

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

August 24, 2000

The Honorable George W. Bush
The Honorable Rick Perry
The Honorable James E. "Pete" Laney
Members of the 76th Legislature
Commissioner James E. Nelson

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am pleased to present our performance review of the Riviera Independent School District (ISD).

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

We have made a number of recommendations to improve Riviera ISD's efficiency. We also have highlighted a number of "best practices" in district operations--model programs and services provided by the district's administrators, teachers and staff. This report outlines 35 detailed recommendations that could save Riviera ISD \$918,614 over the next five years, while reinvesting more than \$122,000 to improve educational services and other operations. Net savings are estimated to reach \$796,214--savings that the district can redirect to the classroom.

We are grateful for the cooperation of Riviera ISD's board, staff, teachers, parents and community members. We commend them for their dedication to improving the educational opportunities for our most precious resource in Riviera ISD--our children.

I also am pleased to announce that the report is available on our Web site at <http://www.window.state.tx.us/tspr/riviera/>.

Sincerely,

Carole Keeton Rylander

Carole Keeton Rylander
Comptroller of Public Accounts

Riviera Independent School District

Riviera Independent School District proudly serves 552 students, making it one of the smallest school districts my Texas School Performance Review (TSPR) has studied. This very small district with its very small budget taught us some very valuable lessons about cooperation and efficiency.



Boundaries mean nothing to all of the school districts located in Kleberg County. As Education Watchdog for the state of Texas, I was excited to see how well these districts worked together to ensure that their students get the best education possible.

Teachers and staff at Riviera ISD are actively involved in the students' well being, both at school and at home and are committed to help students succeed. The district has taken a number of innovative and cost-efficient steps to reach out to the community and parents. I commend them for their involvement in the student's lives.

It is this commitment that has helped the dramatic rise in student scores on the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS). In 1998-99, 74.7 percent of all Riviera ISD students passed the TAAS compared to 59.3 percent in 1994-95.

Like any good district, Riviera ISD still has room for improvement. Despite these gains in TAAS scores, the district still lags behind districts of similar size in several areas. We attribute this to the fact that Riviera ISD has no comprehensive curriculum plan nor does it have a designated curriculum leader. The district must provide direction to teachers concerning student learning objectives, assessment methods and classroom strategies

by developing curriculum guides for each subject at each grade level.

In addition, the district has no cohesive, long-term strategic plan. While the district has several plans, they are not connected to each other nor to the district's budget. These plans also lack detailed strategies to achieve the district's goals, as well as methods to evaluate progress. We recommend the district create such a plan as soon as possible.

Inside the report, you will find 35 recommendations that could result in net savings of \$805,614 over the next five years. One of my 10 Principles for Texas in the 21st Century is to redirect more of every education dollar in the classroom—and these recommendations will help the district do just that.

Riviera ISD can be proud of the district it has built, and should be commended for wanting to improve even further. I am confident that school board members, school administrators, teachers and parents are all committed to making the district the best it can be for their students.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carole Keeton Rylander". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping tail on the "er" at the end.

Carole Keeton Rylander
Comptroller of Public Accounts

Key Findings and Recommendations

During its three-month review, TSPR examined Riviera ISD operations and interviewed employees, school board members, teachers, students, parents, and community and business leaders. Following are the major proposals TSPR has developed to help the district address various issues.

Major Proposals

Educational Service Delivery

- *Develop curriculum guides and designate a leader to ensure consistency in education between grade levels*—Riviera ISD has no comprehensive curriculum plan nor does it have a designated curriculum leader. The district's fourth graders had the second-lowest TAAS scores in reading, math and writing compared to its peer districts. The seventh grade scores are in the middle range of the peer districts and dropped below regional and state averages. Compared to students in peer districts, Riviera High School students had the second-lowest TAAS scores in writing and the third-lowest scores in math during 1998-99. To address this problem, the district must provide direction to teachers concerning student learning objectives, assessment methods and classroom strategies by developing a comprehensive curriculum plan and curriculum guides for each subject at each grade level.

District Organization and Management

- *Create a districtwide strategic plan linked to the budget*—While the district has several planning documents with broad goals, the documents have limited strategies to achieve those goals. These plans do not address the administrative and support functions of the district nor are they linked to each other or to the budget. The district should integrate planning documents into a district strategic plan and link the plan to the budget.

Financial Management

- *Identify vendors owing back taxes and withhold payment until taxes are paid*—When the district purchases goods and services from a vendor, it makes payments even if the vendor owes the district back taxes. The law allows a taxing jurisdiction to withhold payments to an individual or vendor until all outstanding debts to the jurisdiction are paid in full. The district should adopt a policy to flag and withhold payments to all vendors owing back taxes.
- *Reconcile bank statements each month*—Bank statements are not reconciled on a regular basis. Some accounts have not been reconciled since November 1999, and the master account is out of balance by \$92,340. The district should reconcile bank statements each month and investigate and correct all discrepancies immediately.

Personnel

- *Create staffing guidelines to maintain reasonable teacher-student ratios*—Riviera ISD does not have a staffing formula to guide staffing decisions. The district has a teacher-student ratio of 1:10.3, less than any of its peers or the state ratio of 1:15.2. Only 12 of the 113 high school classes have 20 or more students. The district should consolidate the low-enrollment classes and reduce the number of teachers.

Facilities Use and Management

- *Develop and maintain a facilities master plan approved by the board and community*—The district does not have a long-range facilities plan or a preventive maintenance plan for its buildings. Basically, the maintenance director and the business manager walk around the facilities at the end of each year and prepare a priority list for the repairs and equipment replacement for each facility. Riviera ISD should prepare a long-range facilities master plan that will involve its board and community members.

Exemplary Programs and Practices in the Riviera Independent School District

TSPR identified numerous best practices in Riviera ISD. Through commendations in each chapter, the report highlights model programs, operations and services provided by Riviera ISD administrators, teachers and staff. Other school districts throughout Texas are encouraged to examine these exemplary programs and services to see if they could be adapted to meet local needs.

- **Technology grants**—Riviera ISD vigorously pursues grant funds from the state and from private foundations. Eighty percent of the technology at the district was obtained through grants. Each classroom has an average of four computers with Internet access and teachers have been trained extensively to use the technology. The Library has also benefited from technology grants and allows the community access for research and study.
- **Make college courses available to high school students**—By entering into articulation agreements with Del Mar and Coastal Bend community colleges, the district provides its high school students early opportunities to take college classes and receive college credit while completing high school requirements.
- **Help at-risk students**—The district's staff are actively involved in the students' well being, both at school and in the community. Riviera forms intervention teams with teachers, counselors, community members and students, when appropriate, to help at-risk students. Team members identify any problems these students are facing not only in the classroom, but also at home and help them resolve those issues.
- **Involve the community**—The district provides a number of activities to expand community and parental involvement. Nanny Elementary school students decorate the seasonal bulletin board of the H.E.B grocery store in Kingsville. In turn, H.E.B gives

the school a \$400 gift certificate which the school used to purchase student incentives. The store also donates food items for special occasions like field trips.

- **Self-funded workers' compensation cooperative**—The district participates in a self-funded workers' compensation cooperative—Creative Risk Funding, Inc., along with 34 other districts. Since joining this shared service in 1993, the district has reduced its premium costs by \$37,000 annually.
- **Teamwork**—Riviera ISD has a relatively flat organization that encourages teamwork. This was especially apparent in interviews with principals who said that there is a close and supportive working relationship among staff in the district.

What Is TSPR?

The Texas School Performance Review (TSPR), a program of the Texas Comptroller's office, is the nation's first state-level vehicle designed to improve the management and finances of public school districts.

Since its creation in 1991, TSPR has conducted in-depth, on-site management reviews of 37 Texas school districts serving 1 million students, or 26 percent of the state's 3.9 million public school students. More than \$469 million in five-year net savings have been identified in the previous 37 reviews conducted to date.

These reviews diagnose districts' administrative, organizational, and financial problems and recommend ways to cut costs, increase revenues, reduce overhead, streamline operations, and improve the delivery of educational services. TSPR's overall goal is to ensure that every possible education dollar is directed to the classroom.

A TSPR review is more than a traditional financial audit. Instead, TSPR examines the entire scope of district operations, including organization and management, educational service delivery, personnel management, community involvement, facilities use and management, financial management, asset and risk management, purchasing and warehousing functions, computers and technology, food services, transportation, and safety and security.

Reviews can be requested or districts can be selected for a review. A cross-section of Texas school districts—large and small, wealthy and poor, urban and rural—are selected so that a wide variety of other districts can apply TSPR's recommendations to their own circumstances. Priority is given to districts with a poor academic performance and/or a poor financial performance, and where the greatest number of students will benefit from an audit.

Nearly 90 percent of all recommendations are being voluntarily implemented to date in the 30 districts that

have had more than one year to implement TSPR recommendations.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In January 2000, Texas Comptroller Carole Keeton Rylander selected the four districts in Kleberg County--Kingsville ISD, Ricardo ISD, Riviera ISD, and Santa Gertrudis ISD for a school performance review. After difficulties in securing consultants to assist with the reviews, the Comptroller's office began the reviews in May 2000. Based upon more than three months of work, this report identifies Riviera ISD's exemplary programs and suggests concrete ways to improve district operations. If fully implemented, the Comptroller's 35 recommendations could result in net savings of \$796,214 over the next five years.

Improving the Texas School Performance Review

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

Recognizing that only 52 cents of every education dollar is spent on instruction, Comptroller Rylander's approach is designed to give local school officials in Riviera and in other Texas communities the ability to move more of every education dollar directly into the classroom. Comptroller Rylander also has ordered TSPR staff to share best practices and exemplary programs quickly and systematically with all the state's school districts and with anyone else who requests such information. Comptroller Rylander has directed TSPR to serve as a clearinghouse of the best ideas in Texas public education.

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

- Ensure students and teachers receive the support and resources necessary to succeed;
- Identify innovative ways to address the district's core management challenges;
- Ensure administrative duties are performed efficiently, without duplication, and in a way that fosters education;
- Develop strategies to ensure the district's processes and programs are continuously assessed and improved;

- Challenge any process, procedure, program or policy that impedes instruction and recommend ways to reduce or eliminate obstacles; and
- Put goods and services to the "Yellow Pages Test": government should do no job if a business in the Yellow Pages can do that job better and at a lower cost.

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

For more information, contact TSPR by calling (512)475-3676, or see the Legislative Budget Board's Website at www.lbb.state.tx.us.

TSPR in Riviera ISD

On May 15, 2000 TSPR began its performance review of Riviera ISD. Riviera ISD presented a challenge to TSPR since it had not reviewed a district with a student population under 600 students since its initial 1991 pilot project. Most of the school districts reviewed by TSPR have fallen in the range of moderate to large school districts.

The Comptroller's office selected SDSM Inc., an Austin, Texas-based consulting firm, to assist the agency with this review. The TSPR team interviewed district employees, school board members, parents, business leaders and community members and held a public forum on May 18, 2000 in Riviera ISD's school cafeteria. To obtain additional comments, the review team conducted focus group sessions with teachers, and business leaders. The Comptroller also received letters from a wide array of parents, teachers and community members, and staff received calls to the Comptroller's toll-free hotline.

Fourteen campus and central administrators and support staff, 12 teachers, 68 parents, and 28 students completed written surveys as part of the review. Details from the public forums and surveys appear in **Appendices A and B**.

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

Riviera ISD selected peer districts for comparisons based on similarities in student enrollment, student performance and community and student

demographics. The selected peer districts were Benavides, Skidmore-Tynan, Three Rivers and Woodsboro. TSPR also compared Riviera ISD to other school district averages in TEA's Regional Education Service Center (Region 2), to which the district belongs as well as to the state as a whole (Exhibit 1).

Exhibit 1
Student Characteristics of Riviera ISD
and Peer Districts
1999-2000

District	Enrollment	African American	Hispanic	Anglo	Other	Economically Disadvantaged
Benavides	539	0%	97.0%	3.0%	0%	80.5%
Riviera	552	0.4%	66.5%	33.0%	0.1%	58.7%
Skidmore-Tynan	689	0.6%	58.3%	41.1%	0%	55.4%
Three Rivers	769	0.5%	41.2%	52.7%	0.6%	39.8%
Woodsboro	612	3.6%	54.4%	41.8%	0.2%	46.2%
Region 2	109,486	3.8%	65.5%	29.4%	1.3%	55.3
State	4,002,227	14.4%	39.5%	43.2%	2.9%	48.9%

Source: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS 1999-2000.

In all, TSPR found Riviera ISD to be a school district with some notable successes and some challenges ahead. Teachers and staff at Riviera ISD are actively involved in the students' well being, both at school and at home and are committed to help students succeed. The district has taken a number of innovative and cost-efficient steps to reach out to the community and parents. The district however, has no long-term strategic plan. While the district has several plans, they are not connected to each other and to the district's budget. Further, these plans lack detailed strategies to achieve district's goals, as well as methods to evaluate progress.

Financial management is one area in the district found to be in need of immediate attention. The district does not reconcile its bank accounts on a regular basis. The master account is out of balance by over \$90,000, and this particular account has been consistently out of balance since 1996.

During its more than three-month review, TSPR developed 35 recommendations to improve operations and save taxpayers over \$918,614 by 2004-05. Cumulative net savings from all recommendations (savings minus recommended investments or expenditures) would be more than \$800,000 by 2004-05.

A detailed list of costs and savings by recommendation appears in **Exhibit 3**. Additionally, many TSPR recommendations would not have a direct financial impact but would improve the district's overall operations.

Acknowledgments

The Comptroller's office and SDSM Inc. wish to express appreciation to the Riviera ISD's Board of Trustees, Superintendent Charles Thompson, district employees, students, parents and the community residents who helped during the review. Special thanks go to Tita De La Garza, assistant to the superintendent, and Johnny Johnson, the business manager, who jointly served as Riviera ISD's liaison. They arranged for office space, equipment and meeting rooms, organized the findings meeting, and responded to data requests and accommodated the review team's needs.

Riviera ISD

Riviera Independent School District is located in rural south Texas, about 60 miles south of Corpus Christi. The district is a source of pride and focus for the unincorporated Riviera community. The community has historically had strong farming roots in South Texas. Today many community members commute to Kingsville or other nearby towns to work.

The district served 552 students in the 1999-2000 school year in three campuses: Nanny Elementary, De La Paz Middle School and Kaufer High School.

The district's enrollment has been dropping 3 to 7 percent each year since 1993-94. Riviera ISD's property value per student is almost 9 percent higher than the state average and ranks third highest among its peer districts.

In 1999-2000, Riviera ISD's minority student composition was 66.9 percent; with 0.4 percent African American, 66.5 percent Hispanic. Nearly 59 percent of Riviera ISD's students were classified as economically disadvantaged, compared to the state average of almost 49 percent in 1999-2000.

Since 1996, Riviera ISD consistently has received an annual rating of "Academically Acceptable" from the Texas Education Agency (TEA). It has not had a low performing campus since 1994-95. In 1998-99, the district's middle school was rated *Recognized*. In 1999-2000 the high school took over that honor and was rated *Recognized*, the middle school was rated *Academically Acceptable*.

In 1998-99, 74.7 percent of all Riviera ISD students passed the TAAS compared to 59.3 percent in 1994-95.

In 1999-2000, the district employed a full-time equivalent staff of 77.3 employees, with teachers accounting for 51.2, which is over 66 percent of Riviera ISD staffing. The student-to-teacher ratio is 10.3:1 compared to the state average of 14.9:1. The district had expenditures of \$4.3 million in 1998-99; in 1999-2000, that figure increased to \$4.5 million. In 1999-2000, 45.4 percent of Riviera ISD's revenues were generated locally, 52.3 percent came from the state and 2.3 percent came from the federal government.

In 1999-2000, the district spent 53.7 cents of every tax dollar on classroom instruction compared to the state average of 52 cents. Riviera ISD's spending on classroom instruction decreased from 54.4 cents in 1998-99.

Exemplary Programs and Practices

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

- Riviera ISD has a relatively flat organization that encourages teamwork. This was especially apparent in interviews with principals who said that there is a close and supportive working relationship among staff in the district.
- The district provides a number of activities to expand community and parental involvement. Nanny Elementary school students decorate the seasonal bulletin board of the H.E.B grocery store in Kingsville. In turn, H.E.B gives the school a \$400 gift certificate which the school uses to purchase student incentives. The store also donates food items for special occasions like field trips.
- The district's staff are actively involved in the students' well being, both at school and in the community. Riviera forms intervention teams with teachers, counselors, community members and

students, if appropriate, to help at-risk students. Team members identify any problems these students are facing not only in the classroom, but also at home and help them resolve those issues.

- By entering into articulation agreements with Del Mar and Coastal Bend community colleges, the district provides its high school students early opportunities to take college classes and receive college credit while completing high school requirements.
- Riviera ISD vigorously pursues grant funds from the state and private foundations. Eighty percent of the technology at the district was obtained through grants. Each classroom has an average of four computers with Internet access and teachers have been trained extensively to use the technology. The Library has also benefited from technology grants and allows the community access for research and study.
- The district participates in a self-funded workers' compensation cooperative-Creative Risk Funding, Inc., along with 34 other districts. Since joining this shared service for workers' compensation plans in 1993, the district reduced its premium costs by \$37,000 annually.

Key Findings and Recommendations

District Organization and Management:

While the district has several planning documents with broad goals, the documents have limited strategies to achieve those goals. These plans do not address the administrative and support functions of the district nor are they linked to each other or to the budget. The district should integrate planning documents into a district strategic plan and link the plan to the budget.

Educational Service Delivery:

Riviera ISD has no curriculum guides nor does it have a designated curriculum leader. The district's fourth graders had the second-lowest TAAS scores in reading, math and writing compared to its peer districts. The seventh grade scores are the middle range of the peer districts and dropped below regional and state averages. Compared to students in peer districts, Riviera High School students had the second-lowest TAAS scores in writing, the third lowest in math and second-highest in reading during 1998-99. To address this problem, the district must provide direction to teachers concerning student learning objectives, assessment methods and classroom strategies by developing curriculum guides for each subject at each grade level.

Riviera ISD does not have a staffing formula to guide staffing decisions. The district has a teacher-student ratio of 1:10.3 which is less than any of its peers and the state ratio of 1:15.2. Only twelve of the 113 high school classes have 20 or more students. The district should consolidate the low-enrollment classes and reduce the number of teachers.

Financial Management:

Riviera ISD does not reconcile its bank statements on a regular basis. Some accounts have not been reconciled since November 1999. The master account is out of balance by \$92,340. This particular account has been consistently out of balance since 1996. The district should reconcile bank statements each month and investigate and correct all discrepancies immediately.

When the district purchases goods and services from a vendor, it makes payments even if the vendor owes the district back taxes. The law allows a taxing jurisdiction to withhold payments to an individual or vendor until all outstanding debts to the jurisdiction are paid in full. The district should adopt a policy to flag and withhold payments to all vendors owing back taxes.

Operations:

The district does not have a long-range facilities plan or a preventive maintenance plan for its buildings. Basically, the maintenance director and the business manager walk around the facilities at the end of each year and prepare a priority list for the repairs and equipment replacement for each facility. Riviera ISD should prepare a long-range facilities master plan to involve its board and community members.

Savings and Investment Requirements

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

TSPR recommended 35 ways to save Riviera ISD \$918,614 in gross savings over a five-year period. Reinvestment opportunities will cost the district more than \$122,000 during the same period. Full implementation of all recommendations in this report could produce net savings of more than \$796,000 by 2004-05.

Exhibit 2
Summary of Net Savings
TSPR Review of Riviera Independent School District

Year	Total
2000-01 Initial Annual Net Savings	\$10,110
2001-02 Additional Annual Net Savings	\$194,776
2002-03 Additional Annual Net Savings	\$194,776
2003-04 Additional Annual Net Savings	\$194,776
2004-05 Additional Annual Net Savings	\$194,776
One Time Net Savings	\$15,000
TOTAL SAVINGS PROJECTED FOR 2000-2005	\$ 796,214

A detailed list of costs and savings by recommendation appears in **Exhibit 3**. The page number for each recommendation is listed in the summary chart for reference purposes. Detailed implementation strategies, timelines and the estimates of fiscal impact follow each recommendation in this report. The implementation section associated with each recommendation highlights the actions necessary to achieve the proposed results. Some items should be implemented immediately, some over the next year or two and some over several years.

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

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Exhibit 3 Costs and Savings by Recommendation

	Recommendation	2000- 2001	2001- 2002	2002- 2003	2003- 2004	2004- 2005	Total 5-Year (Costs) or Savings	One Time (Costs) or Savings
Chapter 1- District Organization and Management								
1	Integrate the district's planning documents into a district strategic plan and link the plan to the budget. p. 17	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
2	Develop a summary executive reporting format to present financial, management and program-related information to the board. p. 19	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
3	Revise the budget calendar annually. p. 21	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
4	Create a community involvement plan and recruit a volunteer to serve as coordinator. p. 29	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
	Totals -Chapter 1	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Chapter 2- Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measures								
5	Collaborate with Texas A&M University -	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	

	Kingsville so students can receive counseling and social services referrals through the university's graduate programs. p. 41							
6	Consolidate low-enrollment courses at the secondary level and reduce the number of teachers. p. 44	\$0	\$150,896	\$150,896	\$150,896	\$150,896	\$603,584	
7	Develop functional curriculum guides to provide direction for all instruction. p. 47	(\$21,600)	(\$21,600)	(\$21,600)	(\$21,600)	(\$21,600)	(\$108,000)	
8	Develop and adopt a comprehensive curriculum plan to document and direct curriculum management and ensure quality control. p. 49	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$8,000)
9	Comply with the Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students and adopt a five-year plan for the Gifted and Talented Program. p. 51	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
10	Provide training to teachers using campus-level, detailed TAAS performance analysis in effective instructional	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	

	planning. p. 55							
	Totals -Chapter 2	(\$21,600)	\$129,296	\$129,296	\$129,296	\$129,296	\$495,584	(\$8,000)
Chapter 3- Financial Management								
11	Contract with the Kleberg County Tax Assessor-Collector to perform tax collection services and eliminate the Riviera ISD tax collector position. p. 66	\$20,293	\$46,453	\$46,453	\$46,453	\$46,453	\$206,105	
12	The board should authorize more aggressive pursuit of outstanding delinquent taxes. p. 67	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
13	Reconcile bank statements each month and investigate and immediately correct all discrepancies including the large discrepancy in the master account. p. 68	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
14	Fully implement the purchasing module of the financial computer system to facilitate the purchasing process and provide timely and up-to-date data on available balances. p. 70	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
15	Combine multiple orders to the same vendor. p. 70	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	

16	Withhold payments to vendors that are delinquent taxpayers until all delinquent taxes are paid in full. p. 71	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
17	Develop a work place safety training and accident prevention manual and provide periodic safety training to employees. p. 72	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
18	Seek to expand the field of qualified CPA firms responding to the district's Request For Proposals (RFP) for auditing services. p. 74	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Totals -Chapter 3		\$20,293	\$46,453	\$46,453	\$46,453	\$46,453	\$206,105	\$0

Chapter 4- Operations

19	Conduct a formal facilities planning process that includes broad community participation, and prepare a long-range facilities master plan. p. 80	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
20	Conduct an ADA evaluation of all Riviera ISD facilities and determine what renovations are necessary. p. 81	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
21	Maintain detailed records for all	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	

	work performed by the Custodial and Maintenance Department to facilitate planning and budgeting. p. 82							
22	Develop an annual schedule of maintenance, repair and renovation projects for the district during the budget cycle. p. 83	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
23	Translate procedures for the storage and disposal of hazardous chemicals and supplies into Spanish. p. 83	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
24	Shift custodial work schedules to hours when school is not in session in order to maximize custodial efficiency. p. 84	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
25	Implement the recommendations from the 1997 Energy Efficient School Partnership Report in the facilities planning process. p. 86	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
26	Set up and maintain the district's utility expenditures on a spreadsheet to monitor and analyze the	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	

	district's energy usage from month to month. p. 87							
27	Survey and analyze the usage of all electric meters and eliminate the unused and underused meters to reduce utility costs. p. 88	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
28	Participate in the State Power Program to reduce utility costs. p. 89	\$4,400	\$5,344	\$5,344	\$5,344	\$5,344	\$25,776	
29	Apply standard Meals Per Labor Hour (MPLH) guidelines to food service staffing levels. p. 94	\$7,017	\$14,033	\$14,033	\$14,033	\$14,033	\$63,149	
30	Improve the profitability of the food service program by promoting increased participation. p. 95	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
31	Implement an electronic point of sale system. p. 96	\$0	(\$350)	(\$350)	(\$350)	(\$350)	(\$1,400)	(\$5,000)
32	Require the maintenance director to conduct regular maintenance on food service facilities. p. 97	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
33	Develop a policy that requires detailed documentation of accidents involving district	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	

	vehicles. p. 100							
34	Analyze bus ridership and purchase vehicles with less capacity. p. 102	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$20,000
35	Refocus bus driver recruiting on candidates who may be interested in fewer work hours. p. 103	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
	Totals -Chapter 4	\$11,417	\$19,027	\$19,027	\$19,027	\$19,027	\$87,525	\$15,000
	TOTAL SAVINGS	\$31,710	\$216,726	\$216,726	\$216,726	\$216,726	\$898,614	\$20,000
	TOTAL COSTS	(\$21,600)	(\$21,950)	(\$21,950)	(\$21,950)	(\$21,950)	(\$109,400)	(\$13,000)
	NET SAVINGS (COSTS)	\$10,110	\$194,776	\$194,776	\$194,776	\$194,776	\$789,214	\$7,000
			5 Year Gross Savings				\$918,614	
			5 Year Gross Costs				(\$122,400)	
			Grand Total				\$796,214	

Chapter 1

ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

To determine the effectiveness of a district's organization and management it is necessary to evaluate it against several critical success factors. School boards are responsible for setting policies that are carried out by administration. An efficient and logical organizational structure supports an effective planning, budgeting and improvement process that ensures resources are used efficiently and support district goals.

BACKGROUND

The Riviera ISD is located in rural south Texas, about 60 miles south of Corpus Christi. The district is a source of pride and focus for the unincorporated Riviera community. The majority of students are Hispanic (66.5 percent) and almost 59 percent of Riviera ISD students are economically disadvantaged. The community has historically had strong farming roots in South Texas. Today many community members commute to Kingsville or other nearby towns to work.

The superintendent, Dr. Charles Thompson, has been on the job for five years. The elementary, middle and high school campuses are in close proximity and are connected by covered walkways. The administration building is located on the same property, which allows easy access between administration and staff. During the 1999-2000 school year, Riviera ISD's 77 teachers, administrators and support staff served about 552 students in three schools: Nanny Elementary School (PK-5); De La Paz Middle School (6-8); and Kaufer High School (9-12).

For this review, two databases maintained by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) were used to compare educational information: the Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) and the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS). Riviera ISD selected peer districts for comparative purposes based on similarities in size, location, student enrollment and property values. The selected peer districts were Benavides, Skidmore-Tynan, Three Rivers and Woodsboro. The Texas School Performance Review (TSPR) team compared Riviera ISD to district averages in TEA's Regional Education Service Center 2 (Region 2), to which Riviera ISD belongs, and to the state as a whole. (**Exhibit 1-1**).

Exhibit 1-1

District Property Value per Pupil/Percent of Students Passing the TAAS

**Riviera ISD, Peer Districts and the State
1998-1999**

District Name	1998-99 Enrollment	1998-99 Property Value per Pupil	1998 ax Rate	1998-99 Per Pupil Expenditure	1998-99 Percent of Students Passing TAAS
Benavides	529	\$241,413	\$1.500	\$6,002	61.9%
Skidmore-Tynan	718	\$97,260	\$1.300	\$5,439	68.4%
Three Rivers	778	\$513,819	\$1.396	\$7,143	78.9%
Woodsboro	639	\$124,211	\$1.500	\$6,692	87.5%
Riviera	567	\$207,483	\$1.440	\$7,510	74.7%
Region 2	110,688	156,595	\$1.497	\$5,259	77.1%
State	3,945,367	\$190,769	--	\$5,217	78.3%

Source: Texas Education Agency (TEA), Snapshots 1998-99.

Riviera ISD has 552 students enrolled for the 1999-2000 school year, a decline of 15 students from the 1998-99 enrollment. Since 1994, the district's tax base has declined 36 percent due to reductions in the oil/gas/mineral industry. Riviera ISD finances facility improvements or construction projects through the current fund balance.

Based on preliminary 1999-2000 Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) data, about 90 percent of all Riviera ISD students passed the tenth grade exit test. TEA's ratings for 1999-2000 indicate that the high school received a *Recognized* rating.

Chapter 1

ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

A. BOARD GOVERNANCE

Under Texas Education Code Section 11.151(b), the board of trustees of a Texas independent school district is a corporate body, elected by the public with the "exclusive power and duty to oversee the management of the public schools of the district." The board, as a legal agent of the State of Texas, derives its status from the Texas Constitution and the Legislature. It must function in accordance with applicable state and federal statutes, as well as regulations interpreting those statutes and relevant court decisions. Specific powers granted to the board under the Education Code include the power and duty to:

- Adopt rules and bylaws necessary to govern and oversee management of the public schools of the district;
- Acquire and hold real and personal property, sue and be sued and receive bequests and donations and other money or funds;
- Dispose of property no longer necessary for the operation of the school district;
- Levy and collect taxes and issue bonds, including determining the rate of tax to be levied within the dollar limits voted and specified by law (in instances when a specific tax rate has not been adopted at an election authorizing a tax);
- Adopt and file a budget for the next fiscal year and file a report of disbursements and receipts for the preceding fiscal year;
- Ensure district accounts are annually audited at district expense by a certified public accountant following the close of each fiscal year;
- Approve a districtwide plan and campus-level plan for site-based decision making (SBDM) and provide for their implementation;
- Publish an annual report describing the district's educational performance, including campus performance objectives and the progress of each campus toward the objectives; and
- Adopt policies providing for the employment and duties of district personnel.

Through its governance, a board is ultimately responsible for the welfare and effectiveness of its school district. In *The Board Member's Guide to Strategic Planning*, written by Fisher Howe in 1997, education consultant James Wickenden describes his view of exemplary governance by a school board "The best boards are constructive agents for change. They anticipate future demands and require the employees in the schools to meet them. They ask hard questions; they challenge the status quo. They

set broad policies to accomplish the stated mission and then demand evidence that the policies are being followed..." In short, a board is accountable to parents, taxpayers and the community for the district's effectiveness and efficiency.

A seven-member board of trustees governs Riviera ISD. Each trustee is elected at large by voters in the entire district (**Exhibit 1-2**). Board elections are in May of every year and members hold three-year terms. Three first-time trustees were elected in the May 1, 1998 board election, replacing previous board members. The May 2000 elections were cancelled because there were no opponents for the three board members running for reelection. The board members running for reelection were reappointed to new three-year terms by the board based on the Texas Election Code, §2.051 - 2.053.

**Exhibit 1-2
Riviera ISD Board Members
1999-2000**

Member	Years of Experience	Profession	End of Term
Bertha Ramirez, President	10	Secretary, Justice of the Peace Office	2002
Wilson Martin, Vice President	15	Geophysical Service manager	2003
Steve Ulrich, Secretary	10	Businessman	2001
Gregg Lunaas	2	Businessman	2001
Linda Robinson	2	Nurse	2002
Ronnie Unterbrink	19	Farmer	2003
Roberto Villiarreal	3	Businessman	2003

Source: Riviera ISD.

Board meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month. Regular board meetings are at 7:00 p.m. in the library on the school campus. The public is welcome to attend all meetings, and citizens wishing to address the board may speak at a regularly posted time in the agenda, usually at the beginning of the meeting. Time limits for public comments are not strictly enforced and the board has no standing committees.

Student performance information is provided to the board four to five times per year, with an annual AEIS announcement before the public.

The district's tax collector supplies the board with a report of both the monthly and the year-to-date tax collections and includes the collection rate for the current year compared to the prior year.

The district's tax collector, a Riviera ISD employee, takes the minutes of open board sessions and the superintendent's secretary prepares the official minutes. The business manager, the superintendent and the board members review all minutes of open sessions for accuracy before they are accepted and approved.

FINDING

The superintendent in consultation with the board president, develops the agenda for board meetings. The superintendent sends a weekly newsletter on the Friday afternoon prior to each meeting to every board member in a board packet that includes financial information. Board members have the opportunity to read the board packets and may call the superintendent before the Wednesday night meeting if they have questions about specific agenda items.

Members of the review team interviewed a majority of the board members to obtain their perception of the overall functioning of the board and their relationship with the superintendent. All board members interviewed agreed with the superintendent's comments that the board functions well as a policy-making organization. Board members have well-defined roles and do not function independently outside of their role as a member of the board. All board members viewed the superintendent as effective in his role and felt comfortable talking to him when needed. Without exception, there appeared to be a clear understanding among the board members of their role as policy makers and the administration's role as managers.

All the interviewed board members said that the superintendent communicates effectively with the board and supplies written or verbal updates between board meetings about critical issues affecting the district.

COMMENDATION

The superintendent communicates regularly with board members, and board members understand their role as policymakers.

FINDING

The review of regular and special board meeting minutes for the most recent year (April 1999 - April 2000) reflected orderly meetings conducted in accordance with *Robert's Rules of Order*. Board members appeared to have many opportunities to discuss items before voting, and once voted upon, further discussion of a topic ceased. Board meetings did not extend late, except on occasions concerning personnel actions and once during an anticipated Reduction in Force process. Special meetings are not common and are limited to items on the agenda. Executive sessions are conducted in private with reasons stated in open session, and action items were voted upon in open session following the executive session.

COMMENDATION

Riviera ISD's board conducts orderly and efficient meetings, following appropriate rules and protocols for conducting board meetings.

FINDING

While the district has several planning documents, they are not linked to the budget. The district's planning documents include:

- The District Improvement Plan, 1999-2000;
- The Campus Improvement Plans, 1999-2000; and
- The Technology Plan, 1998-2003.

The annual District Improvement Plan (DIP) is developed by a district Site-Based Decision-Making (SBDM) committee as defined in the Education Code. It includes objectives, strategies for reaching these objectives and methods for evaluating progress, and is basically for instructional issues only. The individual campus improvement plans, also instructional, are developed each year by the principal of each school campus with the assistance of the campus-level SBDM committee.

The Technology Plan, in contrast, contains a vision statement, needs assessment and significant measurable objectives. The strategies or activities build on each other and are comprehensive. The Technology Plan also identifies the funds needed to accomplish the objectives. The technology plan was developed by the Technology Committee to meet the objectives and state mandates in the Texas State Board of Education's *Texas Long-Range Plan for Technology, 1996-2010*.

The three planning documents do not discuss the administrative or support functions of the district, nor are they linked to each other or to the district budget. The district and campus improvement plans have broad goals,

limited strategies without a clear implementation plan and do not reinforce one another or provide the means for achieving the broad objectives.

Recommendation 1:

Integrate the district's planning documents into a district strategic plan and link the plan to the budget.

To be effective, plans must contain measurable performance goals. Administrative and support staff must also understand how they fit into overall educational programs and goals should be set and measured, in much the same way as the instructional programs are measured. The district should expand the mandated improvement planning process to become a true strategic plan. The DIP also should include goals that affect the non-instructional functions of the district. The district and individual campus plans should be expanded in both scope and depth so that they become a meaningful part of the district's decision-making process. The district and campus plans should be aligned with the budget in order to fund the district's initiatives, as stated in the DIP and the technology plan.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent, with the assistance of the site-based decision making committee, develops a plan of action and expands the district and campus improvement plans into a true strategic planning process that will link plans to the budget.	September 2000
2.	The superintendent forms a strategic planning oversight committee consisting of administrators, board members, principals, teachers and community members.	October 2000
3.	The strategic planning oversight committee creates functional working teams to address the goals and objectives defined by the board and superintendent.	November 2000
4.	The work team develops action plans, timelines and performance measures for the strategic plan.	November 2000 - January 2001
5.	The strategic planning oversight committee prepares an initial draft of the strategic plan.	January - March 2001
6.	The committee presents the draft to the superintendent for review and comments.	March 2001
7.	The committee revises the draft to include the	April - May

	superintendent's comments and presents the strategic plan to the community for input.	2001
8.	The strategic planning oversight committee includes community comments into the draft and finalizes the strategic plan.	June 2001
9.	The board approves the plan.	July 2001
10.	The superintendent and board monitor and update the strategic plan.	August 2001 and each year thereafter.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Riviera ISD's agenda packets and other financial information are prepared for the board before each regular meeting, but the financial information provided to the board is limited to a list of checks issued to vendors for the previous month, a fund summary, a list of current investments and a summary of monthly tax collections. Budget amendments are provided as required for board approval during the year.

While the information in the agenda packets is factual, there is no analysis of the information provided to the board. For example, the information provided for investments does not determine the amount of investment income earned to date, nor does it compare income earned to that of the prior year or against goals for the current year.

Recommendation 2:

Develop a summary executive reporting format to present financial, management and program-related information to the board.

Financial information that does not include analysis is limited in value because it does not provide a means to evaluate financial performance or help the board and administration anticipate problems. Executive level reports need not be extensive, but should provide basic summary-level financial and program-related information to enable efficient decision making by the board. Reports provided to the board should include information in three essential areas, regardless of the size of a school district:

- Budget control;

- Financial Management and evaluation of financial performance; and
- Education program performance.

A description of basic reports is shown in **Exhibit 1-3**.

Exhibit 1-3
Examples of Summary Executive Management Reports

Report Title and Responsibility	Sample Contents and Frequency (Monthly, Quarterly or Annually)
Budget Control Business Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comparison of budgeted to actual revenue by fund, expenditures by function and related variance (Monthly). • Notes explaining significant variances (5 percent or more) in the above categories.
Financial Management Business Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revenue and expenditure data showing columns for current and prior year actual amounts for similar period (Monthly). • Administrative cost ratios, cost per student, transportation costs per mile, food and labor cost per meal, etc., compared to prior years (Annually). • Actual excess cash invested monthly and year-to-date, compared to similar period in prior years or against current year (Quarterly). • Year-to-date investments by type of investment instrument, including market value, yield and scheduled maturity (Quarterly). • Notes explaining significant variances (5 percent or more) in any of the above categories.
Report Title and Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sample Contents and Frequency (Monthly, Quarterly or Annually)
Education Program Performance Principals and Supervisors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary of grant activities, including number and dollar value of grants submitted, number and dollar value of grants awarded, and the relation of grants awarded to grants submitted - all compared to prior years (Annually). • Comparative data related to performance such as annual graduation rates, dropout rates and TAAS test scores by school (Annually).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comparative funding of specific education programs between fiscal years, (Compensatory Education, Gifted and Talented Career and Technology). • Actual vs. planned performance, with accompanying notes explaining significant variance between planned and actual performance. (Annually)
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Source: Texas School Performance Review (TSPR).

These reports can be prepared from data captured by the district's financial system or by the administrators responsible for the information. In cases in which original data is required, templates need to simplify data compilation and facilitate comparisons from one period to the next. Preparation of this type of information not only helps the board make informed decisions, but also improves and focuses the administration's analysis efforts.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent, business manager, principals and supervisors develop an expanded reporting format and necessary templates.	October 2000
2.	The board approves or modifies the plan.	November 2000
3.	The superintendent implements the new reporting format.	December 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The current budget calendar does not provide for an evaluation of prior year accomplishments compared to the district's goals, or for board input early in the budget formation process. Riviera ISD's board does not define spending priorities at the beginning of the budget process, or in the annual budget. Riviera ISD's budget calendar starts in March (**Exhibit 1-4**). A final budget is adopted each August.

**Exhibit 1-4
Riviera ISD Budget Calendar**

Date	Description
March 20	Budget Workshop-Meeting with business manager and principals to review process and procedures for next school year budget preparation.
April 14	Budget requests due to business manager.
April 18	Review Budget Summary with superintendent, principals or supervisors.
April 20 - May 4	Principals and supervisors review budgets for revisions at campus Building Level Team level.
May 5	Revisions returned to Business Office to review with superintendent.
May 12	Review budget with Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) for possible conflict resolution (If needed).
June 1- August 4	Schedule Budget workshops with board, with hearing and adoption to occur in August.

Source: Riviera ISD Superintendent.

Interviews with board members and administrators as well as results from teacher and parental surveys, indicate that the district is facing hard times financially due to the decline in property values. Without a clear understanding of the board's spending priorities early on, it is difficult for the staff to prepare a meaningful budget.

Recommendation 3:

Revise the budget calendar annually.

The district should revise the budget calendar to include steps for an annual evaluation of the accomplishments and shortfalls for the year. The district should gather board and community input early in the planning cycle and add a step to develop broad goals and spending priorities.

A primary link between planning and budgeting should be the development of spending priorities. A lack of spending priorities makes it difficult to determine whether the district is making spending decisions that will help it achieve its goals.

Board-defined spending priorities will help the district make difficult budgeting decisions; documenting these priorities in the budget would

help explain board decisions to the community and give the administration direction for the new year. The spending priorities should be driven by the district's strategic plan.

An example of a revised calendar is shown in **Exhibit 1-5**.

**Exhibit 1-5
Revised Riviera ISD Budget Calendar**

Date	Description
October- November	Determine Riviera ISD performance in meeting prior year goals and objectives. Identify shortfalls as well as accomplishments. Also, identify variances, both good and bad, as well as reasons for variances.
January	Hold planning workshop with the board to review prior year performance and set board goals for the coming year's budget cycle.
February	Superintendent, principals and supervisors develop spending priorities for next year based on board goals.
March 20	Hold budget workshop with principals to review process and procedures for next school year budget preparation.
April 14	Forward budget requests to business manager for consolidation.
April 18	Review Budget Summary with superintendent, principals or supervisors.
April 20- May 4	Principals and supervisors review budgets for revisions at campus Budget Leadership Team level.
May 5	Revisions returned to Business Office to review with superintendent.
May 12	Review budget with Instructional Leadership Team for possible conflict resolution (If needed).
June 1- August 4	Schedule Budget workshops with board. Hearing and adoption to occur in August.

Source: TSPR.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The board, superintendent and business manager review the budget calendar.	September 2000
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2.	The board and superintendent evaluate accomplishments of prior year.	October-November 2000
3.	The board and superintendent hold a workshop to review 1999-2000 accomplishments and obtain community input for planning purposes.	January 2001
4.	The board sets goals and defines spending priorities based on the strategic plan.	February 2001
5.	The superintendent, business manager and board use spending priorities and community input to make budget decisions.	March 2001
6.	The board adopts the new budget calendar.	April 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 1

ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

B. DISTRICT AND SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

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

- Assuming administrative responsibility and leadership for the planning, operation, supervision and evaluation of the education programs, services and facilities of the district and for the annual performance appraisal of the district's staff;
- Assuming administrative authority and responsibility for the assignment and evaluation of all personnel of the district other than the superintendent;
- Making recommendations regarding the selection of personnel of the district other than the superintendent as provided by Section 11.163 of the Texas Education Code;
- Initiating the termination or suspension of an employee, or the non-renewal of an employee's term contract;
- Managing the day-to-day operations of the district as its administrative manager;
- Preparing and submitting to the board of trustees a proposed budget as provided by Section 44.002 of the Texas Education Code;
- Preparing recommendations for policies to be adopted by the board of trustees and overseeing the implementation of adopted policies;
- Developing, or causing to be developed, appropriate administrative regulations to implement policies established by the board of trustees;
- Providing leadership for the attainment of student performance in the district based on indicators adopted under Section 39.051 of the Texas Education Code and other indicators adopted by the State Board of Education or the District's board of Trustees;
- Organizing the district's central administration; and
- Performing any other duties assigned by action of the board of trustees.

Section 11.253(a) of the Texas Education Code requires "each school district to maintain current policies and procedures to ensure that effective planning and site-based decision making occur at each campus to direct and support the improvement of student performance."

The Education Code requires each school district to establish campus-level planning and decision-making committees that consist of

representative professional staff from the school, parents, business representatives and community members. These committees advise and work with school administrators on campus planning, goal setting, budgeting and decision making.

Section 11.253(c) also requires that "each school principal, with the assistance of the campus-level committee, develop, review and revise the campus improvement plan for the purpose of improving student performance for all student populations." The campus plan must outline the role of the school committees in goal setting, curriculum, budgeting, staff patterns and school organization.

By law, school districts must establish a district-level planning and decision-making committee configured like the campus committees. At least two-thirds of the elected professional staff representatives from the district must be classroom teachers. Section 11.252(a) requires that "each school district have a district improvement plan that is developed, evaluated and revised annually in accordance with district policy, by the superintendent with the assistance of the district-level committee. The purpose of the district improvement plan is to guide district and campus staff in the improvement of student performance for all student groups in order to attain state standards in respect to academic excellence indicators (dropout rates, percentage of graduating students who meet course requirements established for a recommended high school program, results of Scholastic Aptitude Test)."

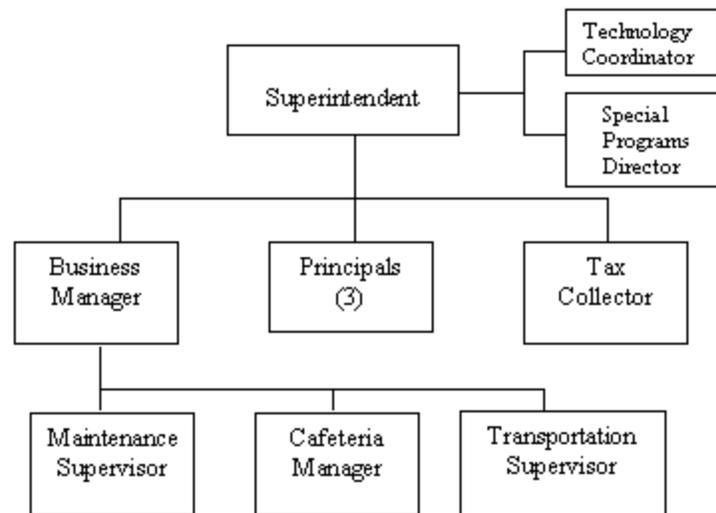
Every two years, the law requires each school district to evaluate the effectiveness of its decision-making and planning policies, procedures and staff development activities related to district and campus-level decision making and planning. The evaluation is to ensure that district policies, procedures and staff-development activities are effectively structured to boost student performance.

Site-based decision making has provided a way for teachers, parents and community members to help central and campus administrators make decisions about improving student performance.

Riviera ISD's organization structure is presented in **Exhibit 1-6**.

Exhibit 1-6
Riviera ISD Current Organization Structure

1999-2000 School Year



Source: Riviera ISD Superintendent's Office.

The superintendent's administrative management team includes the business manager, three school principals, the technology coordinator, the director of Special Programs, supervisor of Maintenance, Cafeteria manager and the supervisor of Transportation.

Under this organization structure, Riviera ISD administrators perform the following duties:

The elementary, middle and high school principals are responsible for developing and monitoring curriculum, scheduling classes, evaluating personnel and managing day-to-day operations, such as student discipline.

The business manager is responsible for all financial functions within Riviera ISD, including financial reporting, budget preparation and monitoring, payroll, asset management, risk management and purchasing. The business manager also supervises the maintenance, cafeteria and transportation functions.

The tax collector is responsible for the tax assessment and collection functions, board elections, taking minutes at board meetings, updates the policy manual and manages facilities-use.

The technology coordinator develops and implements the district's long-range technology plan, trains staff, troubleshoots hardware and software and prepares applications for grant funding.

The director of Special Programs supervises the programs for students with special needs, including special education, gifted and talented,

compensatory education and migrant programs. The director also serves as the special education diagnostician for the district. This is a new position for the 1999-2000 school year, following the district's withdrawal from a special education co-operative.

The total staff full-time equivalents (FTEs) for Riviera ISD and its peer districts are compared in **Exhibit 1-7**. Riviera ISD has the smallest ratio of students to teachers of any of the districts shown, and the smallest number of professional support, education aides and auxiliary staff of the districts evaluated.

Exhibit 1-7
Total staff (FTEs) for Riviera ISD and Peer Districts
1998-99

Staff Category	Riviera	Benavides	Skidmore-Tynan	Three Rivers	Woodsboro
Enrollment	567	529	718	778	639
Teachers	55	42	52.4	72.5	59.3
Professional support	4	7	6	7	4
Campus administration	3	3	3.7	3	3
Central administration	2	1	2.4	2	1
Education aides	9.5	14.2	13.8	16	15
Auxiliary staff	22.7	44.2	23.4	34	25
Total staff	96.2	111.4	101.6	135.1	107.3
Number of Students per Staff Member	5.9	4.7	7.1	5.8	6.0
Number of Students per Teacher	10.3	12.6	13.7	10.7	10.8

Source: 1998-99 AEIS.

Because Riviera ISD is small, administrators have multiple responsibilities. The business manager is responsible for all district payroll functions. Principals at each school are responsible for screening their own teachers and administrative and auxiliary staff with support from the central office. The school board approves the hiring of all teaching positions. Records are maintained in the business manager's office.

The three principals coordinate staff development and work together to develop programs that not only meet the state requirements, but also expand teacher skills. Staff development is provided by presenters from Region 2 as well as in-house presenters. Training since 1998-99 included training in TEKStar curriculum software, TAAS/Campus Planning, Campus Assessment/Planning, Internet training and code of conduct and discipline training. Staff development and training for food service, maintenance and custodial services and transportation is informal and supervised by individual supervisors and directors.

Exhibit 1-8 compares the average teacher salary for Riviera ISD teachers with teachers in peer districts and across the state. Riviera ISD's salaries are below the state average in every category. Compared to peer districts, Riviera ISD was the lowest in the category of teachers with six to 10 years experience, and the second lowest in all other categories. The turnover rate for teachers was the second lowest among the peer districts (9.3 percent) and significantly below that of the state (15.5 percent).

Exhibit 1-8
Comparison of Average Teacher Salaries and Turnover Rates
For Riviera ISD, Peer Districts and Statewide.
1998-99

Average Salary	Riviera	Benavides	Skidmore-Tynan	Three Rivers	Woodsboro	State
Beginning Teachers	\$23,664	N/A	\$23,240	\$26,525	\$24,783	\$25,586
Teachers 1-5 years	\$24,979	\$23,635	\$25,333	\$28,072	\$25,993	\$27,748
Teachers 6-10 years	\$30,502	\$33,086	\$30,544	\$32,712	\$31,655	\$31,470
Teachers 11-20 years	\$36,775	\$34,984	\$37,567	\$38,707	\$38,810	\$38,005
Teachers Over 20 years	\$37,006	\$36,617	\$39,212	\$41,595	\$41,212	\$43,767
Turnover Rate for Teachers	9.3%	20.8%	9.8%	19.8%	8.7%	15.5%

Source: 1998-99 AEIS.

While Riviera ISD's average teacher salaries are below that of its peer districts and significantly below that of the state, it has been able to achieve a relatively low turnover rate for its teachers. These facts tend to confirm TSPR's findings that teachers want to teach in Riviera ISD and perceive advantages to working in a small district. The district cites many examples of why teaching at Riviera ISD is so attractive, including that the faculty feel safe, the collaborations between staff and a positive environment that is open and caring.

FINDING

All the district's principals are relatively new to their positions. During the 1999-2000 school year, the elementary principal completed her second year, the high school principal after five years experience at the middle school completed her first year and the middle school principal promoted from one of the two counselor positions completed her first semester. Principals have multiple districtwide responsibilities that include school planning, student discipline, budget preparation, curriculum development and monitoring, teacher evaluation, testing, textbook adoption, sponsorship of University Interscholastic League events, practice meets and assemblies. In larger districts these are managed by separate individuals or even departments. Given the small size of the schools, each administrator is responsible for the same amount of activities. The remaining counselor, after one counselor was promoted to become the middle school principal, is in a similar position, with multiple duties across K-12 grades.

Riviera ISD has a relatively flat organization that encourages decentralized decision making and teamwork. This was especially apparent in interviews with principals, who indicated a close and supportive working relationship among staff working in the district. One principal commented that all principals work well together and that she had "never ever, not had someone to help me when I needed help."

The district holds bi-weekly administrator meetings and has annual administrator and principal retreats. In support of communication, the district makes extensive use of e-mail through the district's own intranet. E-mail is used to communicate everything from meeting dates to notice of classes on field trips and student's tutoring schedules.

The cohesiveness of the administrative team extended to the business manager and other professional support staff such as the librarian, the counselor, the director of Special Programs and the Technology coordinator. Without exception, administrators demonstrated a sincere respect and regard for other members of the team, as well as a willingness to work together and learn from each other.

COMMENDATION

Riviera ISD's organizational structure and proactive efforts to facilitate communication and to work together effectively in teams improves the effectiveness of the limited number of administrators in the district.

Chapter 1

ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

C. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

As part of this review, TSPR solicited community input through a public forum; distributed surveys to parents, teachers, students, administrators and support staff; and conducted a focus group session with teachers. Findings from each are included in chapters throughout this report and are summarized in the Appendices.

A school district's community involvement function typically involves communicating with and involving different portions of the community, including parents, local businesses and other community groups. A district teacher, who is also a parent, volunteers as a coordinator for parent volunteer needs and is focused primarily at the elementary school.

The district provides a number of activities designed to expand community and parental involvement. These include the following:

- A monthly newspaper, *Hawk Talk*, is written and edited by the high school students under the supervision of the journalism teacher. The *Kingsville Record*, the local newspaper, at no cost to the district, publishes the eight-page newspaper as an insert in its regular edition. The Kingsville paper also provides 300 free copies to the district for its own use;
- A district calendar of events is sent to all homes in the district;
- An elementary school newsletter is mailed every six weeks with the report cards;
- The library hosts a family night once every six weeks for high schools students. The library is also open every Thursday evening from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. for parents and the community to check out books and use the library resources, including Internet access;
- A board member has donated a house in the community for use as a community and parenting center that will provide a focused opportunity to reach parents who may feel uncomfortable in approaching the district directly. The district plans to open the center in fall 2000. Volunteers will create a small library in the parenting center;
- The district reaches out to potential transfer students by having eighth grade Ricardo students (Ricardo does not have a high school so students have to choose which neighboring high school to attend) and sixth grade Sarita students visit the district campus, and staff members speak to students at scheduled meetings around the Ricardo district;

- The Accelerated Reader program was expanded to include a Parent Reading Night. The students and parents read books together and take comprehension tests. The points earned by the parents are given to the student, which energizes the student to use the program. Students whose parents cannot participate are "adopted" by other adults or teachers.

COMMENDATION

The district has taken a number of innovative and cost-efficient steps to reach out to the community and to parents.

FINDING

Nanny Elementary has developed a corporate partnership with the Kingsville H.E.B. grocery store. In exchange for decorating the store's seasonal bulletin board, the grocer gives the students of the elementary a \$400 gift certificate. The parent volunteer group uses the funds to purchase items for student incentives. Additionally, the grocery store donates grocery items for special occasions and hosts field trips for the students.

COMMENDATION

The elementary school's collaborative partnerships with local business benefit students.

FINDING

Despite efforts by the district to reach out to the community, interviews with administrators and board members indicated that a general lack of community and parental involvement has been a problem for some time. These concerns were also reflected in comments from teachers and parents in the focus group and the public forum. Comments included the following:

- "I wish there was more community involvement but I feel that our 'new community center' will help bind all of us together more."
- "Teachers feel there is not enough parental support even though there is a parent volunteer program."
- "Teachers and administrators project an attitude that involved parents are a nuisance. That's the perception, at least."
- "Parents are hesitant to join planning committees, but will work and volunteer. It depends on how you count heads. They will show up for a game, but had only five people at a recent parent meeting."

- "Any special programs offered have to include transportation. Have to reach out to many parents in their own homes and community."

In addition, more than 60 percent of the teachers surveyed disagreed with the statement that "Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs." The responses to community and parent questions from teachers and parents are shown in **Exhibit 1-9**.

Exhibit 1-9
Responses to Parent and Teacher Survey Statements

Group and Statement	No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Parents: "The district regularly communicates with parents."	4.4 %	13.2%	45.6%	19.1%	13.2%	4.4%
Teachers: "The district regularly communicates with parents."	7.7%	7.7%	84.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Parents: "Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs."	5.9%	4.4%	41.2%	25%	13.2%	10.3%
Teachers: "Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs."	7.7%	0.0%	23.1%	7.7%	61.5%	0.0%

Source: TSPR.

Recommendation 4:

Create a community involvement plan and recruit a volunteer to serve as coordinator.

Larger districts often combine all their community/parental involvement functions under one individual reporting to the superintendent to help improve two-way communications and expanded community and parent involvement. This type of focus would be helpful given the district's

efforts to establish a parenting center at the donated community center in fall 2000. With the district's limited resources, however, it may be possible for the district to locate one or more community members to assist with planning the activities of the parenting center and obtaining the needed resources to ensure its success. The plan should have goals that foster two-way communication with the public and oversee community/parental involvement efforts.

To begin the planning process the administration should conduct a survey of parents and community members to determine what skills exist in the community, what obstacles exist that prevent involvement, their needs as far as training and information, and their ideas for increasing involvement. Simultaneously, the district should assess the needs of teachers and administrators so that volunteers can be slotted to meet those needs. The results of these surveys should be shared with the appropriate individuals in the district.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent recruits a volunteer to coordinate community involvement.	October 2000
2.	The coordinator surveys parents and community for skills, and teachers and administrators for district needs.	October - November 2000
3.	The coordinator designs a plan of action based on the results of the survey and submits the plan to the superintendent and board for approval.	November - December 2000
4.	The board approves the plan.	December 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 2

EDUCATION SERVICE DELIVERY

The effective delivery of educational services requires a school district make maximum use of its human and financial resources in educating its students. The delivery of these services is facilitated by the adoption of relevant, up-to-date board policy that provides direction for the management of the instructional process, the design and ongoing maintenance of appropriate curricular programs and the provision of resources adequate to support the programs implemented. The use of assessment data as a means of evaluating and monitoring programs is essential to a successful educational program delivery effort.

BACKGROUND

Riviera ISD has three schools: Nanny Elementary School, De La Paz Middle School and Kaufer High School. Enrollment for the district during the 1999-2000 school year was 552, a decline of 15 students over the 1998-99 enrollment. **Exhibit 2-1** shows Riviera ISD's schools, enrollment and grades served.

Exhibit 2-1
Riviera ISD Schools by Grades and Enrollment
1999-2000

School	Grades Served	Enrollment	Status
Nanny elementary school	Pre-K - 5 grade	198	Acceptable
De La Paz middle school	6 - 8 grade	114	Acceptable
Kaufer high school	9 - 12 grade	240	Recognized
Total		552	

Source: Texas Education Agency (TEA), Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS).

During the 1998-99 school year, Riviera ISD employed 55 teachers, five administrators, four professional support employees, 9.5 educational aides and 22.7 auxiliary staff. The proportion of professional staff represented by both teachers and professional support as well as the proportion of central administration staff was higher in Riviera ISD than in the state as a whole. The proportion of educational aids in Riviera ISD was slightly lower than the state average (**Exhibit 2-2**).

**Exhibit 2-2
Staff Information
Riviera ISD and State
1998-99**

Staff	Percent at Riviera ISD	Percent-Statewide Average
Teachers	57.1%	51.4%
Professional Support	4.2%	7.2%
Campus Administration	3.1%	2.5%
Central Administration	2.1%	0.9%
Educational Aides	9.9%	10.3%
Auxiliary Staff	23.6%	27.7%

Source: 1998-99 Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS).

The proportion of minority teachers and of teachers with more than 5 years of teaching experience was higher in Riviera ISD than the statewide average. But the proportion of teachers with advanced degrees is slightly lower than the statewide average. Teacher turnover rates at Riviera ISD are substantially lower than the state average. A teacher at Riviera ISD has an average of 12.6 years of teaching experience, higher than statewide average of 11.8 years (**Exhibit 2-3**).

**Exhibit 2-3
Teacher Information
Riviera ISD and State
1998-99**

Category	Percent at Riviera ISD	Percent Statewide Average
Ethnicity		
African-American	0.0%	8.3%
Hispanic	43.7%	16.3%
White	54.5%	74.6%
Other	1.8%	0.9%
Degree Status		
No Degree	0.0%	1.3%

Bachelors Degree Only	76.4%	73.6%
Masters Degree	23.6%	24.7%
Doctorate Degree	0.0%	0.4%
Experience		
Beginning Teachers	1.8%	7.7%
1-5 Years Experience	16.4%	26.7%
6-10 Years Experience	27.3%	17.7%
11-20 Years Experience	30.9%	27.5%
20+ Years Experience	23.6%	20.5%
Average Years Experience of Teachers	12.6%	11.8%
Turnover Rate for Teachers	9.3%	15.5%

Source: 1998-99 AEIS.

For the 1998-99 school year, the average teacher's salary at Riviera ISD was \$32,949, 4 percent lower than the statewide average of \$34,336. Riviera ISD's salaries for teachers at all levels of experience were lower compared to teachers' salaries statewide (**Exhibit 2-4**).

Exhibit 2-4
Average Teachers Salaries
Riviera ISD and State
1998-99

Category	Riviera	State
Beginning Teachers	\$23,664	\$25,586
1-5 Years Experience	\$24,979	\$27,747
6-10 Years Experience	\$30,502	\$31,470
11-20 Years Experience	\$36,775	\$38,005
20+ Years Experience	\$37,006	\$43,767
Average Teacher Salary	\$32,949	\$34,336

Source: 1998-99 AEIS.

Riviera ISD selected four school districts as peer districts for comparative purposes. They are Benavides ISD, Skidmore-Tynan ISD, Three Rivers ISD and Woodsboro ISD. These districts have a number of characteristics common with Riviera ISD. All have an enrollment between 500 and 800 students, and each district has three schools except Three Rivers ISD, which has four. All of them have a high percentage of students classified as "economically disadvantaged."

Exhibit 2-5
Student Characteristics of Riviera ISD
and Peer Districts
1998-99

District	Enrollment	Five Year Growth	African American	Hispanic	White	Other	Economically Disadvantaged
Benavides	529	(16.7%)	0%	98.0%	2.0%	0%	77.3%
Riviera	567	(9.6%)	1.0%	63.0%	36.0%	0%	57.0%
Skidmore-Tynan	718	7.3%	1.0%	59.0%	40.0%	0%	60.3%
Three Rivers	778	(4.8%)	1.0%	46.0%	53.0%	1.0%	41.3%
Woodsboro	639	10.7%	3.0%	54.0%	43.0%	0%	48.2%
Region	110,688	(1.3%)	3.8%	64.9%	30.0%	1.3%	56.0%
State	3,945,367	9.4%	14.0%	39.0%	44.0%	3.0%	48.5%

Source: 1998-99 AEIS.

Among the peer districts, Three Rivers ISD has the highest property values per student. Riviera ISD ranks third among the peer districts with \$207,483 in property value per pupil. This is \$16,714 higher than the statewide average. Woodsboro ISD has the highest percentage of students passing the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS). Riviera ISD ranked third among the districts and lower than the statewide average (**Exhibit 2-6**).

Exhibit 2-6
Property Value per Pupil and
Percent of Students Passing TAAS
Riviera ISD and Peer Districts
1998-99

District	1997-98 Enrollment	1998-99 Property Value Per Pupil	Rank	Percent of Students Passing TAAS	Rank
Benavides	529	\$241,413	2	61.9	5
Riviera	567	\$207,483	3	74.7	3
Skidmore-Tynan	718	\$97,260	5	68.4	4
Three Rivers	778	\$513,819	1	78.9	2
Woodsboro	639	\$124,211	4	87.5	1
Region 2	110,688	\$156,595		77.1	
State	3,945,367	\$190,769		78.3	

Source: 1998-99 AEIS.

Exhibit 2-7 shows the student teacher ratios for Riviera compared to its peer districts. Riviera has the lowest student-teacher ratio among its peers and is substantially lower when compared to the statewide and regional averages.

Exhibit 2-7
Student-to-Teacher Ratio
Riviera ISD and Peer Districts
1998-99

Entity	Student-Teacher Ratio
Benavides	12.6
Riviera	10.3
Skidmore-Tynan	13.7
Three Rivers	10.7
Woodsboro	10.8
Region 2	14.9
State	15.2

Source: 1998-99 AEIS.

Student-to-teacher ratios at Riviera ISD's elementary, middle and high schools are shown in **Exhibit 2-8**.

Exhibit 2-8
Average Class Sizes at Riviera Elementary,
Middle and High Schools
1998-99

Riviera Campus	Number of Students	Number of Teachers	Student-to-Teacher Ratio
Nanny Elementary School	208	19.7	10.6
De La Paz Middle School	111	11.5	9.7
Kaufer High School	248	23.8	10.4
Total	567	55.0	10.3

Source: TEA, Accountability Profile, September 1999, Riviera ISD.

Based on the *1998-99 AEIS Report*, the total operating instructional expenditures per student in Riviera ISD is the second highest among the peer districts and higher than the statewide average. The percentage of the district's instructional budget expended on regular education was the highest among the peers and higher than the statewide average. The percentage of total instructional expenditures at Riviera ISD for gifted and talented students was the second lowest among its peers and lower than the statewide average. The percentage of expenditures for special education students at Riviera ISD was the lowest, as shown in **Exhibit 2-9**. Compared to the peer districts, expenditures for Career Technology programs were the third-highest at Riviera ISD and second-lowest for bilingual/ESL and compensatory education.

Exhibit 2-9
Instructional Expenditures
Riviera ISD and Peer Districts
1998-99

District	Expenditures Per Student	Regular Education	Gifted/Talented	Special Education	Career Technology	Bilingual/ESL	Compensatory Education
Benavides	\$3,478	69.8%	0.1%	9.3%	7.3%	2.2%	11.3%
Riviera	\$4,126	80.5%	0.2%	6.4%	6.0%	0.2%	6.7%
Skidmore-Tynan	\$3,215	66.9%	2.2%	7.6%	5.9%	1.6%	15.8%

Three Rivers	\$4,283	77.9%	1.2%	7.8%	5.2%	1.4%	6.5%
Woodsboro	\$4,014	70.8%	0.3%	12.6%	7.9%	0.1%	8.3%
Region 2	\$3,079	73.6%	1.6%	11.4%	4.1%	0.7%	8.7%
State	\$3,071	71.3%	1.6%	12.3%	4.0%	3.5%	7.3%

Source: 1998-99 AEIS.

Chapter 2

EDUCATION SERVICE DELIVERY

A. STUDENT PERFORMANCE AND INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM DELIVERY

For instruction to be effective, a school district must have a sound instructional management system in place. Instructional administrators must be held accountable for ensuring that resources allocated to instructional programs produce continued improvement in student performance. Adequate planning and evaluation systems must be developed to guarantee a successful instructional program.

The TAAS is used to measure student performance. TAAS is administered in reading and mathematics in Grades 3-8 and 10; in reading and mathematics in Spanish in Grades 3 and 4; in writing in Grades 4, 8 and 10 and in science and social studies in Grade 8. Additionally, end-of-course examinations are administered in Algebra I, Biology, English II and U.S. History.

TEA's 1999 accountability standards for schools include four ratings: exemplary, recognized, acceptable and low performing. For a school to receive an exemplary rating, at least 90 percent of the students must pass the TAAS reading, writing and mathematics subtests; the student attendance rate must be at least 94 percent; and the dropout rate must not be more than 1 percent.

To receive a rating of recognized, a school's passing rate on each of the three TAAS tests must be at least 80 percent; an attendance rate of at least 94 percent and no more than 3.5 percent of dropout rate.

For a rating of "acceptable," a school's passing rate on each of the three TAAS tests must be at least 45 percent, an attendance rate of 94 percent and no more than 6 percent of dropout rate.

TEA provides information on TAAS results as well as other demographic, staffing and financial data to school districts and the public annually through the Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) report. TSPR has used the AEIS report to compare the performance of Riviera ISD students with those in the peer districts, the state as a whole and in Region 2.

Riviera ISD has made improvements in student performance as measured by TAAS. The percent of students passing the TAAS has increased

steadily since the 1994-95 school year, except in writing, which first increased and then declined over the same period (**Exhibit 2-10**).

Exhibit 2-10
Percentage of Riviera ISD Students Passing TAAS
1994-95 through 1998-99

Subject	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	Percentage Increase Over 4 years
All tests taken	59.3%	71.0%	69.0%	69.7%	74.7%	26.0%
Reading	80.7%	84.3%	86.5%	83.8%	84.7%	5.0%
Writing	84.5%	87.2%	82.2%	88.9%	84.6%	0.1%
Mathematics	63.5%	77.6%	73.2%	76.2%	85.2%	34.2%

Source: 1994-95 and 1998-99 AEIS.

Compared to peers, Riviera ISD ranks second lowest in percent increase over the same period (**Exhibit 2-11**).

Exhibit 2-11
Percentage of Students Passing TAAS
Riviera ISD and Peer Districts
1994-95 through 1998-99

Subject	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	Percentage Increase Over 4 years
Benavides	51.7%	59.6%	67.4%	65.6%	61.9%	19.7%
Riviera	59.3%	71%	69%	69.7%	74.7%	26.0%
Skidmore-Tynan	53.4%	65.3%	66.9%	68.0%	68.4%	28.0%
Three Rivers	53.2%	57.5%	66.9%	69.4%	78.9%	48.3%
Woodsboro	52.5%	59.8%	74.3%	78.3%	87.5%	66.7%

Source: 1994-95 and 1998-99 AEIS.

Riviera ISD's mean scores on the Scholastic Aptitude Test I were greater than the region's average, but less than the state's. None of Riviera ISD's

peer districts scores were included in the AEIS database, which indicates that not enough students took the test. Riviera ISD ranks second highest among peers in the percentage of students taking advanced courses (**Exhibit 2-12**).

Exhibit 2-12
Mean SAT I, ACT Scores and Percent of Students
Taking Advanced Courses
Riviera ISD and Peer Districts
1998-99

District	SAT I Score	ACT Score	Percentage of Students Tested	Percentage of Students Taking Advanced Courses
Benavides	*	16.7	82.9%	3.6%
Riviera	984	20.2	67.4%	18.8%
Skidmore-Tynan	*	21.3	66.7%	19.3%
Three Rivers	*	19.7	52.1%	7.4%
Woodsboro	*	18.6	100.0%	12.0%
Region 2	979	19.3	64.0%	16.2%
State	992	20.3	61.7%	18.1%

*Source: 1998-99 AEIS. *Data is not available.*

FINDING

The small size of the district and the community allow teachers and other staff members at Riviera ISD to know the students well both at school and in the community. At Riviera ISD, intervention teams made up of teachers, principals, staff members, counselors, community members and sometimes students, if appropriate, meet formally every two weeks to identify at-risk students and recommend ways to help them. Team members identify any problems these students are facing not only in the classroom, but also at home and help them to resolve these issues. The high school principal makes daily calls to parents of students who are absent to make sure absences are legitimate. It is not unusual for the team members to drive to a student's house and bring the student to school. Team members counsel the students and monitor progress until the students are back on track again.

COMMENDATION

Riviera ISD forms intervention teams with principals, teachers, staff, counselors, community members and students to help at-risk students.

FINDING

Beginning in the 1998-99 school year, the Site-Based Decision-Making (SBDM) Committee at Nanny Elementary School began a program called "Zeroes Aren't Permitted" (ZAP). Under this program, if a student fails to complete homework the teacher assigns the student one hour of ZAP. The student is kept after school to complete the homework. ZAP takes place from 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays-the same time for detention, tutorials and any other after-school programs. The school runs a late bus on these days to take children home. The principal oversees ZAP.

COMMENDATION

Riviera ISD has an after-school program to ensure students complete their homework.

FINDING

Every six weeks, Riviera holds a "Parent Reading Night" for high school parents to encourage them to get involved in their children's education. Students may bring their parents or other interested adults to an orientation meeting. The teachers use a computerized program to identify students' reading level, diagnose the areas of difficulty and suggest books for remedial reading. Under a teacher's supervision, the student selects the required number of books to read at each level and takes tests. Based on the test results, the student is awarded grade points in the classroom. The parent or the adult who pairs with the student for the school year, also checks out books from the school library and takes tests. A small portion of the points the adults earn are awarded to the student's class grade.

COMMENDATION

Riviera ISD helps students to improve reading skills through a program that involves parents and other adults in the community.

FINDING

Between the 1993-94 and 1998-99 school years, Riviera ISD's dropout rates have increased from 1.2 percent to 3.3 percent. Riviera ISD's dropout rate is higher than three of its peers, Skidmore-Tynan, Three Rivers and Woodsboro and the regional and state averages (**Exhibit 2-13**).

Exhibit 2-13
Dropout Rates
Riviera ISD and Peer Districts
1993-94 through 1998-99

Entity	1993-94	1998-99	Percentage Point Change 94-99
Riviera	1.2%	3.3%	2.1%
Benavides	0.3%	3.1%	2.8%
Skidmore-Tynan	0.0%	0.8%	0.8%
Three Rivers	2.0%	3.9%	1.9%
Woodsboro	1.4%	0.3%	(1.1%)
Region 2	1.9%	2.2%	0.3%
State	2.8%	1.6%	(1.2%)

Source: 1998-99 AEIS.

In 1998-99, fifty-seven percent of Riviera ISD's student population is classified as economically disadvantaged. According to the district's director of Special Programs, a large portion of the students are raised by grandparents, uncles, aunts and single parents. The district has limited access to professional psychological services for its students. According to the director of Special Programs, the district contracts with a psychologist from Corpus Christi to conduct psychological evaluations of students referred for special education. In addition to psychological counseling, the psychologist provides referrals to state social service organizations like the Texas Department of Human Services (TDHS) and Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services (PRS). The district believes similar services would also help at-risk students. An in-house psychologist can counsel at-risk students and a social worker who can pull together all the social services available to these students and their guardians, however, the district does not have resources to hire these professionals. No mental health or social services are available to parents or students in Riviera ISD and some parents and legal guardians of these students do not drive or have transportation.

Officials at Texas A&M University-Kingsville are enthusiastic about using the district for their students' training and are open to collaborative efforts.

In 1998, the president of Texas A&M University-Kingsville told the Texas Education Agency (TEA) officials that he saw many aspects of the university's relationship with the area school districts that could benefit the university. He said area high schools could be used as field sites for teacher training programs and graduate research.

Recommendation 5:

Collaborate with Texas A&M University-Kingsville so students can receive counseling and social services referrals through the university's graduate programs.

Graduate students can provide counseling to students to help them stay in school and graduate. The graduate students can also help the students and their families receive help from state agencies such as PRS and TDHS, if appropriate.

The director of Special Programs at Riviera ISD has a degree in psychology. She can coordinate with the Department of Psychology at Texas A&M University-Kingsville to arrange for graduate students to come to Riviera ISD and provide counseling with the supervision of a doctorate student twice a week.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Special Programs, with the permission of the board, contacts the district's law firm to ensure that no legal ramifications would arise from the counseling services received from Texas A&M University students.	October 2000
2.	The director of Special Programs contacts the officials at Texas A&M University-Kingsville and receives an informal agreement for graduate students to provide social and counseling services for Riviera students.	October 2000
3.	The director of Special Programs establishes contacts with various stage agencies that provide social services to economically disadvantaged children, children with special needs and their families and learns about the process and procedures for services.	October 2000
4.	The director of Special Programs recommends to the superintendent the names of staff members to develop the counseling and social services needs of the district from Texas A&M University-Kingsville.	November 2000
5.	The superintendent approves the committee members.	November 2000

6.	The committee develops guidelines on students who will be eligible to participate in those services along with the district's service needs, and presents the guidelines to the superintendent for review.	January 2001
7.	The superintendent presents the committee recommendations to the board for its review and approval.	January 2001
8.	The superintendent meets with officials at Texas A&M University-Kingsville to discuss the details of the services.	January-February 2001
9.	The superintendent implements the plan.	February 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Riviera ISD has a teacher-student ratio of 1:10.3, which is less than any of its peers and the state ratio of 1:15.2. During the interviews, staff stated repeatedly that small classes are a tradition in the district and have the support of the board. While small sizes may be desirable in certain situations and for targeted populations, it is not clear that the smaller class sizes in all areas in Riviera are planned or strategically placed to achieve certain performance goals.

Like many small districts, Riviera ISD does not have formal staffing formulas to guide staffing decisions. According to interviews with the superintendent, principals and the counselor, the district uses informal guidelines of 24 or 25 students as a maximum class size with most classes averaging 20 or fewer students.

In the elementary school, the average class size is 18.2 students, which is slightly smaller than regional and statewide average class sizes (**Exhibit 2-14**).

Exhibit 2-14
Elementary School Class Size
Riviera ISD and Peer Districts
1998-99

Entity	Class Size
Woodsboro	19.8

Riviera	18.2
Benavides	19.5
Skidmore-Tynan	17.9
Three Rivers	15.4
Region 2	18.8
State	19.7

Source: 1998-99 AEIS.

An analysis of the middle school master schedule showed that blocked classes (those meeting for two periods, three days a week) followed the district's informal ratio of 20 students per class. Also, a number of band and physical education classes were combined. Since 1994-95, secondary school enrollment has decreased by 5 percent, and average class sizes, with the exception of social studies, have decreased steadily (**Exhibit 2-15**). Average class sizes in all subject areas have been lower than the statewide average class size (**Exhibit 2-16**).

Exhibit 2-15
Riviera ISD Average Secondary School Class Size
1994-95 through 1998-99

Subject	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99
Secondary Enrollment	376	390	409	395	359
English	13.8	16.3	18.7	18.7	13.2
Foreign language	29.2	17.5	16.7	18.6	19.8
Math	20.6	24.0	17.4	17.2	16.2
Science	20.1	21.9	22.2	17.2	17.2
Social studies	15.8	19.9	19.9	19.4	18.0

Source: 1994-95 - 1998-99 AEIS.

Exhibit 2-16
Secondary School Class Size
Riviera ISD and Peer Districts
1998-99

Entity	Class Size
---------------	-------------------

	English	Foreign Language	Math	Science	Social Studies
Riviera	13.2	19.2	16.2	17.2	18.0
Region 2	17.8	18.4	16.5	18.7	20.0
State	20.4	21.0	20.5	21.7	22.5
Benavides	15.6	20.5	13.9	13.3	14.6
Skidmore-Tynan	17.6	17.8	15.3	18.4	19.6
Three Rivers	16.0	18.0	10.9	13.3	12.2

Source: 1999-99 AEIS. A review of the high school master schedule indicated a different picture from the middle school. The 113 different sections (excluding special education, TAAS remediation classes, athletics, drivers' education and band classes) showed only 12 of the 113 classes have 20 or more students (**Exhibit 2-17**).

Exhibit 2-17
Riviera High School Class Sizes
1999-00 School year

Class Size	Number of Sections
25 or more students	2
20 to 24 students	10
15 to 19 students	45
10 to 14 students	34
Less than 10 students	22
Total number of classes	113

Source: Riviera ISD. The lower than average class sizes appear to be a direct result of declining enrollment rather than a planned approach to staffing.

**Recommendation 6:
Consolidate low-enrollment courses at the secondary level and reduce the number of teachers.**

Consolidating low-enrollment classes at the secondary level would allow the district to eliminate four teaching positions at the middle- and high school-level. Should some teachers be needed with special certifications, the district should work with neighboring districts to share teachers on a part-time basis, or teachers with fewer classes should be assigned other duties during their free periods.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent and secondary principals evaluate class sizes by campus and determine where modifications can be made to the master schedule.	November 2000
2.	The superintendent presents this plan to the board for its review and approval.	January 2001
3.	The superintendent and principals implement the plan.	March 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

Consolidating low-enrollment classes at the secondary level would allow the district to eliminate four teaching positions at the middle and high school-level.

The fiscal impact of this recommendation is estimated based on the average salary of \$35,417 for a secondary school teacher and \$2,244 for health benefits (\$187 per month X 12) and \$63 for Workers' Compensation insurance (.00179 of salary for professionals) in 2000-01 school year, this recommendation would save the district \$150,896 $((\$35,417 + \$2,244 + 63) * 4 = \$150,896)$ each year.

District officials indicated that some savings may be realized by not budgeting for some teaching positions lost through attrition.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Consolidate low-enrollment courses at the secondary level and reduce the number of teachers.	\$0	\$150,896	\$150,896	\$150,896	\$150,896

FINDING

Curriculum guides are intended to serve as work plans for teachers to use in their classrooms. These documents provide direction for teachers concerning student objectives, assessment methods, prerequisite skills, instructional materials and resources and classroom strategies. The guides also identify basic instructional resources and describe suggested ways to provide the content in the classroom.

Riviera ISD, however, has no curriculum guides. The curriculum at Riviera is driven by two programs: Saxon Math and Accelerated Reading. Although each of these provides curriculum guidance to the district, they are very specific and cannot take the place of a general curriculum guides. The district also uses TEKStar to develop and evaluate curricula. The software helps staff develop lesson plans in the four foundation areas of Texas Education Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), the minimum knowledge and skills that students should possess at each grade level.

The district does not have a designated curriculum leader, nor does it have a systematic program evaluation process in place. The superintendent told the review team that he was the instructional leader, but the principals also said they had that responsibility.

Student performance on standardized tests is one indicator of the success of a district's educational delivery system. Riviera ISD's fourth graders had the second-lowest scores in reading, math and writing compared to peer districts and fell below the regional and state averages. The fifth graders had the lowest and second-lowest scores respectively in reading and math, and fell short of the regional and state averages (**Exhibit 2-18**).

Exhibit 2-18
Percentage of Students Passing TAAS
Riviera ISD and Peer Districts
Grades 3-5
1998-99

District	3rd Grade		4th Grade		5th Grade		
	Reading	Math	Reading	Math	Writing	Reading	Math
Benavides	85.2%	74.1%	76%	68%	70.8%	72%	84.8%
Riviera	95.7%	87%	76.5%	76.5%	72.7%	71%	86.7%
Skidmore-Tynan	71.4%	56%	81%	70.2%	83.7%	88.9%	92.9
Three Rivers	91.7%	85.4%	91.7%	91.8%	83.7%	77.1%	91.5%
Woodsboro	92.7%	95%	95.1%	95.1%	100%	100%	100%

Region 2	88%	81.9%	88.8%	87.7%	88.6%	86%	89.5%
State	88%	83.1%	88.8%	87.6%	88.4%	86.4%	90.1%

Source: 1998-99 AEIS.

The seventh grade scores are at the middle of the peer district range and dropped below the regional and state averages (**Exhibit 2-19**).

Exhibit 2-19
Percentage of Students Passing TAAS
Riviera ISD and Peer Districts
Grades 6-8
1998-99

District	Sixth Grade		Seventh Grade		Eighth Grade				
	Reading	Math	Reading	Math	Reading	Math	Writing	Science	Social Studies
Benavides	64.9%	67.6%	70.0%	73.3%	80.0%	87.5%	84.0%	80.0%	68.0%
Riviera	92.9%	92.9%	78.4%	83.3%	94.9%	97.4%	89.2%	92.3%	84.6%
Skidmore-Tynan	84.0%	80.8%	72.1%	76.2%	93.8%	91.7%	86.0%	95.8%	66.7%
Three Rivers	72.9%	87.8%	87.5%	89.6%	91.1%	100%	91.1%	95.6%	81.8%
Woodsboro	86.5%	94.7%	89.5%	87.2%	100%	96.7%	85.2%	93.3%	74.2%
Region 2	83.2%	86.1%	81.8%	84.1%	86.5%	85.5%	84.0%	84.9%	63.6%
State	84.9%	86.9%	83.6%	84.9%	88.2%	86.3%	85.7%	87.1%	70.1%

Source: 1998-99 AEIS.

Compared to students in peer districts, Riviera High School students had the second-lowest scores in writing, the third-lowest in math and the second-highest in reading during 1998-99 (**Exhibit 2-20**). Compared to the region and state, Riviera High School students were below average in all tests.

Exhibit 2-20
Percentage of Students Passing TAAS
Riviera ISD and Peer Districts
Grade 10
1998-99

District	Reading	Math	Writing
Benavides	84.8%	69.7%	75.8%
Riviera	85.5%	77.8%	88.7%
Skidmore-Tynan	82.5%	77.6%	91.4%
Three Rivers	94.0%	88.0%	95.8%
Woodsboro	84.2%	83.8%	91.9%
Region 2	88.6%	79.2%	91.2%
State	88.8%	81.6%	90.6%

Source: 1998-99 AEIS.

Recommendation 7:

Develop functional curriculum guides to provide direction for all instruction.

The superintendent should designate one principal as the district's curriculum leader. The curriculum leader should form a curriculum committee with teachers representing all grade levels and key subject areas. This committee should evaluate the existing curriculum of all programs.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent, with input from principals, selects a group of teachers representing all grade levels and key subject areas to serve on the curriculum committee.	October 2000
2.	The committee, with input from appropriate staff, develops and recommends a process for curriculum development, a uniform format and evaluation procedures to determine curriculum effectiveness.	October 2000
3.	The committee, with input from regional and campus personnel, develops a comprehensive matrix for one or two curriculum areas, including a scope and sequence chart showing major curricular emphasis grade by grade and subject by subject, with a schedule for addressing all K-12 curriculum areas.	November - December 2000
4.	Teachers and administrators review all Riviera ISD course offerings to determine which guides should be developed and establishes a timetable for completion of all guides.	January 2001

5.	The curriculum committee develops guides according to the timetable for guide completion.	June - July 2001
6.	The district teachers field-test the initial guide writing project and provides feedback to the curriculum team.	June - July 2001
7.	The curriculum committee modifies the guide-writing process based on feedback.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

All curriculum guides should be scheduled for development from 2000-01 to 2004-05. The district should develop 12-15 guides per year.

A review of the current curriculum and developing 12 guides would require 12 teams with three teachers for each team for one week per guide. If each team is made up of three teachers, it would take 36 teachers with a stipend of \$80 each for seven days ($36 \times \$80 \times 7 = \$20,160$).

A master curriculum guide can be produced in a loose-leaf binder for about \$120. Cost of 12 guides would be \$1,440 ($\$120 \times 12 = \$1,440$).

Total cost for the district for developing and producing 12 curriculum guides each year would be \$21,600 ($\$20,160 + \$1,440 = \$21,600$).

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Develop functional curriculum guides to provide direction for all instruction.	(\$21,600)	(\$21,600)	(\$21,600)	(\$21,600)	(\$21,600)

FINDING

At the district level, Riviera ISD has no comprehensive curriculum plan to provide focus and set direction for the instructional programs. Well-written curriculum plans establish common standards for what is to be taught and evaluated. Such standards ensure the consistency of the district's curriculum and provide a systematic basis for decision making across all instructional settings. Such plans must be clearly and thoroughly communicated to staff members and the community.

While the district staff, principals and teachers have been diligent in their efforts to address students' needs, there is no process in place through which the district's instructional priorities can be addressed. The District Improvement Plan is developed annually and includes objectives and

strategies. These strategies, however, lack the necessary scope and depth to guide the district's decision-making process in curriculum matters.

Typically, an effective curriculum plan covers several areas, including responsibilities for curriculum management, long-range planning, curriculum guides for all areas of instruction, textbook adoption process curriculum linkage between grades, staff training, curriculum delivery, periodic review of curriculum, reports to the board on program effectiveness and program-centered budgeting.

**Recommendation 8:
Develop and adopt a comprehensive curriculum plan to document and direct curriculum management and ensure quality control.**

A strong curriculum management plan includes statements that clearly direct the staff; set a direction how to use available resources to accomplish the organization's mission; and establish the processes and structures by which decisions will be made.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent contacts the RESC 2 in Corpus Christi and other school districts to request sample curriculum management plans.	September 2000
2.	The superintendent directs the three principals and selected teachers to review these plans and to modify them for Riviera ISD.	October - December 2000
3.	The superintendent reviews the proposed plan on curriculum management and submits to the board.	January 2001
4.	The board reviews and approves the plan and the plan is implemented.	February 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

The fiscal impact of this recommendation is based on the assumption that the district would pay a stipend of \$80 per day for 10 teachers for 10 days to develop a curriculum plan for Riviera ISD.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Develop and adopt a comprehensive curriculum plan to document and direct curriculum management and ensure	(\$8,000)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

quality control.					
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Chapter 2

EDUCATION SERVICE DELIVERY

B. GIFTED AND TALENTED PROGRAM

State legislation passed in 1987 requires all school districts to provide services for gifted and talented students. In 1990, the State Board of Education (SBOE) adopted a state plan for serving gifted students that was designed to provide guidance to districts on meeting the requirements of the law. The plan also offered assurance that all students would be afforded the opportunity to be fairly and accurately assessed for the appropriate services.

In 1995, state law required the SBOE to "develop and periodically update a state plan of the education of gifted and talented students." The plan was designed "to measure the performance of districts in providing services to students identified as gifted and talented." The SBOE plan, adopted in 1996, provides direction for the refinement of existing services and for the creation of additional curricular options for the performance of gifted students.

The *Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students* identifies five program areas that serve as the basis for measuring how well districts provide services to gifted and talented students. The areas are student assessment, program design, curriculum and instruction, professional development and family-community involvement.

As shown in **Exhibit 2-21**, the percentage of Riviera ISD students enrolled in gifted and talented programs was highest among the peer districts and higher than the state average. Yet no teachers were assigned for G/T program specifically, and the proportion of instructional expenditures budgeted for gifted programs was second lowest among peer districts and significantly lower than the statewide average.

State law requires all Texas school districts to have educational programs serving the needs of gifted and talented students for all grades. Gifted and talented students are defined as students who have high levels of achievement, intellectual and academic ability, creativity, leadership skills and talent in the visual and performing arts.

Exhibit 2-21
Percentage of Students, Teachers and Budgeted Instructional
Expenditures for Gifted and Talented Program
Riviera ISD and Peers
1998-99

District	G/T Student Enrollment	G/T Teachers	G/T Instructional Expenditures
Benavides	7.0%	0.0%	0.1%
Riviera	15.9%	0.0%	0.2%
Skidmore-Tynan	7.5%	0.6%	2.2%
Three Rivers	12.0%	1.8%	1.2%
Woodsboro	8.1%	0.0%	0.3%
Region 2	6.9%	1.7%	1.6%
State	8.4%	2.1%	1.6%

Source: 1998-99 AEIS.

TEA requires districts to use a systematic process to identify gifted and talented students. Funding is available through the Texas Foundation School Program.

Riviera ISD provides instruction to students identified as gifted and talented in general classes with teachers who have received specialized training. The district's definition of gifted for students in Kindergarten through grade 2 includes all children. At the end of the second grade, teachers identify and nominate students for further assessment as part of the formal program. Members of the community, parents or businesspeople may nominate students in grades three through eight for specialized training. A student may also request the training.

Students in high school who attend Accelerated Programs of Pre-Accelerated Programs (AP) in English, science and math courses are considered gifted and talented.

The district encourages all teachers to obtain the 30 hours of initial staff development training required for teachers who provide services to gifted and talented students. It has been the district's philosophy that all children are gifted and talented, and that instructional strategies appropriate for use with gifted and talented students are also appropriate for use with all students. All elementary and middle school teachers and high school teachers who teach Advanced Placement (AP) and pre AP classes received the 30 hours of initial staff development training.

Although the district encourages its teachers to receive the required training to teach gifted and talented classes, training was last held in 1995. The teachers that received the training are scattered throughout grade

levels, and it is not known if all gifted students are in their classes. According to one district official, the program has not been effective in the past.

FINDING

At Riviera ISD, students are identified as gifted and talented mostly based on teacher recommendations. At the high school level, any student enrolled in AP classes is considered a gifted student. Although teacher recommendations and enrollment in AP classes could be part of the criteria used to identify gifted and talented students, they are not enough to comply with requirements of the Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students. The plan requires that students be assessed under multiple qualitative and quantitative measures.

Riviera ISD provides limited opportunities to these gifted and talented children. The students are placed in the same classroom as regular education students and are taught the regular curriculum. There are no substantial instructional changes for these students. According to one principal, teachers are simply instructed to "expect" more from these students. English allows for challenging selections and science offers science fair participation.

Parents, teachers and community members commented in the forum and through TSPR surveys that the district lacks an effective gifted and talented program.

Recommendation 9: Comply with the Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students and adopt a five-year plan for the Gifted and Talented Program.

Long-range planning and student evaluation are important components of a successful gifted and talented program.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The director of Special Programs recommends to the superintendent the names of individuals that are representative of stakeholders in the gifted and talented program to serve on the committee and write the five-year plan.	October 2000
2.	The superintendent approves the committee members.	October 2000
3.	The committee develops a five-year plan for Gifted and Talented Education and submits it to the superintendent for review and	February 2001

	approval. The director of Special Programs develops criteria for admitting students into the gifted and talented program.	
4.	The superintendent reviews the plan, revises and submits it to the board for review and approval.	March 2001
5.	The board approves the five-year plan for gifted and talented students.	April 2001
6.	The five-year plan for gifted and talented students is implemented.	May 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 2

EDUCATION SERVICE DELIVERY

C. COMPENSATORY EDUCATION

The Federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (Title I), originally enacted in 1965, and the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 provide funds for students who do not meet certain performance standards. Title I funds are sent to campuses, via TEA, based on the number of economically disadvantaged students (typically, students who are eligible for free or reduced-priced lunches or breakfasts). The students served, however, are selected based on educational need, not economic status. Funds are to be supplemental in nature. These funds must be added to the regular program, not supplant regular funds.

State compensatory funds, like federal Title I funds, are supplemental in nature. State compensatory funds rules allow a great deal of flexibility for identification of students and programs. Funds flow on the basis of the number of economically disadvantaged students, but students served need not be economically disadvantaged.

At Riviera ISD, the elementary school is designated as Title 1 campus.

Fifty-seven percent of Riviera ISD students are economically disadvantaged, compared with the state average of 49 percent, as shown in **Exhibit 2-22**. Two of the peer districts have higher percentages of economically disadvantaged enrollment than Riviera ISD.

Exhibit 2-22
Economic Disadvantaged Enrollment
Riviera ISD vs. Peers
1998-99

District	Number	Percent of Enrollment
Benavides	409	77.3%
Riviera	323	57.0%
Skidmore-Tynan	433	60.3%
Three Rivers	321	41.3%
Woodsboro	308	48.2%
State	1,941,547	48.5%

Source: 1998-99 AEIS.

Exhibit 2-23 shows that 3 percent of the faculty are compensatory education teachers and about 6.7 percent of the district's expenditures are for compensatory education. These expenditures are the second lowest among the peer districts.

Exhibit 2-23
Compensatory Education Expenditures
Riviera ISD vs. Peers
1998-99

District	Compensatory Education Teachers (FTEs)	Percent of Total	Budget Expenditures	Percent of Total
Benavides	4.8	11.5%	\$207,436	11.3%
Riviera	1.0	3.0%	\$155,321	6.7%
Skidmore-Tynan	7.7	14.7%	\$355,160	15.8%
Three Rivers	0.5	0.7%	\$208,808	6.5%
Woodsboro	4.2	7.1%	\$213,108	8.3%
Region 2	274.3	3.7	\$28,655,908	8.7%
State	9,494.6	3.7%	\$857,875,666	7.3%

Source: 1998-99 AEIS.

The Texas Education Code, (TEC) Section 11.252 states that a district improvement plan must include a needs assessment and a detailed, measurable plan for improvement. TEC, Section 11.252, states that a district improvement plan must include:

"A comprehensive needs assessment; measurable district performance objectives; strategies for improvement of student performance; resources need to implement identified strategies; staff responsible for ensuring the accomplishment of each strategy; 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."

FINDING

Riviera ISD's economically disadvantaged students do not perform as well on TAAS as students statewide and rank third among peer districts (**Exhibit 2-24**). The gap in test scores between all students and economically disadvantaged students in Riviera ISD is wider than the gap between all students and economically disadvantaged students statewide.

Exhibit 2-24
Percent of All Students & Economically Disadvantaged Students
Passing All TASS Tests
Riviera ISD and Peers
1998-99

District	All Students	Peer Rank	Economically Disadvantaged Students	Peer Rank
Benavides	61.9	5	60.4	4
Riviera	74.7	3	62.3	3
Skidmore-Tynan	68.4	4	56.4	5
Three Rivers	78.9	2	69.8	2
Woodsboro	87.5	1	80.4	1
Region 2	77.1%		69.9%	
State	78.3%		67.9%	

Source: 1998-99 AEIS.

In Riviera ISD, the performance difference between economically disadvantaged and all students was 3.7 percent in grade 3, and increased to 21.5 percent by grade 10 (**Exhibit 2-25**). This performance pattern indicates that the instructional needs of economically disadvantaged students are not met with the same degree of effectiveness as other students.

Exhibit 2-25
Percentage Difference in TAAS Pass Rates
Between All Students and
Economically Disadvantaged Students
1997-99

Grade	1997-98 Percent Passed			1998-99 Percent Passed		
	All Students	Economic Disadvantaged	Gap	All Students	Economic Disadvantaged	Gap

3	51.4%	45.8%	5.6%	87.0%	83.3%	3.7%
4	58.6%	52.4%	6.2%	61.8%	50.0%	11.8%
5	80.8%	77.8%	3.0%	71.0%	60.0%	11.0%
6	83.3%	81.8%	1.5%	85.7%	77.8%	7.9%
7	77.8%	58.8%	19.0%	73.0%	52.9%	20.1%
8	64.2%	53.6%	10.6%	75.0%	62.5%	12.5%
10	57.5%	50.0%	7.5%	67.3%	45.8%	21.5%

Source: 1998-99 AEIS.

One way to provide better instruction is to give teachers detailed information on TAAS performance and instruction on how to use the information to plan instruction.

Riviera ISD campus principals and staff have detailed TAAS data and developed strategies to help the low-performing students. The teachers are provided with detailed TAAS assessment data to use in coaching economically disadvantaged students for TAAS. The district offered TAAS camps for three Saturdays during 1999-2000 school year.

While providing additional help to students to prepare for TAAS is helpful, it is more important to analyze their weaknesses and identify the areas where economically disadvantaged students need additional instruction. While the teachers are given detailed data, they are not given any special training or direction how to use this test data. Without understanding the analysis, teachers can not effectively prepare lesson plans to help these students to improve. Providing teachers the opportunity to see how other schools with similar characteristics are performing is also important, especially schools with similar characteristics that have successful programs. For example, Austin ISD's Martin Junior High became a National Blue Ribbon middle school in 2000, just four years after being designated low performing by the state. When compared with Texas schools with similar numbers of students from low-income families or lacking proficiency in English, Martin is within reach of the best in the state according to a report issued by Just for Kids, an Austin-based nonprofit education research group. To make the gains, Martin's principal and teachers have worked with their elementary schools to find out where their students are weak and have created activities that are engaging and instructive, such as an annual TAAS Math Bowl. Schools with similar student characteristics could duplicate Martin's strategies.

**Recommendation 10:
Provide training to teachers for using campus-level, detailed TAAS
performance analysis in effective instructional planning.**

Data for peer campuses are readily available at no cost from the TEA Web site, from Just for Kids or by requesting data from TEA.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent and the principals develop training modules for teachers on the appropriate use of test scores for identifying and addressing the educational needs of economically disadvantaged students.	October 2000
2.	The superintendent distributes the detailed analysis of TAAS performance data for economically disadvantaged students to all teachers.	January 2001
3.	The principals train teachers and campus staff on to interpret test scores and plan instruction to address specific assessment objectives and items.	February 2001- March 2001
4.	The principals develop strategies to identify successful instructional practices at peer campuses that can be applied in Riviera ISD.	April 2001 and Ongoing
5.	At the beginning of the school year, the principals provide teachers individual student data, TAAS summary reports for their incoming Title I students and training to interpret and use the data in effective instructional planning.	August 2001 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing training resources.

Chapter 2

EDUCATION SERVICE DELIVERY

D. CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION

The Texas Education Code requires school districts to provide a curriculum that affords each student the opportunity to "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."

A TEA rule requires school districts to offer Career and Technology Education (CATE) courses selected from three of eight career and technology education areas: agricultural science and technology, business education, health science technology, home economics, industrial technology, marketing, trade and industrial and career orientation. Riviera ISD offers CATE programs in four of the TEA's eight required areas: web mastering, desktop publishing, agriculture and homemaking.

FINDING

Riviera ISD provides opportunities to its high school students to take college classes and receive college credit. Riviera ISD entered into an articulation agreement with Coastal Bend and Del Mar community colleges so that the students can take college level classes and receive college credit while completing high school requirements. In the 1999-2000 school year, 172 students enrolled in dual credit classes.

Early College Start is a program for high school juniors and seniors that helps them get ahead in today's highly competitive world. A student who participates in the program before his junior year could complete 30 hours of college credit by taking a course each semester, including summers, until graduation. These 30 hours are transferable to any public college in Texas. An early college start lowers the cost of higher education because tuition paid now will most likely be lower than after graduation from high school. If the tuition and fees at post-secondary institutions are waived, the credits are free, so the savings are higher. In addition, early starters need less time after high school graduation to complete post-secondary education. **Exhibit 2-26** provides information on Riviera ISD's dual enrollment courses.

Exhibit 2-26

Dual Enrollment Programs Offered by Riviera ISD

Program	Coastal Bend College	Del Mar College
Keyboarding	X	
Business Computer Information I	X	
Business Computer Information II	X	
Accounting	X	
Technical Introduction to Criminal Justice	X	
Criminal Investigation	X	
Crime in America	X	
Emergency Communications	X	
Fundamentals of Criminal Law	X	
English 1301, 1302 and 1304		X
Biology 1404 and AP Biology		X

Source: Riviera ISD Counselor.

COMMENDATION

The district provides early opportunities for students to receive training and college credits in technical as well as core curriculum areas.

Chapter 2

EDUCATION SERVICE DELIVERY

E. TECHNOLOGY

FINDING

About 80 percent of the technology at Riviera ISD was obtained through a vigorous pursuit of grants from the state and from private foundations. Since 1996-97, the district has been awarded \$415,000 in grant funds for technology needs. The superintendent and the technology coordinator keep in constant touch with Regional Education Service Center 2 (RESC 2) for grant availability information and receive help from the service center to complete the grant applications and put the grant packages together.

The district's *Long-Range Technology Plan (1998-2003)* incorporates the mandates of the state plan adopted by the SBOE (*The Long-Range Plan for Technology, 1996-2010 and Goals 2000*). The state plan has three primary goals. The first is to provide the instructional staff training to prepare them to take advantage of technology and to integrate technology into their teaching and learning. The second goal is to prepare students using a well-balanced curriculum, by providing access to information and by integrating technology into the teaching and learning process. The third goal is to provide resources, space and equipment necessary to deliver instruction.

The plan builds on the board's earlier investment of \$175,000 for wiring schools and purchasing 75 computers.

The district has accomplished much of the plan. The entire district is networked with Internet capability in every classroom. Each classroom has an average of four computers and each teacher has a computer in the classroom. Microsoft Office 97 is on every staff hard drive. Teachers use Grade Speed software for grading, and attendance reporting will be added in 2000-01. The Learning Resource Center, or library, maintains three CD-Rom towers. These towers provide access from every classroom to reference materials, library catalogs, specialized curriculums such as Accelerated Reader and curriculum support software such as TEKStar. In 1999-2000, the district received a grant from Technology Integration in Education (TIE) to establish a distance learning center in the Learning Resource Center.

Teachers have also been trained extensively to use the new technology. This training was included in the long-range plan and includes specialized

training in specific software, such as TEKStar, as well as generalized training for using the Internet, Power Point and other software.

COMMENDATION

Using available grants, Riviera ISD built an advanced technology system that helps provide a broad range of learning opportunities for students and teachers.

Chapter 2

EDUCATION SERVICE DELIVERY

F. DISCIPLINE MANAGEMENT AND SAFETY

The safety and security of students and teachers in schools has become one of the most critical issues facing the nation. For many districts, safety and security is one of the fastest growing items in the budget. In 1996-97, the state started tracking expenditures for security and monitoring services as a separate expenditure item. It is not unusual for districts to have full-time law enforcement departments staffed with officers, security guards and dispatchers.

The Riviera ISD staff is well aware of potential security problems. Immediately prior to TSPR site visit, the district found a bomb threat written on bathroom walls and had taken rigorous action to address it. Riviera's rural location and small size allows individual focus on students, providing an atmosphere that administrators and board members consider relatively safe.

FINDING

An agreement with the Kleberg County Sheriff's Department allows Riviera ISD to avoid spending district funds on security while ensuring a safe environment at all school facilities. The Kleberg County Sheriff's Department, through a state grant, provides campus security. Under this \$29,955 grant, a sheriff's deputy is on the grounds during school hours. The grant also provided two law enforcement classes and sponsorship of a high school club called the Explorers. During the second semester of the 1999-2000 school year, 51 students participated in the law enforcement classes.

The Kleberg County Sheriff's Department also funds the DARE program for students in grade 3 to 5. Students in grades 3 and 4 receive periodic lessons from a police officer on safety issues. Students in grade 5 receive weekly lessons for an entire semester and graduate from the program.

COMMENDATION

Riviera ISD, through grant funds and by working with the Kleberg County Sheriff's Department, not only meets campus security needs, but also enhanced its curricular and extracurricular activities by teaching law enforcement courses and sponsoring a high school club.

Chapter 3

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Successful financial management operations ensure that a school district receives all available revenue from state and federal government resources; maintains a track record of sound financial decisions and adequate and equitable budget allocations; issues timely, accurate and informative reports on the district's financial position; maintains adequate internal controls; employs a skilled, well-trained staff; and maintains a consistent record of unqualified opinions by its external auditors.

BACKGROUND

The business manager, who also supervises the managers of maintenance, food services and transportation, is responsible for the bulk of the duties related to the district's financial management including investments. The district uses a financial computer system run by the Regional Education Service Center in San Antonio. The system is not fully implemented in that some modules such as purchasing were not on-line at the time of the review. The district also uses Microsoft Excel spreadsheets to produce various reports.

Based upon the 1998-99 audited financial statements, the district received 53 percent of its general fund revenue from property taxes and other local income such as penalty and interest income and other tax related income, tuition charged to other districts and investment earnings.

Less than 20 percent of the district property value is designated as residential compared to statewide average of 47.2 percent (**Exhibit 3-1**).

Exhibit 3-1
Property Values by Category as a Percentage of Total Property Value
Riviera and Peer Districts
1998-99

District	Business	Residential	Land	Oil and Gas	Other
Benavides	33.6%	9.6%	20.6%	35.5%	0.7%
Riviera	26.3%	19.7%	27.1%	26.7%	0.2%
Skidmore-Tynan	25.3%	16.6%	38.6%	18.9%	0.6%
Three Rivers	73.9%	5.8%	8.6%	11.6%	0.1%
Woodsboro	32.6%	29.1%	29.0%	8.4%	0.9%

Region 2	40.8%	42.4%	8.3%	8.2%	0.3%
State	40.7%	47.2%	7.3%	4.1%	0.7%

Source: 1998-99 Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS).

The district tax rate has remained at \$1.44 per \$100 assessed valuation over the past three years. However, the district's appraised value has declined 7 percent during the same period resulting in a like reduction in the district's annual levy. As shown in **Exhibit 3-2**, the trend in the declining tax base began in 1994. Specifically, since 1994 the district's tax base has declined by 36.4 percent due to reductions in the oil/gas/mineral industries.

Exhibit 3-2
Riviera Assessed Valuation and Tax Levy
1994 - 1999

Tax Year	Assessed Valuation	Percent Reduction (1994 Base)	Annual Tax Levy	Percent Reduction (1997 Base)
1994	\$183,936,222	N/A	N/A	N/A
1995	\$178,008,943	3%	N/A	N/A
1996	\$146,246,423	20%	N/A	N/A
1997	\$126,291,143	31%	\$1,806,269	N/A
1998	\$119,211,597	35%	\$1,708,104	(5.43%)
1999	\$116,865,786	36%	\$1,669,102	(7.59%)

Source: Riviera ISD Annual Financial Reports, fiscal years 1994-1999.

In 1998-99, Texas school districts received an average of 47.8 percent of their budgeted funds from local property taxes and 44.3 percent from state funding. In Riviera, these percentages were 38.4 and 48.4 percent, respectively. The averages for the region are 39.6 percent and 52.5 percent, respectively. Compared to the region and state, Riviera is lower than the region in percentages from local property tax and significantly lower in state funding sources (**Exhibit 3-3**).

Exhibit 3-3
Sources of Budgeted Revenue as a Percentage
Total Budgeted Revenue

**Riviera and Peer Districts
1998-99**

District	Local Property Tax	Other Local and Intermediate	State	Federal
Benavides	49.2%	1.7%	46.2%	2.9%
Riviera	38.4%	10.8%	48.4%	2.4%
Skidmore-Tynan	21.0%	2.9%	73.4%	2.7%
Three Rivers	88.7%	3.4%	6.3%	1.6%
Woodsboro	28.7%	3.2%	65.6%	2.5%
Region 2	39.6%	4.0%	52.5%	3.9%
State	47.8%	4.4%	44.3%	3.5%

Source: 1998-99 Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS).

From 1995-96 to 1998-99, local property tax revenue as a source of Riviera funding decreased from 53.1 percent to 38.4 percent of total revenues (**Exhibit 3-4**). Other local and intermediary funds increased 16.1 percent. The percentage of state funding in the district's budget increased from 32.1 percent in 1995-96 to 48.4 percent in 1998-99.

**Exhibit 3-4
Riviera Sources of Revenue as a Percentage of
Total Revenue
1995-96 to 1998-99**

District	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99
Local Property Tax	53.1%	43.9%	39.7%	38.4%
Other Local and Intermediary	9.3%	10.0%	10.0%	10.8%
State	32.1%	43.7%	47.4%	48.4%
Federal	5.5%	2.4%	2.9%	2.4%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: 1995-96 through 1998-99 AEIS.

Riviera has the third highest property value per student among its peers and is higher than the state average (**Exhibit 3-5**).

Exhibit 3-5
Tax Rate and Property Value Per Student Riviera and Peer Districts
1998-99

District	Tax Rate	Property Value Per Student
Benavides	\$1.500	\$241,413
Riviera	\$1.440	\$207,483
Skidmore-Tynan	\$1.300	\$97,260
Three Rivers	\$1.396	\$513,819
Woodsboro	\$1.500	\$124,211
Region 2	\$1.502	\$156,595
State	\$1.540	\$190,769

Source: 1998-99 AEIS.

Exhibit 3-6 shows how Riviera funds were distributed in 1998-99, compared to regional and state averages.

Exhibit 3-6
Expenditures by Function
Riviera, and State
1998-1999

Function	Riviera	Percent of Total	State	Percent of Total
Instruction	\$2,329,647	54.7%	\$11,830,068,827	51.3%
Instruction related services	218,921	5.1%	611,977,662	2.7%
Instructional leadership	9,700	0.2%	284,266,388	1.2%
School leadership	257,392	6.0%	1,208,860,290	5.3%
Student support services	162,151	3.7%	902,584,499	4.0%
Student transportation	79,449	1.8%	577,963,515	2.6%
Food services	215,453	5.1%	1,149,708,322	5.0%
Co-curricular/extra curricular activities	255,406	5.9%	524,145,186	2.3%

Central administration	257,390	6.0%	859,513,754	3.7%
Plant M/O	412,699	9.6%	2,304,705,440	10.0%
Security and monitoring services	4,694	0.1%	114,988,867	0.5%
Data processing services	55,295	1.3%	214,598,187	1.0%
Total operating expenditures	4,258,197	99.4	20,651,260,318	89.5%
Debt service	0	0%	1,763,445,436	7.6%
Capital outlay	24,086	0.6%	678,240,156	2.9%
Total non-operating expenditures	\$24,086	0.6%	\$2,441,685,592	10.5%
Total Expenditures	\$4,282,483	100.0%	\$23,092,945,910	100.0%

Source: 1998-99 AEIS.

On a per-student basis from 1995-96 to 1998-99, expenditures have increased 22.2 percent (**Exhibit 3-7**). Instruction and instructional leadership expenditures have increased from \$3,544 in 1995-96 to \$4,126 in 1998-99—an increase of 16.4 percent. Other operating costs have gone up by 43.5 percent, and non-operating expenditures, which include capital outlay, have increased \$84 per student.

Exhibit 3-7
Riviera Expenditures Per Student
1995-96 through 1998-99

Expenditure Category	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	Percent Change
Instruction and instructional leadership	\$3,544	\$3,591	\$3,896	\$4,126	16.4%
School leadership	\$367	\$375	\$396	\$454	23.7%
Central administration	\$557	\$517	\$541	\$454	18.5%
Other operating	\$1,726	\$2,025	\$2,097	\$2,476	43.5%
Total operations	\$6,194	\$6,508	\$6,930	\$7,510	21.2%
Total non-operations	\$116	\$200	\$200	\$200	72.4%
Total per student	\$6,310	\$6,708	\$7,130	\$7,710	22.2%

Source: 1995-96 through 1998-99 AEIS.

Chapter 3

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

A. MANAGEMENT OF REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES

FINDING

According to the Riviera ISD tax collector, the Riviera tax roll consists of 4,935 separate accounts. The King Ranch and the Exxon-Mobil Corporation are the largest taxpayers accounting for approximately \$700,000 of annual property tax revenue. The bulk of tax revenue is received by January 31 of each year. Most payments are received by mail, however, during the period between October and January, the tax collector estimates that foot traffic in the office reaches 25 to 30 taxpayers per day. The collection rate of current taxes over the past three years was 96.8 percent. According to the superintendent, the board believes that by maintaining its own tax collection operation in-house, the district is maintaining a connection with the community that would be lost if the district contracted with the Kleberg County Tax Assessor-Collector.

Riviera is the only district in Kleberg County that maintains its own property tax collector. The district's fiscal 1999 budget for salary and benefits for the tax collector was \$47,109. According to the business manager, the board feels that the collection of current taxes is very high because they have maintained this important contact point with taxpayers. According to the Kleberg County Tax Assessor-Collector, the other districts along with all other taxing jurisdictions in the county (City of Kingsville, South Texas Water District, Santa Gertrudis ISD, Ricardo ISD and Kingsville ISD) pay the Kleberg County Tax Assessor-Collector \$0.95 per account to collect their current tax revenues, pursue delinquent tax accounts (filing legal suits as necessary) and prorating partial payments among all taxing jurisdictions.

The current and delinquent tax collection rate data for the Santa Gertrudis ISD and Ricardo ISD for tax years 1996 through 1998 are listed in **Exhibit 3-8**. This information was not available for the Kingsville ISD since it has only contracted with the county since July 1999.

Exhibit 3-8
Tax Collection Rates
Riviera and Peer Districts
1996 - 1998

District	1996 Regular	1996 Delinquent	1997 Regular	1997 Delinquent	1998 Regular	1998 Delinquent

	Taxes	Taxes	Taxes	Taxes	Taxes	Taxes
Riviera	97.0%	17.0%	96.9%	13.6%	96.5%	15.1%
Ricardo	93.1%	27.6%	94.2%	26.1%	93.1%	29.1%
Santa Gertrudis	99.9%	78.0%	99.9%	91.9%	99.9%	76.9%

Source: Riviera ISD, Kleberg County Tax Assessor-Collector.

Recommendation 11:

Contract with the Kleberg County Tax Assessor-Collector to perform tax collection services and eliminate the Riviera ISD tax collector position.

The district should contract with the Kleberg County Tax Assessor-Collector to collect its property tax revenues.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	Superintendent conducts analysis of outsourcing the tax collection function, including elimination of tax collector position.	September-October 2000
2.	Superintendent presents the analysis to the District Board for consideration and approval.	November 2000
3.	The superintendent gives a reduction-in-force notice to the incumbent and initiates contract negotiations with Kleberg County Tax Assessor-Collector.	November 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

Eliminating the tax collector position and contracting with the county would result in permanent savings of \$20,293 for the first year and \$46,453 for following years.

With a charge of \$0.95 per account and a one-time transfer charge of \$2,500, it would cost the district \$7,187 for the first year and \$4,687 each year after in fees to contract with Kleberg County to collect its taxes.

Savings from eliminating the tax collector position would amount to \$51,140 (\$47,109 for the salary and benefits of tax collector position + \$4,031 for supplies, travel and other incidental expenses associated with the tax office).

Savings from implementing this recommendation are calculated by subtracting the costs associated with contracting with Kleberg County Tax Assessor-Collector from the savings resulting from eliminating the district's tax collector's position (\$51,140 - \$7,187 = \$43,953 for first year and \$51,140 - \$4,687 = \$46,453). In addition, the district would achieve only partial savings during 2000-01 school year because the tax collector position will not be eliminated until December 2000.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Contract with the Kleberg County Tax Assessor-Collector to perform tax collection services and eliminate the Riviera ISD tax collector position.	\$20,293	\$46,453	\$46,453	\$46,453	\$46,453

FINDING

The district has \$363,359 in delinquent taxes as of June 2, 2000. Two-thirds (66.3 percent) of the delinquencies are from tax years 1994 through 1999. The district works with a local law firm to collect delinquent taxes. The law firm prepares the notices and sends them to the tax collector that makes a notation in the taxpayer's file and mails the notice. The law firm is paid a 15-percent fee which is added to the amount collected from the delinquent taxpayer. Based on interviews with the tax collector, any actions on delinquent accounts require board approval. The board, however, has not been diligent in pursuing delinquent taxpayers. The district periodically sends delinquent notices. Outstanding tax amounts are included in the annual tax due notices. Only one property was ever foreclosed and sold at auction. Typically, districts make collection efforts to a certain point before turning the accounts to a collection firm. Riviera does not do that. In fact, the district requires board approval for any enforcement action on delinquent taxes.

Recommendation 12:

The board should authorize more aggressive pursuit of outstanding delinquent taxes.

The district board should authorize more aggressive pursuit of delinquent tax accounts, particularly the \$240,871 in delinquent taxes from tax years 1994 and forward. The longer an account is outstanding, the more difficult it is to collect. It is recommended the district instruct the law firm to concentrate on the more recent delinquent accounts, which account for more than 66 percent of the total arrears balance.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The district tax collector presents a current listing of all delinquent tax accounts to the board for review, along with an analysis of the accounts delinquent from 1994 and forward and makes suggestions of delinquent tax collection methods that could produce better results.	October 2000
2.	The district board directs the law firm under contract for delinquent tax collection services to begin a more aggressive pursuit of all accounts with particular emphasis on the more recently delinquent accounts.	October 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented within current budgetary resources because the law firm is paid based on collections. And, additional collections efforts could result in increased tax revenues.

Chapter 3

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

B. ACCOUNTING ORGANIZATION AND CASH INVESTMENTS

The business manager approves all purchase order requests, reconciles the master bank account and the three clearing accounts, has authority to execute electronic fund transfers to the investment accounts, manages the district's depository bank account, health benefits and contractual relationships and supervises the bookkeeper position. The business manager only has check signing authority on the club accounts and the electronic fund transfer transactions can only be made to specific district accounts. The bookkeeper reconciles the student club bank account, prepares checks (payables and payroll), makes deposits, serves as back-up tax collector as needed and posts entries onto the general ledger. The bookkeeper does not have any check signing authority.

All bank accounts are maintained at the Kleberg Bank through a depository bank agreement that includes a provision for providing coverage if the district's deposits exceed the maximum level of deposits insured by the federal government. All district bank accounts are interest bearing, and available cash balances are invested. The district has investment accounts in TexPool and Lone Star investment pools. The business manager transfers available balances into the investment accounts using password protected phone authorization procedures that are restricted to transfers between the district's bank accounts and the investment pools.

FINDING

The district does not reconcile with its bank statements on a regular basis. Bank reconciliation duties are shared by the business manager (master, investment, general disbursing and payroll accounts) and the bookkeeper (club accounts, Coastal Bend Schools Co-op and Kleberg County Education District account). The bookkeeper was current in her reconciliation of her assigned accounts. The bank accounts assigned to the business manager have not been reconciled since November 1999, and there was no evidence of any supervisory review. In addition, the November reconciliation indicated that the master account was out of balance by the amount of \$92,340. A review of prior reconciliations revealed that this particular bank account has consistently been out of balance since August 1996. According to the business manager, this is due to posting errors in the district's general ledger, which have been identified and will be corrected eventually as workload permits.

Recommendation 13:

Reconcile bank statements each month and investigate and immediately correct all discrepancies including the large discrepancy in the master account.

Bank reconciliation should be completed within 30 days of the receipt of bank statements to ensure that district funds are properly accounted for and that any errors or discrepancies are detected and corrected in a timely manner. The business manager should determine the cause of the ongoing discrepancy and provide training in the proper posting and update of general ledger accounts to reduce future errors. All bank reconciliations should be reviewed for accuracy and initialed and dated by the preparer's supervisor.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The business manager contacts Region 11 in Fort Worth that specializes in business support services if necessary.	September 2000
2.	The business manager reconciles all bank statements of the master account and investigates and corrects all discrepancies as documented from August 1996 forward and makes adjusting entries to the general ledger as necessary.	September - October 2000
3.	The business manager provides training to staff regarding proper posting to the general ledger.	November 2000
4.	All bank reconciliations should be reviewed for accuracy and initialed and dated by the supervisor.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented within existing resources.

Chapter 3

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

C. PURCHASING

The district requires that a purchase order be completed for all purchase transactions regardless of the amount of the purchase. The actual purchasing decision is made at the school principal level, but the business manager approves all purchase order requests, to ensure sufficient funding is available for the items and enters the information into the system. All purchase order amounts must be processed following these procedures.

FINDING

The principals and teachers do not have up-to-date information on which to base their budgetary decisions. The business manager periodically prepares Detail Inquiry Expenditure Reports for the principals, but these reports have not always proved accurate.

When the staff wants to purchase items from local stores, the business manager authorizes a purchase order for a specific amount and enters that amount as an expenditure into the computer system. When the transaction is completed, however, the actual purchases are frequently less than the purchase order amount authorized. The business manager does not reconcile actual expenditures until the end of the year. At that time, the business manager uses the excess money that was not actually spent as a Rainy Day Fund to cover emergency expenditures. This practice does not follow generally accepted accounting principles, and the information from the computer system does not accurately reflect what is in the district's bank account. The principals, therefore, do not have the information they need to make sound budgetary decisions.

The district uses a financial computer system from the Regional Education Service Center 20 Computer Cooperative (RSCCC) in San Antonio.

According to the business manager, the purchasing module, which is part of the district's computer system, has not been fully brought online. Once the module is operational, budget balances will be automatically calculated as soon as the transaction is completed and the general ledger will be accurately updated.

Recommendation 14:

Fully implement the purchasing module of the financial computer system to facilitate the purchasing process and provide timely and up-to-date data on available balances.

The business manager should implement as soon as possible the existing purchasing module of the district's computer system. Full implementation will allow school principals online access to their budgets.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The business manager contacts Region 20 Information Technology support staff for the RSCCC computer system to determine options for activating the purchasing module and obtaining training in its use.	September 2000
2.	The district's purchasing module is fully implemented.	January 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented within existing resources.

FINDING

The district's purchasing operations are decentralized. While each school places orders for similar items such as classroom supplies from the same vendor several times during the year, there are no efforts made to combine orders to reduce paperwork and processing time. Based on the sample of purchase orders reviewed for March 23, 1999 through December 2 1999, the district is processing a little over 1,000 purchase orders during a nine-month period. Many of these orders were to the same vendor. For example, 92 purchase orders were issued for Wal-Mart purchases from September 1999 through May 18, 2000 for an average amount of \$121. Another frequent vendor was the Riviera Home Center for supplies for the maintenance and agriculture program. The maintenance department is already coordinating and combining all of its purchases.

Recommendation 15:

Combine multiple orders to the same vendor.

Combining multiple purchase requests to the same vendor would save the district time and may allow to receive some discounts on purchases. For example, one administrative secretary could be assigned on a rotating basis to combine requests by teachers at an established time each month. Once the requests are received, the secretary could prepare one consolidated purchase order for those items that are to be purchased from the same vendor.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	Superintendent directs school principals to combine their purchases for regularly used items such as classroom supplies and to prepare one concentrated purchase per month per vendor.	September 2000
2.	Principals develop procedures that include a schedule that rotates the processing duties among the administrative staff of each school and prepare a schedule of deadlines for teachers and staff to submit purchase order requests to administrative staff each month.	October 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation would result in greater efficiency of district's staff time, including the principals and teachers. The district may also be able to negotiate discounts from Wal-Mart for volume purchases.

FINDING

The district does not routinely check its vendors against the delinquent tax roll to determine if they owe back taxes to the district before paying for the goods and services they provided. One vendor appeared on the district's Delinquent Tax Roll Summary for amounts due for tax years 1991: \$25.05 in County Education District taxes and \$18.81 in Riviera ISD taxes. While this is relatively small amount, the law allows a taxing jurisdiction to withhold payments to an individual or vendor until all outstanding debts owed to the jurisdiction are paid in full.

Recommendation 16:

Withhold payments to vendors that are delinquent taxpayers until all delinquent taxes are paid in full.

The board should adopt a policy to withhold payments to vendors that provide goods and services to the district if they owe taxes to the district. The district should implement procedures that require a periodic comparison of the active vendor list against the delinquent tax roll to ensure that no payments are released to vendors who are not current in their tax payments.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The board adopts a policy for the district to withhold payments to vendors with delinquent taxes.	September 2000
2.	The business manager develops procedures to compare the active vendor list against the delinquent tax roll.	September 2000

3.	The business manager submits the procedures to the superintendent for review.	October 2000
4.	The superintendent reviews procedures and submits them to the board for review and approval.	October 2000
5.	The new procedures are implemented and vendors are notified.	November 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

Implementing this recommendation would help the district in collecting more delinquent taxes. For lack of sufficient data, the fiscal impact of this recommendation cannot be estimated.

Chapter 3

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

D. ASSET AND RISK MANAGEMENT

The district maintains replacement insurance coverage for all structures (including flood insurance for those structures that are subject to flooding). Employee benefits are provided through a third party carrier, Humana. The district's workers compensation claims are handled through Creative Risk Funding, Inc.-a self funded workers compensation cooperative.

FINDING

Riviera ISD has been part of a self-funded workers' compensation cooperative-Creative Risk Funding, Inc., since 1993. By joining this shared service for workers' compensation plans, the district has reduced its premium costs by \$37,000 annually (from \$53,000 in 1993 to \$16,000 in 2000).

A total of 35 districts participate in this cooperative. The amount each district pays is based on the district's claims history and payroll. Each district holds its own funds until it is necessary to pay claims or administrative costs to the cooperative. Each district pays its own claims up to an assigned level and after that, all the other member districts pay a percentage of the claim.

COMMENDATION

Riviera ISD has reduced its annual premium costs for workers compensation by participating in a shared service for workers' compensation cooperative.

FINDING

Riviera ISD does not have a formal risk management policy. The district also has no formal safety training and accident prevention program for employees, nor does it have a plan to reduce the insurance costs.

For the most part, the district's workers' compensation claims have been minor and relatively low in terms of overall costs. One employee, however, filed two claims totaling more than \$27,700 for similar accidents. Several other employees had a history of filing multiple claims for injuries, but the total amounts paid out by the district were relatively small and resulted in loss of minimal work-time.

According to the business manager, the responsibility for providing training in proper procedures that prevent or reduce accidents is handled by the employees' direct supervisors and/or the school principals.

Recommendation 17:

Develop a work place safety training and accident prevention manual and provide periodic safety training to employees.

The district should develop safety training and accident prevention manuals for all areas. Supervisors should be required to distribute copies of the manuals to all employees along with instructions, and conduct periodic follow-up training sessions. Employees should be required to sign acknowledgments indicating that they have read and understand the manual.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent forms a committee of principals and managers to prepare accident prevention manuals for distribution to all employees.	September 2000
2.	The committee contacts the Regional Service Center and other districts for a sample of the workers compensation policy manuals and drafts a manual for RISD and submits to the superintendent for his approval.	October 2000
3.	The superintendent reviews the manual and submits it to the board for its review and approval.	November 2000
4.	Principals and managers distribute the manual and conduct follow-up training on a periodic basis.	Annually

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 3

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

E. EXTERNAL AUDITING

The board contracts with the CPA firm of Gowland, Quinton, Streatly, & Associates to perform the annual external audit of the district's financial records. The contracting process is recorded in the minutes of the board and is a matter of public record. The funds for the audit engagement are paid through the general fund, and the audit is performed in accordance with all applicable professional accounting and auditing standards. The annual report and accompanying management letter are presented to and discussed with the district board and duly recorded in the board minutes. The external audit firm prepares the annual financial statement and any adjusting entries that need to be made to the district's general ledger. The business manager then posts all adjusting entries or reversing entries in the district's books. The district does not use the external audit firm to perform internal control or management audits.

FINDING

Riviera has used the same accounting firm for the last 12 years. The last audit was conducted in November 1999.

Texas school districts are required by state and federal laws to undergo an annual external audit of their financial statements. The fact that the district has not changed auditors for a long period of time does not violate any law. However, auditing standards require auditors to maintain independence so that their opinions, conclusions, judgments and recommendations will be viewed as impartial by the public.

The auditing profession has engaged in a long-standing debate about whether auditors should be rotated periodically to ensure their independence. Some argue that a periodic change of auditors brings fresh views and new perspectives. Moreover, a rotation of auditors after a guaranteed maximum engagement period enhances their independence because it removes the auditor's fear of being dismissed as the district's auditor. The auditor can be more impartial because the threat of being fired over a dispute with the client is eliminated. Although all auditors must follow standards in auditing and reporting, each firm has its unique strengths and focus that benefit clients. Each change in auditor will give a unique focus to different audit areas with beneficial results. Auditor rotation does not always reduce audit cost.

The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) is a national organization that seeks to improve the quality of governmental accounting, auditing, and reporting. GFOA has published an *Audit Management Handbook* to assist governments in procuring quality audit services. The handbook suggests 24 steps to preparing an RFP that meets the needs of the governmental entity as well as the proposing firm. For example, the handbook suggests the following elements be included in an Request For Proposal (RFP) to ensure broad participation.

- Identify individuals to evaluate the proposers' qualifications.
- Describe in detail particular qualifications that will be considered favorably. This gives respondents the opportunity to emphasize important strengths that might otherwise be overlooked.
- Conduct a pre-proposal conference. This conference gives each respondent an opportunity to ask and answer pertinent questions about the district's operations and the firm's qualifications and experience.

Recommendation 18:

Seek to expand the field of qualified CPA firms responding to the district's Request For Proposals (RFP) for auditing services.

The district should attempt to expand the field of qualified auditing firms that respond to its RFP. The district also should expand its criteria in the RFP to incorporate elements of the GFOA's handbook and should also expand its RFP advertising. Notices could be placed in the State Society of Certified Public Accountants' newsletter. Moreover, the district could use a direct mailing to notify qualified accounting firms of the RFP.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent modifies the auditing services RFP to incorporate elements of GFOA's broad participation criteria.	January 2001
2.	The superintendent develops strategies to encourage more qualified auditing firms to participate in the selection process.	February 2001
3.	The board incorporates the modified RFP and the strategies developed by the superintendent into the selection process to expand the field of qualified firms responding to the RFP.	March 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 4

OPERATIONS

Efficient, effective school operations and quality pupil services support a school district's educational mission. The responsibilities of the facilities function include properly maintaining district facilities in order to provide a clean and safe environment for students, teachers and staff. The food service program should provide nutritious meals, prepared in a sanitary and safe environment, meet all applicable state and federal guidelines, and operate in a cost-effective manner. The transportation function is responsible for the safe operation and maintenance of the buses and vehicles used to transport students to and from school and extracurricular activities. Districts are eligible to receive state funding for transporting students, but local funds pay for all costs not covered by the state allotment.

Chapter 4 OPERATIONS

A. FACILITIES

Riviera ISD has one central campus which serves kindergarten through grade 12. The campus consists of 12 structures that include a bus garage, agriculture barn and storage building. The total square footage is about 123,312 square feet.

Riviera ISD's custodial and maintenance department has nine staff positions: the maintenance director, five custodial positions, one carpenter and two maintenance positions (one also handles mowing duties). Two pickup trucks are assigned to the department. The department handles routine maintenance and repair, grounds care and cleaning services. Most major maintenance work is scheduled during student vacation periods.

The maintenance director has a good understanding of the buildings, and knows when it is time to replace a particular piece of equipment. The maintenance director and business manager have a good working relationship and mutual respect. The maintenance department has an annual budget for repairs and replacement of equipment. To avoid interruption of classes, major facility repairs and equipment replacement are scheduled during the summer. Any projects for which the staff does not have the expertise or certifications to complete are contracted through the competitive bidding process. Most other purchases are made through cooperative bids that result in lower prices than the district could negotiate on its own. **Exhibit 4-1** shows the district's budget for maintenance and operations for 1998-99 school year.

Riviera ISD is second lowest among its peers in the maintenance and operations budgeted cost as a percentage of district budget, and is lower than both the state and the regional average.

Exhibit 4-1
Maintenance and Operations Budget
Riviera ISD and Peer Districts
1998-99

District	Maintenance and Operating Budgets	Percent of Total Budget
Benavides	\$410,800	12.9%

Riviera	\$412,699	9.7%
Skidmore	\$360,950	9.2%
Three Rivers	\$586,714	10.6%
Woodsboro	\$493,916	11.6%

Source: 1998-99 Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS).

As shown in **Exhibit 4-2**, the Riviera ISD maintenance and operations budget increased 7.3 percent, while student enrollment dropped 9.3 percent from 1995-96 and 1998-99. During this period, expenses for supplies and materials increased almost 20 percent, and the budget for contracted services increased more than 17 percent (**Exhibit 4-3**).

Exhibit 4-2
Riviera ISD Maintenance and Operations Budget
And Student Enrollment
1995-96 through 1998-99

Area	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	Percent Change
Student Enrollment	625	633	611	567	(9.3%)
Maintenance and Operations Budget	\$384,463	\$398,974	\$425,967	\$412,699	7.3%

Source: 1995-96 through 1998-99 AEIS.

Exhibit 4-3
Riviera ISD Maintenance and Operations Budget
1995-96 through 1998-99

Category	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	Percent Change
Payroll	\$169,612	\$171,057	\$177,955	\$186,494	10.0%
Contracted Services	\$155,281	\$168,723	\$188,223	\$164,938	17.1%
Supplies and Materials	\$31,570	\$31,691	\$32,286	\$37,764	19.6%
Other Operating Costs	\$28,000	\$27,503	\$27,503	\$23,503	-16.1%
Total	\$384,463	389,974	\$425,967	\$412,699	7.3%

Source: 1995-96 through 1998-99 AEIS.

FINDING

Riviera ISD does not have a board-approved long-range facilities plan or a preventive maintenance plan for its buildings. Critical elements in the school's facilities, such as heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems, need attention. Repairs and upgrades to the district's buildings are performed based on annual teacher requests and observations by the maintenance director and business manager. Teachers provide a list of items they would like to have fixed or installed during the summer break. The district maintenance director and business manager use the list and conduct a facility survey at the end of each school year. Using this survey, the business manager and maintenance director develop a priority list for the repairs and equipment replacement needed for each facility.

TEA recommends facilities planning process model to help districts organize and plan for growth (**Exhibit 4-4**). Such a process addresses a variety of planning issues that should lead to a well-developed master plan.

Exhibit 4-4
TEA Recommended Facilities Planning Process

Program Element	Mission	Responsibilities	Deliverables
Planning	Needs Assessment	Identify current and future needs	Demographics, enrollment projections, facilities survey, boundary, funding, education program, market, staff capability, and transportation analysis.
	Scope	Outline required building areas; develop schedules and costs	Programming, cost estimating, scheduling, cost analysis.
	Strategy	Identify structure	Facilities project list, master schedule, budget plan, organization plan, and marketing plan.
	Public Approval	Implement public relations campaign	Public and media relations.
Approach	Management Plan	Detail roles, responsibilities, and procedures	Program management plan and systems.

	Program Strategy	Review and refine details	Detailed delivery strategy
	Program Guidelines		Educational specifications, design guidelines, Computer-Aided Design standards

Source: Planning model recommended by TEA.

Recommendation 19:

Conduct a formal facilities planning process that includes broad community participation, and prepare a long-range facilities master plan.

A facilities master plan identifies each major repair or renovation needed at each school. The plan considers external factors such as community needs, as well as internal factors such as financing alternatives. It establishes a priority for each project, establishes a timeframe for the work (such as year three of a five-year plan) and estimates the cost of each project.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The board formally establishes a committee and nominates citizens from across the community to participate in preparing a long-range facilities master plan.	September 2000
2.	The superintendent selects Riviera ISD staff from board nominations to serve on the committee.	September 2000
3.	The maintenance director and the business manager schedule the initial meeting and provide support to the committee and the superintendent.	October 2000
4.	The committee establishes a meeting schedule, reviews the needs assessment documents, and conducts a tour of the facilities.	November 2000 - January 2001
5.	The committee prepares a priority list of facilities needs and holds meetings at the school district to gather feedback from parents and residents.	January-February 2001
6.	The committee includes the community input in its recommendations and combines the priorities into a recommended master plan.	March 2001
7.	The maintenance director and the business manager provide	April 2001

	cost estimates for each recommended item and recommend a schedule for implementing the plan based on the district's projected financial capabilities.	
8.	The superintendent reviews the plan and recommends approval to the board.	April 2001
9.	The board reviews and approves the plan and directs the superintendent to include year one items in the budget preparation process.	May 2001
10.	Together, the maintenance director and the business manager update the plan, review the cost estimates and present updated information to the superintendent.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The district's facilities are not in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The district is aware of this and in accordance with state guidelines, when renovations and other facility improvements are made, the district incorporates ADA requirements into these improvements.

The ADA does not mandate the renovation of each existing building but rather sets strict requirements for new construction. Older buildings do not have to be made completely accessible to people with disabilities; the law requires access to all educational programs and services, not to every building. To determine compliance, the school district must perform a self-evaluation to ensure all programs and services are accessible to people with disabilities.

Recommendation 20:

Conduct an ADA evaluation of all Riviera ISD facilities and determine what renovations are necessary.

In the future, if students with disabilities enroll in Riviera ISD, the facilities must be ADA compliant.

The district should contact the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights for a copy of the *Compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act: A Self Evaluation Guide for Public Elementary and*

Secondary Schools handbook and other information pertaining to program accessibility.

Once the district determines the extent of renovations and upgrades needed to bring all of its facilities into compliance with ADA standards and a total cost is estimated, it should develop a prioritized plan to bring each facility into compliance and include it in the facilities master plan.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The business manager contacts the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights for a copy of the <i>Compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act: A Self Evaluation Guide for Public Elementary and Secondary Schools</i> handbook, and other information pertaining to the issue of program accessibility.	September 2000
2.	The business manager, along with the assistance of the maintenance director and community volunteers, assesses the accessibility of all existing district structures for deficiencies and related costs to comply with federal regulations.	October - November 2000
3.	The business manager prepares a report for the superintendent to submit to the board for consideration in long-range facilities planning.	December 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The maintenance director does not maintain records of the maintenance work performed by the Maintenance Department or work that is contracted out. Copies of work orders are retained, but no documentation of major repair or renovation activity is kept on each piece of equipment other than the associated purchase order requests. Any record of repair work performed is manually created and is typically sketchy. There is no running record of maintenance work on equipment. It is difficult for the district to plan and budget for preventive maintenance or equipment replacement needs if it can not track the maintenance record on the equipment.

Recommendation 21:

Maintain detailed records for all work performed by the Custodial and Maintenance Department to facilitate planning and budgeting.

The maintenance director should begin keeping a record of all work completed by his department as well as the work that is contracted out. The records should itemize all work performed, by whom, the number of hours worked, materials used and the associated costs. In addition, records of maintenance performed on equipment will create a record of operating costs, which will assist in the budget process and in determining equipment replacement needs.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The business manager directs the maintenance director to develop a form for the use of maintenance staff to record all work performed on equipment, including labor and materials costs.	September - October 2000
2.	The maintenance director organizes the maintenance forms by equipment every three months and summarizes the maintenance costs.	Quarterly
3.	The maintenance director submits the quarterly summaries of maintenance work performed on equipment to the business manager as part of the planning documentation used in the annual budget process.	Annually

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The district does not have a formal written maintenance plan or a maintenance schedule of needed repairs. Teachers and principals submit requests for repairs throughout the year. The maintenance director prepares work orders for these repair requests and verbally relays this information to the business manager to assist in the budget planning process for the department. Along with regular maintenance projects that will be completed during summer 2000, the maintenance director has identified several major repair and renovation projects that include replacing four air conditioning units in the cafeteria kitchen and repairing roof leaks in the library and three classrooms. The maintenance director does not, however, know whether funding is available for all identified projects.

Recommendation 22:

Develop an annual schedule of maintenance, repair and renovation projects for the district during the budget cycle.

The maintenance director should prepare a written schedule of maintenance, repair and renovation projects annually. The schedule should include the nature of the project, the estimated labor and material costs, the workers to be assigned and the estimated start and completion dates of each project. This document could be used in the budgeting process and could document the department's workload.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The business manager directs the maintenance director to prepare a formal written schedule of maintenance, repair and renovation projects for each fiscal year including estimated labor and materials costs, time for the project and whether the work will be performed by staff or outside contractors.	February 2001
2.	The maintenance director provides the annual schedule to the business manager as part of the planning documentation used in the annual budget process.	Annually

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Riviera ISD has procedures written in English for the storage and disposal of hazardous cleaning chemicals and supplies. These chemicals are packaged well with labels and stored in the warehouse. The warehouse is locked when no one is there. However, the procedures for disposal of these chemicals are written in English and not all custodial staff can read English.

Recommendation 23:

Translate procedures for the storage and disposal of hazardous chemicals and supplies into Spanish.

The district has written procedures on disposing the hazardous cleaning chemicals and supplies only in English, and posted them on the supply shed. A number of the district's support staff speak and write only Spanish and do not read English. By translating the procedures into Spanish, the district should ensure a safer environment. The improper disposal of hazardous wastes poses a threat to individuals and the environment.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the maintenance manager in cooperation with a teacher to translate the procedures for storage and disposal of hazardous materials into Spanish.	September 2000
2.	The maintenance director submits the Spanish version of the procedures to the superintendent for approval.	October 2000
3.	The superintendent approves the procedures and the maintenance director distributes these procedures to all maintenance and custodial staff and posts procedures on supply shed.	October 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The cleaning staff works during school hours while students are on campus, not after school hours. Thus, cleaning is inhibited by the fact that most cleaning is performed during the daytime hours while teachers and students occupy the facilities. This limits the custodians' ability to clean thoroughly certain areas or take the time necessary to complete time-consuming tasks. Evaluating the effectiveness of custodians is also difficult under these circumstances.

During the TSPR visit, some of the district's classrooms were untidy, with newspapers and other papers on the desks. The cafeteria staff complained that custodians do not clean thoroughly.

Although the custodians are responsible for cleaning the bathrooms and common areas while the students are in the classrooms, the cafeteria staff complained that students often walk on wet floors.

Recommendation 24:

Shift custodial work schedules to hours when school is not in session in order to maximize custodial efficiency.

The maintenance director should develop areas of responsibility and a schedule for each custodian, so that their cleaning times will not interrupt students' activities during the day.

All but one custodian should be arriving after or just before the students leave for the day. This change would eliminate re-mopping floors and re-cleaning areas. The environment would be safer for the students as well.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The business manager directs the maintenance supervisor to prepare a schedule for the custodial staff so that all but one custodian arrive for work in the late afternoon.	September 2000
2.	The maintenance supervisor prepares a schedule and submits to the business manager.	September 2000
3.	The maintenance supervisor shares the schedule with the custodians and implements the schedule.	October 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 4

OPERATIONS

B. ENERGY MANAGEMENT

A successful energy management program requires a commitment from the board, the superintendent and the district staff. The district should understand the importance of installing and maintaining energy-efficient equipment such as high efficiency lamps and ballast, energy-efficient heating and air conditioning equipment and energy management control devices. Even more important is changing the behavior of those who use energy and control its usage.

Districts that regularly check rate schedules and control the operating hours of facilities are in a better position to bargain with utility companies for better rates. It is the district's responsibility to select the rate structure from the range available from the utility company. Changes in operating hours of buildings and equipment will help determine the most cost-effective rate structure for a given facility.

FINDING

The district received two walk-through energy evaluations of its facility in 1991 and again in 1997 by a professional engineering firm under contract with the State Energy Conservation Office (SECO) to provide these services to public schools and local governments. Specific findings and recommendations on maintenance and operations procedures as well as cost-effective energy retrofits were identified in the reports. The district business manager presented the 1991 report to the board and the board implemented only items that could be paid for with existing funds. The district replaced lighting in the gym and replaced a few old Heating Ventilation Air Conditioning (HVAC) units. According to the business manager, the board did not want to issue debt for facility improvements.

The *1997 Energy Efficient School Partnership Report* was never presented to the board. According to the report, if the district spent \$212,460 on energy retrofits it could save as much as \$35,500 annually. Any new equipment would pay for itself in six years through reduced utility bills. The district would also see additional savings from reduced maintenance costs associated with old equipment. **Exhibit 4-5** lists the recommendations and the status of implementation. The report was given to the district's architect, and according to the business manager, some of the recommendations are being incorporated into other facility improvements.

Districts from across the state can finance these projects with low-interest loans which are available through the state. Savings from the utility bills pay for the loans so the district would not need to increase the budget to pay for the retrofits. The LoanStar program through the State Energy Conservation Office (SECO) within the State Comptroller's office offers loans at 4.04 percent interest. Loans are also available through the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB), performance contractors and local banks. Before the district applies for an energy loan, it should have a detailed energy assessment report prepared by a professional engineer. The cost of preparing the report can be included in the energy loan.

**Exhibit 4-5
Recommendations from the
1997 Energy Efficient School Partnership Report**

Recommendation	Cost	Annual Utility Savings	Status
Retrofit with energy-efficient T8 lamps and electronic ballast.	\$26,460	\$7,500	Not implemented
Replace Incandescent lighting with T8 lamps and electronic ballast.	\$4,000	\$1,500	Not implemented
Implement Summer Shutdown	0	\$5,500	
Install an Energy Management Control System.	\$70,000	\$13,500	Not implemented
Replace inefficient air-conditioning units with new high-efficiency units.	\$112,000	\$7,500	As they wear out
Total cost of recommendations	\$212,460	\$35,500	

Source: State Energy Conservation Office (SECO) and Riviera ISD.

Recommendation 25:

Implement the recommendations from the 1997 Energy Efficient School Partnership Report in the facilities planning process.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the business manager to prepare a summary of recommendations that are not yet implemented by the district from the 1997 Energy Efficient School Partnership Report, showing the cost and savings from implementing them.	September - October 2000
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2.	The superintendent presents these recommendations to the board to receive approval for seeking low-interest energy loans.	November 2000
3.	The business manager investigates alternative financing sources through Texas Association of School Boards, such as SECO's LoanStar program and presents the alternatives to the superintendent.	November 2000
4.	The superintendent reviews the various financing options and makes his recommendations to the board.	December 2000
5.	The board selects a loan entity.	January 2001
6.	The business manager takes the necessary steps to apply and secure a loan.	March 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

For purposes of this estimate, it is assumed the district will apply and receive a loan from SECO. Beginning school year 2001-02, the district will start installing energy efficient units. Based on the estimated cost of implementing the recommendations in the 1997 *Energy Efficient School Partnership Report*, it will take the district approximately six years to pay back the loan. The district does not need to budget additional funds to pay back the loan. As work is completed, the district incurs expenses, invoices are sent to SECO for payments. A representative from SECO will visit the district to ensure the new energy saving measures implemented are, in fact, producing estimated savings. As the district realizes savings from reduced utility expenditures and reduced maintenance costs, it pays back the loan from its utility budget.

FINDING

The district currently compares the utility bills each month manually with the previous month's bills. This is tedious work, and comparing the current month's bill to the previous month's does not provide any insights into the district's energy usage. Historical energy usage data and analysis would allow the district to identify patterns in energy usage and spot discrepancies quickly. This analysis can provide opportunities for the district to reduce the energy costs.

Recommendation 26:

Set up and maintain the district's utility expenditures on a spreadsheet to monitor and analyze the district's energy usage from month to month.

By entering and comparing each month's bills, the business manager could identify any discrepancies quickly. The spreadsheet would help the district to monitor its utility bills monthly, year-to-date and compare the current costs to the same period in the previous year. This information is useful when negotiating rates.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The business manager creates a work sheet on the computer and enters district's monthly utility expenditures for comparing energy costs.	September 2000
2.	The business manager analyzes the energy expenditures each month, prepares quarterly summaries for the superintendent for discussion and planning with the board.	Quarterly

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Some of the district's 14 electric meters are used only a few months out of the year. Two of the meters had minimum usage between April 1999 through March 2000. Another meter was used only four months during this period. The district does not routinely check the energy usage from individual meters. The utility company still charges a minimum fee for the months the meters are not used.

Recommendation 27:

Survey and analyze the usage of all electric meters and eliminate the unused and underused meters to reduce utility costs.

The maintenance director should determine the necessity of meters that are used only a few months during the year and consider connecting them to other meters. If the district cannot connect them to another meter, it should consider alternative sources of power.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The business manager directs the maintenance director to prepare a report showing the district's meters, monthly usage and monthly costs associated with each meter.	September 2000
2.	The maintenance director contacts the local utility supplier for	October

	options for consolidating meters.	2000
3.	Based on the information gathered on consolidating and eliminating meters, the maintenance director submits recommendations to the business manager for his review.	November 2000
4.	The business manager submits the recommendations to the superintendent for his review and submission to the board.	November 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources. Depending upon the alternatives, the district would realize savings in fees by consolidating and/or eliminating some unused and underused meters.

FINDING

Riviera ISD spent \$133,596 on electricity between April 1999 and March 2000. **Exhibit 4-6** shows the district's utility bills for one year.

**Exhibit 4-6
Riviera ISD's Energy Consumption History**

Month	Year	Kilo Watt per Hour (KWH)	Total Electrical Costs
April	1999	137,693	\$14,035
May	1999	123,625	\$13,150
June	1999	136,593	\$10,524
July	1999	139,704	\$10,693
August	1999	165,885	\$15,005
September	1999	139,778	\$13,862
October	1999	118,354	\$9,729
November	1999	123,940	\$9,764
December	1999	83,291	\$7,745
January	2000	95,576	\$8,533
February	2000	115,086	\$10,487
March	2000	104,297	\$10,069
Total		1,483,822	\$133,596

Source: Riviera ISD Central Office, 1999-2000.

Effective September 1, 1999, the State Power Program, an energy program offered by the General Land Office (GLO) can save districts 4 to 5 percent on their utility bills. As part of electric deregulation legislation in 1999, commercial utility companies can enter into a contract with the Texas General Land Office (GLO). As part of this contract, the utility companies participate in the State Power Program and offer the state's political subdivisions, like the school districts, a discount on their electricity bills. Districts will not be charged a fee to participate in the program, but need to register with GLO to participate in the program. The districts can keep their current utility provider and the services they receive.

The Central Power and Light Co., utility provider for Riviera ISD, has signed up with the GLO to participate in the program.

Recommendation 28:

Participate in the State Power Program to reduce utility costs.

The district must contact the GLO office at (512) 936-1941 to receive an application and an information package. They can also be accessed through their website at <http://www.glo.state.tx.us/spp>.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The business manager contacts the General Land Office to discuss options for purchasing electricity through the state power program and reports options to superintendent.	September 2000
2.	The superintendent directs the business manager to register with the GLO.	October 2000

FISCAL IMPACT

Based on the information provided by the GLO staff and the district's electricity consumption during 1999-2000, the district could save about 4 percent, or \$5,344, on utility costs by contracting with the GLO's energy program. The actual savings will depend on the other energy saving measures the district implements.

Riviera ISD's electric bills for 12 months, \$133,596 X 4 percent = \$5,344 in energy savings. The district will achieve partial savings in the first year due to the implementation time line.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Participate in the State Power Program to reduce utility costs.	\$4,400	\$5,344	\$5,344	\$5,344	\$5,344

Chapter 4

OPERATIONS

C. FOOD SERVICES

A school food service program should provide high quality, nutritional breakfast and lunch meals to students and should charge enough for meals to cover cafeteria costs. Several success factors can be used to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of a food service operation, including low food and labor costs, high student participation for breakfast and lunch, popular menu items, meal variety, high nutritional value and financial self-sufficiency.

BACKGROUND

The district has one central cafeteria located next to the elementary school that houses the kitchen, the manager's office and pantry space for food. The cafeteria operates one serving line that features the regular menu and one snack bar available for cash purchases only. The district board established a closed-campus policy; meaning students can't leave campus for lunch.

Staffing within the food service program consists of four full-time employees and two part-time employees.

Meal prices are set annually and published in the student handbook. The district monitors participation in breakfast and lunch programs: the average distribution of lunches by payment level is 66 percent free, 9 percent reduced price and 25 percent regular price. The district qualifies for the two cent reimbursement supplement from the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs, and received more than \$106,000 (59 percent of its total revenues) from this program during the 1999-2000 school year.

Due to the specific cleaning needs in the food service area, duties are shared between cafeteria and custodial staff. Cafeteria staff cleans the kitchen and serving areas, and custodial employees clean the remaining areas, including the cafeteria and restrooms.

Exhibit 4-7 presents the revenues and expenditures from the district's food service operations for the 1998-99 school year. Expenditures exceeded revenues by \$8,124.

Exhibit 4-7 **Food Services**

**Revenues and Expenditures
1998-99**

Item	1998-99	Percent of the Total
Revenues:		
National School Breakfast Program	\$27,098	14.4%
National School Lunch Program	\$74,339	39.4%
U.S. Department of Agriculture Donated Commodities	\$5,448	2.9%
State	\$6,021	1.0%
Food Sales	\$79,854	42.3%
Total Revenues	\$192,760	100.0%
Expenditures:		
Personnel	\$87,595	43.6%
Contracted Services	\$3,103	1.5%
Supplies (Including Food)	\$105,661	52.6%
Capital Outlay	\$3,100	1.6%
Other	\$1,425	0.7%
Total Expenditures	\$200,884	100.0%

Source: Riviera ISD.

Riviera ISD has the second highest expenditures for food services for second lowest student enrollment among the peer districts (**Exhibit 4-8**).

**Exhibit 4-8
Food Services Expenditures
As a Percent of Total Budgeted Expenditures
Riviera ISD and Peer Districts
1998-99**

District	Enrollment	Expenditures	Percent of the Total Budget
Benavides	529	\$177,601	5.6%
Riviera	567	\$215,453	5.1%
Skidmore	718	\$185,575	4.8%

Three Rivers	778	\$254,713	4.6%
Woodsboro	639	\$156,093	3.7%

Source: 1998-99 AEIS.

Between 1996-97 and 1998-99, Riviera ISD's student enrollment declined 10.4 percent. During the same period food service expenditures increased 5.1 percent (**Exhibit 4-9**).

Exhibit 4-9
Food Services Expenditures and
Student Enrollment
1996-97 through 1998-99

Item	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	Percent Change
Student Enrollment	633	611	567	-10.4%
Food Services Expenditures	\$205,105	\$212,650	\$215,453	5.1%

Source: 1996-99 AEIS.

Exhibit 4-10 shows the participation rates for breakfast and lunch at Riviera ISD have been low during the 1998-99 school year. The highest breakfast participation rate was 30 percent during the month of February and has been as low as 16.6 percent in August.

Exhibit 4-10
Participation in Lunch and Breakfast Programs
Riviera ISD
1998-99

Month	Average Daily Attendance (ADA)	Average Daily Lunch Participation	Percent of ADA	Average Daily Breakfast Participation	Percent of ADA
September 98	536	326	60.8	103	19.2%
October 98	531	329	62.0	100	18.8%
November 98	526	324	61.6	105	20.0%
December 98	535	295	55.1	94	17.6%
January 99	511	298	58.3	119	23.3%

February 99	509	367	72.1	152	30.0%
March 99	514	304	59.1	126	24.5%
April 99	519	291	56.1	113	21.8%
May 99	512	275	53.7	120	23.4%
August 99	507	265	52.3	84	16.6%

Source: Riviera ISD.

Increasing student meal participation is important to a school district not only because a district increases its federal reimbursements for every student who participates in meals, but also because it can ensure more students receive adequate nutrition as directed by the National School Breakfast and Lunch Programs. **Exhibit 4-11** presents federal reimbursement rates for breakfast and lunch programs.

Exhibit 4-11
National School Lunch and Breakfast Program
Reimbursement Rates
1999-2000

Category	Lunch	Breakfast
Full-Price (Paid)	\$0.19	\$0.21
Reduced-Price	\$1.58	\$0.79
Free	\$1.98	\$1.09

Source: TEA Memo, July 9, 1999.

FINDING

The district, in cooperation with Region 1 in Edinburg, participates in an interlocal agreement with the South Texas Cooperative to process meats received through U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) government commodity sources. The meats, such as hamburger, turkey and ham, are processed into various portions based upon the district instructions before delivery to the district. This agreement has helped reduce the overall operating deficit in the food service program.

COMMENDATION

The district has reduced its food costs by participating in the South Texas Cooperative, which processes various meats into desired quantities.

FINDING

The district has not analyzed its staffing levels for the food services program. A common method to determine productivity in school food service is to calculate the number of meals per labor hour (MPLH). MPLH is calculated by dividing the number of meals served by the total number of labor hours worked over a given time period. About 289 meals are prepared per day for the regular food line and about 150 meal equivalents are prepared per day for the snack bar. This translates to 11.6 meals per labor hour. Food industry leaders quote anywhere from 16 to 20 meals per labor hour as a reasonable level of productivity given the large variations in food delivery systems and form of food purchased. Based on this industry average, Riviera ISD cafeteria is not meeting the recommended meals per labor hour. Riviera's current staffing pattern produces 6.5 meals per labor hour below the industry recommended standard.

Recommendation 29:

Apply standard Meals Per Labor Hour (MPLH) guidelines to food service staffing levels.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINES

1.	The business manager contacts the Regional Education Service Center in Corpus Christi and other districts that have been successful at improving productivity and reducing labor costs and determines what practices could be adopted in Riviera.	October 2000
2.	The business manager provides guidance and direction to the cafeteria manager on increasing productivity and specific strategies to reduce labor costs or increase revenues and participation.	October 2000
3.	The business manager meets with the cafeteria manager and reviews how meal equivalents are currently being calculated and provides direction if necessary.	October 2000
4.	The cafeteria manager prepares MPLH report each month and submits to the business manager.	November 2000 and Ongoing
5.	The business manager makes recommendations to the superintendent on reducing costs and increasing productivity	December 2000

	in the cafeteria.	
6.	The superintendent approves the recommendations and the business manager implements them.	January 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

Reducing the cafeteria staff to be in line with industry standards would save the district \$14,033 annually.

In 1999-2000 school year, the four full-time and two part-time cafeteria staff worked 38 hours per day preparing 439 meals. According to the industry standard of average 18 meals per labor hour, these meals could have been prepared in 27.4 hours (439 total meals/16 = 27.4). Compared to the industry standard, Riviera was over the standard by 10.6 hours. These additional hours translate into 1.4 full time equivalent positions (additional hours divided by the number of hours a cafeteria staff works per day-10.6/7.5). Since the district could improve meal participation with the additional staff, this estimate assumes that only one position will be eliminated.

In Riviera, the average salary for a cafeteria worker in 1999-2000 school year was \$11,596. By eliminating one position, the district would save \$14,033 annually (\$11,596 + \$2,244 for health benefits (\$187 per month x 12) + \$193 for Workers' Compensation insurance (.01666 of salary for cafeteria staff) in 2000-01 school year). Due to the implementation timeline, the district would only achieve partial savings during the first year.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Apply standard Meals Per Labor Hour (MPLH) guidelines to food service staffing levels.	\$7,017	\$14,033	\$14,033	\$14,033	\$14,033

FINDING

Riviera's food service program had a deficit of \$8,124 at the end of 1998-99 school year. Over the past few years, the expenses have exceeded revenues, resulting in annual deficits in the Food Service Special Revenue Fund. The deficits are made up through transfers from the general fund. The district has managed to reduce the annual deficit to \$12,096 in 1998-99 from \$43,616 in 1996-97.

According to the business manager and cafeteria manager, the prices for meals are set annually at a level that exceeds the calculated cost per meal. The district does not pre-cost or post-cost menu items on a regular basis. Pre-costing involves projecting menu costs prior to preparing a menu item to measure its costs per serving. Post costing involves determining the actual costs of menu items prepared. As a result, the district does not know if the meals are cost-effective. Lunch prices for 1999-2000 were \$1.25 for elementary students, \$1.50 for middle and high school students, \$2.00 for adults and \$0.40 for reduced price meal. Breakfast prices were \$0.45 for a full price and \$0.30 for reduced price meals.

Recommendation 30:

Improve the profitability of the food service program by promoting increased participation.

The district could take a number of steps to improve student and adult meal participation and eliminate the deficit. At a minimum, the district should:

- Evaluate current menus and recipes to improve quality of food.
- Encourage student participation through promotional activities.
- Conduct student and employee surveys.
- Apply industry standards Meals Per Labor Hour (MPLH) guidelines to staffing levels.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The business manager and the cafeteria manager identify the existing barriers to participation.	September 2000
2.	The business manager and the cafeteria manager develop a plan to increase meal participation.	September 2000
3.	The business manager and the cafeteria manager develop and conduct a customer survey for students and staff for ideas to improve food services.	October 2000
4.	The business manager contacts food products manufacturers to request help in providing promotional giveaways.	October 2000
5.	The cafeteria manager monitors food usage, tracks food costs and compares them to the budgeted amounts weekly.	October 2000
6.	The cafeteria manager and the business manager evaluate the performance of the cafeteria and make changes to maximize revenues.	October 2000 - Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

By taking specific measures, the district should be able to eliminate its food services deficit and begin to build a fund balance to use for future improvements and contribute to overhead.

FINDING

The cafeteria staff tracks students' meal participation manually through a cash register as students pass through the cafeteria serving line during both breakfast and lunch. However, since the snack bar transactions are not processed through the cash register, student participation data is not captured and, therefore, the district has no data of the number of students eligible for free and reduced-price meals using the snack bar. The district loses federal reimbursement revenues when meals are served to students with free and reduced-price meals and are not recorded.

A number of districts use automated, point-of-sale systems that involve a pin pad on which the student punches in his or her number. This information is transferred via modem to a central computer in food service that records the information. Records of sales can be printed from the computers.

The Riviera ISD cafeteria manager and business manager are investigating the purchase of a new point-of-sale (POS) system that would help the district to capture food sales and student participation data.

Recommendation 31:

Implement an electronic point of sale system.

The district should take advantage of the new technology that will capture, monitor and report student participation in the lunch and breakfast programs to maximize reimbursement revenue. A point-of-sale system would also improve planning and management activities.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The cafeteria manager and the technology director solicit information on point-of-sale software and review alternatives.	September 2000
2.	The manager and the director contact other districts to receive additional information on use and operation of the system.	October - November 2000
3.	The manager and the director evaluate the systems and costs	December

	and recommend purchase of a system to the superintendent.	2000
4.	Upon the superintendent's approval, the business manager issues a request-for-bid or purchases a system from the General Services Commission approved bid list.	January 2001
5.	The new system is installed, staff is trained and the system is operational.	February 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

The district has received a preliminary cost estimate of \$5,000 for initial purchase and an annual license renewal fee of \$350 for a point of sale system. The estimate assumes that the vendor would provide staff training necessary. With the enhanced ability to capture data on students eligible for free and reduced-price meals from snack bar sales, the district should begin to recover the costs of the system in the first year of operation through higher reimbursement through the National School Lunch Program.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Implement the proposed acquisition of an electronic point of sale system.	(\$5,000)	(\$350)	(\$350)	(\$350)	(\$350)

FINDING

According to the cafeteria manager, the maintenance staff does not keep up with the routine maintenance of HVAC units, such as cleaning and changing the air conditioning filters. The cafeteria manager did not think they were part of her staff responsibilities, nor were they qualified to perform maintenance on these units. Thus, no one maintained these units. Now, four wall air conditioning units in the kitchen area are inoperable. The maintenance director submitted a request to replace the units. The district will most likely install a central air conditioning system that will require ductwork.

Recommendation 32:

Require the maintenance director to conduct regular maintenance on food service facilities.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The business manager directs the maintenance director to	September -
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	include cafeteria and kitchen areas in regular maintenance schedule.	2000
2.	The maintenance director directs his staff to conduct routine maintenance on food service facilities.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

The district has budgeted money to replace these units, so this recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 4

OPERATIONS

D. TRANSPORTATION

BACKGROUND

The Texas Education Code (TEC) authorizes but does not require each Texas school district to provide transportation between home and school, from school to career and technology training locations, for curricular activities and for extracurricular activities. The Federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act requires a school district to provide transportation for students with disabilities if the district also provides transportation for the general student population, or if disabled students require transportation to receive special education services. The TEC also states that a school district may receive state funding for transporting of regular and special program students between home and school. TEC also provides state funding for transporting career and technology students to and from vocational training locations. The TEA sets the funding rules. Local funds must pay for transportation costs that the state does not cover.

The Riviera ISD fleet of buses and other vehicles consists of 9 buses, one passenger van, three pickup trucks and one drivers' education car. The buses, two of which are not in operation, are used to transport students to and from school on the regular routes and field trips. The transportation director works full-time. He also serves as a mechanic and maintenance person. He has four part-time drivers. Two of them are strictly drivers, the other two drivers also work as part-time educational aides for the district.

The district has four regular bus routes that arrive and depart within a 10-minute period and take between 35 and 55 minutes to complete. Since Riviera ISD is a small district with three schools located close to one another, and the students live in such a widely dispersed rural area, students from all grades levels ride together. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, there is an additional bus that leaves at 4:30 p.m. for students who stay after school for tutoring or detention. District policy requires that a student live at least two miles from campus in order to be eligible for transportation, unless a hazardous-area exception is made.

FINDING

Drivers are assigned to specific routes and specific buses so that they become familiar with its operation and are more likely to notice changes in operation or performance in a timely manner and report them to the transportation supervisor for maintenance. Each driver performs a pre-

route inspection of the bus that takes approximately 15 minutes. Minor maintenance items such as topping off fluids are also handled by the driver during the inspection. The driver then completes signs and dates an inspection form that is turned in to the supervisor.

The transportation supervisor performs all other routine maintenance for the buses as well as all other district vehicles. The forms turned in by the drivers are maintained in a separate file for each bus. The supervisor uses these forms in conjunction with his records of routine maintenance as a way to track the operating needs of each bus. Major repairs are contracted out on an as needed basis through the district's competitive bidding procedures.

COMMENDATION

The daily pre-route inspection routine required of each driver along with the specific assignment of drivers to individual buses helps identify potential maintenance problems and creates a useful operational history for each bus.

FINDING

The transportation supervisor maintains minimal quantities of parts such as belts, hoses and filters, in inventory related to vehicle maintenance (usually one part each for each vehicle). In addition, the supervisor has negotiated an arrangement with a local automotive parts store that allows the district to maintain an inventory of the most expensive maintenance parts, batteries, on a consignment basis. Under the arrangement, the district is not charged for a battery until it is actually used in a vehicle. The arrangement also includes an 18-month guarantee against defects: if the battery does not work, it is replaced but the district is not charged unless it is used. This arrangement allows the district the luxury of replacing batteries as needed without the usual inventory costs. The parts inventory is maintained in the bus garage and is monitored during the day; the garage is locked during the evenings.

COMMENDATION

Riviera ISD reduced its operating expenditures by maintaining expensive transportation parts inventory on a consignment basis and minimizes losses due to parts obsolescence.

FINDING

The transportation supervisor made an arrangement with a local company to pick up and dispose of the used motor oil at no charge to the district.

This eliminates the need for the district to use scarce personnel and vehicle time to transport the oil to the disposal site.

COMMENDATION

Riviera ISD reduced its operating expenditures through arrangements with a local business to pick up and dispose of the district's used motor oil.

FINDING

Riviera ISD does not maintain consistent information on accidents involving district vehicles. When accidents occur, the supervisor asks the driver to give details of the accident. This information however, is not always complete. The maintenance supervisor maintains copies of that information. The originals are forwarded to the business manager's office for insurance purposes. TSPR's review of the reports indicates little consistency in the format and information contained within the reports and the supporting documentation maintained in the files. Some of the staff witness statements reviewed did not identify the district vehicle involved by license number, vehicle identification number (VIN) or the bus route followed, if any. In addition, one staff statement was submitted several days after the accident was reported. This information is critical for the district to claim insurance on accidents. Also, the documentation of employee accident report statements helps provide a complete record of accidents for risk management purposes.

Recommendation 33:

Develop a policy that requires detailed documentation of accidents involving district vehicles.

The accident report documents should include all relevant information, such as the VIN and vehicle license number of the district vehicle involved, address of the accident, names of eyewitness and the name of the driver. This documentation should be submitted in a timely manner. The employee statements should also be attached to the associated police report, if any and any associated insurance claim forms. The driver involved in the accident should be held accountable for completing this information and submitting it to the maintenance supervisor and the business manager.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent develops and issues a policy guideline regarding the format to be used in reporting accidents involving	October 2000
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	district vehicles, including a checklist of information that should be included in all reports.	
2.	The business manager develops a form with all the information that should be reported after an accident and directs the transportation director to have them completed by the drivers when an accident occurs.	November 2000
3.	Direct supervisors and the transportation director review all employee witness statements for compliance with the policy guideline before submitting them to the business manager.	On going

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

In comparison to the peer districts (**Exhibit 4-12**), Riviera ISD has the second-highest cost per rider, but is within 7.8 percent (\$41) of the statewide average. While the annual ridership increased 12 percent from 28,260 student trips in 1997-98 to 31,680 in 1998-1999. Annual mileage decreased from 31,680 miles to 27,432. During the same period, total operating costs also decreased six percent, from \$134,366 to \$125,940.

Exhibit 4-12
Cost per Rider Calculations
1998-99

District	Total Annual Operating Costs	Average Daily Ridership	Cost per Rider	Percent Above (Below) Statewide Average
Riviera	\$125,940	223	\$564.75	7.8%
Benavides	\$117,503	130	\$903.87	72.5%
Skidmore-Tynan	\$121,490	315	\$385.68	(26.4%)
Three Rivers	\$183,898	344	\$534.59	2.0%
Woodsboro	\$44,882	121	\$370.93	(29.2%)
Statewide	\$712,859,412	1,360,590	\$523.93	N/A

Source: TEA. 1998-1999 School Transportation Route Services Status Reports.

Based upon a review of the district's operational reports and review team observations, the district has excess capacity within its bus fleet (**Exhibit 4-13**). There is planned overlap in routes and, while some of the daily ridership reports showed buses with ridership at or near capacity as defined by the manufacturer, the bulk of the reports reviewed indicated ridership far below the buses' capacity. In addition, the buses are operated only two to four hours per day, resulting in part-time driver positions without benefits that are difficult to fill in a competitive labor market.

The district is currently replacing its vehicles on a 10 to 12-year cycle. According to the superintendent the district's preliminary budget includes funds to replace one of the buses. While the big buses come in handy for the district to transport larger number of students for special events such as field trips and athletics, not every bus the district purchases need to be big. Although the maintenance and operating costs are the same for both big and small buses, smaller buses cost less.

Exhibit 4-13
Sample Review of Bus Capacity/Ridership
December 1, 1999 Afternoon Routes

Bus Number	Route Number	Manufacturer's Recommended Capacity	Number of Riders	Excess Capacity
5	4	63	40	23
7	2	77	66	11
17	1	77	43	34
18	5	71	71	0

Source: Register of Eligible Students Reports and Fleet Inventory Listing.

Recommendation 34:

Analyze bus ridership and purchase vehicles with less capacity.

The district could be using smaller buses on routes with fewer students.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The business manager prepares a cost-benefit analysis of purchasing a bus with less capacity and presents it to the superintendent.	November 2000
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2.	The superintendent reviews the analysis and makes recommendation to the board for its approval.	December 2000
3.	The business manager orders the bus.	January 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

The district ordered a 72 passenger capacity bus in July 2000 for \$55,000. According to the business manager, the district has plans to purchase another 72 passenger capacity bus during 2002-03 school year. According to the officials at State General Services Commission, a 55 passenger capacity bus will cost \$35,000. If the district replaces a vehicle with a smaller capacity bus, it will realize one-time savings of \$20,000. The maintenance and operating costs of a smaller bus are assumed to be same as a bigger bus.

Recommendation	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Analyze bus ridership and purchase vehicles with less capacity.	\$0	\$0	\$20,000	\$0	\$0

FINDING

Riviera ISD has a driver shortage. According to the transportation supervisor, lack of benefits and the low number of hours worked per day are the major difficulties in recruiting and retaining drivers.

Advertisements for drivers are placed in newspapers and notices are posted throughout the district. The response has been extremely poor.

One driver works four hours per day and is assigned to the Tuesday and Thursday afternoon route. All other drivers work three hours per day and are paid based upon the hours reported on time clock reports. The current pay rate for drivers is \$12.60 per hour. And the district pays for driver training, medical examinations, and certifications and travel time.

Positions are part-time and therefore do not include benefits. Drivers, however, are eligible to participate in the Teacher Retirement System.

Recommendation 35:

Refocus bus driver recruiting on candidates who may be interested in fewer work hours.

The district should better focus its advertisement of driver positions to people who already have another job and would be interested in short

work hours, such as retirees and graduate students at the local university, Texas A&M University-Kingsville, or mothers who only want to work for certain hours so they can stay home with their children.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The transportation supervisor, in cooperation with the business manger, rewrites the advertisements for part-time drivers and posts them at the college campus, local senior associations such as Veterans of Foreign Wars posts and local American Association of Retired Persons chapters, churches and community halls.	October 2000
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FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

Appendix A

COMMUNITY COMMENTS

This appendix summarizes comments received from several group meetings, including the initial public forum held at the Riviera ISD cafeteria on May 18, 2000 from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. and several focus group meetings with community and parents. These comments are presented verbatim, to illustrate community perception of the Riviera Independent School District (ISD) and do not necessarily reflect the findings or opinions of the review team or the Comptroller.

METHODOLOGY

The community forum was an open meeting in which all members of the Riviera ISD community, including teachers, parents, students and all other members of the community were encouraged to attend. Tablets were placed all around the cafeteria, with each tablet representing a chapter of this report. People were asked to write comments about Riviera ISD on the tablets.

Focus groups were assembled that included teachers. These groups were assembled with the assistance of the Riviera ISD staff and management. Members of the focus groups were also asked to comment on each functional area represented in this report.

Several other interviews were held with community and civic leaders, current school board members, current school teachers and administrators.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

Important findings from these meetings include:

- The district administration supports the educational delivery of the district with ample resources.
- Riviera ISD provides good educational services to its students but lacks a gifted and talented program.
- There are mixed opinions regarding the need for parental involvement in the campuses. Parents don't feel welcome, while teachers expressed a lack of parent volunteers which could be due to a breakdown in communications.
- Student-to-administration ratios seem high, while student-to-teacher ratios are too low in some classes.
- Riviera ISD is taking advantage of a great Agricultural program as well as a program through the Sheriff's department that provides instructors for two criminal justice classes.

- The district has made great strides in technology by providing ample computers and training not only to students but staff as well.
- Board members need additional training in financial and district planning.

Verbatim Comments:

District Organization and Management

- The board needs more education regarding appropriate spending. All educational topics seem geared to sources of revenue.
- There must be more planning (strategic) to close the distance between the community and the Riviera ISD. Clear, decisive, and creative planning is needed.
- The site-based committee could have more responsibility. As the state mandates, it is primarily an advisory committee but I feel this committee could handle more.
- I do feel confident that I will be informed of changes in state and local policies by our superintendent and principals.
- Building leadership teams need to meet consistently and regularly. They should not be hand-picked by administrators. This discredits the team by giving the appearance of favoritism and yes-ma'am behavior.
- Administration leadership approves resources and allows teachers to attend conferences and pays for their tuition.
- Even though there has been some turnover in leadership with principals, we do not feel it has affected the teachers.
- Teachers meet weekly and as often as necessary with leadership.

Education Service Delivery

- There is no gifted and talented program and there should be.
- I disagree in concept and practice with the Math lab. Students need diversity in teaching styles and having the same teacher for numerous years (K-2) does not facilitate this.
- District provides great education for the students. Last year's graduates received hundreds of thousands of dollars in scholarships to colleges and universities across the state and nation.
- The district uses a math program that is consistent that takes the students from Kindergarten through calculus.
- Teachers in Riviera use a vertical teaming approach.
- Riviera ISD has a TAAS Camp that runs six weeks. Teachers get paid a stipend to teach and kids really enjoy attending. They feel it is a treat to come to camp. Kids are given pizza and teachers try to make the program a fun environment.

- Riviera also holds tutoring and mentoring programs after school. In addition, study halls are also available.
- Riviera ISD has a good Agricultural program with participation from seventy students. The state has done away with vocational programs so we feel this is a last ditch effort in having something in this area for the students to participate in since only 50 percent of the students go to college.
- Riviera ISD has a great criminal Justice program called Explorers. The sheriff's department comes to Riviera ISD and teaches classes in criminal justice and students have joined a club known as the Explorers.
- The elementary classroom science program has been very successful with students from K-5 attending classes with one teacher, however, the elementary science teacher has been moved to the high school and we feel that a new teacher should have been hired instead of dissolving such a successful program.

Community Involvement

- Parental involvement and community relations in Riviera are extremely poor. The educators cannot connect with the parents as people, nor can the parents relate to the teachers and administrators in any way other than antagonists. It's not merely a cultural or racial difference. Neither side sees the other's viewpoint and as a consequence nothing gets done therefore the children will suffer for it.
- I wish there was more community involvement but I feel that our new community center will help bind all of us together more.
- Teachers and administrators project an attitude that involved parents are a nuisance. That's the perception, at least.
- Teachers feel there is not enough parental support even though there is a parent volunteer program.

Personnel Management

- Too many personnel who work for the district expect their children to receive special consideration and these children often are not well behaved. Too often these children are excused even when their behavior warrants a different action.
- Teachers (some) do not have a sense of fairness.
- They need cultural diversity education.
- Athletic department needs to pay more attention to Title 9! Re: Athletics.
- How can administration recommend for hire a male coach within weeks of firing a female coach?

- She did resign after confirmation that she would be fired and under pressure from administration.
- Student-to-administrator ratios seem high. Why do we need three principals and one counselor seems adequate?
- Athletics based! But I believe everything is done to make sure our students have the best qualified teachers.
- There is a low teacher turnover. People are in line to obtain a teaching job.
- Teachers feel that they are a very supportive group and the district hires other teachers using a committee to give input.

Financial Management

- I have never been denied of any supply. I can take overnight field trips where students have many hands-on activities.
- The district needs to be able to tap into a larger health pool in order to optimize insurance coverage to the staff. If the district could pay premiums to the state of Texas, teachers could feel secure that their health care needs will be met in the future.

Facilities Use and Management

- Maintenance needs improvement. Repairs are often held up due to contractor (vendor) not responding in a timely manner.

Computer and Technology

- Everyone has their own computer and we are provided with the education to be more computer literate. I have learned a lot myself.
- Others would argue otherwise, but I think we have great technology at our school!
- Our district has great grant writers. So far they have brought in \$430,000.
- Teachers in this district get great technology training such as T-Star training, Academics 2000 and Power Point training.

Food Service

- Quality food.
- There is a lot of fat in the foods prepared. The low fat fare is prepared in sparse quantities and runs out before everyone has a chance to partake.
- Riviera ISD has a great snack bar however, free and reduced lunches cannot go through the snack bar.

Transportation

- Not enough monitors for the buses, and too few drivers.

Safety and Security

- This is the safest school that I have ever taught in.
- In School Suspension (ISS) should not be located in the heart of the elementary campus! Otherwise, I feel we have a very safe campus.
- Not all parents are happy with the ZAP program in the district.

Appendix B

SURVEY RESULTS

This appendix provides a summary of the surveys conducted during the review. The survey results presented here represent the perception of the respondents, and do not necessarily reflect the findings or opinions of the review team or the Comptroller.

METHODOLOGY

During the week beginning April 17th, all survey instruments were provided to all members of the survey groups either by personally handing them out, placing them in the internal RISD mail, or having students take them to their parents. The survey groups included:

- Teachers
- Administrators and Support Staff
- Students (11th and 12th graders only)
- Parents (random sample of 276)

Each of the tests were self administered and all those surveyed were asked to return their surveys by May 5th. All survey respondents were provided with a postage-paid reply envelope to provide maximum security and allow for candid, confidential responses.

Information requested from those surveyed included rankings of the various areas covered by the chapters included in this report. Additional space was provided for any other comments that the respondent cared to make. The data included in this appendix includes a portion of the comments and responses to the open ended questions.

The total amount of responses received in each of the categories surveyed is shown in **Exhibit B-1**.

Exhibit B-1
Number of Respondents by Group

Survey Group	Number of Respondents
Administrators and Support Staff	14
Teachers	12
Students	28

Summary of Opinions

Examining the opinion survey results as described above reveals that the overall opinions of parents, students, teachers and staff/administrators were positive. Although each survey group had specific statements in which more people disagreed than agreed with the statement, most respondents responded positively to most questions.

Riveria parents were generally positive about the quality of district academic and special programs, but identified problems with programs for students at risk of dropping out and programs for dyslexic students. Parents as a group also did not agree that board members and administrators do a good job at explaining the use of tax dollars. Students as a group identified problems in the effectiveness of the foreign language program, the student mentoring program, the timeliness of repairs to facilities, the condition of textbooks, and wait times in food lines.

Riviera teachers were also generally positive about district programs, but expressed some concern over the honors/gifted talented program in the district, and programs for dyslexic students. Teachers did not agree with the statements that teachers are rewarded for superior performance. Teachers did not agree with the statement that the district rewards competence and experience, and don't believe that the district's health care program meets their needs. Teachers were also not satisfied with the amount of press coverage for district students, and teachers don't believe that the district receives enough volunteer assistance. Teachers also believe that drugs are a problem in the district.

Riviera support staff and administrators also identified programs for dyslexic students as a problem for the district, also disagreed with the statement that teachers are rewarded for superior performance. Support staff and administrators also were not satisfied with the amount of press coverage for district students, and teachers don't believe that the district receives enough volunteer assistance.

Summary of Demographic Data

Teachers

Surveys were distributed to all teachers by putting them in their mailbox at school. Each survey instrument was accompanied by a postage paid business reply envelope. A total of 12 teacher surveys were received.

Exhibit B-2 presents the actual number of completed surveys by race and gender and any other key factors.

**Exhibit B-2
Gender Data on Teachers**

STATEMENT	CATEGORY		
	No Response	Male	Female
Gender (Optional)	23.1%	23.1%	53.8%

**Exhibit B-3
Demographic Data on Employees**

STATEMENT	CATEGORY					
	No Response	Anglo	African American	Hispanic	Asian	Other
Ethnicity (Optional)	23.1%	76.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Parents

Surveys were mailed or sent home with students to 276 parents of RISD students. The parents were randomly selected from the entire student population of RISD using the district's mailing list. A total of 68 surveys were received. **Exhibit B-4** presents the actual number of surveys received and provides demographic data.

**Exhibit B-4
Demographic Data on Parents**

Gender		Race		Length of Residency	
Female	57.4%	African American	2.9%	0-5 years	30.9%
Male	26.8%	Anglo	35.3%	6-10 years	16.2%
No Response	16.2%	Hispanic	39.7%	11 or more	44.1%
		Other	4.4%	No response	8.8%
		No Response	17.6%		

Students

Exhibit B-5 presents key demographic data on the students survey sample.

**Exhibit B-5
Student Demographics**

Gender		Race		Grade	
Male	32.1%	Anglo	32.1%	11 th	60.7%
Female	53.6%	Hispanic	53.6%	12 th	39.3%
No Response	14.3%	No Response	10.7%		
		Other	3.6%		

Summary of Opinions

Examining the opinion survey results as described above reveals that the overall opinions of parents, students, teachers and staff/administrators were positive. Although each survey group had specific statements in which more people disagreed than agreed with the statement, most respondents responded positively to most questions.

Students as a group identified problems in the effectiveness of the foreign language program, the student mentoring program, the timeliness of repairs to facilities, the condition of textbooks, and wait times in food lines. Parents identified programs for students at risk of dropping out of school as a problem, and also expressed a desire for greater communication from the board and administration on use of taxpayer money.

Riviera teachers expressed some concern over the honors/gifted talented program in the district, and programs for dyslexic students. Teachers did not agree with the statements that teachers are rewarded for superior performance. Teachers did not agree with the statement that the district rewards competence and experience, and don't believe that the district's health care program meets their needs. Teachers were also not satisfied with the amount of press coverage for district students, and teachers don't believe that the district receives enough volunteer assistance. Teachers also believe that drugs are a problem in the district.

Riviera support staff and administrators also identified programs for dyslexic students as a problem for the district, also disagreed with the statement that teachers are rewarded for superior performance. Support staff and administrators also were not satisfied with the amount of press coverage for district students, and teachers don't believe that the district receives enough volunteer assistance.

Appendix B

SURVEY RESULTS

Teacher Survey

(Note: Data shown may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.)

Exhibit B-7
Management Review of the Riviera Independent School District
Teacher Survey Results
(n=12)
Demographic Data

STATEMENT	CATEGORY		
	No Response	Male	Female
Gender (Optional)	23.1%	23.1%	53.8%

STATEMENT	CATEGORY					
	No Response	Anglo	African American	Hispanic	Asian	Other
Ethnicity (Optional)	23.1%	76.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

STATEMENT	CATEGORY					
	No Response	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	20+ years
How long have you been employed by Riviera ISD?	23.1%	38.5%	23.1%	7.7%	0.0%	7.7%

STATEMENT	CATEGORY						
	PK	K	1	2	3	4	5
What grade(s) do you teach this year?	7.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	7.7%	15.4%	23.1%
	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	15.4%	30.8%	30.8%	46.2%	61.5%	46.2%	53.8%

A. District Organization & Management

STATEMENT	CATEGORY
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		No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.	The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.	7.7%	0.0%	84.6%	7.7%	0.0%	0.0%
2.	School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.	7.7	0.0	69.2	0.0	23.1	0.0
3.	School board members work well with the superintendent.	7.7	0.0	53.8	30.8	7.7	0.0
4.	The school board has a good image in the community.	7.7	0.0	53.8	15.4	23.1	0.0
5.	The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	7.7	15.4	46.2	7.7	15.4	7.7
6.	The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	7.7	7.7	46.2	15.4	15.4	7.7
7.	Central administration is efficient.	7.7	7.7	46.2	7.7	23.1	7.7
8.	Central administration supports the educational process.	7.7	7.7	38.5	23.1	15.4	7.7
9.	The morale of	7.7	0.0	30.8	30.8	15.4	7.7

central administration staff is good.							
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B. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

STATEMENT		CATEGORY					
		No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
10.	Education is the main priority in our school district.	23.1%	7.7%	46.2%	0.0%	23.1%	0.0%
11.	Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.	15.4	7.7	53.8	7.7	15.4	0.0
12.	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	23.1	0.0	46.2	23.1	7.7	0.0
13.	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	23.1	15.4	38.5	7.7	15.4	0.0
14.	The district provides curriculum guides for all grades and subjects.	7.7	0.0	69.2	7.7	7.7	7.7
15.	The curriculum guides are appropriately aligned and	15.4	0.0	61.5	7.7	7.7	7.7

	coordinated.						
16.	The district's curriculum guides clearly outline what to teach and how to teach it.	7.7	0.0	38.5	30.8	15.4	7.7
17.	The district has effective educational programs for the following:						
	a) Reading	7.7	15.4	46.2	38.8	0.0	0.0
	b) Writing	7.7	15.4	30.8	30.8	15.4	0.0
	c) Mathematics	7.7	30.8	30.5	23.1	0.0	0.0
	d) Science	7.7	30.8	53.8	7.7	0.0	0.0
	e) English or Language Arts	15.4	23.1	38.5	23.1	0.0	0.0
	f) Computer Instruction	7.7	15.4	30.8	23.1	15.4	7.7
	g) Social Studies (history or geography)	15.4	7.7	46.2	30.8	0.0	0.0
	h) Fine Arts	7.7	15.4	46.2	15.4	15.4	0.0
	i) Physical Education	7.7	23.1	61.5	7.7	0.0	0.0
	j) Business Education	15.4	7.7	38.5	30.8	7.7	0.0
	k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	7.7	7.7	38.5	23.1	23.1	0.0
	l) Foreign Language	15.4	7.7	30.8	23.1	23.1	0.0
18.	The district has effective						

special programs for the following:							
a) Library Service	7.7	46.2	46.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	
b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	7.7	0.0	30.8	15.4	30.8	15.4	
c) Special Education	7.7	15.4	23.1	15.4	38.5	0.0	
d) Head Start and Even Start programs	7.7	0.0	30.8	38.5	23.1	0.0	
e) Dyslexia program	7.7	0.0	15.4	23.1	38.5	15.4	
f) Student mentoring program	7.7	7.7	46.2	15.4	15.4	7.7	
g) Advanced placement program	7.7	15.4	69.2	0.0	7.7	0.0	
h) Literacy program	7.7	7.7	30.8	38.5	7.7	7.7	
i) Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	7.7	7.7	46.2	15.4	15.4	7.7	
j) Summer school programs	7.7	23.1	69.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	
k) Alternative education programs	7.7	7.7	38.5	7.7	30.8	7.7	
l) "English as a second language" program	7.7	0.0	53.8	30.8	7.7	0.0	
m) Career	7.7	15.4	46.2	15.4	7.7	7.7	

	counseling program						
	n) College counseling program	7.7	15.4	53.8	7.7	7.7	7.7
	o) Counseling the parents of students	7.7	0.0	30.8	46.2	7.7	7.7
	p) Drop out prevention program	7.7	0.0	15.4	53.8	7.7	15.4
19.	Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	7.7	23.1	30.8	38.5	0.0	0.0
20.	Teacher turnover is low.	7.7	7.7	76.9	7.7	0.0	0.0
21.	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	7.7	0.0	69.2	7.7	15.4	0.0
22.	Teacher openings are filled quickly.	7.7	7.7	76.9	0.0	7.7	0.0
23.	Teachers are rewarded for superior performance.	7.7	0.0	23.1	38.5	23.1	7.7
24.	Teachers are counseled about less than satisfactory performance.	7.7	0.0	46.2	46.2	0.0	0.0
25.	Teachers are knowledgeable in the subject areas they teach.	7.7	0.0	84.6	0.0	7.7	0.0

26.	All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.	7.7	38.5	53.8	0.0	0.0	0.0
27.	The student-to-teacher ratio is reasonable.	7.7	30.8	61.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
28.	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	7.7	23.1	69.2	0.0	0.0	0.0

C. Personnel

STATEMENT		CATEGORY					
		No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
29.	District salaries are competitive with similar positions in the job market.	7.7%	23.1%	38.5%	15.4%	15.4%	0.0%
30.	The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.	7.7	0.0	38.5	38.5	15.4	0.0
31.	Temporary workers are rarely used.	7.7	0.0	53.8	23.1	15.4	0.0
32.	The district successfully projects future staffing needs.	7.7	0.0	53.8	23.1	15.4	0.0

33.	The district has an effective employee recruitment program.	7.7	0.0	30.8	30.8	30.8	0.0
34.	The district operates an effective staff development program.	7.7	0.0	69.2	15.4	7.7	0.0
35.	District employees receive annual personnel evaluations.	7.7	23.1	61.5	0.0	7.7	0.0
36.	The district rewards competence and experience and spells out qualifications such as seniority and skill levels needed for promotion.	7.7	0.0	23.1	23.1	38.5	7.7
37.	Employees who perform below the standard of expectation are counseled appropriately and timely.	7.7	0.0	30.8	46.2	0.0	15.4
38.	The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	7.7	0.0	46.2	30.8	7.7	7.7
39.	The district's health insurance	7.7	7.7	23.1	15.4	38.5	7.7

	package meets my needs.						
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D. Community Involvement

STATEMENT		CATEGORY					
		No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
40.	The district regularly communicates with parents.	7.7%	7.7%	84.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
41.	The local television and radio stations regularly report school news and menus.	7.7	0.0	23.1	0.0	53.8	15.4
42.	Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.	7.7	0.0	23.1	7.7	61.5	0.0
43.	District facilities are open for community use.	7.7	23.1	53.8	15.4	0.0	0.0

E. Facilities Use and Management

STATEMENT		CATEGORY					
		No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
44.	The district plans facilities far enough in the future to support	7.7%	0.0%	61.5%	30.8%	0.0%	0.0%

	enrollment growth.						
45.	Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff and the board provide input into facility planning.	7.7	7.7	38.5	23.1	15.4	7.7
46.	The architect and construction managers are selected objectively and impersonally.	7.7	0.0	15.4	69.2	7.7	0.0
47.	The quality of new construction is excellent.	7.7	0.0	46.2	38.5	7.7	0.0
48.	Schools are clean.	7.7	7.7	46.2	7.7	30.8	0.0
49.	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	7.7	7.7	61.5	0.0	23.1	0.0
50.	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	7.7	7.7	46.2	7.7	30.8	0.0
51.	Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	7.7	0.0	76.9	0.0	15.4	0.0

F. Financial Management

STATEMENT	CATEGORY
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		No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
52.	Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers.	7.7%	0.0%	38.5%	38.5%	0.0%	15.4%
53.	Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	7.7	0.0	30.8	61.5	0.0	0.0
54.	Financial resources are allocated fairly and equitably at my school.	7.7	0.0	46.2	30.8	7.7	7.7

G. Purchasing and Warehousing

STATEMENT	CATEGORY						
	No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
55. Purchasing gets me what I need when I need it.	7.7%	0.0%	61.5%	15.4%	15.4%	0.0%	
56. Purchasing acquires the highest quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.	7.7	0.0	46.2	46.2	0.0	0.0	
57. Purchasing processes are	7.7	38.5	0.0	23.1	23.1	7.7	

	not cumbersome for the requestor.						
58.	Vendors are selected competitively.	7.7	0.0	53.8	38.5	0.0	0.0
59.	The district provides teachers and administrators an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment.	7.7	0.0	30.8	30.8	30.8	0.0
60.	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	7.7	15.4	69.2	7.7	0.0	0.0
61.	Textbooks are in good shape.	7.7	0.0	69.2	7.7	15.4	0.0
62.	The school library meets the student needs for books and other resources.	7.7	46.2	46.2	0.0	0.0	0.0

H. Food Services

STATEMENT	CATEGORY					
	No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
63. The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	7.7%	0.0%	53.8%	15.4%	23.1%	0.0%
64. Food is served warm.	7.7	0.0	69.2	15.4	7.7	0.0

65.	Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.	7.7	0.0	92.3	0.0	0.0	0.0
66.	Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	7.7	7.7	84.6	0.0	0.0	0.0
67.	Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	7.7	7.7	69.2	7.7	7.7	0.0
68.	Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	7.7	15.4	61.5	7.7	7.7	0.0
69.	Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	7.7	15.4	53.8	15.4	7.7	0.0

I. Safety and Security

STATEMENT	CATEGORY					
	No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
70. School disturbances are infrequent.	7.7%	7.7%	76.9%	0.0%	7.7%	0.0%
71. Gangs are not a problem in this district.	7.7	23.1	46.2	0.0	23.1	0.0
72. Drugs are not a problem in this district.	7.7	0.0	23.1	15.4	53.8	0.0
73. Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	7.7	0.0	61.5	7.7	23.1	0.0

74.	Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	7.7	7.7	76.9	7.7	0.0	0.0
75.	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	7.7	7.7	76.9	7.7	0.0	0.0
76.	A good working arrangement exists between the local law enforcement and the district.	7.7	23.1	53.8	15.4	0.0	0.0
77.	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	7.7	30.8	53.8	0.0	7.7	0.0
78.	Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	7.7	7.7	61.5	15.4	7.7	0.0

J. Computers and Technology

STATEMENT		CATEGORY					
		No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
79.	Students regularly use computers.	7.7%	46.2%	46.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
80.	Students have	7.7	46.2	46.2	0.0	0.0	0.0

	regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.						
81.	Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	7.7	15.4	69.2	0.0	7.7	0.0
82.	Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	7.7	46.2	46.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
83.	The district meets student needs in classes in computer fundamentals.	7.7	23.1	46.2	7.7	7.7	7.7
84.	The district meets student needs in classes in advanced computer skills.	7.7	7.7	38.5	15.4	30.8	0.0
85.	Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	7.7	46.2	46.2	0.0	0.0	0.0

Appendix B

SURVEY RESULTS

Administrator/Support Staff Survey

(Note: Data shown may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.)

Exhibit B-6

Management Review of the Riviera Independent School District District Administrative and Support Staff Survey Results

(n=14)

Demographic Data

STATEMENT	CATEGORY		
	No Response	Male	Female
Gender (Optional)	14.3%	21.4%	64.3%

STATEMENT	CATEGORY					
	No Response	Anglo	African American	Hispanic	Asian	Other
Ethnicity (Optional)	14.3%	42.9%	0.0%	42.9%	0.0%	0.0%

STATEMENT	CATEGORY					
	No Response	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	20+ years
How long have you been employed by Riviera ISD?	7.1%	21.4%	7.1%	21.4%	21.4%	21.4%

STATEMENT	CATEGORY			
	No Response	Administrator	Clerical Staffer	Support Staffer
Are you a(n):	14.3%	21.4%	35.7%	28.6%

STATEMENT	CATEGORY					
	No Response	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	20+ years
How long have you been employed in this	14.3%	35.7%	0.0%	14.3%	14.3%	21.4%

capacity by Riviera ISD?						
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A. District Organization & Management

STATEMENT		CATEGORY					
		No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.	The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.	7.1%	14.3%	35.7%	35.7%	7.1%	0.0%
2.	School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.	7.1	14.3	35.7	28.6	14.3	0.0
3.	The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	7.1	35.7	35.7	21.4	0.0	0.0
4.	The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	7.1	28.6	28.6	21.4	14.3	0.0
5.	Central administration is efficient.	7.1	35.7	35.7	14.3	7.1	0.0
6.	Central administration supports the educational process.	7.1	42.9	21.4	21.4	7.1	0.0
7.	The morale of central administration	7.1	21.4	50.0	14.3	7.1	0.0

staff is good.						
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Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

STATEMENT		CATEGORY					
		No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
8.	Education is the main priority in our school district.	7.1%	50.0%	28.6%	0.0%	7.1%	7.1%
9.	Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.	7.1	35.7	28.6	14.3	14.3	0.0
10.	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	7.1	21.4	35.7	28.6	0.0	7.1
11.	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	7.1	7.1	35.7	35.7	7.1	7.1
12.	The district has effective educational programs for the following:						
	a) Reading	7.1	28.6	42.9	14.3	7.1	0.0
	b) Writing	7.1	21.4	50.0	14.3	7.1	0.0
	c) Mathematics	7.1	28.6	35.7	14.3	14.3	0.0
	d) Science	14.3	21.4	42.9	21.4	0.0	0.0
	e) English or	7.1	21.4	35.7	21.4	14.3	0.0

	Language Arts						
	f) Computer Instruction	7.1	21.4	35.7	21.4	14.3	0.0
	g) Social Studies (history or geography)	7.1	14.3	42.6	28.6	7.1	0.0
	h) Fine Arts	7.1	14.3	35.7	35.7	7.1	0.0
	i) Physical Education	7.1	21.4	42.9	21.4	7.1	0.0
	j) Business Education	7.1	7.1	35.7	42.9	7.1	0.0
	k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	7.1	21.4	28.6	28.6	14.3	0.0
	l) Foreign Language	7.1	7.1	28.6	50.0	7.1	0.0
13.	The district has effective special programs for the following:						
	a) Library Service	7.1	35.7	35.7	21.4	0.0	0.0
	b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	7.1	7.1	28.6	42.9	14.3	0.0
	c) Special Education	7.1	21.4	42.9	14.3	14.3	0.0
	d) Head Start and Even Start programs	7.1	7.1	7.1	78.6	0.0	0.0
	e) Dyslexia program	7.1	0.0	14.3	50.0	21.4	7.1
	f) Student mentoring	14.3	0.0	14.3	57.1	7.1	7.1

	program						
	g) Advanced placement program	7.1	7.1	42.9	35.7	7.1	0.0
	h) Literacy program	7.1	0.0	35.7	50.0	7.1	0.0
	i) Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	7.1	0.0	28.6	50.0	14.3	0.0
	j) Summer school programs	7.1	7.1	28.6	42.9	14.3	0.0
	k) Alternative education programs	7.1	7.1	35.7	42.9	7.1	0.0
	l) "English as a second language" program	7.1	7.1	28.6	50.0	7.1	0.0
	m) Career counseling program	7.1	7.1	21.4	50.0	0.0	14.3
	n) College counseling program	7.1	14.3	35.7	35.7	0.0	7.1
	o) Counseling the parents of students	7.1	7.1	21.4	50.0	7.1	7.1
	p) Drop out prevention program	7.1	0.0	21.4	57.1	14.3	0.0
14.	Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	7.1	0.0	28.6	42.6	21.4	0.0
15.	Teacher	7.1	21.4	50.0	14.3	7.1	0.0

	turnover is low.						
16.	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	7.1	0.0	64.3	21.4	7.1	0.0
17.	Teacher openings are filled quickly.	7.1	21.4	57.1	14.3	0.0	0.0
18.	Teachers are rewarded for superior performance.	7.1	7.1	7.1	50.0	21.4	7.1
19.	Teachers are counseled about less than satisfactory performance.	7.1	7.1	28.6	42.9	14.3	0.0
20.	All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.	7.1	14.3	50.0	21.4	7.1	0.0
21.	The student-to-teacher ratio is reasonable.	7.1	14.3	57.1	14.3	7.1	0.0
22.	Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	7.1	35.7	50.0	7.1	0.0	0.0
23.	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	7.1	28.6	28.6	28.6	7.1	0.0

C. Personnel

STATEMENT		CATEGORY					
		No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
24.	District salaries are competitive with similar positions in the job market.	7.1%	0.0%	78.6%	14.3%	0.0%	0.0%
25.	The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.	7.1	7.1	50.0	21.4	14.3	0.0
26.	Temporary workers are rarely used.	7.1	14.3	14.3	42.9	21.4	0.0
27.	The district successfully projects future staffing needs.	7.1	7.1	35.7	42.9	7.1	0.0
28.	The district has an effective employee recruitment program.	7.1	0.0	28.6	42.9	21.4	0.0
29.	The district operates an effective staff development program.	7.1	14.3	42.9	35.7	0.0	0.0
30.	District employees receive annual personnel evaluations.	7.1	7.1	57.1	28.6	0.0	0.0
31.	The district rewards competence	14.3	7.1	14.3	42.9	21.4	0.0

	and experience and spells out qualifications such as seniority and skill levels needed for promotion.						
32.	Employees who perform below the standard of expectation are counseled appropriately and timely.	14.3	21.4	50.0	14.3	0.0	0.0
33.	The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	21.4	0.0	28.6	35.7	14.3	0.0
34.	The district's health insurance package meets my needs.	21.4	7.1	42.9	7.1	14.3	7.1

D. Community Involvement

STATEMENT	CATEGORY						
	No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
35. The district regularly communicates with parents.	14.3%	14.3%	42.9%	28.6%	0.0%	0.0%	
36. The local television and radio stations regularly report school news and	14.3	7.1	14.3	35.7	21.4	7.1	

	menus.						
37.	Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.	14.3	0.0	21.4	35.7	28.6	0.0
38.	District facilities are open for community use.	14.3	21.4	42.9	21.4	0.0	0.0

E. Facilities Use and Management

STATEMENT		CATEGORY					
		No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
39.	Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff and the board provide input into facility planning.	14.3%	7.1%	35.7%	42.9%	0.0%	0.0%
40.	The architect and construction managers are selected objectively and impersonally.	14.3	21.4	21.4	42.9	0.0	0.0
41.	Schools are clean.	14.3	21.4	50.0	14.3	0.0	0.0
42.	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	14.3	14.3	50.0	14.3	7.1	0.0

43.	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	14.3	14.3	42.9	28.6	0.0	0.0
44.	Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	14.3	28.6	35.7	21.4	0.0	0.0

F. Financial Management

STATEMENT		CATEGORY					
		No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
45.	Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers.	14.3%	7.1%	50.0%	21.4%	7.1%	0.0%
46.	Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	14.3	7.1	50.0	21.4	7.1	0.0
47.	The district's financial reports are easy to understand and read.	14.3	7.1	42.9	35.7	0.0	0.0
48.	Financial reports are made available to community members when asked.	14.3	21.4	28.6	35.7	0.0	0.0

G. Purchasing and Warehousing

STATEMENT		CATEGORY					
		No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
49.	Purchasing gets me what I need when I need it.	14.3%	28.6%	35.7%	14.3%	7.1%	0.0%
50.	Purchasing acquires the highest quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.	14.3	21.4	42.9	21.4	0.0	0.0
51.	Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for the requestor.	14.3	21.4	21.4	35.7	7.1	0.0
52.	The district provides teachers and administrators an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment.	14.3	14.3	21.4	50.0	0.0	0.0
53.	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	21.4	14.3	21.4	42.9	0.0	0.0
54.	Textbooks are in good shape.	14.3	7.1	35.7	35.7	7.1	0.0
55.	The school library meets student needs for books and other	14.3	28.6	28.6	28.6	0.0	0.0

	resources for students.						
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H. Safety and Security

STATEMENT		CATEGORY					
		No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
56.	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	14.3%	7.1%	42.9%	28.6%	7.1%	0.0%
57.	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	14.3	0.0	35.7	21.4	28.6	0.0
58.	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	14.3	0.0	71.4	7.1	7.1	0.0
59.	Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	14.3	14.3	71.4	0.0	0.0	0.0
60.	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	7.1	21.4	50.0	21.4	0.0	0.0
61.	A good working arrangement exists between the local law enforcement and the district.	7.1	21.4	64.3	7.1	0.0	0.0
62.	Students receive fair	7.1	21.4	35.7	28.6	7.1	0.0

	and equitable discipline for misconduct.						
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I. Computers and Technology

STATEMENT		CATEGORY					
		No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
63.	Students regularly use computers.	7.1%	28.6%	42.9%	14.3%	7.1%	0.0%
64.	Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	7.1	28.6	50.0	14.3	0.0	0.0
65.	Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	7.1	21.4	35.7	28.6	7.1	0.0
66.	Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	7.1	21.4	57.1	14.3	0.0	0.0
67.	The district meets students needs in computer fundamentals.	7.1	14.3	35.7	35.7	7.1	0.0
68.	The district meets students needs in advanced computer skills.	7.1	14.3	35.7	35.7	7.1	0.0
69.	Teachers and students have	7.1	21.4	57.1	14.3	0.0	0.0

	easy access to the Internet.						
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Written Comments: None written.

Appendix B

SURVEY RESULTS

Student Survey

(Note: Data shown may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.)

Exhibit B-9
Management Review of the Riviera Independent School District
Student Survey Results
(n=28)
Demographic Data

STATEMENT	CATEGORY		
	No Response	Male	Female
Gender (Optional)	14.3%	32.1%	53.6%

STATEMENT	CATEGORY					
	No Response	Anglo	African-American	Hispanic	Asian	Other
Ethnicity (Optional)	10.7%	32.1%	0.0%	53.6%	0.0%	3.6%

STATEMENT	CATEGORY		
	No Response	Junior	Senior
What is your classification?	0.0%	60.7%	39.3%

A. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

STATEMENT	CATEGORY					
	No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	0.0%	7.1%	67.9%	17.9%	7.1%	0.0%
2. The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	0.0	14.3	42.9	25.0	14.3	3.6

3.	The district has effective educational programs for the following:						
	a) Reading	0.0	10.7	60.7	14.3	10.7	3.6
	b) Writing	0.0	17.9	67.9	7.1	0.0	7.1
	c) Mathematics	0.0	35.7	64.3	0.0	0.0	0.0
	d) Science	0.0	35.7	64.3	0.0	0.0	0.0
	e) English or Language Arts	0.0	32.1	67.9	0.0	0.0	0.0
	f) Computer Instruction	0.0	25.0	57.1	10.7	7.1	0.0
	g) Social Studies (history or geography)	0.0	10.7	53.6	7.1	21.4	7.1
	h) Fine Arts	3.6	10.7	71.4	3.6	10.7	0.0
	i) Physical Education	0.0	32.1	60.7	7.1	0.0	0.0
	j) Business Education	0.0	3.6	32.1	42.9	21.4	0.0
	k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	0.0	7.1	28.6	42.9	17.9	3.6
	l) Foreign Language	0.0	0.0	39.3	10.7	35.7	14.3
4.	The district has effective special programs for the following:						
	a) Library Service	0.0	46.4	39.3	7.1	7.1	0.0
	b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	0.0	7.1	46.4	32.1	14.3	0.0

	c) Special Education	0.0	7.1	39.3	46.4	7.1	0.0
	d) Student mentoring program	3.6	3.6	25.0	35.7	28.6	3.6
	e) Advanced placement program	0.0	21.4	67.9	3.6	7.1	0.0
	f) Career counseling program	0.0	7.1	35.7	17.9	32.1	7.1
	g) College counseling program	0.0	7.1	35.7	17.9	32.1	7.1
5.	Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	0.0	39.3	46.4	7.1	7.1	0.0
6.	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	0.0	17.9	46.4	14.3	21.4	0.0
7.	The district provides a high quality education.	0.0	10.7	57.1	32.1	0.0	0.0
8.	The district has a high quality of teachers.	3.6	7.1	35.7	32.1	17.9	3.6

B. Facilities Use and Management

STATEMENT		CATEGORY					
		No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
9.	Schools are clean.	0.0%	14.3%	50.0%	10.7%	25.0%	0.0%
10.	Buildings are properly maintained in	0.0	17.9	32.1	14.3	35.7	0.0

	a timely manner.						
11.	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	0.0	3.6	28.6	17.9	39.3	10.7
12.	Emergency maintenance is handled timely.	3.6	14.3	42.9	21.4	17.9	0.0

C. Purchasing and Warehousing

STATEMENT		CATEGORY					
		No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
13.	There are enough textbooks in all my classes.	0.0%	21.4%	32.1%	10.7%	21.4%	14.3%
14.	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	0.0	28.6	46.4	7.1	7.1	10.7
15.	Textbooks are in good shape.	0.0	0.0	25.0	25.0	39.3	17.9
16.	The school library meets student needs for books and other resources.	10.7	50.0	28.6	0.0	10.7	0.0

D. Food Services

STATEMENT	CATEGORY
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		No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
17.	The school breakfast program is available to all children.	0.0%	32.1%	42.9%	14.3%	10.7%	0.0%
18.	The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	0.0	7.1	42.9	21.4	21.4	7.1
19.	Food is served warm.	0.0	14.3	67.9	14.3	3.6	0.0
20.	Students have enough time to eat.	0.0	10.7	32.1	17.9	21.4	17.9
21.	Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.	0.0	21.4	71.4	3.6	0.0	3.6
22.	Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	3.6	10.7	32.1	3.6	46.4	3.6
23.	Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	3.6	10.7	64.3	14.3	7.1	0.0
24.	Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	3.6	25.0	50.0	21.4	0.0	0.0
25.	Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	3.6	10.7	67.9	14.3	3.6	0.0

E. Transportation

STATEMENT		CATEGORY					
		No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
26.	I regularly ride the bus.	0.0%	7.1%	10.7%	32.1%	17.9%	32.1%
27.	The bus driver maintains discipline on the bus.	3.6	0.0	17.9	71.4	7.1	0.0
28.	The length of my bus ride is reasonable.	3.6	3.6	17.9	71.4	3.6	0.0
29.	The drop-off zone at the school is safe.	3.6	7.1	25.0	60.7	3.6	0.0
30.	The bus stop near my house is safe.	3.6	3.6	14.3	71.4	7.1	0.0
31.	The bus stop is within walking distance from our home.	3.6	0.0	21.4	71.4	3.6	0.0
32.	Buses arrive and leave on time.	3.6	3.6	14.3	75.0	3.6	0.0
33.	Buses arrive early enough for students to eat breakfast at school.	3.6	0.0	14.3	67.9	7.1	7.1
34.	Buses seldom break down.	3.6	0.0	25.0	50.0	14.3	7.1
35.	Buses are clean.	3.6	7.1	21.4	50.0	17.9	0.0
36.	Bus drivers allow	7.1	10.7	21.4	57.1	3.6	0.0

	students to sit down before taking off.						
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F. Safety and Security

STATEMENT		CATEGORY					
		No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
37.	I feel safe and secure at school.	0.0%	3.6%	67.9%	14.3%	14.3%	0.0%
38.	School disturbances are infrequent.	0.0	14.3	67.9	3.6	14.3	0.0
39.	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	0.0	32.1	50.0	14.3	3.6	0.0
40.	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	0.0	3.6	32.1	28.6	28.6	7.1
41.	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	0.0	3.6	32.1	35.7	17.9	10.7
42.	Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	3.6	7.1	53.6	17.9	17.9	0.0
43.	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	0.0	14.3	50.0	17.9	14.3	3.6
44.	A good working	0.0	21.4	67.9	10.7	0.0	0.0

	arrangement exists between the local law enforcement and the district.						
45.	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	0.0	3.6	39.3	14.3	25.0	17.9
46.	Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	3.6	3.6	32.1	42.9	14.3	3.6

G. Computers and Technology

STATEMENT	CATEGORY						
	No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
47. Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	0.0%	42.9%	50.0%	0.0%	7.1%	0.0%	
48. Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	0.0	7.1	75.0	10.7	7.1	0.0	
49. Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	0.0	17.9	71.4	7.1	3.6	0.0	
50. The district offers enough classes in computer	0.0	25.0	46.4	10.7	17.9	0.0	

	fundamentals.						
51.	The district meets student needs in advanced computer skills.	0.0	10.7	50.0	10.7	25.0	3.6
52.	Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	3.6	39.3	42.9	3.6	10.7	0.0

Appendix B

SURVEY RESULTS

Parents Survey (Random Sample of 276)

(Note: Data shown may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.)

Exhibit B-10 Management Review of the Riviera Independent School District Parent Survey Results (n=68)

Demographic Data

STATEMENT	CATEGORY		
	No Response	Male	Female
Gender (Optional)	16.2%	26.8%	57.4%

STATEMENT	CATEGORY					
	No Response	Anglo	African-American	Hispanic	Asian	Other
Ethnicity (Optional)	17.6%	35.3%	2.9%	39.7%	0.0%	4.4%

STATEMENT	CATEGORY			
	No Response	0-5 years	6-10 years	11 or more years
How long have you lived in Riviera ISD?	8.8%	30.9%	16.2%	44.1%

What grade level(s) does your child(ren) attend?					
Pre-kindergarten	7.4%	Kindergarten	8.8%	First Grade	11.8%
Second Grade	11.8%	Third grade	10.3%	Fourth Grade	7.4%
Fifth Grade	11.8%	Sixth Grade	8.8%	Seventh Grade	10.3%
Eighth Grade	10.3%	Ninth Grade	16.2%	Tenth Grade	17.6%
Eleventh Grade	14.7%	Twelfth Grade	11.8%		

PART B:

A. District Organization & Management
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Survey Questions		No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.	The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.	8.8	7.4	47.1	23.5	7.4	5.9
2.	School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.	8.8	7.4	33.8	22.1	17.6	10.3
3.	The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	5.9	22.1	41.2	10.3	13.2	7.4
4.	The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	5.9	23.5	30.9	22.1	8.8	8.8

B. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

Survey Questions		No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5.	The district provides a high quality of services.	5.9	11.8	54.4	11.8	8.8	7.4
6.	Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.	5.9	10.3	41.2	26.5	11.8	4.4
7.	The needs of	4.4	10.3	44.1	17.6	14.7	8.8

	the college-bound student are being met.						
8.	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	5.9	8.8	36.8	22.1	16.2	10.3
9.	The district has effective educational programs for the following:						
	a) Reading	4.4	14.7	64.7	5.9	8.8	1.5
	b) Writing	4.4	10.3	61.8	8.8	13.2	1.5
	c) Mathematics	5.9	14.7	58.8	5.9	13.2	1.5
	d) Science	5.9	14.7	58.8	10.3	8.8	1.5
	e) English or Language Arts	5.9	14.7	60.3	7.4	11.8	0.0
	f) Computer Instruction	5.9	14.7	51.5	10.3	14.7	2.9
	g) Social Studies (history or geography)	7.4	7.4	64.7	11.8	7.4	1.5
	h) Fine Arts	7.4	8.8	61.8	11.8	7.4	2.9
	i) Physical Education	4.4	17.6	60.3	10.3	5.9	1.5
	j) Business Education	8.8	1.5	33.8	36.8	17.6	1.5
	k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	8.8	7.4	32.4	27.9	17.6	5.9
	l) Foreign Language	8.8	2.9	32.4	30.9	14.7	10.3
10.	The district has effective						

	special programs for the following:						
	a) Library Service	5.9	29.4	47.1	13.2	2.9	1.5
	b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	10.3	10.3	35.3	22.1	11.8	10.3
	c) Special Education	8.8	13.2	35.3	22.1	13.2	7.4

B. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement (continued)

Survey Questions		No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
11.	The district has effective special programs for the following: (continued)						
	d) Head Start and Even Start programs	10.3	10.3	30.9	30.9	13.2	4.4
	e) Dyslexia program	10.3	2.9	16.2	45.6	14.7	10.3
	f) Student mentoring program	8.8	4.4	30.9	30.9	17.6	7.4
	g) Advanced placement program	8.8	7.4	39.7	27.9	10.3	5.9
	h) Literacy program	8.8	7.4	27.9	35.3	14.7	5.9
	i) Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	8.8	4.4	14.7	38.2	20.6	13.2
	j) Summer school	5.9	11.8	35.3	26.5	14.7	5.9

	programs						
	k) Alternative education programs	10.3	4.4	29.4	33.8	13.2	8.8
	l) "English as a second language" program	8.8	7.4	25.0	38.2	16.2	4.4
	m) Career counseling program	7.4	11.8	30.9	23.5	16.2	10.3
	n) College counseling program	8.8	10.3	29.4	23.5	17.6	10.3
	o) Counseling the parents of students	7.4	11.8	22.1	26.5	19.1	13.2
	p) Drop out prevention program	8.8	4.4	17.6	38.2	17.6	13.2
12.	Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	7.4	13.2	32.4	16.2	17.6	13.2
13.	Teacher turnover is low.	7.4	14.7	38.2	26.5	10.3	2.9
14.	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	8.8	13.2	27.9	16.2	22.1	11.8
15.	A substitute teacher rarely teaches my child.	5.9	5.9	29.4	23.5	22.1	13.2
16.	Teachers are knowledgeable in the subject areas they	7.4	13.2	47.1	13.2	14.7	4.4

	teach.						
17.	All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.	7.4	19.1	52.9	10.3	8.8	1.5
18.	Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	4.4	33.8	57.4	1.5	2.9	0.0
19.	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	8.8	19.1	36.8	25.0	10.3	0.0
20.	The district provides a high quality education.	4.4	22.1	45.6	10.3	13.2	4.4
21.	The district has a high quality of teachers.	5.9	20.6	27.9	22.1	16.2	7.4

C. Community Involvement

Survey Questions	No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
22. The district regularly communicates with parents.	4.4	13.2	45.6	19.1	13.2	4.4
23. District facilities are open for community use.	7.4	11.8	48.5	19.1	11.8	1.5
24. Schools have plenty of volunteers to	5.9	4.4	41.2	25.0	13.2	10.3

	help student and school programs.						
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D. Facilities Use and Management

Survey Questions		No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
25.	Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff and the board provide input into facility planning.	7.4	8.8	27.9	32.4	19.1	4.4
26.	Schools are clean.	5.9	19.1	63.2	5.9	5.9	0.0
27.	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	7.4	14.7	61.8	11.8	2.9	1.5
28.	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	7.4	14.7	50.0	22.1	2.9	2.9
29.	The district uses very few portable buildings.	5.9	29.4	54.4	10.3	0.0	0.0
30.	Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	7.4	14.7	50.0	23.5	4.4	0.0

E. Asset and Risk Management

Survey Questions		No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
31.	My property tax bill is reasonable for the	7.4	16.2	30.9	19.1	20.6	5.9

	educational services delivered.						
32.	Board members and administrators do a good job explaining the use of tax dollars.	8.8	11.8	19.1	27.9	20.6	11.8

F. Financial Management

Survey Questions	No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
33. Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers.	7.4	4.4	19.1	45.6	22.1	1.5
34. Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	7.4	1.5	39.7	35.3	13.2	2.9
35. The district's financial reports are easy to understand and read.	7.4	5.9	20.6	42.6	14.7	8.8
36. Financial reports are made available to community members when asked.	7.4	5.9	29.4	44.1	8.8	4.4

G. Purchasing and Warehousing

Survey Questions		No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
37.	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	5.9	10.3	66.2	8.8	4.4	4.4
38.	Textbooks are in good shape.	5.9	14.7	61.8	11.8	5.9	0.0
39.	The school library meets student needs for books and other resources for students.	5.9	26.5	57.4	1.5	5.9	2.9

H. Food Services

Survey Questions		No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
40.	My child regularly purchases his/her meal from the cafeteria.	4.4	29.4	44.1	4.4	13.2	4.4
41.	The school breakfast program is available to all children.	7.4	35.3	39.7	11.8	4.4	1.5
42.	The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	4.4	14.7	30.9	27.9	11.8	10.3
43.	Food is served warm.	5.9	20.6	45.6	19.1	4.4	4.4
44.	Students have enough time	5.9	11.8	44.1	8.8	19.1	10.3

	to eat.						
45.	Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.	5.9	19.1	61.8	5.9	7.4	0.0
46.	Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	5.9	11.8	36.8	25.0	11.8	8.8
47.	Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	5.9	17.6	57.4	14.7	4.4	0.0
48.	Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	5.9	19.1	51.5	11.8	11.8	0.0
49.	Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	5.9	20.6	55.9	13.2	2.9	1.5

I. Transportation

Survey Questions		No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
50.	My child regularly rides the bus.	4.4	17.6	29.4	11.8	19.1	17.6
51.	The bus driver maintains discipline on the bus.	4.4	11.8	33.8	38.2	5.9	5.9
52.	The length of the student's bus ride is reasonable.	4.4	10.3	26.5	44.1	8.8	5.9
53.	The drop-off zone at the	4.4	25.0	44.1	20.6	1.5	4.4

	school is safe.						
54.	The bus stop near my house is safe.	4.4	14.7	35.3	38.2	2.9	4.4
55.	The bus stop is within walking distance from our house.	7.4	16.2	33.8	38.2	0.0	4.4
56.	Buses arrive and depart on time.	4.4	16.2	39.7	32.4	2.9	4.4
57.	Buses arrive early enough for students to eat breakfast at school.	5.9	16.2	35.3	35.3	4.4	2.9
58.	Buses seldom break down.	5.9	19.1	41.2	27.9	4.4	1.5
59.	Buses are clean.	5.9	16.2	38.2	32.4	4.4	2.9
60.	Bus drivers allow students to sit down before taking off.	4.4	19.1	27.9	36.8	5.9	5.9
61.	The district has a simple method to request buses for special events.	7.4	14.7	36.8	41.2	0.0	0.0

J. Safety and Security

Survey Questions	No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
62. Students feel safe and secure at school.	5.9	19.1	66.2	5.9	0.0	2.9

63.	School disturbances are infrequent.	4.4	20.6	60.3	10.3	4.4	0.0
64.	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	5.9	20.6	58.8	14.7	0.0	0.0
65.	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	5.9	16.2	32.4	25.0	17.6	2.9
66.	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	5.9	23.5	48.5	16.2	2.9	2.9
67.	Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	7.4	14.7	44.1	30.9	1.5	1.5
68.	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	8.8	14.7	42.6	30.9	2.9	0.0
69.	A good working arrangement exists between the local law enforcement and the district.	7.4	22.1	60.3	10.3	0.0	0.0
70.	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	8.8	11.8	51.5	11.8	8.8	7.4
71.	Safety hazards do not exist	7.4	11.8	38.2	30.9	10.3	1.5

	on school grounds.						
K. Computers and Technology							
Survey Questions		No Response	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
72.	Teachers know how to teach computer science and other technology-related courses.	7.4	10.3	41.2	27.9	11.8	1.5
73.	Computers are new enough to be useful to teach students.	7.4	16.2	61.8	8.8	4.4	1.5
74.	The district meets students needs in computer fundamentals.	7.4	11.8	52.9	16.2	10.3	1.5
75.	The district meets students needs in advanced computer skills.	8.8	13.2	41.2	22.1	8.8	5.9
76.	Students have easy access to the Internet.	5.9	23.5	51.5	17.6	0.0	1.5