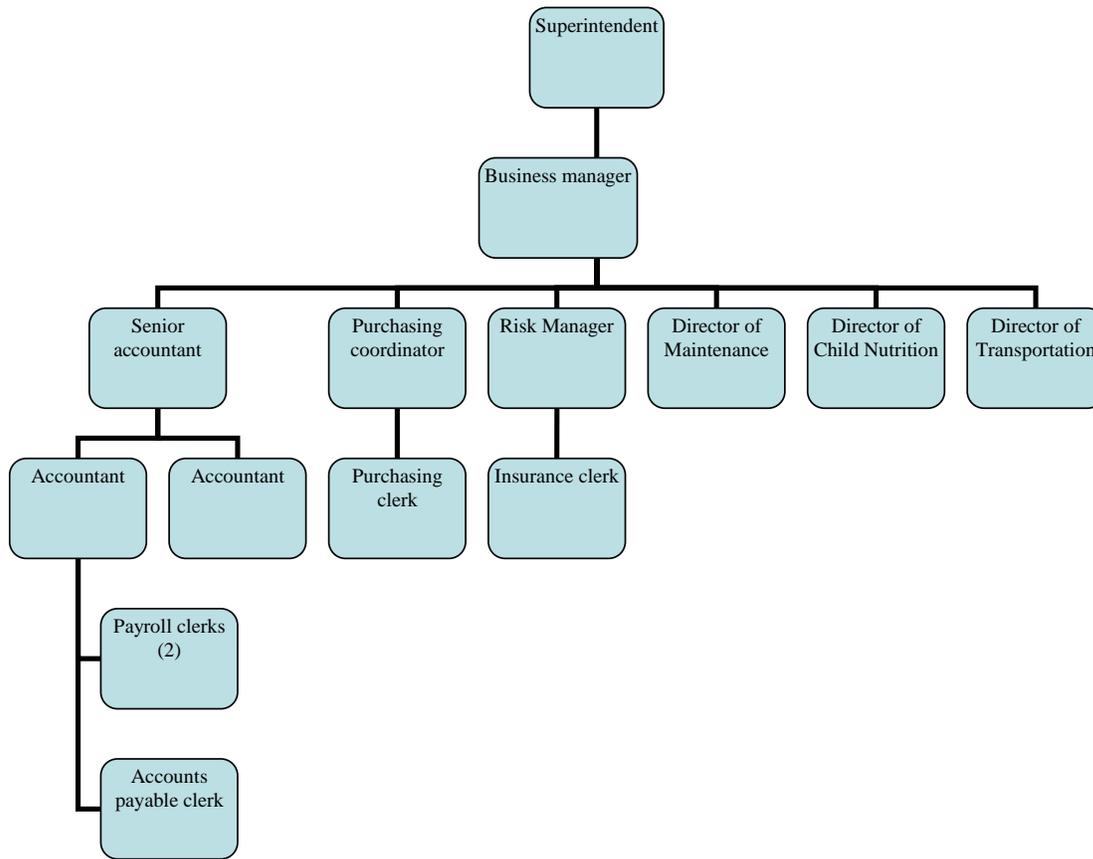
In many districts the size of EEISD, the Business manager supervises many noninstructional departments that maintain a purchasing function in their daily operations. These may include accounting, purchasing, food service, maintenance, transportation, and in some cases, personnel and risk management. This type of alignment can only be accomplished by assigning managerial responsibility for accounting to a single individual, and centralizing the district's purchasing operations under a purchasing director or purchasing agent. *EASRG, §3.3.2, Purchasing Functions and Roles*, lists the following responsibilities of the personnel involved in the purchasing function:

- supervises entire purchasing function of the district;
- supervises the acquisition of goods and services in a timely and efficient manner;
- assists in the development and modification of new and existing purchasing policies and procedures;

- approves all purchase orders and service contracts;
- supervises and coordinates the operations of the department;
- purchases goods and services for the district;
- writes, reviews, and modifies specifications for competitive procurements;
- evaluates competitive procurement, prices, quality, qualifications;
- evaluates vendors;
- communicates with vendors;
- assists in vendor communication between campuses and departments;
- implements training and development activities for purchasing staff;
- stays current on purchasing laws and practices; and
- coordinates district purchases to obtain the best price.

EEISD should reorganize the Business Office and increase operational efficiency by moving maintenance, transportation, and food service operations under the Business Office. Currently, these individuals answer directly to the assistant superintendent of Personnel, which does not promote operational efficiency. The Business Office should have direct oversight of these functions. In addition, the district should centralize the purchasing operation under the Business Office, create the position of, and hire, a purchasing coordinator, and assign one of the accounts payable clerks to the purchasing office. The senior accountant should assume the responsibility for managing all of the EEISD's accounting functions. The Personnel Department should assume responsibility for compensation management and leave accounting; this can be accomplished by moving one of the payroll clerks from the Business Office to the Personnel Department. **Exhibit 7-11** contains the proposed Business Office reorganization.

**EXHIBIT 7-11
PROPOSED EEISD BUSINESS OFFICE REORGANIZATION**



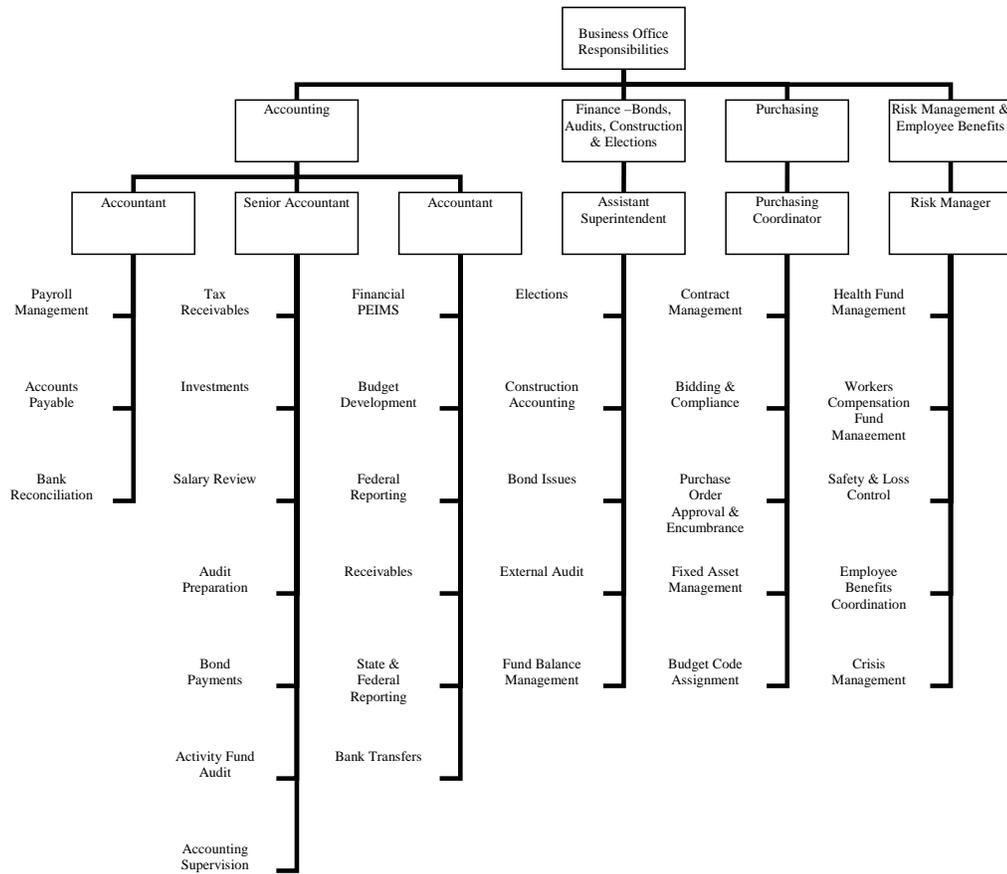
SOURCE: Texas Public School Consulting, Inc., December 2005.

Exhibit 7-12 contains the recommended major responsibilities for the Business Office positions.

The reorganization can be accomplished at an annual cost of \$61,614, the recommended salary for the purchasing coordinator position. This is calculated by taking the average salary of the accountants and the PEIMS coordinator and adding \$3,600 for health insurance and 3.8% for other benefits. (\$55,890 average salary + \$3,600 health insurance + \$2,124 for other benefits = \$61,614). The Business manager salary is already at the level of an assistant superintendent and will not require an adjustment.

For background information on Financial Management, see p. 248 in the General Information section of the appendices.

**EXHIBIT 7-12
RECOMMENDED BUSINESS OFFICE RESPONSIBILITIES**



SOURCE: Texas Public School Consulting, Inc., December 2005

FISCAL IMPACT

RECOMMENDATIONS	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) SAVINGS	ONE TIME (COSTS) SAVINGS
CHAPTER 7: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT							
49. Develop a budget process that includes stakeholder training and revision of its existing budget calendar.	(\$1,850)	(\$925)	(\$925)	(\$925)	(\$925)	(\$5,550)	\$0
50. Develop a plan to actively manage the fund balance which considers the district's long-range needs.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
51. Direct Business Office staff to process all extra duty payments through the payroll system.	(\$160)	(\$160)	(\$160)	(\$160)	(\$160)	(\$800)	\$0
52. Reorganize the Business Office and increase operational efficiency by moving the maintenance, transportation, and food service operations under the Business Office.	(\$61,614)	(\$61,614)	(\$61,614)	(\$61,614)	(\$61,614)	(\$308,070)	\$0
TOTALS-CHAPTER 7	(\$63,624)	(\$62,699)	(\$62,699)	(\$62,699)	(\$62,699)	(\$314,420)	(\$0)

CHAPTER 8

PURCHASING

EDCOUCH-ELSA INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

CHAPTER 8. PURCHASING

An effective purchasing program provides quality materials, supplies, services, and equipment in a timely manner at the lowest cost to districts and in accordance with all applicable statutes, rules and regulations. Purchasing includes activities associated with the acquisition of supplies, materials, services, and equipment. Purchasing agents must balance the needs of customers while exercising sound stewardship of their limited. Purchasing also includes contract management. Contracts usually are awarded as an outcome of negotiations. The negotiation process ensures that school districts award contracts to bidders that offer the best available goods and services at the most competitive prices with terms that are favorable to a district.

EEISD's purchasing operation is localized in the district's central office. The district's Business manager signs contracts on behalf of the district as well, particularly in the area of insurance and service contracts.

EEISD participates in three cooperative purchasing programs with other local governments or local cooperative organizations. The Food Service department uses the South Texas Cooperative to make some of their purchases. However, other district departments and campuses rarely utilize the services offered by the cooperatives.

In addition, the district's goods are housed in a warehouse located several miles from the district's administrative offices. Three full-time employees, a warehouse supervisor, and two clerks are assigned to the warehouse operation. The warehouse clerks are responsible for stocking supplies, filling orders and marking fixed asset items with a cost in excess of \$500.

Finally, the director for Student Services is responsible for EEISD textbook coordination, however, there are no written textbook procedures.

FINDINGS

- EEISD lacks a system or procedures to evaluate, monitor, or maintain existing or future district contracts.
- EEISD lacks procedures and training to guide employees on how to take advantage of using the

district's membership in purchasing cooperatives and district-authorized vendors.

- EEISD lacks a process to evaluate the district's warehouse operation for efficiency.
- EEISD does not require district staff to comply with existing Purchase Order (PO) procedures in the Business Office Procedures Manual.
- EEISD lacks written procedures to provide campus textbook coordinators ongoing guidance on effective and consistent textbooks management.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Recommendation 53: Develop a contract management policy with procedures to effectively manage and monitor EEISD's contracts.** The Business manager should work with legal counsel to develop a uniform set of contract standards and a generic district vendor contract. Developing a contract management plan and supporting guidelines will reduce the district's exposure to liability, ensure the district does not accept contracts where the language is detrimental to the district, help monitor contract performance, track contract expiration dates and ensure that all contracts are completed and enforced. A central filing system should be developed for all contracts to assist with tracking and monitoring. After a contract is awarded, EEISD should have a process to evaluate services rendered or products provided under the contract. The monitoring process should also have a mechanism to evaluate a vendor's performance and provide feedback or implement corrective action if, or when, warranted.
- **Recommendation 54: Add procedures to the current Business Office procedures manual for utilizing purchasing cooperatives and district-authorized vendors and provide training on those procedures.** The Business manager should conduct training for administrators and other interested parties on using cooperative purchasing. The training should include instruction on accessing the cooperatives websites and on how to order through the cooperative. For example, using the Multi-Regional Purchasing Program only requires a visit to their website to locate

awarded vendors and bid numbers. After obtaining this information, district personnel simply reference the cooperative's bid number on their POs. BuyBoard orders can be placed online or by sending the original PO directly to them instead of to the vendor.

- **Recommendation 55: Develop a needs assessment of the district's warehouse operation.** The warehouse supervisor should prepare a plan in response to the district needs assessment determination. The district should consider a just-in-time delivery system, or transportation for the existing warehouse staff. Custodial supply stock should be accounted for by warehouse staff to promote internal control over the use of these costly resources. Furthermore, EEISD should assign shelf-life expectancy to all supplies the district deems as critical items to avoid purchasing too much, or running out.
- **Recommendation 56: Revise the Business Office Procedure Manual to incorporate the elements of the FASRG's blanket PO definition.** The new process should include the number of vendors to whom open POs can be issued, the departments who can make purchases using open POs; the maximum time period allowed for an open PO and the dollar limits of open POs. The Business manager can implement this recommendation by rewriting EEISD's current open PO procedures, updating the Business Office Procedures Manual, and training district personnel on the new process.
- **Recommendation 57: Develop standardized procedures to provide campus administrators and support staff with guidelines for complying with textbook rules and regulations.** The district should develop a textbook procedure manual to assure consistent textbook practices across the district.

DETAILED FINDINGS

CONTRACT PROCEDURES (REC. 53)

EEISD lacks a system or procedures to evaluate, monitor, or maintain existing or future district contracts. The district does not maintain a centralized depository or file for all district contracts, making it difficult to know what current district contractual obligations exist. Contracts are maintained in the superintendent's office and Business Office.

The superintendent and the board president have the authority to sign contracts in the district after board approval,

including vendor and service contracts. Review of sample contracts showed the Business manager signs contracts on behalf of the district as well, particularly in the area of insurance and service contracts.

The district has no written policy or procedure in place requiring the business office to review all contracts, or a legal review of contracts prior to execution. The superintendent stated that EEISD's attorney reviews all contracts, yet several large contracts contained clauses detrimental to the district. This creates a high risk of entering into contracts advantageous to a vendor, but not in the best interests of the EEISD. Both third party administrative service (TPA) agreements for the self-funded health plan and the self-funded workers' compensation program have clauses putting the district at risk for payment of future claims against the vendor. For example, the TPA agreement for the self-funded workers' compensation program states:

The Employer (District) agrees to indemnify and hold harmless ICON Benefit Administrators against any and all damages, liabilities, losses, settlements, claims, demands and expenses of any kind, including but not limited to court costs and attorneys' fees, sustained or incurred by ICON in the performance of its duties, or incurred by ICON in connection with the performance of services under the Agreement, for defense of any legal action brought by any party other than the Employer, or other than those incurred by ICON as a result of gross negligence or willful misconduct of ICON or its agents or employees.

In addition to the hold harmless and indemnification clause, the TPA agreement lacks performance guarantees or measures allowing EEISD to monitor and assure the contracted services are delivered. In fact, the agreement has the following statement releasing the TPA from responsibility for overpayments of claims in Section 2.5 Claim Processing Accuracy:

ICON shall use its best efforts to process claims and to prepare such claims for payment by the Employer in accordance with the Act. ... To the extent that any such payment constitutes a payment in excess of the amount payable under the terms of the Act, ICON shall notify the Employer of such claims payment but shall not be responsible for collecting any such overpayment. The Employer shall be responsible for the recovery of any such overpayment and all

expenses incurred in connection with the recovery of such overpayment.

District staff was unable to locate many contracts as it lacks a central filing system. When the review team requested copies of contracts, the district staff went back to the vendor and asked that they fax a copy of the contract to the district. Two examples of faxed contracts are the TPA agreement for workers' compensation and the expired Sandstone Health Care, Inc. agreement. Other examples of failure to adequately evaluate, maintain, and monitor contracts include:

- The Business Office could not provide the review team with a copy of the required cafeteria plan document adopted by the board for the Internal Revenue Code Section 125 plan during the review team's visit.
- The district lacked a signed agreement with First Financial Administrators, Inc., the third party administrator for the EEISD's cafeteria plan, prior to the effective date of the agreement. The effective date was November 1, 2005, but the company did not sign the agreement until November 28, 2005. The district allowed TPA to conduct an employee open-enrollment in August and September, in addition to marketing several supplementary benefit products in EEISD.
- District staff could not provide the review team with copies of contracts for the supplemental benefit programs offered to employees through payroll deduction.
- The district lacked copies of the fleet liability, underground storage tank liability, and educators' errors and omissions insurance policies at the time of the review team's visit in November, although the effective dates of coverage is September 1, 2005.
- EEISD contracts with Sandstone Health Care, Inc. for counseling services. The contract on file expired July 29, 2005, and although the board approved their renewal in July 2005 they could not provide a current contract..
- The district contracts with the City of Elsa to provide a commissioned police officer. Although the district continues to receive the services, EESID has failed to renew its interlocal agreement which expired on August 31, 2003.

EEISD also allows vendors to provide services prior to an executed agreement. The effective date of service is sometimes two months prior to the actual execution of the

contract and before the terms of the agreement, along with service guarantees, have been approved. When the district allows a time lapse between the effective date and contract execution, staff is sometimes forced to accept the terms of the vendor's contract. EEISD is in a better position to negotiate favorable terms prior to the contract award. Allowing a vendor to provide services prior to having a contract in place increases the district's exposure to liability.

Without a formal contracting process in place, EESID cannot guarantee that contracts are executed properly, and that liability issues are addressed appropriately. If the district fails to review, manage, and monitor their contracts, it cannot ensure that the contracts are in compliance with all applicable statutes and laws, are current, and that EEISD is receiving all services provided for in the contract.

Texas Business and Commerce Code, Subchapter 2.201 requires contracts to be in writing for purchase of goods valued at more than \$500. While this may not be necessary for single purchases using POs, districts need a clear understanding of the contract terms and performance measures with long-term service and supply vendors. Providing terms in a written contract, reviewed by legal counsel, ensures the contract is in compliance with all applicable laws.

The Texas Civil Practice and Remedies Code §101.023 (b) indicates that school districts are liable for money damages against the district of \$100,000 per person, \$300,000 per single occurrence of bodily injury or death, and \$100,000 for each occurrence of property damage or destruction. Given this exposure, it is only prudent that school districts carry their own liability insurance and require those who perform services on school property to do the same. In addition, the Texas Local Government Code §271.903 limits a board of trustees from committing revenues to a contract beyond those available in the current fiscal year.

Contract management procedures provide guidance in executing contracts properly, and establish a system for managing and monitoring approved contracts. When entering into a contract, districts often:

- employ legal counsel to draft or review the final contract prior to signing it;
- identify how the district's liability is addressed in the contract;
- identify those with authority to enter into the contract on behalf of the district;

- attach all supporting documents to the contract;
- retain an original contract with signatures of all district parties;
- describe the specific services to be performed;
- identify when and how the contractor will report to the district;
- identify a clause for changing the contract;
- describe the cost to the district and any changes that may occur;
- describe how the district may terminate the contract and under what conditions;
- identify how the vendor's performance will be reviewed and documented; and
- describe remedies for a contractor's failure to perform services.

East Central ISD has implemented a system to maintain and manage contracts within the district. The only personnel authorized to sign contracts within the district are the superintendent and assistant superintendent for Business and Operations. All contracts are maintained in a central location. The assistant superintendent works with the district's law firm to develop a generic contract to use with all vendors. The contract identifies the contractual obligations of both parties, including services and payments. In circumstances requiring the district to sign a vendor's contract, the assistant superintendent will review the contract to determine if there are any issues in question. If the contract is complex, the contract is reviewed by legal counsel. The district does not enter into any contracts requiring the district to hold harmless and indemnify the vendor for future claims.

The district should develop a contract management policy with procedures to effectively manage and monitor EEISD's contracts. The Business manager should work with legal counsel to develop a uniform set of contract standards and a generic district vendor contract. Developing a contract management plan and supporting guidelines will reduce EEISD's exposure to liability, ensure EEISD does not accept contracts where the language is detrimental to the district, help monitor contract performance, track contract expiration dates, and ensure that all contracts are completed and enforced. A central filing system located in the Business Office should be developed for all contracts to assist with

tracking and monitoring. After a contract is awarded, EEISD should have a process to evaluate services rendered or products provided under the contract. The monitoring process should also have a mechanism to evaluate a vendor's performance and provide feedback, or implement corrective action if, or when, warranted.

COOPERATIVE PURCHASING (REC. 54)

EEISD lacks procedures and training to guide employees on how to take advantage of using the district's membership in purchasing cooperatives and district-authorized vendors. The district participates in three cooperative purchasing programs with other local governments or local cooperative organizations. The purpose of purchasing cooperatives is to allow members to purchase products and services in an efficient, cost-effective, and competitive procurement method that complies with competitive bidding laws.

Exhibit 8-1 contains information on EEISD's purchasing cooperative memberships.

The Food Service department uses the South Texas Cooperative to make some of their purchases. However, other district departments and campuses rarely utilize the services offered by the cooperatives. BuyBoard records reveal only one purchase since September 1, 2004. Instead, district personnel purchase where they want, or rely on a three-page memorandum which establishes authorized vendors for the school year. The vendor listing includes 15 categories of supplies and materials that are selected based on a competitive proposal process. The listing contains only the category, primary vendors, and secondary vendors, and phone numbers. The listing does not include any information on discounts from catalog prices or vendor contacts.

EEISD offers a request for sealed proposals during June. The request includes 15 item descriptions covering such categories as instructional supplies, magazines and periodicals, fuel and oil supplies, and air-conditioning filters. The Business Office evaluates proposals, forwarding recommendations for award to the superintendent. The superintendent then places the recommendations on the board agenda for consideration by the Board of Trustees.

Many of the vendors submitting proposals to EEISD have already been approved by the cooperatives doing business with the district. In some cases the district's efforts are rewarded with better discounts on specific items than the cooperative overall discounts. **Exhibit 8-2** contains EEISD's authorized vendors for instructional supplies during

**EXHIBIT 8-1
EEISD PURCHASING COOPERATIVE MEMBERSHIP
2005-06**

NAME	SPONSOR	PURPOSE	OTHER INFORMATION
South Texas Cooperative	Regional Education Service Center I (Region I)	Assist members in the administration of a fiscally sound child nutrition program through compliance with bid law requirements.	Offers competitive procurement, online ordering, commodity processing, and a food expo.
Multi-Regional Purchasing Program	Regional Education Service Center II (Region II)	Allow member's to purchase goods and services from contracts that meet State bidding requirements	Offers supplies and equipment in 37 categories, with many vendors located in south Texas. Vendor listing are available online.
BuyBoard	Texas Association of School Boards	Created to increase the purchasing power of government entities and to simplify their purchasing by a customized electronic purchasing system.	Offers supplies and equipment in 23 categories, plus online ordering, full- service job order contracting and purchasing cards.

SOURCE: EEISD Internal Local Agreements and Purchasing Cooperative's websites.

**EXHIBIT 8-2
EEISD AUTHORIZED INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPLY VENDORS
2005-06**

VENDOR	EEISD DISCOUNT	COOPERATIVE DISCOUNT
Jones & Cook Stationers	30%	15-60%
Gateway Printing & Office Supply	27%	27%
Rio Grande Valley Office Products	30%	0%
O'Neill Specialty Company	20%	35%
Cielo Office Products	23%	N/A*
Quill	10%	10%
School Specialty	30%	10-25%

*Not available.

SOURCE: EEISD Memorandum Authorized Vendors dated August 4, 2005, EEISD Letter on Recommendation for Instructional Supplies dated July 14, 200, and Region 2 Multi-Regional Cooperative website.

2005–06, as well as the discounts offered to the district and through the Educational Service Center Region II (Region 2) Multi-Regional Cooperative.

Many of the district's administrators are not using EEISD authorized vendors, or the district approved purchasing cooperatives. **Exhibit 8-3** displays administrative and instructional general supply purchases in functions 11, 21, 23, and 41 from September 15, 2005 to September 30, 2005.

The exhibit reveals that from September 15, 2005 through September 30, 2005, EEISD purchased \$13,576 in supplies from district-approved vendors, and \$14,622 in supplies

from other vendors. A substantial number of these purchases were made from vendors without a contract to do business with EEISD. This violates Texas Education Code (TEC) §44.03, and EEISD Policy CH (LEGAL), which states “All District contracts, except contracts for the purchase of produce or vehicle fuel, valued at \$25,000 or more in the aggregate for each 12-month period, shall be made by the method that provides the best value for the District”:

- competitive bidding;
- competitive sealed proposal;
- a request for proposals for services other than construction services;
- a catalog purchase as provided by Government Code Chapter 2157, Subchapter B.
- an interlocal contract;
- the reverse auction procedure as defined by Government Code 2155.062 (d); and
- the formation of a political subdivision corporation under Local Government Code 304.001.

EEISD is not taking advantage of their cooperative purchasing agreements in allowing district personnel to purchase from vendors not on the approved vendor list. This practice wastes district funds by not using discounts available through cooperative purchasing.

The Texas Education Agency's (TEA) *Financial Accountability System Resource Guide (FASRG)*, Section 3.5.1 on Cooperative Purchasing Benefits lists the following advantages:

**EXHIBIT 8-3
EEISD ADMINISTRATIVE AND INSTRUCTIONAL GENERAL
SUPPLY
PURCHASES
SEPTEMBER 15 THROUGH 30, 2005**

PAYEE	EEISD APPROVED VENDOR	MULTI-REGIONAL COOPERATIVE	AMOUNT
Advantage Imaging Supply		Yes	\$155
Airgas Southwest			\$58
Bando Shoes			\$844
Cynthia Garcia			\$300
Gateway Printing & Office Supply	Yes	Yes	\$7,446
Great Source Ed.			\$262
Gulf Coast Data Products			\$12
HEB			\$50
Jones & Cook Stationers	Yes	Yes	\$5,004
Key Poulard			\$2,000
K-Mart			\$420
Mary's Crafts & More			\$110
May the Fours be with You			\$1,150
Melhart Music Center		Yes	\$1,545
Office Depot	Yes	Yes	\$729
RVG Office Products	Yes	Yes	\$397
Sam's Club Direct			\$500
School Check In			\$255
School Services Inc.			\$155
Target Stores			\$3,375
Tech Depot			\$1,064
Texas Education Agency	N/A	N/A	\$400
Upper Valley Mail Services			\$1,032
Vela's Pharmacy			\$850
Wal-Mart Stores			\$85

SOURCE: EEISD Computer Written Check Report for the period September 9, 2005 through September 30, 2005 for general supplies in functions 11, 21, 23 and 41; Letter Re: Recommendation for Instructional Supplies dated July 14, 2005; and Region 2 Multi-Regional Cooperative website.

- Cost savings on products or services. A cooperative purchasing arrangement can increase the buying power of a single district with volume discounts.
- Savings on administrative costs. A cooperative arrangement can reduce administrative costs relating 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, which 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.
- Accessibility to more products and services. 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.

Many districts require district personnel to make purchases through their district's purchasing cooperative partners. Del Valle ISD (DVISD) saved tax dollars through bulk buying and competitive bidding practices. In a two-year period, DVISD saved an estimated \$250,000 through the use of purchasing cooperatives.

EEISD should add procedures to the current Business Office procedures manual for utilizing purchasing cooperatives and district-authorized vendors and provide training on those procedures. The Business manager conduct training for administrators and other interested parties on using cooperative purchasing. The training should include instruction on accessing the cooperative's websites and on how to order through the cooperative. For example, using the Multi-Regional Purchasing Programs only requires a visit to their website to locate awarded vendors and bid numbers. After obtaining this information, district personnel simply reference the cooperatives bid number on their PO's. BuyBoard orders can be placed online or by sending the original PO directly to them instead of to the vendor.

WAREHOUSE OPERATION EFFICIENCY (REC. 55)

EEISD lacks a process to evaluate the district's warehouse operation for efficiency.

District personnel order warehouse items on a supplies requisition form. The Business Office provides district personnel with a warehouse inventory supply list, containing

all the information necessary to complete the request form. The form contains space for entering the budget code, item description, inventory number, quantity, unit price, and the extended amount. The Business Office must approve completed forms. In most cases a district custodian carries a completed requisition form to the Business Office where a clerk checks to ensure that the requesting organization has used a proper budget code and has sufficient budget to support the request. The custodian usually waits while the approval process is completed and then proceeds to the warehouse to have the order filled.

EEISD's warehouse is not situated near campuses but is located within a few miles of all district locations making deliveries difficult. In addition, the warehouse does not have an assigned vehicle and does not make deliveries to district locations. The secondary and elementary custodian supervisors, who are not located at the warehouse, are responsible for notifying the Business Office when restocking is necessary. Building custodians are responsible for picking up and delivering warehouse orders to their locations.

Three full-time employees, a warehouse supervisor, and two clerks are assigned to the warehouse operation. The warehouse clerks are responsible for stocking supplies, filling orders and marking fixed asset items with a cost in excess of \$500. The warehouse stocks office, instructional and custodial supplies. This includes items such as finger paints, transparent tape, felt-tipped markers and rubber bands. Many of these items deteriorate rapidly in a warehouse environment. For example, some stored paper goods such as construction paper, poster board, and colored butcher paper fade quickly and should only be ordered on an as-needed basis.

San Angelo ISD (SAISD) acquires most school supplies through just-in-time acquisitions. This is accomplished through arrangements with their supply vendors, allowing campuses and departments to view catalogues and place orders for supplies online. SAISD staff used to wait between four and five days to receive supplies from the district's warehouse. Now they order the supplies directly from the manufacturer or supplier and receive them in 48 hours or less. As a result, SAISD has been able to close their warehouse.

EEISD should develop a needs assessment of the district's warehouse operation. The warehouse supervisor should prepare a plan in response to the district needs assessment determination. The district should consider a just-in-time

delivery system, or transportation for the existing warehouse staff. Custodial supply stock should be accounted for by warehouse staff to promote internal control over the use of these costly resources. Further more, EEISD should assign shelf-life expectancy to all supplies the district deems as critical items to avoid purchasing too much, or running out.

OPEN PURCHASE ORDERS (REC. 56)

EEISD does not require district staff to comply with existing Purchase Order (PO) procedures in the Business Office Procedures Manual. EEISD allows some budget managers to circumvent the encumbrance accounting system and order supplies through open (Blanket) POs, while other district personnel purchase items and/or services and complete the PO after the fact.

Blanket POs are another term used for open POs. The *EASRG 3.2.5.6* defines the use of blanket POs as follows:

"A blanket purchase order is issued to a pre-approved vendor authorizing purchases from that vendor over a period of time. Blanket purchase orders are valuable because they allow the purchase of items quickly. Both paperwork and related processing costs usually are reduced by blanket purchase orders. 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."

Blanket POs are issued so that supplies, materials, or services are available "as-needed" by user departments. For example, blanket POs may be requested on a regular basis by the Food Service department for perishable items.

Usually this type of PO remains in effect for only a specified amount of time and has a specified dollar limit. During this time period, the district may purchase certain specified items from the vendor not exceeding the total dollar limit without issuing an additional PO. The user department must issue a new requisition if items are requested beyond the specified time period. The advantage of blanket or open POs is that merchandise is accessible to users with some flexibility and without the effort of processing POs."

The 2004-05 EEISD Business Office Procedures Manual published in November 11, 2004 states:

- Open purchase orders and/or open accounts are established with vendors by the Business Office only through Board approval of competitive bids or

proposals or by quotations. Purchase orders not issued in this manner are considered to cover a one-time single purchase per each purchase order number assigned.

- Invoices on open purchase orders are to be attached to a copy of the receiving copy of the purchase order, signed by the director responsible for the purchase, and forwarded to accounts payable.

Despite this, district staff does not always attach a copy of the invoice to the receiving copy of the PO, signed by the director responsible for the purchases, and forwarded to accounts payable.

A sampling of checks processed on a report run for August 1, 2005 through August 10, 2005 disclosed four open POs. These purchases are displayed in **Exhibit 8-4**.

EXHIBIT 8-4
EEISD OPEN PURCHASE ORDERS PROCESSED
AUGUST 5 THROUGH AUGUST 10, 2005

VENDOR	ORDERING DEPARTMENT	MONTH ON INVOICE(S)	AMOUNT
Gulf Coast Paper Company	Inventory	June	\$1,523
Dryk & Associates, Inc	Staff Development	June & July	\$16,000
Johnny's True Value Hardware	Maintenance	July	\$2,064
Westwood International	High School	May	\$3,058

SOURCE: EEISD Computer Written Checks Report from August 1, 2005 through August 10, 2005 and check support received from the business office.

Exhibit 8-4 also shows several problems with EEISD's open POsystem. Open POs are not limited to small routine purchases in departments like maintenance or transportation; they are not limited to a short time period such as one month, and are not encumbered in advance since the PO is created after the items have been received. In addition, the PO issued to Dryk & Associates, Inc., does not appear to conform to the district's open PO procedures since it involves a management service, not supplies or equipment.

In addition, the EEISD's auditors indicated in the Audit Report dated August 31, 2002 that some POs were issued subsequent to purchases being made, recommending that the POsystem be followed properly. POs issued subsequent to the purchase being made, circumvent the accounting encumbrance process and place the district in a position to over spend its budget. The issue does not appear in

subsequent audits, thus corrective action was taken, yet was unsuccessful as demonstrated by the above open POs.

The *FASRG Section 1.1.6, Encumbrance Accounting*, defines encumbrance accounting as follows:

- Budgets are the legal authority for expenditures. To exercise this authority, the administrator must have accurate up-to-date information on the status of the budget balances at all times. Knowing how much money has been spent to date is generally not sufficient. The amount committed must also be known to avoid over expenditure of budgeted funds. An encumbrance accounting system is a method of ascertaining the availability of funds and then reserving funds to cover outstanding obligations.
- Encumbrances represent commitments related to contracts not yet performed and are used to control expenditures for the year and to enhance cash management. A school district often issues POs or signs contracts for the purchase of goods and services to be received in the future. At the time these commitments are made, the appropriate account is checked for available funds. If an adequate balance exists, the amount of the order is immediately charged to the account to reduce the available balance for control purposes.
- The encumbrance account does not represent expenditure for the period, only a commitment to expend resources. When the invoice comes in and is approved, the budgetary accounts are eliminated and the actual expenditure and related liability are recorded. Any difference between the encumbrance and the expenditure is reflected as an adjustment to the remaining encumbrance balance.

Using encumbrance accounting allows budget managers and board members to determine the amount of budget remaining at any given period. Knowing these amounts helps ensure that budgets are not over spent, and gives budget managers the ability to plan future expenditures by knowing the balance remaining in their individual budgets.

Many school districts utilize open POs (blanket POs) to facilitate operations. Their use is normally limited to small value items that are used on a routine basis by the Maintenance or Transportation Departments. Some districts also allow the Food Service Department to utilize open POs for securing kitchen equipment repair parts and for purchasing produce items. These districts issue the POs for short periods and for low dollar amounts. The POs are encumbered at the

beginning of the month and liquidated at the end of each month.

EEISD should revise the Business Office Procedure Manual to incorporate the elements of the FASRG's blanket PO definition. The new process should include the number of vendors to whom open POs can be issued; the departments who can make purchases using open POs; the maximum time period allowed for an open PO; and the dollar limits of open POs. The Business manager can implement this recommendation by rewriting EEISD's current open PO procedures, updating the Business Office Procedures Manual, and training district personnel on the new process.

TEXTBOOK PROCEDURES (REC. 57)

EEISD lacks written procedures to provide campus textbook coordinators ongoing guidance on effective and consistent textbook management. The director for Student Services is responsible for EEISD textbook coordination. There are no written procedures allowing future staff to assume responsibility in the event that the director for Student Services is absent for any length of time. In addition, there is no clerical support for compiling district textbook records/inventories and updating spreadsheets.

District campuses not only lack a set of procedures for processing the textbooks but textbook coordinators rely on training from the previous textbook coordinator at that campus. This results in inconsistent campus textbook procedures across the district. The high school assistant principal was assigned textbooks the previous year and is currently developing and improving procedures for managing textbooks at the high school. The junior high school issues each teacher a class set of textbooks and only issues the student textbooks upon request by the parent. The sixth grade campus lacks lockers for students to store their textbooks. Each classroom has a class set of textbooks, but students are also issued a set of textbooks to keep at home.

The district textbook selection process begins in October or November. The director notifies campus principals of subject areas under consideration and requests nominations for individuals to serve on the textbook selection committee. The committee begins meeting in January. Publishers send textbooks to the director, who forwards the books to the appropriate committee members for the initial review. Region I will often sponsor a textbook hearing. This hearing allows publishers to present their textbooks to representatives of area school districts. The hearing provides the district representatives an opportunity to clarify questions on the

textbooks and accompanying supplemental materials and teacher manuals. EEISD and neighboring districts will conduct additional textbook hearings. In February, the committee makes recommendations for, and votes on, selected textbooks. All campuses will select the same textbook for a particular grade, or subject, for consistency across the district since students will transfer from campus to campus during the year. The board approves the textbook recommendation in March, and the director submits the required certification to the TEA.

The process for ordering textbooks for the following school year begins in the spring. The Student Services director uses peak enrollments for the present year to project the number of textbooks needed for the elementary campuses in the following year. The director bases projections for secondary textbooks on the student course registration completed in the spring, and will try to submit textbook orders to the textbook depository by May or June. The Student Services director must also provide the depository with the district's vacation schedule to assure staff will be at the district at the time of delivery. If no one is available to receive textbooks in the district at the time of delivery, the textbooks are returned to the depository and a new order must be placed. Textbooks are delivered to the vocational building, where vacant classrooms are available to store textbooks for distribution. Upon receipt, the director of Student Services will begin sorting and distributing the textbooks to the individual campuses using the custodial staff.

The Student Services director maintains an inventory of the textbooks delivered to each campus. Each campus has a designated textbook coordinator who works with the director, and is responsible for the campus textbook inventory. The director requires each coordinator to submit a textbook form identifying the number of textbooks on campus by subject or title. This form is used to verify the total campus textbook numbers and identify any campus shortages or extra textbooks that can be redistributed to other campuses. The director of Student Services said that campuses sometimes redistribute textbooks among themselves to meet immediate campus needs, creating a problem with tracking inventory.

Each campus administrator and coordinator is accountable for their campus' textbooks. Throughout the year, students lose textbooks, and parents are contacted to make arrangements to pay for the textbooks. Many parents will pay for textbooks through installments. Funds collected for textbooks are deposited in the campus activity fund. These

textbook funds are transferred to the Business Office at the end of the school year. The director of Student Services does not receive an accounting of these funds by campus. The Business manager will transfer the funds into an account for the director of Student Services to purchase textbook replacements. Campuses are notified in October or November of the funds available for textbook replacement. One campus administrator said that by the time they order and receive additional textbooks, half of the year is over. The director of Student Services orders textbooks through TEA's online textbook management system called Educational Materials and Textbooks (EMAT). Although this ordering process usually takes about two weeks, the director's many responsibilities and lack of clerical support will often prevent timely processing of requests. The director did say if there is an immediate need for textbooks, he can often obtain them locally.

The director of Student Services said that his responsibility was only to manage state adopted textbooks. The high school offers co-curricular courses for college credit, and textbooks for the courses can run \$100 each. The program coordinator often asks the Student Services director to obtain these textbooks for the co-curricular classes. The director does not have a separate budget to purchase these textbooks and will put aside some of the funds provided for the state adopted textbooks to purchase the requested textbooks.

Without textbook procedures, EEISD lacks set guidelines that provide campus textbook coordinators a reference to effectively managing textbooks. When a campus assigns a staff member the responsibility of textbooks at a campus, that individual must rely on training by their predecessor, if available. If the predecessor is not available and a textbook management system has not been developed, the new textbook coordinator must develop their own system to manage textbooks. Furthermore, should the district's textbook coordinator leave the district for any reason, the district does not have any procedures to guide a replacement through the districtwide textbook management process, including the timelines for the textbook selection committee, ordering and replacing textbooks, and textbook distribution. In addition, enrichment textbooks are not funded in accordance with district policy and law.

The TEC §31.102 (a) states all textbooks purchased in accordance with TEC Chapter 31 are the property of the state of Texas. Section 31.104(a) states the board may delegate the power to requisition, distribute and manage the inventory of books, consistent with the TEC Chapter 31.

The Texas Administrative Code (TAC), Title 19 §66.107 addresses the local accountability of textbooks. It states school districts shall conduct annual physical inventories of all currently adopted textbooks that have been requisitioned by, and delivered to, the districts. The inventory results shall be recorded in district files. It further states that all textbooks must be turned in at the end of the year.

The 19 TAC §66.104 addresses the selection of instructional materials by school districts. It states districts that select nonadopted instructional materials for enrichment subjects are responsible for the portion of the cost of the materials not eligible for payment by the state. The state is responsible for paying the district an amount equal to the lesser of:

- seventy percent of the cost to the district of the instructional materials. The applicable quota for adopted materials in the subject shall be the basis for determining instructional materials needed by the district; or
- seventy percent of the maximum cost to the state established for the subject. The applicable quota for adopted materials in the subject shall be the basis for determining instructional materials needed by the district.

The 19 TAC §66.104 further states that nonadopted instructional materials paid by the state must be selected and ratified by the board.

Many school districts develop textbook procedure manuals to manage textbook operations consistently districtwide. These manuals help staff understand how to comply with applicable textbook rules and regulations. An example of a comprehensive textbook procedures manual includes the following topics:

- board policies related to textbooks;
- role of the textbook custodian and textbook clerks;
- textbook selection committee guidelines and procedures;
- textbook quotas;
- textbook number and stamping procedures;
- textbook requisition procedures,
- textbook shipment verification requirements;
- shipping error procedures;

- guidelines for bookrooms, including environment, security and how to stack textbooks;
- information on book covers;
- transferring textbooks from one school to another;
- distribution of textbooks in schools;
- textbook audit procedures;
- lost or damaged textbook procedures;
- year-end physical inventory procedures;
- out of adoption textbook procedures; and
- textbook inventory software procedures.

The manuals provide guidance to administrators and support staff and serve as a reference for textbook questions.

In 2001, the Kennedy ISD (KISD) textbook coordinator developed a textbook manual providing detailed guidance on

managing the district’s textbook needs. Currently, the textbook coordinator is revising that textbook manual to include all legislative updates, TEA requirements, and EMAT guidelines. In addition, KISD is reviewing textbook software to track textbook inventory in accordance with 19 TAC §66.107. The textbook coordinator said the purpose of the manual is to serve as a guide at the campuses for textbook management.

EEISD should develop standardized procedures to provide campus administrators and support staff with guidelines to comply with textbook rules and regulations. The district should develop a textbook procedure manual to assure consistent textbook practices districtwide.

All background information on Purchasing is contained within the chapter.

FISCAL IMPACT

RECOMMENDATIONS	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	TOTAL	ONE TIME
						5-YEAR (COSTS) SAVINGS	(COSTS) SAVINGS
CHAPTER 8: PURCHASING							
53. Develop a contract management policy with procedures to effectively manage and monitor EEISD’s contracts.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
54. Add procedures to the current Business Office procedures manual for utilizing purchasing cooperatives and district-authorized vendors and provide training on those procedures.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
55. Develop a needs assessment of the district’s warehouse operation.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
56. Revise the Business Office Procedure Manual to incorporate the elements of the FASRG’s blanket PO definition.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
57. Develop standardized procedures to provide campus administrators and support staff with guidelines for complying with textbook rules and regulations.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
TOTALS-CHAPTER 8	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

CHAPTER 9

CHILD NUTRITION

EDCOUCH-ELSA INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

CHAPTER 9. CHILD NUTRITION

Edcouch-Elsa Independent School District (EEISD) participates in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs. The district served an average of 5,004 lunches, 4,820 breakfasts and 431 snacks per day during 2004–05. The district is a Provision Two food service program, which allows the district to offer all the students free meals. In 2004–05, the average daily participation in the lunch program was 95 percent and the breakfast participation was 92 percent. The 2004–05 unaudited financial records reflect program revenues of \$3,085,914 and expenditures of \$3,145,111, representing a decrease in fund balance of \$59,197. The unaudited ending fund balance as of August 2005 was \$59,701. The district has eight schools and each has its own cafeteria for food preparation and serving. The district employs eight cafeteria managers, and 65 Food Service workers that work eight hours each day. The district also employs a Child Nutrition director, a field supervisor, a secretary, a Child Nutrition clerk, an inventory/delivery clerk and a maintenance employee bringing the total Child Nutrition staff to 79.

FINDINGS

- EEISD does not require the Child Nutrition Department to compile and use management reporting tools to determine the affect of the fund balance on food service operations.
- EEISD's Child Nutrition Department does not use the industry standard that is based on meals per labor hour (MPLH) to control its staffing levels.
- EEISD's Child Nutrition Department lacks a Bilingual written procedures manual that directly relates to the operations, practices, and procedures of the Child Nutrition Department.
- EEISD does not provide an automated networked management system for efficient communication between cafeterias, the Child Nutrition Department and the central office.
- EEISD's Child Nutrition Department does not train students or teachers concerning proper nutrition.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Recommendation 58: Implement the use of management reporting tools between the Business Office and the Child Nutrition Department.** The director should attend annual training conducted by a professional organization to obtain the skills necessary to use financial management tools to ensure operational adjustments are made to promote efficient operations within available budget allocations. In turn, the director should conduct ongoing training for cafeteria managers to ensure continuity and awareness of the cost drivers. The training should provide the managers with the necessary financial management tools. The use of this knowledge will ensure operational adjustments are made to promote efficient operations within available budget allocations. The director should be granted access to the district's accounting system so that budget variance reports can be evaluated to facilitate financial forecasts such as year-end revenue estimates, expenditures, and current impact to the Food Service fund balance. EEISD should ensure that granted access includes access to detailed transactions so that the director can review all transactions impacting accounts. The director should develop a spreadsheet template to produce a quarterly profit and loss statement.
- **Recommendation 59: Establish a Child Nutrition staffing formula based on MPLH industry standards.** The staffing formula should indicate when to adjust Food Service cafeteria staff according to MPLH data that should be collected, compiled and reported on an ongoing basis. MPLH Industry standards suggest reducing the current number of staff by 22 fulltime equivalents (FTE), or the number of staff hours currently worked by 153 hours per day. The Child Nutrition director should work with the cafeteria managers to recommend a reduction plan of cafeteria staff or hours worked to the Business manager and the superintendent for approval. After implementing the plan, the Child Nutrition Department should monitor MPLH on a monthly basis and compare it to industry standards. Adjustments to the number of staff or the hours worked should be made periodically to ensure efficient operations within industry MPLH standards.

- Recommendation 60: Develop a Bilingual procedure manual for the employees in the Child Nutrition Department.** The director of Child Nutrition and cafeteria managers should develop a bilingual procedure manual for the employees in the Child Nutrition Department and meet periodically to discuss the ongoing revision of the procedures manual according to new trends and standards. The bilingual procedures manual should serve as a training instrument and a communication tool and should include food preparation techniques, sanitation and cleaning processes, work assignments and expectations, at a minimum. The director of Child Nutrition should request assistance from Region I in acquiring examples of comparable Food Service procedures manuals to model an EEISD version. The bilingual procedures manual should ensure activities in the Child Nutrition Office and cafeterias are consistent and efficient, and will allow continuity when turnover or substitutes occur.
- Recommendation 61: Purchase and implement an automated networked management system that electronically communicates between district cafeterias and the Child Nutrition Office.** The system should facilitate point-of-sale, menu planning, menu costing, food production records, serving sizes, grocery ordering, recipes, employee scheduling and participation. The system should have the capability of tracking student transactions and report generation.
- Recommendation 62: Initiate planning for the implementation of nutrition curriculum to comply with the Texas Public School Nutrition Policy, the Coordinated Health Program for Elementary School Students.** Regional Education Service Centers can provide assistance and will be coordinating activities to prepare for compliance. The Child Nutrition director should contact Region I to request information necessary to comply with the Texas Public

School Nutrition Policy. Upon review of the materials, the Child Nutrition director should meet with the health and physical education teachers to develop the implementation of the Coordinated Health Program for Elementary School Students.

DETAILED FINDINGS

MANAGEMENT REPORTING TOOLS (REC. 58)

EEISD does not require the Child Nutrition Department to compile and use management reporting tools to determine the affect of the fund balance on food service operations. The interim Child Nutrition director stated that budget variance reports were received from the Business Office only upon request. Each campus cafeteria completes a daily food production log. The log includes information that allows the managers and the Child Nutrition director to monitor the quantity of food prepared and the disposition of left over food, such as reuse, dispose or serve a second time.

Budget variance reports compare revenues and expenditures to budget allocations. The EEISD Child Nutrition Department does not continuously use budget variance reports to perform financial forecasts to estimate year-end revenue, expenditures, or most importantly to determine the impact to the Food Service fund balance. Additionally, the Child Nutrition Department does not prepare profit and loss reports to determine if the program is currently profitable or experiencing a deficit. **Exhibit 9-1** shows a negative impact to fund balance for the years 2001–02, 2002–03, and 2004–05.

Forgoing the use of management reports to promote financial forecasting prevents the district from making ongoing operational adjustments. This inability jeopardizes profitability and responsiveness when revenue is not at the level necessary to support forecasted expenditures. Financial management training is essential and if the Child Nutrition director and cafeteria managers are not trained to use management reporting tools, the Child Nutrition Department

EXHIBIT 9-1 CHILD NUTRITION DEPARTMENTS FUND BALANCE IMPACT 2001–02 THROUGH 2004–05

DESCRIPTION	2001–02 ACTUAL	2002–03 ACTUAL	2003–04 ACTUAL	2004–05 UNAUDITED
Revenue	\$2,837,664	\$2,821,593	\$3,090,110	\$3,085,914
Expenditures	\$3,036,337	\$2,990,671	\$3,071,881	\$3,145,111
Fund Balance Inc (Dec)	(\$198,673)	(\$169,078)	\$18,229	(\$59,197)

SOURCE: EEISD Audited Financial Data 2001-02 through 2003-04 and Unaudited 2004-05.

will continue to be unaware of critical operational adjustments that directly impact profitability and Food Service fund balance allocations.

Managing Child Nutrition Programs, Leadership for Excellence, 1999, identifies several reports that are needed for the financial management of a school Child Nutrition Department. **Exhibit 9-2** shows a list of these reports.

EEISD should implement the use of management reporting tools between the Business Office and the Child Nutrition Department. The director should attend annual training conducted by a professional organization to obtain the skills necessary to use financial management tools. The use of this knowledge will ensure operational adjustments are made to promote efficient operations within available budget allocations. In turn, the director should conduct ongoing training for cafeteria managers to ensure continuity and awareness of the cost drivers. The training should provide the managers with the necessary tools to adequately complete the required tasks of costing meals. The director should be granted access to the district’s accounting system so that budget variance reports can be evaluated to facilitate financial forecasts such as year-end revenue estimates, expenditures, and current impact to the Food Service fund balance. EEISD should ensure that granted access includes access to detailed transactions so that the director can review all transactions impacting accounts. The director should develop a spreadsheet template to produce a quarterly profit and loss statement. A sample-template is available free of charge on the www.RestaurantU.com website.

The review team estimated the cost for the Child Nutrition director to attend a two-day training academy in Austin, Texas to be \$550 plus \$517 for travel for a total annual cost of \$1,067 ($\$550 + 517 = \$1,067$).

MEALS PER LABOR HOUR (REC. 59)

EEISD’s Child Nutrition Department does not use the industry standard that is based on meals per labor hour (MPLH) to control its staffing levels. Staffing in the cafeterias is based upon each cafeteria manager’s assessment of need. When a cafeteria manager feels additional staff is needed, the cafeteria manager informs the Child Nutrition director who then requests additional staff through the Business Office. The Superintendent approves or disapproves requests for additional positions.

The EEISD Child Nutrition Department is not monitoring MPLH. EEISD is either employing excessive Child Nutrition staff or the district is allowing staff to work more hours than is necessary for the number of meals served. The Child Nutrition Department is spending a higher percentage of revenue on labor and thus has less funding available for food/non food expenses.

The *Managing Child Nutrition Programs, Leadership for Excellence, 1999*, manual recommends that districts keep payroll and payroll-related costs at 40 percent or less of revenue to allow sufficient revenue for food and other expenses.

Payroll and payroll related costs in 2002–03 were 53 percent of EEISD’s revenue, in 2003–04 they were 47 percent, and in 2004–05 they were 49 percent. Over the three-year period from 2002–03 through 2004–05, the district expended \$869,694 more than the recommended standard on payroll and payroll related costs. **Exhibit 9-3** shows the variance of EEISD’s payroll and payroll related costs from the standard over the three-year period.

MPLH is a standard performance measure of efficiency for school districts, hospitals, restaurants and other food service operations. MPLH is the number of meal equivalents that a cafeteria serves in a given period divided by the total hours worked during that period. Meal equivalents are lunches plus an equivalent number of breakfast and a la carte sales. The

**EXHIBIT 9-2
CRITICAL CHILD NUTRITION DEPARTMENTS
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT REPORTS**

REPORT	REPORT DESCRIPTION/USE
Budget	Financial management plan that helps manager estimate revenue and expenses based on prior year data, estimates and planned changes.
Balance Sheet	Report that provides a “snapshot” of the financial worth of the operation at the end of a reporting period. It shows assets, liabilities and the net worth or fund balance of the operation.
Profit and Loss Statement	Report that shows how the operation has been doing both at the end of a period and over a period of time in terms of the revenue or income generated versus expenditures.

SOURCE: *Managing Child Nutrition Programs, Leadership for Excellence, 1999*.

**EXHIBIT 9-3
CHILD NUTRITION DEPARTMENT LABOR COSTS
AS A PERCENTAGE OF REVENUE
2002-03 THROUGH 2004-05**

FISCAL YEAR	LABOR COSTS	TOTAL REVENUE	PERCENTAGE EXPENDED ON LABOR	RECOMMENDED PERCENTAGE**	VARIANCE +/- STANDARD	DOLLAR VARIANCE
2002-03	\$1,503,731	\$2,821,593	53.29%	40%	13.29%	\$374,990
2003-04	\$1,443,833	\$3,090,110	46.72%	40%	6.72%	\$207,655
2004-05	\$1,521,176	\$3,085,914	49.29%	40%	9.29%	\$286,681
TOTAL THREE YEAR VARIANCE						\$869,326

SOURCE: EEISD Audited Financial Data 2001-02 through 2003-04 and Unaudited 2004-05; Managing Child Nutrition Programs, Leadership for Excellence, 1999.

following are the conversion rates for meal equivalents used in the MPLH calculation:

- Breakfast Meal Equivalents:
 - total meals served divided by two,
 - Total a la carte sales (\$) divided by two.
- Lunch Meal Equivalents:
 - total meals served
 - Total a la carte sales (\$) divided by two.

The number of hours worked is a function of two variables: the number of staff employed and the hours worked per employee. Cafeterias can control the size of both variables.

EEISD has eight conventional cafeterias. A conventional cafeteria system prepares meals on the premises from raw ingredients. In contrast, a convenience cafeteria system heats and serves meals that were largely prepared offsite. Convenience cafeteria systems operate with less labor but have higher food costs.

EEISD employs 65 cafeteria workers and eight managers eight hours per day. Hourly wages paid to cafeteria workers range from \$6.64 per hour to \$ \$11.57 per hour and the hourly rate paid to managers range from \$10.08 per hour to \$12.38 per hour. In addition to the hourly wages, staff receives benefits equating to 10.4 percent of gross wages plus \$3,600 annually per employee for health insurance.

Exhibit 9-4 shows the MPLH standards that the review team used to evaluate EEISD's staffing structure.

Exhibit 9-5 shows EEISD's MPLH for each school cafeteria in comparison to the industry standard for a conventional system. The exhibit shows that EEISD's Child Nutrition staff is not producing adequate meals to meet the industry standard. For example, the Early Childhood's MPLH equates

**EXHIBIT 9-4
RECOMMENDED MEALS PER LABOR HOUR**

NUMBER OF MEAL EQUIVALENTS SERVED	MEALS PER LABOR HOUR	
	CONVENTIONAL SYSTEM MPLH	CONVENIENCE SYSTEM MPLH
0-100	8	9
101-150	9	10
151-200	10-11	12
201-250	12	14
251-300	13	15
301-400	14	16
401-500	14	18
501-600	15	18
601-700	16	19
701-800	17	20
801-900	18	21
900+	19+	22+

SOURCE: Managing Child Nutrition Programs, Leadership for Excellence, 1999.

to 12.70. The standard for shown in **Exhibit 9-5** indicates that the standard MPLH for 900+ meal equivalents for a conventional system should be 19. Therefore, Early Childhood is below the standard by 6.30 MPLH indicating that too many hours were worked for the number of meal equivalents served.

Exhibit 9-6 shows the number of hours worked at each EEISD cafeteria in comparison to the industry standard of seven hours. EEISD employs 22.86 more fulltime equivalents (FTEs) than industry standards recommend for the number of meals it serves, or its employees work 153.06 hours per day more than the standard needed to prepare the meals served.

**EXHIBIT 9-5
DAILY MEALS PER LABOR HOUR
FOR OCTOBER 2005**

SCHOOL	TOTAL MEAL EQUIVALENTS SERVED DAILY	TOTAL HOURS WORKED	EEISD'S MPLH	INDUSTRY MPLH STANDARD*	MPLH VARIANCE +/-
Early Childhood	1015.85	80.00	12.70	19	(6.30)
Garcia Elem.	838.45	56.00	14.97	17	(2.03)
J.F. Kennedy	932.30	56.00	16.65	18	(1.35)
LBJ Elem.	1054.28	72.00	14.64	19	(4.36)
Rodriguez Elem.	538.88	48.00	11.23	14	(2.77)
6th Gr. Campus	746.55	56.00	13.33	16	(2.67)
Junior High School	1141.80	88.00	12.98	19	(6.02)
High School	1303.80	128.00	10.19	19	(8.81)

*The recommended MPLH is based on the MPLH for the conventional system.
SOURCE: EEISD Food Service and Managing Child Nutrition Programs, Leadership for Excellence, 1999.

**EXHIBIT 9-6
FOOD SERVICE DAILY MPLH
COMPARED TO INDUSTRY STANDARDS**

SCHOOL	MEAL EQUIVALENTS SERVED DAILY	HOURS WORKED DAILY	RECOMMENDED HOURS AT STANDARD MPLH	HOURS ABOVE (BELOW) STANDARD	EQUIVALENT FTES AT 7 HOURS EACH
Early Childhood	1015.85	80.0	53.47	26.53	3.79
Garcia Elementary	838.45	56.0	49.32	6.68	0.95
JF Kennedy Elementary	932.30	56.0	51.79	4.21	0.60
LBJ Elementary	1054.28	72.0	55.49	16.51	2.36
Rodriguez Elementary	538.88	48.0	38.49	9.51	1.36
6th Grade Campus	746.55	56.0	46.66	9.34	1.33
Junior High	1141.80	88.0	60.10	27.90	3.99
High School	1303.80	128.0	68.62	59.38	8.48
TOTAL	7,571.91	584	423.94	160.06	22.86

*Standard Industry workday is 7 hours.
SOURCES: EEISD Food Service and Managing Child Nutrition Programs, Leadership for Excellence, 1999.

EEISD's Child Nutrition Department should establish a Child Nutrition staffing formula based on MPLH industry standards. The staffing formula should indicate when to adjust Food Service cafeteria staff according to MPLH data that should be collected, compiled and reported on an ongoing basis. MPLH Industry standards suggest reducing the current number of staff by 23 FTE, or the number of staff hours currently worked by 160 hours per day. The Child Nutrition director should work with the cafeteria managers to recommend a reduction plan of cafeteria staff or hours worked to the Business manager and the superintendent for approval. After implementing the plan, the Child Nutrition Department should monitor MPLH on a monthly basis and compare it to industry standards. Adjustments to the number

of staff or the hours worked should be made periodically to ensure efficient operations within industry MPLH standards.

If EEISD maintained its MPLH to meet the industry standard, EEISD would reduce its labor by 23 FTES or 160 hours per day. The average hourly wage of the cafeteria employees is \$8.29. The fiscal impact was calculated by multiplying \$8.29 x 160 hours per day x 180 days per year plus 10.4 percent in benefits. The annual savings to the district would be \$263,582 or (\$8.29 per hour x 160 excess hours x 180 days = \$238,752 + \$24,830 benefits = \$263,582).

PROCEDURES MANUAL AND ONGOING TRAINING (REC. 60)

EEISD’s Child Nutrition Department lacks a Bilingual written procedures manual that directly relates to the operations, practices, and procedures of the Child Nutrition Department. The EEISD Child Nutrition Department office uses the same English employee handbook as all the other employees of the district. The handbook includes employment issues, general rules of conduct and personal appearance for Food Service employees. In interviews conducted by the review team with district cafeteria staff, some cafeteria staff could not communicate with the review team since they did not understand English.

The results of not having a bilingual written procedures manual and ongoing training is that employees do not receive consistent information concerning food preparation techniques, sanitation and cleaning processes, work assignments and expectations. The lack of bilingual written procedures also affects the efficiency and consistency in the program.

Exhibit 9-7 shows essential skills for school food service employees according to *Managing Child Nutrition Programs, Leadership for Excellence*, 1999.

The *School Foodservice Management for the 21st Century, Fifth Edition*, 1999, states “training is the key to a strong, successful school food service program today. It is an ongoing process and should never stop. It is the central administration’s

**EXHIBIT 9-7
ESSENTIAL SKILLS FOR SCHOOL SERVICE EMPLOYEES**

SKILLS NEEDED DURING AN AVERAGE DAY FOR A FOOD SERVICE ASSISTANT

TECHNICAL SKILLS	MANAGERIAL SKILLS	INTERPERSONAL SKILLS
Food Preparation	Time Management	Verbal and Nonverbal Communication
Equipment Use	Decision Making	Dealing with Cultural Diversity
Sanitation		Patience
Standardized Recipe Use		Self-Management
Substitution Procedures		Being a Customer Service Ambassador
		Maintaining a Customer-Focused Culture

SOURCE: *Managing Child Nutrition Programs, Leadership for Excellence*, 1999.

responsibility to train the manager and a manager’s responsibility to train staff.” The author states that some advantages of a good training program include:

- low employee turnover;
- low absenteeism;
- fewer accidents;
- job satisfaction, fewer complaints and grievances;
- higher morale;
- lower production costs;
- high sanitation habits;
- good utilization of commodities;
- increased productivity; and
- improved quality of operations.

The director of Child Nutrition and cafeteria managers should develop a Bilingual procedures manual for the employees in the Child Nutrition Department and meet periodically to discuss the ongoing revision of the procedures manual according to new trends and standards. The bilingual procedures manual should serve as a training instrument and a communication tool and should include food preparation techniques, sanitation and cleaning processes, work assignments and expectations, at a minimum. The director of Child Nutrition should request assistance from Region 1 in acquiring examples of comparable child nutrition procedures manuals to model an EEISD version. The bilingual procedures manual should ensure activities in the Child Nutrition Office and cafeterias are consistent and efficient, and will allow continuity when turnover or substitutes occur. The director for Child Nutrition should ensure the procedures manual is updated annually.

CHILD NUTRITION TECHNOLOGY (REC. 61)

EEISD does not provide an automated networked management system for efficient communication between cafeterias, the Child Nutrition Department and the central office.

Edcouch-Elsa High School is the only campus that uses a point-of-sale system. The system at high school tracks meals served and the dollar amount of a la carte sales. All other campuses use a cash box and ticket system to reconcile meals sold to cash collected for adult or non-student meals. None of the cafeterias are networked to the Child Nutrition

Department office. There is no automated system for tracking and reconciling adult meals and a la carte sales to the revenue received each day. The cafeteria managers from other EEISD campuses are responsible for preparing and sending manually completed daily reports to the Child Nutrition Office. The reports reflect the number of meals served and the dollar amount of a la carte sales. The interviewed cafeteria managers informed the team that completed food production records and grocery orders were submitted to the Child Nutrition Department. District compiled data is performed in the Child Nutrition Office using the manually submitted data. Manually entering and compiling data increases the margin for error and the lack of an automated system hampers the efficiency of the Child Nutrition Department.

In *School Foodservice Management for the 21st Century, Fifth Edition*, 1999, the author discusses savings associated with the use of technology in food service operations. The potential savings that can be realized as a result of computers are identified as:

- reduced inventory because of better projections and more accurate ordering;
- error-free recipe calculations when altering batch sizes, which helps prevent overproduction;
- electronic commerce—just-in-time purchasing and placing orders using computers;
- pre-costing and post-costing of foods on a timely basis, providing management with the information to make better decisions;
- reduction of time spent preparing reports manually;
- reduction in overproduction and waste from leftovers if recipes are extended properly.

Kingsville ISD implemented an automated food service management system that operates within the intranet of the district. Each cafeteria is equipped with a computer that facilitates point-of-sale, menu planning, menu costing, food production records, serving sizes, grocery ordering, recipes, employee scheduling, participation and revenue. Accurate records of each student's cafeteria transactions are maintained on the system and can be reviewed and printed. Each day data is automatically uploaded to the central office server where it is stored and readily available for use in analysis and reporting.

EEISD should purchase and implement an automated networked management system that electronically communicates between district cafeterias and the Child Nutrition Office. The system should facilitate point-of-sale, menu planning, menu costing, food production records, serving sizes, grocery ordering, recipes, employee scheduling and participation. The system should also have the capability of tracking student transactions and report generation. The director of Child Nutrition should review the high school's existing Point of Sales system to determine its compatibility with the new automated management system.

The director of Child Nutrition should visit school districts with automated food service management systems. Using the information acquired by the visits, the director should develop a plan for the purchase and implementation of an automated networked food service management system. The plan should include timelines for implementation at each campus. The acquisition and implementation of a computerized system is a complex project and should involve everyone who would be utilizing and supporting the system to ensure the success of implementation. Meetings with Food Service and campus staff should be held to obtain input and communicate impending changes. The plan should be presented to the Business manager and the superintendent for approval. Upon approval, the Child Nutrition director should work with the Business manager to prepare bid specifications. Procurement of the hardware and software should be made by using one of the methods outlined in the Texas Education Agency Financial Accountability System Resource Guide (FASRG), Purchasing Module 3.2.3 Competitive Procurement.

The estimated cost for implementing this recommendation is based upon the purchase of nine hardware packages, which include nine computers, nine printers and nine scanners (z-pads) and adapters. Additionally, the district will need to purchase point-of-sale software for nine computer sites. The hardware and software cost includes one computer at each campus and one in the Child Nutrition Department. Finally, the district will need to purchase software support after the first year of implementation. No fiscal estimate is given to account for the disposal or salvage of the high school point of sale system. The estimated fiscal impact for this recommendation is a one-time cost of \$84,474 ((9 x \$1,659 hardware = \$14,931) + (9 x \$7,727 software = \$69,543) = \$84,474) In addition, there is an annual estimated ongoing software support cost of \$1,628 to support all of

the software, beginning in 2008-09 after the first year of implementation.

NUTRITION EDUCATION (REC. 62)

EEISD's Child Nutrition Department does not train students or teachers concerning proper nutrition. In addition, it does not participate in the nutritional training of elementary students to comply with the 2001 state law requiring a coordinated health program in each elementary school that coordinates health education, physical education, physical activity, nutrition services, and parental involvement. Coordinated health programs are designed to prevent obesity, cardiovascular disease and Type 2 diabetes in elementary school students.

Effective August 1, 2004, all Texas public schools participating in the federal child nutrition programs, NSLP, SBP and the After School Snack Program, must comply with the nutrition policies outlined by the Texas Public School Nutrition Policy.

Exhibit 9-8 shows TEC §38.013 and §38.014 regarding coordinated health programs for elementary students. No later than September 1, 2007, each school district is required to implement a program.

The American Dietetic Association states that nutrition education leads to changes in knowledge and choices. Combining nutrition education with school meal programs is a logical strategy for improving acceptance of nutritious meals both in and out of school.

According to Josephine Martin and Martha T. Conklin, authors of *Managing Child Nutrition Programs, Leadership for Excellence*, 1999, there is a need for nutrition education. They state:

Providing healthful meals for children in school is not enough. To adopt healthy eating practices, children need to learn about foods, experience eating healthful foods, learn how nutritious foods help their bodies grow and develop, and be able to develop skills necessary to form lifelong healthy eating habits. According to the Centers for Disease

EXHIBIT 9-8

TEC §38.013 AND §38.014

COORDINATED HEALTH PROGRAM FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

§ 38.013. COORDINATED HEALTH PROGRAM FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

(b) The agency shall make available to each school district one or more coordinated health programs designed to prevent obesity, cardiovascular disease, and Type 2 diabetes in elementary school students. Each program must provide for coordinating:

- (1) health education;
- (2) physical education and physical activity;
- (3) nutrition services; and
- (4) parental involvement.

(a-1) The commissioner by rule shall adopt criteria for evaluating a coordinated health program before making the program available under Subsection (a). Before adopting the criteria, the commissioner shall request review and comment concerning the criteria from the Texas Department of Health's School Health Advisory Committee. The commissioner may make available under Subsection (a) only those programs that meet criteria adopted under the subsection.

(c) The agency shall notify each school district of the availability of programs.

§ 38.014 IMPLEMENTATION OF COORDINATED HEALTH PROGRAM FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

(a) Each school district shall:

- (1) participate in appropriate training for the implementation of the program approved by the agency under Section 30.103; and
- (2) implement the program in each elementary school in the district.

(b) The agency, in cooperation with the Texas Department of Health, shall adopt a schedule for regional education service centers to provide necessary training under this section.

SOURCE: Texas Education Code §38.013 and §38.014. Note: References to "the agency" are the Texas Education Agency. Also, the Texas Department's new revised agency name is the Texas Department of Health Services.

Control and Prevention (CDC), healthy eating patterns in childhood and adolescence promote optimal childhood health, growth, and intellectual development; prevent immediate health problems, such as iron deficiency anemia, obesity, eating disorders, and dental caries; and may prevent long-term health problems, such as coronary heart disease, cancer and stroke.

The authors further state that the American Dietetics Association (ADA) supports nutrition for recipients of child and adolescent food and nutrition programs. The ADA's position statement makes the following point:

Appropriate nutrition education to recipients of child and adolescent food and nutrition programs is recognized as a key factor in health promotion/chronic disease prevention.

EEISD should initiate planning for the implementation of nutrition curriculum to comply with the Texas Public School Nutrition Policy, the Coordinated Health Program for Elementary School Students. Regional Education Service Centers can provide assistance and will be coordinating activities to prepare for compliance. The Child Nutrition director should contact Region I to request information necessary to comply with the Texas Public School Nutrition Policy. Upon review of the materials, the Child Nutrition director should meet with the health and physical education teachers to develop the implementation of the Coordinated Health Program for Elementary School Students.

For background information on Child Nutrition, see p. 251 in the General Information section of the appendices.

FISCAL IMPACT

RECOMMENDATIONS	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COST) SAVINGS	ONE-TIME (COST) SAVINGS
CHAPTER 9: CHILD NUTRITION							
58. Implement the use of management reporting tools between the Business Office and the Child Nutrition Department.	(\$1,067)	(\$1,067)	(\$1,067)	(\$1,067)	(\$1,067)	(\$5,335)	\$0
59. Establish a Child Nutrition staffing formula based on MPLH industry standards.	\$263,582	\$263,582	\$263,582	\$263,582	\$263,582	\$1,317,910	\$0
60. Develop a Bilingual procedure manual for the employees in the Child Nutrition Department.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
61. Purchase and implement an automated networked management system that electronically communicates between district cafeterias and the Child Nutrition Office.	\$0	(\$1,628)	(\$1,628)	(\$1,628)	(\$1,628)	(\$6,512)	(\$84,474)
62. Initiate planning for the implementation of nutrition curriculum to comply with the Texas Public School Nutrition Policy, the Coordinated Health Program for Elementary School Students.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
TOTALS-CHAPTER 9	\$262,515	\$260,887	\$260,887	\$260,887	\$260,887	\$1,306,063	(\$84,474)

CHAPTER 10

TRANSPORTATION

EDCOUCH-ELSA INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

CHAPTER 10. TRANSPORTATION

Edcouch-Elsa Independent School District (EEISD) covers 26.3 square miles. The district serves the cities of Edcouch and Elsa with a combined population the U.S. Census Bureau estimated in 2000 at 8,891.

The Transportation Department consists of 28 regular and four special education routes serving approximately 2,000 students daily. The operation is housed in a single centralized facility with adequate parking and office space. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) 2003–04 Student Transportation Operations Cost and Mileage report shows EEISD traveling 260,184 miles while expending \$1,135,752. The district received \$260,633 in state reimbursement for a net district expenditure of \$875,119. During the same year, the TEA Transportation Route Services Report showed the district transporting 2,291 students daily.

The Texas Education Code (TEC) Chapter 34 authorizes, but does not require, Texas school districts to provide transportation for students in the general population to and from home and school, school and career and technology training locations, and extracurricular activities. The federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that a school district provide transportation for students with disabilities if the district also provides transportation for students in the general population, or if students with disabilities require transportation to special education services.

FINDINGS

- EEISD lacks a procedural strategy to ensure bus-fleet-field observations occur routinely to ensure the safety of all students.
 - EEISD does not analyze the transportation operation, including bus routes and the number of student riders per bus to maximize potential efficiencies in transportation operations.
 - EEISD lacks a transportation staffing formula and does not evaluate the department regarding its staffing needs.
 - EEISD transportation department's daily practice of guaranteed minimum hours does not ensure payroll is calculated correctly for all bus drivers.
- EEISD lacks a formal process to evaluate hazardous transportation criteria to determine student eligibility for transportation within two miles of the assigned campus.
 - EEISD does not maintain complete bus fleet maintenance records.
 - EEISD lacks a comprehensive preventive maintenance program that ensures the safety of all buses.
 - EEISD lacks adopted policies regarding the environmental impact of buses that are allowed to idle while waiting for students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Recommendation 63: Plan, organize and implement a procedure that creates opportunities for field observation with campus staff, community volunteers, and Transportation Department staff to ensure safety concerns become action items.** The Transportation Department administrators should compile a list of all loading and unloading sites and then begin evaluating these sites with community members and campus staff. Campus boarding sites should have well marked “danger zones” and posted rules for loading and unloading. The district should direct Maintenance staff to paint and maintain designated danger zones. The district should conduct routine training for students on proper loading procedures on every bus. Transportation and campus staff should spend a portion of each week observing school bus operations. Transportation administrators should develop internal and external marketing methods to ensure district staff and community members know how to communicate significant transportation issues. These methods could include information published in the district’s quarterly community newsletters, district website postings, the Transportation Department telephone number posted on the back of every bus and discussion at campus meetings. Because it is impossible for Transportation staff to observe every operational issue, it is essential to engage the community to expand observation capacity.
- **Recommendation 64: Analyze the transportation operation and develop new bus routes that**

increase the number of riders per bus, eliminate 12 bus routes, and purchase a computerized routing and scheduling software system. The process requires developing bus stops and combining the stops to reduce the number of bus runs and bus routes in the district. The new bus stops will require students to walk to more centralized locations. These locations will allow the bus to travel on fewer streets and pick up more students in a shorter period. More efficient bus routes will reduce the number of buses and drivers needed. Creating efficient bus routes typically requires using routing software to assess routing options to maximize riders per bus and avoid adding new buses. Trained staff should write the routes and then give them to drivers to implement. Staff should complete training in routing and scheduling through one of the state professional associations. Effective routing and scheduling is not a one-time event; it is a process that must be used daily to ensure efficiency. EEISD should implement a process that provides additional bus route information to parents and students. At a minimum, bus routes should provide students, parents, school staff, and bus drivers with stop locations, bus numbers, and service times. This additional information will decrease telephone calls at the beginning of school and enhance communication between the Transportation Department and its users.

- **Recommendation 65: Develop a staffing formula to ensure the department is staffed appropriately and annually evaluate the department's needs, adjusting staffing levels as needed.** The director of Transportation should meet with central office administrators to assess the staffing needs of the department and discuss best practices regarding bus monitors, bus drivers, office personnel and mechanics. The director should visit with other transportation directors with districts comparable in size to EEISD and discuss best practice staffing ratios used in their departments.
- **Recommendation 66: Change the guarantee time process for all employees to eliminate pay for hours not worked when the total worked hours exceed the minimum.** EEISD should implement the daily guarantee only if actual work hours are less than the daily minimum.
- **Recommendation 67: Develop an evaluation process regarding hazardous transportation**

criteria to determine student eligibility for transportation to the assigned campus. The process could eliminate service to several neighborhoods in the district; therefore, community input is critical for a successful implementation. The superintendent should create a districtwide committee with representatives from schools, parents, and safety organizations (police, sheriff department, roadway engineers, etc) that would evaluate each area in an objective manner. The committee should present the results to the EEISD board for final approval. Any neighborhood no longer eligible for service should be notified of the service change before the end of the school year to allow parents time to make alternative arrangements.

- **Recommendation 68: Purchase software to track all fleet maintenance.** The software should easily track all costs associated with each vehicle. All maintenance records should include all services performed, all parts used for the repair, and mechanic time and labor costs. To document that the mechanics address repairs in a timely manner, the work orders should also track the dates services are requested and the dates repairs are completed.
- **Recommendation 69: Develop a comprehensive preventive maintenance program that ensures the safety of all buses on a continuous basis.** The district should develop and implement a program to inspect every aspect of every bus on a regular basis. All items needing adjustment, repair or replacement should be addressed when the vehicle is brought in for inspection to ensure a safe bus fleet. The process should have a written format denoting every area to be inspected and an item-by-item sign-off by the mechanic performing the inspection.
- **Recommendation 70: Develop and implement a formal no idle policy.** The policy should state the duration a school bus can idle and under what circumstances exceptions to the policy would occur. Drivers should be trained on the policy requirements. Transportation supervisors should routinely observe buses both in the bus parking area and during normal operations to ensure compliance.

DETAILED FINDINGS

ROUTINE BUS OPERATION EVALUATION (REC. 63)

EEISD lacks a procedural strategy to ensure bus-fleet-field observations occur routinely to ensure the safety of all students. The district implemented a training program to increase transportation safety, but staff has not implemented the practices in the daily operation of the fleet. Transportation administration handles daily operational duties in the office but does not actively observe the operation of the fleet. The review team observed the buses speeding, and students and aides not sitting properly while the buses were moving. Aides were standing and walking down the aisles and students were kneeling on the seats, leaning over seats, and standing up while the buses were moving. The review team observed bus drivers allowing students to wait for buses in areas designated as “danger zones” at several EEISD schools and at stops in the community. A school bus danger zone is the area immediately adjacent to a school bus where it is difficult to see students. The close proximity to moving bus wheels puts students at risk of their own school bus striking them.

The bus loading zones at several campuses are narrow and the buses park at the curb leaving no safe space for students to wait. In addition, the review team observed drivers allowing unloading students to cross the street and walk immediately in front of the bus where students are out of the driver’s direct view and could be at risk of the bus striking them.

EEISD does not have a process to provide additional information on operational safety issues from all possible sources. The staff could not provide any established process that documented input from the community, schools or parents on daily bus safety issues. In addition, there was no process to encouraged substitute drivers to provide information on operational issues. Substitutes are in a position to see and report issues such as student discipline, bus stop safety, mechanical condition of the bus, and timeliness of the route.

Failing to supervise daily performance through direct field observation and community feedback could lead to unnecessary accidents and student injuries. Failing to dedicate adequate time to develop an observation strategy that includes standard loading/unloading and motion procedures in tandem with organizing, campus site marking, and community engagement diminishes operational control and safety. A comment made on the parent survey indicates that

parents have concerns regarding bus drivers’ failure to stop when another bus is unloading students.

According to industry standards set by the State of Texas School Bus Driver Certification Course, students are to be kept a minimum of six feet from moving buses to protect them from potential accidents. When students wait within six feet of moving buses, minor horseplay can result in severe injury or death. When students walk in front of a bus, the front hood of the bus creates a blind spot that may hide students from the driver’s view. Students that cross within 15 feet of the front of the bus are at risk of the bus striking students who have just left the bus.

The safety features of the bus require that riders sit flat on the seats to compartmentalize movement in emergencies. Allowing riders to move around while the bus is moving negates the safety features of the buses. Riders are safer in school buses than in cars if they are sitting completely down in their seats. School bus compartmentalization only functions if the riders are seated. TEC §34.004, Standing Children, states a school district may not require or allow a child to stand on a school bus or passenger van that is in motion.

Avoiding accidents and student injuries should be the primary concern of any school bus fleet. The *National School Transportation Specifications and Procedures 2000 Revised Edition* outlines the observation concept as the responsibility of the local agency to include the following:

- Participate in pupil transportation operations within its jurisdiction, including...review of school bus routes, investigation and reporting of crashes and other transportation problems and evaluation of the pupil transportation system...; and
- Provide supervision of loading and unloading areas at or near the school and provide ongoing evaluation of route pickup and drop-off locations for safety.

The National Association of State School Bus Directors issued a position paper on the benefits of compartmentalization for riders. It states that compartmentalization is more effective than seat belts in protecting riders if used properly. The State of Texas School Bus Driver Certification Course teaches drivers to keep moving buses at least six feet away from students at any point along the outside of the bus and 15 feet from the front of the bus all times. **Exhibit 10-1** shows the danger zones for a school bus.

EXHIBIT 10-1
TEXAS SCHOOL BUS DRIVER CERTIFICATION COURSE/ DANGER ZONES

DANGER ZONES

Danger Zones are those places around the school bus in which the driver cannot directly see a pedestrian. If a person is standing in a Danger Zone, any movement by the bus may cause injury or death. Younger children present the greatest danger because they are inexperienced, naive, impulsive, and harder to see.

There are four danger zones :

- a. directly in front of the bus, extending 15 feet from the front bumper;
- b. to the left side of the bus, extending 6 feet out from the side of the bus;
- c. to the right side of the bus, extending 6 feet out from the side of the bus; and
- d. directly behind the bus, extending about 150 feet behind the rear bumper.

SOURCE: Course Guide for School Bus Driver Training in Texas, Rev.1999.

While bus drivers are ultimately responsible for ensuring that they maintain a safe distance between moving buses and waiting students, the most effective practice is for campus administrators, the Transportation Department, and bus drivers to develop collaboratively a system for keeping students safe in the bus loading areas. By creating a buffer zone at all campuses by clearly marking the area where the buses should park, a district ensures that students have adequate waiting space for buses that will minimize the risk of moving buses injuring students. The buffer zones are created by painting sidewalks and/or streets with markings to separate buses and students. Students are kept out of the danger zones of the buses anytime the buses are moving. School supervision of the campus loading areas is implemented to enforce the buffer zones. These buffers provide an effective safety resource for students if district staff is present to enforce the area.

The key to minimizing the risk of accidents and student injuries is supervising daily performance through direct field observation complimented with community and staff feedback. Crowley ISD developed a procedure to log community telephone calls regarding transportation. The district then uses this information to advise the bus drivers of issues that warrant their attention. Field observations occur daily and generate additional operational controls to maximize safety.

EEISD should plan, organize, and implement a procedure that creates opportunities for field observation with campus staff, community volunteers, and Transportation Department staff to ensure safety concerns become action items. The Transportation Department administrators should compile a list of all loading and unloading sites and then begin evaluating these sites with community members and campus staff. Campus boarding sites should have well marked "danger zones" and posted rules for loading and unloading. The district should direct Maintenance staff to paint and

maintain designated danger zones. The district should conduct routine training for students on proper loading procedures on every bus. Transportation and campus staff should spend a portion of each week observing school bus operations. Transportation administrators should develop internal and external marketing methods to ensure district staff and community members know how to communicate significant transportation issues. These methods could include information published in the district's quarterly community newsletters, district website postings, the Transportation Department telephone number posted on the back of every bus and discussion at campus meetings. Because it is impossible for Transportation staff to observe every operational issue, it is essential to engage the community to expand observation capacity.

The review team estimates the fiscal impact for this recommendation is \$200 for paint and labor to mark the buffer zones. The painted zone should last at least 10 years. The review team assumes costs incurred for painting the buffer zones would be covered by the district's existing budget.

BUS ROUTING (REC. 64)

EEISD does not analyze the transportation operation, including bus routes and the number of student riders per bus to maximize potential efficiencies in transportation operations. The department lacks a routing plan that dictates the number of buses necessary to maintain service. Furthermore, the district does not consider routing efficiency when making decisions concerning bus fleet size and replacement. The district has 45 buses capable of transporting students. Currently, 32 buses transport students to eight campuses. In addition, 1,984 of the 5,472 students in the district ride school buses.

In addition, the district does not publish routes with times and bus stops, instead, the department merely draws colored

maps to provide information to the schools regarding the areas served but gives limited information to the community. In addition, the Transportation Department staff told the review team that the lack of bus pick-up and delivery time information creates significant concern in the community. The department receives a large number of telephone calls at the beginning of each school year from parents trying to determine bus schedules.

EEISD picks up and drops off students to their homes, which requires the buses to turn on every street where students live and stop at each residence. This type of routing pattern adds additional time on every bus route due to the constant stopping and starting at each residence. There is no coordination between parents and the Transportation staff to ensure safe, reasonable and efficient pick-up and drop-off sites. If routes become overcrowded, the Transportation Department splits the route, doubling dedicated resources.

The district lacks a process for constantly evaluating and refining routes to maximize efficiency as the student population changes.

Exhibit 10-2 shows the current percentages of actual riders versus bus capacity for EEISD. It shows that the daily ridership on buses is below capacity. Average ridership is the average number of students transported on buses each day, on either the morning or afternoon route. The exhibit shows the number of individual runs (trips) that each bus makes either taking students to school or delivering them home. The number of student riders per bus at one time (per trip) indicates the efficiency of the bus.

Exhibit 10-3 shows existing runs by campus with current riders. It also shows the number of bus runs per school and the average number of riders per bus.

**EXHIBIT 10-2
EEISD BUS RIDERSHIP
2005-06**

BUS NUMBER	BUS CAPACITY	1ST TRIP RIDERS	2ND TRIP RIDERS	3RD TRIP RIDERS	1ST TRIP PERCENTAGE OF CAPACITY	2ND TRIP PERCENTAGE OF CAPACITY	3RD TRIP PERCENTAGE OF CAPACITY
20	71	19	35	25	26.76%	49.30%	35.21%
29	71	48	49		67.61%	69.01%	
30	71	39			54.93%		
34	71	45	44		63.38%	61.97%	
35	71	60	59		84.51%	83.10%	
36	71	58	22		81.69%	30.99%	
37	71	*	7		*	9.86%	
38	71	49	48		69.01%	67.61%	
42	72	40	38	28	55.56%	52.78%	38.89%
43	72	46	39		63.89%	54.17%	
44	77	14	35		18.18%	45.45%	
45	77	48	47		62.34%	61.04%	
47	71	24	72		33.80%	101.41%	
50	71	15	42	53	21.13%	59.15%	74.65%
51	71	44			61.97%		
52	71	35	62		49.30%	87.32%	
53	71	49	49		69.01%	69.01%	
54	71	51			71.83%		
56	72	42	42		58.33%	58.33%	
57	71	51	51		71.83%	71.83%	

*Numbers less than five have not been cited due to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) 34CFR Part 99.1 and Texas Education Agency procedures OP 10-03.

SOURCE: EEISD Transportation Department, 2005-06.

**EXHIBIT 10-3 CURRENT RIDERS
REGULAR RIDERS PER BUS BY SCHOOL
2005-06**

RIDERS PER SCHOOL									
	GARCIA	KENNEDY	JOHNSON	RODRIGUEZ	E C CAMPUS	6TH GRADE CAMPUS	TRUMAN JR. HIGH	EE HS	DISTRICT TOTAL
	44	49	35	42	51	16	17	38	
	45	48	62	42	75	20	28	25	
		39	49	59	49	24	57	15	
		38	48	60	49	46	39	18	
			48	58	44	14	17	21	
			47		51	19	*	25	
			51		39	15	35	33	
			51		40	40	42	28	
							38		
TOTAL	89	174	391	261	398	194	273	203	1983

CURRENT REGULAR BUS RUNS PER SCHOOL									
	GARCIA	KENNEDY	JOHNSON	RODRIGUEZ	E C CAMPUS	6TH GRADE CAMPUS	TRUMAN JR. HIGH	EE HS	DISTRICT TOTALS
TOTAL	2	4	8	5	8	8	9	8	52
Ave. Riders per Bus	44.5	43.5	48.9	52.2	49.8	24.3	30.3	25.4	38.1

*Numbers less than five have not been cited due to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) 34CFR Part 99.1 and Texas Education Agency procedures OP 10-03.
SOURCE: EEISD Transportation Department, 2005-06.

Total routes determine the overall spending in the Transportation Department. The routes create driver positions, determine vehicle maintenance staffing levels, generate new bus expenditures, and mandate office staff positions. EEISD currently spends approximately \$29,600 (based on TEA Operations report data for 2003–04 of regular expenditures at \$1,035,767 less 20 percent for field trips, summer school and non-route service divided by 28 route buses) each year per bus route.

Individualized bus stops “door-to-door” are the most inefficient type of bus routes. The buses make as many stops as there are students riding. Buses are also traveling on more streets to make stops in front of each student’s home. Failure to provide the community information on bus stop and pick-up times creates a demand for individualized bus stops. The district cannot expect students to stand in remote locations without information on pick-up times.

TEA set a funding formula for transportation under TEC §42.155 where each district or county operating a regular transportation system is entitled to an allotment based on

the daily cost per regular eligible student of operating and maintaining the regular transportation system and the linear density of that system.

In effectively managed Transportation departments, bus routes are developed by staff that is trained specifically in routing efficiency, safety and scheduling. This function is enhanced by routing software, which speeds the process and provides additional resources for the drivers such as right and left turns, student rider lists, and state report forms. The Texas Association of School Business Officials (TASBO) (www.tasbo.org) or the Texas Association for Pupil Transportation (TAPT) (www.tapt.com) provides school districts training in best practices through their “Transportation Routing and Scheduling” certification courses offered throughout the year. Associations like TAPT instruct districts to use TEA’s funding formula based on a student rider per mile to maximize a bus’s capacity. A minimum target of 66 percent of capacity is the goal per bus, which requires two passengers per seat on every seat in the bus. Elementary routes may have a target of up to 100 percent of capacity due to the small size of these students.

However, buses and driver salaries are a fixed commodity when the bus operates, therefore, the only way to achieve realistic savings is to eliminate as many routes as possible and avoid these expenses. Eliminating partial routes does not generate significant savings. The major costs of operating the bus and paying driver salaries and benefits are not reduced unless all trips for the bus are eliminated. The goal is to transport as many students as safe and practical in the fewest buses possible. The closer the buses are to two riders per seat (66 percent) at secondary and three riders per seat (100 percent) for elementary, the fewer buses and drivers are needed.

EEISD should analyze the transportation operation and develop new bus routes that increase the number of riders per bus, eliminate 12 bus routes, and purchase a computerized routing and scheduling software system. The process requires the development of bus stops and combining the stops to reduce the number of bus runs and bus routes in the district. The new bus stops will require students to walk to more centralized locations to catch the bus. The centralized locations will allow the bus to travel on fewer streets and pick up more students in a shorter period of time. The creation of more efficient bus routes will reduce the number of buses

and drivers needed to serve the district. **Exhibit 10-4** shows recommended bus run consolidations per school and the new average number of student riders per bus. Creating efficient bus routes typically requires routing software to adequately assess routing options to maximize riders per bus and avoid adding new buses.

Exhibit 10-4 shows the potential to maximize efficiency by eliminating as many as 12 runs. This process would require that the district create bus stops to maximize student pick-up and drop-off while minimizing ride-time. Efficient routing minimizes the number of stops per route while maximizing ridership. Trained staff should write routes and then give them to drivers to implement. Staff should complete training in routing and scheduling through one of the state professional associations.

The district should eliminate 12 bus runs and purchase computerized routing and scheduling software. Effective routing and scheduling is not a one-time event, but a process that the district must use daily to ensure efficiency. EEISD should implement a process that provides additional bus route information to parents and students. At a minimum, bus routes should provide students, parents, school staff, and bus drivers with stop locations, bus numbers, and service

**EXHIBIT 10-4
RECOMMENDED EEISD BUS RUN CONSOLIDATIONS**

CURRENT REGULAR BUS RUNS PER SCHOOL									
	GARCIA	KENNEDY	JOHNSON	RODRIGUEZ	E C	6TH GRADE	TRUMAN JR. HIGH	EE HS	TOTALS
Total Bus Runs	2	4	8	5	8	8	9	8	52
Recommended Bus Runs	2	3	7	5	7	4	6	5	39
BUS RUN DIFFERENCE* INCREASE (DECREASE)	0	(1)	(1)	0	(1)	(4)	(3)	(3)	(13)
RECOMMENDED REGULAR BUS RUNS PER SCHOOL									
Current Average Riders per Bus	44.5	43.5	48.9	52.2	49.8	24.3	30.3	25.4	38.1
Recommended Average Riders per Bus	44.5	58	55.9	52.2	56.9	48.5	45.5	40.6	50.8
AVE. RIDERS DIFFERENCE** INCREASE (DECREASE)	0	14.5	7	0	7.1	24.2	15.2	15.2	12.7

*Between current buses run less recommended bus runs equals bus runs recommended for elimination.

**Between current average riders per bus and recommended average riders per bus.

SOURCE: EEISD Transportation Staff Interview, November, 2005; Texas Public School Consulting, Inc., January 2006.

times. This additional information will enhance communication between the Transportation Department and its users and decrease telephone calls at the beginning of the school year.

Eliminating 12 bus runs could reduce the number of bus routes and drivers by six, based on two runs per driver for a savings of \$177,600 per year (6 routes x \$29,600 per route [includes salary and entire cost of route] = \$177,600). Routing software costs approximately \$4,995 and the annual license fee is estimated at a cost of \$2,250. This will result in a one time cost of \$4,995 and an annual saving of \$175,350 (\$177,600 route reduction savings - \$2,250 routing software annual license fee = \$175,350).

STAFFING (REC. 65)

EEISD lacks a transportation staffing formula and does not evaluate the department regarding its staffing needs. In 2005-06, the Transportation Department includes a director, operations supervisor (dispatcher), trainer, route scheduler, two part-time office staff, 32 bus drivers of which four serve as part-time mechanic helpers, 12 full-time and two part-time bus monitors and two mechanics.

Interviews with the department's part-time office staff, found that they spend significant portions of their shifts working on duplicating records that already exist in the department. Several daily hours are spent typing vehicle maintenance records into a word document despite the same data already existing in the shop area. Fuel records are taken from a computerized fueling program and re-entered into a separate document. The additional vehicle maintenance and fueling records are redundant and serve an identical purpose.

In addition, the district has 32 bus drivers, with no records to indicate what criteria the district used to determine the appropriate number of drivers and monitors necessary to maintain an efficient transportation department. In addition, the district has twelve fulltime regular bus monitors and two part-time monitors who assist the driver with student management and to physically escort students across the street at bus stops. The district has not identified a ratio to promote an ongoing evaluation of efficient bus driver and monitor staffing levels. Many school districts do not hire monitors to ride on regular bus routes. If a driver is properly trained, the driver can perform the duties currently handled by the monitors with minimal problems. If student discipline is an issue, most districts use cameras on the buses to document student discipline problems on the bus rather

than monitors. However, some districts provide additional support on a rotating basis to address significant temporary problems.

The Transportation Department's maintenance area is also staffed with two mechanics and four mechanic helpers. The mechanic helpers, classified as bus drivers supplement their five hour a day bus driving duties with approximately three hours of mechanic assistance. The department has a 45-unit school bus fleet with two mechanic bays and no maintenance vehicles to support. The district does not track repair time to determine actual mechanic efficiency.

Without staffing standards or an evaluation component to determine the Transportation Department's staffing and productivity standards, the department is at risk of overstaffing, misusing resources that can be directed to instructional purposes and not tracking maintenance repair time for efficiency or effectiveness.

Associations like the Texas Association for School Business Officials (TASBO) and the Texas Association for Pupil Transportation (TAPT) provide training for school districts on best practices through their "Effective and Efficient Transportation" class. This class provides guidelines regarding the appropriate number of mechanics needed by a district, based on the type and age of the fleet. As a general rule of thumb, one mechanic is required for every 22.5 buses or 45 maintenance vehicles. This figure typically includes line mechanics and supervision.

The district should develop a staffing formula to ensure the department is staffed appropriately and annually evaluate the department's needs, adjusting staffing levels as needed. The director of Transportation should meet with central office administrators to assess the staffing needs of the department and discuss best practices regarding bus monitors, bus drivers, office personnel and mechanics. The director should visit with other transportation directors with districts comparable in size to EEISD and discuss best practice staffing ratios used in their departments.

PAYROLL COSTS (REC. 66)

EEISD transportation department's daily practice of guaranteed minimum hours does not ensure payroll is calculated correctly for all bus drivers. The district employs 32 bus drivers and 12 full-time and two part-time bus monitors. The district pays employees for routes on an hourly basis. In addition to time worked operating the buses, employees receive an average of an hour extra each day to

supplement their earnings. These employees are assigned other responsibilities, such as field trips, that require additional compensation including overtime compensation at a rate of one and one-half times their rate of pay per hour. The guarantee is viewed as hours worked so the combination of guarantee and additional duties creates additional overtime in the department.

Offering an hour guarantee as time worked inflates district transportation expenditures. EEISD is currently spending significantly more than comparison districts for regular service on a cost per mile basis. **Exhibit 10-5** shows the cost per mile comparison between EEISD and several comparison districts for 2003–04.

**EXHIBIT 10-5
COST PER MILE COMPARISON
2003-04**

DISTRICT	REGULAR COST PER MILE	SPECIAL NEEDS COST PER MILE
EDCOUCH-ELSA	\$5.22	\$1.62
Progresso	\$3.42	\$5.29
Southside	\$2.85	\$2.31
Roma	\$2.18	\$0.91
Rio Grande City	\$2.00	\$2.54

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency Transportation Operation Reports, 2003-04.

The district should change the guarantee time process for all employees to eliminate pay for hours not worked when the total worked hours exceed the minimum. EEISD should implement the daily guarantee only if actual work hours are less than the daily minimum.

Eliminating and/or reducing guarantee time for drivers and monitors will save approximately \$75,307 per year. Restructuring the guarantee process will save \$68,213 in salaries or (\$52,186 driver salary + \$16,027 monitor salary) and \$7,094 in benefits (\$5,427 driver benefits + \$1,667 monitor benefits) = \$75,307. Calculations used overtime hourly wages per day of \$9.06 for 32 drivers and \$6.36 for 14 monitors times 180 days.

HAZARDOUS TRANSPORTATION CRITERIA (REC. 67)

EEISD lacks a formal process to evaluate hazardous transportation criteria to determine student eligibility for transportation within two miles of the assigned campus. The Transportation staff said that the district allows every student to ride a school bus to school. TEA provides funding

guidelines for regular bus route service. The guidelines discourage school districts from providing bus service within two miles of the assigned school by limiting funding. TEA funding guidelines to school districts for areas within two miles of schools state:

The District may apply to the commissioner of education for an additional amount of up to ten percent of its regular transportation allotment to be used for the transportation of students living within two miles of the school they attend who would be subject to hazardous traffic conditions if they walked to school. The Board or its designee shall provide to the commissioner the definition of hazardous conditions applicable to the District and shall identify the specific hazardous areas for which the allocation is requested. A hazardous condition exists where no walkway is provided and students must walk along or cross a freeway or expressway, an underpass, an overpass or a bridge, an uncontrolled major traffic artery, an industrial or commercial area, or another comparable condition.

EEISD does not evaluate areas within two miles of the assigned school. During interviews with the review team, district staff stated that a mechanism for determining service within two miles of the schools does not exist. Furthermore, interviews with the review team, revealed two routes are not turned into TEA for funding due to the lack of a board approved hazardous transportation process. Transportation staff were aware that funding was available but did not seek board approval to claim the routes. TEA will pay up to 10 percent of the foundation allotment for service within two miles of the school if it meets a district defined hazardous criteria.

Although the district can make a choice to provide bus service to all students at its expense, there may not be a safety need in all areas. Consequently, the district may be expending funds for a non-essential service rather than directing those funds to the classroom instruction. There is a potential that several areas in the district would not be considered hazardous, which would allow additional reductions in the number of bus routes needed. The hazardous process is an in depth review of the community.

Round Rock ISD has a numeric rating format to determine hazardous transportation eligibility shown in **Exhibit 10-6**. This rating system analyzes the emotional topic of school bus eligibility in a data driven format. Over 30 school districts across the state have adopted this rating format. A copy of

**EXHIBIT 10-6
ROUND ROCK ISD HAZARDOUS TRANSPORTATION
ELIGIBILITY RATING SYSTEM**

SCHOOL:	AREA:	
DESCRIPTION OF AREA		POINTS
Industrial/Commercial area with no walkways		100
Apartment complex on major streets without walkways		80
Residential area with no walkways to school		60
Rural area with no walkways		40
Residential/rural/apartment area with walkways		20
DESCRIPTION OF STREETS AND HIGHWAYS TO BE CROSSED OR TRAVELED		
Overpass/Underpass across an expressway		100
Access road along an expressway		90
Railroad crossing		90
Narrow, winding, isolated streets without walkways		80
Narrow, winding, isolated streets with walkways		70
Four lane highway/major artery without walkways		70
Four lane highway/major artery with walkways		60
Two lane road carrying heavy traffic		50
Two lane road carrying light traffic		40
Low water crossing		30
Residential area without walkways		20
Residential area with walkways		10
DISTANCE - HOME TO SCHOOL - BASED ON NEAREST HAZARDOUS CONDITION		
1.75 - 1.99 miles		100
1.50 - 1.74 miles		90
1.25 - 1.49 miles		80
1.00 - 1.24 miles		70
.75 - .99 miles		60
.50 - .74 miles		50
.25 - .49 miles		30
.00 - .24 miles		20
TRAFFIC CONTROLS LOCATED BETWEEN HOME AND TRAFFIC CONTROLS LOCATED BETWEEN HOME AND SCHOOL WHICH ASSIST THE STUDENT		
None provided		100
Pedestrian crossing of major street with no assistance		80
Neighborhood streets with no controls		60
Neighborhood streets with controls		40
School crossing zones provided		30
Neighborhood streets with crossing guard		10
Traffic Density of Major Roads or Arteries		
Heavy traffic at all times		100
Heavy rush hour traffic - normal at other times		85
Medium density at all times		70
Medium rush hour traffic - normal at other times		55
Low density traffic at all times		40

**EXHIBIT 10-6 (CONTINUED)
ROUND ROCK ISD HAZARDOUS TRANSPORTATION
ELIGIBILITY RATING SYSTEM**

SCHOOL:	AREA:	POINTS
SPEED LIMITS OF MAJOR ROADS TO BE CROSSED		
45 m.p.h. +		100
35 - 44 m.p.h.		75
25 - 34 m.p.h.		50
10 - 24 m.p.h.		25
NUMBER OF MAJOR INTERSECTIONS TO BE CROSSED		
Six or more		100
Five		90
Four		80
Three		70
Two		60
One		50
NUMBER OF FEEDER STREETS STREETS THAT CARRY NEIGHBORHOOD TRAFFIC TO MAJOR STREETS/ARTERIES TO BE CROSSED		
Six or more		100
Five		90
Four		80
Three		70
Two		60
One		50
APPLY SCORES FROM EVALUATION OF HAZARDOUS AREA TRANSPORTATION		
< 500 points	Not Hazardous	
500 - 574 points	Grey Area - Determination on case by case basis	
575 + points	Hazardous	

SOURCE: Round Rock ISD Transportation Department, 2005.

the entire rating scale is available at <http://www.roundrockisd.org>.

EEISD should develop an evaluation process regarding hazardous transportation criteria to determine student eligibility for transportation to the assigned campus. The process could eliminate service to several neighborhoods in the district; therefore, community input is critical for a successful implementation. The superintendent should create a districtwide committee with representatives from schools, parents, and safety organizations (police, sheriff department, roadway engineers, etc) that would evaluate each area in an objective manner. The committee should present the results to the EEISD board for final approval.

The review team based the fiscal impact on the two bus routes that serve only hazardous areas. These routes were not submitted to TEA for reimbursement because the district lacks a formal evaluation process. If the district implemented a formal process, TEA would fund these routes. The actual

length of the routes is unknown but if they were only two miles one-way, the district would receive an additional \$2,059 per year (4 miles per route x 2 runs per day x 180 school days x \$1.43 reimbursement rate from TEA = \$2,059). Other areas are currently receiving service within two miles of the school but the amount of service that would be rated as hazardous cannot be determined until the district implements a formal process.

**MAINTENANCE WORK ORDER DOCUMENTATION
(REC. 68)**

EEISD does not maintain complete bus fleet maintenance records. The Transportation Department revised the entire maintenance area within the last year. Maintenance records are kept through a paper process that does not show a complete record of work or total repair costs. The work order lists the parts used to repair the vehicle, the date the vehicle was repaired, and the odometer reading. Other required items such as mechanic time, labor costs, and other

items inspected while the vehicle was in the repair facility are not listed.

The lack of fleet maintenance software prevents EEISD from tracking expenditures to each bus. Mechanic efficiency cannot be evaluated because the work order does not show the time spent on the repair. The current process provides limited information to determine the safety of the bus or the efficiency of the repair process. The preventive maintenance process must be scheduled by walking the bus lot and writing down odometer readings.

The *National School Transportation Specifications and Procedures, 2000 Revised Edition*, provides guidelines for vehicle maintenance records. The intent of vehicle maintenance records is to allow a comprehensive analysis of all expenditures and document that all vehicles have been adequately maintained. It is also required to ensure that mechanical problems are handled quickly so vehicles not meeting minimum operational requirements are taken out of service. Best practice would normally require that the records be computerized to allow easy accountability.

The district should purchase software to track all fleet maintenance. The software should easily track all costs associated with each vehicle. All maintenance records should include all services performed, all parts used for the repair, and mechanic time and labor costs. To document that repairs occur in a timely manner, the work orders should also track the dates services are requested and the dates repairs are completed. Several low cost commercial programs are available that would meet the needs of the district.

The fiscal impact for implementing a vehicle maintenance records program is estimated at \$3,000, based on user fleet maintenance programs estimated to cost \$2,500 and a computer for this program in the shop area estimated to cost \$500. An annual program maintenance fee is estimated to be \$595, beginning in 2008-09.

PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE (REC. 69)

EEISD lacks a comprehensive preventive maintenance program that ensures the safety of all buses.

Preventive maintenance records before last spring were not in the vehicle maintenance file. The current process began when a new mechanic supervisor began their employment. The process is so new that several vehicles may not have traveled enough miles to generate multiple preventive maintenance inspections.

Vehicles are scheduled for preventive maintenance every 5,000 miles but items actually inspected were undocumented. There is no preventive maintenance form listing items the mechanic is to check routinely to keep the fleet running safely. The absence of a proscribed list of items that mechanics must inspect may allow them to skip critical mechanical systems during the preventive maintenance process. This situation increases the risk of mechanical failure and potentially reduces the life span of the bus. The current preventive maintenance records only guarantee that oil changes were performed. Maintenance documents show that buses have traveled more than 20,000 miles in at least one instance without preventive maintenance.

A sample of preventive maintenance records in **Exhibit 10-7** shows overdue preventive maintenance in bold in the interval column. The last odometer readings are included in the exhibit to show current preventive maintenance intervals. They do not reflect performed maintenance.

The lack of a preventive maintenance inspection form that requires mechanics sign off on every item inspected creates the potential for mechanical breakdowns and student injuries. A bus may not be adequately checked if there are no procedures requiring a full inspection of the entire bus. This can result in severe mechanical problems that could endanger students.

The goal of preventive maintenance is to keep the bus in a safe and reliable condition at all times. Thorough inspections that are performed in a timely manner are valuable tools in ensuring vehicles are in proper working order.

The goal of preventive maintenance is to keep the bus in a safe and reliable condition at all times. Thorough inspections that are performed in a timely manner are valuable tools in ensuring vehicles are in proper working order.

All commercial and public passenger vehicles fall under the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, Department of Transportation (DOT) Code, Part 396.3 summarized means all parts and accessories should be in safe and proper operating condition at all times. School buses are not under this legal requirement but it sets best practice standards that are followed throughout the school transportation industry. Preventive maintenance is the primary process for maintaining safe school buses.

The State of Florida has a legally required monthly bus preventive maintenance program that mandates items to be inspected. Florida provides a state adopted form for

**EXHIBIT 10-7
EEISD PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE RECORDS SAMPLE**

VEHICLE	PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE DATE	ODOMETER	INTERVAL	VEHICLE	PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE DATE	ODOMETER	INTERVAL	
Bus #5	7/26/2005	47456		Bus #56	4/19/2005	24936		
	Last Odo	10/31/2005	69302	21846	Last Odo	10/31/2005	30464	5528
Bus #34	10/11/2005	136982		Bus #57	4/19/2005	22861		
	Last Odo	10/31/2005	137931	949	Last Odo	10/31/2005	27805	4944
Bus #52	4/18/2005	34762		Bus #58	10/3/2005	13263		
	Last Odo	10/31/2005	38951	4189	Last Odo	10/31/2005	14093	830
Bus #53	4/18/2005	25435		Bus #59	4/14/2005	10344		
		11/1/2005	29604	4169	Last Odo	10/31/2005	14093	3749
Bus #54	4/18/2005	30243		Bus #60	4/14/2005	9261		
	Last Odo	10/31/2005	34708	4465		9/7/2005	12254	2993
					Last Odo	10/31/2005	13148	894
Bus #55	4/18/2005	23467						
		11/2/2005	31043	7576				

SOURCE: EEISD Maintenance Record, November 2005.

preventive maintenance that sets best practice standards. These standards are found in the “2003 State of Florida School Bus Safety Inspection Manual.” A copy of the Florida standards can be found at <http://info.fldoe.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-1149/04.pdf>.

The district should develop a comprehensive preventive maintenance program that ensures the safety of all buses on a continuous basis. A program should be developed and implemented to inspect every aspect of every bus on a consistent basis. All items needing adjustment, repair or replacement should be addressed when the vehicle is inspected to ensure a safe bus fleet. The process should have a written format denoting every area to be inspected and an item by item sign-off by the mechanic performing the inspection. Comprehensive preventive maintenance is a valuable tool used to maximize the life span of the school

bus. Long term cost avoidance due to component failures can be minimized through a thorough maintenance process.

NO IDLE POLICY (REC. 70)

EEISD lacks adopted policies regarding the environmental impact of buses that are allowed to idle while waiting for students. District staff could not provide a copy of a policy or procedures addressing this requirement. The review team observed buses idling for extended periods in both the Transportation facility and at schools. Interviews with transportation staff indicate that they were aware of the issue but did not implement procedures to reduce extended idling.

Idling buses for extended periods wastes fuel and increases air pollution. Review team observations of the fleet indicate that most buses idle up to 45 minutes per day. The Texas

Commission on Environmental Quality has rules to limit heavy-duty vehicle idle time to five minutes. The rule is voluntary but it is a good practice. **Exhibit 10-8** provides the rule.

The district should develop and implement a formal no idle policy. The policy should state the duration a school bus can idle and under what circumstances exceptions to the policy would occur. Drivers should be trained on the policy

requirements. Transportation supervisors should routinely observe buses both in the bus parking area and during normal operations to ensure compliance. An estimate of fuel savings is not practical but the district should see some fuel savings if the policy is implemented.

For background information on Transportation, see p. 254 in the General Information section of the appendices.

**EXHIBIT 10-8
TEXAS COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
RULE ON IDLE TIME**

AREA(S) AFFECTED	Statewide
START DATE	December 9, 2004
END DATE	None
APPLICABILITY PERIOD	April 1 through October 31
SOURCE TYPE	On-road mobile source
EMISSIONS TARGETED	Nitrogen oxides (NOx)
RULE/CITATION	30 TAC 114, Subchapter J, Division 2 http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/AC/help/policies/linking_policy.html .
DESCRIPTION	This rule, which was first established in December 2004, places idling limits on gasoline and diesel-powered engines in motor vehicles in any locality that signs a Memorandum of Agreement with the TCEQ. This rule prohibits any person in the affected locality from permitting the primary propulsion engine of a heavy-duty motor vehicle to idle for more than five consecutive minutes when the vehicle is not in motion unless the driver is using the engine to heat or cool his sleeper berth while taking a federally mandated rest break. This rule is effective from April 1 through October 31. The aim of this program is to lower oxides of nitrogen (NOx) and other emissions from fuel combustion.

SOURCE: Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/AC/help/policies/linking_policy.html.

FISCAL IMPACT

RECOMMENDATIONS	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) SAVINGS	ONE TIME (COSTS) SAVINGS
CHAPTER 10: TRANSPORTATION							
63. Plan, organize and implement a procedure that creates opportunities for field observation with campus staff, community volunteers, and Transportation Department staff to ensure safety concerns become action items.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$200)
64. Analyze the transportation operation and develop new bus routes that increase the number of riders per bus, eliminate 12 bus routes, and purchase a computerized routing and scheduling software system.	\$175,350	\$175,350	\$175,350	\$175,350	\$175,350	\$876,750	(\$4,995)
65. Develop a staffing formula to ensure the department is staffed appropriately and annually evaluate the department's needs, adjusting staffing levels as needed.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
66. Change the guarantee time process for all employees to eliminate pay for hours not worked when the total worked hours exceed the minimum.	\$75,307	\$75,307	\$75,307	\$75,307	\$75,307	\$376,535	\$0
67. Develop an evaluation process regarding hazardous transportation criteria to determine student eligibility for transportation of the assigned campus.	\$2,059	\$2,059	\$2,059	\$2,059	\$2,059	\$10,295	\$0
68. Purchase software to track all fleet maintenance.	\$0	(\$595)	(\$595)	(\$595)	(\$595)	(\$2,380)	(\$3,000)
69. Develop a comprehensive preventive maintenance program that ensures the safety of all buses on a continuous basis.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
70. Develop and implement a formal no idle policy.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
TOTALS-CHAPTER 10	\$252,716	\$252,121	\$252,121	\$252,121	\$252,121	\$1,261,200	(\$8,195)

CHAPTER 11

COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

EDCOUCH-ELSA INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

CHAPTER 11. COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

Edcouch-Elsa Independent School District's (EEISD) technology services have greatly expanded since 2003–04. The Technology Center is staffed by two technology strategists, four certified technicians, a technology assistant, and a technology secretary. The strategists, both former classroom teachers, have divided their responsibilities so that one strategist takes major responsibility for instructional and administrative support and staff development, while the other maintains the networks and related infrastructure.

The district maximized its use of E-rate funding to provide connectivity to district campuses. E-rate is grant funding provided under the Telecommunications Act of 1996 and administered by the Federal Communications Commission to assure that schools and libraries have access to advanced telecommunications infrastructure. The four in-town campuses use an unlimited bandwidth fiber Wide Area Network (WAN), while the more remote campuses use T1 lines, an older dedicated telephone type of connection. The district plans to lease unlimited fiber optic lines for those campuses this year. All campuses have wireless connections. Technology Center staff members meet briefly every morning to organize efficient response to work orders. The helpdesk is online and the system monitors response times. The Technology Center provides a central computer lab where most staff development takes place. It is also made available to parents, community groups, and businesses.

FINDINGS

- EEISD technology staffing is not organized to provide effective coordination of technology use, support and integration into the curriculum.
- EEISD's Technology Planning Committee lacks a sufficiently diverse membership to ensure a high level of expertise and support in developing, executing, and evaluating the technology plan.
- EEISD is not funding the purchase of instructional computers at a level that will meet its replacement schedule goal, nor has it provided dedicated computer stations for its teachers.
- EEISD has not developed the specific competencies and sequential training units that will enable its teachers to integrate technology to the level of expectation

set in district goals and defined by State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) technology standards for all educators.

- EEISD lacks systematic administrative and teacher accountability for technology.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Recommendation 71: Reorganize technology staffing to provide effective coordination of technology use districtwide.** The director should be part of the leadership team under the direct supervision of the superintendent. The district should develop a job description for the director position that clearly details districtwide responsibility for planning and implementing technology throughout the instructional and administrative programs of the district. The district should eliminate one technical services strategist since those duties will become a component of the director's position and should offer extra-duty stipends to the master technology teachers and librarians should coordinate all technology applications with the master technology teacher assigned to each campus. Extra-duty job descriptions and stipends should be established for the master technology teachers, with one being selected for each campus. Three campuses should add a master technology teacher and campus librarian's technology efforts should be coordinated by the Technology director.
- **Recommendation 72: Add additional stakeholders to the technology planning committee, meet at least four times a year, and involve the board in advancing districtwide technology.** The district should broaden the membership of the Technology Committee to include representation from the instructional staff (members of the campus technology committees), librarians, master technology teachers, business leaders, and the community to obtain input and support for the district EEISD Technology Plan. The Technology Committee should meet at least four times a year, and involve the board in advancing districtwide technology. The addition of stakeholders to the planning committee should add valuable support, guidance, and expertise for the district's technology efforts. EEISD

technology committee membership should be familiar with the plan and will communicate the plan to the campuses and finally to the community. A report of the committee's goals and accomplishments should be made to the board at least once a year. The board in turn should become supportive of the committee's work, and include a measurable strategy for its own technology use in the district plan.

- **Recommendation 73: Fully fund a replacement schedule for instructional computers and purchase dedicated computer stations for classroom teachers.**

The district should develop a detailed long-range replacement plan based on the state plan and answering the question, "What amounts and types of equipment do our students and teachers need to have by 2008 in order to master the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and successfully integrate technology in all aspects of the curriculum?" and planning backward by year. The resulting list, with accompanying budget, should be included in the District Technology Plan and the board should fully fund this priority as it plans annual budgets. The district should consider purchasing more mobile laptop carts in order to increase equity of access and flexibility for curriculum integration, and to take advantage of the wireless infrastructure already in place. As suggested by the *National Educational Technology Plan (NETP)*, the district should consider utilizing a lease or lease/purchase plan with a three to five year refresh cycle. Additionally, a replacement schedule and upgrades for campus libraries should be specifically included in the district plan. The district should also keep in mind, and plan for, the state recommendation in the Long-Range Technology Plan of one computer per student by 2010.

- **Recommendation 74: Develop a detailed and sequential long-range staff development plan using the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) Standards for New Teachers.** The plan should identify competencies and organize them by level, such as Early Tech, Developing Tech, Advanced Tech, and Target Tech. The master technology teachers should be an excellent resource for this project, as their recent certification criteria followed state standards. The district should develop or purchase training manuals for each competency and publish a training schedule. Teachers should be matched to the appropriate level. Each teacher's training progress should be monitored

via an individual checklist of competencies that the teacher has received training in, or has been assessed as competent in each category.

- **Recommendation 75: Require teachers to produce documentation for the mandated 16 hours annual technology training in order to be scored "proficient" in the Professional Development domain.** The district should hold administrators and teachers accountable, by revising job descriptions and aligning the evaluation process, for attending required training, and demonstrating knowledge and skills related to the SBEC technology standards for all educators. For technology to be successfully and systematically integrated in the curriculum, expectations must be uniformly applied across the district. The board should annually include a measurable technology goal for the superintendent, to be evaluated through the appraisal process, based on the needs assessed by the technology committee. The district technology plan should include an objective to develop technology competencies for administrators using State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) standards for all educators. The standards should be incorporated into revised job descriptions and evaluation documents for each administrative position. The standard currently applied to teachers for 16 annual hours of training should be included for administrators. Principals and other administrators should annually complete the Levels of Technology Integration (LOTI) profile, and the results should be part of the documentation in each administrator's evaluation process, along with documentation of training. The superintendent (or the administrator's immediate supervisor) should incorporate at least one measurable technology related goal into the annual evaluation for each administrator based on the administrator's current level. An intervention, or improvement, plan should be written and monitored for any administrator failing to meet expectations.

DETAILED FINDINGS

TECHNOLOGY STAFFING AND ORGANIZATION (REC. 71)

EEISD technology staffing is not organized to provide effective coordination of technology use, support and integration into the curriculum. The district organization chart lists a Technology director reporting to the assistant superintendent for Curriculum, but this position has never

been filled. One of the two Technology strategists attends the administrative staff meetings held by the superintendent and participated in meetings to develop the District Improvement Plan (DIP) for the first time in the spring of 2005. There is no administrator whose primary responsibility is for instructional or informational technology.

Staff members responsible for technology are located at the Technology Center away from the central administration building. The staff is headed by two Technology strategists who report to the assistant superintendent for Curriculum. These positions do not appear on the district organization chart, yet they are charged with devising the technology plan, managing infrastructure, network installation, maintenance, providing districtwide technology staff development, supervising technicians, setting standards for the district's hardware purchases, approving related purchase orders, administering the E-rate budget, troubleshooting and campus support.

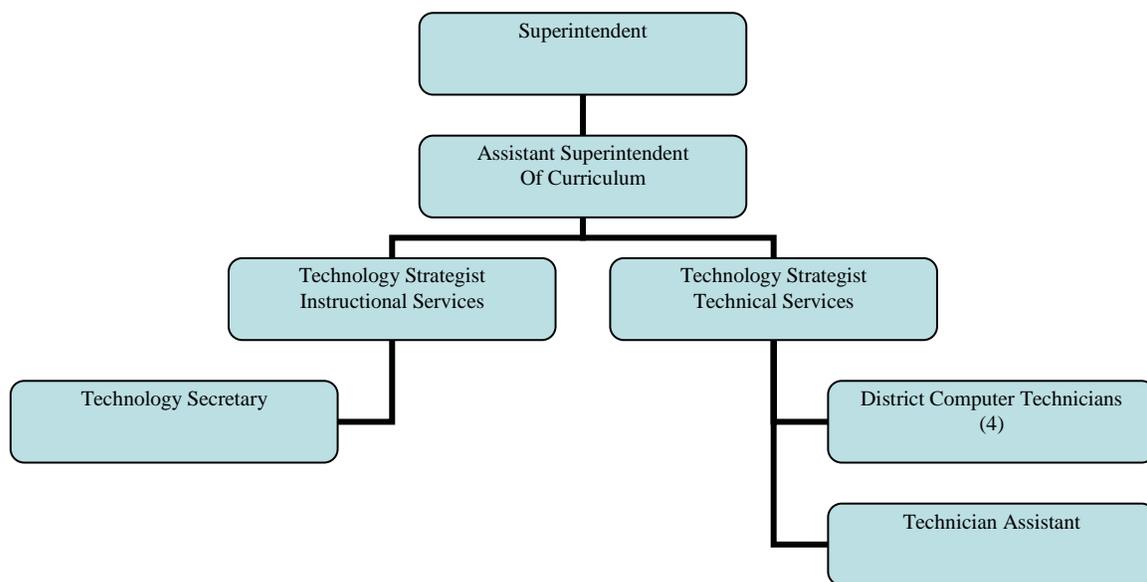
Technology use is not coordinated across the district. For example, the strategists do not decide who may have access to district administrative computer functions; rather, the PEIMS coordinator (located in the Business Office) and the Business manager have responsibility for deciding access privileges for district programs provided through contract with the Regional Education Service Center I (RSCCC Microcomputer Services). The Student Services portion of

the contract includes programs for registration, attendance accounting, grade reporting, scheduling, and discipline management. According to the Technology strategists, levels of privilege are not tied to PEIMS training. The business services portion of the contract includes programs for payroll, personnel, fixed assets, budget and PEIMS frozen file maintenance. During the review team visit, the district had not purchased the campus/sites function of the program, so principals and directors did not have look-up privileges for their own budgets. Instead, they requested a written copy of encumbrance and expenditure reports from the Business Office.

Exhibit 11-1 shows the current organization of the department.

Under the current structure, technology coordination is also lacking in two other areas; master technology teachers and librarians. As part of the district Technology Plan, the district has encouraged teachers to become certified under the state's Master Technology Teacher Program. The district pays for tuition and books for teachers to become certified. By November 2005, eight teachers had taken advantage of the opportunity. The eight teachers are located at five campuses: the Early Childhood campus, JFK Elementary, LBJ Elementary, Rodriguez Elementary, and Truan Junior High School. Edcouch-Elsa High School, Sixth Grade campus, and Garcia Elementary do not have a master technology

**EXHIBIT 11-1
EEISD TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT**



SOURCE: EEISD Technology Department, November 2005.

teacher. The master technology teachers are expected to meet during 2005–06 according to the Technology Plan, “to develop strategies to meet all performance descriptions for students in the TEKS.” Additionally, these master technology teachers provide “just in time” response to teacher needs at the campuses where they are located. While these master technology teachers provide a valuable service their campuses, the master technology teachers are not under the supervision of the technology strategists, do not have an extra-duty job description, and are not paid a stipend for the services they perform on the campus in addition to their own classroom responsibilities.

EEISD librarians coordinate their technology efforts under the direction of the Student Services Director, rather than the technology strategists. The technology plan does not address the need to develop campus libraries as multimedia centers to support 21st Century research and production. As teachers learn to integrate technology, libraries become the campus hub for resources and the technological skills of the librarians become critical.

Staffing is not organized to promote the integration of technology into the curriculum, thus classroom technology integration is uneven. Since three campuses do not have a master technology teacher, the strategists and technicians must respond to onsite work orders or helpdesk questions that the campus master technology teacher would address ordinarily. The campuses with a master technology teacher are at an advantage by having a highly qualified teacher who can assist in planning instructional technology integration in the curriculum.

EEISD has not delegated or hired an individual with authority or responsibility for technology issues in the district, thus a lack of a coordinated effort. Local, state, and federal budgets are not coordinated to address priority goals. For example, development offered to fulfill the stated goal that each teacher will have 16 hours of training per year has no accountability for attendance. Written expectations for teacher competencies in technology have not been agreed upon or adopted at the district level. There are no established standards for software review, and no coordinated process for software selection.

Due to a lack of coordinated technology leadership, there is no current plan for assisting the board to develop a paperless environment, a move which would send a powerful message to the community and staff regarding the use and integration of technology. The district is missing some opportunities to

increase efficiency by not using available technology, such as online purchase orders, involving campuses in monitoring and managing campus budgets, use of tracking software for the Maintenance Department work orders, and textbook accounting.

In the *2004 Update to the Texas Long-Range Plan for Technology*, Texas Education Commissioner Shirley Neeley said:

Without leadership and capacity building at the campus and district level, educational reforms, including those facilitated by technology, seldom survive. Leaders need support to make ideas become programs, policies become practice, and vision become a reality. It is not enough merely to install technology infrastructure—to connect schools to the Internet or to teach students to use software for gathering information. The successful integration of technology into Texas schools, as outlined in the Texas Long-Range Plan for Technology, 1996–2010, hinges on administrators knowing what their schools need and doing what must be done to fulfill those needs. As a result, successful integration of technology depends on the effective support of those administrators’ efforts.

Yet another example on the role technology plays in districts is noted in the *TEA 2002 Update to the Texas Long-Range Plan for Technology*:

Research shows that the critical element for creating and sustaining change is the role of leadership. The effective administrator is the technology leader who creates a shared vision for the appropriate integration of technology. Leadership in technology is critical for sustaining a technology program. Leadership is also necessary to ensure that data is used for sound decision making. An effective administrator provides leadership for continual assessment of effective technology for instruction and for improving student learning.

The district’s technology assessment indicates a goal to be at an Advanced Tech level, requiring the district to have a fulltime Technology Coordinator. **Exhibit 11-2** shows the four levels of criteria used in the Texas STaR Chart. The Texas STaR Chart is a diagnostic and reporting tool the Texas Education Agency (TEA) developed for campuses to report and measure their technology implementation. As indicated in the table, the criteria call for a fulltime Technology Coordinator/Assistant Superintendent at the Developing Tech level.

**EXHIBIT 11-2
TEA STAR CHART CRITERIA**

KEY AREA	ADMINISTRATION AND SUPPORT SERVICES	
	COLUMN(N) TECHNICAL SUPPORT	COLUMN(O) INSTRUCTIONAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE STAFFING
Early Tech	No technical support on-site; technical support call-in; response time greater than 24 hours	No fulltime dedicated district level Technology Coordinator Campus educator serving as local technical support
Developing Tech	At least one technical staff to 750 computers Centrally deployed technical support call-in; response time less than 24 hours	Fulltime Technology Coordinator/Assistant Superintendent for Technology Centrally located instructional technology staff; one for every 5,000 students Additional staff as needed, such as trainer, webmaster, or network administrator
Advanced Tech	At least one technical staff to 500 computers Central technology support use remote management software tools Centrally deployed and minimal campus-based technical support on-site; response time is less than 8 hours	Fulltime district level Technology Coordinator/Assistant Superintendent for Technology Centrally located instructional technology staff; one for every 1,000 students Additional staff as needed
Target Tech	At least one technical staff to 350 computers; centrally deployed and dedicated campus-based Central technology support use remote management software tools Technical support on-site; response time is less than 4 hours	Fulltime district level Technology Coordinator/Assistant Superintendent for Technology Dedicated campus-based instructional technology support staff -one per campus plus one for every 1,000 students Additional staff as needed

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency 2004 STaR Chart.

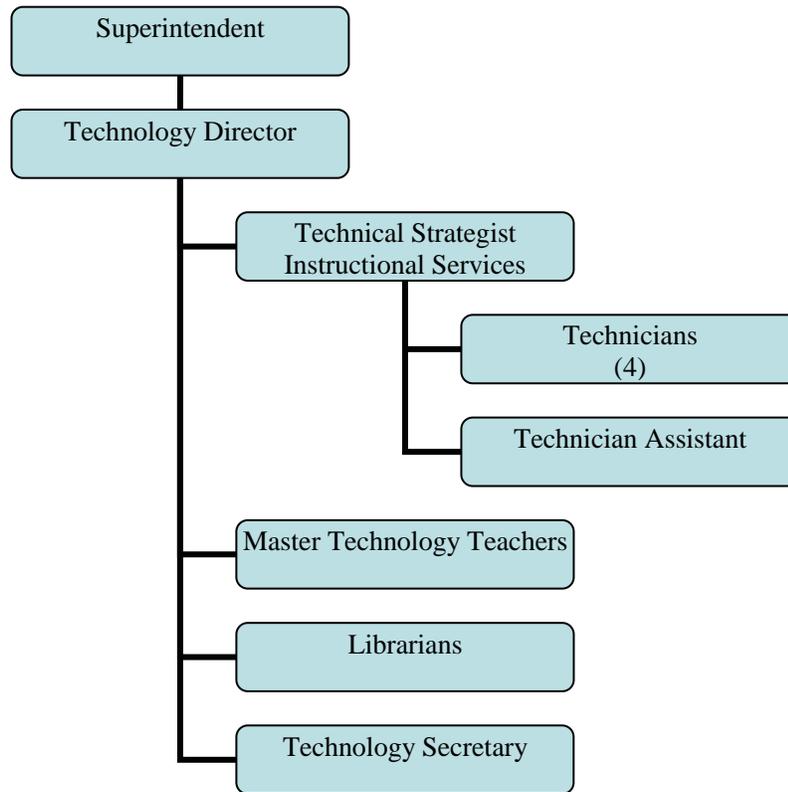
EEISD should reorganize technology staffing to provide effective coordination of technology use districtwide. The director should be part of the leadership team under the direct supervision of the superintendent. The district should develop a job description for the director position that clearly details districtwide responsibility for planning and implementing technology throughout the instructional and administrative programs of the district. The district should eliminate one technical services strategist since those duties will become a component of the director's position and should offer extra-duty stipends to the master technology teachers and librarians should coordinate all technology applications with the master technology teacher assigned to each campus. Extra-duty job descriptions and stipends should be established for the master technology teachers, with one being selected for each campus. Three campuses should add a master technology teacher and campus librarian's technology efforts should be coordinated by the

Technology director. **Exhibit 11-3** shows the recommended organization chart.

The skills of the master technology teachers should be accessible on each campus and they should meet regularly with the Technology director. A job description should be developed, extra-duty stipends provided and positions should be posted and applicants interviewed. Principals should recommend the master technology teacher to serve the campus. Librarians, in order to become effective multimedia facilitators, should be coordinated under the auspices of the Technology director, rather than the Student Services Director.

The district should eliminate the position of technology strategist Technical Services. The salary for this position is estimated at \$59,956 plus benefits of 3.80 percent or \$2,278 and \$3,600 for medical insurance for a total of \$65,834. The district should also offer extra-duty stipends to the master technology teachers and librarians should coordinate all

**EXHIBIT 11-3
RECOMMENDED DEPARTMENT OF TECHNOLOGY**



SOURCE: Texas Public School Consulting, Inc., December 2005.

technology applications with the master technology teacher assigned to each campus. The fiscal impact of filling the position of Technology director has been addressed in the District Leadership, Organization and Management chapter. Eight master technology teacher extra duty stipends of \$4,000 will cost the district \$33,216. The stipends are subject to the district average benefit rate of 3.8 percent. $(\$32,000 \times .038 = \$1,216)$ for a total of \$33,216 $(\$32,000 + \$1,216 = \$33,216)$. The net savings for implementing this recommendation is \$32,618 or $(\$65,834 \text{ technology strategist} - \text{a cost of } \$33,216 \text{ master teacher stipends} = \text{a net total of } \$32,618 \text{ annual savings})$.

LONG-RANGE TECHNOLOGY PLANNING (REC. 72)

EEISD’s Technology Planning Committee lacks a sufficiently diverse membership to ensure a high level of expertise and support in developing, executing, and evaluating the technology plan. The EEISD technology plan was approved by TEA on April 23, 2004 for a period of three years, with an expiration date of June 30, 2007. The district’s plan was updated, as required by TEA, on June 22, 2005, and meets both the Texas and Federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB)

requirements. Goals and objectives in the plan are based on recommendations defined by the Texas Long-Range Plan for Technology. These goals and objectives include: teaching, learning, educator preparation and development, administration and support services and infrastructure for technology.

Goal 4, Strategy 4.1.1 of the EEISD Technology Plan states that “EEISD will maintain a district technology committee composed of a minimum of: two students, eight instructional staff members, six administrators, two community members, two parents (non-employees), one librarian.”

As Exhibit 11-4 shows, the actual committee consists of two district technology strategists, eight principals, six central office administrators, and four teachers. The committee does not include students, parents, a librarian, or community members. It only has half of the instructional staff called for, and is top heavy with administrators. One of the technology strategists stated that it is difficult to recruit community members. According to the plan, the committee is scheduled to meet four times a year, but as of December 2005, has not met in 2005–06.

**EXHIBIT 11-4
EEISD TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE**

MEMBERS	REQUIRED	ACTUAL
Technology strategists	0	2
Students	2	0
Instructional staff	8	4
Administrators	6	14*
Community members	2	0
Parents	2	0
Librarian	1	0

*Eight principals and six central office administrators.
SOURCE: EEISD Technology Plan for E-Rate Year 8.

Because the EEISD committee does not include enough representation from stakeholder groups such as business leaders, parents, and teachers, the plan lacks knowledgeable, high profile support. Several board members, for example, remembered adopting the technology plan, but did not recall any specifics within the plan. The district is missing an opportunity to gain needed support and expertise for meeting the goals and objectives of the technology plan. It is also failing to assure that all critical technology functions are included in the plan. For example, since the committee did not include librarians, the plan does not include a strategy for addressing the needs of district libraries, which are critical to integrating technology into instruction and supporting classroom technology use. Four campuses did not have instructional staff representation in the development of the plan, which risks the effect of lesser knowledge about, and commitment to, the technology plan on those campuses.

Exhibit 11-5 shows the TEA criteria for composing the planning team in its E-Plan Assistance Guide. As shown, the TEA defines an effective technology plan based on the shared vision of educators, parents, and community members, who have technological experience and understand the benefits of integrating technology into the curriculum.

TEA pays particular attention to the role that librarians play in the development of an effective long range technology plan, as detailed in the 2004 Update to the Technology Plan:

Texas public school libraries can build the capacity of Texas school library programs to support learning, especially in the core curriculum areas and enable students to achieve their potential and fully participate now and in the future in the social, economic, and educational opportunities of our state, nation and world. The role of school librarians or library media specialists has evolved from “keepers of the books” to that of “information providers.” Library media specialists play an integral part as they collaborate with teachers and students to demonstrate the ways in which research and technology skills support student success in an exemplary school library program. For students to be information literate they must be engaged in extended, inquiry-based research. School libraries provide students and teachers the opportunity to develop information literacy and digital technology literacy (Technology Applications). School librarians have been valuable

**EXHIBIT 11-5
TEA'S E-PLAN ASSISTANCE GUIDE**

CRITERIA FOR PLANNING TEAM

Technology has become a vital component of the educational process and is giving educators new tools to transform learning and teaching. To ensure effective use of technology and compliance with federal and state requirements, a coordinated plan must be developed that defines a common vision for the role of technology in instructional programs and operations.

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STEP 1: PLANNING TEAM ORGANIZATION

1. The Superintendent will establish a District-wide Educational Technology Planning Team composed of representatives from all stakeholders (administrators, teachers, librarians, parents, community leaders, business representatives, and other educational partners) for the purpose of developing/revising a long-range plan for technology for the district. This plan should be integrated with the District/Campus Improvement Plan and support the District's Mission, Beliefs, and Objectives.
2. The Superintendent will send an “Invitation to Participate” letter to the planning team candidates.
3. All principals will send a letter to the faculty and staff of his/her campus to inform them that a planning team has been established and encourage them to cooperate with the team when they request information.

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency E-Plan Assistance Guide.

resources in using the information and technology literacy knowledge and skills gained in the library to strengthen student achievement in English language arts & reading, mathematics, social studies, and science. The role of the library media specialist has expanded to include utilization of the following resources: library books, reference resources, access to databases, Internet connectivity for computers, multimedia, and information in all formats, electronic as well as print.

EEISD should add additional stakeholders to the technology planning committee, meet at least four times a year, and involve the board in advancing districtwide technology. The district should also broaden the membership of the Technology Committee to include representation from the instructional staff (members of the campus technology committees), librarians, master technology teachers, business leaders, and the community to obtain input and support for the district EEISD Technology Plan. The Technology Committee should meet at least four times a year, and involve the board in advancing districtwide technology. The addition of stakeholders to the planning committee should add valuable support, guidance, and expertise for the district’s technology efforts. EEISD technology committee membership should be familiar with the plan and will communicate the plan to the campuses and finally to the community. A report of the committee’s goals and accomplishments should be made to the board at least once a year. The board in turn should become supportive of the committee’s work, and include a measurable strategy for its own technology use in the district plan.

REPLACEMENT SCHEDULE (REC. 73)

EEISD is not funding the purchase of instructional computers at a level that will meet its four year replacement schedule goal, nor has it provided dedicated computer stations for its teachers. The last major instructional computer purchase was in 2000. **Exhibit 11-6** shows the number of instructional computers by the year of purchase.

As shown in **Exhibit 11-6**, the district purchased 920 instructional computers in 2000 or earlier, while it purchased 565 in the five years since 2000. Using student enrollment of 5,472, with a total of 1,485 computers, EEISD has 3.68 students per computer. Of the district’s instructional computers, 62 percent, are more than five years old.

According to district technicians, the old computers are being kept in use by adding new hard drives and “doing

**EXHIBIT 11-6
INSTRUCTIONAL COMPUTERS BY YEAR OF PURCHASE**

YEAR PURCHASED	INSTRUCTIONAL COMPUTERS	PURCHASED SINCE 2001
2000 and Earlier	920	
2001	28	28
2002	203	203
2003	104	104
2004	94	94
2005	136	136
TOTAL	1485	565

SOURCE: EEISD Technology Department, Instructional Computer Inventory.

whatever it takes to keep them going.” In a survey conducted by the review team, 38 percent of the students surveyed disagreed or strongly disagreed that “students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.” Twenty-seven percent of the students surveyed said that the computers are not new enough to be useful for student instruction, as did 30 percent of the teachers.

Objective 3.3 of the TEA approved district technology plan for 2005–06 states “Replace obsolete classroom computers on a scheduled basis.” The budget for this objective is \$273,126.

The first year that there was a designated replacement budget line item is 2005–06. The replacements being purchased are for a 25-station lab at each of the eight campuses, a total of 200 computers. Additional computers may be purchased by individual campuses using the state allotment, as is district practice. The new computer labs, using New Century software, are fully scheduled for what the district calls “bubble students.” These are students whose TAKS test scores, or district benchmark test scores, indicate that they are in need of accelerated instruction in order to master the TEKS. Therefore, not all students use the labs. For the most part, the older computers are in the classroom where all students work to master technology TEKS and to integrate the technology into the learning. Most classrooms have three to four computers.

Teachers do not have a dedicated workstation in the classroom. The district technology plan states that the computer/teacher ratio is 1:1; however, interviews with strategists and principals confirmed that teachers share the classroom computers with students. When teachers do not have a dedicated workstation, opportunities to integrate technology are diminished.

Ensuring that technology is a viable instructional tool requires schools to have sufficient numbers of up-to-date computers so that each student can have needed access and teachers can effectively integrate technology into the curriculum. TEA created a Long Range Plan for Technology for 1996-2010 and publishes a report every two years which details how Texas schools are progressing. The report includes a self-reporting system called the Texas STaR Chart. In its TEA-approved three year technology plan, the district stated: “We are confident that by continuing to work on our goals, objectives, and strategies, we will reach Advanced Tech ranking within the timeframe of this three year plan.” The Advanced Tech criteria contained in the STaR Chart calls for four or less students per Internet connected computer with a four year replacement cycle.

Statewide and EEISD report totals for computers are shown in **Exhibit 11-7**. The exhibit shows that none of the EEISD campuses are at Advanced Tech, while statewide, 2,810 campuses are at Advanced or Target Tech. Three EEISD campuses report their status as Early Tech; five campuses report as Developing Tech.

At the current level of replacement, the district cannot meet its goal to achieve STaR Chart Advanced Tech status by 2008, providing one computer for every four students, with a four-year replacement schedule. The lack of enough up-to-

date computers may deprive students of a vital learning tool. If all students do not have access to the campus computer labs, teachers must address the TEKS in the classroom. It is a great challenge to address the TEKS in a classroom with three or four outdated computers, as well as to use them to integrate technology effectively into the curriculum on a seamless basis. When teachers have to share computers with students, rather than having a dedicated workstation, their ability to plan for integration is limited, as well as their ability to use management functions such as online submission of lesson plans and tracking student performance data.

The Texas Long Range Plan for Technology, 1996–2010, set goals for the number of computers for each student and teacher in Texas classrooms, and states that by 2010, the ratio should be 1:1. The plan also recommends that every classroom teacher have a workstation. The plan states that school districts benefit the most by implementing and maintaining the suggested ratio of workstations to students and educators and determining how best to deploy the workstations to assure universal accessibility.

EEISD should fully fund a replacement schedule for instructional computers and purchase dedicated computer stations for classroom teachers. The district should utilize the broad-based Technology Committee to develop a detailed long range replacement plan based on the state plan and

**EXHIBIT 11-7
INFRASTRUCTURE FOR TECHNOLOGY
TEA CAMPUS STaR CHART DATA FOR STUDENTS PER COMPUTER**

	TEXAS CAMPUSES	EEISD CAMPUSES
I. EARLY TECH		
Ten or more students per Internet-connected multimedia computer. Replacement cycle is 6 or more years.	1,176	3 Early Childhood Junior High Sixth Grade
II. DEVELOPING TECH		
Between 5 and 9 students per Internet-connected Multi-media computer. Replacement cycle is every 5 years.	3,200	5 LBJ Elem. Rodriguez Elem. Garcia Elem. JFK Elem. High School
III. ADVANCED TECH		
Four or less students per Internet-connected Multi-media computer. Replacement cycle is every 4 years.	2,310	0
IV. TARGET TECH		
In addition to four or less students per Internet connected Multi-media computer, on-demand access for every student. Replacement cycle is 3 years or less.	500	0

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency 2003-04 STaR Chart.

answering the question, “What amounts and types of equipment do our students and teachers need to have by 2008 in order to master the TEKS and successfully integrate technology in all aspects of the curriculum?” and plan backward by year. The resulting list with accompanying budget should be included in the District Technology Plan and the board should fully fund this priority as it plans annual budgets.

The district should consider using a lease or lease/purchase plan with a three- to five-year refresh cycle. Additionally, a replacement schedule and upgrades for campus libraries should be specifically included in the district plan. The district should also consider and plan for the state recommendation in the Texas Long Range Technology Plan of one computer per student by 2010.

To achieve the 2004 Advanced Technology goal of a 4:1 ratio with a four-year replacement cycle by 2008 the district needs 1,368 computers. EEISD purchased 136 computers through October 2005 thus this number is decreased to 1,232 or (1,368 – 136 computers purchased). EEISD needs to purchase 1,232 computers or approximately 411 computers each year in 2007-08, 2008-09, and 2009-10. This will require an annual investment of \$345,240 calculated on an average \$840 per computer, as per 2005 EEISD state bid list purchases (411 x \$840 = \$345,240). Based on the 2005–06 replacement budget of \$273,126, the district will need to budget an additional \$72,114 per year (\$345,240 - \$273,126 = \$72,114) as this fiscal impact assumes the district will continue to allocate \$273,126 per year to the computer replacement budget. In addition, EEISD has 329 teachers who need dedicated workstations. The cost, approximately \$276,360, based on \$840 per computer, spread over a three year period, will add \$92,120 to the annual budget (329 x \$840 = \$276,360 ÷ 3 = \$92,120). The total fiscal impact is \$164,234 per year for 2007, 2008, and 2009 (\$72,114 + \$92,120 = \$164,234).

EDUCATOR PREPARATION AND DEVELOPMENT (REC 74)

EEISD has not developed the specific competencies and sequential training units that will enable its teachers to integrate technology to the level of expectation set in district goals and defined by SBEC technology standards for all educators. The EEISD Technology Plan states “We are confident that by continuing to work on our goals, objectives and strategies, we will reach Advanced Tech within the time frame of this three year plan (2004–07).” The Advanced

Tech criteria requires that 60 percent of teachers meet SBEC standards.

The 2004 STaR Chart responses displayed in **Exhibit 11-8** show all EEISD campuses reporting themselves as Developing Tech in the key area of Educator Preparation and Development.

Although the Technology staff uses SBEC standards as a framework for planning its staff development, EEISD has not yet articulated the SBEC standards as teacher competencies. The EEISD staff development goal, objectives, and strategies relative to curriculum integration as contained in the district’s Technology Plan states:

Goal 2: Provide district personnel with the preparation and professional development needed to demonstrate proficiency in using technologies effectively.

- Objective 2.1 EEISD will provide technology staff development for 100% of their staff.
 - Strategy 2.1.1 All teachers will complete 16 hours of technology staff development aligned with SBEC standards.
 - Strategy 2.1.3 Provide just in time professional development opportunities for all educators.
- Objective 2.2 EEISD will assess all teachers’ proficiencies on SBEC technology standards on a bi-annual basis.

The district has allocated sufficient staff development funds to meet Advanced Tech criteria. According to the budget in the district Technology Plan, EEISD dedicated \$399,033 of the \$1,473,932 technology budget to Educator Preparation and Development. The total amount equals 27 percent of the technology budget, which meets the StaR chart standard for Advanced Tech.

In addition to responding to the STaR Chart survey, EEISD educators responded to a survey contracted by the Technology Center staff and conducted by Learning Quest in March 2004. The LoTi questionnaire generated a profile for each campus and a district summary, as contained in **Exhibit 11-9**. According to the contractor’s summary, “This profile focused on the use of technology as an ‘interactive learning medium’ since this particular component has the greatest and lasting impact on classroom pedagogy and is the most difficult to implement and assess.”

**EXHIBIT 11-8
EDUCATOR PREPARATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

STAR CHART 2003-04 EDUCATOR PREPARATION AND DEVELOPMENT	
LEVEL OF PROGRESS	NUMBER (PERCENTAGE)
1. EARLY TECH	284 TEXAS CAMPUSES (4%) 0 EEISD CAMPUSES
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology skills include multimedia and the Internet. • 10% of educators meet SBEC standards. • Administrators recognize benefits of technology in instruction. • There is minimal personal use. • 5% or less of technology budget allocated for professional development.
2. DEVELOPING TECH	4016 TEXAS CAMPUSES (55.9%) 8 EEISD CAMPUSES
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of technology is for administrative tasks and classroom management. • There is use of online resources. • 40% of educators meet SBEC standards. • Administrators expect teachers to use technology. • 6-24% of technology budget allocated for professional development.
3. ADVANCED TECH	2773 TEXAS CAMPUSES (38.6%) 0 EEISD CAMPUSES
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is integration of technology into teaching and learning. • There is use of online resources regularly. • 60% of educators meet SBEC standards. • Administrators recognize and identify exemplary use of technology. • 25-29% of technology budget allocated for professional development.
4. TARGET TECH	113 TEXAS CAMPUSES (1.6%) 0 EEISD CAMPUSES
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are regular technology-supported learner-centered projects. • There is vertical alignment of Technology Applications TEKS and anytime, anywhere use of online resources. • Administrators ensure integration of appropriate technology. • 100% of educators meet SBEC standards. • 30% or more of budget allocated for professional development.

SOURCE: EEISD and Texas Education Agency 2004 StaR Chart.

The results of the LoTi survey show 45 percent of the teaching staff at Level 0 or 1; 71 percent reported at Level 0, 1, or 2. Skills at Level 2 on the LoTi Profile are closely equivalent to the Adaptation Stage of SBEC Standard II and approximate STaR Chart Early Tech and Developing Tech criteria.

EEISD has a technology staff development plan divided into phases by year, beginning with 2004-05:

Phase I (2004-05)

- PC, and/or Macintosh basics training (hardware, software, desktop organization);
- Productivity Tools (word processing, database, spreadsheets, electronic portfolio/lesson plans and grade books);
- Internet—the classroom connect Part I (telecommunications projects, WWW, e-mail, etc.);

- Integrating Technology across the Curriculum Part I (strategies, classroom design, lesson design) Web Design-Front Page 2000;
- Administrative Productivity Part I (telecommunications, e-mail, data management);
- Curriculum Production Part I (creating and modifying learning materials with technology);
- Teaching and Learning (redefine role of teacher as a facilitator); and
- Videoconferencing Part I.

Phase II (2005-06)

- Content-Area Software, Part I (Reading, Writing, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies);
- Internet;
- Web Design;
- Integrating Multimedia Part I (hypermedia and multimedia applications);

**EXHIBIT 11-9
LOTI PROFILE**

LOTI FINDINGS	H.S.	JR. H.	6TH	JFK	LBJ	RCR	GARCIA	E. E.	DISTRICT
PERCENTAGE OF PARTICIPANTS AT LEVEL 0. There is no visible evidence of computer access or instructional use of computers in the classroom.	23	31	18	36	50	39	41	27	31
PERCENTAGE OF PARTICIPANTS AT LEVEL 1. Available computers are used primarily for teacher productivity (e.g., email, word processing, grading programs)	15	19	24	12	25	0	23	7	14
PERCENTAGE OF PARTICIPANTS AT LEVEL 2. Student technology projects (for example., designing web pages, internet research, creating multimedia presentations) focus on lower levels of student cognition.	20	25	6	27	19	39	32	40	26
PERCENTAGE OF PARTICIPANTS AT LEVEL 3. Tool-based applications (e.g., graphing, concept-mapping) are primarily used by students for analyzing data, making inferences, and drawing conclusions.	20	11	29	9	6	13	5	13	14
PERCENTAGE OF PARTICIPANTS AT LEVEL 4A. The use of outside resources and/or interventions aid the teacher in developing challenging learning experiences using available classroom computers.	15	11	24	12	0	10	0	13	12
PERCENTAGE OF PARTICIPANTS AT LEVEL 4B. (TARGET LEVEL). Teachers can readily design learning experiences with no outside assistance. Students empowered to identify and solve authentic problems using technology.	5	3	0	3	0	0	0	0	2
PERCENTAGE OF PARTICIPANTS AT LEVEL 5. Teachers actively elicit technology from outside entities to expand student experiences directed at problem-solving, issues resolution, and student action.	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
PERCENTAGE OF PARTICIPANTS AT LEVEL 6. Computers provide a seamless and almost transparent medium for information queries, problem-solving, and/or product development.	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Percentage of participants indicating they have access to computers for instructional purposes.	102	100	101	99	100	101	100	100	99

SOURCE: Levels of Technology Implementation (LoTi) Questionnaire, March 2004.

- Emerging Technologies (appropriate state-of-the-art technology);
- School Transformation Part I (redefine pedagogy);
- Integrating Technology Across the Curriculum Part II (strategies, classroom design, lesson design);
- Curriculum Production Part II (creation and modification of learning materials and technology); and
- Videoconferencing Part II (distance learning).

Phase III (2006–07)

- Internet-The Classroom Connect Part II (collaborative telecommunications projects);
- Web Design;
- Integrating Technology Across the Curriculum Part III (strategies, classroom design, lesson design);
- Curriculum Production Part III (creation and modification of learning materials with technology);
- Integrating multimedia Part II (hypermedia and multimedia applications);
- Emerging Technology Update (appropriate state-of-the-art technology); and
- Videoconferencing Part III (distance learning).

EEISD offers summer academies in which the above topics are addressed. During 2005–06 to date, the Technology Center offered multiple training sessions on the following topics:

- Content Area Software-Success Maker;
- Grade speed/Email;
- Pinnacle- Video Production;
- Lexia-Bilingual Program;
- Internet Resources “Best Websites for the Little Ones”;
- Building your own Classroom Website;
- Emerging Technologies; and
- Integrating Technology Across the Curriculum.

Training packets have been developed on the following topics:

- SuccessMaker;
- Pocket PC’s for Administrators;
- Classroom Applications for the Digital Camera;
- Front Page 2000 Website design;
- PowerPoint Guide for Teachers;
- Microsoft Producer;
- GradeSpeed;
- Digital Video Production;
- Internet History and Growth; and
- Excel, Word 2000, and Outlook 2000.

In-service sessions occur before the start of school, on designated Saturdays, and during the school day.

The technology strategist who conducts staff development stated that last year that if they used the StaR Charts and the LoTi Profiles to divide the teaching staff into three groups: beginners, intermediate, and advanced. He said that about 25 percent of the staff completed the mandatory 16 annual hours of training, and reported that 100 of 329 teachers attended the summer academies. Master technology teachers have not yet developed strategies for TEKS. Strategists report that about 90 percent of the staff development is planned, while 10 percent is a “just-in-time” response to needs.

EEISD training for technology integration, while offered, is not developed systematically enough to assure that “70 percent of all teachers will integrate technology into all areas of the instructional program to effectively impact student learning,” as stated in the District Improvement Plan; nor will the district reach its stated goal of Advanced Tech in Educator Preparation by 2007. Therefore the district lacks specific competencies and sequential training units to assist its instructional staff to integrate technology to the SBEC technology standards.

TEA incorporated SBEC technology standards for all educators into the levels of progress assessed by the Texas STaR Chart. The standards are as follows:

- Standard I. All teachers use technology related terms, concepts, data, input strategies, and ethical practices to make informed decisions about current technologies and their applications.

- Standard II. All teachers identify task requirements, apply search strategies, and use current technology to efficiently acquire, analyze, and evaluate a variety of electronic information.
- Standard 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.
- Standard IV. All teachers communicate information in different formats and for diverse audiences.
- Standard 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 TEKS into the curriculum.

The standards contain fully developed and detailed proficiencies at the SBEC website, in the *Standards for New Teachers and Technology Applications*.

In Fort Bend ISD, a district task force determined the proficiencies needed, organized them in a logical order and correlated them to the technology training already in place. All employees completed a checklist to determine their training needs. The checklist assisted the instructional technology specialists to individualize training efforts and to plan future training sessions. Any employee who demonstrated mastery of skills could test out of training sessions. The educators could choose the training that helped them to advance through the sequence of objectives in the four-year plan.

EEISD should develop a detailed and sequential long-range staff development plan using the developed State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) Standards for New Teachers. The plan should identify competencies and organize them by level, such as Early Tech, Developing Tech, Advanced Tech, and Target Tech. The master technology teachers should be an excellent resource for this project, as their recent certification criteria followed state standards. The district should develop or purchase training manuals for each competency and publish a training schedule. Teachers should be matched to the appropriate level. Each teacher's training progress should be monitored via an individual checklist of competencies that the teacher received training in, or has been assessed as competent in each category.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND TEACHER ACCOUNTABILITY (REC. 75)

EEISD lacks systematic administrative and teacher accountability for technology. Some of the district's DIP and Technology Plan's strategies are not being fully met. The DIP states in Goal 1, Performance Objective 1.7 that "Seventy percent of all teachers will integrate technology into all areas of the instructional program to effectively impact student learning." The Action/Initiative associated with the performance objective is to use master technology teachers to develop and implement a comprehensive training program to assist teachers in integrating technology within their discipline. The summative evaluation of the objective is the analysis of Technology Application (TA) TEKS Proficiency Test. As of November 2005, the comprehensive training program was not yet in place. When it is implemented, the TEKS Proficiency Test will provide a means of assessing the effectiveness of the training, in terms of teacher knowledge; it will not measure the "integration of technology into all areas of the instructional program to effectively impact student learning," as stated in the plan.

EEISD's board adopted Technology Plan states in "Goal 2, Strategy 2.1.1" that "All teachers will complete 16 hours of technology staff development aligned with SBEC standards." The technology strategist responsible for technology staff development states that 100 of the 329 members teaching staff have completed the required 16 hours of annual training. He said that no one actually requires attendance or monitors it, and there is no articulated link between technology staff development and the Professional Development and Appraisal System (PDAS).

There is no strategy in the district technology plan that requires staff development hours for administrators, and no stated expectation that administrators will meet SBEC standards as teachers are expected to do. There are only two references to technology in the EEISD principals' thirty item job description, neither of which requires a principal to promote or model the use of technology on the campus. The two included are:

- (11) develop, maintain, and use information systems and records necessary to show campus progress on performance objectives addressing each Academic Excellence Indicator; and
- (21) compile, maintain, and file all physical and computerized reports, records, and other documents required including accurate and timely reports of maximum attendance to requisition textbooks.

There is only one reference to technology in the principals' 38-item evaluation form:

- 3.4 Maintains and utilizes information systems and records necessary for bringing about school improvement (e.g. student achievement scores, attendance, program performance, staff performance, etc.)

The board has not stated a goal relative to technology for itself or for the superintendent. At least one principal is a none-user of technology, according to interviews.

The Advanced Tech and Target Tech criteria in the Vision and Planning section of the Texas Campus STaR Chart describe elements of accountability for teachers and administrators. Four EEISD campuses, as shown in **Exhibit 11-10**, reported that they are "Early Tech" in terms of Administration and Planning; four campuses report that they are "Developing Tech."

The district technology plan states that Advanced Tech is the goal by the end of 2007; however, EEISD is significantly behind most Texas districts in the accountability related areas defined and rated in the 2004 Texas STaR Chart. Only 13 percent of Texas campuses remain at the Early Tech level in the key area of Administration and Planning for technology; 50 percent of EEISD's campuses report themselves at that level and none of EEISD's campuses report themselves at

the Advanced or Target level, while 48 percent of Texas campuses do. This is a significant discrepancy. The lack of systematic accountability is limiting EEISD's progress in moving toward Advanced Tech in all areas.

The 2002 Update to the state technology plan states:

...a successful administrator assumes the role of technology leader. As technology leaders, our administrators must create a shared vision, and encourage and sustain the appropriate integration of technology. Effective administrators must also use modern information technology tools to embrace accountability and hence use data for sound decision-making and continual assessment of effective technology for improving student learning.

Administrators are held accountable through the evaluation process. The Commissioner Recommended Administrator Appraisal Process: Performance Domains and Descriptors (19 TAC 150.1021) lists accountability for technology in the very first domain, as follows:

- (a) The domains and descriptors used to evaluate each administrator in a school district may include the following:

**EXHIBIT 11-10
ADMINISTRATION AND SUPPORT
TEA CAMPUS STaR CHART DATA
VISION AND PLANNING**

LEVEL	NUMBER OF CAMPUSES	
	TEXAS	EEISD
I. EARLY TECH		
No campus technology plan; technology primarily used for administrative tasks such as grade book, word processing budgeting, attendance.	963	4
II. DEVELOPING TECH		
Campus technology plan aligned with state plan, Integrated into district, used for internal planning, budgeting applying for external funding and discounts. Teachers and administrators have a vision for technology use for direct instruction and some student use...	2,763	4
III. ADVANCED TECH		
Campus technology plan is approved by the board and supported by the superintendent. Campus plan collaboratively developed guiding policy and practice, regularly updated. Campus plan addresses Technology Applications TEKS and higher order teaching and learning.	2,536	0
IV. TARGET TECH		
Campus plan is actively supported by the board, collaboratively. Developed and updated annually. Campus plan is focused on student success, based on needs, research, proven teaching and learning principles. Administrators use technology tools for planning and decision making.	924	0

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, 2003-04 STaR Chart, 2004.

- (1) Instructional management. The administrator promotes improvement of instruction through activities such as the following: monitoring student achievement and attendance; diagnosing student needs; helping teachers design learning experiences for students; encouraging the development and piloting of innovative instructional programs; and facilitating the planning and application of emerging technologies in the classroom.

A shared vision, in becoming reality, is modeled by the Board of Trustees and, most particularly, by the administrative and teaching staff, who are held accountable through evaluation. For example, by deduction:

- A board that uses district issued laptops to conduct meetings via paperless agenda and posts its minutes on the district website sends a powerful message to the community and the staff.
- A superintendent and central office administrator who use PowerPoint, decision-making software tools, and data management tools at staff meetings likewise influences campus principals.
- Principals who use such applications in campus staff meetings inspire the teaching staff.

EEISD should require teachers to produce documentation for the mandated 16 hours annual technology training in order to be scored “proficient” in the Professional Development domain. The district should hold administrators and teachers accountable, by revising job descriptions and aligning the evaluation process, for attending required training, and demonstrating knowledge and skills related to the SBEC technology standards for all educators. For technology to be successfully and systematically integrated in the curriculum, expectations must be uniformly applied across the district. The board should annually include a measurable technology goal for the superintendent, to be evaluated through the appraisal process, based on the needs assessed by the technology committee. The district technology plan should include an objective to develop technology competencies for administrators using SBEC standards for all educators. The standards should be incorporated into revised job descriptions and evaluation documents for each administrative position. The standard currently applied to teachers for 16 annual hours of training should be included for administrators. Principals and other administrators should annually complete the LOTI profile, and the results should be part of the documentation in each

administrator’s evaluation process, along with documentation of training. The superintendent (or the administrator’s immediate supervisor) should incorporate at least one measurable technology related goal into the annual evaluation for each administrator based on his or her current level. An intervention, or improvement, plan should be written and monitored for any administrator failing to meet expectations.

The final link to accountability, not the first, should be to directly relate teachers’ PDAS scores to observed practices and documented training related to:

- Domain II: Learner-Centered Instruction. Criteria 9 states “The teacher makes appropriate and effective use of available technology as part of the instructional process.”
- Domain VI: Professional Development. Criteria 1 and 2 state “The teacher successfully engages in professional development activities that positively correlate with the goals of the campus and district. The teacher successfully correlates professional development activities with assigned subject content and the varied needs of students.”

Principals should carefully apply PDAS resource materials in assigning scores. For example, the resource materials define the four performance levels for each domain:

The four performance levels under PDAS (Exceeds Expectations, Proficient, Below Expectations, and Unsatisfactory) are defined in terms of the impact on student learning. In other words, what is the impact on student learning and how often and with how many students does the positive impact on learning occur? Since the goal of PDAS is to enhance the learning of all students, the “Proficient” level is a high standard of performance. Teaching behaviors that result in considerable impact on student learning and which are demonstrated a high percentage of the time and with a high percentage of students (80–89 percent) is “proficient.” Words associated with “proficient” teaching behaviors or the rating of “proficient” are: skillful, experienced, masterful, well-advanced, and knowledgeable.

An Intervention Plan for Teacher in Need of Assistance (PDAS forms) should be written and monitored for teachers who do not meet expectations. Aligned accountability at all

levels of the organization will bring the systemic development of technology use desired by the administrative and teaching staff of EEISD.

For background information on Computers and Technology, see p. 256 in the General Information section of the appendices.

FISCAL IMPACT

RECOMMENDATIONS	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	TOTAL	ONE
						5-YEAR (COSTS) SAVINGS	TIME (COSTS) SAVINGS
CHAPTER 11: COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY							
71. Reorganize technology staffing to provide effective coordination of technology use districtwide.	\$32,618	\$32,618	\$32,618	\$32,618	\$32,618	\$163,090	\$0
72. Add additional stakeholders to the technology planning committee, meet at least four times a year, and involve the board in advancing districtwide technology.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
73. Fully fund a replacement schedule for instructional computers and purchase dedicated computer stations for classroom teachers.	(\$164,234)	(\$164,234)	(\$164,234)	\$0	\$0	(\$492,702)	\$0
74. Develop a detailed and sequential long-range staff development plan using the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) Standards for New Teachers.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
75. Require teachers to produce documentation for the mandated 16 hours annual technology training in order to be scored "proficient" in the Professional Development domain.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
TOTALS-CHAPTER 11	(\$131,616)	(\$131,616)	(\$131,616)	\$32,618	\$32,618	(\$329,612)	\$0

CHAPTER 12

SAFETY AND SECURITY

EDCOUCH-ELSA INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

CHAPTER 12. SAFETY AND SECURITY

School districts develop policies, procedures, and coordinate districtwide programs to address crisis contingencies, facility safety, drug and violence prevention, student discipline, and truancy. All of these contribute to the safety of students and are of paramount concern to administrators, parents, students, and community members.

Several staff including the security guards and supervisors, campus administrators, risk manager, assistant superintendent for Personnel, assistant superintendent for Curriculum, and superintendent share the responsibility for safety and security in Edcouch-Elsa Independent School District (EEISD). The district has a security department, but guards that staff the department are not certified or commissioned police officers. The district does contract with the City of Elsa for one commissioned police officer to assist with security needs. Although the district has two security supervisors, security guards report to the building principal who is responsible for assigning duties, evaluating security guard performance, and purchasing any security equipment and uniforms.

The assistant superintendent for Curriculum coordinates the district's discipline management program. The district has a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP) under the supervision of the DAEP director for the secondary schools. The DAEP director works closely with the campus high school administration to coordinate the education of the students assigned to the DAEP program. In addition, the district has contracted the services of local counseling agencies to assist with substance abuse counseling, transitioning students to the regular classroom, and follow-up programs. The district has also entered into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Hidalgo County Juvenile Board for Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program services (see the General Information section of this report for details).

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- EEISD uses an effective process to curb truancy and increase attendance.
- EEISD established a formal drug education program in 2003–04 that incorporates community resources, curriculum integration, and intervention activities at all grade levels.

FINDINGS

- EEISD does not publish annual incident reports to the board, community, or parents.
- EEISD lacks a DAEP for the elementary school students.
- EEISD's security program lacks a staffing methodology for security providers, central coordination, planning, procedures, and program evaluation.
- EEISD has not developed staffing standards for security guards.
- EEISD lacks a current written agreement with the local police departments that clearly defines the responsibilities of both entities regarding services and responses to emergencies.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Recommendation 76: Develop annual comprehensive disciplinary incident reports for the board, employees, and community and conduct an annual hearing to review the report.** These reports should be distributed to and discussed by board members, school administrators, teachers, parents and site-based committees at least once a year. This process would enable district administrators to obtain input from parents, teachers and school administrators to develop and implement additional prevention and intervention programs. Presenting the disciplinary incident reports to the board, employees, and community will provide the district an opportunity to dispel any misperceptions regarding incidents occurring in the schools.
- **Recommendation 77: Implement a DAEP for elementary students to comply with the Texas Education Code (TEC) Chapter 37 and the board adopted student code of conduct.** The director of Student Services and assistant superintendent for Curriculum should evaluate the district's available resources to determine the most appropriate location for a DAEP for elementary students. This evaluation should be coordinated with the director of Students Assistance in Life (SAIL) and the elementary school principals and should include procedures for operating

the program. The district should create a position and hire an additional certified elementary teacher to be assigned to the elementary DAEP. The assistant superintendent for Curriculum should assign the teacher to other campuses to assist with instructional programs when there are no elementary students assigned to the DAEP. A district committee should be established to evaluate the current discipline management program and additional alternative means of discipline that can be utilized prior to placement into a DAEP.

- Recommendation 78: Develop policies and procedures to guide the management and ongoing evaluation of the security program effectively, including a staffing methodology for the security provider.** An assessment of the security needs of the district should include the identification of the security measures being implemented, the effectiveness of those measures, and input from the stakeholders, as well as any security needs that are not being addressed by the district. A districtwide security plan should be developed based on the needs assessment and should include goals with implementation strategies and performance measures. All security personnel should report directly to the security supervisor, who is responsible for the development of job descriptions, evaluations, and duty assignments. Evaluations should be conducted jointly with campus administrators. All principals should work through the assistant superintendent for Personnel and security supervisor for security needs. Staff development needs should be identified and ongoing training scheduled to ensure personnel are trained to effectively carry out their daily responsibilities and perform appropriately in a crisis situation. The supervisor should participate in workshops, conferences, and seminars to keep abreast of developments in law enforcement and compliance issues, and keep the superintendent, board, and employees informed of those developments.
- Recommendation 79: Develop a staffing methodology for security guards, reduce the number of security guards, and reduce the number of workdays for security guards to ensure that guards are staffed in accordance with the school calendar.** The assistant superintendent for Personnel should work with principals to conduct a security needs assessment to identify and develop a methodology for staffing security guards throughout the district. The

security guard assignments should be based on the results of the needs assessment, the developed staffing formulas, and a total number of days to include student attendance days, school holidays, and teacher in-service days. Work assignments should be reduced when school is not in session.

- Recommendation 80: Formalize the relationship with the local police departments by developing a MOU specifying both the services provided by the local law enforcement office and district responsibilities.** The assistant superintendent for Personnel should draft a MOU using samples provided by the National Association of School Resource Officers (NASRO). The district's legal counsel, superintendent and mayors of the local cities should review and finalize the draft and submit the MOU to the board for approval. The board should review and approve the MOU annually.

DETAILED ACCOMPLISHMENTS

TRUANCY PROGRAM

EEISD uses an effective process to curb truancy and increase attendance. Truancy refers to a student's unexcused absences from school. The EEISD truancy program is under the direction of the district's truancy officer who works closely with each campus to enforce the district's truancy policy. The district staff identifies students who are absent, conducts a follow-up with immediate home contact, and works with the courts to enforce its attendance policy. During the past four years, this process increased attendance.

Teachers take daily attendance in each classroom and report any absence to the attendance clerk, who then refers the absent student to the campus community aide. The campus community aide requests a print out of the student's attendance record along with their home address and telephone number from the attendance clerk. The community aide follow-ups on the student absence with a phone call, and in some cases a home visit. The purpose of the contact is to find out why the student is absent and to inform the parent about the attendance law. The attendance law, TEC Section 25.085, Compulsory School Attendance, provides the district with the basis for the attendance policy as stated below:

- a child who is required to attend school under this section shall attend school each day for the entire period the program of instruction is provided; and

- Unless specifically exempted by Section 25.086, a child who is at least six years of age, or who is younger than six years of age and has previously been enrolled in first grade, and who has not completed the academic year in which the child’s 18th birthday occurred, should attend school.

If the parent refuses the home visit, the community aide refers the student to the district’s truancy officer. The truancy officer contacts the parent to come in for a conference. If the parent refuses to cooperate, the truancy officer sends the parents a letter requesting a conference or conduct a home visit. During the conference, the parents receive a warning letter quoting the law, which they are required to sign acknowledging receipt. The truancy officer explains the law and the parent accountability for the student’s absence. After the home visit, the truancy officer and community aide monitor the student’s absences on a weekly basis and, if absences continue, the truancy officer files a complaint with the truancy court. If the student is under 10 years of age, the complaint is filed against the parent. If a student is between the ages of 10 and 17 years, a complaint is filed against both the student and parent and a summons is issued for the student and parent to appear in court. If the parent does not attend their court appearance, a warrant for an arrest is issued and the sheriff’s department picks up the parent and takes them to court.

The district established a good working relationship with the Justice of Peace who handles truancy complaints. The Justice of Peace makes monthly visits to hold court in EEISD to

hear the truancy complaints. The district also has three substance abuse counseling companies attend truancy hearings. If the judge suspects substance abuse, by the student or a parent, the judge immediately orders a drug screening test that is conducted on-site. The judge orders students and/or parents with positive drug screenings to enter one of the substance abuse counseling programs. The truancy officer stated that the judge will work with the parents. If a parent is assessed a fine, the judge places the student on probation. If the student complies with the terms of the probation, the judge waives the fine upon completion of the probation terms.

Exhibit 12-1 shows the district’s attendance percentages by campuses for school years from 2000–01 through 2004–05. The district demonstrated a successful attendance record during this period.

Finally, the truancy officer monitors the attendance program and meets with the principals during a monthly staff meeting to discuss any issues and how they can improve the program.

DRUG PREVENTION PROGRAM

EEISD established a formal drug education program in 2003–04 that incorporates community resources, curriculum integration, and intervention activities at all grade levels. The district implemented the program in grades pre-K–12 and includes a district Drug Task Force Committee for both the elementary and secondary schools. In addition, each campus has an individual campus drug task force committee.

**EXHIBIT 12-1
EEISD ATTENDANCE
2000–01 THROUGH 2004–05**

SCHOOLS	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
Edcouch Elsa High School	92.9%	93.0%	93.8%	94.1%	94.6%
Truan Junior High	96.2%	96.3%	95.8%	95.6%	95.6%
Sixth Grade Middle School	N/A	N/A	N/A	97.5%	97.5%
Garcia Elementary	N/A	98.9%	99.0%	99.3%	99.1%
J F Kennedy Elementary	96.8%	97.8%	98.3%	98.6%	98.6%
L B Johnson Elementary	98.1%	98.3%	98.4%	98.8%	99.0%
R C Rodriguez Elementary	N/A	98.6%	97.9%	98.6%	98.8%
Early Childhood Center	95.4%	96.0%	95.6%	96.7%	96.3%
Edcouch Elsa Middle School	98.1%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Edcouch Elementary	97.3%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
DISTRICT TOTAL AVERAGE	96.4%	97.0%	97.0%	97.4%	97.4%

SOURCE: EEISD Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS); Superintendent’s Semester Report of Student Attendance Summary 2000-01, July 13, 2005.

The secondary program’s district Drug Task Force Committee consists of the principals, supervisors, counselors, student council representatives, security guards, and community representatives for the high school, junior high school and sixth grade campus. The committee set the following program goals:

- inform students about the dangers of drugs;
- reduce the number of students using drugs,
- develop an effective drug intervention program;
- educate parents on drug awareness; and
- establish local AA, ALONON, and/or ALA Teen chapters.

Exhibit 12-2 shows the program activities identified by the secondary committee.

EEISD elementary schools have also implemented a Drug Task Force Committee, with individual committees at each

campus. The goal of the elementary program is “to provide students with consistent, firm, no-drug use, and no-violent messages in all areas of their education” and includes the following objectives:

- comprehensive integrated lessons;
- drug and violence prevention lesson log; and
- TEKS alignment.

Campuses set the following activities and interventions for the elementary students:

- daily motivational topics to be used during morning announcements;
- counseling timelines/outlines of topic sessions;
- weekly log for drug education lessons;
- personalized parenting sessions; and
- motivational topics to include:

EXHIBIT 12-2
EEISD DRUG PREVENTION PROGRAM ACTIVITIES
2003-04

CATEGORY	ACTIVITY
Staff Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signs and Symptoms of drugs (Sandstone) • Description of major drugs (Customs Agents) • Teaching strategies - drug education
Weekly Drug Prevention Lessons Counseling Sessions- DAVE Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lessons provided by the Supervisor and explained during Wednesday in-service • Taught every Thursday during the tutorial period at high school and during Friday’s pass period at junior high and sixth grade
Monthly Drug Prevention Counseling Sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lessons provided by the grade level counselors (classroom, small group, or large group presentations) • Scheduled speakers (Boot Camp, Drug Rehab Counselor, Sandstone counselors, Etc.
Bi-weekly Videos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Viewed through the school-wide television system (Channel One Network) • Utilize commercially purchased videos
Schoolwide Assemblies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One assembly in the fall and one in the spring term • Speakers are brought in every year
Parent Drug Education Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drug Education Counselor conducts a monthly parental meeting informing parents on drug awareness • Drug Education Counselor provides monthly parental meetings with students at the AEP center (Sandstone counseling services)
Follow-up Intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CIS counselor and the grade level counselors provide individual or group counseling • The CIS counselor provides follow-up counseling for students returning from the AEP
2004-05 School Year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All freshmen students will be enrolled in a “Teen Leadership” class • Schedule speakers from the Texas School Safety Center at Southwest Texas State University (now Texas State University) to do small and large group presentations

SOURCE: EEISD Drug Education Program, 2003-04.

- pride;
- respect;
- opportunity;
- patience;
- enthusiasm; and
- responsibility.

The elementary school program emphasizes character education through the guidance counselor program. **Exhibit 12-3** shows the 2005–06 “Classroom Guidance/Character Education” program for Ruben C. Rodriguez Elementary School.

**EXHIBIT 12-3
RUBEN C. RODRIGUEZ ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
CLASSROOM GUIDANCE/CHARACTER EDUCATION
2005–06**

MONTH	ACTIVITIES
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pride/Responsibility/Self-Esteem • Activities on health, safety, and self esteem
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pride/Courage/Self-Control/Self-Discipline • Drug Awareness (Red Ribbon Week) Oct. 24-28 • Campus Activities/Presenters
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pride/Empathy/Compassion • Activities on being kind to others • Campus Project - Food Drive
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pride/Empathy/Compassion • Student organizations Christmas caroling, Christmas program, etc.
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pride/Honesty/Generosity • Activities on fairness and courtesy
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pride/Perseverance/Commitment • Activities on setting goals/determination/ making good choices • Stress deduction • Lessons targeting Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS)
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pride/Perseverance/Commitment • Activities on setting goals/determination/ making good choices • Stress deduction • Lessons targeting TAKS
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Abuse Awareness • Pride/Career Awareness • Campus Career Week • Hall and Classroom displays • Activities on career choices • Presenters

SOURCE: Ruben C. Rodriguez Elementary Principal, November 2005.

The Early Childhood Development Center also has a similar schedule for activities. The September program presenters included the chief of police, a firefighter, and a pharmacist. In addition to the activities in **Exhibit 12-3**, “An Alcohol Use Prevention Curriculum,” sponsored by Mothers Against Drunk Driving, is used in grade 4. To track the drug education program activities, each classroom teacher is provided an activity log to document drug awareness education. **Exhibit 12-4** shows an example of the activity log.

Since implementing the Drug Education Program in 2002–03, the district has seen a reduction in drug incidents according to the Texas Education Agency (TEA) PEIMS report as shown in **Exhibit 12-5**.

According to the PEIMS Incident report, EEISD had 51 incidents involving “possessed, sold or used marijuana or other controlled substance” in 2002–03. The total number of incidents in 2003–04 was 44, while in 2004–05, the number of incidents dropped to 31, with the high school reducing the number of incidents by 50 percent.

By incorporating a drug education program at all grade levels, with an emphasis on character education and consistent reinforcement of program goals through curriculum and school activities, the district has seen a reduction in substance abuse incidents.

DETAILED FINDINGS

ANNUAL INCIDENT REPORTS (REC. 76)

EEISD does not publish annual incident reports to the board, community, or parents. According to interviews, the staff is not compiling and publishing an annual district behavior and violence incident report, although the information is available. When a student violates the Student Code of Conduct, disciplinary action is taken by the campus administrator who then documents and codes the violation on a disciplinary form. The campus PEIMS clerk receives the disciplinary form and enters the information regarding the violation into the PEIMS system. The district PEIMS coordinator can run reports for the district by campus and student regarding the number of violations occurring in the district.

Incident statistics are generated to satisfy PEIMS reporting requirements but are not published annually for the board or the community to review. The district staff stated two formal presentations that included incidents were made to the board in the past. The staff made a presentation to the board on the “Elementary Discipline Management Plan” on July 12,

**EXHIBIT 12-4
EEISD CLASSROOM TEACHER'S ACTIVITY LOG
DRUG EDUCATION
2005-06**

TEACHER'S NAME _____ GRADE _____ SUBJECT _____

SCHOOL _____ (CHECK ANY APPROPRIATE AREA.)

DATE	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY	SELF-CONCEPT	VALUES	DECISION MAKING	FACTUAL DRUG & ALCOHOL INFORMATION
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SOURCE: EEISD Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, November 2005.

**EXHIBIT 12-5
EEISD SUBSTANCE ABUSE INCIDENTS
2002-03 THROUGH 2004-05**

**TYPE OF INCIDENT
POSSESSED, SOLD, OR USED MARIJUANA OR OTHER CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE.**

SCHOOL	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Elementary	*	*	*
Middle/Junior High	18	10	14
High	33	34	17
TOTAL	51	44	31

*Numbers less than five have not been cited due to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) 34CFR Part 99.1 and Texas Education Agency procedures OP 10-03.

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS 2002-03 through 2004-05;

2001 and on the drug prevention program in 2003-04, but no further presentation on discipline or incidents have been made since then.

The assistant superintendent for Curriculum provided the review team with information on district drug prevention programs implemented in 2003-04. The district established a Drug Task Force Committee consisting of representatives from the campuses, in addition to central office and community representatives. In 2003-04, the program identified possession of controlled substances by category for 2001-02 and 2002-03 for the high school and junior high school. **Exhibit 12-6** shows the possession of controlled substance offense by category for the high school and junior high school from 2001-02 and 2002-03. There were no offenses for the elementary schools during that period.

Exhibit 12-7 shows EEISD's PEIMS incident reports for the years 2002-03 through 2004-05. The report provides the

code (reason) and type of incident by school year. During 2004-05, the reports show a reduction of incidents from previous years in "possessed, sold or used marijuana or other controlled substance."

The report shows that out of 954 incidents in 2004-05, 858 are due to a violation of the student code of conduct that is not included in codes 33 and 34. There are no incidents of school related gang violence.

Surveys conducted by the review team indicate that the majority of the EEISD principals, teachers, students and parents believe students are safe and secure at school. **Exhibit 12-8** provides responses to survey questions regarding safety and security in the schools. While the majority of responses agreed that school disturbances were infrequent, a number of survey responses indicated gangs were a problem in the district and a significant number of responses from teachers, principals, support staff, and

**EXHIBIT 12-6
EEISD POSSESSION OF CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE OFFENSES
2001-02 THROUGH 2002-03**

OFFENSE	2001-02		2002-03	
	HIGH SCHOOL	JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL	HIGH SCHOOL	JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL
Marijuana	44	15	36	18
Cocaine	*	*	5	*
Roache/Alcohol	*	*	9	*
Cigarette/Tobacco	15	*	14	*
Total Offenses	59	15	64	18

*Numbers less than five have not been cited due to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) 34CFR Part 99.1 and Texas Education Agency procedures OP 10-03.

SOURCE: EEISD Drug Education Program Presentation, 2001-02 through 2002-03.

**EXHIBIT 12-7
EDCOUCH-ELSA ISD INCIDENT REPORTS
2002-03 THROUGH 2004-05**

CODE*	TYPE OF INCIDENTS	2002-03 TOTAL	2003-04 TOTAL	2004-05 TOTAL
4	Possessed, sold or used marijuana or other controlled substance	51	44	31
5	Possessed, sold, used or was under the influence of an alcoholic beverage	*	*	*
7	Public lewdness or indecent exposure	*	*	*
12	Used, exhibited or possessed a illegal knife	*	*	*
14	Used, exhibited or possessed a prohibited weapon	*	*	*
21	Violation of student code of conduct not included in codes 33 and 34	758	1,043	858
22	Criminal mischief	*	*	*
26	Terroristic threat	*	*	*
28	Assault against someone other than a school district employee or volunteer	*	*	6
31	Sexual assault or aggravated assault against a school district employee or volunteer	*	*	*
33	Possessed, purchased, used or accepted a cigarette or tobacco product	8	*	*
34	School-related gang violence	*	*	*
35	False Alarm/False Report	*	*	*
43	Truancy - 3 Unexcused Absences	*	298	59
	Totals:	817	1,385	954

*This exhibit only includes incident codes that were reported for the given time period; Numbers less than five have not been cited due to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) 34CFR Part 99.1 and Texas Education Agency procedures OP 10-03.

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS 2002-03 through 2004-05;

students perceived there to be a drug problem in the district.

Survey responses in **Exhibit 12-8** also show that a total of 39 percent of the teachers, 44 percent of the principals, and 47 percent of the administrators and support staff perceived that drugs were a problem. Fifty-eight percent of the student survey responses also perceived the district had problems with drugs.

Without a comprehensive annual report that provides historical data and data listed by categories, school and district administrators cannot evaluate and monitor the type and frequency of incidents occurring in the district. They cannot analyze the data to determine trends, evaluate the effectiveness of current programs, and create additional prevention and intervention programs to further address student behavior problems. Furthermore, district staff does

**EXHIBIT 12-8
SAFETY AND SECURITY PERCEPTIONS
2005-06**

SURVEY QUESTION: SCHOOL DISTURBANCES ARE INFREQUENT.	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Teachers	12%	60%	9%	12%	6%
Principals	22%	67%	0%	11%	0%
Students	11%	38%	27%	16%	7%
Parents	25%	43%	18%	10%	4%

SURVEY QUESTION: GANGS ARE NOT A PROBLEM IN THIS DISTRICT.	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Teachers	9%	36%	27%	21%	6%
Principals	22%	33%	22%	22%	0%
Administrative and support staff	7%	44%	19%	23%	7%
Students	11%	29%	20%	24%	16%
Parents	27%	29%	14%	25%	6%

SURVEY QUESTION: DRUGS ARE NOT A PROBLEM IN THIS DISTRICT.	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Teachers	6%	18%	36%	24%	15%
Principals	11%	44%	0%	44%	0%
Administrative and support staff	2%	14%	37%	35%	12%
Students	6%	22%	15%	27%	31%
Parents	25%	26%	12%	31%	6%

SOURCE: Review Team Edcouch-Elsa ISD Survey, November 2005.

not inform parents of the current situation regarding violence incidents at the campuses.

The TEC §39.053, subsections (4), (5), and (6) require the board of trustees of each school district to publish in their annual district performance report statistics on incidents that occurred in the district. The report must include:

- the number, rate, and type of violent crime or criminal incidents that occurred on each campus;
- information concerning school violence prevention and violence intervention policies and procedures that the district is using to protect students; and
- findings that result from evaluations conducted under the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act.

TEC §39.053 (c) also states that the board shall hold a hearing for public discussion of the report.

The district should develop annual comprehensive disciplinary incident reports for the board, employees, and community and conduct an annual hearing to review the report. These reports should be distributed to and discussed

by board members, school administrators, teachers, parents, and site-based committees at least once a year. This process would enable district administrators to obtain input from parents, teachers, and school administrators to develop and implement additional prevention and intervention programs. Presenting the disciplinary incident reports to the board, employees, and community will provide the district an opportunity to dispel any misperceptions regarding incidents occurring in the schools.

ELEMENTARY DISCIPLINE ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM (REC. 77)

EEISD lacks a DAEP for the elementary school students. DAEPs are disciplinary alternative education settings for students who violate the student code of conduct. Students in a DAEP must be separated from regular education students. They can be located either on campus or at an off campus location. A DAEP must provide supervision, counseling, and instruction to students in the core curriculum. The district provides a DAEP for the secondary grades called Students Assistance in Life (SAIL). Secondary campuses follow procedures for discipline management outlined in the student code of conduct for referrals to the SAIL program.

Although the EEISD Student Code of Conduct, included in the elementary student handbook, outlines the referral process to a DAEP, the district does not have a DAEP for elementary students. The elementary campuses follow a discipline management program called the Edcouch-Elsa Golden Bees. At the beginning of the school year, parents receive the Elementary School Student Handbook and are requested to read the handbook and return the signature page acknowledging receipt of the handbook. Parents also receive additional communication informing them of the Golden Bees Discipline Management Program, which includes positive and negative behavior expectations and consequences for the cafeteria, hallways, playgrounds, restrooms, in addition to the classroom. **Exhibit 12-9** provides an example of the program’s behavior consequences and documentation.

**EXHIBIT 12-9
EEISD GOLDEN BEES DISCIPLINE MANAGEMENT PLAN
2005-06**

CONSEQUENCES FOR POSITIVE BEHAVIOR

- Verbal praise or recognition
- Weekly reinforcements such as stickers, pencils, coupons, treats and certificates
- Reward at the end of every six weeks
- Golden Bee award at the end of the year

CONSEQUENCES FOR NEGATIVE BEHAVIOR

Parent/Student Notification of Program Expectations	Responsibility Card
First Violation	Parental Note
Second Violation	Telephone call to parent
Third Violation	Isolation Letter
Fourth Violation	Extreme Behavior Letter

SOURCE: Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, November 2005.

Parents are asked to sign and return each document sent home for negative behavior. Teachers also complete a form documenting phone calls that include the date, reason for call, and the results of the call and maintain a weekly class discipline log to monitor each student’s behavior.

Although the Golden Bees discipline management program has been effective, principals expressed a need for an alternative education program for elementary students. The current program does not work with students in the upper elementary grades who continually disrupt the classrooms with their inappropriate behavior. After the teacher and

administrator exhaust all steps in the Golden Bees program, they have no other avenue to take for future discipline problems with a student. Elementary campuses do not have in-school-suspension programs to isolate students on a temporary basis for extreme behavior violations or violations of the student code of conduct that may warrant a referral to a DAEP. Staff stated that an alternative education program for elementary students was proposed to the site-based-decision-making committee, but secondary committee members voted against the proposal for fear that it would be over used to the detriment of the student.

The superintendent did request staff to conduct an investigation of the possibility of locating an elementary DAEP at the same campus as the secondary SAIL program. Staff did investigate but no action has been taken. The DAEP director stated that they currently have available space and staff at the DAEP where they could segregate elementary students from the secondary students. **Exhibit 12-10** shows the current organization of the SAIL DAEP program, which consists of 16 employees.

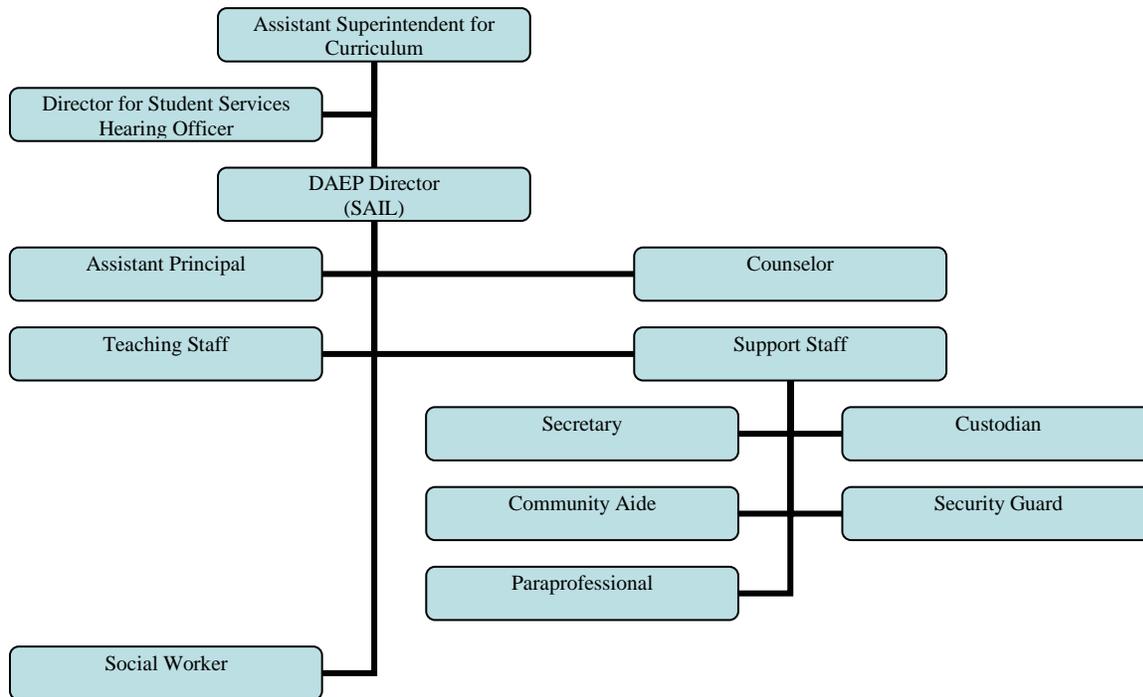
The director of Student Services, who serves as the hearing officer for the DAEP, said TEA was contacted regarding whether or not it was permissible to locate an elementary DAEP at the same site as the secondary DAEP. TEA stated that the district could use the same location as long as the elementary students were separated from the secondary students, and students did not mingle or dine together.

As a consequence of not being in compliance with the TEC Chapter 37 or the district’s student code of conduct for elementary students, elementary principals and teachers do not have an alternative course of action to take with students when all discipline management steps have been exhausted.

The TEC Section 37.008 states that each school district shall provide a disciplinary alternative education program. **Exhibit 12-11** shows the required elements of a DAEP outlined in TEC Section 37.008.

In addition, TEC §37.007(e) (h) states students younger than 10 must receive services in a DAEP if they commit an expellable offense. Section 37.002 states a teacher may remove a student from the classroom for behavior that is so unruly, disruptive, or abusive that seriously interferes with the teacher’s ability to communicate with the students or with the ability of the student’s classmates to learn. The section further states that the principal may place the student into “another appropriate classroom, into in-school

**EXHIBIT 12-10
EEISD SAIL DAEP CENTER
2005-06**



SOURCE: EEISD SAIL Organization Chart, November 2005.

**EXHIBIT 12-11
REQUIREMENTS FOR DISCIPLINARY ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

REQUIREMENTS OF A DAEP

- Provides a setting other than a student’s regular classroom.
- Is located on or off of a regular school campus
- Provides for the students who are assigned to the disciplinary alternative education program to be separated from students who are not assigned to the program
- Focuses on English language arts, mathematics, science, history and self-discipline
- Provides for students’ educational and behavioral needs
- Provides supervision and counseling
- Requires that to teach in an off-campus DAEP, each teacher meets all certification requirements established under Subchapter B, Chapter 21;
- Requires that to teach in a DAEP of any kind, each teacher employed by a school district during the 2003-2004 school year or an earlier school year meet, not later than the beginning of the 2005-06 school year, all certification requirements established under Subchapter B, Chapter 21

SOURCE: Texas Education Code, Section 37.008.

suspension, or into a disciplinary alternative education program as provided by Section 37.008.”

The *EEISD 2005–06 Elementary Student Handbook* addresses conduct violations and consequences in the student code of conduct section. It specifically states under the “Discipline Management Techniques” that behavior prohibited by the student code of conduct or by campus or classroom rules

may result in placement in a DAEP. Under the section entitled “Removal from the Regular Educational Setting,” the handbook further states “A teacher or administrator must remove a student from class if the student engages in behavior that under the education code requires or permits the student to be placed in a DAEP or expelled. When removing for those reasons, the procedures in the subsequent

section on DAEP or expulsion will be followed.” The student handbook provides a specific process for removal of a student from a regular classroom setting to a DAEP. Without a district DAEP for elementary students, district staff cannot comply with its current student code of conduct the board adopted.

Seguin ISD (SISD) has a DAEP, Lizzie M. Burges Alternative School, which serves one high school, two middle schools, and nine elementary schools for grades one through twelve. Students in grades 1–6 are in a different wing from the secondary students and enter and leave the campus from a different gate.

The SISD DAEP has a total staff of 23 employees, as shown in **Exhibit 12-12**.

**EXHIBIT 12-12
SISD DAEP STAFF**

EMPLOYEE GROUP	POSITIONS
Administrators	Principal
	Assistant Principal
Teachers	Science Teacher
	Math Teacher
	TAKS Pre/Reading Teacher
	Language Arts Teacher
	Social Studies Teacher
	Personal & Family Development Teacher (1)
	Personal & Family Development Teacher (2)
	Electronics Teacher
	Special Education - Math Teacher
	Special Education - Language Arts Teacher
	Elementary Teacher
Instructional Aides	Intensive Supervisory Unit
	Computer Lab Manager
	Content Mastery Aide
	Instructional Aide
Support	Personal Management Class
	Secretary
	Attendance Clerk
Custodians	Juvenile Probation Officer
	Head Custodian
	Custodian

SOURCE: Seguin ISD Website, www.seguine.k12.tx.us.

Students assigned to the elementary DAEP are under the supervision of one elementary teacher. On the average, two to six students are assigned to the elementary DAEP. If the number should increase, an instructional assistant is assigned to the classroom temporarily. Elementary students are normally assigned five to 11 days at the DAEP. Repeaters are assigned up to 30 days. The elementary students use the same computer lab as the secondary students but at different times. By combining the elementary and secondary DAEPs at one location, SISD can conserve resources and comply with the state law.

Clear Creek ISD (CCISD) also has two DAEPs for students who have been removed from regular education settings: Falcon Pass Elementary School and Clear Path Alternative School. Falcon Pass Elementary School houses the disciplinary alternative education program for students in kindergarten through grade five. The Clear Path Alternative School serves students in grades six through twelve. Assignments to the DAEP vary, depending on the seriousness of the offense, the disciplinary record of the student, the age of the student, and the impact of the offense on the school environment. The normal assignment is for 60 days. Teachers and school administrators carefully weigh the consequences of behaviors that violate the student code of conduct and use discretionary placement in the DAEP as a last resort for student discipline.

The district should implement a DAEP for elementary students to comply with the TEC Chapter 37 and the board adopted student code of conduct. The director of Student Services and assistant superintendent for Curriculum should evaluate the district’s available resources to determine the most appropriate location for a DAEP for elementary students. This evaluation should be coordinated with the DAEP director and the elementary school principals and should include procedures for operating the program. The district should create a position and hire an additional certified elementary teacher to be assigned to the elementary DAEP. The assistant superintendent for Curriculum should assign the elementary teacher to other campuses to assist with instructional programs when there are no elementary students assigned to the DAEP. A district committee should be established to evaluate the current discipline management program and additional alternative means of discipline that can be utilized prior to placement into a DAEP.

The fiscal impact of this recommendation will include the annual cost of an additional certified elementary school teacher and one time cost of classroom furnishings. The

cost of adding one teacher will be approximately \$44,954 per year (\$39,840 base salary + \$1,514 [\$39,840 x 10.4 percent benefits] + \$3,600 health contribution = \$44,954). The estimated cost of setting up an elementary DAEP classroom includes a teacher desk at \$455, a teacher chair at \$95, one computer at \$840, one laser printer at \$499, and 10 students desks at \$99 each, for a total one time cost of \$2,879 (10 x 99 = \$990) + \$455 + \$95 + \$840 + \$499 = \$2,879).

SECURITY DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION (REC. 78)

EEISD's security program lacks a staffing methodology for security providers, central coordination, planning, procedures, and program evaluation. In December 1991, the district adopted the Texas Association of School Boards, Inc. (TASB) legal board policy for a safety program. The policy states, "The Superintendent or designee shall be responsible for developing, implementing, and promoting a comprehensive safety program." The district has not adopted a local policy establishing the security function of the district. A policy addressing security staff would identify the board's authorization to hire security staff and peace officers, identify the jurisdiction of the peace officers, their scope of powers, duties and limitations. The district has a security department that currently reports to the assistant superintendent for Personnel. Staff interviews revealed a program that is not centralized and does not have procedures that provide guidance for performance of daily security tasks.

The organization chart the security department provided includes two supervisors for the district security function. One supervisor is responsible for the elementary security guards and the other supervisor is responsible for the secondary security guards. In addition, there is a night head security guard and two additional head security guards at the high school campus on the organizational chart. According to staff interviews, the security guards actually report to principals, who are responsible for the duty assignments and annual evaluations of the security guards assigned to their campuses. The security guard job descriptions also assign the security guards to the campus principal or assistant principal. The security department has 23 employees. **Exhibit 12-13** shows the organization chart for the security department submitted to the review team. The numbers in the chart indicate the number of employees in that position at each location.

In addition to the campus security guards, the Transportation Department has a security guard during the day. The district also contracts with the City of Elsa for a commissioned

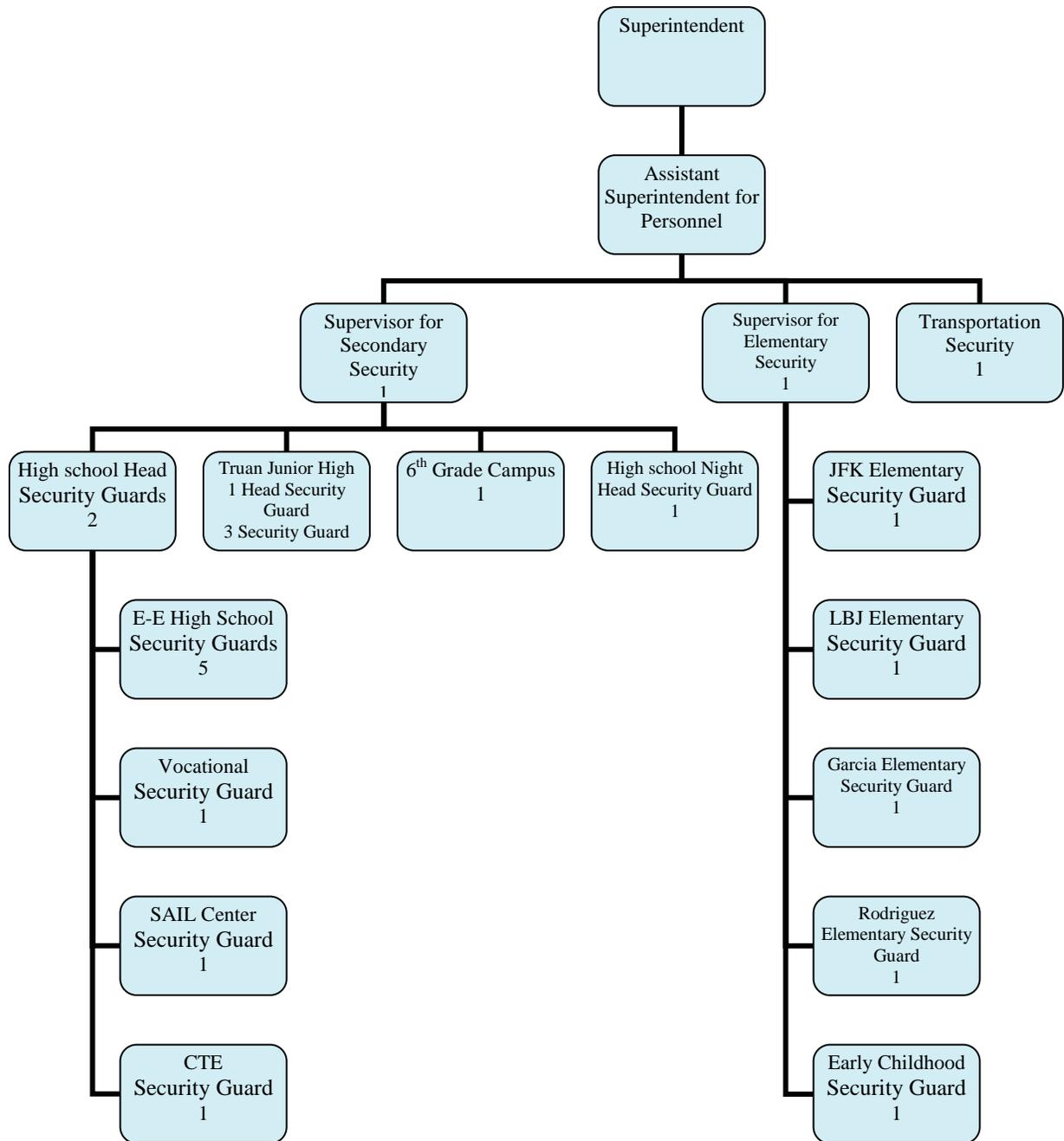
Police officer to assist the district with security needs. The commissioned police officer is an employee of the City of Elsa and does not report to the district. Although the principals are directly responsible for assigning duties and evaluating the security guards, the organization chart does not include the principals in the reporting structure. Principals do not have input in hiring security guards at their campuses and there is no process to provide a substitute when a security guard is absent. The lack of this process creates a problem for the campuses with only one security guard, requiring teachers and other staff to cover the security guard's responsibilities, such as supervising parent drop-off zones and monitoring visitors.

The assistant superintendent for Personnel stated that the district was not large enough to justify two security supervisor positions. He explained the reason the district has two security supervisors is because one was not present due to an ongoing wrongful termination lawsuit. The lawsuit reinstated this supervisor as a requirement of the settlement agreement. Since the district had assigned another employee as supervisor, the district created a second security supervisor position for elementary security guards. According to the organization chart, the secondary supervisor is responsible for security guards at the high school, junior high school, and the sixth grade campus. The assistant superintendent further stated that the security supervisors should report to the principals because the principals control the security budget on their campuses and are responsible for the security guard's duty assignments and evaluations. He stated that he would recommend the security supervisors report to their respective principals. However, this reporting has not been possible due to a lack of procedures.

Some campus administrators did not know there were two security supervisors. The security supervisors do not work with the campus principals or coordinate districtwide security activities. The security department did not provide job descriptions for either the security supervisors or head security guards. The security supervisor stated that they do not have a departmental budget. Campus budgets cover all security costs, including uniforms. The principal is in charge of campus security and any funds budgeted for security is under the individual campus budgets. Campus administrators stated that they are budgeted \$500 for security, which includes the uniform rental and cell phone.

There are no district procedures to guide security practices consistently across the district. The assistant superintendent of Personnel stated that any established procedures for

**EXHIBIT 12-13
EEISD SECURITY DEPARTMENT
2005-06**



SOURCE: EEISD Security Department and Payroll Department Interviews, November 2005.

security guards would be developed by the campus principal. The high school principal provided the review team with formalized procedures developed for the high school security department. These procedures include:

- a mission statement for the high school security department;

- job description for security guards tailored to the security needs of the high school campus;
- scheduled areas and duties for security guards;
- daily procedures for security guards including lunch duties and dress code;

- high school bell schedule;
- student dress code to be enforced;
- parking tickets;
- disciplinary referral form;
- campus floor plan for fire escape route; and
- security handbook receipt.

Each security guard is required to complete a form acknowledging receipt of a personal copy of the Edcouch-Elsa High School Security Handbook and its requirements. The high school was the only campus to provide established security guard procedures.

Security guards and staff receive limited training in security and critical incident procedures, which is provided by the campus principals. The security supervisors do not attend conferences, seminars or workshops for staff development in the area of security and safety and do not have formal training in the security function. The district requires all security guards to complete two forms of training. Upon hiring, a security guard must complete a four-hour security guard certification-training program from a private company. In addition, all district security guards receive training on Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI) and the Texas Behavioral Support Initiative (TBSI) through the Special Education department. TEA was tasked with developing training on the use of restraint and time-out for students with disabilities. This has been addressed through the TBSI training. **Exhibit 12-14** provides the six modules included in the TBSI and the seventh module for the CPI training:

The TBSI and CPI training is 12 to 14 hours over the course of two days and each security guard must pass a certification exam. They must also complete a periodic refresher course. According to the CPI trainer, if there is a significant lapse in time between the original training and refresher course, the security guard must repeat the initial CPI training. The trainer provided documentation for the CPI training since 2002 for all security guards. With the exception of the CPI and TBSI training and limited training provided by the campus principals to all security guards, the district provides minimal districtwide safety training in the area of security.

Exhibit 12-15 shows the documented training sessions for the security guards from 2002 through 2005.

The officer contracted through the City of Elsa is certified under the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Officer

EXHIBIT 12-14 **TBSI AND CPI TRAINING MODULES** **2005–06**

MODULES

Module 1: Legislative Overview

Module 2: Positive Behavioral Supports: Schoolwide/
Classroom Interventions

Module 3: Positive Behavioral Supports: Individual
Interventions

Module 4: Time-Out

Module 5: Severe Behavior: Prevention and De-Escalation
Techniques

Module 6: Action Planning (ESC/District training teams)

Module 7: Physical Restraint Crisis Prevention Intervention
Training

SOURCE: EEISD Website Special Education Department,
<http://specialeducation.eeisd.org/>, December 2005.

Standards and Education (TCLEOSE) and can provide training for the district's security department. The district has not taken advantage of this training resource.

The lack of centralized leadership in the security department prevents the coordination of districtwide security activities, responsiveness to campus principal security needs, and ongoing training. Without a centralized program, the district does not conduct a needs assessment with input from principals, security guards and stakeholders, nor does it establish program goals and objectives. Policies and procedures are not developed to ensure consistent security operations across the district. Without set policies and procedures, the district has not established guiding principles for daily decision-making or defined roles for the security staff, building principals, assistant principals, teachers and other district staff; nor has it established accountability among staff for security. Furthermore, a program evaluation process has not been developed to determine the effectiveness of the security department. Although there is some safety training, the security department has no ongoing training that would prepare them to handle critical incidents appropriately. Security resources have not been allocated according to need. This misallocation resulted in a security department that is overstaffed, which uses resources that the district could instead direct to instructional programs.

Many school districts designate one person as coordinator of districtwide security and safety planning, communication, and allocation of resources. This person incorporates all planning and goals into any districtwide long-range strategic plan and implements the plan according to identified budget

**EXHIBIT 12-15
STAFF DEVELOPMENT FOR SECURITY GUARDS
2002 THROUGH 2005**

DATE	LENGTH OF TIME	TOPIC	PRESENTER
08/16/05	3 hours	Weapons of Mass Destruction and the Awareness Level	Jorge Jalomo Debra Fischer
08/10/05- 08/11/05	14 hours	Crisis Prevention Intervention	Angi Pena Carmen Quiroz Special Education
12/02/04-12/03/04	14 hours	Crisis Prevention Intervention and Texas Behavioral Support Initiative	Carmen Quiroz Special Education
4/15/04-4/16/04	14 hours	Crisis Prevention Intervention and Texas Behavioral Support Initiative	Carmen Quiroz Special Education
8/08/02-8/09/02	14 hours	Crisis Prevention Intervention	Carmen Quiroz Special Education

SOURCE: Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Crisis Prevention Intervention Trainer, November 2005.

constraints. Policies and procedures are both necessary for effective and legally compliant safety and security programs, thereby reducing a district’s exposure to liability and risks. Reporting relationships and position expectation provide the framework for a successful safety and security program.

The Texas Attorney General’s *School Violence Prevention Task Force Report* published in May 2002 states “A school safety assessment should be conducted regularly in order to correct weak areas and stay abreast of innovations.” It goes on to say that districts should continually examine safety measures they have implemented to take advantage of new strategies. The report identifies the following components to be included in an assessment:

- safety and security of buildings and grounds;
- development and enforcement of policies;
- procedures and data collection;
- development of intervention plans;
- level of staff development;
- opportunities for student involvement;
- level of parent and community involvement;
- role of law enforcement;
- development of crisis management plans; and
- standards for safety and security personnel.

EEISD should develop policies and procedures to guide the management and ongoing evaluation of the security program effectively, including a staffing methodology for the security

provider. An assessment of the security needs of the district should include the identification of the security measures being implemented, the effectiveness of those measures, and input from the stakeholders, as well as any security needs that are not being addressed by the district. A districtwide security plan should be developed based on the needs assessment and should include goals with implementation strategies and performance measures. All security staff should report directly to the security supervisor, who is responsible for the development of job descriptions, evaluations, and duty assignments. Evaluations should be conducted jointly with campus administrators. All principals should work through the assistant superintendent for Personnel and security supervisor for security needs. Staff development needs should be identified and ongoing training scheduled to ensure personnel are trained to effectively carry out their daily responsibilities and perform appropriately in a crisis situation. The supervisor should participate in workshops, conferences, and seminars to keep abreast of developments in law enforcement and compliance issues, and keep the superintendent, board, and employees informed of those developments. The district should consider requiring TCLEOSE certification of a security supervisor.

Elimination of one security supervisor position at a salary plus benefits of \$39,184 (\$32,232 + \$3,352 [\$32,232 x 10.4 benefits] + \$3,600 medical contribution = \$39,184) will reduce annual costs of the organization. The fiscal impact assumes no cost for obtaining TCLEOSE certification until the district assesses its security needs.

SECURITY STAFFING (REC. 79)

EEISD has not developed staffing standards for security guards. The district's security department has 23 employees, which includes a secondary supervisor, an elementary supervisor, four head security guards and 17 security guards. The department is assigned to the assistant superintendent for Personnel. Each of the eight campuses has at least one security guard. In addition to the 23 security guard employees, the district contracts with the City of Elsa for a police officer to work with the campuses. Staff interviews revealed there is no centralized coordination of security staff assignments, nor were there any documented needs assessments identified in the district that would provide a basis for security assignments or staffing. Interviews with administrative staff stated that security guards are often assigned to a campus

without any rationale. The assistant superintendent for Personnel confirmed there are no staffing formulas for security guards. With the exception of the sixth grade campus principal, principals stated that they do not have any input on who is assigned to their campuses regarding security guards. **Exhibit 12-16** shows a list of security guards with salaries and assigned workdays the district provided to the review team.

All of the security guards work 260-day schedules; although the students attend school 180 days and the supervisors work 230 day contracts. **Exhibit 12-17** shows the estimated cost for the security guards and contracted police officer for the 2005–06.

EXHIBIT 12-16
SECURITY STAFF ASSIGNMENTS AND SALARIES
2005–06

LOCATION	POSITION	ANNUAL SALARY	WORKDAYS
Security Department	Secondary Supervisor	\$40,000	230
	Elementary Supervisor	\$32,232	230
High School - Career and Technology Education (CTE) SAIL and Vocational Building	High School Night Head Security	\$23,371	260
	High School Head Security	\$22,248	260
	High School Head Security	\$20,434	260
	Security Guard	\$20,671	260
	Security Guard	\$17,626	260
	Security Guard	\$24,716	260
	Security Guard	\$23,220	260
	Security Guard	\$19,980	260
	Security Guard	\$17,842	260
	Security Guard	\$18,101	260
Junior High	Head Security	\$22,486	260
	Security Guard	\$17,626	260
	Security Guard	\$19,462	260
	Security Guard	\$18,317	260
Sixth Grade	Security Guard	\$19,980	260
Early Childhood Center	Security Guard	\$21,816	260
Garcia Elementary	Security Guard	\$20,131	260
Johnson Elementary	Security Guard	\$27,000	260
Kennedy Elementary	Security Guard	\$17,626	260
Rodriguez	Security Guard	\$19,721	260
Transportation	Security Guard	\$17,626	260

SOURCE: EEISD Security Department and Payroll, November 2005.

**EXHIBIT 12-17
SECURITY DEPARTMENT COSTS
2005-06**

SERVICES	PAYROLL AND CONTRACT COST
City of Elsa Police Officer	\$31,285
2 Security Supervisors	\$72,232
4 Head Security Guards	\$88,539
17 Security Guards	\$341,461
Total Cost	\$533,517

NOTE: Overtime costs are not included.
SOURCE: EEISD Payroll and 2002-03 Interlocal agreement with the City of Elsa; November 2005.

Exhibit 12-17 does not include an estimated cost for overtime the security guards may receive for working extra-curricular activities. Although the district did not provide an inter-local agreement with the City of Elsa for the current year, the last contract on file for 2002-03 provides a salary for the officer. In addition to the contracted amount, it states the district shall pay a variable overtime rate which will include FICA/Medical, health insurance and workers' compensation for the services of the peace officer assigned to duty with the district.

The district is spending a significant amount of funds to staff the security department for 260 workdays. The district continues to pay security officers when school is not in session. Without having a staffing formula in place to drive the department's needs regarding how many positions to staff and ensuring that the staff works on days security is needed, the district does not ensure that it is using its funds effectively. More importantly, the district is not redirecting those funds to instructional programs.

Although a staffing industry standard could not be identified, Northside ISD (NISD) conducted a survey in October 2004 on school district police/security departments and received responses from nine districts. Spring Branch ISD was the only district that uses a set staffing formula of one officer per 1,000 students. The other districts ranged from assigning one officer per 800 students to one officer per 1,600 students. NISD assigns one officer per 1,100-student enrollment.

Point Isabel ISD (PIISD) established a police department with one police chief and three police officers. All officers are commissioned and TCLEOSE certified. The district has four campuses and the police department is located at the high school. The department assigns officers to each campus, but officers first report to the high school each morning to review any events of the day that may require additional

security. The district also has an agreement with the local city law enforcement department for additional police services as needed for extra-curricular activities. The school board approves this agreement annually. The PIISD police department provides the necessary services to maintain a safe learning environment with an efficient staff and a coordinated effort with the local law enforcement office.

EEISD should develop a staffing methodology for security guards, reduce the number of security guards, and reduce the number of workdays for security guards to ensure that guards are staffed in accordance with the school calendar. The assistant superintendent for Personnel should work with principals to conduct a security needs assessment to identify and develop a methodology for staffing security guards throughout the district. The district should decide on an appropriate level of security staff per campus or building or derive a staffing ratio based on student population versus security staff. The security guard assignments should be based on the results of the needs assessment, the developed staffing formulas, and a total number of days to include student attendance days, school holidays, and teacher in-service days. EEISD should review whether a security guard is necessary at the Transportation Department. Work assignments should be reduced when school is not in session.

EEISD has 23 security guards including two supervisors. Security guards are scheduled for 260 days, while the security supervisors are scheduled for 230 days. The district's enrollment for 2004-05 was 5,472 students. In 2005-06, the district provided security for 11 buildings and the Transportation Department. The 11 buildings include; eight campuses, the SAIL campus, CTE building, and the Vocational building.

Based on staffing standards identified in the Northside ISD survey the EEISD should employ five security guards. However, it is evident that EEISD needs more than five security guards given the eight campuses and three buildings in the district. Thus, this recommendation does not use a student population ratio, rather a staffing level based on the number and size of the buildings where security is necessary. The ensuing recommendation suggests 14 security guards remain, given the student population of 5,472, a student to security staff ratio of 391 to 1 is realized, respectively. (5,472 students / 14 security guards = 391 students per security guard) The district should develop a staffing ratio for future staffing level assessment.

The district should retain 14 security staff positions including; one supervisor, two day and one night security guard at the high school, one security guard each for the SAIL, CTE, and Vocational buildings, one day security guard for each of the remaining seven campuses, for a total recommended security staff of fourteen. The one security supervisor and three security guards should remain on a 260 day work schedule to cover summer school. The remaining ten security guards workdays should be reduced from 260 days to 210 days to include school holidays and teacher in-service days. The following is a list of the recommended security guard assignments until the district can develop an appropriate staffing ratio as a result of the recommended needs assessment.

***Security Department**

- Security Supervisor, 260-days

High School

- Night Security Guard, 260-days
- Security Guard, 260-days
- Security Guard, 260-days

SAIL/DAEP Building

- Security Guard, 210-days

CTE Building

- Security Guard, 210-days

Vocational Building

- Security Guard, 210-days

C. Truan Junior High

- Security Guard, 210-days

Sixth Grade

- Security Guard, 210-days

Early Childhood Center

- Security Guard, 210-days

Garcia Elementary

- Security Guard, 210-days

L. B. Johnson Elementary

- Security Guard, 210-days

J. F. Kennedy Elementary

- Security Guard, 210-days

Rodriguez Elementary

- Security Guard, 210-days.

**This list takes into account the 1,521 students at the high school and the local desire to maintain a night security guard. The list does not recommend a security guard for the Transportation Department.*

The fiscal impact of this finding is based on three parts. The first part calculates the savings from eliminating nine security guard positions. The fiscal impact of eliminating nine security guard positions is calculated by multiplying the average salary

of \$20,086 (341,461 divided by 17 = 20,086) by the nine positions being eliminated ($\$20,086 \times 9 = \$180,774$), then multiplying the results by a 10.4 percent for benefits, to determine the annual savings of \$199,574 ($\$180,774 \times 1.104 = \$199,574$). The district also pays an annual \$3,600 per full-time employee for health insurance ($9 \times \$3,600 = \$32,400$) to give a total annual savings of \$231,974 ($\$199,574 + \$32,400 = \$231,974$).

The second part of the fiscal impact is based on reducing the number of workdays for ten security guards from 260 days to 210 days for a work schedule that coincides with student attendance days, school holidays, and in-service days. (180 student days + 22 school holidays + 8 in-service days = 210 workdays), resulting in a reduction of 50 workdays (260 days – 210 days = 50 days).

The average hourly rate is \$9.66 for security guards. Based on an eight-hour day, the security guards average daily rate is \$77.28 ($8 \times \$9.66 = \77.28). The estimated annual savings per security guard is \$3,864 ($50 \times \$77.28 = \$3,864$), then multiplying the results by 10.4 percent for benefits, to determine the annual savings of \$4,266 ($\$3,864 \times 1.104$ benefit rate = \$4,266), resulting in a total annual savings of \$42,660 ($10 \times \$4,266 = \$42,660$) for reducing the number of annual workdays for ten security guards from 260 workdays to 210 workdays.

The third part of the fiscal impact is based on the security supervisor increasing from 230 workdays to 260 work days to supervise the three security guard summer staff. The estimated annual cost for increasing the supervisors schedule from 230 days to 260 days is derived by averaging the two security supervisor's salaries for an average salary of \$36,116 [$(\$40,000 + 32,232)/2 = \$36,116$]. An average supervisor salary of \$36,116 at the current 230 workdays is an average of \$19.63 per hour. (230 days x 8 hours daily = 1,840 hours annually) ($\$36,116/1,840 = \19.63 average hourly rate for security supervisor) (30 days x 8 hours daily = 240 additional security supervisor hours) for a total estimated additional cost of \$5,201 (240 hours x 19.63 per hour = \$4,711), ($\$4,711 \times 1.104$ benefit rate = \$5,201). The total annual savings is \$269,433 ($\$231,974 + \$42,660 - \$5,201 = \$269,433$).

WRITTEN LOCAL AGREEMENT FOR EMERGENCIES (REC. 80)

EEISD lacks a current written agreement with the local police departments that clearly defines the responsibilities of both entities regarding services and responses to emergencies. The superintendent confirmed that the district does not have

a MOU with the local law enforcement agency. Review of files indicated that the district signed an interlocal agreement with the City of Elsa, Texas in 1997–98 through 2002–03. However, district staff did not provide the review team agreements for 2003–04 through 2005–06. The guidelines for previous agreements included the following:

- assignment of one or more commissioned peace officers to the district;
- designation of the city as the employer of the assigned officer and responsible for workers compensation, liability insurance and a motor vehicle;
- assignment of training of peace officer, particularly in juvenile supervision and custody matters, and in the use of weapons and law enforcement equipment;
- identification of the peace officer's jurisdiction; and
- assignment of salary and overtime for peace officer to be paid by the district to the city, in addition to a flat rate for vehicle maintenance and fuel.

The assistant superintendent for Personnel, responsible for the district's security, stated the district has had agreements with the City of Elsa in the past, but could not recall any agreements with the City of Edcouch. The City of Elsa continues to provide a peace officer to the district, although a current interlocal agreement or memorandum of understanding for the services is not available. None of the previous agreements addressed the local law enforcements' responsibilities in the campuses crisis management plans.

Without a current interlocal agreement or MOU with the local law enforcement agency, there is no assignment of responsibility for the supervision of the officer. The reporting relationship with district staff is not defined and the district's responsibilities are not identified regarding the contracting of the police officer. Although past documentation clearly defines the police officer as an employee of the local police department, the district does not have any current documentation stating the local police department will be responsible for the officer's liability coverage and benefits for 2005–06.

Without the defined responsibilities of each entity in a written MOU, there may be confusion over which agency has authority in a given area during a response to a critical incident. For example, an MOU would designate who the spokesman would be in an emergency situation, preventing every involved agency from having its own spokesperson providing conflicting information to the public and media.

The NASRO provides samples of contracts between police departments and school districts, which is available at http://www.nasro.org/governing_rules.asp. Samples include a MOU used by Allen ISD. The MOU includes the following components:

- purpose of agreement;
- mission and goals of School Resource Program;
- organization structure that defines composition and supervision;
- procedures;
- selection process of officers;
- duties and responsibilities of the police department and officers;
- law enforcement duties;
- school district responsibilities; and
- compensation for services.

In addition, the May 2002 report published by the Texas Attorney General's School Violence Prevention Task Force states, "All of the agencies involved in the critical incident plan should enter into a MOU that clearly delineates issues of liability, responsibility, and jurisdiction." The MOU provides each agency with a clear understanding of everyone's role and responsibilities. Some examples of responsibilities listed in the report include operating the command post, processing the crime scene, conducting witness interviews, and providing services to victims.

The district should formalize the relationship with the local police departments by developing a MOU specifying both the services provided by the local law enforcement office and district responsibilities. The assistant superintendent for Personnel should draft a MOU using samples provided by the NASRO. The district's legal counsel, superintendent, and mayors of the local cities should review and finalize the draft and submit the MOU to the board for approval. The board should review and approve the MOU annually.

For background information on Safety and Security, see p. 259 in the General Information section of the appendices.

FISCAL IMPACT

RECOMMENDATIONS	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) SAVINGS	ONE TIME (COSTS) SAVINGS
CHAPTER 12: SAFETY AND SECURITY							
76. Develop annual comprehensive disciplinary incident reports for the board, employees, and community and conduct an annual hearing to review the report.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
77. Implement a DAEP for elementary students to comply with the TEC Chapter 37 and the board adopted student code of conduct.	(\$44,954)	(\$44,954)	(\$44,954)	(\$44,954)	(\$44,954)	(\$224,770)	(\$2,879)
78. Develop policies and procedures to guide the management and ongoing evaluation of the security program effectively, including a staffing methodology for the security provider.	\$39,184	\$39,184	\$39,184	\$39,184	\$39,184	\$195,920	\$0
79. Develop a staffing methodology for security guards, reduce the number of security guards, and reduce the number of workdays for security guards to ensure that guards are staffed in accordance with the school calendar.	\$269,433	\$269,433	\$269,433	\$269,433	\$269,433	\$1,347,165	\$0
80. Formalize the relationship with the local police departments by developing a MOU specifying both the services provided by the local law enforcement office and district responsibilities.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
TOTALS-CHAPTER 12	\$263,663	\$263,663	\$263,663	\$263,663	\$263,663	\$1,318,315	(\$2,879)

APPENDICES

EDCOUCH-ELSA INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

GENERAL INFORMATION

CHAPTER 1 EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

HEALTH SERVICES

The district has adequate staff to provide effective school health services at all eight campuses. The National Association of School Nurses' (NASN) position on caseload assignments for nurses states that the number of nurses per campus should be influenced by multiple factors, such as social, economic, and cultural status of the community, special health problems, and the mobility of people in the community. NASN and the Texas Association of School Nurses recommend a maximum ratio of 750 students per school nurse. EEISD provides a licensed vocational nurse (LVN), registered nurse (RN), or nurse's aide per campus, which is consistent with the NASN guidelines. **Exhibit A-1** shows the health services staff assigned to each EEISD campus.

EEISD complies with all Health Services policies. The EEISD Health Advisory Council met in October 2005. This committee established a council that can make recommendations to the Board of Trustees related to the instruction of the health education. Three external partners provide additional health services to the district: Sandstone, Nuestra Clinica, and the Hidalgo County Health agencies.

EEISD has the following legal and local policies in place to provide the required health services to students:

EXHIBIT A-1 NURSE/NURSE AIDE POSITIONS PER CAMPUS 2005

CAMPUS	POSITION	NUMBER OF POSITIONS
LBJ Elementary	LVN	1
Truan Junior High	RN	1
	LVN	1
	Nurse Aide	1
EEISD High School	LVN	2
	Nurse Aide	1
Early Childhood Center	LVN	1
6th Grade Center	LVN	1
Kennedy Elementary	Nurse Aide	1
Garcia Elementary	RN	1
Rodriguez Elementary	RN	1

SOURCE: EEISD Nurse Coordinator, November 2005.

- FFAA (Legal) Health Requirements and Services/ Physical Examinations, which addresses:
 - Vision and Hearing Screening;
 - Routine Screening;
 - Acanthosis Nigricans Screening; and
 - Spinal Screening.
- FFAA (Local) Health Requirements and Screening, which addresses:
 - Tuberculosis Testing;
 - UIL Participation; and
 - Additional Screening Referrals.
- FFAB (Legal) Health Requirements and Services: Immunizations, which includes:
 - Immunization Requirement
 - Exclusions
 - Medical Reasons
 - Reasons of Conscience
 - Provisional Admittance;
 - Homeless Student
 - Transfer Student
 - Evidence Of Immunization
 - Consent to Immunization
 - Transfer of Records.
- FFAC (Legal) Health Requirements and Services: Medical Treatment, which includes:
 - Consent to Medical Treatment
 - Forms of Consent
 - Minor's Consent Treatment
 - Administering Medication
 - Self-Administration of Asthma Medicine
 - Dietary Supplements
 - Psychotropics
- FFAC (Local) Health Requirements and Services: Medical Treatment, which includes:
 - Student Illness
 - Accidents Involving Students
 - Emergency Treatment Forms
 - Administering Medication
 - Exceptions
 - Psychotropics

- FFAD (Legal) Health Requirements and Services: Communicable Diseases include:
 - Reports
 - Exclusion
 - Readmittance
 - Bacterial Meningitis
- FFAD (Local) Health Requirements and Services: Communicable Diseases include:
 - Chronic Reportable Diseases
 - Confidentiality
 - Risk of Transmission
 - Risk to Affected Student
 - Referral to Special Programs
- BFD (Legal) Board Internal Organizations: Citizen Advisory Committees include:
 - School Health Advisory Council
 - Changes in Curriculum

MIGRANT

EEISD’s Migrant Education Program serves migrant students districtwide. Its goal is to help migrant students succeed academically by implementing instructional activities for core subjects to improve student performance. EEISD enrolled 1,294 migrant students in 2005. The migrant student population increased 36.1 percent since 2001, which is a higher increase annually than its peer districts. **Exhibit A-2** shows the migrant enrollment from 2001–2005.

The district receives Title I, Part C federal funds of \$885,346 for the education of migrant children. Title I, Part C funds provide supplemental resources to local education agencies. These agencies provide supplemental instructional support services for migrant students and their families, conduct identification and recruitment, data collection, and records transfer as required by law. The migrant program helps

migrant students overcome the challenges of mobility, cultural and language barriers, social isolation, and other difficulties of migratory life.

EEISD’s Migrant Education Program begins with identifying and recruiting of migrant students. To identify migrant families, the district distributes an employment survey when parents register their children for school. The survey is available in English and Spanish and asks parents whether they have traveled or moved in the last three years to pursue temporary or seasonal agricultural work. The program recruiter reviews the responses and migrant visiting teachers contact parents who answered yes. If the families do not have telephones, program staff visits homes to verify the survey information. A Parent Advisory Committee (PAC), consisting of officers and members that are migrant family members, hold meetings to discuss the seven areas of focus, funding, and activities they will hold for the migrant students. The district addresses student education, parental involvement and instructional strategies.

EEISD offers a variety of supplemental programs to support migrant students in the early childhood program, elementary school, middle school, and high school as well as support services. The programs consist of the following:

Early Childhood Program (Ages 3–Kindergarten):

- provides home-based Building Bridges Program for three and four year olds; and
- coordinates with the district’s Even Start and early childhood programs to place three and four year olds in appropriate programs.

Elementary School (Grades 1–5):

- provides migrant computer lab during the school day;
- provides tutoring during the regular school day; and
- offers summer school opportunities.

EXHIBIT A-2
EEISD AND PEER DISTRICT MIGRANT STUDENT ENROLLMENT
2001–2005

DISTRICT	2001 ENROLLMENT	2002 ENROLLMENT	2003 ENROLLMENT	2004 ENROLLMENT	2005 ENROLLMENT	PERCENT CHANGE
EDCOUCH–ELSA	951	1,137	1,275	1,376	1,294	36.1%
Progresso	527	546	658	682	642	21.8%
Rio Grande City	2,153	2,233	2,541	2,526	2,038	(5.3%)
Roma	992	489	1,415	731	277	(72.1%)
Southside	88	86	0	75	65	(26.1%)

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS 2001-2005.

Middle School (Grade 6) Junior High School (Grades 7–8):

- provides migrant computer lab during the school day;
- provides tutoring during the school day; and
- provides migrant summer school.

High School (Grades 9–12):

- provides computer-assisted instruction to facilitate accrual or partial and/or missing credits;
- provides correspondence coursework to facilitate accrual or partial and/or missing credits; and
- provides summer school opportunities.

Support Services:

- provides clothing and/or school supplies;
- provides vision, hearing, and/or health screenings;
- provides drop-out prevention programs; and
- sends migrant parents to state workshops and conferences to enable them to participate more fully in the Migrant Education Program.

ATHLETICS

The University of Texas at Austin created the University Interscholastic League (UIL) to provide leadership and guidance to public school debate and athletic teachers. In 1913, the Debating League of Texas High Schools and the Interscholastic Athletic Association merged to form the UIL, which the University of Texas at Austin still operates.

According to UIL rules, a school shall not participate in a sports activity unless its registration for that sport, signed by the superintendent or designated administrator, is on file in the UIL office by February 15 of the preceding school year (September 1 for football). Only schools in Conferences 3A, 4A, and 5A are eligible to participate in UIL soccer. Only schools in Conferences 4A and 5A are eligible to participate in UIL team tennis. Schools are placed in conferences according to enrollment figures. Schools are assigned to districts by the UIL office.

The “No Pass, No Play” rule is administered according to the rules of the UIL. If a student fails any class during the grading period, that student is ineligible for the next three weeks. At that time, a student must pass all of his classes to become eligible again. EEISD participates in Conference League 4A. Student performances in extracurricular activities are tracked and monitored. At the high school, a failure list is printed every six weeks and coaches and sponsors are responsible for looking at the list, identifying players if they are on the list, and taking appropriate action. Tutoring classes

are available and athletes can come to practice late if they are attending a tutoring class.

Staffing for athletics is allocated on a needs basis. Staffing is consistent between campuses. Programs are offered equitably to every student, both boys and girls. All coaches teach academic classes. Teachers who assist with these activities also receive stipends. **Exhibit A-3** shows the EEISD athletic positions and supplemental pay per position for 2005–06. Stipends are a part of the teaching contract.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), districts must provide appropriate public education for all children with disabilities regardless of their severity. 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 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 related to those of children in regular education classrooms.

EEISD has a pre-referral process to determine if students require special education services. This process includes intervention strategies that address student needs before referral for special education services. Student-assistance teams at each school meet regularly to discuss student remediation before special education referral.

The IDEA states that an effective special education program provides the items listed as follows:

- pre-referral intervention in regular education;
- referral to special education for evaluation;
- comprehensive nondiscriminatory evaluation;
- initial placement through an Admission, Review and Dismissal (ARD) committee;
- educational services and supports according to a written Individualized Education Plan;
- annual program review;
- three-year re-evaluation; and
- dismissal from the special education program.

Exhibit A-4 shows the EEISD students enrolled in special education by disability. The learning disabled category has the largest student enrollment with 330 students. Speech impairment has the second largest enrollment with 54 students.

**EXHIBIT A-3
ATHLETIC POSITIONS AND SUPPLEMENTAL PAY
2005-06**

SPORT	STIPEND	TOTAL STIPEND	ADDITIONAL DAYS
Assistant JV Football	\$4,500	\$6,500	20
JH Golf	\$2,000		
JH Cross County	\$1,750	\$3,750	5
Assistant V/JV Boys/ Girls Track	\$2,000		
JH Football	\$1,500	\$5,000	0
JH Tack	\$1,500		
Sports Inventory Clerk	\$2,000		
Freshman Football	\$2,000	\$4,000	10
JH Track Coordinator	\$2,000		
JH Basketball	\$1,500	\$1,500	0
HS Boys/ Girls Golf	\$6,500	\$6,500	20
JH Basketball	\$1,750	\$1,750	0
Freshman Basketball	\$1,750	\$1,750	0
Head Boys Basketball/Summer	\$4,000	\$7,000	20
Gym Coordinator	\$1,000		
V/JV Track Boys/Girls	\$2,000		
Assistant HS Boys Basketball	\$1,750	\$1,750	0
Freshman Girls Volleyball	\$1,750	\$3,500	5
JH. Girls Basketball	\$1,750		
Assistant Girls Soccer	\$2,000	\$2,500	0
Equipment Manager	\$500		
Head Varsity Boys Soccer	\$4,000	\$4,000	5
Head Soccer (Grade 7)	\$1,750	\$1,750	0
Assistant Boys Soccer	\$2,000	\$2,500	0
Equipment Manager	\$500		
JH Volleyball	\$1,750	\$1,750	5
JH Football	\$1,500	\$3,000	5
JH Track	\$1,500		
JH Volleyball (Grade 8)	\$1,750	\$4,000	10
JH Girls Track Head (Grade 7)	\$1,750		
Equipment Manager	\$500		
JH Volleyball	\$1,750	\$3,250	5
JH Track	\$1,500		
HS Volleyball	\$2,000	\$4,000	5
HS Softball	\$2,000		
JH Football Head (Grade 8)	\$1,750	\$3,750	10
Assistant Baseball HS	\$2,000		
Assistant HS Boys Basketball	\$1,750	\$1,750	0
Assistant HS Girls Cross Country	\$2,000	\$4,000	10
Assistant HS Girls Track	\$2,000		
JV Football	\$2,500	\$4,500	10
Assistant HS Baseball	\$2,000		

EXHIBIT A-3 (CONTINUED)
ATHLETIC POSITIONS AND SUPPLEMENTAL PAY
2005-06

SPORT	STIPEND	TOTAL STIPEND	ADDITIONAL DAYS
Asst. Athletic Director		\$12,500	25
First Assistant	\$5,000		
Defensive Coordinator	\$4,000		
Off Season Coordinator	\$2,500		
Football Tech Coordinator	\$1,000		
Asst. JV/Varsity Football	\$4,500	\$8,500	20
Assistant HS Girls Basketball	\$2,000		
Assistant HS Boys/Girls Track	\$2,000		
Asst. Track	\$2,000	\$7,500	20
Summer Football	\$1,000		
Assistant V/ JV Football	\$4,500		
Assistant V/JV Football	\$4,500	\$6,500	20
Assistant HS Boys/Girls Track	\$2,000		
Head HS Volleyball	\$4,000	\$6,000	10
Assistant Girls Track	\$2,000		
Head Girls Cross Country	\$3,000	\$7,000	15
Head Girls Track	\$4,000		
JH Football	\$1,500	\$3,000	5
JH Track	\$1,500		
Head Football (Grade 7)	\$1,750	\$3,750	10
HS Girls Softball	\$2,000		
Assistant JV/V Football	\$4,500	\$9,500	20
Head Boys HS Track	\$4,000		
Varsity Scout Coordinator	\$1,000		
Assistant JV/V Football	\$4,500	\$6,500	20
Assistant Boys/Girls Track	\$2,000		
JH Football	\$1,500	\$3,000	5
JH Track	\$1,500		
JH Head Girls Cross Country	\$1,750	\$4,750	10
JH Girls Basketball	\$1,500		
JH Girls Track	\$1,500		
Head Freshman Football	\$2,500	\$4,500	10
Assistant Track Boys/Girls	\$2,000		
Head Girls Softball	\$4,500	\$4,500	5
Freshman Football	\$1,750	\$3,250	5
JH Track	\$1,500		
Assistant V/JV Football	\$4,500	\$7,500	20
Assistant Track Girls/Boys	\$2,000		
Special Teams Coordinator	\$1,000		
Freshman Head Girls Basketball	\$1,750	\$1,750	5
HS Girls Volleyball	\$1,750	\$1,750	5
JH Football	\$1,750	\$4,250	5
Assistant Boys JH Track	\$1,500		
JH Coordinator	\$1,000		

(continued on next page)

**EXHIBIT A-3 (CONTINUED)
ATHLETIC POSITIONS AND SUPPLEMENTAL PAY
2005-06**

SPORT	STIPEND	TOTAL STIPEND	ADDITIONAL DAYS
JH Football Head (Grade 7)	\$1,750	\$4,500	5
JH Girls Track Head (Grade 8)	\$1,750		
JH Equipment Manager	\$500		
JH Track Coordinator	\$500		
Fulltime Head Trainer	\$8,000	\$8,000	25
Asst. Girls Soccer	\$1,750	\$3,250	0
JH Girls Basketball	\$1,500		
Assistant JV/V Football	\$4,500	\$6,500	20
Assistant JV/V Boys/Girls Track	\$2,000		
JH Football	\$1,500	\$3,000	5
Assistant Boys JH Track	\$1,500		
Head Boys Cross Country	\$3,000	\$7,000	15
Head Girls Soccer	\$4,000		
Assistant Girls Basketball	\$2,000	\$2,000	5
Assistant Varsity Cross Boys Country	\$2,000	\$2,000	10
Assistant Baseball	\$1,750	\$1,750	0
Tennis	\$6,500	\$6,500	20
Head JH Boys Soccer	\$1,750	\$1,750	0
HS Boys/ Girls Golf	\$3,500	\$3,500	10
Head Baseball	\$4,000	\$6,000	10
Freshman Football	\$2,000		
Assistant JV/V Football	\$4,500	\$7,500	20
Assistant HS Girls/Boys Track	\$2,000		
Varsity Football Equipment Manager	\$1,000		
Assistant HS Girls Track	\$2,000	\$2,000	0
Assistant HS Girls Softball	\$2,000	\$3,000	
JH Boys Basketball	\$1,000		
Freshman Baseball	\$1,750	\$1,750	0
Head Girls Varsity Basketball	\$4,000	\$4,000	10
Assistant Varsity Basketball	\$2,000	\$2,000	5
JH Football	\$1,500	\$3,000	5
JH Track	\$1,500		
TOTAL	\$269,250	\$268,750	545

SOURCE: EEISD Athletic Director.

EEISD is a member of the Mid Valley Special Education Cooperative and shares services with Monte Alto ISD and La Villa ISD. The district serves special education students by offering a range of instructional arrangements that highly qualified professionals deliver in modern, well-equipped classrooms. The district provides appropriate curriculum modifications and services through the following instructional settings:

- **Mainstream:** Students with disabilities who spend all of their classroom hours in a regular classroom

are “mainstreamed.” EEISD provides two types of mainstreaming: mainstreaming with content support and mainstreaming with a co-teacher or an aide. Content mastery services are available at the middle school and high school to all students with disabilities. Co-teaching is at the high school only in the content areas of math, reading, language arts and science. Special education teachers go into regular education classes and join the regular education teacher in teaching, working particularly with the special education students.

**EXHIBIT A-4
EEISD SPECIAL EDUCATION
ENROLLMENT BY DISABILITY
2004-05**

DISABILITY	KENNEDY ELEMENTARY	EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER	RODRIGUEZ ELEMENTARY	GARCIA ELEMENTARY	LBJ ELEMENTARY	GRADE 6 CENTER	TRUAN JUNIOR HIGH SCJPP;	EEISD HIGH SCHOOL	TOTAL
Orthopedic Impairment	*	5	*		*		*	*	5
Other Health Impaired	*	*	6	*				5	11
Auditory Impairment							*	5	5
Mental Retardation	*	*	8		*	*	8	16	32
Visual Impairment	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*
Emotional Disturbance	*							*	*
Deaf-Blind								*	*
Learning Disability	21		10	16	17	43	80	164	351
Speech Impairment	10	24	9	12	8			*	63
Autism		*	*	*			*	*	0
Traumatic Brain Injury			*		*				*
Non-categorical Early Childhood									0
Multiple Disabilities									0
TOTAL	31	29	33	28	25	43	88	190	467

ENROLLMENT IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

*Exhibit does not show data for groups of students fewer than 5 for privacy reasons.
SOURCE: EEISD Special Education Director, November 2005.

- **Resource:** The ARD committee recommends assigning students to a separate, special education classroom. These resource classes are offered in three core subjects of reading, language arts and mathematics. Students may be placed in one or more of these classes based on their abilities. Students in this category take a combination of regular classes and resource classes.
- **Vocational Education Class:** This class provides educational and vocational services, including training in job readiness skills, to eligible secondary students.
- **Self-Contained Classes:** EEISD students with severe disabilities who cannot get a satisfactory education in a regular classroom are served in a self-contained classroom.

- **Homebound:** This program provides at-home services for students in all grades (not necessarily special education) who cannot attend school because of illness, injury or expulsion.
- **Pre-school:** EEISD provides a preschool program in which children with disabilities are included in classes with regular students.

In 2004-05, the district provided special education services to 499 students, or 9.1 percent of the district's student population. The percentage of students served was second highest as compared to the peer districts and lower than the state percentage. The percentage of teachers in the special education program was second highest among peer districts and higher than the state percentage. The percentage of budgeted instructional expenditures, however, was second

highest among the peer districts and higher than the state percentage. **Exhibit A-5** shows the number of special education students, teachers and budgeted instructional expenditures among peer districts and the state.

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) special education monitoring activities were redesigned during 2003–04 to focus on a data-driven and performance based system that will take place on a continuous improvement, rather than a cyclical model. The 2003–04 school year was a transition year for statewide monitoring. Districts were strongly encouraged to verify that their internal data collection procedures and systems were effectively designed to assure data quality and integrity of system implementation.

In September 2004, the special education unit of the Program Monitoring and Interventions Division notified EEISD that it completed the 2003–04 Special Education Monitoring Stage 2 Intervention requirements. The intervention included the district submitting required documents and information related to a Public Performance Review (District Public Meeting), Focused Data Analysis, and a Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP). In developing the CIP, the district was required to review findings from the public meeting and the focused data analysis of performance-based data element results.

The specific Stage 2 Intervention documents that were submitted for agency review included:

- District Public Meeting Participant Template;
- District Public Meeting response Template;
- District Public Meeting Findings Template;
- Focused Data Analysis Template for applicable data elements; and

- CIP.

EEISD identified local needs and implemented continuous improvement planning activities to address its needs. The district indicated that teachers were not following the Student Intervention Team (SIT) recommendations adequately. A plan to address this concern was included in the district’s CIP submitted to TEA in May 2004.

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION (CTE)

Texas Education Code (TEC) Section 29.181 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.” Texas Administrative Code Chapter 74, Subchapter A, requires school districts to offer “programs of study for broad career concentrations in areas of agricultural science and technology, arts and communication, business education, family and consumer science, health occupations technology, trade and industry and technology education that will prepare students for continued learning and postsecondary education in employment settings.”

EEISD 2004–05 CTE courses available to students at the high school were comprised of Agricultural Science, Business Education, Family and Consumer Sciences, Health Science, Media Technology Education, and Industrial Engineering Technology Education. EEISD has a of post–secondary articulation agreement in place with a local college, which includes dual credit courses in:

- South Texas College
 - Health Occupations II
 - Business Computer Information Systems II

**EXHIBIT A-5
SPECIAL EDUCATION
ACTUAL OPERATING EXPENDITURES
2004–05**

DISTRICT	STUDENTS	PERCENTAGE	TEACHERS	PERCENTAGE	ACTUAL OPERATING EXPENDITURE SPECIAL EDUCATION	PERCENTAGE
EDCOUCH–ELSA	499	9.1%	30.5	9.4%	\$2,902,512	13.4%
Roma	533	8.5%	24.8	6%	\$1,494,173	6.1%
Southside	704	14.5%	9.9	3.2%	\$2,323,167	11.6%
Progreso	115	5.7%	9.4	6.1%	\$755,195	8.3%
Rio Grande City	1,231	2.9%	77.9	11.7%	\$6,365,172	14.3%
STATE	506,391	11.6%	30,200.8	10.3%	\$3,729,870,123	16.3%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS 2004-05.

- Medical Terminology
- Administrative Procedures
- Metal Works
- Metal Trades

The Armed Forces Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) is given, on a voluntary basis, to all students in grades 11 and 12. Student participation in the CTE program offerings at EEISD also includes optional participation in a number of student organizations:

- Future Farmers of America (FFA);
- Family and Career and community Leaders of America;
- Health Occupations Students of America; and
- Vocational Industrial Clubs of America/Skills USA.

In 2004–05, the EEISD CTE program served 1,152 students, or 21.1 percent of the students. The district figures were the lowest for percentage of students enrolled. The number of CTE teachers in EEISD was the highest among its peers. The percent-of-total- budgeted expenditures was the second highest among the peer districts and higher than the statewide percentage. **Exhibit A-6** shows students, teachers, and budgeted instructional expenditures for EEISD, peers districts, and the state.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT (A)

The Advanced Placement (AP) course and exam participation rates and examination scores of EEISD students are lower than Region 1 and the state, and ranks third highest among peer districts. AP is a nationally recognized program that introduces students to university-level work while they are in

high school. The courses are developed locally, based on course descriptions provided by the College Board, sponsor of the AP program. AP examinations, developed by committees of university faculty and high school teachers, are widely accepted as valid indicators of how well students are likely to perform in the same courses taken in college. Over 90 percent of the nation’s colleges and universities have policies granting either incoming credit or advanced placement, or both, for satisfactory grades on AP exams. There are 29 College Board courses approved for the Texas public schools. EEISD offers 13 of the courses, representing basic courses in English, mathematics, history, foreign language, and science. The courses available through the College Board and those offered by EEISD are shown in **Exhibit A-7**.

By earning college course credit through AP programs, students can complete college hours while attending high school, thus finishing their college degrees sooner. As enrollment in the high school increases, there has been a decrease of 91 students taking AP classes from 2001–2004. **Exhibit A-8** shows the number of AP courses offered at the high school, and student enrollment for a three-year period.

In 2003–04, the percentage of EEISD students taking AP examinations was third highest among peer districts, and higher than the region and state averages. In 2002–03, the percentage of EEISD students taking AP exams was the third highest among peer districts and lower than the region and state average. **Exhibit A-9** shows the percentage of students taking AP tests in EEISD, peer districts, region, and the state during 2002–03 and 2003–04. Data is not available for 2004–05.

**EXHIBIT A-6
CTE
ACTUAL OPERATING EXPENDITURES
2004–05**

DISTRICT	STUDENTS		TEACHERS		ACTUAL OPERATING EXPENDITURES	
	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE	AMOUNT	PERCENTAGE
EDCOUCH-ELSA	1,152	21.1%	17.2	5.3%	\$1,289,748	5.9%
Roma	1,901	30.3%	16.2	3.9%	\$814,933	3.3%
Progreso	447	22.0%	7.5	4.9%	\$400,420	4.4%
Rio Grande City	2,134	22.4%	0.1	4.5%	\$1,600,736	3.6%
Southside	1,048	21.65	15.1	4.9%	\$684,987	3.4%
STATE	892,018	20.3%	11,787.1	4.0%	\$824,895,004	3.7%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2004-05.

**EXHIBIT A-7
AP COURSES COLLEGE BOARD OFFERED
2004-05**

COLLEGE BOARD COURSES	OFFERED BY EDCOUCH-ELSA HIGH SCHOOL
Biology	✓
Calculus AB	✓
Calculus BC	✓
Chemistry	✓
Computer Science A	
Computer Science B	
Macroeconomics	✓
Microeconomics	
English Language	✓
English Literature	✓
Environmental Science	
European History	
French Language	
French Literature	
German Language	
Spanish Language	✓
Comparative Government and Politics	✓
Human Geography	
Latin Literature	
Music Theory	
Physics B	✓
Physics C	
Psychology	
Spanish Literature	✓
Statistics	
Studio Art	
U.S. History	✓
World History	✓

SOURCE: EEISD Curriculum Department, November 2005.

To award credit or advanced standing for an AP course, colleges and universities generally require an AP examination score of three, four, or five, with three defined as “qualified,” four as “well-qualified,” and five as “extremely well-qualified.” In 2002-03, the percentage of scores for EEISD students that were at or above the criterion score of three on one or more AP examinations was the third highest among peer districts and 2.9 percent below the Region and 17.4 percent below the state averages. In 2003-04, the percentage of

**EXHIBIT A-8
AP COURSE OFFERINGS
2002-03 THROUGH 2004-05**

COURSE	STUDENTS ENROLLED 2002-03	STUDENTS ENROLLED 2003-04	STUDENTS ENROLLED 2004-05
AP English Grammar	64	79	62
AP English Literature	26	11	13
AB Calculus	39	31	16
BC Calculus	00	0	6
AP Physics B	24	0	0
AP Biology	0	11	0
AP Chemistry	0	13	13
AP US History	94	81	34
AP Government	0	8	43
AP Economics	16	17	0
AP Spanish Grammar	5	8	0
AP Spanish Literature	4	0	0

SOURCE: EEISD High School Principal, November 2005.

**EXHIBIT A-9
AP STUDENTS TESTED
2002-03 AND 2003-04**

DISTRICT	2002-03 PERCENTAGE	2003-04 PERCENTAGE
Rio Grande City	22.0%	24.0%
Progreso	15.7%	25.0%
EDCOUCH-ELSA	11.2%	19.1%
Southside	7.5%	10.4%
Roma	3.2%	14.0%
REGION 1	17.5%	18.6%
STATE	16.1%	17.4%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2004-05.

EEISD students scoring a three, four, or five on one or more AP examinations was third highest among the peer districts, and only 14.3 percent below Region 1 and 28.8 percent below the state. **Exhibit A-10** shows a comparison of the EEISD AP scores to peer districts, Region 1, and the state. EEISD is third highest among the peer district for students scoring a three, four or five but below both Region 1 and the state.

Although most students participate in AP courses before taking the corresponding examinations, students may take AP examinations without having taken the courses. The examinations, which are developed and administered through the College Board, are available statewide to schools making

**EXHIBIT A-10
AP EXAMINATION PERFORMANCE
2002-03 AND 2003-04**

DISTRICT	SCORES OF 3, 4, OR 5 2002-03	SCORES OF 3, 4, OR 5 2003-04
Progreso ISD	42.9%	32.4%
Rio Grande City ISD	34.6%	32.5%
EDCOUCH ELSA ISD	34.0%	20.5%
Southside ISD	33.8%	20.0%
Roma ISD	0.0%	9.2%
REGION 1	36.9%	34.8%
STATE	51.4%	49.3%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2004-05.

the required administrative and financial arrangements in advance. Conversely, AP courses are developed locally and depend on individual school and district resources. As a result, AP course offerings vary from district to district.

**CHAPTER 2
DISTRICT LEADERSHIP, ORGANIZATION,
AND MANAGEMENT**

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETINGS

Regular board of trustees meetings are held on the third Wednesday of the month at 7:00 PM in the boardroom at the central administration building. Meetings are posted at the central administration building and on the district website at least 72 hours before the scheduled time. Agendas contain the date, time, place, and topics to be addressed the school review team attended the regular meeting of November 16, 2005. A group of about 60 people was present, including all campus principals, parents of students to be honored, and a sizeable contingent of patrons concerned about the lack of available tickets for a football play-off game. The meeting was conducted in an orderly manner in accordance with Roberts' Rules of Order.

Board packets reviewed contained a copy of the posted agenda, minutes of the previous regular meeting and any special meetings, and a brief summary of each agenda item in a format containing:

- agenda item number;
- subject;
- background information;
- administrative consideration;

- administrative recommendation; and
- board action required.

A provision for public forum, called Citizen Communication in the EEISD agendas, is provided at the beginning of every regular board meeting. EEISD board policy BED (Local) governs the process. The agenda summary does not include budget references and district goal relevance; however, many agenda items are include exhibits that the administration prepared. Consent agenda format is for routine or recurring items. The back of each agenda packet contains a form for board members to use to request that an item be placed on a future agenda. The board president signs a certified agenda after the board meets in closed session.

BOARD/SUPERINTENDENT COMMUNICATION

On each Friday before the Wednesday board meeting, the superintendent's secretary hand-delivers the meeting agenda to board members. Board members agree that this is a consistent practice and that it gives them enough time to prepare for the meeting. A weekly written memo is also hand-delivered to board members to update them on the past week's events and upcoming activities. If there are sensitive issues or emergencies, the superintendent communicates with board members by telephone or in person. The superintendent stated that he hoped to issue laptop computers to the board members in the spring of 2006 and transition to a web-based agenda.

BOARD TRAVEL EXPENDITURES

Board members attend an annual retreat sponsored by Region 1 at South Padre Island. Most also attend the annual TASA/Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) convention held in Houston or Dallas and/or the TASB Summer Leadership Conference in San Antonio. Two or three board members commonly attend the national school board convention. **Exhibit A-11** shows board travel expenditures for 2004 for EEISD and peer districts. Board travel expenses were reduced in 2004 by \$8,505 from 2003, when the board spent \$31,063 on travel.

On September 28, 2005, the board adopted revisions to board/superintendent and employee travel compensation. Allowances for lodging, meals, and mileage are contained in **Exhibit A-12**.

DISTRICT AND CAMPUS IMPROVEMENT PLANS (CIPs)

CIPs start at the end of the school year, completed at the beginning of the next school year. CIPs are submitted to the

**EXHIBIT A-11
BOARD TRAVEL COSTS
2004**

DISTRICT	EXPENDITURE
Rio Grande City ISD*	\$25,907
Progreso ISD	\$24,364
EDCOUCH-ELSA ISD	\$22,558
Roma ISD	\$9,225
Southside ISD	\$9,045

*2003 Audit used; 2004 not available.
SOURCE: District Financial Audits posted on Legislative Budget Board website.

**EXHIBIT A-12
TRAVEL COMPENSATION
2005**

GROUP	LODGING	MEALS	MILEAGE
Board/ Superintendent	Up to \$170 with receipt	\$72/day in region \$100/day out of region	40.5 cents/mile
Employees	Up to \$85 with receipt	\$36/day	40.5 cents/mile

SOURCE: EEISD Board Agenda, September 28, 2005.

board for approval at the same time as the District Improvement Plan (DIP). CIPs follow the format and goals contained in the DIP, and include some strategies that are unique to the campus. For the current school year, DIP and the CIPs were approved by the board as part of the consent agenda on September 28, 2005. The assistant superintendent for Curriculum stated that “the plans drive everything we do.” District site-based teams receive training from Region 1; the focus for the past year has been on integrating components and instructional strategies for all sub-groups. The assistant superintendent for Curriculum has recently developed a *Guide to District Integrated Planning and Decision-Making Process*.

**CHAPTER 3
COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

PARENT INVOLVEMENT DIRECTOR

The district ensures the EEISD community and parents are informed regarding district matters by employing a Parent Involvement director who collaborates with other agencies to bring services to the district. The district position is funded 50 percent from Title I funds and 50 percent from migrant funds. The director is responsible for several activities designed to increase parental involvement and meet

state and federal requirements for parent communication and involvement. Responsibilities include coordinating an annual parent conference each November. The conference is presented in collaboration with Even Start and the Texas Migrant Council, and Hidalgo County Head Start programs. The Parent Involvement director solicits contributions from community and business groups as well as individuals. In 2005–06, this initiative raised \$1,150 in donations. Groups are also encouraged to donate products that can be provided as incidental attendance gifts for parents. The Parent Involvement director, together with four volunteers, collects and packages these supplies for parents who attend the conference. The conference offers breakfast, lunch, and door prizes to encourage attendance. Parents who attend the conference can attend concurrent sessions on such topics as graduation requirements, signs of drug abuse, understanding the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) and child development; a guest speaker presents on a topic of general interest. In 2004, 280 parents attended the session and session evaluations were generally favorable. Over 391 parents in attended the district’s 2005 conference.

The Parent Involvement director presents information to parents annually at the beginning of the year regarding services under Title I and migrant programs as well as information describing Title II, Title III and Title V programs. The Parent Involvement director also presents information to each campus regarding state compensatory, bilingual, special education and vocational programs. The director also assists campus staff in providing parent-training activities, which include information regarding TAKS and how parents can help students at home. The director is responsible for writing, photographing, publishing, and translating the quarterly newsletter.

In addition to the numerous activities provided by the Parent Involvement director to meet Title I and migrant parent involvement requirements, the director has undertaken a project that recognizes parent leaders. She recruited four volunteers from the Parent Advisory Council (PAC), who assist her in many parent involvement activities, to attend a four-month training program the Communities in Families organization sponsors. This training is provided entirely in Spanish and trains parents so they can present lessons to other parents in topics such as the value of the family, family relationships, and stages in children’s education. These parents are expected to provide lessons to other parents in the spring of 2006.

COMMUNITY AND BUSINESS INVOLVEMENT

GENERAL ORGANIZATION

The district maintains excellent relationships with many community agencies. Additionally, an interview with a prominent businessperson in the community indicated that the business community is very interested in the district and its students. He stated that one of the business communities' big events was a banquet which honors the top students in the district and provides scholarships. He stated that the business community has a vested interest in assisting the district in improving student performance since certain prospective businesses considering moving into the area need a large pool of skilled workers. He further stated that business professionals stay connected to the district by participating in committees and career day presentations. According to this person, the district is very receptive to the community and allows the community to use facilities for appropriate activities. The district does not use any foundations to enhance or support district programs.

The district communicates with students in a variety of ways including the student handbooks and the district website. The handbook contains extensive information for both students and parents. Information for parents includes grading guidelines, report cards, testing and the parental complaint process. Information for students includes curriculum related information as well as rules of conduct and expectations for behavior. The website includes information from each campus such as who to contact for information and schedules for a variety of activities. Links on the site provide resources for students having difficulties or needing additional information. The district also communicates with taxpayers in the community through its website. The website contains information concerning the adopted tax rate and its effects on the community. The taxpayers are also involved through the annual budget and tax adoption process meetings held by the board.

CHAPTER 4 PERSONNEL

ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

Several administrators in several departments perform personnel functions in EEISD. The present Personnel organizational structure is detailed in finding one of Chapter 4 as is in-depth description of the management of personnel functions. The personnel budget for 2005–06 presented to the review team had an appropriation total of \$51,685 and a

balance of \$41,521. The budget for 2004–05 showed a total appropriation of \$51,835.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The director of Personnel has developed a detailed employee handbook, which includes information such as district information, employment, compensation and benefits, leaves and absences, employee relations and complaints, and grievances. The handbook is available on the district website but is not available for employees that cannot access the website because the district prints about 20 copies.

Personnel policies as well as all other board policies are available online. The Personnel director is not involved with review and revision of local personnel policies; he has been involved in the development of only two policies in the past few years. The Personnel Department has not written personnel procedures to guide department staff or administrators in regards to conducting personnel functions in a consistent and legally compliant manner. The department has not conducted training for managers on procedures. Both the director of Personnel and the director of Student Services are involved in handling grievances. They hear level one or level two grievances depending on the circumstance and the type of grievance filed. If the grievance deals with a personnel related matter, either director may hear it at level one. If a level one grievance is not resolved at a campus or department level, either director may serve as the superintendent's designee at level two.

The district has applications for professional employment, auxiliary/paraprofessional employment and substitute employment. The professional and auxiliary/paraprofessional applications are available on the district website and can be downloaded.

COMPENSATION AND CLASSIFICATION SYSTEMS

The district contracted with TASB in 2005 to conduct a salary study. The TASB study, completed in June 2005, includes findings and recommendations regarding employee salaries. The study shows that EEISD teacher salaries were low when compared to salaries in surrounding districts, with beginning teacher salaries lower than all eight of comparison districts. The compensation study recommended a substantial raise for teachers of approximately \$1,500 dollars and a general pay increase between 3.5 percent and 4 percent for all others. According to the superintendent and the Business manager, the board approved the teacher increases and the 4 percent increase for other employees in the August board

meeting as part of the budget process. The district did not provide an individual agenda item listing compensation plan approval. All wage information provided indicates that the district uses a step scale for salary determinations for teachers and a midpoint system for all other employees, including administrators, and that no salaries are tied to student achievement.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

The district appraises all staff annually and maintains the appraisals in personnel files. The documents the review team examined show that the district has a variety of evaluation methods that clearly indicate performance ratings and the evaluation indicators. The evaluation forms for administrative positions include three ratings: below expectations, meets expectations and exceeds expectations. Instructions were provided to use these ratings at the criterion level rather than on the specific indicator level; indicators were listed under several criterion such as instruction management, school/organization management and school/community relations. The supervisor and the superintendent signed these evaluations. The paraprofessional and auxiliary forms had a five point system which ranged from clearly outstanding to unsatisfactory. Each indicator described a major responsibility or duty, which was then rated by the supervisor; only supervisor signatures were required for these evaluations. Teachers in EEISD are evaluated annually on the Professional Development Assessment System (PDAS). Over 90 percent of the teachers on the teacher survey agreed with the statement that district employees receive annual personnel evaluations.

CONTRACTING PROCESS

The district has contracted with JR3 Associates, a Texas Limited Partnership Company, for the sale and purchase of employment services. Under this contract, JR3 agrees to provide qualified teachers and school administrative staff (“educators”) on a temporary basis to districts that require these services and the district agrees to pay to JR3 for the salaries of those educators as per a fixed compensation schedule, which is subject to change on a yearly basis. Currently the district is paying JR3 for 36 employees, which include 16 teachers, four administrators, four counselors, one librarian, three secretary/clerks and eight teacher aides. According to the superintendent, the district saved considerable money by employing these persons through contracted services because the district saves on workers compensation costs and benefits, which the district does not

pay. He indicated that the district saved over \$300,000 by contracting with this third party employer. The review team called the director of Personnel to determine how the district can include paraprofessional employees as part of the contract, but the director did not return the telephone call.

CHAPTER 5 FACILITIES

CUSTODIAL CLEANING SUPPLIES

The district’s custodial staff has a controlled method of administering cleaning agents for its custodial workforce by contracting for its custodial supplies, including cleaning agents that are used by all custodians. The district chose to outsource its cleaning supplies and procure cleaning agents that arrive premixed by the supplier after experiencing several safety incidents in past years regarding individual custodial personnel mixing cleaning chemicals on their own.

The decision to provide pre-mixed cleaning agents through a contractor-provided program effectively eliminated this potentially harmful scenario making schools a safer environment for students and staff.

BALANCE OF STUDENT ENROLLMENT

EEISD has balanced enrollment across the district to the degree necessary to preclude the need for portable buildings for educational purposes. Through a variety of demographic factors and well-timed decisions, the district has constructed adequate school facilities eliminating the need for portable classrooms at this time.

The ability of the district to contain all students in permanent classrooms is a combination of several factors. The following factors have allowed the district to use all schools to capacity:

- accurate past assessment of student demographics;
- proper distribution of that demographic across the district by setting appropriate attendance boundaries;
- establishing grade-level grouping that optimizes its facilities; and
- constructing appropriately-sized schools.

The district has not overbuilt its hard-wall capacity. Since the district is projected to have small but steady growth, the district prudently built its current schools to reflect the district’s needs. Elementary schools in the 70,000 to 80,000 square foot range are common in many districts today and

offer districts the ability to reduce administration through fewer, larger elementary schools, rather than building numerous small schools as was common in years past.

The process of balancing district enrollment places the EEISD in the enviable situation of containing all students in permanent classrooms, while ensuring from a facilities perspective, equal or similar educational resources for all students. It also adds to overall campus security and instructional time-on-task for teachers and students alike.

ENERGY MANAGEMENT

The district recently installed an energy management system in the district during 2005–06 in an effort to reduce utility costs. The system is made by Tour Andover Controls, Inc. (t.a.c.) and has been installed in the high school to operate and control the district’s heating, air conditioning, and ventilation (HVAC) systems. Building automation systems are installed to automatically start, stop, and regulate temperature-controlling equipment and can result in reduced electrical consumption and avoided utility costs for the owner.

Properly used, an automated system can have buildings “on-temperature” only when needed without requiring the Maintenance personnel’s presence ahead of time and can ensure mechanical systems are turned off promptly when not needed, thereby conserving utility resources. The district should identify building occupants’ work routines so the district can start/stop systems at the times needed for instruction or building use. The energy management system is new and the district did not have any records of energy reduction or cost savings at the time of the review team’s visit.

CARPENTER SHOP

Carpenters in EEISD’s Maintenance Department routinely make custom furniture for district offices and classrooms when requested by work order.

MAINTENANCE COMMUNICATION

The director of Maintenance office is away from the Central Administration area of the district and has no email connectivity.

CHAPTER 6 ASSETS AND RISK MANAGEMENT

PROPERTY CASUALTY COVERAGE

An effective risk management program controls costs by ensuring that the district is adequately protected against significant loss exposures with comprehensive insurance policies purchased at the lowest possible premiums. The first step a district can take to protect itself against significant losses is to have accurate insurable property values through annual appraisals. EEISD’s last property appraisal was through their 2004–05 property carrier, Property Casualty Alliance of Texas (PCAT). To obtain the most comprehensive coverage at the most competitive price, a district periodically issues requests for proposals (RFP) for property and casualty coverage. Preparation of specifications for a RFP for property and casualty coverage provides the district staff with an opportunity to conduct a risk assessment of the district’s needs and loss exposures. Obtaining proposals from various companies allows the district to identify various options within the market, identify trends in the industry, and compare coverages and costs that are most beneficial to the district. EEISD advertised a RFP for all property and casualty coverages on July 6, 2005, with a deadline of July 19, 2005. Although the district provided carriers less than 30 days to respond, property and casualty proposals were received from four companies, Argonaut Insurance Company, PCAT, State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Company, and Diamond State Insurance Company. The only documentation provided to the review team for the evaluation of the proposals based the selection on cost alone. Argonaut provided the lowest quote for property and general liability coverage. State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Company provided the lowest quote for the fleet liability, and Diamond State Insurance Company provided the lowest quote for the educator’s errors and omissions policy.

Exhibit A-13 shows the current coverage the district purchased for the 2005–06 school year.

UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION

School districts must provide unemployment compensation benefits to former staff who qualify for benefits under the Texas Unemployment Compensation Act. To finance these benefits, EEISD participates in the TASB Unemployment Compensation Program through an interlocal agreement. This risk pool provides a maximum contribution based on an approval rate for the fiscal period. **Exhibit A-14** shows

EXHIBIT A-13
EEISD PROPERTY AND CASUALTY COVERAGES
2005-06

INSURANCE/COVERAGE POLICY	POLICY PERIOD	COVERAGE LIMITS	DEDUCTIBLE	PREMIUM	COMPANY
Property	9/1/05 - 9/1/06	\$82,883,058	\$5,000	\$174,054	Argonaut
Property - Wind, Hurricane, & Hail	9/1/05 - 9/1/06	\$82,883,058	\$50,000	Included	Argonaut
Equipment Breakdown	9/1/05 - 9/1/06	Included in Property	\$5,000	Included	Argonaut
General Liability	9/1/05 - 9/1/06	\$1,000,000	\$1,000	\$4,916	Argonaut
Employee Benefits					
School Professional Legal Liability	9/1/05 - 9/1/06	\$1,000,000	\$40,000	\$17,160	Diamond State Insurance Company
Fleet Liability	9/7/05 - 9/7/06	\$100,000 @ person \$300,000@ occurrence \$100,000 @ property \$2,500 Medical Payments	\$0	\$26,286	State Farm Mutual Auto Company
Fleet - Collision	9/7/05 - 9/7/06	Actual Cash Value	\$1,000	Included	State Farm Mutual Auto Company
Specific Causes					
Fuel Storage Tank Liability	9/1/05-9/1/06	\$1,000,000	\$10,000	\$880	Argonaut
Crime Policy	9/1/05 - 9/1/06	\$100,000 -Employee Dishonesty Form O \$50,000 Forgery, Money and Securities	\$1,000	\$1,541	Argonaut
Student Insurance Blanket Athletic and UIL	8/1/05 - 7/31/06	\$25,000 Individual and \$5,000,000 Catastrophic	\$25,000	\$149,492	

SOURCE: EEISD Business Office, November 2005.

EXHIBIT A-14
EEISD UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION PROGRAM
1998-99 THROUGH 2004-05

YEAR	PAYROLL	CONTRIBUTION	CLAIM NUMBER	BENEFITS PAID
1998-99	\$15,830,047	\$35,744	29	\$10,297
1999-2000	\$23,582,324	\$35,744	37	\$18,760
2000-01	\$24,456,585	\$31,545	51	\$24,176
2001-02	\$25,761,485	\$29,601	56	\$31,239
2002-03	\$26,838,501	\$27,290	81	\$31,502
2003-04	\$25,710,043	\$46,866	86	\$82,080
2004-05*	\$20,777,583	\$46,877	48	\$55,220

* 2004-05 includes only three quarters.

SOURCE: Texas Association of School Board Risk Management Fund Unemployment Compensation Annual Account Summary Report, Received December 8, 2005.

EEISD’s annual contributions and claims for 1998–99 through 2004–05.

Due to a significant number of terminations during the past few years, the district’s claims have increased. Each year the district’s fund contribution is capped at a specified dollar amount based on the previous year’s gross wages. This information makes it easier to budget for these costs annually. The program provides training so that districts know how to handle complex unemployment compensation issues. District staff can attend informal regional workshops to learn effective unemployment and loss control strategies.

The director of Student Services receives a “Notice of Application for Unemployment Benefits” from former employees via the Texas Workforce Commission. The director reviews the claim to determine what action the district will take. If the district decides to challenge the claim, a response will be sent to the Texas Workforce Commission and a hearing will be scheduled. The director will represent the school district in the hearing.

CASH AND ASSET MANAGEMENT PERSONNEL

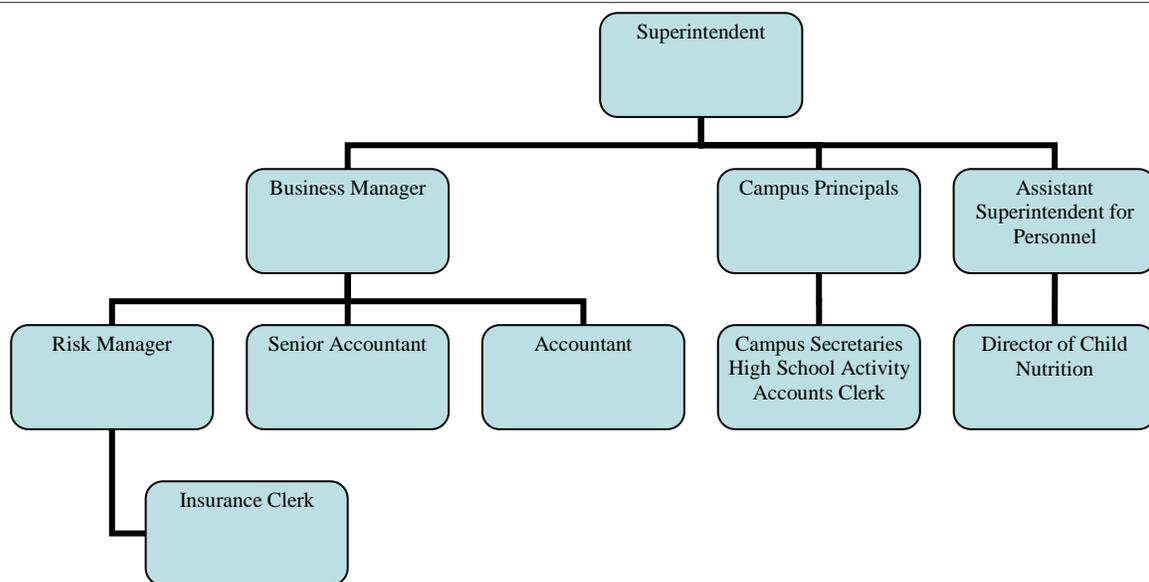
The Business manager, principals, and assistant superintendent for support services manage the district’s cash, assets and risk management. **Exhibit A-15** shows the reporting structure for the management of the assets, cash and risk.

CASH MANAGEMENT AND INVESTMENT PRACTICES

Cash and investments often represent one of the largest assets on a school district’s balance sheet. The investment of excess school district funds should be made with judgment and care. The superintendent and the Business manager are the designated investment officers for the district. The district’s CDA (Local) policy gives authority to the investment officers of the district to invest in public funds investment pools and other instruments as permitted by Government Code 2256.016. EEISD elected to invest all of the district’s funds in certificates of deposit in its depository. The period that the district’s funds are invested and the amount of the investment are determined by the Business manager’s estimate of the district’s needed cash to cover payroll, accounts payable and bond payments. Investment reports reflecting the investments in certificates of deposit are presented to the board on a quarterly basis.

The district maintains 33 checking accounts and one investment account. Twenty-three of the accounts are maintained in the Business Office. The remaining accounts are maintained by campuses and departments. The campuses and departments that maintain checking accounts are responsible for the receipting and depositing of cash and for writing checks. The Child Nutrition Department is responsible for depositing funds collected through the operation of Child Nutrition. Tax and other receipts are

**EXHIBIT A-15
EEISD’S CASH AND ASSET MANAGEMENT PERSONNEL**



SOURCE: EEISD Interviews, November 2005.

handled by Business Office staff. The Business Office also processes accounts payables for the district.

The district entered into a depository contract on September 1, 2005. Under the terms of the contract, all of the district’s collected funds earn interest. Both the interest earned on collected balances and investment in certificates of deposits are tied to the 13-week Treasury Bill (T-Bill) as quoted in the Wall Street Journal on the first business day of each month.

FIXED ASSETS AND INVENTORY

The district’s CFB (Local) Policy states that fixed assets shall include land, buildings, machinery, furniture, and other equipment that have a unit cost of \$5,000 or more and a life expectancy of one or more years. All items falling into this category and price range shall be capitalized accordingly and included in the general fixed asset account group.

A “locally defined fixed asset” inventory shall be maintained. This grouping shall include all assets with a unit cost of \$500 or higher for equipment and \$100 for furniture, but below the \$5,000 unit cost threshold. These items shall not be capitalized but expenditures shall be recorded under a “locally defined fixed asset” object code. All property purchased by school organizations, activity fund accounts, or contributed by outside organizations shall become the property of the district. All purchases shall be reported so that a school property number may be assigned and the purchase placed on inventory. A continuous inventory shall be kept of all school property as directed by the superintendent. The principal or head of each department shall be responsible for report to the Business Department on a properly designated form any property transferred, worn out, traded in, destroyed, or stolen.

EEISD’s warehouse receiving staff is responsible for receiving and marking all items that fall into the criteria of fixed assets as defined by CFB (Local). Fixed asset items are then delivered to the requesting campus or department. A report for all items received and marked as fixed assets is sent to the senior accountant in the Business Office. The accountant reconciles the receiving report to items posted to the district’s general ledger. Each year, district staff performs a physical inventory based upon a drawn sample. The district holds an auction to dispose of retired items.

**CHAPTER 7
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

TAX COLLECTIONS

EEISD contracts with the Hidalgo County Tax Assessor/Collector (County Tax Collector) for tax collection. This arrangement started in September 2002 because the tax collection rate was low and the auditor’s noted that tax collections were not deposited on a timely basis. At that time, the district closed its tax office and signed an inter-local agreement for tax assessment and collection. For 2005–06, the district will pay a fee of \$27,300 for this service. **Exhibit A-16** shows current tax collections for the 2001–02, 2002–03, and 2003–04. The exhibit shows that the percentage of tax collected increased since being moved to the County Tax Collector.

The district contracts with the law firm of Linebarger, Coggan, Blair, & Sampson, LLP for the collection of delinquent taxes. During the 2004–05, the firm sent out ten mailings to people who had not paid their tax. In addition, they filed 76 lawsuits, took 37 judgments, and posted 15 properties for foreclosure. These efforts, when combined with current collections, resulted in the collection of over 90 percent of the current levy. **Exhibit A-17** shows the district’s total collections.

**EXHIBIT A-16
CURRENT TAX COLLECTIONS
2001-02 THROUGH 2003 -04**

SCHOOL YEAR	ADJUSTED LEVY	CURRENT COLLECTIONS			PERCENTAGE
		M&O	DEBT SERVICE	TOTAL	
2001-02	\$2,106,939	\$1,355,844	\$134,090	\$1,489,934	71%
2002-03	\$2,258,250	\$1,542,998	\$132,588	\$1,675,586	74%
2003-04	\$2,330,415	\$1,620,714	\$140,549	\$1,761,263	76%

SOURCE: Annual Audit Reports for fiscal years 2001-02, 2002-03, and 2003-04.

EXHIBIT A-17
TOTAL CURRENT AND DELINQUENT TAX COLLECTIONS
2001-02 THROUGH 2003-04

TAX YEAR	ADJUSTED LEVY	TOTAL TAX COLLECTIONS			PERCENTAGE
		M&O	DEBT SERVICE	TOTAL	
2001	\$2,106,939	\$1,639,712	\$188,944	\$1,828,656	87%
2002	\$2,258,250	\$1,960,328	\$199,726	\$2,160,054	96%
2003	\$2,330,415	\$2,068,960	\$202,475	\$2,271,435	97%

SOURCE: Annual Audit Reports for fiscal years 2001-02, 2002-03, and 2003-04.

Taxpayers can pay their taxes at the local bank or at the Hidalgo County Tax Office (tax office).

The tax office prepares daily reports of collections and emails these reports to the senior accountant. The senior accountant enters collection information into a spreadsheet that he developed. The spreadsheet keeps track on a daily basis of current and delinquent tax collections by bond issue, principal and interest payments, and attorney's fees. It also runs an accumulative total for the month. At the end of the month the senior accountant reconciles the spreadsheet's monthly totals to the monthly collection reports emailed from the tax office.

The tax office regularly deposits tax collections directly into the district's depository bank. The accountant keeps a record of deposits and reconciles monthly deposits to the senior accountant's tax collections spreadsheet.

EXTERNAL AUDIT

Chapter 44.008 of the TEC requires a district to have an annual audit of its accounts performed at the close of the fiscal year. A certified or public accountant holding a permit from the Texas State Board of Accountancy must conduct the audit. The resulting audit report must be approved by the district board of trustees and filed with TEA no later than 150 days after the close of fiscal year. Luis C. Orozco, a certified public accountant (CPA) located in Pharr, Texas, performed EEISD's 2003-04 annual audit. The audit resulted in the district receiving an unqualified opinion on its basic financial statements. An unqualified opinion is given when, in the auditor's opinion, the financial statements are presented fairly and free of material defects. EEISD also received unqualified opinions for the 2001-02 and 2002-03. All of the district's audits complied with state requirements and were filed with TEA within the prescribed time limit.

SPECIAL REVENUES

During the 2003-04, EEISD expended \$9,138,886 in 26 special revenue funds. **Exhibit A-18** shows EEISD's special revenue fund expenditure along with their funding source. The exhibit shows that the federal government is the largest source of special revenue funding.

Special revenue expenditure reports are made through the TEA Secure Environment (TEA SE) web base reporting system. The Single Audit Act (ACT) and OMB Circular A-133 require school districts that expend total federal financial assistance equal to or in excess of \$500,000 in a fiscal year to have an audit performed in accordance with the ACT. The district's external auditor performed an audit in accordance with the ACT and reported that EEISD complied in all material respects with the requirements of the ACT.

SALE OF WEIGHTED AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCE

In 2004-05, EEISD sold Weighted Average Daily Attendance (WADA) students to Port Isabel ISD (PIISD) resulting in a revenue gain of approximately \$50,000. At the start of 2004-05, the superintendent and Business manager investigated the possibility of selling a portion of their WADA to a high wealth district. Chapter 41 of the TEC defines a high wealth district as a district with a property tax base that exceeds the equalized wealth level of \$305,000 in property value per student in weighted average daily attendance. The Texas Education Code allows a high wealth district to reduce their wealth by choosing one of several wealth-sharing options. One option is to enter into an agreement to pay the cost of educating students in a low wealth district such as EEISD. Region 1 was selected to manage the sale and help select a qualifying high wealth district. Region 1 selected PIISD as the qualifying high wealth district. For providing these services, Region 1 was to receive 80 percent of the excess funds to provide educational services in the region. Excess funds are determined by taking the cost per WADA in the high wealth district and subtracting

EXHIBIT A-18
SPECIAL REVENUE FUND EXPENDITURES
2003-04

PROGRAM	LOCAL	STATE	FEDERAL	TOTAL
Campus Activity Fund	\$168			\$168
Shared Services (Special Education)	\$92,249		\$376,096	\$468,345
Shared Services (Special Education)	\$1,231,331		\$114,876	\$1,346,207
Pregnancy Education & Parenting		\$39,017		\$39,017
Optional Extended Year		\$40,782		\$40,782
Technology Allotment		\$99,182		\$99,182
Student Success Initiative		\$119,886		\$119,886
Employees Health Insurance		\$379,372		\$379,372
Visually Impaired			\$810	\$810
IDEA Preschool (Special Education)			\$23,018	\$23,018
Direct Federal Program			\$34,471	\$34,471
Innovative Programs			\$42,985	\$42,985
Vocational Basic Grant			\$69,775	\$69,775
Safe & Drug Free Schools			\$70,998	\$70,998
Summer Feeding			\$77,144	\$77,144
Direct Federal Program			\$82,940	\$82,940
Enhancing Educational Technology			\$84,770	\$84,770
Direct Federal Program			\$92,460	\$92,460
Improving Teaching			\$126,388	\$126,388
Even Start			\$198,224	\$198,224
English Language Acquisition			\$250,173	\$250,173
Reading First			\$405,240	\$405,240
Training & Recruiting			\$591,113	\$591,113
Migrant			\$756,032	\$756,032
IDEA Formula (Special Education)			\$1,166,611	\$1,166,611
Improving Basic Program			\$2,572,775	\$2,572,775
TOTALS	\$1,323,748	\$678,239	\$7,136,899	\$9,138,886

SOURCE: EEISD 2003 Annual Financial Report.

it from the cost per WADA in the low wealth district, then multiplying that number by the amount of WADA sold. **Exhibit A-19** shows the original WADA sale calculations computed by Region 1.

The exhibit shows that EEISD's estimated gain for the sale of WADA was \$125,157. On October 10, 2005, EEISD received a "Near Final Summary of Finance" from the TEA Division of State Funding, which changed the district's WADA cost to \$4,426 and change the amount of WADA sold to 2,149,019. TEA also adjusted PIISD's WADA costs to \$4,449. This change resulted in reducing the share received

by Region 1 to \$39,542 and EEISD's share to \$9,885. **Exhibit A-20** contains the Adjusted WADA sale calculations computed by Region 1.

The near final estimates are still subject to a final adjustment by the TEA.

In November 2005, the Texas Supreme Court ruled the present system of funding public schools violates the Texas Constitution. This ruling will result in a new funding system and make future WADA sales unlikely.

**EXHIBIT A-19
ORIGINAL ESTIMATE OF WADA SALE
2004-05**

WADA SOLD	WADA COST IN PIISD	WADA COST IN EEISD	EXCESS WADA COSTS PIISD	EXCESS WADA MULTIPLIED BY WADA SOLD	REGION 1 SHARE	EEISD SHARE
2,227	\$4,343	\$4,062	\$281	\$625,787	\$500,630	\$125,157

SOURCE: Port Isabel ISD/Edcouch-Elsa ISD/Region 1 ESC Cash Flow Schedule 2004-05.

**EXHIBIT A-20
NEAR FINAL ESTIMATE OF WADA SALE
2004-05**

WADA SOLD	WADA COST IN PIISD	WADA COST IN EEISD	EXCESS WADA COSTS PIISD	EXCESS WADA MULTIPLIED BY WADA SOLD	REGION 1 SHARE	EEISD SHARE
2,149.019	\$4,449	\$4,426	\$23	\$49,427	\$39,542	\$9,885

SOURCE: Port Isabel ISD/Edcouch-Elsa ISD/Region 1 ESC Cash Flow Schedule 2004-05.

**CHAPTER 9
CHILD NUTRITION**

PROVISION 2 AWARENESS

EEISD receives most of the revenue it uses to support the Child Nutrition operation from federal reimbursements for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP) and an After School Snack Program that operates when tutorials are held. **Exhibit A-21** shows the percentage of revenue received from local, state and federal sources.

Exhibit A-22 shows the federal reimbursement rates for reimbursable meals served to students in EEISD for 2005-06, which is the current year of operation. The rates shown in the exhibit include the additional two cents for lunch and the severe need reimbursement for breakfast. EEISD qualifies for both the additional \$.02 lunch reimbursement and the severe need reimbursement for breakfast.

EEISD operates under the NSLP regulations, which contain a clause known as Provision 2. The purpose of this regulatory provision is to reduce the burden of paperwork on parents

and on school districts by reducing the requirements for taking applications, notifying the public, and counting meals by category for schools that agree to serve all enrolled students free meals.

EEISD has higher National School Lunch and School Breakfast participation rates than three of its peer districts. Of the EEISD students in average daily attendance in 2004-05, 95 percent participated in the lunch program and 92 percent participated in the breakfast program. **Exhibit A-23** shows a comparison of EEISD's meal participation rates to those of its peer districts.

Provision 2 qualifications are based on socioeconomic data. The district must provide documentation of the socioeconomic status of the school district population and income levels during a base year. The district must reapply every four years thereafter if the socioeconomic conditions and income levels have remained stable or have declined during the four previous years of the program. Sources of data to be used to document the socioeconomic state of the district population include:

- local data collected by the Chamber of Commerce or economic planning offices in the county;

**EXHIBIT A-21
CHILD NUTRITION REVENUE
2001-02 THROUGH 2004-05**

REVENUE	2001-02	PERCENTAGE	2002-03	PERCENTAGE	2003-04	PERCENTAGE	2004-05	PERCENTAGE
Local	\$150,568.00	5%	\$102,336.00	4%	\$133,538.00	4%	\$191,342.00	6%
State	\$26,514.00	1%	\$26,456.00	1%	\$25,874.00	1%	\$26,195.00	1%
Federal	\$2,660,582.00	94%	\$2,692,801.00	95%	\$2,930,698.00	95%	\$2,868,377.00	93%
TOTALS	\$2,837,664.00	100%	\$2,821,593.00	100%	\$3,090,110.00	100%	\$3,085,914.00	100%

SOURCE: EEISD Audited Financial Data 2001-02 Through 2003-04 and Un-audited 2004-05.

**EXHIBIT A-22
FEDERAL REIMBURSEMENT RATES
2005-06**

BENEFIT CATEGORY	BREAKFAST	SEVERE NEED BREAKFAST	LUNCH
Full-price	\$.23	\$.23	\$.24
Reduced-price	.97	1.21	1.94
Free	1.27	1.51	2.34

SOURCE: Texas Department of Agriculture, Child Nutrition Program, 2005-06.

**EXHIBIT A-23
MEAL PARTICIPATION RATES
AUGUST 2004 THROUGH MAY 2005**

DISTRICT	AVERAGE LUNCH PARTICIPATION	AVERAGE BREAKFAST PARTICIPATION
Progreso	95%	93%
EDCOUCH-ELSA	95%	92%
Roma	91%	79%
Rio Grande City	89%	63%
Southside	76%	63%

SOURCE: Texas Department of Agriculture, Child Nutrition Program District Profile Report, 2004-05.

- census track data compiled for the local area covering most of the district population;
- unemployment data for the area from which the school district draws attendance;
- direct certification data from the four previous years; and
- other local data as approved by the TEA.

The program is a four-year cycle. After the district's cycle is completed, reapplication for four-year extensions may be requested from the state office.

It is important to monitor the year of the cycle because the district must reapply every four years to continue to operate under Provision 2 provided the socioeconomic conditions and income levels have remained stable or have declined during the four previous years of the program. Without monitoring, the district can fail to reapply for and receive Provision 2 funding.

Exhibit A-24 shows the base year and continuing year requirements to receive Provision 2 funding.

**EXHIBIT A-24
NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM PROVISION 2 ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES
BASE YEAR**

Applications are distributed, and free and reduced-price eligibility determinations are made using the standard procedures, including the required public announcement that is regularly published at the beginning of the school year.

After all applications have been received and approved, a second public announcement is made stating that all meals will be provided free to all students regardless of economic status.

Meals are served free to all students.

Meal counts are taken and claimed for reimbursement using standard procedures; i.e., by the eligibility category of the child receiving the meal.

If the reimbursement received by the school district is not sufficient to cover total nonprofit school Child Nutrition program costs, non-federal funds must be used to pay the difference.

During the Base Year, a complete review of the Child Nutrition operation by the Texas Education Agency, Child Nutrition Programs Division, will be conducted to document and ensure the accuracy of the current methods being used by the district to determine free, reduced-price and paid categories, and counting and claiming procedures used to report claims for reimbursement.

The percentage of the total meals is calculated monthly by campus and by program for each category. This information is gathered in the base year for use in following years to establish the reimbursement claims.

YEAR 2 AND 3

At the beginning of each school year, a public announcement is made stating that all meals will be provided free to all students regardless of economic status.

No distribution of applications and no eligibility determination are conducted.

Officials count only total meals served and apply the monthly percentages developed during the Base Year to determine the counts by type for the reimbursement claims.

If the reimbursement received by the school district is not sufficient to cover total nonprofit school Child Nutrition program costs, non-federal funds must be used to pay the difference.

SOURCE: Texas Department of Agriculture, Administrator's Reference Manual, Chapter 5 Provision 2.

TEXAS PUBLIC SCHOOL NUTRITION POLICY

The Texas Department of Agriculture's (TDA) Administrator's Reference Manual states that the purpose of Child Nutrition Programs is to safeguard the health and well being of the nation's children by providing nutritionally adequate meals each school day. This ensures that participating children gain a full understanding of the relationship between proper eating and good health. In addition, the Child Nutrition Programs provide children with learning experiences that will improve their eating habits.

The TDA administers the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), the School Breakfast Program (SBP) and the After School Snack Program at the state level.

EEISD participates in the NSLP, SPB and After School Snack Program. Lunch and breakfast is served at each of its eight campuses. After school snacks are served at the elementary campuses when tutorials are being held. EEISD served an average of 5,004 lunches, 4,820 breakfasts and 431 snacks per day during the 2004–05 school year.

The National School Lunch Act, enacted in 1946, established the NSLP. According to TDA, the NSLP is a federally assisted meal program operating in more than 99,800 public and non-profit private schools across the nation. It provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free lunches to more than 2.3 million Texas school children each school day. In 1998, Congress expanded the NSLP to include reimbursement for snacks served to children in after school educational and enrichment programs to include children through 18 years of age. In 2004, the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act was signed into law. Its purpose is to strengthen the Child Nutrition Act and related programs and to improve their effectiveness for America's children.

Districts that choose to participate in NSLP receive cash reimbursements for each meal served. To qualify for the reimbursements, they must serve lunches that meet federal requirements and they must offer free or reduced-price lunches to eligible children. Districts that served 60 percent or more free or reduced-price lunches during the second preceding school year qualify to receive an additional two cents per reimbursable lunch served. For 2005–06, the qualifying year is 2003–04. EEISD receives the additional \$0.02 reimbursement for each reimbursable lunch served.

School lunches must meet the applicable recommendations of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, which recommend that no more than 30 percent of calories come from fat and less than 10 percent from saturated fat. Regulations also

establish a standard for school lunches to provide one-third of the Recommended Dietary Allowances of protein, vitamin A, vitamin C, iron, calcium and calories. School lunches must meet federal nutrition requirements, but decisions about the specific foods to serve and their preparation are made locally.

The School Breakfast Program (SBP) is a federal entitlement program that provides states with cash assistance for nonprofit breakfast programs in schools. The Child Nutrition Act of 1966 authorized SBP as a pilot program. The program was made permanent in 1975. Participating schools must serve breakfasts that meet the federal nutrition standards and must provide free and reduced-price breakfasts to eligible children. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) established severe need funding for breakfast for schools serving a large percentage free and reduced-price reimbursable breakfasts. EEISD receives an additional \$0.24 in severe need funding for each free and reduced-price reimbursable breakfast served.

A district must participate in the NSLP to sponsor or operate an After School Snack Program. EEISD operates an After School Snack Program in its elementary schools when it holds tutorials.

EEISD plans the lunch and breakfast menus by using a software program to ensure compliance with the nutritional requirements for the school lunch and breakfast programs. EEISD follows the school lunch pattern for traditional food based menu planning with offer versus serve in all grades except Early Childhood. Offer versus serve is a serving method designed to reduce food waste and food costs in the school lunch program without jeopardizing the nutritional integrity of the lunches served. Schools are required to implement the offer versus serve provision for senior high school students (grades 9–12). Senior high school students must be allowed to refuse those food items which he/she does not intend to eat. A lunch is reimbursable if the student takes full portions of three or more of the five food items offered.

EEISD's Child Nutrition operation underwent a Coordinated Review Effort (CRE) in February 2005. There were no findings concerning noncompliance with nutrition requirements. Concerns were expressed at the public forum in regard to the portion sizes and menus used in EEISD's Child Nutrition operation. On the days of the visit, the review team observed that menus and the portion sizes were

within the nutritional requirements guidelines and that adequate records were being maintained.

The district hired a director of Child Nutrition, who began work in November 2005. For several months the district operated Child Nutrition with an interim director who later filled the position of field supervisor. The team observed that the staff strived for excellence and worked to ensure compliance with all guidelines. Daily food production records were maintained and submitted to the Child Nutrition office. The team also observed that EEISD is complying with the Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value policy. There were no vending machines located in Child Nutrition areas.

The district has eight schools and each has its own cafeteria for food preparation and serving. The district employs eight cafeteria managers and 65 Child Nutrition workers that work eight hours each day in the cafeterias. The district also

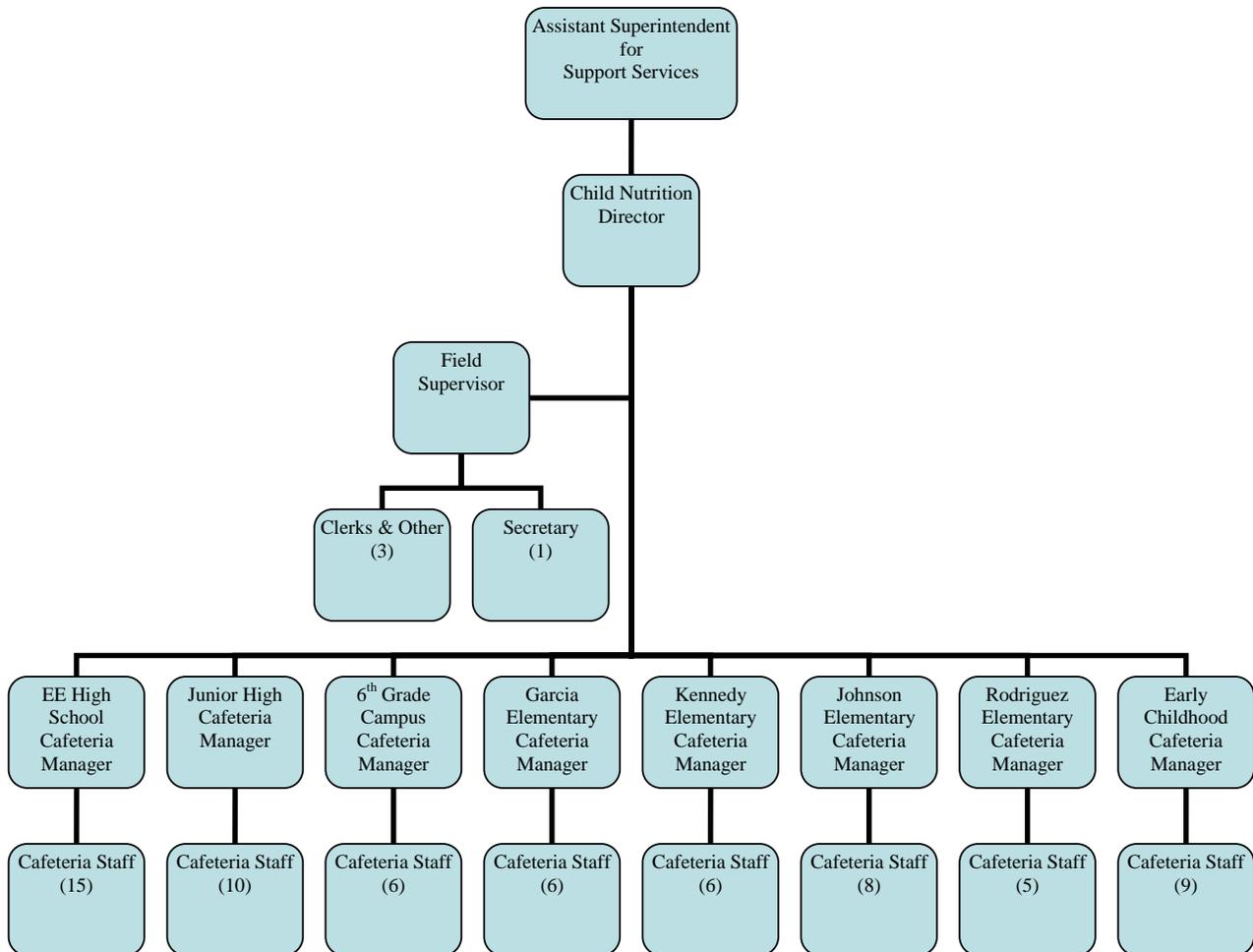
employs a Child Nutrition director, a field supervisor, a secretary, a Child Nutrition clerk, an inventory/delivery clerk and a maintenance employee bringing the total Child Nutrition staff to 79. **Exhibit A-25** shows the EEISD Child Nutrition office organization.

**CHAPTER 10
TRANSPORTATION**

TRANSPORTATION ORGANIZATION

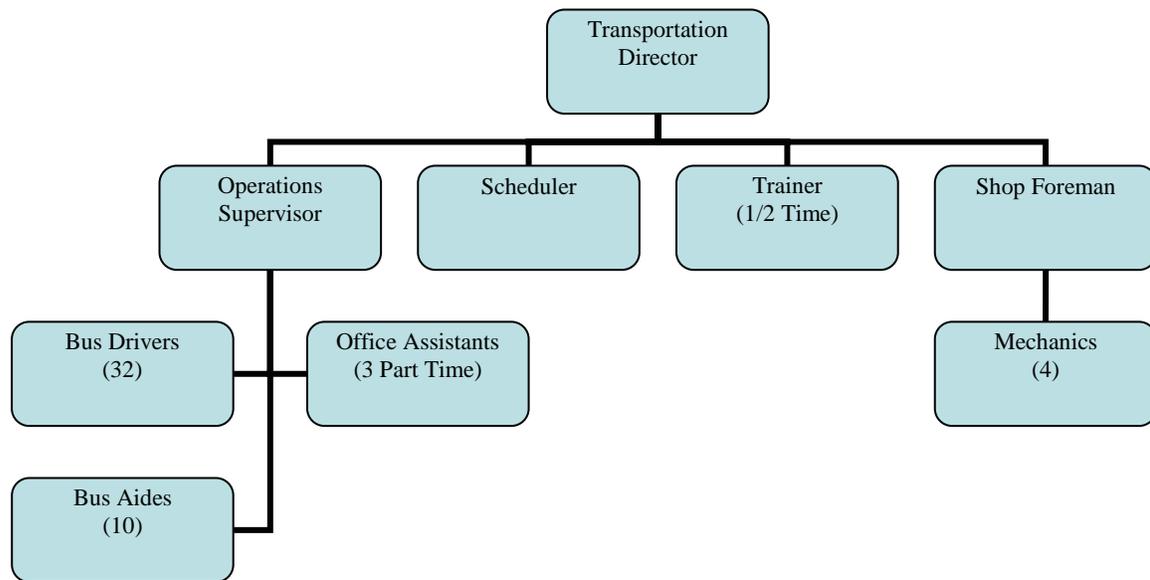
The EEISD Transportation Department is managed by the Transportation director, who reports to the assistant superintendent for Support Services. **Exhibit A-26** shows the department organization.

**EXHIBIT A-25
EEISD CHILD NUTRITION DEPARTMENT**



SOURCE: EEISD Child Nutrition organization chart, November 2005.

**EXHIBIT A-26
EEISD TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT**



SOURCE: Transportation Department Interviews, November 2005.

TRANSPORTATION EXPENDITURES

Exhibit A-27 shows total transportation costs reported on the TEA Operations Report divided by the number of daily riders reported in the Route Services Report for EEISD and its peers for 2003–04. Dividing actual riders by total costs provides a comparison of cost per student transported. This comparison is useful in determining if the district is maximizing the capability of the bus. Transporting more students per bus has a tendency to reduce the cost per student.

Exhibit A-28 compares total expenditures against total buses for EEISD and its peers for 2003–04. Dividing the total expenditures by the number of buses the district owns

generates a comparison of cost per bus for a school year. This comparison shows differences in hours and pay rates between districts. Many factors may affect this type of evaluation, but when comparing like districts trends tend emerge.

When compared with peer districts, EEISD is on the upper end of the expenditures both in cost per student transported and cost per bus per year. This trend indicates that improvement in efficiency and payroll structures are possible.

BUS MAINTENANCE

Drivers are not required to set seating assignments for riders. This process helps reduce seat vandalism since everyone

**EXHIBIT A-27
COST PER STUDENT TRANSPORTED COMPARISON
2003–04**

2003–04	COST PER REGULAR STUDENT TRANSPORTED	COST PER SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENT TRANSPORTED
Rio Grande City	\$475.03	\$4,706.28
EDCOUCH-ELSA	\$465.51	\$1,515.02
Roma	\$432.05	\$2,269.41
Southside	\$398.16	\$1,529.23
Progresso	\$270.87	\$1,192.04

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency Transportation Operations and Route Services Reports, 2003-04.

**EXHIBIT A-28
COST PER BUS COMPARISON
2003–04**

DISTRICT	COST PER REGULAR BUS	COST PER SPECIAL NEEDS BUS
Southside	\$35,300.29	\$37,083.88
EDCOUCH-ELSA	\$31,386.88	\$19,998.20
Rio Grande City	\$29,620.70	\$41,179.92
Roma	\$21,634.26	\$16,642.33
Progresso	\$14,261.45	\$15,496.50

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency Transportation Operations Report, 2003-04.

knows who was sitting in every seat. A seating chart will also be required by the Texas Department of Public Safety in accident situations.

Employees routinely wash out the interior of the buses with water hoses. This practice leads to floor damage over time since the floors are plywood that are covered with rubber.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE

EEISD has video boxes on most buses but only four cameras to help document student discipline. The limited number of cameras does not provide enough coverage to discourage student misconduct on the bus routes.

CHAPTER 11 COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

EEISD made several software applications available districtwide to assist students in mastering Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). A major new investment is in New Century software that is used in campus labs throughout the district to support and enhance the curriculum and prepare students for the TAKS. Accelerated Reader and Renaissance Place (Accelerated Reader web version) are provided to promote reading. Students earn points for reading level-coded books and passing the related test. PLATO software is available to high school students as a credit recovery program. Other instructional software includes:

- Geo Safari;
- Jumpstart Preschool;
- Kidspiration;
- Magic School Bus;
- Presentation Plus;
- Reader Rabbit: Learn and Read Phonics;
- Rosetta Stone (language learning);
- Succeeding on TAKS, Grade 8;
- Sharp Eye Music Reader;
- Social Science 2000; and
- Worldbook 2001.

INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT AND MANAGEMENT

EEISD uses several technology applications to support and manage instruction. Each campus library uses Follett

Automated Library software. While it supports efficient library usage, it is a stand-alone system. Librarians expressed a desire to move to new generation web-based software, such as Destiny, so that libraries can be interactive. Librarians also expressed concern about aging computers and not having enough computers to keep up with student and teacher demand.

Teachers have been using GradeSpeed for grade reporting for three years. Parents can receive authorization from the PEIMS coordinator to access their children's grades online. At the time of this report, 222 parents were signed up to access the system. The assistant principal at the high school, responsible for technology integration at that campus, said that parents are encouraged to sign up via flyers and parent meetings. He said that many parents do not have computers and that it would be helpful for them to use the technology center for that purpose.

Filemaker Pro (Success Maker) and Aeis-It are used by campus principals and by the Curriculum Department to monitor student progress on benchmark tests and TAKS. At the high school, teachers tag their own students' data in the system for planning purposes. The federal programs staff uses Process Manager to gather and organize data for program evaluation. The program also enables production of teacher productivity reports as requested by the superintendent.

TECHNOLOGY USE FOR BUSINESS, OPERATIONS, AND COMMUNICATION

For example, the district contracts with Region 1 for microcomputer services. On the student side of the service menu, EEISD contracts for central office and campus use of programs for registration, attendance accounting, grade reporting, scheduling, SHARE (health services reporting), Inquiry, Discipline Management, and Regional Service Center Computer Cooperative (RSCCC) PEIMS frozen file management. The central office contracts for all of the services on the business side of the menu, including payroll, personnel, fixed assets, budget, and RSCCC PEIMS frozen file maintenance. However, the district does not contract for campus sites for these functions, so campus principals do not, for example, have look up capability for their budgets, limiting their ability to be effective budget managers. Having to periodically request a paper copy of expenditures is not efficient. The district has begun a process to initiate online purchase orders. The district does not use the Region 1 fixed assets program, although it is part of the package. Fixed

asset inventories are on a district generated database. The Personnel department does not use all of the personnel management and reporting tools available in the personnel module. Region 1 provides training and support to district staff for all computer services.

Other areas of district operation currently not using technology to increase efficiency are Child Nutrition and Transportation. The Maintenance department uses technology for energy management, but not to track work orders. Records required to be retained by the district are not electronically transcribed or indexed.

Websites are a valuable tool for communication with stakeholders. Every EEISD campus has a live link on the district website. Half of the district's departments have an active link. **Exhibit A-29** shows the departments and their link status.

**EXHIBIT A-29
EEISD DEPARTMENT LINKS ON THE WEBSITE**

ACTIVE	NOT ACTIVE
Administration	Athletic Department
Bilingual Education	Business Office
Gifted and Talented	Career and Technology
Library Services	Curriculum and Instruction
Parental Involvement	Evaluation and Planning
Risk Management	Even Start
Special Education	Federal Programs
Technology	Student Support Services
Transportation	Warehouse

SOURCE: EEISD website, 2006.

OPERATING ENVIRONMENT AND DISASTER RECOVERY

The Technology Center, open from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM and some Saturdays, is in a converted, free-standing building that was part of the old high school. The building has been remodeled effectively to serve as the hub for district technology. The public enters into the training lab, where the technology clerk's work station is located. The lab is for staff training and is available for parent training and student use. Local businesses and community groups have also used the facility. Technology strategists and technicians' offices are in the back of the building, where they monitor the network and support equipment housed in climate controlled conditions. Systems are protected by Symantec antivirus software. Appropriate use policies are reinforced with the use of Websense Content Filtering Enterprise Manager.

The EEISD has a Disaster Recovery Plan that states:

All critical server data locations are backed up at least once daily into locations on three separate backup units. Yearly full server backups are used to archive basic server configurations and software applications. These backups are stored off-site and allow for faster recovery than loading software applications individually. Data is backed up using a combination of magnetic media and hard drive arrays. The hard drive is for data storage for the five most recent days. Magnetic media is for a three week (21 day) rotation scheme where critical data is backed up each weeknight. The district financial and student information software is backed up nightly at the Network Operations Center (NOC). This data is also backed up three times throughout the day at the administration building using a local tape drive. Magnetic media (weekly backups) are stored off-site and rotated on a weekly basis.

A full backup of the entire system is done on a weekly basis and will be stored off-site along with the originals of all installed programs and required device drivers. A copy of information required to reinstall and reconfigure network hardware will be stored off-site as well. On a weekly basis, one tape containing a copy of all the data is stored at an on-site location. The system administrator reviews the system logs daily to ensure that the backup process has executed successfully. Test recoveries are performed during off-hours operation.

The plan specifies the types of equipment used for backup and recovery procedures, lists disaster probability ratings, and contains emergency contact information.

PEER DISTRICT STaR CHART COMPARISONS

Texas school districts must complete the Texas Campus STaR Chart Needs Assessment annually, along with the submission of the online technology plan. The assessment has been developed around the four key areas of the Texas Long-Range Plan for Technology:

- Teaching and Learning;
- Educator Preparation and Development;
- Administrative and Support Services; and
- Infrastructure for Technology.

In addition to fulfilling state requirements, the Campus STaR Chart can be used for multiple purposes:

- to update the district technology plan;
- to conceptualize a vision for campus or district technology;
- to set benchmarks and goals;
- to measure student and teacher proficiencies;
- to document progress by campus teachers;
- to apply for grants;
- to determine funding priorities;
- to track progress on the use of Title II, Part D funds (No Child Left Behind); and
- to identify needs specific to a particular campus.

Campus responses are totaled in each area to identify the level of progress in each area, as follows:

- 1= Early Tech
- 2= Developing Tech

- 3= Advanced Tech
- 4= Target Tech

As seen in **Exhibit A-30**, the totals for Teaching and Learning show EEISD and its peers at the Developing Tech level (9–14 points), with EEISD in the middle of the group.

As seen in **Exhibit A-31** the totals for Educator Preparation and Development show EEISD and its peers at the Developing Tech level (9–11 points), with EEISD at the bottom of the group.

As seen in **Exhibit A-32**, the totals for Administrative and Support Services show EEISD and its peers at the Developing Tech level (8–12 points), with EEISD at the bottom of the group.

As seen in **Exhibit A-33**, the totals for Infrastructure for Technology show EEISD and its peers at the Developing Tech level (8–12 points), with EEISD at the bottom of the group.

**EXHIBIT A-30
STAR CHART: TEACHING AND LEARNING
2004-05**

DISTRICT	IMPACT OF TECH. ON TEACHER ROLE	PATTERNS OF TEACHER USE	FREQUENCY OF USE/DIGITAL CONTENT	CURRICULUM AREAS	TECH. APP. TEKS ASSESSMENT	PATTERNS OF STUDENT USE	TOTAL
Southside	2	2	2	2	2	2	12
Rio Grande City	2	2	2	2	2	2	12
EDCOUCH-ELSA	2	2	2	2	2	2	12
Roma	2	2	2	2	2	2	12
Progreso	1	2	2	2	2	2	11

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, STaR Chart Division, 2004-05.

**EXHIBIT A-31
STAR CHART: EDUCATOR PREPARATION AND DEVELOPMENT
2004-05**

DISTRICT	CONTENT OF TRAINING	CAPABILITIES OF EDUCATORS	LEADERSHIP/ CAPABILITIES OF ADMIN.	MODELS OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	LEVELS OF UNDERSTANDING AND PATTERNS OF USE	BUDGET FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	TOTAL
Southside	2	2	3	2	2	2	14
Rio Grande City	3	2	2	2	2	2	14
Roma	2	2	2	2	2	2	13
Progreso	2	2	2	2	2	2	12
EDCOUCH-ELSA	2	2	2	2	2	2	11

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, STaR Chart Division, 2004-05.

EXHIBIT A-32
STAR CHART: ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT SERVICES
2004-05

DISTRICT	VISION AND PLANNING	TECHNICAL SUPPORT	INSTRUCTIONAL AND ADMIN. STAFFING	BUDGET	FUNDING	TOTAL
Progresso	2	3	3	3	3	14
Rio Grande City	2	3	2	2	3	13
Southside	2	2	2	2	2	10
Roma	2	2	2	2	2	10
EDCOUCH-ELSA	2	2	2	2	2	9

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, STaR Chart Division, 2004-05.

EXHIBIT A-33
STAR INFRASTRUCTURE FOR TECHNOLOGY
2004-05

DISTRICT	STUDENTS PER COMPUTER	INTERNET ACCESS/ CONNECTIVITY SPEED	DISTANCE LEARNING	LAN/WAN	OTHER TECHNOLOGIES	TOTAL
Progresso	2	4	2	4	3	15
Rio Grande City	2	3	2	3	2	13
Southside	1	3	2	3	2	11
Roma	2	3	1	3	2	11
EDCOUCH-ELSA	2	2	1	2	2	9

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, STaR Chart Division, 2004-05.

CHAPTER 12
SAFETY AND SECURITY

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Every Texas school district is required to adopt a code of conduct that establishes standards for student behavior and complies with the provisions of the TEC Chapter 37. The law states the board must adopt the code of conduct and the code must be prominently displayed at each school campus. It must provide the circumstances for removing a student from a classroom, campus or alternative program. In addition, the code of conduct must provide guidelines for transferring a student to the alternative education program and steps for suspension. The Texas School Performance Review publication, Keeping Texas Children Safe in School, January 2000, states, "The most successful programs require a signature from parents and students acknowledging the rules up front." EEISD board policy FO (Local) adopts a student code of conduct regarding student discipline. The district distributes student code of conduct through the EEISD Student Handbook to both elementary and secondary students and parents annually, and is available in Spanish and English. The code is accompanied by an acknowledgement that the rules were read and understood by the parents, which students are asked to return with the parent's signature.

Campus principals provide incentives, such as pizza parties, to the class that has returned the most parental forms.

CRISIS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

The coordination for crisis management in EEISD is a shared responsibility with the superintendent, assistant superintendent for Curriculum, risk manager, and campus principals.

The superintendent established an "EEISD Emergency All-Call Procedures" for the district. To implement the procedures, he purchased Nextel cell phones for all administrators and key employees so that he can communicate with everyone instantly through his Blackberry. Procedures include the following:

- Emergency all-calls will be sent only by the superintendent.
- Only the individuals listed on the procedures are to respond the all-call.
- This frequency is not to be used for any conversations.
- The superintendent will give a specific command and individuals must respond to the command.

- A list of individuals is provided and are assigned designated station numbers. These individuals are directed to keep their phones on at all times.

The assistant superintendent for Curriculum worked with the campus principals to develop campus crisis management plans. A generic crisis management manual was purchased for each campus. This manual provides a step-by-step guide for handling various types of crises, which includes the following categories:

- medical;
- violence and Crime;
- shelter in place/evacuation;
- facility emergencies;
- weather;
- student welfare; and
- terrorism.

Each crisis scenario identifies responsibilities to be carried out by various staff and actions to take to minimize the situation. The manual also provides guides for the individual campuses to customize the crisis management plan, such as:

- setting up an emergency alarm system;
- specific campus emergency plan checklist;
- personnel lists by campus with addresses and telephone numbers;
- emergency phone numbers;
- district crisis responders with telephone numbers;
- incident/drill log
- incident report
- bomb threat checklist form; and
- suspected child abuse form.

Interviews with campus principals revealed that all campuses have the manual and conduct periodic drills, but the high school principal was the only administrator to customize the crisis plan for her campus. The high school principal provided a copy of a “Crisis Management Plan for Teachers” flip chart, which illustrates action plans for various crises that were identified in the manual. The high school principal also provided a supplemental handout with emergency numbers

and codes to signal various emergencies. A floor plan of the campus was provided on the back of the handout.

The risk manager is responsible for coordinating emergency planning for hurricanes and works with the local emergency agencies and district personnel. In addition, this position is responsible for coordinating the implementation of Senate Bill 11, Seventy-ninth Legislature, mandates regarding:

- security criteria for design of school facilities;
- security audits; and
- multi-hazard emergency operations plan.

The Multi-hazard Emergency Operations plan provides for district employee training, mandatory school drills, and measures to ensure coordination with local management agencies, implementation of a security audit. Districts must adopt the plan no later than March 1, 2006. The risk manager attended a workshop presented by the Texas School Safety Center on the requirements of the law and worked with district staff to meet compliance requirements. The district’s comprehensive Multi Hazard Emergency Response Guidelines was completed and approved by the board on February 15, 2006. The guidelines include:

- Planning for alarm system and signals, code words, evacuation plan, fire drills, shelter plan, lock down, emergency management kit, and staff training log;
- Incident command system including concepts and principles;
- Fire and emergency medical services;
- General responsibilities described for superintendent, assistant superintendents, district critical incident response coordinator, directors and department heads, campus and facility administrators, classroom teachers, support staff and bus drivers;
- Specific responsibilities identified for team leader, medical coordinator, student guidance coordinator, telephone operator, communications coordinator, special needs coordinator, parents communication coordinator, student release coordinator, security coordinator, witness coordinator, nutrition coordinator, emergency kit coordinator, sanitation coordinator, and transportation coordinator;
- Response Guidelines, Level I, for stray animals on campus, suspicious letter or parcel, air pollution alert, bomb threat, fighting, protest activity, theft or damage

to district property or personal property, district vehicle accident, violent student, and severe weather watch;

- Response Guidelines, Level II, for abduction, activity trip emergency, animal contact, assault, bomb threat, bus accident, death of a student, gang violence, lightning, poisoning, power outage, medical emergency, and stranger or irate person;
- Response Guidelines, Level III, for building structural failure, death of student or staff, explosion, fire, gas leak, gunfire, hostage situation, and multiple casualty incident;
- Communication;
- Relocation Sites; and
- Public Health Emergency.

JUVENILE JUSTICE ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM

EEISD has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with Hidalgo County Juvenile Center for a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program (JJAEP) for 2005–06. TEC Chapter 37 requires the Hidalgo County Juvenile Board (HCJB) to establish and operate a JJAEP for students who are expelled from school for the offenses described in TEC §37.007. The goals of the JJAEP are:

- to provide a continuum of educational services to students;
- to establish consistency, predictability, and appropriateness of student placement following expulsions from regular schools or alternative education programs;

- to return students to a regular school setting when appropriate;
- to impress upon youth that there are progressive sanctions for misconduct in the public school setting; and
- to provide educational options for the juvenile courts.

JJAEP eligibility for EEISD students is based on three categories of offenses. Category A includes those cases where the student has been officially charged, arrested and referred to the Hidalgo County Juvenile Probation Department. The JJAEP placement is mandatory and the JJAEP funding is provided to HCJB by the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission. Students who commit Category B offenses, which are discretionary, non-court order offenses, and Category C offenses, engaging in persistent misbehavior covered by Section 37.007(c) and described in the Student Code of Conduct, may be placed in the JJAEP by the district. The district provides the JJAEP funding for Category B and C placements. The district agreed to budget \$59 per student per attendance day for 2005–06 for each non-mandatory student space reserved in the JJAEP, for a total budget of \$11,210. **Exhibit A-34** provides the number of spaces that the district has reserved for 2005–06, which may vary from the number of students expelled during the year.

The district may enroll additional Category B and Category C students in the JJAEP in excess of the number of student spaces reserved for \$75 per student per attendance day for each student placement. The JJAEP will refund to the district \$59 per student day for which no student(s) was assigned by

**EXHIBIT A-34
EEISD RESERVATION OF STUDENT SPACES FOR JJAEP
2005**

CATEGORY OF STUDENTS	OPTIONAL SELECTIONS	STUDENT SPACES ANTICIPATED/RESERVED
Total Number of Student Spaces Anticipated for Category A Offenses (Mandatory)		2/3
Category B Offenses (Fall Semester Only) Optional - Students expelled for mandatory reasons but who cannot or will not be adjudicated for that expense)	0	
Category B Offenses (Spring Semester Only)	1	
Category C Offenses (Fall Semester Only) (Optional - Students expelled for 37.007 (b), (c), and (e) student code of conduct violation)	0	
Category C Offenses (Spring Semester Only)	1	
Total Number of Student Spaces Reserved fro Category B and C Students		2

SOURCE: Memorandum of Understanding, EEISD and Hidalgo County JJAEP, July 26, 2005.

the district to the spaces during the school year. Attendance for students assigned to the JJAEF is mandatory.

BUILDING SECURITY

EEISD implemented safety measures to ensure campus security, in addition to the security guards. Board policy FEE (Local) established a closed campus policy. No student is permitted to leave a campus during lunch except as approved by the principal on a case-by-case basis in response to a parent's written request. Students who leave campus during lunch or at any other time without administrative approval shall be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the student code of conduct. EEISD does not require students to wear identification badges on campus.

All campuses require visitors to sign in at the front office. Some campuses have a computer set up so that visitors can log in and enter their destination. The high school and several elementary schools have security guards stationed at the front door to direct visitors to the front office.

All buildings have security alarms, which a private company monitors. The principal, head custodian, assistant principals, security guard, and maintenance director have the security alarm codes. None of the buildings have surveillance cameras. Principals are contacted if the alarm is activated and will usually investigate the problem. The night security guards do not have codes or locks. They are only responsible for checking the outside areas and calling the police in case of an emergency.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT STAFF SURVEY

(N = 51)

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

PART A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

SURVEY QUESTION	1-5 YEARS	6-10 YEARS	11-15 YEARS	16-20 YEARS	20+ YEARS
1. How long have you been employed by Edcouch-Elsa ISD?	29.4%	19.6%	23.5%	5.9%	21.6%

SURVEY QUESTION	ADMINISTRATOR	CLERICAL STAFF	SUPPORT STAFF
2. Are you a(n)	34.8%	26.1%	39.1%

SURVEY QUESTION	1-5 YEARS	6-10 YEARS	11-15 YEARS	16-20 YEARS	20+ YEARS
3. How long have you been employed in this capacity by Edcouch-Elsa ISD?	55.8%	13.5%	21.2%	1.9%	7.7%

PART B: SURVEY QUESTIONS

A. DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1. School board members understand their role as policymakers and stay out of the day to day management of the district.	15.8%	17.5%	36.8%	14.0%	15.8%
2. The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.	12.3%	36.8%	33.3%	8.8%	8.8%
3. School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.	14.0%	35.1%	26.3%	14.0%	10.5%
4. School board members understand their role as policymakers and refrain from the day to day management of the district.	12.3%	17.5%	36.8%	19.3%	14.0%
5. The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	31.6%	45.6%	10.5%	7.0%	5.3%
6. The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	28.1%	42.1%	17.5%	8.8%	3.5%
7. Central administration is efficient.	17.5%	42.1%	26.3%	12.3%	1.8%
8. Central administration supports the educational process.	26.3%	45.6%	22.8%	3.5%	1.8%
9. The morale of central administration staff is good.	12.3%	43.9%	29.8%	10.5%	3.5%
10. The district organizational chart is well communicated and promotes efficiency and accountability at all levels within the organization.	15.8%	45.6%	28.1%	7.0%	3.5%
11. Site-based decision making is supported by board and superintendent action.	12.3%	38.6%	38.6%	7.0%	3.5%
12. The district and campus improvement plans are highly effective in bringing about needed change	15.8%	35.1%	36.8%	10.5%	1.8%

B. EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
13. Education is the main priority in our school district.	36.8%	35.1%	10.5%	12.3%	5.3%
14. Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.	19.3%	42.1%	24.6%	10.5%	3.5%
15. The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	15.8%	47.4%	28.1%	5.3%	3.5%
16. The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	12.3%	43.9%	36.8%	3.5%	3.5%
17. The district has effective educational programs for the following:					
a) Reading	17.5%	66.7%	12.3%	1.8%	1.8%
b) Writing	19.3%	66.7%	8.8%	3.5%	1.8%
c) Mathematics	17.5%	61.4%	10.5%	8.8%	1.8%
d) Science	14.0%	64.9%	15.8%	3.5%	1.8%
e) English or Language Arts	15.8%	70.2%	10.5%	1.8%	1.8%
f) Computer Instruction	19.3%	63.2%	14.0%	1.8%	1.8%
g) Social Studies (history or geography)	15.8%	64.9%	15.8%	1.8%	1.8%
h) Fine Arts	19.3%	56.1%	19.3%	1.8%	3.5%
i) Physical Education	21.1%	57.9%	17.5%	1.8%	1.8%
j) Business Education	17.5%	52.6%	28.1%	0.0%	1.8%
k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	17.5%	57.9%	22.8%	0.0%	1.8%
l) Foreign Language	15.8%	54.4%	26.3%	1.8%	1.8%
18. The district has effective special programs for the following:					
a) Library Service	17.5%	57.9%	15.8%	5.3%	3.5%
b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	24.6%	63.2%	8.8%	1.8%	1.8%
c) Special Education	21.1%	61.4%	14.0%	1.8%	1.8%
d) Head Start and Even Start programs	19.3%	61.4%	15.8%	1.8%	1.8%
e) Dyslexia program	12.3%	52.6%	26.3%	5.3%	3.5%
f) Student mentoring program	14.0%	52.6%	21.1%	8.8%	3.5%
g) Advanced placement program	17.5%	54.4%	24.6%	1.8%	1.8%
h) Literacy program	12.3%	63.2%	19.3%	3.5%	1.8%
i) Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	12.3%	35.1%	29.8%	17.5%	5.3%
j) Summer school programs	14.0%	66.7%	12.3%	5.3%	1.8%
k) Alternative education programs	15.8%	50.9%	19.3%	10.5%	3.5%
l) "English as a second language" program	12.3%	59.6%	21.1%	3.5%	3.5%
m) Career counseling program	12.3%	47.4%	22.8%	15.8%	1.8%
n) College counseling program	14.0%	43.9%	26.3%	14.0%	1.8%
o) Counseling the parents of students	14.0%	29.8%	29.8%	21.1%	5.3%
p) Drop out prevention program	10.5%	33.3%	31.6%	19.3%	5.3%
19. Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	24.6%	57.9%	12.3%	3.5%	1.8%
20. Teacher turnover is low.	12.3%	43.9%	28.1%	12.3%	3.5%
21. Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	14.0%	47.4%	29.8%	7.0%	1.8%
22. Teacher openings are filled quickly.	10.5%	56.1%	24.6%	5.3%	3.5%
23. Teachers are rewarded for superior performance.	5.3%	29.8%	33.3%	19.3%	12.3%

B. EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY (CONTINUED)

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
24. Teachers are counseled about less than satisfactory performance.	1.8%	38.6%	29.8%	22.8%	7.0%
25. All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.	7.0%	57.9%	15.8%	12.3%	7.0%
26. The student-to-teacher ratio is reasonable.	10.5%	71.9%	8.8%	5.3%	3.5%
27. Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	28.1%	68.4%	1.8%	0.0%	1.8%
28. Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	10.5%	54.4%	26.3%	3.5%	5.3%
29. Teachers are counseled about less than satisfactory performance.	1.8%	38.6%	29.8%	22.8%	7.0%
30. All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.	7.0%	57.9%	15.8%	12.3%	7.0%
31. The student-to-teacher ratio is reasonable.	10.5%	71.9%	8.8%	5.3%	3.5%
32. Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	28.1%	68.4%	1.8%	0.0%	1.8%
33. Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	10.5%	54.4%	26.3%	3.5%	5.3%

C. HUMAN RESOURCES

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
34. Departments are staffed equitably across the district.	8.8%	43.9%	22.8%	17.5%	7.0%
35. Campuses are staffed equitably across the district.	1.8%	36.8%	40.4%	17.5%	3.5%
36. Human resources policies and procedures regarding job posting and hiring are followed consistently.	5.3%	36.8%	26.3%	19.3%	12.3%
37. The human resources department provides appropriate and timely assistance regarding staffing.	5.3%	38.6%	35.1%	14.0%	7.0%
38. District salaries are competitive with similar positions in the job market.	3.5%	24.6%	28.1%	31.6%	12.3%
39. The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.	3.5%	57.9%	21.1%	14.0%	3.5%
40. Temporary workers are rarely used.	1.8%	35.1%	26.3%	29.8%	7.0%
41. The district successfully projects future staffing needs.	1.8%	36.8%	38.6%	17.5%	5.3%
42. The district has an effective employee recruitment program.	1.8%	29.8%	38.6%	24.6%	5.3%
43. The district operates an effective staff development program.	5.3%	59.6%	24.6%	8.8%	1.8%
44. District employees receive annual personnel evaluations.	12.3%	63.2%	12.3%	10.5%	1.8%
45. The district rewards competence and experience and spells out qualifications such as seniority and skill levels needed for promotion.	7.0%	29.8%	22.8%	29.8%	10.5%
46. Employees who perform below the standard of expectation are counseled appropriately and timely.	3.5%	36.8%	24.6%	28.1%	7.0%
47. The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	7.0%	59.6%	22.8%	7.0%	3.5%
48. The district's health insurance package meets my needs.	7.0%	64.9%	14.0%	10.5%	3.5%

D. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
49. The district regularly communicates with parents.	12.3%	57.9%	14.0%	10.5%	5.3%
50. Parent involvement and training activities are widely available throughout the district.	10.5%	59.6%	17.5%	7.0%	5.3%
51. Building community and business partnership is a major goal of this district.	10.5%	47.4%	24.6%	10.5%	7.0%
52. The local television and radio stations regularly report school news and menus.	5.3%	40.4%	35.1%	14.0%	5.3%
53. Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.	5.3%	24.6%	40.4%	17.5%	12.3%
54. District facilities are open for community use.	7.0%	64.9%	15.8%	8.8%	3.5%

E. FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
55. Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff and the board provide input into facility planning.	3.5%	42.1%	28.1%	14.0%	12.3%
56. The architect and construction managers are selected objectively and impersonally.	1.8%	21.1%	54.4%	14.0%	8.8%
57. Schools are clean.	10.5%	63.2%	12.3%	8.8%	5.3%
58. Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	8.8%	52.6%	14.0%	21.1%	3.5%
59. Repairs are made in a timely manner.	5.3%	29.8%	31.6%	22.8%	10.5%
60. Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	12.3%	49.1%	21.1%	10.5%	7.0%

F. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
61. Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers.	7.0%	43.9%	38.6%	7.0%	3.5%
62. Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	10.5%	40.4%	36.8%	10.5%	1.8%
63. The district's financial reports are easy to understand and read.	3.5%	45.6%	43.9%	3.5%	3.5%
64. Financial reports are made available to community members when asked.	1.8%	38.6%	50.9%	1.8%	7.0%

G. PURCHASING AND WAREHOUSING

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
65. Purchasing gets me what I need when I need it.	5.3%	54.4%	22.8%	14.0%	3.6%
66. Purchasing acquires the highest quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.	5.3%	54.4%	26.3%	7.0%	7.0%
67. Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for the requestor.	1.8%	40.4%	50.9%	3.5%	3.5%
68. The district provides teachers and administrators an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment.	5.3%	64.9%	12.3%	10.5%	7.0%

G. PURCHASING AND WAREHOUSING (CONTINUED)

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
69. Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	3.5%	64.9%	21.1%	7.0%	3.5%
70. Textbooks are in good shape.	5.3%	57.9%	24.6%	10.5%	1.8%
71. The school library meets the student needs for books and other resources.	8.8%	59.6%	24.6%	5.3%	1.8%

H. SAFETY AND SECURITY

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
72. Gangs are not a problem in this district.	7.0%	43.9%	19.3%	22.8%	7.0%
73. Drugs are not a problem in this district.	1.8%	14.0%	36.8%	35.1%	12.3%
74. Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	3.5%	31.6%	24.6%	35.1%	5.3%
75. Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	7.0%	52.6%	29.8%	3.5%	7.0%
76. Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	7.0%	43.9%	33.3%	12.3%	3.5%
77. A good working arrangement exists between local law enforcement and the district.	8.8%	59.6%	26.3%	0.0%	5.3%
78. Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	8.8%	40.4%	22.8%	17.5%	10.5%

I. COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
79. Students regularly use computers.	15.8%	71.9%	10.5%	1.8%	0.0%
80. Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	17.5%	68.4%	10.5%	3.5%	0.0%
81. Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	10.5%	66.7%	15.8%	5.3%	1.8%
82. Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	15.8%	63.2%	10.5%	7.0%	3.5%
83. The district meets student needs in classes in computer fundamentals.	12.3%	68.4%	14.0%	1.8%	3.5%
84. The district meets student needs in classes in advanced computer skills.	10.5%	52.6%	28.1%	5.3%	3.5%
85. Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	14.0%	73.7%	10.5%	0.0%	1.8%

PRINCIPAL AND ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL SURVEY

(N = 9)

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

PART A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

SURVEY QUESTION	1-5 YEARS	6-10 YEARS	11-15 YEARS	16-20 YEARS	20+ YEARS
1. How long have you been employed by Edcouch-Elsa ISD?	14.3%	14.3%	0.0%	42.9%	28.6%

PART B: SURVEY QUESTIONS

A. DISTRICT LEADERSHIP, ORGANIZATION, AND MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1. The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.	11.1%	66.7%	22.2%	0.0%	0.0%
2. School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.	22.2%	44.4%	22.2%	11.1%	0.0%
3. School board members understand their role as policymakers and stay out of the day-to-day management of the district.	0.0%	22.2%	33.3%	22.2%	22.2%
4. The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	0.0%	77.8%	11.1%	11.1%	0.0%
5. The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	11.1%	77.8%	0.0%	11.1%	0.0%
6. Central administration is efficient.	0.0%	55.6%	33.3%	11.1%	0.0%
7. Central administration supports the educational process.	11.1%	77.8%	11.1%	0.0%	0.0%
8. The morale of central administration staff is good.	11.1%	66.7%	11.1%	11.1%	0.0%
9. The district organization chart promotes efficiency and accountability at all levels with the organization.	0.0%	66.7%	0.0%	33.3%	0.0%
10. Site-based decision making is supported by board and superintendent actions.	11.1%	66.7%	11.1%	11.1%	0.0%
11. The district and campus improvement plans are highly effective in bringing about needed changes.	11.1%	88.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

B. EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
12. Education is the main priority in our school district.	22.2%	55.6%	11.1%	11.1%	0.0%
13. Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.	11.1%	55.6%	22.2%	11.1%	0.0%
14. The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	11.1%	77.8%	11.1%	0.0%	0.0%
15. The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	11.1%	66.7%	22.2%	0.0%	0.0%

B. EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY (CONTINUED)

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
16. The district provides curriculum guides for all grades and subjects.	22.2%	22.2%	11.0%	44.4%	0.0%
17. The curriculum guides are appropriately aligned and coordinated.	11.1%	44.4%	11.1%	33.3%	0.0%
18. The district’s curriculum guides clearly outline what to teach and how to teach it.	0.0%	44.4%	0.0%	55.6%	0.0%
19. The district has effective educational programs for the following:					
a) Reading	11.1%	88.94	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
b) Writing	22.2%	77.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
c) Mathematics	22.2%	66.7%	0.0%	11.1%	0.0%
d) Science	22.2%	66.7%	0.0%	11.1%	0.0%
e) English or Language Arts	11.1%	88.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
f) Computer Instruction	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
g) Social Studies (history or geography)	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
h) Fine Arts	0.0%	77.8%	0.0%	22.2%	11%
i) Physical Education	0.0%	88.9%	0.0%	11.1%	0.0%
j) Business Education	11.1%	77.8%	11.1%	0.0%	0.0%
k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	11.1%	88.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
l) Foreign Language	11.1%	66.7%	22.2%	0.0%	0.0%
20. The district has effective special programs for the following:					
a) Library Service	22.2%	55.6%	11.1%	11.1%	0.0%
b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	11.1%	77.8%	0.0%	11.1%	0.0%
c) Special Education	11.1%	77.8%	0.0%	11.1%	0.0%
d) Head Start and Even Start programs	11.1%	55.6%	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%
e) Dyslexia program	11.1%	66.7%	11.1%	11.1%	0.0%
f) Student mentoring program	0.0%	77.8%	22.2%	0.0%	0.0%
g) Advanced placement program	0.0%	77.8%	22.2%	0.0%	0.0%
h) Literacy program	0.0%	66.7%	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%
i) Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	0.0%	77.8%	11.1%	11.1%	0.0%
j) Summer school programs	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
k) Alternative education programs	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
l) “English as a second language” program	0.0%	77.8%	11.1%	11.1%	0.0%
m) Career counseling program	0.0%	88.9%	11.1%	0.0%	0.0%
n) College counseling program	0.0%	77.8%	22.2%	0.0%	0.0%
o) Counseling the parents of students	0.0%	55.6%	44.4%	0.0%	0.0%
p) Drop out prevention program	0.0%	55.6%	33.3%	11.1%	0.0%
21. Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	33.3%	55.6%	11.1%	0.0%	0.0%
22. Teacher turnover is low.	11.1%	66.7%	22.2%	0.0%	0.0%
23. Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	11.1%	77.8%	0.0%	11.1%	0.0%

B. EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY (CONTINUED)

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
24. Teachers are counseled about less than satisfactory performance.	11.1%	44.4%	22.2%	22.2%	0.0%
25. All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.	11.1%	66.7%	11.1%	11.1%	0.0%
26. Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	33.3%	66.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
27. Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	33.3%	55.6%	0.0%	11.1%	0.0%

C. PERSONNEL

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
28. District salaries are competitive with similar positions in the job market.	11.1%	66.7%	0.0%	22.2%	0.0%
29. The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.	0.0%	77.8%	0.0%	11.1%	11.1%
30. Temporary workers are rarely used.	0.0%	66.7%	11.1%	22.2%	0.0%
31. The district successfully projects future staffing needs.	0.0%	55.6%	0.0%	44.4%	0.0%
32. The district has an effective employee recruitment program.	0.0%	44.4%	11.1%	44.4%	0.0%
33. The district operates an effective staff development program.	0.0%	89.0%	0.0%	11.0%	0.0%
34. District employees receive annual personnel evaluations.	22.2%	77.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
35. The district rewards competence and experience and spells out qualifications such as seniority and skill levels needed for promotion.	0.0%	44.4%	11.1%	44.4%	0.0%
36. Employees who perform below the standard of expectation are counseled appropriately and timely.	0.0%	55.6%	0.0%	44.4%	0.0%
37. The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
38. The district's health insurance package meets my needs.	11.1%	66.7%	0.0%	22.2%	0.0%
39. Departments are staffed equitably across the district.	0.0%	66.7%	0.0%	33.3%	0.0%
40. Campuses are staffed equitably across the district.	0.0%	55.6%	11.1%	33.3%	0.0%
41. Human resource policies and procedures regarding job posting and hiring are followed consistently across the district.	0.0%	55.6%	11.1%	33.3%	0.0%
42. The Human Resources department provides appropriate and timely assistance regarding staffing.	0.0%	77.8%	22.2%	0.0%	0.0%

D. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
43. The district regularly communicates with parents.	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
44. Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.	0.0%	22.0%	11.0%	66.7%	0.0%
45. District facilities are open for community use.	11.1%	77.8%	0.0%	11.1%	0.0%
46. Building community and business partnerships is a major goal of this district.	11.1%	22.2%	33.3%	33.3%	0.0%
47. Parent involvement and training activities are widely available throughout the district.	0.0%	66.7%	22.2%	11.1%	0.0%

E. FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
48. Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff and the board provide input into facility planning.	0.0%	44.4%	22.2%	22.2%	11.1%
49. Schools are clean.	11.1%	66.7%	11.1%	11.1%	0.0%
50. Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	22.2%	33.3%	0.0%	44.4%	0.0%
51. Repairs are made in a timely manner.	11.1%	44.4%	0.0%	44.4%	0.0%
52. Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	33.3%	66.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

F. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
53. Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers.	0.0%	55.6%	11.1%	33.3%	0.0%
54. Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	0.0%	44.4%	11.1%	44.4%	0.0%
55. Financial resources are allocated fairly and equitably at my school.	22.2%	33.3%	33.3%	0.0%	11.1%

G. PURCHASING

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
56. Purchasing gets me what I need when I need it.	11.1%	44.4%	22.2%	22.2%	0.0%
57. Purchasing acquires high quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.	0.0%	77.8%	0.0%	22.2%	0.0%
58. Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for the requestor.	0.0%	77.8%	11.1%	11.1%	0.0%
59. The district provides teachers and administrators an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment.	0.0%	66.7%	22.2%	11.1%	0.0%
60. Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	11.1%	88.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
61. Textbooks are in good shape.	22.2%	66.7%	0.0%	11.1%	0.0%
62. The school library meets student needs for books and other resources.	11.1%	77.8%	0.0%	11.1%	0.0%

H. CHILD NUTRITION

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
63. The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	0.0%	88.9%	0.0%	11.1%	0.0%
64. Food is served warm.	22.2%	77.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
65. Students have enough time to eat.	33.3%	66.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
66. Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.	33.0%	67.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
67. Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	22.2%	55.6%	0.0%	11.1%	11.1%
68. Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	33.3%	55.6%	0.0%	11.1%	0.0%
69. Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	22.2%	77.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
70. Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	22.2%	77.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

I. TRANSPORTATION

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
71. The drop-off zone at the school is safe.	22.2%	77.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
72. The district has a simple method to request buses for special events.	22.2%	77.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
73. Buses arrive and leave on time.	11.1%	77.8%	0.0%	11.1%	0.0%
74. Adding or modifying a route for a student is easy to accomplish.	0.0%	88.9%	11.1%	0.0%	0.0%

J. SAFETY AND SECURITY

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
75. Students feel safe and secure at school.	22.2%	66.7%	0.0%	11.1%	0.0%
76. School disturbances are infrequent.	22.2%	66.7%	0.0%	11.1%	0.0%
77. Gangs are not a problem in this district.	22.2%	33.3%	22.2%	22.2%	0.0%
78. Drugs are not a problem in this district.	11.1%	44.4%	0.0%	44.4%	0.0%
79. Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	11.1%	55.6%	0.0%	33.3%	0.0%
80. Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	11.1%	55.6%	11.1%	22.2%	0.0%
81. Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	0.0%	66.7%	11.1%	22.2%	0.0%
82. A good working arrangement exists between local law enforcement and the district.	11.1%	77.8%	0.0%	11.1%	0.0%
83. Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	33.3%	66.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
84. Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	22.2%	44.4%	11.1%	22.2%	0.0%

K. COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
85. Students regularly use computers.	11.1%	88.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
86. Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	22.2%	66.7%	0.0%	11.1%	0.0%
87. Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	22.2%	55.6%	11.1%	11.1%	0.0%
88. The district meets student needs in computer fundamentals.	11.1%	77.8%	0.0%	0.0%	11.1%
89. The district meets student needs in advanced computer skills.	12.5%	50%	12.5%	25%	0.0%
90. Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	0.0%	66.7%	11.1%	22.2%	0.0%
91. Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	22.2%	77.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

TEACHER SURVEY

(N = 33)

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

PART A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

	1-5 YEARS	6-10 YEARS	11-15 YEARS	16-20 YEARS	20+ YEARS
1. How long have you been employed by Edcouch-elsa ISD?	38.5%	15.4%	7.7%	11.5%	26.9%

PART B: SURVEY QUESTIONS

A. DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1. School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.	6.1%	30.3%	27.3%	21.2%	15.2%
2. School board members understand their role as policymakers and stay out of the day to day management of the district	9.1%	18.2%	39.4%	15.2%	18.2%
3. School board members work well with the superintendent.	18.2%	21.2%	48.5%	3.0%	9.1%
4. The school board has a good image in the community.	12.1%	18.2%	21.2%	27.3%	21.2%
5. The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	21.2%	27.3%	24.2%	15.2%	12.1%
6. The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	21.2%	27.3%	30.3%	12.1%	9.1%
7. Central administration is efficient.	9.1%	45.5%	15.2%	24.2%	6.1%
8. Central administration supports the educational process.	12.1%	42.4%	18.2%	15.2%	12.1%
9. The morale of central administration staff is good.	12.1%	27.3%	30.3%	27.3%	3.0%
10. The district organization chart promotes efficiency and accountability at all levels with the organization.	6.1%	42.4%	33.3%	12.1%	6.1%
11. Site-based decision making is supported by board and superintendent actions.	15.2%	30.3%	21.2%	27.3%	6.1%
12. The district and campus improvement plans are highly effective in bringing about needed changes.	12.1%	48.5%	15.2%	15.2%	9.1%

B. EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
13. Education is the main priority in our school district.	36.4%	42.4%	0.0%	15.2%	6.1%
14. Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.	18.2%	42.4%	12.1%	9.1%	18.2%
15. The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	15.2%	60.6%	21.2%	3.0%	0.0%
16. The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	6.1%	54.5%	36.4%	0.0%	3.0%
17. The district provides curriculum guides for all grades and subjects.	15.2%	54.5%	9.1%	9.1%	12.1%
18. The curriculum guides are appropriately aligned and coordinated to the TEKS and TAKS.	21.2%	57.6%	9.1%	3.0%	9.1%
19. The district's curriculum guides clearly outline what to teach and how to teach it.	12.1%	54.5%	9.1%	15.2%	9.1%
20. The district has effective educational programs for the following:					
a) Reading	24.2%	57.6%	6.1%	9.1%	3.0%
b) Writing	27.3%	48.5%	6.1%	15.2%	3.0%
c) Mathematics	27.3%	51.5%	9.1%	9.1%	3.0%
d) Science	24.2%	33.3%	15.2%	21.2%	6.1%
e) English or Language Arts	24.2%	54.5%	9.1%	6.1%	6.1%
f) Computer Instruction	27.3%	51.5%	6.1%	6.1%	9.1%
g) Social Studies (history or geography)	24.2%	48.5%	9.1%	15.2%	3.0%
h) Fine Arts	21.2%	42.4%	18.2%	6.1%	12.1%
i) Physical Education	18.2%	66.7%	12.1%	0.0%	3.0%
j) Business Education	21.2%	36.4%	36.4%	6.1%	0.0%
k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	24.2%	42.4%	30.3%	3.0%	0.0%
l) Foreign Language	18.2%	33.3%	36.4%	6.1%	6.1%
21. The district has effective special programs for the following:					
a) Library Service	21.2%	48.5%	15.2%	12.1%	3.0%
b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	18.2%	60.6%	12.1%	3.0%	6.1%
c) Special Education	24.2%	66.7%	6.1%	3.0%	0.0%
d) Head Start and Even Start programs	21.2%	51.5%	24.2%	3.0%	0.0%
e) Dyslexia program	15.2%	24.2%	36.4%	15.2%	9.1%
f) Student mentoring program	15.2%	42.4%	24.2%	12.1%	6.0%
g) Advanced placement program	21.2%	39.4%	33.3%	6.1%	0.0%
h) Literacy program	18.2%	48.5%	24.2%	3.0%	6.1%
i) Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	15.2%	42.4%	33.3%	6.1%	3.0%
j) Summer school programs	24.2%	51.5%	15.2%	9.1%	0.0%
k) Alternative education programs	24.2%	42.4%	27.3%	3.0%	3.0%
l) "English as a second language" program	15.2%	39.4%	24.2%	15.2%	6.1%
m) Career counseling program	12.1%	36.4%	33.3%	12.1%	6.1%
n) College counseling program	18.2%	45.5%	27.3%	3.0%	6.1%

B. EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY (CONTINUED)

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
o) Counseling the parents of students	15.2%	36.4%	21.2%	18.2%	9.1%
p) Drop out prevention program	15.2%	30.3%	39.4%	12.1%	3.0%
22. Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	39.4%	36.4%	21.2%	0.0%	3.0%
23. Teacher turnover is low.	9.1%	27.3%	21.2%	39.4%	3.0%
24. Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	15.2%	51.5%	15.2%	12.1%	6.1%
25. Teacher openings are filled quickly.	9.1%	63.6%	18.2%	9.1%	0.0%
26. Teachers are counseled about less than satisfactory performance.	9.1%	39.4%	30.3%	12.1%	9.1%
27. Teachers are "highly qualified" in the subject areas they teach according to the NCLB regulations.	21.2%	45.5%	21.2%	9.1%	3.0%
28. All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.	21.2%	42.4%	6.1%	18.2%	12.1%
29. The student-to-teacher ratio is reasonable.	12.1%	69.7%	9.1%	6.1%	3.0%
30. Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	30.3%	39.4%	15.2%	15.2%	0.0%

C. HUMAN RESOURCES

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
31. Departments and campuses are staffed equitably across the district.	12.1%	42.4%	27.3%	15.2%	3.0%
32. Human resource policies and procedures regarding job posting and hiring are followed consistently across the district.	15.2%	33.3%	24.2%	12.1%	15.2%
33. The human resource department provides appropriate and timely assistance regarding staffing.	12.1%	30.3%	39.4%	9.1%	9.1%
34. District salaries are competitive with similar positions in the job market.	6.1%	12.1%	12.1%	48.5%	21.2%
35. The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.	18.2%	57.6%	12.1%	9.1%	3.0%
36. Temporary workers are rarely used.	6.1%	39.4%	33.3%	18.2%	3.0%
37. The district successfully projects future staffing needs.	9.1%	24.2%	45.5%	15.2%	6.1%
38. The district has an effective employee recruitment program.	9.1%	27.3%	36.4%	15.2%	12.1%
39. The district operates an effective staff development program.	12.1%	48.5%	15.2%	18.2%	6.1%
40. District employees receive annual personnel evaluations.	36.4%	54.5%	6.1%	3.0%	0.0%
41. Teacher morale is good.	15.2%	36.4%	18.2%	18.2%	12.1%
42. The district rewards competence and experience and spells out qualifications such as seniority and skill levels needed for promotion.	9.1%	9.1%	33.3%	30.3%	18.2%
43. Employees who perform below the standard of expectation are counseled appropriately and timely.	9.1%	24.2%	42.4%	21.2%	3.0%
44. The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	6.1%	51.5%	30.3%	6.1%	6.1%
45. The district's health insurance package meets my needs.	6.1%	45.5%	12.1%	33.3%	3.0%

D. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
46. Building community and business partnerships are a major goal of this district.	12.1%	33.3%	24.2%	24.2%	6.1%
47. The district regularly communicates with parents.	18.2%	54.5%	15.2%	6.1%	6.1%
48. Parent involvement and training activities are widely available throughout the district.	21.2%	48.5%	9.1%	21.2%	0.0%
49. The local television and radio stations regularly report school news and menus.	6.1%	24.2%	30.3%	24.2%	15.2%
50. Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.	6.1%	18.2%	9.1%	45.5%	21.2%
51. District facilities are open for community use.	15.2%	54.5%	24.2%	6.1%	0.0%

E. FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
52. The district plans facilities far enough in the future to support enrollment growth.	6.1%	39.4%	30.3%	15.2%	9.1%
53. Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff and the board provide input into facility planning.	9.1%	24.2%	33.3%	12.1%	21.2%
54. The architect and construction managers are selected objectively and impersonally.	3.0%	12.1%	45.5%	18.2%	21.2%
55. The quality of new construction is excellent.	6.1%	15.2%	30.3%	36.4%	12.1%
56. Schools are clean.	9.1%	63.6%	9.1%	18.2%	0.0%
57. Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	9.1%	48.5%	15.2%	18.2%	9.1%
58. Repairs are made in a timely manner.	12.1%	36.4%	9.1%	24.2%	18.2%
59. Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	12.1%	51.5%	9.1%	18.2%	9.1%

F. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
60. Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers.	6.1%	39.4%	27.3%	9.1%	18.2%
61. Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	6.1%	45.5%	36.4%	6.1%	6.1%
62. Financial resources are allocated fairly and equitably at my school.	9.1%	27.3%	33.3%	21.2%	9.1%

G. PURCHASING AND WAREHOUSING

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
63. Purchasing gets me what I need when I need it.	0.0%	45.5%	18.2%	30.3%	6.1%
64. Purchasing acquires the highest quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.	3.0%	33.3%	39.4%	15.2%	9.1%

G. PURCHASING AND WAREHOUSING (CONTINUED)

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
65. Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for the requestor.	3.0%	45.5%	30.3%	18.2%	3.0%
66. Vendors are selected competitively.	3.0%	39.4%	42.4%	6.1%	9.1%
67. The district provides teachers and administrators an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment.	9.1%	57.6%	24.2%	6.1%	3.0%
68. Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	12.1%	72.7%	3.0%	12.1%	0.0%
69. Textbooks are in good shape.	12.1%	69.7%	9.1%	9.1%	0.0%
70. The school library meets the student needs for books and other resources.	9.1%	54.5%	15.2%	18.2%	3.0%

H. FOOD SERVICES

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
71. The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	6.1%	57.6%	9.1%	27.3%	0.0%
72. Food is served warm.	15.2%	75.8%	3.0%	6.1%	0.0%
73. Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.	21.2%	69.7%	3.0%	6.1%	0.0%
74. Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	12.1%	69.7%	9.1%	9.1%	0.0%
75. Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	15.2%	72.7%	12.1%	0.0%	0.0%
76. Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	21.2%	63.6%	9.1%	6.1%	0.0%
77. Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	21.2%	69.7%	6.1%	3.0%	0.0%

I. SAFETY AND SECURITY

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
78. School disturbances are infrequent.	12.1%	60.6%	9.1%	12.1%	6.1%
79. Gangs are not a problem in this district.	9.1%	36.4%	27.3%	21.2%	6.1%
80. Drugs are not a problem in this district.	6.1%	18.2%	36.4%	24.2%	15.2%
81. Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	6.1%	42.4%	21.2%	24.2%	6.1%
82. Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	6.1%	69.7%	12.1%	12.1%	0.0%
83. Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	6.1%	69.7%	9.1%	15.2%	0.0%
84. A good working arrangement exists between local law enforcement and the district.	15.2%	60.6%	12.1%	12.1%	0.0%
85. Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	12.1%	54.5%	12.1%	9.1%	12.1%
86. Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	12.1%	51.5%	12.1%	18.2%	6.1%

J. COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

SURVEY QUESTIONS		STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
87.	Students regularly use computers.	30.3%	45.5%	3.0%	12.1%	9.1%
88.	Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	33.3%	42.4%	3.0%	15.2%	6.1%
89.	Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	15.2%	69.7%	6.1%	9.1%	0.0%
90.	Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	15.2%	48.5%	6.1%	21.2%	9.1%
91.	The district meets student needs in classes in computer fundamentals.	12.1%	60.6%	15.2%	6.1%	6.1%
92.	The district meets student needs in classes in advanced computer skills.	9.1%	45.5%	30.3%	9.1%	6.1%
93.	Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	39.4%	48.5%	6.1%	3.0%	3.0%

STUDENT SURVEY

(N = 55)

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

PART A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

SURVEY QUESTION	JUNIOR	SENIOR
1. What is your classification?	47.3%	52.7%

PART B: SURVEY QUESTIONS

A. EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1. The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	9.1%	45.5%	29.1%	12.7%	3.6%
2. The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	9.1%	41.8%	32.7%	12.7%	3.6%
3. The district has effective educational programs for the following:					
a. Reading	27.3%	52.7%	9.1%	10.9%	0.0%
b. Writing	32.7%	49.1%	7.3%	10.9%	0.0%
c. Mathematics	38.2%	41.8%	10.9%	7.3%	1.8%
d. Science	36.4%	43.6%	12.7%	3.6%	3.6%
e. English or Language Arts	41.8%	41.8%	10.9%	5.5%	0.0%
f. Computer Instruction	36.4%	43.6%	16.4%	3.6%	0.0%
g. Social Studies (history or geography)	36.4%	41.8%	14.5%	5.5%	1.8%
h. Fine Arts	27.3%	50.9%	16.4%	3.6%	1.8%
i. Physical Education	30.9%	43.6%	20.0%	3.6%	1.8%
j. Business Education	29.1%	34.5%	30.9%	1.8%	3.6%
k. Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	32.7%	49.1%	12.7%	1.8%	3.6%
l. Foreign Language	27.3%	52.7%	5.5%	7.3%	7.3%
4. The district has effective special programs for the following:					
a. Library Service	25.5%	43.6%	23.6%	5.5%	1.8%
b. Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	25.5%	47.3%	18.2%	9.1%	0.0%
c. Special Education	21.8%	50.9%	25.5%	1.8%	0.0%
d. Student mentoring program	27.3%	38.2%	25.5%	9.1%	0.0%
e. Advanced placement program	29.1%	47.3%	18.2%	5.5%	0.0%
f. Career counseling program	25.5%	32.7%	16.4%	16.4%	9.1%
g. College counseling program	23.6%	27.3%	25.5%	16.4%	7.3%
5. Students have access, when needed, to school nurse.	38.2%	38.2%	14.5%	5.5%	3.6%
6. Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	23.6%	27.3%	20.0%	20.0%	9.1%
7. The district provides a high quality education.	20.0%	34.5%	23.6%	16.4%	5.5%
8. The district has high quality teachers.	21.8%	38.2%	27.3%	10.9%	1.8%

B. FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
9. Schools are clean.	9.1%	38.2%	14.5%	30.9%	7.3%
10. Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	9.1%	38.2%	23.6%	20.0%	9.1%
11. Repairs are made in a timely manner	7.3%	25.5%	21.8%	29.1%	16.4%
12. Emergency maintenance is handled timely.	10.9%	52.7%	21.8%	7.3%	7.3%

C. PURCHASING AND WAREHOUSING

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
13. There are enough textbooks in all my classes.	5.5%	25.5%	14.5%	32.7%	21.8%
14. Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	9.1%	40.0%	16.4%	20.0%	14.5%
15. Textbooks are in good shape.	5.5%	29.1%	9.1%	29.1%	27.3%
16. The school library meets student needs for books and other resources.	20.0%	40.0%	9.1%	23.6%	7.3%

D. FOOD SERVICES

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
17. The school breakfast program is available to all children.	36.4%	40.0%	7.3%	10.9%	5.5%
18. The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	9.1%	14.5%	29.1%	32.7%	14.5%
19. Food is served warm.	16.4%	49.1%	12.7%	14.5%	7.3%
20. Students have enough time to eat.	10.9%	18.2%	1.8%	36.4%	32.7%
21. Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.	14.5%	61.8%	9.1%	7.3%	7.3%
22. Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	16.4%	16.4%	10.9%	29.1%	27.3%
23. Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	10.9%	56.4%	5.5%	18.2%	9.1%
24. Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	30.9%	49.1%	10.9%	7.3%	1.8%
25. Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	20.0%	47.3%	18.2%	9.1%	5.5%

E. TRANSPORTATION

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
26. I regularly ride the bus.	7.3%	16.4%	21.8%	25.5%	29.1%
27. The bus driver maintains discipline on the bus.	7.3%	12.7%	69.1%	5.5%	5.5%
28. The length of my bus ride is reasonable.	9.1%	14.5%	67.3%	3.6%	5.5%
29. The drop-off zone at the school is safe.	9.1%	32.7%	54.5%	1.8%	1.8%
30. The bus stop near my house is safe.	9.1%	14.5%	72.7%	1.8%	1.8%
31. The bus stop is within walking distance from our home.	5.5%	12.7%	72.7%	3.6%	5.5%
32. Buses arrive and leave on time.	7.3%	16.4%	69.1%	3.6%	3.6%
33. Buses arrive early enough for students to eat breakfast at school.	14.5%	18.2%	63.6%	0.0%	3.6%

E. TRANSPORTATION (CONTINUED)

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
34. Buses seldom break down.	7.3%	9.1%	78.2%	1.8%	3.6%
35. Buses are clean.	9.1%	12.7%	65.5%	5.5%	7.3%
36. Bus drivers allow students to sit down before taking off.	10.9%	14.5%	65.5%	3.6%	5.5%

F. SAFETY AND SECURITY

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
37. I feel safe and secure at school.	14.5%	45.5%	9.1%	21.8%	9.1%
38. School disturbances are infrequent.	10.9%	38.2%	27.3%	16.4%	7.3%
39. Gangs are not a problem in this district.	10.9%	29.1%	20.0%	23.6%	16.4%
40. Drugs are not a problem in this district.	5.5%	21.8%	14.5%	27.3%	30.9%
41. Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	3.6%	14.5%	25.5%	36.4%	20.0%
42. Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	10.9%	41.8%	32.7%	5.5%	9.1%
43. Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	12.7%	36.4%	20.0%	21.8%	9.1%
44. A good working arrangement exists between the local law enforcement and the district.	9.1%	38.2%	36.4%	10.9%	5.5%
45. Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	12.7%	30.9%	18.2%	20.0%	18.2%
46. Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	3.6%	25.5%	34.5%	23.6%	12.7%

G. COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
47. Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	18.2%	29.1%	14.5%	16.4%	21.8%
48. Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	25.5%	36.4%	20.0%	9.1%	9.1%
49. Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	20.0%	40.0%	12.7%	9.1%	18.2%
50. The district offers enough classes in computer fundamentals.	16.4%	43.6%	18.2%	7.3%	14.5%
51. The district meets student needs in advanced computer skills.	16.4%	36.4%	27.3%	12.7%	7.3%
52. Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	20.0%	40.0%	21.8%	5.5%	12.7%

PARENT SURVEY

(N = 49)

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

A. DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1. The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.	18.4%	46.9%	22.4%	10.2%	2.0%
2. School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.	16.3%	40.8%	20.4%	14.3%	8.2%
3. The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	22.4%	46.9%	18.4%	10.2%	2.0%
4. The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	20.4%	42.9%	30.6%	6.1%	0.0%

B. EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
5. The district provides a high quality of services.	26.5%	49.0%	12.2%	10.2%	2.0%
6. The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	14.3%	46.9%	24.5%	12.2%	4.0%
7. The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	12.2%	44.9%	34.7%	8.2%	0.0%
8. The district has effective special programs for the following:					
a) Library Service	28.6%	51.0%	12.2%	8.2%	0.0%
b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	32.7%	49.0%	8.2%	8.2%	2.0%
c) Special Education	34.7%	46.9%	16.3%	0.0%	2.0%
d) Head Start and Even Start programs	30.6%	51.0%	16.3%	2.0%	0.0%
e) Dyslexia program	16.3%	24.5%	51.0%	6.1%	2.0%
f) Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	16.3%	38.8%	20.4%	22.4%	2.0%
g) Summer school programs	24.5%	61.2%	10.2%	4.1%	0.0%
h) "English as a second language" program	26.5%	61.2%	10.2%	2.0%	0.0%
i) Counseling the parents of students	18.4%	38.8%	16.3%	20.4%	6.1%
9. Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	42.9%	30.6%	4.1%	20.4%	2.0%
10. Teacher turnover is low.	22.4%	24.5%	36.7%	14.3%	2.0%
11. Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	24.5%	34.7%	20.4%	16.3%	4.1%
12. A substitute teacher rarely teaches my child.	12.2%	36.7%	18.4%	24.5%	8.2%
13. Teachers are knowledgeable in the subject areas they teach.	34.7%	51.0%	6.1%	4.1%	4.1%
14. All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.	36.7%	44.9%	6.1%	6.1%	6.1%
15. Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	38.8%	46.9%	6.1%	2.0%	6.1%
16. Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	20.4%	40.8%	16.3%	16.3%	6.1%
17. The district provides a high quality education.	28.6%	49.0%	14.3%	6.1%	2.0%

C. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
18. The district regularly communicates with parents.	30.6%	40.8%	2.0%	24.5%	2.0%
19. District facilities are open for community use.	14.3%	57.1%	18.4%	10.2%	0.0%
20. Schools have plenty of volunteers to help students and school programs.	12.2%	28.6%	34.7%	18.4%	6.1%

D. FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
21. Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff, and the board provide input into facility planning.	14.3%	34.7%	26.5%	14.3%	10.2%
22. Schools are clean.	32.7%	46.9%	6.1%	8.2%	6.1%
23. Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	28.6%	59.2%	8.2%	2.0%	2.0%
24. Repairs are made in a timely manner.	28.6%	46.9%	14.3%	8.2%	2.0%
25. The district uses very few portable buildings.	30.6%	44.9%	16.3%	6.1%	2.0%
26. Emergency maintenance is handled expeditiously.	28.6%	42.9%	22.4%	4.1%	2.0%

E. ASSET AND RISK MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
27. My property tax bill is reasonable for the educational services delivered.	6.1%	44.9%	24.5%	16.3%	8.2%
28. Board members and administrators do a good job explaining the use of tax dollars.	6.1%	32.7%	28.6%	20.4%	12.2%

F. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
29. Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	6.1%	42.9%	38.8%	8.2%	4.1%
30. The district's financial reports are easy to understand and read.	8.2%	36.7%	36.7%	14.3%	4.1%
31. Financial reports are made available to community members when asked.	4.1%	36.7%	42.9%	12.2%	4.1%

G. PURCHASING

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
32. Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	18.4%	65.3%	6.1%	6.16%	4.1%
33. Textbooks are in good shape.	24.5%	51.0%	6.1%	10.2%	8.2%
34. The school library meets student needs for books and other resources.	22.4%	65.3%	6.1%	2.0%	4.1%

H. FOOD SERVICES

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY		NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
	AGREE	AGREE			
35. My child regularly purchases his/her meal from the cafeteria.	12.2%	12.2%	24.5%	36.7%	14.3%
36. The school breakfast program is available to all children.	59.2%	32.7%	6.1%	2.0%	0.0%
37. The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	18.4%	53.1%	6.1%	18.4%	4.1%
38. Food is served warm.	24.5%	57.1%	6.1%	10.2%	2.0%
39. Students have enough time to eat.	12.2%	34.7%	14.3%	26.5%	12.2%
40. Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.	22.4%	65.3%	4.1%	8.2%	0.0%
41. Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	12.2%	34.7%	18.4%	24.5%	10.2%
42. Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	24.5%	67.3%	6.1%	2.0%	0.0%
43. Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	28.6%	49.0%	16.3%	4.1%	2.0%
44. Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	28.6%	57.1%	8.2%	4.1%	2.0%

I. TRANSPORTATION

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY		NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
	AGREE	AGREE			
45. My child regularly rides the bus.	28.6%	30.6%	12.2%	22.4%	6.1%
46. The bus driver maintains discipline on the bus.	20.4%	36.7%	32.7%	4.1%	6.1%
47. The length of the student's bus ride is reasonable.	18.4%	49.0%	18.4%	6.1%	8.2%
48. The drop-off zone at the school is safe.	34.7%	53.1%	12.2%	0.0%	0.0%
49. The bus stop near my house is safe.	36.7%	38.8%	20.4%	2.0%	2.0%
50. The bus stop is within walking distance from our home.	26.5%	40.8%	22.4%	10.2%	0.0%
51. Buses arrive and depart on time.	30.6%	42.9%	16.3%	6.1%	4.1%
52. Buses arrive early enough for students to eat breakfast at school.	30.6%	40.8%	20.4%	8.2%	0.0%
53. Buses seldom break down.	20.4%	28.6%	34.7%	10.2%	6.1%
54. Buses are clean.	26.5%	38.8%	24.5%	6.1%	4.1%
55. Bus drivers allow students to sit down before taking off.	30.6%	34.7%	20.4%	12.2%	2.0%

J. SAFETY AND SECURITY

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY		NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
	AGREE	AGREE			
56. Students feel safe and secure at school.	28.6%	44.9%	10.2%	14.3%	2.0%
57. School disturbances are infrequent.	24.5%	42.9%	18.4%	10.2%	4.1%
58. Gangs are not a problem in this district.	26.5%	28.6%	14.3%	24.5%	6.1%
59. Drugs are not a problem in this district.	24.5%	26.5%	12.2%	30.6%	6.1%
60. Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	22.4%	22.4%	20.4%	26.5%	8.2%
61. Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	26.5%	40.8%	26.5%	6.1%	0.0%
62. Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	24.5%	38.8%	22.4%	10.2%	4.1%
63. A good working arrangement exists between the local law enforcement and the district.	28.6%	42.9%	22.4%	6.1%	0.0%
64. Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	20.4%	44.9%	24.5%	4.1%	6.1%
65. Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	14.3%	32.7%	24.5%	24.5%	4.1%

K. COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
66. Teachers know how to teach computer science and other technology-related courses.	22.4%	53.1%	20.4%	4.1%	0.0%
67. Computers are new enough to be useful to teach students.	20.4%	55.1%	16.3%	8.2%	0.0%
68. The district meets student needs in computer fundamentals.	26.5%	51.0%	10.2%	12.2%	0.0%
69. The district meets student needs in advanced computer skills.	26.5%	40.8%	16.3%	14.3%	2.0%
70. Students have easy access to the internet.	18.4%	42.9%	22.4%	12.2%	4.1%