

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD

Lytle Independent School District

Management and Performance Review

**LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD STAFF
PRISMATIC SERVICES, INC.**

AUGUST 2017

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August 31, 2017

Michelle Carroll Smith
Superintendent
Lytle Independent School District

Dear Ms. Smith:

The attached report reviews the management and performance of Lytle ISD Independent School District's (ISD) educational, financial, and operational functions.

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

Some of the recommendations provided in this report are based on state or federal laws, rules or regulations, and should be promptly addressed. Other recommendations are based on comparisons to state or industry standards, or accepted best practices, and should be reviewed to determine the level of priority, appropriate timeline, and method of implementation.

The Legislative Budget Board engaged Prismatic Services to conduct and produce this review, with LBB staff working in a contract oversight role.

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

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ursula Parks".

Ursula Parks
Director
Legislative Budget Board

/kk

August 31, 2017
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cc: LeeAnna Mask
Nan Boyd
Reagan Wagner
Oscar Jimenez

Maria Frie
Marc Martinez
Mae Flores

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Texas Legislature established the Texas School Performance Review (TSPR) in 1990 to “periodically review the effectiveness and efficiency of the budgets and operations of school districts” (the Texas Government Code, Section 322.016). The Legislative Budget Board’s (LBB) School Performance Review Team conducts comprehensive and targeted reviews of school districts’ and charter schools’ educational, financial, and operational services and programs. The review team produces reports that identify accomplishments, findings, and recommendations based upon the analysis of data and onsite study of each district’s operations. A comprehensive review examines 12 functional areas and recommends ways to cut costs, increase revenues, reduce overhead, streamline operations, and improve the delivery of educational, financial, and operational services. School districts are typically selected for management and performance reviews based on a risk analysis of multiple educational and financial indicators.

To gain an understanding of the school district’s operations prior to conducting the onsite review, the LBB review team requests data from the district and multiple state agencies, including the Texas Education Agency (TEA), the Texas Department of Agriculture, and the Texas School Safety Center. LBB staff may implement other methods for obtaining feedback on district operations, including surveys of parents, community members and district and campus staff. While onsite in the district, the review team gathers information through multiple interviews and focus groups with district and campus administrators, staff, and board members.

Lytle Independent School District (Lytle ISD) is located in Atascosa, Bexar, and Medina counties in Lytle, 25 miles

southwest of San Antonio. The district is served by Regional Education Service Center XX (Region 20), which is located in San Antonio. According to the 2010 census, the city of Lytle had a population of 2,492, an increase of 4.6 percent from the 2000 census. The state legislators for the district are Senator Carlos Uresti and Representatives Ryan Guillen, Andrew Murr, and Philip Cortez.

The district has four instructional campuses, including Lytle High School, Lytle Junior High School, Lytle Elementary School, and Lytle Primary School. During school year 2014–15, enrollment totaled 1,720 students. Of these students, 79.5 percent of students were Hispanic, 18.3 percent were Caucasian, 0.9 percent were African American, 0.5 percent were American Indian, 0.2 percent were Pacific Islander, and 0.5 percent were of two or more races. Of Lytle ISD students, 71.4 percent were identified as economically disadvantaged, which is more than the state average of 58.8 percent, and 52.2 percent were identified as at-risk, slightly more than the state average of 51.2 percent.

EDUCATIONAL OVERVIEW

Lytle ISD has a history of variable academic achievement. In accordance with the state accountability system, TEA rated the district and Lytle High School as Met Standard from school years 2012–13 to 2015–16. However, the junior high school campus was rated Improvement Required for school years 2012–13 and 2014–15, and the elementary school and primary school campus was rated Improvement Required for school years 2013–14 and 2014–15. **Figure 1** shows state accountability ratings for school years 2012–13 to 2015–16 for the district and each campus in the revised system implemented during school year 2012–13 (Met Standard, Improvement Required, or Not Rated).

FIGURE 1
LYTLE ISD STATE ACCOUNTABILITY RATINGS
SCHOOL YEARS 2012–13 TO 2015–16

CAMPUS	2012–13	2013–14	2014–15	2015–16
District	Met Standard	Met Standard	Met Standard	Met Standard
High School	Met Standard	Met Standard	Met Standard	Met Standard
Junior High School	Improvement Required	Met Standard	Improvement Required	Met Standard
Elementary School and Primary School	Met Standard	Improvement Required	Improvement Required	Met Standard

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, Texas Academic Performance Report, school years 2012–13 to 2015–16.

Lytle ISD's academic performance is less than regional and state averages. **Figure 2** shows academic measures comparing Lytle ISD to the average of other school districts in Region 20 and the state.

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

For tax year 2015–16, Lytle ISD's preliminary property wealth per weighted average daily attendance was \$111,606. This amount is less than and, thus, not subject to, the state's primary equalized wealth level (EWL). For property wealth level greater than the EWL of \$514,000, the state recaptures a portion of school districts' local tax revenue to assist in financing public education in other districts. This primary EWL applies to a district's tax rates up to \$1.00 per \$100 of valuation. The state's school finance system has a secondary EWL that applies to certain enrichment tax effort greater than \$1.00.

For school year 2015–16, Lytle ISD's total actual expenditures were approximately \$19.4 million. Lytle ISD's actual operating expenditures per-pupil for school year 2015–16 were \$10,849, compared to the state average of \$9,373. During school year 2015–16, Lytle ISD spent 48.6 percent of total actual operating expenditure on instruction, compared to the state average of 56.7 percent. The instructional expenditures percentage was calculated using the district's actual operating expenditures that funded direct instructional activities. These activities, as categorized by TEA by function, include Function 11 (Instruction), Function 12 (Instructional Resources and Media Sources), Function 13 (Curriculum Development and Instructional Staff Development), and Function 31 (Guidance, Counseling, and Evaluation Services.)

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The LBB's School Performance Review Team identified significant findings and recommendations based upon the analysis of data and onsite review of the district's operations. Some of the recommendations provided in the review are based on state or federal laws, rules or regulations, and should be promptly addressed. Other recommendations are based on comparisons to state or industry standards, or accepted best practices, and should be reviewed by the school district to determine the level of priority, appropriate timeline, and method of implementation.

FINANCIAL INEFFICIENCY

Lytle ISD has adopted deficit budgets for the past four school years, resulting in a significant decrease in its fund balance. Several issues districtwide contribute to this deficit, including: ineffective budgeting, not properly evaluating food service operations, and not fully managing all inventory and assets. The district should better manage its financial assets to avoid depleting its fund balance.

Lytle ISD lacks a long-term budgeting process and does not manage its fund balance. The district prepares a budget for the next fiscal year with no multiyear budget planning or projecting of student enrollment. Additionally, the board passed a resolution setting a goal of 25.0 percent of annual operating expenditures as a minimum fund balance. However, the fund balance has decreased to less than this threshold, and the district continues to adopt deficit budgets. The district could better manage its resources by developing multiyear revenue projections and enforcing its fund balance resolution.

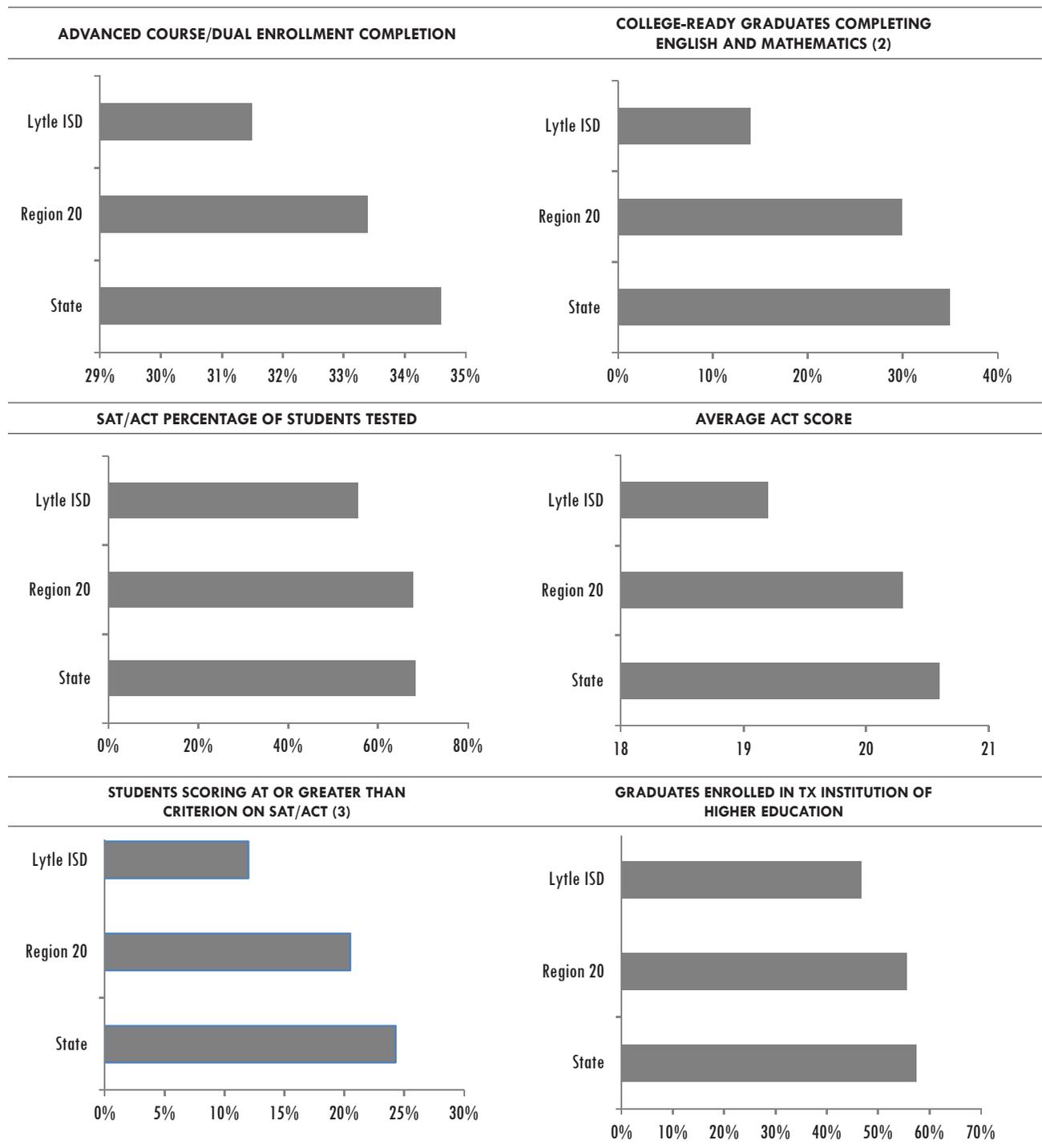
Lytle ISD does not monitor or analyze the monthly revenues and expenditures for food services, either at the department level or by kitchen. Without financial oversight, the Food Services Department operated at a loss during school years 2014–15 and 2015–16, and the expenditures exceeded revenues during school year 2016–17. The district could control costs by developing and analyzing food service revenues and expenditures at the district level and for each kitchen.

The district also does not manage its inventory, and it does not track any of its nontechnology assets valued at less than the \$5,000 capitalization threshold. The Technology Department uses a commercial inventory software program to track technology equipment, but the district does not manage any of its other assets. The district could better manage its assets by tagging and tracking all assets and conducting an annual inventory.

To improve its financial efficiency, the district should:

- develop revenue projections, including student enrollment, as part of the preparation of its annual budget and identify areas to control expenditures;
- enforce the board resolution regarding the General Fund balance and evaluate expanding the resolution to a board policy to prevent depleting the fund balance;

FIGURE 2
LYTLE ISD STUDENT ACADEMIC MEASURES COMPARED TO REGION 20 AND STATE (1)
SCHOOL YEAR 2015–16



NOTES:

- (1) Region 20=Regional Education Service Center XX.
- (2) To be considered college-ready, a graduate must have met or exceeded the college-ready criteria on the Texas Success Initiative Assessment, the SAT or ACT standardized college admissions tests.
- (3) Criterion refers to the scores on the SAT and ACT college admissions tests. For these tests, the criterion scores are at least a composite 24 on the ACT and at least 1110 total on the SAT.

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, Texas Academic Performance Report 2015–16.

- develop monthly reports showing the financial status of the Food Services Department and for each kitchen operation; and
- tag and track all assets, conduct an annual inventory, and note the funding source for each asset.

PROGRAM INEFFICIENCY

The district lacks controls to ensure that its planning, programs, and contracts achieve their stated objectives. Lytle ISD lacks goals and evaluation methods to validate the performance of many of its programs.

The district has a strategic plan; however, the plan lacks measurable objectives and effective monitoring to link it to student success. Lytle ISD has a district improvement plan (DIP) and campus improvements plans (CIP) based on the strategic plan. However, the DIP and CIPs also lack measurable performance objectives or address student achievement. The district could better support student progress by including measurable objectives that link to student performance in its strategic plan.

Lytle ISD lacks a process to evaluate which curriculum and instructional programs to keep, modify, or discontinue. The district operates several instructional programs, but it has no system to evaluate these programs to identify which systems are effective at meeting their stated goals. The district could more effectively manage its instructional programs by developing and implementing a comprehensive instructional program evaluation process.

Lytle ISD also lacks a process for evaluating and monitoring contracted services. The district has no central location for contracts or a single contact to manage the contracts. In addition, the district automatically renews many of the contracts without any formal process for review or evaluation of cost effectiveness and quality of services. The district could improve its contracted services and reduce unnecessary costs by developing a process to monitor and evaluate contracted services.

To improve its program efficiency, the district should:

- include measurable objectives and a process to evaluate student progress in the district's strategic plan;
- develop and implement a comprehensive process to evaluate instructional programs; and

- develop and implement a contract management process with written procedures and practices to identify all district contracts, centrally monitor contract requirements, and evaluate vendor performance.

STAFFING INEFFICIENCY

The district is not using its staff efficiently in several areas.

The district's leadership structure is not optimally organized. The superintendent oversees 14 direct reports, which requires extensive daily management and operations. Additionally, Lytle ISD's administrative reporting structure is fragmented and lacks coordination. The district would develop more cohesive, effective district leadership by realigning its organizational structure.

Lytle ISD lacks a process to ensure that campus staffing decisions are consistent with the district's budget and student enrollment. Principals and department heads determine the need for additional staff and present the request to the superintendent for approval. The district could better manage its staff budget and more effectively meet student needs by using staffing allocation formulas or industry standards to determine the appropriate number of staff.

Lytle ISD does not have a board policy preventing one family member from supervising and evaluating another family member's performance. Several staff in Lytle ISD are related biologically or through marriage, and, in some situations, a family member may directly supervise another family member. State law and board policy address nepotism in hiring, but not in supervising the work of a family member, and the board did not adopt a local policy to address supervision. However, supervising one's relative can be problematic to staff. The district could avoid potential perceptions or accusations of unfairness by adopting a local board policy detailing conditions and procedures when one family member supervises and evaluates another family member.

The district is not efficiently managing its staff in the Food Services Department and the Operations Department's Transportation Division. The Food Services Department does not use industry guidelines for meals per labor hour to determine staff allocation. The department's misaligned staffing level contributes to its operating loss. Similarly, the lack of a cohesive organizational structure in the Transportation Division limits the division's ability to manage its operations in a coordinated manner. More

coherent and cohesive staff management in these departments would result in more effective and efficient delivery of services.

To improve its staffing efficiency, the district should:

- realign the organizational structure for a reasonable span of control that will enable administrators to manage the district more effectively and efficiently;
- use staffing allocation formulas or industry standard guidelines to determine the appropriate number of staff;
- develop a local policy for board approval that details conditions and procedures when one family member supervises and evaluates another family member;
- establish staffing standards based on industry standards for school food service operations; and
- realign the job responsibilities of the transportation manager and operations director so that the transportation manager is the direct supervisor of all transportation staff.

PROCESS INEFFICIENCY

Lytle ISD has established some processes that are inefficient, deplete district resources, and use staff time and effort that could be better used for other tasks.

The district requires the superintendent to review and approve every purchase order and overage, even in amounts of less than \$1.00. The business manager and campus staff or department staff approve purchase requisitions before the staff submit them to the superintendent for final approval. By designating final approval authority for purchase requisitions and overages to the business manager, the district would enable the superintendent to focus time and effort on more critical district functions.

The district does not ensure the security and confidentiality of staff files and records. The district stores documents awaiting filing in unsecure workspaces. The district also maintains former staff's files in unlocked file cabinets, and in a vault that staff that are not part of the Human Resources (HR) Department can access. The district could ensure confidentiality of staff files and personal information by installing locking cabinets and developing procedures to keep files secured.

The Transportation Division is also not maximizing the use of its routing and scheduling software to assist with transportation management. The district is not using much of the functionality of this software, including mapping and routing tools, bus tracking for parents and students, and fleet management capabilities. The district could maximize use of software it has by assigning the transportation manager responsibility for full use of the routing software.

To improve its process efficiency, the district should:

- designate final approval authority for purchase requisitions and for purchase order overages to the business manager;
- install locking cabinets and develop procedures to ensure that all staff records are stored in compliance with board policy; and
- realign the responsibility for the district's routing software to the transportation manager.

KNOWLEDGE INEFFICIENCY

The district lacks assurance that all staff know how to meet expectations, and many areas lack procedures for staff to know what is expected of them.

Lytle ISD lacks a process to ensure that professional development for teachers reflects district goals for student performance and includes adequate technology training. The district does not use professional development to target student assessment data from its tests. As a result, teachers were unsure of how professional development opportunities related to student needs or focused on student performance. Teachers knew they were expected to use technology in the classroom, but they were unaware of specific expectations for its usage. The district could enhance teacher effectiveness by developing a teacher training program that reflects student achievement and provides clear expectations for technology in the classroom.

Lytle ISD lacks a comprehensive plan for managing staff certification or professional development. The district provides in-person and online training to staff, but it does not monitor completion or compliance with training requirements at the district level. The district also does not effectively monitor staff professional certification and credentials. The district could better manage staff training by developing a comprehensive staff file management system that tracks certification and professional development records.

The district lacks written procedures for some key functions. The HR Department does not have documented procedures that describe how staff perform critical HR functions. Transportation staff lack written standard operating procedures for transportation functions. The district also lacks written procedures to ensure that the district’s website provides updated information and complies with state law. The district could ensure staff knowledge and consistency of operations by developing standard operating procedures for staff.

The district could use the Food Services Department as a model for improving other departments. The district effectively manages staff knowledge in the department. Although federal law requires school cafeteria staff to attend training, school districts are not required to provide training for staff to meet the requirement. Some districts place the burden of meeting the requirements on staff. However, Lytle ISD provides the classes to meet the requirements, covers training expenses for staff, and teaches the skills to receive training in various formats.

To improve its knowledge efficiency, the district should:

- develop a process to ensure staff development opportunities and ensure that all professional training is based on assessed teacher and student need and aligns with strategic academic goals;
- adopt clear expectations and ensure training for teachers on the software and devices that the district uses;
- develop a comprehensive staff file management system that tracks certification and professional development records;
- develop and implement written procedures and regulations to guide HR functions;

- develop written standard operating procedures for the functions required of transportation staff; and
- develop and implement written procedures to update the district’s website and include required information.

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

Each chapter concludes with a fiscal chart listing the chapter’s recommendations and associated savings or costs from school years 2017–18 to 2021–22. The following figure summarizes the fiscal impact of all 44 recommendations in the performance review.

FISCAL IMPACT

	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) OR SAVINGS	ONETIME (COSTS) OR SAVINGS
Gross Savings	\$45,999	\$45,999	\$45,999	\$45,999	\$45,999	\$229,995	\$4,000
Gross Costs	(\$45,385)	(\$45,460)	(\$45,385)	(\$45,460)	(\$45,385)	(\$227,075)	(\$16,564)
Total	\$614	\$539	\$614	\$539	\$614	\$2,920	(\$12,564)

CHAPTER 1. DISTRICT LEADERSHIP, ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

An independent school district’s governance structure, staff management, and planning process provide the foundation for effective and efficient education of students. An elected seven-member board of trustees (board) governs each school district in Texas. The board focuses on decision making, planning, and providing resources for achieving goals. The board sets goals, objectives, and policies and approves plans and funding necessary for school district operations. The superintendent is responsible for implementing policy, managing district operations, recommending staffing levels, and allocating the resources to implement district priorities. The board and superintendent collaborate as a leadership team to meet district stakeholder needs.

Lytle Independent School District (ISD) is located in Lytle, Texas, approximately 20 miles southwest of San Antonio, in three different counties: Atascosa, Bexar and Medina. Residents founded the area in 1882 and Lytle became an incorporated city in 1951.

In school year 2015–16, Lytle served 1,672 students across five campuses: one primary school, one elementary school, one junior high school, one high school, and one Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP). The student population is 79.5 percent Hispanic, 18.3 percent White, 0.5 percent American Indian, 0.2 percent Pacific Islander, and 0.5 percent two or more ethnicities. Based on the school year 2014–15 Texas Academic Performance Report, economically disadvantaged students comprise 71.4 percent of the student population, which is above the state average of 58.8 percent. English Language Learners comprise

8.5 percent of the student population compared to the state average of 18.2 percent. Based on state criteria, Lytle ISD has approximately 52.2 percent students defined as at-risk, compared to the state average of 51.2 percent.

The Lytle ISD Board of Trustees, as the policy making body authorized by law to govern the district, is responsible for the following duties:

- adopting goals and objectives for the district;
- reviewing and acting on policies;
- adopting an annual budget and setting the tax rate; and
- approving school staff as recommended by the superintendent.

The board consists of seven members elected through seven single-member districts, each serving staggered three-year terms. Elections for board members occur each May, in conjunction with city elections. **Figure 1–1** shows the members of the Lytle ISD’s board.

Pursuant to the Texas Open Meetings Act, the district conducts monthly public board meetings facilitated by the board president. The district posts public notification of board meetings in the display outside of the district’s office and on the district’s website. The board addresses staff matters and other confidential topics in the closed sessions as needed. The board secretary records the meeting minutes, which the board then approves at the next board meeting.

**FIGURE 1–1
LYTLE ISD BOARD OF TRUSTEES
SCHOOL YEAR 2016–17**

NAME	TITLE	TERM STARTED	TERM EXPIRATION	YEARS OF SERVICE
LeeAnna Mask	President	May 2014	May 2017	1.5 years
Nan Boyd	Vice-President	May 2015	May 2018	7 years
Reagan Wagner	Secretary	May 2016	May 2019	6 months
Mae Flores	Member	May 2016	May 2019	6 months
Oscar Jimenez	Member	May 2016	May 2019	6 months
Marc Martinez	Member	May 2015	May 2018	6 months
Jeanie Sanders	Member	May 2014	May 2017	11 years

NOTE (1): Since the onsite review, board member Maria Frie replaced board member Jeanie Sanders.
SOURCE: Lytle ISD, November 2016.

FINDINGS

- ◆ The district lacks a strategic planning process that includes measurable objectives that are monitored for improved accountability and student achievement.
- ◆ The board does not use measurable goals to evaluate the superintendent's performance.
- ◆ The district's leadership structure is not optimally organized.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ◆ **Recommendation 1: Include measurable objectives and a process to evaluate student progress in the district's strategic plan.**
- ◆ **Recommendation 2: Develop and implement a superintendent evaluation system that includes measurable objectives and is aligned with board goals.**

- ◆ **Recommendation 3: Realign the organizational structure for a reasonable span of control that will enable administrators to manage the district more effectively and efficiently.**

DETAILED FINDINGS

STRATEGIC PLANNING (REC. 1)

The district lacks a strategic planning process that includes measurable objectives that are monitored for improved accountability and student achievement.

The district developed its current strategic plan in school year 2013–14, which includes district goals through school year 2018–19. The district contracted with a consultant to develop the strategic plan with community and staff input. The strategic plan includes seven goals and eight learner outcomes, shown in **Figure 1–2**.

**FIGURE 1–2
LYTLE ISD STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS AND LEARNER OUTCOMES
SCHOOL YEAR 2016–17**

GOALS:

1. We will evolve organizational structures to be more supportive of holistic learning to meet the needs of a new generation of learners.
2. We will develop instructional systems to assist all stakeholders in creating rigorous learning experiences that provide opportunities to excel.
3. We will offer multiple types of assessments to monitor, measure, and evaluate learner progress.
4. We will build relationships with families, civic and business partners and advocate policy to our state government in order to advocate educational transformation.
5. We will provide open channels of communication that provides all stakeholders accurate information.
6. We will remain committed to an ever-changing digital learning environment that supports technological skills for all stakeholders.
7. We will design a system of accountability to monitor and assess the effectiveness of curriculum and instruction, programs and district goals.

LEARNER OUTCOMES:

1. Learners will gain skills and values to be college and career ready.
2. Learners will achieve individual goals within a personal success plan.
3. Learners will demonstrate self-confidence through creative expression and persistence in achieving his/her goals.
4. Learners will effectively use oral, written, and technological communication skills.
5. Learners will develop the ability to adapt to the challenges they may encounter beyond our community.
6. Learners will demonstrate the ability to handle life changes and challenges.
7. Learners will become productive citizens within his/her chosen community.
8. Learners will apply critical thinking and creative skills in order to solve problems in everyday life.

SOURCE: Lytle ISD, November 2016.

The district prepared a District Improvement Plan (DIP) and each campus prepared a Campus Improvement Plan (CIP) for school year 2016–17, based on the district’s strategic plan from school year 2013–14. The district developed the strategic plan and sent it to the campuses, which then developed the CIPs based on the goals of the strategic plan. Each campus has seven goals in its CIP that are identical to the seven goals from the strategic plan and the DIP. In addition, each CIP has between 50 and 89 action items outlined under the seven goals. Staff reported in interviews that each campus develops its budget separate from planning its CIP. Campuses submit proposed budgets to the superintendent who reviews them and approves a final budget based on the availability of funding. There is not a process for the district to align the budget process to goals included in the DIP and CIPs.

The DIP and CIPs do not contain measurable goals and objectives, including academic achievement goals or objectives. For example, action items in the DIP include goals such as “support teachers with resources and manpower with technology integration in their day to day instruction” and “Actively solicit feedback from campus staff on inhibitors to achieving transformational targets,” but no measurable targets for student achievement. In interviews, the superintendent acknowledged that the goals in the CIPs and the DIP are difficult to measure because the goals do not align to student achievement. Each campus identified student achievement as a need in their comprehensive needs assessment in the CIPs, and three of the four campuses received an accountability rating of needs improvement. However, as shown in **Figure 1–2**, none of the seven goals in the DIP address student achievement, and none of the eight learner outcomes include measurable goals for students.

District staff present the progress of the strategic plan to the board two to three times a year. However, staff reported that the presentations primarily focus on various student activities and community involvement activities as the evidence for progress. District staff, including the superintendent and the board members, reported that the district does not have any measures in place to determine if the district is achieving its goals. District staff also acknowledged that the goals are not measurable and therefore it has been difficult to ascertain progress for each of the seven goals.

The outcomes and goals in the strategic plan do not include academic achievement. Each board member interviewed acknowledged that the strategic plan did not address student achievement. The superintendent stated that none of the

goals focus on test scores because 70 percent of the students are categorized as economically disadvantaged and she stated this would “rob them of a true education.” Board members also reported that the district purposefully developed the strategic plan without achievement goals because they did not want to focus on test results as an indicator for student achievement. Without measurable goals to evaluate student achievement, there is no means to ensure that the district is meeting its strategic goals for academic progress. District staff and board members were not able to articulate the progress towards the goals.

A comprehensive strategic plan allows districts to set priorities, focus resources, and ensure that all staff and other stakeholders are working toward shared goals. Districts are then able to set goals for all functional areas and monitor progress, which leads to greater accountability and more efficient and effective operations. A strategic plan includes measurable goals and objectives, performance measures for each goal and objective, specific timeline, and detailed actions/strategies. In addition, the strategic plan allows the superintendent and the board to operate from a shared vision with a set of performance expectations that will help the board allocating resources. **Figure 1–3** shows a sample strategic planning process, including steps to identify performance measures, track them, and evaluate learner outcomes based on this data.

The district should include measurable objectives and a process to evaluate student progress in the district’s strategic plan.

The district should organize work sessions with the board and superintendent that focus on developing measurable performance measures to track student progress. The strategic planning process should include both internal and external stakeholders for citizen-driven input. This process should include establishing priorities based on student achievement, the district’s mission, and stated goals, and evaluating progress on the strategic plan based on stated performance measures.

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

SUPERINTENDENT EVALUATION (REC. 2)

The board does not use measurable goals to evaluate the superintendent’s performance.

The board evaluates the superintendent based on 14 goal areas. Six of the goal areas, labeled “Superintendent Priority/

FIGURE 1–3
SAMPLE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

Vision Setting – The board, superintendent, and key stakeholders engage in a vision setting process to determine what characteristics the district would have if operated at the most optimal level.

Mission and Goals – The board, superintendent, and key stakeholders align the district’s mission and associate goals that, if accomplished, will bring the district closer to fulfilling its vision.

Setting Priorities – The board prioritizes the district’s most important goals to serve as the basis of the strategic plan.

Identifying Barriers – The board, superintendent, and leadership team use data to identify the key barriers to accomplishing the goals.

Identifying Resources – The administration links the budgeting process to the planning process to ensure that the budget allocation reflects the district’s goals and priorities.

Strategy – The superintendent, administration, and key stakeholders, including parents, business leaders, civic organizations, and community groups, develop strategies to accomplish the goals by addressing the identified barriers, creating timelines for completion, assigning accountability, identifying performance measures, and allocating resources.

Consensus Building, Review, and Approval – The board, superintendent, and stakeholders build consensus, review the plan for viability, and approve the final document.

Implementation and Monitoring – Persons or departments with assigned accountability enact the plan strategies while monitoring progress against performance measures and use of allocated funds.

Evaluation – The district evaluates the success of the plan, including which performance measures were met, what goals were fulfilled or what obstacles prevented success. The superintendent presents findings to the board.

SOURCE: Legislative Budget Board, School Review Team, November 2016.

Campus Performance Objectives,” match six of the district’s seven goals in the strategic plan developed in school year 2013–14. The six goals do not include clearly defined measures of success, which the superintendent and members of the board acknowledged. Staff reported in interviews that the board and superintendent intentionally excluded academic measures from the superintendent’s evaluation. Additionally, the board did not include Goal 3 from the district’s strategic plan, “we will offer multiple types of assessments to monitor, measure, and evaluate learner progress,” in the superintendent’s goal areas for evaluation. **Figure 1–4** shows Lytle ISD’s criteria for evaluating the superintendent.

In its 2016 evaluation, the board rated the superintendent’s performance for designing a system of accountability to monitor and assess effectiveness (Goal 6) as needing improvement. The superintendent’s 2016 evaluation did not include measures from the district’s annual performance report. The performance report is provided by the state accountability system. Because the superintendent has not adequately developed a system to monitor and assess academic progress, and the board does not consider the district’s annual performance report in its evaluation of the superintendent, the district has no system to hold the

superintendent accountable for student performance. In addition, the superintendent’s 2016 evaluation was incomplete as it lacked signatures and accountability worksheets.

Additionally, the superintendent’s evaluation lacked feedback from the board on goals where performance did not meet expectations. The rating categories on the superintendent’s evaluation form are exceptional, proficient, and needs improvement. Based on the evaluation instrument, if an area receives a needs improvement rating, a comment must accompany the rating indicating failure to meet expected performance. Although required according to the form instructions, the evaluations lacked board member comments.

Without an evaluation process with measurable performance objectives, the board cannot effectively evaluate superintendent performance and is missing an opportunity to establish shared direction and focus with the superintendent. In addition, the lack of measurable goals and a clearly defined evaluation process negatively affects the board’s ability to hold the superintendent accountable for improving results that could influence student performance. For school year 2014–15, Lytle ISD’s percentage of students at Satisfactory or above for STAAR at

FIGURE 1–4
LYTLE ISD SUPERINTENDENT EVALUATION CRITERIA
SCHOOL YEAR 2015–16

SUPERINTENDENT PRIORITY/CAMPUS PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES

1. We will evolve organizational structures to be more supportive of holistic learning to meet the needs of a new generation of learners.
2. We will develop instructional systems to assist all stakeholders in creating rigorous learning experiences that provide opportunities to excel.
3. We will build relationships with families, civic and business partners and advocate policy to our state government in order to advocate educational transformation.
4. We will provide open channels of communication that provides all stakeholders accurate information.
5. We will remain committed to an ever-changing digital learning environment that supports technological skills for all stakeholders.
6. We will design a system of accountability to monitor and assess the effectiveness of curriculum and instruction, programs and district goals.

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

- A. The superintendent manages an assessment and improvement system for student learning in the major academic subjects that results in the ongoing improvement in student achievement.
- B. The superintendent oversees a program of student services.
- C. The superintendent oversees a program of staff development designed to improve district performance.

DISTRICT MANAGEMENT

- A. The superintendent maintains a management system designed to produce ongoing efficiencies in major district operations, including transportation, food services, and building maintenance and operations.
- B. The superintendent manages a budget development, implementation, and monitoring process that reflects sound business and fiscal practices and that supports district goals.
- C. The superintendent oversees a comprehensive human resources program (recruitment, retention, staffing organization, compensation and benefits, staff recognition and support), tied to defined goals and targets developed by administration for board review.

BOARD AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS

- A. The superintendent maintains a positive and productive working relationship with the board of trustees.
- B. The superintendent maintains a positive and productive working relationship with the community.

SOURCE: Lytle ISD, November 2016.

phase-in was 59.0 percent, compared to the state average of 77.0 percent. Additionally, TEA rated three of Lytle ISD's five campuses as Improvement Required. Using measurable performance objectives such as students' performance in superintendent evaluations keeps superintendents accountable for students' academic success.

The Texas Education Code, Section 39.054, requires the results of the district's annual performance report from the state accountability system to be a primary consideration in the board's evaluation of the superintendent. Although Lytle ISD was rated "met standard," the district's current process for the evaluation of the superintendent does not include any academic goals or measurable objectives. The superintendent's

contract does not identify the types of performance measures or performance objectives. However, the superintendent's contract states that the evaluation format and procedures will be in accordance with state and federal law. The district's failure to use measurable goals, objectives, and academic achievement to evaluate the superintendent may not be consistent with the Texas Education Code.

The National Association of School Boards describes in its July 2014 report, *A Case for Improving Superintendent Evaluation*, how superintendents and boards play key roles in the performance and outcomes of school systems. Fair, valid, and objective-driven evaluation of a superintendent's performance is critical to the work of the superintendent and

the district. Without an effective performance-based evaluation process for the superintendent, it is difficult to align and focus the board and superintendent leadership for significant improvement of the district.

The Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) provides direction to boards in developing effective superintendent evaluation processes with measurable performance goals. TASB provides a framework for connecting the superintendent's performance goals with those of the board. TASB offers examples on its website for how to make these connections. TASB also states that goals should contain criteria for what will demonstrate successful performance on the goal.

The sample procedures document provided by TASB references the use of performance goals at several points in the evaluation process. TASB suggests that the board identify the performance goal areas at the conclusion of the evaluation, and develop specific performance goals within a month after the summative evaluation. At a posted meeting within six weeks after the summative, TASB recommends that the board and superintendent meet to discuss the goals and set the target results for the next summative evaluation. With this approach, the reviewing and setting of performance goals is an integral part of the superintendent's evaluation.

Lytle ISD should develop and implement a superintendent evaluation system that includes measurable objectives and is aligned with board goals.

The board and superintendent should first establish measurable goals. The goals must have clearly defined measures of progress that align to the stated goal. For example, the annual student performance goals should be determined based on the results of the annual performance report. Based on the Texas Education Code, Section 39.054, the board must consider the results of the annual performance in its evaluation of the superintendent. The Texas Commissioner of Education provides a worksheet form to assist in this process, which is available on the TASB website.

The board should use superintendent appraisal worksheets or adopt an alternate method for considering student performance data. The board and superintendent should align the measures to one of the performance categories or establish a district goal to match the student performance measures. The board and superintendent should complete the same process for each goal area for which the board evaluates the superintendent to ensure that the district uses

measurable performance indicators for the superintendent evaluation.

Once the board and superintendent have identified goals, they should develop criteria for determining successful performance. This step should also include how to collect the data to ensure validity and reliability. The board and superintendent should collaborate to develop detailed procedures for the evaluation system. Finally, the board should review the appraisal form developed and the procedures to ensure alignment to both state and district requirements.

Once the superintendent evaluation system is clearly defined with measurable goals and detailed procedures, the board should submit the evaluation system to legal counsel for review. The board should then revise district operating procedures and the superintendent's contract to reflect these changes.

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE (REC. 3)

The district's leadership structure is not optimally organized.

The organization chart used by the district does not accurately reflect current operation. In addition, the superintendent oversees 14 direct reports, which requires extensive daily management and operations, leaving limited time for leadership development, planning, and performance management.

According to Lytle ISD's board operating procedures, Lytle ISD's superintendent performs the following essential tasks:

- accepts administrative responsibility and leadership for the planning, operation, supervision, and evaluation of the education programs, services, and facilities of the district;
- accepts authority and responsibility for the assignment and evaluation of staff and makes recommendations for employment and termination of staff;
- prepares and submits to the board a proposed budget;
- recommends policies to be adopted by the board and develops administrative regulations to implement those policies; and
- provides leadership for maximizing student performance.

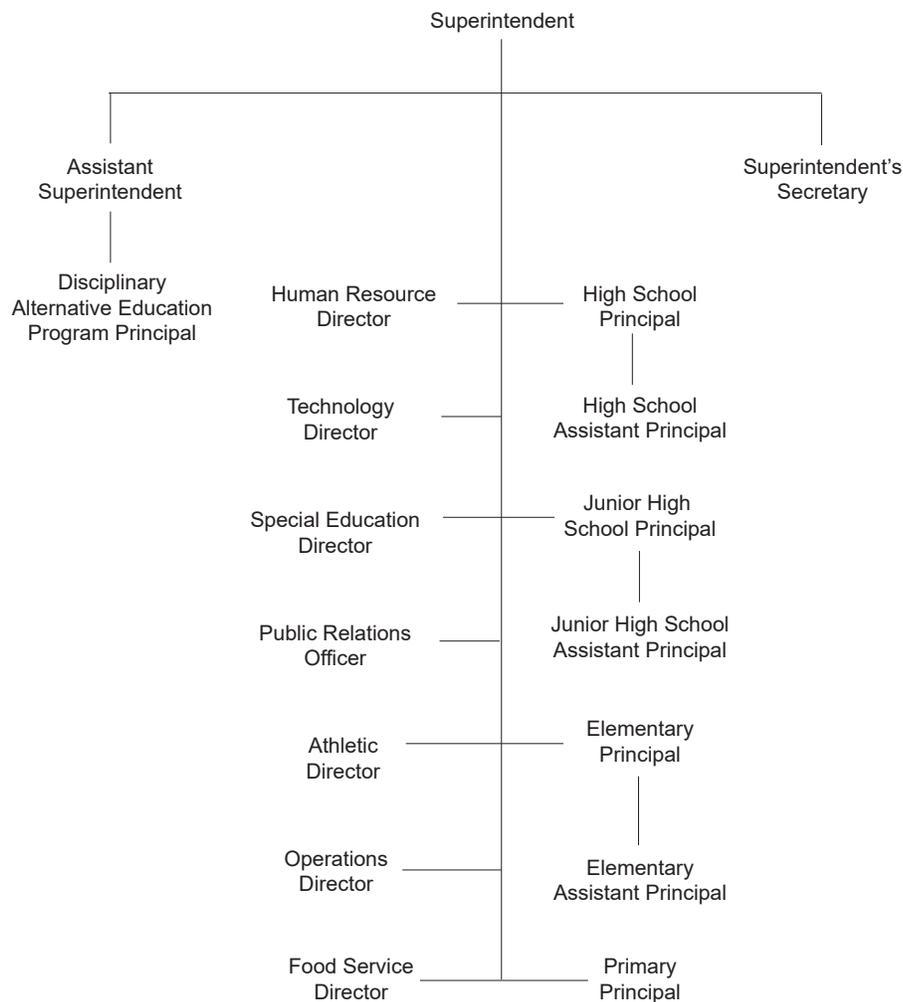
The superintendent supervises and evaluates 14 direct reports. These reports include four principals, an assistant superintendent, the human resources (HR) director, the director of technology, the special education director, the public relations officer, the athletic director, the food services director, the operations director, the business manager, and the superintendent’s secretary. This structure requires the superintendent to oversee multiple functional areas, including educational service delivery, technology, HR, athletics, food services, and public relations. **Figure 1–5** shows the administrative organization of the district.

However, this organization chart does not accurately reflect the actual reporting structure in the district. Principals said that both the superintendent and the assistant superintendent

supervised them, which the organizational chart does not reflect.

Additionally, Lytle ISD’s reporting structure is fragmented and lacks coordination. Multiple staff are responsible for various aspects of the instructional functions. Campus principals and department heads independently report to the superintendent, regardless of oversight of specific functions. For example, department heads and campus learning leaders who develop and review curriculum maps report directly to the superintendent—despite the assistant superintendent being responsible for curriculum, instruction, and assessments. This organizational structure lacks coordination and leads to fragmented decision making.

**FIGURE 1–5
LYTLE ISD DISTRICT ORGANIZATION
SCHOOL YEAR 2016–17**



SOURCE: Lytle ISD, October 2016.

As another example, the HR director performs many curriculum and instruction duties in addition to HR. These duties include overseeing Capturing Kids' Hearts and English as Second Language (ESL), as well as working with counselors. The special education director is also responsible for a variety of curriculum, instruction, and assessment related duties. With a fragmented organizational structure, the district risks having uncoordinated decision making.

Effective districts divide the responsibilities and reporting structure between two to three assistant superintendents to provide a clear organization for each function and allow for coordinated efforts with one point of oversight. Effective districts separate functional areas for reporting purposes and coordination efforts such as: Curriculum/Support Services, HR/Student Services, Business Services, Technology and Support Operations/Special Programs Services. For example, Poteet ISD's organization divides functions between an assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction and an executive director of business and operations with numerous other director positions that are specific for each position.

Although the span of control and the number of direct reports vary from one organization to another, most executives' direct supervision is limited to six to eight direct reports. By instituting an effective span of control and a functional organizational reporting structure, a superintendent is able to focus on major tasks such as leadership development, strategic planning, and other strategic initiatives that affect the performance of the district.

The district should realign the organizational structure for a reasonable span of control that will enable administrators to manage the district more effectively and efficiently.

Lyle ISD should modify the district's organizational structure to align instructional, financial, and operational functions to reduce the superintendent's span of control. The district should reorganize the administrative organizational reporting structure to align all staff under functional areas for collaborative and comprehensive decision making. This reorganization would reduce fragmentation and make operations more efficient and effective.

The district should realign the job duties and reporting structure for curriculum and business management. The district should revise the position title of the assistant superintendent to the assistant superintendent of curriculum, instruction, and assessment, and create a new position of

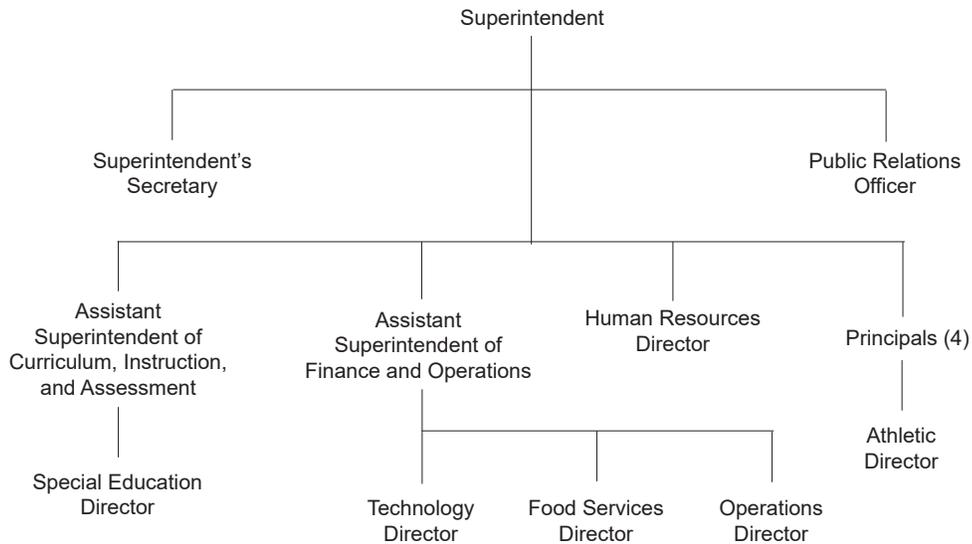
assistant superintendent of finance and operations. The district should eliminate the business manager position.

In addition, the special education director and the director of federal programs, special programs, and testing should report to the assistant superintendent of curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The operations director, technology director, and food services director should report directly to the assistant superintendent of finance and operations.

The assistant superintendent of finance and operations should oversee all financial functions including the district budget, payroll, accounting, purchasing, food services, transportation, maintenance and custodial services, facilities and construction, fixed assets, and technology. The public relations director, the HR director, and the four principals should continue to report to the superintendent. However, the athletic director should report to the high school principal. **Figure 1-6** shows the recommended organization.

This fiscal impact assumes the district will eliminate the business manager position and create the assistant superintendent of finance and operations position. The fiscal impact assumes the new position would receive the same salary and benefits as the current assistant superintendent, which totals \$91,559. By eliminating the business manager position, the district would save \$46,903 in salary and benefits, for an annual cost of \$44,656 (\$91,559-\$46,903).

**FIGURE 1–6
RECOMMENDED LYTLE ISD ORGANIZATION**



SOURCE: Legislative Budget Board, School Review Team, November 2016.

FISCAL IMPACT

Some of the recommendations provided in this report are based on state or federal laws, rules or regulations, and should be promptly addressed. Other recommendations are based on comparisons to state or industry standards, or accepted best practices, and should be reviewed to determine the level of priority, appropriate timeline, and method of implementation.

RECOMMENDATION	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) OR SAVINGS	ONETIME (COSTS) OR SAVINGS
CHAPTER 1. DISTRICT LEADERSHIP, ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT							
1. Include measurable objectives and a process to evaluate student progress in the district's strategic plan.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
2. Develop and implement a superintendent evaluation system that includes measurable objectives and is aligned with board goals.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
3. Realign the organizational structure for a reasonable span of control that will enable administrators to manage the district more effectively and efficiently.	(\$44,656)	(\$44,656)	(\$44,656)	(\$44,656)	(\$44,656)	(\$223,280)	\$0
TOTAL	(\$44,656)	(\$44,656)	(\$44,656)	(\$44,656)	(\$44,656)	(\$223,280)	\$0

CHAPTER 2. EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

An independent school district's educational service delivery function is responsible for providing instructional services to Texas students based on state standards and assessments. A school district should identify students' educational needs, provide instruction, and measure academic performance. Educational service delivery can encompass a variety of student groups and requires adherence to state and federal regulations related to standards, assessments, and program requirements.

Managing educational services is dependent on a district's organizational structure. Larger districts typically have multiple staff dedicated to educational functions, while smaller districts have staff assigned to multiple education-related tasks. Educational service delivery identifies district and campus priorities, establishes high expectations for students, and addresses student behavior. The system should provide instructional support services such as teacher training, technology support, and curriculum resources. To adhere to state and federal requirements, an educational program must evaluate student achievement across all content areas, grade levels, and demographic groups.

Lytle Independent School District (ISD) has five campuses: one primary school, which includes prekindergarten to grade one; one elementary school, which includes grades two to five; one junior high school; one high school; and a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP). Lytle ISD's school year 2015–16 student enrollment was 1,672 students. The student population for school year 2015–16 was 80.0 percent Hispanic, 17.7 percent White, 1.0 percent African American, 0.4 percent American Indian, and 0.9 percent Pacific Islander or two or more races. Additionally, students classified as economically disadvantaged represented 73.3 percent of the total district population, and 9.9 percent of students were identified as English Language Learners.

During school year 2011–12, Texas implemented the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) as the state testing program. Lytle ISD's percentage of students testing at Satisfactory or greater levels for STAAR at phase-in was 59.0 percent for school year 2014–15 and 63.0 percent for school year 2015–16. **Figure 2–1** shows Lytle ISD's STAAR phase-in at satisfactory or greater levels for all grades in comparison to the state average from school years 2014–15 to 2015–16. All Lytle ISD campuses except the high

school increased their scores on the STAAR at phase-in from school years 2014–15 to 2015–16, but all campuses scored less than the state average for both years.

FIGURE 2–1
LYTLE ISD STAAR AT PHASE-IN SATISFACTORY STANDARD
SCHOOL YEARS 2014–15 TO 2015–16

CAMPUS	2014–15		2015–16	
	LYTLE ISD	STATE AVERAGE	LYTLE ISD	STATE AVERAGE
Districtwide	59.0%	77.0%	63.0%	75.0%
High School	72.0%	77.0%	65.0%	75.0%
Junior High School	51.0%	77.0%	59.0%	75.0%
Elementary/ Primary (1)	53.0%	77.0%	66.0%	75.0%

NOTES:

- (1) Lytle Primary School is paired with Lytle Elementary School.
 - (2) Lytle Disciplinary Alternative Education Program student test scores are included within their respective campuses.
- SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, Texas Academic Performance Report, school years 2014–15 to 2015–16.

Figure 2–2 shows Lytle ISD's state accountability ratings from school years 2012–13 to 2015–16. During school year 2014–15, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) rated three of Lytle ISD's five campuses as Improvement Required, including Lytle Junior High, Lytle Elementary, and Lytle Primary schools. TEA has paired the primary and elementary schools for state accountability. As a result, Lytle ISD assembled a campus intervention team that included the assistant superintendent, campus principals, campus learning leader (CLL), campus learning facilitator (CLF), and a professional service provider. The district contracted for a professional service provider to relay information and submit quarterly reports to TEA on the progress of each campus. The team developed a needs assessment and intervention plan based on the data from the state testing results. The team met monthly until TEA rated the elementary and junior high schools as Met Standard for school year 2015–16.

CLLs are master teachers who work with administrators and classroom teachers to improve curriculum and instructional delivery. CLFs are full-time teachers and department heads who support CLLs to implement and follow up with

**FIGURE 2–2
LYTLE ISD STATE ACCOUNTABILITY RATINGS
SCHOOL YEARS 2012 –13 TO 2015 –16**

CAMPUS	2012 –13	2013 –14	2014 –15	2015–16
Districtwide	Met Standard	Met Standard	Met Standard	Met Standard
High	Met Standard	Met Standard	Met Standard	Met Standard
Junior High	Improvement Required	Met Standard	Improvement Required	Met Standard
Elementary/Primary (1)	Met Standard	Improvement Required	Improvement Required	Met Standard
DAEP (2)	Not Rated	Not Rated	Not Rated	Not Rated

NOTES:

(1) Lytle Primary School is paired with Lytle Elementary School.

(2) Lytle Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP) is not rated using the same measures as the other campuses and is listed as not rated.

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, Academic Accountability Ratings, school years 2012–13 to 2015–16.

curriculum, instructional changes, and improvements. Lytle ISD has six CLLs and eight CLFs throughout the district. During school year 2011–12, Lytle ISD implemented the Schlechty Center model to increase student engagement. The Schlechty Center provides background and training for teachers of kindergarten to grade 12 in daily lesson planning. The model provides training for classroom behavioral strategies and techniques. To implement the Schlechty Center model throughout its campuses, Lytle ISD trained some teachers to become CLLs and CLFs. During school year 2011–12, Lytle ISD received a grant from the University of Texas System Teacher Advancement Program. The program’s Teacher Incentive Fund grant (UT–TIF) provides funding for training for CLLs and CLFs. Lytle ISD is one of seven Texas public school districts to receive the UT–TIF grant. The UT–TIF program is a five-year grant for school districts that serve primarily low socioeconomic areas. The grant provides additional compensation and training for teachers based upon their students’ academic growth. School year 2016–17 is the last year of the five-year grant.

Figure 2-3 shows the organizational structure of Lytle ISD’s educational service delivery function. Lytle ISD’s assistant superintendent manages the curriculum across the district.

ACCOMPLISHMENT

- ◆ Lytle ISD’s Special Education Department fosters an engaging relationship between the parents and the district.

FINDINGS

- ◆ Lytle ISD lacks an effective process to assess and evaluate its curriculum for kindergarten to grade 12.

- ◆ Lytle ISD lacks an instructional technology framework to ensure software alignment with Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), age appropriateness, and targeted academic student need.
- ◆ Lytle ISD lacks review and assessment of staff development opportunities to ensure that the district provides teacher training that is based on student performance and is driven by comprehensive, instructional goals for campus academics and long-term strategic planning.

RECOMMENDATIONS

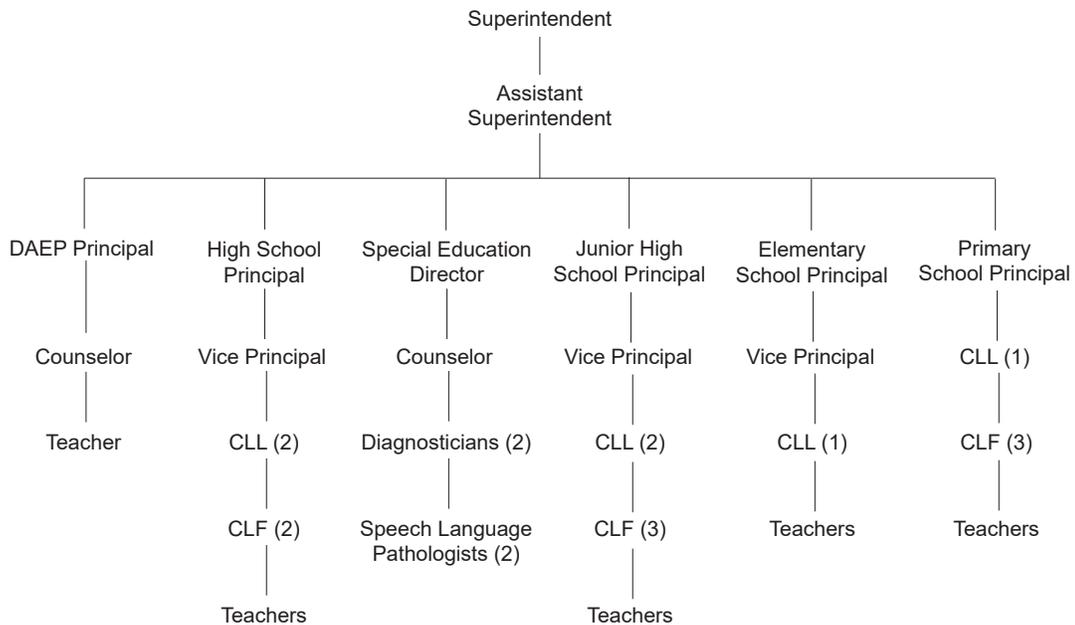
- ◆ **Recommendation 4: Develop and implement a comprehensive process to evaluate instructional programs.**
- ◆ **Recommendation 5: Develop and implement a comprehensive technology framework to ensure that classroom instructional software aligns with assessed student need, supports TEKS, and enhances research-based instructional delivery.**
- ◆ **Recommendation 6: Develop a process to ensure staff development opportunities and ensure that all professional training is based on assessed teacher and student need and aligns with strategic academic goals.**

DETAILED ACCOMPLISHMENT

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Lytle ISD’s Special Education Department fosters an engaging relationship between the parents and the district.

**FIGURE 2-3
LYTLE ISD EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY STAFFING ORGANIZATION
SCHOOL YEAR 2016-17**



NOTE: DAEP=Disciplinary Alternative Education Program; CLL=campus learning leader; CLF=campus learning facilitator.
SOURCES: Legislative Budget Board School Review Team, Lytle ISD, January 2017.

The department developed a parent support group that includes about 20 parents of the 119 students that the Special Education Department serves. The parent support group meets twice each semester. Each school year, the district chooses a different topic to focus on and discuss with the support group. The special education director invites organizations to discuss topics with the parent support group. The Special Education Department fosters a high level of parental involvement, which results in providing extra services to its students. For example, during the onsite review, the special education director, staff, and parents were preparing the elementary cafeteria for the annual holiday dance for the special education students. The event included decorations, music, and food.

DETAILED FINDINGS

CURRICULUM MANAGEMENT (REC. 4)

Lytle ISD lacks an effective process to assess and evaluate its curriculum for kindergarten to grade 12.

Lytle ISD uses the TEKS Resource System (TRS) as its curriculum management system. TRS aligns with the TEKS state standards. Lytle ISD also uses a content-based instructional (CBI) model to serve the language development needs of its students who are

learning English as a second language (ESL). However, each campus manages and paces its own curriculum. During onsite interviews, teachers reported using the TRS curriculum, textbooks, their own curricula, and other supplemental resources. Additionally, elementary teachers develop rubrics to monitor student progress.

In accordance with the Schlechty Center model, CLLs meet with teachers each day in the elementary and high schools in an additional planning period and in the junior high school before or after school hours. The district calls these meetings design time for teachers and CLLs to work together on student performance and to improve instructional delivery strategies. Additionally, CLLs, CLFs, and teachers work in grade-level and content-area teams to review student performance results on state assessments and end-of-instruction or grading-period assessments. During onsite interviews, teachers reported that they adjust flex groups after reviewing student data for remediation and intervention at the campus level.

Lytle ISD reviews core curriculum maps at weeks four and nine during the school year. The district tracks all student data in the Data Management for Assessment and Curriculum (DMAC), a web-based software program. The district uses

DMAC to generate student performance reports and disaggregate student assessment data. The program provides a bank of test items for benchmark and performance assessments. Additionally, the district contracted with a professional development consultant from the Institute for Public School Initiatives at the University of Texas at Austin for school year 2015–16 to assist teachers of grades two to 12.

However, Lytle ISD lacks a formal approach to evaluate these programs and determine which they need to keep, modify, or discontinue. The Legislative Budget Board’s School Performance Review Team conducted interviews with staff during its onsite review. Interview feedback did not indicate that the district routinely manages instructional programs through evaluation measures to show how curriculum programs meet students’ needs. Additionally, district staff were unable to describe the district’s instructional program evaluation process. During the onsite review, staff were unable to articulate specific instructional and curricular approaches that maximize learning for ESL students. Additionally, the district was unable to provide consistent CBI examples, processes, or procedures for how teachers implement content-based and language-based objectives in their daily instruction to ESL students. Furthermore, the district has committed extensive training, time, activities, and resources from district resources and the UT–TIF grant for Schlechty Center training, use of a consultant, and curriculum assessment programs without any program evaluations to determine if these programs contribute to improved and consistent student performance. **Figure 2–4** shows that, during school year 2015–16, Lytle ISD spent \$93,462 for curriculum instructional programs and staff development.

As shown in **Figures 2–1** and **2–2**, Lytle ISD’s academic performance has improved but is still unsatisfactory. During

**FIGURE 2–4
LYTLE ISD CURRICULUM INSTRUCTION EXPENDITURES
SCHOOL YEAR 2015–16**

PROGRAM	AMOUNT
Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills Resource System	\$12,038
Schlechty Center Model training	\$63,000
Data Management for Assessment and Curriculum	\$5,956
Professional Development Consultant	\$12,468
Total	\$93,462

SOURCES: Legislative Budget Board School Performance Review Team; Lytle ISD, December 2016.

school year 2014–15, Lytle ISD’s percentage of students testing at Satisfactory or greater scores for STAAR at phase-in was 59.0 percent, compared to the state average of 77.0 percent. That year, TEA rated three of Lytle ISD’s five campuses as Improvement Required. TEA rated the district as Met Standard for school year 2015–16. However, the lack of ongoing program evaluation has resulted in a lack of understanding within the district of what contributed to or inhibited that progress.

TEA measures school districts using four indices. Index 1 measures student achievement, Index 2 measures student progress, Index 3 measures closing student performance gaps, and Index 4 measures postsecondary readiness. During school years 2014–15 and 2015–16, several Lytle ISD campuses have failed to exceed the state’s target for Index 1 on student achievement. Moreover, the district’s margin of exceeding the state target has decreased. **Figure 2–5** shows the performance of Lytle ISD and its campuses from school years 2012–13 to 2015–16 for Index 1. Only Lytle High School has consistently met the targets set for Index 1. However, the high school exceeded

**FIGURE 2–5
LYTLE ISD STATE ACCOUNTABILITY RATING, INDEX 1, STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT
SCHOOL YEARS 2012–13 TO 2015–16**

CAMPUS	2012–13 (TARGET=50)		2013–14 (TARGET=55)		2014–15 (TARGET=60)		2015–16 (TARGET=60)	
	SCORE	EXCEEDED TARGET						
Districtwide	68	Yes	61	Yes	59	No	63	Yes
High School	72	Yes	69	Yes	72	Yes	65	Yes
Junior High School	61	Yes	58	Yes	51	No	59	No
Elementary and Primary schools	66	Yes	57	Yes	53	No	66	Yes

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, Academic Accountability Reports, school years 2012–13 to 2015–16.

the target by five points during school year 2015–16, compared to a margin of 22 points during school year 2012–13.

The primary reason for conducting program evaluations is to collect data to help district administration make informed decisions about various programs. Knowing the extent to which a program meets its goals helps determine whether to continue the program, modify it, or terminate it. Evaluation is necessary to determine if a program meets the needs of all students and of specific student populations. Without evaluation, the district has no evidence that it is appropriately allocating its education resources. Additionally, without evaluation, the district cannot adequately determine if it has accomplished what it set out to achieve.

Figure 2–6 shows Kerrville ISD’s comprehensive program evaluation model. Kerrville ISD’s district leadership committee identifies three programs a year for in-depth evaluation using this model. After an evaluation is completed, the committee forwards the report and recommendations to the superintendent. The superintendent reviews the report with the principals and respective directors to determine any needed changes in program implementation.

Additionally, the National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance promotes the use of a logic model in conducting instructional program evaluation. A logic model

helps evaluators assess the major components of instructional programs: resources, activities, outputs, and outcomes. Furthermore, the logic model guides evaluators in finding answers to the following questions:

- to what degree are program resources sufficient to implement the program effectively?
- to what degree are the program activities conducted as intended?
- to what degree are the expected program outputs realized? and
- to what degree did the program achieve its short-term, mid-term, and long-term outcomes?

In its publication *Evaluation Matters*, the U.S. Department of Education states, “Evaluation is important so that we can be confident the programs we are using in our schools and classrooms are successful. A common criticism regarding evaluation is that it takes time and resources that could be dedicated to educating students. However, evaluation, done properly, can actually result in better quality practices being delivered more effectively to enhance student learning.”

Lytle ISD should develop and implement a comprehensive process to evaluate instructional programs.

**FIGURE 2–6
KERRVILLE ISD PROGRAM EVALUATION MODEL
SCHOOL YEAR 2001–02**

STEP	ACTIVITIES
1. Select a steering committee and organize	Evaluation leader selects a committee, identifies a resource person, schedules committee meetings and organizes. Establish a deadline for the evaluation report.
2. Describe the program being evaluated	Evaluators describe the program and where and how it has been implemented; state the goal of the program and articulate expected outcomes.
3. Select the focus of the evaluation	Evaluators define the purpose of the evaluation and identify specific concerns about the program that should be investigated.
4. Select the evaluation method	Evaluators select the methodology associated with expected outcomes, define quantitative and qualitative measures, develop a data collection schedule and specify the population from whom data will be collected.
5. Collect data and document results	Evaluators collect data from the target population using the specified data collection instruments.
6. Analyze and interpret the results	Evaluators analyze the data and document results. Evaluators describe program implementation and whether and how it varies from the original plan; evaluators document the data obtained by each evaluation methodology.
7. Prepare report including recommendations	Evaluators prepare a report that shows the degree to which the program met each expected outcome and support their conclusions. The report includes a cost/benefit analysis and a recommendation of whether the program should be continued as is, modified, or discontinued. The report also includes suggestions on how the program’s weaknesses can be remedied and how its strengths can be perpetuated.

SOURCE: Comptroller of Public Accounts, Kerrville ISD School Performance Review, 2002.

Annually, the Lytle ISD assistant superintendent should form an evaluation committee that includes the superintendent, assistant superintendent, department directors, campus principals, CLLs, CLFs, and select teachers to evaluate at least one instructional program in use in the district. The evaluation committee should develop an appropriate program evaluation plan for the district. The committee should establish and monitor metrics to ensure that the district is meeting academic goals and that curriculum programs serve their intended purpose.

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY (REC. 5)

Lytle ISD lacks an instructional technology framework to ensure software alignment with Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), age appropriateness, and targeted academic student need.

Lytle ISD uses instructional networking software for online learning and grading, and a file server for teachers to store lesson plans. The district also trains teachers in using workflow software for online grade books, lesson plans, and posting the course syllabi. However, during onsite interviews, staff reported that district administrators provided informal guidelines to assist them in incorporating technology into their classrooms. Teachers said they received minimal instruction in how they should integrate technology into their curriculum and daily lesson plans. For example, the review team learned that teachers have autonomy in selecting web-based applications for student use in their classrooms. However, no instructional or curricular framework ensures that all technology supports student achievement and aligns closely with TEKS. As a result, during the onsite review, the review team observed students using a mobile phone application to send pictures of classroom work to their parents. This process resulted in lost instructional time because students had to wait in line to take pictures.

Additionally, Lytle ISD administration, teachers, library aides, and the instructional technology staff do not collaborate to structure instruction and curricular support to implement the required instructional TEKS technology. As required in TEKS, grades two, five, and eight are benchmark years wherein students should be able to demonstrate applicable technology proficiencies before exiting those grades. TEKS technology requirements include knowledge and skills, communication and collaboration, digital citizenship, and research and information fluency.

The district cannot ensure that students master the standard curriculum objectives without an accountability process. Using classroom technology enhances the teaching process and helps students to learn the course material and learn how to function in technologically dependent workplaces. A curriculum that incorporates technology in a consistent way improves instructional material and familiarizes students with technology.

The State Board for Educator Certification has developed five standards for teachers:

- use technology-related terms, concepts, data input strategies, and ethical practices to make informed decisions about technologies and their applications;
- identify task requirements, apply search strategies, and use technology to efficiently acquire, analyze, and evaluate electronic information;
- use task-appropriate tools to synthesize knowledge, develop and modify solutions, and evaluate results in a way that supports the work of individuals and groups in problem-solving situations;
- communicate information in different formats and for diverse audiences; and
- know how to plan, organize, deliver, and evaluate instruction for all students to incorporate the effective use of technology for teachers and integrate TEKS into the curriculum.

Arlington ISD offers a scope and sequence for kindergarten to grade eight. The scope and sequence provides teachers with a framework for integrating technology into the daily curriculum by defining when to introduce, practice, master and review skills. Additionally, Arlington ISD offers several technology applications courses at the high school level: pre-Advanced Placement (AP) computer science I, AP computer science A, advanced computer science III, digital design and media production, web design I, and web design II. Successful completion of any of these courses provides students with a technology applications graduation credit.

Lytle ISD should develop and implement a comprehensive technology framework to ensure that classroom instructional software aligns with assessed student need, supports TEKS, and enhances research-based instructional delivery.

The superintendent, assistant superintendent, principals, select teachers, and technicians should develop expectations

for teachers to integrate technology into the curriculum and their weekly lesson plans, incorporating the TEKS expectations for technology. The process should include written guidelines to integrate instructional technology into the curriculum and accountability measures ensured to meet expectations.

The newly developed process should include processes, procedures, and timelines for implementation. The district should also include instructional technology as part of the new teacher orientation.

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT (REC. 6)

Lytle ISD lacks review and assessment of staff development opportunities to ensure that the district provides teacher training that is based on student performance and is driven by comprehensive, instructional goals for campus academics and long-term strategic planning.

The district provides professional development to teachers through the Schlechty Center and with a contracted consultant's work through the Institute for Public School Initiatives from the College of Education at the University of Texas at Austin. However, staff input from interviews indicated no clear understanding for how professional development opportunities were correlated to student needs or focused on student performance. Although 73.3 percent of the district's population is considered economically disadvantaged, staff has minimal understanding of how the district links professional development training to the needs of these students and students at risk.

Professional development opportunities risk a lack of alignment when developed without review of student assessment data from standardized tests, benchmark assessments, checkpoint tests from teacher-developed assessments, or other sources to determine the target student population. Effective districts intend for staff development to address a targeted student need, and districts structure professional development opportunities to help educators address those needs. District planning begins with the determination of what the data suggests about student learning needs.

Seminars and conferences provide information and motivate teachers; however, they are not a sustained and systematic approach to improving teaching practice. Best practices

indicate that successful teacher professional development programs should include the following components:

- choice – Teachers are like students; they need and appreciate choice. Choice within a given framework, centered on student need or the teachers' ability to meet the need, enables teachers to determine their personal professional priorities;
- flexibility – Teachers should be able to make modifications to best add new learning into their classroom environments and to meet students' needs;
- small steps – Learning is incremental. It takes time to change practice, and to be lasting, it must become a part of the teacher's routine. Professional development for teachers enables them to practice, in small steps, how to improve and better serve the cultural, demographic, and academic needs of students; and
- support and accountability – Change in teaching practice is challenging and requires support and accountability. Developing a community approach provides teachers with the opportunity to develop personal action plans, report to the group what happened when implementing new plans, and reflect and receive feedback (support) from colleagues who are working on the same changes in practice.

Lytle ISD should develop a process to ensure staff development opportunities and ensure that all professional training is based on assessed teacher and student need and aligns with strategic academic goals.

The district should base the staff development planning process on student achievement results and the district's long-term academic goals. The assistant superintendent should coordinate efforts with the Human Resources Department to ensure that training opportunities are primarily site-based, aligned with student performance results, and include an assessment of teacher need. At the end of each school year, the district should review student performance data to identify trends, patterns, and achievement gaps. The district should also review its subgroup performance data. The district should use teacher input to determine needs and filter them through the district's long-term goals. The district should also ensure that teacher requests to attend staff development align with district goals.

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

FISCAL IMPACT

Some of the recommendations provided in this report are based on state or federal laws, rules, or regulations, and should be promptly addressed. Other recommendations are based on comparisons to state or industry standards, or accepted best practices, and should be reviewed to determine the level of priority, appropriate timeline, and method of implementation.

RECOMMENDATION	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	TOTAL 5-YEAR	ONETIME (COSTS)
						(COSTS) OR SAVINGS	OR SAVINGS
CHAPTER 2. EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY							
4. Develop and implement a comprehensive process to evaluate instructional programs.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
5. Develop and implement a comprehensive technology framework to ensure that classroom instructional software aligns with assessed student need, supports TEKS, and enhances research-based instructional delivery.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
6. Develop a process to ensure staff development opportunities and ensure that all professional training is based on assessed teacher and student need and aligns with strategic academic goals.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
TOTAL	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

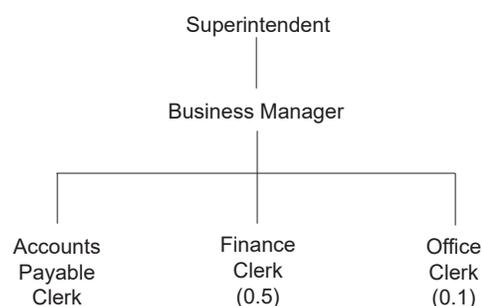
CHAPTER 3. BUSINESS SERVICES

An independent school district's financial management function administers a district's financial resources and plans for its priorities. Administration may include budget preparation, accounting and payroll, administrative technology, and auditing. Planning may include aligning a district's budget with its district and campus priorities, allocating resources, and developing a schedule with milestones.

Financial management is dependent on a district's organizational structure. Larger districts typically have staff dedicated to financial functions, and smaller districts have staff with multiple responsibilities. Budget preparation and administration are critical to overall district operations. Financial management includes budget development and adoption, oversight of expenditure of funds, and involvement of campus and community stakeholders in the budget process. Managing accounting and payroll includes developing internal controls and safeguards, reporting of account balances, and scheduling disbursements to maximize funds. Management of this area includes segregation of duties, use of school administration software systems, and providing staff training. State law requires all school districts to have an external auditor review the district's compliance with established standards and practices. The audit provides an annual financial and compliance report, an examination of the expenditure of federal funds, and a report to management on internal accounting controls.

Figure 3–1 shows the financial management organization for Lytle Independent School District (ISD). The business manager directs and manages the operation of all financial and business affairs of the district. The business manager's duties include accounting, purchasing, risk management, and serving as the chief financial adviser to the superintendent and the Board of Trustees. The business manager supervises a full-time accounts payable clerk, a finance clerk who works part-time in the Finance Department and part-time in the Human Resources Department, and an office clerk who works approximately four hours per week. The accounts payable clerk maintains accounting records and processes accounts payable, and the office clerk performs accounting and budget data entry.

FIGURE 3–1
LYTLE ISD FINANCE DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION
SCHOOL YEAR 2016–17



NOTE: The finance clerk position is a 0.5 full-time-equivalent (FTE) position; the office clerk position is a 0.1 FTE position.
SOURCES: Legislative Budget Board School Performance Review Team; Lytle ISD, December 2016.

The Finance Department performs all accounting functions for the district. The Human Resources Department generates and reviews the district payroll. After the superintendent approves the payroll, the business manager transfers the amount needed into the payroll account. According to onsite interviews, the payroll process incorporates segregation of duties among three staff for internal control.

Lytle ISD uses the Texas Enterprise Information System (TxEIS) as its financial management software and receives support from the Regional Education Service Center XX (Region 20). Campus and department staff report that the system is easy to use, and that campuses and departments can generate budget and expenditure reports as needed. The administration provides summary reports to the board at each monthly board meeting.

Lytle ISD's fiscal year begins on July 1 of each year. The budget process begins each spring when the superintendent, human resources (HR) director, and business manager meet to discuss the number of district staff. These administrators then request budgets from campuses and departments for the upcoming budget year. Campus and department staff submit requests to the superintendent and the Finance Department, and the Lytle ISD Board of Trustees must adopt the budget by the end of June.

Lytle ISD receives its local revenues primarily from property taxes. The school district is located in Atascosa and Medina counties. The Atascosa County Tax Office collects school district taxes from both counties, and an outside firm collects delinquent property taxes. Lytle ISD’s 2014–15 tax rate is \$1.42, including \$1.17 for maintenance and operations and \$0.25 for debt service.

Figure 3–2 shows expenditure percentages by category from the general revenue fund for Lytle ISD and peer districts for school year 2015–16. Peer districts are districts similar to Lytle ISD used for comparison purposes for this review. Lytle ISD is comparable to the average for the peer groups in all categories of expenditure. Lytle ISD is second highest in the peer group in the Instructional and School Leadership category. Expenditures have exceeded revenues at Lytle ISD since school year 2013–14. As a result, the district’s General Fund balance is decreasing.

School districts in Texas receive two different financial accountability ratings, including the Financial Integrity Rating System for Texas (FIRST) and Smart Score. FIRST is Texas’ school financial accountability rating system, which is intended to hold public schools accountable for the quality of their financial management practices, and for the improvement of those practices. The intention of FIRST ratings is to encourage Texas school districts to provide the maximum allocation possible for direct instructional purposes. The Smart Score rating is compiled at Texas A&M University for the organization Texans for Positive Economic Policy. The rating measures academic progress and spending

at Texas’ school districts and campuses. The Smart Score ratings range from the lowest one star to the highest five stars, indicating a district’s success in combining cost-effective spending with the achievement of measurable student academic progress. Smart Score lists academic and spending ratings as low, average, or high. The district and campus Smart Score calculations use three-year averages to project more stable and consistent measures with less year-to-year volatility. The 2016 Smart Score rating results use data from school years 2012–13 to 2014–15.

Figure 3–3 shows Lytle ISD’s FIRST and Smart Score ratings compared to ratings for peer districts. For the FIRST rating, Lytle ISD and three of the peer districts scored A/Superior for school year 2014–15. Lytle ISD has scored A/Superior for each of the last five years, except school year 2014–15, when the top rating for FIRST was Pass. Lytle ISD received a 1.5 Smart Score, with an academic performance rating of very low academic progress and a spending rating of high. Lytle ISD’s Smart Score rating is less than average for the peer group.

An independent school district’s asset and risk management function controls costs by ensuring that it is adequately protected against significant losses with the lowest possible insurance premiums. This protection includes the identification of risks and methods to minimize their effects. Risks can include investments, liabilities, capital assets, and insurance.

FIGURE 3–2
LYTLE ISD AND PEER DISTRICT EXPENDITURES FOR THE GENERAL REVENUE FUND
SCHOOL YEAR 2015–16

CATEGORY	CAMERON ISD	POTEET ISD	SHEPHERD ISD	PEER DISTRICTS	
				AVERAGE	LYTLE ISD
Instruction and Instruction-related Services	55.6%	47.2%	55.8%	52.8%	55.2%
Instructional and School Leadership	6.0%	10.0%	6.6%	7.5%	7.6%
Support Services – Student	11.4%	11.0%	13.0%	11.8%	13.4%
Support Services – Nonstudent-based	15.3%	16.7%	14.5%	15.5%	17.2%
Administrative Support Services	5.3%	5.0%	4.2%	4.8%	4.7%
Ancillary Services	0.3%	0.2%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%
Debt Service	0.0%	0.5%	0.0%	0.2%	0.1%
Capital Outlay	5.4%	6.7%	3.6%	5.2%	0.3%
Intergovernmental Charges	0.8%	2.8%	2.4%	2.0%	0.6%

NOTE: Totals may not sum due to rounding.
SOURCE: Districts’ annual financial reports, fiscal year 2015–16.

**FIGURE 3–3
LYTLE ISD FINANCIAL INTEGRITY RATING SYSTEM FOR TEXAS (FIRST) AND SMART SCORE RATINGS COMPARED TO PEER DISTRICTS
SCHOOL YEAR 2014–15**

DISTRICT	FIRST RATING	SMART SCORE RATING	SMART SCORE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE RATING	SMART SCORE SPENDING RATING
Shepherd ISD	A=Superior	1.5	Very low academic progress	High Spending
Cameron ISD	A=Superior	3.0	Average academic progress	Average spending
Poteet ISD	B=Above Standard	1.0	Very low academic progress	Very high spending
Lytle ISD	A=Superior	1.5	Very low academic progress	High Spending

SOURCES: Texas Education Agency, Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas, school year 2014–15; Texans for Positive Economic Policy, 2016 Smart Scores.

Managing assets and risk is dependent on the organizational structure of the district. Larger districts typically have staff dedicated to asset and risk management, and smaller districts assign staff these responsibilities as a secondary assignment. Managing investments includes identifying those with maximum interest-earning potential while safeguarding funds and ensuring liquidity to meet fluctuating cash flow demands. Forecasting and managing revenue includes efficiency to meet its cash flow needs, earn the highest possible interest, and estimate state and federal funding. Capital asset management should identify a district’s property (e.g., buildings, vehicles, equipment) and protect it from theft and obsolescence. Insurance programs cover health, workers’ compensation, and district liability for staff.

Oversight of Lytle ISD’s asset and risk management activities is primarily with the business manager and the superintendent, with support from the Finance Department staff. The district keeps most of its idle cash in interest-bearing accounts, either at its depository bank or at the Lone Star Investment Pool (LSIP). The business manager transfers funds to the depository bank from the LSIP as needed to cover payroll and accounts payable checks.

The Lytle ISD Financial Policies and Procedures Manual defines procedures for handling cash and is available on the district’s website for easy reference. In interviews, district staff were familiar with these procedures, and reported that Finance Department staff are available to answer any questions that arose. The procedures manual calls for a verification count and signature for any cash transfer from one staff to another within the district. A finance clerk makes bank deposits.

As market conditions warrant, the district refunds eligible debt instruments to take advantage of lower interest rates. In 2013, the district refunded \$340,000 in maintenance tax notes, resulting in an interest savings of \$31,984.

Figure 3–4 shows Lytle ISD’s payments for property and casualty insurance coverage obtained through the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB).

**FIGURE 3–4
LYTLE ISD CONTRIBUTION FOR PROPERTY AND CASUALTY INSURANCE
JUNE 2015 TO MAY 2017**

COVERAGE	PAYMENT	
	6/1/2015 TO 5/31/16	6/1/2016 TO 5/31/17
Property:	\$38,315	\$43,000
All Perils (including Wind, Hurricane, Hail, Flood, Earthquake, Crime, Equipment Breakdown)		
School Liability:	\$8,224	\$8,225
Professional Legal liability, General Liability, Employee Benefits Liability		
Automobile:	\$8,676	\$8,676
Automobile liability, Automobile Physical Damage, Comprehensive, Collision		
TOTAL CONTRIBUTION	\$55,215	\$59,901

SOURCE: Texas Association of School Boards, Risk Management Fund, March 2016.

The district meets its statutory workers’ compensation obligation through participation in the TASB Risk Management Fund (RMF). TASB provides risk management training to Lytle ISD staff, with extra training during any year in which the district incurred a larger number of workers’ compensation claims than normal. Lytle ISD also provides unemployment compensation coverage to its staff through participation in the TASB RMF. Additionally, the district maintains an insurance policy from another provider for the coverage of athletic injuries.

Lytle ISD staff have the option of choosing health insurance coverage through the Teacher Retirement System of Texas Active Care. The district also makes available to staff, at their own expense, supplemental insurance programs through the First Financial Group of America, the district's third-party administrator. First Financial provides online enrollment and consulting services for other staff benefits. These supplemental insurance programs include disability, accidental death and dismemberment, cancer and dread disease, dental, and additional term life insurance on a pretax basis.

An independent school district's purchasing function is responsible for providing quality materials, supplies, and equipment in a timely, cost-effective manner. Purchasing includes identification and purchase of supplies, equipment, and services, and the storage and distribution of goods.

School districts in Texas are required to follow federal and state laws and procedures applicable to purchasing. The purpose of competitive bidding requirements pursuant to the Texas Education Code, Section 44.031, is to stimulate competition, prevent favoritism, and secure the best goods and services needed for district operations at the lowest possible price. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) developed a comprehensive purchasing module in the Financial Accountability System Resource Guide (FASRG), available as a resource for districts.

The business manager oversees the purchasing function for Lytle ISD. Campuses and departments enter purchase requisitions into TxEIS for approval by the business manager and then the superintendent. After approval, the campuses and departments print the purchase orders and send them to the vendors. Board Policy CH (LOCAL) grants authority to make purchases of less than \$50,000 to the superintendent. Purchases of greater than \$50,000 require board approval. The superintendent delegates daily management of the purchasing function to the business manager, but approves all purchases made by the district.

The district has three warehouse facilities. One houses operations supplies, including fertilizer; paint; and heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) supplies. A second warehouse holds surplus chairs and desks. The third warehouse holds custodial supplies such as chemicals, paper products, and cleaning tools and supplies.

Campuses and departments purchase most of the items they use on an as-needed basis. In addition to its Financial Policies and Procedures Manual, Lytle ISD has a Purchasing Policies and Procedures Manual that details the district's purchasing procedures. These manuals are comprehensive, and include

documentation of every form, step, and approval required for a valid purchase order.

The Finance Department manages contract functions as outlined in Board Policy CH (LEGAL). The business manager enters vendor information and contracts into TxEIS. After approval, the campus or department issues a purchase order for the good or service.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ◆ Lytle ISD has a mandatory direct deposit policy that results in a more efficient and cost-effective method to pay staff.
- ◆ Lytle ISD requires all staff to use an electronic time clock, which facilitates payroll processing by automatically calculating time worked.
- ◆ The Board of Trustees receives information concerning the district's investments as part of monthly board packets.

FINDINGS

- ◆ Lytle ISD lacks a process for developing a multiyear budget with projections to account for decreasing student enrollment and increasing expenditures.
- ◆ Lytle ISD is not enforcing its board resolution that sets a target balance for the General Fund and is depleting its fund balance.
- ◆ Lytle ISD does not adequately track any of its nontechnology assets valued at less than the \$5,000 capitalization threshold.
- ◆ Lytle ISD has a warehouse storing broken and unused furniture and lacks an effective process to dispose of surplus furniture.
- ◆ Lytle ISD lacks a process for systematically reviewing and monitoring contracted services.
- ◆ Lytle ISD requires the superintendent to review and approve every purchase order and overages, resulting in an inefficient use of time.
- ◆ Lytle ISD uses an inefficient, manual process to document the receipt of purchases.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ◆ **Recommendation 7: Develop revenue projections, including student enrollment, as part of the**

preparation of the district's annual budget and identify areas to control expenditures.

- ◆ **Recommendation 8: Enforce the board resolution regarding the General Fund balance and evaluate expanding the resolution to a board policy to prevent depleting the fund balance.**
- ◆ **Recommendation 9: Tag and track all assets, conduct an annual inventory, and note the funding source for each asset.**
- ◆ **Recommendation 10: Develop procedures for the disposition of surplus property at least once per year.**
- ◆ **Recommendation 11: Develop and implement a contract management process with written procedures and practices to identify all district contracts, centrally monitor contract requirements, and evaluate vendor performance.**
- ◆ **Recommendation 12: Designate final approval authority for purchase requisitions and for purchase order overages to the business manager.**
- ◆ **Recommendation 13: Implement the electronic receiving capability of the Texas Enterprise Information System to process purchase orders.**

DETAILED ACCOMPLISHMENTS

DIRECT DEPOSIT

Lytle ISD has a mandatory direct deposit policy that results in a more efficient and cost-effective method to pay staff.

As stated in the employee manual, Lytle ISD requires that all staff participate in direct deposit. This procedure saves time in handling checks and reconciling the payroll account; eliminates trips to the bank; eliminates lost, stolen, and fraudulent checks; and ensures that staff receive payments when absent from the district. Implementing mandatory direct deposit contributes to an efficient and effective payroll process for Lytle ISD and ensures that staff receive timely payments.

Paper paychecks are costly to process and distribute, and paychecks occasionally have problems that require administrative resources to resolve. For instance, paper paychecks can be easily lost or stolen. Sometimes, paychecks are delivered to the wrong location on payday or staff fail to pick up their last paychecks, which can cause administrative inefficiencies.

With direct deposit, staff receive their pay even if they are absent from work on a payday, and fewer paper checks are printed each payroll run. This process reduces the administrative time required for bank reconciliations of the payroll account, because the bulk of the payroll withdrawal is in one transaction, as opposed to multiple individual staff checks.

ELECTRONIC TIME CLOCK

Lytle ISD requires all staff to use an electronic time clock, which facilitates payroll processing by automatically calculating time worked.

All Lytle ISD staff clock in daily, including the superintendent. Only nonexempt staff (those paid hourly) are required to clock out. The time-keeping system calculates the hours worked, deductions, and amount of pay due to staff.

Using a mandatory, automated time-keeping system reduces the processing time for payroll while improving its accuracy. In addition to recording staff working hours, these systems streamline processes by automating calculations, integrating data and producing reports. Automated systems also increase compliance with federal and state wage and hour laws by ensuring that nonexempt staff receive all the wages to which they are entitled.

INVESTMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The Board of Trustees receives information concerning the district's investments as part of monthly board packets.

Although state law requires only quarterly investment board reports, Lytle ISD's monthly board packet includes a summary of deposits and withdrawals for each of the district's investments. The business manager assembles and provides the board information concerning the district's investments as part of every month's board packets. The Texas Government Code, Section 2256.023, requires that "not less than quarterly, the investment officer shall prepare and submit to the governing body of the entity a written report of investment transactions for all funds." Lytle ISD includes in each month's board packet a listing of beginning balances for the month in the district's bank and investment accounts and shows deposits, checks written, transfers in and out, and ending balances. An ending column shows historical balances from the previous year. This data provides board members with valuable summary information to facilitate monitoring of the monthly district's cash and investment positions and analyze historical trends.

DETAILED FINDINGS

LONG-TERM PLANNING AND BUDGETING (REC. 7)

Lytle ISD lacks a process for developing a multiyear budget with projections to account for decreasing student enrollment and increasing expenditures.

Lytle ISD last retained a demographer in 2011. The demographer’s report provided anticipated enrollment for several years and high, low, and projected student counts for those years. Projections are subject to change depending on the economy and the real estate market. However, they can provide a good starting point for estimating revenues and expenditures.

The district prepares a budget for the next fiscal year with no long-term budget planning or projecting of student enrollment. **Figure 3–5** shows total enrollment from school years 2011–12 to 2015–16. Enrollment for school year 2015–16 decreased unexpectedly by 48 students from school year 2014–15, a 2.8 percent decrease, which will result in reduced average daily attendance (ADA) funding from TEA.

Additionally, Lytle ISD’s Board of Trustees has minimal oversight of the budget process. The district’s fiscal year begins on July 1, and the board must approve a budget before this date. Administrators present a nearly complete budget to the board in May, with little time for board input. According

**FIGURE 3–5
LYTLE ISD TOTAL ENROLLMENT BY YEAR
SCHOOL YEARS 2011–12 TO 2015–16**

YEAR	ENROLLMENT
2011–12	1,713
2012–13	1,736
2013–14	1,762
2014–15	1,720
2015–16	1,672

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, Snapshot: School District Profiles, November 2016.

to the budget calendar provided to the Legislative Budget Board’s School Performance Review Team, the board first received a proposed budget for school year 2016–17 in April 2016.

Figure 3–6 shows actual General Fund revenues and expenditures from school years 2013–14 to 2015–16 and budgeted revenues and expenditures for school year 2016–17. Revenues have decreased from \$15.1 million for school year 2013–14 to \$15.0 million for school year 2015–16.

Although revenues have decreased since school year 2013–14, expenditures have increased. After a decrease in expenditures of \$1.4 million from school years 2013–14 to 2014–15, expenditures increased. Without a process to project for student enrollment, the district risks receiving less ADA revenue than expected to fund its operations.

According to the FASRG, financial forecasting is important for several reasons. Forecasting facilitates planning; makes clear trends, needs, and issues; and enhances decision-making. The FASRG mentions student enrollment projections, revenue and expenditure projections, property value projections, and debt service cost projections as especially important. Projections of student enrollment include both the number and types of students expected. Enrollment projections drive many of the revenue and expenditure components of both annual operating and multi-year program and construction budgets.

Galena Park ISD prepares enrollment projections as part of its long-range planning process to drive its budget and decision-making processes. Many smaller Texas school districts contract with demographers to provide specialized experience in population trends.

Lytle ISD should develop revenue projections, including student enrollment, as part of the preparation of the district’s annual budget and identify areas to control expenditures.

By providing these estimates, the board would be aware of the potential financial effects of lower than expected enrollment and could adjust expenditures accordingly. The district should schedule budget workshops with the board earlier in the year to increase board oversight of the district’s budget. The business manager should develop the summaries and compare the projected student to weighted ADA counts from previous years to project state revenues. The district could also consider contracting a demographer to more accurately project student enrollment. By obtaining a more accurate projection, the board would be aware of the potential financial impact if enrollment were less than the estimated figure used to prepare the budget.

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

FUND BALANCE (REC. 8)

Lytle ISD is not enforcing its board resolution that sets a target balance for the General Fund and is depleting its fund balance.

FIGURE 3–6
LYTLE ISD GENERAL FUND FINANCIAL OVERVIEW
SCHOOL YEARS 2013–14 TO 2016–17

CATEGORY	2013–14	2014–15	2015–16	2016–17 (BUDGETED)	PERCENTAGE OF 2016–17 BUDGET
Revenue					
Local Revenue	\$3,375,131	\$3,334,889	\$3,384,876	\$3,468,728	23.4%
State Revenue	\$11,526,176	\$11,074,008	\$11,459,592	\$11,201,237	75.6%
Federal Revenue	\$183,328	\$133,582	\$146,531	\$151,500	1.0%
Total Revenue	\$15,084,635	\$14,542,479	\$14,990,999	\$14,821,465	100.0%
Expenditures					
Instruction and Instruction-related Services	\$8,291,796	\$7,861,451	\$8,682,200	\$8,705,361	55.1%
Instructional and School Leadership	\$1,091,221	\$1,091,662	\$1,193,831	\$1,243,748	7.9%
Support Services – Student	\$1,884,197	\$1,977,319	\$2,111,909	\$2,046,968	12.9%
Administrative Support Services	\$669,709	\$643,385	\$743,417	\$817,053	5.2%
Support Services – Nonstudent-based	\$1,920,998	\$2,380,876	\$2,697,126	\$2,708,408	17.1%
Ancillary Services	\$4,530	\$4,546	\$3,660	\$5,900	0.0%
Debt Service	\$141,669	\$140,462	\$139,704	\$141,971	0.9%
Capital Outlay	\$2,153,200	\$689,147	\$41,909	\$100	0.0%
Intergovernmental Charges	\$117,041	\$113,645	\$100,935	\$143,000	0.9%
Total Expenditures	\$16,274,361	\$14,902,493	\$15,714,691	\$15,812,509	100.0%

NOTE: Totals may not sum due to rounding.

SOURCE: Lytle ISD, annual financial reports, school years 2013–14 to 2015–16, and budget report, school year 2016–17.

Figure 3–7 shows the beginning and ending General Fund balance for fiscal years 2010–11 to 2015–16, and the projected fund balance for fiscal year 2016–17. Although Lytle ISD has accumulated a substantial General Fund balance, the board lacks a policy for the use of these funds. However, in June 2011, the board passed a resolution to “strive to maintain an unassigned fund balance of not less than 25.0 percent of the budgeted operating expenditures in the district’s general fund.” **Figure 3–7** shows that the district’s ending fund balance as a percentage of annual operating expenditures decreased to 22.5 percent for school year 2015–16 and 16.1 percent for school year 2016–17, less than the board’s 25.0 percent resolution level.

Lytle ISD’s school year 2016–17 adopted General Fund budget includes a planned withdrawal from the balance of \$991,044, which represents approximately 28.1 percent of its beginning balance. This plan follows a year in which the use of fund balance totaled \$723,692. Continued drawdown of the fund balance at an average of \$700,000 per year risks a fund balance depletion by fiscal year 2020–21.

A school district’s general fund is the primary method of funding most of its functions. Lytle ISD receives local property tax revenue and state and federal funding, which it deposits into the General Fund. Districts typically use the fund balance to meet payroll and pay other operating costs during August and September while waiting to receive state payments. A sufficient fund balance provides the district with adequate cash flow until tax collections begin in October. The Governmental Accounting Standards Board, an independent organization that standardizes state and local accounting and financial reporting, established the following five categories that designate how a fund balance could be expended:

- nonspendable – amounts that are not in spendable form or are required to be maintained intact;
- restricted – amounts that could be spent only for specific purposes because of local, state, or federal laws, or externally imposed conditions by grantors or creditors;
- committed – amounts constrained to specific purposes by the board;

**FIGURE 3-7
LYTLE ISD GENERAL FUND BALANCE
FISCAL YEARS 2010-11 TO 2016-17**

CATEGORY	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17 (1)
Beginning fund balance	\$4,041,458	\$4,615,609	\$5,308,515	\$5,806,071	\$4,616,346	\$4,256,332	\$3,532,640
Ending fund balance	\$4,615,609	\$5,308,515	\$5,806,071	\$4,616,345	\$4,256,332	\$3,532,640	\$2,541,596
Increase/(Decrease)	\$574,151	\$692,906	\$497,556	(\$1,189,726)	(\$360,014)	(\$723,692)	(\$991,044)
Percentage change	14.2%	15.0%	9.4%	(20.5%)	(7.8%)	(17.0%)	(28.1%)
Ending fund balance as a percentage of annual expenditures	35.1%	43.8%	42.3%	28.4%	28.6%	22.5%	16.1%

NOTE: (1) Fiscal year 2016-17 ending fund balance is projected.

SOURCES: Lytle ISD, annual financial reports, fiscal years 2010-11 to 2015-16, and budget projections, fiscal year 2016-17; Texas Education Agency, Public Education Information Management System financial data, school years 2010-11 to 2012-13.

- assigned – amounts the district intends to use for a specific purpose; and
- unassigned – amounts that are available for any purpose.

Lytle ISD’s entire fund balance is unassigned, because the board has not designated funds for any specific initiatives.

A low fund balance increases the risk that the district will not be able to meet its obligations if other funding fails to arrive when expected or unexpected expenditures occur. Without adequate reserves, credit rating agencies, which regularly monitor the size of governmental fund balances, may question the district’s ability to meet its debt service payments.

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) issues the FASRG and the Financial Accounting and Reporting (FAR) appendices as guidelines for appropriate general fund balances. FASRG calls for an optimum unassigned fund balance that would cover the cash flow deficit in the general fund for the fall period. The balance also would cover estimated monthly cash disbursements from the general fund for the following fiscal year. The worksheet in the FAR’s Appendix recommends a minimum general fund balance to cover a two-month period of operating expenses.

Many districts adopt board policies to ensure an appropriate fund balance level. Keller ISD has established Board Policy CE (LOCAL). The policy directs district staff to calculate and maintain a committed fund balance from 17.0 percent to 20.0 percent of the district’s initial adopted operating budget each year. The board must approve any variation from this range.

Poteet ISD, selected as a peer district for Lytle ISD, established Board Policy CE (LOCAL) specifying that the district maintain a yearly fund balance in the general operating fund of 25.0 percent, or three months, of operating expenditures.

Lytle ISD should enforce the board resolution regarding the General Fund balance and evaluate expanding the resolution to a board policy to prevent depleting the fund balance.

The policy could include guidelines for the minimum General Fund balance, including the 25.0 percent fixed percentage of the next year’s proposed budget as a minimum amount as cited in the board resolution, or the board could establish an alternate percentage. The policy should also define actions that the district should take to increase the fund balance if it decreases to less than the board threshold.

The board should consider a multiyear approach that best meets the district’s needs. The board should prioritize the district’s goals, and then direct the superintendent to develop a three-year plan that includes specific steps to meet the fund balance target.

After the superintendent determines the target fund balance, administration should develop procedures that help the district meet and maintain the target balance. The board should authorize the superintendent to reduce budgeted expenditures as needed, and to establish annual procedures to ensure that the district maintains its fund balance target. The superintendent should also identify each board agenda item involving General Fund receipts or expenditures, and include a fiscal impact statement showing how the item will affect the fund balance.

To assist the board in deciding this matter, the business manager should calculate the optimum fund balance. The business manager should calculate the balance according to TEA's worksheet for the current year and the past three years, and compare it to the actual year-end fund balances. An analysis of the difference would help the board be better aware of how the district is performing based on its actual calculations versus best practice calculations.

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

INVENTORY CONTROL (REC. 9)

Lytle ISD does not adequately track any of its nontechnology assets valued at less than the \$5,000 capitalization threshold.

Lytle ISD maintains two types of fixed assets – capital assets and controlled assets. Capital assets are large purchases that are capitalized and depreciated. Board Policy CFB (LOCAL) defines capital assets as those costing more than \$5,000. These assets often include building and improvements, equipment, and vehicles. Lytle ISD records acquisition information about capital assets in a fixed-assets file in the TxEIS financial software. The business manager provides the operations director with an annual listing of capital asset information. The operations director conducts a physical inventory of the items listed, removing items from the inventory listing no longer in the district's possession.

Controlled assets are those valued at less than the depreciation threshold, which in Lytle ISD are those valued from \$500 to \$5,000. TEA's FASRG defines controlled assets as "personal property that is durable but does not meet the district's criteria for capitalization as a capital asset. These items have a useful life longer than one year." Examples of controlled assets may include computers, audiovisual equipment, textbooks, calculators, desks, and physical education equipment. Board Policy CFB (LOCAL) refers to these as inventory items, and requires that the district maintain inventories of its assets as recommended and directed by FASRG for reporting and insurance purposes. For inventory items, staff send the purchase order to the operations director, who makes a paper copy of the purchase order information, files the copy in a cabinet, and retains the electronic copy.

Lytle ISD's Technology Department uses a commercial inventory software program to track technology equipment, including items costing less than \$5,000 that may be subject to theft, such as tablet computers. The department uses tamper-resistant Quick Response (QR) coded labels to mark

the equipment and with the use of mobile phones or tablet computers, can readily inventory each item of marked equipment. The technology director reported that the Technology Department had experienced success with this software program.

However, other departments in the district do not list or track any of its other assets, controlled assets with a value of \$500 to \$5,000, or other assets with a value of less than \$500. Staff purchase these items in accordance with district policy and file their purchase orders; however, the district does not maintain an inventory listing for these items or have a process to ensure that departments and campuses track them accordingly. After the district purchases the items, the requesting department receives and uses them. The business manager does not require that the assets are tagged, tracked, or inventoried.

Without a process to tag and record inventory valued from \$500 to \$5,000, the district cannot accurately track the location and usage of these assets. Additionally, inventory records do not accurately represent district assets. Staff, guests, or unauthorized visitors could remove portable assets from district premises without the district realizing they are missing. Without a physical inventory, district records would not capture missing or stolen inventory or make staff aware that the loss had occurred. In the event of fire or other disaster, the district would be unable to present an accurate inventory for insurance purposes.

The district may not properly track the disposal of assets purchased with federal funding because it does not catalog items by funding source. Use of federal funding often requires that assets remain in their designated locations and are used as specified in the grant guidelines. Because the district is not tracking inventory properly, it could inadvertently violate policy for assets purchased with federal funds. For example, a campus could dispose of an asset without following proper procedures as mandated by federal regulations. Disposing of funds improperly could subject the district to sanctions from the U.S. Department of Education, including requiring the repayment of funds or loss of future allocations.

Additionally, without tracking or inventorying these items, the district could purchase a duplicate item. This purchase would add unused assets, the space they require, and an inefficient use of revenue.

Socorro ISD publishes policies and procedures concerning accounting for fixed assets and equipment inventories. The

policy states the district should track all assets valued at \$5,000 or less. The district tags assets that are categorized as technology, musical instruments or equipment, and furniture and equipment valued at more than \$500. Warehouse staff tag assets valued at more than \$500 with a Socorro ISD fixed asset number and scan the tag into the database. The Department of Financial Services is responsible for tracking and reporting all fixed assets.

Lytle ISD should tag and track all assets, conduct an annual inventory, and note the funding source for each asset.

The district could expand the use of the same software program and QR coded labels used by the Technology Department to facilitate tracking of assets valued from \$500 to \$5,000. According to the technology director, the band director plans to use the software for tracking band instruments. Lytle ISD should use the software program to improve or replace the combined electronic and manual process in place for conducting the inventory.

The operations director, who oversees the annual physical inventory of capital assets, could coordinate this districtwide process. Each campus or department could maintain a supply of QR coded labels, and attach these labels to a new asset upon purchase and notify the operations director of barcode installations. The operations director would confirm the entry into the software program. Finance Department staff, in conjunction with the operations director, should develop written guidelines to govern the inventory control process.

Attaching a QR-coded label to an inventory item and entering its information into the software program is simple and brief. The technology director has developed Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for all the inventory of technology assets, and some of the SOPs could be readily adapted for use by other areas. The software can run reports that would assist in the physical counts of the inventory.

The district's contract with the software provider would enable additional inventory items without a per-unit cost, and the vendor has reported no cost would be incurred for additional asset tags.

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

SURPLUS PROPERTY (REC. 10)

Lytle ISD has a warehouse storing broken and unused furniture and lacks an effective process to dispose of surplus furniture.

The district does not have procedures describing the disposal of surplus property. Lytle ISD has two warehouses for unused furniture: one stores broken and unusable furniture, and the other has usable furniture in good repair. The surplus property in these warehouses is not inventoried. The operations director stated that the district could use the furniture in good repair; however, it was unlikely to do so. The district's Technology Department has an ongoing program to remove broken technology equipment. As technology items are determined no longer usable, they are stored in a designated space in the Technology Department. Staff then contact a company that removes them; however, this disposal is not coordinated with the Finance Department.

Board Policy CI (LEGAL) states that a board may dispose of property that is no longer necessary for district operations in an appropriate manner. Board Policy CI (LOCAL) calls for the disposition of property at fair market value (FMV), or, if no FMV, disposition per administrative discretion. However, the district lacks an effective process for implementing these policies.

Storing broken and surplus furniture poses a potential hazard and is an inefficient use of space. Although the proceeds from the sale of unused assets is minimal, the district is not maximizing the surplus value of its assets by keeping them in storage and not offering them for sale. Proceeds from the sale could generate additional revenue for the General Fund, and holding saleable inventory for extended periods diminishes its value, leading to a reduction in potential proceeds.

Moore Public School District in Moore, Oklahoma, has a board policy that states:

The superintendent shall be authorized to dispose of all obsolete, excess, and unusable equipment as prescribed by Oklahoma School Law and shall report all such transactions to the Board. A public auction shall be conducted at times designated by the Board for such purpose. Other disposal methods allowed by law include sale, exchange, lease, lease-purchase, and sale and partial lease back. One of these disposal methods may be used if a greater financial benefit can be gained.

Round Rock ISD has an annual online Surplus Store, which is a fixed-price outlet for items appropriate for sale to the public, usually electronics, books, or furniture. The district also uses a third-party auction company for online auctioning of other items. A recent review of Round Rock ISD's items for auction included one pallet of 99 desktop computers, two

pallets of library books from a middle school, and a box of 59 USB-compatible microphones. By adding a buyer's premium to the bid, the district could recover its listing fee for the auctions.

Lytle ISD should develop procedures for the disposition of surplus property at least once per year.

This process should include uniform districtwide procedures for all surplus property in the district, including technology items. The district could dispose of surplus property through an auction, a warehouse sale, or another method in accordance with board policy. The operations director could include disposal of surplus property as part of the annual physical inventory.

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

CONTRACT MONITORING PROCESS (REC. 11)

Lytle ISD lacks a process for systematically reviewing and monitoring contracted services.

Each campus and department in Lytle ISD initiates the procurement of contract services as needed. The position at the campus or department requesting the goods or services acts as program manager and works with the business manager to procure contracts. For example, the special education director acts as program manager to oversee a contract with an occupational therapist.

The district's Financial Policies and Procedures Manual and Purchasing Policies and Procedures Manual outline the following standard procedures for contracting:

- purchases less than \$1,000 – no competition required; however, the district encourages the end user to secure competition through quotes;
- purchases from \$1,000 to less than \$5,000 – the district encourages the end user to obtain quotes from at least three vendors and retain documentation regarding the choice of vendor;
- purchases from \$5,000 to less than \$50,000 – end users required to secure a minimum of three quotes and retain documentation regarding the choice of vendor; and
- purchases of \$50,000 or greater – the Finance Department uses the formal competitive sealed bid process, working directly with the campus or department.

The Finance Department solicits proposals every year by category through purchasing cooperatives and maintains an online vendor list that includes the names and addresses of approved vendors. Lytle ISD's business manager procures bids and oversees vendor contracts.

The district has contracts for a variety of purposes, including data management, food services, physical therapy, turf services, occupational therapy, and professional learning services. **Figure 3–8** shows contracts that were made available during the onsite review. The district does not maintain a central list of all contracts; therefore, this list is incomplete and does not include, for example, contracts for professional services such as auditing.

The district has no central location for contracts or a single contact to manage the contracts. In addition, the business manager does not evaluate all contracts consistently. The business manager approves an automatic renewal of many of the contracts without any formal process for review or evaluation of cost effectiveness and quality of services. The review team found review for quality for two contracts. The district did not have documentation to show reviews for cost effectiveness of any contracts. Staff reported that one contract had been in place for 10 years without a review or evaluation, and that contract renewal occurred for three years for an unneeded service. In addition, Lytle ISD's attorney does not review contracts. The review team found that the Finance Department does not review contracts periodically, even though multiple contracts had similar automatic-renewal clauses.

Vendor performance should inform the contract evaluation and renewal process. Without reviewing contractual services regularly, Lytle ISD lacks a system to ensure high quality services and cost-effectiveness. Furthermore, if Lytle ISD does not appropriately document and monitor contract performance and evaluation, the district may not be able to avail themselves of legal remedies in case of breach of contract, unsatisfactory performance by a vendor, or any other loss to the district resulting from an outside service contract or provider.

FASRG provides support and guidance to districts to optimize purchasing and procurement. It states that a system for the evaluation of vendors and their performance is important to support an effective purchasing function. FASRG states: "multiyear contracts can save time, labor and money. ... However, using multiyear contracts and automatically granting renewals without a documented decision-making process can result in their misuse." FASRG

**FIGURE 3–8
LISTING OF DISTRICT CONTRACTS WITH EXTERNAL AGENCIES AND FIRMS
FISCAL YEAR 2016–17**

CONTRACT	TERM	FEES
Standard-bearer School District Network	2/1/2012 to 1/31/2015	\$60,000
Contract for Shared Professional Services with Atascosa McMullen Special Education Cooperative	7/1/2016 to 6/30/2017	\$75.00 per hour
School Dual Credit Academic Agreement with Alamo Community College District	2015 to 2018	No cost listed
Letter of Agreement for County Breeze Counseling Center	11/17/2016 – No timeline is set for termination	\$40.00 per hour, paid by parents
Eidex Focus	9/25/2016 to 9/25/2019	\$3,236 per year
Memorandum of Understanding and Articulation Agreement with the University of Texas of the Permian Basin	6/15/2016 to 6/15/2017	\$150.00 per course, paid by students
Interlocal Agreement for Teacher Preparation Program with Somerset Independent School District (1)	Begin on date of the last of parties to sign the agreement – 7/31/2017	\$10,405.29 one-time and \$0.54 per mile
Tax Collection Contract with the Law Office of Thomas P. Cate, P.C.	6/20/2016 to 6/30/2019	20.0% of the amount of delinquent tax
Atascosa County	8/26/2013 – No termination date	\$1.70 per parcel for each parcel
Mission Road Development Center Day Habilitation Agreement	8/1/2016 to Automatically renews	\$45.68 per day
Susan Aileen Broussard, Physical Therapist	8/22/2016 to 6/30/2017	\$60.00/hour not to exceed 160 hours
Lori Ralph, Occupational Therapist	8/22/2016 to 6/30/2017	\$60.00 per hour, not to exceed 296.0 hours
Flippen Group	4/27/2015 – Spring 2016	\$45,000 plus travel
Engage! Learning, Inc.	2013 to 2014 and 2014 to 2015	Year 1: \$71,625, plus expenses; Year 2: \$71,625, plus expenses
Walker Quality Services	10/1/2014 – Annually renewed	\$2,400 per month, plus expenses

NOTE: (1) Contract unsigned.
SOURCE: Lytle ISD, November 2016.

also states that school districts should attempt to develop an open and professional relationship with vendors; however, if a problem occurs, it is important to document the problem using the following best practices:

- note the date with an accurate description of the problem;
- contact the vendor with specifics on how the problem needs to be corrected;
- provide written notification to the vendor if problem persists, and restate the problem and desired resolution; include breach of contract notification with associated cancellation of the contract; and
- contact legal counsel if the problem is not resolved using these steps.

Contract management includes review for cost effectiveness, quality, and implementation. Management should establish written expectations and communicate them to all administrators to ensure compliance. An effective monitoring process includes specific scheduled checkpoints, set evaluation criteria, documentation procedures for contract modifications, documentation procedures to review charges made against the contract, and documentation procedures for reviewing cost effectiveness. In addition, an effective monitoring process allows the district to ensure compliance with state law, efficacy of the contract, and ensure cost effectiveness. **Figure 3–9** shows a comprehensive contract monitoring process.

Lytle ISD should develop and implement a contract management process with written procedures and practices to identify all district contracts, centrally monitor contract requirements, and evaluate vendor performance.

FIGURE 3–9
CONTRACT MONITORING PROCESS
FEBRUARY 2016

1. Develop a master schedule and a work breakdown structure that incorporates every important date or milestone in the contract.
2. List contract deliverables and their evaluation criteria in detail, with checklists for the people who perform the tasks.
3. Set a schedule and reminders for required reports, including the format and delivery method.
4. For each party involved in the contract, document change orders and contract modifications that require rescheduling of any deliverables.
5. Ensure that expenses charged to the contract are allowable, allocable, and reasonable.
6. Give room for competing priorities.

SOURCE: Best Practices in Contract Administration, Bren George-Nwabugwu, February 2016.

The Finance Department should use existing spreadsheet programs to maintain a database of all the district's contracts. As the district enters new contracts, Finance Department staff should enter information about the contracts into the database. This information should include the initial and renewal date of the contract and the date by which notification to cancel or renew must be provided to the contractor. The district can then readily cancel the contract if the district chooses not to renew it. The superintendent, in collaboration with the business manager, should develop a policy for board approval to determine which contracts the district's attorney should review.

At the beginning of each month, staff should review the database to identify all contracts that are eligible for renewal within the next 90 days and notify the appropriate campus and department. Campuses and departments should review contracts and, if appropriate, sign an approval for contract renewal. Failure to review the contract could result in cancellation of the contract by the Finance Department. The board should also designate specific staff as authorized representatives of Lytle ISD to enter into contracts on its behalf.

Lytle ISD's business manager should attend training for the oversight and management of contracts and for evaluating contract vendors. Lytle ISD should also ensure that the district's attorney review all contracts with commercial entities.

The fiscal impact of this recommendation assumes a onetime cost of \$964 for contract management certification, and \$75 every other year for a contract management webinar. With the district's existing membership in the Texas Association of School Business Officials, the Contract Management Procedures webinar training costs \$75. The business manager should enroll in the class at least every other year. The Comptroller of Public Accounts (CPA), Statewide Procurement

Division, provides contract management certification training for a fee of \$400. Travel-related expenses are \$564 (\$255 lodging, \$204 daily expenses, \$105 mileage), based on CPA reimbursement rates. The total cost for the CPA training is \$964.

PURCHASING PROCEDURES (REC. 12)

Lytle ISD requires the superintendent to review and approve every purchase order and overages, resulting in an inefficient use of time.

The Financial Policies and Procedures Manual and the Purchasing Policies and Procedures Manual define purchasing procedures for the district. Staff requesting the purchase of a good or service enters a purchase requisition into TxEIS. Depending on the funding source and the type of purchase, the principal, supervisor, or department head reviews the purchase requisition before submitting it to the business manager. If the business manager approves the purchase requisition after review, the business manager submits it to the superintendent for final approval.

According to the superintendent, each purchase requisition requires two electronic inputs: one to approve changing the purchase requisition into a purchase order, and a second directing TxEIS not to print the purchase order. The Finance Department does not print purchase orders; the requesting campuses and departments print them. After the superintendent electronically approves the purchase order in TxEIS, the requesting campus or department prints the purchase order and sends it to the vendor. In addition to approving the purchase orders, the superintendent also approves all overages on purchase orders, even in amounts of less than \$1.00. Overages may occur when the approved total on a purchase order is less than the vendor's charge on the invoice due to an increase in the sale price of the items or errors in calculation.

The superintendent stated that, due to her other duties, she often worked outside of regular work hours to process purchase requisitions. The superintendent reported that a previous auditor recommended that she personally initial every revised purchase order amount that exceeded the original purchase order, even for a purchase order overage of less than \$1.00. For school year 2015–16, the superintendent disapproved three out of 3,000 purchase orders.

The business manager and campus or department staff already approve purchase requisitions before they go to the superintendent for final approval. If the superintendent is unavailable, the business manager has authority to approve purchase orders.

Effective school districts enact procedures that enable the best use of a superintendent's time. Reviewing thousands of individual purchase orders and approving immaterial purchase order overages is not an efficient use of the superintendent's time. Shepherd ISD states in its Finance Department manual that a properly authorized purchase order includes two or three approvals, depending on the type of purchase. The purchase order must include the approval of the principal or director at the campus or department level; the technology director, if the purchase is technology-related; and the business manager (or designee) to ensure financial and programmatic compliance in the expenditure of all funds. This process enables approval at all levels without overburdening the superintendent.

Lytle ISD should designate final approval authority for purchase requisitions and for purchase order overages to the business manager. The business manager could consult with the superintendent when necessary to resolve any issues, such as any questions of the appropriateness of a particular purchase. By delegating this responsibility to the business manager, the superintendent would be able to focus more time on other job duties. To remain informed about goods and services the district is purchasing, the business manager should develop a monthly summary report for the superintendent. The business manager is already approving purchase orders and overages in the superintendent's absence; this recommendation is an expansion of that authority.

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

PURCHASE REQUISITION OF TECHNOLOGY (REC. 13)

Lytle ISD uses an inefficient, manual process to document the receipt of purchases.

After making purchases, campus or department staff send the Finance Department a copy of the purchase order printed on pink paper to confirm the receipt of ordered items or services. Receipt of the pink copy authorizes the Finance Department to make a payment for the purchase order. Each campus or department retains a white copy of the purchase order for its files. TxEIS, which the district uses, has the capability to execute the purchasing process electronically. However, Lytle ISD has not implemented this feature. Lytle ISD staff reported that the district had beta-tested this feature in TxEIS before its general release, but the electronic receiving system did not function properly at that time.

Lytle ISD uses a three-way match to ensure that the district has received goods and services before issuing a payment. The ordered items on the purchase order must match the items received by type and quantity. Additionally, the pricing on the invoice must match the pricing on the purchase order. Any discrepancies must be resolved before authorizing a payment; for example, if prices have changed from the time of order or if a freight charge is billed but not on the original requisition.

The receipt notification method begins with an electronic process but introduces a manual component of printing the purchase order, which results in a time inefficiency and generates unnecessary paper documents. This printing also costs campuses and departments time to change paper in the printer to have the physical receipt notification print on pink-colored paper.

TxEIS enables school districts to automatically initiate, submit, and approve requisitions, purchase orders, and contracts. The system can generate purchasing, purchase order, and system user reports. Districts that transition to the full use of electronic components of TxEIS save the district time in handling paper, provides better security, and generates reports useful for budgeting and analysis. Lytle ISD's purchasing process continues to be inefficient by not verifying the purchase order electronically and by printing the purchase order. With this process, the business manager cannot approve the purchase order in TxEIS.

The Texas Computer Cooperative provides training to districts through Regional Education Service Center XX (Region 20). Region 20 provides, at no cost, more than 140 student and business consultants who provide training and support to district and charter school end-users.

Lytle ISD should implement the electronic receiving capability of TxEIS to process purchase orders.

Lytle ISD staff could obtain support for implementation from Region 20 on how the software handles electronic receiving. The district should implement this electronic purchase receipt process gradually, beginning with a single department or campus, before districtwide implementation.

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

FISCAL IMPACT

Some of the recommendations provided in this report are based on state or federal laws, rules, or regulations, and should be promptly addressed. Other recommendations are based on comparisons to state or industry standards, or accepted best practices, and should be reviewed to determine the level of priority, appropriate timeline, and method of implementation.

RECOMMENDATION	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) OR SAVINGS	ONETIME (COSTS) OR SAVINGS
CHAPTER 3. BUSINESS SERVICES							
7. Develop revenue projections, including student enrollment, as part of the preparation of the district's annual budget and identify areas to control expenditures.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
8. Enforce the board resolution regarding the General Fund balance and evaluate expanding the resolution to a board policy to prevent depleting the fund balance.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
9. Tag and track all assets, conduct an annual inventory, and note the funding source for each asset.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
10. Develop procedures for the disposition of surplus property at least once per year.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
11. Develop and implement a contract management process with written procedures and practices to identify all district contracts, centrally monitor contract requirements, and evaluate vendor performance.	\$0	(\$75)	\$0	(\$75)	\$0	(\$150)	(\$964)
12. Designate final approval authority for purchase requisitions and for purchase order overages to the business manager.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
13. Implement the electronic receiving capability of the Texas Enterprise Information System to process purchase orders.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
TOTAL	\$0	(\$75)	\$0	(\$75)	\$0	(\$150)	(\$964)

CHAPTER 4. HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

An independent school district's human resources (HR) function is responsible for the management of staff. HR management is dependent on the organizational structure of the district. Larger districts may have staff dedicated to HR management, while smaller districts assign staff these responsibilities as a secondary assignment.

HR management includes compensation and benefits, recruitment, hiring, and retention, administrative planning and duties, records management, staff relations and grievances, and staff evaluations. These functions are defined by either compliance-based or strategic-based responsibilities. Compliance-based responsibilities include assuring an organization is following federal, state, and local labor laws in areas such as benefits, compensation and hours worked, records management, mandatory leave, discrimination, medical privacy, safety, termination, and eligibility to work. Strategic-based responsibilities include recruiting and retention, compensation and benefits, and staff relations.

Lytle ISD distributes HR responsibilities between the superintendent and the administrative office staff. The superintendent oversees the recruitment and retention of office staff and authorizes all HR hiring decisions. Campus and department heads initially select teachers and staff, and the HR director and superintendent approve the new hires. The administrative staff includes a HR director, with responsibilities in HR (60 percent) and Federal Programs

(40 percent). The HR director manages the day-to-day work of the payroll supervisor, the payroll clerk, and three part-time office clerks.

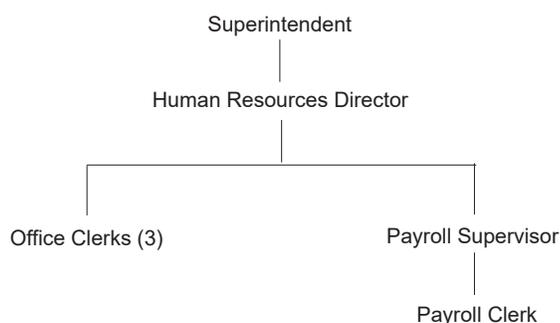
Figure 4–1 shows the organization of the district's HR Department, and **Figure 4–2** shows the major responsibilities of these positions.

In school year 2015–16, Lytle ISD employed 280.9 full-time-equivalent (FTE) positions at the district's five campuses and administrative building to provide services to 1,672 students. The five campuses are Lytle Primary School, Lytle Elementary School, Lytle Junior High School, and Lytle High School. The Lytle Disciplinary Education Program (DAEP) is located in the administration building.

Figure 4–3 shows Lytle ISD's payroll expenditure as a percentage of general funds compared to its peer districts. Peer districts are districts similar to Lytle ISD used for comparison purposes. Lytle ISD's payroll expenditures were the second highest among peer districts for school year 2015–16. Lytle ISD's payroll percentage of 79.4 percent is the highest among the peer districts.

Figure 4–4 shows average base salaries by staff type for Lytle ISD compared to those of peer districts. Lytle ISD's average base salary for teaching staff is the highest in the peer group. The salary for Lytle ISD's superintendent is also the highest in the peer group.

FIGURE 4–1
LYTLE ISD HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION
SCHOOL YEAR 2016–17



SOURCE: Legislative Budget Board School Review Team, December 2016; Lytle ISD, December 2016.

FIGURE 4–2
LYTLE ISD STAFF WITH HR RESPONSIBILITIES BY POSITION TITLE
SCHOOL YEAR 2016–17

POSITION TITLE	MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES
Superintendent	<p>Oversight of the Human Resource (HR) Department's functions</p> <p>Supervises the HR director</p> <p>Oversight of recruitment and retention of the district's central office staff</p> <p>Authorizes all HR hiring decisions</p>
HR Director	<p>Oversight of clerical staff with HR and payroll work assignments</p> <p>Staff interviews</p> <p>Districtwide staffing</p> <p>Policy development and compliance</p> <p>Recruiting</p> <p>Staff retention</p> <p>Salary administration and assignment of salaries</p> <p>Staff grievances and compliance</p> <p>New staff orientation</p> <p>Substitute teacher program</p> <p>Staff contracts, renewals and non-renewals</p> <p>Staff performance appraisals</p>
Payroll Supervisor	<p>Reception for central administrative offices</p> <p>Payroll verification for accuracy</p> <p>Criminal history background checks</p> <p>Verification of employment</p> <p>Staff leaves: requests, records, Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), return to work documents</p> <p>Staff service records requests and responses</p> <p>Districtwide mail-room, collection and distribution</p>
Payroll Clerk	<p>District payroll registers, payroll check registers, staff payroll information</p> <p>Staff wage calculations, salaries, hours worked, overtime pay</p> <p>Staff withholdings, deductions, net pay</p> <p>Direct deposits and staff payroll history</p> <p>Funds transfer for payroll</p> <p>Payroll earnings and deductions balancing</p> <p>Staff work time reports and subsequent audits</p> <p>Electronic work time and attendance system (TimeClockPlus)</p> <p>Aesop electronic substitute teacher call-out system</p>

FIGURE 4–2 (CONTINUED)
LYTLE ISD STAFF WITH HR RESPONSIBILITIES BY POSITION TITLE
SCHOOL YEAR 2016–17

POSITION TITLE	MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES
Office Clerks	Staff applications
	Staff folders and applicant files
	Staff service records: verification, preparation, and maintenance
	Worker's Compensation claims
	Substitute teacher processes and files
	Health insurance applications and claims
	Educator Certification and renewals
	Professional development and training sign-in logs
	Salary verification forms filing
	Job description filing
	Records and other documents storage

SOURCE: Legislative Budget Board School Review Team, December 2016, Lytle ISD, December 2016

FIGURE 4–3
LYTLE ISD PAYROLL EXPENDITURES AS PERCENTAGE OF GENERAL FUNDS COMPARED TO PEER DISTRICTS
SCHOOL YEAR 2015–16

CATEGORY	LYTLE ISD	CAMERON ISD	POTEET ISD	SHEPHERD ISD
Total Expenditures	\$15.6 million	\$14.6 million	\$17.3 million	\$15.3 million
Payroll Expenditures	\$12.3 million	\$10.4 million	\$12.6 million	\$11.9 million
Payroll Percentage	79.4%	71.3%	73.1%	77.6%
Total Staff FTE (1)	280.9	228.6	288.5	272.4

NOTE (1) FTE = full time equivalent.

SOURCES: Texas Education Agency (TEA), TEA Snapshot 2016 and Public Education Information Management (PEIMS) District Actual Financial Report, school year 2015–16.

FIGURE 4–4
LYTLE ISD AVERAGE BASE SALARIES COMPARED TO PEER DISTRICTS
SCHOOL YEAR 2015–16

EMPLOYEE TYPE	LYTLE ISD	CAMERON ISD	POTEET ISD	SHEPHERD ISD
Total All Staff	\$38,400	\$37,172	\$40,575	\$38,748
Total Teaching Staff	\$48,807	\$45,847	\$47,552	\$46,658
Pre-Kindergarten	\$49,774	\$41,098	\$51,463	\$40,785
Kindergarten	\$46,854	\$48,691	\$42,936	\$45,771
Elementary (Grades 1-6)	\$47,322	\$51,550	\$52,389	\$48,121
Middle School (Grades 7-8)	\$46,313	\$41,462	\$46,837	\$45,552

FIGURE 4–4 (CONTINUED)
LYTLE ISD AVERAGE BASE SALARIES COMPARED TO PEER DISTRICTS
SCHOOL YEAR 2015–16

EMPLOYEE TYPE	LYTLE ISD	CAMERON ISD	POTEET ISD	SHEPHERD ISD
High School (Grades 9-12)	\$50,002	\$46,323	\$49,300	\$49,957
Total Support Staff	\$51,885	\$48,152	\$56,745	\$60,048
Counselor	\$55,797	\$53,333	\$62,919	\$58,441
Other Campus Professionals	\$49,105	\$39,149	\$55,643	\$59,991
Other Non-Instructional District	\$45,694	\$44,218	\$58,456	\$66,327
Total Administrative Staff	\$77,824	\$85,590	\$76,447	\$73,504
Principal	\$80,319	\$83,430	\$81,167	\$73,547
Assistant Principal	\$67,329	\$61,368	\$65,818	\$60,987
Superintendent	\$140,000	\$122,500	\$116,747	\$116,200
Total Professional Staff	\$51,943	\$48,953	\$52,135	\$50,316
Educational Aide	\$16,040	\$18,016	\$18,485	\$19,502
Auxiliary	\$19,474	\$19,083	\$23,952	\$23,468

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS), Standard Reports, school year 2015-16.

Figure 4–5 shows the student-to-teacher ratios and student-to-staff ratios for Lytle ISD and its peer districts. Lytle ISD staffing ratios for both student-to-teacher and student-to-staff are the lowest in the peer group.

FIGURE 4–5
LYTLE ISD STAFF COMPOSITION COMPARED TO PEER DISTRICTS
SCHOOL YEAR 2015–16

SCHOOL DISTRICT	STUDENT-TEACHER RATIO	STUDENT-STAFF RATIO
Lytle	13.6	6.0
Cameron	16.0	7.7
Poteet	14.2	6.2
Shepherd	14.4	7.0
State	17.4	9.7

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) Snapshot, November 2016.

Lytle ISD staff receive health insurance provided by the Teacher Retirement System (TRS). A third-party administrator provides the district’s supplemental insurance.

The payroll supervisor is the district’s contact when staff seek information about benefits and insurance.

Lytle ISD contracts with the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) policy service to assist in developing and maintaining board policies to govern the district and Regional Education Service Center XX (Region 20) for teacher training and staff services. Lytle ISD maintains a pool of qualified teachers in hard to fill areas such as special education and secondary math and science.

FINDINGS

- ◆ Lytle ISD lacks a process to ensure that staffing decisions are consistent with the district’s budget and student enrollment.
- ◆ Lytle ISD does not regularly review or update job descriptions.
- ◆ Lytle ISD’s performance evaluation system is ineffective, and the district does not consistently evaluate staff annually.

- ◆ Lytle ISD does not have a comprehensive plan for managing staff certification or professional development.
- ◆ Lytle ISD does not have a board policy preventing one family member from supervising and evaluating another family member's performance.
- ◆ Lytle ISD does not have written procedures for performing human resources functions.
- ◆ Lytle ISD does not ensure the security and confidentiality of staff files and records.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ◆ **Recommendation 14: Use staffing allocation formulas or industry standard guidelines to determine the appropriate number of staff.**
- ◆ **Recommendation 15: Annually review and update all district job descriptions to align job titles with the responsibilities staff perform.**
- ◆ **Recommendation 16: Develop a process and written procedures to manage the district's performance evaluation program in accordance with board policies and state law.**
- ◆ **Recommendation 17: Develop a comprehensive staff file management system that tracks certification and professional development records.**
- ◆ **Recommendation 18: Develop a local policy for board approval that details conditions and procedures when one family member supervises and evaluates another family member.**
- ◆ **Recommendation 19: Develop and implement written procedures and regulations to guide HR functions.**
- ◆ **Recommendation 20: Install locking cabinets and develop procedures to ensure that all staff records are stored in compliance with board policy.**

DETAILED FINDINGS

STAFFING GUIDELINES (REC. 14)

Lytle ISD lacks a process to ensure that staffing decisions are consistent with the district's budget and student enrollment.

Budgeting in Lytle ISD is a decentralized process. Principals and department heads develop preliminary budget requests for their campuses and departments and submit them to the Finance Department. The business manager and superintendent use these requests to write the following year's budget.

Principals and department heads determine the need for additional staff and present the request to the superintendent for approval. If the superintendent approves the new position, the HR director assigns a funding code and instructs the business manager to adjust the budget for salary and benefits. The district does not use projections or formulas for staffing. The business manager develops the budget but is not involved in any staffing discussions. As a result, the district has added teaching positions in school years 2015–16 and 2016–17 despite student enrollment decreasing over that period. To meet future budget shortfalls, the district plans to use attrition as the primary method to reduce expenditures.

Principals reported that class sizes and student-to-teacher ratios for the required grades conform to state law for staffing and comply with waivers for allocating staff granted through the Lytle ISD District of Innovation Plan for school year 2016–17. A District of Innovation may seek exemptions through waivers from certain requirements that ordinarily apply to school districts. These exemptions include minimum minutes of instruction, class size and student-to-teacher ratios, teacher certification, and teacher benefits. TEA approved Lytle ISD's District of Innovation designation for school year 2016–17, so Lytle ISD added Board Policy EEP (LOCAL), AF (LOCAL), DK (LOCAL), EEB (LEGAL), DEAA (LEGAL), and AF (LEGAL), which address waivers for teacher certification and class sizes for kindergarten through grade four.

Lytle ISD's staffing model does not use projections of student enrollment to staff appropriately, resulting in higher than necessary salary expenditures. As shown in **Figure 4–3**, the district spends the highest percentage of funds on payroll of its peers. As shown in **Figure 4–5**, Lytle ISD staffing ratios for student-to-teacher and student-to-staff are significantly lower than its peer group and the state average.

AdvancED identifies school staff planning in its standards. In its Standards for Quality – Schools, AdvancED's Standard 4 discusses resources and support systems. Standard 4 lists specific indicators to determine if school districts have the resources to provide services to ensure success for all students. Indicator 4.1 states: "Qualified professional and support

staff are sufficient in number to fulfill their roles and responsibilities necessary to support the school's purpose, direction, and the educational program." While Indicator 4.1 does not provide specific staffing standards, the indicator evaluates whether school leaders use a formal, systematic process to determine the number of personnel necessary to fill all the roles and responsibilities necessary to support the school purpose, educational programs, and continuous improvement."

Clint ISD implemented position control, which identifies each employment position in the district and the associated salary budgeted for the position. Position control is a management tool that entities use to allocate financial resources to staffing needs. The district enters the number of approved positions per location into an information system, even if the position is vacant. Clint ISD links its position control system to the annual financial budget and during each budget cycle, schools and administrators identify staffing needs.

The Clint ISD Personnel Service Department prepares a monthly hiring report for the board that lists staff hired for that month. According to Personnel Service Department staff, the process of board-approved position budgets has expedited the hiring process from weeks to less than five days. Some board members said that this process takes the hiring approval out of their hands. The position control process establishes a means for the board to manage the quantity of staff employed without micromanaging the hiring process.

The Clint ISD business staff work with the superintendent, administrators, and schools to identify financial resources to fund their needs. The business staff present the proposed position budget by school, department, and job-classification to the board for approval with the annual financial budget. When the district needs to fill a position, the Personnel Service Department reviews the approved position control database, and the superintendent approves the recommended new hire. However, if the position is for an administrator or is not included with the approved position budget, the board must then approve the position and candidate before the district can hire the staff.

Lytle ISD should use staffing allocation formulas or industry standard guidelines to determine the appropriate number of staff.

The district should use industry standards as a model to develop staffing guidelines that fit the profile of its students.

The business manager and superintendent should develop a process and procedures to integrate staff planning into Lytle ISD's HR system and to use a staff formula. In this process, the central office should meet with principals individually and collectively to discuss campus needs. Once this team has developed a system, the business manager and the HR director should document the process in an HR procedures manual. The HR Department should train campus staff on the procedures.

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

JOB DESCRIPTIONS (REC. 15)

Lytle ISD does not regularly review or update job descriptions.

Lytle ISD Board Policy DC (LOCAL) requires the superintendent or a designee to define the qualifications, duties, and responsibilities of all positions and ensure that job descriptions are current and accessible to staff. The office clerks enter the name, job title, and associated details of each position into the Texas Enterprise Information System (TxEIS), which the district uses for its business and student administrative software for payroll and reporting purposes. However, some job descriptions entered into TxEIS are outdated, incomplete, inaccurately describe actual position responsibilities, or describe positions that do not exist. In several cases, the job duties entered into TxEIS do not match the duties that the position actually performs.

Lytle ISD also maintains a district database with the names and job titles of all staff and a list of job descriptions. **Figure 4-6** shows a cross reference of Lytle ISD's database in TxEIS with current staff job titles and job descriptions in the district database. Lytle ISD uses generic job description templates published by TASB, but has not individualized them to reflect the actual duties of Lytle ISD staff. Several of the job titles in TxEIS had no effective date and different job descriptions.

Lytle ISD's TxEIS database also included many job titles that did not correlate with existing district staff. **Figure 4-7** shows the 30 job descriptions that appear in TxEIS without assigned staff.

Lytle ISD staff reported that they had not recently seen their job descriptions and some staff reported that they were unsure if they had job descriptions.

Without a written list of specific job responsibilities and work expectations, Lytle ISD staff lack a clear and concise

FIGURE 4–6
LYTLE ISD COMPARISON OF STAFF JOB TITLES AND JOB DESCRIPTIONS
DECEMBER 2016

TXEIS JOB TITLE	EFFECTIVE DATE	REVIEW TEAM OBSERVATIONS
Accounts Payable	2013	
Aide	Not dated	Other job titles listed: Classroom Aide; Instructional Aide
Assistant Band Director	Not dated	
Assistant Principal	2016	
Assistant Superintendent	Not dated	Not formatted to appear as a job description
Athletics Secretary	Not dated	Other job title listed: Secretary to Athletics Director
Band Director	Not Dated	
Bus Aide Monitor	2010	
Bus Driver	Not dated	
Business Manager	2010	
Cafeteria Clerk	Not dated	Other job titles listed: Applications Clerk; Cafeteria Clerk – Vendor/Deposit
Cafeteria Full Time 7 Hours	Not dated	Other job title listed: Food Service Worker
Cafeteria Manager	Not dated	
Clerk (Special Pop)	Not dated	Other job title listed: Special Populations Clerk
Curriculum Learning Leaders (CLL)	Not dated	
Counselor Secretary	2009	
Crossing Guard	2012	
Custodian Supervisor	2010	
DAEP Teacher	Not dated	
Data and Attendance Clerk	Not dated	
Diagnostician	2010	
Director of iPads	Not dated	
Director of Operations	2010	
Director, Athletics	Not dated	
Director, Food Service	Not dated	
Director, Human Resources	2010	Other job title listed: Federal/HR Director
Director, Special Education	2010	
Director, Technology	2010	
District Computer Technician	Not dated	
Elementary Counselor	Not dated	Other job title listed: Counselor
Elementary Secretary	2003	Other job title listed: Campus Secretary
Full Time Custodian	2010	
Full Time Maintenance	2010	Other job title listed: General Maintenance Worker
High School Secretary	Not dated	

FIGURE 4–6 (CONTINUED)
LYTLE ISD COMPARISON OF STAFF JOB TITLES AND JOB DESCRIPTIONS
DECEMBER 2016

TXEIS JOB TITLE	EFFECTIVE DATE	REVIEW TEAM OBSERVATIONS
Interventionist	2010	Includes two different job descriptions
Junior High Secretary	Not dated	
Librarian Aide	Not dated	
Media Specialist	2010	Other job title listed: District Librarian/Media Specialist
Migrant Service Coordinator	2015	
Nurse	2010	Other job title listed: School Nurse
Nurse's Aide	2013	
Office Clerk	2010	Other job title listed: HR Clerk – Substitute Teacher Program; includes three different job descriptions
Operations Secretary	2010	
Payroll, Benefits	2010	Other job title listed: Payroll Clerk
PBL Coordinator	Not dated	
PEIMS Clerk	Not dated	Other job title listed: Data and Attendance Clerk
Primary School Secretary	Not dated	
Principal	2008	
Principal, DAEP	2016	
Public Relations Director	2010	
Public Relations Officer	2010	
Secondary School Counselor	Not dated	Other job title listed: Counselor
Special Ed Bus Driver	Not dated	
Special Education Aide	2013	Other job title listed: Special Education Aide Life Skills
Special Education Secretary	2009	Other job title listed: Federal and Special Program Clerk
Special Education Counselor	None	
Speech Therapy Special Ed	2010	Other job title listed: Speech Pathologist
Superintendent's Secretary	Not dated	
Teacher	Not dated	
Teacher, Special Education	Not dated	
Teacher/Coach	Not dated	
Transportation Manager	Not dated	
Vocational Agriculture	Not dated	

NOTE: TxEIS=Texas Enterprise Information System.

SOURCES: Legislative Budget Board, School Review Team, December 2016; Lytle ISD Job Descriptions; December 2016; TxEIS Student Information System, December 2016.

**FIGURE 4–7
JOB DESCRIPTIONS SUBMITTED BUT NO STAFF ASSIGNED
DECEMBER 2016**

JOB TITLE		
At-Risk Coordinator	Athletic Trainer	Bus Maintenance Worker
Director Career and Technology	Playground and Classroom Monitor	College Readiness Coordinator
Adult and Community Education Coordinator	Computer Lab Aide	Data Entry Clerk-Information Services
Director of Business	Federal/Special Programs Director	Gifted and Talented Coordinator
Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning Technician	Interim High School Principal	In-School Suspension Aide
Instructional Technology Coordinator	Lead Mechanic Transportation	Behavior Life Skills Instructional Aide
Mechanic Helper	Transportation Mechanic	Migrant Recruiter Clerk
Payroll Supervisor/Receptionist	PEIMS and Attendance Clerk	Secretary to Principal
Special Needs Aide	Receptionist	Special Programs Clerk
Special Program Attendance Clerk	Media Specialist	Parent Involvement Liaison

SOURCES: Legislative Budget Board, School Review Team, December 2016; Lytle ISD Job Descriptions; December 2016; TxEIS Student Information System, December 2016.

resource to guide their job performance. Supervisors also lack a job description as a measuring tool to ensure that staff are meeting job expectations. Lack of accurate job descriptions could lead to problems regarding expected role and responsibility for staff. For example, terminated staff may use the lack of a job description as a way to challenge the termination in court. Additionally, accurate job descriptions are essential in the hiring process to screen applicants and ensure that job postings reflect necessary skills.

The Society of Human Resources Management provides a guide for including the standard components of job descriptions. These components are:

- date when job description was written or last revision date;
- job status: exempt or nonexempt in accordance with the federal Fair Labor Standards Act and whether the job is full-time or part-time;
- position title;
- objectives of the position: what the position is supposed to accomplish, how it affects other positions and the organization;
- supervision received; to whom the staff in the position reports;
- supervisory responsibilities; direct reports, if any, and the level of supervision;

- job summary: an outline of job responsibilities;
- essential functions: detailed tasks, duties and responsibilities;
- competency or position requirements: knowledge, skills, and abilities;
- quality and quantity standards: minimum levels required to meet the job requirements;
- education and experience: required levels;
- time spent performing tasks: percentages, if used, should be distributed to equal 100 percent;
- physical factors: type of environment associated with job, such as whether it is indoor or outdoor;
- working conditions: shifts, overtime requirements as needed;
- unplanned activities: other duties as assigned;
- disclaimer: statement that indicates that the job description is not designed to cover or contain a compulsive list of activities, duties, or responsibilities that are required of the staff; and
- signature lines: validates the job description; signature indicates both the manager and staff understand the requirements, essential functions, and duties of the position; additional line for highest-ranking administrator.

Lytle ISD should annually review and update all district job descriptions to align job titles with the responsibilities staff perform. HR staff could accomplish this recommendation by following these steps:

- review all existing district job descriptions in TxEIS and remove all outdated job descriptions;
- require all supervisors to annually review, update, and revise the job descriptions for all staff who report to them and present job descriptions to the superintendent for approval;
- distribute job descriptions and salary verifications to all staff to review and sign; and
- require supervisors to review job descriptions annually for staff that report to them and revise job descriptions accordingly.

The supervisors should return all finalized job descriptions to the HR Department for filing. HR staff should add this to the department's written procedures to ensure that the process continues to occur annually.

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS (REC. 16)

Lytle ISD's performance evaluation system is ineffective, and the district does not consistently evaluate staff annually. Lytle ISD board policy requires an annual written evaluation of all staff. Board Policy DN (LOCAL) – Performance Appraisal states that:

- All district employees shall be periodically appraised in the performance of their duties. The District's employee evaluation and appraisal system shall be administered consistent with the general principles set out below.
- The employee's performance of assigned duties and other job-related criteria shall provide the basis for the employee's evaluation and appraisal. Employees shall be informed of the criteria on which they will be evaluated.
- Evaluation and appraisal ratings shall be based on the evaluation instrument and cumulative performance data gathered by supervisors throughout the year. Each employee shall have at least one evaluative conference annually, except as otherwise provided by policy, to discuss the written evaluation and may have as many conferences about performance of duties as the supervisor deems necessary.

- Appraisal records and forms, reports, correspondence, and memoranda may be placed in each employee's personnel records to document performance.
- All employees shall receive a copy of their annual written evaluation.
- Employees may present complaints regarding the evaluation and appraisal process in accordance with the District's complaint policy for employees.

Principals use the Framework for Teaching and the evaluation rubric developed by TEA. Lytle ISD had evaluations of principals on file for school year 2015–16, but none on file for school years 2011–12 to 2014–15. The files of two principals who were assistant principals prior to school year 2016–17 did not contain any recent evaluations as assistant principals. Additionally, two long-term central office staff said they had never received a formal evaluation throughout their employment. Lytle ISD also has no system to identify missing annual evaluations, to ensure that supervisors of non-teaching staff meet with their staff or complete annual written performance evaluations, or that evaluations become a part of staff files.

Not evaluating or inconsistently evaluating the performance of staff does not comply with Lytle ISD board policy. Additionally, the Texas Education Code, Section 21.3541(g) requires that each school district shall appraise each principal annually. Board Policy DNB (LOCAL and LEGAL) states that district funds may not be used to pay an administrator who has not been appraised in the preceding 15 months.

If a school district fails to conduct evaluations consistently, underperforming staff could assume that their job performance is acceptable. The district could have difficulty dismissing staff for unsatisfactory performance if the district had never informed the staff of the issue. This could also lead to allegations of disparate treatment or lead to staff grievances or lawsuits. In addition, without periodic review of their job performance, staff do not have the opportunity to receive input from their supervisor and improve their performance. When school leaders do not receive performance evaluations, the opportunity is lost to gauge the effectiveness of goals and objectives set by the board and superintendent.

Killeen ISD uses a staff appraisal system that ensures all staff receive an annual evaluation. The district provides written procedures, forms, and an appraisal calendar. Contract renewals occur only after filing and verification of each appraisal. The Killeen ISD superintendent assigned its HR

Department the responsibility of overseeing and managing the appraisal system, writing procedures and updating them annually to ensure consistency, and developing the appraisal calendar for each staff group.

Fort Bend ISD has implemented an appraisal system that is both performance-based and job-specific for its non-teacher and non-principal staff groups. Each staff and his or her supervisor develop annual appraisal instruments using the essential functions and work responsibilities of the job description as criteria for measuring the quality of the work performed. This collaboration includes discussion regarding goal setting and the contents of the appraisal instrument between staff and supervisor at a required pre-appraisal conference. Like Killeen ISD, Fort Bend ISD renews contracts after filing and verifying each staff appraisal.

Lytle ISD should develop a process and written procedures to manage the district's performance evaluation program in accordance with board policies and state law.

The superintendent and HR director should develop procedures for Lytle ISD's annual appraisal process. With superintendent oversight and approval, the HR director should review all existing evaluation instruments for district staff, including the principal evaluation instrument to ensure it meets legal requirements outlined in Board Policies DN (LOCAL) and DNB (LOCAL and LEGAL). If evaluation instruments are outdated or do not exist for some positions, the HR Department should develop an evaluation instrument using a current job description as a guide. The HR director should write guidelines with detailed steps and dates to ensure annual evaluation of all staff.

After the district develops written procedures with established evaluation deadlines for each staff category, the HR director should provide training to the principals and other departmental supervisors about the requirements. The HR director should also establish a review schedule to annually update evaluations and request feedback from supervisors regarding necessary updates to evaluation instruments.

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

STAFF FILE MANAGEMENT (REC. 17)

Lytle ISD does not have a comprehensive plan for managing staff certification or professional development.

Lytle ISD provides in-person and online training to teachers. The assistant superintendent's duties include serving as the

director of curriculum and instruction, which includes planning and providing professional development. The district regularly offers districtwide professional development and allocates sufficient funding for training. In addition to the traditional in-person staff development options, Lytle ISD offers online training for staff through EduHero. The course catalog available to district staff includes 121 courses as of December 2016, ranging from compliance courses such as Blood borne Pathogens to educator support courses such as Classroom Management and Section 504 for Teachers. EduHero codes its courses as compliance, technology, webinar, or all three. Most of the courses are one hour in length. There are also specific courses for substitute teachers. While there are required compliance courses, the HR director reported that there is no minimum number of training classes or hours required of staff.

The district does not have a written professional development plan aligned with the District Improvement Plan (DIP), Campus Improvement Plans (CIP), or department goals. Staff keep annual logs of their training for the year and submit them to the principal of their respective campus. However, the district does not monitor completion or compliance with training requirements at the district level. The central office does not maintain records of training that each campus conducts.

Board Policy DMA (LEGAL) requires that staff safety courses include suicide prevention training, mental health promotion, substance abuse prevention, sexual abuse and maltreatment of children, and cardiopulmonary resuscitation and the use of an automated external defibrillator. In the absence of a written training plan, the district cannot ensure that it meets the requirements of Board Policy DMA (LEGAL).

The district also does not effectively monitor staff professional certification and credentials. Lytle ISD Board Policy DBA (LOCAL) requires staff to submit documentation that they have passed the required certification exam, or obtained or renewed their credentials to HR in a timely manner. The Lytle ISD Employee Handbook outlines this requirement. Although the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) notifies staff when their certification is eligible for renewal, SBEC does not automatically notify the school districts employing them. Each school district has electronic access through a secure online website to the SBEC database that contains information about certification and renewal status. The HR director reported that she has access to this system and does check the SBEC database to verify certification status of new staff as part of employment onboarding.

Lytle ISD's HR Department does not have procedures to monitor this process regularly and consistently, despite the job description of the office clerk's duties that include servicing staff records and renewing educator certification. In reviewing a sample of Lytle ISD staff files and folders, the review team found expired certificates for a principal and a teacher. There are no procedures to ensure that the district regularly monitors or reviews certification for long-term staff, or that the office clerks' duties regarding staff records and certification conformed to the tasks listed in that position's job description.

Failure to renew a certificate and/or failure to notify HR could have negative consequences both to the district and to staff. By relying on staff to report their certification status to HR, rather than checking it directly, the district could employ staff who have allowed their certification to lapse. A school district may need to terminate staff contracts unexpectedly if they do not hold a valid certificate or if SBEC suspends or revokes certification.

Killeen ISD annually uploads a data file of Social Security numbers (SSN) of certified staff to SBEC and receives an electronic file of all certificates issued for each of the SSNs listed to determine if any on the list have not been renewed. Each month, Killeen ISD reminds the teachers whose certificates are nearing expiration. Principals contact teachers in the case of non-renewals and ensure that the teachers complete the online renewal. Once renewed, the HR Department adds a copy of the certificate to the staff file. If the contract is not renewed, the principal reports the teacher to the HR Department.

Figure 4-8 contains recommended steps to develop and write a professional development plan.

Lytle ISD should develop a comprehensive staff file management system that tracks certification and professional development records.

The HR director should review all staff files and identify those lacking necessary certificates. Once all files have valid certificates, the office clerks should complete a list of expiration dates and establish a process that notifies staff of upcoming expiration dates. The HR Department should complete this process at least annually. The district should assemble a committee that includes the superintendent, assistant superintendent, the HR director, and campus and department heads. This committee should determine the appropriate number of training hours and courses, and develop a training and professional development plan for

staff that meets board requirements and aligns with the District Improvement Plan. The assistant superintendent should communicate with staff their responsibility to meet recommended training and professional development. The HR director should receive certificates of completed training and ensure that the office clerk places them in staff files. The HR director should coordinate with campus and department heads to ensure that staff complete the required training and professional development within the time period required.

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

SUPERVISING AND EVALUATING FAMILY MEMBERS (REC. 18)

Lytle ISD does not have a board policy preventing one family member from supervising and evaluating another family member's performance.

Several staff in Lytle ISD are related biologically or through marriage, and in some situations, a family member may directly supervise another family member. One of the bus drivers is the spouse of the transportation manager, and the spouse of the assistant superintendent is an assistant principal at the elementary school campus. The operations director evaluates the related bus driver, and the elementary principal evaluates the assistant principal. Although the district expects the non-family members to evaluate the family member, because of the functions of the positions, the staff supervise the family members.

The Lytle ISD superintendent evaluates the performance of each of the four principals. In August 2006, the board approved the appointment of the superintendent's sister as principal of the primary school. This meant that the superintendent would be supervising her sister as primary school principal. Board members and the superintendent told the review team that they were satisfied with the hiring of the superintendent's sister as principal of the primary school. The superintendent told the review team that the board attorney had assured the board that the board appointed the superintendent's sister, not the superintendent, and thus was not in conflict with Board Policy DBE (LEGAL) on nepotism. At the time of the onsite review, the superintendent was considering requesting the assistant superintendent to review her sister, the primary school principal. In an interview with the review team, the primary school principal told the review team that she did not know who her evaluator would be, but she assumed it would be the assistant superintendent.

FIGURE 4–8
STEPS TO DEVELOP A WRITTEN, SHORT- OR LONG-TERM DISTRICTWIDE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN
DECEMBER 2013

STEP	ACTION	TASK
1	Analyze student-learning needs.	Gather multiple forms of student data.
2	Identify characteristics of community, district, school, department, and staff.	Analyze the data to identify trends, patterns, and areas of needed improvement. Gather data about the learning context. Identify the features of the context that influence student and educator learning. Identify potential contributors to the current state of student learning. Write SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, results-based, and time-bound) goals for student learning. Gather data about teachers, principals, and other educators.
3	Develop improvement goals and specific student outcomes.	Review research and evidence on the success of current programs already in place and funded. Review research and evidence on the success of professional development programs or practices. Identify those relevant to the current goals and objectives.
4	Identify learning needs of district educators and develop goals and objectives.	Develop educator SMART objectives. Define knowledge, attributes, skills, aspirations, and behavior changes (KASAB). Develop logic model.
5	Study research for specific professional development programs, strategies, or interventions.	Study professional learning research related to goal area and context features. Identify research- or evidence-based practices.
6	Plan professional development implementation and evaluation, including establishing a logic model for specific professional development programs.	Develop theory of change with assumptions. Develop logic model.
7	Implement, evaluate, and sustain the professional development and learning	Enact the plan. Monitor progress and adjust as needed. Evaluate progress and results. Sustain support to achieve deep implementation over time.

SOURCE: Adapted from "Develop a Professional Learning Plan," Journal of Staff Development. Vol. 34 No.6. December 2013.

Board Policy DBE (LEGAL) states that a public official may not appoint a person to a position that is to be directly or indirectly compensated from public funds if that person is related to the public official by consanguinity (blood) or affinity (marriage). State law and board policy address nepotism in hiring, but not in supervising the work of a family member, and the board did not adopt a local policy to address supervision.

Supervising a relative can be problematic to staff. Having a relative in the organization could affect the morale of other staff. For example, if a relative of a superior receives a promotion, other

staff may perceive this as unfair and could hinder performance. Dissatisfied staff may also use a familial relationship between a superior and other staff as the basis for a legal proceeding if they feel the superior is treating them unfairly.

The Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired (TSBVI) states in Board Policy DBE (LOCAL) "no employee shall be directly, or indirectly, supervised by an individual to who he, or she, is related by consanguinity within the third degree or by affinity within the second degree." Consanguinity within the third degree refers to relationships with a parent, child,

grandparent, grandchild, sister/brother, great-grandparent, great-grandchild, aunt/uncle, or niece/nephew. Affinity relates to marriage between the supervisor and the staff, or the parent, child, grandparent, grandchild, or sister/brother of the staff. By including supervisory restrictions in their board policy, TSBVI ensures that complications that could occur in supervising a family member do not occur.

Lytle ISD should develop a local policy for board approval that details conditions and procedures when one family member supervises and evaluates another family member. The superintendent and HR director should identify all current instances where this situation could exist and prepare possible changes to supervisory and evaluation duties for board review. Checking for nepotism should also be a part of the job employment application to determine if applicants are related to other district staff, and if a family member could potentially supervise an applicant. The HR director should add the details of the nepotism supervisory policy into the Lytle ISD Employee Handbook.

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

WRITTEN PROCEDURES (REC. 19)

Lytle ISD does not have written procedures for performing HR functions.

The HR director supervises HR staff and oversees HR operations. These duties include recruiting and vetting job applicants, and ensuring that new staff receive proper training. The HR director works with the principals and directors who present requests for new positions. The superintendent approves the position, and the HR director posts the position. Principals recommend applicants to the HR director, who conducts the first interview. The superintendent conducts the second interview and presents a job offer. The HR director meets with new staff to review the Employee Handbook, which the district provides in hard copy and electronically on the Lytle ISD website. New teachers attend the new teacher orientation before the beginning of the school year.

However, Lytle ISD does not have documented procedures that describe how staff perform critical HR functions such as recruitment, benefits administration, staff orientation, and maintenance of staff records. The district does not have a HR procedures manual that defines and outlines the HR processes, functions, responsibilities, or district HR policies. Lytle ISD has an Employee Handbook that introduces and

summarizes district policies for staff, but it does not provide procedures or instructions that address the role of HR staff in overseeing and implementing these processes.

Without a comprehensive HR procedures manual that defines and outlines the HR functions and responsibilities, the district cannot ensure consistency in implementing HR functions. Lack of uniformity in administration of HR throughout the district may increase the district's vulnerability to litigation. For example, a lack of consistency in job postings and interview and vetting procedures could raise questions of the district's fairness in hiring one applicant over another.

Without consistent procedures, different staff requesting information about steps needed to apply for retirement conceivably could receive different information. Staff requesting to view contents of his or her staff record in central administration may not be aware that the requests for access require advance notice. Principals have no guidelines by which to investigate reported or suspected harassment.

Lytle ISD is a member of TASB, which offers best practice models and is available to assist school districts with expert advice in the development of procedures and regulations. TASB has an Administrative Procedures Manual that describes procedures with references to legal and local policy. The Administrative Procedures Manual is a guide for developing additional written procedures for HR functions as needed. Topics include recruitment, job posting, Office of Civil Rights (OCR) compliance, hiring process, staff records, job description management, performance evaluation management, HR best practice training, new staff orientation, and staff benefits.

Figure 4-9 is an analysis of some HR functions in Lytle ISD that lack consistent implementation, oversight, and management compared to industry best practices.

HR audits assist a school district identify whether an HR Department's specific practice areas or processes are adequate, legal, and effective. In lieu of a full-scale HR audit, the Society of Human Resources Management (SHRM) recommends a thorough review of HR administrative rules and procedures to help identify gaps in HR practices. Once these gaps are identified, an HR Department can then take corrective action to minimize lawsuits or regulatory violations. SHRM recommends having well-written administrative procedures to identify issues and prevent problems before they arise.

FIGURE 4–9
LYTLE ISD HUMAN RESOURCES ACTIVITIES COMPARED TO INDUSTRY STANDARDS
SCHOOL YEAR 2015–16

TASK	INDUSTRY STANDARD	LYTLE ISD PRACTICE
RECRUITMENT	Develop recruitment strategies/goals based on needs	Strategic plans do not exist to increase staff diversity and meet the needs of limited English students
JOB POSTING	Post jobs on district and professional websites	Jobs posted on website and TASANET
COMPLIANCE WITH OWNERSHIP AND CONTROL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS	Job postings and hire documents meet Office of Civil Rights requirement of non-discrimination language in document footer	Not all hire documents have the required Office of Civil Rights notice of non-discrimination in document footers
HIRING PROCESS	Define procedure for selecting interview committee members	Written procedures exist but are not distributed or implemented
	Procedure exists for supervisor to inform HR of vacancies for prompt posting	No written process for supervisor to inform HR of vacancies; some postings delayed
	Hiring timeline exists from time of posting to recommendation of finalist	Written procedures do not address specific timelines
	Define screening process in choosing applicants who meet qualifications	Written procedures exist but do not articulate screening process
	Train members of interview committee on interview protocols that meet Equal Employment Opportunity Commission guidelines	Written procedures exist but are not distributed or implemented
	Determine number of required reference checks and provide guidance for the process and method to record results	Written procedures exist but are not provided to supervisors; evidence of completion of reference checks is inconsistent
STAFF RECORDS	Collect and file all federal and state required documents	Required federal and state documents not consistently filed
	Highly qualified status paperwork consistently filed	Highly qualified status documentation not consistently filed
	Criminal history background check receipt filed for all staff	Criminal history background check receipts not consistently filed
	Staff records are organized in file	Documents not consistently collected
	Staff files are stored in locked, fire-proof cabinets	Staff files are not all filed in locked, fire-proof cabinets
JOB DESCRIPTION MANAGEMENT	Job descriptions are fully developed and specific to the district	Job descriptions lack consistency, and information on required experience and some are template model versions
PERFORMANCE EVALUATION MANAGEMENT	All district staff job performance is evaluated and filed	Principals file teacher appraisals electronically. Non-exempt staff evaluations are not consistently filed in personnel file
	A check off system exists to ensure all staff are evaluated	Check off system does not exist so supervisors know all evaluations are complete
SUPERVISORS AND STAFF TRAINED IN HR BEST PRACTICE	HR training is planned so that district stays abreast of best practice	No evidence of an HR training calendar to ensure on-going HR training
TRAINING OF NEW STAFF IN HR DISTRICT SOFTWARE	HR maintains a training calendar so that new supervisors are trained in district HR software	Training calendars do not exist
NEW STAFF ORIENTATION	Provide new staff orientation and training on policies	Training is completed at the beginning of the year; building principal provides training to staff hired thereafter

SOURCES: Texas Association of School Boards, Lytle ISD, November 2016; Legislative Budget Board School Performance Review Team, December 2016.

Lytle ISD should develop and implement written procedures and regulations to guide HR functions.

The superintendent should direct the HR director, the payroll supervisor, and the payroll clerk to meet with campus principals and department heads to determine a plan for developing HR procedures. The HR director should emphasize procedures that require the most interaction with stakeholders. A writing team, led by the HR director, working with other staff actively involved in a specific HR action, should develop the HR procedures. For example, writing procedures to change a name or contact address requires action from both the HR director and the payroll clerk; therefore, both positions would provide input for that procedure. The HR director could upload completed procedures into the HR section of the Lytle ISD website. The HR director and HR staff should develop a plan to review and update these procedures annually.

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

STAFF FILES (REC. 20)

Lytle ISD does not ensure the security and confidentiality of staff files and records.

The district has a fire-rated, waterproof vault that stores most current staff files. However, at the time of the onsite review, the district stored many documents awaiting filing in expandable cardboard folders on the floor underneath workspaces. The district also maintained former staff's files in regular, non-fire-rated file cabinets in the work/break room. HR staff do not keep these filing cabinets consistently locked, so access to them compromises their confidentiality. Access to the vault is not limited to HR staff; other central administration office staff have walk-in access for business documents, legal documents, and general office supplies kept in the same space as the files. The door to the vault opens into the workstations used by the building receptionist and the superintendent's secretary and onto a main walkway between the superintendent's office and other departments. At the time that the review team requested access to the room housing staff folders, the door to the vault was open.

Because staff records contain personal information, they are highly sensitive and confidential. Staff records can include birth dates, social security numbers, and medical history. Lytle ISD Board Policy GBA (LEGAL) Public Information Program: Access to Public Information addresses the confidentiality of staff records and their contents. It states

that social security numbers, performance evaluations, results from certification exams, credit or debit card numbers, and other identifying information must remain confidential. Lytle ISD Board Policy DBA (LOCAL) states, "the district shall keep an employee's social security number confidential."

Lytle ISD's HR Department does not have written procedures for storing, managing, or reviewing staff files to implement board policy. By not keeping files in the vault, and not limiting physical access to the vault to authorized staff, Lytle ISD does not comply with its board policies. Lack of diligent records management procedures is not consistent with the board policy.

Best practices dictate that school districts should have clear records management procedures to ensure compliance with board local and legal policies. **Figure 4–10** shows TASB's recommended procedures for records management.

Culberson County-Allamoore ISD (CCAISD) has a system for filing and storing staff records that allows for controlled access and security in accordance with state and federal guidelines that address the organization of the files themselves and the systems in place for file security. Locked cabinets in the primary custodian's office house all files. All former staff files are in the storage vault in the main office, which remains locked at all times. The only key holders for these files are the primary custodian and the superintendent. A third key to the active files cabinet is in the locked storage vault. Staff may review their files at any time that the file custodian is available to access them. The district's policy manual outlines the protocols for reviewing a staff file and a set of procedures and accompanying forms are in place for executing the policy.

Lytle ISD should install locking cabinets and develop procedures to ensure that all staff records are stored in compliance with board policy.

The district should continue using the vault for storing staff records if only HR staff have access to the file cabinets and written procedures require that staff lock these file cabinets whenever they are not in use by HR staff. The district should replace the file cabinets holding records of retired staff in the work/break room with those that are heavy-duty, lockable, fire-rated and waterproof. The district should install a single four-drawer, lockable, fire-rated, and waterproof file cabinet so that HR staff can secure all active and retired staff folders when not in use and at the end of the work day. HR staff should keep documents awaiting filing in the same secure cabinet within HR.

FIGURE 4–10
RECOMMENDED PROCEDURES FOR ORGANIZING DISTRICT RECORDS
SEPTEMBER 2010

ACTIVITY	PROCEDURES
Record Storage	<p>Create procedures for storage and management of personnel and other district records</p> <p>Ensure storage area is fireproof, and all records are protected from destruction by water damage, corruption, theft</p> <p>Control access to records that may contain confidential information</p> <p>Organize records so that district only stores records that correlate to TSLAC retention guidelines</p>
Manage Record Collection	<p>Separate records that are permanent from records that have a retention date</p> <p>Secure permanent records</p> <p>Organize records by record type as outlined in the TSLAC schedule and clearly mark destruction date on box</p> <p>Organize boxes by destruction dates</p> <p>Annually schedule destruction of non-permanent records that have met their retention dates</p>
Training	<p>Train district staff on established records management procedures</p> <p>Provide guidance on annual purging and organization of records</p>

SOURCE: Texas Association of School Boards, Organizing Personnel Records, September 15, 2010.

The district should strictly control and monitor access to records, whether paper or electronic. The HR Department should have a tracking system for paper records. This system should show the location of the records and who accessed the records, for what reasons, and what actions or changes occurred. Those who have custody and daily management and maintenance of staff records must protect the confidentiality of the records and understand the legal requirements associated with these records. The HR director should evaluate the opportunity to convert the paper records maintenance process to an electronic staff records process.

The fiscal impact assumes that the district will purchase six file cabinets having these specifications: heavily insulated, vertical, four-drawer, fireproof and rated, and waterproof or water-resistant. Five of the cabinets should house files of former staff, and one cabinet should hold working files in the HR staff offices. The estimated one-time cost of each file cabinet is \$2,600, for a total cost of \$15,600 (\$2,600 x 6).

HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT ENHANCEMENT OPPORTUNITY

During the fieldwork, the review team identified additional areas in which the district could enhance its services to students, staff, and the community. This opportunity is not a finding, but it is presented for the district's consideration as it implements the report's other findings and recommendations.

With a small HR department, the district has not needed to measure its performance. The district could implement performance measures, including, for example, the number of district staff per HR staff, average days from position vacancy to hire and staff absentee days per year, to ensure optimal performance of the HR Department and identify any possible areas for improvement.

FISCAL IMPACT

Some of the recommendations provided in this report are based on state or federal laws, rules or regulations, and should be promptly addressed. Other recommendations are based on comparisons to state or industry standards, or accepted best practices, and should be reviewed to determine the level of priority, appropriate timeline, and method of implementation.

RECOMMENDATION	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) OR SAVINGS	ONETIME (COSTS) OR SAVINGS
CHAPTER 4. HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT							
14. Use staffing allocation formulas or industry standard guidelines to determine the appropriate number of staff.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
15. Annually review and update all district job descriptions to align job titles with the responsibilities staff perform.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
16. Develop a process and written procedures to manage the district's performance evaluation program in accordance with board policies and state law.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
17. Develop a comprehensive staff file management system that tracks certification and professional development records.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
18. Develop a local policy for board approval that details conditions and procedures when one family member supervises and evaluates another family member.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
19. Develop and implement written procedures and regulations to guide HR functions.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
20. Install locking cabinets and develop procedures to ensure that all staff records are stored in compliance with board policy.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$15,600)
TOTAL	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$15,600)

CHAPTER 5. FOOD SERVICES

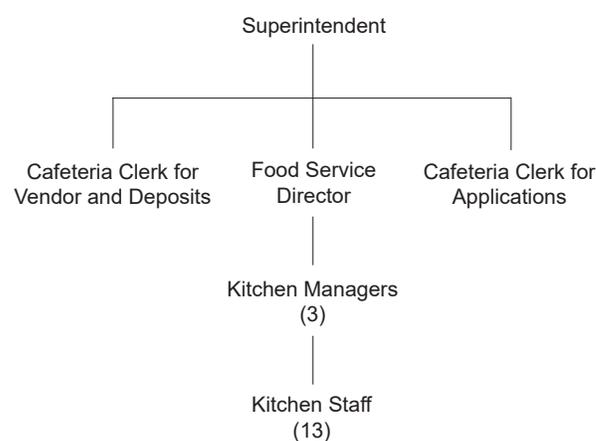
An independent school district's food service operation provides meals to its students and staff. The district may provide meals through the federally funded Child Nutrition Programs, which include the School Breakfast and National School Lunch programs. The School Breakfast Program (SBP) is a federal entitlement program administered at the state level by the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA). Participating campuses receive cash assistance for breakfasts served that comply with program requirements. Districts receive different amounts of reimbursement based on the number of breakfasts served in each of the benefit categories: free, reduced-price, and paid. Texas state law requires campuses to participate in the breakfast program if at least 10.0 percent of their students are eligible to receive free or reduced-price meals. The National School Lunch Program (NSLP) serves low-cost or free lunches to students. Like the breakfast program, lunches must comply with federal nutrition guidelines and are reimbursable to campuses based on the number of meals served within the benefit categories. A district's food service operations may also offer catering services as a way to supplement the food service budget or to provide training for students interested in pursuing a career in the food service industry.

Food service operation is dependent on the organizational structure of the district. The two primary models of organizing food service operations are self-management and contracted management. Using the self-management model, a district operates its food services department without assistance from an outside entity. Using a contracted management model, a district contracts with a food service management company to manage either all or a portion of its operations. In this arrangement, a district may rely on the company to provide all or some staff, or may use district staff for its operations.

Lytle Independent School District (ISD) self-manages its food services operations but also uses a consultant for menu development. The food services director, who reports to the superintendent, manages the Lytle ISD Food Services Department. Additional office staff consists of the cafeteria clerk for vendors and deposits, who coordinates with vendors and manages bank deposits, and the cafeteria clerk for applications, who handles the meal applications. The food services director also coordinates with the district's

administrative office clerk and business manager in the Finance Department to submit meal reimbursement information to TDA. All three campuses have full preparation and serving kitchens with a manager and several cooks. The district also contracts with a consultant chef who visits the district monthly and provides instruction on menus and recipes for healthy meals. The junior high school and high school operate from the same kitchen, serving area, and cafeteria. **Figure 5–1** shows the organization for the Food Services Department.

FIGURE 5–1
LYTLE ISD FOOD SERVICES DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION
SCHOOL YEAR 2016–17



SOURCES: Legislative Budget Board School Performance Review Team, Lytle ISD, December 2016.

Figure 5–2 shows Lytle ISD's student breakfast and lunch participation rates for school year 2015–16 compared to peer districts. Peer districts are districts similar to Lytle ISD used for comparison purposes.

Figure 5–3 shows Lytle ISD's Food Services Department's actual expenditures from school years 2013–14 to 2015–16 and budgeted expenditures for school year 2016–17. The district operated its Food Services Department at a loss during school years 2014–15 and 2015–16, and it projects a deficit for the school year 2016–17 budget. The district transfers the amount of the yearly losses from its General Fund to cover the deficits.

**FIGURE 5–2
LYTLE ISD FOOD SERVICES DEPARTMENT PARTICIPATION
RATES COMPARED TO PEER DISTRICTS
SCHOOL YEAR 2015–16**

DISTRICT	AVERAGE DAILY ENROLLMENT	AVERAGE DAILY PARTICIPATION	
		BREAKFAST	LUNCH
Lytle	1,684	43.8%	73.8%
Cameron	1,790	63.9%	66.4%
Poteet	1,830	45.3%	84.8%
Shepherd	2,085	100.0%	100.0%

SOURCES: Legislative Budget Board School Performance Review Team; Lytle ISD; Texas Department of Agriculture, November 2016.

The district has board-approved policies covering topics relating to food services such as closed campus, competitive food sales, charging, and wellness. The Food Services Department has a staff handbook and various procedure manuals for food production, Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) procedures, and recordkeeping.

The Food Services Department distributes free and reduced-price meal applications to each campus. The applications are also available during the school year in the district’s administrative office and available online for download. Campus food service staff collects the applications and submits them to the central office for processing.

The junior high school and high school cafeteria provides catering food and supplies. Catering is available to district customers, and the Food Services Department bills the customers for the service. The department credits the revenue to a food services account. Most requests are from the Athletics Department for sack lunches. Other typical requests are for fruit/vegetable trays and pastries for district meetings. Requests for catering have decreased in recent years.

ACCOMPLISHMENT

- ◆ The Food Services Department has a strong staff development program.

FINDINGS

- ◆ The Food Services Department is overstaffed, according to industry standard guidelines, which adds unnecessary costs and contributes to the department operating at a loss.
- ◆ Lytle ISD does not effectively monitor campus kitchen operations to ensure financial stability and optimal performance.
- ◆ Lytle ISD is not adequately managing its kitchen equipment.
- ◆ The Food Services Department provides minimal nutrition education to students, even though nutrition promotion is one of the requirements of the federal Healthy, Hunger-free Kids Act (HHFKA) of 2010.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ◆ **Recommendation 21: Establish staffing standards based on industry standards for school food service operations.**
- ◆ **Recommendation 22: Develop monthly reports showing the financial status of the Food Services Department and for each kitchen operation.**
- ◆ **Recommendation 23: Develop and implement a kitchen equipment repair policy and replacement plan based on age and repair history.**
- ◆ **Recommendation 24: Provide nutrition education to students by using a variety of venues, such as displaying materials in the cafeterias using posters and menu boards, on distributed menus, and on the district website.**

**FIGURE 5–3
LYTLE ISD SUMMARY OF FOOD SERVICES DEPARTMENT REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES
SCHOOL YEARS 2013–14 TO 2016–17**

CATEGORY	2013–14	2014–15	2015–16	2016–17
Total Revenues	\$1,041,706	\$1,070,274	\$1,053,981	\$1,018,912
Total Expenditures	\$1,001,340	\$1,141,404	\$1,097,857	\$1,046,005
Difference	\$40,366	(\$71,130)	(\$43,876)	(\$27,093)

NOTE: School years 2013–14 to 2015–16 amounts shown are actual; school year 2016–17 amounts shown are budgeted.
SOURCES: Legislative Budget Board School Performance Review Team; Lytle ISD, November 2016.

DETAILED ACCOMPLISHMENT

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The Food Services Department has a strong staff development program.

The director ensures that the district meets all professional standards requirements of the federal HHFKA. This legislation became effective for school year 2015–16, and it requires the district to meet a minimum number of annual training hours for all managers and staff. The regulations ensure staff in child nutrition programs have the knowledge, training, and tools needed to prepare and serve nutritious meals to students. **Figure 5–4** shows the minimum training hours required for each staff group. The training must be job-specific, apply to the work duties, and assist the staff in optimal performance of their assigned job duties. The regulation requires documentation to demonstrate compliance with the training requirements.

**FIGURE 5–4
PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS REQUIRED ANNUAL
TRAINING HOURS, SCHOOL YEARS 2015–16 TO 2016–17**

STAFF	2015–16	2016–17
Directors	8	12
Managers	6	10
Staff	4	6
Staff (less than 20 hours per week)	4	4

SOURCE: U.S. Healthy, Hunger-free Kids Act, 2010.

To implement online training, the food services director provided an orientation for all kitchen staff. Staff log in and take classes online for skills that the food services director stated most staff previously did not have. The director completed the requirements for ServSafe, a food safety and sanitation class, so she could teach it to the staff and prepare them for their food handlers test. She uses the available class materials from the Institute of Child Nutrition to teach her staff in a classroom setting and refers staff to the online courses available.

The district encourages staff to attend state and regional classes. The Food Services Department pays registration and travel expenses and staff receives pay at their regular rate for hours of attendance. Staff indicated the training classes they attended were valuable. All staff receive an updated Handbook for Cafeteria Staff every year. The district rotates jobs in all the kitchens, and the department provided a listing

of cafeteria tasks and the rotation of staff performing these tasks each week.

The Texas Health and Safety Code requires a food establishment maintain a certificate of completion of a food handlers training course for all staff. The Food Services Department paid the cost of training for the first course and the exam for all staff. Staff who do not pass the test the first time must pay for subsequent attempts.

The food services director recognizes the value of well-trained staff and understands the importance of investing in their training. The budget includes an annual allocation for training. Although HHFKA requires training for staff, school districts are not required to provide training for staff to meet the requirement. The district’s minimum obligation is to ensure all staff complete the requirements and keep documentation. Some districts place the burden of meeting the requirements on staff. The Lytle ISD Food Services Department, however, provides the classes to meet the requirements, covers training expenses for staff, and teaches the skills to receive training in various formats.

DETAILED FINDINGS

STAFFING (REC. 21)

The Food Services Department is overstaffed, according to industry standard guidelines, which adds unnecessary costs and contributes to the department operating at a loss.

Lytle ISD’s number of labor hours is large compared to the number of meals served. Kitchen staff serve for 7.0 hours per shift, and kitchen managers serve for 7.5 hours. The number of hours assigned to both staff and managers do not consider differences in meal times, the number and variety of menu offerings, or participation levels. In interviews with the food services director and kitchen managers, the district does not consider staffing formulas when assigning staff hours or scheduling in relation to meal participation levels. The food services director said that scheduling is based on anecdotal experience relative to each kitchen and does not consider the number of meals served as a basis for staffing levels.

The most common means of measuring staff productivity in school meal programs is the meals per labor hour (MPLH) measure. The calculation for MPLH is the number of meal equivalents produced and served in a day divided by the number of labor hours required to produce those meals. The food services director has a spreadsheet to calculate MPLH;

however, this calculation is not used as a basis for decision making and is not distributed to the kitchen managers.

The student reimbursable lunch meal is the standard unit of conversion for determining meal equivalents. Therefore, all meal types and a la carte revenue convert to meal equivalents for the purposes of measurement. A meal equivalent is not a unit of production; it is a calculation that enables the food services director to equate all meals to a standard. By converting all food sales to meal equivalents, a director can determine production rates. Lytle’s ISD Food Services Department uses the following conversions to calculate meal equivalents:

- one lunch equates to one meal equivalent;
- two breakfasts equate to one meal equivalent; and
- a la carte sales of \$2.75 equate to one meal equivalent.

The Food Services Department calculates MPLH for each kitchen on a monthly basis. **Figure 5–5** shows Lytle ISD’s MPLH by campus compared to national standards for a conventional system at low productivity.

Figure 5–6 shows guidelines for MPLH staffing from *School Food and Nutrition Service Management for the 21st Century*, 2014. **Figure 5–6** shows guidelines for conventional and convenience systems of food preparation. A conventional system uses a more limited amount of convenience foods, such as bakery-made breads, prepared pizza, and some disposable serving dishes. In a convenience system, all food items are pre-made. The Legislative Budget Board’s School Performance Review Team found that Lytle ISD predominantly uses a conventional system. Lytle ISD meets the characteristics of a low productivity system. Kitchens in this category prepare their food onsite, have menus with multiple choices, and use older equipment.

Lytle ISD’s MPLH are less than industry standards. Based on meal equivalents, the primary school’s recommended MPLH

is 14, compared to its productivity of 11. Likewise, the elementary school’s recommended MPLH is 15 compared to its productivity of 12, and the combined junior high school and high school cafeteria’s recommended MPLH is 18 compared to its actual MPLH of 14.

The district is not using industry best practice recommended staffing guidelines to set goals for productivity relative to meals served. Productivity, measured in MPLH, in all three kitchens is lower than recommended standards, and labor hours in all kitchens is not consistent with industry guidelines. This discrepancy results in higher costs and lower net revenues for the program.

Costs for labor and benefits are a major expenditure for child nutrition programs. Establishing goals for staffing based on industry standards is essential to maintain a sound financial position. MPLH must be calculated and evaluated on a regular basis to ensure that each kitchen has adequate labor hours, but are not overstaffed.

Financial Management: A Course for School Nutrition Directors, 2017, published by the National Food Service Management Institute (NFSMI), recommends establishing a desired goal that includes a range of acceptable MPLHs to accommodate all factors that can affect productivity.

Keys to Excellence: Standards of Practice for Nutrition Integrity, August 2015, is a self-assessment tool from the School Nutrition Association. The publication recommends that “A staffing plan is developed based on factors such as delivery systems, participation, facilities, and services provided; a contingency staffing plan is developed to ensure effective operations when vacancies occur.”

Lytle ISD should establish staffing standards based on industry standards for school food service operations.

The district should assign labor hours using meal equivalent calculations; each individual kitchen should assign labor

FIGURE 5–5
LYTLE ISD MEALS PER LABOR HOUR (MPLH) COMPARED TO NATIONAL STANDARDS
SCHOOL YEAR 2015–16

SCHOOL	MEAL EQUIVALENTS	MPLH	DAILY LABOR HOURS	STANDARD MPLH	DAILY LABOR HOURS BASED ON STANDARD MPLH	VARIANCE
Primary	322	11.3	28.5	14.0	23.0	5.5
Elementary	528	12.4	42.5	15.0	35.2	7.3
Junior High and High	889	14.0	63.5	18.0	49.4	14.1
Excess Labor Hours Districtwide						26.9

SOURCES: Legislative Budget Board School Performance Review Team, December 2016; Lytle ISD, Food Services Department, November 2016.

**FIGURE 5–6
INDUSTRY STANDARD RECOMMENDED MEALS PER LABOR HOUR
2014**

MEAL EQUIVALENTS	CONVENTIONAL SYSTEM		CONVENIENCE SYSTEM	
	LOW PRODUCTIVITY	HIGH PRODUCTIVITY	LOW PRODUCTIVITY	HIGH PRODUCTIVITY
Less than 101	8	10	10	12
101–150	9	11	11	13
151–200	10–11	12	12	14
202–250	12	14	14	15
251–300	13	15	15	16
301–400	14	16	16	18
401–500	14	17	18	19
501–600	15	17	18	19
601–700	16	18	19	20
701–800	17	19	20	22
801–900	18	20	21	23
Greater than 900	19	21	22	23

SOURCE: School Food and Nutrition Service Management for the 21st Century, Dorothy Pannell-Martin and Julie A. Boettger, Sixth Edition, 2014.

hours to ensure staffing levels are within standards. The current practice of assigning all kitchen staff the same hours should be discontinued and adjustments made to coordinate with actual labor needs at various times during the workday. The district should gradually reach staffing goals by adjusting hours as staff retire or resign.

All Food Services Department staff should learn the process of calculating MPLH and meal equivalents, including how to improve their campus’s MPLH, given the assignment to determine how they would work to improve their MPLH to meet the goal that the director has given them.

The two ways to increase MPLH are to decrease the number of labor hours and to increase the number of meal equivalents. Districts can decrease labor hours by reducing staff at campuses where staff hours are greater than national standards or decrease the number of staff hours worked daily by adjusting work schedules. Districts can increase the number of meal equivalents by implementing measures to increase participation. Until the food services program is feeding all of the students, faculty, and staff every day, the department has opportunities to increase participation. Every student enrolled and every adult employed by the district is a potential customer. Kitchen managers and the director should examine these approaches and determine if one or a combination of approaches will produce the desired

result to ensure that cafeterias are performing at industry standards for MPLH. The food services director should set goals for each campus and monitor them on a monthly basis.

The fiscal impact assumes a reduction of 26.9 MPLH per day, resulting in a savings of \$256 per day, for an annual savings of \$45,999 (26.9 hours per day x \$9.5/hour x 180 operating days).

PROGRAM MONITORING (REC. 22)

Lytle ISD does not effectively monitor campus kitchen operations to ensure financial stability and optimal performance.

Revenue and expenditure data related to kitchen operations is collected by different departments within the district and is not consolidated to monitor the efficiency of kitchen operations. Each kitchen places food orders with vendors who provide an invoice to the kitchen upon delivery. The kitchen managers bring the invoices to the food services director’s office where the cafeteria clerk for vendors and deposits tabulates the invoices and prepares them for payment. Additionally, the food services director collects lunch participation and sales data from each kitchen. The Finance Department tabulates the number of meals eligible for reimbursement, and the business manager uses the data

to prepare the monthly claim to submit to TDA for federal reimbursement.

Neither the Finance Department nor the Food Services Department monitors the monthly revenue and expenditure for food services, either at the department level or by kitchen. Neither the business manager nor the food services director prepares financial reports showing activities for individual kitchens. The only report showing financial data is the annual budget that the food services director prepares for the entire department, showing revenue and expenditures by line item.

The business manager stated that the food services director has access to all of the financial data for food services. However, neither the food services director nor the business manager analyzes the school meals program. These staff are only aware when a bottom-line overage or loss occurs. The kitchen managers reported that they are not aware of the financial status of their operations because they do not receive monthly financial reports to compare to monthly budgets.

Food Services Department staff do not analyze financial data. Therefore, no system is in place to determine if the program or the individual kitchens are financially sound or in need of improvements. The food services director makes decisions regarding menus, costs of food and supply items, salaries, and assigning labor hours with no knowledge of how these costs affect the program's financial health. The Food Services Department lacks a process to determine if improvements for increased efficiency are possible. Kitchen managers do not know how to determine if revenue is sufficient to cover the costs expended at their sites or how efficient their operations are performing. The food services director does not monitor the financial performance of each kitchen.

Managing Child Nutrition Programs: Leadership for Excellence, by Josephine Martin and Charlotte Beckett Oakley, Second Edition, 2008, states: "One of the most important aspects of financial management involves the preparation of financial statements that can be used to analyze program operations." Without reviewing monthly financial information, the food services director and kitchen managers are unable to tell if their revenue and expenditures compare to their monthly budgets, or how to adapt if expenditures are greater than the budget.

School meal programs are unique in a district's budget considerations because they have both revenue and expenditure accounts. If the programs do not cover their costs, they must be subsidized by the general fund. Regular

financial monitoring helps ensure the program is fiscally solvent and provides information for decision-making.

NFSMI's publication *Financial Management: A Course for School Nutrition Directors* includes samples of financial reports that districts can use to monitor their food service operations. **Figure 5–7** shows these reports. District staff have access to some of these reports; for example, the budget and statements of revenue and expenditures are accessible. However, the district does not provide budget or performance reports to Food Services Department staff. Without this feedback, the kitchen managers are unaware of the financial performance of their kitchens throughout the year. Managers also are unaware of how to take corrective action if they are exceeding their budgets.

The School Nutrition Association's self-assessment tool for food service operations includes the following best practices and indicators:

- a statement of revenue and expenditures (profit and loss statement) is prepared monthly for the department level and for each serving site;
- school nutrition site-level statement of revenue and expenditures are distributed;
- school nutrition staff at the site level receive training on controlling costs and revenue generation; and
- school nutrition staff at the site level are encouraged to develop and implement practices to increase revenue and control costs.

Figure 5–8 shows a sample cafeteria level report that provides a variety of data, including financial and performance data, in a format that is easy to read and understand. The National Food Service Management Institute provides other sample reports in its class materials.

The Lytle ISD food services director and business manager should develop monthly reports showing the financial status of the Food Services Department and for each kitchen operation.

The food services director and business manager should discuss the reports that are needed for program analysis, how to collect the data for these reports, the format necessary to present the data to be used for evaluation and analysis, and who will assume responsibility for preparing the reports. Monthly reports will help the food services director understand the financial position of each kitchen and can be used for program changes and enhancements that will

**FIGURE 5–7
SAMPLE FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT REPORTS USED TO MONITOR CHILD NUTRITION OPERATIONS
2014**

REPORT	DATA	USES	FREQUENCY
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • forecasted revenue by source based upon estimates of participation, reimbursement, meal prices, and new revenue sources; and • forecasted expenditures based upon a determination of increases or decreases in each category 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enables a projection of financial performance for the next school year; and • enables comparisons between actual and forecasted performance 	Annually with monthly monitoring and adjustments as necessary
Statement of Revenue and Expenditures (Profit and Loss Statement)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all revenues by source and expenditures by category; • net gain or loss for the time period; • comparison of current month to previous month and year to date; and • reflects activity during one month 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • determine if revenues are sufficient to cover expenditures; and • identify sites needing adjustments to reduce loss 	End of each month
Statement of Net Position (Balance Sheet)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assets, liabilities, fund balance; and • reflects financial position 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • determine amount of fund balance available for expenditures; • verify if program has no more than three months' average operating costs in reserve; and • determine financial status of program 	End of each month
Key Operating Ratios	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an analysis of expenditures to revenue; and • calculated by dividing each expenditure by total revenue generated during the same time period 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • determine the percentage of revenue that is used for food, labor, benefits, supplies, overhead, capital expenditures, and indirect costs; • compare actual ratios to goals set and industry standards; and • determine if the program is operating at break even or experiencing a profit or loss 	Monthly or quarterly
Meals Per Labor Hour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • calculated by dividing total number of meals/meal equivalents by total number of labor hours for each site; and • meal equivalents are determined by converting all meals and à la carte revenue to a standard unit (lunches) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analyze staffing patterns by site and compare to goals set; • identify sites needing adjustments to labor hours; and • enable comparison to industry standards 	Monthly
Participation Reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • average daily attendance (ADA), number and percentage of students eligible by category (free, reduced-price, full-price), average number of breakfast and lunch meals served by category, daily participation percentage by eligibility category; and • district-level and site-level data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • determine what percentage of eligible students are participating in each program; • identify eligibility categories to target for participation improvement; • identify sites not meeting participation goals; and • enable comparison to industry standards 	Monthly and at end of year
Pre-menu and Post-menu Costing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • menu items; • forecasted and actual amounts used; • food cost per menu item; • total cost per menu; • cost per serving; • average food cost per meal; and • district-level and site-level data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enable comparison of actual cost per meal to revenue per meal (reimbursement, commodity value, payment); • determine menus needing adjustments for cost effectiveness; and • assist in purchasing and evaluation of new products 	Monthly

SOURCE: National Food Service Management Institute, 2014.

**FIGURE 5-8
SAMPLE MONTHLY CAFETERIA REPORT**

School: 326 Baileywick Elementary

Amy Tant

March 2013

Revenue:		Current Month	Year to Date
Meal Revenue		\$2,411.40	
Supplemental Sales		\$1,648.90	
Other Revenue		\$75.34	
Total Reimbursement		\$15,061.75	
TOTAL REVENUE:		\$19,197.39	\$139,903.44

Expenses:		Current Month	Year to Date
<i>Inventory/Food Cost</i>			
Beginning Inventory		\$5,973.00	
Purchases		\$7,167.00	
Transfers		(\$70.00)	
Ending Inventory		\$5,932.00	
<i>Total Food Usage:</i>		<i>\$7,138.00</i>	<i>\$51,686.00</i>
<i>Inventory/Supply Cost</i>			
Beginning Inventory		\$1,413.00	
Purchases		\$753.00	
Transfers		\$311.00	
Ending Inventory		\$1,564.00	
<i>Total Supply Usage:</i>		<i>\$913.00</i>	<i>\$6,618.00</i>
<i>Labor Costs</i>			
School Staff		\$8,186.19	
Temporary Labor		\$0.00	
<i>Total Labor:</i>		<i>\$8,186.19</i>	<i>\$67,638.24</i>
Overhead		(\$108.37)	\$6,207.11
TOTAL EXPENSES:		\$16,128.82	\$132,149.35
GAIN or (LOSS):		\$3,068.57	\$7,754.09
% GAIN or (LOSS):		15.98%	5.54%

Percent of Revenue			
	Total Cost	% of Total Revenue	Goal Less Than
Food	\$7,138.00	37.18%	40%
Supplies	\$913.00	4.76%	5%
Labor	\$8,186.19	42.64%	40%
Overhead	(\$108.37)	-0.56%	7%
Total Cost	\$16,128.82	84.02%	92%

Total Meal Equivalents Per Day	
Total Breakfasts:	56
Total Lunches:	264
Supplemental Sales:	36
Total Meal Equivalents:	357

% of Eligible Meals Served			
Average Daily Attendance: 426			
	# Eligible	% Served	Goal
Free	223	85.67%	
Reduced	14	88.72%	
Paid	219	26.56%	

Current Month Plate Cost			
	Total School Cost	Cost Per ME	Goal
Food	\$7,138.00	\$1.05	\$1.08
Supplies	\$913.00	\$0.13	\$.13
Labor	\$8,186.19	\$1.38	\$1.08
Overhead	(\$108.37)	(\$0.02)	\$0.19
Total Cost	\$16,128.82	\$2.55	\$2.48

YTD Plate Cost			
	Total School Cost	Cost Per ME	Goal
Food	\$51,686.00	\$1.05	\$1.08
Supplies	\$6,618.00	\$0.13	\$.13
Labor	\$67,638.24	\$1.37	\$1.08
Overhead	\$6,207.11	\$0.12	\$0.19
Total Cost	\$132,149.35	\$2.67	\$2.48

Supervisor Comments/Suggestions:

SOURCE: National Food Service Management Institute, 2014.

improve the financial status of the operation. The food services director should provide each cafeteria manager with a monthly financial report detailing the revenues and expenditures related to their kitchen. The food services director should discuss the reports with the kitchen managers during their meetings. Managers should receive training on how to interpret the data and coordinate with the director to

make appropriate changes as necessary to increase revenue and/or reduce costs. These reports should be ready for use in school year 2017-18.

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

KITCHEN EQUIPMENT (REC. 23)

Lytle ISD is not adequately managing its kitchen equipment.

Repairs to kitchen equipment do not occur regularly. The review team observed equipment that was nonoperational or not working properly. The elementary school had a nonfunctioning slicer, clothes dryer, garbage disposal unit, and walk-in freezer. The cafeteria shared by the high school and junior high school had a dishwasher and a convection oven that needed repair. The primary school had a warmer, convection oven, and dishwasher that needed repairs.

Lytle ISD maintains an inventory of kitchen equipment by campus that includes the name, description, and the number in inventory of each item. The district annually updates the list based on items added or removed. The inventory might note the manufacturer or serial number. The inventory does not include the age of each piece of large equipment nor any repair history.

The Food Services Department does not have an equipment replacement plan. The food services director stated that equipment replacement occurs when it wears out and stops working. However, the Food Services Department does not replace equipment consistently, as some equipment has been nonoperational for several years.

The food service budget does not include a category for kitchen equipment replacement, but it does include equipment repairs at each kitchen. When the district purchases new equipment, it uses reserves from the general fund balance.

Poorly functioning or nonoperational equipment has led to inefficiencies in meal preparation, service, and use of labor hours. These inefficiencies result in an undue hardship for staff. For example, the review team observed a large quantity of cucumbers sliced by hand. Kitchen staff at the elementary school reported that they recently had to slice cold meats for approximately 300 sandwiches by hand because the automated slicer is nonoperational. Due to a leak in the garbage disposal at the primary school kitchen, staff position a bucket underneath the leak, which they have to empty frequently. Staff hangs linens on the equipment after washing due to the lack of a dryer. The review team observed negative results due to the lack of a functioning walk-in freezer at the elementary school. The district does not have a back-up freestanding freezer at the elementary school. Therefore, the elementary school had its frozen food delivered to the high school, and the elementary school food services manager used her personal vehicle to transport items back to her

campus. High school staff had difficulty storing both schools' frozen items in their freezer unit.

The Food Services Department has used equipment to the point of complete breakdown; then the department must operate without the critical equipment until a replacement is procured. The food services freezer is approximately 25 years old and has required several Freon replacements in the past.

Repairing aged kitchen equipment is problematic. Locating repair parts can be challenging as service companies stop stocking parts for some older pieces and special orders are costly and take more time to locate. Repair parts are no longer available for some aged pieces that are being used beyond their useful lives.

In *Cost Control for School Foodservice Directors and Administrators*, Third Edition, 2000, author Dorothy Pannell-Martin suggests budgeting 2.6 percent of revenue on large equipment. *School Food and Nutrition Service Management for the 21st Century, Sixth Edition, 2014*, recommends 3.8 percent. The considerations related to purchasing new equipment or repairing old equipment in institutional kitchens. Effective districts analyze the old equipment's repair history, energy efficiency and if frequent repairs exceed the cost of replacing the piece of equipment. A school district that receives approval to administer the NSLP and SBP has an implied understanding with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) that kitchen facilities and equipment are sufficient to prepare and serve meals to students.

Lytle ISD should develop and implement a kitchen equipment repair policy and replacement plan based on age and repair history.

The food services director should inventory all kitchen equipment and determine the age and condition of each item. The inventory list should include this information. The respective kitchen manager and the food services director should perform an audit of the working condition of each piece. Compiling this data will be beneficial to develop and implement an equipment replacement plan.

The district should budget 2.6 percent of projected revenue for equipment purchases in the school year 2017–18 department budget. Strategic planning should include developing a priority list of pieces of equipment to replace based on frequency of repair and estimated age. Kitchen managers should purchase equipment as allowed by the budget. Facilities maintenance staff should remove and dispose of the old equipment in accordance with district policy.

Developing a database, performing an equipment audit, and developing a preventive maintenance program could all be implemented with existing resources. No fiscal impact is assumed for the 2.6 percent increase in replacement cost for equipment. The fiscal impact assumes that the cost will be offset by the savings related to reduced expenses for equipment repair throughout the year.

NUTRITION AND NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAMS (REC. 24)

The Food Services Department provides minimal nutrition education to students even though nutrition promotion is one of the requirements of the federal Healthy, Hunger-free Kids Act of 2010.

Cafeterias do not fully use the venues to display posters, menus, and bulletin boards containing nutrition education information for students. The district does not provide nutrition information on printed menus or the district website.

The review team found evidence of district efforts toward health and wellness education and promotion. Lytle ISD has a School Health Advisory Council (SHAC). The focus of this group is to implement a coordinated health program, including nutrition services among its eight subject matter areas. SHAC publishes a newsletter that contains some nutrition information. The food services director provided a flyer for a family health night with the district consultant chef demonstrating how to make a recipe healthy. These efforts had more of an adult focus for parents and staff in the district. When the review team asked the food services director about nutrition education for students, she replied that it was handled by SHAC.

During campus observations, the review team observed minimal nutrition education materials posted in the cafeterias. Kitchen staff write menus on a daily basis on erasable whiteboards near the serving line, but they do not contain any nutrition information. The information only listed the food items and ingredients included without specific nutrition details. The food service section of the district website also did not include nutrition information. The monthly breakfast and lunch menus did not include nutrition information about the menu items. Staff in one campus provided a sample bag for sack lunches used in a previous school year that was colorful and contained information about the food groups (fruits, vegetables, grains, protein, and dairy). No similar nutrition education materials were used during school year 2016–17.

Nutrition promotion is one of the requirements of HHFKA. The introduction of wellness requirements in the federal Child Nutrition and Women, Infants, and Children Reauthorization Act of 2004 set an expectation that nutrition education should be a strong component of the food services program. Lytle ISD is not meeting the updated 2010 wellness requirements. The Food Services Department does not use available materials and is not incorporating nutrition education into its meal programs.

Figure 5–9 shows a comparison of the 2004 and 2010 wellness policy requirements to Lytle ISD practices.

Most child nutrition programs use free posters available from manufacturers and trade organizations to decorate their cafeterias while also providing messages about good nutrition. Many districts use menus and the district website to provide nutrition information to parents and students. One of Lytle ISD's peer districts, Cameron ISD, provides nutrition information to three audiences—parents, students, and teachers. Several resources are available to assist child nutrition programs in providing nutrition education information. Most programs provide these materials at no cost, such as:

- USDA's My Plate, which includes graphics, materials for educators such as lesson plans, and other printable materials that can be downloaded at no cost;
- USDA's Team Nutrition, which includes nutrition education materials for the preschool, elementary, middle, and high schools levels;
- Fuel Up to Play 60, which is a school nutrition and physical activity program sponsored by the National Dairy Council and the National Football League and includes nutrition education materials;
- the National Food Service Management Institute, which provides professionals working in child nutrition with training materials on the topic of nutrition education; and
- the School Nutrition Association, the Texas Association for School Nutrition, and TDA's Food and Nutrition program provide nutrition education training materials for staff working in child nutrition.

The School Nutrition Association addresses nutrition education in its *Keys to Excellence* self-assessment tool, which states that “school nutrition personnel are actively involved in nutrition education at the school level.” Indicators of success in this area include the following activities:

**FIGURE 5–9
COMPARISON OF LOCAL SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICY REQUIREMENTS TO LYTLE ISD PRACTICES
SCHOOL YEAR 2015–16**

AREA	2004 REQUIREMENTS	2010 REQUIREMENTS	LYTLE ISD
Elements of the Local School Wellness Policy	Local Wellness Policy includes goals for nutrition education, physical activity, and other school-based activities to promote student wellness and nutrition guidelines for all foods available.	Adds Local Wellness Policy requirement to include goals for nutrition promotion.	Stated as goal in Local Wellness Policy but no specific nutrition education to students by food services.
Stakeholder Participation	The stakeholders must participate in the development of the Local Wellness Policy.	Authorizes local educational agencies to enable all stakeholders to participate in the implementation and periodic review and update of Local Wellness Policy.	Various stakeholders included in School Health Advisory Council.
Local Discretion	Allows Local Educational Agencies to determine the specific policies appropriate for the schools within their jurisdiction, if those policies include all required elements specified in the Act.	Same as 2004 requirement.	Outlined in board policy.
Public Notification	None.	Requires Local Educational Agencies to inform and update the public (including parents and students) about the content and implementation of the Local Wellness Policy.	On district website in board policy section.
Measuring Implementation	Requires Local Educational Agencies to establish a plan for measuring implementation of the Local Wellness Policy.	Requires Local Educational Agencies to measure and make available to the public every 3 years an assessment on the implementation of Local Wellness Policy.	Posted to district website.

SOURCES: Legislative Budget Board School Performance Review Team, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, November 2016.

- nutrition education materials such as posters, displays, and bulletin boards are used on campus;
- school nutrition staff serve as a resource for nutrition activities through kitchen tours, food demonstrations, tasting parties, or participating in classroom nutrition education activities;
- the school dining area serves as a dynamic nutrition learning center where students are engaged in healthy eating;
- colorful, easy-to-read graphics are used to display the menus and to assist students in making healthy choices; and

- nutrition education materials such as posters, table tents, and bulletin boards are displayed and updated frequently in the dining room.

Lytle ISD should provide nutrition education to students by using a variety of venues, such as displaying materials in the cafeterias using posters and menu boards, on distributed menus, and on the district website.

The food services director should evaluate the nutrition education materials available and determine which will be most appropriate for the students at each grade level. Kitchen managers should display nutrition materials in each cafeteria, update the information often to maintain interest, and continue to provide new information. The district should

add nutrition resources and information for parents and students to the food service page on the district website and keep the information updated. Menus should contain different nutrition messages every month.

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

FISCAL IMPACT

Some of the recommendations provided in this report are based on state or federal laws, rules, or regulations, and should be promptly addressed. Other recommendations are based on comparisons to state or industry standards, or accepted best practices, and should be reviewed to determine the level of priority, appropriate timeline, and method of implementation.

RECOMMENDATION	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) OR SAVINGS	ONETIME (COSTS) OR SAVINGS
CHAPTER 5. FOOD SERVICES							
21. Establish staffing standards based on industry standards for school food service operations.	\$45,999	\$45,999	\$45,999	\$45,999	\$45,999	\$229,995	\$0
22. Develop monthly reports showing the financial status of the Food Services Department and for each kitchen operation.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
23. Develop and implement a kitchen equipment repair policy and replacement plan based on age and repair history.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
24. Provide nutrition education to students by using a variety of venues, such as displaying materials in the cafeterias using posters and menu boards, on distributed menus, and on the district website.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
TOTAL	\$45,999	\$45,999	\$45,999	\$45,999	\$45,999	\$229,995	\$0

CHAPTER 6. TRANSPORTATION

An independent school district's transportation function transports students to and from school and other school-related activities. This function is regulated by federal and Texas state laws related to funding, vehicle type, driver education, and safety issues. Districts implement these regulations, budget and allocate resources, and establish operational procedures for bell schedules, bus routes, and transportation fleet maintenance.

Managing transportation operations is dependent on the organizational structure of the district. Districts may either contract for or self-manage their transportation operations. Using a contracted management model, districts rely on the company to provide supervision of its transportation operation. In this arrangement, a district may rely on the company to provide all or some staff, or may use district staff for its operations. Using the self-management model, a district manages transportation functions without assistance from an outside entity. Lytle ISD self-manages its transportation.

Managing transportation operations requires planning; state reporting and funding; training and safety; and vehicle maintenance and procurement. Primary transportation expenditures include capital investments in vehicle fleets, and annual costs of maintenance and operations. State transportation funding relies on a district's annual submission of certain transportation reports to the Texas Education Agency (TEA), which is determined by a formula that includes the number and type of students transported.

According to the school year 2015–16 TEA Route Services Report, Lytle ISD provided transportation to approximately 645 regular students, 11 special program students, and 29 students were transported to Career and Technology Education (CTE) programs, totaling 685 regular riders. In school year 2015–16, the district spent \$616,648 to operate 22 buses—11 buses serve as daily route buses and 11 buses are used as spares. Of the 11 buses used for daily route services, nine are used for regular education and two for special education. **Figure 6–1** shows the district's student ridership for the past three years. The average daily ridership decreased in school year 2015–16 by 35 students. **Figure 6–1** also shows the linear density and the total annual state funding for transportation. Linear density is the ratio of the average number of regular education students transported daily to the number of miles traveled daily for those students.

Lytle ISD's Transportation Division is part of the district's Operations Department, overseen by the operations director. The operations director evaluates all Transportation Division staff, the operations secretary, as well as the supervisors of Custodial Services and Facilities Maintenance. In addition to home-to-school and return service, the division also coordinates and provides transportation supporting student activities and athletic trips. The district's bus storage and fleet maintenance operation facility is adjacent to the high school, where all transportation staff are also housed. The maintenance facility is a unique three-sided, three-bay building where the maintenance staff, which includes the mechanic and the mechanic's helper. Division staff perform

FIGURE 6–1
LYTLE ISD'S TRANSPORTATION ROUTING AND STATE FUNDING DATA
SCHOOL YEARS 2013–14 TO 2015–16

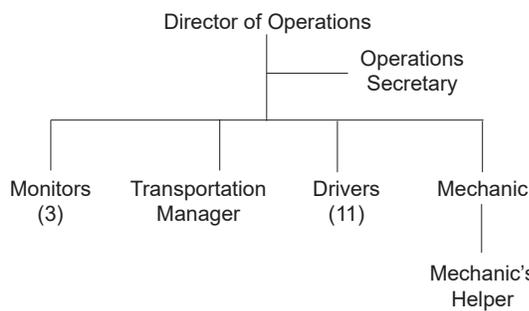
CATEGORY	2013–14	2014–15	2015–16
Average Daily Ridership—Regular Program/Hazardous Area Service	663	673	645
Average Daily Ridership –Special Program	11	12	11
Average Daily Ridership –Career and Technology Program	24	35	29
Average Daily Ridership—Total Students	698	720	685
Linear Density (1)	0.72	1.00	0.98
Total Annual State Funding	\$155,118	\$177,478	\$164,600

NOTE: Lytle ISD had 10 more regular riders in school year 2014–15, which caused the linear density to increase.

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, Lytle ISD School Transportation Route Services Report, school years 2013–14 to 2015–16. Lytle ISD had 10 more regular riders in school year 2013–14, which caused the linear density to increase.

general, preventive, and reactive maintenance and repairs on district owned and operated vehicles. The spare parts inventory storage, maintenance records and office space for the mechanic staff is located to the left of the maintenance facility. The fleet maintenance facility has a fuel point dispensing diesel and regular unleaded fuel. **Figure 6–2** shows the school year 2015–16 organizational structure of Lytle ISD’s Transportation Division within the Operations Department.

**FIGURE 6–2
TRANSPORTATION DIVISION ORGANIZATION
SCHOOL YEAR 2015–16**



SOURCE: Legislative Budget Board School Performance Review Team, Lytle ISD, December 2016.

All transportation staff report to the operations director, with the exception of the mechanic’s helper who reports to the mechanic. The operations secretary assists with dispatch functions, answering the telephone for transportation-related issues, and warranty tracking for fleet maintenance.

A key indicator of a transportation operation’s efficiency is a fleet and cost comparison of similar sized operations. **Figure 6–3** shows the cost per mile, number of buses, and ridership during school year 2015–16 for Lytle ISD and peer districts. Peer districts are school districts similar to Lytle ISD

that are used for comparison purposes. Although Lytle ISD had the highest cost per mile, its daily cost per rider was the second lowest.

The key measures of cost effectiveness for a student transportation operation includes the annual cost per transported student and the annual cost per bus. It is also useful to convert the annual cost per bus to the daily cost per bus. **Figure 6–4** shows key measures for Lytle ISD transportation operations over time. Lytle ISD’s total mileage has stayed relatively stable, however, the annual cost per transported student has increased.

ACCOMPLISHMENT

- ◆ Lytle ISD has secured the lowest price available for diesel and regular unleaded fuel.

FINDINGS

- ◆ Lytle ISD lacks written standard operating procedures (SOPs) for transportation staff.
- ◆ Lytle ISD’s Transportation Division lacks an organizational structure to ensure the effective transportation of students.
- ◆ Lytle ISD lacks a method for identifying buses that are no longer of use to the district, along with a scheduled and cost-effective means of disposal.
- ◆ Lytle ISD lacks an effective process to recruit and hire substitute bus drivers.
- ◆ Lytle ISD lacks a process to assess and report on the effectiveness and efficiency of the Transportation Division.
- ◆ Lytle ISD is not maximizing the use of its routing and scheduling software.

**FIGURE 6–3
LYTLE ISD AND PEER DISTRICTS’ VEHICLE FLEET COMPARISON
SCHOOL YEAR 2015–16**

DISTRICT	OPERATIONS COST	BUSES	RIDERS	COST PER REGULAR PROGRAM MILE	COST PER SPECIAL PROGRAM MILE	DAILY COST PER BUS OWNED	DAILY COST PER STUDENT RIDER
Lytle ISD	\$616,648	22	685	\$3.03	\$2.63	\$156	\$5.00
Cameron ISD	\$604,865	24	455	\$2.83	\$0.90	\$140	\$7.39
Poteet ISD	\$601,729	17	564	\$2.58	\$1.99	\$197	\$5.93
Shepherd ISD	\$682,499	27	1,003	\$2.61	\$1.35	\$140	\$3.78

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, Student Transportation Operations Report, school year 2015–16.

**FIGURE 6–4
LYTLE ISD KEY MEASURES OF TRANSPORTATION DIVISION
SCHOOL YEARS 2013–14 TO 2015–16**

KEY MEASURES	2013–14	2014–15	2015–16
Total Costs	\$577,488	\$637,940	\$616,648
Total Student Riders, All Programs	698	720	685
Number of Route Buses	20	19	22
Total Mileage, Regular Program	177,650	182,262	169,921
Total Mileage, Special Program	31,922	41,089	38,954
Total Mileage, All Programs	209,572	223,351	208,875
Annual Cost Per Transported Student	\$827	\$886	\$900
Annual Cost Per Route Bus	\$28,874	\$33,576	\$28,029
Daily Cost Per Owned Bus	\$160	\$187	\$156
Buses Per 100 Students Transported	2.87	2.64	3.21
Average Students Per Owned Bus	34.9	37.9	31.1
Cost per Mile, All Programs	\$2.76	\$2.86	\$2.95

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, Student Transportation Operations and School Transportation Route Services reports, school year 2013–14 to 2015–16.

- ◆ Lytle ISD lacks a professional development program for transportation staff.
- ◆ Lytle ISD lacks an effective process for maintaining an accurate inventory and sufficient records to manage preventive maintenance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ◆ **Recommendation 25: Develop written standard operating procedures for the functions required of transportation staff.**
- ◆ **Recommendation 26: Realign the job responsibilities of the transportation manager and operations director so that the transportation manager is the direct supervisor of all transportation staff.**
- ◆ **Recommendation 27: Develop a bus replacement and spare procedure based on the vehicle’s mileage and age.**
- ◆ **Recommendation 28: Develop a program to recruit substitute bus drivers.**
- ◆ **Recommendation 29: Develop performance metrics to measure the effectiveness and efficiency of the Transportation Division.**

- ◆ **Recommendation 30: Realign the responsibility for the district’s routing software to the transportation manager.**
- ◆ **Recommendation 31: Invest in the training and development of transportation staff.**
- ◆ **Recommendation 32: Develop a process to improve vehicle maintenance and inventory management procedures.**

DETAILED ACCOMPLISHMENT

PURCHASING FUEL

Lytle ISD has secured the lowest price available for diesel and regular unleaded fuel.

Lytle ISD is one of the largest consumers of vehicle fuel in the local area. The district informed regional vendors of the opportunity to submit bids with the goal of supplying the district with regular unleaded and diesel fuel. The district seeks at least three bids each time it competes the fuel contract. The district awards fuel contracts annually.

The operations director and the business manager develop the request for bids, where the vendors respond with their sealed bid. At the bid opening, the vendors with the lowest cost for diesel and for regular unleaded fuel are selected. For

school year 2016–17, one vendor had the lowest bid for each fuel type and was awarded both contracts.

This process is beneficial for the district because it allows Lytle ISD to realize a substantial savings from the retail cost of fuel. For example, the Oil Price Information Service (OPIS) spot price for fuel is significantly higher than the price the district is charged. During the review team's fieldwork, it was observed that the district enjoyed a 30 percent discount from the OPIS spot price being offered at the retail level in the 78052 service area.

DETAILED FINDINGS

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (REC. 25)

Lytle ISD lacks written standard operating procedures (SOPs) for transportation staff.

The Transportation Division staff conduct operations based on the word-of-mouth knowledge of the staff, without a specific source document for procedures. While a district staff handbook exists, a handbook specific to transportation operations does not. Instead, the operations director and the transportation manager provide information to staff on how tasks are performed in the department. The transportation manager is more of a "hands on" facilitator while the operations director is responsible for the planning for the Transportation Division.

Lytle ISD has board policies that list basic information relating to the Transportation Division such as bus maintenance, bus driver credentials, and safety of students; however, the district lacks a transportation-specific manual that explains how or why these policies are executed. If knowledgeable staff such as the transportation manager or operations director are unavailable, staff do not have a documented reference when questions arise.

Per current routine, bus drivers are required to conduct a pre-trip bus inspection before every route or trip in the vehicle. The drivers complete a form each week that has Monday through Friday and spaces for both a morning pre-trip check, an afternoon post-trip check, and mileage next to each. There was no documentation however, regarding how the process was monitored or who did the monitoring.

The Transportation Division mechanics conduct preventive maintenance inspections (PMIs), which helps to ensure that the buses are safe and roadworthy. However, during the onsite review, four of the 22 buses did not have a copy of the

recommended 3,000-mile PMI in their respective maintenance file as required by the district.

The efficiency and effectiveness of a transportation operation largely depends on the knowledge of the staff. Lack of written procedures could result in staff being unaware of important procedures they are expected to follow in certain situations. For example, a bus driver in an accident may not be aware he or she is only to speak with law enforcement, and not the media. Additionally, during the onsite review, it was noted that a driver had an expired commercial driver's license (CDL). This situation poses a significant risk to the district if it were exposed to a records investigation if that bus driver became involved in a collision. Buses without documented PMIs in their files could become a liability issue for the district in the event of an accident, as it will be more difficult to assess whether an accident was a lack of proper maintenance, equipment failure, driver error, or something else.

Written SOPs provide the objective criteria to assess whether functions are being performed to standard to ensure an effective and efficient student transportation system. A Pupil Transportation Handbook was developed at Richmond City Public Schools (VA) which detailed:

- goals, vision and mission statement;
- organization chart;
- rules for operating a school bus;
- threat assessment;
- radio communication procedures (10-4, 10-7 etc.);
- drug and alcohol testing in a safety sensitive position;
- how to handle a hostage situation on a school bus;
- trespassing and student rules for riding a school bus;
- transporting students with disabilities;
- safety briefings prior to field trips;
- student behavioral management techniques;
- emergency procedures (lost students, reactive maintenance);
- pre-trip and post-trip school bus inspections;
- extra work procedures;

- inclement weather (heavy weather, wind event, local disasters);
- distracted driving;
- procedures to follow in the event of an accident;
- how to identify sexual predators;
- accident mitigation;
- unauthorized bus stops; and
- wheelchair lift operations (every bus driver/bus monitor trained to operate).

Lytle ISD should develop written standard operating procedures for the functions required of transportation staff.

This document should include the mission of the Transportation Division, the organizational structure, daily responsibilities, and attendance. The operations director should form a student transportation handbook committee that includes the transportation manager, a senior bus driver, the HR director, and the lead mechanic. The committee should identify topics for inclusion in the handbook. The handbook should include photographs along with graphics for visual learners.

The handbook committee should develop a draft for leadership review and approval. The leadership review team may consist of the assistant superintendent, operations director, athletic director, and one principal. Upon approval by the superintendent, the student transportation handbook should be printed and distributed to all transportation staff at the beginning of the school year at the in-service training session (convocation week). The handbook should also be distributed to every newly employed bus driver, substitute bus driver, and bus monitor. Additionally, the handbook should be uploaded to the district's website.

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE (REC. 26)

Lytle ISD's Transportation Division lacks an organizational structure to ensure the effective transportation of students.

Lytle ISD's transportation manager provides instructions, trip assignments, and training to the transportation staff. However, staff are not supervised or evaluated by the transportation manager, but instead by the operations director. Additionally, transportation staff typically go to the

operations director for most matters, bypassing the transportation manager, making the operations director often directly involved in day-to-day transportation activities.

According to the operations director, the transportation manager does not supervise or evaluate transportation staff because the manager is related to one of the bus drivers. Additionally, Lytle ISD uses other job titles for the transportation manager on many transportation-related documents, such as the transportation supervisor or transportation director.

The operations director's daily management tasks pose a challenge because they reduce the time the director has available for administrative activities. In addition to transportation, the operations director oversees both the maintenance and custodial divisions. The operations director also has other responsibilities as a member of the superintendent's leadership team. Additionally, dual reporting relationships, whereby staff report to one position for some items, but another position for other items, could be confusing and could lead to inconsistency regarding roles and responsibilities.

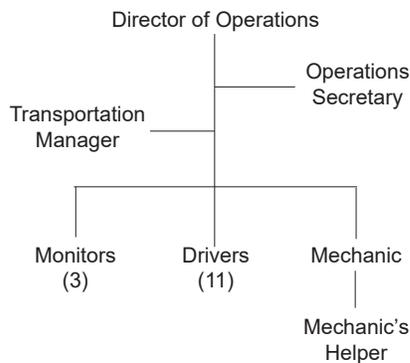
The lack of clearly defined supervisory roles also limits the division's ability to ensure that operations are managed in a cohesive, coordinated manner. When staff are not sure who to report to or who should be reporting to them, it makes it difficult to establish clear workplace expectations and responsibilities. Furthermore, a lack of formally defined job roles within a division can lead to confusion, ineffective performance, and morale issues.

The website, Online Business Advisor, published an article in 2000 titled Avoid Dual Reporting Relationships. The article stated that "It is vital that staff work closely with one supervisor to set expectations and goals, take direction, and receive feedback about performance. When more than one supervisor is involved, the staff is subject to the potential for far too many mixed messages and different approaches."

Lytle ISD should realign the job responsibilities of the transportation manager and operations director so that the transportation manager is the direct supervisor of all transportation staff.

Figure 6-5 shows the proposed organizational structure for the Transportation Division. This realignment will eliminate potential confusion about reporting responsibilities and clarify that the transportation manager supervises the transportation staff.

**FIGURE 6-5
PROPOSED TRANSPORTATION DIVISION ORGANIZATION
SCHOOL YEAR 2016-17**



SOURCE: Legislative Budget Board School Performance Review Team, December 2016.

The operations director, HR director, and the transportation manager should propose to the superintendent a change to the organization which reflects decentralized reporting and evaluation responsibilities. The transportation manager should assume responsibility for the annual evaluations of all transportation staff and regularly report to the operations director. Considering the one bus driver who is related to the transportation manager, the operations director should continue the supervisory role and annual evaluation of the bus driver related to the transportation manager.

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

BUS REPLACEMENT (REC. 27)

Lytle ISD lacks a method for identifying buses that are no longer of use to the district, along with a scheduled and cost-effective means of disposal.

For school year 2016-17, Lytle ISD has 22 daily school buses with an average fleet age of 11.1 years. The district fleet age ranges from 22 years to a one year old. The district has a spare bus ratio of 100 percent, with 22 buses on active routes; 11 in daily use and 11 spares. The district has an additional four buses (for a total of 26 buses) that are part of daily use and are not listed in the inventory or reported to TEA. Two of these four are fueled, registered, insured, and have a valid Texas state license plate. The other two buses are not roadworthy and have expired tags and registrations. These buses are not being used for their parts.

The district owns buses from three major school bus manufacturers, including Thomas C-2, International Bus,

and Blue Bird model school buses. Smaller districts typically have a higher ratio of spare-to-active buses to have ready replacements in the event of mechanical failures and for extracurricular trips. Having multiple bus manufacturers becomes challenging when considering spare parts and proprietary special tools needed in the repair process. **Figure 6-6** shows the district’s bus inventory, with two buses that are 20 years old. The average mileage of the fleet is 99,670 miles.

The four newest, low-mileage buses identified as spares in **Figure 6-6** are used as “trip buses” which are primarily driven by the coaches to athletic events. These buses are not used frequently, so time is required to warm them up, ensuring the motor oil flows to protect engine components.

**FIGURE 6-6
LYTLE ISD BUS INVENTORY
SCHOOL YEAR 2015-16**

YEAR	AGE	QUANTITY	AVERAGE MILEAGE	BUS STATUS
2015	1	2	15,444	Spare
2013	3	2	37,299	Spare
2012	4	1	66,025	Route bus
2009	7	3	88,930	Route bus
2007	9	2	128,851	Route bus
2004	12	1	161,817	Route bus
2003	13	1	105,681	Route bus
2001	15	3	138,609	Route bus
2000	16	2	125,349	Spare
1999	17	2	129,653	Spare
1998	18	1	167,985	Spare
1996	20	2	67,710	Spare

SOURCE: Legislative Budget Board School Performance Review Team, December 2016; Lytle ISD, December 2016.

An excessive number of spare buses takes up valuable time from the lead mechanic. Attention to these buses takes focus away from the in-service buses and other vehicles with a higher priority for service, since they are used in the primary mission of the home to school and return function.

Without a defined and supported replacement plan, the average and maximum ages of a district’s fleet of vehicles is likely to increase. Although interviews with principals and staff indicate a high level of satisfaction with the service provided by the Transportation Division, maintaining an acceptable level of service is likely to result in increased costs due to higher maintenance costs for older buses.

The National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services (NASDPTS) recommends that buses be replaced every eight to 15 years, depending upon the type of bus and level of use. Buses older than 16 years are often not compliant with current regulations and policies. An aging fleet with significant mileage generally has a higher cost of operation, in the form of lower miles per gallon in fuel consumption, more frequent repairs, and higher repair costs.

According to the Council of Greater City Schools, a goal of a well-run transportation department is to procure only the number of buses actually needed on a daily basis, plus an appropriate spare bus ratio of 10 percent to 15 percent. Although this standard is flexible based on the needs of a particular system, things like district size, off-site parking, age of the fleet, and reliability of the fleet are all factors that can impact the appropriate spare factor for a fleet.

Regular investment in bus fleet replacement is important to ensure the ongoing safety, reliability, and efficiency of the Transportation Division. Older vehicles are less reliable, leading to an increase in breakdowns and service disruptions, as well as the need to retain a higher proportion of spare vehicles in the fleet to cover more frequent and longer maintenance and repair activities. Older vehicles also fail to take advantage of the latest improvements in vehicle technology for safety and efficiency.

Lytle ISD should develop a bus replacement and spare procedure based on the vehicle's mileage and age.

The operations director and the transportation manager should review the use of each bus in the inventory and develop a target spare bus ratio to be maintained based on comparison to the industry standard.

In addition, the district should consider selecting one manufacturer to purchase buses from in the future to make repairs and required tools more cost effective and efficient. Additionally, when a school bus has met the criteria for replacement, the transportation manager should ensure that the buses are not identified for additional maintenance. As additional replacement buses are added into the bus inventory, the transportation manager should regularly identify the buses for surplus via auction or scrap. This process will eliminate the high spare ratio.

Applying the 10 percent to 15 percent spare bus ratio, the district would need three spare buses instead of the 11 spare buses they now have, an excess of eight buses. The fiscal

impact assumes that the transportation manager would sell the eight buses at an average of \$500 each, for a one-time revenue gain of \$4,000 (\$500 x 8). The fiscal impact revenue gain is based on standard auction prices for school buses of the age and mileage Lytle USD would be selling.

SUBSTITUTE BUS DRIVERS (REC. 28)

Lytle ISD lacks an effective process to recruit and hire substitute bus drivers.

The Transportation Division has 11 drivers for school year 2016–17. Bus drivers are assigned to every route; however, if two or more drivers are absent, key staff such as the operations director or transportation manager drive the bus route. The transportation manager is the first position to substitute for the absent driver. During the onsite review, the transportation manager stated that she has driven a school bus two to three times per week since August 2016. According to the district's human resources database, there are no permanent substitute bus driver positions. Currently, the district has a large sign posted which states that they are recruiting drivers. The district also relies on their staff to recruit family members to work as substitute bus drivers.

The shortage of school bus drivers is problematic because it forces other staff to neglect their primary responsibilities to substitute for absent drivers. For example, the transportation manager functions as an administrator, dispatcher, and driver trainer. Additionally, the first priority of the lead mechanic is to maintain the road worthiness of the school buses. Having buses remain sitting in the bay awaiting maintenance while the mechanic is acting as a substitute bus driver is an inefficient use of staff resources. The operations director is responsible for leading and managing three divisions, in addition to being a key member of senior staff.

Best practices recommend having enough staffing for bus routes, typically a goal of 12 percent to 15 percent spare ratio for drivers. At Richmond City Public Schools in Richmond, VA, the substitute bus driver percentage was 15 percent due to the average age of the school bus drivers being 67 years old.

The district should develop a program to recruit substitute bus drivers.

The transportation manager should meet with the bus drivers to discuss ideas for recruiting substitute bus drivers. Additionally, the transportation manager should attend parent-teacher organization meetings to explain the opportunities for substitute bus drivers. Using local jobs

boards and local store bulletin boards would be another place to attract candidates. Additionally, the district should consider placing a small flyer in church bulletins and distributing flyers with students to attract an initial database of candidates for the district.

The HR director, operations director, and transportation manager should identify a strategy and recruit substitute drivers from non-traditional sources. These sources could include churches, military retirees, Emergency Medical Service drivers, parents, and firefighters who already have their CDL. They should conduct job fairs specific to the need or attend job fairs in the local area where CDL holders may be looking for either a morning or afternoon opportunity to make money. The district should post help wanted signs at military retiree job boards, supermarket bulletin boards, internet job boards, and signs near Lytle ISD campuses to attract some candidates to be vetted by the Human Resources Department.

The Human Resources Department should track the effectiveness of the various methods and report the status to the operations director and/or the superintendent.

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

PERFORMANCE METRICS (REC. 29)

Lytle ISD lacks a process to assess and report on the effectiveness and efficiency of the Transportation Division.

The Lytle ISD Transportation Division is responsible for the transportation of students from home to school and return. The drivers and monitors report to work, conduct pre-trip inspections, and depart for the morning bus run. The bus drivers must execute an effective route design to get students to school in time for breakfast. In the afternoon, the bus drivers report to transport students home.

However, the school district has not established performance measures for the Transportation Division. The district does not compare its performance against established benchmarks, key performance indicators (KPIs), or peer districts to identify areas of improvement. KPIs track progress toward achieving the organization’s objectives by monitoring activities that could potentially cause losses or failure. Additionally, district staff were unable to determine the on time performance of buses because the district does not track this data.

Figure 6–7 shows transportation expenditures. Since school year 2013–14, the total cost of transportation has risen by 6.8 percent, but the increase has not been uniform among the categories. Salaries and benefits have increased by 24.7 percent, purchases has increased 112.3 percent, while supplies and materials have decreased by 26.0 percent. During the same period, the cost per mile of the regular transportation program increased by 10.2 percent, but the cost per mile for the special program decreased by 5.1 percent. Staff in the Transportation Division is neither tracking nor analyzing this cost data.

**FIGURE 6–7
LYTLE ISD KEY MEASURES OF TRANSPORTATION DIVISION
SCHOOL YEARS 2013–14 TO 2015–16**

KEY MEASURES	2013–14	2014–15	2015–16	PERCENTAGE CHANGE
Total Costs	\$577,488	\$637,940	\$616,648	6.8%
Salaries and Benefits	\$274,324	\$358,754	\$342,170	24.7%
Purchases	\$9,630	\$28,922	\$20,449	112.3%
Supplies, Materials, Oil and Fuel	\$178,839	\$134,343	\$132,299	(26.0%)
Depreciation/Other Operating Expense	\$114,695	\$115,921	\$121,730	6.1%
Cost per Mile, Regular Program	\$2.75	\$2.91	\$3.03	10.2%
Cost per Mile, Special Program	\$2.77	\$2.62	\$2.63	(5.1%)

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, Student Transportation Operations reports, school year 2013–14 to 2015–16.

Failure to track KPIs or other performance metrics means not knowing how well or how poorly the Transportation Division is functioning. The district has an obligation to ensure that students are transported safely, in the most efficient and effective means possible.

Effective districts use performance measurement systems to identify measurable goals and objectives. Districts establish a desired goal or benchmark for each measurement, document its data and compare the data to the benchmarks. The process of continual improvement requires the use of benchmarks. TEA requires both the operations report and the route service report from school districts. The Operations Report captures the cost of regular and special education transportation, mileage and vehicle summaries. The Route Service Report captures program costs by category (regular, special education and CTE) to calculate the funding allotment for each school district. **Figure 6–8** shows an example of transportation benchmarks used in other districts or noted in transportation research.

Establishing performance metrics for the transportation operation allows a district to make data-driven decisions supported by objective evidence. Districts can determine how the division/department is functioning on a monthly or quarterly basis.

Lytle ISD should develop performance metrics to measure the effectiveness and efficiency of the Transportation Division.

The operation and route service reports could provide a useful starting point for developing ideas for initial data to track for benchmarking and then goal development. The transportation manager should include goals with clear objectives and dates to accomplish critical tasks. The transportation manager should develop the initial set of performance metrics, then communicate them to all stakeholders.

The transportation manager should regularly analyze actual performance against the selected benchmarks to determine where improvements are needed. The transportation manager should report to the school board annually on the divisions’ performance, including areas of efficiency and effectiveness, as well as areas in need of improvement.

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

**FIGURE 6–8
TRANSPORTATION INDUSTRY BENCHMARKS**

BENCHMARK	MEASURE
Preventable Accidents	1 : 100,000 miles
On-Time Performance	99.5% (includes all services)
Routing Utilization Efficiency	80% of available time or available capacity
Runs per Bus (a.m.)	1.6 to 1.9 (double tiered system) 2.3 to 2.5 (triple tiered system)
Bus to Mechanic Ratio	25 to 30 : 1 (depends on fleet type and age)
Spare Bus Ratio	10% to 15% (depends on fleet mix and trip volume)
Driver Turnover Rate	< 15%
Parts Cost per Mile (no labor)	\$0.16 to \$0.18 (depends on fleet type and age)
Maintenance Cost per Mile	\$0.39 to \$0.43 (depends on fleet type and age, assumes 13,000 miles per bus per year)
Fleet MPG	6.0 to 7.0 (depends on fleet mix, type, age)
Driver Labor % of Operating Costs	39% to 43% (benefits and work comp excluded)
Total Labor % of Operating Costs	54% to 61% (benefits and work comp excluded)
Insurance and Risk % of Cost	5% to 10% (excluding workers compensation)
Annual Cost per Bus Operated	\$30,000 to \$50,000 per bus (no capital cost)
Fleet Useful Life	10,000 to 15,000 miles per year – 180,000 max.
Bus Replacement Policy	10 to 12 years (spares 11 to 13 years)

SOURCES: Council of the Great City Schools, 2010; American School and University Magazine, 2005; National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation, 2010; Legislative Budget Board’s School Performance Review Team, December 2016.

TRANSPORTATION SOFTWARE TRAINING (REC. 30)

Lytle ISD is not maximizing the use of its routing and scheduling software.

The district has routing and scheduling software to assist with transportation management. The district pays an annual software subscription fee of \$595 for the commercial software. **Figure 6–9** shows a gap analysis between the routing system functions and those used by Lytle ISD’s Transportation Division.

**FIGURE 6–9
SELECT FEATURES OF LYTLE ISD’S ROUTING SOFTWARE**

FUNCTION	FEATURES	DISTRICT’S USE
Routes and Stops	Mapping, Routing, and Optimization	None
	Auto Assign Students to Nearest Bus Stop	None
	Turn-by-Turn Directions	None
	School Building Emergency Evacuation Routes	None
	School Drop Off and Pickup Traffic Flow Maps	None
Parents and Students	Parent Lookup Website Integration	None
	Display Announcements and Bulletins	None
	Locate Student’s Bus Stop, Routes, School	None
	Field Trips and Activities	None
Fleet Management	GPS Tracking Integration	None
	Bus Inventory Management	None

SOURCES: Masonlane Sunray Software, December 2016; Legislative Budget Boards School Performance Review Team, December 2016; Lytle ISD, December 2016.

The operations director is the district’s subject matter expert for the software and determines the routing of school buses using it. However, the operations director has not trained the transportation manager or operations secretary on the routing and scheduling software. The routing and scheduling function requires time and effort at the beginning of the year when students must be routed to new schools. Data upkeep and maintenance during the school year is not as time consuming but the route sheets must reflect changes when students make mid-year address changes. The operations director has many functions with the school district; the added responsibility of designing bus routes each year reduces his time available for other areas.

Additionally, the district is not maximizing all the functionality available in the current software package. No route maps exist on the district’s website and parents cannot identify the assigned route of their child on the district’s website.

Lytle ISD should realign the responsibility for the district’s routing software to the transportation manager.

Shifting the responsibility for the routing software management from the operations director to the transportation manager allows time for other important tasks. Additionally, better use of the software could result in more efficient routing.

The operations director should train the transportation manager and the operations secretary on the routing and scheduling software. The transportation manager should also request training support from the commercial vendor, with the goal of implementing as many components as benefit the district and transportation operations. Training could take place during a slow period of the year when the sole focus is on training. The sessions could be electronically recorded for review later; the transportation manager should also document the steps involved so that there is written reference guide.

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (REC. 31)

Lytle ISD lacks a professional development program for transportation staff.

Lytle ISD trains transportation staff on the districtwide student behavior program, and offers online training in various compliance areas, such as blood borne pathogens. Additionally, Lytle ISD’s transportation manager also serves as the district trainer, attends “training-the-trainer” courses every three years, and provides bus drivers with professional development once a month. However, transportation staff have not had the opportunity to interact with subject matter experts from a statewide or nationwide professional organization. No Transportation Division staff are a member of the Texas Association for Pupil Transportation (TAPT) or the National Association for Pupil Transportation (NAPT), which are professional organizations that provide training, education, and professional development while promoting excellence in the discipline of student transportation.

Training improves staff’s ability to become more proactive in risk management, threat assessment issues, and data-driven decision making. The lack of professional development exposure at the state or national level means that staff are missing knowledge opportunities specifically geared toward transportation. If there are areas of concern, staff could reach out to these groups to find best practices.

Edmond Public Schools in Oklahoma has a robust training program for new drivers. **Figure 6–10** shows a re-training

FIGURE 6–10
SAMPLE DRIVER TRAINING TOPICS
FEBRUARY 2014

Pre–trip and post–trip (familiarization with switches and controls)
Air brake (exterior and interior)
Seatbelt
Mirror adjustments
Intersections (approach, signal, visual checks, lane position, speed)
Stopping (stop line, stop sign, crosswalk, gap)
Speed
Lane change (visual check, signal, interval)
Right turns (visual checks, signal, lane position, correct lane, speed)
Left turns (visual checks, signal, lane position, correct lane, speed)
Mirror usage (checks mirrors every 3 to 5 seconds)
Steering (position and smoothness)
Following distance (both +/- 40)
15 steps (loading and discharging)
Parking (uphill, downhill, roadside stop)
Turnabout
Railroad crossing (right lane, ambers, stop, distance, look, listen)
Bridges and overpasses (weight limit and clearance signs)
Right and left curves (stay in lane, speed)
Stall parking (signal, parallel to curb, 4–ways)
Unsafe acts (traffic violations, accidents, vehicle over sidewalks or curbs)

SOURCE: Edmonds Public Schools, OK, February 2014.

program for existing drivers who are involved in an accident or exhibit poor driving skills or habits, and a specific training module for conducting pre–trip inspections. This surpasses Oklahoma state requirements and contributes to a safer working environment.

Additionally, best practices allow for transportation staff to receive annual professional development training at the state and national level. NAPT’s professional development series

offers nearly 40 different courses to aid staff in advancing their careers.

Lytle ISD should invest in the training and development of transportation staff.

The transportation manager should join TAPT and NAPT. Membership in these professional organizations provides targeted training in the field, networking opportunities, and interaction with administrators across the state and the nation. In addition, the transportation manager and staff should annually rotate attendance at the TAPT conference.

The following topics should be included as areas of concentration: driver records and associated data; bus maintenance records; ride–along with school bus drivers; bus route verification; PMI schedules; and parts warranty tracking.

The fiscal impact assumes an annual membership in NAPT for \$100 and \$40 for TAPT, for a total membership cost of \$140. The fiscal impact also assumes one transportation staff attending the TAPT annual conference for a total cost of \$589, including a conference registration fee of \$105, \$340 for lodging (\$85 x 4 nights) and \$144 for food (\$36 x 4 nights). The fiscal impact assumes that staff could use a district vehicle for transportation to the annual state conference. The total annual fiscal impact is a cost of \$729 (\$140 membership and \$589 conference attendance).

VEHICLE MANAGEMENT INFORMATION AND INVENTORY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (REC. 32)

Lytle ISD lacks an effective process for maintaining an accurate inventory and sufficient records to manage preventive maintenance.

The operations director oversees the district’s fleet maintenance activities. Lytle ISD’s Transportation Division uses a paper system to track preventive maintenance inspections. When a bus is due for preventive maintenance or reactive maintenance, a mechanic inspects the vehicle and identifies the source of any problems. A mechanic retrieves any needed parts from the parts room and installs them on the bus.

The Transportation Division maintains a limited supply of stock parts, including bus tires and diesel fuel filters. However, the division does not maintain an inventory list or history for these items. Transportation staff reorder stock parts when supplies look low. The Transportation Division’s current inventory tracking system lacks a viable process to

document spare parts used in the bus repair process. The majority of the transportation parts are ordered as needed, in an effort to avoid a surplus of unneeded repair parts.

When the required part is not in the garage, the operations director generates a purchase order, but by the time the approval process is complete, a vehicle could be inoperable for 24 to 48 hours. Additionally, a maintenance bay is occupied until the repair can be completed.

There is no single source document updated regularly to reflect the status of inventory and spare parts used on a maintenance work order. Although the district purchases an annual subscription to Sunray, a web-based student logistics operations management application that has the ability to track inventory and maintenance, neither the operations director nor the transportation manager use the system to its full capacity.

The paper-based records management system's inability to capture preventive maintenance issues results in challenges for the district with missing or incomplete documentation. The incomplete documentation and loss of accounting could lead to excessive spare parts inventory and an overreliance on spare buses. The inability to go to a single source document prevents the district from knowing the true cost of maintenance and the true lifecycle cost of maintaining vehicles.

Effective transportation departments maintain accurate counts of spare parts and appropriate reorder points to ensure a sufficient stock is on hand. An adequate spare parts inventory is critical to the timely repair of school buses. The use of software can assist in maintaining information. Inventory management is a daily process to accurately track inventory.

The district should develop a process to improve vehicle maintenance and inventory management procedures.

The district should develop a system identifying the date when preventive maintenance is scheduled, when it has been performed, what items were used, the impact on the inventory balance, and when the next preventive maintenance is scheduled. This system should include inventory management that identifies the parts that were installed on each bus and a set re-ordering standard that considers the order processing and shipping time to keep as many buses on the road without using a spare bus.

Lytle ISD should conduct a physical inventory of parts and reconcile the results with the on-hand totals annually during

the slower holiday weeks or the summer session. The operations director should make note of any discrepancies and forward them to the business manager for further action, if warranted.

The system should establish a reorder point in addition to tracking quantities remaining. The reorder point should consider the time it takes to process and ship the items and record when they are delivered and entered back into inventory.

The operations director and the transportation manager should establish a database to be the vehicle management information system. The database should include a drop down menu to capture bus number, parts used, duration of repair, type of maintenance performed, date, mileage, interval of the next service, warranty recovery, diesel fuel dispensed and mileage (for miles per gallon), vendor work (brake jobs outsourced), reactive maintenance, and spare parts inventory.

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

FISCAL IMPACT

Some of the recommendations provided in this report are based on state or federal laws, rules, or regulations, and should be promptly addressed. Other recommendations are based on comparisons to state or industry standards, or accepted best practices, and should be reviewed to determine the level of priority, appropriate timeline, and method of implementation.

RECOMMENDATION	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) OR SAVINGS	ONETIME (COSTS) OR SAVINGS
CHAPTER 6. TRANSPORTATION							
25. Develop written standard operating procedures for the functions required of transportation staff.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
26. Realign the job responsibilities of the transportation manager and operations director so that the transportation manager is the direct supervisor of all transportation staff.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
27. Develop a bus replacement and spare procedure based on the vehicle's mileage and age.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$4,000
28. Develop a program to recruit substitute bus drivers.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
29. Develop performance metrics to measure the effectiveness and efficiency of the Transportation Division.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
30. Realign the responsibility for the district's routing software to the transportation manager.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
31. Invest in the training and development of transportation staff.	(\$729)	(\$729)	(\$729)	(\$729)	(\$729)	(\$3,645)	\$0
32. Develop a process to improve vehicle maintenance and inventory management procedures.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
TOTAL	(\$729)	(\$729)	(\$729)	(\$729)	(\$729)	(\$3,645)	\$4,000

CHAPTER 7. FACILITIES AND SAFETY MANAGEMENT

An independent school district's (ISD) facilities program provides a safe and clean learning environment. A school district's facilities include campuses, buildings, grounds, athletic facilities, portable buildings, and supplement facilities (e.g., storage, warehouses). Facilities management includes planning for facilities use, construction of projects, and maintenance of infrastructure (e.g., electrical, plumbing, irrigation, heating and cooling).

Managing facilities is dependent on a district's organizational structure. Larger districts typically have staff dedicated to support facilities management, and smaller districts may have staff with dual roles. For example, staff may be responsible for custodial and grounds keeping tasks. Facilities planning establishes district priorities, allocates resources and funds, and identifies milestones based on student enrollment, campus and building capacity, facilities condition, curriculum needs, and state regulations. Management of construction and maintenance projects should include contract management, cost control, and a project schedule with defined milestones. Facilities maintenance requires a program for planned maintenance of facilities and equipment, and routine cleaning of facilities to ensure a safe environment for students and staff.

An ISD safety and security function identifies vulnerabilities and includes strategies to minimize risks to ensure a protected learning environment for students and staff. This protection includes a balanced approach of prevention, intervention, enforcement, and recovery. Risks could include environmental disasters, physical hazards, security threats, emergencies, and human-caused crises.

Managing safety and security initiatives depends on a district's organizational structure. Larger districts typically have staff dedicated to safety and security, and smaller districts assign staff tasks as a secondary assignment. Safety and security includes ensuring the physical security of a school and its occupants. A comprehensive approach to planning for physical security considers school locking systems; monitoring systems; equipment and asset protection; visibility of areas and grounds; police and school resource officers; and emergency operations. Emergency and disaster-related procedures must include fire protection, environmental disasters, communication systems, crisis management, and contingency planning. The identification

of physical hazards must consider playground safety, and overall building and grounds safety. Environmental factors, such as indoor air quality, mold, asbestos, water management, and waste management, also affect the safety of school facilities.

One of the stated objectives of public education in the Texas Education Code is to "provide safe and disciplined environments conducive to learning." To achieve this objective, safety and security operations go hand in hand with education, because districts are responsible for protecting students, teachers, and school property while providing a positive learning environment. Working together, district leaders, campus principals, facility managers, transportation supervisors, and safety and security staff identify risks and develop plans to mitigate threats. A safe and secure school environment as defined by the federal 21st Century Schools and the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act encompasses: communication systems, fire protection, playground safety, facility safety, environmental regulations, and emergency operation planning.

The campus facilities serving Lytle ISD's 1,672 students consist of one high school, one junior high school, one elementary school, one primary school, and a disciplinary alternative education program (DAEP) facility. **Figure 7-1** shows the district's facilities, which include school campuses and ancillary buildings.

In 2011, the district built the junior high school on the same property as the high school campus. The two schools share the cafeteria and gymnasium. Before building, the district consulted users of the facilities. The resulting configurations promote learning environments and are incorporated into the junior high school, elementary school, and primary school.

The district manages its facilities through its Operations Department. The Operations Department oversees transportation, custodial services, and facilities maintenance. The operations director leads the department and has five staff: a general maintenance technician, a custodial supervisor, two grounds technicians, and the operations secretary.

**FIGURE 7-1
LYTLE ISD FACILITIES
SCHOOL YEAR 2016-17**

FACILITY	DATE BUILT OR RENOVATED
High School	1996
Junior High School	2011
Elementary School	2013
Primary School	2001
Elementary School Cafeteria	1993
Athletic Field House	2013
Stadium Field House	1977/1996
Central Office	1977/2006
Disciplinary Alternative Education Program	1977
Operations Department	1977
Information Technology Campus	1977
Auxiliary Gym	1977
Agricultural Barn	2013

SOURCES: Legislative Budget Board School Performance Review Team, Lytle ISD, November 2016.

Twenty-one full-time and two part-time custodians serve the district’s 354,727 square feet floor area. The district’s full-time-equivalent (FTE) position allotment is 16,124 square feet per FTE position. The Legislative Budget Board’s School Performance Review Team conducted an onsite evaluation in the district and observed that the district facilities were consistently clean.

Figure 7-2 shows Lytle ISD facilities and maintenance organization.

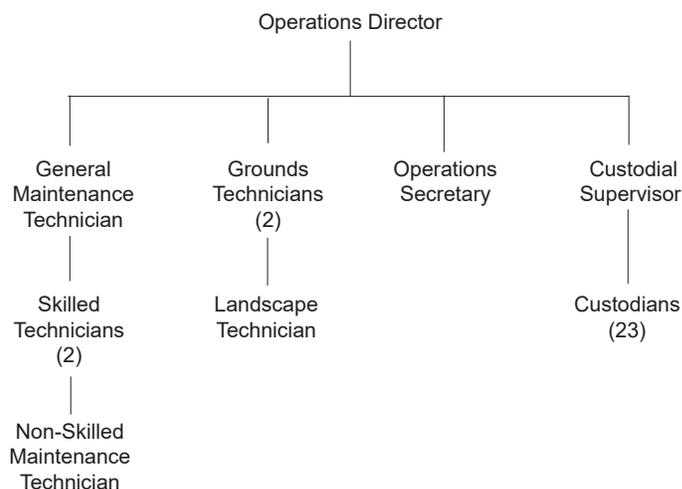
The district uses an email system to transmit work orders, which includes sending photos through email. The system’s communications strings enable staff to aggregate and organize communications by work order or other topic. By using this system, the department can attach pictures of maintenance problems and other documents and allows for easy transmittal of attachments through email.

The district has no major contracts for facilities planning, design, or construction. The facilities construction contracts the district recently administered were a design-bid-build model. In this model, the architect acts on behalf of the owner in securing the lowest bid from prequalified, prescreened contractors. The construction manager, hired temporarily as district staff, managed the construction for the district. The district’s board policies specify these and other methods of contracting.

Lytle ISD’s emergency operations planning team implements the district’s Emergency Operations Plan (EOP), including the role and reporting structure for these positions. Figure 7-3 shows the reporting structure of the emergency operations planning team.

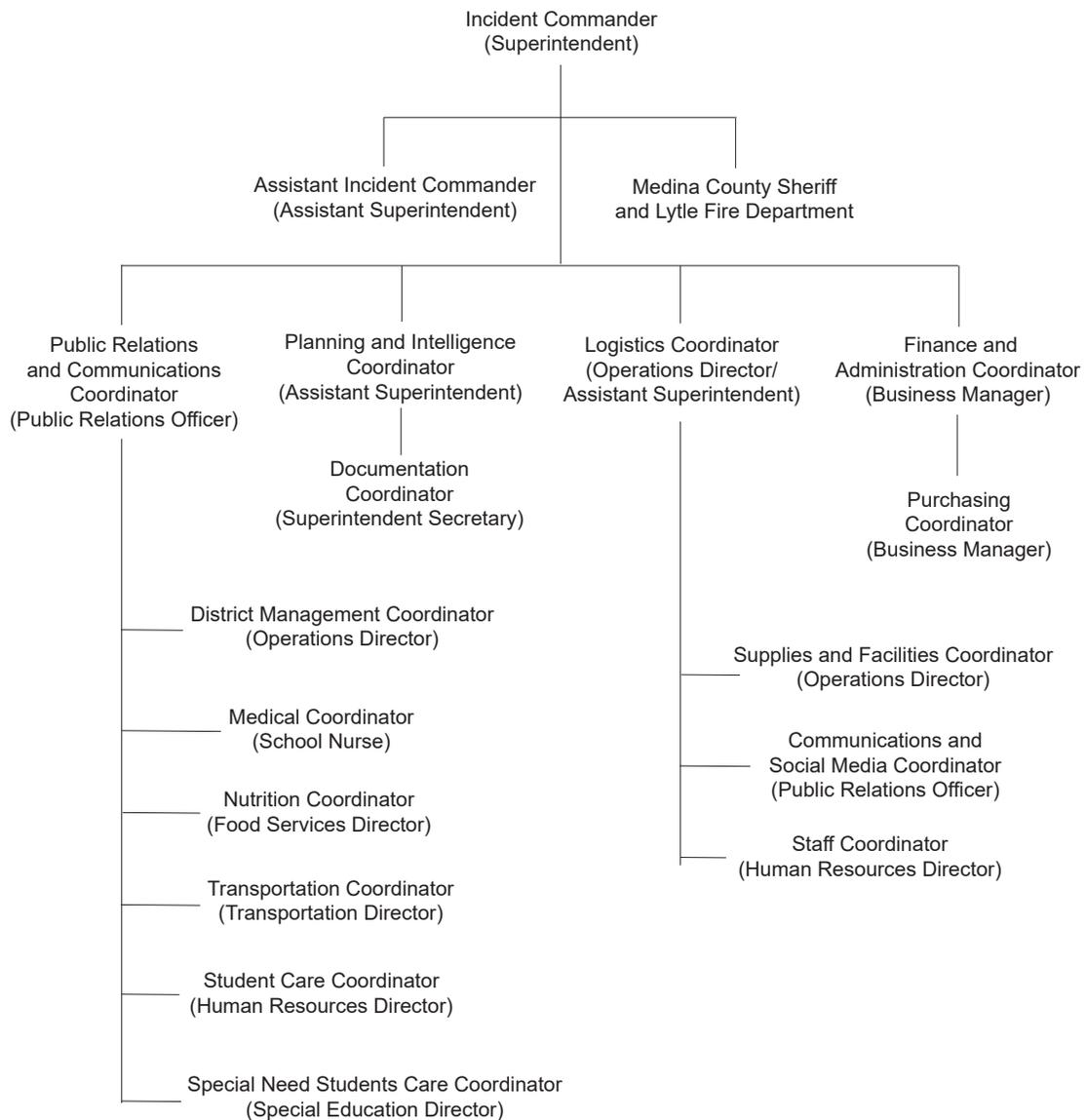
For safety and security, the district implements the Incident Command System (ICS) methodology. ICS is an on-scene incident management concept intended to enable responders

**FIGURE 7-2
LYTLE ISD FACILITIES AND MAINTENANCE ORGANIZATION
SCHOOL YEAR 2016-17**



SOURCES: Legislative Budget Board School Performance Review Team; Lytle ISD, January 2017.

**FIGURE 7-3
LYTLE ISD EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLANNING TEAM
SCHOOL YEAR 2016-17**



SOURCES: Legislative Budget Board School Performance Review Team, December 2016; Lytle ISD, December 2016.

to adopt an integrated organizational structure that meets the demands of incidents. The superintendent implements the ICS function of managing incidents that occur in the district. Four other major management activities form the basis of ICS, including public relations and communication, planning and intelligence, logistics, and finance and administration. The district conducts various drills regularly as required by state law. Drills include evacuation, lockdown, shelter in place, severe weather, and reverse evacuation. An

outside vendor conducts annual inspections of safety equipment at the campuses.

The district has cameras located throughout the interiors and grounds of the district, and the district plans to purchase additional cameras. Exterior locks open with programmed district-issued badges installed at all campus perimeter doors, with key locks in the elementary school cafeteria. The badge-operated locks are selectively programmable. Some district

and campus staff can have their badges programmed for limited numbers of doors, and other positions have universal access. All badges are instantly deprogrammable in the event of a threat if an intruder may have forcibly taken a badge from staff or a student to gain entry. With the exception of Lytle High School, all main campus entrances have secure vestibules, and visitors receive temporary badges to wear while on the campus. The district trains students and staff not to permit entry to individuals without identification badges through any doors that are not part of the entry vestibules.

ACCOMPLISHMENT

- ◆ Lytle ISD coordinated with the Medina County Sheriff's Department to develop and fill a school resource officer (SRO) position to implement and increase safety measures in the district and to increase awareness of safety-related issues on each campus.

FINDINGS

- ◆ The district has not developed an active facility planning protocol.
- ◆ The district lacks a process to assess safety in shop classrooms and utility closets.
- ◆ Automatic External Defibrillators do not display the expiration date of the pads in the front panel.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ◆ **Recommendation 33: Develop and implement an active facility master plan and establish an ongoing planning protocol.**
- ◆ **Recommendation 34: Conduct an annual inspection of the shop area and electrical utility closets to identify and correct any safety violations.**
- ◆ **Recommendation 35: Ensure during Automatic External Defibrillator inspections that the expiration date of the pads is clearly visible in the defibrillator's front panel window.**

DETAILED ACCOMPLISHMENT

SAFETY AND SECURITY PLANNING AND AWARENESS

Lytle ISD coordinated with the Medina County Sheriff's Department to develop and fill an SRO position to implement and increase safety measures in the district and to increase awareness of safety-related issues on each campus.

Beginning with school year 2016–17, Lytle ISD hired a deputy sheriff to serve as the district's first SRO. By having a dedicated full-time position to spearhead the district's emergency operations and safety efforts, the district promotes safety and security at a more active level.

Since this hiring, the district started, increased, or completed the following initiatives:

- upgraded the EOP and its related staff organization; the new EOP structure expands training, drilling, and continued evaluation;
- the district has increased placement of surveillance cameras, and plans to continue as annual budgets permit at all campuses and facilities;
- the district has identification badge-activated exterior locks at all campus perimeter doors, with key locks in the remainder of the district's buildings; and
- with the exception of Lytle High School, all campus entrances reflect state-of-the-art secure vestibules with a kiosk for the credentialing of visitors.

The organization of an EOP team and committee led by the SRO would help to increase and maintain awareness and bring constant attention to security results throughout the district. The SRO, operations director, and human resources director provide information and direction to an emergency management committee. The districtwide committee includes all assistant principals, the primary principal, and all counselors from the four campuses. Other committee members include the district nurse, the special education director, the DAEP principal, the assistant superintendent, and the superintendent.

DETAILED FINDINGS

FACILITIES MASTER PLAN (REC. 33)

The district has not developed an active facility planning protocol.

Lytle ISD has implemented large-scale construction and renovation projects in recent years. Since school year 2013–14, the junior high school and the field house were newly constructed, and the elementary school was renovated. The district indicated that, because most of the buildings are new, it does not maintain a facilities master plan.

The absence of a formal planning protocol between major construction and renovation projects increases the likelihood that some elements of facilities planning will be postponed,

deferred, neglected, or forgotten. This likelihood can lead to a lack of planning concerning critical facility needs, and insufficient attention to setting completion goals, schedules and deadlines for ongoing facility management, maintenance, and operations tasks. For example, the roofs of the high school and the primary school have leaks, which the district identified as necessary deferred maintenance. Without a planning protocol, these items are not part of a facilities master plan.

The elementary school also has roof leaks, which the district lists as warranty work. A consequence of roof breaches typically is collateral damage. As water intrudes, it can damage interior finishes, furnishings, fixtures, and equipment. Leaked water can short-circuit electrical systems, which increases the risk of fires. Computer labs and server rooms are especially vulnerable to high-cost damage.

A long-range facility master plan provides a roadmap for future construction and renovation programs. A comprehensive school facility master plan can include the following:

- an extensive evaluation of the condition and educational functionality of existing buildings and sites;
- a capacity analysis of all district education facilities, reflecting the district’s instructional program;

- an evaluation of each campus and facility to determine its best use, considering local programs and space requirements;
- a determination of technology capabilities within existing facilities;
- information relative to school facilities conformance to state and federal mandates;
- a series of recommendations and options available to the district to meet current and projected facility needs; and
- a 10-year enrollment forecast by grade and by campus for the entire district.

Periods of routine maintenance typically follow large-scale construction, renovation, and upgrade projects. Having a long-term facilities master plan helps ensure the district prioritizes, starts, and completes building projects according to an efficient and logical process. As the board and district leadership changes, having a long-term facilities master plan adds stability and cohesiveness to the district’s construction, use, and management of facilities.

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) provides districts with a recommended planning model for facilities. **Figure 7–4** shows TEA’s recommended program elements for districts to develop a comprehensive long-range facilities master plan.

FIGURE 7–4
SAMPLE LONG-RANGE FACILITY MASTER PLAN ELEMENTS
2003

PROGRAM ELEMENT	MISSION	RESPONSIBILITIES	PLAN ELEMENTS
Planning	Needs Assessment	Identify current and future needs	Demographics, facilities survey, boundary, funding, education program, market, staff capability, 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, organizational plan, community involvement 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: Texas Education Agency, Recommended Planning Model for Facilities and Planning, 2003.

The district should develop and implement an active facility master plan and establish an ongoing planning protocol.

The operations director and the custodial supervisor should develop a continuous facility planning process and submit the framework to the board and superintendent for review and approval. This process should have the following elements:

- A five-year plan, where each year contains specific programs, projects, actions, and the required funding for each section.
- When the current year is ready for implementation, the district should add a new year to the program to maintain the five-year horizon.
- The programs, projects, and actions for each year come from these categories: data and other information collection, analysis, and inputs to planning; facilities planning, programming, design, and construction actions; renovations, additions, rehabilitation, major repairs, and other capital improvements; preventive and reactive facilities maintenance; and custodial services, security and safety, and facilities operations.
- The district continuously reviews and updates the information within each plan year as new data and information become available. The continuous planning process is a dynamic activity that enables a school district to be highly responsive to changes in demographics, educational technology, trends in teaching methods, and subject matter emphasis.

The district should include all roof-related schedules, budgets, inspections, repairs, and replacements in its facilities master plan. All roof-related activities should be included as action items for each year of the plan. These activities include, but are not limited to, the following items:

- scheduled and required roof inspections to stay eligible for existing warranties;
- visual roof inspection and preventive maintenance;
- roof repairs in response to roof inspection findings;
- roof refurbishments; and
- roof replacements.

The district should issue work orders for these items and for the reactive repairs that arise.

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

SAFETY INSPECTIONS (REC. 34)

The district lacks a process to assess safety in shop classrooms and utility closets.

During onsite walkthroughs, the review team found unsafe areas in shop classrooms and utility closets. The review team observed welding and woodworking equipment loose and unbolted to the floor. Equipment such as miter saws and large vices attached to metal stands were unbolted in the shop classroom. Some electrical and utility closets contained furniture, equipment, and boxes that often obstructed electrical panels and utility storage areas.

Unbolted equipment results in risks of injury because it may tip over and fall on equipment operators or bystanders. Cluttered electrical and utility closets may result in combustion hazards and prevent access to electrical panels and other equipment by service personnel.

The Texas School Safety Center's website provides School Safety and Security Standards. The guidelines state, "The school district should train staff and use appropriate partners to systematically perform ongoing self-assessments/audits, to identify and address safety and security issues and report the results according to current Texas statute." However, the district's safety audits have not identified the safety risks in the shop classrooms and utility closets.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) ensures employer compliance with federal requirements and educates employers and employees to establish and support safe work environments. OSHA published a booklet titled *Personal Protective Equipment* in 2006 that includes information for establishing safety equipment policy and workplace safety standards. The Texas Department of State Health Services recommends reviewing OSHA's Compliance Guidelines for Hazard Assessment and Personal Protective Equipment Selection. The U.S. Code of Federal Regulations, Title 29, Standard 1910.212(b), addresses the anchoring of fixed machinery, stating, "Machines designed for a fixed location shall be securely anchored to prevent walking or moving." The National Fire Protection Association's publications *National Electrical Code*, 2017, and *NFPA 101: Life Safety Code*, 2015, require a three-foot clearance around all electrical panels.

Lytle ISD should conduct an annual inspection of the shop area and electrical utility closets to identify and correct any safety violations.

The district should annually remove electrical, utility, and other closets to remove furnishings, fixtures, equipment, and boxes that are no longer in use. Staff should inspect shop classrooms and correct any noted violations before the beginning of every school year. The assigned staff should conduct the inspection in conjunction with the outside contractor who conducts the annual inspections of safety equipment at the campuses.

The operations director should clearly mark and restore clearance distances around electrical panels and mechanical equipment. The district should dispose as surplus all items still in usable condition according to established procedures.

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

DEFIBRILLATOR PAD EXPIRATION DISPLAY (REC. 35)

Automatic External Defibrillators (AED) do not display the expiration date of the pads in the front panel.

All fire extinguishers, fire panels, emergency lights, exit lights, eyewash stations, fume hoods, dust collectors, and showers were in working order. These elements also were inspected by an outside contractor hired by the district and were maintained as required. However, the review team found that none of the AEDs inspected in Lytle ISD had pads positioned so that the expiration date was readable through the viewing window. According to the district, the district nurse and trainer regularly inspect the AEDs in all areas.

AED pads contain a gel that enables them to make full contact with the patient’s skin, resulting in a sufficient shock to resuscitate a stopped heart. This gel dries and hardens, making it less likely to achieve the necessary contact. Most AED pads have a manufacturer’s expiration date of two years. Use after the expiration date may present a greater risk of failure in achieving the lifesaving results expected from the system.

When the expiration date of a defibrillator pad is not clearly visible, the likelihood of a missed pad replacement increases. Expired pads may render the defibrillators partially or completely ineffective, which could result in loss of life. The district nurse and trainer inspects the AEDs to ensure that they are functioning properly.

All 50 states have laws regulating defibrillators. **Figure 7-5** summarizes the Texas laws.

Lytle ISD should ensure during AED inspections that the expiration date of the pads is clearly visible in the defibrillator’s front panel window.

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

FACILITY AND SAFETY MANAGEMENT ENHANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

During the fieldwork, the review team identified additional areas in which the district could enhance its services to students, staff, and the community. The following opportunities are not findings, but they are presented for the district’s consideration as it implements the report’s other findings and recommendations:

**FIGURE 7-5
TEXAS STATE AUTOMATIC EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATORS (AED) SUMMARY**

REQUIREMENTS

Physician	A licensed physician must be involved in the training program and placement to ensure compliance.
Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation/ Automatic External Defibrillator Training	Each user of the automated external defibrillator must receive training given or approved by the Texas Department of State Health Services in cardiopulmonary resuscitation and use of the automated external defibrillator.
Emergency Medical Service Notification	When a person or entity acquires an automated external defibrillator, the person or entity shall notify the local emergency medical services provider of the existence, location, and type of automated external defibrillator.
Maintenance Program	A person or entity that owns or leases an automated external defibrillator shall maintain and test the automated external defibrillator according to the manufacturer’s guidelines.
Notification of Use	A person or entity that provides emergency care to a person in cardiac arrest by using an automated external defibrillator shall promptly notify the local emergency medical services provider.

SOURCE: AED Brands, AED State Laws, January 2017.

- the high school is the only campus that does not have a secure entry vestibule into the building; the district could place a visitor entry vestibule at the high school to provide the same security as the entry vestibules at the other campuses;
- the agriculture building and the elementary school travel path to the cafeteria do not have perimeter fencing installed; the district could install perimeter fencing at the travel path to the cafeteria to provide optimal security to students walking between buildings on the elementary campus;
- with the exception of the elementary school cafeteria, all buildings in the district have badge-activated lock systems; the district could consider converting the elementary school cafeteria building from key lock to badge-activated lock systems to ensure consistency across campuses; and
- two light fixtures in the district (one in the primary school and one in the junior high school) present potential hazards to maintenance staff; the district could automate the process for changing the light fixtures to increase the safety for maintenance staff.

FISCAL IMPACT

Some of the recommendations provided in this report are based on state or federal laws, rules, or regulations, and should be promptly addressed. Other recommendations are based on comparisons to state or industry standards, or accepted best practices, and should be reviewed to determine the level of priority, appropriate timeline, and method of implementation.

RECOMMENDATION	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) OR SAVINGS	ONETIME (COSTS)OR SAVINGS
CHAPTER 7. FACILITIES AND SAFETY MANAGEMENT							
33. Develop and implement an active facility master plan and establish an ongoing planning protocol.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
34. Conduct an annual inspection of the shop area and electrical utility closets to identify and correct any safety violations.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
35. Ensure during Automatic External Defibrillator inspections that the expiration date of the pads is clearly visible in the defibrillator's front panel window.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
TOTAL	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

CHAPTER 8. TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT

An independent school district's technology management affects the operational, instructional, and financial functions of a school district. Technology management requires planning and budgeting, inventory control, technical infrastructures, application support, and purchasing. Managing technology is dependent on a district's organizational structure. Larger districts typically have staff dedicated to administrative or instructional technology responsibilities, while smaller districts may have staff responsible for both functions.

Administrative technology includes systems that support a district's operational, instructional, and financial functions (e.g., financial management, human resources, payroll, student attendance, grades, and Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) reporting). Administrative technology improves a district's operational efficiency through faster processing, increased access to information, integrated systems, and communication networks. Instructional technology includes the use of technology as a part of the teaching and learning process (e.g., integration of technology in the classroom, virtual learning, and electronic instructional materials). Instructional technology supports curriculum delivery, classroom instruction, and student learning.

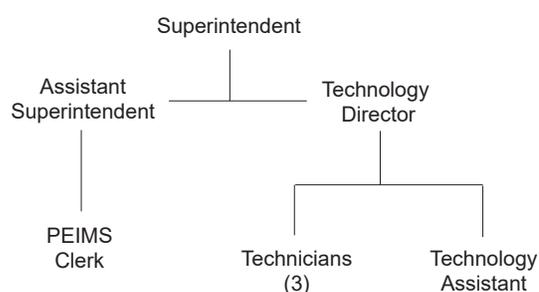
Texas state law requires school districts to prepare plans that include the integration of technology with instructional and administrative programs. A plan defines goals, objectives, and actions for technology projects; assigns responsibility for implementation steps; and establishes deadlines. The state provides a tool for planning and assessing school technology and readiness, which identifies performance measures for teaching and learning, educator preparedness, administration, support services, and infrastructure.

Lytle Independent School District's (ISD's) Technology Department manages the district's technology support function, which includes the technology director, three full time computer technicians and one part time technology assistant. In addition, Lytle ISD has three instructional technology specialist positions (an iPad initiative director and two media specialist) that report to the high school principal, the junior high school principal, or the assistant superintendent depending on the topic. Two computer lab aides at the elementary and primary campuses report to the

respective campus principal. The district also has a PEIMS clerk who reports to the assistant superintendent.

Figure 8–1 shows the organization of the Lytle ISD Technology Department. The technology director reports to the superintendent. The Technology Department staff handle the network and hardware support needs, while the instructional technology specialists and computer lab aides handle the software support needs.

FIGURE 8–1
LYTLE ISD TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION
SCHOOL YEAR 2016–17



SOURCE: Legislative Budget Board School Performance Review Team, Lytle ISD, December 2016.

In summer 2016, the district adopted a new inventory management system. Technology Department staff inventoried and added a Quick Response (QR) code to all computer equipment, including items below the required inventory threshold of \$500. The new system links the inventory number to the work order system, which gives staff access to a complete history for each item. At the end of each school year, teachers report the technology items in their rooms through the inventory management system and the instructional technology specialists reconcile these reports to the district inventory. Technology Department staff registered all devices with AirWatch, which provides tools for managing stolen or compromised mobile devices.

The technology director oversees all computer purchases for review and approval. This ensures that all purchased items will function as intended on the district network and systems.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ◆ Lytle ISD provides a robust and technology-rich environment for teachers, staff, and students.
- ◆ Lytle ISD provides efficient and effective technical support to staff and students through its help desk function.

FINDINGS

- ◆ Lytle ISD lacks a professional development plan for teacher technology competence.
- ◆ Lytle ISD’s Technology Department lacks a method to include teachers in the technology planning process.
- ◆ Lytle ISD has not examined its electronic data to ensure compliance with retention requirements.
- ◆ Lytle ISD lacks a designated backup for the PEIMS clerk.
- ◆ Lytle ISD’s process for collecting attendance data includes manual tasks, which increases the risk of erroneous PEIMS submissions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ◆ **Recommendation 36: Adopt clear expectations and ensure training for teachers on the software and devices that the district uses.**
- ◆ **Recommendation 37: Include teachers in the technology planning process.**
- ◆ **Recommendation 38: Develop guidelines for electronic data retention.**
- ◆ **Recommendation 39: Develop a succession planning process to ensure the district has adequate backup for critical PEIMS functions.**
- ◆ **Recommendation 40: Eliminate manual tasks when processing attendance data.**

DETAILED ACCOMPLISHMENTS

CLASSROOM TECHNOLOGY

Lytle ISD provides a robust and technology-rich environment for teachers, staff, and students. The district’s long-range goals included maintaining a 1-gigabyte per campus wide area network connection. Due to district plans to issue tablets to all students, the district acquired a network with 10-gigabytes between campuses and additional capacity

available for future use. Network traffic on a high use day, on student testing days for example, shows that adequate bandwidth is available. The review team observed minimal wait times for Internet access by classes of students. In interviews and focus groups, principals and teachers reported few to no problems with technology infrastructure or Internet access.

All primary elementary classrooms have five tablet computers assigned, with additional carts of tablets readily available. Students in grades eight through 12 receive a one-to-one environment, meaning that all grade eight and high school students receive a personal tablet computer. The district plans in school year 2017–18 to provide all grade seven students with tablet computers as part of the expansion of the one-to-one initiative.

During onsite work, the review team observed many examples of technology usage on all campuses. **Figure 8–2** shows the observed tally of classrooms with an active use of technology.

**FIGURE 8–2
LYTLE ISD CLASSROOM TECHNOLOGY OBSERVATIONS
NOVEMBER 2016**

SCHOOL	ROOMS OBSERVED	CLASSROOMS WITH ACTIVE TECHNOLOGY ENGAGEMENT
High School	15	9
Junior High School	15	11
Elementary School	25	24
Total	55	44

SOURCE: Legislative Budget Board School Performance Review Team, November 2016.

In interviews and focus groups, principals and teachers reported generally high levels of satisfaction with the resources available to support the district’s technology. Campus staff reported high levels of satisfaction regarding technology availability and its utility for their job duties.

Figure 8–3 shows review team survey responses by campus staff. About 90 percent of the campus staff agree that the district meets the student needs and that technology is readily accessible.

Figure 8–4 shows the results of the review team’s parent survey. Approximately 85 percent of the parents agree that students have regular access to technology and that the district meets the students’ fundamental and advanced computer skills.

**FIGURE 8-3
LYTLE ISD CAMPUS STAFF TECHNOLOGY SURVEY RESULTS
FALL 2016**

SURVEY STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Students have regular access to computer equipment, software, and the internet in the classroom, labs, or library.	52.3%	44.1%	0.9%	1.8%	0.9%
Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	46.0%	49.6%	2.7%	1.8%	0.0%
The district meets student needs in fundamental and advanced computer skills.	44.1%	43.2%	9.9%	2.7%	1.1%
Technology is readily accessible and easy to use in the performance of my job duties.	49.6%	42.3%	1.8%	4.5%	1.8%

NOTE: Totals may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding.
SOURCE: Legislative Budget Board School Performance Review Team Survey, Fall 2016.

**FIGURE 8-4
LYTLE ISD PARENT TECHNOLOGY SURVEY RESULTS
FALL 2016**

SURVEY STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Students have regular access to computer equipment, software, and the internet in the classroom, labs, or library.	32.5%	62.3%	2.6%	2.6%	0.0%
Computers are new enough to be useful to teach students.	33.8%	49.4%	14.3%	1.3%	1.3%
The district meets student needs in fundamental and advanced computer skills.	27.3%	48.1%	14.3%	7.8%	2.6%

NOTE: Totals may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding.
SOURCE: Legislative Budget Board School Performance Review Team Survey, Fall 2016.

In interviews, campus staff also indicated general satisfaction with the budgeting process for technology. All campus leaders noted that if they or their teachers feel a need for some type of technology, the administration usually provided it.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT AND HELP DESK OPERATIONS

Lytle ISD provides efficient and effective technical support to staff and students through its help desk function. Any district staff can place a work order ticket and request support. The Technology Department staff process submitted work orders. The technology director also works tickets when they require a more advanced level of expertise.

The technicians decide daily which campus to work at and then complete all the existing tickets for the chosen campus. Technology staff estimated that one-third of the support tasks completed are not initially placed into the work order system, but are instead requested as technicians are in campuses working other tickets. However, technicians and staff report high levels of satisfaction with the functionality of the work order system. In addition, staff report high levels of satisfaction with the timeliness and quality of the technical support provided by the Technology Department.

Figure 8-5 shows the number of help desk tickets Technology Department staff responded to from July 2015 to June 2016, identified by the location of the campus or department staff who initiated the work order.

**FIGURE 8-5
LYTLE ISD HELP DESK TICKETS
JULY 2015 TO JUNE 2016**

LOCATION OF REQUESTOR	TOTAL TICKETS	AVERAGE TICKETS PER MONTH
High School	307	25.6
Primary School	142	11.8
Administration	111	9.3
Elementary School	105	8.8
Junior High School	67	5.6
Operations Department	28	2.3
Special Education	19	1.6
Technology Department	6	0.5
Total	785	65.4

SOURCE: Legislative Budget Board School Review Team, January 2017; Lytle ISD, November 2016.

All staff in the Technology Department receive email notifications from the work order system regarding any new, assigned, or closed work orders. There is an automatic request for customer feedback, and the work order initiator can reopen a work order if the requester is not satisfied.

DETAILED FINDINGS

STAFF DEVELOPMENT (REC. 36)

Lytle ISD lacks a professional development plan for teacher technology competence.

At all grade levels, teachers have access to a wide range of technology in the classroom, as well as software and online resources. In school year 2014–15, Lytle ISD implemented a 1-to-1 iPad initiative for grades nine through 12, and added grade eight in school year 2016–17. **Figure 8–6** shows the desktops, laptops, and tablet computers assigned to each campus in primarily student learning areas, excluding computers in administrative offices. In addition, each classroom has interactive whiteboards, both mounted on the wall and configured as an interactive table. Available software titles include Atomic Learning, BrainPop, Discovery Education, ST Math, TexQuest Online Resources, and Think Through Math.

**FIGURE 8–6
LYTLE ISD INVENTORY OF COMPUTERS FOR CLASSROOM USE
NOVEMBER 2016**

CAMPUS	COMPUTERS (1)
High School	328
Junior High School	74
Elementary School	401
Primary School	49
Disciplinary Alternative Education Program	16
Total	868

NOTE: (1) Include desktops, laptops, and tablets.
SOURCES: Legislative Budget Board School Performance Review Team, January 2017; Lytle ISD, November 2016.

The Texas Education Code, Section 11.251, requires districts to produce an annual District Improvement Plan (DIP), which districts use to guide district and campus staff toward improving students’ academic performance. Each campus within each school district must also develop, review, and revise annually a Campus Improvement Plan (CIP). The CIP serves as the blueprint for how each campus will actually address the objectives and goals in the DIP.

For the school year 2016–17 CIP, each campus includes the same seven goals. Of these, the following two goals affect the technology management function:

- Goal 2: We will develop instructional systems to assist all stakeholders in creating rigorous learning experiences that provide opportunities to excel.
- Goal 6: We will remain committed to an ever-changing digital learning environment that supports technological skills for all stakeholders.

The CIPs have a comprehensive assessment section that indicates professional development needs for teachers regarding technology. **Figure 8–7** shows the comprehensive assessment section of the CIPs by campus. However, there is no defined professional development plan to address these needs, nor is there an expectation for each teacher at each campus to demonstrate skills in the outlined areas at the end of school year 2016–17.

**FIGURE 8–7
LYTLE ISD TECHNOLOGY-RELATED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
SCHOOL YEAR 2016–17**

CAMPUS	TECHNOLOGY-RELATED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
High School	Tablet tool Video conferencing
Junior High School	Interactive whiteboards Tablets Video conferencing Teacher blogs
Elementary School	Projectors Video conferencing Mobi View Teacher blogs
Primary School	Interactive whiteboards Tablets Video conferencing

SOURCE: Lytle ISD Campus Improvement Plans, November 2016.

The district uses EduHero, which provides online technology training to teachers, but does not track or mandate its use. The course catalog available to district staff through EduHero included 121 different courses as of December 2016, many related to instructional technology and technology integration. **Figure 8–8** shows a list of the courses related to instruction completed by the staff in the previous two years. From school years 2014–15 and 2015–16, Lytle ISD staff

**FIGURE 8–8
LYTLE ISD COURSES RELATED TO INSTRUCTIONAL
TECHNOLOGY COMPLETED BY STAFF
SCHOOL YEARS 2014–15 AND 2015–16**

COURSE NAME	STAFF COMPLETIONS
Adobe Presenter 8 Overview	1
Classroom Management & BYOT	8
Collaboration Tools for the Classroom	3
Communication Tools for the Classroom	2
Content Based Games & Activities	2
Creating Forms in Google Drive	1
Creating Forms with Adobe Acrobat X	2
Exploring Discovery Education	2
Google Drive in the Classroom	1
Introduction to Edmodo	3
Introduction to Google Drive	2
Introduction to Microsoft Office 2010	1
iPads in the Classroom	2
iTunes U	3
Microsoft PowerPoint 2010 Level 2	1
No Clickers Needed	4
Open Source & Amazing	3
Photo Editing Tools	2
Photoshop CC: Basics 1	1
Podcasting for Educators	1
QR Codes in the Classroom	5
Search Engines in the Classroom	3
Smart Phones in the Classroom	4
Symbaloo	2
Technology Essentials: Part 1	2
Technology Essentials: Part 2	2
Technology Essentials: Part 3	2
Tools for Digital Storytelling	1
Toon Your Classroom	2
Using Technology to Create and Present	4
Total	72

NOTE: Counts are duplicated, and individual staff may have attended multiple courses.
SOURCE: Lytle ISD, November 2016.

completed 30 different courses related to instructional technology.

A learning management system is a software application for the administration, documentation, tracking, reporting, and

delivery of educational courses or training programs. The district has two main learning management systems in use, iTunes U and eBackpack, and some teachers use learning management tools available through Google Classroom. However, technology staff estimate that only half of Lytle ISD teachers have mastered one or more of these tools. When the district initially implemented tablet computers, staff reports that the district provided training. When new staff joins the district, they receive some initial training in the functions of a tablet computer.

The instructional technology specialists are available to assist teachers with the use of technology in the classroom on as needed basis. They reported spending a significant amount of time training the teachers on the functionalities of the technology in the classroom. However, there is no formal plan for teachers to receive ongoing professional development for instructional technology. Teachers reported that they received an initial two-hour session of training on eBackpack and iTunes U, but no subsequent training. They noted that in several cases the students trained the teachers as the IT department was implementing the learning management systems.

In a focus group, junior high and high school teachers stated they were not aware of any specific expectations for how they should use technology in their classrooms, only that they are expected to use it. They noted a lack of sufficient training in various areas of instructional technology. Specific concerns include:

- Teachers noted that they requested technology training “design time” in school year 2016–17, but instead the district provided a repeat of performance-based learning training.
- Teachers reported frustrations with the commonly implemented “drive-by” trainings offered by the instructional technology specialists, whereby the specialists drop in at various times to show new tools or techniques, usually while the teacher is teaching or in a planning period. The teachers did not feel this format provides optimal learning.
- Teachers reported the need for better training, for example: providing modeling examples on how to incorporate new technology into the classroom, refresher trainings on the topics already covered, and more comprehensive training on devices’ functions and uses.

- Several teachers reported unsuccessfully trying to learn technology on their own and that they would prefer explicit training.

While the review team observed high levels of technology usage in many classrooms, it was not consistent. During the onsite review, the review team observed extensive classroom interactions with technology and no use of outdated technology, such as bulb projector overheads. However, there were variations observed in the level of technology implementation. In some cases, the students used tablet computers only as a device for reading text.

The International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) has defined technology standards for teachers called the ISTE–T. The ISTE–T defines the fundamental concepts, knowledge, skills, and attitudes for applying technology in educational settings. The ISTE–T establishes five standards and performance indicators that users could customize to fit state or district guidelines and include measurable specific outcomes when developing technology assessment tools. These standards for educators include:

- using knowledge of subject matter, teaching and learning, and technology to facilitate experiences that advance student learning, creativity, and innovation in both face-to-face and virtual environments;
- designing, developing, and evaluating authentic learning experiences and assessment, incorporating contemporary tools and resources to maximize content learning in context and to develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes identified for students;
- exhibiting knowledge, skills, and work processes representative of an innovative professional in a global and digital society;
- understanding local and global societal issues and responsibilities in an evolving digital culture and exhibiting legal and ethical behavior in their professional practices; and
- continuously improving their professional practice, modeling lifelong learning, and exhibiting leadership in their campus and professional community by promoting and demonstrating the effective use of digital tools and resources.

Lytle ISD should adopt clear expectations and ensure training for teachers on the software and devices that the district uses.

The superintendent should review the ISTE–T standards and discuss them with the technology director, the instructional technology specialists, teachers, and staff in the Curriculum and Instruction Department to determine expectations and the necessary training to ensure technology competence for teachers. Together, the superintendent and principals should define a standard to establish expectations for the integration of technology into the classroom. The district should evaluate whether the teachers are meeting those expectations. The superintendent and principals should communicate the standard and the expectations to teachers and staff, with a timeline for expected implementation.

To assist the teachers in fulfilling the expectations for technology integration, the three instructional technology specialists should develop online training modules for teachers and staff. They should also develop a rubric to assess the skills of teachers in the classroom and provide it for principals to use to conduct classroom observations. Teachers identified through this process as needing additional training should work with an instructional technology specialist.

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

TECHNOLOGY PLANNING (REC. 37)

Lytle ISD's Technology Department lacks a method to include teachers in the technology planning process.

Teachers are not explicitly included in technology planning. According to staff, a technology committee that included teachers last met more than three years ago. There is currently not an active technology committee.

The E-rate program is administered by the Schools and Libraries Division of the Universal Service Administrative Company, a nonprofit corporation appointed by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). The program provides discounts for telecommunications and Internet access to school districts and libraries. Previously, E-rate recipients were required to develop a technology plan. However, recent changes to the E-rate program removed this requirement.

As it is no longer required for E-rate funding, the district does not have an up-to-date, written, long-range technology plan. Instead, the technology director meets annually with each campus principal and the superintendent to determine funding availability for technology in the upcoming budget. The technology director stated these long-range goals:

- maintain the current one to one devices for all learners in grades eight through 12, and expand to other grade levels when funding becomes available;
- support online testing with computer labs on all campuses;
- maintain one Gigabyte-per-campus area network connections;
- maintain 10 Gigabyte districtwide network layer two connections to the Network Operations Center (NOC);
- verify wireless internet access for learning areas including outdoor learning spaces (learner, staff, and guest);
- communicate with our constituents on all technology plans and options;
- maintain website and all social media avenues; and
- continue supporting district safety technology systems, the automated door controls, and security camera systems.

Teachers in a focus group expressed frustration with not being a part of the technology planning process. Several noted that the district's choice for a tablet computer would likely not have been the most popular choice of the teachers, as the device lacks a keyboard and external storage. While they agreed that it would not be in the district's best interest to make a switch now, they reported that they feel they lack a voice in the process for future decisions.

The National Center for Technology Planning recommends five phases for an effective planning model that includes recruiting and organizing a planning team. With this model, it is important that the planning team consists of all stakeholder groups including teachers. Team members should excel in planning and communication skills. Other stakeholders may include technology specialists, district leaders, parents, students, community members, and business leaders.

Lytle ISD should include teachers in the technology planning process.

When asked by the review team, Lytle ISD principals identified teachers that were most effective incorporating technology use for classroom learning. The superintendent should request that the principals nominate those teachers to

serve on a technology advisory committee, with the charge of providing input to annual technology budgeting and planning. The technology director should amend his current planning process by adding at least two meetings with the technology advisory committee each year.

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

ELECTRONIC DATA RETENTION (REC. 38)

Lytle ISD has not examined its electronic data to ensure compliance with retention requirements. In July 2016, the district adopted Board Policy CPC (LEGAL) and CPC (LOCAL) on records retention. These policies provide the board's responsibilities and the retention periods for the district student and non-student records. The district moved its permanent paper records storage to a location near the offices of the Food Services Department within the past year. The district also contracted to develop digital copies of many paper records. Nearly all paper records had clearly labeled contents, dates of the contents, and the date at which the district could destroy the contents. The district had some stored paper records for which it had already paid to digitize.

The Texas Local Government Code, Section 202.002, governs the management and retention of local government records including student academic records, district financial records, transportation, food service records, and individual staff records. The Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 7, also provides rules associated with destruction, management, and preservation of records, and requires all local governments to establish a records management program and a records control schedule.

While Lytle ISD appears to comply with state requirements for paper documentation, the district does not have procedures to ensure that all district electronic storage complies with the Texas Local Government Code and the Texas Administrative Code. Staff acknowledged that the district follows some of the records retention provisions, but not all, primarily because of associated costs.

Additionally, the district has multiple locations where its staff can save files and records, resulting in an increased risk for ensuring compliance. The district implemented a shared storage drive (the p: drive) since school year 2007–08. All staff have access to various portions of the p: drive, which has seven terabytes of space. Teachers use the p: drive to store files they plan to use again in classroom lessons. The Technology Department maintains its standard operating

procedures on the p: drive. The Finance Department maintains its files on a secure section of the p: drive to which unauthorized staff do not have access. The business manager requires that no files are stored permanently on local hard drives or devices.

A review of the data maintained by teachers on the p: drive found that it appears that teachers saved or loaded files to the p: drive in 2015 or earlier. The technology director noted that teachers also store work-related files elsewhere, such as in Google Docs.

Teachers may also be keeping files on their district-issued laptops, which Lytle ISD issues to all teachers employed by the district. The Technology Department regularly backs up the p: drive, but not laptops. The Technology Department has notified the teachers via email that the district does not back up their laptops. The Technology Department has not notified the teachers of any requirements regarding records retention, either for their files on the p: drive or potentially on the district-issued laptops. Without clear communication of the expectations for records retention, the teachers could delete records that the district is required to maintain.

Effective school districts establish clear and concise procedures to ensure that they comply with local policy and state statute. The Texas State Library and Archives Commission's (TSLAC's) records retention provisions state that the destruction of local government records in violation of the Local Government Act of 1989, and the administrative rules accompanying those provisions, is a Class A misdemeanor. For severe infractions, a perpetrator may face a third degree felony charge (Texas Penal Code, Section 37.10). Additionally, personnel who destroy local government records without authorization may face criminal penalties and fines described in the Public Information Act (Texas Government Code, Chapter 552).

Figure 8-9 shows examples of the retention and destruction schedule for district records based on statutory requirements.

Lytle ISD should develop guidelines for electronic data retention.

The heads of each department should review the TSLAC local schedule school district requirements for data retention in their respective functional areas. The schedule identifies mandatory minimum retention periods for more than 300 types of records that are associated with school districts. The district should then review those requirements with staff and determine whether the electronic records maintained on the p: drive or local drives comply with TSLAC. The department heads should then develop guidelines for ongoing compliance with electronic records storage.

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

PEIMS DATA MANAGEMENT (REC. 39)

Lytle ISD lacks a designated backup for the PEIMS clerk.

The PEIMS records include Texas school districts' student data, staff information, and financial information.

The PEIMS clerk manages the PEIMS data submitted by teachers and counselors. The PEIMS clerk submits PEIMS data to TEA at four annual collection periods: Fall Collection 1 (enrollment and program data), Midyear Collection 2 (actual audited financial data from previous year), Summer Collection 3 (attendance and course completion, teacher class assignments, course sections, disciplinary actions, and restraint events), and Extended Year Collection 4 (English as a second language students' summer school attendance).

Each campus has an attendance clerk. All of the attendance clerks attend annual training through Regional Education Service Center XX (Region 20). As such, they are familiar with the initial data developed for the PEIMS database, including daily student attendance. The data that Lytle ISD reports in PEIMS resides

**FIGURE 8-9
SAMPLE RETENTION/DESTRUCTION SCHEDULE FOR SCHOOL DISTRICT RECORDS
AUGUST 2011**

DATA TYPE	NOTES	RETENTION/DESTRUCTION REQUIREMENT
Employment Selection Records	Including interview notes	2 years
Personnel Corrective Actions	Actions imposed to correct or improve staff job performance	After termination of employment, plus 5 years
Job Descriptions	N/A	Until position superseded or position eliminated, plus 4 years
Visitor Logs	N/A	2 years
Fire Drill Records	N/A	3 years
School Meal Menu Records	Daily menus	5 years

SOURCE: Texas State Library and Archives Commission, Local Schedule SD, Second Edition, August 2011.

on a server owned and maintained internally by the district. The Technology Department backs up the server nightly and the server is equipped with an uninterruptible power supply that is regularly tested.

The PEIMS clerk has been in the position for a number of years and is the only position assigned to handle PEIMS functions. If the PEIMS clerk is absent, PEIMS tasks are not completed. The district does not have organized documentation of how the PEIMS clerk accomplishes the tasks associated with compiling and reporting PEIMS data to TEA.

The PEIMS clerk provides critical support to the campus attendance clerks and in ensuring that PEIMS data is accurate and timely submitted to TEA. No other positions in the district are trained or able to perform these duties in the PEIMS clerk's absence. As a result, Lytle ISD is at risk for being unable to produce key management reports or meet reporting deadlines for TEA data submission if this position is unavailable.

Many organizations use succession planning as a standard part of managing financial and human resources. Succession planning is the deliberate and systematic effort made by organizations to recruit, develop, and retain individuals with a range of leadership competencies capable of implementing current and future organizational goals. The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) describes a succession planning process as a systematic approach to:

- building a leadership pipeline/talent pool to ensure leadership continuity;
- developing potential successors in ways that best fit their strengths;
- identifying the best candidates for categories of positions; and
- concentrating resources on the talent development process and yielding a greater return on investment.

OPM identifies the following factors as keys to successful succession planning initiatives:

- senior leaders are personally involved;
- senior leaders hold themselves accountable for growing leaders;
- staff are committed to their own self-development;
- succession is based on a business case for long-term needs;

- succession is linked to strategic planning and investment in the future;
- workforce data and analysis inform the process;
- leadership competencies are identified and used for selection and development;
- a pool of talent is identified and developed early for long-term needs;
- development is based on challenging and varied job-based experiences;
- senior leaders form a partnership with human resources staff; and
- succession planning addresses challenges such as diversity, recruitment, and retention.

Lytle ISD should develop a succession planning process to ensure the district has adequate backup for critical PEIMS functions.

The district should implement a process to designate and cross train at least one of the attendance clerks in the PEIMS functions for the district. The district should allow the designated attendance clerk adequate time to obtain training from the PEIMS clerk. To maintain her PEIMS skills, the designated attendance clerk should assist the PEIMS clerk at least one day a month in the central office.

As part of the training, the designated attendance clerk and PEIMS clerk should develop written procedures for the various PEIMS tasks. The district could use the information from the Region 20 annual training as a basis and the PEIMS clerk should edit the content as needed for the specific needs of Lytle ISD.

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

ATTENDANCE RECORDKEEPING (REC. 40)

Lytle ISD's process for collecting attendance data includes manual tasks, which increases the risk of erroneous PEIMS submissions.

Lytle ISD collects initial attendance data online in the Texas Enterprise Information System (TxEIS). TxEIS is a state-sponsored system developed to support the operational and reporting requirements of Texas districts, charter schools, private schools, and education service centers.

All teachers enter attendance electronically through TxEIS. If a student is initially marked absent, but then arrives later to class, the campus attendance clerk makes all revisions to the attendance data in TxEIS. Once teachers submit attendance, they cannot make changes. The attendance clerk at each campus ensures that each teacher completes attendance. If there is a substitute teacher for a class, the attendance clerk prints a paper roster for the substitute to mark; the attendance clerk then inputs that attendance data into TxEIS. Mid-morning each school day, the attendance clerk at each campus reviews the data in TxEIS and enters it into an electronic form developed by the PEIMS clerk based on the form used in the annual training provided by Region 20.

Once this is complete, the attendance clerks print the attendance summary form. The attendance clerks attach a printout of attendance, a copy of the TxEIS record for any new or withdrawing students, and a copy of the TxEIS roster of unexcused students for the day. Attendance clerks send the packet for their respective campus to the central office using interoffice mail. At the central office, the PEIMS clerk compares the data entered on the form by the attendance clerks to the data in TxEIS. If there are mistakes, she contacts the appropriate attendance clerk to correct it. Once reviewed, the PEIMS clerk files the documentation at the central office. The PEIMS clerk keeps the paper documentation for five years.

By printing records that are already available in the district's attendance system, the district is creating additional work for staff. The printing of daily attendance summaries for each campus unnecessarily consumes paper. The maintenance of the paper records at the central office for five years consumes storage space for information that already exists electronically.

According to the TEA Student Attendance Accounting Handbook, a school district may use an electronic student attendance system. If a district chooses to keep attendance electronically, it may do so provided the electronic system has this functionality:

- requirement that teachers log on to the system using distinct secret passwords;
- timing out (automatic shutoff) if the program has not had any activity in an appropriately short period (for example, 10 minutes);
- ability to report the date, time, and identity of the teacher entering the absence data, upon request;

- ability to report the date, time, and identity of the individual making changes to the attendance report, upon request; and
- provision of a positive confirmation for 100 percent of attendance (teacher submits "All Present" rather than showing no one absent).

According to district staff, Lytle ISD's TxEIS software meets all of these functionality criteria. However, the district continues to use this manual-based attendance accounting method despite it being less efficient.

The Texas State Library and Archives Commission provides a retention schedule for records of public schools. In the area of attendance records it notes that "Daily Registers of Pupil Attendance (or an equivalent locally-designed record) and similar daily or periodic reports used to document the attendance and absence of students" must be retained for a period of five years and that electronic records are acceptable.

The district should eliminate manual tasks when processing attendance data.

The PEIMS clerk should meet with the campus attendance clerks to review opportunities to modify the attendance process to eliminate the creation of unneeded paper records. Finally, the PEIMS clerk should have the existing and unnecessary paper records destroyed in order to free storage space in the central office.

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

FISCAL IMPACT

Some of the recommendations provided in this report are based on state or federal laws, rules, or regulations, and should be promptly addressed. Other recommendations are based on comparisons to state or industry standards, or accepted best practices, and should be reviewed to determine the level of priority, appropriate timeline, and method of implementation.

RECOMMENDATION	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) OR SAVINGS	ONETIME (COSTS) OR SAVINGS
CHAPTER 8. TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT							
36. Adopt clear expectations and ensure training for teachers on the software and devices that the district uses.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
37. Include teachers in the technology planning process.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
38. Develop guidelines for electronic data retention.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
39. Develop a succession planning process to ensure the district has adequate backup for critical PEIMS functions.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
40. Eliminate manual tasks when processing attendance data.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
TOTAL	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

CHAPTER 9. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

An independent school district's community involvement function requires communicating and engaging stakeholders in district decisions and operations. District stakeholders include students, staff, guardians, residents, and businesses. Stakeholders must be aware of issues facing the district, support its priorities, and respond to its challenges. Communication tools include public meetings, the district's website, campus-to-home communications, extracurricular activities, and local media.

A successful community involvement program addresses the unique characteristics of the school district and the community. A critical component of school improvement and accountability systems is a high level of community involvement. Community members and volunteers provide valuable resources that can enrich and enhance the educational system. In turn, community members directly benefit because they ultimately supply an informed citizenry, an educated workforce, and future community leaders.

Lytle Independent School District (ISD) has one full-time and two part-time staff who report to the superintendent and coordinate public relations, parent involvement, and community relations. The public relations officer, the parent coordinator, the community relations coordinator, the superintendent, and the assistant superintendent represent the district at community functions and meetings such as the Lytle Chamber of Commerce. They also serve on the District Educational Improvement Committee (DEIC), which has community and business leaders and parents as members. **Figure 9-1** shows this organizational structure.

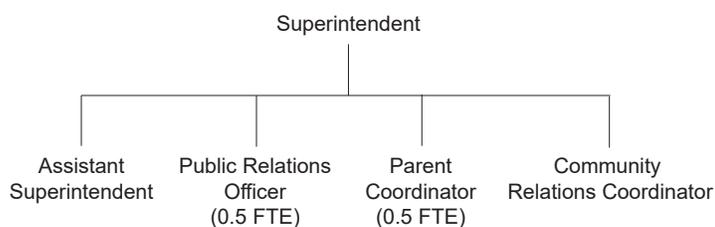
The superintendent receives open records requests and other general inquiries and assigns them to the public relations officer. The public relations officer contacts the requestor to determine what information should be delivered. If a request has potential legal implications, the district's attorney becomes involved.

The Leader News is the local newspaper in Lytle. The newspaper is published each Thursday. Lytle ISD uses the newspaper as a communication tool to disseminate district and campus news, including academics and athletics news, throughout the community. Issues typically contain district press releases, which the part-time public relations officer produces. The public relations officer also maintains and updates the district's website.

The full-time community relations coordinator assists principals and teachers in scheduling community members to participate in on-campus activities such as career days and guest speakers. The community relations coordinator also facilitates field day activities and other off-campus events that involve students and teachers.

The Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP) principal also serves part-time as the parent involvement coordinator. The parent involvement coordinator facilitates informational meetings for parents. Meeting topics have included helping students with homework, understanding the requirements of the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) test, and communication tips. In a survey conducted by the Legislative Budget Board's School Performance Review Team, teachers districtwide responded that the number of parent volunteers was sufficient.

FIGURE 9-1
LYTLE ISD COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT ORGANIZATION
SCHOOL YEAR 2016-17



NOTE: FTE=full-time-equivalent position.

SOURCE: Legislative Budget Board School Performance Review Team; Lytle ISD, November 2016.

FINDINGS

- ◆ Lytle ISD lacks a process to ensure that the district’s website provides updated information and complies with state law.
- ◆ Lytle ISD lacks written procedures that guide posting on social media.
- ◆ The district’s lack of a unified written plan results in a lack of coordination of services among the various staff assigned to provide for parent and community involvement, and goals are inconsistent.
- ◆ Lytle ISD does not seek formal partnerships with businesses and community groups to support its campuses.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ◆ **Recommendation 41: Develop and implement written procedures to update the district’s website and include required information.**
- ◆ **Recommendation 42: Develop guidelines for campus social media posting and task one staff on each campus to update main social media outlets.**
- ◆ **Recommendation 43: Develop a long-range plan to guide community involvement functions.**

- ◆ **Recommendation 44: Maximize the use of partnerships with community groups and local businesses.**

DETAILED FINDINGS

DISTRICT WEBSITE (REC. 41)

Lytle ISD lacks a process to ensure that the district’s website provides updated information and complies with state law.

The public relations officer is also the district’s webmaster. The district has had this position since 2011. Before 2011, the Technology Department staff had the additional responsibility of maintaining the website. The district moved these duties to the public relations officer as part of a districtwide and communitywide vision. The part-time public relations officer estimates he spends approximately one-fourth of his time, or five hours per weeks, managing the district’s website.

State law requires districts to maintain certain information on their websites. The layout of Lytle ISD’s website is attractive and easy to navigate; however, it does not meet state requirements in some areas. **Figure 9–2** shows the state requirements compared to information available on Lytle ISD’s website.

**FIGURE 9–2
LYTLE ISD WEBSITE’S DISTRICT INFORMATION
JANUARY 2017**

POSTINGS	STATUTE	NOTES	LINK PROVIDED	LYTLE ISD
Notice of School Board Meetings	The Texas Government Code, §551.056(a) to (b)	Requires the posting of a meeting notice.	Yes	Links correctly to Meeting Notices page, which is current.
Employment Policies	The Texas Education Code, §21.204(d)	Requires the posting of a district’s employment policies.	Yes	Links to a private page on the TASB website – nonstaff do not have access.
		Report on Highly Qualified Teachers	No	Listed on Required Postings page, but no link provided. Not found elsewhere on website.
Group Health Coverage Plan	The Texas Education Code, §22.004(d), as amended by House Bill (HB) 2427, Eightieth Legislature	Only required if district has a self-funded insurance plan.	Yes	Link is nonspecific and redirects to main page of Teacher Retirement System of Texas.
Conflict Disclosure Statements and Questionnaires	The Texas Local Government Code, §176.009(a), as amended by HB 1491, Eightieth Legislature	Requires access to statements and questionnaires on the district website.	No	Listed on Required Postings page, but no link provided.
				Not found elsewhere on website.

FIGURE 9–2 (CONTINUED)
LYTLE ISD WEBSITE'S DISTRICT INFORMATION
JANUARY 2017

POSTINGS	STATUTE	NOTES	LINK PROVIDED	LYTLE ISD
Vacancy Postings	The Texas Education Code, §11.1513(d)(1)(B) and §11.163(d)(1)(B)	Requires at least 10 days' notice of a vacant position in the school district to be posted on the district's website.	Yes	Links correctly to Job Listings page, which is current.
Costs and Metered Amounts for Electricity, Water, and Natural Gas for District	The Texas Government Code, §2264.001(b), as amended by HB 3693, Eightieth Legislature	Requires the posting of the metered amounts of electricity, water, and gas consumption for which the district is required to pay and the aggregate amounts of those services.	Yes	Links correctly to document with data for school year 2015–16.
Maintenance and Operations Tax Rate	The Texas Tax Code, §26.05(b)	Requires a school district to post a statement that indicates that it adopted a tax rate that will raise more taxes for maintenance and operations than the previous year's tax rate.	Yes	Links correctly to a 2012 public meeting notice with information on tax rate.
Summary of Proposed Budget	The Texas Education Code, §44.0041	Requires a school district to post a summary of the proposed budget; summary must be concurrently posted with notice of the budget.	Yes	Links correctly to a budget page, but that page has school year 2014–15 budget information as the most recent. No school year 2015–16 data included. School year 2016–17 budget information found elsewhere on the website.
Post-adopted Budget	The Texas Education Code, §39.084	Required to maintain the adopted budget on the district's website until the third anniversary of the date the budget was adopted.	Yes	Yes, but little information provided within the budgets. Adopted school year 2016–17 budget not provided via the link.
Superintendent's Contract	The Texas Administrative Code, Title 19, §109.1005(b)(2)(A)	The school district is to provide a copy of the superintendent's contract either as a disclosure in the financial management report provided to attendees at TEA's School Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas hearing or by posting the contract on the district's website.	Yes	Links correctly to signed, current copy of contract.
Landowner's Bill of Rights	The Texas Property Code, §21.0112(b)(2), as amended by HB 1495, Eightieth Legislature	Requires a school district to make available, if technologically feasible, on its website a landowner's bill of rights prepared by the Office of the Attorney General.	Yes	Link is nonspecific, redirects to main page of Office of the Attorney General.
Testing for Home-schooled Students	The Texas Education Code, §29.916(c), as amended by HB 1844, Eightieth Legislature	Requires a school district to post the dates that PSAT/NMSQT or any college advanced placement test will be administered, the availability of the exams to home-schooled students, and the procedures to register for the tests.	No	Listed on Required Postings page, but no link provided. Not found elsewhere on site. Directs user to visit the high school counselor.

FIGURE 9–2 (CONTINUED)
LYTLE ISD WEBSITE'S DISTRICT INFORMATION
JANUARY 2017

POSTINGS	STATUTE	NOTES	LINK PROVIDED	LYTLE ISD
College Credit Programs	The Texas Education Code, §28.010(b), as amended by Senate Bill 282, Eightieth Legislature	Authorizes a school district to post a notice regarding the availability of college credit programs in the district.	No	Listed on Required Postings page, but no link provided. Not found elsewhere on site. Directs user to visit the high school counselor.
Most recent AEIS Reports available	The Texas Education Code, §39.252	Requires a school district to post the most recent campus report card for each campus in the district, the information in the most recent performance report, the most recent performance rating of the district, and a definition and explanation of each performance rating.	Yes	Links to two nonfunctioning links on the TEA website. Notes that a letter on the topic from the superintendent is available, but no link is provided.
Physical Education Policies	The Texas Education Code, §28.004(k)	Requires a school district to post a statement of its physical activity policies for elementary school, middle school, and junior high school students.	No	Listed on Required Postings page, but no link provided.
Immunization Awareness	The Texas Education Code, §38.019	Post in English and Spanish: a list of immunization requirements and recommendations, a list of health clinics in the district that offer influenza vaccine, and a link to the Texas Department of State Health Services website providing procedures for claiming an exemption from requirements in the Texas Education Code, §38.001.	Yes	Complete. Link provided to the state website that includes a search engine for locating a health clinic.
Reverse Auction Scheduled Internet Location	The Texas Government Code, §2155.062(d)		No	Not found elsewhere on website.
Transition and Employment Guide for Special Education Students	The Texas Education Code, §29.0112	Districts are to post the employment and transition guide developed by TEA in collaboration with the Health and Human Services Commission.	No	Provided via the Special Education Department page.
Graduation Plans	The Texas Education Code, §28.02121(b)	Notice is to include information provided by TEA on benefits of various graduation plans, levels of achievement and endorsements. Published information is to be in the language(s) in which parents or legal guardians are most proficient and that at least 20 students in a grade level primarily speak. Effective beginning school year 2014–15.	No	Not found elsewhere on website. The high school counseling webpage includes a link to a TEA Graduation Toolkit, but the link is not functioning.

**FIGURE 9–2 (CONTINUED)
LYTLE ISD WEBSITE'S DISTRICT INFORMATION
JANUARY 2017**

POSTINGS	STATUTE	NOTES	LINK PROVIDED	LYTLE ISD
Performance in Community and Student Engagement	The Texas Education Code, §39.0546	Locally identified academic performance indicators related to three programs or categories pursuant to §39.0545(b)(1) that pertain to community and student engagement are to be posted on district and campus websites before the beginning of the school year. The locally identified indicators also must be submitted to TEA.	No	Not easy to find on the website. Located in the section accountability.
Local Innovation Plan and Campus Intervention Team	The Texas Education Code, §12A.005	The final version of the proposed local innovation plan is to be posted on the district's website for at least 30 days before the public meeting of the board to adopt the plan. Notice of a campus intervention team public meeting must be posted on the campus website, pursuant to HB 1842, Eighty-fourth Legislature.	No	District of Innovation Plan link to updated document is available elsewhere on the website.
Main Office Contact Information	The Texas Local Government Code, §140.008(f)(2)	Contact information for the district's main office, including physical address, mailing address, main telephone number and email address.	No	Available via link on home page of website.
Annual Federal Report Card	U.S. Code, Title 20, §6311(h)(2)(E)	Post the annual federal report card.	No	Not found elsewhere on website.
Tax Rate Trend Information	The Texas Tax Code, 26.16	School districts are to provide tax rate information to the county tax assessor collector for the most recent five tax years beginning with tax year 2012.	No	Not found elsewhere on website.

NOTES: TASB=Texas Association of School Boards; PSAT/NMSQT=Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test; TEA=Texas Education Agency; AEIS=Academic Excellence Indicator System.

SOURCES: Legislative Budget Board School Performance Review Team; Texas Association of School Business Officials; Lytle ISD, January 2017.

During the website review, the review team found several instances in which the staff directory posted on the Lytle ISD website was not current or optimal. Other concerns include the following notes:

- Lytle ISD Board of Trustees members are listed on the website; however, the only contact information available is a district email address. No phone number or email outside the district is available for a constituent to contact a board member confidentially. The listing of the school board members does not indicate which district each represents or when each is up for reelection;

- the website does not include a link for individuals to volunteer in the district or provide other types of support. The website does not have a page describing the kinds of volunteer opportunities available or the process an individual must complete to volunteer;
- the main page does not include a search box; the site help page's search box does not enable text entry; and
- some staff email addresses do not have functioning links.

An outdated website limits the district’s potential to engage and inform the community, publicize district successes, and increase parental communication and involvement. Additionally, a district or campus website that is noncompliant with statute presents potential risks to the district for not providing full disclosure to the public.

The Texas Association of School Business Officials (TASBO) maintains a listing of all the Texas Education Code and other governmental agency requirements regarding information that school districts must post to their websites. This information is available on TASBO’s website and is updated regularly.

Canutillo ISD effectively uses its website to engage and inform the community. The homepage contains Canutillo ISD news, district announcements, quick links, and upcoming events. The website meets all state statutory requirements, and it includes information about the district’s board, bonds, leadership, departments, students, parents, teachers, calendar, and school campuses.

The Lytle ISD public relations officer should develop and implement written procedures to update the district’s website and include required information. These procedures should include establishing regular schedules to ensure that the information on the website is current. The public relations officer should also review TASBO’s requirements for districts to post on their websites and ensure that the district is meeting all of these requirements. The public relations officer should regularly check the TASBO website for updates.

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

SOCIAL MEDIA (REC. 42)

Lytle ISD lacks written procedures that guide posting on social media.

The public relations officer manages the district’s main social media accounts. As of November 2016, the district’s Facebook page has 1,696 followers, and the Twitter account had 764 followers. According to the public relations officer, the district surveyed parents regarding the best methods to reach them in school year 2014–15 and found that posting on Facebook was the most popular method.

The campuses are responsible for their own Facebook accounts, and each campus has an active account. The elementary school requires its teachers to make personal Facebook pages that are accessible to parents. **Figure 9–3** shows the number of Facebook posts per account from July 2016 to December 2016.

Lytle ISD has two Twitter accounts. The district uses one account and supporters of the district, called the Lytle Ambassadors, use the other account. **Figure 9–4** shows the number of tweets per account from July 2016 to December 2016.

Lytle ISD does not have guidelines for campuses to follow in posting to social media. The public relations officer stated that staff have shown good judgment in posting. However, the district has no guidelines regarding the types of informative or positive posts that should be posted to engage the community.

Without guidelines for social media practice, the district risks missing important communication channels to parents and the community. District communications on social

**FIGURE 9–3
LYTLE ISD FACEBOOK POSTS BY CAMPUS
JULY 2016 THROUGH DECEMBER 2016**

DATE	DISTRICT	PRIMARY SCHOOL	ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL	HIGH SCHOOL
July	4	15	4	1	0
August	14	37	12	2	8
September	15	33	26	16	7
October	26	48	46	14	20
November	12	19	17	6	9
December	6	27	24	13	13
Total	77	179	129	52	57

SOURCES: Legislative Budget Board School Review Team; Lytle ISD, January 2017.

FIGURE 9–4
LYTLE ISD TWITTER POSTS BY ACCOUNT
JULY 2016 THROUGH DECEMBER 2016

DATE	LYTLE ISD	LYTLE AMBASSADORS
July	4	20
August	48	111
September	63	112
October	93	135
November	60	67
December	57	83
Total	325	528

SOURCES: Legislative Budget Board School Review Team; Lytle ISD, January 2017.

media are likely to lack consistency and vision without central guidelines. If the public relations officer does not update the social media accounts with important information regularly, the district risks having parents and community members not accessing its communications tools as a source of news.

The National School Public Relations Association published a report titled *School Communication Benchmarking Project: Rubrics of Practice and Suggested Measures in 2014* that includes rubrics for assessing a school district's work in the following areas:

- comprehensive professional communication program;
- internal communications;
- parent and family communications; and
- marketing and branding schools.

Each area includes an assessment of social media, using a three-point scale including emerging, established, and exemplary. An exemplary level of effective engagement that targets audiences through social media includes the following recommended practices:

- usage, monitoring, and strategies for social media channels are incorporated within the overall communications plan and are coordinated by the school communications department;
- selection and usage of social media are based on researched audience preferences and profiles;
- social media use spans a full range of district communications; audiences are encouraged to interact with the district via social media;

- clear, ongoing proactive coordination exists among staff in the district who have posting rights; the team of staff with posting rights meets regularly;
- board policies regarding social media are shared with students, parents, staff, and the public via multiple mechanisms, such as the district website, social media channels, student handbooks, and staff manuals;
- regularly update students, staff, and parents about best practices and staying safe while using social media channels; and
- goals established for attaining views or interaction are aligned with the district's communications plan; the leadership team tracks results and adjusts strategies accordingly.

The public relations officer should develop guidelines for campus social media posting and task one staff on each campus to update main social media outlets.

The public relations officer should draft guidelines for engaging the community via social media. Guidelines should include goals for posting positive news stories and timely information, such as when officials delay the start time of classes due to inclement weather. The superintendent should review the plan, and then request that principals identify several staff at each campus to assign campus-level portions of the plan. Each campus should also designate one staff to update the main social media outlets, and coordinate with the superintendent and the public relations officer regarding any public inquiries made through the social media sites. The public relations officer should regularly compile data on the campus postings and the number of followers for each type of social media, and share the report with the superintendent and board.

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

LONG-RANGE PLANNING (REC. 43)

The district's lack of a unified written plan results in a lack of coordination of services among the various staff assigned to provide for parent and community involvement, and goals are inconsistent.

The community relations coordinator reported that the majority of work involves responding to requests from teachers and principals about community needs or activities. The public relations officer's work includes updating the

district's website and writing and disseminating news releases about teachers and students' academic and athletic achievements.

However, Lytle ISD's community involvement function operates without long-range plans or strategies. The review team found no evidence that the district's planning leaders meet regularly to develop an action plan and strategies to ensure that partnerships exist among campuses, families, and communities. Principals often take on the responsibilities for developing and implementing partnerships, but they do so without any long-range planning.

The district's lack of a strategic written plan results in community involvement functions being informally coordinated, inconsistent, and not goal-oriented. Meeting and developing long-range planning for community involvement can address the following areas: improving home environments to support children as learners; using more effective forms of communication between campus staff and parents; organizing volunteer programs and recruiting participants; and identifying and integrating resources and services from the community. The lack of a formal long-range plan to address community involvement results in the district being less equipped to meet students' and parents' needs.

Northside ISD in Leon Valley has a long-range strategic plan focusing on promoting community involvement. This strategic plan uses the following working guidelines:

- student success that is a shared responsibility among students, parents, educators, and the community;
- students learn best when they are active participants in their own learning;
- the more connected families are in the educational process, the more successful students will be; and
- meaningful relationships among parents, educators, and the community foster student success.

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) provides resources for school districts to promote parent and family involvement in public education. The TEA training manual *Parental Involvement in Every School* guides school districts in carrying out their parental involvement functions. This manual contains the three following general training sections:

- How Students Benefit from Parent Involvement;
- Understanding Your School; and
- How Texas Parents Become Involved.

The district should develop a long-range plan to guide community involvement functions.

The district should form a committee to oversee involvement with the public and guide planning for community involvement. The committee should meet monthly to develop long-range plans to maximize the use of parental involvement, community relations, public relations, and the parent-teacher organization. Members of this committee could include the superintendent, principals, the public relations officer, the parent coordinator, and the community relations coordinator.

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

COMMUNITY AND BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS (REC. 44)

Lytle ISD does not seek formal partnerships with businesses and community groups to support its campuses.

To support instructional programs, Lytle ISD typically asks local business leaders to visit a campus and tell Lytle ISD students about their businesses, professions, or work that they do within the community. Two local banks and a large grocery store are the most active donors of gifts to the district and its campuses. Campus staff reported that local businesses are willing and prompt to respond to their requests for support of their activities. Businesses and community groups provide incentive awards, gifts, and coupons to students, door prizes for open houses at the campuses, and use of their facilities for special events and fund-raising.

Business and community partnerships can support districts with activities intended to benefit students, improve student achievement, and accomplish district and campus improvement goals. Lytle ISD may not be maximizing financial and material support without a formal plan to establish local partnerships. Students may not be receiving opportunities to learn skills through mentoring or apprenticeships that local businesses could provide.

Denton ISD has a program called Adopt-a-School. The program builds relationships with local businesses and organizations by recruiting them as campus adopters. Most Denton ISD campuses have several adopters, who support the campuses by sponsoring events and donating financial support and school supplies. A team of Denton ISD school and community leaders was invited to share the district's model for public engagement at a recent Texas Association of School Boards business and education forum.

Schools and businesses work together to benefit students, teachers, and entire communities. A partnership between Taft High School in Cincinnati, Ohio, and a local telephone provider developed into the school becoming Taft Information Technology High School. In Elgin, Illinois, a locally owned bookstore sponsored a Kids Love a Mystery Night for elementary school students who read a mystery novel. Some schools become involved with nonbusiness partnerships. A group of retired educators in Middleburg, Florida, provides tutoring for local students and established a fund to help pay for field trips for students who cannot afford them.

The district should maximize the use of partnerships with community groups and local businesses.

The superintendent should assign the community relations coordinator to conduct research into different district-business partnerships and explore their missions, structures, and expectations or outcomes. The community relations coordinator should present this research to a planning committee led by the superintendent and composed of principals, parents, and representatives of local business and

community organizations. The planning committee should develop implementation steps with timelines and indicators of success. After the plan is completed, the committee should discuss the plan with area businesses and community groups.

This recommendation could be implemented with existing resources.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT ENHANCEMENT OPPORTUNITY

During the fieldwork, the review team identified additional areas in which the district could enhance its services to students, staff, and the community. This opportunity is not a finding, but it is presented for the district’s consideration as it implements the report’s other findings and recommendations.

Lytle ISD posts summary budget information on the district’s website, pursuant to the Texas Education Code requirements. However, the district could include information about its General Fund, debt service fund, child nutrition fund, and detailed cash flow statements to provide a more transparent budget process for the community.

FISCAL IMPACT

Some of the recommendations provided in this report are based on state or federal laws, rules, or regulations, and should be promptly addressed. Other recommendations are based on comparisons to state or industry standards, or accepted best practices, and should be reviewed to determine the level of priority, appropriate timeline, and method of implementation.

RECOMMENDATION	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) OR SAVINGS	ONETIME (COSTS) OR SAVINGS
CHAPTER 9. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT							
41. Develop and implement written procedures to update the district’s website and include required information.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
42. Develop guidelines for campus social media posting and task one staff on each campus to update main social media outlets.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
43. Develop a long-range plan to guide community involvement functions.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
44. Maximize the use of partnerships with community groups and local businesses.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
TOTAL	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

