

Letter of Transmittal

February 28, 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

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen:

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

In June 1998, TSPR released the results of a five-month study of the district's operations. This review, originally requested by the former WISD superintendent and Board of Trustees, offered 41 specific recommendations for saving Wimberley taxpayers more than \$656,000 over five years. The review also noted a number of WISD's exemplary programs and model services provided by district administrators, teachers, and staff.

After nearly a year and a half, we have returned to check on how well the district's leadership has put these proposals into practice. We found an administration and board actively seeking to implement nearly every proposal.

Since the release of the report, WISD has implemented or is in the process of implementing 39 of these proposals, or 95 percent, and has saved taxpayers nearly \$737,000. These net savings exceed TSPR's conservative five-year estimate of more than \$656,000. District administrators project savings will reach more than \$1.3 million over five years.

While there is still work to be done, WISD is to be commended for taking these steps to ensure that students, teachers, and taxpayers receive the maximum possible benefit from every dollar spent in Wimberley public schools.

Detailed information can be obtained from TSPR by visiting the Comptroller's Web site at www.window.state.tx.us/tspr/wimberpr/.

Sincerely,

Wimberley Independent School District Progress Report

In February 1998, the Comptroller of Public Accounts' Texas School Performance Review (TSPR) began a comprehensive school review of the Wimberley Independent School District. TSPR, a nationally recognized program created by Texas lawmakers in 1991 identifies savings and suggests methods to improve operational efficiency in Texas public school districts. In January 2000, TSPR returned to Wimberley to assess the district's progress in implementing the recommendations.

Since 1991, TSPR has recommended more than 3,500 ways to save taxpayers more than \$381 million over five years in 34 public school districts throughout Texas. Follow-up reviews of districts that have had at least one year to implement recommendations have also been conducted. These subsequent reviews show that nearly 90 percent of TSPR's combined proposals have been acted upon, saving local taxpayers more than \$94 million, with the savings expected to grow in the future.

Improving the Texas School Performance Review

After taking office in January 1999, Comptroller Carole Keeton Rylander consulted school district officials, parents and teachers from across Texas and carefully examined past reviews and progress reports in an effort to make TSPR more valuable to the more than 1,000 school districts in Texas. With the perspective of a former teacher and school board president, the Comptroller vowed to steer TSPR to increased accountability to local school districts and the communities they represent. The Comptroller intends for TSPR to become a tool for improvement in many more districts, particularly those that seek help to improve academic performance by better managing classroom resources.

Comptroller Rylander began by creating new criteria for selecting school districts for future reviews. Priority is now given to districts that are judged poorly performing academically or financially, and to performing hands-on reviews that will benefit the greatest number of students. These are the school districts and children that need help the most.

Recognizing that fewer than 52 cents of every state education dollar is spent on instruction, Comptroller Rylander wants to give local school officials the ability to move every dollar possible into the classroom. In

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addition, TSPR will not bury districts' best practices and exemplary models deep inside individual reports. Instead, Comptroller Rylander has ordered best practices and exemplary programs to be shared quickly and systematically among all the state's school districts, and with anyone interested in improving education. There is no reason for a district that has solved a problem to keep the solution to itself. Comptroller Rylander directed TSPR to serve as an active clearinghouse for the best and brightest ideas in Texas public education.

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

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

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

Detailed information can be obtained from TSPR by visiting the Comptroller's Web site at www.window.state.tx.us or by calling: 1-800-531-5441, extension 53676.

TSPR in Wimberley

TSPR began the Wimberley Independent School District (WISD) review in February 1998. As in previous reviews, TSPR visited Wimberley in response to a local call for assistance. In July 1997, the former WISD superintendent and Board of Trustees, along with many members of the Wimberley community, requested a review.

WISD presented a unique challenge for the TSPR team, which had not reviewed a district with fewer than 2,000 students since its initial 1991 pilot project. The majority of districts reviewed by TSPR had fallen into the moderate-to-large enrollments, including seven of the state's largest districts: Houston, Dallas, Austin, San Antonio, Ysleta in El Paso, El Paso and Corpus Christi.

Follow-up discussions with three smaller districts reviewed during TSPR's initial pilot project--the San Saba, Cherokee and Richland Springs Independent School Districts--indicated that the review process was not sufficiently sensitive to smaller districts' needs. Officials at these districts said they were overwhelmed by requests for data that they did not have. Some recommendations stemming from those reviews proved unworkable because the districts simply do not have the resources to accomplish what larger districts can.

WISD worked with TSPR to modify the review process to meet the needs of smaller districts. Months in advance of the review, TSPR gave district officials a preliminary list of data the review team would need so the district could compile basic documentation at a less demanding pace.

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The TSPR review process has improved as a result of WISD's assistance.

With the help of McConnell, Jones, Lanier & Murphy, LLP, a Houston-based consulting firm formerly known as Empirical Management Services, TSPR interviewed district employees, school board members, students, parents, business leaders and representatives from community organizations. In addition, the review team collected comments from letters and calls to the Comptroller's office.

To obtain additional comments from community residents, TSPR held a public forum at Scudder Primary School and conducted focus-group sessions and personal interviews that yielded valuable comments from current and former district employees, parents, community leaders, and students. TSPR sent written surveys to all district personnel and junior and senior high school students. Responses were received from 37 administrative staff, including central and campus administrators, clerks, custodians, maintenance workers, bus drivers and other non-instructional staff, three principals and assistant principals, 91 teachers, and 191 students.

WISD is located in an unincorporated community about 40 miles southwest of Austin. The district was created in 1985 when it was detached from the Hays Consolidated School District. WISD's student enrollment grew 18 percent, from 1,345 in 1995-96 to 1,586 in 1998-99. The district continues to grow, but not at the 6-percent rate originally

projected. With a 1999-2000 enrollment of 1,601, WISD gained only 15 students from 1998-99, about a 1 percent increase. The district's annual operating budget reached nearly \$9 million in 1999-2000, up from more than \$7 million in 1995-96, an increase of more than 28 percent. Three of the district's four schools and the administration building were built after 1985.

The district is a source of pride and the focus of the Wimberley community. The majority of students are Anglo (91 percent), and nearly 16 percent of WISD's students are economically disadvantaged. The community is predominantly well-educated. Many residents are retired, and most are upper-middle class. A strong artistic influence exists in the community.

The district has undergone numerous personnel changes since the 1998 review. In July 1999, the WISD board hired a new superintendent, Marion Running, when former superintendent David Simmons left the district. WISD's business management function has been in a state of flux since the review. The business manager employed during the review left the district, and was replaced by another business manager, who also left the job. The district has had a part-time business manager since February 1999.

During the 1999-2000 school year, WISD's 210 teachers, administrators, and support staff served 1,601 students in four schools: a primary school (grades K-2), intermediate school (grades 3-5), junior high (grades 6-8), and high school (grades 9-12). In 1998-99, WISD received an exemplary district Texas Education Agency accreditation rating, with about 92 percent of the students passing the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) test at all levels. For 1998-99, Scudder primary school, Bowen intermediate school and Wimberley high school were rated exemplary, while Wimberley junior high was rated recognized according to the Texas Education Agency's accountability system.

Because of the size of Wimberley ISD, the review team rolled the 12 functional areas normally addressed by TSPR into four targeted areas:

- District organization and management
- Community involvement
- Personnel management
- Educational service delivery and performance measures
- Safety and security
- Administrative support services
- Financial management
- Asset and risk management
- Purchasing, warehousing and textbooks
- Computers and technology

- Operations and pupil services
- Facilities use and management
- Food service
- Transportation

Carole Keeton Rylander

Carole Keeton Rylander
Comptroller of Public Accounts

Summary of Savings and Report Card

Summary of Savings

	TSPR's Projected Savings	Total Savings Projected by TSPR	WISD's Actual Savings	Difference
Net Savings to Date		\$83,458	\$736,709	\$653,251
TOTAL SAVINGS PROJECTED FOR 1998-2003		\$656,390	\$1,369,670	\$713,280

Wimberley ISD Report Card

Chapter	Total	Complete	In Progress	Not Implemented	Rejected	Percent Complete/In Progress	Grat
District Organization and Management	10	5	4	0	1	50%/40%	Satisfac
Educational Service Delivery and Student Performance	10	6	3	0	1	60%/30%	Satisfac
Administrative Support Services	11	5	6	0	0	45%/55%	Satisfac
Operations and Pupil Services	10	6	4	0	0	60%/40%	Satisfac
Overall Grade	41	22	17	0	2	54%/41%	Satisfac

Excellent = More than 80% complete

Satisfactory = 80% to 100% complete or in progress

Needs Work = Less than 80% complete or in progress

Exemplary Programs and Practices

TSPR identified a number of exemplary programs at WISD, which were highlighted in the original report and are repeated in this report, along with information on additional improvements the district has made. TSPR encourages school districts throughout the state to examine these programs and services, and determine if they can be adapted to meet local needs.

- WISD's school board conducts orderly and efficient meetings following appropriate protocols, and board members work together in an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect.

The board continues to conduct meetings in an orderly manner, and the additional training and team building is contributing to the assimilation of new board members.

- The Wimberley community is committed to its school district. WISD enjoys considerable parental involvement as well as financial and volunteer support from business, civic, higher education and non-profit organizations in and around the community.

WISD has begun several new initiatives since the original review. For example, the district encourages senior citizens to get involved in WISD by offering them computer classes with students serving as volunteer tutors. In 2000, WISD will offer Austin Community College (ACC) courses in Computer Literacy to community members with ACC instructors teaching in the junior high computer lab. In addition, the district began providing senior citizens a Gold Card that provides free admission to school events. Such efforts build on and encourage ongoing community support of district programs.

Another new district initiative, Arts from the Heart, is a community volunteer program that provides cultural art experiences for WISD students. Professional artists volunteer to provide after-school workshops in dance, performance art, visual art and music.

WISD also contracts with a professional grant writer who researches and applies for all available grants that meet the district's needs. The district has captured nearly \$700,000 in grant funds due to grant writing efforts.

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The Wimberley community continues to support the district in many different ways. Recently, community members produced a foundation for the district's strategic planning, worked on safety issues, and served on a technology committee.

- Over the last three years, students in WISD have passed the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) and college admissions tests at higher rates, with fewer dropouts, than the region and the state average.

Wimberley student performance continues to improve. The percentage of students passing the TAAS increased from 89.7 percent in 1997-98 to 91.7 percent in 1998-99. Significant improvements in Math resulted after a new K-5 curriculum was introduced.

- Wimberley High School students assemble, rebuild and install personal computers for WISD as part of an exemplary instructional technology program. Not only are students learning a valuable skill, but the program has saved the district more than \$100,000 in new computers, computer repairs and installations. A related association assembles, upgrades and repairs computers for the public as well, and profits are used to advance technology education in the district.

Students continue to build and repair about 25 computers annually as part of the instructional technology program. The district often conducts cost-benefit analyses in determining whether to buy new computers or build computers in the classroom.

- In September 1995, WISD contracted management of its custodial, maintenance, and grounds functions to a private contractor, but retained WISD employees. Under its management contract, the vendor uses a computerized work order management system to handle requests for services and conducts periodic satisfaction surveys of teachers and administrators to improve services.

The district's contract for maintenance is up for renewal in 2000. The district will determine if it can be modified to enhance and improve services to schools.

- District bus routes are planned manually, due to the high cost of computerized routing systems. WISD is working with Hays County and the Capital Area Planning Council, however, to develop a cost-effective computerized routing and scheduling

system using a Geographic Information System the county is developing.

Once Hays County's Geographic Information System is complete, the district plans to use that system for automating their routing and scheduling.

- The district saved more than \$230,000 over the last four years through an energy management contract to upgrade schools with energy efficient heating and air-conditioning equipment.

Energy management continues to be a major focus of the district's facility management process.

- WISD has negotiated a favorable depository agreement with a local bank that waives all monthly service charges, pays a significant interest rate on excess cash held in the bank, and provides checks, deposit slips, and a safety deposit box at no charge.

The district's depository agreement continues to give favorable treatment to the district. Enhanced cash flow forecasting has allowed WISD to earn additional interest by moving excess cash into an investment pool.

- WISD is managing its insurance and related risk management functions effectively. The district provides competitive health plan coverages to employees, reduced workers' compensation claims through targeted safety training, has an effective emergency preparedness program, and works effectively with the Wimberley Fire Department to educate students in fire safety and ensure that schools comply with fire codes.

Since the review, the district received two \$2,500 Texas Association of School Boards risk management grants, used to purchase school safety equipment and provide staff safety training. The safety of students and staff remains a priority for WISD.

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- WISD saves administrative time and overhead by delivering merchandise directly to schools instead of operating a central warehouse.

The "just-in-time" delivery system used by WISD saves the district the cost of facilities and staff to operate a central warehouse.

- WISD controls textbook losses by holding students and teachers responsible for textbooks and checking textbook assignments throughout the year.

Textbook losses can be extremely costly. WISD's process continues to contain those costs by holding individuals responsible for keeping up with their textbooks.

TSPR Key Recommendations

District personnel identified the results of these original recommendations as the most successful and helpful to the district.

District Organization and Management

3. Develop a comprehensive strategic planning process that reflects WISD's goals, objectives and strategies.

The district gathered a group of community members to develop recommendations concerning the strategic plan. The resulting report, delivered to the district in August 1999, is the foundation for the administration's formal strategic plan. The complete plan will be finished by August 2000. By working openly with the community on the initial recommendations, the district improved communications with the community in general and its critics in particular. The district's leadership believes this plan will set the course for the district over the next five years--and will be understood and supported by the community, parents and students.

5. Establish a community involvement initiative under the leadership of the superintendent to strengthen communications among the board, the district, and the public, as well as build on and encourage ongoing community support.

The new superintendent believes this recommendation has been critical to turning around public opinion about WISD. At the time of the review, the district was not doing a good job communicating with local citizens. Community members, teachers, students and staff said they found it difficult to get information from the district. The district was unable to provide explanations for processes and procedures, arousing community suspicions that the district was doing something wrong. Initiatives begun by the former superintendent and expanded on by the current superintendent have resulted in improved goodwill in the community, greater support from parents and students, and the improved morale of district employees.

Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measures

11. Develop formal curriculum guides for core academic subjects and update guides according to the state revision cycle every five years beginning in 2002-03.

District administrators credited the development of the K-5 math curriculum guides with an immediate improvement in test scores. Seventy percent of

third graders passed the math portion of TAAS in 1998; in 1999, 89.7 percent passed. In 1998, 85 percent of fourth graders and 93.7 percent of fifth graders passed; in 1999, 100 percent of fourth graders and 98.1 percent of fifth graders passed. The district was so encouraged by this result that it budgeted funds for software and training to develop the remaining curriculum guides at an accelerated pace. As one administrator said, the experience in developing the guides allowed them to "share the expertise" among teachers and across all grade levels.

16. Hire a districtwide technology specialist to support the district's instructional and administrative technology.

Teachers and administrators agreed that hiring a technology specialist has been of extreme benefit to the district. Equipment that malfunctions is immediately fixed and teachers are finding more effective ways to use information technology in the classroom. An added benefit is that administrators are getting better data reporting out of the classroom.

19. Ensure accurate reporting of security violations, and establish critical thresholds at which additional safety and security measures will be needed.

The district realized that accurate reporting of security violations was only one of the data reporting issues the district faced. The district hired a person to be responsible for ensuring the quality of all data reported to Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS). Improved reporting of security violations has also allowed the district to capture more state funds, because the accuracy in Average Daily Attendance (ADA) reporting has improved.

Administrative Support Services

31. Solicit both monetary and non-monetary grants from the surrounding business communities, state and federal grant programs, and other sources.

The district cited this recommendation as instrumental in helping it acquire technology and expanding its telecommunications network. To improve grant acquisition, WISD began contracting with a professional grant writer who had retired in Wimberley. The district keeps her informed of their needs and she, in turn, researches available grants. The district captured nearly \$700,000 in grant funds using this process. The grants the district received were fundamental to changes in the district. For a small district particularly, the input from business and the state and federal grants allowed the district to

make changes it otherwise could not have afforded to make.

The district has taken advantage of a state program for bus refurbishing services available at the Ellis prison unit in Huntsville. WISD had four 1986 district buses mechanically refurbished at a significant saving to the district.

Operations and Pupil Services

38. Qualify all eligible students for the free and reduced-price program and process all applications at the central office.

Centralizing free and reduced-price breakfast and lunch applications immediately increased federal funding in the district. First year increases in Title I and compensatory education funds were \$26,500, with a five-year conservative projection of \$132,500. More significantly, involving principals and staff in the application process has brought increased awareness in the district on the importance of signing up every eligible student.

What Still Needs to Be Done

WISD has made significant progress, but if progress is to be sustained there are certain key issues that still need to be addressed. Key issues that have the greatest potential for future improvement include:

Security

In January 2000, Comptroller Carole Keeton Rylander revised and reissued her report Keeping Texas Children Safe In School. In this special report, Comptroller Rylander maintains that school safety is everyone's responsibility, and smaller districts are not immune to the violence and crime experienced nationally. In WISD, two potentially violent incidents involving students possessing weapons and explosives resulted in the arrest of several students. Having programs in place and individuals in the right place at the right time are key to preventing or containing violence.

Comptroller Rylander maintains that school safety is everyone's responsibility, and smaller districts are not immune to the violence and crime experienced nationally.

Administrators and trustees have a responsibility to protect staff and students from harm. School Resource Officer (SRO) programs were recommended as a method used to prevent violence in other school districts. These officers are not placed in schools as enforcers, but are there to educate students and provide students and teachers a resource to go to with problems, questions or concerns. The board rejected this recommendation stating that SROs may be beneficial for larger districts like Austin or San Antonio, but would be reactionary for a small district like Wimberley. The fact that Wimberley has already experienced two near-disastrous incidents proves that the incidents that occurred in Colorado, Oklahoma, Arkansas, California, and elsewhere could also happen in Wimberley. WISD needs to reconsider developing an SRO program in cooperation with the Hays County Sheriff's Office to ensure the safety of students and teachers.

Facilities

The district still needs to develop a long-range facilities master plan. While the demographic study conducted by the district shows flat growth over the next five years, the district still needs to maintain and repair existing facilities. A master plan allows a district to plan maintenance effectively while helping to avoid a budgetary crisis.

Contract Services

WISD has taken the lead among small districts in contracting for maintenance, food services and transportation.

WISD has taken the lead among small districts in contracting for maintenance, food services and transportation. At the time of the review, WISD was a model for showing how a small district can focus its energy on educating children by contracting for support services. All three contracts are up for renewal, and WISD is negotiating with the service providers for new contracts. The superintendent feels two of the three contracts have produced the results hoped for when the district made the original decision to contract.

Comptroller Rylander advocates using the Yellow Pages test--government should do no job that business does better and for a lower cost. The test assumes that services are continually monitored and the final decision is based on who can provide the highest quality service at the lowest price. As the district reviews these contracts, a cost-benefit analysis should be conducted to verify that the decision to contract is still warranted, and that both external and internal competition is assessed during the negotiation process. The final recommendation in the performance review anticipated that these contracts would be renegotiated and suggested establishing performance measures that ensure results are linked to cost increases.

Curriculum

TSPR commends the district for completing the curriculum guides for Math K-5, and the decision to move forward quickly to prepare the remaining guides. It is imperative, however, that the development of the remaining curriculum guides stays on target for timely completion. Comprehensive curriculum alignment provides clear direction for both staff and students. TSPR urges WISD administrators and board members to keep this project a top priority.

WISD's Ideas for Improving the TSPR Review Process

The Texas School Performance Review team does not assume that its process for performing school reviews works so well that it cannot be improved. This was especially true for the review of Wimberley because it was one of the first small district reviews undertaken. Therefore, as part of the progress report preparation, TSPR asked Wimberley board members and administrators what they thought went right and wrong and how the process could be improved.

The feedback TSPR received from other districts led to improvements in the review process. For example, early reports did not include implementation strategies. Districts told TSPR that they needed help in getting the recommendations started. As a result, the reports now include implementation strategies and timelines to complement the recommendations. Districts have told TSPR that these blueprints are invaluable for starting, and ultimately achieving, the desired results.

While many administrators were not with the district at the time of the review, new and old administrators said that TSPR had been fair and balanced in reporting facts and issues within the district at that time. Those who were in the district during the review said that TSPR consultants acted professionally and exhibited the highest level of integrity. The new superintendent said that she had studied the report prior to her interview with the board that eventually hired her as the superintendent in July 1999. Another administrator stated the report was a "blessing for the district" because it carefully documented what the district was doing right, and what it should do to improve. Several administrators said the report allowed the district to improve its communication with the community in concrete ways and ultimately turned around public opinion.

WISD administrators and board members not only praised the TSPR process, they also offered helpful suggestions to improve future school district reviews--feedback that is particularly important as TSPR embarks on other reviews of small districts.

The district's suggestions for improving the TSPR review process and making it more useful for small districts include:

- Like most small districts, not all of Wimberley ISD's processes are formally documented. Small districts like WISD often have a strong oral tradition concerning the dissemination of rules,

procedures and practices. Administrators felt TSPR should be more sensitive to these oral traditions.

- One board member, who was not on the board at the time of the review, felt TSPR had not done an adequate job explaining the need for establishing a School Resource Officer program in cooperation with the Hays County Sheriff's Office. He felt this recommendation may have been appropriate in Dallas, but the finding and explanation did not support doing this in Wimberley.

TSPR strives to make findings and recommendations persuasive, especially those aimed at improving children's safety.

TSPR strives to make findings and recommendations persuasive, but more care will be given to fully supporting recommendations, especially those aimed at preventing crime and violence, and improving children's safety.

- Although most participants liked the idea of public forums and focus groups, one board member who was not on the board at the time of the review said that holding these events on school grounds may have intimidated people and may have prevented some from participating. In small communities, where everyone knows everyone else, this could be particularly troubling. The board member mentioned that TSPR should consider holding forums at non-school facilities, or consider gathering input from stakeholders by printing a form in the local newspaper that residents could complete and mail in anonymously.

This is an issue that was raised during reviews of larger districts as well. TSPR will investigate the use of less intimidating methods for gathering input, including using non-school facilities for some public forums and/or focus group sessions. Because open and forthright communication is critical to the review process, TSPR is committed to providing individuals a variety of options for providing input.

Appendix A - Status of Recommendations and Savings

Chapter 1: District Organization and Management

Rec #	General Recommendation	Implementation Status	TSPR's Projected Five-Year Savings (Costs)	Actual Savings (Costs) To Date	WISD's Projected Five-Year Savings (Costs)	Comments
CHAPTER 1: DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT						
1	Board members should attend required continuing education workshops to further improve their understanding of school district governance and administration issues. (p. 19)	Complete	\$0	(\$7,000)	(\$35,000)	The board previously removed all board training from the budget, but added back \$7,000 for board member training, conventions, and other workshops. All board members attended TASB training. From 1/1/1999 to 1/15/2000, board members attended a total of 75 hours of training, an average of nearly 11 hours each.
2	Develop a summary-level, user-friendly executive reporting format to present financial, management, and program-related	In Progress	\$0	\$0	\$0	WISD's new software system, Skyward, provides reports in monthly packets. These reports will continue to be improved as the

	information to the board. (p. 21)					system becomes fully operational and employees are trained on its use.
3	Develop a comprehensive strategic planning process that reflects WISD's goals, objectives and strategies. (p. 29)	In Progress	\$0	(\$500)	(\$500)	The board appointed a Strategic Planning Committee that presented recommendations to the board in August 1999. The district is using this document as the basis for developing a comprehensive, multi-year strategic plan. The superintendent believes they will have the plan in place by August 2000. In the future, the strategic plan will guide the development of annual budgets.
4	Require mandatory SBDM training for principals and CEIC members and clarify and reinforce their roles and responsibilities. (p.35)	Complete	(\$6,000)	(\$500)	(\$500)	The assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Technology developed and taught a series of workshops on site-based decision making (SBDM) for district personnel and distributed materials on

						SBDM developed by the Texas Education Agency. These materials discuss how to perform a needs assessment and explain how to use disaggregated test data to identify strengths and weaknesses in current instructional programs. The district plans to train administrators and CEIC members every September and January.
5	Establish a community involvement initiative under the leadership of the superintendent to strengthen communications among the board, the district, and the public, as well as build on and encourage ongoing community support. (p. 43)	In Progress	(\$37,500)	\$0	(\$37,500)	The district is developing a monthly newsletter for distribution to the community. The first issue is scheduled for a September 2000 release.
6	Institute a process for retaining qualified teachers. (p. 49)	In Progress	\$0	\$0	\$0	WISD teacher turnover rates declined from 20.1 percent in 1997-98 to 16.2 percent in 1998-99. Conversely,

						<p>statewide teacher turnover rates increased from 13.3 percent to 15.5 percent during the same period. The district has not developed a formal comprehensive plan for retaining teachers, but has adopted practices for improving teacher working conditions and morale. For example, the superintendent held an Open House during the holidays, and teachers were encouraged to visit with the superintendent during their planning period to share their concerns.</p>
7	<p>Develop a salary schedule for all employees, conduct an annual salary comparison study, and determine if salary schedules should be adjusted. (p.51)</p>	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	<p>An initial, comprehensive salary schedule was developed for all employee classifications. The district continues to fine-tune and makes changes to it on a regular basis.</p>
8	<p>Maintain automated or scanned files of qualified</p>	Rejected	\$0	\$0	\$0	<p>The district determined that performing this task would</p>

	applicants only and archive all others. (p. 53)					require hiring additional personnel and was therefore considered cost prohibitive.
9	Ensure that all employees receive annual performance evaluations. (p.54)	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	All employees are now evaluated annually. According to the new superintendent, all evaluations of staff are current and have been included in each employee's personnel file.
10	Assess the quality and need for specific staff development programs. (p.58)	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	The district added a staff development component to the district's improvement plan and conducted an assessment of all staff development programs. As a result, the district eliminated a number of training courses and retooled others. For example, new training for working in vertical teams was developed and taught. Teachers and administrators applaud the

						over/under training that gave teachers an opportunity to work with teachers from grades above and below the grade they teach. Numerous benefits resulted from this type of session that could not have occurred under the previous model.
Totals-Chapter 1			(\$43,500)	(\$8,000)	(\$73,500)	
Total All Chapters			\$656,390	\$736,709	\$1,369,670	

Appendix A - Status of Recommendations and Savings

Chapter 2: Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measures

Rec #	General Recommendation	Implementation Status	TSPR's Projected Five-Year Savings (Costs)	Actual Savings (Costs) To Date	WISD's Projected Five-Year Savings (Costs)	Comments
Chapter 2: Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measures						
11	Develop formal curriculum guides for core academic subjects and update guides according to the state revision cycle every five years beginning in 2002-03. (p.68)	In Progress	(\$25,900)	(\$10,000)	(\$25,900)	Vertical teams are reviewing the curriculum in all content areas. Curriculum guides for Math K-5 are complete. Funds for the purchase of specialized software have been budgeted for the 1999-2000 school year and the remaining curriculum guides will be completed by August 2001. The initial introduction of the math guides significantly increased the math pass rates for TAAS. Seventy percent of third graders passed the math portion of TAAS in 1998; in 1999,

						89.7 percent passed. In 1998, 85 percent of fourth graders and 93.7 percent of fifth graders passed; in 1999, 100 percent of fourth graders and 98.1 percent of fifth graders passed.
12	Develop targeted instructional strategies that build on strengths and recognizes weaknesses.(p.75)	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	Campuses received specialized training on how to develop and use Campus Improvement Plans (CIPs). All campuses now have a CIP, and teachers develop solutions for curriculum problems using vertical teams.
13	Analyze the costs and benefits of assuming the responsibility of fiscal agent for the special education cooperative to ensure continuity in program quality for WISD and the remaining cooperative members. (p.79)	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	Dripping Springs ISD has assumed the role of fiscal agent for the Hays County Special Education Cooperative, thereby ensuring the continuity of services. The district, however, is continuing to assess the financial feasibility of providing special education services in-

						house.
14	Affiliate with the RESC XIII GT cooperative to obtain additional resources and ongoing staff development for the district's GT program. (p.84)	Complete	(\$5,000)	(\$1,500)	(\$7,500)	After the original TSPR report on WISD was issued, the Region 13 Education Service Center discontinued its gifted and talented cooperative. Keeping with the spirit of the recommendation, the district contracted for gifted and talented training, which addressed the problem using a modified approach.
15	Monitor growth of WISD's student population who have limited English proficiency to determine the threshold at which a formal bilingual program should be established. (p.85)	Complete	\$0	(\$5,360)	(\$5,360)	The district contracted for a detailed demographic study showing enrollment growth will remain fairly flat over the next five years, delaying the need for a formal bilingual program. The district continues to monitor changes through the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS).

16	Hire a districtwide technology specialist to support the district's instructional and administrative technology. (p.89)	Complete	(\$197,750)	(\$18,071)	(\$180,710)	A districtwide technology coordinator was hired in June 1999. The coordinator's efforts have been critical to teacher success in using technology in the classroom. Teachers who have problems receive timely service and assistance, allowing them to apply technology effectively in daily classroom operations.
17	Revise the Student and Athletic Codes of conduct to clearly de- fine the intent of each document and the relationship between the two documents. (p.94)	In Progress	\$0	\$0	\$0	The district appointed a Safety Committee to address districtwide safety issues. The committee is scheduled to deliver its comprehensive report to the board in March 2000, when the codes of conduct should be revised.
18	Develop a structured alternative education program that complies with the provisions of the Texas Education	Complete	\$0	(\$15,000)	(\$30,000)	An Alternative Education Program (AEP) has been developed using American Preparatory Institute

	Code and WISD's Student Code of Conduct. (p.96)					materials (modules covering core subjects from the seventh to twelfth grades). The district used Title VI funds to purchase computers and skills software.
19	Ensure accurate reporting of security violations, and establish critical thresholds at which additional safety and security measures will be needed. (p.100)	In Progress	\$0	(\$25,000)	(\$125,000)	The district hired a PEIMS Coordinator to improve data reporting accuracy. TEA mandates for reporting security incidents, as well as other new reporting requirements, created a need for this position.
20	Establish an SRO program in cooperation with the Hays County Sheriff's Office to enhance safety and security at WISD schools. (p.101)	Rejected	(\$66,000)	\$0	\$0	The board rejected the recommendation in a 4 to 3 vote.
Totals-Chapter 2			(\$294,650)	(\$74,931)	(\$374,470)	
Total All Chapters			\$656,390	\$736,709	\$1,369,670	

Appendix A - Status of Recommendations and Savings

Chapter 3: Administrative Support Services

Rec #	General Recommendation	Implementation Status	TSPR's Projected Five-Year Savings (Costs)	Actual Savings (Costs) To Date	WISD's Projected Five-Year Savings (Costs)	Comments
Chapter 3: Administrative Support Services						
21	Develop a formal budget calendar outlining major tasks, timelines, and responsibilities in the budget development process. (p.110)	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	The district uses a calendar it developed for the annual budget cycle.
22	Develop a formal budget document that is useful as a financial management and operations tool and link budget priorities to a district long-range strategic plan. (p. 112)	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	WISD developed a budget document and the Strategic Planning Committee has developed recommendations for a strategic plan. The district will link the budget to the plan when it is finalized.
23	Invest excess funds in the highest yielding investments possible. (p. 115)	In Progress	\$60, 995	\$8,000	\$43,000	The Lone Star investment pool is currently yielding 0.4 percent more

						interest than the depository bank. Additional interest revenues will range from \$8,600 to \$16,000 annually, depending on market rates.
24	Centralize the accounting and control of student activity funds. (p. 116)	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	Using a modified approach, the district made several changes in how student activity funds are handled, resulting in greater control and accountability. According to the external auditor, no expenditures in excess of budgeted amounts were made as a result of these changes.
25	Establish a district policy to increase tax collections and reduce delinquencies. (p. 120)	Complete	\$491,500	\$112,500	\$562,500	The delinquency rate decreased from 10.5 percent in 1997 to 8.8 percent in 1999. This was accomplished by the collections attorneys taking a more assertive approach to collections.
26	Tag all fixed assets using room location codes to improve inventory	In Progress	\$0	\$0	\$0	All computers and technology equipment are tagged as they

	control and reduce loss. (p. 123)					are received. The district also tags all new items purchased upon receipt. The district continues to tag non-technology items that were purchased prior to the release of the report. No losses have been reported since controls were instituted.
27	Purchase the automated purchase order module and process purchase orders online and through the Internet. (p. 134)	In Progress	(\$5,000)	\$0	\$0	The Danforth campus is conducting a pilot project using the new Skyward purchasing software. In 2001, the district should have all campuses online and will begin using the new software districtwide. WISD is already networked to take advantage of the new software.
28	Develop and implement a written procedures manual for purchasing. (p. 136)	In Progress	\$0	\$0	(\$100,000)	The district plans to hire a central purchasing agent to manage all purchases. Once this position is filled, the agent will complete a purchasing manual reflecting the new

						centralized system and computing function. This position will be included in the 2000-01 budget.
29	Implement all available modules of the automated financial accounting system at the school level. (p. 142)	In Progress	(\$3,000)	(\$3,000)	(\$15,000)	Campuses will be automated in 2000-01, when the Skyward software and network upgrades are installed.
30	Expand the technology committee to include community representatives and modify the technology plan to include responsibilities, implementation timelines, and estimated costs for administrative technology improvements. (p. 144)	In Progress	\$0	\$0	\$0	Business and community members who have been involved in strategic planning, and individuals who are members of campus and district committees, are working with the technology subcommittee. As the technology plan is revised to reflect the focus of the district's strategic plan, many business and community members will be involved in this effort.
31	Solicit both monetary and non-monetary grants from the	Complete	\$287,000	\$671,000	\$1,200,000	WISD received 20 grants for \$671,016 since the June 1998

	surrounding business communities, state and federal grant programs, and other sources. (p. 145)					release of the TSPR report on WISD. The assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Technology writes the majority of the grants, and supervises the overall grant writing and acquisition process. The district applies for additional grants by contracting with a retired grant writer living in Wimberley.
Totals-Chapter 3			\$831,495	\$788,500	\$1,690,500	
Total All Chapters			\$656,390	\$736,709	\$1,369,670	

Appendix A - Status of Recommendations and Savings

Chapter 4: Operations and Pupil Services

Rec #	General Recommendation	Implementation Status	TSPR's Projected Five-Year Savings (Costs)	Actual Savings (Costs) To Date	WISD's Projected Five-Year Savings (Costs)	Comments
Chapter 4: Operations and Pupil Services						
32	Conduct a formal facilities planning process that invites broad community participation and prepare a long-range facilities master plan linked to WISD's strategic plan. (p.157)	In Progress	(\$5,000)	(\$5,360)	(\$5,360)	A demographic study completed in January 1999, at a cost of \$5,360, projected flat enrollment growth over the next five years. The district continues to evaluate the need for renovations of existing facilities and understands a plan for renovations, program changes, repairs and preventive maintenance needs to be developed and linked to the

						annual budget.
33	Determine the extent of ADA compliance deficiencies, assign costs to specific projects, and include a strategy for bringing each facility into compliance. (p. 159)	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	All buildings built after 1985 are in compliance, and any future renovation will be in compliance.
34	Monitor and track the performance of the maintenance contractor. (p.164)	In Progress	\$0	\$0	\$0	The district receives and reviews monthly reports from the maintenance contractor. The maintenance contract is up for renewal in 2000. The district is carefully analyzing the vendor's performance as part of the contract negotiations.
35	Establish performance measures for Food Service operations to improve services while increasing revenues and reducing costs. (p.174)	In Progress	\$112,500	\$0	\$0	The district began tracking average daily participation rates for all breakfasts and lunches by regular, free, and reduced-price meals in

						January 1998.
36	Assess meal and a la carte prices and associated program costs each year. (p.179)	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	Meal prices were reviewed and adjusted in 1998-99. The district will review the external audit report each year to evaluate the prices and make needed adjustments.
37	Increase lunch participation rates by at least 5 percent. (p.183)	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	The district's free meal participation rate increased 28.4 percent between 1998 and 1999. Reduced-price meal participation rates increased 17.7 percent during the same time. District enrollment increased by less than 1 percent during that time.
38	Qualify all eligible students for the free and reduced-price program and process all applications at the central office. (p.184)	Complete	\$55,545	\$26,500	\$132,500	All applications are now processed in the central office. More importantly, campus administrators and staff understand

						how important it is to determine if students qualify for free and reduced-price lunches, in order to maximize federal funds for the district.
39	Continuously monitor student discipline-related incidents on contractor-operated buses to ensure compliance with the terms of the transportation agreement and make incident reports available to the public on a monthly basis. (p.193)	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	Campus administrators compile reports on all discipline matters according to TEA's PEIMS requirements. The district has a tracking system in place and is working on computerizing this process.
40	Monitor and track the performance of the transportation contractor. (p.194)	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	The contractor hired a new transportation director who closely monitors the performance and meets quarterly with the superintendent to discuss performance and transportation issues.

41	As contracts expire or come up for renewal, link performance measures to annual increases in compensation. (p.205)	In Progress	\$0	\$0	\$0	The maintenance, transportation, and food services contracts are at the end of their five-year cycle and are up for renewal. The district is performing a cost-benefit analysis of contractor performance as part of its overall contracting and negotiation process.
Totals-Chapter 4			\$163,045	\$21,140	\$127,140	
Total All Chapters			\$656,390	\$736,709	\$1,369,670	