

March 5, 2003

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

Fellow Texans:

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

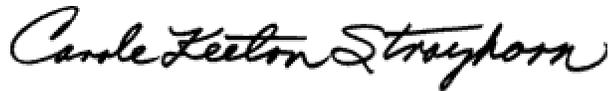
In August 2001, I released the results of my review of the district's operations. This review offered 43 recommendations that collectively could save CISD taxpayers a net of \$291,733 by 2005-06. The review also noted a number of CISD's exemplary programs and model services provided by district administrators, teachers, and staff.

In December 2002, we returned to check on the district's progress implementing recommendations. Over the last year, CISD has implemented, or is in the process of implementing, 42 of the recommendations, or nearly 98 percent. The district has saved a net of \$41,825 to date and expects those savings to grow to \$174,202 over five years.

This report is available on my Web site at www.window.state.tx.us/tspr/christovalpr/.

Thanks for all that you do for Texas.

Sincerely,



Carole Keeton Strayhorn
Texas Comptroller

c: Senate Committee on Education
House Committee on Public Education
The Honorable Robert Duncan, State Senator, District 28
The Honorable Scott Campbell, State Representative, District 72

Introduction

In March 2001, Texas Comptroller Carole Keeton Strayhorn began a review of the Christoval Independent School District (CISD) as part of a six-district project that also included reviews of the neighboring San Angelo, Veribest, Grape Creek, Wall and Water Valley school districts. These six districts are located geographically near each other in Tom Green County. In August 2001, a final report was issued detailing 43 recommendations, which taken together could result in net savings of \$291,733 over the next five years. During December 2002, Texas School Performance Review (TSPR) staff returned to assess the district's progress in implementing the recommendations.

Since 1991, TSPR has recommended more than 7,000 ways to save taxpayers more than \$700 million over a five-year period in more than 80 different public school districts and higher education institutions throughout Texas. TSPR also conducts follow-up reviews of districts that have had at least one year to implement recommendations. These 56 subsequent reviews show that more than 90 percent of TSPR's combined proposals have been acted upon, saving taxpayers nearly \$125 million, with the full savings estimated to grow in the future.

Improving the Texas School Performance Review

Comptroller Strayhorn, who took office in January 1999, consulted school district officials, parents and teachers from across Texas and carefully examined past reviews and progress reports in an effort to make the TSPR review more valuable, even vital, to the state's more than 1,000 school districts. With the perspective of having served as a teacher, and later a school board president, the Comptroller has vowed to steer TSPR toward being more accountable to local school districts and the communities they represent.

Comptroller Strayhorn began by establishing new criteria for selecting school districts for future reviews. Priority is given to districts judged poor performing-academically or financially-and to hands-on reviews that will benefit the greatest number of students. To ensure that this process also serves small districts, reviews of numerous school districts in close proximity, regardless of academic or financial status, are also done to achieve some economy of scale, as was the case with the smaller districts reviewed in Tom Green County.

Recognizing that only 51 cents of every education dollar is spent on instruction, Comptroller Strayhorn's goal is to drive more of every

education dollar directly into the classroom. In addition, no longer are school districts' best practices and exemplary models buried inside individual TSPR reports. Instead, Comptroller Strayhorn has ordered best practices and exemplary programs to be shared quickly and systematically among all the state's school districts and with anyone who requests such information. There is simply no reason for a district that has solved a problem well to keep the solution to itself. Comptroller Strayhorn has directed TSPR to serve as an active clearinghouse of the best and brightest ideas in Texas public education. Best practices identified in the original review are now included in the Comptroller's best practices database, *A+ Ideas for Managing Schools (AIMS)*, which is accessible on the Web at www.aimsdatabase.org.

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

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

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

Detailed information can be obtained from TSPR by calling 1-800-531-5441 extension 5-3676, or by visiting the Comptroller's Web site at <http://www.window.state.tx.us>.

TSPR in the Christoval Independent School District

In March 2001, Texas Comptroller Carole Keeton Strayhorn began a review of the CISD as part of a six-district project that also included reviews of the neighboring San Angelo, Veribest, Grape Creek, Wall and Water Valley school districts. In the final report issued in August 2001, four key challenges surfaced - improving planning efforts, enhancing federal, state and local revenues, better documenting procedures and adequately maintaining facilities.

Based upon more than six months of work, this report identified CISD's exemplary programs and suggested concrete ways to improve district operations. If fully implemented, the Comptroller's 43 recommendations could result in net savings of \$291,733 over the next five years.

The Comptroller contracted with Gibson Consulting Group, Inc., an Austin-based firm, to assist TSPR with the review. The team interviewed district employees, school board members, parents, business leaders and community members and held a public forum on Wednesday March 28, 2001, at the Christoval High School from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. To obtain additional comments, the review team conducted small focus group sessions with teachers, principals and board members. The Comptroller's office also received letters and phone calls from parents, teachers and community members.

To ensure that all stakeholders had an opportunity to give comment, surveys were sent to students, parents, teachers and campus and central administration and support staff. A total of 140 respondents answered these surveys: 11 central administrators and support staff, 18 teachers, 60 parents and 51 students. The review team also consulted two databases of comparative educational information maintained by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) - the Academic Excellence indicator System (AEIS) and the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS).

CISD selected peer districts for comparisons based on similarities in student enrollment, student performance and community and student demographics. The districts chosen were Apple Springs, Brookeland, Leggett, Meadow and Slidell. TSPR also measured CISD against district averages in TEA's Regional Education Service Center XV (Region 15) in San Angelo and to the state as a whole.

Christoval ISD in Profile

Located in Tom Green County, CISD is approximately 19 miles south of the county seat of San Angelo, Texas. Agriculture and ranching comprise a large percentage of the economy within the county. The district has seen a shift in its demographics over the past five years. Historically, the population base was 100 percent rural. However, with the continued growth in the neighboring communities of Dove Creek and Knickerbocker, the population base is more equally split between rural and suburban. Enrollment is expected to increase as both of these communities send their students to Christoval. The central Christoval campus includes the high school, middle school and administration building. The district maintains a separate elementary school located several blocks from the central location.

CISD's enrollment for 2001-02 totaled 365 students, an increase of 1 percent from its 1996-97 enrollment of 360 students. In 2001-02, CISD's student demographics were 80 percent Anglo, 18.9 percent Hispanic and 1.1 percent African American. More than 28 percent of the student body of the district is considered economically disadvantaged.

On August 1, 2002 TEA released the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) statewide testing results for 2001-02. CISD received an overall *Recognized* rating for the sixth year in a row. According to these latest reports, CISD's elementary campus achieved an *Exemplary* rating for the third year in a row while the high school received a *Recognized* rating for the sixth year in a row.

In 2001-02, 90.7 percent of all students passed all tests taken; 95.0 percent of all students passed the math portion of the test; 94.4 percent of all students passed the reading portion of the test; and 93.1 percent of all students passed the writing portion of the test. The district's overall passing rate increased by nearly 5 percentage points from the 86.6 percent passing rate from the previous year.

In 2001-02, the district employed a staff of 65 employees, with teachers accounting for nearly 40 employees, or 49 percent, of CISD staffing. The district had expenditures of nearly \$3 million that same year. In 2001-02, 31.0 percent of CISD's budgeted revenues were generated from local taxes, and 2.9 percent came from local and intermediate sources. About 64.9 percent of revenues came from the state, while only 1.1 percent came from the federal government.

CISD participates in the Fairview Accelerated Education Cooperative (Fairview) founded in 1994 as the Alternative Education facility for the communities surrounding San Angelo, Texas. Wall Independent School

District houses the facilities and serves as the fiscal agent. Member districts in addition to Christoval are Bronte, Eden, Grape Creek, Miles, Robert Lee, Sterling City, Wall, Water Valley and Irion County. The students in grades 6 through 12 whom attend Fairview are bused into school each day from distances up to fifty miles.

CISD is also a member of the Small Schools Cooperative, a shared service arrangement designed to assist member districts in serving students with disabilities. The Small Schools Cooperative serves as the "Special Education Department" for 18 member school districts in the area. Belonging to a cooperative allows CISD and the other member districts to access support services that could not otherwise be afforded because of its limited number of students and associated funding.

Over the last year, significant changes have occurred in the district including the hiring of a new business manager. Additionally, in September 2002, Superintendent Rusty Sherman was selected as the Region 15 superintendent of the year from more than 40 nominations and was one of the five finalists in the statewide competition sponsored by the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB). The district also opened a new cafetorium, and students, staff, parents and community members now enjoy its services.

CISD has made steady progress in implementing TSPR recommendations, particularly considering that the district transitioned to a new business manager during this time. Forty recommendations have been implemented and two are in various stages of progress. The district only rejected one of the recommendations after review because implementation was not feasible at this time (See **Appendix A** for details on the recommendations' status.)

Christoval ISD Report Card

Chapter	Total	Complete	In Progress	Not Implemented	Rejected	Percent Complete/ In Progress	Grades
District Organization and Management	9	8	1	0	0	89%/11%	Excellent
Educational Service Delivery	6	6	0	0	0	100%/0%	Excellent

Financial Management	8	7	0	0	1	87.5%/0%	Excellent
Operations	20	19	1	0	0	95%/5%	Excellent
Overall Grade	43	40	2	0	1	93%/5%	Excellent

Excellent = More than 80% complete
Satisfactory = 80% to 100% complete or in progress
Needs Work = Less than 80% complete or in progress

Exemplary Programs and Practices

CISD is a school district with some notable successes, and TSPR has identified numerous "best practices." Through commendations in each chapter, the original report highlighted model programs, operations and services provided by CISD administrators, teachers and staff members. Other school districts throughout Texas are encouraged to examine these exemplary programs and services to see if they could be adapted to meet local needs. TSPR's commendations include the following:

- CISD challenges all high school students to achieve at the highest level by making the Recommended High School Program the standard program for students.*** Every CISD student starts out in the Recommended High School Program and is moved into the minimum program only if there is no other alternative. This practice precedes the 2001 legislative requirement that students graduate with at least the Recommended High School Program beginning with the class of 2004-05. Consequently, more students in CISD complete the recommended plan than in its peer districts, Region 15 or the state. In 1999-2000, 69 percent of CISD students completed the Recommended High School Program, while 57 percent of students completed the program in 2000-01.

CISD continues to promote academic achievement beyond state recommendations. Since the state mandated all students to graduate under the Recommended High School Program, the district sought additional ways to encourage academic growth and challenge. CISD is one of a select group of Texas districts that participate in the EXPLORE & PLAN programs, two curriculum-based assessments associated with the Scholastic Achievement Test (SAT) and American College Test (ACT). These programs allow students in grades 8 and 10 to build an informed educational and career analysis plan in preparation for the college admission

process based on identified strengths from administered tests. By continuing to strive for academic excellence for its students, CISD not only ensures that students will enjoy future success but also ensures that students qualify for Texas Grant scholarships, which require that students graduate under the Recommended High School Program and subsequently pay full tuition to any state supported college or university.

- ***The district actively recruits teachers with multiple certifications to optimize its use of teaching resources.*** One of the ways the district has addressed limited resources and facilities is through recruiting teachers who can serve multiple functions. For example, the district is currently recruiting a math and science teacher for the sixth grade. The district also is looking to hire teachers that are certified to teach math and science as well as coach. This practice allows the district to save both salary and benefit expenses. Instead of hiring separate individuals for these subjects, the district can pay a stipend and not incur an additional full salary.

The district continues to seek teachers to fulfill multiple teaching roles in science and math - areas traditionally difficult to fill statewide. The district hired a math and science teacher for the sixth grade and continues to seek certified professionals to teach these subjects and serve as coaches for the district to control salary and benefit costs. The district maintains a professional teaching staff with fully certified teachers for all subjects and at all grade levels.

- ***CISD defines possible payroll deductions and gives employees the opportunity to invest through payroll deductions.*** The district developed an orientation package that explains all possible deductions, including state retirement benefits, insurance premiums and leave without pay policies. The employees also are allowed to request additional investment options for their own investment strategies, such as annuities or mutual funds. The district will make the necessary arrangements to make payments on employees' behalf through payroll deductions.

The district enhanced its orientation package and prioritizes opportunities to ensure that staff adequately understand available payroll deductions and investment opportunities. The district provided training seminars for all staff hosted by insurance specialists and monitored its effectiveness by surveying teachers and attendees for comments. In fall 2002, the superintendent said that a majority of participants revised payroll deductions due to the district's attention to explaining employee benefits.

- ***CISD has strong internal cash controls in place.*** CISD maintains strong internal cash controls by separating its cash receipts from the bank statement reconciliation. The business manager reconciles all of the district's bank accounts each month; the elementary principal's secretary and the PEIMS coordinator handle all cash receipts from the elementary campus and the high school campus, respectively; and the business manager ensures the accuracy of all deposit slips before the district deposits funds into appropriate bank accounts.

CISD continues to maintain strong internal cash controls by separating its cash receipts from bank statement reconciliations. The new business manager reconciles the district's bank accounts monthly while the elementary principal's secretary and the PEIMS coordinator continue to process all cash receipts for the elementary and high school campuses. The business manager conducts a final check of all deposit slips to ensure accuracy prior to actual bank deposits.

- ***CISD effectively manages its fund balance by controlling expenditures.*** Since 1996-97, the district has placed an average of 4.8 cents of every revenue dollar earned per student directly into the general fund balance. This has allowed CISD to maintain a fund balance near or in excess of TEA's three-month recommendation.

The district's new business manager and the superintendent cooperate with the board to ensure that budgeted expenditures are allocated effectively to maintain a fund balance that equals or exceeds TEA's recommended amounts. As a small district, CISD knows the importance of maintaining adequate reserves and continues to watch all expenditures so the district can meet its payroll and expected bills in the event of a financial emergency.

- ***The district successfully applied the Construction Manager-at-Risk method to build quality facilities at lower cost.*** The district hired a construction manager-at-risk to perform all pre- and during construction tasks such as providing a preliminary evaluation of CISD's program and project budget; regularly monitoring project costs; and securing and transmitting to the architect and engineers required guarantees, affidavits, releases, bonds and waivers. Additionally, the district formed a committee of three board members with construction experience to oversee the project. This knowledge base on the board gave the district a measure of quality control that many small districts do not have. The total cost of the project is expected to be \$1.4 million under budget.

The district's use of a construction manager-at-risk, board member construction experience and continuous monitoring of all aspects of the cafeteria construction project effectively saved the district more than \$1 million from the projected budget. The district plans to employ these same cost-saving strategies for any future construction or renovation projects.

- ***The district allows the county to use its grounds for drug dog training in the evenings, providing drug detection services at no cost to the district.*** CISD has addressed drug problems by allowing the Sheriff's Department to train their drug dogs on the school premises. The dogs are trained inside the high school and elementary school, the parking lots and the football field. In 1999-2000, CISD did not have expenditures in the area of safety and security, while the state average for security and monitoring costs was 0.6 percent.

CISD continues to prioritize and address drug problems by allowing the Sheriff's Department to train their drug dogs inside the high school and elementary school, on parking lots and on the football field. By encouraging this relationship, CISD has realized savings for the district and has not incurred expenditures in the area of safety and security since 1999-2000.

TSPR Key Recommendations

Listed below are some of the key recommendations that administrators and staff said they believe had the greatest impact on district operations. The highlighted recommendations are organized by chapter and by the area of operation contained in the original report. The comments came from district administrators during the TSPR team's follow-up visit to the district.

District Organization and Management

Recommendation 4: - Subscribe to the Texas Association of School Boards' (TASB) "policy on-line" service.

According to the superintendent, this initial recommendation not only made access to district policies by staff and community members easier but also facilitated the district's creation of a personalized Web site including central administration and campus news. The superintendent commented that policy research is now quick, easy and available to anyone with computer access.

Recommendation 5: - Develop a long-range strategic plan that integrates the District Improvement Plan (DIP) and Campus Improvement Plan (CIP) and links the plan to the budget with alternative scenarios for growth.

The district's site-based decision-making committees cooperated with the superintendent to develop a long-range strategic plan and ensured that the DIP and the CIPs incorporated future plans for growth and appropriate budgetary elements. CISD's external auditor noted that out of 17 district audits completed by that firm for a January 2003 submission to TEA, CISD's CIPs and DIP were in the top two due to the level of included detail and coordination linking goals and budgeted funds. The district continues to study alternative plans for growth including investigations into land acquisitions for future construction.

Recommendation 9: - Use high school students to create a district Web page.

The district's Technology coordinator and the superintendent collaborate with three additional administrators and staff to maintain the CISD Web site. Grant funding in 2001-02 and 2002-03 has allowed the district to provide training in Web page design to the high school technology teacher. The district has future plans to include students proficient in Web design and maintenance in possible Web site updates. The superintendent additionally said that he encouraged staff development in technology.

Educational Service Delivery

Recommendation 14: - Develop Campus Improvement Plans that address state mandates governing compensatory education fund management.

The district's 2002-03 CIPs not only address state mandates for compensatory education fund management, but also exceed minimum standards as evidenced by the initial external auditor's report submitted to TEA in fall 2002. The superintendent personally conducted research to ensure that the district not only complied with but exceeded state requirements and said that implementation of the state mandated compensatory education external audit cost the district \$17,000 in 2002 as opposed to \$8,000 in 2001 when the district's audit showed compensatory education compliance in the DIP. The external auditors said that the CISD results were the second best of 17 reviewed district DIPs and CIPs.

Operations

Recommendation 31: - Use a work order tracking log to monitor the cost, timeliness and performance of maintenance services.

This recommendation has been the most significant for the district in the area of operations because the district went a step beyond the recommendation and hired a full-time Maintenance director in 2002 to not only monitor the cost and timeliness of maintenance services but bring many contracted services back in-house. The Maintenance director reports operational expenditures and projected expenditures to the superintendent on a regular basis. The district anticipates realizing significant savings through this decision.

What Still Needs to be Done?

CISD has made steady progress in implementing TSPR's recommendations, with more than 98 percent of the recommendations either implemented or being implemented at this writing. The district rejected only one of the report's recommendations and is encouraged to continue full implementation of those cost-saving recommendations still in-progress.

District Organization and Management

TSPR recommended that CISD include more detail in its documentation of board minutes (Recommendation #1) to provide the community with the background information the board uses to make district decisions. Details about discussions or data considered by the board provide community members with a way to hold the board accountable for its decisions. The board carefully considered this recommendation and cited a lack of community participation and interest in board meetings as the basis for its decision to maintain its current level of board minute documentation. Although community attendance at monthly board meetings is low, the board is encouraged to consider adding more detail to its monthly minutes for review by the public on the district's Web site. The district has already embraced the Web site as the most cost-effective means of communicating with the public and would provide parents and community members with the additional information needed to hold the board accountable for items discussed and decisions made during board meetings.

Operations

The district has made good progress in its efforts to reduce the overall operating costs of its Food Service Operations through increased meal participation (Recommendation #25) and increased productivity of its

cafeteria staff using established meals per labor hour (Recommendation #24). CCISD administrators are, however, encouraged to continue monitoring monthly meals per labor hours for cafeteria workers and to continue exploring other cost saving alternatives such as joining a food cooperative. The district is commended for initiating discussions with Region 15 regarding a food cooperative. Increasing staff productivity as well as meal participation through innovative programs will help the district to increase federal reimbursements and thereby become financially self-sufficient.

CISD's Ideas for Improving the Texas School Performance Review

The Texas School Performance Review team does not assume that its process for performing school reviews works so well that it cannot be improved. Therefore, as part of the progress report preparation, TSPR asked Christoval ISD board members and administrators what went right and what went wrong-and how the process could be improved.

The feedback TSPR has received from other districts led to improvements in the review process. For example, early reports did not include implementation strategies, and districts told TSPR they needed help getting started. As a result, the reports now include IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINES to complement the recommendations. District officials have told TSPR these blueprints are invaluable to achieving the desired results. It is important however, for TSPR staff to be mindful of those things that did not work as intended so that the review process can be improved.

Christoval's superintendent noted that it was difficult for the consultants to understand the intricacies of a small district without spending more than two weeks in the district observing daily operations. He expressed concern about the process of including small districts that were doing well in this review process. However, he also said that all of the consultants were professional and knowledgeable about their respective subjects.

TSPR agrees that a strict two weeks on-site may not be enough time to conduct interviews and review in-house operations. Based on the unique needs of a district, TSPR does make adjustments to timelines when additional work is needed on-site, while still being sensitive to the fact that the presence of the review team can be disruptive to staff and administrators. In the future, these concerns will be given careful consideration.

Christoval board members also responded to a request for follow-up comments and made the following observations:

"Overall, I enjoyed the review and it has made a difference. As long as it remains advisory in nature and lets independent school districts operate independently, it is a useful tool."

"It would have made a difference, however, if the review team could have spent more time understanding the rural nature of Tom Green County and realizing the cost of travel to the cooperatives with other districts in regards to food service and bus driver training for example."

"The report also had recommendations that 'went by the book' without regard to why we did things a certain way. A follow-up site visit after three to six months before releasing the report would have given the review team better information to respond to those particular areas of need for us and other districts."

TSPR takes these comments seriously, and continually uses feedback to revise its procedures to ensure that the process is beneficial for both large and small districts. Most recently, TSPR assembled a task force of volunteer large and small school district administrators and experts to assist in updating the audit protocols that guide each review - from district organization and educational service delivery to food service operations and transportation. Comments and suggestions from CISD staff and administrators will be welcomed.

Appendix A

Status of Recommendations and Savings

Rec #	Recommendation	Implementation Status	TSPR's Projected Five-Year Savings (Costs)	Actual Savings (Costs) To Date	CISD's Projected Five-Year Savings (Costs)	Comments
Chapter 1 District Organization and Management						
1	Prepare more detailed board minutes. p. 24	In Progress	\$0	\$0	\$0	After much discussion and efforts to encourage increased public participation in board meetings including newspaper advertisements, Web page announcements and promotion by word of mouth the board concluded that the community was satisfied with the present level of communication and decided to continue documenting official board minutes as it has in the last four years. The board will make adjustments in the future if needed.
2	Ensure that all board members meet continuing education requirements in accordance with state law. p. 26	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	Board members comply with state law and are in the process of completing all continuing education hours for 2002-03. Board members individually report training hours to the

						Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) and retrieve reports that summarize the hours they earn each year.
3	Hold central office board meetings in the new high school cafeteria, and conduct at least one board meeting a year in Dove Creek and Knickerbocker. p. 27	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	CISD's board held its budget hearing on August 29, 2001 in the new high school cafetorium. The district published a quarter page advertisement 10 days prior to the hearing to announce the meeting to the community; however no one in addition to district officials attended. District board members, the superintendent and administrators continue to promote increased public attendance at board meetings, and have implemented a contingency plan to use the distance learning lab if public participation increases for any given board meeting.
4	Subscribe to TASB's "Policy On-Line" service. p. 28	Complete	(\$4,700)	(\$5,000)	(\$5,000)	The district received board approval to subscribe to the TASB online policy service in October 2001. The district maintains local board policy on its

						Web site. The superintendent and Technology coordinator oversee all policy updates. The district also limits access to the Web site access to the superintendent, Technology coordinator and three additional campus and administrative staff.
5	Develop a long-range strategic plan that integrates the DIP and CIP and links the plan to the budget with alternative scenarios for growth. p. 30	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	The district's site-based decision-making committees cooperated with the superintendent to develop a long-range strategic plan for the district. CISD retains its commitment for continued discussions regarding alternative growth scenarios including facility development and the purchase and lease of available land.
6	Incorporate specific performance measures into the superintendent's performance evaluation instrument. p. 35	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	The board and the superintendent continue to collaborate on specific performance measures to include in the superintendent's annual performance evaluation instrument. The district is using an

						evaluation instrument developed by the Commissioner of Education and has not added any new local elements to the 2002-03 evaluation form for 2002-03.
7	Evaluate central office staff annually. p. 36					The superintendent evaluated all central office staff in spring 2002 using the TASB Personnel Management evaluation instruments and plans to continue this annually. The superintendent said that this process took a lot of time especially in a small district where staff strengths and challenges are generally known without a formal evaluation. The superintendent said that the evaluation tools create physical records of employee evaluations that will help the district if new administrators are hired or staff members move and request a copy of their evaluations.
		Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	
8	Recruit a volunteer community involvement liaison to					The district uses the Web site created in fall 2001 to cost-effectively and efficiently
		Complete	(\$6,000)	(\$240)	(\$1,200)	

	coordinate a quarterly district newsletter and seek innovative and cost-efficient steps to reach out to the community and parents. p. 43					communicate with parents and the community. The district also sends newsletters home with students' report cards and mails them separately when necessary. The postage for these mailings cost the district approximately \$40 every six weeks for an annual total of \$240.
9	Use high school students to develop a district Web page. p. 45	Complete	\$0	(\$3,000)	(\$3,000)	On October 5, 2001, the district launched an interactive Web site that provides the public with information on board policy, district and local news, school calendars and district administrative information and contacts. The librarian and counselors included web pages with links to state and national databases. The district modified implementation of this recommendation and is designating additional funds of \$10,000 that it received from a Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund

						grant to provide extensive technology training including Web design to the computer teacher. The district has future plans to include qualified high school students in the maintenance of the district's Web site.
	Chapter 1 Total		(\$10,700)	(\$8,240)	(\$9,200)	
Chapter 2 Educational Service Delivery						
10	Explore innovative ways to offer advanced courses to small numbers of students including distance education and sharing teachers who can teach advanced courses with neighboring districts. p. 60					The district initiated distance-learning services in September 2001, although it decided not to share teachers for advanced placement (AP) courses with other districts. CISD offers AP English and AP biology courses on a scheduled basis as well as dual credit courses in government and economics through Howard College. Students who complete these courses receive high school credit as well as six hours of college credit. The district is one of a select few statewide participants in the PLAN pilot program
		Complete	(\$11,340)	(\$5,000)	(\$25,000)	

						designed to enhance student performance on the American College Test (ACT). Using baseline tests given in grade 10, the district develops an educational and career plan for participating students in preparation for college entrance exams.
11	Create intervention teams at the elementary and secondary schools to refine, enhance, develop and monitor pre-referral practices. p. 65					The elementary school principal created an intervention team of teachers and professional staff. The intervention team developed and implemented a prereferral intervention plan for students identified with classroom challenges. The elementary school principal monitors implementation to ensure that all students are processed through the intervention plan. In 2002-03, the secondary school implemented an inclusion model to serve students in special education. Regular education and special education staff regularly
		Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	

						<p>communicate about prereferral needs and, because of the availability of academic modifications due to inclusion, students with challenges but not identified for the special education program also benefit. Increased professional development at this level has also provided teachers with more intervention strategies to use with students in efforts to reduce special education referrals.</p>
12	<p>Examine the over-representation of specific student groups in special education and ensure that all students are properly assessed and identified. p. 67</p>	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	<p>The district reduced the percentage of students served in special education programs in 2001-02 to 14.7 percent from 22 percent in 2000-01. The district credits its elementary intervention plan, the additional professional development it provides to special education staff and the secondary school's decision to provide inclusion services for students with achieving this reduction and</p>

						<p>appropriately providing prereferral and identification services. The district also used the special education teachers to train the regular education teachers in the process of inclusion. Monitoring these processes also resulted in a reduction of unnecessary paperwork.</p>
13	<p>Fully implement the <i>Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students</i>. p. 70</p>	Complete	(\$11,000)	(\$4,000)	(\$20,000)	<p>Both the elementary and high schools comply with the state's Gifted and Talented (G/T) Plan. In July 2002, the board decided to hire a full-time principal for middle school students in grades 6, 7 and 8. This principal now actively cooperates with the elementary and high school principals to ensure a smooth transition of services for all students including those in the G/T program. The middle school principal is making strides to ensure the middle school complies with the state's G/T plan by attending pertinent workshops and</p>

						<p>providing required staff development for teachers. The board approved a \$4,000 salary increase for this individual to become the middle school principal. The superintendent said that the district already had discussed this possibility and would have pursued this option without this recommendation to provide the best instructional environment available for all CISD middle school students and to ensure no students "fall through the cracks."</p>
14	<p>Develop Campus Improvement Plans that address state mandates governing compensatory fund management. p. 75</p>	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	<p>The district's 2000-01 and 2001-02 audit reports noted that the District Improvement Plan (DIP) complied with state mandates governing compensatory fund management. The district included academic strategies and detailed budgetary information in the 2002-03 Campus Improvement Plans (CIPs) that exceeded</p>

						state mandates. The superintendent personally conducted research to ensure that the district not only complied with but exceeded state requirements for compensatory education and said that implementation of the state mandated compensatory education external audit cost the district \$17,000 in 2002 compared to \$8,000 in 2001.
15	Request that the Texas Department of Transportation install signs restricting speed in front of the high school. p. 78					The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) denied the district's request for restricted speed limit signs for the areas in front of both the elementary and high schools in December 2001. TxDOT also denied a speed zone study of these areas and directional signs to the high school stadium because too many signs were already posted on the designated corner. The district has no further options or plans to pursue these signs.
		Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	
	Chapter 2 Total		(\$22,340)	(\$9,000)	(\$45,000)	

Chapter 3 Financial Management

16	Establish a Budget Planning Committee to identify the district's goals and financial constraints for the next five years and prepare a budget calendar. p. 90	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	The superintendent handles the majority of the budget information and established a committee including all three principals, the Transportation director, Maintenance staff and the Athletic director to assist with these duties. The superintendent solicits and receives input from these committee members before developing a prioritized budget for board review and approval. The superintendent includes a detailed budget report in the board's monthly agenda packet and presents oral updates at each meeting.
17	Provide each administrator with a monthly budget report. p. 91	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	District administrators receive verbal and written budget information at least once a month. The business manager also provides additional information and report explanations to administrators upon request. The district received a superior financial rating according to

						TEA's Financial Accountability System Resource Guide for 2001-02. The superintendent cooperates with the business manager and the district's accounting firm on a monthly basis to ensure that the administrators and board stay up-to-date on the district's finances.
18	Identify opportunities for obtaining grants and submit the applications to secure the funding. p. 96					The middle school principal served as the district's half-time grant writer until July 2002 when the district assigned him full-time responsibility for the middle school. The middle school principal continues to actively seek grant funding. The superintendent works with teachers and administrators interested in applying for specific grants and has prioritized grant writing and grant funding opportunities districtwide. As a result of grants, the district realized funds in excess of \$115,000 in 2001-02 - (a \$50,000 PS10 Telecommunications
		Complete	\$205,000	\$115,500	\$300,000	

						Infrastructure (TIF) Grant, a \$33,000 Rural Economic Action Plan Grant, a \$27,000 Coca Cola Grant, a \$3,000 Tech Prep Grant and a \$2,500 Tech Prep Grant).
19	Offer direct deposit of paychecks to employees. p. 98					The district initiated direct deposit for employee paychecks in September 2001 and cooperated with the depository bank to ensure a smooth transition for employees choosing this payroll option. The superintendent reports that employees who use direct deposit are satisfied with the services.
		Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	
20	Establish a committee of staff and administrators to assess the state employee health insurance plan and help determine the district's course of action. p. 103					The Texas Teacher Retirement System (TRS) is responsible for the new state plan. The district started the sign-up process for TRS ActiveCare in April 2002. District staff distributed and returned all required health care information for both TRS and Blue Cross/Blue Shield. This process included attendance at informational workshops regarding the state's
		Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	

						health insurance plans. The district noted that it recorded significant staff hours to transition to the new state insurance plan.
21	Close the clearing fund accounts, restructure the remaining clearing accounts into zero balance accounts and sweep all undedicated funds into local maintenance accounts each night to maximize interest income. p. 106	Complete	\$76,725	\$10,313	\$34,375	The district implemented this recommendation by maximizing its investments in the state's TexPool accounts. CISD is averaging 2.5 percent in interest income. This amount exceeds what the district would have earned from cash investments placed into Crockett National Bank CDs proposed as a modified offer to the district in lieu of sweep accounts. The superintendent keeps abreast of TexPool's daily interest rates.
22	Perform a physical inventory and maintain fixed assets data in the RSCCC fixed asset module. p. 107	Complete	(\$226)	\$0	\$0	The district continuously updates the 2002-03 physical inventory and finished audits for the previous years. The district is carefully maintaining records of districtwide fixed assets and expects to reconcile actual assets with recorded

						data on an annual basis.
23	Enter requisitions On line directly into RSCCC and have deliveries made to each campus. p. 112					After careful consideration, and due to the small size of the district, the superintendent decided to maintain administrative control of purchasing requisitions using a streamlined paper process. The district uses an internal control process to ensure all requisitions contain the correct purchase codes.
		Rejected	(\$12,000)	\$0	\$0	
	Chapter 3 Total		\$269,499	\$125,813	\$334,375	
Chapter 4 Operations						
24	Establish a meals per labor hour standard and staff accordingly. p. 119					Although the district has not reduced staffing levels and does not regularly use meals per labor hour (MPLH) figures, administrators are now more closely monitoring cafeteria payroll expenditures, overtime and absenteeism. The district achieved an increase in MPLHs from five to eight for its two full kitchens and has employed additional strategies to help recapture food
		In Progress	\$67,235	\$0	\$0	

						service operation expenditures.
25	Encourage increased meal participation. p. 121					<p>The district increased meal participation by more than 35 percent in 2001-02. The district hired a new Food Service manager, developed new menus, raised food prices sequentially in 2001-02 and 2002-03 and completed construction of the secondary cafeteria. The district reports increased monthly revenues from its Food Service operations although expenditures increased because of salary and facility costs. The district is discussing the possibility of a food purchasing cooperative with region 15.</p>
		Complete	\$45,108	\$0	\$50,000	
26	Regularly assess meal prices to set prices at cost-recovery level. p. 123					<p>The district has realized some savings since it regularly began assessing meal prices. CISD raised meal prices in 2001-02 and 2002-03 effectively placing the Food Service operation above the cost-recovery threshold. The district anticipates</p>
		Complete	\$30,140	\$5,000	\$25,000	

						increased savings as it completes all Food Service improvements.
27	Enter into a countywide food-purchasing cooperative. p. 125	Complete	\$54,000	\$0	\$0	Region 15 is actively discussing creation of a food purchasing cooperative, in which CISD has already agreed to participate and help plan. At this time, the district cannot assess five year savings since the cooperative is still in the planning stages and is not yet available.
28	Purchase point-of-sale software for food services. p. 126	Complete	(\$2,389)	(\$800)	(\$800)	The high school and elementary school use a point-of-sale system that the district purchased in 2001-02. Food Service staff and central administrators report time savings, improved reporting and an increase in available operational data to analyze overall costs. The district did extensive research prior to system software purchase and procured software and training at a total cost of \$800, well below report suggested costs.

29	Reactivate the facilities planning committee and develop a long-range facilities master plan. p. 132	Complete	(\$5,000)	\$0	\$0	The district site-based decision-making committees and the superintendent included annual goals in the 2001-02 and 2002-03 DIP and CIPs. The committees and the superintendent participate in an ongoing development process for a facilities master plan that will include a reactivation of the facilities planning committee. The district passed a \$1.5 million bond referendum to fund the cafetorium construction project with the assistance of the facilities planning committee. The district values the input of this committee in future endeavors and is focusing efforts on maintaining its maintenance schedule.
30	Develop and maintain a facilities inventory. p. 133	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	The district obtained the necessary facilities inventory information which is maintained in the central administrative office.
31	Use a work order	Complete	\$0	\$1,000	\$5,000	After hiring a

	tracking log to monitor the cost, timeliness and performance of maintenance services. p. 135					maintenance director in 2002, the district reduced reliance on contracted services for a variety of maintenance repairs. The district realized savings despite the salary expenditure. The director monitors costs and timeliness of repairs.
32	Hire an additional full-time custodian for the district and train custodians to care more effectively for the campuses. p. 136	Complete	(\$103,420)	(\$24,000)	(\$120,000)	The district hired a full-time custodian in July 2001, and gave the custodian appropriate in-house training. Administrators report that both the elementary and secondary campuses are extremely clean and well maintained. The superintendent said CISD staff, parents and students are also happy with these services.
33	Participate in the State Energy Conservation Office (SECO) LoneSTAR program to reduce energy costs. p. 138	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	The district entered into an agreement with the Texas General Land Office to begin receiving energy services from West Texas Utilities, the actual energy providers, in January 2002. To date, WTU has not regulated its billing procedures nor provided any reports on services provided

						or on the district's usage. The district received a bill in October 2002 for the district's energy use for the months of January, February and March 2002. The district continues to cooperate with the Texas General Land Office to resolve problems with the energy provider.
34	Construct a fence around the bus lot. p. 142	Complete	(\$4,300)	(\$5,800)	(\$5,800)	The district reviewed its original plans and constructed a larger fence that will better address current and future transportation needs for the district.
35	Document maintenance performed on each vehicle. p. 143	Complete	\$0	\$1,000	\$5,000	In May 2001, the district hired a new Transportation director who developed and maintains detailed documents for each vehicle. The district reports that the Transportation director is knowledgeable about the business aspects of the Transportation Department and performs routine maintenance and repairs on the buses himself. The district purchased material

						and the Transportation director recovered all the bus seats himself at a significantly lower cost than if this project had been contracted to an outside company. The district expects to realize additional savings in the area of maintenance and repairs.
36	Implement a formal pre- and post-trip inspection procedure for buses. p. 144	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	The district has not only implemented the inspections, but the Transportation director additionally involves students in routine clean up after field trips and assigns accountability to student groups using the buses. The district said that despite the fact that its buses are older, their condition makes them comparable to new buses.
37	Reduce the spare bus ratio and adopt a bus procurement plan to replace buses every 12 years or 200,000 miles. p. 146	Complete	(\$22,000)	(\$41,848)	(\$62,773)	The district purchased a new activity bus in 2001 for \$62,773 and negotiated a three-year payment plan. The new Transportation director maintains records projecting bus procurement and

						has a detailed replacement plan.
38	Coordinate with other districts in Tom Green County to provide expanded driver training. p. 148	Complete	(\$600)	(\$300)	(\$600)	The district contacted Region 15 to explore additional training offerings for a group of districts and currently provides bus driver training and refresher courses through the region at a cost of \$50 for a four-hour refresher course and \$300 for a 20-hour new driver training course.
39	Update the district's technology plan annually. p. 150	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	The district has a board-approved technology plan through 2004 that documents detailed equipment acquisitions and associated expenditures budgeted from a \$50,000 Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund grant. The district has already purchased 20 computers for the faculty, new Pentium IVs at a cost of \$22,980 and an additional server for \$5,095. The district is completing a wireless lab for students that will include 25 compact

						laptops and a rolling cart.
40	Develop a disaster recovery plan for technology. p. 153	Complete	\$0	(\$1,000)	(\$1,000)	The district contracted with Region 15 for disaster recovery services and sends all data electronically to the region once a week. The Technology director coordinates these off-site storage services in conjunction with the superintendent.
41	Purchase switches that take full advantage of the fiber optic connection between schools. p. 154	Complete	(\$3,500)	\$0	\$0	The district replaced initial equipment with switches that were in place at the time of the review and is maximizing switch use for fiber optic telecommunications between the elementary school and the secondary school.
42	Track technical support work orders to monitor the effectiveness of technical support. p. 154	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	The Technology director monitors all repair and help desk requests to assess response effectiveness and, along with the Technology teacher, has increased professional development hours to provide enhanced technical support to teachers and staff.
43	Adopt policy that	Complete	\$0	\$0	\$0	The district updated

	requires district approval for all software on district computers. p. 155					existing Technology policy to limit administrator access and effectively control software use, requests and purchases.
	Chapter 4 Total		\$55,274	(\$66,748)	(\$105,973)	
	Grand Total		\$291,733	\$41,825	\$174,202	