

TRANSMITTAL LETTER

July 26, 2001

The Honorable Rick Perry
The Honorable William R. Ratliff
The Honorable James E. "Pete" Laney
Members of the 77th Legislature
Commissioner James E. Nelson

Fellow Texans:

I am pleased to present our Texas School Performance Review of the Eagle Pass Independent School District (EPISD).

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

We have made a number of recommendations to improve EPISD's efficiency. We also have highlighted a number of "best practices" in district operations to share with other districts-model programs and services provided by the district's administrators, teachers and staff. This report outlines 64 detailed recommendations that could save EPISD nearly \$12 million over the next five years, while reinvesting more than \$1.9 million to improve educational services and other operations. Net savings are estimated to reach nearly \$10 million-savings that the district can redirect to the classroom.

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

I am also pleased to announce that the report is available on my Window on State Government Web site at
<<http://www.window.state.tx.us/tspr/eaglepass/>>.

Sincerely,

Carole Keeton Rylander

Carole Keeton Rylander
Texas Comptroller

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Executive Summary Overview
Summary of Recommendations (Exhibit 5)

In November 2000, Texas Comptroller Carole Keeton Rylander began a review of the Eagle Pass Independent School District (EPISD) as part of a three-district project that also included reviews of the neighboring Crystal City and La Pryor school districts. These three districts are located geographically near each other in Maverick and Zavala County. Based upon more than seven months of work, this report identifies EPISD's exemplary programs and suggests concrete ways to improve district operations. If fully implemented, the Comptroller's 64 recommendations could result in net savings of nearly \$10 million over the next five years.

Improving the Texas School Performance Review

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

Recognizing that only 51 cents of every education dollar is spent on instruction, Comptroller Rylander's goal is to drive more of every education dollar directly into the classroom. Comptroller Rylander also has ordered TSPR staff to share best practices and exemplary programs quickly and systematically with all the state's school districts and with anyone else who requests such information. Comptroller Rylander has directed TSPR to serve as a clearinghouse of the best ideas in Texas public education.

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

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

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

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

For more information, contact TSPR by calling toll-free 1-800-531-5441, extension 5-3676, or see the Comptroller's Website at www.window.state.tx.us .

TSPR in Eagle Pass ISD

When contacted by the Comptroller's office in August 2000, the board and Superintendent Mona Hopkins voiced their support for the review and the superintendent and her staff have worked cooperatively with the review team throughout the project.

The Comptroller contracted with WCL Enterprises, a Houston-based firm to assist with the review. The team interviewed district employees, school board members, parents, business leaders and community members and held public forums on Wednesday, November 8, 2000, at the Memorial Junior High School from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. and on Thursday, November 9, 2000, at Eagle Pass Junior High School. Comments from the public forums are summarized in **Appendix A**. To obtain additional comments, the review team conducted small focus group sessions with teachers, principals, employees, students, parents and community members. The Comptroller's office also received letters and phone calls from a wide array of parents, teachers and community members.

A total of 698 respondents answered surveys. Of this total, 257 campus and central administrators and support staff, 67 parents, 340 teachers and 34 principals and assistant principals completed written surveys. Details from the surveys appear in **Appendices B** through **E**.

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).

EPISD selected peer districts for comparisons based on similarities in student enrollment, student performance and community and student demographics. The districts are South San Antonio, Mission Consolidated, San Benito Consolidated, Harlandale, Weslaco and San Felipe ISDs.

During its more than seven-month review, TSPR developed recommendations to improve operations and save taxpayers nearly \$12 million by 2005-06. Cumulative net savings from all recommendations (savings minus recommended investments or expenditures) would reach nearly \$10 million by 2005-06.

A detailed list of costs and savings by recommendation appears in **Exhibit 2**. Many TSPR recommendations would not have a direct financial impact but would improve the district's overall operations.

Acknowledgments

The Comptroller's office and WCL Enterprises wish to express their appreciation to the EPISD Board of Trustees, Superintendent Mona Hopkins, district employees, students, parents and community residents who helped during the review. Special thanks go to Ms. Ana Gonzalez, executive director for Support Services, who served as EPISD's liaison to the review team. She arranged for office space, equipment and meeting rooms, organized meetings, responded to requests and accommodated the review team's needs.

Eagle Pass ISD

EPISD is responsible for providing public education for students living within Maverick County. The district's mission statement says, "The mission of the Eagle Pass Independent School District is to provide all students opportunities to develop intellectually, socially, culturally, physically and emotionally in order to become productive, contributing and responsible members of society. This will be achieved by providing all students with quality cognitive and affective experiences. Quality at all levels, equity in all endeavors and accountability for all responsibilities will be provided for all students while at the same worth. To make these goals a reality, the district will work collaboratively with the total community, striving daily to achieve this mission."

EPISD provides these educational opportunities through its two high school campuses (9-10 grade and 11-12 grade), two junior high schools, 13 elementary schools and seven special campuses. EPISD's enrollment has grown 6.3 percent since 1996-97.

In 2000-01, the district served 12,547 students: 97.0 percent are Hispanic, 1.5 percent Anglo, 0.1 percent African American, and 1.5 percent Other; 89.7 percent of the district's student population are economically disadvantaged. **Exhibit 1** details the demographic characteristics of the EPISD, its peer school districts, Region 20 and the state.

Exhibit 1
Demographics of EPISD, Peer Districts,
Region 20 and State Student Populations
2000-01

District	Student Enrollment	African American	Hispanic	Anglo	Other	Economically Disadvantaged
San Benito	8,898	0.1%	97.3%	2.5%	0.1%	86.7%
South San Antonio	10,004	1.7%	94.6%	3.4%	0.4%	89.5%
San Felipe	10,046	1.2%	87.7%	10.7%	0.4%	68.3%
Mission	12,481	0.1%	97.4%	2.5%	0.0%	81.3%
Eagle Pass	12,547	0.1%	97.0%	1.5%	1.5%	89.7%
Weslaco	13,466	0.2%	96.8%	2.7%	0.3%	87.0%
Harlandale	14,500	0.4%	94.0%	5.4%	0.2%	90.4%
Region 20	325,851	7.0%	64.3%	27.4%	1.4%	61.5%
State	4,071,433	14.0%	41.0%	42.0%	3.0%	49.2%

Source: TEA, PEIMS 2000-01.

The district's annual budget is \$74.8 million for 2000-01. For 2000-01, EPISD's property value per student of \$66,359 is the second highest among all peer districts, while its tax rate of \$1.590 is the highest tax rate among its peers (**Exhibit 2**).

Exhibit 2
EPISD Tax Rate and Value per Student Compared to Peer Districts
2000-01

District	Tax Rate	Value per Student
Eagle Pass	\$1.247	\$66,359
Weslaco	\$1.430	\$60,720

San Felipe-Del Rio Consolidated	\$1.449	\$75,492
San Benito Consolidated	\$1.470	\$46,698
Mission Consolidated	\$1.534	\$56,197
South San Antonio	\$1.619	\$59,933
Harlandale	\$1.678	\$54,117

Source: TEA, PEIMS 2000-01.

Student performance in EPISD has shown significant improvement in all areas since 1995-96. Student performance in math exhibited the greatest improvement over the five-year period. (**Exhibit 3**).

Exhibit 3
Percentage of All EPISD Students Grades 3-8 and 10
Passing TAAS, All Levels
1995-96 through 1999-2000

Subject	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Reading	67.1%	73.9%	79.7%	81.3%	84.6%
Math	68.8%	77.2%	83.4%	85.7%	88.1%
Writing	73.2%	84.2%	84.2%	88.2%	89.6%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1995 -1996 through 1999-2000.

While the district has made significant improvements in student performance, EPISD is facing some major challenges including:

- Maintaining student performance improvements;
- Organizing the district efficiently to provide support for instruction; and
- Efficiently managing the district's financial and physical resources to prepare for future growth.

Key Findings and Recommendations

Maintaining Student Performance Improvement

Conduct a curriculum audit. Although EPISD students do well on the TAAS test, student performance on other measures lag behind peer districts. In focus groups and in surveys, parents voiced concerns about the curriculum. By conducting an independent examination of the district's

curriculum and instruction, the district will have better data upon which to plan for improvements in student performance.

Adopt an incentive plan to reduce the use of substitute teachers. EPISD spent approximately \$700,000 on substitute teachers in 2000-01. Although some principals have implemented incentives on their campuses to reduce teacher absenteeism, a districtwide plan does not exist. By initiating a districtwide plan that provides monetary incentives to teachers EPISD could reduce teacher absenteeism and expenditures for substitutes and yield net savings of up to \$200,000 annually.

Organizing the District to Support Instruction

Reorganize responsibilities among EPISD senior managers and improve and coordinate student evaluation. The district's upper level management is not effectively organized to run the district and provide support for student improvement. By and realigning the reporting structures and streamlining staff in EPISD, the district can improve its ability to provide direction to campuses and the district in general. The proposed changes would also yield significant savings in future years.

Implement a controlled retirement incentive plan. EPISD has a significant number of staff with 20 or more years of service who are eligible for full retirement. Many districts carefully plan for the future by using tools like retirement incentive plans that assist in the controlled exit of experienced staff and the careful replacement of those retiring positions. Through better management of their departure the district will have adequate time to recruit highly qualified replacements to match the district's priorities.

Efficiently Managing the District's Financial and Physical Resources

Transfer EPISD tax administration to the Maverick County Tax Office. EPISD's tax collection operations are costly compared to peers. By entering into an interlocal agreement with the county, EPISD could lower costs for this function while still maintaining the same level of service.

Eliminate opportunities for problems in purchasing procedures. While TSPR found no violations with district purchasing activities, the lack of controls leaves the district exposed to unnecessary risks. By establishing procedures to ensure compliance with all state and local purchasing laws and policies and improving sole source purchasing procedures, the district can avoid problems before they occur and raise public confidence in district financial management.

Develop technology measures that match the goals and objectives of the technology plan. EPISD does not formally track how teachers and students use technology, or how much technology training teachers receive. By building measures to track teacher and student progress in using technology and incorporating the attainment of certain levels of efficiency into the technology plan, EPISD can better serve the technology needs of the district.

Develop a pay scale for bus drivers. Salaries for EPISD's bus drivers vary and are not related to driver tenure or driver experience. By developing a pay scale for bus drivers, EPISD can achieve equity in pay and reduce driver complaints.

Make more efficient use of school property and reorganize and streamline property maintenance. By closing two schools and the central administrative complex and converting another school to an administrative building, the district can more efficiently provide educational services in the district. EPISD could also improve the upkeep of school property by increasing the number of Maintenance Department crafts positions, reassigning the grounds crew and using custodial staff more efficiently.

Exemplary Programs and Practices

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

- ***Using staffing allocations to distribute staff resources equitably.*** In 2000-01, EPISD developed and began applying staffing formulas for campus personnel at each school. This change helps the district better distribute educational resources and helps campus and other personnel better understand the district's desired staffing levels.
- ***EPISD aggressively seeks federal and state grants to support needed district programs.*** Over a three-year period (1998-99 to 2000-01), EPISD increased federal grants from \$6.8 million annually to almost \$8.2 million and state grants from \$634,000 annually to \$1.6 million.
- ***Energy conservation program brings solar power to EPISD.*** In May 2001, EPISD's C.C. Winn Campus was selected as one of only 11 schools in Texas to participate in the Solar for Texas Schools Project. This project, part of the state's Renewable Energy Demonstration Program, will fund the installation of a solar energy

system in the school as a demonstration program. The state sent out requests for information to all 1,034 school districts, and eleven were selected to participate in this program, including EPISD.

- ***EPISD developed an extensive range of traditional and non-traditional programs to meet the diverse needs of EPISD students.*** EPISD has developed many innovative programs to assist students both academically and emotionally. From programs to assist migrant students, to programs to help pregnant students to programs targeting Native Americans, EPISD participates in a wide array of programs to give students the tools to succeed.
- ***EPISD uses a series of strategies to recruit and develop teachers.*** EPISD has had problems recruiting teachers and has had to devise innovative strategies. EPISD learned that to meet the need for new teachers, the district must also target graduates from non-education programs and help them become certified. The district has also begun to work more closely the Education Service Center, Region 20, through a cooperative that helps school districts identify potential applicants.
- ***EPISD saves money by performing bodywork, glass replacement and upholstery in-house.*** The district discovered the expertise in-house to perform certain maintenance functions on vehicles in the district. Now, the district examines the feasibility to perform some functions in-house instead of automatically contracting for repairs.

Savings and Investment Requirements

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

TSPR recommended 64 ways to save EPISD nearly \$12 million in gross savings over a five-year period. Reinvestment opportunities will cost the district \$1.9 million during the same period. Full implementation of all recommendations in this report could produce net savings of nearly \$10 million by 2005-06.

Exhibit 4
Summary of Net Savings
TSPR Review of Eagle Pass Independent School District

Year	Total
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2001-02 Initial Annual Net Savings	\$384,887
2002-03 Additional Annual Net Savings	\$2,046,111
2003-04 Additional Annual Net Savings	\$2,046,111
2004-05 Additional Annual Net Savings	\$2,954,777
2005-06 Additional Annual Net Savings	\$2,954,777
One Time Net (Costs)/Savings	(\$417,480)
TOTAL SAVINGS PROJECTED FOR 2001-2006	\$9,969,183

A detailed list of costs and savings by recommendation appears in **Exhibit 5**. The page number for each recommendation is listed in the summary chart for reference purposes. Detailed implementation strategies, timelines and the estimates of fiscal impact follow each recommendation in this report. The implementation section associated with each recommendation highlights the actions necessary to achieve the proposed results. Some items should be implemented immediately, some over the next year or two and some over several years.

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

	curriculum audit to direct curriculum management and ensure quality control. p. 61							
5	Develop a formal program evaluation process. p. 63	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
6	Eliminate administrative responsibilities of the counselors to allow them more time to devote to counseling. p. 64	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
7	Develop a comprehensive staff development policy including procedures that address key issues and support EPISD goals. p. 69	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Total, Chapter 2	\$44,826	\$89,652	\$89,652	\$89,652	\$89,652	\$403,434	(\$68,000)

Chapter 3 Community Involvement

8	Redirect the <i>Eagle Times</i> from an employee newsletter to a district newsletter, and place it as an insert in the local paper six times a year. p. 111	(\$1,038)	(\$1,038)	(\$1,038)	(\$1,038)	(\$1,038)	(\$5,190)	\$0
9	Expand the district's use of the Internet to provide useful information to schools.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

	teachers, parents and the community. p. 112							
10	Standardize elementary parent/student handbooks, secondary student handbooks and teacher handbooks. p. 114	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Total, Chapter 3	(\$1,038)	(\$1,038)	(\$1,038)	(\$1,038)	(\$1,038)	(\$5,190)	\$0
Chapter 4 Personnel Management								
11	Create a coordinator of Human Resources position to head the Human Resources Department. p. 129	(\$36,930)	(\$49,240)	(\$49,240)	(\$49,240)	(\$49,240)	(\$233,890)	\$0
12	Adopt a districtwide incentive plan to reduce the use of substitute teachers. p. 131	\$0	\$209,880	\$209,880	\$209,880	\$209,880	\$839,520	\$0
13	Implement a controlled retirement incentive plan. p. 140	\$0	\$624,408	\$624,408	\$1,533,344	\$1,533,344	\$4,315,504	\$0
14	Redesign the paraprofessional applicant testing process to test for specified skills such as spelling, math and grammar. p. 143	(\$12,500)	(\$12,500)	(\$12,500)	(\$12,500)	(\$12,500)	(\$62,500)	(\$4,000)
	Total, Chapter 4	(\$49,430)	\$772,548	\$772,548	\$1,681,484	\$1,681,484	\$4,858,634	(\$4,000)

Chapter 5 Facilities Use and Management

15	Establish a facilities committee to re-evaluate the facilities master plan. p. 154	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
16	Close three EPISD elementary schools: Lee, Austin, and Kirchner. p. 156	\$0	\$552,665	\$552,665	\$552,665	\$552,665	\$2,330,660	\$0
17	Close the current District Service Center and convert Austin Elementary School to a new central administrative office building. p. 158	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$400,000)
18	Increase the number of EPISD Facilities and Maintenance Department crafts positions. p. 162	(\$65,360)	(\$130,719)	(\$130,719)	(\$130,719)	(\$130,719)	(\$588,236)	\$0
19	Reassign the grounds crew to the coordinator of Facilities and Maintenance. p. 164	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
20	Redesign custodial areas of responsibility using industry standards, reallocate more custodial work schedules to hours when school is not	\$153,524	\$307,047	\$307,047	\$307,047	\$307,047	\$1,381,712	\$0

	in session, and reduce the number of custodians. p. 171							
21	Develop an energy management plan for all EPISD's current and planned facilities and acquire a system to track and monitor associated energy costs. p. 176	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Total, Chapter 5	\$88,164	\$728,993	\$728,993	\$728,993	\$728,993	\$3,004,136	(\$400,000)

Chapter 6 Financial Management

22	Eliminate the position of assistant director for Financial Services and reassign employee benefits management and risk management functions to existing personnel. p. 187	\$60,918	\$60,918	\$60,918	\$60,918	\$60,918	\$304,590	\$0
23	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. 195	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
24	Transfer EPISD tax levy and collection operations to the Maverick County Tax Office. p. 199	\$135,634	\$140,634	\$140,634	\$140,364	\$140,364	\$697,630	\$0

25	Hire an independent tax attorney to settle the Maverick County delinquent tax account. p. 201	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$183,000
26	Contract for payroll processing. p. 202	\$21,415	\$42,829	\$42,829	\$42,829	\$42,829	\$214,145	\$0
27	Complete network installation of Kronos time clocks. p. 205	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$4,480)
28	Develop an implementation strategy for GASB Statement No. 34 to meet annual external financial reporting guidelines and TEA regulatory reporting requirements. p. 213	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
29	Contract with an external audit firm to perform internal audits. p. 215	(\$7,500)	(\$7,500)	(\$7,500)	(\$7,500)	(\$7,500)	(\$37,500)	\$0
30	Include provision for overnight investments in Request for Proposals for depository banking agreement. p. 218	\$21,460	\$21,460	\$21,460	\$21,460	\$21,460	\$107,300	\$0
	Total, Chapter 6	\$231,927	\$258,341	\$258,341	\$258,071	\$258,071	\$1,264,751	\$178,520
Chapter 7 Purchasing								
31	Establish procedures to	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

	ensure compliance with all state and local purchasing laws and policies. p. 231							
32	Enhance "sole-source" purchasing procedures to include documentation requirements and a definition that matches TEA's Financial Accountability System Resource Guide. p. 233	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
33	Implement the online purchase order system that is currently part of the Region 20 financial software package. p. 234	(\$4,686)	(\$4,686)	(\$4,686)	(\$4,686)	(\$4,686)	(\$23,430)	\$0
34	Submit all bid extensions to the board for approval. p. 235	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
35	Place all departments currently housed in the Warehouse under the supervision of the executive director for District Operations. p. 236	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
36	Increase printing charges to the schools to better reflect the actual cost of providing	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

	requirements for teachers. p. 252							
42	Consolidate network documentation in one location and provide backup in an off-site location. p. 254	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
43	Develop a comprehensive disaster recovery plan including all district activities, and test it. p. 256	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
44	Hire a computer technician. p. 258	(\$13,125)	(\$26,250)	(\$26,250)	(\$26,250)	(\$26,250)	(\$118,125)	\$0
	Total, Chapter 8	(\$13,125)	(\$26,250)	(\$26,250)	(\$26,250)	(\$26,250)	(\$118,125)	\$0
Chapter 9 Transportation								
45	Purchase automated bus routing software. p. 269	\$0	\$59,654	\$59,654	\$59,654	\$59,654	\$238,616	(\$25,000)
46	Establish a community transportation committee to identify opportunities to reduce or eliminate hazards affecting student transportation. p. 271	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
47	Adopt the Transportation Department's functional organization chart and adjust salaries to fit district salary	(\$13,790)	(\$18,387)	(\$18,387)	(\$18,387)	(\$18,387)	(\$87,338)	\$0

	schedules. p. 273							
48	Develop a pay scale for bus driver salaries based on driver experience and use it to correct discrepancies in driver salaries. p. 276	(\$25,830)	(\$25,830)	(\$25,830)	(\$25,830)	(\$25,830)	(\$129,150)	\$0
49	Develop and implement an incentive program to reduce bus driver absenteeism by 25 percent. p. 278	\$5,155	\$5,155	\$5,155	\$5,155	\$5,155	\$25,775	\$0
50	Perform behind-the-wheel evaluations of all bus drivers at least once a year. p. 279	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
51	Purchase and implement an automated fleet maintenance system. p. 280	(\$2,500)	(\$550)	(\$550)	(\$550)	(\$550)	(\$4,700)	\$0
52	Purchase white roofs and dark-tinted windows on all new buses and paint the roofs of EPISD buses less than 10 years old over a five-year period. p. 281	(\$8,150)	(\$8,150)	(\$8,150)	(\$8,150)	(\$8,150)	(\$40,750)	\$0
	Total, Chapter 9	(\$45,115)	\$11,892	\$11,892	\$11,892	\$11,892	\$2,453	(\$25,000)
Chapter 10 Food Services								
53	Develop job descriptions, performance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

	standards and evaluation criteria for the Food Services operation. p. 291							
54	Purchase a Point-Of-Sale System to maintain financial accountability, increase participation and protect student anonymity. p. 293	\$101,871	\$185,166	\$185,166	\$185,166	\$185,166	\$842,535	(\$99,000)
55	Arrange for the health inspector to inspect all EPISD cafeteria kitchens at least once a year as required by law. p. 294	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
56	Provide nutrition education at all grade levels as a component of health education programs and coordinate nutrition education with the Food Services department. p. 296	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
57	Increase federal reimbursements by requiring all a la carte snack bars in the schools to provide lunch options that qualify for federal reimbursement. p. 298	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
58	Expand menus and recipes to	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

	include more food choices, brand named foods and meals that taste good. p. 299							
59	Increase breakfast participation by implementing new programs and offering alternative serving methods. p. 301	\$31,493	\$31,493	\$31,493	\$31,493	\$31,493	\$157,465	\$0
60	Enforce the regulations to control competitive food sales, including vending machines, as required by the Child Nutrition Programs and as outlined in the TEA Administrator's Reference Manual. p. 303	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
61	Develop a system to monitor turnaround time for maintenance requests. p. 304	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
62	Conduct a needs assessment of existing kitchens and prepare a plan to upgrade all kitchens to the Federal Food Code. p. 305	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Total, Chapter 10	\$133,364	\$216,659	\$216,659	\$216,659	\$216,659	\$1,000,000	(\$99,000)
Chapter 11 Safety and Security								
63	Undate the Code	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

	of Student Conduct to standardize discipline policies and the consequences for violations. p. 318							
64	Use previously purchased electronic security equipment at EPISD high school campuses. p. 323	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Total, Chapter 11	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	TOTAL SAVINGS	\$576,296	\$2,330,961	\$2,330,961	\$3,239,627	\$3,239,627	\$11,717,472	\$183,000
	TOTAL COSTS	(\$191,409)	(\$284,850)	(\$284,850)	(\$284,850)	(\$284,850)	(\$1,330,809)	(\$600,480)
	NET SAVINGS (COSTS)	\$384,887	\$2,046,111	\$2,046,111	\$2,954,777	\$2,954,777	\$10,386,663	(\$417,480)

5-Year Gross Savings	\$11,900,472
5-Year Gross Costs	(\$1,931,289)
Grand Total	\$9,969,183

Chapter 1

DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

This chapter describes the organization and management of the Eagle Pass Independent School District (EPISD) in the following areas:

- A. Organization and Staffing
- B. Planning
- C. Site-Based Decision Making

The organization and management of a school district involves cooperation between elected members of the Board of Trustees and staff of the district. The board's role is to set goals and objectives for the district in both instructional and operational areas, determine the policies by which the district will be governed, approve the plans to implement those policies, provide the funding sources necessary to carry out the plans and evaluate the results.

BACKGROUND

Each board derives its legal status from the Texas Constitution and the Texas Legislature. The board must function in accordance with applicable state and federal statutes, court decisions and regulations. Under Section 11.151 of the Texas Education Code, each board has specific statutory powers and duties, including:

- Govern and oversee the management of the public schools of the district;
- Adopt such rules, regulations and bylaws as the board may deem proper;
- Approve a district-developed plan for site-based decision-making and provide for its implementation;
- Levy and collect taxes and issue bonds;
- Select tax officials, as appropriate to the district's need;
- Prepare, adopt and file a budget for the next succeeding fiscal year and file a report of disbursements and receipts for the preceding fiscal year;
- Have district fiscal accounts audited at district expense by a Texas certified or public accountant holding a permit from the Texas State Board of Public Accountancy following the close of each fiscal year;
- Publish an annual report describing the district's educational performance, including campus performance objectives and the progress of each campus toward these objectives;

- Receive bequests and donations or other money coming legally into its hands in the name of the district;
- Select a depository for district funds;
- Order elections, canvass the returns, declare results and issue certificates of election as required by law;
- Dispose of property no longer necessary for the operation of the school district;
- Acquire and hold real and personal property in the name of the district; and
- Hold all powers and duties not specifically delegated by statute to the Texas Education Agency or the State Board of Education.

The EPISD board consists of seven members elected at large for three-year terms (**Exhibit 1-1**).

**Exhibit 1-1
EPISD Board Members
December 2000**

Board Member	Board Position	Term Expires	Occupation
Frank Alfaro, Jr.	President	2003	Businessman
Marcial Reyes, Jr.	Vice president	2002	County government employee
William E. Masters, IV	Secretary	2004	Federal government employee
Raul Besa	Member	2003	Retired
Rodolfo Lopez	Member	2004	State government employee
Francisco A. Martinez	Member	2004	City government employee
Guillermo Ruiz	Member	2003	Utility company employee

Source: EPISD superintendent.

Elections are held each year on the first Saturday in May. Following installation of newly elected board members, officers are elected by the board. The board meets monthly.

District staff is responsible for managing the day-to-day implementation of the plans approved by the board and for recommending modifications necessary to ensure the most effective operation of all district programs and functions. The superintendent, as the chief executive officer of the district, recommends the level of staffing and resources necessary to run the operations and to accomplish the goals and objectives set forth by the board.

Board policies are updated annually using the service provided by the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB). The executive director for Human Resources maintains the policies.

For the past few years, the district has used an outside law firm, Escamilla Poneck, to handle all legal work. The district spent \$118,075 in legal fees in 1997-98, \$86,770 in 1998-99, \$105,455 in 1999-2000 and budgeted \$145,000 in 2000-01.

EPISD is responsible for providing public education for all the students who live within the 1,196 square miles of the district. The district's mission is to "provide a learning environment in facilities conducive to a quality education by providing instructional leadership and quality teachers to ensure that students are competent communicators in English and graduate with a mastery of basic skills along with a value system that will allow students to function independently, cooperatively and become productive citizens."

EPISD provides these educational opportunities through 21 schools: 17 elementary, two junior high schools and two high school campuses. There are also two separate alternative schools, one for at-risk students in danger of dropping out of school and one for discipline management students.

In the 1999-2000 Texas Education Agency (TEA) accountability ratings, EPISD earned a Recognized rating and had one Exemplary campus and 10 Recognized campuses. The November 2000 enrollment was 12,636 students.

The district is served by Regional Education Service Center XX (Region 20), which is located in San Antonio.

For this review, EPISD selected peer districts for comparative purposes based upon certain similarities in student enrollment, student performance and community and student demographics. Those districts are Harlandale, Mission, San Benito, San Felipe-Del Rio, South San Antonio and Weslaco.

Chapter 1

DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

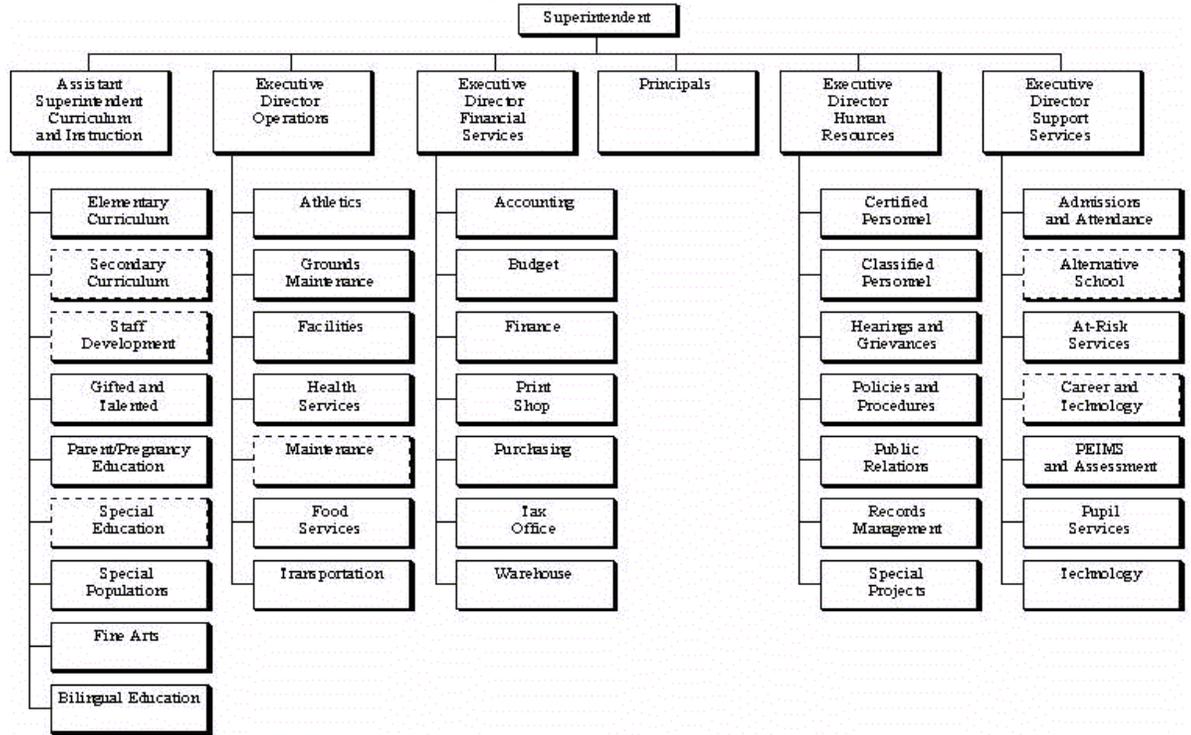
A. ORGANIZATION AND STAFFING

EPISD is managed by a superintendent and senior staff members who report to the superintendent. As specified by Section 11.201 of the Texas Education Code and EPISD local board policy BJA, the superintendent is primarily responsible for:

- Administrative responsibility for the planning, operation, supervision and evaluation of the educational programs, services and facilities of the district and for annual performance appraisals of the staff;
- Administrative authority and responsibility for the assignment and evaluation of all district personnel;
- Termination or suspension of staff members or the non-renewal of staff members' term contracts;
- Day-to-day management of district operations;
- Preparation of district budgets;
- Preparation of policy recommendations for the board and administration of the implementation of adopted policies;
- Development of appropriate administrative regulations to implement board policies;
- Leadership in attainment of student performance; and
- Organization of the district's central administration.

Exhibit 1-2 presents EPISD's organization at the beginning of the TSPR review.

Exhibit 1-2 EPISD Organization



Source: Organization chart approved by the EPISD Board of Trustees, August 8, 2000.

The key responsibilities of the senior management positions are as follows:

Assistant superintendent, Curriculum and Instruction. This position oversees most of the education programs of EPISD as well as curriculum support to the schools.

Executive director, Human Resources. This position supervises the human resource functions of EPISD. The executive director also maintains and updates the board policies, serves as the grievance officer, coordinates preparation of district publications and serves as the records management officer.

Executive director, Financial Services. This position supervises the business management of the district including preparation and monitoring of the district budget, purchase order processing, tax collections and certain warehouse functions. Also, the position oversees the district's in-house print shop.

Executive director, Operations. This position supervises athletics, grounds maintenance, transportation, food services, maintenance, health services and facilities construction.

Executive director, Support Services. This position supervises the De Luna alternative school and at-risk services through the Chisum Technical Center, career and technology education, admissions and attendance, preparations of Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) submissions, pupil services and technology.

As a result of a district investigation of certain purchasing practices, the assistant superintendent was proposed for termination in January 2001. The responsibilities of that position were divided among the superintendent, executive director for Support Services, the executive director for Human Resources and the executive director for Operations.

FINDING

In 2000-01, EPISD developed and began applying staffing formulas for campus personnel at each school (**Exhibit 1-3**). The allocations are the basis for the salary portion of the budget each year.

Exhibit 1-3
EPISD Campus Staffing Formulas
2000-01

Position/Grade Level	Staffing Formula
Classroom teachers	
• Pre-kindergarten	1 teacher for 18 students (1:18)
• Grades K-4	1:22
• Grades 5-12	1:25-30
• Elementary physical education	1:300
Clerks	
• Elementary school	1:300 plus 1 secretary
• Middle/high school	1:300 plus 1 secretary and 1 attendance clerk
Counselors (academic): all grade levels	1:400 with a maximum of 2 counselors at the elementary school level
Custodians	
	1 custodian for every 17,000 square feet of permanent construction
	1 custodian for every 15,000 square feet of portable buildings
Elementary management team	1 principal and instruction officer for 400 students; add one instruction officer for enrollments above 400 students
Secondary management team	1 principal, 1 assistant principal and 1 curriculum lead teacher for 400 students; add one curriculum teacher or assistant principal position for every 400-student increment
Instructional aides	
• Pre-kindergarten	1 aide per teacher
• Elementary/middle schools	Based upon program funding
Library staff	
• Elementary school	1 library aide
	1 accredited reading aide (based upon program funding)
• Middle/high school	1 librarian and 1 library aide
Nurses	
• Elementary school	1:500
• Middle/high school	1:750
Security officers: middle and high schools only	1:300

Source: EPISD executive director for Human Resources.

COMMENDATION

EPISD maintains staffing allocations for elementary and secondary schools that are used to equitably distribute staff resources.

FINDING

At the time of the primary field data collection by the TSPR project team, the assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction and the director for Elementary Curriculum were on administrative leave. As a result, the responsibilities of the assistant superintendent position were divided among the superintendent, executive director for Support Services, the executive director for Human Resources and the executive director for Operations.

The assistant superintendent and the curriculum director are not responsible for the development or evaluation of curriculum.

The assistant superintendent is responsible for broad oversight of both regular education and special population programs. Reporting to the assistant superintendent are the directors of elementary and secondary curriculum, fine arts, parent education and pregnancy program, special education, gifted and talented, special populations, migrant and bilingual/ESL education. Principals report to the superintendent.

The curriculum directors assist principals and teachers with the development of curriculum through districtwide staff development, use of outside speakers on specific program or subject areas, evaluation of instructional materials and the development and evaluation of instructional programs, such as the advanced placement program for secondary students.

According to principals and teachers, the curriculum directors do not provide assistance in developing new instructional strategies, assessing student performance, designing learning plans for students, assisting teachers in the preparation of lesson plans, in the integration of technology in the curriculum or evaluating the effectiveness of educational programs.

Individual student performance assessment is not coordinated in EPISD. Benchmark tests are administered every six-week grading period; however, each school must develop strategies to address its specific needs. No central office positions assist in the evaluation of data and the development of teaching strategies. In the Summer of 2000, the district did purchase software to assist with the disaggregation of Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) test results, but instruction on how to use that software has not been extended to all schools.

No evaluation of existing education programs is conducted in EPISD. Effective program evaluations in school districts describe standards to apply to the evaluation of all district educational programs. These evaluations gather information useful to improving, revising and determining the worth of programs. Two types of evaluation are included for these purposes: evaluation designed to improve the implementation of programs in progress and evaluation designed to make judgments regarding the merit of new programs.

The assistant director for Financial Services recently resigned leaving key financial duties improperly distributed among current staff members. The key responsibilities of the assistant director included payroll, employee benefits and risk management. From an organizational perspective, many Texas school districts include the employee benefits under Human Resources and risk management under Operations.

In addition, some functions currently performed in EPISD are not operating as efficiently as possible. For example, the EPISD tax collection operation is costly in comparison to its peers. The operating budget was \$629,306 for 2000-01. This included a fixed cost of \$421,300 paid to the appraisal district for appraising property values in the district and \$10,000 for payments to the delinquent tax attorney for amounts collected from delinquent taxpayers. State law requires all taxing entities to use the county appraisal districts for appraising property values. The remainder of the budget (\$198,006) covers salaries and benefits for four EPISD Tax Office employees, printing, stuffing and mailing, computer hardware and software, equipment and other operating expenses.

The Financial Services office is responsible for the timely and accurate payment of district employees payrolls, benefit deductions, the payment of insurance premiums, IRS-related matters, court-ordered deductions and deductions for participation in the Teacher Retirement System and Medicare/Social Security. Financial Services provides semi-monthly checks to approximately 2,150 EPISD employees. The payroll clerks report to the payroll supervisor. Six full-time employees, including the supervisor, perform the payroll functions.

EPISD's total direct personnel costs associated with its payroll function are \$219,876. This amount does not include the allocated costs from other Financial Services employees and Management Information Services support activities.

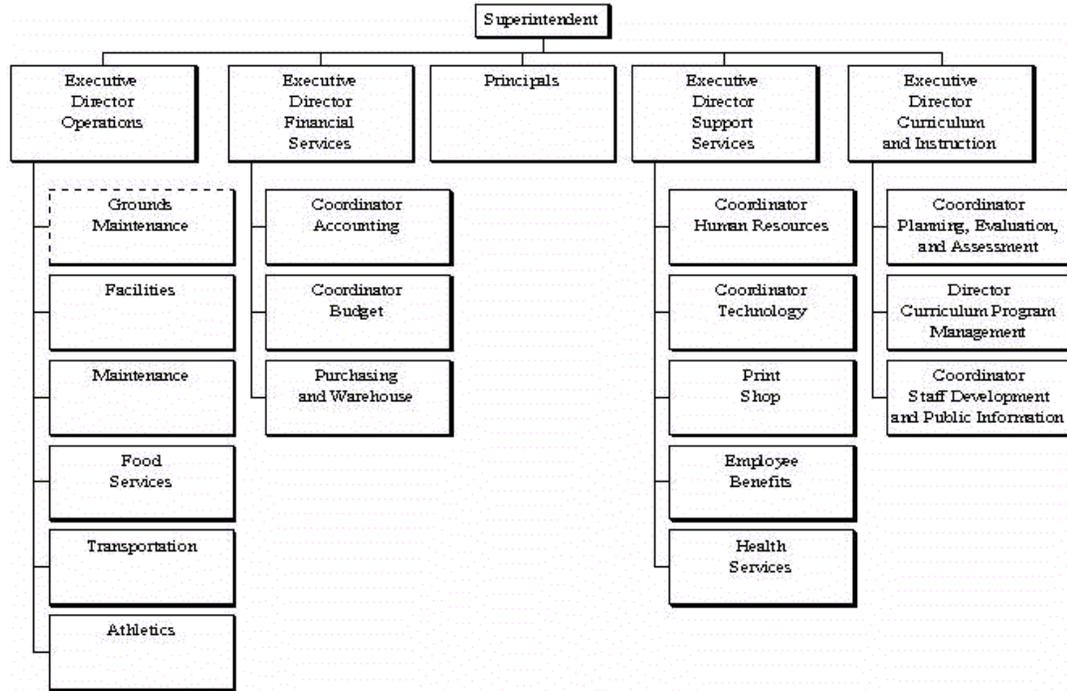
Recommendation 1:

Reorganize responsibilities among EPISD senior managers to enhance student performance and program evaluation.

Exhibit 1-4 shows the recommended organization. The impact of these changes is as follows:

- Eliminate the positions of assistant superintendent, executive director of Human Resources and the two curriculum directors.
- Create an executive director of Curriculum and Instruction position with responsibility for planning, evaluation and assessment of student performance and programs; curriculum program management; staff development and public information.
- Create a coordinator position for Planning, Evaluation and Assessment position with responsibility for student performance assessment and program evaluation.
- Redefine the role of the director of Special Populations to be director of Curriculum Program Management to coordinate regular and special program personnel.
- Combine responsibilities for staff development and public information into one new coordinator position.
- Redefine the current Special Populations evaluator paraprofessional position to fill one of the two paraprofessional positions supporting the coordinator for Planning, Evaluation and Assessment.
- Create a second paraprofessional position to support the coordinator for Planning, Evaluation and Assessment.
- Redefine the current positions of the four lead teachers at the junior high and high schools as academic coordinators, with responsibilities for coordinating benchmark testing, designing campus and individual learning strategies, supporting teachers by assisting with lesson planning and providing individualized teacher staff development. The four positions are assigned to grades K-12 and one each to the following subject areas: reading, English/language arts, math and science/social studies.
- Redefine the executive director of Support Services position to include responsibility for all personnel and employee benefit functions, technology, print shop and health services.
- Create a position of coordinator of Human Resources supported by the existing paraprofessional staff in that department. Responsibility for handling grievances and hearings is transferred to the coordinator position.
- Transfer the benefits function and two clerks to the executive director of Support Services.
- Consolidate the tax office with the county, eliminating four positions.
- Outsource the payroll function, eliminating the payroll supervisor, one payroll specialist and one clerk positions.
- Eliminate the vacant assistant director of Finance position.

**Exhibit 1-4
Recommended EPISD Organization**



Source: TSPR.

Most of the recommended changes are discussed in greater detail in other chapters of this report, particularly where staff is added or positions are eliminated.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent establishes the organization structure in discussions with staff and with board approval.	September - October 2001
2.	The superintendent informs individual staff of the changes according to contract requirements and advertises for the newly created positions.	October - December 2001
3.	The superintendent recommends candidates for the vacant positions to the board.	January 2002
4.	The superintendent implements the recommended organization and reassigns individuals as necessary until the end of their contract.	February - August 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

The costs and savings associated with the creation or elimination of positions are recognized within the chapters where they are discussed in greater detail.

Chapter 1

DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

B. PLANNING

Planning and budgeting are critical to effective management. Planning enables a district to define goals and objectives, establish priorities, select appropriate implementation strategies and determine critical measures of performance.

The budget process should follow the plan's development and implementation by allocating resources necessary to reach the performance targets established in the plan. When coordinated properly, the combination of planning and budgeting reduces confusion and conflict regarding how scarce resources are distributed.

School districts with effective planning systems divide the process into a series of key components that provide information used to develop the plan, update it or implement priorities. These key components include annual district priorities; campus improvement plans; a regular program evaluation cycle; work plans; ongoing evaluation of the personnel implementing the plan; budget for the priorities in the plan; and a management information system.

Annual priorities are adopted by the board each year and indicate what the district will do in a given year to achieve the district's goals and objectives. The plan must set priorities and clearly measurable objectives, assign responsibility for implementation at each level and define a mechanism by which the accomplishment of the priorities is measured.

The program cycle indicates what will happen in each program taught in the district or each program used to support learning among all student groups in the district (e.g., students eligible for compensatory education programs) in each year of the plan and whether new programs or modifications to existing ones are necessary. Conclusions are used in making, changing or extending decisions about program objectives and activities.

Work plans define the responsibilities for plan implementation and monitoring at all levels of the district. They provide objective-specific tasks and identify what department and position are to be held accountable for completing each task.

The budget is tied to each priority so adequate resources are assigned. Budget information can be readily communicated to the public in concert

with the established priorities of the district, not the accounting system of the Texas Education Agency.

The personnel evaluation system measures how well district personnel performed in accomplishing objectives. A summary annual evaluation provides information for individual and system improvement.

Finally, the management information system collects information to determine how well the total system has performed in satisfying the priorities of the plan and what needs to change. The information includes input from each of the above elements as well as other information pertinent to decision-making, such as enrollment and financial projections.

In Texas, Section 11.252 of the Texas Education Code (TEC) provides the requirements for district-level planning and decision-making. The TEC sets out minimum requirements for district and campus planning and decision making that all school districts must satisfy. The board has the responsibility to adopt policy for establishing a district- and campus-level planning and decision-making process. The board must ensure that administrative procedures are established with the active involvement of the district-level committee to satisfy state requirements.

Neither the Texas Education Agency nor the State Board of Education (SBOE) has any rule-making authority in this area. Therefore, each school district must interpret and implement the provisions of the state education code in the manner that will best serve the school district's unique characteristics.

State law stipulates that the district and campus plans must be mutually supportive to accomplish the identified objectives for student performance improvement (TEC §11.251) and to support the state goals and objectives.

Each school district must have a district improvement plan (DIP) that is developed, evaluated and revised annually. State statute specifically designates the components that must be addressed in district and campus plans: mission statement, comprehensive needs assessment, long-range goals, performance objectives, strategies for improvement of student performance, resources needed to implement identified strategies, provisions for implementation (such as staff and timelines) and formative (i.e., criteria for determining whether the strategies are working) and summative or cumulative evaluation.

The DIP must be developed by a districtwide committee that is comprised of board members, district staff, principals, teachers and citizens. At least every two years, each district shall evaluate the effectiveness of the district's decision-making and planning policies, procedures and staff

development activities related to district- and campus-level decision making and planning to ensure that they are effectively structured to positively impact student performance.

Campus-level committees must be involved in decisions in the areas of planning, budgeting, curriculum, staffing patterns, staff development and school organization. The campus-level committees must approve the portions of the campus plan addressing campus staff development needs.

In each district, an administrative procedure must be provided to clearly define the respective roles and responsibilities of the superintendent, central office staff, principals, teachers, district-level committee members and campus-level committee members in six areas (TEC §11.251): planning, budgeting, curriculum, staffing patterns, staff development and school organization.

FINDING

The current planning process does not involve any central monitoring of districtwide results, does not hold central staff nor principals accountable for achieving planned results and does not tie specific resources to the plans.

In EPISD, the Districtwide Educational Improvement Council (DEIC) was chaired by the assistant superintendent. With his suspension and proposed termination, the DEIC is chaired by the executive director for Operations. The DEIC consists of 33 members representing campus-based professional staff, district-level professional staff, parents, businesses and the community. According to board policy, at least two-thirds of the committee must be classroom teachers, six must be parents of students, three must be business representatives and three must be community representatives.

The DEIC starts meeting in May to review the results of the TAAS and compare the results to the DIP. Over the summer, the DEIC revises and updates the DIP to reflect achievement of objectives from the prior year and any shortfall. The DIP is usually finalized and presented to the superintendent and the board for approval in September or October of each year.

The DEIC has met irregularly in recent years with no more than two meetings per year. No ongoing monitoring of the DIP is conducted by the DEIC nor any member of EPISD staff.

In EPISD, Campus Improvement Plans (CIP) are prepared by each campus beginning with a needs assessment by each campus. This

assessment begins when the district receives its TAAS scores and continues through the summer.

The principal and teachers at each campus then prepare/update the CIP for their campus and review it with the site-based decision-making committee (SBDM) for input. After incorporating appropriate modifications from the SBDM, the plan is finalized and presented to the SBDM for final approval before being presented to the superintendent and the board. The CIPs are usually approved in October or November.

CIPs are usually monitored on a weekly basis in meetings between principals and department heads. Any changes in strategies are brought to the SBDM for approval.

While CIPs are supposed to follow the key priorities identified in the DIP, district central staff and principals indicated that there is no monitoring system in place to track the campus plans and their achievement of district goals. They also said there is no accountability associated with the achievement of either the DIP or the CIPs. Instead of identifying one position with primary responsibility, the plans typically identify several positions as accountable, and, hence, no position is ultimately held responsible.

For example, the first goal of the DIP is to have 90 percent of all students pass reading, writing and math on TAAS by the 2003-04 school year. The first strategy/activity identified in the plan is to continue specific grade-level and department staff development targeting those three areas. The personnel to be held responsible for accomplishing this strategy/activity are the curriculum director (there are two, and the plan does not identify whether it is to be one or both) and the principals as a group. No specific activities are defined for each position or by school.

Also, according to central administrators and principals, there is no direct link between the DIP and the CIPs and the district's budget. Broad goals identified in the DIP are not reflected as budget items. For example, a district strategy to provide staff development to secondary social studies teachers to help attain the goal of 90 percent of EPISD students passing TAAS social studies test by 2003-04 includes the following under resources: "Title I, state funds, technology funds, bilingual funds, state compensatory funds."

The CIPs include the same broad, vague language. However, principals indicated that they are allocated per-student funds based upon grade level: \$89 per student at the elementary level, \$100 per student at the junior high schools, and \$125 per student at the high schools. This means that principals do have discretion over funds totaling anywhere from

approximately \$25,000 at the elementary schools to over \$150,000 at the high schools. Yet, use of these discretionary funds is not tied to achieving specific district or campus objectives.

School districts such as Spring and Houston include the management of the school budget as part of the evaluation of the principal. In Houston, incentive compensation is provided to schools based upon student achievement from one year to the next.

This linkage also makes communication of the district's budget to the community much easier. The district's current format, required by the Texas Education Agency, requires submitting the budget in the format of the state accounting system, i.e., by specific functions, objects and sub-object codes. This format is confusing for the average person because it has functions that are then broken down into numerous line items called objects and sub-objects. To get an accurate total of the funding for any one program and perspective for the cost of a particular item, figures must be added from several different line items, possibly across several functions.

Spring ISD has an effective system for displaying district priorities with the budget allocated to each one (**Exhibit 1-5**). The system in Spring ISD rolls up the costs of implementing individual strategies into the broad goals identified in the annual planning document.

Exhibit 1-5
Spring ISD General and Special Revenue Funds Budget by Priorities

Goal	Budget	Percentage
1. Enhance the quality of teachers and support staff		
Recruiting	\$482,913	0.47%
Salary and Benefits	\$59,026,039	57.58%
Teacher Incentives and Recognition	\$2,352,032	2.29%
Teacher Development and Improvement	\$1,578,837	1.54%
Total	\$63,439,821	61.89%
2. Strengthen student achievement and educational programs	\$12,502,709	12.20%
3. Increase the quality and quantity of parent involvement	\$1,086,683	1.06%
4. Provide strong fiscal management, protect the District's Investment in instructional space needs facilities and equipment and meet	\$12,221,996	11.92%

5. Reduce the number of students at risk for dropping out of school	\$1,417,880	1.38%
6. Provide for safety of students and staff in the schools	\$969,734	0.95%
7. Increase the effectiveness of student discipline	\$2,104,071	2.05%
8. Eliminate substance abuse	\$800,104	0.78%
9. Improve the transition of students from elementary to middle school, from middle school to high school, and from high school to college and work	\$1,149,095	1.12%
10. Expand computer support applications for teachers and instructional services for students	\$1,517,800	1.48%
11. Expand school-business partnerships	\$31,000	0.03%
Total Five Year Education Plan Priorities	\$97,240,893	94.86%
Other General Support [Transportation, tax office, school activity]	\$5,269,386	5.14%
Total General and Special Revenue Funds Budget	\$102,510,279	100.00%

Source: SISD Five-Year Education Plan Budget Priorities.

Fort Bend ISD has a strategic plan that involves five key areas, including instructional strategy, service strategy, organization and management strategy, finance and facilities strategy and research and development strategy. One position, director of Administrative Services, serves as the coordinator to make sure that all information is gathered, that work groups and committees are formed and scheduled and that key issues are addressed in each area.

Recommendation 2:

Modify the district planning process to assign specific responsibilities by position, either districtwide or by campus, and tie the allocation of resources to the District and Campus Improvement Plans.

Goals in the DIP and CIPs should have total costs associated with implementing individual strategies reflected. Then, those total costs should be reflected in the budget so the plan links with the resource allocation.

Part of the evaluation of performance of principals and teachers should be matching their resources to identified priorities of the district and the success each campus has using those resources to achieve the goals. The SBDM committees should be involved in determining how the resources

are used to achieve district and campus priorities; however, a degree of flexibility must be left to the principal to meet unforeseen occurrences or adjustments to unusual situations (e.g., opportunity to get an outside speaker for teacher staff development).

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent and the executive directors for Financial Services, Support Services and Human Resources develop a process by which funds are allocated to the District Improvement Plan (DIP) and Campus Improvement Plans (CIP).	September - October 2001
2.	The executive directors meet with each principal to discuss the approach and receive comments and modifications.	November - December 2001
3.	The executive director for Financial Services finalizes the process and presents it to the superintendent for approval.	January 2002
4.	The superintendent approves the process and recommends it for approval to the board.	February 2002
5.	The board approves the process and directs the superintendent to implement it.	February 2002
6.	The superintendent directs the executive directors to initiate the process upon receipt of the TAAS results.	May 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact associated with this recommendation.

Chapter 1

DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

C. SITE-BASED DECISION MAKING

Section 21 of the Texas Education Code describes certain requirements associated with implementing site-based decision making (SBDM) in Texas school districts. The major theme of SBDM is the empowerment of students, parents, teachers, principals and schools. The code describes requirements for annual district and campus improvement plans, composition of district and campus decision-making councils, election of representatives to each council, terms of office, meetings and general responsibilities.

FINDING

The site-based decision-making system in EPISD works well. The district intends the SBDM process to "bring about improved student performance...which in essence empowers the community with the obligation of assuring that through responsibility and participation, student achievement will improve."

Each EPISD campus Site-Based Decision-Making Council (SBDMC) has 15 members who "serve exclusively in an advisory role except that each council shall approve staff development of a campus nature." The committees meet every six weeks or at the call of the principal. Each council's membership is at least two-thirds teachers, with an additional two members each from parents, business and community representatives.

In October 1998, EPISD prepared a booklet defining the roles, responsibilities and administrative procedures associated with the site-based decision-making process. This booklet, which was distributed to each campus, discusses the purpose of site-based decision making in EPISD; the district's beliefs; mission statement; academic philosophy; the role of staff, parents and students; roles and responsibilities in the SBDM process of the board, superintendent, principal, DEIC and SBDMC; and policies and procedures.

The procedures clearly define the role of each entity in the areas of responsibility (**Exhibit 1-6**).

Exhibit 1-6 **EPISD Site-Based Decision-Making Roles and Responsibilities**

	Entity
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Area of Responsibility	SBDMC	Principal	Superintendent	Board of Trustees
Goal setting	Advisory Collaborative	Decision Recommend	Approval Recommend	Approval
Curriculum	Advisory Collaborative	Decision Recommend	Approval Recommend	Approval
Budgeting	Advisory Collaborative	Decision Recommend	Approval Recommend	Approval
Staffing patterns	Advisory Collaborative	Decision Recommend	Approval Recommend	Approval
Campus organization	Advisory Collaborative	Decision Recommend	Approval Recommend	Approval
Staff development	Development Approval	Advisory Collaborative	Advisory	Approval

Source: EPISD Site-Based Decision-Making Administrative Procedures, October 1998.

According to council members, principals and teachers, the process works well. SBDMC members said that the committees meet regularly, principals share information with them, principals implement and follow decisions of the councils and communication is enhanced between the schools and parents. Principals and council members said that parents participated fully on the councils and that it was not difficult to find parents willing and able to participate.

COMMENDATION

EPISD effectively involves parents, teachers and community representatives in the decision-making process through its Site-Based Decision-Making Councils.

Chapter 2

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

This chapter examines the educational service delivery and performance measures of the Eagle Pass Independent School District (EPISD) in the following areas:

- A. Student Performance
- B. Curriculum Organization and Evaluation
- C. Staff Development
- D. Compensatory Education
- E. Bilingual/English as a Second Language Program
- F. Migrant Education
- G. Career and Technology Education
- H. Gifted and Talented Education Program
- I. Special Education

The key emphasis of any school system is on educating children. Instructional programs and services are developed, evaluated and modified based upon the performance of students measured by standardized tests, students achieving learning objectives and the changing composition of the student population. Higher concentrations of students at risk of dropping out means that districts must develop targeted programs to ensure these students are successful in school.

BACKGROUND

Since 1993, Texas has rated and accredited districts and schools based upon specific performance measures including the reading, writing and math portions of the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS), dropout rates and attendance rates. Districts are evaluated each year, and beginning with the 1995-96 school year, the Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) has been used to rate districts according to the scale presented in **Exhibit 2-1**.

Exhibit 2-1
Texas Education Agency Accountability Ratings
1999-2000

Rating	Applicability/Explanation
Exemplary	District and campus
Recognized	District and campus

Academically Acceptable	District
Acceptable	Campus
Academically Unacceptable	District
Low Performing	Campus
Alternative Education (AE): Acceptable, AE: Needs Peer Review, or AE: Not Rated	Campuses that applied and were identified as eligible to be evaluated under alternative education procedures.
Charter schools	At the district level, open-enrollment charter schools receive the label Charter School. At the campus level, they are given one of the four rating categories listed above, based on the state's accountability system.
Not rated	These campuses include those that do not serve students within the 1st- through 12th-grade, such as pre-kindergarten centers and early education through kindergarten schools.
Unacceptable: Special Accreditation Investigation	Districts have undergone an investigation as mandated in Chapter 39 of the Texas Education Code.
Unacceptable: Data Quality	District: serious errors in data reporting that affected one or more of the base indicators used for determining accountability ratings. The errors were of such magnitude that the results were deemed to be unsuitable for ratings purposes.
Unacceptable: Data Issues	Campus: serious errors in data reporting that affected one or more of the base indicators used for determining accountability ratings. The errors were of such magnitude that the results were deemed to be unsuitable for ratings purposes.

Source: Texas Education Agency (TEA), AEIS 1999-2000.

TEA acknowledges schools for high performance on additional indicators that are not part of the accountability ratings. One of these indicators is Comparable Improvement. Comparable Improvement is a statutorily-defined improvement measure that shows how student performance on TAAS reading and mathematics has improved from one year to the next at a given school. The growth is compared to the performance of 40 schools that the Texas Education Agency has identified as most demographically similar to the given or target school.

EPISD operates four secondary schools, 17 elementary schools with various grade arrangements [for example, PreKindergarten(PK)-Kindergarten(K), Early Childhood-K, K-6, 1-6, PK-6, 2-6, PK-1 and PK-2], an alternative education campus for grades nine through 12, a discipline alternative program and a daycare providing parent education. **Exhibit 2-2** shows grade levels served and enrollments by school for 1999-2000.

Region 20 Education Service Center is located in San Antonio and serves the district. Many migrant children attend Eagle Pass schools, with a peak enrollment in late January.

Exhibit 2-2
EPISD Campuses, Grade Levels and Enrollment
1999-2000 through 2000-01

Campus	Grade Levels	1999-2000 Enrollment	2000-01 Enrollment
Eagle Pass High School	9-10	1,808	1,840
C.C. Winn High School	11-12	1,195	1,174
Frank Chisum Regional Tech	9-12	158	156
Eagle Pass Jr. High School	7-8	818	848
Memorial Junior High School	7-8	1,010	1,007
Austin Elementary School	K-6	263	267
Benavides Hts. Elementary School	1-6	494	451
Darr Elementary School	1-6	519	537
Gallego Elementary School	K-6	523	517
Glass Elementary School**	K-6	731	487
Gonzalez Elementary School	1-6	460	481
Graves Elementary School	1-6	510	504
Houston Elementary School	2-6	404	423
Kirchner Elementary School	PK-6	117	118
Lee Elementary School	1-6	549	520
Rosita Valley Elementary School	2-6	341	347
San Luis Elementary School	K-6	548	550
Seco Mines Elementary School	PK-6	565	588

Early Childhood Center	EC-K	495	383
De Luna Discipline Center	7-12	15	24
Kennedy Hall Elementary	PK-2	0	402
Language Dev. Center	EC-K	539	501
Rosita Valley Lit. Academy	PK-1	413	422
Total		12,475	12,547

Source: TEA 2000-01, AEIS 1999-2000, Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) 2000 through 01.

Exhibit 2-3 lists the 1999-2000 accountability rating and the 2000-01 demographics for each school. As detailed in **Exhibit 2-1**, schools are evaluated each year, and beginning with the 1995-96 year, schools are rated Exemplary (E), Recognized (R), Acceptable (A), Low-Performing (LP) and Not Rated: Pre-K-K (NR). Alternative Education schools that applied and were identified as eligible to be evaluated under alternative education procedures receive a rating of AE: Commended (AE:C), AE: Acceptable (AE:A), AE: Needs Peer Review (AE:NPR) or AE: Not Rated (AE: NR).

One school, Austin Elementary, received an Exemplary rating, 11 schools achieved a Recognized rating and the district received a rating of Recognized. Four EPISD elementary schools received an Acknowledged designation in Reading for 1999-2000: Glass Elementary, Kirchner Elementary, San Luis Elementary and Gallego Elementary.

Exhibit 2-3
EPISD Campuses, Demographics and Accountability Ratings
2000-01

Campus	Grades Served	Enrollment	Anglo	Hisp.	Native Amer.	Other	Eco. Disad	LEP	Mobility*	Rating*
Eagle Pass High School	9-10	1,840	1.5%	97.0%	1.0%	0.5%	87.2%	24.5%	17.2%	A
C.C. Winn High School	11-12	1,174	2.4	97.0	0.3	0.3	79.7	12.4	18.9%	R
Alternative School	9-12	156	0.2	96.0	3.8	0	93.6	18.6	82.6%	AE:A
Eagle Pass Junior High	7-8	848	2.8	96.0	0.4	0.8	83.6	17.5	17.3%	R
Memorial Junior High	7-8	1,007	0.3	97.0	2.2	0.5	95.2	23.2	20.5%	R

Austin Elementary	K-6	267	2.6	95.0	0.4	2.0	91.4	43.1	27.6%	E
Benavides Elementary	1-6	451	0.5	99.0	0.5	0.0	91.8	53.9	18.4%	R
Darr Elementary	1-6	537	0	100	0	0	95.2	43.8	22.7%	R
Gallego Elementary	K-6	517	2.7	97.0	0.2	0.1	91.7	46.2	-	R
Glass Elementary	EC,K-6	487	3.1	96.0	0.2	0.7	76.4	19.3	32.1%	R
Gonzalez Elementary	1-6	481	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	97.1	54.7	-	R
Graves Elementary	1-6	504	3.2	95.0	0.2	1.6	81.7	36.3	16.4%	A
Houston Elementary	2-6	423	0.0	99.0	1.0	0.0	96.9	46.6	28.5%	R
Kennedy Elementary	PK-2	402	2.5	97.0	0.2	0.3	82.8	65.2	--	--
Kirchner Elementary	PK-6	118	17.0	83.0	0.0	0.0	82.2	33.9	16.7%	A
Lee Elementary School	1-6	520	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	94.2	69.6	21.8%	A
Rosita Valley Elementary	2-6	347	0.0	82.0	18.0	0.0	98.8	46.4	24.8%	A
Rosita Valley Literacy Academy	PK-1	422	0.2	94.0	5.7	0.1	95.3	85.8	20.9%	A
San Luis Elementary	K-6	550	0.7	98.0	0.9	0.4	91.1	48.5	18.8%	A
Seco Mines Elementary	PK-6	588	0.7	98.0	0.5	0.8	98.6	60.4	19.6%	R
Early Childhood Center	EC-K	383	0.5	99.0	0.0	0.5	89.6	77.3	-	NR
Language Dev. Center	EC-K	501	0	100.0	0	0	96.2	87.6	-	NR
De Luna Discipline Center	7-12	24	4.0	96.0	0.0	0.0	83.3	25.0	100%	NR

Source: TEA, PEIMS 2000-01.

* Mobility and Rating are from AEIS 1999-2000, the latest year this information is available.

For comparison purposes EPISD selected six peer districts similar in size and demographics: San Benito Consolidated, San Felipe-Del Rio Consolidated, South San Antonio, Mission Consolidated, Harlandale and Weslaco. The student enrollment in EPISD and all but one of the peer districts is more than 90 percent Hispanic. These averages are much higher than the state and regional averages (**Exhibit 2-4**).

EPISD experienced a 7.7 percent increase in its student enrollment over the past five years, a rate higher than the state, Region 20 and all of its peer districts. Three peer districts experienced a decline in student population during the same period (**Exhibit 2-4**).

The percent of limited English proficient (LEP) students in EPISD is more than double the percent of LEP students in three of the peer districts, almost four times higher than the regional average and almost three times higher than the state average (**Exhibit 2-6**).

Exhibit 2-4
Student Enrollment, Ethnicity and Percent Growth
in EPISD, Peer Districts, Region 20 and State
2000-01

District	Student Enrollment	5-year Percent Growth	African American	Hispanic	Anglo	Asian	Native American
San Benito Consolidated	8,898	6.3%	0.1%	97.3%	2.5%	0.1%	0.0%
San Felipe-Del Rio Consolidated	10,046	-2.3%	1.2%	87.7%	10.7%	0.3%	0.1%
South San Antonio	10,004	-3.0%	1.7%	94.6%	3.4%	0.3%	0.1%
Mission Consolidated	12,481	4.0%	0.1%	97.4%	2.5%	0.0%	0.0%
Eagle Pass	12,547	6.3%	0.1%	97.0%	1.5%	0.2%	1.3%
Weslaco	13,466	4.4%	0.2%	96.8%	2.7%	0.2%	0.1%
Harlandale	14,500	-1.2%	0.4%	94.0%	5.4%	0.1%	0.1%
Region 20	325,851	5.2%	7.0%	64.3%	27.4%	1.2%	0.2%
State	4,071,433	6.7%	14.0%	41.0%	42.0%	2.7%	0.3%

Source: TEA, PEIMS 2000-01 and TSPR calculations. Note: Totals may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

The change in enrollment varied by grade level between 1996-97 and 2000-01. EPISD experienced a 11.7 percent increase in enrollment in the elementary grades, Early Childhood through 6, while enrollment in the

junior high grades, 7-8 remained constant. Enrollment decreased by 1.4 percent in the high school grades, 9-12 (**Exhibit 2-5**).

Exhibit 2-5
EPISD Student Enrollment by Grade Level/School
1996-97 through 2000-01

Grade Level (Grades)	1996-97	2000-01	Percent Change
Elementary (EC-6)	6,710	7,498	11.7%
Junior High school (7-8)	1,865	1,865	0.0
High school (9-12)	3,228	3,184	(1.4%)
Total	11,803	12,547	6.3%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1995-96; PEIMS 2000-01.

Compared to its peer districts, EPISD is the second highest in its percent of economically disadvantaged students and is the highest of the peer districts in the percent of LEP students (**Exhibit 2-6**). The percent of economically disadvantaged and LEP students in EPISD is much higher than the regional and state averages.

Exhibit 2-6
EPISD, Peer District, Region 20 and State Economically
Disadvantaged
and LEP Students as a Percent of Total Student Population
2000-01

District	Economically Disadvantaged Students	LEP Students
San Benito Cons.	86.7%	22.5%
San Felipe-Del Rio Cons.	68.3%	18.7%
South San Antonio	89.5%	16.7%
Mission Cons.	81.3%	26.4%
Eagle Pass	89.7%	40.8%
Weslaco	87.0%	33.0%
Harlandale	90.4%	14.3%
Region 20	61.5%	10.5%

State	49.2%	14.0%
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Source: TEA, PEIMS 2000-01.

EISD student attendance decreased by 1 percent over the last four years, is lower than all but one of the peer districts and the state average and is less than one percent higher than the regional average (**Exhibit 2-7**).

Exhibit 2-7
Attendance Rate of EPISD Students Compared to Peer Districts,
Region 20 and the State
1995-96 through 1998-99

District	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99
Harlandale	94.8%	95.2%	94.8%	94.3%
Mission Consolidated	96.1%	96.1%	96.2%	96.2%
San Felipe-Del Rio	94.2%	94.6%	94.8%	95.3%
San Benito	93.9%	94.4%	95.7%	95.7%
South San Antonio	95.3%	95.2%	95.5%	95.3%
Weslaco	96.3%	96.5%	96.9%	96.6%
Eagle Pass	95.9%	95.1%	94.9%	94.8%
Region 20	94.9%	94.9%	94.9%	94.5%
State	95.1%	95.2%	95.3%	95.4%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1996-97 through 1998-99.

The majority of the student population and teachers in EPISD are Hispanic (**Exhibit 2-8**).

Exhibit 2-8
EPISD Student and Teacher Ethnicity
2000-01

Ethnicity	Students	Teachers
Anglo	1.5%	12.2%
Hispanic	97.0%	87.0%
African American	0.1%	0.1%

Native American	1.3%	0.1%
Other	0.1%	0.5%
Total	100%	100%

Source: TEA, PEIMS 2000-01.

EPISD has a higher student-teacher ratio than all of its peer districts, the region and the state (Exhibit 2-9).

Exhibit 2-9
Students per teacher in EPISD, Region 20 and the State
2000-01

District	1999-2000
Eagle Pass	16.7
San Felipe-Del Rio Consolidated	16.4
Weslaco	15.3
Mission Consolidated	15.4
San Benito	15.6
Harlandale	14.7
South San Antonio	14.7
Region 20	14.8
State	14.9

Source: TEA, PEIMS 2000-01.

EPISD's total budgeted expenditures in 2000-01 were slightly more than \$74.8 million. Of that total, \$39.9 million, or 54 percent, was spent for direct classroom instruction and other activities that deliver, enhance or direct the delivery of learning situations to students. Compared to its peer districts, EPISD spends the second highest percent of total expenditures on classroom instruction (Exhibit 2-10). EPISD's percent of expenditures for direct classroom instruction is also higher than the state and regional averages.

Exhibit 2-10
EPISD, Region 20, State, and Peer District Classroom Instruction
Expenditures

**as a Percent of Total Budgeted Expenditures
2000-01**

District	Total Expenditures	Classroom Instruction Expenditures	Classroom Instruction Expenditures as a Percent of Total Budgeted Expenditures
Harlandale	\$111,805,169	\$50,907,444	45.5%
San Felipe-Del Rio Consolidated	\$65,775,017	\$31,593,289	48.0%
San Benito Consolidated	\$59,907,447	\$30,786,588	51.4%
South San Antonio	\$71,030,790	\$37,066,334	52.2%
Weslaco	\$94,823,368	\$47,509,437	50.1%
Mission Consolidated	\$81,423,328	\$43,817,546	53.8%
Eagle Pass	\$74,818,117	\$39,990,454	53.5%
Region 20	\$2,200,161,302	\$1,155,147,286	52.5%
State	\$27,056,013,935	\$13,871,475,883	51.3%

Source: TEA, PEIMS 2000-01.

The EPISD per pupil instructional expenditures are lower than all peer districts, the regional and state averages. EPISD is spending above the regional and state averages for regular education, compensatory education and career and technology education. For gifted and talented education EPISD spends above the regional average and below the state average. EPISD spends below the regional and state averages for special education and bilingual education. Compared to its peer districts, EPISD instructional expenditures for regular education are the highest and the second lowest for special education, career and technology education and compensatory education. EPISD expenditures for Bilingual/ESL education and Gifted and Talented education are average when compared to peer districts (**Exhibit 2-11**).

**Exhibit 2-11
EPISD, Peer Districts, Region 20, and State Instructional Program
Budgeted Expenditures as a Percent of Budgeted Instructional
Operating Expenditures
2000-01**

District	Instructional Expenditures per Student	Regular Education	Special Education	Compensatory Education	Career and Technology Education	Bilingual/ESL Education	Gifted and Talented Education
South San Antonio	\$3,705	93.7%	12.4%	9.2%	4.5%	14.6%	2.7%
Mission Consolidated	\$3,511	78.5%	6.1%	9.4%	4.4%	1.4%	0.2%
San Benito Consolidated	\$3,460	72.6%	10.4%	8.8%	4.3%	0.6%	3.4%
Harlandale	\$3,511	62.6%	14.9%	7.4%	3.5%	10.7%	0.9%
Weslaco	\$3,528	73.1%	10.4%	7.1%	5.8%	1.9%	1.7%
San Felipe-Del Rio Consolidated	\$3,145	63.2%	9.9%	6.3%	3.9%	15.1%	1.6%
Eagle Pass	\$3,187	76.7%	8.9%	7.2%	3.6%	2.1%	1.5%
Region 20	\$3,545	69.5%	14.9%	6.2%	4.0%	3.5%	1.2%
State	\$3,407	70.0%	12.5%	6.6%	4.1%	4.3%	1.8%

Source: TEA, PEIMS 2000-01.

Note: Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

The comparison of expenditures by program from 1996-1997 to 2000-01 reflect slight decreases in spending in the compensatory education, special education and bilingual/ESL education programs and an increase in all other program expenditures. (**Exhibit 2-12**).

Exhibit 2-12
EPISD Instructional Program Expenditures
as a Percent of Total Budgeted Instructional Operating Expenditures
1996-97 and 2000-01

Program	1996-97 Budget Percent	2000-01 Budget Percent
Regular education	76.4%	76.7%
Special education	9.3%	8.9%
Compensatory education	8.3%	7.2%

Career and Technology Education	2.4%	3.6%
Bilingual/ESL education	2.4%	2.1%
Gifted and talented education	1.1%	1.5%
Total	100%	100%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1995-96; PEIMS 2000-01.

Note: Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Exhibit 2-13 shows the change in the number of full-time-equivalent (FTE) teachers in each of the instructional program areas from 1996-97 to 2000-01. Overall, the district's teaching staff has increased by 6.3 percent over the period. Compensatory education, regular education and other (honors/migrant) education programs show decreases in FTE teachers. All other programs reflect an increase with bilingual education showing a significant increase of 123.7 percent.

Exhibit 2-13
Number of EPISD Teacher FTEs by Instructional Program and
Percent of Change
1996-97 through 2000-01

Program	1996-97 FTEs	2000-01 FTEs	Percent Change 1996-2000
Regular education	444.4	297.7	(33.0%)
Special education	47.4	53.5	12.9%
Compensatory education	27.8	18.8	(32.4%)
Career and Technology Education	20.8	32.3	55.3%
Bilingual/ESL education	138.0	308.7	123.7%
Gifted and talented education	13.6	28.9	112.5%
Other (honor/migrant)	8.9	5.4	(39.3%)
Total	700.9	745.3	6.3%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1996-97 and PEIMS 2000-01.

EPISD assigns a lower percent of teachers to regular education instructional programs than the regional and state averages and all of its

peer districts (**Exhibit 2-14**). Compared to its peer districts EPISD is highest in the percent of bilingual/ESL certified teachers. Many of these bilingual certified teachers serve in the EPISD regular, migrant and compensatory education programs.

Exhibit 2-14
Percent of EPISD, Peer District, Region 20 and State
Teacher FTEs by Instructional Program
1999-2000

District	Regular Education	Special Education	Compensatory Education	Career And Technology Education	Bilingual/ESL Education	Gifted and Talented Education	Other (Honor/Migrant)
Harlandale	68.6%	12.7%	0.5%	4.4%	12.1%	0.8%	0.7%
Weslaco	63.4%	7.7%	0%	5.6%	15.7%	4.4%	3.2%
Mission Consolidated	61.9%	4.4%	3.7%	4.8%	18.5%	5.9%	0.8%
San Benito Consolidated	58.3%	7.8%	3.8%	5.1%	20%	4.7%	0.2%
San Felipe-Del Rio Cons.	65.5%	7.7%	6.8%	2.6%	18.8%	2.1%	1.8%
South San Antonio	51.7%	9.8%	5.0%	4.8%	18.7%	8.4%	1.6%
Eagle Pass	43.5%	7.3%	2.5%	4.1%	39.6%	2.2%	0.9%
Region 20	70.8%	11.8%	2.9%	3.8%	5.9%	2.6%	2.2%
State	71.3%	9.6%	3.3%	4.3%	7.0%	2.2%	2.4%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1999-2000.

Chapter 2

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

A. STUDENT PERFORMANCE

EPISD's performance on the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) is above the regional average and below the state average for the latest year available (1999-2000). Among its peer districts the percent of EPISD students passing TAAS is fourth highest while EPISD property value per pupil is second highest (**Exhibit 2-15**) for the latest year available (2000-01).

Exhibit 2-15
Property Value per Pupil and Percent of All EPISD Students
Passing TAAS compared to Peer Districts, Region 20 and the State
1999-2000 and 2000-01

District	2000-01 Property Value per Pupil	1999-2000 Percent of Students Passing TAAS	Rank by Performance
San Felipe-Del Rio Consolidated	\$75,492	74.6%	7
Eagle Pass	\$66,359	78.4%	4
Weslaco	\$60,720	81.7%	1
South San Antonio	\$59,933	75.7%	5
Mission Consolidated	\$56,197	80.2%	2
Harlandale	\$54,117	74.9%	6
San Benito	\$46,698	80.1%	3
State	\$215,121	79.9%	N/A

Source: TEA, AEIS 1999-2000 and PEIMS 2000-01.

The percent of all EPISD students passing each section of the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) steadily increased from 1995-96 to 1999-2000. Student performance in reading increased by 26.5 percent points, in math by 28 percent points and in writing by 22 percent points (**Exhibit 2-16**).

Exhibit 2-16
Percent of All EPISD Students Passing TAAS, All Levels
1995-96 through 1999-2000

Subject	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Reading	67.1%	73.9%	79.7%	81.3%	84.6%
Math	68.8%	77.2%	83.4%	85.7%	88.1%
Writing	73.2%	84.2%	84.2%	88.2%	89.6%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1999-2000.

The 1999-2000 percent of EPISD students passing the writing and math portions of the TAAS exceeded the regional and state averages. The reading scores were below both the regional and the state averages, and the percent of EPISD students passing all tests taken exceeded the regional percent and were below the state percent. Among its peer districts, the percent of EPISD passing students ranked first in writing, third in math, third in all tests and fifth in reading, (**Exhibit 2-17**).

Exhibit 2-17
Percent of All EPISD, Region 20, and State Students
Passing TAAS, All Levels
1999-2000

District	Reading	Writing	Math	All Tests
Mission	87.4%	87.9%	88.1%	80.2%
San Benito	86.5%	85.7%	91.3%	80.1%
Eagle Pass	84.6%	89.6%	88.1%	78.4%
Weslaco	86.5%	85.7%	91.3%	75.7%
San Felipe-Del Rio	83.5%	82.0%	84.2%	74.6%
Harlandale	84.1%	86.7%	85.0%	72.6%
South San Antonio	85.5%	87.8%	84.8%	71.6%
Region 20	85.9%	87.1%	85.3%	77.1%
State	87.4%	88.2%	87.4%	79.9%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1999-2000.

The percent of economically disadvantaged students passing TAAS was above the regional and state averages in all areas (**Exhibit 2-18**).

Exhibit 2-18
Percent of Economically Disadvantaged EPISD,
Region 20, and State Students Passing TAAS, All Levels
1999-2000

District	Reading	Writing	Math	All Tests
Eagle Pass	83.6%	89.5%	87.4%	77.3%
Region 20	80.5%	82.8%	80.6%	70.1%
State	79.8%	81.3%	81.1%	70.0%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1999-2000.

The percent of special education students passing TAAS was below the regional and state averages of special education students in reading and writing, above the regional and state averages in math, above the regional average and slightly below the state average in all tests (**Exhibit 2-19**).

Exhibit 2-19
Percent of Special Education EPISD,
Region 20, and State Students Passing TAAS, All Levels
1999-2000

Entity	Reading	Writing	Math	All Tests
Eagle Pass	67.6%	54.5%	72.7%	58.6%
Region 20	68.0%	63.8%	67.1%	54.0%
State	71.0%	65.6%	71.1%	58.8%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1999-2000.

The percent of EPISD students in grades 3-6 passing the TAAS was above the regional and state averages of elementary students in fourth grade writing, fifth grade math and sixth grade reading and math. The percent of EPISD students passing the TAAS was above the regional average and equal to the same as state average in fifth grade reading. In third and fourth grades, the percent of EPISD students passing the TAAS in both reading and math was below regional and state averages (**Exhibit 2-20**).

Exhibit 2-20
Percent of EPISD, Region 20, and State
Elementary Students Passing TAAS
1999-2000

Grade/Subject	Eagle Pass	Region 20	State
3rd-Reading	77.8%	85.9%	87.9%
3rd-Math	73.6%	78.0%	80.6%
4th-Reading	86.5%	89.0%	89.9%
4th-Writing	92.0%	89.7%	90.3%
4th-Math	84.3%	85.3%	87.1%
5th-Reading	87.8%	86.3%	87.8%
5th-Math	93.2%	91.3%	92.1%
6th-Reading	89.1%	83.8%	86.0%
6th-Math	94.5%	85.6%	88.5%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1999-2000.

The percent of EPISD students passing TAAS was above both the regional and state averages in seventh and eighth grade math, eighth grade writing and tenth grade math. In eighth grade reading, the percent of EPISD students passing was above the regional average and just below the state average. In seventh grade reading, eighth grade science and social studies and tenth grade reading and writing, the percent of EPISD students passing TAAS was below both the state and regional averages (**Exhibit 2-21**).

Exhibit 2-21
Percent of EPISD, Region 20 and State
Secondary School Students Passing TAAS
1999-2000

Grade/Subject	Eagle Pass	Region 20	State
7th-Reading	80.7%	81.1%	83.5%
7th-Math	93.4%	85.5%	88.1%
8th-Reading	89.1%	88.0%	89.6%
8th-Writing	88.6%	82.2%	84.3%
8th-Math	92.2%	88.1%	90.2%
8th-Science	86.9%	87.5%	88.2%
8th-Social Studies	67.7%	68.8%	71.8%
10th-Reading	86.4%	89.4%	90.3%

10th-Writing	88.2%	89.9%	90.7%
10th-Math	88.9%	84.0%	86.8%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1999-2000.

Elementary student performance in EPISD has been showing steady improvement over the past five years. Between 1995-96 and 1999-2000, significant improvements have been made in both reading and math in grades 4-6 (**Exhibit 2-22**).

Exhibit 2-22
Percent of EPISD Elementary Students Passing TAAS
1995-96 through 1999-2000

Grade/Subject	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
3rd-Reading	71.7%	69.5%	72.8%	75.9%	77.8%
3rd-Math	61.1%	80.4%	72.6%	71.3%	73.6%
4th-Reading	62.1%	68.6%	83.8%	84.7%	86.5%
4th-Writing	70.5%	79.5%	87.5%	90.2%	92.0%
4th-Math	56.6%	79.9%	86.5%	89.6%	84.3%
5th-Reading	66.4%	79.1%	81.5%	79.3%	87.8%
5th-Math	59.6%	87.7%	88.8%	91.4%	93.2%
6th-Reading	70.3%	68.9%	82.0%	86.2%	89.1%
6th-Math	55.8%	79.5%	83.5%	92.9%	94.5%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1995-96 through 1999-2000.

At the middle and high school levels, the percent of students passing the TAAS test increased substantially from 1995-96 through 1999-2000 (**Exhibit 2-23**).

Exhibit 2-23
Percent of EPISD Junior High School
and High School Students Passing TAAS
1995-96 through 1999-2000

Grade/Subject	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
7th-Reading	65.4%	77.8%	78.5%	80.3%	80.7%

7th-Math	56.3%	82.3%	82.3%	89.1%	93.4%
8th-Reading	63.3%	71.5%	80.1%	86.8%	89.1%
8th-Writing	66.2%	75.8%	82.4%	85.6%	88.6%
8th-Math	42.8%	73.4%	87.7%	91.0%	92.2%
8th-Science	55.6%	74.2%	78.6%	79.2%	86.9%
8th-Social Studies	48.4%	50.1%	59.5%	66.0%	67.7%
10th-Reading	57.0%	68.4%	78.0%	81.0%	86.4%
10th-Writing	67.0%	75.1%	82.6%	89.9%	88.2%
10th-Math	47.7%	55.5%	72.7%	78.4%	88.9%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1995-96 through 1999-2000.

Since 1995-96, the percent of EPISD students in grades 3-8 and 10 passing the reading TAAS test increased from 67.1 percent in 1995-96 to 84.6 percent in 1999-2000 (**Exhibit 2-24**). Compared to the state average for all students, EPISD narrowed the performance difference from 13.3 percent points in 1995-96 to 2.8 percent points in 1999-2000. EPISD also narrowed the performance difference from 7.7 percent points to 1.3 percent points compared to the regional average for all students on the reading test.

Exhibit 2-24
Percent of EPISD Students Grades 3-8 and 10 Passing TAAS Reading
Test
1995-96 through 1999-2000

Category	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
All students	67.1%	73.9%	77.9%	81.6%	84.6%
Hispanic students	66.7%	73.5%	77.8%	81.5%	84.5%
Anglo students	88.9%	89.0%	84.5%	93.7%	95.2%
Native American	51.9%	71.4%	64.0%	68.7%	69.6%
Economically disadvantaged students	64.5%	72.1%	78.3%	80.1%	83.6%
State through all students	80.4%	84.0%	83.3%	86.5%	87.4%
Region 20 through all students	74.8%	79.7%	79.4%	83.9%	85.9%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1995-96 through 1999-2000.

The overall percent of students in grades 3-8 and 10 passing the math TAAS increased from 68.8 percent in 1995-96 to 88.1 percent in 1999-2000 (**Exhibit 2-25**). Compared to the state average for all students on the TAAS math test, EPISD reduced a 5.4 percent point difference to 0.7 percent points above the state average and 2.8 percent points above the regional average.

Exhibit 2-25
Percent of EPISD Students Grades 3-8 and 10 Passing TAAS Math
Test
1995-96 through 1999-2000

Category	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
All students	68.8%	77.2%	83.4%	85.8%	88.1%
Hispanic students	68.5%	76.9%	83.3%	85.7%	88.2%
Anglo students	81.1%	92.2%	89.1%	91.6%	90.5%
Native American	67.9%	69.7%	70.2%	75.5%	67.9%
Economically disadvantaged students	67.2%	76.5%	82.4%	84.7%	87.4%
State through all students	74.2%	80.1%	84.2%	85.7%	87.4%
Region 20 through all students	67.0%	74.2%	79.4%	82.4%	85.3%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1997-98 through 1999-2000.

The overall percent of students in grades 3-8 and 10 passing the writing TAAS increased from 73.2 percent in 1995-96 to 89.2 percent in 1999-2000 (**Exhibit 2-26**). In 1999-2000, the percent of all groups of students passing the writing test was higher than both the regional and state percents for all students.

Exhibit 2-26
Percent of EPISD Students Grades 3-8 & 10
Passing TAAS Writing Test
1995-96 through 1999-2000

Category	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
All students	73.2%	76.7%	84.2%	88.2%	89.2%

Hispanic students	73.0%	76.4%	84.1%	88.1%	89.4%
Anglo students	91.4%	92.5%	91.5%	95.6%	97.5%
Native American	58.3%	77.8%	72.7%	84.6%	91.7%
Economically disadvantaged students	70.7%	75.5%	83.1%	87.8%	89.5%
State through all students	82.9%	85.3%	87.4%	87.9%	88.2%
Region 20 through all students	79.0%	83.0%	85.3%	86.9%	87.1%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1997-98 through 1999-2000.

Not only has the performance of Anglo students continued to improve over the past five years, but the gap between their performance and that of minority and economically disadvantaged students continued to close (**Exhibit 2-27**).

Exhibit 2-27
Percent Point Difference of EPISD Minority and Economically Disadvantaged Student Performance from Anglo Student Performance on TAAS Reading, Math and Writing 1995-96 through 1999-2000

Category	Percent Point Difference from Anglo Student Performance					
	Reading		Math		Writing	
	1995-96	1999-2000	1995-96	1999-2000	1995-96	1999-2000
Hispanic students	(22.2)	(10.7)	(12.6)	(2.3)	(18.4)	(8.1)
Native American students	(37.0)	(25.6)	(13.2)	(22.6)	(33.1)	(5.8)
Economically Disadvantaged	(22.4)	(11.6)	(13.9)	(3.1)	(20.7)	(8.0)

Source: Compiled from TEA, AEIS 1995-96 through 1999-2000.

Exhibit 2-28 shows the percent of EPISD students and the regional and state averages exempted from TAAS for 1998-99 and 1999-2000. Each special education student receives an annual evaluation of their progress by the Admission, Review and Dismissal (ARD) committee, which consists of the regular education teacher, the special education teacher, an assessment professional and an administrator empowered to commit the

school district to appropriate services determined necessary by the ARD committee. ARD exemptions are granted to individual special education students in a process controlled by the ARD committee on each campus.

Limited English Proficient (LEP) exemptions are also granted to individual bilingual/ESL students by the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) on each campus. This committee is made up of the same type of personnel as the ARD committee with the exception of a bilingual or ESL teacher instead of a special educator.

Students whose answer documents were coded with a combination of the "not tested" categories or whose testing was disrupted by illness or other similar events are included as "other."

In 1998-99, EPISD's overall TAAS not tested rate was lower than the state average and slightly higher than the regional average. In 1999-2000, EPISD's overall TAAS exemption rate was lower than the state and regional averages.

Exhibit 2-28
EPISD, Region 20 and State Percents of Students
Not Taking TAAS Test
1998-99 through 1999-2000

Category	Eagle Pass		Region 20		State	
	1998-99	1999-2000	1998-99	1999-2000	1998-99	1999-2000
Absent	0.4%	0.4%	0.6%	0.6%	0.7%	0.6%
ARD exempted	8.0%	7.0%	7.9%	8.2%	6.9%	7.1%
LEP exempted	0.8%	1.1%	0.8%	0.6%	2.2%	1.3%
Other	1.0%	1.0%	0.7%	0.6%	0.8%	0.8%
Total percent not tested	10.2%	9.5%	10.0%	10.0%	10.6%	9.8%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1997-98 through 1999-2000.

FINDING

EPISD lowered the dropout rate from a high of 4.2 percent in 1997-98 to 1.1 percent in 1998-99.

Realizing the dropout rate was steadily increasing, EPISD performed a needs assessment using information developed by the district's Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) coordinator. The needs assessment concluded many dropouts were still residing in the EPISD.

To address the dropout rate, EPISD created a Secondary School Leaver team. Members of the team include high school principals, designated assistant principals, attendance officers, attendance clerks and the student service advocate recruiters. The PEIMS coordinator serves as the team leader. The team meets weekly to review records of students who did not return to school at the beginning of the year and to plan strategies for locating these students.

At the beginning of the school year, the attendance clerks review all enrollment data to ensure all students enrolled the previous year have returned. At the weekly Leaver Team meetings, the clerks submit the names of those students who did not return to school to the attendance officers and the student service advocate recruiters who in turn make telephone calls and home visits to determine if the students are currently residing in the district. Parent conferences are held with the student and the parents to explain options for return to school.

Each week during the school year the PEIMS coordinator analyzes all attendance reports and provides the data to school principals. Resulting home visits by team members are made to potential dropouts and information on small group and individual counseling is provided.

The two high school site-based decision-making (SBDM) committees collaboratively used the results of the needs assessment to design ways to help their particular student populations. Some of the approaches the district tried included establishing a General Educational Development (GED) program for older students at Eagle Pass High School, additional parent conferences and incentives for attendance. The campus plans were aligned with the district improvement plan. (**Exhibit 2-29**).

Exhibit 2-29
District Improvement Plan Strategies
to Address Dropout Rate
1999-2000

Intervention Strategies	Description of Strategy
Secondary School Leaver Team	The PEIMS coordinator held weekly meetings with secondary principals, designated assistant principals,

	attendance officers, attendance clerks and student service advocate recruiters. Attendance and enrollment data was provided and strategies for student and parent contacts were developed.
Parent conferences	Team members conducted parent/student conferences with potential dropouts.
Monitor student data	PEIMS coordinator disaggregated data on students in Grades 7-12 and reported potential dropouts to campus principals for intervention.
Establish a General Educational Development (GED) program	A GED program was implemented at the 9-10 campus for students who were older and had few credits.
Parental awareness	Parent education training sessions included the consequences of absenteeism.
Analyze attendance reports	The PEIMS coordinator analyzed all attendance reports and disseminated weekly reports to principals.
Home visits	Student service advocate recruiters and attendance officers made home visits to students with high absentee rates.
Summer Instructional Program	EPISD provided a summer program for students in K-8 to reduce retention numbers.
Individual and Group Counseling	Counselors discussed attendance and achievement with individuals and groups of students with similar problems.
Coordination with Community Services	Health providers and the Women, Infant and Children (WIC) program provided services at the district child care facility so students did not miss school.

Source: TEA District Accreditation Report, March 2000 and EPISD 2000-01 District Improvement Plan.

The dropout rate in EPISD is lower than half of the peer districts, the state and regional averages (**Exhibit 2-30**).

Exhibit 2-30
Dropout Rate for EPISD, Region 20 and the State
1995-96 through 1998-99

District	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99
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San Felipe-Del Rio Consolidated	1.7%	1.4%	2.2%	2.8%
South San Antonio	2.9%	3.4%	1.7%	2.2%
Harlandale	1.0%	0.5%	0.9%	1.7%
Eagle Pass	2.3%	3.3%	4.2%	1.1%
Mission Consolidated	2.5%	2.1%	1.8%	0.8%
San Benito	1.7%	1.6%	1.6%	0.7%
Weslaco	1.5%	1.6%	1.6%	0.4%
Region 20	2.0%	1.9%	2.0%	1.9%
State	1.8%	1.6%	1.6%	1.6%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1996-97 through 1999-2000.

COMMENDATION

EPISD performed a comprehensive needs assessment and implemented strategies that significantly reduced the dropout rate.

FINDING

EPISD has analyzed student performance by regularly implementing benchmark testing and disaggregating the resulting data.

EPISD administers a release TAAS at the beginning of each school year to determine a baseline for each student and again in January to track individual performance at each grade level.

The PEIMS coordinator compares all TAAS and AEIS data in a variety of ways and publishes a report on this data for all schools and curriculum personnel. This data is provided to schools to help them find and predict special or common causes for variations in student performance and to design instructional programs to address identified issues.

The data for each subject, grade level and school is compared to both the district and state averages. The comparisons include:

- the percent of students meeting minimum expectations;
- the percent of students mastering all objectives;
- Texas Learning Index scores (TLI-a score that describes a student's performance on TAAS reading or mathematics test. It can be used to tell how far a student is above or below the passing standard);
- the number of students exempted;

- the number of students passing all tests;
- the number of students failing one or more tests; and
- the number of students not tested.

Comparisons are made for all students, for students not in special education, for students taking the Spanish TAAS and by demographic group.

Also included in this publication is longitudinal data specific to each teacher at every school. This information, which compares the percent of students mastering each objective for each subject area tested, is listed teacher by teacher for the elementary schools. At the secondary schools, End-of-Course exam passing rates in Algebra I, English II, U. S. History and Biology are also compared teacher by teacher.

Principals and site-based decision-making committees use this data to plan initiatives and programs for particular grade levels and groups of students. Teachers use the information to develop individualized instruction for students based on performance measures and to discuss ways to improve student achievement during parent/teacher conferences.

COMMENDATION

EPISD provides extensive data for principals and site-based decision-making committees to target the areas of greatest weakness in student performance.

FINDING

EPISD has implemented several programs to improve the academic performance of all student groups, especially economically disadvantaged and migrant students (**Exhibit 2-31**). The district's initiatives include: using analyzed data to develop and implement specific programs in reading, writing and mathematics; providing individualized help for students who have not mastered sections of the TAAS; and offering mentoring programs.

**Exhibit 2-31
EPISD Initiatives to Increase
Student Performance on TAAS
1996-2000**

Initiative	Description of Initiative
Help One Student to Succeed (HOSTS)	A nationally recognized computer assisted mentoring program. which identifies specific areas of need within

	a student's learning arena.
Accelerated Reader Program	This program allows students to select their own reading materials for subsequent detail and comprehension tests taken on a computer. Awarded points may, at certain intervals, be exchanged for prizes.
Extended Day, Week and Year Programs	After-school, Saturday and summer programs are offered to help strengthen student skills.
Kickapoo Tutorial Program	This after-school program helps students make up any school work they may have missed while attending religious ceremonies. It is housed on reservation grounds.
Class Size Reduction Grant	The grant provides additional funding to reduce lower grade level class size to less than 20 students. Three elementary schools participated.
Disaggregating and analyzing TAAS data for classroom teachers	PEIMS coordinator does extensive disaggregating of TAAS data and provides it to campus principals. Campus principals will be provided software developed by Region 20 to perform item analysis of individual and student groups.
Various reading program strategies	Gourmet Reading, Kamico, Step Up to TAAS Reading, TAAS Tutor Reading, TAAS Coach Reading, Blast Off Reading to TAAS, Michael Eaton Reading, Sheryl Cox Reading
New Jersey Writing Project	Specialized training in writing instruction is open to all teachers at all campuses. Teachers attend a 15-day institute during the summer. Follow-up training is provided once during the regular school year.
Tutorial Enhancement Program	Teachers provide remediation to students who did not master any aspects of the TAAS.

Source: EPISD Annual Report, 1997-2000 and director of Special Populations.

COMMENDATION

EPISD evaluated test data and implemented a series of innovative programs and strategies that significantly improved overall student achievement on TAAS.

FINDING

Austin Elementary School achieved the highest accountability rating, which is Exemplary, in 1998-99 and 1999-2000. The two previous years, Austin Elementary School was a Recognized school, the second highest rating.

To achieve Exemplary status, a school must meet the following criteria:

- At least 90 percent of students passing TAAS in reading, writing and math (all students and each demographic student group);
- A dropout rate of 1 percent or less for all students and each demographic student group; and
- A minimum 94 percent attendance rate.

In 1998-99, Austin Elementary received an Acknowledged designation for reading. TAAS results at Austin Elementary School steadily improved at all grades and in all areas during that same period (**Exhibit 2-32**).

Exhibit 2-32
Austin Elementary School TAAS Test Scores
1996-97 through 1999-2000

Grade/Subject	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
3rd-Reading	75.5%	80.9%	93.0%	100.0%
3rd -Math	90.4%	77.1%	86.2%	96.9%
4th-Reading	67.3%	86.0%	94.9%	87.9%
4th-Math	78.7%	88.2%	89.7%	97.0%
4th-Writing	82.0%	92.2%	97.5%	91.2%
5th-Reading	89.5%	86.0%	93.8%	95.8%
5th-Math	94.7%	83.7%	95.8%	95.8%
6th-Reading	76.5%	94.6%	88.2%	92.9%
6th-Math	82.0%	91.9%	92.2%	100.0%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1996-97 through 1999-2000.

The district, the principal and the staff at Austin Elementary School used a series of strategies to improve student performance. The strategies included:

- staff development focused on ESL, math, reading and TAAS;

- benchmark testing results to guide teaching; and
- high expectations of the students.

In addition to the instructional focus, the principal created a family environment within the school. and involved all staff members in the teaching-learning process. The principal also is visible in the classroom, monitoring and motivating the staff and the students.

COMMENDATION

The principal and teachers at Austin Elementary School applied instructional strategies that improved student achievement.

Chapter 2

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

B. CURRICULUM ORGANIZATION AND EVALUATION

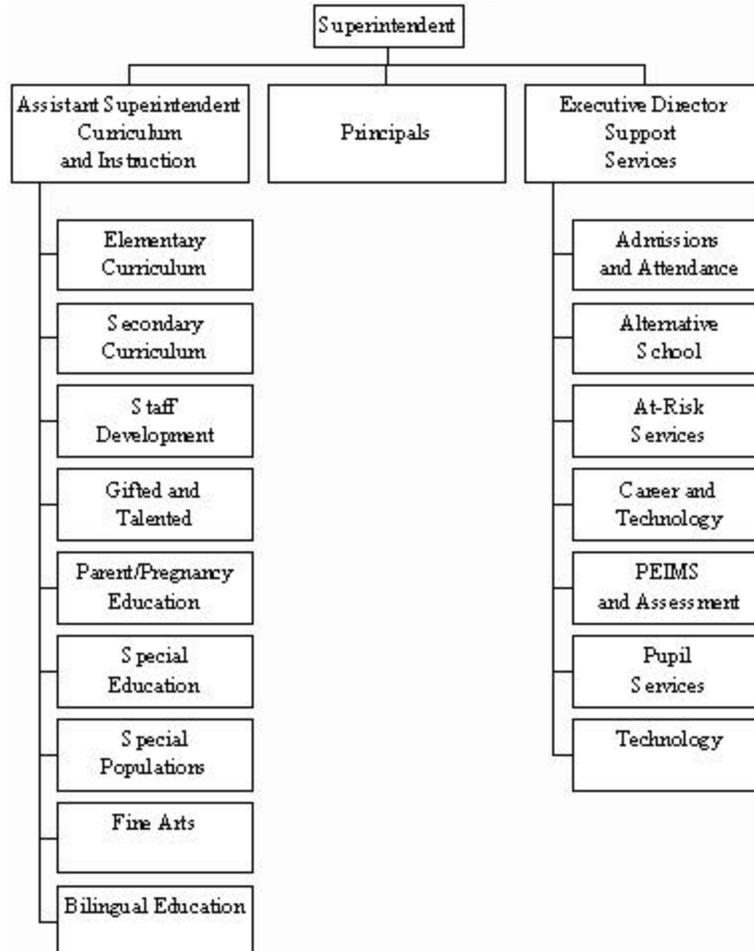
The Curriculum and Instruction Department manages the development of curriculum, the delivery of educational services and the evaluation of programs in EPISD. The department is also responsible for providing principals and teachers the tools necessary to consistently deliver educational services such as curriculum guides and staff development at all campuses.

FINDING

EPISD's Curriculum and Instruction Department is not organized for efficiency and effectiveness. While the district's most recently adopted organization chart shows an assistant superintendent supervising personnel responsible for both regular education and special population programs, in reality the actual functioning of the department is very different.

Exhibit 2-33 presents the instructional organization that EPISD had in place at the beginning of the TSPR review.

**Exhibit 2-33
EPISD Instructional Organization**



Source: Organization chart approved by the EPISD Board of Trustees, August 8, 2000.

At the time of the primary field data collection by the TSPR project team, the assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction and the director for Elementary Curriculum were on administrative leave. As a result, the responsibilities of those positions were divided among the superintendent, executive director for Support Services, the executive director for Human Resources and the executive director for Operations.

Although the organization chart shows a Staff Development position, in reality there is not one. Based on interviews and a review of job descriptions the two curriculum directors, the Gifted and Talented coordinator and the Career and Technology coordinator are responsible for districtwide staff development. However, staff development is actually coordinated by the executive director of Human Resources assisted by the director of Secondary Curriculum and the Bilingual Programs coordinator.

A process for keeping district records of professional development hours is not in place.

The job descriptions for both the director of Elementary Curriculum and the director of Secondary Curriculum assign them responsibility for developing curriculum and instruction programs.

The curriculum directors assist principals and teachers with the development of curriculum through the use of districtwide staff development, outside speakers on specific program or subject areas, evaluation of instructional materials and the development and evaluation of instructional programs, such as the advanced placement program for secondary students.

According to principals and teachers, the curriculum directors do not provide assistance in developing new instructional strategies, assessing student performance, designing learning plans for students, assisting teachers in the preparation of lesson plans, in the integration of technology in the curriculum or evaluating the effectiveness of educational programs.

A lead teacher is employed on each of the four secondary campuses. According to the job description for this position the lead teacher's role is to assist the principal in interacting effectively with each component of the educational setting, to create an educational environment that is conducive to learning and to provide planned learning opportunities for teachers and students. The lead teacher assists in planning and implementing the total instructional program for the school.

The roles of the directors of curriculum and the lead teachers overlap and are confusing.

While the Gifted and Talented education coordinator reports directly to the assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, the Migrant and Bilingual/ESL coordinators report to the Director of Special Populations and the Career and Technology coordinator reports to the Executive Director of Support Services.

There are also positions whose duties are contradictory to their titles. The director of Special Populations coordinates library services; the executive director of Support Services coordinates counseling services and the director of Secondary Curriculum supervises the Advanced Placement (AP) program. Many school districts' Advanced Placement programs are the responsibility of the Gifted and Talented coordinator.

Individual student performance assessment is not coordinated in EPISD. Benchmark tests are administered every six-week grading period;

however, each school must develop strategies to address its specific needs. No central office positions assist in the evaluation of data and the development of teaching strategies. In the Summer of 2000, the district did purchase software to assist with the disaggregation of Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) test results, but instruction on how to use that software has not been extended to all schools.

Neither is there sufficient evaluation of existing education programs in EPISD. Effective program evaluations in school districts describe standards to apply to the evaluation of all district educational programs. These evaluations gather information useful to improving, revising and determining the worth of programs. Two types of evaluation are included for these purposes: evaluation designed to improve the implementation of programs in progress and evaluation designed to make judgments regarding the merit of new programs.

Recommendation 3:

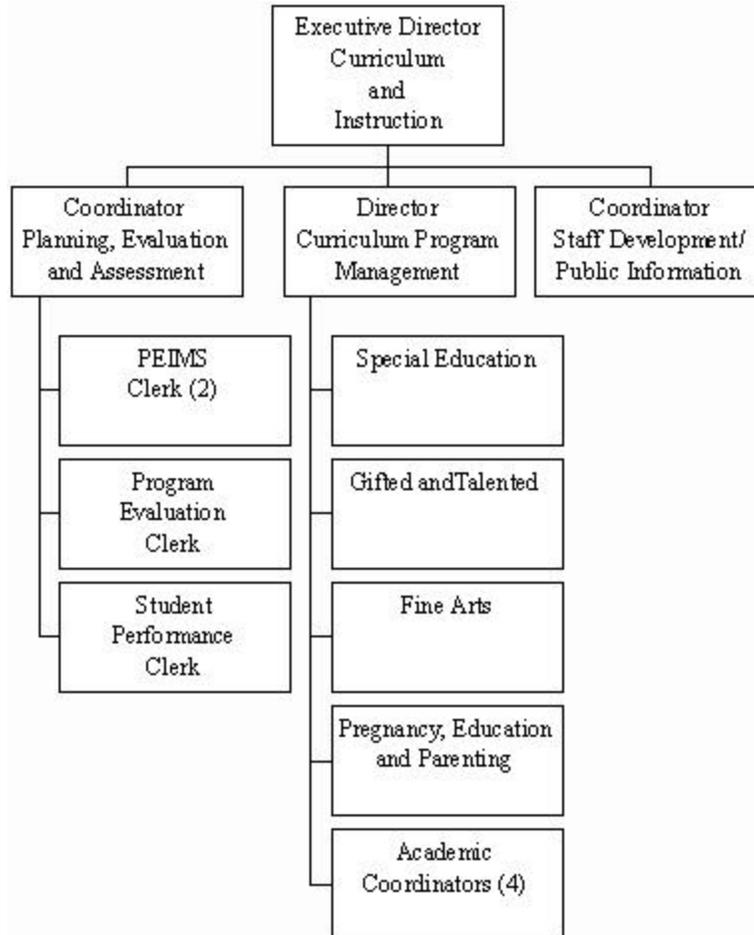
Reorganize the Curriculum and Instruction Department for effectiveness and efficiency.

Under the reorganization depicted in **Exhibit 2-34**, the following changes are proposed:

- Eliminate the positions of assistant superintendent and the two curriculum directors.
- Create an executive director of Curriculum and Instruction position with responsibility for planning, evaluation and assessment of student performance and programs; curriculum program management; staff development and public information.
- Create a coordinator position for Planning, Evaluation and Assessment position with responsibility for student performance assessment and program evaluation.
- Redefine the role of the director of Special Populations to be director of Curriculum Program Management to coordinate regular and special program personnel.
- Combine responsibilities for staff development and public information into one new coordinator position.
- Redefine the current Special Populations evaluator paraprofessional position to fill one of the two paraprofessional positions supporting the coordinator for Planning, Evaluation and Assessment.
- Create a second paraprofessional position to support the coordinator for Planning, Evaluation and Assessment.
- Redefine the current positions of the four lead teachers at the junior high and high schools as academic coordinators, with

responsibilities for coordinating benchmark testing, designing campus and individual learning strategies, supporting teachers by assisting with lesson planning and providing individualized teacher staff development. The four positions are assigned to grades K-12 and one each to the following subject areas: reading, English/language arts, math and science/social studies.

**Exhibit 2-34
Recommended EPISD Curriculum and Instruction Organization**



Source: TSPR.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent reorganizes the Curriculum and Instruction Department.	August 2001
2.	The board approves the plan.	August 2001
3.	The executive director of Human Resources revises the job descriptions of existing positions and writes job descriptions for	September 2001

new positions.	
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FISCAL IMPACT

The net impact of the instructional reorganization is shown in **Exhibit 2-35**.

**Exhibit 2-35
Fiscal Impact of Recommended EPISD Reorganization**

Position	Action	Savings/(Cost)
Assistant superintendent	Eliminate	\$80,384
Curriculum directors	Eliminate	\$116,336
Director of Special Populations	Change position to director for Curriculum Program Management	\$0
Lead teachers	Transfer to academic coordinators	\$0
Special populations evaluator	Transfer to student performance clerk	\$0
Program evaluation clerk	Add	(\$39,944) (1)
Coordinator for Planning, Evaluation, and Assessment	Add	(\$41,033) (2)
Coordinator for Staff Development/Public Information	Add	(\$41,033) (2)
Total salary impact		\$74,710
Employee benefits @ 20 percent (6)		\$14,942
Total fiscal impact		\$89,652

(1) Assumes same salary as special populations evaluator position.

(2) Assumes same salary as budget coordinator position.

Because some of these changes may take longer to implement, the overall savings are reduced by one-half for the first year.

Recommendation	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Reorganize the Curriculum and Instruction Department for effectiveness and efficiency.	\$44,826	\$89,652	\$89,652	\$89,652	\$89,652

FINDING

Despite its improving TAAS scores, EPISD student performance on other measures lags behind the majority of its peer districts and the state and regional averages.

Parents meeting in focus groups conducted by TSPR expressed concern about the difficulty level of the curriculum. Some parents said that students enrolled in PreAP/AP courses and remediation courses were on target, but that students in the regular program were not being challenged.

The Texas Education Agency Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) report includes an indicator that shows the percent of graduates from the previous graduating class who did well enough on the exit-level TAAS to have a 75 percent likelihood of passing the Texas Academic Skills Program (TASP) test. This test is required of all students entering college. The indicator in the report is TAAS/TASP Equivalency. The results of the TAAS/TASP Equivalency for EPISD, peer districts, Region 20 and the state are shown in **Exhibit 2-36**. EPISD scored lower than four of its peer districts, the region and the state averages.

Exhibit 2-36
EPISD TAAS/TASP Equivalency Results Compared
to Peer Districts, Region 20 and the State
Class of 1999

District	TAAS/TASP Equivalency Class of 1999
Weslaco	46.5%
Mission Consolidated	50.7%
San Felipe-Del Rio Consolidated	41.4%
Harlandale	40.0%
Eagle Pass	37.5%
San Benito	37.5%
South San Antonio	30.1%

Region 20	46.9%
State	53.5%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1999-2000.

Students completing Algebra I, Biology, English II or U.S. History must take an end-of-course (EOC) examination. The passing rates for each of the four EOC examinations can be used as a preview of the 2003 exit-level TAAS exam. The results of the EOC examinations for 1999-2000 are shown in **Exhibit 2-37**.

Compared to its peer districts, the percent of EPISD students passing the Algebra I EOC exam was second highest and the percent passing the Biology EOC was third highest. The percent of EPISD students passing English II EOC was third lowest, and the percent passing U.S. History was the lowest compared to its peers. The percent of EPISD students passing each of the four EOC exams was lower than the regional and state averages.

Exhibit 2-37
End-of-course Examination Results in
Algebra I, Biology, English II and U.S. History for EPISD
Compared to Peer Districts, Region 20 and the State
1999-2000

District	Percent Passing Algebra I	Rank	Percent Passing Biology	Rank	Percent Passing English II	Rank	Percent Passing U.S. History	Rank
Eagle Pass	39.9%	2	68.6%	3	68.6%	5	13.5%	7
Harlandale	23.4%	6	68.6%	3	61.0%	7	65.6%	1
South San Antonio	21.7%	7	54.4%	7	69.7%	4	62.6%	2
San Felipe-Del Rio	29.0%	5	61.0%	6	70.6%	3	49.2%	5
Mission	41.9%	1	74.1%	1	76.0%	1	38.6%	6
Weslaco	33.8%	3	73.0%	2	73.0%	2	62.0%	4
San Benitio	33.8%	3	63.5%	5	62.5%	6	62.6%	2

Region 20	43.9%	N/A	77.7%	N/A	77.8%	N/A	71.5%	N/A
State	43.9%	N/A	80.3%	N/A	77.7%	N/A	72.1%	N/A

Source: TEA, AEIS 1999-2000.

EPISD students scored lower than the regional and state average on SAT I and ACT scores each of the past two years and lower than four of its peer districts in both years. The results of both classes ranked fifth among the peer districts. The state's accountability system allows for a district to receive a special acknowledgement if 70 percent or more of its graduates take the SAT I or the ACT and if 50 percent or more of those examinees score at or above 1,110 or 24 respectively. Only 5.3 percent of EPISD students taking the SAT or ACT in 1998 and 5.8 percent in 1999 scored at or above those criterion scores. This performance is below the regional average of 21.6 percent and the state average of 27.2 percent and below four peer districts. The percent of EPISD students taking the SAT I and ACT in 1999 was below the state and regional averages, above two of the peer districts and the same as one of the peer districts (**Exhibit 2-38**).

Exhibit 2-38
Mean SAT I and ACT Scores for EPISD, Region 20 and the State
Classes of 1998-1999

District	Class of 1998				Class of 1999			
	Percent Tested	SAT Score	ACT Score	Percent At/Above Criterion	Percent Tested	SAT Score	ACT Score	Percent At/Above Criterion
State	61.7%	992	20.3	27.2%	61.8%	989	20.2	27.2%
San Felipe-Del Rio Consolidated	44.0%	964	18.6	18.8%	37.2%	966	17.9	19.3%
Region 20	48.7%	952	19.5	22.2%	65.9%	941	19.5	21.6%
Weslaco	46.8%	947	17.9	8.4%	52.1%	934	18.0	8.8%
San Benito Consolidated	26.6%	908	18.5	10.3%	27.2%	916	20.1	11.7%
Mission Consolidated	54.7%	910	18.0	12.6%	61.0%	889	17.8	10.0%
Eagle Pass	59.2%	831	19.3	5.3%	51.4%	830	18.4	5.8%
Harlandale	45.6%	827	17.4	4.4%	51.4%	827	17.1	4.7%

South San Antonio	54.0%	820	17.2	4.1%	53.2%	817	17.2	5.2%
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Source: TEA, AEIS 1998-99 and 1999-2000.

Scoring well on TAAS and lagging behind in other academic performance measures may be the result of a curriculum focused too intently on TAAS and not providing a sufficiently broad curriculum. EPISD curriculum guides are timelines of TAAS objectives to be taught each six weeks. The TAAS objectives are aligned with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) objectives. Some of the guides list materials to support the objectives, others do not. The guides have no suggestions for extending learning to higher levels.

A quality curriculum has three crucial parts: written curriculum that clearly define and communicate the standards that all students must achieve; a taught curriculum; and a tested curriculum. For the written, taught and tested curriculum to be strong, the curriculum must be defined in policy, guided by written procedures, supported and monitored by district leadership and reinforced by classroom teaching.

The district has not performed a curriculum audit, developed a districtwide curriculum plan or fully documented its curriculum. According to the Texas Curriculum Management Audit Center (TMAC) of the Texas Association of School Administrators, a curriculum audit is "designed to reveal the extent to which officials and professional staff of a school district have developed and implemented a sound, valid and operational system of curriculum management." Such a system "enables the school district to make maximum use of its human and financial resources in the education of its students."

An audit is an independent examination of three data sources: documents, interviews and site visits. The audit process, first developed and implemented in the Columbus, Ohio public schools in 1979, is centered on curriculum and instruction and any aspect of school system operations that improve or hinder curriculum and instructional design and/or delivery.

For example, Phi Delta Kappa International conducts curriculum management audits for large, small, rural or urban districts. Both curriculum policy and the system in which curriculum functions are analyzed by the audit team.

Recommendation 4:

Conduct a curriculum audit to direct curriculum management and ensure quality control.

Contact TMAC, Phi Delta Kappa International or another group or organization that conducts curriculum management audits to determine an appropriate program to meet the specific needs of EPISD.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The executive director of Curriculum and Instruction contacts various organizations that conduct curriculum management audits and selects the appropriate group.	July 2001
2.	The executive director of Curriculum and Instruction develops a timeline for the curriculum audit.	August 2001 - September 2001
3.	The executive director of Curriculum and Instruction oversees the audit process.	November 2001 - February 2002
4.	The executive director of Curriculum and Instruction forms a curriculum committee to draft policies related to curriculum based on the audit recommendations.	February 2002
5.	The board reviews and adopts the new curriculum policies.	April 2002
6.	The executive director of Curriculum and Instruction and the other members of the department oversee the implementation of the new curriculum policies and other recommendations of the audit.	April 2002 - Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

The review team obtained information from the Texas Association of School Administrators that shows a typical curriculum audit for a district with the enrollment size of Eagle Pass is estimated to cost \$68,000 (\$64,000 for the audit and \$4,000 for expenses for the audit team). Costs among other groups and organizations are anticipated to be similar.

Recommendation	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Conduct a curriculum audit to direct curriculum management and ensure quality control	(\$68,000)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

FINDING

EPISD does not formally evaluate its programs other than the compliance evaluations required for federally-funded programs.

Effective program evaluations describe the evaluation standards to be applied to all district educational programs. In Waco, district staff developed a What Works process in which schools are allowed to use discretionary funds to implement programs if the program meets one of three conditions:

- It is listed in the What Works compendium that was developed after a comprehensive review of educational research.
- The site-based committee provides documentation showing the program produced desired outcomes under similar circumstances.
- It is a pilot project for which a research design is developed and used to measure results for not more than three years. The principal and site-based committee must agree to discontinue the program if results are not achieved.

The Spring Independent School District Standard Process for Program Evaluation describes evaluation standards for all educational programs in Spring ISD. The district's intent is "to establish program evaluation as an expected, systematic and continuing process integrated with an organized program development cycle." The plan gathers information to improve, revise and determine the worth of programs. Two types of evaluation are included for these purposes: evaluation designed to improve the implementation of programs in progress and evaluation designed to make judgments on the programs' merits.

A select number of programs are reviewed each year. These program evaluations identify both strengths and concerns. Instructional and administrative staff and the board use evaluation results for program planning and revision. In addition to these evaluations, Spring ISD evaluates programs periodically through surveys of parents, teachers and students. Spring ISD also annually surveys graduates.

Spring ISD created its five-year curriculum evaluation program based on Standards for Evaluation of Educational Programs and projects and materials produced by the joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation. Variables to be addressed in the program evaluation process include:

- Measures of the Degree of Program Implementation
- Measures of Student Performance
- Measures of the Quality of Teacher Preparation and Development
- Measures of Teacher Satisfaction and Concern
- Measures of the Use, Quantity and Quality of Materials and Resources
- Measures of Unintended Effects
- Measures of Student, Parent and Community Satisfaction

- Measures of Adequacy of Staffing, Facilities and Equipment

Recommendation 5:

Develop a formal program evaluation process.

The Planning, Evaluation and Assessment coordinator works with central office staff, principals and teachers to develop a rotational schedule of programs to be evaluated, a standard report format and a timeframe for evaluation completion.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The coordinator of Planning, Evaluation and Assessment meets with central office Curriculum and Instruction staff, principals, and teachers to discuss the order of priority in which programs should be evaluated.	July 2001
2.	The coordinator of Planning, Evaluation and Assessment develops a rotational cycle, standard report format and schedule for completing the evaluations during the first year and reviews these materials with the executive director of Curriculum and Instruction, central office Curriculum and Instruction staff, principals and teachers.	August 2001
3.	The coordinator of Planning, Evaluation and Assessment modifies the plan to reflect the input of the participants and presents the plan to the executive director of Curriculum and Instruction for approval.	September 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Counselors spend time on activities that are not directly related to counseling. Some counselors are assigned bus, lunch, recordkeeping or registrar duties. In the high schools, counselors perform administrative duties such as constructing the school's master schedule. In the fall of 2000, EPISD began updating the district guidance plan and is moving toward implementing the state-recommended job descriptions for counselors.

The job description of the counselors lists the following responsibilities:

- Plans, implements and evaluates a developmental program of guidance, including counseling services.
- Teaches the school developmental guidance curriculum.
- Assists teachers in the teaching of guidance-related curriculum.
- Guides individuals and groups of students through the development of educational plans and career awareness.
- Counsels individual students.
- Counsels small groups of students.
- Uses accepted theories and techniques appropriate to school counseling.
- Uses an effective referral process for assisting students and others to use special programs and services.
- Participates in the planning and evaluation of the school's group standardized testing program.
- Interprets test and other appraisal results.
- Develops and maintains a plan for professional improvement.

Recommendation 6:

Eliminate administrative responsibilities of the counselors to allow them more time to devote to counseling.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	Principals review the counselor's job description.	August 2001
2.	Counselors submit administrative and/or non-job related duties performed during the past year for review by principals.	August 2001
3.	Principals review lists supplied by counselors and reassign duties to the administration support staff, grade-level teaching teams or special area personnel.	August 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact associated with this recommendation.

Chapter 2

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

C. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The Texas Education Code prescribes certain criteria for staff development in a Texas school district (Chapter 21, Subchapter J, Staff Development, Section 21.451). The key requirements are that staff development:

- Must include training in technology, conflict resolution strategies and discipline strategies;
- May include instruction as to what is permissible under law;
- Must be predominantly campus-based, related to achieving performance objectives; and
- Must be developed and approved by the campus site-based decision-making committee.

Campus staff development includes activities that enable the campus staff to plan together to improve their skills, to share effective strategies, to reflect on curricular and instructional issues, to analyze student achievement results, to reflect on ways to improve student achievement, to study research, to practice new methods, to identify students' strengths and needs, to develop meaningful programs for students, to appropriately implement site-based decision-making and to conduct research.

According to the job descriptions, EPISD elementary and secondary curriculum directors are responsible for planning and coordinating elementary and secondary staff development. Staff development activities must incorporate the mission of the district, program evaluation and input from teachers and others. EPISD solicits input from the teachers at each campus through a written survey.

At the secondary level, each department prioritizes the top six requests and recommends presenters to the Curriculum director. At the elementary level, staff development topics are prioritized by each grade level and submitted to the Curriculum director. The directors of Special Education and Special Populations receive input from special program staff and plan sessions for these programs.

The staff development survey for 2000-01 was completed in March 2000. Staff development topics identified by all schools included: classroom management, TAAS instruction, math and special education. Staff development topics requested by most of the schools' staff were:

computer/technology training, reading and writing. In addition, stress management, bilingual education, instructional strategies, dyslexia, parental involvement, gifted and talented, fine arts and new teacher development were listed as topics for staff development by at least two schools.

Some of the EPISD district level staff development scheduled for 2000-01 is described in

Exhibit 2-39. Staff development is scheduled on a year-long calendar and updated monthly by the Staff Development office.

**Exhibit 2-39
EPISD Staff Development
2000-01**

Date	Subject	Participants
August 2000	Review new textbook adoptions, Reading and Science	Elementary teachers
	Language Development/Alternative Assessment	All special education teachers
	Bilingual early literacy Strategies	Pre-K and EC teachers
	TAAS Reading Strategies	Elementary teachers
	Problem Solving using TEKS	G/T teachers
	504/Crisis Management	Counselors
	PEIMS/Discipline/Referrals	Campus administrators
	PE/Health TEKS	PE/Health teachers
	CPR/First Aid	PEP caregivers
	Content Specific- Algebra, Biology, Writing	Secondary teachers
	History Alive	Secondary teachers
	Vertical Alignment Teaming	All teachers
September 2000	Steps to Success for Beginning Bilingual Education	K-6th new bilingual teachers
	Sheltered English Strategies for Secondary	Grade 7 and 8 Math teachers
	Guided Reading Overview	2nd Grade Teachers
	Neuhaus Training	K Instructional Aides

	DRA/EDL Training	1st-2nd Grade teachers
	Nature Needs Identification Assessment	Secondary G/T teachers
	Autism	Special/Regular Education teachers/parents
	Keeping communication lines open between home and school	All professional staff
	Technology	Hosts teachers and aides
	Multi-Sensory Writing	Dyslexia teachers
	National Reading Styles Institute	Primary teachers at RVLA, RV and Benavides Elementary Schools
	Social Studies TAAS Item Analysis	7th and 8th grade social studies teachers
	Literacy Across the Curriculum	Secondary Language Arts, Social Studies and Science teachers
	Preparing students for Algebra	6th-8th grade teachers
	Biology lab training	Biology teachers
	English II End of Course Writing	7th through 10th grade English teachers
	TAAS Math item analysis	Campus administrators
October 2000	Keeping Adolescents in School	All professional staff
	Reading Strategies for LEP students	4th grade teachers
	ESL/Bilingual ExCET Review	Bilingual/ESL teachers
	Career Investigation Vertical Alignment	Business Education/Junior High teachers
	Texas Primary Reading Inventory and Tejas Lee	Instructional officers
	Integration Math and Science	Gonzalez K-5th teachers
	Modifications for Students at Secondary	Secondary Teachers
	Secondary Credit Accrual Workshop	Secondary Counselors

	Writing across the Curriculum	7th-12th Social Studies/Science
November 2000	Emergent Literacy	PK-2nd teachers
	Guided Reading	K teachers
	Neuhaus Reading	Elementary teachers
	Scottish Rite Training	Dyslexia and Host teachers
	Reading across the Curriculum	3rd Grade and Special Education teachers
	Math AIMS	Elementary teachers
	Bilingual Transition Strategies	Second grade teachers
	Multisensory Reading	Dyslexia teachers
	TAAS Reading, TAAS Math	3rd and 5th grade teachers
	Integrating Technology	Fourth grade teachers
	Research Writing without Copying	Sixth grade teachers
	Conflict Resolution	Counselors
	IEP/CLASS	Elementary Special Education
	Integrating the Curriculum into PE activities	PE and Health teachers
	Vocabulary Strategies for PSAT/SAT	Language Arts teachers
	Brainshifts	Secondary teachers
	Anger Management	Elementary counselors
January 2001	Campus Improvement Planning	Campus staffs
	Assessment Training	PreAP-AP teachers
	Integrating Technology	Secondary teachers
	Helping Adolescents Make Wise Choices	All professional staff
	Behavior Management	All staff
	Responsibility Education	Leadership Teams
March 2001	Gifted and Talented Institute	G/T teachers

May 2001	National Reading Styles Institute	All EPISD staff
June 2001	New Jersey Writing Project	All teachers

Source: EPISD 2000-01 Staff Development Catalogue.

FINDING

EPISD has no local policy guiding staff development for all personnel. The local policy, DMA (local) addresses release time for staff development. On November 14, 2000, the EPISD board of trustees adopted guidelines for obtaining continuing professional education (CPE) credit to comply with State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) requirements.

According to TEA, an effective policy on staff development should include:

- How training needs will be identified;
- Specific training requirements;
- How campus-level staff development operates;
- A focus on staff development for student achievement;
- Criteria for staff reimbursement for attending training on their own time;
- Requirements for special programs training, such as gifted and talented, Title I, students with disabilities, athletics; and
- Administrator training policy.

Some staff development training occurs during school hours. Teachers attending this training are pulled from their classes and substitutes hired. The 2000-01 staff development brochure lists 14 full-day sessions and eight half-day sessions for secondary teachers, 15 full-day sessions for elementary teachers and six full-day sessions for both secondary and elementary teachers during regular school hours. All sessions are scheduled at locations within the district. EPISD paid \$30,875 in 1998-99 and \$37,900 in 1999-00 to hire substitutes for teachers attending staff development. The amount budgeted for 2000-01 for substitutes to fill in for teachers participating in staff development totals \$80,792. The practice of offering staff development on a regular basis during the school day is costly in dollars and removes the teacher from the classroom.

Port Arthur ISD has excellent, well-defined staff development philosophies and procedures, which include how needs will be determined, met and monitored. Written descriptions define sections on compensatory time for training, special programs training development,

administrator training development and requirements and professional and college credit.

After staff development has occurred, a process should be in place to monitor how the training is implemented, especially for training involving teachers. Monitoring can occur in several ways, such as during classroom observations related to annual evaluations or department/team leaders discussing the recent training in meetings to identify what has been successfully used and what has not and why not. The Division of Accountability Evaluations at the Texas Education Agency conducted an on-site review of EPISD in January 2000. A recommendation included in their report relates to staff development evaluation: "The peer review team recommends that evaluation of the delivery of staff development be conducted so that the effectiveness of the training can be evaluated."

Recommendation 7:

Develop a comprehensive staff development policy including procedures that address key issues and support EPISD goals.

Policy development should include written procedures to help the district monitor the selection, delivery, feedback and success aspects of staff development training as it relates to both district and individual needs. Inclusion of a feedback mechanism monitored by the director of Staff Development could facilitate future program modifications.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The coordinator of Staff Development meets with central office Curriculum and Instruction staff, principals and teachers to discuss what should be included in districtwide staff development policy and procedures.	November 2001
2.	The coordinator of Staff Development uses the input to prepare a draft of the policy and procedures, which is shared with meeting participants for review and comment.	December 2001
3.	The coordinator of Staff Development incorporates the comments and presents the policy and procedures to the assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction for modification and approval.	January 2002
4.	The executive director of Curriculum and Instruction approves the plan and presents it to the superintendent for modification and approval.	January 2002
5.	The superintendent presents the policy and procedures to the board of trustees for modification and approval.	February 2002

6.	The board approves the policy and procedures and authorizes the superintendent to implement the plan.	February 2002
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FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented at no cost.

Chapter 2

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

D. COMPENSATORY EDUCATION

Accelerated or compensatory education, as defined in Section 42.152(c) of the Texas Education Code, is a program designed to improve the regular education program for students in at-risk situations.

The criteria used to identify students in at-risk situations are defined in Section 29.081 of the Texas Education Code. "Each student in grades 7-12 who is under 21 years of the age and who: 1) was not advanced from one grade level to the next for two or more school years; 2) has mathematics or reading skills that are two or more years below grade level; 3) did not maintain an average equivalent to 70 on a scale of 100 in two or more courses during a semester, or is not maintaining such an average in two or more courses in the current semester, and is not expected to graduate within four years of the date the student begins ninth grade; 4) did not perform satisfactorily on an assessment instrument administered under Subchapter B, Chapter 39 of the Texas Education Code; or 5) is pregnant or a parent. Additionally, each student in pre-kindergarten through grade 6 who: 1) did not perform satisfactorily on a readiness test or assessment instrument administered at the beginning of the school year; 2) did not perform satisfactorily on assessment instrument administered under TEC Subchapter B, Chapter 39, 3) is a student of limited English proficiency, as defined by TEC Section 29.052; 4) is sexually, physically, or psychologically abused; or 5) engages in conduct described by Section 51.03(a), Family Code."

Students in any grade are also identified as students in at-risk situations if they are not disabled and reside in a residential placement facility in a district in which the student's parent or legal guardian does not reside, including a detention facility, substance abuse treatment facility, emergency shelter, psychiatric hospital, halfway house or foster family group home.

In determining the appropriate accelerated or compensatory program for students, districts must use student performance data from the state assessment instruments and any other achievement tests administered by the district. Based on this needs assessment, district and campus staff should design the appropriate strategies and include them in the campus and/or district improvement plan. By law, the improvement plan must include the comprehensive needs assessment, measurable performance objectives, identified strategies for student improvement, identified

resources and staff, specified timelines for monitoring each strategy and formative evaluation criteria. Each district is responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of the locally-designed program. The purpose of compensatory education is to improve the achievement and reduce the dropout rate of identified students in at-risk situations.

Funding allocated under state compensatory education is based on the number of educationally disadvantaged students in the district. The number of educationally disadvantaged students is determined by averaging the school's highest six months' enrollment in the national school lunch program for the preceding school year.

Of the 12,547 students enrolled in EPISD, 7,891-or 63 percent-are classified as being in at-risk situations. All students are eligible for receiving free- and reduced meals. Of the \$5,045,739 in state compensatory funds budgeted by EPISD for 1999-2000, \$4,752,445 or 94 percent, was budgeted to use directly at a campus (**Exhibit 2-40**). These funds supplement other funding based upon the needs of the campus. The Pregnancy, Education and Parenting Center (PEP), the dropout recovery alternative school and the discipline alternative school received the highest per student allocation.

Exhibit 2-40
EPISD Campuses, At-Risk Students and Compensatory Funding
1999-2000

Campus	Number of Students At Risk	Allocation	Per Pupil
Austin	170	\$111,060	\$653
Gallego	291	\$198,412	\$682
Kirchner	46	\$31,700	\$689
San Luis	342	\$184,036	\$538
Seco Mines	213	\$147,939	\$695
Benavides	292	\$122,688	\$420
Darr	259	\$108,474	\$419
Glass	310	\$126,809	\$409
Gonzalez	416	\$166,720	\$401
Graves	262	\$112,650	\$430
Houston	232	\$103,727	\$447

Lee	353	\$172,142	\$488
Rosita Valley	172	\$98,690	\$574
ECC	518	\$281,585	\$544
LDC	466	\$303,423	\$651
RVLA	350	\$227,051	\$648
Memorial	660	\$289,247	\$438
Eagle Pass Junior High	433	\$170,067	\$392
Eagle Pass High	849	\$244,415	\$288
C. C. Winn	709	\$180,218	\$254
Alternative	303	\$746,993	\$2,465
De Luna	99	\$174,826	\$1,766
PEP Program*	146	\$329,162	\$2,255
Total	7,891	\$4,632,034	\$587

Source: EPISD.

*Note: The students in the Parenting Education and Pregnancy program are enrolled on various campuses.

FINDING

EPISD seeks many federal government grants to supplement EPISD programs to increase student achievement. Over a three-year period, from 1998-99 to 2000-01, the amount of federal grant money increased from \$6,835,237 to \$8,254,349. In addition to applying for federal grants, EPISD also applies for additional state grant funds.

The director of Special Populations is responsible for grant writing. She reviews all notifications from the Texas Education Agency relating to grant funds and determines if EPISD will qualify. She solicits help from individual campus administrators and teachers when developing the programs for these applications. In addition to writing the grants, she prepares the corresponding yearly evaluation documents.

Schedule 5B of the federal Title I application requires districts to rank their schools based on the percent of students in the free- and reduced-lunch program. The director of Special Populations uses this information, as well as the total campus enrollment, to cluster and equitably fund the

schools. By using these two factors and looking at services or programs offered, EPISD ensures equity in funding and programs at all campuses. The state relies on this same basic process to monitor districts' use of state compensatory funds. SCE flows on basis of low income, but is used based on a students status as at-risk - see TEC 29.081.

TEA and the federal government provide specific guidelines for using schedule 5B in determining which services will be provided and the amount of funds to be used at each school. EPISD submits an annual program evaluation for all funds, and TEA reviews data submitted through PEIMS to ensure equity and that compensatory funds are used to supplement and not supplant regular education funds. TEA conducts a comprehensive audit every three years of each district receiving compensatory funding.

Federal funding is based upon the poverty level in the geographical area in which the school district is located. Title I, Part A funding is for helping disadvantaged children at risk of failure to meet high standards; Part C, is for education of migratory students; Title II, Part B funds are for Dwight D. Eisenhower professional development program; Title IV money is designed for safe and drug-free schools; and Title VI is to be spent on innovative education program strategies. Funds the district received from 1998-99 to 1999-2000 in each of these programs are identified in **Exhibit 2-41**.

Exhibit 2-41
EPISD Federal and State Program Funds
1998-99 through 1999-2000

Title	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-2001 Budgeted
I, Part A, ESEA, as amended	\$5,068,028	\$5,220,730	\$4,801,677
I, School Improvement Program	-0-	-0-	\$955,874
I, Part B, Even Start	\$29,885	\$35885	\$35,885
I, Part C, Migrant Education	\$1,252,812	\$1,224,928	\$1,060,568
II, Dwight D. Eisenhower, Staff Dev.	\$108,909	\$116,690	\$105,802
IV, Safe and Drug Free Schools	\$84,723	111,979	\$60,499
VI, Innovative Education	\$90,202	\$120,642	\$96,111
VI, Class Size Reduction	-0-	\$598,449	\$694,360
VII, Emergency Immigrant Education	\$98,577	\$100,524	\$103,351

IX, Indian Education	\$16,644	\$14,736	\$19,921
Johnson O'Malley Indian Education	\$8,640	\$8,370	\$7,700
Reading is Fundamental (Migrant)	\$16,029	\$16,029	\$16,029
Reading is Fundamental	-0-	25,572	\$25,572
Investment Capital Fund, EPHS	-0-	-0-	\$50,000
Investment Capital Fund, CC Winn	-0-	-0-	\$50,000
Impact Aid	\$60,788	\$96,413	\$96,000
Even Start Family Literacy Project (TEA/AVANCE) - In Kind Contribution	-0-	-0-	\$75,000
Total	\$6,835,237	\$7,690,947	\$8,254,349

Source: EPISD director of Special Populations.

Exhibit 2-42 lists additional Texas grants obtained to improve students' reading and to help reduce the number of potential dropouts in EPISD.

Exhibit 2-42
EPISD Texas Grant Program Funds
1998-99 through 1999-2000

Grant Program/Location	Program Description	1999-2000	2000-2001
Academics 2000: First Things First Reading Improvement Lee, Darr, San Luis and Benavides elementary schools	The program focuses on intensive, sustained professional development and the integration of appropriate research-based strategies and methodologies that will provide students with intensive reading instruction in Pre-K - fourth grade.	\$101,388	
READ for Texas	The goal of the Reading Excellence & Academic Development (READ for Texas) grant is providing support in early childhood and the early grade levels in school to produce proficient readers.		\$500,000
PK-12 Learn & Serve	Service-learning involves	\$4,000	

America	students in service experiences.		
9 th Grade Success Initiative	Program that addresses (for eligible students) both the ability to attain and demonstrate basic skills as reflected in TAAS data as well as to pass courses required for state and local graduation.		\$225,000
Accelerated Reading Instruction	Accelerated Reading Instruction Program is to provide support for the training of teachers and the implementation of scientific, research-based programs to support students in their reading development in the early grades. Summer Reading program for kindergarten students.	\$152,090	\$288,100
Optional Extended Year	This program provides students additional instructional time to master the state's content standards and student performance standards.	\$376,723	\$376,723
Texas Reading Academies	For students in grades 6-10 Funds are used for implementation of research-based reading programs, additional reading materials and staff development.		\$214,700 Submitted, waiting for approval
Total		\$634,201	\$1,604,523

Source: EPISD director of Special Populations.

COMMENDATION

EPISD aggressively seeks federal and state grants to support needed district programs.

FINDING

EPISD has developed many innovative programs to assist students both academically and emotionally (**Exhibit 2-43**). Computer labs were installed at all schools, and reading and mathematics programs were implemented to improve student achievement in those areas. Teachers

were trained in the New Jersey Writing Project. In addition to programs at the traditional schools, EPISD opened an alternative school offering two four-hour sessions each day for students whose circumstances inhibited them from attending school all day. EPISD also operates a Parenting, Education and Pregnancy program that includes a day care center for children of students who are teen parents.

Title I, Part A programs are designated as either schoolwide, which means the funds can be used throughout the school to upgrade the entire educational program as long as the uses help meet the needs of the targeted students, or targeted assistance, which means that the funds are used for only a designated purpose, such as a computer lab that only serves the targeted students.

To qualify as a schoolwide assistance campus, 50 percent of the student population must be identified as economically disadvantaged. All EPISD schools are schoolwide assistance campuses.

Eisenhower program funds in EPISD are used for staff development in all core subject areas with emphasis in math and science.

Title IV funds for safe and drug-free schools are used to support programs that prevent violence in and around schools; prevent the illegal use of alcohol, tobacco, and drugs; involve parents; and coordinate with related federal, state and community efforts and resources to promote safe and drug-free schools and communities.

**Exhibit 2-43
EPISD Compensatory Education Programs
1999-2000**

Program	Description	Campus Location
HOSTS	HOSTS Structured Mentoring is a research-based and nationally validated program for accelerating learning using one-to-one or small group instruction in reading, writing, math and Spanish Language Arts.	Austin, Benavides, Darr, Graves, Lee, San Luis, Seco Mines, and Rosita Valley
National Reading Styles	A research-based school reform program designed to improve student reading fluency and comprehension, decrease discipline problems and strengthen	Graves, Rosita Valley, Rosita Valley Literacy Academy

	teaching and management skills of teachers.	
Computer Curriculum Corporation (CCC)	A research-based instructional software program aligned to national and state standards that adapts to each student's learning style, evaluates responses and moves students through the curriculum at an appropriate learning pace.	All Campuses
Creative Education Institute (CEI)	CEI offers an interactive, computer-based therapeutic approach to help students with learning difficulties build language skills.	Darr, Lee, Eagle Pass High School
Laptop Distance Learning	Migrant and homebound students from the Pregnancy, Education and Parenting program (PEP) checkout laptop computers to continue coursework from their home or from the area of the country to which their families have migrated to do seasonal farm work. Students dial into the NovaNet distance learning system to complete assignments in the courses they were taking while attending class in EPISD. EPISD assigns designated teachers the responsibility for giving all assignments and monitoring the students' on-line records. The students complete assigned work on a given time line.	Eagle Pass High School, EPHS C.C. Winn Campus
Project ESTRELLA	The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Migrant Education funds Project ESTRELLA (Encouraging Students Through Technology to Reach High Expectations in Learning, Life skills, and Achievement). Secondary students from six Texas school districts in the Rio Grande Valley and Winter	Eagle Pass High School, EPHS C.C. Winn Campus

	<p>Garden areas who migrate with their families to Illinois, Minnesota, Montana and New York benefit from the opportunity to continue their course work. Students leave EPISD equipped with laptop computers loaded with all the software needed to complete their courses, begin new learning projects and stay connected. Instructional support in both the sending and receiving states makes the project work. Teachers serve as subject matter experts, technology troubleshooters and providers of positive reinforcement for motivation. The program includes students from the University of Incarnate Word in San Antonio who serve as Cybermentors to encourage and motivate the migrant students to complete their work. The students e-mail the Cybermentors.</p>	
Credit by Examination	<p>EPISD Policy EEJA Local (Credit by Examination) allows students to gain credit by making a grade of 70 on an exam approved by the district. The University of Texas Distance Education Center, The Migrant Studies division provides tests covering the appropriate essential knowledge and skills. Credit by examination is available for all of the migrant program courses for a fee of \$30 per exam. Tests are available in mathematics, social studies, English, health, computer training, Spanish and French.</p>	Eagle Pass High School, EPHS C. C. Winn Campus
Portable Assisted Study Sequence (PASS) Program	<p>This is a program in which migrant farm worker students can earn course credit through semi-independent study. PASS provides</p>	Eagle Pass High School, EPHS C. C. Winn Campus

	<p>the student portable, self-contained semester learning packets developed specifically for mobile migrant students. Designed to parallel regular academic courses, PASS courses are competency-based, allowing a student to progress through a series of activity books and accompanying tests at their own pace.</p>	
<p>Graduation Enhancement Program</p>	<p>The federal Title I, Part C Graduation Enhancement Program is designed to meet the needs of migrant students who enroll late and/or withdraw early in the school year. Its goals are to increase attendance, decrease the dropout rate and improve the rate of graduation. The program has certified teachers in their assigned field of experience in a small group instructional setting with the students. The program affords migrant students in grades 7-12 the opportunity to make up credits missed by arriving late or by leaving early in the school year.</p>	<p>Eagle Pass High School, EPHS C. C. Winn Campus, Memorial Junior High and Eagle Pass Junior High</p>
<p>SAT/ACT/TASP</p>	<p>Migrant graduating seniors are provided the opportunity to register and take either the SAT, ACT or TASP examination at no expense.</p>	<p>Eagle Pass High School, EPHS C. C. Winn Campus</p>
<p>Building Bridges</p>	<p>This is a home-based program for migrant three year olds, that was developed as an alternative to an early childhood education program. The program provides appropriate developmental activities in language, cognition, psychomotor, social and affective skills.</p>	<p>Austin School</p>
<p>Texas Youth Leadership Training</p>	<p>This is a four-day summer camp in which students from junior high and high school are taught ways to</p>	<p>Eagle Pass High School, EPHS C. C. Winn Campus.</p>

	develop leadership potential and address issues relating to substance abuse and youth violence.	Memorial Junior High, Eagle Pass Junior High
Drug and Violence Education program (DAVE)	DAVE is the Texas Education Agency's adopted curriculum for the Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Program. It is implemented at all campuses. Teachers are provided staff development and curriculum materials.	All campuses
Parent-to-Parent Training	This training is available on all campuses in grades Pre-K to 12. Each campus provides training sessions for parents. The sessions are presented by a Parent Trainer funded with Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Program funds.	All campuses
Volunteers In Drug Awareness (VIDA) Clubs	VIDA Clubs are composed of students who do volunteer work for the campus to make peers more aware of the consequences of drug and alcohol abuse and violence. The Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Program provides VIDA Club Sponsors for each campus to facilitate and ensure implementation of the program.	Elementary and Secondary campuses
Safe & Drug Free Schools & Communities Summer Program	Safe and Drug Free funds are used to provide outreach services to parents and to enrich summer programs funded from other sources. Two outreach workers are funded with Safe and Drug Free funds to assist in program implementation. It is coordinated with other programs.	Summer Program locations
Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) Program	DARE is an educational program in the classroom developed to prevent or reduce drug abuse and violence among children and	Bena vides, Kirchner, Austin, Gallego

	<p>youth. It is provided at four campuses and is coordinated with the Eagle Pass Police Department.</p>	
<p>Responsibility Education Program</p>	<p>The goal of this program is to teach students how to take responsible control of their own lives at school in ways that increase their success. It is designed to teach students the knowledge and skills needed to make a good life for themselves. Campus-based "Responsibility Education Teams" handle campus training and implementation. Follow-up training sessions and campus visitations are scheduled throughout the year.</p>	<p>Elementary and Junior High Schools</p>
<p>New Jersey Writing Project</p>	<p>Teachers instructing grades PK-12 are given the opportunity to receive specialized training in how to teach writing by attending a New Jersey Writing Project Institute. The 15-day Institute is offered during the summer and is located at one of the campuses. Follow-up training is provided once during the regular school year. Title I, Part A funds are coordinated with the program to provide extended training, such as New Jersey Grammar, New Jersey Reading, and additional New Jersey Writing Institutes.</p>	<p>Open to all teachers at all campuses.</p>
<p>Optional Extended Year</p>	<p>The purpose of this program is to provide students additional learning opportunities to master the essential knowledge and skills. The program is designed to reduce retention in grade. The program targets at-risk students who are not likely to be promoted to the next grade level and offers them a program designed to improve their skills sufficiently to function in the</p>	<p>All Campuses K-8th grade</p>

	next grade level.	
Emergency Immigrant Education Summer Program	The purpose of the Emergency Immigrant Education Summer Program is to provide students identified as recent immigrants additional instruction in English as a Second Language so they can master the state's challenging content standards and student performance standards.	EIEP students at all campuses grades 1-12
Emergency Immigrant Education Family Literacy Program (mobile classroom)	The Partners in Education Mobile Classroom Program offers parent education classes in GED, ESL, citizenship and parenting skills. The mobile classroom also provides parents hands-on experience in computer assisted instruction. The mobile classroom offers instruction to all parents whose children are immigrants and are enrolled in the EPISD.	Rosita Valley, Darr, Seco Mines
Accelerate to Master (ATM)TAAS	ATM is designed to assist students who did not master all aspects of the TAAS. Teachers help students with the essential elements they failed to master.	Eagle Pass High School and EPHS C. C. Winn Campus, Memorial Junior High, Eagle Pass Junior High
Summer Fun At The Mall	The purpose of this Summer Fun program is to provide students in grades 1-6 additional instruction to improve their skills so they can master the state's content standards and student performance standards. The main focus is reading. Other instructional areas of focus are math, science, writing and oral language development.	(1998-99) changed to Summer Fun at the Library due to lack of space at the mall.
Summer Fun At The Library	The Summer Fun at the Library Program focused primarily on the Franklin fairy tales theme stories. Instructional activities included story reading (orally), hands on	Austin, Benavides, San Luis, Sam Houston, Graves, Gonzalez, Rosita

	activities, book projects, videos, learning centers, educational games, independent reading, creative thinking activities and computer assisted instruction.	Valley, Lee, Darr
Kickapoo Academic Motivation Program	The Kickapoo program is designed to provide Kickapoo students in grades K-12 additional instruction necessary to master the state's content standards and student performance standards in reading, writing and math.	Kickapoo Village
Service Advocate Recruiters (SAR)	SARs provide assistance to parents to help their child become successful in school. SARs identify/recruit/certify children eligible to participate in the Migrant Education Program. They also assist in recruiting parents for all parent meetings and activities, assist in implementing a strong school-to-home program for parents of all students, conduct home visits for absenteeism, meet clothing needs, discourage students from dropping out of school and organize parental involvement meetings.	All campuses
Practical Parent Education Program	This program teaches parents to assist their children at home with schoolwork and provides information to improve parenting skills. Parent trainers and Service Advocate Recruiters implement the program. The program provides babysitters for the children while parents attend sessions.	Kickapoo Village
Reading Renaissance and Accelerated Reader	The Reading Renaissance Program is a successful, schoolwide reading program that combines technology, motivation and individualized instruction to support extensive in-school	All campuses

	reading practices.	
Texas/Illinois/Montana Even Start (TIME)	TIME is designed to help parents who migrate to Illinois and Montana to be the first teachers of their children through effective parenting skills, help fulfill the educational needs of migrant families and provide early childhood education for children 0-7 years old to increase their school readiness.	Austin School
Title II, Part C Even Start Family Literacy	The Even Start Family Literacy Program is designed to provide family centered education projects, assist children in reaching their full potential, provide literacy training for parents, integrate early childhood and adult education, assist families with parenting strategies and coordinate efforts that build on existing community resources.	Austin School
AVANCE Family Support and Education Program	AVANCE is a private non-profit organization whose main purpose is to strengthen and support families. AVANCE provides services for the Even Start Family Literacy Programs, Building Bridges, the Investment Capital Fund and READ for Texas.	
Native American Acceleration Teacher and Tutor	This program provides accelerated reading instruction to Native American students using the HOSTS program at Rosita Valley and Rosita Valley Literacy Academy. Tutors assist students at the secondary schools with academics.	Rosita Valley, Rosita Valley Literacy Academy, Memorial Junior High, Eagle Pass High School, EPHS C. C. Winn Campus, Frank Chisum Regional Technical Center
Summer School Now	The Summer School Now Program is designed to assist students who	Eagle Pass High School. EPHS C.

	<p>receive a failing grade for a course at the end of regular six-weeks periods. The program re-teaches the essential elements of the previous six weeks. It requires students to attend Saturday classes from 8:00 a.m.- 1:00 p.m. for five consecutive Saturdays. The failing grade is replaced with a passing grade of "70" if the student attends all scheduled Saturday classes and has no discipline referrals. The program offers a variety of core and elective courses for students in grades 9-12.</p>	C. Winn Campus
9th Grade Success Initiative	<p>Ninth grade students who are at risk of not earning sufficient credit to pass to the 10th grade, who fail to meet minimum skills levels, fail one or more parts of TAAS, fail one or more classes in a reporting period, obtain a grade of 75 in any class in a reporting period, or have excessive absences and repeaters/retainees are provided an Intervention Tutorial program after school for one hour a day, four days a week. Reclassified ninth grade students who failed first semester courses attend extended day classes in spring, and/or Saturday classes to obtain credits. Students failing 9th grade courses at the end of the school year attend a summer program. Only 9th grade students can attend the program, and only 9th grade state-approved courses can be offered.</p>	Eagle Pass High School
Parent Access Lab (PAL)	<p>Parents of students enrolled in the Eagle Pass ISD are given an opportunity to receive supplemental computer-assisted instruction in the GED and English as a Second Language.</p>	

Tutorial Enhancement Program	The TAAS Tutorial Program is designed to assist students who did not master all aspects of the TAAS. Teachers teach the essential elements the students failed to master.	Memorial Junior High, Eagle Pass Junior High, San Luis, Seco Mines, Lee, Rosita Valley, Darr, Sam Houston, Gallego, Gonzalez, RVLA, LDC
Dyslexia Program	The purpose of the dyslexia program is to provide students identified as having primary difficulties in reading, writing and spelling an appropriate instructional program designed to meet their individual educational needs.	All campuses.
Take-Home Technology	EPISD ranks all sixth grade students according to their Texas Learning Index score on TAAS. Students scoring the lowest participate in a Take-Home Technology Program. EPISD issues these students laptop computers containing Heart Beeps for TAAS software and other educational software to assist students with reading and math. The computers are issued for six-week periods.	All elementary campuses
Outreach Libraries	Parents are issued books and read-along tapes to take home and use to read with their child(ren) at home.	Lee, ECC, Benavides
Frank Chisum Regional Technical Center Alternative Education Program	The alternative education program specializes in educational programs for students returning to school after dropping out.	FCRTC
De Luna Center-Discipline Alternative Center	Alternative education program for students with disciplinary risk factors	De Luna Center
Pregnancy Education	PEP provides support services to	EPISD Day Care

and Parenting Program (PEP)	students who are parents. The program seeks to reduce the number of students who drop out of school due to pregnancy or parenthood and to encourage young parents who are 21 years old or younger to return to school. Job training, parenting skills, child care services, transportation, community resources and case management are provided	Center
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Source: EPISD director of Special Populations.

EPISD established a Pregnancy, Education and Parenting Program (PEP) in 1990. The mission of PEP is to enable PEP parents, through education, to become self-sufficient, responsible, job oriented citizens.

Approximately 55 percent of the students enrolled in PEP attend the alternative high school, 40 percent attend the traditional high school and 5 percent are enrolled in junior high. Students receive instruction related to child development, parenting, nutrition and home and family living at the PEP Day Care Center. EPISD operates the day care for children of the students. Many of the students enrolled in the program are recovered dropouts (**Exhibit 2-44**).

**Exhibit 2-44
Pregnancy, Education and Parenting (PEP) Program Statistics
1997-98 - 2000-01**

Year	Number Male Students	Number Female Students	Recovered Dropouts	Graduates	GED	Number of Participant Children Served
1997-98	14	115	86	23	1	84
1998-99	14	100	70	25	1	79
1999-2000	17	110	58	34	3	89
2000-01	15	60	32	2	1	44

Source: EPISD director of PEP Program and Grant P035 yearly report 1997-2001.

The director of PEP coordinates with many agencies in the community and with other EPISD programs to assist teen parents. The Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program comes to the EPISD Day Care Center the second Tuesday of each month. United Medical Centers operates a clinic at the day care center daily from 3 p.m. to 4 p.m. Providing these services at the day care center reduces the number of student absences.

EPISD opened an alternative school for students in grades nine through 12 who have extenuating circumstances or special needs, or in instances where the traditional high school is not conducive to the students' graduation. A portion of a manufacturing company in the downtown area of Eagle Pass was renovated to house the program. In January 1995, the EPISD Alternative School relocated to the Frank Chisum Regional Technical Center located east of downtown. This facility also houses the Southwest Texas Junior College Business and Industry Office. To reflect the name of the facility where the program is now operated, the name of the alternative school changed from EPISD Alternative School to Frank Chisum Regional Technical Center (FCRTC) in May 2000.

Enrollment in FCRTC is voluntary. Students complete an application, and the student and parent participate in an interview with the director and the counselor at FCRTC. The special needs of the student applying, the student's records and the student's goals are considered. Students who are functioning below grade level in reading and mathematics, are older, have many absences, are dropouts or who have personal situations that affect their attending school for a full day on the home campus are given priority. Upon selection, the student signs a contract indicating a commitment to work toward a high school diploma and abide by the school guidelines.

FCRTC operates two four-hour sessions each day. Ninth and tenth grade students must attend both sessions, while other students may attend either the morning session or the afternoon session.

Students may apply to FCRTC at anytime. To enroll, a student must be released by the home school principal and accepted by the FCRTC principal. Average daily enrollment at FCRTC is between 130 and 150 students. Approximately 260 students enroll throughout a given year. Students graduate throughout the year whenever they meet all graduation requirements.

Students attending one session register for four courses. Students who attend both sessions register for eight courses. Students work independently in subject modules with teacher assistance. The students determine the amount of time they spend on a particular subject each day. Students are encouraged to attend all four classes each day. All students spend time in the computer lab on a daily basis. Students earn credits when all modules for the course are successfully completed and the student passes the final exam regardless of the length of time the student spent in class. When a student completes a course, the counselor registers the student for another course.

COMMENDATION

EPISD has developed an extensive range of traditional and non-traditional programs to meet the diverse needs of its students.

Chapter 2

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

E. BILINGUAL/ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE PROGRAM

Bilingual/English as a Second Language (ESL) programs are required by federal and state law to provide educational access to students whose first language is not English. Specifically, these programs are designed to help limited-English-proficient (LEP) students learn English.

EPISD's bilingual education program has two primary goals: help students with limited English to become competent in the comprehension, speaking, reading and composition of the English language and to use their native language for primary instructional purposes while English is being learned as a second language.

EPISD enrolls many immigrant children whose native language is Spanish. Children from the Kickapoo Reservation attend EPISD schools. Some Kickapoo children speak Spanish as their native language and others speak Kickapoo. The Kickapoo language is only a spoken language. EPISD enrolls Kickapoo students whose native language is Spanish in the bilingual program and for those whose language is Kickapoo, tutorial assistance is provided. The district employed its first Kickapoo teacher in 2000-01 who is a graduate of EPISD. The district serves 3,536 bilingual/ESL students (**Exhibit 2-45**).

The purpose of the Eagle Pass Independent School District's ESL program is to provide an intensive second language program for older students and students at grades in which bilingual education is not offered. There are 857 students in the ESL program.

Exhibit 2-45
EPISD Bilingual and ESL Students by Grade Level
2000-01

Grade Level	Number of Bilingual Students	Number of ESL Students
Elementary school (grades PK-6)	3,536	0
Middle school (grades 7-8)	0	315
High school (grades 9-12)	0	542

Total	3,536	857
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Source: TEA, PEIMS 2000-01.

EPISD has a higher percent of bilingual/ESL students than any of its peer districts, the region and the state (**Exhibit 2-46**).

Exhibit 2-46
EPISD, Peer District, Region 20 and State Students in Bilingual/ESL
Program
as a Percent of Total Enrollment
2000-01

District	Bilingual/ESL
Eagle Pass	28.2%
Weslaco	23.4%
Mission Consolidated	21.2%
San Benito Consolidated	16.2%
San Felipe-Del Rio Consolidated	14.7%
South San Antonio	10.8%
Harlandale	10.3%
Region 20	8.7%
State	12.5%

Source: TEA, PEIMS 2000-01.

Upon the registration of students new to EPISD, the student is given a Home Language Survey. If the student's home language is any language other than English, the Language Assessment Scales (LAS) is administered. If the student's score indicates a need for bilingual education, parent permission for placement is required. Students whose parents refuse the program and those whose scores indicate a need for ESL education are placed in an all English curriculum with a minimum of 45 minutes ESL instruction. The Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) that is located at each campus and is comprised of at least an administrator, a teacher, and a parent makes the recommendation for program placement.

For grades one and two, the TerraNova English/Supera Spanish test is given yearly. The TerraNova/English/Supera tests are the Spanish

equivalent of the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS). In Grades three - 12 the English/Spanish TAAS is given.

Bilingual/ESL students can only be exempted from TAAS by the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC). The committee reviews the status of each bilingual and ESL student on the campus to determine proficiency. The committee functions similarly to the way the Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) committee does for special education students.

Students in grades one and two scoring above the 40th percentile on the TerraNova English/Supera Spanish and students scoring 70 or above on the English TAAS exit the program. Seven hundred and fifty-four bilingual students in grades one through six exited the program in 1999-2000 as well as 201 ESL students in grades seven through 10.

Expenditures for the bilingual/ESL program have increased by 20.2 percent from 1996-97 to 2000-01, while the student population increased by 9.9 percent during that same period. As noted in **Exhibit 2-4**, the student composition of EPISD is more than 90 percent Hispanic. (**Exhibit 2-47**).

Exhibit 2-47
EPISD Bilingual/ESL Education Expenditures
1996-97 and 2000-01

Category	1996-97 Actual	2000-01 Budget	Percent Change
Bilingual/ESL expenditures	\$709,155	\$852,246	20.2%
Bilingual/ESL students served	3,997	4,393	9.9%
Bilingual/ESL expenditures per student	\$177	\$241	36.2%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1996-97 and PEIMS 2000-01.

Compared to its peer districts, EPISD spends the fourth highest dollar amount on its bilingual/ESL education program and has the fifth highest per student expenditure (**Exhibit 2-48**). EPISD spends less per student than both the state or regional averages on bilingual/ESL education.

Exhibit 2-48
EPISD and Peer District Bilingual/ESL Education Budgeted
Expenditures
2000-01

District	Bilingual/ESL Expenditures	Expenditures per Eligible Student
South San Antonio	\$5,413,268	\$5,017
San Felipe-Del Rio Consolidated	\$4,785,930	\$3,245
Harlandale	\$5,424,623	\$3,636
Eagle Pass	\$852,246	\$241
Mission Consolidated	\$606,541	\$229
San Benito Consolidated	\$191,582	\$133
Weslaco	\$903,741	\$287
Region 20	\$39,863,394	\$1,409
State	\$590,335,700	\$1,156

Source: TEA, PEIMS 2000-01.

The bilingual/ESL program is designed to assist students who have limited English proficiency (LEP) transition gradually from primarily speaking Spanish to speaking proficiently in English. Bilingual programs are designed for grades pre-K-3 or K-3, at which point the district's ESL program is designed to assist students in the transition from learning in their native language to learning in English. This transition is typically completed by grade six.

FINDING

The performance of EPISD students enrolled in the bilingual/ESL program has steadily improved. The director of Bilingual/ESL for EPISD has designed a model of instruction to facilitate and guide the process (**Exhibit 2-49**). The model provides for specific instruction in both Spanish and English at grade levels pre-K through sixth.

Exhibit 2-49 EPISD Bilingual/ESL Model of Instruction 1999-2000

Grade Level	Spanish Instruction	English Instruction
Pre-K	All Language Arts, Reading, Phonics, Computer, Vocabulary Skills, Math when needed	Math, Science, Social Studies are addressed in English using varied ESL Strategies (2 hrs. 15 min. 45 minutes of structured ESL) is given

		in addition to the daily English extensions using primary language areas concepts and themes.
K	Language Arts, Reading, Writing, Spelling and Math when needed.	Math, Science, Social Studies are addressed in English using varied ESL Strategies (2 hrs. 15 min. 45 minutes of structured ESL) is given in addition to the daily English extensions using primary language areas concepts and themes.
1st	Language Arts, Reading, Writing, Spelling and Math when needed.	Math, Science, Social Studies are addressed in English using varied ESL Strategies (2 hrs. 15 min. 45 minutes of structured ESL) is given in addition to the daily English extensions using primary language areas concepts and themes.
2nd	Language Arts, Reading, Writing, Spelling and Math when needed.	Math, Science, Social Studies are addressed in English using varied ESL Strategies (2 hrs. 15 min. 45 minutes of structured ESL) is given in addition to the daily English extensions using primary language areas concepts and themes.
3rd	Recent Immigrants and LAS Level beginners are addressed in Spanish in Reading, Language and Writing. Spanish may be used in all subjects as needed.	The majority of 3 rd grade students have transitioned to all English instruction with ESL strategies.
4th	Recent Immigrants and LAS Level beginners are addressed in Spanish in Reading, Language and Writing. Spanish is used in all subjects as needed.	The majority of 4th grade students have transitioned to all English instruction with ESL strategies.
5th	Recent Immigrants and LAS Level beginners are addressed in Spanish in Reading, Language and Writing. Spanish is used in all subjects as needed. Minimal support in Spanish is used with all other bilingual students.	The majority of 5th grade students have transitioned to all English instruction with ESL strategies.
6th	Recent Immigrants and LAS Level	The majority of 6th grade students

beginners are addressed in Spanish in Reading, Language and writing. Some Spanish is used in all subjects as needed. Minimal support in Spanish is used with all other bilingual students.	have transitioned to all English instruction with ESL strategies.
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Source: EPISD director of Bilingual/ESL Education.

Immigrant students entering EPISD at the secondary level are placed in a beginning ESL class. Of the 4,606 students in the bilingual/ESL education program, only 929 or 20 percent, are in grades above the sixth grade.

In 1994, the State Board of Education adopted a plan to develop Spanish TAAS tests for grades three through six in order to evaluate the academic skills of limited English proficient (LEP) students who receive their academic instruction in Spanish while they learn English. The Spanish-version tests have been phased in since they were field tested in 1995. TAAS performance results include the performance of students taking Spanish TAAS.

TAAS scores for 1998-99 and 1999-2000 for EPISD students in the bilingual/ESL program passing the Spanish TAAS are included in **Exhibit 2-50**. The percent of students passing reading, math and writing increased at grades three through five and decreased at grade six. The largest decrease occurred in sixth grade reading, from 55 percent to 18 percent.

Exhibit 2-50
Amount of Growth in Percent of EPISD Bilingual/ESL Students
Passing Spanish TAAS Tests
1998-99 through 1999-2000

Grade/ Subject	1998-99		1999-2000	
	Number Tested	Percent Passing	Number Tested	Percent Passing
3rd/Reading	53	63%	52	67%
3rd/Math	53	50%	52	71%
4th/Reading	26	33%	27	55%
4th/Math	18	75%	26	85%
4th/Writing	25	63%	24	79%
5th /Reading	25	35%	29	46%

5th/Math	25	85%	28	76%
6th/Reading	29	55%	25	18%
6th/Math	28	74%	24	65%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1999-2000.

The percent of bilingual/ESL students passing the English TAAS increased from 1995-96 to 1999-2000 at all grade levels and subjects (Exhibit 2-51).

Exhibit 2-51
Amount of Growth in Percent of
EPISD Bilingual/ESL Students
Passing English TAAS Tests
1995-96 through 1999-2000

Subject	1995-96 Percent Passing	1999-2000 Percent Passing
3rd/Reading	53%	60%
3rd/Math	54%	59%
4th/Reading	47%	65%
4th/Math	62%	67%
4th/Writing	64%	75%
5th/Reading	44%	51%
5th/Math	45%	81%
6th/Reading	35%	63%
6th/Math	54%	88%
7th/Reading	31%	38%
7th/Math	39%	78%
8th/Reading	22%	59%
8th/Math	41%	78%
8th/Writing	47%	51%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1999-2000 and EPISD director for Bilingual/ESL Education.

Students exempted from taking TAAS either take a TAAS Release or the Terra Nova which is the Spanish equivalent of the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills.

COMMENDATION

EPISD implemented a Bilingual/ESL program that has improved student performance.

Chapter 2

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

F. MIGRANT EDUCATION

As of November 2000, 2,321 migrant students were enrolled in EPISD. Enrollment generally peaks at approximately 3,500 students in February and begins declining again in late March or early April. Records for 1998-99 show that 537 families with 867 children migrated from EPISD to Minnesota and 257 families with 371 children migrated to Wisconsin. EPISD works very closely with the schools in those two states to provide education to the migrating students. There are approximately 122,000 migrant children in Texas.

EPISD's Migrant Education program begins with identification and recruitment of migrant students. This process includes flyers posted in local businesses and at all schools, notices in the local newspapers and information on the local radio stations. Nineteen paraprofessionals, called Service Advocate Recruiters, perform a house-to-house survey and make telephone calls and home visits to help migrant families enroll their children in school.

EPISD begins Migrant Education at age three with an early education program, known as Building Bridges. Children attend school for three hours in the morning or three hours in the afternoon. Currently, eighteen children are enrolled in the program. While the children are in school, the parents attend a Family Literacy program, which offers ESL and GED preparation. Parents may eat breakfast or lunch with their children and then attend class. Babysitting is offered for younger children in the family. Twenty parents are involved in this program.

FINDING

EPISD implements many in-school programs to support migrant students and their families (**Exhibit 2-52**).

EPISD coordinates services for migrant families with several different agencies and programs: Texas Workforce Commission, Southwest Texas Junior College, Texas Migrant Council and the Housing Authority of the City of Eagle Pass. EPISD also provides space for the AVANCE program, a family literacy program. EPISD is a member of Project SMART, a national distance learning program specifically designed for migrant students. Project SMART is designed to accommodate the instructional delivery models in center-based or home-based summer migrant projects,

including live, interactive or non-interactive televised instruction, delayed television instruction or video-taped instruction. Instruction is available from preschool- grade 12.

Exhibit 2-52
EPISD Migrant Education Programs
2000-01

Program Title	Program Description
Reading is Fundamental Grant	Provides free books for students PK-12.
Distance Learning	Laptop checkout program and Project SMART.
Portable Assisted Study Sequence (PASS)	Students complete course work through individualized packets.
Credit-by-Exam	Students may receive credit by successfully completing an exam.
Correspondence Courses	Students enroll in correspondence courses offered by several universities.
Extended day/year	Students may attend school for an additional hour Monday through Thursday from October through May. Teachers are available to assist the students.
College Tours	EPISD arranges tours at several Texas Colleges and Universities.

Source: EPISD Special Populations Procedures for Program Implementation, 2000-01.

Ten EPISD elementary schools received Title I Recognition awards from the Texas Education Agency, Division of Migrant Education for meeting or exceeding state accountability standards on 1999-2000 TAAS, attendance and dropout rates. One hundred Texas school districts and 398 schools were recognized.

The purpose of the award is to recognize school districts and schools that strive to meet the unique needs of migrant children and their families and that help migrant students meet high academic standards. Campus recognition is awarded in four categories: exceptional, excelling, promising and acknowledged. Campus awards are grouped according to the level of success attained by the migrant students enrolled on that campus. Forty-eight schools were distinguished as exceptional, 97 schools as excelling, 139 schools as promising and 114 schools as acknowledged.

Each school received a Certificate of Merit. EPISD schools receiving recognition are listed in **Exhibit 2-53**. These schools also were recognized at the regularly scheduled November meeting of the Board of Trustees.

**Exhibit 2-53
Migrant Education Awards and EPISD Schools
1999-2000**

Award	Schools receiving Award	Standards for Award
Excelling	Gallego Elementary Ray Darr Elementary Seco Mines Elementary	Ten or more migrant students tested in one or more areas of TAAS; at least 80% of migrant students passing all tests taken on the TAAS; at least 94% attendance rate; a migrant student dropout rate of 3.5% or lower
Promising	Benavides Elementary Graves Elementary Gonzalez Elementary Rosita Valley Elementary Sam Houston Elementary San Luis Elementary	Ten or more migrant students tested in one or more areas of TAAS; at least 70% of migrant students passing all tests taken on the TAAS; at least 94% attendance rate; a migrant student dropout rate of 6% or lower.
Acknowledged	Austin Elementary	At least 5, but no more than nine migrant students tested in one or more areas of TAAS; at least 70% of migrant students passing all test taken on the TAAS; at least 94% attendance rate; a migrant student dropout rate of 6% or lower.

Source: TEA memo, September 2000.

COMMENDATION

EPISD implements a variety of programs to meet the unique needs of migrant children and their families.

Chapter 2

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

G. CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION

Career and Technology Education (CATE) is a curriculum designed to train students in subjects such as health sciences and technology, marketing, industrial technology and trade and industrial occupations. Approximately 16.3 percent of all high school students, in EPISD are enrolled in a CATE course.

The percent of EPISD students enrolled in one or more CATE courses is presented in **Exhibit 2-54**. EPISD is fifth among its peer districts but is higher than the regional and state averages in the percent of students enrolled in CATE programs.

Exhibit 2-54
EPISD and Peer District Students Enrolled in CATE Programs
as a Percent of Total Enrollment
2000-01

District	CATE Students
Weslaco	22.8%
San Benito Consolidated	21.2%
Harlandale	19.2%
Mission Consolidated	18.4%
San Felipe-Del Rio Consolidated	17.1%
Eagle Pass	16.3%
South San Antonio	13.8%
Region 20	16.6%
State	18.9%

Source: TEA, PEIMS 2000-01.

Expenditures for the CATE program declined by 40.8 percent from 1996-97 to 2000-01, and student enrollment decreased 6.5 percent (**Exhibit 2-55**).

Exhibit 2-55
EPISD CATE Expenditures
1996-97 and 2000-01

Category	1996-97 Actual	2000-01 Budget	Percent Change
CATE expenditures	\$2,450,854	\$1,451,356	(40.8%)
CATE students served	2,181	2,039	(6.5%)
CATE expenditures per student	\$1,124	\$712	(36.7%)

Source: TEA, AEIS 1996-97 and PEIMS 2000-01.

Compared to its peer districts EPISD spends the fourth lowest dollar amount on its CATE program (**Exhibit 2-56**). Its per student expenditure of \$712 is lower than both the regional and state averages.

Exhibit 2-56
EPISD and Peer District CATE Expenditures
2000-01

District	CATE Expenditures	Students Served	Expenditures per Student
South San Antonio	\$75,033	1,385	\$1,209
Mission Consolidated	\$935,269	2,291	\$845
San Felipe-Del Rio Consolidated	\$234,823	1,720	\$718
Weslaco	\$773,390	3,065	\$905
Harlandale	\$804,727	2,785	\$648
Eagle Pass	\$451,356	2,039	\$712
San Benito Consolidated	\$330,923	1,889	\$705
Region 20	\$6,145,251	54,169	\$852
State	\$64,377,617	768,226	\$735

Source: TEA, PEIMS 2000-01.

The director of Career and Technology, employed by EPISD in January 2000, is responsible for managing the CATE program and is located at C. C. Winn High School. The director also serves on the board of the

Regional Middle Rio Grande Council of the Texas Workforce Commission.

EPISD's director of Career and Technology, with input from CATE teachers and community representatives developed a CATE Plan to provide direction for the department. Although a CATE Plan is not required by statute, the director anticipates presenting the EPISD CATE plan to the EPISD Board of Trustees for adoption at the same time campus improvement plans are presented.

The plan contains the following six objectives: (1) Encourage academic excellence and additional relevant opportunities through a rigorous career and technology education program; (2) Provide a quality guidance and counseling program for all students pre-kindergarten through grade 12; (3) Plan, develop and implement partnerships that support higher learning and training at a post secondary level; (4) Provide students a rigorous curriculum that enables them to compete in today's workforce; (5) Support teachers, administrators, counselors, and other educational partners in planning, developing and implementing staff development opportunities and (6) Evaluate programs offered to determine if programs need to be continued, expanded or deleted.

FINDING

EPISD provides opportunities for students to earn college credit by participating in a TechPrep partnership with area colleges.

TechPrep is a program that leads students toward associate or baccalaureate degree programs and helps students prepare for high skill, high wage jobs in at least one field of engineering technology, applied science, health, or business through a planned, sequential program of study. EPISD has been a member of the STAR TechPrep consortium for several years.

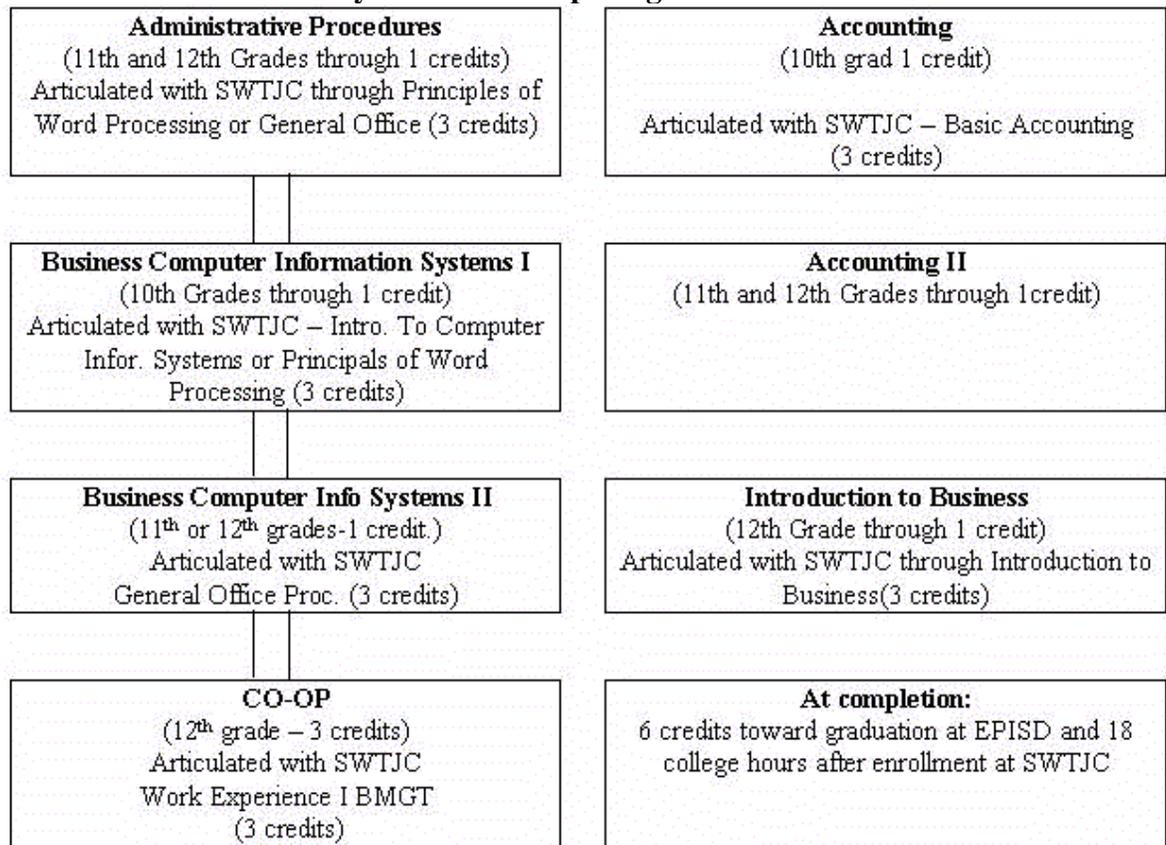
EPISD participates in TechPrep partnership with Southwest Texas Junior College, Palo Alto College, St. Phillips College, Laredo Community College and San Antonio College. Students may enroll in courses in eight areas: hospitality, criminal justice, computer science technology, accounting, business and office administration, health occupations, child care management and emergency medical services. Forty-nine different courses are articulated with the five colleges.

Eleven EPISD students over the past five years enrolled in the Office Systems TechPrep program at SWTJC's Uvalde Campus. These eleven students earned 93 college credits with articulated courses while in high school. The Eagle Pass campus of SWTJC began offering the program for

the first time in January 2001. EPISD anticipates an increase in enrollment due to the convenience of the college being located in Eagle Pass.

Exhibit 2-57 provides an example of how the Office Systems Technology Tech Prep program works. Each of the eight programs is fully articulated with the five colleges, which means that a student in any of the programs will receive high school credit toward graduation as well as college credit at the colleges with which the courses are articulated.

Exhibit 2-57
EPISD/Southwest Texas Junior College
Office Systems TechPrep Program



Source: EPISD coordinator of Career and Technology.

According to the head counselor at C.C. Winn, approximately 25-30 percent of EPISD graduates enroll in a four-year college and 10-15 percent enroll in a two-year program.

EPISD also has adopted a two-year CATE program called the Cisco Academy that prepares students to pass a computer network certification test. Students learn the basics of computer networking, cabling, configuring information routers and troubleshooting problems. With this

certification, a student qualifies for employment with attractive compensation in an area where there is a critical shortage of qualified workers. Students who do not start the program until they are seniors can complete the second year at Southwest Texas Junior College. More advanced courses are also offered at the college.

Currently, students successfully completing the criminal justice courses can earn jailer certification. According to Middle Rio Grande Workforce Development, Texas Workforce Development, Inc., the fastest growing non-college careers in the area with an annual increase of 100 or more workers are: computer support specialists; health service workers; child care workers; police patrol officers; correctional officers; landscaping; home health aides; inspectors and compliance officers; personal care aides and nursing aides.

EPISD high school students may choose from approximately 70 CATE courses representing five different program areas including Business, Home Economics, Agricultural Science and Technology Education, Health Science, Trade and Industrial Occupations. Enrollment by program areas is shown below (**Exhibit 2-58**).

Exhibit 2-58
EPISD Career and Technology Program Area
Number of Courses and Enrollment
1999-2000 and 2000-01

Program Area	Description	Number of Courses	Enrollment 1999-2000	Enrollment 2000-01
Agricultural Science	Courses develop competencies needed to enter jobs in producing, managing, processing, marketing, regulating or protecting any of the renewable natural resources.	15	321	245
Business Education	These courses emphasize development of effective oral and written communication, preparing and analyzing business records, operating business equipment and human relations skills.	14	333	550
Home	Prenares students for	13	846	514

Economics Education	personal and family life. The focus is on families, work and interrelationships.			
Health Science Technology	Designed for students who have an interest and desire to explore health careers.	4	234	210
Trade and Industry	Designed to prepare students for initial employment in trade and industrial occupations: communications, criminal justice, transportation, construction and metal trades.	18	268	841
Technology	Courses that prepare students to work in telecommunications and programming.	6	1298	1090

Source: EPISD director of Career and Technology and High School Course Description Guide, 2000-01.

COMMENDATION

EPISD offers programs to meet the career needs of its students and provide them with opportunities to earn college credit.

Chapter 2

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

H. GIFTED AND TALENTED EDUCATION PROGRAM

Since 1987, state law has required all Texas school districts to offer educational programs to serve the needs of gifted and talented students. These programs must be available in all districts and at all grade levels. Gifted and talented students are characterized as those students who have high levels of achievement, intellectual and academic ability, creativity, leadership skills and talent in the visual and performing arts.

Districts are required to have a systematic process for identifying gifted and talented students. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) issues guidelines for identifying gifted and talented students to ensure all of these students receive a quality education. The process must include quantitative and qualitative evaluation tools and instruments. Funding for identifying gifted and talented students and the programs to serve them is available through the Texas Foundation School Program.

Students in EPISD's Gifted and Talented program are educated in math, language arts, social studies and science. The Gifted and Talented program coordinator developed an Administrators Handbook for Gifted and Talented Education. The handbook provides information on planning, identification procedures, program organization, principles of differentiation, staff development requirements, parental and community involvement, evaluation and an appendix of resources. EPISD provides the teachers of gifted students curriculum guides in the four core areas.

A Gifted and Talented Advisory Council meets to review the gifted program four to eight times yearly. Council members consist of campus educators, counselors, parents and community members.

At the elementary grade level, a gifted and talented specialist is assigned to each elementary campus. The specialist is charged with the responsibility to provide a continuum of learning experiences to all gifted and talented students in grades K-6 through a program that periodically pulls the students out of their regular classes. The regular classroom teachers also provide some differentiation from the regular curriculum and instruction for their gifted and talented students.

Identified middle school students attend Pre-Advanced Placement classes that are designed to provide a differentiated and advanced curriculum. At the high school level, students are provided differentiated instruction

through enrollment in advanced placement and pre-advanced placement courses.

A formal screening of elementary students is conducted in the spring of each year to identify students for the following school year. Screening for secondary students is held twice each year. The nomination process is announced at each school and through the news media. Announcements are printed in English and Spanish. Nomination forms are made available at each school and throughout the community at public libraries, churches and businesses. Any parent, educator, community member or peer may nominate a student. Secondary students may nominate themselves. Any student whose TAAS scores in reading or math are at, or above the 90th percentile are nominated by the campus staff. Conferences are held at each campus with students nominated and their parents to inform them of program services.

Transfer students who participated in a former school's gifted program are referred to the campus identification committee. Upon determination that the programs are comparable, the student is accepted into the local program.

EPISD provides opportunities for the academically gifted students to participate in challenging activities. Each elementary school participates in the Texas Future Problem Solving Program. Junior high school students can be involved in the Duke University TIP/MAP talent search pool. The high school participates in Academic Decathlon and Mock Trial programs.

EPISD sponsors a PSAT Institute to train students in test-taking skills to increase the probability of their scoring well on the exam. EPISD holds a Summer Technology Camp for kindergarten and first grade students.

EPISD enrollment in the gifted and talented program is higher than the regional and state averages and is the second highest compared to its peer districts (**Exhibit 2-59**).

Exhibit 2-59
EPISD, Peer District, Region 20, and State Students in
Gifted and Talented Program as a Percent of Total Enrollment
1999-2000

District	Gifted and Talented
Weslaco	12.0%
Eagle Pass	11.9%
Mission	9.3%

San Felipe	8.5%
South San Antonio	8.4%
San Benito	7.7%
Harlandale	5.6%
Region 20	7.2%
State	8.4%

Source: TEA, PEIMS 2000-01.

EPISD expenditures for the gifted and talented program are described in **Exhibit 2-60**. Total funding and per-student funding have increased by 72.5 and 44.8 percent respectively since 1996-97. The number of students in the program has increased by 19.4 percent over the same period.

Exhibit 2-60
EPISD Budgeted Expenditures for the Gifted and Talented Education Program
1996-97 and 2000-01

Category	1996-97 Budget	2000-01 Budget	Percent Change
Gifted and talented expenditures	\$336,314	\$580,196	72.5%
Gifted and talented students served	1,254	1,497	19.4%
Gifted and talented expenditures per student	\$268	\$388	44.8%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1996-97 and PEIMS 2000-01.

Compared to its peer districts EPISD has the fifth highest expenditures on the gifted and talented education program and has the third lowest per student expenditure, lower than both the regional and state averages (**Exhibit 2-61**).

Exhibit 2-61
EPISD Gifted and Talented Education Program Expenditures vs. Peer Districts
2000-01

District	Gifted and Talented	Students	Expenditures per
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	Expenditures	Served	Eligible Student
San Benito	\$1,032,348	682	\$1,514
South San Antonio	\$1,011,999	842	\$1,202
San Felipe	\$496,174	858	\$578
Weslaco	\$828,405	1,621	\$511
Eagle Pass	\$580,196	1,497	\$388
Mission	\$70,956	1,161	\$61
Harlandale	\$41,024	816	\$50
Region 20	\$13,438,699	23,529	\$571
State	\$245,706,612	342,855	\$717

Source: TEA, PEIMS 2000-01.

EPISD requires that all core curriculum teachers of gifted and talented students meet the state minimum required 30 hours of in-service training and the required six hours of annual training. Teachers can obtain this level of training through Region 20, district in-service training, Texas Association of Gifted and Talented state conferences and other special out-of-district services.

FINDING

In the fall of 1999-2000, beginning with the ninth grade class, EPISD implemented the Eagle Academy of Curriculum Opportunities for Science and Math Oriented Students (COSMOS) at Eagle Pass High School. The Eagle Academy COSMOS program is a college prep program with a focus on health and science. Students enroll in Pre-AP and AP courses for their core course requirements. Electives are chosen from Science, Health Science Technology courses, computer courses and Scientific Research. Students completing the Eagle Academy COSMOS program meet the requirements for the Recommended Graduation Plan of the State of Texas.

EPISD is located in Maverick County near the Texas-Mexico border. This area is known as the Winter Garden Region and is designated as a medically underserved area with a health professional shortage. Prior to the COSMOS program there was no program in this area to identify, orient and motivate high school students to pursue professional health careers. According to reports from the American Association of Medical Colleges (AAMC), the number of Hispanic applicants from Texas to medical schools is very small.

Students in the fourth year of the program complete an internship at Fort Duncan Medical Facility in Eagle Pass. EPISD partners with University of Texas Health Science Center, San Antonio (UTHSCA). Networking with health care professions enables students to receive guidance in selecting and pursuing a health career.

COMMENDATION

EPISD has implemented a program focusing on health careers to address the shortage of health professionals in the area.

Chapter 2

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

I. SPECIAL EDUCATION

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 require all public school districts that receive federal funds to establish central office and campus processes to identify students with learning disabilities or special learning needs so that accommodations can be made to help them. This includes students in special education and students with dyslexia, attention deficit and/or hyperactivity disorders and other types of disabilities. Accommodations can include additional instruction in a particular subject through a resource teacher, additional time to complete assignments and oral exams versus written exams.

EPISD's special education program is staffed with a director, elementary school coordinator and a secondary school coordinator. The program has 55 teachers, two speech pathologists, two speech therapists, six diagnosticians and EPISD contracts with a psychologist. Additional speech therapy is provided through a contract arrangement. These staff members provide a variety of programs and services, which are summarized in **Exhibit 2-62**.

Exhibit 2-62
EPISD Special Education Programs
1999-2000

Program/Service	Description
Assistive Technology	Assistive technology includes aids to improve self-help skills and encourage independence, electronic and non-electronic devices that enhance communication skills, instructional material aids, sensory aids, environmental control systems and homework modifications.
Multi-disciplinary/family support team	EPISD uses the multidisciplinary team approach to address the total child and makes recommendations based on the referral. The team includes parents, teachers, administrators, appraisal personnel and may include counselors, therapists and others as appropriate.
Diagnostic team	Diagnosticians are available to provide psycho-educational services to students.

Speech team	Speech pathologists and therapists provide language and articulation speech services to identified students.
Related services	The related services are provided by occupational and physical therapists; teacher of auditory and visual services; orientation and mobility trainers and counselors.
Homebound	Services are provided to students who are placed on homebound or health related services.

Source: EPISD director of Special Education.

EPISD delivers these services to students through a variety of instructional settings. Students with disabilities who spend all of their school hours in a regular classroom are referred to as being "mainstreamed." These students follow the general education curriculum with modifications.

Mainstreamed special education student requiring additional assistance receive specific content instruction from a special education teacher in a "content mastery" classroom or attend a "resource" class for additional help. If a student's disability is so severe that satisfactory education cannot take place in a regular classroom, the student will be served in a "self-contained" classroom that is limited to special education students.

In the PEIMS submission in October 2001, 209 secondary students and 257 elementary students or 44.4 percent of the special education enrollment, were reported as fully mainstreamed. Thirty-two percent of the special education population were reported to be receiving additional help through resource classes for part of the day and mainstreamed for the remainder of the day.

EPISD's special education student enrollment totaled 905 students in 2000-01 or 7 percent of the student population. This percent is lower than the state and regional averages and second lowest among its peer districts (**Exhibit 2-63**).

Exhibit 2-63
EPISD, Peer District, Region 20, and State Students in Special Programs
as a Percent of Total Enrollment
2000-01

District	Special Education
Harlandale	15.1%
South San Antonio	13.1%

San Benito	12.5%
San Felipe	11.4%
Weslaco	8.3%
Eagle Pass	7.2%
Mission	6.1%
Region 20	14.4%
State	12.1%

Source: TEA, PEIMS 2000-01.

In October 2000, EPISD had 905 students in special education located at all its campuses (Exhibit 2-64).

Exhibit 2-64
EPISD Special Education Students by Campus
2000-01

Campus	Number of Students	Percent of Enrollment	Types of Services
Eagle Pass High School	158	8.6%	Counseling, adaptive P.E., occupational therapy, auditory impaired, physical therapy, speech therapy, homebound, resource, vocational adjustment, mainstream, self-contained, transportation and adaptive equipment.
C.C. Winn High School	97	8.3%	Adaptive equipment, counseling, vocational adjustment, orientation and mobility, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and speech therapy, adaptive P.E., homebound, visually impaired, auditory impaired, resource, mainstream, self-contained and transportation
Alternative School	3	2.0%	Counseling and mainstream.
Eagle Pass Jr. High School	87	10.3%	Counseling, adaptive P.E., speech therapy, resource, mainstream, self-contained, transportation, behavior unit and adaptive equipment.

Memorial Junior High School	123	12.2%	Adaptive equipment, counseling, orientation and mobility, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and speech therapy, adaptive P.E., homebound, visually impaired, auditory impaired, resource, mainstream, and transportation.
Austin Elementary School	20	7.5%	Counseling, occupational therapy, speech therapy, resource, physical therapy, self-contained, transportation, visually impaired, homebound adaptive equipment and mainstream.
Benavides Hts. Elementary School	41	9.1%	Counseling, occupational therapy, speech therapy, resource, physical therapy, self-contained, transportation, adaptive equipment and mainstream.
Darr Elementary School	20	3.7%	Counseling, occupational therapy, speech therapy, resource, and mainstream and auditory impaired.
Gallego Elementary School	22	4.3%	Counseling, auditory impaired, speech therapy, resource, and mainstream.
Glass Elementary School	55	11.3%	Counseling, occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech therapy, resource, and mainstream, adaptive equipment, self-contained, behavior management unit, transportation, adaptive PE and auditory impaired.
Gonzalez Elementary School	25	5.2%	Adaptive equipment, counseling, occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech therapy, home campus, resource, and mainstream.
Graves Elementary School	32	6.4%	Counseling, occupational therapy, speech therapy, resource, visually impaired, transportation, orientation and mobility, adaptive P.E., and mainstream.
Houston Elementary School	41	9.7%	Counseling, speech therapy, resource and mainstream.
Kirchner Elementary School	8	6.8%	Counseling, speech therapy, resource and mainstream.

Lee Elementary School	19	3.7%	Counseling, speech therapy, resource, transportation and mainstream.
Rosita Valley Elementary	28	8.1%	Counseling, speech therapy, resource, adaptive equipment and mainstream
San Luis Elementary	26	4.7%	Counseling, speech therapy, resource, and mainstream.
Seco Mines Elementary	36	6.1%	Counseling, speech therapy, resource, transportation, self-contained, adaptive equipment, occupational therapy, physical therapy, adaptive P.E. and mainstream.
Rosita Valley Lit. Academy	9	2.1%	Counseling, speech therapy and mainstream.
Early Childhood Center	27	7.6%	Counseling, speech therapy, resource, transportation, self-contained, adaptive equipment, occupational therapy, physical therapy, adaptive P.E. and mainstream.
Language Dev. Center	14	2.8%	Speech therapy, physical therapy, occupational therapy, self-contained, transportation, visually impaired, homebound, adaptive equipment.
DeLuna Discipline Center	3	12.5%	Mainstream and counseling.
Kennedy Hall Elementary	11	2.7%	Speech therapy, mainstream, resource, counseling, and auditory impaired
Total	905	7.2%	

Source: EPISD director of Special Education, fall PEIMS submission.

Expenditures for special education increased by 29.2 percent from 1996-97 through 2000-01. The number of students served increased 26.9 percent, and the per student expenditure increased from \$3,868 in 1996-97 to \$3,937 in 2000-01, or by 1.8 percent (**Exhibit 2-65**).

Exhibit 2-65
EPISD Budgeted Expenditures for the Special Education Program
1996-97 and 2000-01

Category	1996-97 Budget	2000-01 Budget	Percent Change
Special education expenditures	\$2,757,879	\$3,563,185	29.2%
Special education students served	713	905	26.9%
Special education expenditures per student	\$3,868	\$3,937	1.8%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1996-97 and PEIMS 2000-01.

Compared to its peer districts EPISD spends the fourth highest in gross dollars on the special education program and is the second highest in per student expenditures (**Exhibit 2-66**).

Exhibit 2-66
EPISD Budgeted Special Education Program Expenditures vs. Peer Districts
1999-2000 Budget

District	Special Education Expenditures	Students Served	Expenditures per Eligible Student
Weslaco	\$4,936,055	1,114	\$4,431
Eagle Pass	\$3,563,185	905	\$3,937
South San Antonio	\$4,607,917	1,309	\$3,520
Mission	\$2,683,122	765	\$3,507
Harlandale	\$7,598,444	2,192	\$3,466
San Benito	\$3,194,445	1,115	\$2,865
San Felipe	\$3,126,608	1,148	\$2,724
Region 20	\$172,105,792	47,046	\$3,658
State	\$1,734,634,496	492,045	\$3,525

Source: TEA, PEIMS 2000-01.

FINDING

To determine programs to meet the needs of all students, eliminate the duplication of effort associated with identifying particular student needs and providing necessary student assistance for academic and social success, the district established the Student Review Committee (SRC) as a

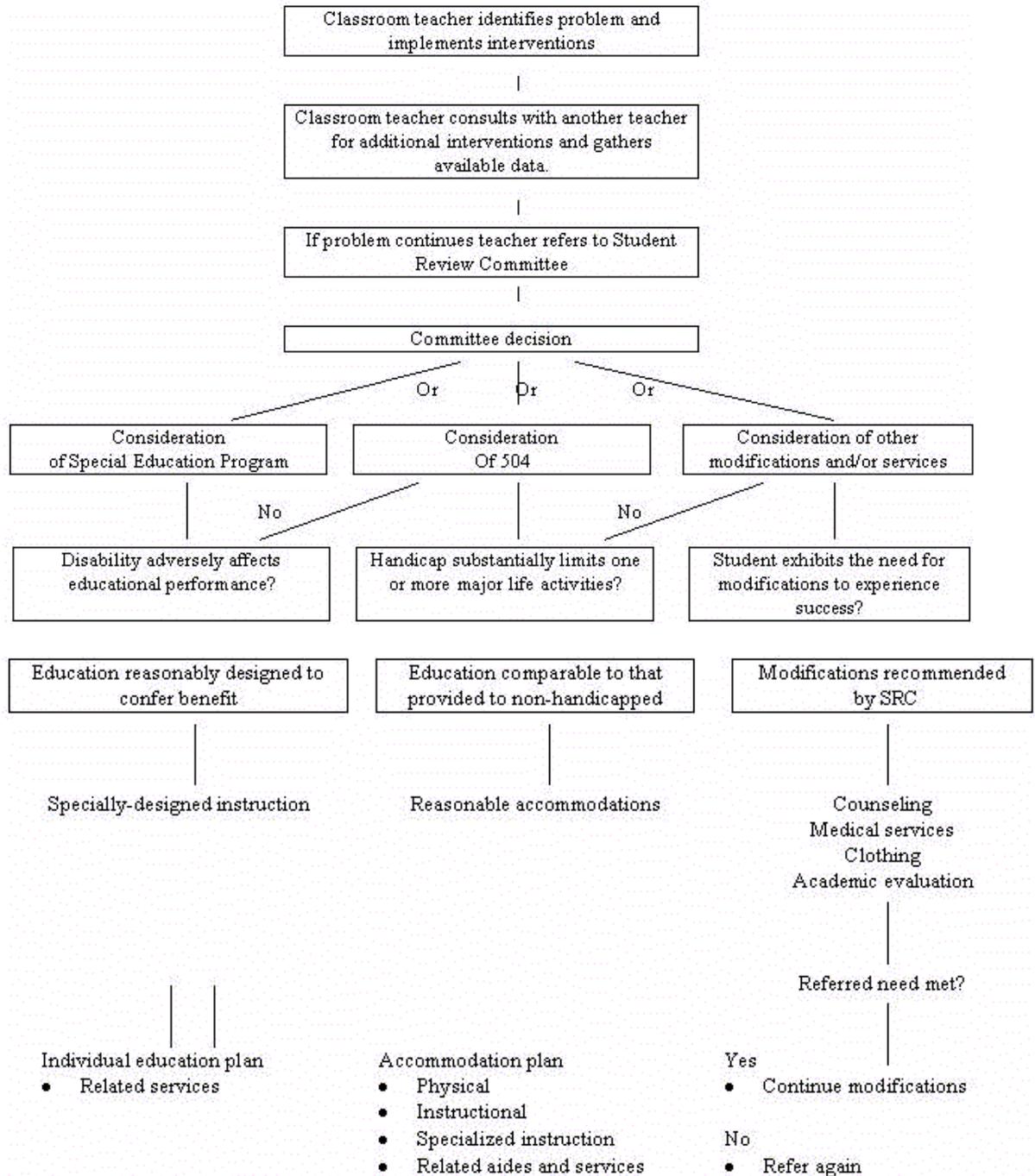
problem-solving entity. The Student Review Committee is designed to identify all students with disabilities and is intended to provide an opportunity for the total staff to consider many options for individual students.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) lists specific types of disabling conditions, which qualify a child to receive special education. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is broader than IDEA in that there is no categorical listing of disabling conditions. Examples of potentially handicapping conditions under Section 504 are dyslexia, behavior disorders, chronic asthma and severe allergies, physical handicaps such as spina bifida, hemophilia and conditions requiring children to use crutches and other chronic and/or life-threatening diseases such as diabetes or cancer. A student may be referred for Special Education services, Section 504 services, or regular classroom modifications.

The SRC on each campus meets with the referral teacher, reviews the teacher's documentation of behavior difficulties and develops a set of intervention strategies to be implemented. The SRC may meet several times to follow up on interventions that were successful, brainstorm new strategies and enlist help from the parents. Members of the team include the principal, counselor, nurse, (grades K-6), referring teacher and others as deemed appropriate. Each SRC is also encouraged to have an individual familiar with student assessment, such as a diagnostician, as a member of the team.

Teachers, parents and students themselves are encouraged to refer any student who is experiencing difficulty in the classroom for any reason. The counselor usually collects data on each student referral for team review. The student is assigned to a member of the team for action which can involve several alternatives (**Exhibit 2-67**).

Exhibit 2-67
EPISD SRC Referral Process



Source: EPISD director of Special Education.

The SRC has four options to consider before making a decision to intervene. These options are to be considered from least restrictive to most restrictive in the order that follows:

- Implement campus modifications for a pre-determined amount of time.

- Refer to the dyslexia committee on campus.
- Initiate 504 referral process.
- Initiate special education referral process.

The team strives to maintain a preventive and positive focus to ensure success for all students through monthly reviews of attendance, school-based intervention, parent involvement, and school/community service integration.

Principals, teachers representing all grade levels, and parents said that the committee members discuss each student's situation carefully and attempt to identify campus modifications that will address the concern. A total of 336 students were referred for special education services in 1999-2000. Of those 336 students, 18 did not qualify. As of November 2000, the number of students referred is 221, with four of those students not qualifying.

COMMENDATION

EPISD has developed a process to identify individual student needs, devise appropriate modifications and accomplish desired learning and achievement levels within the least restrictive environment.

FINDING

Over the past five years, the EPISD has been reimbursed \$60,1999 in School Health and Related Services (SHARS) funds. SHARS is a Medicaid program that covers those services determined to be medically necessary and reasonable to ensure a disabled child under the age of 21 receives the benefits of a free and appropriate public education. These services include assessment, audiology, counseling, medical and school health services, occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech therapy, psychological services, and associated transportation.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 1975 requires school districts to provide certain education-related health services to children with disabilities to meet their unique needs. As of September 1992, the state's Medicaid program was amended to allow school districts to enroll as Medicaid providers and to apply for Medicaid reimbursement for services they are providing to children with disabilities.

School districts can apply for reimbursement for specific services provided to Medicaid-certified children. The reimbursement amount is a percent of the federal portion of the fee for each eligible service. Districts must certify that they used state or local funds to pay for the remainder of the service fee. Reimbursements can be deposited in the district's general revenue fund and do not have to be spent on special education services. To

qualify for SHARS Medicaid reimbursement, claims must be filed within 12 months of the date that services are delivered.

EPISD bills Medicaid for reimbursements for services delivered to students who have qualified for Medicaid. The district uses the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) for its billing. The SHARS reimbursement payments for the last five years are shown in **Exhibit 2-68**. The director of Special Education said the decrease in 1999-2000 was caused when TASB required a change in computers to operate the software program used for inputting information. The request for the computer was made in July 1999, and the computer was received February 2000. The situation was corrected, and EPISD is on target to receive appropriate funds.

Exhibit 2-68
SHARS Activity for EPISD
1995-96 through 1999-2000

Year	SHARS Reimbursement Received
2000-December 2001	\$10,859
1999-2000	\$1,718
1998-99	\$9,728
1997-98	\$21,508
1996-97	\$19,788
1995-96	\$7,457

Source: EPISD director of Special Education.

In 1996, the state started another special education reimbursement program, Medicaid Administrative Claiming (MAC), to allow districts to receive reimbursement for administrative services provided by districts that cannot be billed through School Health and Related Services (SHARS). At that time, it was not feasible for some districts with less than 15,000 students to participate because the federal requirements for calculating the staff time spent on health-related activities was too burdensome. However, the MAC program has changed significantly, making it feasible for smaller school districts to participate. Consortiums have been established to pool participating districts so that each district's commitment for the time study is greatly reduced. As a result, about half of the districts in state are now participating in MAC.

Since the consortium handles most of the burdensome administrative functions required by the federal government for this program, it is relatively simple for districts to participate. The amount of reimbursements depends on level of activity of staff for the eligible activities.

EPISD joined the Houston ISD consortium in January 2001 to participate in the MAC program.

COMMENDATION

EPISD complements its local and state funding for special education by actively seeking available federal funds to reimburse eligible services.

Chapter 3

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

This chapter examines the community involvement efforts of the Eagle Pass Independent School District (EPISD) in following areas:

- A. Internal and External Communications
- B. Community and Parental Involvement

Providing accurate, timely information to the public is an important function of public institutions. The efficient delivery of this service fosters trust and enables citizens to draw conclusions and take action based on information, as opposed to rumor and gossip. The manner in which school districts perform this function has an impact on how the district is viewed by the public.

The most effective community involvement programs are inclusive, take advantage of the variety of media outlets that exist in every community, and disseminate information in a timely manner.

BACKGROUND

Among Texas school districts, there is wide variation in the manner in which community involvement is performed. Some school districts have departments that are dedicated to it. Larger districts can spread individual community relations functions among several people. However, smaller districts like EPISD must rely upon staffs of three or fewer people, with each staff member performing a variety of community-relations functions.

Boards of trustees can also play an important role in community involvement by being accessible and sensitive to community concerns.

Districts also vary widely in how they involve the community in and inform it of district activities. Newsletters, town hall meetings, cable television programs, Internet Web sites, school calendars, brochures and inserts in news media published by other entities are some of the methods that districts use to communicate with parents and other citizens.

Chapter 3

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

A. INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

The executive director of Human Resources currently serves as the district's public relations officer and information liaison with the media and the community; and receives and responds to open record requests and produces brochures, bulletins, fliers, invitations and pamphlets. The mission of the public relations department as stated in a draft plan is "to encourage frequent and open dialogue with the school and business community. To offer to co-sponsor activities that will promote the district in a positive image and to represent the district with various publics such as special interest groups and community groups, as well as the print and broadcast media. To be a positive force in all the daily activities and business of the Eagle Pass Independent School District."

Prior to 2000-01, EPISD did not follow the legal policy for open records requests and had no standard administrative procedure in place. Whoever received the request responded to it. No records of requests were kept. Beginning August 2000, requests are required to be made in writing through the Human Resources department. Records of requests are kept in the office. The director of Human Resources said 25 requests, most from employees, have been received since August 2000.

EPISD publishes an 8-page employee newsletter *The Eagle Times* four to five times yearly. The *Eagle Times* contains news of activities in the district, a message from the superintendent and a summary of board actions. This publication is delivered to the schools for distribution to employees, and copies are made available at the local HEB grocery, local banks and local churches for community members.

Additional EPISD publications include the *Annual Report*, *EPISD Progress Report*, several tri-fold brochures and school newsletters. The *Annual Report* is a 20-page booklet containing facts and accomplishments of the district from the preceding school year. EPISD provides copies of the *Annual Report* at all district locations, the Chamber of Commerce, and area businesses.

The *EPISD Progress Report* is published yearly as a tri-fold brochure and mailed with the yearly tax statement to all addresses in the district. The *EPISD Progress Report* includes TAAS information, the number of EPISD employees by category, a summary of the district revenues and the projects to be completed with bond money.

Several tri-fold brochures describing services and programs offered in EPISD are published by various departments in the district including Special Education, Migrant Education, Parent Education and Parenting Program, and Career and Technology Education. These publications are available in the respective departments and are provided to parents at the various parent meetings throughout the district.

Hi-Light, a student newsletter published by the journalism classes at Eagle Pass High School-C.C. Winn Campus is distributed on campus monthly. Each elementary school sends a monthly newsletter to parents via the students.

FINDING

EPISD does not consistently disseminate information about district and board activities to all residents of the school district. Many articles in a local newspaper have a negative tone. Parents stated that, although the individual schools do a good job of disseminating news about specific campus activities, the district does not do a good job of communicating districtwide news. Participants in focus groups held by TSPR said they receive no districtwide news. Examples of public comments regarding this issue are:

"Parents don't get information. If we do, it's after the fact."

"Communication between the administration and parents is lacking."

"The bulletin goes to employees and staff of EPISD, not to parents. We need monthly general information about the district."

"We get things from the schools, but not the district."

Several school districts publish semi-annual or monthly newsletters and mail to all addresses in the district, residential and business. Other districts have an insert in the local newspaper.

Spring ISD communicates to its constituents through a variety of print media. *Spring Schools* is published and distributed two to three times yearly to all addresses in the district. Spring ISD also mails a calendar of events to its parents at the beginning of the school year, which includes dates for board meetings and special events.

Bastrop ISD mails a monthly newsletter, *The School Report*, to all residents. Bastrop ISD publishes its annual report in a calendar format. Each page is divided into two parts; the top part is devoted to the annual report, and the bottom part is a calendar month. Activities of the district are listed on the calendar dates. One publication, serves two purposes, the

annual report and parent notification of activity dates. This publication is mailed to all addresses.

Conroe ISD highlights the programs and people of the district in the *Perspective*. The 16-page newsletter is printed on newsprint and mailed to all addresses semi-annually. The superintendent provides pertinent staff information in a 1-page publication *CISD Employee Update*.

The Round Rock ISD has worked out an arrangement with the *Austin American-Statesman* to print a full-page newsletter on the first Friday of each month. The paper does not charge the district for the space, but rather sells ads at the bottom of the page to businesses that are located in or around the Round Rock ISD. These businesses have a vested interest in promoting a positive image for the district because their businesses benefit when the school district attracts new residents to Round Rock. Round Rock estimates that they reach 250,000 readers with each publication. In the past, they mailed newsletters to area residents three times a year at a cost of more than \$10,000 per mailing. Today, the only cost is to provide reprints to send home with every elementary student and to distribute at all secondary campuses.

Recommendation 8:

Redirect the *Eagle Times* from an employee newsletter to a district newsletter, and place it as an insert in the local newspaper six times a year.

The district should continue to publish the newsletter including a report of board activities, a message from the superintendent and descriptions of EPISD programs and accomplishments. The school calendar, school menus and announcements of upcoming events should also be included. In addition to the current distribution the newsletter should be placed on the district's Web site, published in the local newspaper and the hand distributed copies should be printed in English and Spanish.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The executive director of Human Resources seeks approval from the school board to create a community newsletter insert to be published in the local newspaper.	August 2001
2.	The executive director of Human Resources contracts with the local newspaper to publish the <i>Eagle Times</i> newsletter six times a year.	August 2001
3.	The executive director of Human Resources gathers information from the superintendent and principals and	September 2001

	prepares news of board activities and other information of interest to community for an insert published in the local newspaper.	
4.	The executive director of Human Resources collaborates with the Technology Department to post the information on the EPISD Web site.	September and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

The cost for continuing to publish the newsletter normally and placing it on the district's website can be accomplished with existing resources. The cost for publishing a half-page ad six times per year in the *Eagle Pass News Guide* is \$1,038.

Recommendation	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Redirect the <i>Eagle Times</i> from an employee newsletter to a district newsletter, and place it as an insert in the local newspaper six times a year.	(\$1,038)	(\$1,038)	(\$1,038)	(\$1,038)	(\$1,038)

FINDING

While EPISD has established a Web site, the district has not tapped into the full potential of the Web site.

The EPISD Web site currently includes an overview of district job postings, information on TAAS scores, a profile of each campus, names of district administration and board members, links to Eagle Pass High School - C. C. Winn Campus, Frank Chisum Regional Technical Center, the Gifted and Talented Department, the local board policy handbook, dates and agendas to board meetings and links to education resources

The Internet is a vehicle to provide information in a timely and cost effective manner to the staff and to community residents who have Internet access.

Santa Gertrudis ISD has implemented a variety of instructional technology initiatives that enable students to strengthen their computer skills. The school offers a Web Master course and the enrolled students are responsible for designing and maintaining the SGISD Web site One teacher places her notes for the next class day on the Internet to encourage students to become more familiar with the Internet.

Smithville ISD posts the summary of board actions taken at each meeting and other information pertinent to staff and the community such as the demographics of the school, school calendar and the history of Smithville. Alief ISD uses their Web site to distribute the district newsletter, *The Communicator*. The three divisions of AISD, instruction, business and human resources, each have extensive information for staff and the community posted. For example, in the instruction division, the special education department lists all services provided, information on Special Olympics, a teacher page, parent page and information on assistive technology. Individual Educational Plans (IEPs) can also be downloaded from the Web site.

Recommendation 9:

Expand the district's use of the Internet to provide useful information to schools, teachers, parents and the community.

The district should investigate using internal resources, such as students who are involved in technology and Web Master training, to assist them in further developing their Web site. Information on the Web site should include board information, school menus, school closing information, board meeting notices, board briefs and similar information.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The district Technology Coordinator identifies sources within the district, such as students, who can assist in the further development and maintenance of its district Web site.	August 2001
2.	The district Technology Coordinator solicits input from the coordinator of Staff/Development/Community Involvement for information to add to its Web site.	August 2001
3.	The Technology Coordinator, with student assistance, begins posting relevant information.	September 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no additional cost associated with implementing this recommendation.

FINDING

EPISD elementary parent/student handbooks, secondary student handbooks and teacher handbooks do not contain consistent information. Each school provides a wealth of information which varies by school. Some schools have parent/student handbooks with as few as 14 pages

while others have as many as 65 pages. The district publishes the Code of Student Conduct in both English and Spanish in a separate booklet.

The same inconsistencies exist among the teacher handbooks. Some include school board policies related to personnel and sections from the Texas Education Code while others do not.

The EPISD print shop prints multiple copies of each school's handbooks and the Code of Student Conduct. Some of the handbooks are bound; others are in loose-leaf notebooks.

Elementary parent/student handbooks and secondary handbooks all have a section with information on district policies on attendance, promotion/retention, grading and homework, testing schedules and the school district calendar. The Code of Student Conduct is included in the elementary parent/student handbooks and the secondary student handbooks. By having the code included in the handbook, information needed by parents and students is covered in one booklet rather than in multiple publications.

Each school is allowed an additional section for information that is specific to that school. Having information that is applicable to all schools in each handbook eliminates confusion for parents who have children in more than one school. It also allows the print shop to be more effective when printing the handbooks.

The teacher handbooks published by each school vary by size and content. Some handbooks include personnel policies and sections from the Texas Education Code, others do not.

Recommendation 10:

Standardize elementary parent/student handbooks, secondary student handbooks, and teacher handbooks.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The executive director of Curriculum and Instruction appoints a handbook revision committee composed of elementary and secondary teachers, parents and administrators to review existing student and teacher handbooks and to determine items applicable to all schools.	August 2001
2.	The committee determines three lists for teacher handbooks; the items applicable for all schools, for only elementary schools and for high schools only. The committee applies the same process	September 2001

	for the parent/student handbooks.	
3.	The committee submits the documents to the executive director of Curriculum and Instruction for review and approval.	November 2001
4.	The executive director of Curriculum and Instruction reviews and approves the document.	December 2001
5.	The executive director of Curriculum and Instruction establishes a timeline for principals to prepare information pertinent only to their school to be included with the standardized information.	January 2002
6.	The principals submit the handbooks to the district print shop and Webmaster.	June 2002
7.	Handbooks are available for the beginning of school.	August 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing funds.

Chapter 3

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

B. COMMUNITY AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Elementary Parent Teacher Organizations (PTOs), the elementary parent advisory committee, high school extra-curricular parent booster clubs and a site-based decision-making committee (SBDM) at each school offer opportunities for parents to get involved with decision making.

Members of the PTOs plan activities for students, assist with special events at the schools and volunteer in the classrooms and offices of the school. EPISD established an elementary parent advisory committee that meets two to four times yearly to receive information on the district's curriculum and give feedback to the district. Booster clubs at the secondary schools chaperone fieldtrips and hold fundraisers to provide monies for equipment and special trips.

In addition to the parent teacher organizations, individual schools enjoy the involvement in school activities of such community partners as Sul Ross Rio Grande College (SRRGC), Southwest Texas Junior College (SWTJC), local supermarkets and restaurants, department stores, and banks. These businesses provide volunteers to assist the schools in many areas: tutoring students, providing various incentives for the students, providing guest speakers for career days and hosting special events for teachers during Teacher Appreciation Week. Examples of parent and community-involvement in the schools are shown in **Exhibit 3-1**. School principals are responsible for coordinating community-involvement activities, and the director of Career and Technology assists with soliciting Career Day speakers.

Exhibit 3-1
Examples of Volunteer Efforts by School
1999-2000

School	Parental Involvement Activities	Businesses Involved
Austin Elementary and Kennedy Hall Elementary	Volunteers in classrooms and offices, mentors, fieldtrip sponsors, PTO members, Halloween Carnival organizers and workers, UIL activity chaperones, field day workers. school assembly	Peter Piper Pizza, McDonald's, U.S. Border Patrol, Immigration, Eagle Pass Police Dept., NBC Bank, Camino Real Bank, Taco Bell, Cinema Theatre, Aladdin's Castle, Wal-Mart, HEB, Mexican Consulate

	assistants	
Benavides Heights Elementary School	PTO members, SBDM members, tutors, volunteers for special events, decorators for school for holidays, assistants in coaching sports, teachers for mini-courses, office assistants making and distributing instructional materials, chaperones for fieldtrips	Peter Piper Pizza, Taco Bell, Long John Silver's, McDonald's, Burger King, Dairy Queen, Wendy's, Church's, Valley Mart, Eagle Warehouse, HEB, Wal-Mart, Alamo Lumber, McCoy's, Pizza Hut, U.S. Border Patrol, Eagle Pass Police and Fire Departments, J C Penney, South West Texas Junior College
Darr Elementary School	Volunteers in classrooms, assistants to teachers helping with bulletinboards and laminating, supervisors for lunch, office assistants, tutors, PTO volunteers helping with special events, and area Boy Scouts sponsors.	HEB, Peter Piper Pizza, Eagle Pass Fire Department, Sirloin Stockade, McDonald's, Rodriguez of Texas LTD, The Optical, Rodriguez and Associates, U.S. Border Patrol and Customs, Eagle Pass Police Department, Pizza Hut, Aladdin's Castle
Early Childhood Center	PTO members, volunteers with special programs, classroom volunteers	HEB, Peter Piper Pizza, Piedras Negras Super Market, Border Patrol, Eagle Pass Police and Fire Departments, Texas Department of Public Safety, U.S. Customs
Gallego Elementary School	PTO members, safety patrols, chaperones on fieldtrips and volunteers in classrooms, in the workroom, and with special events	SBDM members, career awareness in the classrooms, guest speakers from businesses, U.S. Border Patrol, Eagle Pass Police Department, U.S. Customs, sheriff's office
Glass Elementary School	SBDM members, PTO members, volunteers who assist with after school activities, in the workroom, office, and classroom	NBC bank
Gonzalez Elementary	VIP's (Very Important Parents) - parents who volunteer in various capacities in the school, PTO members, Practical Parent Education Meeting attendees	Peter Piper Pizza, Yeager Barrera Mortuary, Eagle Pass Fire and Police Departments, CP&L, U.S. Border Patrol, Taco Bell, Sonic

Graves Elementary School	PTO members, volunteers who assist in the classroom, workroom, and with traffic control; sponsors for Cub Scouts, cheerleaders and pep squads; workers in the library; assistants for field day; hosts for open house; organizers for fund raising events and assistants who publish newsletters and notices	Law enforcement agencies, Texas National Guard, HEB, Wal-Mart, Peter Piper Pizza, Eagle Pass Business Journal, McDonald's, Pizza Hut, Pepsi Cola, Auto Zone, Alamo Building Supply
Houston Elementary School	SBDM members, PTO members, assistants in office and classrooms who make bulletin boards and help with landscaping, recognition luncheons, special events, volunteer recruitment, and coaching after school.	Pizza Hut Book It program, Peter Pipers Pizza, Taco Bell, Estrada's Carriages, Chente Sounds, HEB, CPL, District Service Center personnel
Kirchner Elementary School	Room-mother volunteers, trainers for Practical Parent Training, assistants for the Spring Festival and Field Day, fieldtrip volunteers, PTO members, SBDM members, grade level parent meeting attendees	HEB
Language Development Center	SBDM members, assistants for special events, PTO members, and volunteers in the classroom	Wal-Mart, HEB, Peter Piper Pizza
Lee Elementary School	Mentors, volunteers in classrooms, sports coaches, attendees for monthly chats with the principal, PTO members, SBDM members, assistants for Cub Scouts	SBDM committee, Adopt-a-School program, Career Day speakers
Rosita Valley Elementary	PTO members, mentors, volunteers for after-school sports program.	HEB, Peter Piper Pizza
Rosita Valley Literacy	Classroom and office volunteers, PTO members	HEB

Academy		
San Luis Elementary School	PTO members, classroom volunteers, extra curricular activity help, sports coaches, school festival workers, tutors, SBDM members	J C Penney, McDonald's, Taco Bell, Peter Piper Pizza, Wal-Mart, The Optical, Lions Club, Knights of Columbus
Seco Mines Elementary School	Volunteers for teachers and in workroom, assistants three times yearly for Reading is Fundamental book distribution, traffic control workers, cafeteria monitors, assistants with registration, sports, cheerleaders; in the library and in computer labs, PTO members	HEB, Dairy Queen, Modern Woodmen of America, Scholastic Books, Mr. Dickerson, Jr., Advantage Signs, American Ads, Eagle Pass Fire Department, Foster Real Estate, Fort Duncan Medical Center, Maverick County Courthouse, Rio Grande College, Sul Ross State University
Eagle Pass Junior High and Memorial Junior High	Band Boosters members, cheerleader parents, fundraising activities organizers, football player parents, fieldtrip chaperones, office volunteers, SBDM members, school club volunteers, and science fair volunteer judges	HEB, Blockbuster Video, Eagle Lumber Co., Cinema Theatre, Ruiz & Association, Knickerbockers & Association, Sirloin Stockade, Wyatt's Cafeteria, Wal-Mart, Eagle Grocery, Eagle Warehouse, Ricardo Calderon Office, D-Lico Perfumes & Sports, Knights of Columbus, Memorial Funeral Chapel, Charcoal Grill, Judge Muniz, Attorney Rodriguez, Pilo's Rental, Jando's Rental, Mancha's Rental, Ford Motors, NBC Bank, Kickapoo Lucky Eagle Casino, Eddie's Sporting Goods, Commissioner Rush, Yeager-Barrera Mortuary
Eagle Pass High School & C.C. Winn Campus	Band Boosters members, motivational speakers, speakers for career presentations	NBC Bank, Brown Foster Association, State Farm, Wickstrom Chevrolet, Pepe's Authentic Foods, Yeager Barrera Mortuary, Maverick Arms, Riojas Optimist Club, Davis Used Cars, South Texas National Bank, Dr. DeLa Pena, Memorial Funeral Chapel, Del Rio Welders. Sirloin Stockade.

		Rodee's Country Chicken, Pizza Hut, HEB, Peter Piper Pizza, many scholarship contributors
Chisum Regional Technical Center	Graduation speakers, math tutors, volunteer custodians and office clerks, advisors, SBDM members, Career Day presenters	Cinema III theatre, HEB, Municipal Officers, Evening Lions Club, Our Lady of Refuge (OLOR) church group
Pregnancy Education and Parenting Center		Community Resource Coordination Group, South Texas Health Support Services, Women, Infants, and Children, Maverick County Human Services, United Medical Centers, Middle Rio Grande Development Council and Child Care Provider Services

Source: Elementary and Secondary Curriculum directors, EPISD, August 2000.

Community involvement also means the interaction between citizens and the board of trustees. The EPISD board meets once a month in the evenings at the EPISD Administration Building. Opportunity for the public to address the board is provided at each board meeting.

FINDING

EPISD provides a wide variety of Parent Education Programs designed to provide training on parenting skills, drug-free awareness, English as a Second Language (ESL) and GED preparation. These parent education programs are coordinated by the director of Special Populations. During 1999-2000, over 2,900 parents participated in the programs provided by EPISD (**Exhibit 3-2**).

Exhibit 3-2
EPISD Parent Education Programs
1999-2000

Parent Education Program	Description of Program
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Parent-to-Parent Training	Drug-Free Education is the topic of these training sessions held monthly at each campus throughout the district.
Practical Parent Education	This program is designed to enhance parent skills. Sessions are held monthly at each school. Each session covers some aspect of parenting such as "Dealing with Teenagers" or "Handling a Family Crisis."
Partners in Education Mobile Classroom	A fully equipped computer lab is based at three campuses per week. The lab is used to teach English as a Second Language (ESL) to parents of immigrant students. Parents can participate at the location most convenient to them.
Summer Vocational Training	Courses ranging from computer literacy to small engine repair and welding are provided free to parents of EPISD students.
Parent Access Lab (PAL)	This lab gives parents the opportunity to study for the GED and/or ESL in a technology-based adult educational setting.
Parent Training Lab - Kickapoo Indian Reservation	This parent training lab is housed on reservation grounds and provides training on various topics of concern to parents, such as nutrition.
Parent Summer Program	This is a one-day summer program for parents. Several one-hour sessions are presented on a variety of topics, ranging from information about programs offered in the district to how to obtain information or assistance from governmental agencies.
Mobile Classroom	A family literacy program operates from a bus equipped with computers and classroom materials.
Parent Education Conference	An all-day conference for parents and school personnel is held yearly at the high school. Several sessions of interest to parents are held each hour. Topics include: information on the Bilingual Program, gangs, drugs and their effects on the community, profiles of the gifted, career and technology program, and learning and literacy at home.

Source: EPISD director of Special Populations.

EPISD partners with Southwest Texas Junior College to provide adult-education opportunities at the Frank Chisum Regional Technical Center. The office of Workforce Training/Development is housed at the center. The college provides 12 different computer classes, nurse aide training, first aid/CPR, lifeguard training and certification, food service manager

certification, refrigerant training and certification, professional truck driving, management business training and banking training.

COMMENDATION

EPISD provides opportunities for parent training and adult education.

FINDING

EPISD partners with the Parks and Recreation Department of the City of Eagle Pass to provide after-school sports activities for elementary students. Each elementary school fields teams in football, basketball, soccer, volleyball and softball. The teams practice in the afternoons at the school, and the Parks and Recreation Department of the city schedules competitions at the Eagle Pass Multipurpose Center. Parent volunteers coach the teams, and the PTOs at each school provide uniforms for the teams.

The sports program not only provides an after-school supervised setting for children whose parents are working, but it provides healthy exercise and interaction for the students.

COMMENDATION

EPISD and the City of Eagle Pass sports program provides a valuable service to parents and children.

Chapter 4

PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

This chapter examines the personnel department of the Eagle Pass Independent School District (EPISD) in the following areas:

- A. Organization and Staffing
- B. Recruitment
- C. Policies and Procedures

Factors critical to the success of any personnel or human resources department include recruitment of qualified candidates for all positions; appropriate staffing and salary administration; and compliance with state and federal personnel laws.

BACKGROUND

In most public school districts, a personnel or human resources department manages employee-related tasks, including:

- Developing wage and salary schedules;
- Maintaining salary systems, including the placement of positions on salary schedules and periodic review to ensure that schedules are competitive with area employers;
- Classifying all positions;
- Developing job descriptions for all positions and modification of the job descriptions to reflect changes in responsibilities;
- Developing personnel staffing tables and reviewing staff allocation formulas;
- Administrating an employee grievance process;
- Recruiting personnel to fill vacant positions;
- Maintaining required employee records;
- Administration of certification and permit processes;
- Issuing contracts and non-renewal or dismissal notices;
- Placing substitutes in jobs as needed;
- Recruiting and placing student teachers in classrooms;
- Developing board policies regarding personnel issues;
- Developing and administering an employee benefits program; and
- Preparing periodic reports addressing local board and state reporting requirements.

EPISD's personnel duties are handled by the executive director for Human Resources, who is assisted by a personnel specialist, an administrative clerk, an auxiliary clerk and an administrative secretary. The district's receptionist also reports to the executive director of Human Resources.

EPISD's executive director of Human Resources took that position in July 2000. Before then, the executive director was the administrator of Human Resources Procedures in Brownsville ISD.

The executive director is responsible for coordinating recruiting, responding to employee relations issues, updating personnel policies, responding to employee grievances and managing the salary plan.

The five paraprofessional positions within the Human Resources Department, and their key responsibilities are:

- Administrative secretary to the executive director. This employee is responsible for directly supporting the executive director and providing assistance as needed throughout the office. The secretary schedules appointments, processes purchase orders for department supplies, prepares and processes necessary forms, and performs other general clerical duties.
- Personnel specialist. This employee is responsible for supervising the work of other department clerical staff, verifying certification of teachers, applying for permits, monitoring deficiency plans, processing retirement forms, administering skills tests required for paraprofessional positions, and processing teacher contracts.
- Administrative clerk. This employee reviews Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) data submitted to the state for accuracy, enters new employee information into the personnel/payroll system and modifies existing information, processes retirement account rollovers to other retirement accounts, maintains files on certified employees, processes administrator contracts, calculates and maintains employee service records, and maintains records for employee service awards.
- Auxiliary clerk. This employee maintains a list of eligible substitute teachers, conducts annual substitute teacher training, maintains files for auxiliary employees, processes applications for part-time and temporary employees, and initiates criminal background checks for new employees.
- Receptionist. This employee answers the main district telephone line, greets visitors to the District Services Building, hands out or sends out applications for employment, and copies or faxes student records to appropriate requesting organizations.

Employees are often required to help with other duties during peak work periods.

The executive director assigns department and campus personnel to conduct recruiting visits, solicit applicants, and conduct candidate interviews. Some personnel-related activities are handled by other

departments exclusively or in conjunction with the executive director (Exhibit 4-1).

Exhibit 4-1
EPISD Personnel Management Responsibilities

Responsibility	Department or Position Involved
Recruiting staff	Human Resources
Hiring staff	All departments
Background checks	Human Resources
Reference checks	Human Resources
Initial salary determinations	Superintendent; Human Resources; department directors; Financial Services
Salary adjustment calculations	Superintendent; department directors; Financial Services
Compensation studies	Human Resources
Attendance monitoring (employees)	All departments
Benefits administration	Financial Services
Employee grievances	All departments
Training/staff development	All departments
Termination	All departments
Planning for staffing levels	Superintendent

Source: EPISD interviews and job descriptions.

EPISD must comply with federal laws governing human resources management, including the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), which governs wages and hourly payments; the Americans with Disabilities Act, which requires employers to provide reasonable accommodation to any employee or job applicant who has a disability; and the Equal Employment Opportunity Act, which prevents employers from making hiring and firing decisions based on age, race, religion, gender or other factors not related to performance. There are also state laws governing school district personnel administration in areas such as employee grievances, due process, termination and contract renewal (Section 21, Texas Education Code).

Payroll accounts for more than 75 percent of EPISD's 2000-01 budget (**Exhibit 4-2**).

Exhibit 4-2
EPISD Expenditures by Category
1999-2000 to 2000-01

Category	Percent of Total Expenditures	
	1999-2000	2000-01
Payroll costs	80.2%	77.2%
Professional and contracted services	6.0%	5.9%
Supplies and materials	7.2%	9.3%
Other operating expenses	1.3%	1.2%
Debt service	4.0%	5.6%
Capital outlay	1.3%	0.8%

Source: TEA, Academic Excellence Indicator System Reports, 1999-2000 and EPISD budget for 2000-01.

Note: Totals may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) categorizes school district staff into three groups for the Academic Excellence Indicate System (AEIS): 1) professional staff, including teachers, professional support staff, campus administrators and central administrators; 2) educational aides; and 3) auxiliary personnel.

The number of full-time equivalent positions (FTEs) for the district from 1996-97 to 1999-2000, and the budget for 2000-01 are described in **Exhibit 4-3**. EPISD staffing increased compared to the student population (10.6 percent increase compared to 6.3 percent). The largest increases have been in professional support personnel and auxiliary staff. According to EPISD personnel responsible for submitting staffing and student data to TEA, information for previous years has not always been reviewed to ensure accuracy, however, the district will do so beginning with 2000-01 data sub missions.

Exhibit 4-3
EPISD Staff FTEs
1996-97 to 2000-01

Staff Category	Budgeted					
	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	Percent Change
Teachers	700.9	705.4	712.1	737.5	753	7.4%
Professional support	73.1	77.6	83.1	82.9	85	16.3%
Campus administration	24.2	26.2	35.2	41.8	27	11.6%
Central administration	6.0	5.0	5.0	4.0	4	-33.3%
Educational aides	242.9	246.8	250.1	254.0	261	7.5%
Auxiliary staff	481.4	475.6	502.1	516.4	543	12.8%
Total staff	1,528.5	1,536.6	1,587.6	1,636.6	1,691	10.6%
Total students	11,803	11,836	12,207	12,436	12,547	6.3%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1996-97 to- 1999-2000 and PEIMS 2000-01.

For EPISD, central administrative staff includes the following positions: superintendent, assistant superintendent and executive director. Campus administration includes the principal, assistant principal, instructional officer and curriculum lead teacher. Professional support includes a counselor, diagnostician and librarian. Auxiliary positions include clerical staff, instructional aides, cafeteria workers, bus drivers, custodians, and maintenance employees.

Exhibit 4-4 compares EPISD's percent of employees budgeted for each group in 2000-01 compared to peer districts employee budgets. EPISD ranks third among peer districts in the number of teachers as a percent of total staff, but EPISD and most of its peer districts rank below the state and regional averages of teachers as a percent of total staff. EPISD has the lowest percent of professional support and along with Harlandale the highest percent of educational aides.

Exhibit 4-4
EPISD Staffing Percentages Compared to Peer Districts, Region 20,
and the State
2000-01

District	Teachers	Professional Support	Campus Administrators	Central Administrators	Educational Aides	Auxiliary Staff
South San	48.4%	7.3%	2.7%	1.2%	13.1%	27.2%

Antonio						
San Felipe - Del Rio	47.3%	6.3%	2.5%	0.4%	12.3%	31.1%
Eagle Pass	44.5%	5.0%	1.6%	1.3%	15.4%	32.1%
Harlandale	44.4%	9.4%	2.5%	1.3%	15.4%	32.1%
Mission	42.8%	6.5%	1.4%	1.1%	14.0%	34.2%
San Benito	41.7%	9.7%	2.3%	1.1%	13.7%	31.6%
Weslaco	38.8%	8.2%	1.8%	0.4%	1.7%	49.1%
State	50.6%	7.9%	2.4%	1.0%	10.3%	27.7%
Region 20	48.2%	8.2%	2.3%	0.9%	11.0%	29.5%

Source: TEA, PEIMS 2000-01.

The executive director of Human Resources and other EPISD employees carry out the following personnel duties:

- Employees required to have a commercial driver's license are subject to drug and alcohol testing. Teachers, coaches and other employees who primarily perform duties other than driving are subject to testing requirements when they are driving. The program is coordinated by the director of Transportation, and tests are administered by the Transportation Department for bus drivers and other EPISD personnel who drive district vehicles.
- Employees are evaluated annually by their immediate supervisor. Each principal or department head is responsible for ensuring all employees are evaluated annually.
- According to EPISD job descriptions, staff development activities are predominantly handled by the directors of Elementary and Secondary Curriculum and by individual campuses based upon campus performance objectives.
- The district developed salary schedules for all district positions. The salary schedule uses pay ranges that identify minimum, midpoint and maximum rates for all positions.
- Salary supplements are provided to individuals who assume additional responsibilities, whether they are academic, such as Academic Decathlon advisor, class sponsor or debate sponsor; co-curricular, such as band director or cheerleader sponsor; or assume athletic responsibilities. These supplements range from \$250 for a

cheerleading sponsor at an elementary school to \$10,000 for the high school head football coach.

- Group insurance is available to all full-time employees and includes health, dental, life, supplemental life, workers compensation, unemployment compensation and cafeteria plan coverage. Prior to annual enrollment, each employee receives an information packet on the available coverage, options and costs. The district makes an annual contribution to cover a portion of the insurance premium cost.
- Other employee benefits such as personal leave, sick leave, local leave, temporary disability, family and medical leave, military leave, assault leave and jury duty also are provided to employees.
- The district maintains a set of personnel policies and updates them in accordance with changes mandated by federal and state government and TEA. In November 2000, EPISD issued its first employee handbook. The handbook includes all EPISD personnel policies.
- The district contracts with DSC, Inc. and the Texas Department of Public Safety, through Region 20, for criminal history reviews.

Chapter 4

PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

A. ORGANIZATION AND STAFFING

FINDING

The executive director is the only professional position within the Human Resources Department. Since coming to the district in August 2000, the executive director assumed not only the human resource duties, but also responsibilities in other areas including serving as the superintendent's designated officer for hearing employee grievances, coordinating the preparation of districtwide publications, serving as the records manager, and maintaining and updating district policies and procedures.

In addition to performing these non-human resource duties, the executive director is also responsible for recruiting teachers, administrators and paraprofessional employees; mentoring new teachers; conducting new employee orientation; reviewing requests for salary adjustments; updating or writing job descriptions; conducting salary surveys; reviewing requests for leaves and absences; and preparing human resources training for district employees.

During the first five months at EPISD, the executive director addressed key weaknesses in the district's human resource system by:

- Updating district personnel policies and procedures and creating the first employee handbook, approved in November 2000;
- Updating employee job descriptions. Previously, the district used generic job descriptions developed by the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB); however, most of these descriptions did not apply to EPISD positions;
- Creating a mentoring program for first-year teachers using the Texas Beginning Educator Support System model. The executive director meets once a month with all new teachers and their mentors, their principals and cooperating teachers from the colleges and universities the new teachers attended;
- Developing the framework for a new administrator training and development academy; and
- Developing a human resources training program addressing areas employees were not sufficiently knowledgeable in, including sexual harassment and Family Medical and Leave Act (FMLA).

The executive director also took on other key duties by attending 10 employee grievance hearings from July through December 2000;

processing 53 requests for leaves and absences due to FMLA or a disability (involves reviewing paperwork, meeting with doctors, and interviewing employees). In addition, the director also performed desk audits of positions requesting salary increases; conducted teacher recruiting, prepared a schedule for Spring 2001; and five major investigations regarding child abuse and employee issues.

The district's other paraprofessional personnel are trained to handle those duties. The executive director also assumed the duties of various Curriculum and Instruction personnel who were on administrative leave.

Recommendation 11:

Create a coordinator of Human Resources position to head the Human Resources Department.

The executive director job description should be broadened to include technology, employee benefits, health services and the print shop duties.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The executive director creates a job description for the coordinator of Human Resources position and reviews it with the superintendent.	August 2001
2.	The executive director advertises the available position, interviews candidates and recommends a candidate to the superintendent for approval.	August - October 2001
3.	The superintendent approves the candidate and recommends approval to the board.	October 2001
4.	The board approves adding the position.	November 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

Based upon a similar budget coordinator position in the Financial Services Department, the coordinator of Human Resources position would have a salary of \$41,033. Including benefits of 20 percent of salary, or \$8,207, the total compensation would be \$49,240. Assuming the successful candidate begins work in December 2001, the first-year cost would be \$36,930.

Recommendation	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Create a coordinator of	(\$36,930)	(\$49,240)	(\$49,240)	(\$49,240)	(\$49,240)

Human Resources position to head the Human Resources Department.					
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FINDING

EPISD is spending an exorbitant amount of money on substitute teachers. Since 1997-98 through 2000-01, EPISD has budgeted or spent nearly \$2.7 million on substitute teachers (**Exhibit 4-5**). These absences do not include time away from the classroom for staff development.

**Exhibit 4-5
EPISD Expenditures for Teacher Substitutes
1997-98 to 2000-01**

Year	Expenditure
2000-01	\$727,635*
1999-2000	\$635,293
1998-99	\$763,525
1997-98	\$559,329
Total	\$2,685,782

*Source: EPISD executive director for Financial Services.
* Budgeted.*

The schools most reliant upon substitute teachers are Eagle Pass High School, Memorial Junior High School, Eagle Pass Junior High School, Eagle Pass High School? C.C. Winn Campus, and Glass Elementary School (**Exhibit 4-6**). Two schools that have only been open since 1998-99, Sam Houston Elementary School and Rosita Valley Literacy Academy, spent \$53,320 and \$57,595, respectively, over the three-year period for substitutes.

**Exhibit 4-6
Expenditures for EPISD Schools most reliant upon substitute teachers**

School	Year				Total
	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01*	

Eagle Pass High School	\$168,650	\$91,455	\$132,908	\$61,101	\$454,114
Memorial Junior High School	\$62,000	\$122,245	\$83,565	\$56,175	\$323,985
Eagle Pass Junior High School	\$83,710	\$90,575	\$60,320	\$13,135	\$248,040
Eagle Pass High School C.C. Winn Campus	\$0	\$134,495	\$58,540	\$35,285	\$228,320
Glass Elementary School	\$31,270	\$32,060	\$32,153	\$7,550	\$103,033

*Source: EPISD executive director for Financial Services. * Through January 18, 2001.*

Teachers are provided 10 days of leave time per year. Teachers are reimbursed by the state for five of the days. The remaining five days are provided by the school district. According to principals, teachers nearly always take the days because they feel entitled to them.

Substitute teachers must have a high school degree or a GED and college credits. The frequent use of substitutes can jeopardize the learning process because substitute teachers may not be as familiar with lesson plans, the learning levels of students and effective teaching strategies for different student learning styles.

Substitute teachers are paid according to the number of college credits they have: those with 59 or fewer college credits receive \$40 per day; those with 60 or more credits but no degree receive \$50; and those with college degrees receive \$60. Based upon funds budgeted for 2000-01 and the substitute pay rates, the district anticipate losing between 12,127 and 18,190 teacher days due to absence.

Prior to 2000-01, there was no incentive to cutting the use of leave days by teachers. A proposal was presented to the board in 2000 to provide \$500 to all teachers who did not use their leave days, but the plan was never adopted by the board. The superintendent and cabinet have proposed a \$1,000 attendance performance stipend and a local leave incentive that will pay for up to 30 accumulated days of unused leave upon an employee's resignation, or up to 45 accumulated days upon employee retirement.

Some principals indicated that they have implemented incentives on their campus. One principal provides a one-hour lunch to all teachers who do not have an absence in any six-week grading period. Another principal

says the school's PTO provides free meal vouchers at local restaurants to teachers who are not absent during a six-week grading period.

Recommendation 12:

Adopt a districtwide incentive plan to reduce the use of substitute teachers.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent assigns the development of an incentive plan to the executive director for Human Resources.	August 2001
2.	The executive director for Human Resources meets with principals to discuss incentives that would reduce the use of substitutes.	August - September 2001
3.	The executive director for Human Resources prepares a plan and meets with the executive director for Financial Services to develop cost estimates of implementing the plan.	October 2001
4.	The executive director for Human Resources presents the plan to principals for review and comment.	November 2001
5.	The executive director for Human Resources incorporates the comments of principals into the plan and presents it to the superintendent for review and approval.	January 2002
6.	The superintendent approves the plan and recommends it to the board for approval.	February 2002
7.	The board approves the plan and authorizes the superintendent to implement during the next fiscal year.	March 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

A plan will most likely include a combination of interim incentives combined with an annual incentive. Incentives provided throughout the year, such as restaurant and meal vouchers, will cost the district no more than \$5,000. An annual incentive plan might include a sliding scale with \$500 for no days missed, \$400 for one day missed, \$300 for two days missed, and so on. With 737 full-time equivalent teaching positions, if 50 percent qualified for the highest amount (\$500), the district would pay \$184,250 (737 teacher positions/2 x \$500 = \$184,250).

If the district could reduce substitute teacher days by 50 percent, or 6,064 days at \$40 a day, and 9,095 at \$60 a day, it could save between \$242,560 (\$40 per day x 6,064 days) and \$545,700

(\$60 per day x 9,095). The midpoint, a likely estimate, would be a savings of \$394,130. ($\$545,700 + \$242,560 = \$788,260 \div 2 = \$394,130$).

Annual savings would be \$209,880 (\$394,130 in reduced substitute teacher costs - \$184,250 in annual incentive awards - \$5,000 in periodic incentive awards = \$209,880).

Recommendation	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Adopt a districtwide incentive plan to reduce the use of substitute teachers.	\$0	\$209,880	\$209,880	\$209,880	\$209,880

Chapter 4

PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

B. RECRUITMENT

TEA's February 1999 *Texas Teacher Recruitment and Retention Study* says Texas is experiencing a growing teacher shortage. According to the report, rising student enrollments, decreasing student teacher enrollment and a lack of state and local resources to maintain competitive salaries are causing the shortage.

The report says districts respond to shortages first by filling vacant positions with teachers certified in other fields, then with teachers hired on emergency permits or long-term substitutes. According to the TEA study, these latter actions may be hurting student performance.

FINDING

EPISD has a difficult time recruiting certified teachers. According to the executive director for Human Resources, of 82 new teachers hired for the 2000-01 school year, only 40, or 48.8 percent, were certified by the state of Texas. In 1999-2000, only 27 certified teachers, or 36.5 percent, were among the 74 new teachers EPISD hired.

Once hired, however, EPISD is better able to retain teachers than other districts in the state or regional (**Exhibit 4-7**).

Exhibit 4-7
EPISD Teacher Turnover
1995-96 to 1999-2000

Entity	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Eagle Pass	13.1%	8.1%	9.9%	12.6%	11.6%
Region 20	12.6%	11.2%	11.8%	13.7%	13.3%
State	12.1%	12.6%	13.3%	15.5%	15.0%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1995-96 to 1999-2000.

According to the executive director of Human Resources, low salaries, especially compared to the school districts in the San Antonio area that EPISD competes with (**Exhibit 4-8**), and the district's distance from a metropolitan area make it difficult to attract certified teachers to Eagle Pass ISD. According to the executive director and principals, new teachers

are most likely to consider EPISD if they have family in the area or originally grew up in the Eagle Pass area. Otherwise, with lower comparative salaries offered in EPISD, teachers choose to work elsewhere.

Exhibit 4-8
EPISD Beginning Teacher Salaries Compared to Area Districts
2000-01

District	Beginning Teacher Salary
Harlandale	\$32,500
San Antonio	\$32,000
Austin	\$30,270
Eagle Pass	\$30,000
San Felipe - Del Rio Consolidated	\$29,000
Laredo	\$29,000
Carrizo Springs	\$26,240
Uvalde	\$26,000
Crystal City	\$25,533
La Pryor	\$24,540

Source: TSPR survey, January 2001.

According to the current and prior executive directors of Human Resources, before 2000-01, EPISD recruited college graduates within and outside of Texas. However, most of the graduates that were recruited were not education students. Since the new teachers lacked certification, they had to get permits.

The state implemented a variety of alternative permitting classifications that allow districts to use people who may have qualifications or a degree in another field of study to fill certified or non-certified positions (**Exhibit 4-9**).

Exhibit 4-9
Types of Permits

Type of Permit	Description
Emergency (for	Activated by the employing superintendent for the

certified personnel)	professional services of a certified individual.
Emergency (for uncertified personnel)	Activated by the employing superintendent for the professional services of an uncertified individual.
Nonrenewable	Issued to allow an individual to complete testing requirements stipulated for continued employment.
Temporary classroom assignment	Activated by the local school district for a teacher who is certified to teach in grades 6-12, but who will be assigned outside the certified area at the secondary level.
District Teaching	Activated by the local school district and approved by the Commissioner of Education for a degreed teacher who is uniquely qualified to teach a particular assignment and does not hold any type of teaching credential.
Temporary Exemption	Activated by the employing superintendent for a certified, degreed teacher who is not certified for the classroom assignment. This exemption cannot be renewed.

Source: TEA.

Helping qualified individuals become certified is one way districts are able to fill positions. This allows a district to hire a person who can then work toward certification. The person and the district must prepare a deficiency plan and file it with the State Board of Educator Certification 60 days before assignment. The plan must include an agreement between a college and the student teacher to complete a certification program. The plan provides specific information on the courses needed for certification and verifies that the individual meets the grade-point average required for admission into the college or university teacher education program. The plan must be completed within three years.

The permits are renewable based upon completion of specified levels of work each year the permit is in use (**Exhibit 4-10**).

Exhibit 4-10
Renewal Requirements for Emergency Permits

Category	Information
General Provisions	1) The employing superintendent or authorized representative of a public school district may renew an emergency permit for the same assignment in the same school district for which the initial permit was activated. 2) No individual may continue in the same assignment for more

	<p>than three years of service on the basis of an emergency permit.</p> <p>3) The total number of semester hours required to obtain certification appropriate for the assignment shall determine the number of permit renewals for which the individual may be eligible. The following schedule shall determine eligibility for permit renewal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One to six semester hours plus the appropriate examination requirements - no renewal. • Seven to 12 semester hours plus the appropriate examination requirements - one renewal. • More than 12 semester hours plus the appropriate examination requirements - two renewals.
Renewal Procedures	<p>Before an emergency permit for a non-certified individual is renewed for the first time, the superintendent or authorized representative must verify that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a non-certified teacher, except one serving in a vocational assignment requiring skill and experience in the area taught, has passed a competency examination of basic skills Texas Academic Skills Program (TASP); and • a non-certified teacher serving in a vocational assignment requiring skill and experience in the area taught has passed the Texas Examination of Current Administrators and Teachers or the reading and writing portions of the TASP.

Source: TEA.

The reliance on graduates from non-education programs means EPISD made frequent use of permits for teachers who did not pass the required Examination for the Certification of Educators in Texas exam (ExCET). **Exhibit 4-11** shows the percent of teachers on permits in EPISD from 1995-96 through 1999-2000. The percent of EPISD teachers using permits averaged about one-fourth of all teachers, and was three to four times higher than the state average during the five-year period.

**Exhibit 4-11
Types of Permits Used by EPISD
1995-96 to 1999-2000**

Type of Permit	Number Used					Percent
	1995-	1996-	1997-	1998-	1999-	

	96	97	98	99	2000	Change over the Five Year Period
Emergency (for certified personnel)	20	52	46	36	26	30.0%
Emergency (for uncertified personnel)	75	84	78	75	74	- 1.3%
Nonrenewable	14	11	12	23	19	35.7%
Temporary classroom assignment	6	5	1	0	0	N/A
District Teaching	1	3	2	3	3	200.0%
Temporary exemption	0	0	1	0	0	N/A
Total	116	155	140	137	122	5.2%
Total teacher FTEs	652.8	700.9	705.4	712.1	737.5	
Percent of EPISD teacher FTEs on permit	17.8%	22.1%	19.8%	19.2%	16.5%	
Percent of state teacher FTEs on permit	3.6%	4.0%	4.1%	5.1%	5.0%	

Source: TEA, AEIS 1995-96 to 1999-2000.

EPISD is more reliant on permits for teachers than any of its peer districts, which illustrates the results of the district's prior strategy of recruiting college and university graduates outside education programs (**Exhibit 4-12**). Among its peer districts, EPISD's percent of teachers on permits (16.5 percent) is almost triple the percent of the next highest district, Mission (5.9 percent).

Exhibit 4-12
EPISD and Peer District Teachers on Permits
1999-2000

Type of Permit	Harlandale	Mission	San Benito	San Felipe	South San	Weslaco	Eagle Pass
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					Antonio		
Emergency (for certified personnel)	11	4	2	3	1	0	26
Emergency (for uncertified personnel)	24	23	17	12	7	26	74
Nonrenewable	11	7	11	0	10	15	19
Temporary classroom assignment	0	13	0	2	1	0	0
District teaching	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Temporary exemption	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	46	47	30	17	19	41	122
Total teacher FTEs	989.7	800.1	577.9	604.9	725.7	861.6	737.5
Percent of district teacher FTEs on permit	4.6%	5.9%	5.2%	2.8%	2.6%	4.8%	16.5%

Source: TEA AEIS, 1999-2000 and TSPR calculation.

According to the executive director of Human Resources, EPISD is attempting to reduce its reliance on permits to qualify individuals for teaching positions. In 2000-01, approximately 14.7 percent of EPISD teachers are on some form of permit (**Exhibit 4-13**).

Exhibit 4-13
EPISD Teachers on Permits
2000-01

School	Number of Teachers on Permits	Description
Secondary schools		

Eagle Pass High School, CC Winn Campus	13	4 science; 3 CATE; 2 social studies; and one each in English, ROTC, foreign language, and special education.
Eagle Pass High School	23	6 science (1 district); 4 math (1 district); 4 business; 3 special education (3 certified teaching outside of their field); and 2 each in English, social studies, and ROTC.
Memorial Junior High School	12	3 math and English; 2 reading; and 1 each in PE, science, social studies, and special education (1 year non-renewable for out of state certification).
Eagle Pass Junior High School	8	3 special education (3 certified, teaching outside of their field); 2 each in business and math (1 certified, teaching outside of their field) and 1 in science.
Subtotal	56	
Elementary schools		
Austin	1	Kindergarten
Darr	5	Bilingual (2 one-year non-renewable)
Language Development Center	1	Kindergarten (certified teaching outside of their field)
Lee	2	Bilingual (2 one-year non-renewable)
Kirchner	1	Bilingual (needs to teach this year for certificate)
San Luis	2	1 each bilingual and special education (certified teaching outside of their field)
Rosita Valley	9	Bilingual (2 on one-year non-renewable permit)
Benavides	3	Bilingual
Early Childhood Center	1	Special education (certified teaching outside of their field)
Seco Mines	6	Bilingual (1 on one-year non-renewable permit)
Sam Houston	3	2 bilingual and 1 special (certified teaching outside of their field)
Rosita Vallev	2	1 each bilingual and kindergarten

Learning Academy		
Gallego	6	5 bilingual and 1 kindergarten (certified teaching outside of their field)
Gonzalez	5	Bilingual
Subtotal	47	
Total	103	
Total teacher FTEs	698.8	
Percent of teachers on permits	14.7%	

Source: EPISD executive director of Human Resources, 2000-01 PEIMS data, and TSPR calculation.

In prior years, EPISD personnel recruited teachers at as many as 22 different job fairs, colleges, and universities. In Spring 2000, EPISD personnel visited the following job fairs, colleges, and universities: Region 20 Job Fair, Southwest Texas State University, University of Texas (Austin and San Antonio), Texas A&M University (Laredo, Corpus Christi, and Kingsville), Angelo State University, Uvalde Community College Job Fair, Sul Ross State University, Texas Tech University, and TASPFA Job Fair. These efforts cost the district over \$25,000 annually.

Of the 82 new teachers recruited for the 2000-01 school year, 63 are first-year teachers recruited as a result of the district's recruitment efforts. Previous EPISD recruitment efforts relied heavily on attracting graduates from the local Sul Ross State University program. For example, 41 of the 2000-01 new teachers, or 50 percent, graduated from Sul Ross State University. However, Sul Ross' education program is currently under review by the Texas Education Agency and any change in the program's status could have a detrimental effect on EPISD recruiting efforts.

Last year, prior to the current executive director of Human Resources arriving, the district joined a personnel cooperative through Region 20 for the 2000-01 year at an estimated annual cost of \$20,000. The cooperative provides a list of member districts to potential applicants through the Region 20 Web site. Districts can access the Web site using a password and identify the name, address, telephone number, and certifications of any potential applicant selecting that district. Through December 2000, only one applicant who selected EPISD agreed to an interview.

To address the limited teacher recruitment success and reduce the current and future number of EPISD teachers on permits, the executive director began a multi-stage process, which includes the following:

- Employ Region 20 personnel to come to EPISD and work with teachers on permits who have not passed ExCET. This work, through Region 20 Teacher Orientation and Preparation Program (TOPP) would involve test taking strategies and assessment of weaknesses.
- Establish a program to allow paraprofessional staff with college credit hours to receive release time from work to attend classes in pursuit of their degree.
- Reduce the reliance on Sul Ross State University for teacher candidates by focusing on a limited number of colleges at which EPISD has had success in recruiting teachers in the past: Southwest Texas State, University of Texas at San Antonio, Our Lady of the Lake, Texas A&M University at College Station, East Central University in Oklahoma. By focusing on a small number of colleges and universities from which to attract teachers, the executive director believes the district can establish stronger ties and create more interest among graduates.
- Work with Sul Ross State University to address issues of concern identified by the TEA and restore the certification of program graduates.
- Evaluate the success of the Region 20 personnel cooperative and continue participation only if the program generates a sufficient number of candidates in areas targeted by EPISD.
- Establish student teaching relationships with the Texas colleges and universities in the Eagle Pass, San Antonio, and College Station areas to pre-identify qualified candidates.

COMMENDATION

EPISD is addressing the need for attracting certified teachers through a series of coordinated efforts in focused district-college relationships, elimination of current teacher deficiencies, and long-term investments in non-teaching employees and student teachers.

FINDING

Eagle Pass ISD has a significant number of staff with 20 or more years of service who will be eligible for full retirement.

Beginning in 2000-01, 108 professional EPISD employees were eligible for full retirement. This total includes 60 teachers, 23 professional support personnel (e.g., counselor, librarian), 16 campus administrators (e.g.,

principal, assistant principal), and nine central office administrator (e.g., superintendent, assistant superintendent, director).

The total salary for the 108 employees eligible to retire in 2001-02 is \$6,059,574. **Exhibit 4-14** presents the salary information for each category of employees eligible to retire in 2001-02, the average annual salary of those eligible to retire and the average annual salary of all employees in the category.

Exhibit 4-14
Total and Average Annual Salary of EPISD Employees Eligible to Retire in 2001-02

Position Category	Total Salaries of Employees Eligible for Retirement	Average Salary of Employees Eligible to Retire in Position Category	Average Salary of All Employees in Position Category
Campus administration	\$1,015,740	\$63,484	\$54,864
Central administration	\$570,823	\$63,424	\$76,253
Professional support	\$1,210,635	\$52,636	\$47,482
Teachers	\$3,262,376	\$54,373	\$39,131
Total	\$6,059,574		

Source: EPISD executive director of Human Resources and TSPR calculation.

The Teacher Retirement System (TRS) of Texas administers a defined benefit pension plan for school district employees. Under this plan, the state pays retirees a retirement annuity based on a benefit formula that uses the employee's years of service, multiplied times a benefit rate of 2.2 percent for each year of service, times the average of the three highest annual salaries.

TRS members are eligible for full or normal retirement with five or more years of service credit at age 65, or any combination of age and years of service credit equal to a total of 80. Members are also given the option to retire early with reduced benefits.

Many districts carefully plan for the future by using tools like retirement incentive plans that assist in the controlled exit of experienced staff and the careful replacement of those retiring positions. Through better management of the exodus, the district has adequate time to recruit highly qualified individuals to replace key employees so that a more orderly transition can be made not only hiring replacements but for other priorities of the district.

In addition, the employees who take advantage of the plan need not necessarily retire from TRS or from their chosen profession. Eligible EPISD employees could be offered retirement options such as retiring from EPISD and receiving the district's retirement incentive only. This would mean that their years of experience would not be lost to the profession, but instead, the employees would have extra cash to use as a retirement nest egg as they continue to teach, support or administer in another district.

An incentive plan does not necessarily restrict the district from re-employing a retired participant to the extent permitted by the TRS rules of employment. Consequently, if a large number of experienced teachers accepted the offer, the district would be able to rehire or contract with some of them, perhaps with more flexible schedules to encourage their continued involvement in the education of children and mentoring of less experienced teachers.

Districts must carefully consider all aspects of an incentive against the possible negative impacts and fully understand the legal and management issues surrounding a plan.

Recommendation 13:

Implement a controlled retirement incentive plan.

While the district may benefit from not replacing some retirees depending on the position and the need, a planned approach, using retirement incentives, could make the turnover rate more gradual.

The district could conduct a comprehensive analysis to fully understand the effect the retirement incentive plan would have on the district and its management structure.

The retirement incentive plan could be structured as a one-time cash incentive of 50 percent of the employee's annual salary.

When designing a plan, EPISD administrators should be mindful of all the legal issues surrounding retirement incentives; these issues should be

clearly communicated to interested employees as well. In compliance with the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, the plan must be voluntary, and apply to all classes of employees. Money received by retiring employees is considered taxable income by the Internal Revenue Service but is not treated as income by TRS.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent reviews the list of district employees with creditable service in TRS eligible for the retirement plan.	August 2001
2.	The superintendent, the district's attorney, the assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, the executive director for Human Resources, and the executive director for Financial Services explore the impact of a retirement plan on overall district operations.	August - October 2001
3.	The superintendent presents findings to the board for discussion and/or approval.	November 2001
4.	Information on the plan is prepared and disseminated to eligible employees, a window for signing up for the incentive is created and the program is implemented.	January - March 2001
5.	The affects of employee participation are assessed and adjustments are made to recruiting plans and salary schedules.	April - June 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

Key assumptions in the fiscal estimate include:

- One hundred eight (108) EPISD employees eligible for retirement in 2001-02 are eligible to participate in the plan;
- The average salary of a replacement is the EPISD average salary for a teacher with five years of experience (\$32,850);
- An estimated 60 percent of eligible employees (64 employees) will elect to participate in the plan. Salaries for these employees total \$3,635,744 (60 percent x total salaries for all eligible employee of \$6,059,574 as shown in **Exhibit 4-14** = \$3,635,744);
- Sixty percent of the eligible number in each staff category will elect to participate: 36 teachers (60 percent of 60 eligible teachers); 14 professional support personnel (60 percent of 23 eligible professional support personnel); 9 campus administrators (60 percent of 16 eligible campus administrators); and 5 central administrators (60 percent of 9 eligible central administrators);
- Participants will receive a lump sum payment of 50 percent of annual salary of \$3,635,744 payable in two annual installments at the beginning of the 2002-03 and 2003-04 fiscal years. The

district's lump sum cost for participants will be \$1,817,872 or \$908,936 in each of the first two years (total salaries of \$3,635,744 x 50 percent = \$1,817,872 ÷ 2 = \$908,936);

- Sixty-four new hires will replace retiring employees. The district should evaluate each position before refilling it. The district will spend \$2,102,400 on new hires' salaries (64 new hires x \$32,850 = \$2,102,400).

The total potential savings from implementing this plan would be \$4,315,504 over four years beginning in 2002-03.

EPISD may incur additional costs for accrued sick leave, but this amount should be capped for each employee based on a finite number of days at a reduced daily rate. These costs are not included in this estimate but should not exceed \$50 per day per employee.

Recommendation	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-05	2005-06
Employees accept plan.	\$0	\$3,635,744	\$3,635,744	\$3,635,744	\$3,635,744
Lump sum payment to employees accepting plan.	\$0	(\$908,936)	(\$908,936)	\$0	\$0
Hire new employees to replace employees accepting plan.	\$0	(\$2,102,400)	(\$2,102,400)	(\$2,102,400)	(\$2,102,400)
Net savings (cost)	\$0	\$624,408	\$624,408	\$1,533,344	\$1,533,344

Chapter 4

PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

C. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

FINDING

Active employee files are maintained at the central office in a vault at the front of the District Services Building. According to EPISD personnel, the vault is not fire-resistant. Inactive employee files are maintained in the central warehouse. Based upon the review team's inspection, no additional room is available to store records in the vault.

Exhibit 4-15 shows what information is stored in administrator/teacher and paraprofessional employee files, which includes educational aides.

Exhibit 4-15
Information Contained in EPISD Employee Files 2000-01

Administrator/Teacher File	Paraprofessional File
Evaluations	Evaluations
Contracts	Contracts
Tuberculosis test results	TB test results
Audit card	Audit card
Teacher certificate	Paraprofessional certificate
Transcripts (original)	Transcripts (original)
Permits	Letters of reasonable assurance
Professional application	Application
Correspondence on certificates/permits	Paraprofessional test results
Oath of office	Oath of office
Birth certificate	Birth certificate
Citizenship form (IRS form I-9)	Citizenship form (IRS form I-9)
General correspondence	General correspondence
Disclosure statement	High school diploma
	Disclosure statement

Source: EPISD executive director of Human Resources 2000-01.

EPISD employees responsible for maintaining the files were not aware of what information was required by TEA to be in each employee's file. As a result, some of the files have grown to considerable size.

TEA requires that the following records on professional personnel be readily available for review: credentials (certificate or license); service record(s) and any required attachments; contract; teaching schedule or other assignment record; and absence from duty reports.

Districts such as Beaumont, Clear Creek, Spring, Galena Park, and Fort Bend have purchased software allowing them to scan information into a computer and store it on a disk. The City of Dallas aggressively incorporates document imaging in developing its records retention, storage and destruction schedules. Document imaging allows an organization to store up to 30,000 pages of paper on a disk and eliminates the need for excessive storage space.

The Texas State Library and Archives Commission has adopted standards for document imaging and storage that meet legal requirements for permanent and temporary records. The development of an imaging system has replaced the need for maintaining a filing system and increased district and citizen access to information.

In 2000-01, the Human Resources Department ordered a high-speed scanner and accompanying computer system to begin storing permanent and temporary records on disks. Also, in an effort to increase storage space in the records vault, an outside firm was hired to evaluate current use of that space and recommend a more efficient and organized method for using this space until all records are stored electronically.

COMMENDATION

EPISD is exploring ways to store information electronically to reduce storage requirements and expand access.

FINDING

Applicants for paraprofessional jobs are tested on an appointment-only basis. Applicants for instructional aide positions are tested twice each year, once in the Fall and once in the Spring. The tests are administered and graded manually. All applicants for each position take the same tests regardless of the responsibilities of the position, and none of the tests have been evaluated for applicability to the specific positions for which they are administered.

Written tests for paraprofessional positions include vocabulary, spelling, filing, technical knowledge (e.g., computer system language), math, usage and expression, and letter writing skills. A typing test for speed and accuracy is administered to paraprofessional position applicants. For aide positions, written tests include vocabulary, reading comprehension, spelling, language mechanics (e.g., use of quotation marks), capitalization, language expressions and math computation.

Districts such as Cypress-Fairbanks ISD and Clear Creek ISD use automated testing with self-scoring capabilities. Their systems also can test math, grammar and sentence construction knowledge.

The Mental Health Mental Retardation Authority of Harris County contracts with a temporary employment firm to conduct all paraprofessional testing. The firm varies the test based upon the position and grades all tests. The firm charges a fee that varies based upon the components of the test (i.e., spelling only; spelling and grammar; or spelling, grammar and math).

Recommendation 14:

Redesign the paraprofessional applicant testing process to test for specified skills such as spelling, math and grammar.

Tests should be designed specifically for the requirements of each position. Either an automated testing program or an outside vendor supplying the necessary service would reduce the amount of staff time necessary and allow the tests to be configured for each paraprofessional positions.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMETABLE

1.	The executive director of Human Resources reviews requirements for paraprofessional positions to determine which positions will require testing and what types of tests will be necessary.	October 2001 - December 2001
2.	The executive director of Human Resources reviews automated testing systems used in other districts and the availability of an outside firm to conduct the testing.	January - March 2002
3.	The executive director of Human Resources recommends selection of an automated testing system or several local vendors to the superintendent.	April 2002
4.	The superintendent approves the recommendation for inclusion in the budget.	May 2002

5.	The board approves the budget.	August 2002 - September 2002
6.	The executive director of Human Resources eliminates all manual testing for paraprofessional positions.	October 2001
7.	The executive director of Human Resources implements the process.	September 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

Automated testing software costs approximately \$4,000 with an annual maintenance contract of \$500. Contracted services will vary but typically cost about \$25 per test. According to the Human Resource staff, the district tests about 200 applicants for aide positions and 600 applicants for clerical positions each year. Assuming that only 60 percent of the 800 applicants are tested in the future, or 480 applicants, EPISD would pay \$12,000 annually plus a \$500 annual maintenance fee. The first year would include a \$4,000 one time cost for the software.

Recommendation	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Redesign the paraprofessional applicant testing process to test for specified skills such as spelling, math and grammar.	(\$12,500)	(\$12,500)	(\$12,500)	(\$12,500)	(\$12,500)
One time fee for software.	(\$4,000)				
Net Savings (cost)	(\$16,500)	(\$12,500)	(\$12,500)	(\$12,500)	(\$12,500)

Chapter 5

FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

This chapter reviews facilities use and management for the Eagle Pass Independent School District (EPISD) in the following areas:

- A. Facilities Planning
- B. Maintenance
- C. Custodial Operations
- D. Energy Management

A comprehensive facilities, maintenance and energy management program coordinates all the physical resources in a district. The program must effectively integrate facilities planning with all other aspects of school planning. The most effective and efficient plant operations and maintenance programs involve facilities managers in strategic planning, design and construction. Additionally, all facilities departments should operate under clearly defined policies and procedures.

Facilities use and management managers ensure that district facilities are designed and built in a way that enhances the educational process. Facilities managers must also maintain equipment in peak operating condition; provide a clean school and working environment; ensure facilities comply with local, state and federal building regulations; and minimize the district's utility costs.

Efficient facilities operations help districts keep up with change in enrollment and changing instructional program needs, and are essential to building public trust and confidence in district management.

BACKGROUND

EPISD owns and operates 29 facilities with 1,367,366 square feet of space (**Exhibit 5-1**).

Exhibit 5-1
EPISD Facilities
2000-01

School/facility	Number of Students*	Square Footage		
		Total	Permanent	Portable
Secondary schools				

Eagle Pass High School	1,825	185,079	173,079	12,000
Chisum Technical Center	121	25,000	25,000	0
De Luna Alternative Center	33	20,357	20,357	0
Eagle Pass High School, C.C. Winn Campus	1,148	195,650	195,650	0
Eagle Pass Junior High School	847	108,422	108,422	0
Memorial Junior High School	1,025	127,630	127,630	0
Austin	279	42,282	40,032	2,250
Benavides	483	37,856	31,856	6,000
Darr	546	48,473	39,473	9,000
Early Childhood Center	356	22,032	2,400	19,632
Gallego	520	43,256	41,756	1,500
Glass	491	46,112	37,112	9,000
Gonzalez	511	41,756	41,756	0
Graves	515	28,349	20,849	7,500
Kennedy Hall	395	22,466	11,954	10,512
Kirchner	114	9,604	5,104	4,500
Language Development Center	523	36,231	34,731	1,500
Lee	539	39,029	34,529	4,500
Rosita Valley	371	43,100	41,600	1,500
Rosita Valley Literacy Academy	441	28,352	4,800	23,552
Sam Houston	449	41,756	41,756	0
San Luis	562	62,964	59,964	3,000
Seco Mines	590	39,783	29,283	10,500
Other facilities				
District service center	N/A	27,600	27,600	0
Maintenance/storage building	N/A	7,676	7,676	0
Warehouse	N/A	17,776	17,776	0

Transportation building	N/A	9,393	9,393	0
Multiplex administration building	N/A	5,313	5,313	0
Day care center	N/A	4,069	4,069	0
Total	12,684	1,367,366	1,240,920	126,446

Source: EPISD coordinator of Facilities and Maintenance.

**As of March 30, 2001.*

EPISD's coordinator of Facilities and Maintenance oversees each major construction project, including construction schedules, change order requests and project problems. The coordinator reports to the executive director of District Operations.

EPISD passed bond issues in May 1996, 1997 and 2000. The amounts of each issue were \$8 million in 1996 and \$18 million in both 1997 and 2000. The 1996 election had only one proposition, which did not specify what facilities would be built or renovated with the funds. Ultimately, the bond funds were used to construct the new high school campus, C.C. Winn.

In the May 1997 bond election, there was also only one proposition, which specified the construction of two elementary schools, Gallego and Gonzalez, and Eagle Pass Junior High School.

In the May 2000 bond election, there were three propositions that addressed several needs
(**Exhibit 5-2**).

**Exhibit 5-2
May 2000 Bond Propositions**

Proposition	Use	Amount
1	Construct new San Luis Elementary School	\$4,150,000
	Renovation of existing school facilities	4,375,000
	Architect fees	600,000
	Issuance costs	75,000
	Subtotal	\$9,200,000
2	CC Winn Campus gym addition	900,000

	Construction of multipurpose buildings	3,600,000
	Subtotal	\$4,500,000
3	Construct new elementary school	4,100,000
	Purchase land	200,000
	Subtotal	\$4,300,000
Total		\$18,000,000

Source: EPISD coordinator of Facilities and Maintenance.

EPISD's maintenance and custodial expenditures are the fourth highest compared to its peer districts (**Exhibit 5-3**). EPISD's maintenance and custodial budget is also the fourth-highest among its peers, is at the state average and is slightly above the regional average.

Exhibit 5-3
EPISD and Peer District Maintenance and Custodial Budgets
2000-2001

District/ Entity	Maintenance and Custodial Budgets	Percent of Total Budget
Harlandale	\$12,335,742	11.0%
San Benito	\$5,846,366	9.8%
San Felipe-Del Rio	\$6,550,392	10.0%
Mission	\$7,923,125	9.7%
Weslaco	\$8,003,354	8.4%
South San Antonio	\$5,367,611	7.6%
Eagle Pass	\$6,723,506	9.0%
Region 20	\$185,508,360	8.4%
State	\$2,576,890,955	9.5%

Source: TEA, PEIMS 2000-2001.

On a per student basis, EPISD maintenance and custodial costs are the lowest among peer districts (**Exhibit 5-4**). The cost per student is also below both the state and regional averages.

Exhibit 5-4
EPISD and Peer District Maintenance and Custodial Budgeted Cost
Per Student
2000-2001

District/ Entity	Maintenance and Custodial Budgets	Enrollment	Budgeted Maintenance and Custodial Cost Per Student
Eagle Pass	\$6,723,506	12,547	\$536
Region 20	\$185,508,360	32,5851	\$569
Weslaco	\$8,003,354	13,466	\$594
Mission	\$7,923,125	12,481	\$635
South San Antonio	\$5,367,611	10,004	\$537
State	\$2,576,890,955	4,071,433	\$633
San Felipe-Del Rio	\$6,550,392	10,046	\$652
San Benito	\$5,846,366	8,898	\$657
Harlandale	\$12,335,742	14,500	\$851

Source: TEA, PEIMS 2000-2001.

Chapter 5

FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

A. FACILITIES PLANNING

A school district's long-range comprehensive master plan is a compilation of district policies, information and statistical data that provides a basis for planning educational facilities to meet the changing needs of a community. The master plan becomes the district's policy statement for allocating resources, and offers potential alternatives for facility improvement.

Effective school facilities master planning incorporates the following elements:

Facility Capacity: The capacity of each school facility should be established with standards that govern student-to-teacher ratios and the amount of square feet required per student in a classroom. These standards also should deal with the minimum size of core facilities (such as gyms, cafeterias and libraries) so that schools do not overload these facilities or use too many portable classrooms.

Facility Inventory: An accurate facility inventory is an essential tool in managing the usage of school facilities. Each school inventory should identify the use and size of each room. This enables planners to accurately set the maximum capacity of each school. Modifications to schools should be noted in the inventory so that it can be kept up to date.

Enrollment Projections: Effective planning requires accurate enrollment projections. These projections should be made for at least five years into the future. Accurate projections require planners to examine neighborhood demographics and track new construction activity. Many school planners work in coordination with county and city planners to track growth patterns.

Attendance Zones: While the use of portable classrooms can temporarily alleviate overcrowding due to fluctuations in enrollment, they can also become a liability to the educational program if a district uses too many to handle the overloading of core facilities. Therefore, an effective enrollment management plan calls for adjustments in attendance zones whenever they prove necessary. While such adjustments often prove unpopular with parents and students, they are necessary if all students are to have appropriate access to school facilities.

Capital Improvement Master Plan: Effective planning requires the district to anticipate its future needs and balance these against resources. A capital master plan charts future improvements to school facilities and identifies funding sources for them. The planning process, which should involve the community at large, should identify district goals and objectives and prioritize projects based on those goals and objectives.

FINDING

EPISD's facilities plan covers 1996 through 2001 and has not been updated during that period. As a result, student enrollment projections that were generated in March 1996 have not been updated and are no longer accurate. Also, the district considered the needs of individual schools without an evaluation of overall district needs. Consequently, the district is building or planning to build new schools while the student enrollments at existing schools dropped below stated capacities; making the school's operating costs vary widely.

The district uses a long-range facilities master plan developed by an architectural firm in 1996. The plan covers a five-year period ending in 2001. Based on this plan, the district elected to construct a new high school campus (CC Winn), a new junior high school campus (Eagle Pass Junior High School) and three new elementary schools (Sam Houston, Gonzalez, and Gallego). The district also based bond packages passed in 1996, 1997 and 2000 on this plan.

The architectural firm prepared enrollment projections through 2000-01 based upon historical district trends using the cohort survival method. This method uses the historical data of a group of students progressing from one grade to another and tracks the percentage of students that actually move to the next level from kindergarten through grade 12. The percentage is used to project likely student population.

Exhibit 5-5 compares the student enrollment projections contained in the facilities plan to actual enrollment by school from 1996-97 through 2000-01. Actual enrollment for 2000-01 is through March 30, 2001. According to the coordinator of Facilities and Maintenance, the district has not updated these projections.

Exhibit 5-5
EPISD Student Enrollment by School Compared to Facilities Master Plan Projections
1996-97 to 2000-01

School/facility	Projected versus Actual
-----------------	-------------------------

	1996-97		1997-98		1998-99		1999-2000		2000-01	
	Proj	Act	Proj	Act	Proj	Act	Proj	Act	Proj	Act
Secondary schools										
Eagle Pass High School (1)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1,793	1,730	1,741	1,807	1,705	1,825
Eagle Pass High School, CC Winn Campus	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1,306	1,183	1,215	1,174	1,217	1,148
Eagle Pass Junior High School (2)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	789	767	780	818	765	847
Memorial Junior High School	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	917	996	914	1,010	928	1,025
Elementary schools										
Austin	407	395	395	397	405	411	403	263	414	279
Benavides	473	513	483	498	490	516	493	494	491	483
Darr	719	721	731	760	741	780	742	519	763	546
Early Childhood Center	477	570	514	622	567	636	621	486	674	356
Glass	734	742	750	709	760	740	790	731	815	491
Graves	505	454	488	449	472	495	460	510	465	515
Kirchner	133	124	134	122	130	109	130	117	133	114
Language Development Center	575	563	573	587	561	599	565	517	575	523
Lee	591	581	612	615	631	660	642	549	649	539
Rosita Valley	861	879	904	947	936	309	953	341	951	371
San Luis	548	549	532	538	533	552	550	542	565	562
Seco Mines	631	619	668	610	690	688	695	565	687	590
Sam Houston	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	364	N/A	404	N/A	449

Gallego	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	523	N/A	520
Gonzalez	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	460	N/A	511
Rosita Valley Literacy Academy	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	388	N/A	413	N/A	441
Kennedy Hall	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	398
Total	6,654	6,710	6,784	6,854	11,721	11,923	11,694	12,243	11,797	12,533
Variance of actual enrollment from projected enrollment	0.8%		1.0%		1.7%		4.7%		7.5%	

Source: EPISD Master Plan for School Facilities, 1996 through 2001, prepared by SHW Group, Inc.

Note: Projected enrollment figures not provided for alternative programs. Actual enrollment totals reflect enrollment in alternative programs; hence, totals in these columns may not add due to these adjustments.

(1) Eagle Pass High School, CC Winn Campus opened in 1998-99. Before that, Eagle Pass High School had students in grades 10-12.

(2) Prior to 1998-99, Eagle Pass Junior High School and Memorial Junior High School had students in grades 7-9. Beginning in 1998-99, both schools had students in grades 7-8 only.

The actual student enrollments vary from the projections and grow further apart over the five-year period. Some of the individual school differences can be attributed to the opening of new facilities, including:

- Glass Elementary School changed from grades K-6 to grades 3-6 in 1999-2000. The students in grades pre-K-2 attended Kennedy Hall.
- Seco Mines Elementary School students in grades pre-K-1 attended Gallego beginning in 1999-2000.

- Sam Houston Elementary School (grades 2-6) opened in 1998-99 to relieve student over capacity at Rosita Valley Elementary School.
- Rosita Valley Literacy Academy opened in 1998-99 to relieve student over capacity at Rosita Valley Elementary School.
- Gonzalez Elementary School (grades 1-6) opened in 1999-2000 to relieve student over-capacity at Darr Elementary School.

Several other factors will affect facilities planning in EPISD. New housing growth is occurring rapidly to the north of the city of Eagle Pass and away from the central part of Eagle Pass where the district has a concentration of schools. Behind Eagle Pass Junior High School, 100 residential lots have been developed and another 337 are platted for development. These developments will affect enrollment at Graves and Glass Elementary Schools.

Behind the BORDER=1 Patrol station west of Del Rio Boulevard, a new 300-lot subdivision is being developed. This development will affect the old junior high school, which is serving as a temporary elementary school while the district constructs a new elementary school to replace San Luis Elementary School. Additionally, a subdivision with 718 lots is under development between Highway 57 and Loop 431, northeast of Eagle Pass. This subdivision already includes 100 Lee Elementary School students who are bused across several school zones, and the continued growth of this subdivision will also affect school construction planned north of the city.

The facilities plan adopted by the district and funded by the three bond issues calls for a fourth elementary school to be built in the north part of the district near Eagle Pass Junior High School. This elementary school will open in 2002 and is designed to address student over-capacity at Gallego Elementary School as well as fast growth in the north section of Eagle Pass. Another factor affecting future facilities planning is that EPISD is considering the establishment of two four-year high schools to address student over-capacity at the old Eagle Pass High School. One high school campus would be at the old Eagle Pass High School, which currently houses only ninth and tenth graders, and one at the C.C. Winn campus, which currently has only eleventh and twelfth graders.

According to the executive director for Operations, a third factor affecting facilities planning is that school attendance zones are not drawn to reflect appropriate feeder patterns, but to make sure that schools are filled with students. For example, about 70 students live within the original attendance boundary of Lee Elementary School. To fill the school, other students are bused from Loma Bonita, Calle de los Santos and Westlakes subdivisions or other areas of the city. This busing provides an additional

320 to 400 students. A fourth factor affecting facilities planning is the board policy on student transfers (Local policy FDB) According to principals and central administrative staff, students have been allowed to transfer for almost any reason, which exacerbates the facilities use and planning process.

A final factor affecting facilities planning is that the board established capacity limits for elementary schools of between 500 and 550 students. This limits the number of geographical areas a school can serve. In addition, teachers and principals were critical of the facilities planning and construction process. Neither group indicated that they were involved in planning facilities. Among concerns cited by the two groups were that there is only one set of restrooms at one end of some new schools, outside access doors to school grounds are located in unusual places, such as through the school library; there is poorly designed access to, and parking at the facilities; and there is a lack of two-way communication between the school offices and classrooms.

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) recommends a facilities planning process model to assist districts in organizing and planning for facility growth (**Exhibit 5-6**). A planning model allows a variety of planning issues to be identified and addressed in the development of a master plan.

Exhibit 5-6
TEA Recommended Facilities Planning Process

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

Approach	Management Plan	Detail roles, responsibilities, and procedures	Program management plan and systems
	Program Strategy	Review and refine details	Detailed delivery strategy
	Program Guidelines		Educational specifications, design guidelines, CAD standards

Source: TEA.

Districts that have been successful in planning for facilities needs and receiving voter approval include principals, teachers and citizens throughout the planning and facilities development process. These districts also update enrollment projections annually to reflect trends in student movement.

Recommendation 15:

Establish a facilities committee to re-evaluate the facilities master plan.

The district should establish a facilities committee to review enrollment projections; review time schedules and priorities associated with scheduled new facilities; review the current student transfer policy and its impact; and review the cost-benefit of keeping existing facilities open or used as schools compared to other district needs. The committee should have 25 to 30 members including EPISD administrators, teachers and maintenance staff and members of the community representing each of the schools. Principals should work with the committee to confirm the priorities.

Each year the master plan must be reviewed and updated to reflect changing priorities and events that have occurred. The process is an opportunity to involve the community in understanding the breadth of facilities issues and in determining priorities.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Board of Trustees establishes a committee and nominates citizens from across the community to participate.	August 2001
2.	The superintendent selects EPISD staff to serve on the committee.	August 2001

3.	The superintendent designates EPISD staff to serve as support to the committee and schedules the initial meeting.	August 2001
4.	The designated staff position establishes a meeting schedule, updates and reviews enrollment and operating cost information with the committee, and, if necessary, conducts a tour of all facilities.	September - October 2001
5.	The committee prepares a priority list of facilities needs and holds district meetings to gather feedback from parents and residents.	November 2001 - January 2002
6.	The committee includes the community input in their recommendations and combines the priorities into a recommended five-year master plan.	February 2002
7.	The superintendent reviews the plan and recommends approval to the board.	February 2002
8.	The board reviews the plan, makes modifications and approves the overall plan.	March 2002
9.	The coordinator of Facilities and Maintenance updates the plan annually, reviews the cost information and presents recommendations to the board.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be accomplished with existing resources.

FINDING

EPISD keeps some schools open that are unnecessary to meet current enrollment nor future growth trends. As a result, school operation and staffing and student transportation costs are increased.

The cost per student (defined as salaries, benefits, contract services, utilities, insurance, supplies, capital outlay and other expenses) to operate each EPISD school varies widely (**Exhibit 5-6**).

EPISD also incurs additional operations costs by redesigning facilities rather than adjusting feeder patterns and/or reviewing whether facilities should be open. There is no consistency in grade alignment at the elementary school level. Five elementary schools have grades 1-6, three have grades K-6, two have grades pre-K-6, two have grades 2-6, two have grades early childhood through kindergarten, one has grades pre-K-1, one has grades pre-K-2, and one has grades 3-6 (**Exhibit 5-7**).

EPISD also incurs additional operations costs by redesigning facilities rather than adjusting feeder patterns and/or reviewing whether facilities should be open. There is no consistency in grade alignment at the elementary school level. Five elementary schools have grades 1-6, three have grades K-6, two have grades pre-K-6, two have grades 2-6, two have grades early childhood through kindergarten, one has grades pre-K-1, one has grades pre-K-2, and one has grades 3-6 (**Exhibit 5-7**).

As a result of the facilities plan adopted by the district and funded through the bond issues, several problems exist with the current use of EPISD facilities:

- Eagle Pass High School, which includes grades 9-10, grew at a rate 10 percent above the plan projections, while CC Winn campus, which includes grades 11-12 never has reached student enrollment estimates.
- Rosita Valley Elementary School, which was relieved of over capacity through the construction of Sam Houston Elementary School and Rosita Valley Literacy Academy, now has only 361 students but a capacity for 667.
- The site on which Rosita Valley Elementary School sits had enough land acreage to accommodate the addition of classroom space to the existing facility. However, Rosita Valley Literacy Academy, which is adjacent to Rosita Valley Elementary School, was built as a separate school and has its own principal and facilitator (assistant principal).
- Gallego Elementary School, which was built to relieve over capacity at Seco Mines Elementary School, is already over capacity in its second year of operation and has added portable buildings to meet the need.
- Austin Elementary School has been at approximately 60 percent of capacity for the 1999-2000 and 2000-01 school years. Its current attendance zone will not provide additional students beyond this level.
- Lee Elementary Schools relies on 85 percent of its students being bussed into the school from non-contiguous attendance zones that should really be associated with other schools.
- Kirchner Elementary School is over 20 miles away from the main part of the district and has seen its enrollment decline to less than 120 students.

Recommendation 16:

Close three EPISD elementary schools: Lee, Austin, and Kirchner.

All teachers should be reassigned to other schools based upon capacity and district goals for class sizes. Students from the schools should be reassigned to new schools being constructed or already planned as part of prior bond issues and the prior facilities plan.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The committee appointed to update the facilities plan should oversee the closing of the three schools.	August 2001 and Ongoing
2.	The committee studies the use of existing facilities and holds public meetings, conducts surveys, and uses other appropriate methods to receive input from all stakeholders.	November 2001 - January 2002
3.	The committee includes the recommendations in the plan update presented to the board.	February 2002
4.	The board approves the committee's recommendations and plan update.	March 2002
5.	The board announces closings for the 2002-03 school year.	March 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

Based upon the operational costs of the facilities, the district could save all but the salary and benefits costs at Austin, Lee, and Kirchner Elementary Schools. Additional revenue would be gained from the property sales of closed facilities and the land on which they are located, but since it is impossible to predict the timing associated with real estate sales, no additional revenues from sale of the closed facilities or the land on which they are located is included in the fiscal impact.

Exhibit 5-7 summarizes the fiscal impact associated with the closing of the three elementary schools. Annual savings would be \$582,665. Annual costs for transportation of students from Kirchner to other schools would be \$30,000. The net savings to the district would be \$552,665 annually.

**Exhibit 5-7
Potential EPISD Revenues, Operational Savings and Costs
Associated with Closing Three Elementary Schools**

Facility	Recommendation	Estimated Annual Revenue or Savings	Estimated Annual Cost
Austin Elementary	Close	\$208,235 (1)	

School			
Lee Elementary School	Close	\$320,165 (1)	
Kirchner Elementary School	Close	\$54,265 (1)	
	Transport students to other schools		(\$30,000)
Total		\$582,665	(\$30,000)

Source: EPISD executive director for Financial Services, director of Transportation, and coordinator of Facilities and Maintenance.
1. Includes contracted services, supplies, other, and fixed asset purchases--based on the 2000-01 budget for the school.

Recommendation	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Close three EPISD elementary schools: Lee, Austin, and Kirchner.	\$0	\$552,665	\$552,665	\$552,665	\$552,665

FINDING

At the same time that current schools are being kept open with low enrollments and high operational costs, the district is using an antiquated building for its District Service Center (administrative complex). Not only is the building in general disrepair, it is located at the southern most point of the district, not centrally. Also, the board room at the District Service Center will not accommodate many citizens at public meetings, two telephone systems are required for personnel located in the facility, and several of the storage rooms are infested with rodents.

Recommendation 17:

Close the current District Service Center and convert Austin Elementary School to a new central administrative office building.

Since Austin Elementary School is near the center of EPISD geographically, it will provide easier access to staff throughout the district. Also, as a two-story building, it is less useful as an elementary school.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The committee appointed to update the facilities plan recommends converting Austin Elementary School to a district service center and closing the current service center as part of its overall plan recommendations.	February 2002
2.	The board approves the committee's recommendations and plan update.	March 2002
3.	The coordinator of Facilities and Maintenance works with school architects and develops plans to convert Austin Elementary School to a central administrative center	March - July 2002
4.	The coordinator presents the plans, conversion timetable, and cost estimates to the superintendent for review and approval.	July 2002
5.	The superintendent approves the plans and recommends approval to the board.	July 2002
6.	The board approves the plan, timetable, and costs and authorizes the coordinator to proceed with the project.	August 2002
7.	The coordinator lets necessary bids for contracting services and initiates the conversion.	September 2002 - August 2003
8.	The conversion process is completed, and central office staff are moved to the new facility.	August 2003

FISCAL IMPACT

Based upon cost estimates provided by the coordinator of Facilities and Maintenance, the one-time cost of converting Austin Elementary School to a central administrative center would be \$400,000. For purposes of this fiscal impact, utility costs are assumed to remain the same at the new administrative facility as at the current District Service Center.

Additional revenue would be gained from the property sale of the District Service Center and the land on which it is located, but since it is impossible to predict the timing associated with real estate sales, no additional revenues from sale of the closed facility or the land on which it is located is included in the fiscal impact.

Recommendation	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Close the current District Service Center and convert Austin Elementary School to	\$0	(\$400,000)	\$0	\$0	\$0

a new central administrative office building.					
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Chapter 5

FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

B. MAINTENANCE

The Facilities and Maintenance department maintains the facilities for both routine and major repairs. The department has 28 employee positions (**Exhibit 5-8**). The coordinator also supervises temporary employees assigned to new construction associated with school facilities. The district contracts with outside firms to provide pesticide and herbicide services.

Exhibit 5-8
EPISD Maintenance Staffing
1999-2000

Position/Function	Number of Staff
Coordinator	1
Carpenters	2
Heating, ventilating and air conditioning mechanics	4
Painters	2
Plumbers	2
General maintenance technicians	2
Welder	1
Mason	1
Heavy machinery operator	1
Electricians	3
General laborers	6
Dispatcher	1
Stock clerk	1
Secretary	1
Total	28

Source: EPISD coordinator of Facilities and Maintenance.

During the summer, additional temporary maintenance help is hired to clean, inspect and repair heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) equipment.

The Facilities and Maintenance Department expenditures for 1996-97 through 1999-2000, and the budget for the 2000-01 school year are included in **Exhibit 5-9**. The budget increased by 10.6 percent during that period. The largest increase was in payroll costs.

Exhibit 5-9
EPISD Maintenance Budget
1996-97 through 2000-01

Operating Expense	Actual				Budget	
	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	Percentage Change over the Five-year Period
Payroll	\$726,844	\$733,224	\$783,914	\$782,364	\$859,555	18.3%
Contracted services	48,464	42,148	43,012	42,217	51,200	5.6
Equipment, materials and supplies	321,712	459,555	333,511	316,612	304,805	(5.3)
Other	2,984	981	7,536	3,086	1,500	(49.7)
Total	\$1,100,004	\$1,235,908	\$1,167,973	\$1,144,279	\$1,217,060	10.6%

Source: EPISD coordinator of Facilities and Maintenance.

FINDING

EPISD's maintenance staff provides low cost service, but is understaffed compared to industry standards and is causing delays in responding to requests. According to EPISD principals and teachers, the Facilities and Maintenance Department is slow to respond to requests for service. Principals cited ongoing problems with temperature control, leaks and delays in response. Teachers said that it took maintenance a long time to respond to service requests.

In the written surveys of teachers, principals and assistant principals confirmed this issue with 41 percent of principals and assistant principals and 49 percent of teachers indicating that maintenance response was slow for routine repairs (**Exhibit 5-10**). One-quarter of both groups indicated that even emergency repairs were not handled in an expeditious manner.

Exhibit 5-10
Evaluation of Facilities Maintenance by
EPISD Principals, Assistant Principals and Teachers

Survey Statement	Principals' and Assistant Principals' Response		Teachers' Response	
	Strongly Agree or Agree	Strongly Disagree or Disagree	Strongly Agree or Agree	Strongly Disagree or Disagree
Repairs are made in a Timely manner.	53%	41%	38%	49%
Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	74%	24%	53%	25%

Source: TSPR survey, November 2000.

Note: Totals will not add due to exclusion of responses with no opinion.

EPISD maintains 29 facilities with 1.4 million square feet of space. The 24 maintenance employees (excluding coordinator, secretary, dispatcher and stock clerk) are each responsible for an average of 56,974 square feet. The staff handles the routine repair needs of the district as well as major equipment repair and replacement for equipment no longer covered by warranty.

The number of skilled craft positions remained constant from 1996-97 through 2000-01. The amount of square footage maintained by the department staff increased from 38,597 to 56,974 per staff member, or 47.6 percent (**Exhibit 5-11**).

Exhibit 5-11
EPISD Facilities and Maintenance Crafts
Positions Compared to Square Footage Maintained
1996-97 - 2000-01

Craft Position	1996-	1997-	1998-99	1999-	2000-01
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	97	98		2000	
General maintenance mechanic	2	2	2	2	2
HVAC mechanic	3	4	4	4	4
Plumber	2	2	2	2	2
Electrician	3	3	3	3	3
Carpenter	2	2	2	2	2
Painter	2	2	2	2	2
Other	4	4	4	3	3
Total craft positions	24	25	24	24	24
Total square footage maintained	926,334	926,334	1,163,884	1,367,366	1,367,366
Average square footage per craft position	38,597	37,053	48,495	56,974	56,974

Source: EPISD coordinator of Facilities and Maintenance.

The Association of Physical Plant Administrators (APPA) developed a set of staffing standards for crafts positions based upon gross square footage in a district. The current EPISD Facilities and Maintenance Department staffing is compared to these standards in **Exhibit 5-12**. Based upon this comparison, EPISD's Facilities and Maintenance Department is understaffed by four positions.

Exhibit 5-12
EPISD Facilities and Maintenance Department
Crafts Positions Compared to APPA Standard
1999-2000

Craft	Current Staffing	APPA Standard	Recommended Staffing	Variance Above (+)/Below (-) Standard
General maintenance mechanic	8	1:500,000 gross square feet (GSF)	2.5	+ 5.5
HVAC mechanic	4	1:450,000 GSF	3	+ 1.0
Plumber	2	1:390,000 GSF	3.5	- 1.5

Electrician	3	1:380,000 GSF	3.5	- 0.5
Carpenter and locksmith	2	1:200,000 GSF	6.5	- 4.5
Painter	2	1:200,000 GSF	6.5	- 4.5
Other	3	1:500,000 GSF	2.5	+ 0.5
Total	24		28	- 4.0

Source: EPISD coordinator of Facilities and Maintenance and APPA.

According to the coordinator, contracting with outside firms is difficult for two reasons: local firms do not carry workers compensation insurance, and the firms are not bonded. Thus, the financial exposure to EPISD is much higher than hiring necessary staff. The coordinator said it was not difficult to recruit and hire skilled craftspeople.

Recommendation 18:

Increase the number of EPISD Facilities and Maintenance Department crafts positions.

The most critical needs are for experienced carpenters, painters, electricians and plumbers.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The executive director of Operations and the coordinator of Facilities and Maintenance develop a recommendation on staffing and present it to the superintendent for review and approval.	September 2001
2.	The superintendent approves the plan and authorizes the assistant superintendent to modify the proposed budget for 2001-02 to reflect the plan.	October 2001
3.	The Board of Trustees reviews the plan and approves the modifications.	October 2001
4.	The coordinator, with the assistance of the coordinator for Human Resources, advertises for the vacant positions, interviews candidates, and recommends candidates to fill the positions to the executive director.	November 2001
5.	The executive director approves the new hires and places them on the agenda for board approval.	December 2001

6. The board approves the new hires.	December 2001
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FISCAL IMPACT

Assuming that the number of positions for carpenters, painters, electricians and plumbers is increased to the level recommended by APPA standards, EPISD would add one carpenter, one painter, one electrician and one plumber. Assuming the annual wages for these positions are set at the current EPISD salaries, they would be \$23,868 for the carpenter, \$26,728 for the painter, \$27,470 for the electrician, and \$30,867 for the plumber. The total annual salaries would be \$108,933. Adding benefits at 20 percent of salary, or \$21,786, the annual cost to the district would be \$130,719. Since these positions will not be filled until January, one-half of that cost is recognized in the first year.

Recommendation	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Increase the number of EPISD Facilities and Maintenance Department crafts positions.	(\$65,360)	(\$130,719)	(\$130,719)	(\$130,719)	(\$130,719)

FINDING

The director of Athletics supervises grounds maintenance even though the director has little involvement with facilities use, especially elementary schools. Supervision of the grounds crews requires additional time, which detracts from the main function of the position. The coordinator of Facilities and Maintenance is responsible for all facilities.

EPISD facilities include 355 acres of grounds, which must be maintained. The Athletic department has two grounds crews. An athletic facilities crew that consists of one foreman and four grounds crew members and maintains the facilities included in **Exhibit 5-13**.

**Exhibit 5-13
EPISD Facilities Maintained by Athletic Grounds Crew**

Location	Areas Included
Central Stadium	football field
	practice fields (2)

	tennis courts (8)
City Baseball Field	The district's contract for use of this facility includes all of the maintenance including watering, lighting, fences, scoreboard, mowing, adding dirt and painting
Eagle Pass High School, CC Winn Campus	football field (practice)
	baseball field (practice)
	soccer field (practice)
Eagle Pass High School	two football fields (practice)
	baseball (practice)
	four softball fields (competition)
	soccer field (practice)
	eight tennis courts
Eagle Pass Junior High School	football field
	baseball field
	softball field
Memorial Junior High School	football field
	three softball fields
All secondary schools	Maintain lawns around all secondary schools

Source: EPISD director of Athletics.

As part of lawn and field maintenance, the athletic crew mows every week, aerates, fertilizes, waters and plants winter rye. They are also responsible for striping fields, setting up game equipment (pylons, nets, game clocks, etc.), working lights and cleaning restrooms, concessions stands and bleachers after the games.

The second ground crew is for elementary campuses, and consists of four grounds crew members that also perform special tasks, such as moving furniture.

The director of Athletics said that when he took over the job of supervising these crews, there were only 10 schools. Now there are 22 schools maintained by the same four grounds crew members, and they are not able to keep up a cycle of mowing each school at least once every two weeks.

Equipment shared by all of the grounds crews includes three diesel tractors, three pick-up trucks and two trailers plus weed eaters and small mowers.

Recommendation 19:

Reassign the grounds crew to the coordinator of Facilities and Maintenance.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The executive directors for District Operations and Human Resources meet to determine the schedule associated with transferring all grounds crewmembers and responsibilities to the Facilities and Maintenance department.	September 2001
2.	The executive directors prepare a plan and recommend it to the superintendent for implementation.	September 2001
3.	The superintendent approves the plan and presents it to the board for approval.	October 2001
4.	The board approves the plan.	October 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 5

FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

C. CUSTODIAL OPERATIONS

Custodial duties should be coordinated with the school program and skilled labor so that work during school hours is done with a minimum of disturbance to pupils and other school personnel. There are many custodial tasks that need to be performed on a regular basis, including:

- Regulating HVAC equipment as required;
- Unlocking doors, opening windows for ventilation and turning on lights;
- Setting up rooms for special activities;
- Cleaning restroom facilities, replacing all commodities and making sure dispensers work properly;
- Cleaning classrooms, teachers' lounges and other areas;
- Performing special tasks within the classrooms based upon teacher requests;
- Moving furniture;
- Disposing of trash; and
- Locking school building doors and gates, closing windows, turning off lights and related tasks.

Duties of a weekly, monthly or quarterly nature should be defined and scheduled. Tasks that may be included in this classification include:

- Lubricating equipment;
- Cleaning interior walls;
- Indoor painting;
- Waxing floors and cleaning carpeting;
- Washing windows and blinds and arranging for the cleaning of draperies; and
- Resurfacing floors and refinishing furniture.

FINDING

EPISD facilities are overstaffed with custodians; most of the custodians work during the day when cleaning is most difficult; teachers and parents criticize the lack of cleanliness in the facilities; and EPISD pays more than comparable organizations for custodial work.

Custodians are assigned to each building and report to the principal. The principal determines the work pattern, responsibilities and schedules of the custodial staff at each facility. At district facilities, the custodial staff

report to the executive director of Financial Services. There are no custodians assigned to the maintenance and transportation facilities (Exhibit 5-14).

**Exhibit 5-14
EPISD Custodians by Location
2000-01**

School/facility	Square Footage	Number of Custodians	Work Schedule
Secondary schools			
Eagle Pass High School	195,650	9	6:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. 6:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (2) 9:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. 9:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m. (2) 9:30 a.m. - 7:00 p.m. 9:30 a.m. - 7:30 p.m. 10:30 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Chisum Technical Center	25,000	1.75	7:00 a.m. - noon; 2:00 - 5:00 p.m. 4:30 - 10:00 p.m.
De Luna Alternative Center	20,357	0.25	2:00 - 4:30 p.m.
Eagle Pass High School, CC Winn Campus	186,183	11	6:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (2) 7:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (3) 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. (2) 1:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. (3) 3:00 p.m.- 11:00 p.m.
Eagle Pass Junior High School	108,422	8	7:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (3) 7:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. 11:30 a.m. - 7:30 p.m. (4)
Memorial Junior High School	118,209	8	7:00 a.m. - noon, 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. (3) 7:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m., noon - 4:00 p.m. 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. 11:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m. 4:00 p.m.- midnight (2)
Elementary schools			
Austin	44,544	3	7:00 - 9:30 a.m., 1:00 - 7:00 p.m. 8:00 a.m. - noon, 3:00 - 7:00 p.m. 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m., 3:00 -

			7:00 p.m.
Darr	46,099	3	7:00 a.m. - noon, 2:00 - 5:00 p.m. 7:00 - 9:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. 7:00 - 10:00 a.m., 12:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Language Development Center	36,332	3	7:15 - 11:30 a.m., 2:00 - 5:45 p.m. 7:15 a.m. - noon, 2:00 - 5:15 p.m. 7:15 a.m. - 12:30 p.m., 2:30 - 5:15 p.m.
Graves	35,299	3	7:00 - 11:00 a.m., 2:00 - 6:00 p.m. 7:00 - 10:00 a.m., 12:30 - 5:30 p.m. 7:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m., 3:00 - 5:30 p.m.
Glass	45,056	3	7:00 - 11:00 a.m., 2:00 - 6:00 p.m. 7:00 - 9:00 a.m., 11:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. 8:00 - 9:30 a.m., 11:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Lee	37,649	3	7:00 - 9:00 a.m., 11:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. 7:30 a.m. - noon, 2:00 - 5:30 p.m. 7:30 - 10:30 a.m., 12:30 - 5:30 p.m.
Kirchner	13,038	1	7:00 - 11:00 a.m., 1:30 - 5:30 p.m.
San Luis	35,154	3	7:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. (3)
Rosita Valley	55,088	3	7:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. 10:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Benavides	36,536	3	7:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. 8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. 7:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Early Childhood Center	19,632	3	7:00 - 10:30 a.m., 1:30 - 6:30 p.m. 8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., 3:00 - 6:00

			p.m. 8:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m., 3:30 - 6:00 p.m.
Seco Mines	40,477	3	7:00 - 10:30 a.m., noon - 5:30 p.m. 7:30 - 9:30 a.m., 2:00 - 5:00 p.m. 8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., 2:00 - 5:00 p.m.
Sam Houston	41,756	3	7:00 - 11:00 a.m., 1:00 - 5:30 p.m. 7:30 - 10:30 a.m., 12:30 - 5:30 p.m. 8:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m., 2:00 - 5:30 p.m.
Rosita Valley Literacy Academy	28,352	3	7:00 - 10:00 a.m., 1:00 - 6:00 p.m. 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., 2:00 - 6:00 p.m. 8:00 - 11:00 a.m., 1:00 - 6:00 p.m.
Gallego	41,756	3	7:00 - 10:30 a.m., 1:00 - 5:30 p.m. 7:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., 2:30 - 5:00 p.m. 8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., 2:30 - 5:30 p.m.
Gonzalez	41,756	3	8:00 a.m. - noon, 1:00 - 5:00 p.m. 7:00 - 11:00 a.m., 2:00 - 6:00 p.m. 7:30 - 11:30 a.m., 12:30 - 4:30 p.m.
Kennedy Hall		2	7:00 - 10:00 a.m., 2:00 - 7:00 p.m. 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m., 3:00 - 7:00 p.m.
Other facilities			
District service center	27,600	3	
Maintenance/storage building	7,676	0	N/A

Warehouse	17,776	0	N/A
Transportation building	5,670	0	N/A
Multiplex administration building	5,313	0	N/A
Day care center	4,069	0	N/A
Total	1,367,366	92	

Source: EPISD coordinator of Facilities and Maintenance and survey of principals at each EPISD campus, November 2000.

TSPR conducted a tour of a majority of EPISD's facilities and found that the overall cleanliness of each facility was poor, with the exception of the new facilities. Among the conditions during the visits was trash in most hallways, floors frequently did not appear to be waxed, outside trash receptacles were overflowing, and litter was present on school grounds.

In focus groups with teachers and parents, both groups said the older schools were not kept clean. Teachers cited the presence of rodents and insects in the facilities because trashcans were not emptied and classrooms were not cleaned.

In response to the statement, "Schools are clean," in the written survey conducted by TSPR however, 50 percent of the principals and assistant principals, 68 percent of the teachers, and 75 percent of the parents strongly agreed or agreed.

Cleaning can be inhibited if it is performed during daytime hours while teachers and students occupy the facilities. In California, the State Department of Education developed a guide for school districts, entitled *Business Services Guide*, which provides recommended procedures in all operational areas of a district, excluding instruction. In the custodial area, the procedures recommend limited daytime use of custodial personnel and, instead, recommend custodial work schedules that emphasize late afternoon and evening work hours. According to the guide, daytime cleaning limits the custodians' ability to thoroughly clean certain areas or take the time necessary to complete time-consuming tasks.

Since the custodians report to the principal at the campus where they work, the work schedules and tasks to be covered vary widely. Many school districts assign custodians based upon specific square footage allocations along with the type of surfaces and areas to be cleaned. The

Association of School Business Officials (ASBO), using widely accepted industry standards, has developed cleaning guidelines for schools that a district can tailor to its needs depending upon the type of facility, facility use and types of surfaces to be cleaned (**Exhibit 5-15**). These standards identify the type of facility, the daily use, the types of surfaces to be cleaned and an estimate of the time necessary to complete each task.

Exhibit 5-15
Examples of Recommended Custodial Work Standards
Established by the Association for School Business Officials

Space	Service	Unit Measure	Work Rate Time
Classrooms (average size)	routine clean	850 sq. ft.	24 minutes
Offices - resilient floor	routine clean	1,000 sq. ft.	24 minutes
Offices - carpet	routine clean	1,000 sq. ft.	24 minutes
Floors	dust mop	1,000 sq. ft.	12 minutes
	damp mop	1,000 sq. ft.	20 minutes
	spray buff - daily	1,000 sq. ft.	20 minutes
	spray buff - weekly	1,000 sq. ft.	40 minutes
	spray buff - monthly	1,000 sq. ft.	120 minutes
	light furniture scrub	1,000 sq. ft.	240 minutes
	medium furniture scrub	1,000 sq. ft.	300 minutes
	heavy furniture scrub	1,000 sq. ft.	400 minutes
Bathrooms	three or fewer commodes, urinals and wash basins	Each	4.5 minutes
	more than three commodes, urinals and wash basins	Each	3 minutes
Stairs	damp mop	1 flight	12 minutes
	wet mop	1 flight	35 minutes
	hand scrub	1 flight	48 minutes
	dust handrails	1 flight	2 minutes
	dust treads	1 flight	6 minutes

	Wash	1,000 sq. ft.	210 minutes
	wash heavy soil	1,000 sq. ft.	290 minutes
Blinds	Dust	Each	15 minutes
	damp dust	Each	30 minutes
	Wash	200 sq. ft.	340 minutes
Windows - single pane	Wash	1,000 sq. ft.	240 minutes
Windows - multi-pane	Wash	1,000 sq. ft.	320 minutes
Light fixtures - fluorescent	Dust	4 ft.	5 minutes
Light fixtures - egg crate	Wash	4 ft.	40 minutes
Light fixtures - open	Wash	4 ft.	20 minutes
Light fixtures - incandescent	Dust	Each	5 minutes
Light fixtures - incandescent	Wash	Each	15 minutes

Source: Custodial Methods and Procedures Manual, ASBO.

According to ASBO's standards, custodial staffing should be based upon an expected average productivity of 2,500 square feet per staff-hour of work or 20,000 square feet during a typical 8-hour cleaning period. The type of flooring, size of storage areas, age of buildings and other variables could reduce the square feet per staff hour of a facility.

EPISD has its own standard for custodians. According to the district's staffing formula, one custodian is assigned to a facility for every 17,000 square feet of permanent construction space or 15,000 square feet of portable building space.

Applying the ASBO standard instead of EPISD's standard would reduce the number of custodial staff by 15.5 employees (**Exhibit 5-16**).

Exhibit 5-16
ASBO Recommended Custodial Staffing
as Compared to EPISD Custodial Staff

Campus	Square Footage	Number of Custodians		
		Current	Recommended	
			ASBO	EPISD Staffing Formula
Secondary schools				
Eagle Pass High School	185,079	9	9.25	10
Chisum Technical Center	25,000	1.75	1.25	-
De Luna Alternative Center	20,357	0.25	1.00	1
Eagle Pass High School, C.C. Winn Campus	195,650	11	9.75	11
Eagle Pass Junior High School	108,422	8	5.50	6
Memorial Junior High School	127,630	8	6.25	7
Elementary schools				
Austin	42,282	3	2.00	3
Benavides	37,856	3	2.00	2
Darr	48,473	3	2.50	3
Early Childhood Center	22,032	3	1.00	2
Gallego	43,256	3	2.25	3
Glass	46,112	3	2.25	2
Gonzalez	41,756	3	2.00	3
Graves	28,349	3	1.50	2
Kennedy Hall	22,466	2	1.00	2
Kirchner	9,604	1	0.50	1
Language Development Center	36,231	3	1.75	2
Lee	39,029	3	2.00	3
Rosita Valley	43,100	3	2.25	3
Rosita Valley Literacy Academy	28,352	3	1.50	2
Sam Houston	41,756	3	2.00	3
San Luis	62,964	3	3.00	2

Seco Mines	39,783	3	2.00	2
Other facilities				
District service center	27,600	3	1.50	1.5
Maintenance/storage building	7,676	0	0	0
Warehouse	17,776	0	0	0
Transportation building	9,393	0	0	0
Multiplex administration building	5,313	0	0	0
Day care center	4,069	0	0	0
Total	1,367,366	92	66.0	76.5

Source: EPISD executive director for Human Resources and ASBO.

Some school districts achieve cleaner facilities and further savings if a majority of the custodians at each school are assigned to work after students leave the facilities. According to a TSPR study of Socorro ISD, implementing after-hours cleaning of facilities provided a 5- to 10 percent increase in custodial productivity.

In the 1998 salary study conducted by Texas Association of School Boards for EPISD, the positions of lead custodian and custodian were both paid more than the market average for similar positions. EPISD's lead custodian position salary was 7 percent above the market, and the custodian salary was 19 percent more than the market.

Recommendation 20:

Redesign custodial areas of responsibility using industry standards, reallocate more custodial work schedules to hours when school is not in session, and reduce the number of custodians.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent instructs each principal to redesign the cleaning areas and schedules of custodians using ASBO recommendations.	September 2001
2.	The principals and the lead custodian at each campus redesign the cleaning areas and restructure the work schedules to shift primary cleaning time to after-school hours.	September - October 2001
3.	Unnecessary positions are eliminated during the budget	April - August

process for the 2002-03 school year.	2001
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FISCAL IMPACT

The average custodian position salary is \$15,992. Assuming that primary cleaning is shifted to hours after school is closed for the day and using EPISD's formula to eliminate 16 positions-half in 2001-02 and half in 2002-03-would result in annual salary savings of \$127,936 the first year and \$255,872 in each of the next four years. An additional 20 percent of total salaries, or \$25,588 the first year and \$51,175 in each of the next four years, would be saved in employee benefit costs. The total annual savings the first year would be \$153,524 (\$127,936 in annual salaries plus \$25,588 in annual benefits) and \$307,047 (\$255,872 in annual salaries plus \$51,175 in annual benefits) in each of the next four years.

Recommendation	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Redesign custodial areas of responsibility using industry standards, reallocate more custodial work schedules to hours when school is not in session and reduce the number of custodians.	\$153,524	\$307,047	\$307,047	\$307,047	\$307,047

Chapter 5

FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

D. ENERGY MANAGEMENT

With the passage of the bond election in May 2000, several energy management projects were planned (**Exhibit 5-17**).

Exhibit 5-17
EPISD Energy Management Projects
January 2001

School	Cost	Status
A/C retrofit projects		
Eagle Pass High School, C.C. Winn Campus	\$900,000	Planned
Eagle Pass High School	\$750,000	Planned
Memorial Junior High School	\$60,000	Planned
Darr Elementary School	\$60,000	In progress
Graves Elementary School	\$60,000	Planned
Glass Elementary School	\$60,000	In progress
San Luis Elementary School	\$60,000	Complete
Seco Mines Elementary School	\$40,000	Complete
Lighting retrofit projects		
Benavides Elementary School	\$25,000	Planned
Darr Elementary School	\$25,000	Planned
Graves Elementary School	\$25,000	Planned
San Luis Elementary School	\$40,000	In progress
Memorial Junior High School	\$40,000	Planned
Seco Mines Elementary School	\$25,000	Planned
Lee Elementary School (1)	\$25,000	Complete

*Source: EPISD coordinator of Facilities and Maintenance.
(1) Completed with local funds.*

FINDING

In May 2001, EPISD's C. C. Winn Campus applied for and was selected as one of only 11 schools in Texas to participate in the state's Solar for Texas Schools Project. This project is part of the State Energy Conservation Office's (SECO's) Renewable Energy Demonstration Program. Applications were requested in January 2001 from all 1,034 school districts in Texas.

Each selected school will receive a solar energy system, a data monitoring system that will provide real-time solar data, renewable energy educational materials with corresponding lesson plans and assistance in developing a renewable energy community outreach effort. Each school will have the added benefit of sharing a solar energy powered fuel cell demonstration kit and solar cooker kit that can be used to show students, parents and community member how solar energy works and can be put to practical use.

COMMENDATION

EPISD has aggressively sought out opportunities to bring energy conservation measures to the district.

FINDING

EPISD does not have an overall energy management plan or a system for tracking and monitoring its energy use. Even though several projects have been completed, there is no integration of needed energy management improvements in any overall facilities planning. EPISD's budget for gas and electricity rose 8.6 percent from 1998-99 to 2000-01. This increase reflects the addition of three new campuses: Gallego, Gonzalez and Kennedy Hall Elementary Schools and the resulting 107,478 additional square feet of space to heat and cool.

The utility cost budgets since 1998-99 for each EPISD school are included in **Exhibit 5-18**. Six schools: Eagle Pass High School; De Luna Alternative Center; Eagle Pass High School, C.C. Winn Campus; Eagle Pass Junior High School; Glass Elementary School and San Luis Elementary School use both electricity and gas. The rest of the district's schools use electricity only.

Exhibit 5-18
EPISD Utility Budgets By School
1998-99 through 2000-01

School/facility	Total Square	Utility Costs/Budget
------------------------	---------------------	-----------------------------

	Footage	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01
Secondary schools				
Eagle Pass High School	185,079	\$248,730	\$262,520	\$253,500
Chisum Technical Center	25,000	29,051	30,504	30,504
De Luna Alternative Center	20,357	8,613	9,361	0
Eagle Pass High School, C.C. Winn Campus	195,650	351,993	292,763	270,000
Eagle Pass Junior High School	108,422	109,536	115,489	151,000
Memorial Junior High School	127,630	157,608	165,488	165,000
Elementary schools				
Austin	42,282	38,841	40,783	40,000
Benavides	37,856	43,858	46,051	40,000
Darr	48,473	52,761	55,399	55,000
Early Childhood Center	22,032	28,574	30,003	30,000
Gallego	43,256	N/A	55,650	50,000
Glass	46,112	55,955	58,809	62,000
Gonzalez	41,756	N/A	55,650	55,000
Graves	28,349	51,635	54,217	55,000
Kennedy Hall	22,466	N/A	N/A	40,000
Kirchner	9,604	11,719	12,305	15,000
Language Development Center	36,231	39,279	41,243	40,000
Lee	39,029	44,717	46,953	45,000
Rosita Valley	43,100	47,438	49,810	40,000
Rosita Valley Literacy Academy	28,352	20,000	21,000	25,000
Sam Houston	41,756	53,000	55,650	55,000
San Luis	62,964	37,845	39,803	43,000
Seco Mines	39,783	45,422	47,693	45,000

Total	1,295,539	\$1,476,575	\$1,587,144	\$1,605,004
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Source: EPISD executive director of Financial Services and coordinator of Facilities and Maintenance.

During 1999-2000, the utility cost per square foot averaged 72 cents for the region in which EPISD is located. For EPISD, the average utility cost per square foot was \$1.25 (**Exhibit 5-19**).

Exhibit 5-19
EPISD Utility Cost per Square Foot by School
1999-2000

School/facility	Total Square Footage	1999-2000 Utility Cost	
		Total	Per Square Foot
Secondary schools			
Eagle Pass High School	185,079	\$262,520	\$1.42
Chisum Technical Center	25,000	30,504	1.22
De Luna Alternative Center	20,357	9,361	0.46
Eagle Pass High School, CC Winn Campus	195,650	292,763	1.50
Eagle Pass Junior High School	108,422	115,489	1.07
Memorial Junior High School	127,630	165,488	1.30
Elementary schools			
Austin	42,282	40,783	0.96
Benavides	37,856	46,051	1.22
Darr	48,473	55,399	1.14
Early Childhood Center	22,032	30,003	1.36
Gallego	43,256	55,650	1.29
Glass	46,112	58,809	1.28
Gonzalez	41,756	55,650	1.33
Graves	28,349	54,217	1.91
Kirchner	9,604	12,305	1.28

Language Development Center	36,231	41,243	1.14
Lee	39,029	\$46,953	\$1.20
Rosita Valley	43,100	\$49,810	\$1.16
Rosita Valley Literacy Academy	28,352	\$21,000	\$0.74
Sam Houston	41,756	\$55,650	\$1.33
San Luis	62,964	\$39,803	\$0.63
Seco Mines	39,783	\$47,693	\$1.20
Total	1,273,073	\$1,587,144	\$1.25

Source: EPISD director of Finance and coordinator of Facilities and Maintenance.

Note: Kennedy Hall Elementary School was not operational in that year and is not included in the exhibit.

Since June 1997, EPISD has had four separate evaluations of some or all of its facilities for improving energy management and associated cost savings:

- In June 1997, the State Energy Conservation Office (SECO) assessed Eagle Pass High School, Benavides Elementary School and Lee Elementary School as a service under the Energy Efficient School Partnership Service. The study recommended a combination of revised operating procedures (thermostat resetting, turning off computers at night, greater HVAC training for EPISD personnel and separation of air handlers) combined with energy retrofit opportunities (programmable thermostats, T8 lamps and electronic ballast, motion sensors and replacement of incandescent lamps) that would save the district as much as \$55,464 annually with a 3.5 year payback period on conversion and installation costs.
- Southern Union Gas conducted an analysis to compare the costs of using gas instead of electricity to heat and cool a new school. The analysis estimated that EPISD could save \$46,666 annually using gas to heat and cool a school in EPISD, with a payback period of 4.88 years to offset the higher costs of implementing a gas-fired system versus electricity.
- In May 1998, Applied Computer Technologies completed an analysis of all EPISD facilities and estimated that the district could save \$236,000 annually in energy costs and an additional \$15,000

annually with a reduction of lighting and mechanical material (replacing fluorescent lighting, establishing central on/off time controls for HVAC equipment and consistence preventive maintenance).

- In 1999, Z-Data Energy Consultants conducted an energy audit of lighting and air conditioning systems at eight EPISD schools: Austin, Darr, Glass, Graves, San Luis, and Seco Mines Elementary Schools; and Eagle Pass and Memorial Junior High Schools. Savings from upgrading the lighting systems were estimated at \$66,979 annually, with a payback period of 2.54 years on conversion and installation costs; and savings from replacement of inefficient HVAC equipment was estimated at \$79,670 annually, with a payback period of 6.23 years.

According to the coordinator of Facilities and Maintenance, several meetings and presentations have been conducted with prior superintendents and the board about establishing a plan to implement the recommendations included in these studies, including the following:

- In May 1997, the assistant superintendent for Support Services and the director of Maintenance recommended an ongoing preventive maintenance schedule for air conditioning units.
- In September 1999, the construction supervisor and the maintenance coordinator recommended retrofitting air conditioning units at four elementary schools.

In 1997, SECO recommended that the district acquire software to track energy use and cost and suggested several systems. However, the district has not purchased or prepared a system for this purpose.

Recommendation 21:

Develop an energy management plan for all EPISD's current and planned facilities and acquire a system to track and monitor associated energy costs.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The coordinator of Facilities and Maintenance assesses the status of each recommendation from prior energy management studies and ranks them in priority order with implementation costs.	September 2001
2.	The coordinator and the executive director of Support Services identify any changes necessary for making the new facilities more energy efficient. and notes the cost of the	September - October 2001

	changes.	
3.	The executive director and coordinator present the recommendations to the superintendent for review, modification and approval.	November 2001
4.	The superintendent approves the plan and directs the executive director of Finance to develop funding alternatives.	December 2001
5.	The superintendent presents the plan to the board for discussion and approval.	February 2002
6.	The board approves the plan and directs the superintendent to include the highest priority projects in the 2002-03 budget.	March 2002
7.	The superintendent, the executive directors and the coordinator include projects, costs and funding in the budget to accomplish these projects.	May 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no cost for preparing the project plan. However, unless existing funds can be reallocated to cover the projects themselves, there may be a cost associated with implementation. As an alternative to using operating funds, EPISD could use bond funds; secure loans through SECO's LoanSTAR Program or the Texas Association of School Boards' Capital Acquisition Program; or hire an outside contractor on a performance-contracting basis.

Chapter 6

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

This chapter reviews the financial operations and asset and risk management operations of the Eagle Pass Independent School District (EPISD) in the following areas:

- A. Organization and Staffing
- B. Risk Management
- C. Tax Collections
- D. Payroll
- E. Financial Reporting and Budgeting
- F. Financial Management Practices
- G. Cash and Investments
- H. Long-Term Debt

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

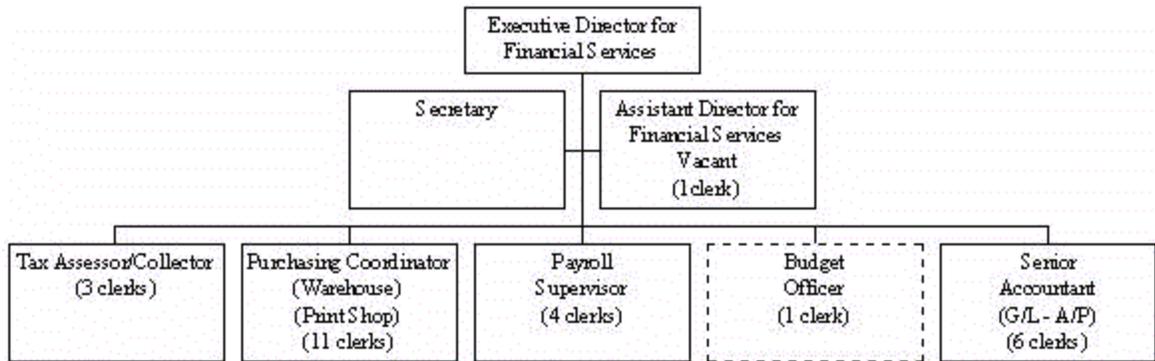
Asset management involves managing a district's cash resources and physical assets in a cost-effective and efficient manner. The district also must account for and safeguard its cash and physical assets against theft and obsolescence. Risk management includes the identification, analysis and reduction of risk through insurance and safety programs to protect the district's assets and employees.

BACKGROUND

Exhibit 6-1 shows a summarized organization structure of the district's Financial Services.

Exhibit 6-1 Organization of EPISD Financial Services

2000-01



Source: EPISD executive director for Financial Services.

EPISD maintains its accounting records on the South Texas Multi-Regional Processing Center (STMRPC) software, which is supported by the Regional Education Service Center XX (Region 20) in San Antonio. **Exhibit 6-2** details the annual support costs by category for automated financial systems support from Region 20.

**Exhibit 6-2
EPISD Annual Automated Financial Systems Support Costs with
Region 20
2000-01**

Support Type	Annual Cost
Payroll, personnel and position management	\$38,126
Ad valorem tax accounting system	\$27,252
Financial services	\$60,130
PEIMS support	\$125,508

Source: EPISD Financial Services -Region 20 support agreements for 2000-01.

EPISD also paid annual support fees for 2000-01 to Region 20 for general computer support and the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) support in the amounts of \$54,203 and \$4,180, respectively. These costs have not been allocated between Financial Services and other district departments.

Region 20 support personnel visit the district when EPISD needs assistance with the financial software. The district has access to all

STMRPC modules, including accounting and finance, check reconciliation, budgeting, amendment, payroll, fixed assets, property tax and purchasing. The district uses the STMRPC software for monthly accounting, payroll, financial reporting, tax collection, purchasing and fixed assets record keeping. This system uses a series of options, or menus, to allow a district to choose the level of detail it prefers to use in maintaining its Financial Services records.

The STMRPC software can generate a wide variety of management information reports in four general categories: summary reports, fixed asset/inventory reports, vendor/purchase order reports and journals/checks/detailed ledger reports. Summary reports are most useful for board members and district administrators and include a summary of general ledger activity, comparisons of revenue to budget, budget status by organization (by departments or school) and budget status by program (for example, for technology or athletics).

More than 15 percent of EPISD's property value is composed of land. This Percent is higher than any of its peers and the regional and state average. EPISD has less business and residential property value than most peer districts and state and region averages (**Exhibit 6-3**).

Exhibit 6-3
EPISD, Region 20, State and Peer District Property Values
by Category as a Percent of Total Property Value
1999-2000

Entity	Business	Residential	Land	Oil and Gas	Other
Eagle Pass	27.9%	50.9%	15.2%	5.2%	0.8%
San Benito Consolidated	33.4%	50.4%	13.2%	0.0%	3.0%
Weslaco	36.1%	50.5%	8.2%	0.4%	4.8%
Mission Consolidated	29.4%	62.0%	7.9%	0.0%	0.7%
San Felipe-Del Rio Consolidated	31.5%	58.3%	7.8%	1.8%	0.6%
Region 20	32.7%	58.8%	7.5%	0.3%	0.7%
State	40.6%	48.7%	7.3%	2.8%	0.6%
South San Antonio	42.6%	53.2%	3.7%	0.0%	0.5%
Harlandale	31.6%	65.2%	2.9%	0.0%	0.2%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1999-2000.

In 2000-01, EPISD budgeted the lowest Percent of funding from other local and intermediate sources among its peers, the region and state while budgeting the fourth highest Percent of funding from federal sources in comparison to this same group. Texas school districts budgeted an average of 48.5 percent of their funds from the local property tax and 43.6 percent in revenue from the state in 2000-01. In EPISD, those Percents are 13.8 and 76.9 percent, respectively. The averages for the region are 34.7 and 56.6 percent, respectively (**Exhibit 6-4**).

Exhibit 6-4
EPISD, Region 20, State and Peer District
Sources of Budgeted Revenue as a Percent of Total Budgeted Revenue
2000-01

Entity	Local Property Tax	Other Local And Intermediate	State	Federal
Eagle Pass	13.8%	2.1%	76.9%	7.2%
San Benito Consolidated	9.5%	2.5%	80.7%	7.3%
Mission Consolidated	12.9%	3.0%	76.7%	7.5%
Harlandale	11.6%	4.9%	77.8%	6.2%
South San Antonio	13.9%	3.1%	76.7%	6.5%
San Felipe-Del Rio Consolidated	15.2%	2.8%	76.3%	5.8%
Welasco	13.1%	2.9%	76.5%	7.6%
Regional Average	34.7%	3.7%	56.6%	5.0%
State Average	48.5%	4.6%	43.6%	3.4%

Source: TEA, PEIMS 2000-01. Includes general, debt service, and food service funds.

From 1996-97 to 2000-01, local property tax revenue as a source of funds for EPISD has decreased from 14.6 to 13.8 percent of total revenues. At the same time, state revenue has increased from 76.3 to 76.9 percent of total revenues (**Exhibit 6-5**). Federal funds have increased from 6.8 to 7.2 percent of total revenues during this same period.

Exhibit 6-5
EPISD Sources of Revenue as a Percent of Total Revenue
1996-97 through 2000-01

Source of Revenue	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	Percent Change
Local property tax	14.6%	13.9%	14.0%	12.5%	13.8%	(5.5%)
Other local and intermediate	2.3%	2.3%	2.0%	1.6%	2.1%	(8.7%)
State	76.3%	77.7%	77.1%	78.3%	76.9%	0.8%
Federal	6.8%	6.1%	6.9%	7.6%	7.2%	5.9%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

Source: TEA, AEIS 1996-97 through 1999-2000 and PEIMSS 2000-01. Includes general, debt service and food service funds.

The local property tax rate has decreased by 5.2 percent over the last five years while the total students have increased by 6.3 percent. Local property values have increased by 38 percent for this same period (**Exhibit 6-6**).

Exhibit 6-6
EPISD Tax Rates, Assessed Property Values
and Per Student Property Values and Debt Service Costs
1996-97 through 2000-01

Category	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	Percent Change
Maintenance and operations tax rate	\$1.197	\$1.065	\$1.099	\$1.100	\$1.180	(1.4%)
Interest and sinking fund tax rate	\$0.119	\$0.174	\$0.173	\$0.042	\$0.0667	(43.9%)
Total tax rate	\$1.316	\$1.239	\$1.272	\$1.142	\$1.247	(5.2%)
Total property value (000's)	\$603,331	\$651,212	\$664,228	\$734,370	\$862,609	43.0%
Total Students	11,803	11,836	12,207	12,436	12,547	6.3%
Value per student	\$51,117	\$55,020	\$54,414	\$59,052	\$66,359	29.8%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1996-97 through 1999-2000 and PEIMS 2000-01.

EPISD has the second highest value per student in comparison to peer districts while having a much lower tax rate than peers or regional and state averages (**Exhibit 6-7**).

Exhibit 6-7
EPISD Tax Rate and Value per Student
Compared to Peer Districts and State and Region Averages
2000-01

Entity	Tax Rate	Value per Student
Eagle Pass	\$1.247	\$66,359
San Felipe-Del Rio Consolidated	\$1.449	\$75,492
Weslaco	\$1.430	\$60,720
San Benito Consolidated	\$1.470	\$46,698
Mission Consolidated	\$1.534	\$56,197
Harlandale	\$1.678	\$54,117
South San Antonio	\$1.619	\$59,933

Source: TEA, PEIMS 2000-01.

On the expenditure side, **Exhibit 6-8** shows how EPISD budgeted funds were distributed in 2000-01 compared to the state averages. EPISD is similar to state averages in most categories. However, EPISD's Percent of other expenditures, which include capital outlay and debt service costs, approximately is half of state and regional averages.

Exhibit 6-8
EPISD and State Budgeted Expenditures by Function
as a Percent of Total Expenditures
2000-01

Function	EPISD		State	
	Amount	Percent	Amount	Percent
Instruction	\$39,990,454	53.5%	\$13,871,475,883	51.3%
Instructional related services	\$1,594,356	2.1%	\$711,993,126	2.6%
Instructional leadership	\$837,119	1.1%	\$327,217,968	1.2%
School leadership	\$4,362,499	5.8%	\$1,413,048,962	5.2%

Support services - student	\$2,924,403	3.9%	\$1,080,558,025	4.0%
Student transportation	\$1,889,127	2.5%	\$676,770,906	2.5%
Food services	\$5,827,808	7.8%	\$1,315,831,789	4.9%
Cocurricular/extracurricular activities	\$1,613,393	2.2%	\$601,620,200	2.2%
Central administration	\$2,764,179	3.7%	\$946,026,510	3.5%
Plant maintenance and operations	\$6,723,506	9.0%	\$2,598,036,618	9.6%
Security and monitoring services	\$844,547	1.1%	\$153,117,054	0.6%
Data processing services	\$488,778	0.7%	\$298,526,325	1.1%
Other*	\$4,957,948	6.6%	\$3,061,791,569	11.3%
Total Budgeted expenditures	\$74,818,117	100.0%	\$27,056,013,935	100.0%

Source: TEA, PEIMS 2000-01.

*Includes operating expenditures not listed above and all non-operational such as debt service, capital outlay, and community and parental involvement services.

On a per student basis from 1996-97 to 2000-01, expenditures have increased by 27.7 percent

(**Exhibit 6-9**). Instruction and instructional leadership spending has increased by 28.5 percent, or \$735, per student, while school leadership spending has increased by 19.5 percent, or \$57 per student. Other operating costs have increased by 30.5 percent, or \$394 per student.

Exhibit 6-9
EPISD Operations Expenditures Per Student
1996-97 through 2000-01

Expenditure Category	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	Percent Change
Instruction and instructional leadership	\$2,579	\$2,717	\$2,822	\$3,078	\$3,314	28.5%
School leadership	\$291	\$297	\$319	\$328	\$348	19.5%

Central administration	\$199	\$214	\$198	\$195	\$220	10.6%
Other operating	\$1,293	\$1,403	\$1,485	\$1,558	\$1,687	30.5%
Total operations	\$4,363	\$4,631	\$4,823	\$5,159	\$5,569	27.7%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1996-97 through 1999-2000 and PEIMS 2000-01.

The executive director for Financial Services and the Financial Services office staff manage EPISD's assets. The Financial Services office administers EPISD's risk management program as well, which includes all employee benefit insurance and all property and casualty insurance coverages.

The design of EPISD's cash management and investment policy ensures the safety of idle funds; the availability of operating, capital and debt service funds when needed; and a competitive return on investments. Trustees review and approve the policy annually.

The district's investment portfolio includes financial instruments that earn the maximum rate of return within EPISD's safety and liquidity objectives. The district normally uses U.S. Agencies and commercial paper for investment purposes. EPISD's investment objectives and policies vary with the nature of the fund, using income generated as a supplementary source of revenue.

Chapter 6

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

A. ORGANIZATION AND STAFFING

The executive director for Financial Services is responsible for tax collection, budget and finance, payroll and employee benefits administration, purchasing, the print shop and warehouse operations. A coordinator, supervisor or paraprofessional employee supervises each of these areas and reports directly to the executive director. The executive director has held this position since September 1999.

FINDING

The assistant director for Financial Services recently resigned, leaving key financial duties improperly distributed among current staff members. The key responsibilities of the assistant director included payroll, employee benefits and risk management. From an organizational perspective, many Texas school districts include the employee benefits under Human Resources and risk management under Operations.

As part of a strategy to deal with the assistant director's resignation, the executive director has tentative plans to hire two professional employees rather than replace the assistant director. These two professionals would take over as payroll director and risk manager. The net additional costs for salary and benefits (estimated at 20 percent of base salary) of this strategy are \$42,887

(Exhibit 6-10).

Exhibit 6-10
EPISD Net Costs of Assistant Director Replacement Strategy
2000-01

Position	Pay Grade	Salary	Benefits	Total Costs
Payroll director	11	\$43,252	\$8,650	\$51,902
Risk manager	11	\$43,252	\$8,650	\$51,902
Sub-total		\$86,504	\$17,300	\$103,804
Assistant director for Financial Services	14	\$50,765	\$10,153	\$60,918
Net (cost)		(\$35,739)	(\$7,148)	(\$42,887)

Source: EPISD Executive director for Financial Services and EPISD pay schedule.

Recommendation 22:

Eliminate the position of assistant director for Financial Services and reassign employee benefits management and risk management functions to existing personnel.

By reassigning the employee benefits management function to Human Resources and the risk management function to Operations, the district will not incur the additional net costs of hiring two new professional employees instead of filling the vacant assistant director position. The employees currently performing the employee benefits duties will transfer to Human Resources and the employees performing the risk management duties will transfer to Operations.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent reassigns employee benefits management to the Human Resources Department and risk management to the Operations area.	July 2001
2.	The superintendent, with assistance from the executive director for Financial Services, makes appropriate adjustments to the 2001-2002 budget.	August 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

By eliminating the vacant position of assistant director for Financial Services, the district will save \$60,918 as shown in **Exhibit 6-10**.

Recommendation	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Eliminate the position of assistant director for Financial Services and reassign employee benefits management and risk management functions to existing personnel.	\$60,918	\$60,918	\$60,918	\$60,918	\$60,918

Chapter 6

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

B. RISK MANAGEMENT

EPISD provides health insurance benefits through a self-funded insurance plan administered through Group & Pension Administrators, Inc. (GPA), a firm specializing in managing benefit plans. GPA is the third-party administrator of the plan. A self-funded plan is one in which the district chooses to retain risks associated with the health insurance claims of the district's employees, rather than receiving this coverage from an independent insurance company. In choosing a self-funded health insurance plan, the district creates its own "insurance operation" by charging premiums that are expected to cover the costs of the plan.

GPA advises the district annually on the amount of premiums to pay into the plan. The basic characteristics of the self-funded plan are similar to that of outside providers. By choosing the self-funded method, the district can have more control over plan provisions, external health service providers and administrative costs. EPISD purchases aggregate and individual stop loss insurance coverages to prevent certain claims from having a catastrophic effect on the plan's ongoing operations.

The self-funded plan has certain providers that are included within its preferred provider organization (PPO) for which an employee receives a higher Percent reimbursement of claims. A PPO plan pre-approves health service providers for use by plan participants and thus reduces costs in the plan's handling of claims for the use of their services. ETHIX/TEXAS TRUE CHOICE is the PPO network that EPISD employees use under the plan. The plan premiums that employees pay have increased by 31 percent and by 23 percent in fiscal 2000 and 2001, respectively.

The program includes group health/accident, dental, life/disability, legal liability and workers' compensation insurance for all eligible staff members. Employees who work at least 20 hours per week, excluding overtime, are eligible for the plan. Financial Services officials, the district's insurance consultant and the third party administrator review the plans annually for type and amount of claims paid, costs and actuarial reliability.

EPISD's self-funded plan has a lifetime maximum of \$1 million and a \$250 and \$500 deductible per year per individual for PPO and non-PPO services, respectively. The maximum deductible to a family in any year is \$500 and \$1,000 for PPO and non-PPO services, respectively. The annual maximum out-of-pocket expense to a family is \$3,000 plus deductible and

\$6,000 plus deductible to a PPO member and non-PPO member, respectively.

Due to recent escalation in coverage costs, the district has a high and a low option choice for employee coverage. GPA representatives have said the district has a very high volume under the plan. If the low option is selected, the employee pays only for dependent coverage, while the high option results in the employees paying a portion of their own coverage in addition to dependent coverage.

Exhibit 6-11 provides a summary of the key plan provisions as revised on September 1, 2000 for the high option coverage.

Exhibit 6-11
Summary of EPISD High Option Medical Plan Benefits
2000-01

Basic Benefits	Employee reimbursement of PPO provided service	Employee reimbursement of Non-PPO provided service
Physician office visit, including same day lab/X-ray	\$20 co-pay	70% after deductible
Hospital in-patient	90% no deductible	70% no deductible
Hospital pre-certification		\$250 penalty if pre-cert requirements are not met
Hospital emergency room co-pay	\$50	\$50
Pre-admission testing	90% after deductible	70% after deductible
Outpatient surgery	90% after deductible	70% after deductible
Maternity	90% after deductible	70% after deductible
Second surgical opinion (if required by pre-cert company)	90% no deductible	70% no deductible
Physical medicine (P.T., O.T., Chiro) Maximum benefit of \$50 per visit	90% after deductible	70% after deductible
Mental & nervous - in-patient	90% after deductible	70% after deductible

Mental & nervous - lifetime maximum	\$10,000	\$10,000
Mental & nervous - annual maximum	30 days	15 days
Mental & nervous - outpatient	\$20 co-pay; 100%	70% after deductible
Mental & nervous - annual maximum outpatient visits	30	30
Serious mental illness	Paid as any other illness	Paid as any other illness
Substance abuse	Paid as any other illness	Paid as any other illness
Preventive and wellness - routine mammograms, checkups, routine lab, well child care and immunizations	100% (deductible waived)	70% after deductible
Preventive and wellness - maximum two year period	Unlimited	Unlimited
Prescription drug card (30 day supply)	\$10 generic/\$20 brand name	Co-pay; 80%
Mail order drugs (100 day supply)	\$10 generic/\$20 brand name	Does not apply

Source: EPISD benefit office records.

Exhibit 6-12 provides a summary of the key plan provisions as revised on September 1, 2000 for the low option coverage.

**Exhibit 6-12
Summary of EPISD Low Option Medical Plan Benefits
2000-01**

Basic Benefits	Employee reimbursement of PPO provided service	Employee reimbursement of Non-PPO provided service
Physician office visit, including same day lab/X-ray	80% after deductible	60% after deductible
Hospital in-patient	80% no deductible	60% no deductible
Hospital pre-certification		\$250 penalty if pre-cert

		requirements are not met
Hospital emergency room co-pay	\$50	\$50
Pre-admission testing	80% after deductible	60% after deductible
Outpatient surgery	80% after deductible	60% after deductible
Maternity	80% after deductible	60% after deductible
Second surgical opinion (if required by pre-cert company)	80% no deductible	60% no deductible
Physical medicine (P.T., O.T., Chiro) Maximum benefit of \$50 per visit	80% after deductible	60% after deductible
Mental & nervous - in-patient	80% after deductible	60% after deductible
Mental & nervous - lifetime maximum	\$10,000	\$10,000
Mental & nervous - annual maximum	30 days	15 days
Mental & nervous - outpatient	80% after deductible	60% after deductible
Mental & nervous - annual maximum outpatient visits	30	30
Serious mental illness	Paid as any other illness	Paid as any other illness
Substance abuse	Paid as any other illness	Paid as any other illness
Preventive and wellness - routine mammograms, checkups, routine lab, well child care and immunizations	100% (deductible waived)	60% after deductible
Preventive and wellness - maximum two year period	Unlimited	Unlimited
Prescription drug card (30 day supply)	80% after \$100 drug deductible	80% after \$100 drug deductible
Mail order drugs (100 day supply)	Does not apply	Does not apply

Source: EPISD benefit office records.

A third option is an alternate plan if an employee's spouse is covered by another plan, a hospital indemnity benefit, which pays \$200 per day for up to 150 days per calendar year.

EPISD contributes \$238 per employee to fund its plan under both the high and low option. This contribution increased from \$194 in 1999-2000.

Exhibit 6-13 details employee contributions, excluding the district's portion.

Exhibit 6-13
EPISD Full-Time Employee Monthly
Premiums for Medical Coverage
2000-01

Category	Premiums	
	High Option	Low Option
Employee only	\$66	\$0
Employee + children	\$478	\$358
Employee + spouse	\$524	\$393
Employee + family	\$667	\$556
Employee + family - both employed	\$429	\$318

Source: EPISD benefit office records.

EPISD has a dental plan with the same benefits under both the high and low options. An employee enrolled in the district's health insurance plan has the dental plan coverage. The dental plan has an individual annual deductible of \$50 for basic services and a calendar year maximum benefit of \$1,500. Orthodontic services have a lifetime maximum of \$1,000 for dependents up to age 19.

A summary of key provisions of the dental plan is included in **Exhibit 6-14**.

Exhibit 6-14
EPISD Dental Plan Benefits
2000-01

Benefit	Coverage
Diagnostic and preventive	80%
Basic services	80%

Major services	50%
Orthodontic (for dependents up to age 19)	50%

Source: EPISD benefit office records.

EPISD also offers basic life insurance if the employee chooses to pay for this coverage of up to four times their annual salary.

Section 125 of the Internal Revenue Code provides a pre-tax benefit that allows employees to deduct premiums for health, dental, cancer, other life insurance and medical/dependent care reimbursement from their salary before federal income tax is calculated. EPISD makes this option available to all employees.

Long- and short-term disability programs are available for all eligible employees; however, the district does not pay any of the premiums for either program.

EPISD also carries legal liability insurance coverage for all employees, including substitutes and student teachers. This policy covers claims made against employees for errors, omissions and/or breach of duty in the performance of their jobs for EPISD.

The district's claims history for the self-funded medical plan since 1997 is summarized in

Exhibit 6-15. Participation in the plan has decreased since 1997. Costs per participant have increased by more than 70 percent over this same period.

**Exhibit 6-15
EPISD Claims History
Calendar 1997 through 2000**

Calendar Year	Participants	Total Medical Claims	Costs per Participant	Percent Change In Costs Per Participant Since 1997
2000	1,854	\$5,171,943	\$2,790	70.85%
1999	1,872	\$4,956,132	\$2,648	62.16%
1998	1,846	\$3,784,623	\$2,050	25.54%
1997	2,023	\$3,303,127	\$1,633	N/A

Source: Group & Pension Administrators, Inc. and EPISD Benefits Office.

Exhibit 6-16 compares EPISD's high option monthly medical premium costs to those of EPISD peer districts. EPISD has the second highest monthly district contribution for the group surveyed. EPISD provides a \$238 (employee only amount) monthly contribution toward the premium.

Exhibit 6-16
EPISD and Peer Districts' Monthly Cost per Person for Medical Insurance
2000-01

District	Amount of Premium Paid by the District	Cost to Employee			
		Employee Only	Employee and Children	Employee and Spouse	Employee and Family
Eagle Pass	\$238	\$66	\$478	\$524	\$667
Harlandale	\$204	-0-	\$272	\$291	\$518
Mission Cons	\$181	\$52	\$277	\$315	\$449
Sam Benito Cons	\$250	\$69	\$413	\$355	\$460
San Felipe-Del Rio	\$170	-0-	\$125	\$179	\$250
South San Antonio	\$117	-0-	\$189	\$210	\$382
Weslaco	\$153	-0-	\$196	\$233	\$406

Source: Telephone survey conducted by TSPR, January 2001.

EPISD provides unemployment insurance through the Texas Association of School Boards Risk Management Fund. This is a pooled risk program that provides for a maximum contribution based on an approved rate for the fiscal period. The total contribution for 2000-01 was \$118,472 based on a rate of .002463 applied to \$48,100,782 in gross wages in 1999.

Property and casualty policies include liability for facilities, equipment and vehicles, personal injury, professional and general liability and loss of property. As illustrated in **Exhibit 6-17**, property and casualty insurance premiums cost the district \$235,738 in 2001, a 57.67-percent increase from the previous year. The largest increases were for property, school professional liability and vehicle coverage.

Exhibit 6-17
EPISD Property and Casualty Insurance Coverages and Premiums
1999-2000 and 2000-01

Type	Liability Limits	1999-2000 Premium	2000-01 Premium	Difference Inc./ (Dec.)	Percent Change Inc./ (Dec.)
Storage tank - pollution liability	\$1,000,000	\$387	\$387	\$0	0.00%
Property	\$123,159,711	\$55,308	\$123,160	\$67,852	122.68%
Equipment breakdown	\$100,000,000	\$3,907	\$4,493	\$586	15.00%
General liability	\$1,000,000	\$8,750	\$8,776	\$26	0.30%
School professional liability	\$1,000,000	\$20,375	\$26,268	\$5,893	28.92%
Vehicle fleet liability	\$100,000/ \$300,000	\$34,315	\$42,347	\$8,032	23.41%
Vehicle physical damage	Actual value	\$25,287	\$29,161	\$3,874	15.32%
Crime	\$25,000	\$938	\$896	(\$42)	(4.48%)
Tax assessor bond	\$50,000	\$250	\$250	\$0	0.00%
Total		\$149,517	\$235,738	\$86,221	57.67%

Source: EPISD Financial Services Office-Executive Director of Financial Services.

FINDING

Because EPISD has more than 1,000 employees and self-funds its employee health coverage the district will need to make some very serious decisions regarding the new statewide health coverage in the coming years. The 77th Texas Legislature, meeting during the spring of 2001, established a statewide school employee health insurance plan for teachers and other employees of school districts. School districts with 500 or fewer

employees-over 80 percent of the state's school districts-will be required to participate in the new state insurance plan beginning in the fall of 2002. Districts with between 501 and 1,000 employees may join the plan but must make this decision before September 30, 2001. Districts with more than 1,000 employees may join in 2005, unless the Teacher Retirement System Board (TRS), who will be administering the plan, determines that an earlier opt-in is feasible. Districts not joining the state insurance plan will still receive state support to continue their locally determined insurance programs. All districts, whether participating in the state insurance plan or not will receive from the state a \$75 a month per covered employee contribution for the district and \$1,000 a year "pass through" for each school employee.

There are some special provisions to the plan that deal with risk pools and self-insurance programs.

Risk pools: If a risk pool was in existence on January 1, 2001, the districts with under 501 employees within the pool may elect not to participate in the state pool.

Self-Insured: Districts with under 501 employees that were individually self-insured on or before January 1, 2001, and have continued a self-insured program since, may elect not to participate in the state pool.

Furthermore the bill provides that districts that are parties to a health insurance contract in effect on Sept 1, 2002 are not required to participate until the expiration of the contract period.

All full-time employees and those part-time employees who are members of TRS are automatically covered by the basic state plan, which is considered catastrophic coverage. Receiving higher levels of coverage will require additional district and employee contributions. To assist with these costs, the state will send each district \$75 per month, per covered employee and will give each employee an additional \$1,000 annually (\$83 a month) to pay for additional employee coverage, dependent coverage, compensation or any combination of the above. Part-time employees who are not TRS members may participate if they or the district pays the full cost.

Districts are required to make a minimum contribution of \$150 per employee per month. If they are not currently making that effort, over the next six years the state will help them pay that local district share. The state will phase out this hold harmless aid over the next six years. Districts reaching the Maintenance and Operations tax cap of \$1.50 will also be held harmless for any tax effort over \$1.50 required to reach their

minimum district effort of \$150 a month. EPISD is currently contributing \$238 a month per employee for insurance, up from \$194 in 1999-2000.

Districts contributing more than \$150 a month per employee may use the difference between their current expenditure per employee per month and the required \$150 a month minimum effort to provide additional insurance coverage or other employee compensation.

All of the details of the plan will be subject to contract negotiations with health insurance providers and actuarial estimates, as well as rules and guidelines set by TRS. TRS will have more details before July 31, so that districts with between 501-1,000 employees can make a decision regarding participation before the September 30, 2001 deadline for declaring their intent to participate. Consequently, within the next year more than 80 percent of the districts in the state will be examining the options and making plans to transition to the new plan.

Because the Legislature was concerned about the effect that the termination or bidding of insurance contracts during this final year of coverage would have on a district's ability to obtain competitive bids for health insurance, the state has exempted the smaller school districts from the competitive bid requirements for health insurance coverage's for the coming year.

Districts, such as EPISD, that will not be brought in to the program until 2005 may have the erroneous assumption that they will not be required to make any decisions regarding the plan or the state funding until that time. This is not true. Even before districts are eligible for participation, state funding will begin flowing to employees and districts.

Recommendation 23:

Establish a committee of staff and administrators to assess the state employee health insurance plan and help determine the district's course of action.

Decisions regarding the use of these funds must be carefully thought through so that the best interests of employees and the district are protected. The committee should be made up of employee representatives as well as financial and benefit-related staff.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent directs the executive director for Financial Services to establish a committee of representative teachers and other employees to research the options and prepare	August 2001
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	recommendations for how the district will approach the new employee health coverage's in the coming year.	
2.	The executive director for Financial Services selects a committee and begins to gather information from TRS, Region 20 and the state on the program.	September 2001
3.	The committee examines the information and prepares a plan of action to be presented to the board.	October - December 2001
4.	The superintendent and executive director for Financial Services presents the plan to the board for review and approval.	January 2001
5.	Upon approval, the committee communicates the plan to all members of the staff.	February 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 6

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

C. TAX COLLECTIONS

A cost effective and efficient school district tax collection system that produces a high collection rate is essential to generating the resources necessary to cover daily operations.

School districts adopt a tax rate each year for general operations and debt service. Calculation of this rate is dependent upon the certified tax roll provided by a central appraisal district. School districts levy taxes on real and personal property. School districts offer exemptions for homesteads of \$15,000 to all taxpayers and additional exemptions for homesteads of \$10,000 to taxpayers that have an age 65 or disabled classification. Land used for agricultural purposes is reduced to agricultural value upon application by the land owner.

EPISD collected more than \$8 million in 1999-2000 in property taxes and provided 12.5 percent of the district's operating funds. The EPISD Tax Office performs EPISD's tax collections. This tax office is one of three in Maverick County. The others are the county tax office, which also collects the taxes for the county's hospital district, and the City of Eagle Pass Tax Office. EPISD, the county and the county hospital district have similar boundaries and tax rolls.

The Eagle Pass County Appraisal District establishes property values used in assessing taxes and transmits the values to the district annually. The appraisal district sends corrections and updates to the district periodically throughout the year.

The district's tax assessor-collector supervises the EPISD Tax Office, which includes three other staff members. The EPISD Tax Office is responsible for generating and mailing tax notices and collecting payments.

The EPISD Tax Office uses South Texas Multi-Regional Processing Center (STMRPC) software, which allows EPISD to download appraisal rolls from the appraisal district as well as accommodate tax statement requests from mortgage companies. Payments from mortgage companies include a computerized tape that lists every account paid. This system eliminates the necessity for tax office personnel to manually enter each of EPISD's 25,386 accounts.

FINDING

The EPISD tax collection operation is costly in comparison to its peers. The operating budget was \$629,306 for 2000-01. This included a fixed cost of \$421,300 paid to the appraisal district for appraising property values in the district and \$10,000 for payments to the delinquent tax attorney for amounts collected from delinquent taxpayers. State law requires all taxing entities to use the county appraisal districts for appraising property values. The remainder of the budget (\$198,006) covers salaries and benefits for four EPISD Tax Office employees, printing, stuffing and mailing, computer hardware and software, equipment and other operating expenses.

The budget does not include allocated support costs from the Financial Services and Management Information Systems offices. **Exhibit 6-18** shows a breakdown of this budget for 2000-01 and the actual expenditures for the three preceding fiscal years. Tax office employees include a tax-assessor collector, an assistant tax collector and two tax clerks. Costs have increased by 22.1 percent, or \$35,813, since 1997-98 while delinquent tax collection fees have decreased by 93.7 percent or \$149,842. The drop in delinquent tax collection fees is indicative of the poor annual and overall collection rates for the district and Maverick County.

Exhibit 6-18
EPISD Tax Office Budget and Expenditures
1997-98 through 2000-01

Cost Element	1997-98 Actual	1998-99 Actual	1999-2000 Actual	2000-01 Budget	Percent Change
Personnel costs	\$119,247	\$114,090	\$121,503	\$132,248	10.9%
Contracted services	\$29,292	\$41,760	\$11,507	\$43,801	49.5%
Supplies	\$7,582	\$8,392	\$9,122	\$11,100	46.4%
Other	\$2,687	\$1,648	\$1,534	\$8,191	204.8%
Capital outlay	\$3,385	\$5,052	\$4,157	\$2,666	(21.2)%
Sub-total	\$162,193	\$170,942	\$147,823	\$198,006	22.1%
CAD contribution	\$307,716	\$340,721	\$344,618	\$421,300	36.9%
Delinquent tax collection costs	\$159,842	\$2,660	\$3,840	\$10,000	(93.7)%
Total	\$629,750	\$514,323	\$496,282	\$629,306	(0.1)%

Source: EPISD Financial Services Office Records.

The Property Tax Code allows school districts to contract out collections to a public entity in accordance with the Interlocal Cooperation Act. A Texas Attorney General's opinion states that in all cases a school district must name a tax assessor-collector as the responsible party for all tax collection operations. School districts that contract for their tax collection operations rely on the contractor to perform all technical and day-to-day operations on the district's behalf. The staff person designated as tax assessor-collector manages the tax collections and oversees the contractor's activities.

The county tax office can collect the district's taxes based on the cost of the extra work associated with EPISD's tax levy and collections. Peer districts that use consolidated tax collections paid an average of \$2.26 per account for 2000-01 (**Exhibit 6-19**).

Exhibit 6-19
EPISD and Peer District Budgeted Tax Collections and Costs
2000-01

District	Number of Accounts	Costs	Costs per Account	Collection Method
Eagle Pass	25,386	\$198,006	\$7.80	Internal
San Felipe-Del Rio Consolidated	29,920	\$81,480	\$2.72	CAD
Welasco	25,384	\$75,000	\$2.95	County
San Benito Consolidated	18,059	\$27,945	\$1.55	Internal
Mission Consolidated	21,883	\$60,000	\$2.74	County
Harlandale	22,262	\$32,058	\$1.44	County
South San Antonio	13,153	\$18,937	\$1.44	County
Average - excluding Eagle Pass			\$2.26	

Source: EPISD Financial Services Office Records and TSPR Telephone Survey in December 2000.

When school districts' use county tax offices for property tax levy and collection, it can result in lower costs because the county already collects other taxes from school taxpayers and can avoid duplicative mailing and stuffing costs. The Maverick County Tax Office, which collects taxes for two different taxing entities in Maverick County, provides all of the same services and payment arrangements for taxpayers that the EPISD Tax Office provides. **Exhibit 6-20** shows the entities, tax levies and total

accounts collected by the Maverick County Tax Office in 2000 and compares these totals to EPISD information. EPISD's tax collection operation would represent 73.7 percent of the combined county tax office and EPISD levies collected and 33.8 percent of the total accounts handled by both EPISD and the county.

Exhibit 6-20
Tax Levy and Accounts for Entities that Use Maverick
County Tax Office for Collections Compared to EPISD
1999-2000

Entity	Estimated Tax Levy	Estimated Number of Accounts
Maverick County	\$2,079,861	24,813
Maverick County Hospital District	\$917,525	24,813
Total County Tax Office	\$2,997,386	49,626
EPISD	\$8,390,219	25,386
Total County Tax Office and EPISD	\$11,387,605	75,012
Percent for EPISD	73.7%	33.8%

Source: EPISD, Eagle Pass County Tax Offices and EPISD Official Statement for Series 2000 Bonds.

EPISD realized an 87.2 percent collection rate on taxes owed by EPISD property owners in 2000. When adding delinquent tax collections from previous years, the combined collection rate for 2000 is 95.9 percent. The county tax office had an overall collection rate of 94.7 percent countywide for 2000. **Exhibit 6-21** shows tax collection rates for EPISD and the county tax office (all entities) for the past seven years.

Exhibit 6-21
EPISD and Maverick County
Tax Collection Percents by Fiscal Year
1991 through 2000

Fiscal Year	EPISD		Maverick County	
	Current	Overall*	Current	Overall*
2000	87.2%	95.9%	85.6%	94.7%
1999	86.1%	94.4%	83.8%	95.0%

1998	84.9%	92.4%	87.4%	97.0%
1997	84.7%	92.8%	85.67	95.64
1996	84.8%	90.6%	87.1%	97.6%
1995	85.1%	91.9%	81.6%	97.4%
1994	85.3%	88.1%	87.2%	102.0%

Source: EPISD, Eagle Pass County Tax Offices and EPISD Official Statement for Series 2000 Bonds.

Both the county tax office and EPISD contract with the same tax attorney to collect delinquent taxes. State law allows the tax attorney to add an additional 15-percent collection fee to taxes outstanding as of July 1 of each year. When delinquent taxes are collected, the attorney retains the 15 percent. The district keeps the taxes collected plus penalty and interest.

According to EPISD's delinquent tax attorney, the district's collection rate, similar to other taxing entities, is low for a variety of reasons. Eagle Pass is a town with a large Percent of low-income families and a high number of transients. There are a number of large trucks on the tax roll at a high value. Historically, the collection of taxes from a number of the truck owners has been difficult because they spend a significant amount of time on the road and they are hard to locate.

The school district has a significant amount of agricultural land with large ranches on the tax roll. Tax collection from agricultural land is normally timely and the taxes are generally small amounts. The delinquent tax attorney stated that partial payments are accepted and he does not sue if the owner is making regular payments. The attorney gets a computer tape of delinquent accounts from the tax office periodically for review.

Recommendation 24:

Transfer EPISD tax levy and collection operations to the Maverick County Tax Office.

The similar tax collection Percents for the county and district indicate that costs per account collected would be the overriding factor in evaluating the use of the county tax office for these services.

EPISD should establish an interlocal agreement with the Maverick County Tax Assessor-Collector to provide tax levy and collection duties currently handled by the district's tax office. This agreement should address all pertinent EPISD tax policies and such key areas as the frequency and

method of fund transfers, the calculation of the effective and roll-back tax rates, mail-out and payment schedules, reporting requirements and the handling of tax refunds. Agreement provisions should include consideration for special contingencies such as the cost of mailing corrected bills when necessary. EPISD should address delinquent tax collections as part of the agreement.

EPISD also should designate a current Financial Services office employee as EPISD's tax assessor-collector for the district as required by law. Hands-on technical expertise in tax collections is not required of this employee, because this would be the responsibility of the county tax office.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The board approves a cooperative agreement between EPISD and the Maverick County Tax Assessor-Collector.	August 2001
2.	The superintendent signs an agreement with Maverick County Tax Assessor-Collector.	August 2001
3.	The executive director for Financial Services develops a transition plan for transferring tax functions from the EPISD Tax Office to the County Tax Office, including staff reductions and the designation of a current Financial Services office employee as EPISD's tax assessor-collector.	September 2001
4.	The County Tax Office begins handling EPISD's tax levy and collection functions.	October 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

The Maverick County Tax Assessor-Collector was not able to provide an estimate of this cost. All peer districts that used their county or county appraisal district to collect taxes had more accounts than EPISD. The average of \$2.26 per account would indicate that EPISD should expect to pay \$57,372 (25,386 accounts times \$2.26). An additional \$5,000 has been estimated in the first year to set up and convert data. Excluding the costs for the appraisal district and delinquent tax collection fees paid by delinquent taxpayers, the tax office's operating budget is approximately \$198,006. The designation of an existing Financial Services office employee as the school district's tax assessor-collector results in no additional costs. The savings in the first year of transition are estimated at \$135,634 and \$140,634 per year thereafter.

Recommendation	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
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Transfer EPISD tax levy and collection operations to the Maverick County Tax Office.	\$135,634	\$140,634	\$140,634	\$140,364	\$140,364
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FINDING

EPISD has a severely delinquent tax account that is currently due from Maverick County. As of November 2000, the county owes the district \$366,981 in taxes, penalties and interest relating to the county's purchase of a building with outstanding property tax balances. According to EPISD's delinquent tax attorney, the previous owner is no longer a corporation in good standing in Texas. Diversified was hired to build and operate the county jail for a five-year period, with the agreement that the county would pay the taxes. The years involved are 1992-1996. The attorney is unsure if the previous owner owned the property on January 1, 1997. There is also a total of \$53,000 owed on the personal property account through 1996. The county tax rolls also show a delinquency for this account for the Maverick County Hospital District.

The delinquent tax attorney says there has been discussion with one EPISD board member about trying to obtain payment from the county on at least the base tax. The attorney takes instructions on the matter from the EPISD board. The delinquent tax attorney would have a conflict if the school district wanted to pursue the suit because he also represents the county. There has been some controversy about whether the property should have been exempt since the county planned to take over the facility after five years, but the county has never made a decision on this matter. The account has been turned over to the district's delinquent tax attorney.

According to the Maverick County Appraisal District's Chief Appraiser, the property is properly classified as taxable for the delinquent years in question. The owner bought the property on June 15, 1989 from Duval County Ranch. The next conveyance was from owner to Maverick County on June 9, 1997. The county's contract with the owner provided that Maverick County was liable for any ad valorem taxes on the property. The owner built the jail and leased it to the county. The Chief Appraiser discussed the lease at length with the county judge concerning the taxable nature of the property and indicates that the district's delinquent taxes are owed and that the property is taxable for the years taxed.

Recommendation 25:

Hire an independent tax attorney to settle the Maverick County delinquent tax account.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The executive director for Financial Services interviews independent delinquent tax attorneys from available firms.	August 2001
2.	The executive director for Financial Services makes a recommendation to the superintendent.	August 2001
3.	The superintendent presents recommendation for independent delinquent tax attorney to the board for formal approval.	September 2001
4.	The independent delinquent tax attorney negotiates a settlement with Maverick County officials.	September 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

It is uncertain what the actual fiscal impact of implementing this recommendation will be. EPISD could collect the total \$366,000 if it is determined that the county should pay the amount. A legal settlement for a lesser amount is also a possibility and the district will also incur attorney fees to negotiate a settlement. Thus the fiscal impact is estimated at one-half of the maximum \$366,000.

Recommendation	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Hire an independent tax attorney to settle the Maverick County delinquent tax account.	\$183,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Chapter 6

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

D. PAYROLL

The Financial Services office is responsible for the timely and accurate payment of district employees payrolls, benefit deductions, the payment of insurance premiums, IRS-related matters, court-ordered deductions and deductions for participation in the Teacher Retirement System and Medicare/Social Security.

Financial Services provides semi-monthly checks to approximately 2,150 EPISD employees. The payroll clerks report to the payroll supervisor. Six full-time employees, including the supervisor, perform the payroll functions.

FINDING

EPISD's total direct personnel costs associated with its payroll function are \$219,876 (**Exhibit 6-22**). This amount does not include the allocated costs from other Financial Services employees and Management Information Services support activities.

Exhibit 6-22
Personnel Costs for EPISD Payroll Function
2000-01

Position	Salary and Benefit Costs
Payroll Supervisor	\$60,687
Payroll Specialist I	\$50,794
Payroll Specialist II	\$35,527
Payroll Clerk I	\$26,347
Payroll Clerk II	\$22,832
Payroll Clerk II	\$23,688
Total	\$219,875

Source: EPISD Financial Services Records.

Many school districts and other governments have found that outsourcing payroll functions is an attractive alternative to maintaining the staff and automated systems internally. Several factors enter into weighing the

advantages and disadvantages of outsourcing payroll functions. The leading advantages are potential cost savings and avoiding personnel shortages. The ability to attract and retain the appropriate level of personnel to oversee and perform these functions has been difficult in recent years for some local governments.

Galveston College, a local community college on Galveston Island, recently outsourced its payroll functions. The college's upper level administrators were pleased with the results based on the realization of most of the advantages noted above.

Recommendation 26:

Contract for payroll processing.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The executive director for Financial Services, in cooperation with Purchasing, prepares a request for proposals (RFP) for payroll processing services from available vendors.	August 2001
2.	The executive director for Financial Services, in cooperation with Purchasing, reviews proposals received and make a recommendation with the review of the superintendent.	August 2001
3.	The superintendent presents recommendation for payroll processing vendor to the board for formal approval.	September 2001
4.	The payroll processing vendor and EPISD personnel begin the transition to vendor processing EPISD payroll.	October 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

Based on information obtained from the firm providing Galveston College's payroll services, it would cost approximately \$95,000 annually and allow the elimination of three of the full-time employees currently handling payroll functions in the Financial Services office. EPISD should transfer two clerks to the Human Resources Office to manage employee benefits. **Exhibit 6-23** compares the costs associated with outsourcing the payroll function to the current direct personnel costs for this function.

Exhibit 6-23
Savings Resulting from Outsourcing EPISD Payroll Function
2000-01

Description	Costs (Including Benefits)
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Payroll Specialist II (remaining employee)	\$35,527
Contract services for outsourcing	\$95,000
Total	\$130,527
Current direct personnel costs (four employees)	\$173,356
Savings	\$42,829

Source: WCL Enterprises and EPISD Financial Services Office Records.

The district would achieve a total cost savings of approximately \$42,829 by outsourcing the payroll function. Because transition will not occur until mid-year, only one-half of the estimated savings are assumed in the first year.

Recommendation	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Contract for payroll processing.	\$21,415	\$42,829	\$42,829	\$42,829	\$42,829

FINDING

EPISD purchased the Kronos Automated Time System during the 1999-2000 fiscal year and has not completed its installation. According to the district, the delay in installation was due to a change in the personnel responsible for implementation. The district paid \$104,049 for this system, excluding employee travel cost for training sessions (**Exhibit 6-24**).

Exhibit 6-24 EPISD Kronos Automated Time System Costs 1999-2000

Element	Cost
System hardware	\$86,165
One year maintenance agreement for hardware and software	\$9,884
Training for ten persons @ \$800 per person	\$8,000
Total	\$104,049

Source: Kronos and EPISD Financial Services Office Records.

The costs included a 90-day warranty and installation. The warranty began the day of delivery, April 28, 2000 and expired on July 27, 2000. The one-year maintenance agreement began at the conclusion of the 90-day

warranty, on July 28, 2000. All of the purchase and maintenance agreement costs are paid. Any additional time spent by the company is now on a pay-as-you-go basis except for what is included in the maintenance agreement.

The maintenance agreement includes equipment exchange if there is a problem, a customer support help desk both on line and by telephone and software upgrades. **Exhibit 6-25** shows key dates related to the system.

Exhibit 6-25
EPISD Kronos Automated Time System Key Dates
1999-2000

Element	Date
Delivery	April 28, 2000
90 day warranty expired	July 27, 2000
Maintenance agreement begins	July 27, 2000
Personnel training in Austin	August 2000
Equipment installation	September 7, 2000
Additional personnel training in Austin (2 persons)	October 2000

Source: Kronos and EPISD Financial Services Office Records.

The system includes 28 time clocks installed in the district. An employee badge is equipped with a bar code. Employees swipe the badge across the clock, and the information is stored in the clock. The information is sent to a computer equipped with the Kronos software through the district's network. Payroll uses the attendance information for completing payrolls.

The contract called for Kronos to install three to four clocks while training EPISD employees. EPISD was to install the rest of the clocks and cabling.

The system is not functioning. Kronos representatives state that the system administrator was the assistant director for Financial Services, a position that is vacant. There has been no progress in getting the system up and running in the absence of the assistant director. EPISD has since named the payroll supervisor as system administrator.

The installation is seriously delayed. Kronos representatives say that a payroll survey was necessary to configure the system, and it was not completed until sometime in July 2000. EPISD sent eight employees in

August 2000 to training and sent two more in October 2000. The training consists of one day for administration and one day for operations.

Kronos representatives say that at this point it is unclear how many of the clocks have been installed. It is EPISD's responsibility to complete the installations.

If all installations were complete, Kronos representatives say the system could be up and running in two days with their staff's assistance. Kronos would charge professional service fees for the company's assistance. With the long delay in implementation, Kronos representatives believe that employees have forgotten some of the training. They also contend they call EPISD on a regular basis to see how things are going and if "they need any help" and are usually told the district will call if personnel need help.

Recommendation 27:

Complete network installation of Kronos time clocks.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The payroll supervisor oversees the installation of the remaining time clocks throughout the district.	August 2001
2.	The executive director for Financial Services contracts with Kronos to provide technical assistance in bringing the time keeping system online.	August 2001
3.	The executive director for Financial Services assembles a district-wide group of trainers to be trained on the system and acquires the appropriate basic training or refresher course on system operations.	August 2001
4.	The payroll supervisor oversees the training of rank and file district personnel during in-service training.	September 2001
5.	District personnel begin using Kronos time system.	September 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

TSPR contacted Kronos representatives and found that charges from Kronos will include: two days of onsite training at a rate of \$1,500 per day, the cost of training a system administrator at a rate of \$400 per day and Kronos Virtual Classroom Training on the Internet for eight personnel at a rate of \$135 per session. The total estimated one-time cost to complete

the implementation of this recommendation is \$4,480 (($\$1,500 \times 2 = \$3,000$) + $\$400$ + ($\$135 \times 8 = \$1,080$)).

Recommendation	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Complete network installation of Kronos time clocks.	(\$4,480)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Chapter 6

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

E. FINANCIAL REPORTING AND BUDGETING

All Texas school districts must comply with state financial reporting guidelines, which are contained in the Texas Education Agency's (TEA) *Financial Accountability System Resource Guide* (FASRG). The guide includes the accounting and financial reporting requirements of generally accepted accounting principles, federally mandated auditing and financial reporting requirements and specific accounting and financial reporting requirements of the TEA. A district's annual audited financial statements must include all necessary financial information and related disclosures prescribed in the guide.

The FASRG says that budgeting is the process of allocating resources to the prioritized needs of the district. Although budget formats and policies are by no means uniform in school districts, formal budgets play a critical role in the planning, control and evaluation of school district operations. In school districts, the adoption of a budget implies that a set of decisions have been made by school board members and school district administrators that match a school district's resources with its needs. As such, the budget is a product of the planning process. The budget also provides an important tool for the controlling and evaluating a school district's use of resources. With the assistance of the accounting system, administrators can execute and control budgeted activities and evaluate the district's performance based upon comparisons between budgeted and actual operations.

The link between planning and budget preparation gives budgets a unique role in school districts. Budgets in the public arena are often considered the ultimate policy document since they are the financial plan a school district uses to achieve its goals and objectives reflecting:

- Public choices about what goods and services the district will and will not acquire.
- School districts' priorities among the wide range of activities in which they are involved.
- Relative weight given to the influence of various participants and interest groups in the budget development process.
- How a school district has acquired and used its resources.

The budget, itself, then becomes intrinsically a political document reflecting school district administrators' accountability for fiduciary responsibility to citizens.

In the educational context, budgeting is a valuable tool in both the planning and evaluation processes. Budgeting provides a vehicle for translating educational goals and programs into financial resource plans. Thus, instruction planning (to attain student educational goals) determines budgetary allocations. This link between instruction and financial planning is critical to effective budgeting. In addition, such a budgeting practice may enhance the evaluation of budgetary and educational performance since resource allocations are closely associated with instructional plans.

Performance evaluation allows citizens and taxpayers to hold policymakers and administrators accountable for their actions. Because accountability to citizens often is stated explicitly in state laws and constitutions, it is considered a cornerstone of budgeting and financial reporting. The Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) recognizes its importance with these objectives in its GASB Concepts Statement No. 1 (Section 100.177):

- Financial reporting provides information to determine whether current-year revenues were sufficient to pay for current-year services.
- Financial reporting demonstrates whether resources were obtained and used in accordance with the entity's legally adopted budget. It also demonstrates compliance with other finance-related legal or contractual requirements.
- Financial reporting provides information to assist users in assessing the service efforts, costs and accomplishments of the governmental entity.

Legal requirements for school district budgets are formulated by the state, TEA and the local district. Additional legal requirements also may be imposed by state and federal grants.

The responsibility for preparing district budget guidelines and the budget calendar lies primarily with district administrators and the superintendent. Because these guidelines and the calendar create a framework for the entire budget development process, their careful design is critical to an efficient and effective process.

The budget calendar lists the critical dates for the preparation, submission and review of campus budgets for the school district. A variety of simple techniques can be used to build the district calendar. The easiest technique is to begin with the previous year's calendar and modify it for use in the current year. Timing problems from the previous year's process are reviewed and appropriate changes made in the current year's calendar. At a minimum, the budget calendar should be reviewed to ensure it is

appropriate for the current year's budget development process. **Exhibit 6-26** shows the district's budget calendar.

Exhibit 6-26
EPISD Budget Calendar
Fiscal 2000-01

Date	Action
February 21	The executive director for Financial Services prepares preliminary review for 2000-01 Budget.
February 22	Distribute current manning tables to principals and directors for reviewing and updating (1 st time).
February 24	Payroll creates File E and reviews it.
February 29	Principals and directors return updated manning tables to executive director for Financial Services (1 st time). Superintendent, assistant superintendent for Education and executive director for Financial Services meet to discuss preliminary review for 2000-01 budget (1 st time).
March 2	Payroll prints the 1 st File E draft. Budget officer begins to verify positions and funding from 1 st File E draft to manning tables (discrepancies reported to executive director for Financial Services).
March 7	Executive director for Financial Services prepares Preliminary Budget Calendar.
March 9	Financial Services reviews preliminary budget calendar and requests peak enrollments from assistant superintendent for Education. Executive director for Financial Services requests central office allocations from assistant superintendent for Education.
March 10	Superintendent, assistant superintendent for Education, and executive director for Financial Services meet to continue discussing preliminary review for 2000-01 budget.
March 23	Assistant superintendent for Education returns peak enrollments to executive director for Financial Services. Assistant executive director for Financial Services calculates supplemental payroll for maintenance & operations fund. Assistant superintendent for Education returns central office allocations to executive director for Financial Services.
April 5	Assistant executive director for Financial Services requests supplemental payrolls for Food Service (101). Transportation

	(162), Gifted & Talented (165), Special Education (168), and Athletic (181) Funds (use same download for amended budget and next year's budget).
April 12	Executive director for Financial Services and Budget officer calculate utilities and central office allocations (insurance, Region 20, copiers, etc.). Executive director for Financial Services reviews updated manning tables returned by principals and directors.
April 17	Provide list of budget committee members to superintendent and committee members. Distribute preliminary review for 2000-01 budget, budget calendar and budget committee members list to trustees. Food Service (101), Transportation (162), Gifted & Talented (165), Special Education (168) and Athletic (181) Departments submit supplemental payrolls to assistant executive director for Financial Services. Executive director for Financial Services submits central office allocations (returned by assistant superintendent for Education) to budget officer for data entry to budget file. Budget officer returns manning tables to executive director for Financial Services to verify any discrepancies (changes in funding or positions) when compared to 1 st File E draft. Budget officer begins to work on Budget Procedures Manual. Distribute campus manning tables to program directors and assistant superintendent for Education to verify funding.
April 19	Payroll prints 2 nd File E draft. 1 st revenue estimates calculated by executive director for Financial Services and Budget officer.
April 20	Tax collector submits revised tax collections for 1999-00 and 2000-01. Assistant superintendent for Education, director of Personnel Services, and executive director for Financial Services meet with program directors to coordinate manning tables funding (vacancy deletions, F230 funding and personnel changes due to comparability).
April 25	Program directors and assistant superintendent for Education return campus manning tables to executive director for Financial Services. Executive director for Financial Services reviews corrected manning tables returned by assistant superintendent for Education and program directors. Revise ADA for 1999-00 and project for 2000-2001. Executive director for Financial Services meets with program directors to review projections (FTE's) for state mandated programs. Assistant executive director for Financial Services submits Food Service (101), Transportation (162), Gifted & Talented (165), Special Education (168), Athletic (181) and Maintenance & Operations supplemental payrolls to the Payroll Department.
April 26	Distribute undated manning tables to principals and directors after

	updating them with changes made by assistant superintendent for Education and program directors (2 nd time).
April 27	2 nd revised revenue estimates calculated by Financial Services. Budget officer enters central office allocations to budget file. Payroll begins to calculate cost of local salary step increase for teachers and registered nurses as required by Senate Bill 4. Executive director for Financial Services and Budget officer begin to calculate revenues (local, state and federal) for next year's budget.
April 28	Assistant superintendent for Education, director of Personnel Services, and executive director for Financial Services meet with program directors and principals to coordinate manning tables funding (vacancy deletions, F230 funding and personnel changes due to comparability). Executive director for Financial Services provides 1 st revenue estimates to program directors and distribute revenue allocations (general fund, 1xx). Executive director for Financial Services submits updated manning tables to Payroll Department for updating File E.
May 1	Review Budget Procedures Manual with Assistant executive director for Financial Services and Budget officer. Payroll Department provides cost of local step increases for teachers and registered nurses as required by Senate Bill 4 (\$530 local step for teachers with 20+ years experience). Payroll Department enters (to File E) cost of local step increases for teachers and registered nurses as required by Senate Bill 4. Executive director for Financial Services provides manning tables changes made by principals and directors to Payroll Department for updating (last time these changes will require program director and Assistant supt. for Education approvals).
May 2	Payroll prints 3 rd File E draft. Print Budget Information and Procedures Manual.
May 3	Budget department begins to enter File E amounts and fringe benefits (include health increase of +17%) from 2 nd File E draft to budget file (Beverly at Region 20 will assist with downloading in the new system).
May 6 through May 7	Personnel from Financial Services may need to work on weekend for data entry.
May 12	Budget - (delete accounts with zero amounts on all columns). Request reports from Region 20 Data Reporter Name: (EPBUD2).
May 18	Distribute budget manuals and budgets. Campuses/departments

	begin to submit all additional requests/issues for personnel, budget items and special projects to executive director for Financial Services for review and consideration. (Deadline to submit all additional requests is 05/31/00)
May 25	Program directors submit supplemental payroll with budgets for balanced budgets (general fund) not subsidized by the M & O fund. Payroll Department enters supplemental pay to File E for balanced budgets. Budget department enters supplemental pay to budget file for balanced budgets.
May 26	Budget Department begins entering budgets (general fund) in budget file. Executive director for Financial Services and Budget officer provide revenues (local, state and federal) for general fund for data entry to next year's budget. Executive director for Financial Services and Budget officer begin to work on 1 st draft of Board Budget Workshop Manual.
May 29	Executive director for Financial Services, Asst. executive director for Financial Services and Budget officer review 1 st draft of Board Budget Workshop Manual.
May 31	Superintendent and executive director for Financial Services review 1 st draft of Board Budget Workshop Manual. Submit 1 st Board Budget Workshop Manual to Print Shop
June 1	Deadline for principals and program directors to return budgets (general fund) to executive director for Financial Services. Deadline for campuses/departments to submit all Additional Requests/Issues for personnel, budget items and special projects to executive director for Financial Services for review and consideration. Budget officer verifies budget allocations for (general fund) budgets returned by principals and program directors. Print Shop returns 1 st Board Budget Workshop Manual.
June 2	Distribute 1 st Board Budget Workshop Manual to trustees.
June 5	Complete data entry of budgets (general fund) in the budget file.
June 6	1 st budget committee meeting to review preliminary budget calendar, preliminary review for 2000-01 budget, manning tables procedures (how they interface with the budget), and 1 st Board Budget Workshop. Prepare budget reports. (Presented in 2 nd Board Budget Workshop)
June 7	1 ST Board Budget Workshop
June 13	Complete budget reports.
June 16	Distribute 2 nd Board Budget Workshop Manual to trustees.

June 20	2 nd Budget Committee Meeting to review 2 nd Board Budget Workshop.
June 21	2 nd Board Budget Workshop
July 11	3 rd budget committee meeting to review 3 rd Board Budget Workshop.
July 12	3 rd Board Budget Workshop
July 17	Deadline for principals and directors to submit fixed assets (capital outlay) for 2000-01 school year (rationale must be attached)
July 18	Publish date of public hearing. (minimum of 10-day notice, but not to exceed 30 days)
August 1	4 th budget committee meeting to review 4 th Board Budget Workshop
August 2	4 th Board Budget Workshop
August 8	Regular board meeting, budget hearing and adoption of budget.
September 1	2000-01 official budget downloaded to general ledger accounting system.
September 5	Publish effective tax rate calculation and fund balances in both local newspapers.
September 6	Upload 2000-01 budget to general ledger.
September 14	Request reports from Region 20, Data Reporter Names: EPBUDGET, DREPOFB2, DRMANDAT.
September 19	Adoption of tax rate
October 30	Official budget transmitted to TEA through PEIMS.

Source: EPISD Budget Information and Procedures Manual 2000-01.

If the budget development process has been altered substantially from the previous year's process, the development of an entirely new budget calendar may be necessary. The following three steps may be used to prepare a new budget calendar:

- Determine the level of detail needed. A district may have several budget calendars with varied levels of detail provided. A general calendar may be presented to the school board while a detailed calendar may be used in the budget guidelines for use at the campus level. If several calendars are used, they are summarized in

a district master calendar to ensure that all the activities and dates are consistent and compatible.

- Identify all the activities that must be included in the calendar and arrange them in chronological order.
- Assign completion dates to each activity on the calendar.
Completion dates are assigned working backward through the activities from the legally mandated date for presentation of the preliminary school district budget to the school board by August 20. Dates are also be assigned to ensure that sufficient time is allowed for the completion of each activity on the calendar. Some school districts may wish to assign only completion dates for each activity and allow budget actors/groups to determine when an activity is begun. Other school districts may assign suggested/mandatory start dates for certain activities to ensure their timely completion.

FINDING

The district provides budget information to the public on a monthly basis and conducts an open finance committee meeting workshop before the regular board meeting to review this information.

EPISD's monthly finance committee report reflects the amount that the district has budgeted and the actual financial results. The report also includes information on variances from the budget at a selected level of detail. Written or oral explanations of large budget variances supplement the monthly board report.

**Exhibit 6-27
Summarized Format of a Standard Monthly Budget Comparison Report**

Description	Budget Amount	Actual Amount	Variance
Fund:			
Revenue:	\$	\$	\$
Categories	\$	\$	\$
Total Revenues	\$	\$	\$
Expenditures:	\$	\$	\$
Function:	\$	\$	\$
Expenditure type:	\$	\$	\$
Program area	\$	\$	\$

Campus or facility	\$	\$	\$
Total expenditures	\$	\$	\$

Source: Summary format noted in EPISD monthly finance committee packet.

COMMENDATION

EPISD prepares informative budget analysis reports every month for the board and the public.

FINDING

In June 1999, the GASB developed and issued a very comprehensive governmental accounting rule. GASB Statement of Financial Accounting Standards No. 34 will significantly change the way Texas school districts and other state and local governments report their finances to the public. TEA requires implementation of the new standard in the 2001-2002 year. GASB is the private sector organization formed in 1984 that sets financial accounting and reporting standards for state and local governments. Its seven members are drawn from the board's diverse constituency, including preparers and auditors of state and local government financial statements, users of those statements, and members of the academic community.

Under the new rule, anyone with an interest in school finance - citizens, the media, bond raters, creditors, legislators, and others - will have more and easier-to-understand information about the school in question. For the first time, school district financial reports will have information about the full cost of providing services to students and the public. An additional feature of financial reports presented under the new standard is management's narrative analysis of the school district's financial performance. The new financial reporting system will give citizens a clearer picture of what a school district is doing with the taxes it collects. This includes whether current revenues are paying for current services, or if the services are the responsibility of the next generation of taxpayers. Other significant features of the new standard include calculating and recording depreciation for school facilities and equipment and disclosing the extent of net costs for all school programs that tax revenues and basic state revenues actually fund.

Reports prepared under the new standard will help to determine whether the school district's financial health is improving or deteriorating. The reports will provide vital information to a company planning to relocate to a particular county or region of the state. Reports prepared under the new

standard will help trustees better understand the long- and short-term implications of policy decisions. Investors will better understand the financial health of school districts participating in the financial markets. The new standard will help taxpayers better assess the fiscal soundness of district management's actions.

EPISD is in the process of reviewing these requirements, but no formal implementation plan has been developed.

Recommendation 28:

Develop an implementation strategy for GASB Statement No. 34 to meet annual external financial reporting guidelines and TEA regulatory reporting requirements.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The executive director for Financial Services develops plans with Region 20 representatives for implementing the new financial reporting standard.	July 2001
2.	The executive director for Financial Services develops information for presentation to the board concerning the new standard and explains significant implementation issues.	August 2001
3.	The executive director for Financial Services implements necessary procedures to satisfy new reporting and data maintenance requirements for satisfying the new standard.	September 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 6

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

F. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Internal audit functions in organizations generally are assigned special projects that operational staff members do not have time or capabilities to perform. These projects include policy and procedures monitoring activities with an emphasis on internal and administrative control processes. Internal audit personnel assist in routine functional areas as well when staff turnover or peak workloads occur. A major focus of the internal audit function includes the constant evaluation of efficiency and effectiveness in routine operations.

TEA's *FASRG* includes a section on management reviews and indicates that district's internal auditor can perform audits. The TEA indicates that these types of audits do not satisfy the requirements of the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996 for external reporting purposes but may be conducted by an independent certified public accountant (CPA), internal auditor and/or state auditor.

TEA recommends operational, compliance and financial audits of systems and records, special and criminal investigation assistance, compliance and financial audits of sub-grantees and other operational areas, management and service audits of education service centers.

TEA also provides guidance in analyzing management issues affecting operational effectiveness. These management and operations analyses seek to pose several important questions that relate to service quality, operational efficiency, organizational positioning and management effectiveness. In the evaluation of the overall effectiveness of an operation, it is necessary to understand the overall objectives, which the operation must ultimately support. These objectives are

Mission objectives related to:

- the established strategic direction of the school district and the operation being audited,
- identifying the school district's "customers",
- if the strategic direction of the operation fully support the requirements of the school district's overall strategic direction,
- if the strategic direction of an operation reflect the requirements of its operating environment,
- if the organizational structure of the operation under study reflect the basic needs of the school district and it's customers and

- if the assignments of functions and reporting responsibilities appropriate and consistent with the overall role, scope and mission of the activity.

Performance objectives related to:

- whether services provided are consistent with "customer" service needs and desires,
- identification of the operation's service level goals and measures of performance,
- how is activity value measured,
- how resource utilization and performance are measured,
- whether the organization actually accomplishes its mission (i.e., how well does it actually perform),
- how operational policies are set, implemented and communicated.

Supporting resource allocation objectives related to:

- the resources are available to the organization, and what is the organization's role in deploying those resources,
- how specific resources are consumed in the delivery of services,
- if the school district should seek alternative providers for any of the functions under study,
- if functions and/or organizational unit responsibilities overlap,
- if resources are allocated and utilized appropriately,
- if proper performance measurement systems in place and
- if current performance measures adequately reflect the mission and goals of the school district and the operation being audited.

Overall management objectives related to:

- whether the current operation's organizational structure is efficient and effective in facilitating quality service delivery and management coordination and control,
- if management information is available through utilization of appropriate technology and technological tools,
- if planning, budgeting and performance measurement are consistent and internally coordinated and
- if there is a method for determining what, when and how improvements in operating practices are made.

FINDING

The district has no internal audit function.

The district relies heavily on its certified public accounting firm to perform its annual financial and compliance audit and prepare its annual audited financial statements. The audit firm is hired each year for these services. The current engagement arrangement was the result of a Request for Proposal (RFP) process by the district two years ago that included fee estimate projections for the potential extension of annual engagement arrangements through the 2001 fiscal year. The audit firm, which has been the district's external auditor since fiscal 1999, also audits other school districts in the region and has special expertise in school audits. Annual audit fees total about \$33,000 for all routine compliance work and reporting in accordance with TEA guidelines.

Recommendation 29:

Contract with an external audit firm to perform internal audits.

The firm selected should report directly to the EPISD board. The board should discuss and consider issues brought to their attention in audit reports. Based on the significance of the findings reported by the contracted firm, the board may find that a need exists where increasing the audit coverage is warranted or even the need to create a position for a full-time internal auditor.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Board of Trustees negotiates an agreement with an external audit firm for internal audit services.	August 2001
2.	The board approves the agreement.	September 2001
3.	The board works with the selected firm to create an internal audit plan.	October 2001
4.	The external audit firm begins implementation of the internal audit plan.	January 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

Based on the review team's discussions with the executive director for Financial Services, the superintendent and representatives of EPISD's current external audit firm, selected internal audits can be performed annually in 80 to 100 hours. At an average charge of \$75 per hour, estimated costs for these services are \$7,500 annually (100 hours x \$75 per hour).

Recommendation	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Contract with an external audit firm to perform internal audits.	(\$7,500)	(\$7,500)	(\$7,500)	(\$7,500)	(\$7,500)

Chapter 6

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

G. CASH AND INVESTMENTS

EPISD uses Caminoreal Bank, N.A. as its depository. Texas school districts typically bid and issue depository contracts for a two-year period; however, recent legislation allows a district to renew depository contracts for two additional years if the district considers the service satisfactory. Caminoreal Bank, N.A maintains all the district's checking accounts for general and payroll disbursements. The depository agreement provides for a surety bond and/or acceptable collateral securities to cover all bank balances in excess of federal depository insurance limits as established by the federal depository insurance corporation.

Each day, the accounting specialist reviews account balances for each of the 14 district bank accounts and 10 investment accounts in the Lone Star investment pool and makes investment decisions based on the balances available. Because the interest rates for these accounts typically are lower than those earned from other investments, the district attempts to keep these balances at a minimum.

The district is a type 1 payee for state funding purposes. According to Section 42.259 of the Texas Education Code, a type 1 payee is a school district with a wealth per student of less than one-half of the statewide average wealth per student. Type 1 payees receive their funding throughout the year

(**Exhibit 6-28**) because these school districts do not have significant tax revenues for operating purposes.

Exhibit 6-28
State Revenue Payment Timing
For Type 1 Payee School Districts
2000-01

Fiscal Year On or Before Date	Percent of Yearly Entitlement
September 25	15%
October 25	10%
November 25	10%
December 25	10%
January 25	10%

February 25	5%
March 25	10%
May 25	10%
June 25	10%
July 25	10%

Source: Texas Education Code

Based on the funding method for state revenues, EPISD works diligently to invest any unused funds to maximize interest earnings. As of October 31, 2000, the district had \$3,684,027 in checking accounts earning 3.5 percent (**Exhibit 6-29**). This amount represents 33 percent of the district's total cash and investment balances. EPISD had other funds invested in higher yielding investments, specifically government investment pools as of August 31, 2000 that were earning higher interest rates ranging between 6.44 percent and 6.47 percent.

Exhibit 6-29
EPISD Schedule of Cash and Investments by Deposit/Investment
As of October 31, 2000

Deposit/ Investment	Balance	Percent of Total Cash and Investments	Average Interest Rate
Checking accounts	\$3,684,027	33%	3.5%
Lone Star investment pool	\$7,494,140	67%	6.44%
Total/Average	\$11,178,167	100%	6.44%

Source: Financial Services Office records, Accounting Specialist.

EPISD's general fund had \$5,255,174 in cash and investments as of October 31, 2000 (**Exhibit 6-30**). EPISD's cash and investment accumulation in the general fund includes federal program cash balances and represents 47 percent of the district's total cash and investment balances.

Exhibit 6-30
EPISD Schedule of Cash and Investments by Fund
As of October 31, 2000

Description	Amount	Percent of Total Cash and Investments
--------------------	---------------	--

Athletic fund	\$6,756	0.1%
Building fund	\$17,276	0.2%
Construction fund	\$78,740	0.7%
Designated purpose fund	\$898,657	8.0%
Disbursement fund	\$484,197	4.3%
Elementary fund	\$224,016	2.0%
Food service fund	\$10,809	0.1%
General fund	\$5,255,174	47.0%
Health insurance fund	\$258,397	2.3%
I & S 1997 bond	\$140,415	1.3%
I & S fund series 1995/1997	\$582,912	5.2%
Investment account	\$2,299	0.0%
Payroll fund	\$1,789,996	16.0%
Scholarship fund	\$4,366	0.0%
Workers' compensation fund	\$1,424,157	12.8%
Total	\$11,178,167	100.0%

Source: Financial Services Offices records, Accounting Specialist.

FINDING

EPISD cash and investment policies and depository agreements do not provide for overnight investment of idle funds in higher yielding investments. EPISD places all idle funds in depository bank accounts until placed in specific long and short-term investment vehicles. EPISD does not conduct any formal cash forecasting to match when funds will be received and when those funds will be needed so that excess funds can be invested.

Texas school districts frequently make arrangements for placing idle depository bank account balances in overnight "sweep" investment vehicles. The use of higher yielding overnight investment vehicles for unused depository bank balances reduces the effort needed by both district and bank personnel to maintain and monitor collateral for securing bank balances on deposit.

School districts that use overnight investments generally increase their earnings on these balances at higher yielding investment rates.

EPISD's current depository banking agreement expires on August 31, 2001.

Recommendation 30:

Include provision for overnight investments in Request for Proposals for depository banking agreement.

Cash forecasting is necessary in making arrangements for an overnight investment arrangement with the depository bank. The district should develop cash forecasts for the fiscal year on a monthly basis (perhaps biweekly as well, depending upon payroll periods). These forecasts should consider the timing of federal and state aid payments, local property tax levies and collections, interest earnings and disbursements. Cash forecasts may also include bond proceeds and short-term loan proceeds/disbursements.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The executive director for Financial Services develops specifications for district depository services.	August 2001
2.	The executive director for Financial Services advertises for quotations.	August 2001
3.	The superintendent presents the depository banking contract to the finance committee and board for review and approval.	August 2001
4.	The executive director for Financial Services updates administrative policies and procedures to accommodate the overnight investment arrangements with the depository bank.	September 2001
5.	The superintendent approves updated administrative policies and procedures to accommodate the overnight investment arrangements with the depository bank	September 2001
6.	The depository bank begins investment of idle bank deposits in higher yielding overnight investment vehicle.	September 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

If one-fourth of the October 31, 2000 checking account balance (\$3,684,027) were invested overnight at 5.83 percent rate, instead of the current 3.5 percent rate, the district could realize an additional \$21,460 annually (**Exhibit 6-31**).

Exhibit 6-31
Annual Savings from increased Investment Earnings on
Overnight Investment of Daily Bank Cash Deposits

Description	One-Fourth Times Deposits
Balance available for investment	\$921,007
Estimated overnight interest rate	5.83%
Annual estimated interest earnings	\$53,695
Current account rate	3.5%
Current interest earnings estimate	\$32,235
Additional interest earnings	\$21,460

Source: EPISD Financial Services Office and TSPR calculation.

Recommendation	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Include provision for overnight investments in Request for Proposals for depository banking agreement.	\$21,460	\$21,460	\$21,460	\$21,460	\$21,460

Chapter 6

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

H. LONG-TERM DEBT

The executive director for Financial Services is responsible for issuing bonds and other debt instruments, debt funding and refinancing. The last bond referendum was in May 2000 for \$18 million. EPISD issued the bonds in August 2000 and received the funds shortly thereafter. **Exhibit 6-32** shows how these funds are being used.

Exhibit 6-32
Use of Bond Funds Approved in May 2000

Use	Amount
Construction of San Luis elementary school and renovation of other existing school buildings	\$9,200,000
C.C. Winn gymnasium and elementary school multi-purpose/physical education facilities	\$4,500,000
Purchase of land and construction of a new elementary school	\$4,300,000
Total	\$18,000,000

Source: EPISD - Executive director for Financial Services.

Exhibit 6-33 presents the district's outstanding debt at the end of fiscal 2000, including the 2000 series.

Exhibit 6-33
Bond Schedule

Description	Original Issue	Interest Rates	Outstanding Debt
Unlimited tax school building bonds, series 1995	\$8,000,000	4.50% to 7.50%	\$6,275,000
Unlimited tax school building bonds, series 1997	\$18,000,000	4.50% to 6.50%	\$16,155,000
Unlimited tax school building bonds.	\$18,000,000	4.35% to 5.75%	\$18,000,000

series 2000			
Capital acquisition loans	\$3,430,000	6.19% to 6.29%	\$1,225,626
Capital leases	\$300,000	6.10%	\$234,809
Totals	\$47,730,000	N/A	\$41,890,435

Source: EPISD 2000 annual audited financial and compliance report and 2000 Series Bonds Official Statement.

FINDING

The district has complied with federal tax laws associated with the issuance of long-term debt since 1986. The compliance has minimized the risk of significant monetary penalties because of potential noncompliance with these tax laws. In accordance with provisions of Section 148 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, (the "Code") the district's long-term debt obligations must meet certain minimum criteria to be considered and continue to be considered "tax exempt."

This "tax exempt" status means that interest income earned by purchasers of long-term debt instruments is not subject to federal income taxes. Related US Treasury Regulations under section 148 of the Code generally provide that the determination of whether these obligations are tax exempt is made as of the date such obligations are issued based on reasonable expectations regarding the use of the proceeds of the bonds issued.

Long-term debt that does not meet and continue to meet the minimum criteria of Section 148 of the Code and the related Treasury Regulations described above are considered "arbitrage bonds" and are not considered "tax exempt" as described above. Bond proceeds that are invested at a higher yield than the effective interest rate on the bonds (arbitrage profits) and that do not meet related minimum criteria described above make the bonds arbitrage bonds. Under current tax laws, the district must make calculations periodically to determine any amounts that it might owe to the federal government under these rules and must make actual payments of any amounts owed in five-year increments.

Obligations will become arbitrage bonds (as described above) if EPISD does not convey arbitrage profits to the federal government as rebate payments under section 148(f) of the Code. The district's obligation to calculate and make rebate payments (if any) will continue as long as there are gross proceeds allocable to outstanding debt issues.

The district has performed calculations required under section 148(f) of the Code. Additional exposures under the Code regarding potential yield restriction requirements for unexpended bond proceeds (if any) that EPISD has been evaluated. Yield restriction requirements relate to bond proceeds that have gone unspent for longer than three years from the issuance of the bonds. The primary exposures under the Code and related regulation provisions have to do with potential penalties that the Internal Revenue Service might impose should noncompliance become an issue. It is not uncommon for these penalties to reach 3 percent of the original issue amount of the debt issue.

COMMENDATION

EPISD has developed procedures that ensure compliance with federal tax laws pertaining to its tax-exempt debt issues.

Chapter 7

PURCHASING AND CONTRACT MANAGEMENT

This chapter examines the Eagle Pass Independent School District's (EPISD) purchasing, distribution and contract management functions in three areas:

The goal of a school district Purchasing Department is to purchase the best products, materials and services at the lowest practical prices within relevant statutes and policies.

- A. Purchasing and Contract Management
- B. Warehouse Operations
- C. Printing Operations

A. PURCHASING AND CONTRACT MANAGEMENT

An effective purchasing system requires a good organization staffed with well-trained people. Roles and related responsibilities must be clearly defined and be adapted to meet the unique operating environment of the district. Although purchasing organization structures may vary, most provide similar functions. A purchasing administrator typically:

- Approves purchase orders and service contracts, including competitive procurement specifications and tabulations;
- Assists in developing and modifying purchasing policies and procedures and is responsible for implementing such policies and procedures;
- Resolves purchasing problems;
- Establishes and monitors good working relations with vendors;
- Provides for communication with vendors (i.e., pre-competitive procurement conferences, competitive procurement openings, etc.) and approves vendor communication with schools and departments;
- Ensures that district staff is aware of relevant purchasing statutes, regulations and board policies through either formal or informal training programs; and
- Stays current on purchasing statutes, regulations and practices by attending various purchasing-related courses, seminars or workshops, and by reading current purchasing periodicals and books.

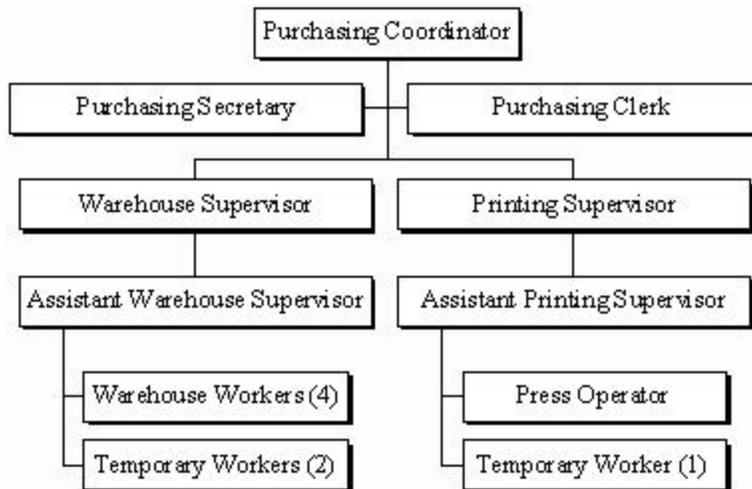
The purchasing administrator or an assistant typically prepares competitive procurement specifications, evaluates competitive procurement tabulations, maintains a vendor list, supervises the processing

of purchase orders and evaluates the performance of vendors. Buyers and clerical staff typically write, review and modify specifications for competitive procurements; assist in the evaluation of competitive procurements; identify sources to obtain competitive prices and terms; assist in maintaining an updated vendor list from which purchases can be made; and obtain and verify vendor price quotes.

BACKGROUND

In EPISD, the Purchasing coordinator reports directly to the executive director for Financial Services and has worked for the district only one year. A staffing chart for the EPISD Purchasing Department is shown in **Exhibit 7-1**.

**Exhibit 7-1
EPISD Purchasing Organization
2000-01**



Source: EPISD Purchasing coordinator.

Exhibit 7-2 shows the volume and dollar amount of purchase orders issued through the EPISD Purchasing Department over the last four years.

**Exhibit 7-2
EPISD Purchasing Volume
1996-97 through 1999-2000**

School Year	Purchase Orders Issued
1996-97	9,363
1997-98	9,567

1998-99	9,440
1999-2000	10,097
Percent Change	7.8%

Source: EPISD Purchasing/Warehouse computer transaction reports.

Competitive procurement methods, as outlined by the Texas Education Code (TEC), must be used for all school district purchases valued at \$25,000 or more in the aggregate for each 12-month period, except for contracts for the purchase of vehicle fuel and produce. For purchases valued between \$10,000 and \$25,000 in the aggregate over a 12-month period, the school district is required to obtain written or telephone price quotes from at least three suppliers. State laws prohibit the use of competitive bidding for certain types of professional services, including engineering, architectural, accounting and land surveying.

In 1995, the state legislature expanded school district purchasing options by adding three new methods of competitive procurement: design-build contracts, competitive sealed proposals and requests for proposals for personal property and construction contracts. In 1997, the legislature included two additional methods: job-order contracts and contracts using construction managers. With these additions, school districts can select among eight methods for the competitive purchase of goods valued at \$25,000 or more in the aggregate over a 12-month period (**Exhibit 7-3**).

Exhibit 7-3 Competitive Procurement Methods

Purchasing Methods	Method Description
Competitive bidding	Requires that bids be evaluated and awarded based solely upon bid specifications, terms and conditions contained in the request for bids and according to the bid prices offered by suppliers and to pertinent factors affecting contract performance. Forbids negotiation of prices of goods and services after proposal has been opened.
Competitive sealed proposals	Requires the same terms and conditions as competitive bidding, but allows changes in the nature of a proposal and prices after proposal has been opened.
Request for proposals	Generates competitive sealed proposals and involves several key elements, including newspaper advertisement, notice to proposers, standard terms and conditions, special terms and

	conditions, a scope-of-work statement, an acknowledgment form/response sheet, a felony conviction notice and a contract clause.
Catalog purchase	Provides an alternative to other procurement methods for the acquisition of computer equipment, software and services only.
Interlocal contract	Provides a mechanism for agreements with other local governments, the state or a state agency to perform governmental functions and services.
Design/build contract	Outlines a method of project delivery in which the school district contracts with a single entity to both design and construct a project.
Job order contracts	Provides for the use of a particular type of contract for jobs (manual labor work) to perform minor repairs and alterations.
Construction management contracts	Outlines the use of a contract to construct, rehabilitate, alter or repair facilities using a professional construction manager.

Source: TEA.

FINDING

The EPISD Purchasing Department processes about 38 formal bids per year to handle most of the goods and services that have annual purchase volumes anticipated to exceed \$25,000. These bids are mainly associated with maintenance and operations, athletics, food services, construction, transportation, furniture, copiers, insurance and general school supplies.

EPISD uses several purchasing cooperatives to save the expense and time of developing formal bids in-house. These cooperatives include:

- General Services Commission - buses
- Qualified Information Services Vendor (QISV) - technology
- Region 20 Purchasing Cooperative - general supply categories

During the 1999-2000 school year, 90 vendors provided the district goods and services of which the value exceeded \$25,000 in aggregate. Of those vendors, the review team tested 34 for compliance with competitive bidding provisions of the Texas Education Code.

Purchases from two vendors were not in compliance with state bid laws and board policy. Over a 12-month period, the district issued purchase orders totaling \$51,588 to Kerrville Bus Company and \$35,783 to Sports Awards without a bid.

Once EPISD became aware of the violation, the Purchasing coordinator issued bids for the 2000-01 school year.

One vendor, Pearson Education, a "sole-source" provider of curriculum materials, did meet the state-allowed exemption from bidding, but the purchase was not appropriate because the sales representative was the spouse of the EPISD director for Elementary Curriculum. Upon becoming aware of this issue, the superintendent placed the assistant superintendent and the director for Elementary Curriculum on administrative leave.

Exhibit 7-4 lists each of the vendors tested, their dollar volume and the bid verification.

Exhibit 7-4
EPISD Purchase Orders Sampled for Bid Compliance
Dollar Volume Greater Than \$25,000
1999-2000

Vendor Name	Dollar Volume	Bid Verification
AMR Training Group, Inc.	\$80,000	Sole Source - Curriculum license agreement
AIMS Education Foundation	\$38,249	Sole Source - Curriculum materials
Apple Computer, Inc.	\$182,182	State Contract - QISV
Arnold Refrigeration, Inc.	\$53,500	EPISD Bid - Walk-in freezers
Athlete's World, Inc.	\$26,369	EPISD Bid - Athletics
Belco Supply	\$58,039	EPISD Bid - Hardware & Equipment
Beltran Enterprises	\$26,004	EPISD Bid - Hardware & Equipment
Benrod Dist.	\$31,341	EPISD Bid - Food
Borden, Inc.	\$464,610	EPISD Bid - Milk
Buttercrust Bakery, Inc.	\$46,135	EPISD Bid - Bread
Capital Bus Sales & Service	\$55,720	State Contract - GSC
Children's Shelter of San Antonio	\$40,000	Therapy services provided for special education students - No bid required
Comfort Supply, Inc.	\$28,943	EPISD Bid - Hardware & Equipment

De La Garza Wholesale	\$103,135	EPISD Quotes - Produce
Dell Marketing, L.P.	\$651,691	State Contract - Computers - QISV
Del Rio Welders Equipment, Inc.	\$98,173	EPISD Bid - Hardware Supply
Demco, Inc.	\$55,089	EPISD Bid - Library
IOS Capital	\$289,617	EPISD Bid - Copier Lease
Indeco Sales, Inc.	\$50,481	EPISD Bid - Furniture
Insko Distributing, Inc.	\$89,612	EPISD Bid - Hardware
J&W Distributing	\$102,421	EPISD Bid - Food
Kerrville Bus Company	\$51,588	Not bid in 1999-2000, but there is a bid for 2000-01 Charter Buses
Kronos, Inc.	\$76,072	State Contract - QISV
McCoy's	\$28,779	EPISD Bid - Lumber
NBA CSI	\$145,885	EPISD Bid - Computers through 12/99
NASCO	\$34,435	EPISD Bid - Science Equipment
Office Supply Express	\$26,796	EPISD Bid - Office Supplies
Pearson Education	\$119,135	Sole Source, but conflict of interest
Perma-Bound	\$122,313	EPISD Bid - Library
School Specialty, Inc.	\$60,965	EPISD Bid - Teaching Supplies
Sherwin-Williams Company	\$36,566	EPISD Bid - Paint
Sports Awards	\$35,783	Not bid in 1999-2000, but there is a bid for 2000-01 Sports Awards
Truman Arnold Companies	\$67,523	Formal Quotes - Fuel
Vargas Hardware, Inc.	\$92,092	EPISD Bid - Hardware

Source: EPISD past history financial reports of vendors paid in excess of \$10,000, fiscal 2000.

Also, during the 1999-2000 school year, the district purchased between \$10,000 and \$25,000 from 100 vendors. Of those vendors, the review

team tested 37 for compliance with quote provisions of the Texas Education Code.

Of the 37 vendors tested, six were not in compliance with state bid laws and board policies. Most of these items were multiple lower-dollar purchases spread out over a 12-month period, but the Purchasing coordinator is responsible for monitoring purchasing volumes for quote compliance.

In addition, there were two sets of quotes for vehicles; one was awarded to Heart of Texas Dodge and one to Philpott Motors, Inc. Even though the amount purchased from each vendor was less than \$25,000, the combined total of these two purchases was \$33,491, which would have required a formal bid. **Exhibit 7-5** lists each of the vendors tested, their dollar volume and the quote/bid verification.

Exhibit 7-5
EPISD Purchase Orders Sampled for Quote/Bid Compliance
Dollar Volume Between \$10,000 and \$25,000
1999-2000

Vendor Name	Dollar Volume	Quote/Bid Verification
Alert Services, Inc.	\$13,372	No Quotes or Bids - Training supplies
Andy's Auto Air Supply, Inc.	\$13,807	EPISD Bid - Automotive Supplies
ATD-American	\$14,129	EPISD Bid - Furniture
Bravo Glass Service	\$13,200	EPISD Bid - Hardware
Communication Prof. S.T. Ltd.	\$21,823	Quotes - Handheld Radios
Computer Solutions	\$11,224	State Contract - QISV - Printers
Creative Education, Inc. (CEI)	\$17,500	Sole Source - Educational Software
D & H Distributing Company	\$21,904	EPISD Bid - Graphing Calculators
Eagle Sales	\$11,825	EPISD Bid - Hardware
Ellison Educational Equipment, Inc.	\$14,664	No Quotes or Bids - Lettering machines
Fernandez Tortilla Factory	\$24,220	EPISD Bid - Tortillas

Raymond Geddes & Company, Inc.	\$13,659	No Quotes or Bids
International Computer Sales	\$12,328	Quotes - Typewriters
Gray's Wholesale Tire Dist.	\$21,529	State Contract - GSC - Tires
Heart of Texas Dodge	\$16,974	Quotes - Vehicle
A.E. Hiller & Sons, Inc.	\$23,210	EPISD Bid - Hardware
Laguna Nursery	\$19,118	Quotes - Landscaping
3M	\$12,855	No Quotes or Bids - Library Detection System
Maxey Energy Company	\$10,027	Quotes - Fuel
Mueller, Inc	\$17,199	Quotes - Maintenance
PDP Systems	\$10,253	No Quotes or Bids - Print Shop Supplies
Adrian J. Paul Company, Inc.	\$11,262	Quotes - Ag Equipment
Philpott Motors, Inc.	\$16,517	Quotes - Vehicle
Rexel Summers	\$18,542	EPISD Bid - Electrical Supplies
Sargent-Welch Scientific	\$11,950	EPISD Bid - Science Equipment
Sax Arts & Crafts	\$10,054	EPISD Bid - Art Supplies
Scantron Corporation	\$13,990	Sole Source - Scanning Supplies
Southwest Sound & Electric, Inc.	\$14,814	Quotes - PA system
Alvin E. Stock Contractors	\$17,288	RFP - Lift Station, Pete Gallego Elem.
The Trane Company	\$22,395	EPISD Bid - Air Conditioner
U.S. Liquids	\$10,465	Quotes - Cleaning Grease Traps (Only vendor available with Worker's Comp)
Unifirst Corporation	\$12,256	EPISD Bid - Uniforms
Uvalde Tractor & Implement	\$12,894	Quotes - Lawn Equipment
Vernier Software & Technology	\$14,089	EPISD Bid - Graphing Calculators & Supplies

Vicco Supply	\$19,175	EPISD Bid and Quotes - Janitorial Supplies
Walden Books Company, Inc.	\$18,720	No Quotes or Bids - Books
Weiner's	\$12,920	Quotes- Clothing Gift Certificates

Source: EPISD past history reports of vendors paid in excess of \$10,000, fiscal 2000.

Recommendation 31:

Establish procedures to ensure compliance with all state and local purchasing laws and policies.

Identifying purchases requiring competitive solicitation is a collaborative effort. The Purchasing Department and the user departments must work together to identify such purchases, and the budget process is the place to start. By July, budgets for the year are substantially complete, and departments have a firm grasp of projected expenditures. If any budget category equals \$10,000 or more in aggregate for like items or categories, the Purchasing Department must be notified so the appropriate acquisition method can be chosen.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Purchasing coordinator meets with department heads and principals to review their budgets for the 2001-02 school year to determine if bids or quotes will be needed for any goods or services.	September 2001
2.	The Purchasing coordinator submits a list of all goods or services requiring bids to the executive director for Financial Services for approval.	October 2001
3.	The Purchasing coordinator submits monthly reports to the executive director for Financial Services indicating categories of goods or services that are approaching purchasing volumes that may necessitate competitive bids or quotes.	October 2001
4.	The Purchasing coordinator prepares bids for those goods and services.	November 2001
5.	The Purchasing coordinator submits bid recommendations to the superintendent and board for approval.	December 2001

6.	The Purchasing coordinator, executive director for Financial Services, superintendent and board repeat process on an annual basis.	Annually
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FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

While the review team observed no sole-source violations of state bid, EPISD's procedures leave open the possibility of misuse of this legal exception. Texas law and EPISD board policy allows an exception to the bidding process if an item is only available from one vendor (sole-source purchase). Examples include items for which competition is precluded because of the existence of a patent, copyright, secret process, or monopoly; a film, manuscript, or book; a utility service, including electricity, gas or water; and a captive replacement part or component for equipment (those that are specific to a particular piece of equipment and are not available from more than one vendor).

EPISD's purchasing procedures do not define what documentation is required to purchase a sole-source item, nor does it state who is responsible for obtaining the documentation and where that documentation is kept. The EPISD Purchasing Department often relies on a vendor's word to determine if a product is sole-source. For example, a vendor could say that his brand of weight equipment is sole-source because it is only available from one supplier in North America, and that the weights have a unique patented rubber coating on them. However, the Texas Education Agency's *Financial Accountability System Resource Guide* (FASRG) states:

"In order to be a bona-fide exemption to the Texas Education Code purchasing law requirements, there must be no other like items available for purchase that would serve the same purpose or function, and only one price for the product because of exclusive distribution or marketing rights. The fact that a particular item is covered by a patent or copyright is but one factor in determining if the purchase falls under the sole-source exemption."

In the example of the weight equipment, many vendors can provide weight equipment that can provide the same functionality as the rubber-coated weights. Therefore, this type of weight equipment would not meet the requirements of the sole-source provision, as defined in FASRG.

Recommendation 32:

Enhance "sole-source" purchasing procedures to include documentation requirements and a definition that matches TEA's *Financial Accountability System Resource Guide*.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Purchasing coordinator develops a new "sole-source" procedure.	September 2001
2.	The Purchasing coordinator submits the new procedure to the executive director for Financial Services and superintendent for approval.	September 2001
3.	The Purchasing coordinator communicates the procedural change to EPISD staff.	October 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

EPISD uses manual instead of automated purchase orders, even though the district's financial software, South Texas Multi-Regional Processing Center (STMRPC), has an online purchase order module (Requisition System).

Using automated purchase orders, EPISD could simplify data entry, automatically check availability of funds and generate management reports showing purchasing volumes by vendor or by purchasing category. Automated purchase orders also allow department heads and financial administrators the ability to approve orders electronically, resulting in improved turn-around times for mailing purchase orders.

EPISD is already paying for the software package. Additional costs would only be incurred if the district needs more "Logical Units (LUs)." A "Logical Unit" is the terminal/pc connection located at the campuses or central office. Region 20 charges a fee for LUs based on the number of computers connected to the software application in each district. Currently, EPISD is paying for 193 LUs. Each additional unit would cost \$213 per year.

The EPISD wide-area computer network (WAN) should be completed by April 2001. The WAN is necessary to fully use the online purchase order system.

Recommendation 33:

Implement the online purchase order system that is currently part of the Region 20 financial software package.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Purchasing coordinator and the executive director for Financial Services meet with Region 20 technology staff to determine how the online purchase order system works and what training is available.	September 2001
2.	The Purchasing coordinator submits a budget amendment request for the cost of additional LUs to the superintendent for board approval	October 2001
3.	The board approves the budget amendment.	November 2001
4.	The Purchasing coordinator orders the additional LUs.	November 2001
5.	The Purchasing coordinator schedules training for all district staff responsible for purchase orders.	January 2002
6.	The district converts from manual purchase orders to automated purchase orders.	February 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

Assuming that one additional LU would need to be added in all 22 schools, the total cost would be \$4,686 (\$213 per LU x 22 locations) per year.

Recommendation	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Implement the online purchase order system that is currently part of the Region 20 financial software package.	(\$4,686)	(\$4,686)	(\$4,686)	(\$4,686)	(\$4,686)

FINDING

While there are no local board policies or any district procedures that authorize the Purchasing coordinator to approve extensions of bids, the Purchasing coordinator routinely approves the extension of some contracts. The extensions apply to bids, such as office supplies, that are issued as annual contracts, with the district's option to extend for an additional year if certain conditions are met.

The EPISD board appropriately approves the first year of all contracts, but does not approve the extension of the contracts per local board policies. As such, bid prices and quantities of items can increase, often to the district's disadvantage, without the board having an opportunity to review and approve or reject the extensions.

Recommendation 34:

Submit all bid extensions to the board for approval.

Often, vendors are willing to maintain their pricing for an additional year, which can often be a good value to the district. Submitting contract extensions to the board for approval helps the board ensure that the district receives the best value for its money.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Purchasing coordinator identifies the bids that will be recommended for extension.	September 2001
2.	The Purchasing coordinator submits a recommendation to the superintendent to extend the bids.	September 2001
3.	The board approves the bid extension.	September 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 7

PURCHASING AND CONTRACT MANAGEMENT

B. WAREHOUSE OPERATIONS

An efficient warehouse operation ensures that all purchases and deliveries are complete and timely; inventory levels are sufficient to meet requests; property and equipment are accounted for and controlled; and surplus or obsolete property is disposed of properly and removed from district records.

The EPISD Warehouse staff consists of a Warehouse supervisor, an assistant Warehouse supervisor, four Warehouse workers and two part-time warehouse workers. Warehouse responsibilities include delivery of warehouse supplies and central receiving. The Warehouse supervisor reports to the Purchasing coordinator.

FINDING

The Food Service Warehouse and the Textbook Warehouse are located in the same building, separated only by chain-link fences. This building also houses Central Warehouse and Receiving and the Print Shop. Food Service warehouse workers report to the director of Food Service, and they have their own delivery vehicles and equipment. The two textbook employees report to the assistant superintendent for Education and they have their own delivery vehicle and equipment.

The textbook storage area can only be accessed through the central Warehouse. If the textbook workers need to work overtime, one of the central Warehouse workers has to stay to open and lock the Warehouse door.

Recommendation 35:

Place all departments currently housed in the Warehouse under the supervision of the executive director for District Operations.

There are a number of advantages of having Central Warehouse and Receiving, Textbooks, Food Service Warehouse and Print Shop under one supervisor including:

- Staff can be used in a more efficient manner across functions.
- Vehicles and other equipment can be shared.
- Central Warehouse/Receiving can be separated from the Purchasing function.

- Security of the Warehouse building can be centralized.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent develops a district organization chart that places warehouse-based departments under the supervision of the executive director for District Operations.	September 2001
2.	The superintendent submits the revised organization chart to the board for approval.	October 2001
3.	The superintendent communicates the changes to the staff.	November 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 7

PURCHASING AND CONTRACT MANAGEMENT

C. PRINTING OPERATIONS

The district Print Shop staff consists of a Printing supervisor, an assistant Printing supervisor, a press operator and one temporary operator. The Printing supervisor reports to the Purchasing coordinator.

FINDING

Because the Printing supervisor used to repair printing equipment for a private company, many pieces of EPISD Print Shop equipment can be repaired in-house, including three presses, one sorter, two folders and one camera. By not having to purchase a maintenance agreement for these items, the district saves \$28,000 per year. The district also saves money when the staff is able to purchase used equipment and repair it to "like new" condition.

COMMENDATION

The EPISD Print Shop saves the district over \$28,000 per year by performing in-house maintenance on printing equipment.

FINDING

The EPISD Print Shop does not recover all of its costs through its charge-back system. **Exhibit 7-6** shows the cost of operation of the Print Shop for 1999-2000.

Exhibit 7-6
EPISD Print Shop Budget
1999-2000

	1999-2000
Payroll	\$58,000
Equipment Leases	\$67,825
Supplies (Internal)	\$8,025
Capital Outlay	\$3,100
Total Budget	\$136,950
Number of Images Printed	6,500,000

Average Cost Per Image	\$0.021
Total Charges To Schools/Departments	\$59,952
Average Charge Per Image	\$0.009

Source: EPISD Purchasing coordinator and Printing supervisor.

The schools are only charged an average of \$0.009 per copy for work produced in the Print Shop. However, the actual cost to produce those copies is \$0.021 per copy. Excluding payroll costs, the cost per image is \$0.012, which is still more than what the Print Shop is charging for its services.

Recommendation 36:

Increase printing charges to the schools to better reflect the actual cost of providing the printing services.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Printing supervisor calculates the actual cost of providing printing services for a year as well as fees charged to the schools.	September 2001
2.	The Purchasing coordinator communicates the new charges to the schools.	November 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 8

COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

This chapter examines the computer and technology services provided by the Eagle Pass Independent School District (EPISD) in the following sections:

- A. Organizational Structure
- B. Technology Planning and Funding
- C. Instructional Technology and Training
- D. Infrastructure
- E. Technical Support

To achieve its technology-related goals, a school district must have an organizational structure that creates an environment supporting new technologies.

A well-managed administrative technology and information services department is guided by a clearly defined plan based on appropriate goals and organization, clear assignments of responsibility for each application, well-defined development procedures for new applications and a customer-service orientation that continually seeks to meet and anticipate user needs.

BACKGROUND

In 1995, the Office of Technology Assessment (OTA) presented a report to the Congress of the United States recognizing Texas for its comprehensive and visionary *Long-Range Plan for Technology, 1988-2000*. This long-range plan provided a framework to guide the state, regional education service centers and school districts meet educational needs through the use of technology.

A technology-rich educational environment requires hardware, software, training and administrative support. Balance between the areas, in both time and money, is crucial. Often schools invest a majority of time and money in hardware, leaving limited funds for software or educator training. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) recommended that districts allocate 30 percent of their technology budgets to staff development (U.S. Congress, 1995; *Texas Long Range Plan for Technology, 1996-2010*, p. 30). An initial recommendation would allocate one-third of the technology budget for hardware, one-third for software and one-third for training.

Hardware is a major investment for school districts. One emerging trend is for schools to lease hardware at a fixed rate per year to alleviate the

financial burden of upgrading every few years. Many school districts have also passed bond elections to fund an initial investment in information technology. Hardware and software standards are an important aspect to consider when purchasing computers. However, it should be recognized that one platform might not be the best for all users. Teachers, first graders and high school science students have different needs.

Four types of software are suggested for classroom-centered information technology needs: teacher productivity software: (word processors, spreadsheets/grade books, databases, presentation systems, etc.); student tool software: (word processors, graphic tools, telecommunication programs, desktop publishing, multimedia, presentation systems, etc.); programming software: (Logo, BASIC, and other programming languages); and tutor software: (drill and practice, tutorial, and/or simulations).

School districts must narrow their list of software titles for support purposes while maintaining a variety of software titles to fit the needs of a diverse group of users. Schools should establish guidelines for obtaining software designed to support the needs of the users on their campus.

The need for educator training in the use of hardware and software is frequently overlooked or allocated insufficient funding and time. It is possible for students and teachers to learn applications on their own through exploratory learning sessions. Many learners need some guidance during the learning process. For teachers, this can often be accomplished by time dedicated to hands-on laboratory instruction for the initial training, followed up by practice and implementation support via E-mail and teleconferencing consultations with trainers. Finding the time to learn new applications is often the most difficult part for busy teachers.

The Long-Range Plan for Technology, 1996-2010 and Chapter 32 of the Texas Education Code call for standards to ensure all high school graduates are computer literate by 2000. The Technology Applications in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) standards include those standards. This is the first time that comprehensive K-12 knowledge and skills have been specified for the use of computers and other related technologies in Texas. The Technology Applications TEKS focus on creating, manipulating, using, communicating, and publishing information during the learning process. The goal of the Technology Applications TEKS is for students to gain knowledge and skills and apply them in all curriculum areas at all grade levels.

The level of an administrator's enthusiasm about information technology is a contributing factor in whether technology is successfully employed in a school. Because of the leadership role administrators play in the school

environment, attitudes toward technology influence other personnel. Administrators are responsible for planning and delivering professional development opportunities that include training in the use of technology.

Network infrastructure is the underlying system of cabling, phone lines, hubs, switches, routers and other devices that connect the various parts of an organization through a Wide Area Network (WAN). If a sound infrastructure is in place, most users can access people and information throughout their organization and beyond, greatly aiding their ability to perform their job.

Typically, a WAN allows users to communicate with personnel within the organization through tools such as electronic mail systems. It also provides a bridge to the Internet that allows anyone connected to the WAN to access information and people outside the organization. WANs are usually "closed," meaning they include security measures that prevent unauthorized users outside the organization from gaining access to information or people inside the organization.

Chapter 8

COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

A. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

An instructional technology support department must be familiar with school operations and the technologies, materials, networks and training used for instructional purposes, particularly training that integrates new technologies into the curriculum.

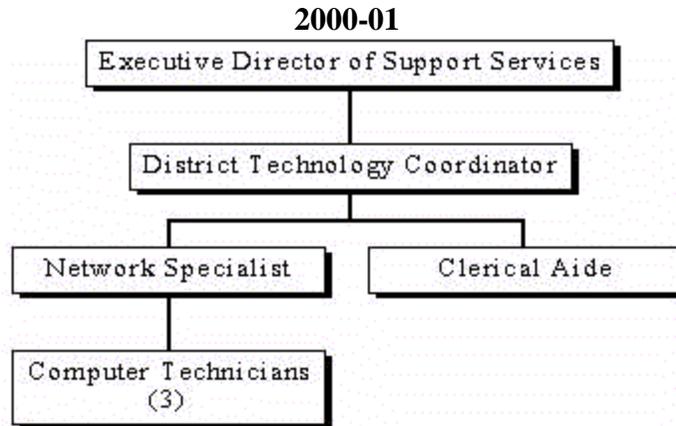
Responsibilities of the technology coordinator include the identifying and processing of grant opportunities; maintaining the district's computer hardware and software infrastructure; training and working with teachers to integrate technology into their curriculum; assisting with technology purchases and decisions; encouraging teachers to explore potential uses of technology; maintaining the district's Web site; ensuring computers are backed up and protected from viruses; serving as a technology information resource for teachers and staff; supervising computer technicians, and approving all hardware and software budget requests. All Technology department personnel handle computer help calls.

The Technology Department reports its activities through weekly updates to the executive director of Support Services. Principals, directors and campuses are advised of Technology Department activities through memorandums. A monthly technology report is no longer submitted to the EPISD school board. Other employees are kept informed via e-mail. In addition, technology-related information is posted on the district's Web site. Monthly meetings are held with campus lab managers to discuss training and troubleshooting tips as well as campus lab needs.

In addition to the Technology Department, the executive district coordinator of Support Services is responsible for Public Education Information Management Systems data, problem troubleshooting, Pupil Services, and the district's financial software reporting provided by the Regional Service Center Computer Cooperative (RSCCC), Region 20.

Exhibit 8-1 describes the organization structure of the EPISD Technology Department.

Exhibit 8-1 **EPISD Technology Department Organization**



Source: EPISD district coordinator for Technology.

FINDING

The EPISD campuses do not have technology-trained staff to assist campus teachers and to minimize technician service calls to resolve computer hardware or software problems. The Technology Plan includes an objective of hiring campus instructional technology representatives but no one has been hired.

The campus principals determine which employees may assist with technology-related problems. Typically, the assistant principal and the lead teacher for technology curriculum are the most likely candidates. Each campus has three employees designated who pass service calls to the Technology Department.

The district hopes to pay eight district employees an additional \$3,500 a year to serve as technology representatives. The representatives would come from eight campuses, and would assist in resolving hardware and software problems. Campus staffs have been asked to select criteria and set a job description for the positions.

COMMENDATION

EPISD is establishing a technology representative position at eight campuses and is training the staff to assist other campus teachers and staff in technology use.

FINDING

Seventy percent of the Technology Department's budget is allocated to hardware purchases, 5 percent to software and 25 percent to training.

Exhibit 8-2 describes the EPISD technology budgeted expenditures between 1997-98 and 2000-01.

Exhibit 8-2
EPISD Technology Actual and Budgeted Expenditures
1997-98 to 2000-01

Function	1997-98 Expenditures	1998-99 Expenditures	1999-2000 Expenditures	2000-01 Budgeted
Administrative	\$603,932	\$412,959	\$424,246	\$358,380
Instructional	\$1,866,318	\$442,492	\$423,280	\$847,670
Total	\$2,470,250	\$855,451	\$847,526	\$1,206,050

Source: Interview with EPISD Network Administrator.

The district plans to spend twice as much on instructional technology in 2000-01 than it did in 1999-2000.

In the Comptroller's publication *Helping Schools Make Technology Work: Managing Information Technology From Classrooms to Lunchrooms*, training in information technology use is identified as a key success factor for implementing new technologies. Computer software giant Microsoft and many national authorities state that 30 percent of any school districts educational technology budget should be dedicated to training. EPISD dedicates 25 percent of its entire technology budget to training.

COMMENDATION

EPISD funds information technology training according to national guidelines.

FINDING

EPISD did not have an active Technology Committee during the absence of the coordinator due to personal leave. The committee did not meet on a regular basis but did resume with the return of the coordinator and have met twice since January 2001. The Technology Coordinator says a change in meeting time for the monthly committee meetings to 1:00 p.m. has increased participation on the part of the district's staff. Without consistency and continuity within the Technology Committee, achieving the goals of the Technology Plan will be difficult.

EPISD has developed a technology plan that states the district's goals and objectives, the tasks required to meet those objectives, has assigned those

tasks to individuals and created a time line for the completion of these activities. Technology planning for education should be an organized and continuous process, not be a one-time exercise. The plan formalizes the procedures and methods for making technology decisions, including the setting of priorities and the purchase, evaluation, upgrading and use of technology.

The Technology Department determines the district's curriculum and instructional needs by conducting a survey twice a year. The Technology director attends meetings with the Curriculum and Instructional director and meets with campus principals to discuss their needs. There is a weekly meeting with the executive director of Support Services that includes all directors (Curriculum, Career and Technology Education (CATE), Special Programs director, Bilingual coordinator, Pupil Services coordinator, Interim Technology coordinator) to discuss issues and prepare ongoing instructional programs that include curriculum and technology and their integration into the classroom

A technology plan needs continuous input from the teachers and administrators as well as students, parents and community members. The district reviews the Technology Plan and makes the appropriate changes to make it consistent with the *Long-Range Plan for Technology 1996-2010*. The processes of identifying the tasks, cost estimates, and timeframes for each goal need to be monitored and driven by the Technology Committee if the goals of the plan are to be met.

Having a Technology Committee that coordinates these goals and tasks makes it easier for people in the district and in the community to see the district's goals are accomplished.

Recommendation 37:

Formalize the Technology Committee to assure continuity in monitoring and supporting the implementation of the Technology Plan.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The executive director of Support Services and the Technology coordinator review and determine the composition of the Technology Committee.	October 2001
2.	The executive director of Support Services identifies personnel that should serve on the committee.	October 2001
3.	The executive director of Support Services contacts and enlists members of the Technology Committee.	November 2001

4.	The executive director of Support Services establishes and publishes the agenda and meeting schedule for the Technology Committee.	December 2001
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FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

A primary function of the Technology management position is to facilitate the integration of technology into the classroom but other responsibilities are affecting available time. The extended medical leave of the Technology coordinator further affected the time available to accomplish the department's goals.

The EPISD Technology coordinator was forced to spend too much of his time trying to find the funding necessary to meet the state goals for technology infrastructure. This interfered with the department's primary mission of helping teachers integrate technology into the classroom.

The EPISD Technology coordinator found it difficult to devote sufficient time to fundraising for technology infrastructure. The Technology coordinator spends an estimated three weeks preparing the documentation required for each grant application. Based on the current level of grant preparation, this activity requires an estimated six weeks of the coordinator's time. This is time that could be spent working with the teachers to improve their understanding and use of technology in the classroom. The Technology coordinator's time is more appropriately applied to activities related to the integration of technology into the curriculum rather than administrative functions.

Recommendation 38:

Use available outside resources that provide free funds acquisition services.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The executive director of Support Services identifies services that provide assistance with fund acquisition activities.	October 2001
2.	The executive director of Support Services interviews selected candidates.	November 2001
3.	The executive director of Support Services presents a	December

	recommendation to the EPISD superintendent.	2001
4.	The EPISD superintendent recommends an action plan.	January 2002
5.	The executive director of Support Services contracts with the selected service to implement the plan.	February 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 8

COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

B. TECHNOLOGY PLANNING AND FUNDING

Planning for the use of new technologies is particularly important to education because of the following factors:

- **Equity.** Despite the best intentions, the level of technological resources available to each school in a district can vary unacceptably. Poorly-planned introductions of new technology can serve to further widen the gap between the "haves" and "have nots." Careful planning at the district level can ensure all schools receive adequate support.
- **Rapid Change.** The pace of technological change continues to accelerate. If planning for the implementation of new technology does not cover an adequate span of time (three to five years), the district risks failing to take full advantage of this rapid change.
- **Funding.** Funding can be the greatest barrier to the effective use of technology in the classroom. Unless planning addresses whether and how projects will be funded, limited funding can have a greater impact than it should.
- **Credibility.** The public is anxious to see that its tax dollars are spent effectively. Thorough planning makes it possible to demonstrate that proposed strategies have been well thought out, acquisitions of technological resources have been carefully considered and that every aspect of the implementation is cost-effective.

To implement information technology effectively in administrative offices or schools, a district must have:

- An extensive computer network connecting modern computers;
- Comprehensive administrative and instructional software and up-to-date operating systems;
- Effective, ongoing training and adequate technical support;
- A professional staff capable of implementing and administering in a technology-rich environment; and
- A means to provide the community access to school information through technology.

FINDING

The Technology coordinator, working with the District Technology Committee, has prepared a detailed Technology Plan for 2000-03. The

plan is updated twice per year, and includes goals and objectives, activities to achieve the goals and objectives, employees responsible for the activities, time frames, expected outcomes and ongoing evaluation of progress.

Exhibit 8-3 describes the technology plan for EPISD.

**Exhibit 8-3
EPISD Technology Plan
2000 to 2003**

Area	Goals/Objectives
Teaching and Learning - Incorporate technology in all areas of the curriculum to ensure TEKS objectives and expectations are met.	<p>Goal 1: Develop strategies to help students meet TEKS performance descriptions.</p> <p>Goal 2: Improve the technological skills of students.</p> <p>Goal 3: Integrate technology into the instructional process.</p> <p>Goal 4: Integrate planning for technology into all classrooms, campuses and district planning.</p> <p>Goal 5: Identify and provide technology tools to help staff meet TEKS objectives.</p>
Education Preparation and Development: Educators must demonstrate the skills needed to use and integrate technology effectively in their professional duties.	<p>Goal 6: Enhance the technological skills of the educational staff through the effective use of technology.</p> <p>Goal 7: Identify and communicate the best technology practices to the community.</p>
Administration and support services: Staff will accomplish their duties by taking full advantage of technology tools for data gathering, analysis and distribution.	<p>Goal 8: Integrate technology into instructional management and administration.</p> <p>Goal 9: Expand community access to school information through technology.</p>
Infrastructure for Technology: The establishment of a proficient and capable hardware and human infrastructure will be the means of accomplishing all technology objectives.	<p>Goal 10: Meet the technology equipment targets for students adopted in the Texas Long-Range Plan for Technology, student-to-workstation ratio of 1:1.</p> <p>Goal 11: Provide high-speed access to the Internet and other network services for students and staff.</p>

	Goal 12: Maintain and retain expertise for installing and supporting an appropriate technology infrastructure.
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Source: Interview with technology coordinator.

COMMENDATION

EPISD developed a technology plan that incorporates goals, objectives, tasks, assigned responsibilities and timelines for integrating technology into the curriculum.

FINDING

EPISD does not formally keep track of how teachers and students use technology, or how much training in technology teachers receive. It is important for the district to have key indicators of success for each component of the technology plan and to be able to assess the level of technological proficiency gained by students, teachers and staff.

Technology implementation is a continuous process that must be adapted to an organization's changing circumstances and must include ongoing evaluation. Effective measurement and evaluation will force planners to rethink and adapt objectives, priorities and strategies as implementation proceeds. Continuous evaluation also makes it easier to adapt if the plan is not working.

Evaluating the progress of a technology plan can be conducted by various means. Simple observations, both negative and positive, that have been made by students and teachers using the technology are helpful. Interviews and informal meetings with both teachers and students can draw out the lessons that both groups have learned from using the technology.

The district does have a concern with experienced teachers who have not readily adapted to new technologies. Consideration has to be given to individual situations, but the overall goals should not be compromised. Putting teachers into pairs or teams may help them adopt new technology more quickly.

Recommendation 39:

Develop and implement technology measurements that match the goals and objectives of the Technology Plan.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The District Technology coordinator works with the staff and representatives from schools and administration to identify technology measurements for the Technology Plan.	October 2001
2.	The District Technology coordinator works with the staff and representatives from schools and administration to identify the activities associated with each technology measurement, and the person responsible for implementing and monitoring the measurement.	December 2001
3.	The District Technology coordinator approves the technology measurements.	January 2002
4.	The District Technology coordinator tracks each technology measurement.	February 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 8

COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

C. INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY AND TRAINING

To integrate technology into instructional programs, a school district must provide infrastructure and technology hardware, train staff to use the technology system, establish curriculum for technology, train staff to use the curriculum standards and monitor implementation of the curriculum.

Teachers must be comfortable with instructional technology and must know not only how to operate it, but also how to integrate it effectively into their teaching. Studies indicate that it may take three to five years for a teacher to acquire the appropriate level of expertise. Planning and support for technology-related training must take this into account.

Technology-related training must be ongoing. Teachers need continuous opportunities to expand their technological skills and to interact with other teachers so they can share new strategies and techniques. Access to electronic mail and the Internet have proven valuable resources for allowing teachers to share ideas on classroom uses of technology.

Training is just as critical for technical support staff. Rapid technological change makes it easy for technology specialists to fall behind. Sufficient time and funding for continuing training is essential if technical support is to remain effective.

FINDING

Even though the district allocated more than \$300,000 for technology training through Region 20 in 2000-01, the district estimates that 50 percent of the teaching staff has not been trained to use technology, and does not have even basic technology skills.

This lack of training makes it difficult to integrate technology into the classroom. More in-depth training in technology for teachers, especially in how to effectively integrate technology into the curriculum, is needed.

Region 20 will provide technology training for EPISD for 26 days for about \$30,000. Mobile education for campuses could begin during 2001, with 40 recently purchased iBook laptop computers. The annual cost for the training would be about the same as the cost of Region 20 technical training. Laptop computers and an in-house trainer would provide

flexibility and a greatly increased number of training hours available for each campus.

A district technology trainer's average salary is \$24,000 plus 25 percent in benefits (\$6,000).

Recommendation 40:

Hire a trainer to provide mobile technology training for all campuses.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Technology coordinator develops the training curriculum based on the Technology Plan's goals and objectives.	October 2001
2.	The executive director of Support Services and the Technology coordinator identify personnel who could serve as a technology trainer.	October 2001
3.	The executive director of Support Services contacts and enlists the trainer.	November 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources. The district can cover the cost of hiring a trainer by reducing Region 20 training.

FINDING

EPISD does not require a minimum level of technology training or require any type of technology certification. The district developed a chart to depict the campus staff training needs, hours trained, program training needs and the number of training days needed.

On May 5, 2000, the State Board for Educator Certification approved five certification standards in technology applications for all beginning teachers of Early Childhood (EC) through Grade 8. These same standards for all beginning teachers in Grades 8-12 have not yet been adopted, but are available for public comment. The drafts are based on the corresponding Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for Technology Applications in Grades 8-12.

The five certification standards that apply to all beginning teachers in grades 8-12 include:

- Standard I - All teachers use technology-related terms, concepts, data input strategies and ethical practices to make informed decisions about current technologies and their applications (approved for EC-Grade 8);
- Standard II - All teachers identify task requirements, apply search strategies, and use current technology to efficiently acquire, analyze and evaluate a variety of electronic information (approved for EC-Grade 8);
- Standard III - All teachers use task-appropriate tools to synthesize knowledge, create and modify solutions, and evaluate results in a way that supports the work of individuals and groups in problem-solving situations (approved for EC-Grade 8);
- Standard IV - All teachers communicate information in different formats and for diverse audiences (approved for EC-Grade 8); and
- Standard V - All teachers know how to plan, organize, deliver and evaluate instruction for all students that incorporates the effective use of current technology for teaching and integrating the Technology Applications TEKS into the curriculum (approved for EC-Grade 8).

Recommendation 41:

Use the State Board for Educator Certification draft technology standards as a guideline for establishing EPISD's technology knowledge requirements for teachers.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction reviews the state certification standards for technology applications.	November 2001
2.	The assistant superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction and the Technology coordinator prepare training material for introducing the new certification standards.	November 2001
3.	The Technology coordinator schedules workshops to introduce the new certification standards.	December 2001
4.	The Technology coordinator conducts workshops to introduce the new certification standards.	January 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 8

COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

D. INFRASTRUCTURE

School districts, due to limited budgets and technical expertise, have a difficult time choosing and buying technology. Often they lack adequate information about the newest technologies and how to use them, or they do not take into account the level of training and staff development needed to use the technology.

Technology planners need to make informed decisions about hardware and software, or they are at a disadvantage. Planners must take a broad view of technology and educate planners and staff about current and emerging technologies and their benefits and realize that implementing technology is an ongoing and continuous process that requires a supportive infrastructure flexible enough to deal with the rapid pace of technological change.

While the infrastructure provides the connections that permit communications, and hardware provides the capability to retrieve, process and disseminate information, software makes these tools truly powerful resources. Productivity software such as spreadsheets and databases make it possible for people with limited technical capabilities to perform sophisticated data manipulation.

TEA recommended that school districts attain a student-to-workstation ratio of 4:1 by 1997-98, 3:1 by 1999-2002 and 1:1 by 2003-10.

The student-to-workstation ratio varies widely across the district. **Exhibit 8-4** lists the inventory of technology available for student use in EPISD. Eagle Pass has 3,691 computers at 23 school locations.

Exhibit 8-4
Inventory of EPISD Computer Equipment
May 2000

School	Number of Students	Total Computers	Student to Computer Ratio
S.F. Austin Elementary	266	139	1.9 to 1
Ray H. Darr Elementary	566	173	3.3 to 1
Language Development Center	556	59	9.4 to 1

Kelso Graves Elementary	518	109	4.8 to 1
Nelly May Glass Elementary	550	154	3.6 to 1
Robert E. Lee Elementary	567	139	4.1 to 1
Maude M. Kirchner Elementary	126	57	2.2 to 1
San Luis Elementary	548	112	4.9 to 1
Rosita Valley Elementary	359	94	3.8 to 1
Benavides Heights Elementary	535	135	3.9 to 1
Early Childhood Center	350	59	5.9 to 1
Seco Mines Elementary	587	139	4.2 to 1
Sam Houston Elementary	430	74	5.8 to 1
Rosita Valley Literacy Academy	441	73	6.0 to 1
Eagle Pass High School	1,870	581	3.2 to 1
CC Winn High School	1,203	496	2.4 to 1
Frank Chisum - Alternative School	181	95	1.9 to 1
Rodolfo De Luna Center	23	20	1.2 to 1
Eagle Pass Jr. High	830	290	2.9 to 1
Memorial Jr. High	1,046	469	2.2 to 1
Pete Gallegos Elementary	529	82	6.5 to 1
Henry B. Gonzalez	499	82	6.1 to 1
Kennedy Hall Center	400	60	6.7 to 1
Totals	12,980	3,691	3.5 to 1

Source: Interview with EPISD Network Administrator.

The short-term (1997-1998) student-to-workstation ratio of 4:1 is exceeded in 10 of the 23 locations. The district has placed computers in schools based on critical need.

FINDING

EPISD does not have its network documentation maintained at one location. In the event of a network problem, the network administrator needs a complete and accessible set of documentation and manuals for identifying and correcting problems. The network administrator maintains some written documentation describing the design and structure of the

district's network and components. Vendors involved in the network installation keep some of the detailed information.

Recommendation 42:

Consolidate network documentation in one location and provide backup in an off-site location.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINES

1.	The network administrator acquires and completes the detailed documentation for the network.	October 2001
2.	The network administrator identifies an off-site location for the documentation.	November 2001
3.	The network administrator transfers a copy of the network documentation to the off-site location.	November 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

EPISD has a fragmented Technology Department disaster recovery plan. There is a procedures memorandum that describes responsibilities for the backup of computer files and data, the hardware inventory maintained by the Technology Department and the telephone numbers of key software vendors in the event of software failures. **Exhibit 8-5** lists some of the key elements of an effective disaster recovery plan.

A computer disaster could result in lost productivity and an inability to perform important district functions. To protect electronic information, top-level administrators must invest time and expertise into the development of a well-conceived, comprehensive and customized security policy. This policy must then be applied appropriately throughout the entire organization.

**Exhibit 8-5
Key Elements of a Disaster Recovery Plan**

Step	Details
Build the disaster recovery team.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify a disaster recovery team that includes key policy makers, building management, end-users.

	key outside contractors and technical staff.
Obtain and/or approximate key information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an exhaustive list of critical activities performed within the district. • Develop an estimate of the minimum space and equipment necessary for restoring essential operations. • Develop a timeframe for starting initial operations after a security incident. • Develop a list of key personnel and their responsibilities.
Perform and/or delegate key duties.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an inventory of all computer technology assets, including data, software, hardware, documentation and supplies. • Set up a reciprocal agreement with comparable organizations to share each other's equipment or lease backup equipment to allow the district to operate critical functions in the event of a disaster. • Make plans to procure hardware, software and other equipment as necessary to ensure critical operations are resumed as soon as possible. • Establish procedures for obtaining off-site back-up records. • Locate support resources that might be needed, such as equipment repair, trucking and cleaning companies. • Arrange with vendors to provide priority delivery for emergency orders. • Identify data recovery specialists and establish emergency agreements.
Specify details within the plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify individual roles and responsibilities by name and job title so everyone knows exactly what needs to be done. • Define actions to be taken in advance of a disaster. • Define actions to be taken at the onset of a disaster to limit damage, loss and compromised data integrity. • Identify actions to be taken to restore critical functions. • Define actions to be taken to re-establish normal operations.

Test the plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test the plan frequently and completely. • Analyze the results to improve the plan and identify further needs.
Deal with damage appropriately.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a disaster actually occurs, document all costs and videotape the damage. • Be prepared to overcome downtime; insurance settlements can take time to resolve.
Give consideration to other significant issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't make a plan unnecessarily complicated. • Make one individual responsible for maintaining the plan, but have it structured so that others are authorized and prepared to implement it if it necessary. • Update the plan regularly and whenever changes are made to the system.

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, "Safeguarding Your Technology." (Modified by TSPR).

Recommendation 43:

Develop a comprehensive disaster recovery plan including all district activities, and test it.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Technology coordinator establishes a Disaster Recovery Team, comprised of department representatives from finance, payroll, purchasing, student accounting and technology.	July 2001
2.	The Disaster Recovery Team develops the Disaster Recovery Plan.	July 2001 - January 2002
3.	The Technology coordinator presents the plan to the superintendent and board for approval.	February 2002
4.	The Technology coordinator communicates the plan to the appropriate personnel.	March 2002
5.	The Technology coordinator runs a scheduled test of the plan.	May 2002
6.	The Technology coordinator reports the results to the superintendent and board.	July 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 8

COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

E. TECHNICAL SUPPORT

Technical support, like training, significantly influences how effectively technology is used in the classroom. Teachers, even those who are experienced computer users, often encounter technology-related difficulties that interrupt their planning or classroom activities. Unless they receive quick responses to their questions, their effectiveness will be diminished.

When solutions to such problems are not provided promptly, teachers sometimes are forced to abandon the computers in the classroom and may be reluctant to resume their use, even after the problems are resolved. Schools that can resolve difficulties quickly are best able to prepare students effectively.

FINDING

EPISD has fewer technical support positions than its peer districts.
(Exhibit 8-6)

Exhibit 8-6
EPISD & Peer Districts, Technology Staffing Comparisons
2000-01

District	Administrative	Infrastructure and Support	Instructional
Eagle Pass Total Staff: 6	1 coordinator	1 network administrator 3 computer repair technicians 1 clerical aide	
Harlandale Total Staff: 15	1 Technology director	6 technicians; 1 help desk; 1 network engineer; 1 clerk	5 instructors
Mission Consolidated Total Staff: 16	1 Technology director; 1 Technical director	5 district technicians; 1 network specialists	1 campus coordinator; 4 campus technicians
San Benito Consolidated Total Staff: 7	1 Technology director	1 secretary; 5 technicians	

- San Felipe-Del Rio Consolidated Total Staff: 6	1 Technology director	1 secretary; 4 technicians	
- South San Antonio Total Staff: 11	1 Technology director	1 network specialist; 1 software specialist; 1 hardware specialist; 1 help desk; 6 technicians (2 openings)	
- Welasco Total Staff: 24	1 Technology director	1 secretary; 2 network specialists; 1 telephone specialist; 1 Internet systems manager; 5 hardware technicians; 1 senior programmer; 1 information systems and teams coordinator; 1 technical support coordinator; 1 help desk; 1 Magnet supervisor; 1 PEIMS specialist; 1 AS400 systems operator	1 Instructional coordinator

Source: Telephone interview with Technology administrators in peer districts.

The district has no contracts with vendors to provide computer support or computer maintenance.

Exhibit 8-7 describes EPISD's technology support staffing levels and its peer districts.

**Exhibit 8-7
EPISD and Peer Districts, Technology Support Staff Ratio
2000-01**

District	Total	Technology Support Staff	Ratio of Users to Technology Support Staff
San Felipe-Del Rio Consolidated	780	6	130:1
San Benito Consolidated.	800	7	114:1

Mission Consolidated	900	16	56:1
Eagle Pass	910	6	151:1
South San Antonio	1,000	11	91:1
Harlandale	1,500	15	100:1
Welasco	1,698	24	71:1

Source: Telephone interview with Technology administrators in peer districts.

EPISD has the highest ratio of users to Technology support staff when compared to its peer districts.

Recommendation 44:

Hire a computer technician.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Technology coordinator develops a job description for the computer technician.	November 2001
2.	The director for Personnel posts the positions.	November 2001
3.	The Technology coordinator interviews the applicants.	December 2001
4.	The Technology coordinator hires a computer technician.	January 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

The salary of the computer technician would be \$21,000 plus benefits of 25 percent (\$5,250) = \$26,250. Because the technician is not hired until mid-year, only one-half of the costs are assumed in the first year.

Recommendation	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Hire a computer technician.	(\$13,125)	(\$26,250)	(\$26,250)	(\$26,250)	(\$26,250)

Chapter 9

TRANSPORTATION

This chapter examines the Eagle Pass Independent School District (EPISD) transportation services in three areas:

- A. Operations
- B. Management and Organization
- C. Fleet Maintenance

The primary goal of every school district is to transport all students to and from school and approved extracurricular functions in a timely, safe and efficient manner.

BACKGROUND

The Texas Education Code (TEC) authorizes, but does not require, each Texas school district to provide transportation between home and school; from school to career and technology training locations; for co-curricular activities; and for extracurricular activities. The federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires a school district to provide transportation for students with disabilities if the district also provides transportation for the general student population or if disabled students require transportation to receive special education services.

The TEC also states that a school district may receive state funding for transporting regular and special program students between home and school and for transporting career and technology students to and from vocational training locations. The funding rules are set by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). Local funds must pay for transportation costs not covered by the state. For the regular transportation program, TEA reimburses qualified transportation expenses according to a prescribed formula that is based on linear density. Linear density is the ratio of the average number of regular program students transported daily to the number of miles driven daily.

State transportation funding for regular program transportation is limited to students living two or more miles from the school they attend, unless the students face hazardous walking conditions on the way to school. The state does not pay for summer school transportation or for co-curricular routes between schools during the day. Extracurricular transportation, such as trips to after-school and weekend events, also is not funded by the state. That is why individual schools are expected to reimburse the district's Transportation Department for these services.

All special education transportation, except for certain field trips, is eligible for state reimbursement. Although the actual cost to EPISD for transporting special program students in 1998-99 was reported as \$2.18 per mile, the state's reimbursement for special program transportation is capped at \$1.08 per mile. Special programs, unlike the regular program, are unable to achieve efficiency by clustering students at bus stops.

Career and technology education transportation costs are reimbursed based on the previous year's actual cost-per-mile for that type of transportation. Since no EPISD students were bused for career and technology classes in 1998-99, the district received no state transportation funding for that program in 1999-2000.

According to the 1999-2000 *School Transportation Route Services Report*, EPISD's Transportation Department operates 57 routes per day, covering 1,145 square miles, carrying an average of 3,355 students to school and home on regular runs; 1,619 students living within two miles of the school but on a route classified as hazardous; and 150 students on special education runs. The total ridership of 5,124 represents about 42 percent of the district's 12,207 students. The department also transports students on special activity runs for athletic, educational and extracurricular programs. School buses typically operate on regular routes between 7:00 a.m. and 9:30 a.m. and between 2:15 p.m. and 5:00 p.m.

Chapter 9

TRANSPORTATION

A. OPERATIONS

To receive state funding, all Texas school districts must submit two reports to TEA each year: the *School Transportation Operations Report* and the *School Transportation Route Services Report*. The *School Transportation Operation Report* is designed to establish a cost-per-mile for reimbursements in the fiscal year following the report. **Exhibit 9-1** shows that, over the last five years, EPISD's costs for regular transportation have increased by 38 percent, and the total route mileage has increased by 33 percent. EPISD's cost per mile for regular transportation is 11 percent higher than five years ago.

Exhibit 9-1
EPISD Summary of School Transportation Operations Reports-
Regular Transportation
1994-95 - 1998-99

	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	Percent Change
Operations Costs						
Salaries & Benefits	\$989,271	\$1,125,153	\$1,218,445	\$1,360,411	\$1,507,592	52%
Purchased & Contracted Services	\$25,938	\$25,145	\$34,918	\$45,568	\$71,371	175%
Supplies & Materials	\$179,887	\$178,880	\$208,424	\$192,860	\$192,953	7%
Other Operating Expenses	\$59,889	\$70,386	\$63,528	\$59,934	\$70,257	17%
Debt Service	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	0%
Capital Outlay	\$239,529	\$307,792	\$12,326	\$605,146	\$223,971	
Total Operations Costs	\$1,494,514	\$1,707,356	\$1,537,641	\$2,263,919	\$2,066,144	38%
Mileage Summary						

Route Mileage	541,072	756,980	782,662	999,275	721,946	33%
Extra/Cocurricular Mileage	244,607	219,943	225,680	221,599	190,102	-22%
Non-School Organizations Mileage	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Other Mileage	0	62,978	54,898	68,896	64,521	2%
Total Annual Mileage	785,679	1,039,901	1,063,240	1,289,770	976,569	24%
Cost per Mile - Regular	\$1.902	\$1.642	\$1.446	\$1.755	\$2.116	11%

Source: TEA, School Transportation Operations Reports, 1994-95 through 1998-99.

Exhibit 9-2 shows that, over the last five years, EPISD's costs for special transportation have increased by almost 500 percent, and the total route mileage has increased by 42 percent. EPISD's cost per mile for special transportation is 53 percent higher than five years ago.

Exhibit 9-2
EPISD Summary of School Transportation Operations Reports-
Special Transportation
1994-95 through 1998-99

	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	Percent Change
Operations Costs						
Salaries & Benefits	\$33,161	\$61,951	\$111,262	\$155,443	\$198,127	497%
Purchased & Contracted Services	\$4,083	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Supplies & Materials	\$10,213	\$5,938	\$6,923	\$5,949	\$6,714	-34%
Other Operating Expenses	\$9,427	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Debt Service	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	0%
Capital Outlay	\$37,704	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	

Total Operations Costs	\$94,588	\$67,889	\$118,185	\$161,392	\$204,841	117%
Mileage Summary						
Route Mileage	66,265	78,267	91,260	101,238	94,031	42%
Extra/Co-curricular Mileage	0	0	0	0	0	
Non-School Organizations Mileage	0	0	0	0	0	
Other Mileage	0	0	0	0	0	
Total Annual Mileage	66,265	78,267	91,260	101,238	94,031	42%
Cost per Mile - Special	\$1.427	\$0.867	\$1.295	\$1.594	\$2.178	53%

Source: TEA, School Transportation Operations Reports, 1994-95 through 1998-99.

Exhibit 9-3 and **Exhibit 9-4** show that EPISD has the highest cost for regular transportation and the second lowest cost for special transportation compared with its peer districts.

Exhibit 9-3
EPISD and Peer Districts, Comparison of Operations Costs - Regular Transportation
1998-99

School District	Salaries & Benefits	Purchased & Contracted Services	Supplies & Materials	Other Operating Expenses	Debt Service	Capital Outlay	Total Operating Costs
Eagle Pass	\$1,507,592	\$71,371	\$192,953	\$70,257	\$0	\$223,971	\$2,066,144
Weslaco	\$1,129,144	\$164,838	\$229,619	\$16,834	\$7,389	\$259,263	\$1,807,087
Mission Consolidated	\$1,187,231	\$34,948	\$186,488	\$31,535	\$0	\$36,268	\$1,476,470
San Felipe-Del Rio Consolidated	\$714,330	\$20,087	\$100,045	\$12,906	\$0	\$182,253	\$1,029,621

San Benito Consolidated	\$680,616	\$30,303	\$86,079	\$40,945	\$0	\$109,592	\$947,535
Harlandale	\$478,263	\$26,963	\$70,766	\$3,647	\$0	\$34,714	\$614,353
South San Antonio	\$389,700	\$23,414	\$60,739	\$10,767	\$0	\$100,435	\$585,055

Source: TEA, School Transportation Operations Reports, 1998-99.

Exhibit 9-4
EPISD and Peer Districts, Comparison of Operations Costs- Special Transportation
1998-99

School District	Salaries & Benefits	Purchased & Contracted Services	Supplies & Materials	Other Operating Expenses	Debt Service	Capital Outlay	Total Operating Costs
Harlandale	\$514,169	\$10,883	\$15,942	\$1,520	\$0	\$23,520	\$566,034
San Benito Consolidated	\$268,625	\$13,672	\$31,512	\$10,756	\$0	\$32,537	\$357,102
Weslaco	\$214,786	\$21,119	\$29,546	\$2,166	\$0	\$48,389	\$316,006
South San Antonio	\$270,869	\$0	\$5,211	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$276,080
San Felipe-Del Rio Consolidated	\$152,104	\$365	\$4,933	\$578	\$0	\$91,126	\$249,106
Eagle Pass	\$198,127	\$0	\$6,714	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$204,841
Mission Consolidated	\$73,197	\$5,033	\$12,972	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$91,202

Source: TEA, School Transportation Operations Reports, 1998-99.

Exhibit 10-5 combines the information above and shows each cost category as a percentage of the total operations cost for each district. EPISD's cost is similar to the average cost for the peer districts.

Exhibit 9-5
EPISD and Peer Districts, Percentage Analysis of Total Operating Cost Categories
1998-99

School District	Salaries & Benefits	Purchased & Contracted Services	Supplies & Materials	Other Operating Expenses	Debt Service	Capital Outlay
Eagle Pass	75%	3%	9%	3%	0%	10%
Harlandale	84%	3%	7%	1%	0%	5%
Mission Consolidated	80%	3%	13%	2%	0%	2%
San Benito Consolidated	73%	3%	9%	4%	0%	11%
San Felipe-Del Rio Consolidated	68%	2%	8%	1%	0%	21%
South San Antonio	77%	3%	7%	1%	0%	12%
Weslaco	63%	9%	12%	1%	1%	14%
Peer Average	74%	4%	9%	2%	0%	11%

Source: TEA, School Transportation Operations Reports, 1998-99.

Exhibit 9-6 and **Exhibit 9-7** show that EPISD is below the peer average for cost-per-mile for regular and special transportation. Deadhead miles, as defined by TEA, are those incurred between the location where the student transportation vehicle is parked and the campus site where the route officially begins and ends.

Exhibit 9-6
EPISD and Peer Districts, Comparison of Mileage Data- Regular Transportation
1998-99

School District	Route Mileage*	Extra/ CoCurricular Mileage	Non-School Organizations Mileage	Other Mileage	Total Annual Mileage	Cost per Mile**
South San Antonio	96,480	54,913	0	0	151,393	\$3.864
Harlandale	124,725	51,672	2,782	0	179,179	\$3.429
Mission	251,766	176,720	1,175	19,969	449,630	\$3.284

Consolidated						
Eagle Pass	721,946	190,102	0	64,521	976,569	\$2.116
Weslaco	648,270	217,355	0	3,117	868,742	\$2.080
San Benito Consolidated	415,703	85,781	0	0	501,484	\$1.889
San Felipe-Del Rio Consolidated	642,610	217,649	0	3,684	863,943	\$1.192
Peer Average	363,259	134,015	660	4,462	502,395	\$2.630

Source: TEA, School Transportation Operations Reports.

*Note: Route mileage includes deadhead miles.

**Note: Cost per mile is for regular transportation only.

Exhibit 9-7
EPISD and Peer Districts, Comparison of Mileage Data- Special Transportation
1998-99

School District	Route Mileage*	Extra/ CoCurricular Mileage	Non-School Organizations Mileage	Other Mileage	Total Annual Mileage	Cost per Mile**
Weslaco	98,838	12,947	0	0	111,785	\$2.827
Harlandale	205,875	4,245	2,122	0	212,242	\$2.667
San Benito Consolidated	151,008	2,312	0	0	153,320	\$2.329
San Felipe-Del Rio Consolidated	110,210	1,020	0	1,768	112,998	\$2.205
Eagle Pass	94,031	0	0	0	94,031	\$2.178
South San Antonio	87,120	57,395	0	0	144,515	\$1.910
Mission Consolidated	49,428	580	0	278	50,286	\$1.814
Peer	117,080	13,083	352	341	130,858	\$2.290

Average						
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Source: TEA, *School Transportation Operations Reports, 1998-99.*

*Note: Route mileage includes deadhead miles.

**Note: Cost per mile is for special transportation only.

Cost-per-rider can also be an indicator of the cost efficiency of a school district's transportation services. **Exhibit 9-8** shows that EPISD's cost-per-rider is below the peer average.

Exhibit 9-8
EPISD and Peer Districts, Comparison of Cost Per Rider
1998-99

School District	Total Annual Operating Costs	Annual Ridership	Cost Per Rider Per Day
Harlandale	\$1,180,387	62,640	\$18.84
Mission Consolidated	\$1,567,672	322,200	\$4.87
Eagle Pass	\$2,270,985	579,780	\$3.92
San Benito Consolidated	\$1,304,637	381,240	\$3.42
South San Antonio	\$861,135	345,600	\$2.49
San Felipe-Del Rio Consolidated	\$1,278,727	536,940	\$2.38
Weslaco	\$2,123,093	951,840	\$2.23
Peer Average	\$1,255,941	433,410	\$5.71

Source: TEA, *1998-99 School Transportation Operations Reports and 1999-00 Route Services Reports.*

The second state report, the *School Transportation Route Services Report* includes information on ridership and mileage for regular, special and career and technology programs. It also includes a calculation of "linear density" for the regular home-to-school program, which is the basis for transportation funding.

Linear density is the ratio of the average number of regular program students transported daily to the number of miles driven daily. TEA uses this ratio to assign each school district to one of seven groups, with each group receiving a different per-mile reimbursement. **Exhibit 9-9** shows

the categories of reimbursement, the linear density for each category and the related reimbursement, as defined by TEA. The higher district's the linear density, the higher the district's state reimbursement rate.

Exhibit 9-9
Categories of State Linear Density Reimbursement for Regular Bus Routes

Category	Linear Density Range	Reimbursement per Mile
1	.000 - .399	\$0.68
2	.400 - .649	\$0.79
3	.650 - .899	\$0.88
4	.900 - 1.149	\$0.97
5	1.150 - 1.649	\$1.11
6	1.650 - 2.399	\$1.25
7	2.400 - 9.999	\$1.43

Source: TEA.

To establish route mileage and daily ridership figures, TEA requires districts to gather mileage and ridership data on the first Wednesday of each month. **Exhibit 9-10** shows the route data for EPISD for five years, beginning with the 1995-96 school year. Mileage for the regular transportation has increased by 21 percent over the last 5 years and special mileage has increased by 30 percent. Ridership for regular transportation has increased by 15 percent over the last five years, while special transportation ridership has increased by 61 percent. Funding from the state has increased by 39 percent over the same time period.

Exhibit 9-10
EPISD Summary of Route Services Reports
1995-96 through 1999-2000

	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	Percent Change
Regular Program						
Annual Standard Ridership	505,620	501,480	563,760	607,320	579,780	15%

Annual Standard Mileage	301,752	304,812	301,538	374,076	366,372	21%
Linear Density	1.676	1.645	1.870	1.624	1.582	-6%
Reimbursement per Mile	\$1.11	\$1.11	\$1.25	\$1.25	\$1.25	13%
Annual Mileage (incl. hazardous)	395,028	401,130	402,082	483,768	491,652	24%
Total Daily Ridership	4,387	4,291	4,787	5,059	4,974	13%
Hazardous Annual Mileage	71,352	76,788	78,620	80,064	88,056	23%
Hazardous Daily Ridership	1,475	1,421	1,564	1,569	1,619	10%
Special Program						
Total Daily Ridership	93	93	107	117	150	61%
Total Annual Mileage	63,076	63,076	64,434	81,724	81,724	30%
Career & Technology Program						
Total Daily Ridership	130	130	45	0	0	-100%
Total Annual Mileage	450	450	450	0	0	-100%
Reimbursements						
Regular Program	\$395,208	\$396,022	\$444,760	\$555,093	\$554,945	40%
Special Program	\$68,122	\$54,687	\$69,589	\$88,262	\$88,262	30%
Career & Technology Program	\$856	\$739	\$653	\$0	\$0	-100%
Private Program	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	0%
Total Reimbursement	\$464,186	\$451,448	\$515,002	\$643,355	\$643,207	39%

Source: TEA, School Transportation Route Services Reports, 1995-96 through 1999-2000.

FINDING

The amount of revenue EPISD receives from the state covers only 28 percent of its total operating costs. **Exhibit 9-11**

Exhibit 9-11
EPISD and Peer Districts, Linear Density and State Reimbursement
1999-2000

School District	Linear Density (Riders Per Mile)	Reimbursement per Mile	Total State Reimbursement	Percent of Operating Costs
San Felipe-Del Rio Consolidated	0.898	\$1.25	\$877,876	69%
San Benito Consolidated	1.393	\$1.25	\$630,136	48%
Weslaco	1.760	\$1.25	\$872,135	41%
Harlandale	1.706	\$1.11	\$377,604	32%
South San Antonio	3.523	\$1.43	\$263,504	31%
Eagle Pass	1.582	\$1.25	\$643,207	28%
Mission Consolidated	2.582	\$1.43	\$385,866	25%

Source: TEA, School Transportation Route Services Status, 1999-2000.

Compounding this problem is that the EPISD's 1999-2000 state transportation allocation of \$1.25 per mile was based on the 1998-99 linear density calculation. Because EPISD's linear density went down to 1.582 for 1999-2000, the transportation allowance dropped to \$1.11 per mile for 2000-01. Assuming that route mileage stays the same, the district will lose \$62,154 in state transportation allocation unless it improves its efficiency.

Currently, EPISD still designs their bus routes manually instead of using automation. Automated bus routing software could help design more

efficient bus routes that could increase the linear density and maximize state transportation funding.

Software, such as Edulog, can help a district design routes and schedules with the least number of buses and the shortest travel distances, while still meeting the needs of the eligible student population. Route optimization is especially critical in determining the locations of stops, building routes, and coupling routes.

Stop location optimization allows the district to define hazards, maximum walking distance for students, maximum students at a stop and forbidden or undesirable locations for stops. An automated system will identify and select the minimum number of stops at the best locations to satisfy these requirements. Interactive graphics can allow the district to evaluate the solutions and make revisions and/or corrections.

Run building optimization allows the district to automatically build multiple bus runs to a specific school or cluster of schools. An automated system can maximize vehicle capacity, while minimizing time and distance in travel. Computer plots can help evaluate the results and modify as needed.

Route coupling optimization allows the district to combine a specified group of bus runs into bus schedules to minimize fleet requirements, travel distance and wait time.

Recommendation 45:

Purchase automated bus routing software.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINES

1.	The Transportation coordinator contacts all vendors who offer bus routing software to get detailed information about their products.	September 2001
2.	The Transportation coordinator develops bid specifications for bus routing software and submits the specifications to the Purchasing coordinator.	October 2001
3.	The Purchasing coordinator solicits bids for the bus routing software.	November 2001
4.	The Transportation coordinator and the Purchasing coordinator evaluate the bids.	January 2002
5.	The Purchasing coordinator presents a recommendation for the bid award to the superintendent and board for approval.	February 2002

6.	The Purchasing coordinator issues a purchase order for the bus routing software.	March 2002
7.	The Transportation director schedules training on the new software.	May 2001
8.	The bus routing application is implemented.	June 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

Based on pricing obtained from Edulog, a routing software company, the cost of bus routing software would be about \$25,000 initially, then \$2,500 each subsequent year for maintenance. Based on the mileage reported in the *1999-00 School Transportation Route Services Report*, EPISD's reimbursement for regular transportation was \$554,945 (443,956 miles x \$1.25 per mile). The \$1.25 per mile was based on the previous year's linear density of 1.870. Because the 1999-00 linear density dropped to 1.582, the district's 2000-01 transportation allocation will be reduced to \$492,791 (443,956 x \$1.11 per mile), assuming the same mileage. This amount would represent a loss of \$62,154 in state transportation allocation.

By optimizing its bus routes, EPISD should be able to increase its linear density from the current 1.582 to at least 1.650, which would restore the state transportation reimbursement to \$1.25 per mile.

Recommendation	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Purchase automated bus routing software.	(\$25,000)	(\$2,500)	(\$2,500)	(\$2,500)	(\$2,500)
Increase in state revenue.	\$0	\$62,154	\$62,154	\$62,154	\$62,154
Net (Costs)/Savings	(\$25,000)	\$59,654	\$59,654	\$59,654	\$59,654

FINDING

EPISD has maximized the state funding available for its hazardous routes. Hazardous routes are those that would pose a safety risk or hazard to students if they walked to school. TEA guidelines suggest that areas with busy roadways, railroad tracks or having few sidewalks qualify as hazardous, if the local school board designates them as such. In addition to many other routes in the district, all EPISD bus routes within two miles of the school are classified as hazardous. **Exhibit 9-12** shows that EPISD has more hazardous miles than any of its peer districts.

Exhibit 9-12
EPISD and Peer Districts, Comparison of Hazardous Routes
1999-00

School District	Hazardous Annual Mileage	Hazardous Daily Ridership
Eagle Pass	88,056	1,619
Harlandale	49,785	395
Mission Consolidated	72,612	195
San Benito Consolidated	38,520	617
San Felipe-Del Rio Consolidated	2,337	596
South San Antonio	2,160	80
Weslaco	0	0

Source: TEA, School Transportation Route Services Status, 1999-00.

According to the *1999-2000 School Transportation Routes Services Report*, EPISD reported 88,056 miles for hazardous routes. However, the state sets limits on how many hazardous miles are eligible for reimbursement. The state allows up to 10 percent more reimbursement for hazardous miles than the district receives for its regular miles. Since EPISD reported 403,596 regular miles, they could receive hazardous route funding for an additional 40,360 miles at \$1.25 per mile. However, EPISD reported a total of 88,056 hazardous miles, which means the additional 47,696 hazardous miles must be covered with EPISD funds. According to the 1998-99 School Transportation Operations Report, the actual cost for EPISD to provide those additional miles is \$2.11 per mile, or a total of \$100,639.

There are a number of factors that contribute to the number of hazardous routes in EPISD. In one instance, a school is located in close proximity to a subdivision, but a drainage canal separates the school from the subdivision, which requires the district to bus all of the students. If there were a bridge over the ditch, students could walk to school. In other instances, schools and subdivisions are separated by busy highways or railroad tracks and there are no safe ways for the students to walk to school. Some subdivisions do not have sidewalks or paved streets on which the students can walk.

Addressing the hazards and providing safe ways for students within two miles to walk to school would allow students to walk to school, reduce the number of bus routes required, and save the district money.

Recommendation 46:

Establish a community transportation committee to identify opportunities to reduce or eliminate hazards affecting student transportation.

A community committee is needed because the school district cannot accomplish this alone. Parents are needed to provide input regarding student safety; police agencies can provide information on traffic issues; city and county officials can provide information on city and county ordinances as well as possible funding sources for traffic lights, sidewalks, and bridges over canals and railroad tracks; developers can offer ideas regarding design of subdivisions and building codes; demographers and school officials can provide demographic information for rezoning possibilities; and school transportation staff can provide answers to busing questions.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINES

1.	The superintendent seeks names of parent and community members to serve on a Community Transportation Hazards Committee to identify opportunities to reduce or eliminate hazards affecting student transportation.	September 2001
2.	The superintendent, or designee, begins holding the committee meetings.	October 2001
3.	The committee submits its recommendations to the board, the City Council, and County Commissioners for approval.	January 2002
4.	The committee communicates the approved plan to the public.	April 2002
5.	The designees of the district, city, and county implement the approved plan.	August 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 9

TRANSPORTATION

B. MANAGEMENT AND ORGANIZATION

FINDING

EPISD bus driver records are comprehensive, current and are maintained in locked file cabinets in the Transportation Department office. They contain the following items.

- A photocopy of the driver's commercial driver's license (CDL) (for identification purposes)
- Documentation of the driver's original 20-hour certification training
- Documentation of the driver's road test
- Documentation of the eight-hour refresher course, required every three years
- Documentation of training related to Omnibus Drug Testing
- Documentation of the driver's yearly motor vehicle license check
- The driver's evaluation(s)
- The results of the driver's annual physical
- The driver's pre-employment drug test
- The results of all random or other required drug testing
- The driver's attendance records

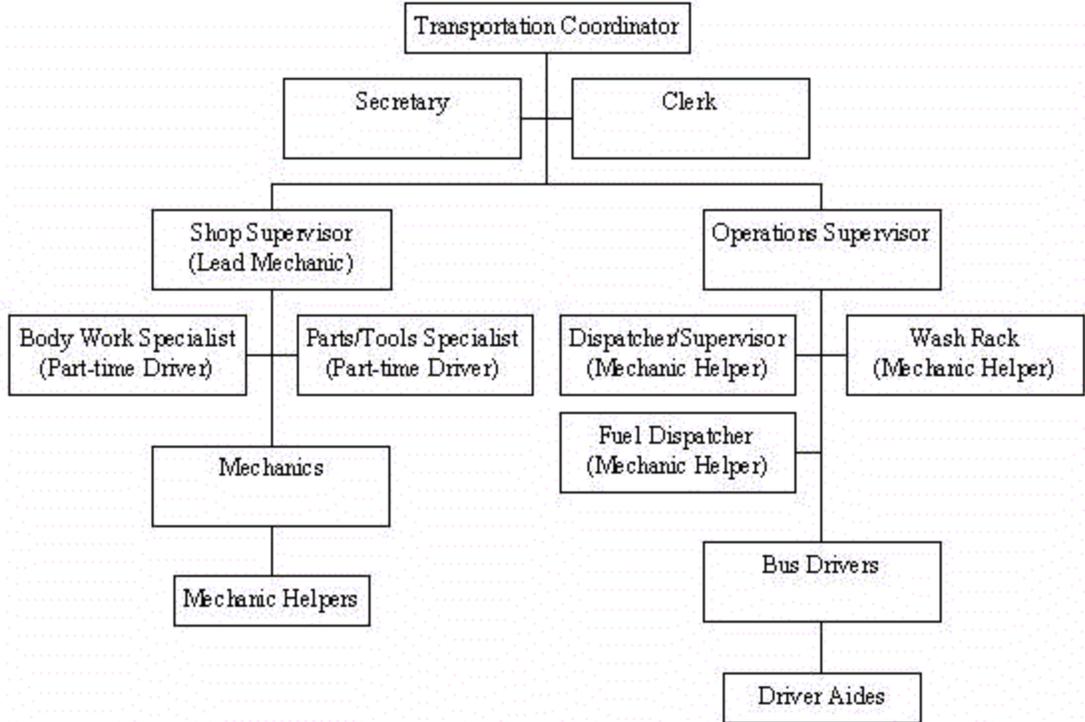
COMMENDATION

The EPISD Transportation Department maintains comprehensive, up-to-date and secure personnel records for all bus drivers

FINDING

The Transportation coordinator, who began working for the district at the beginning of the 2000-01 school year, reports directly to the executive director for District Operations. The Transportation coordinator determined that the existing organization structure was not working and that some realignment of duties was necessary to make transportation services more efficient. The lead mechanic was given the additional responsibilities of shop supervisor. Two part-time drivers were assigned full-time responsibilities in bodywork and parts and tools. One mechanic helper was assigned as a full-time radio dispatcher, while two others were assigned the duties of bus wash and fuel dispatch. The Transportation coordinator developed an unofficial but functional organization chart as illustrated in **Exhibit 9-13**.

**Exhibit 9-13
EPISD Transportation Department Organization - Functional
2000-01**



Source: EPISD Transportation coordinator.

* Note: Title in parenthesis indicates employee's previous title.

As part of the reorganization, four employees (Shop Supervisor, Body Work Specialist, Parts/Tools Specialist and Dispatcher/Supervisor) received more duties, but they did not receive pay adjustments to compensate for those additional duties. EPISD has specific pay schedules for certain job categories but these four employees are not on the correct pay schedule.

Recommendation 47:

Adopt the Transportation Department's functional organization chart and adjust salaries to fit district salary schedules.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINES

1.	The Transportation coordinator submits a revised departmental organization chart and revised job description for each position.	September 2001
2.	The Transportation coordinator recommends salary adjustments to the superintendent.	September 2001

3.	The superintendent recommends the board approve changes to the district organization charts.	October 2001
4.	The board approves the organization chart and budget.	October 2001
5.	The Human Resources Department updates the official Transportation Department organization chart and prepares the paperwork necessary for salary adjustments.	November 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

According to the Transportation coordinator, the cost to adjust the salaries of four affected employees would be \$18,387. The first year is prorated to account for an implementation date of November 2001.

Recommendation	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Adopt the Transportation Department's functional organization chart and adjust salaries to fit district salary schedules.	(\$13,790)	(\$18,387)	(\$18,387)	(\$18,387)	(\$18,387)

FINDING

Although there is a pay range for bus drivers, there is no pay scale. There are no guidelines on where new drivers are placed in the pay range. Consequently, some drivers with more experience actually make less money than drivers with less experience. **Exhibit 9-14** illustrates the inconsistencies in bus drivers' pay.

Exhibit 9-14
EPISD Bus Driver Pay By Seniority
1999-2000

Years Experience	Hourly Rate	Inconsistency of Pay Rates
25	\$10.97	
21	\$10.68	
21	\$10.68	
19	\$10.56	
19	\$10.21	2 rates for 1 year

19	\$10.56	
16	\$9.89	
16	\$9.89	
16	\$9.89	1 rate for 2 years
15	\$9.89	
15	\$9.89	
15	\$9.89	
14	\$9.21	
14	\$9.21	
13	\$9.07	
13	\$9.12	
13	\$9.01	
13	\$9.12	
13	\$9.01	
13	\$9.21	4 rates for 2 years
12	\$9.12	
12	\$9.01	
12	\$9.12	
12	\$9.01	
12	\$9.12	
11	\$8.94	
11	\$8.94	
10	\$8.94	
10	\$8.94	
10	\$8.94	
9	\$8.94	
9	\$8.94	1 rate for 5 years
9	\$8.94	
8	\$8.94	
8	\$8.94	

San Felipe-Del Rio Consolidated	\$6.13	\$9.57	\$13.00
South San Antonio	\$6.50	\$9.75	\$13.00
Weslaco	\$8.46	\$10.23	\$12.00
Peer Average	\$7.59	\$9.81	\$12.02

Source: Telephone interviews with the Transportation Department in each school district.

Recommendation 48:

Develop a pay scale for bus driver salaries based on driver experience and use it to correct discrepancies in driver salaries.

To minimize driver complaints, the scale could be designed to provide at least some pay increase for all drivers. Obviously, some drivers would receive more than others to correct discrepancies. Assuming an average raise of \$0.25 per hour, most discrepancies could be corrected, and the overall bus driver pay schedule would be closer to the peer average.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINES

1.	The Transportation coordinator surveys other school districts to get samples of bus driver pay scales.	July 2001
2.	The Transportation coordinator recommends a proposed salary scale to the superintendent for the 2001-02 budget.	August 2001
3.	The superintendent recommends the 2001-02 budget to the board for approval.	August 2001
4.	The Payroll Department implements the new bus driver pay scale.	September 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

An average pay increase of \$0.25 per hour for 82 drivers for seven hours per day for 180 days would cost \$25,830.

Recommendation	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Develop a pay scale for bus driver salaries, based on driver experience, and use it to correct	(\$25,830)	(\$25,830)	(\$25,830)	(\$25,830)	(\$25,830)

discrepancies in driver salaries.					
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FINDING

The EPISD Transportation Department is experiencing a significant absenteeism rate among its drivers. In the first semester of 2000-01, 20 percent of EPISD bus drivers averaged at least one absence per month. Seventy-six percent of the drivers missed at least one day of work. Bus drivers missed a total of 358 days during the first semester.

Some school districts offer financial incentives for good attendance. For example, Katy ISD has a monthly drawing for \$50 for all drivers who have not missed a day that month. In addition, they have an end-of-year drawing for \$250 for all drivers who have perfect attendance. Funding is provided from activity funds generated through the Transportation Department's soft-drink machines.

EPISD has only five substitute bus drivers. If they work, they are paid \$7.20 per hour for a minimum of four hours, or at least \$28.80 per day. If more than five drivers are absent, other Transportation Department employees, such as bus mechanics, have to drive. This takes them away from their duties, resulting in the inefficient use of skilled personnel.

Recommendation 49:

Develop and implement an incentive program to reduce bus driver absenteeism by 25 percent.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINES

1.	The Transportation coordinator surveys other school districts to find examples of incentive programs that have effectively improved driver attendance.	September 2001
2.	The Transportation coordinator submits a proposal for an incentive program to the superintendent for board approval.	October 2001
3.	The superintendent submits the proposal and the board approves the incentive program.	November 2001
4.	The Transportation coordinator implements the approved plan.	January 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

With 358 days missed in the first half of 2000-01, the projected number of absences for the whole year would be 716. If absences could be reduced by 25 percent, the district could save \$5,155 per year in substitute costs (179 days X \$28.80 per day = \$5,155).

Recommendation	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Develop and implement an incentive program to reduce bus driver absenteeism by 25 percent.	\$5,155	\$5,155	\$5,155	\$5,155	\$5,155

FINDING

EPISD has no provisions to measure drivers' effectiveness after they receive the initial 20-hour Texas Certification Course and some behind-the-wheel training. A driver is assumed to be doing a good job unless a parent calls to complain. There are no provisions for monitoring the drivers' driving abilities or effectiveness after the initial training. Periodic, behind-the-wheel evaluations, especially during the first year, could help identify areas in which drivers could need some additional training.

Recommendation 50:

Perform behind-the-wheel evaluations of all bus drivers at least once a year.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINES

1.	The Transportation coordinator contacts other school districts to get copies of their behind-the-wheel driver evaluation forms.	September 2001
2.	The Transportation coordinator develops a behind-the-wheel Driver Evaluation Form for EPISD.	October 2001
3.	The Transportation coordinator arranges training of skilled and experienced drivers as behind-the-wheel peer driver evaluators.	November 2001
4.	The Transportation coordinator develops an evaluation schedule.	December 2001
5.	The designated evaluators begin behind-the-wheel evaluations.	January 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 9

TRANSPORTATION

C. FLEET MAINTENANCE

EPISD operates 97 school buses, 57 of which are used on regular routes each day. Other buses are used for mid-day routes, extracurricular trips, and as spares when regular buses are undergoing maintenance. Separate buses are needed for extracurricular trips due to the distance from EPISD to the extracurricular destinations, which require buses to leave the district or return during the time scheduled for regular bus routes.

FINDING

EPISD discovered that one of their part-time bus drivers possesses skills to do body work, painting, welding, window repairs, and upholstery repair. From August 2000 to December 2000, the shop was able to complete 60 body repairs, which if contracted out, would have cost the district \$21,700 in labor alone. The actual labor cost by doing the job in-house was only \$7,000, saving the district \$14,700. Over a year, projected savings would be \$29,400.

EPISD also spent \$12,000 last year contracting out seat repairs. Unfortunately, the quality of the work was poor, so the seats are not in very good condition. Now the district is performing the work in-house at a much lower cost and with much better quality. Projected savings would be \$12,000 per year.

The district spent \$3,278 last year for repairs to bus windows. This year, it has purchased and installed its own glass windows. Annual projected savings for window repairs would be \$2,100.

Total annual savings for all repairs are projected to be \$43,500.

COMMENDATION

The EPISD Transportation Department saves money by performing bodywork, glass replacement, and upholstery repair in-house.

FINDING

No computerized fleet maintenance system exists to notify the shop personnel of scheduled preventive maintenance. Some maintenance is not performed unless the bus is brought in for other problems. Consequently, buses may go beyond bus manufacturer's recommended maintenance

cycles. Fueling records are also kept manually, which could result in inaccurate accounting or loss of fuel inventory. The Transportation coordinator indicated they have run out of fuel on several occasions because they were not sure how much fuel had been removed from the tanks.

Fleet maintenance systems can be used to track and schedule preventative maintenance; maintain records of work orders; track parts inventories and vendor history; track warranties; track fuel usage and fuel inventory; track cost per mile; maintain personnel records; and generate management reports. This would allow EPISD to measure and monitor different performance measures to determine if changes need to be made in department operations.

Recommendation 51:

Purchase and implement an automated fleet maintenance system.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINES

1.	The Transportation coordinator meets with the Technology coordinator to develop the requirements of a fleet management system and determine an estimate of the cost of the system, including installation.	September 2001
2.	The Transportation coordinator and the Purchasing coordinator purchase the fleet management system.	October 2001
3.	The Transportation coordinator and the Technology coordinator install the fleet management system.	November 2001
4.	The fleet management company provides training to EPISD employees.	December 2001
5.	The Transportation Department begins using the fleet management system.	January 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

The cost of the fleet management software is estimated at \$2,500 plus \$550 per year for maintenance and support.

Recommendation	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Purchase and implement an automated fleet maintenance system.	(\$2,500)	(\$550)	(\$550)	(\$550)	(\$550)

FINDING

Only 39 percent of EPISD buses have white roofs. Some studies have shown that white roofs reflect more sunlight than yellow roofs and that inside temperatures can actually be lowered by as much as 10 degrees. This difference is significant, considering the number of hot days students must ride the buses in EPISD. Studies have also shown that the comfort level of the student can be improved with the addition of dark-tinted glass on the side windows. The additional cost to add white paint to the roof of a new school bus is only \$800 per bus, while the tinted windows add about \$500 per bus. Existing buses could have roofs painted white by in-house staff at a lower cost, as time permits.

Recommendation 52:

Purchase white roofs and dark-tinted windows on all new buses and paint the roofs of EPISD buses less than 10 years old over a five-year period.

There are only 15 buses in the EPISD fleet that are less than 10 years old and do not have a white roof. The buses older than 10 years should be replaced within the next five years, so it is not cost-effective to paint them. According to the Transportation coordinator, the cost for EPISD to paint a bus roof white, using district personnel, would be \$550 each. If three buses were painted each year, all 15 would be painted within five years.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINES

1.	The Transportation coordinator contacts the General Services Commission to get information and prices for white roofs and dark-tinted windows.	September 2001
2.	The Transportation coordinator includes those options on all new bus purchases.	September 2001
3.	The Transportation coordinator identifies three of the current bus fleet each year that are less than 10 years old and instructs the staff to paint the roofs white.	October 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

Assuming it costs \$800 per bus for a white roof and \$500 for dark-tinted glass on a new bus, the district would spend \$1,300 per bus x 5 buses per year = \$6,500 per year. The cost to paint the roofs of three existing EPISD buses per year would be \$1,650. Therefore, the total annual expenditures for white roofs would be \$6,500 + \$1,650 = \$8,150.

Recommendation	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Purchase white roofs and dark-tinted windows on all new buses and paint the roofs of EPISD buses less than 10 years old over a five-year period.	(\$8,150)	(\$8,150)	(\$8,150)	(\$8,150)	(\$8,150)

Chapter 10

FOOD SERVICES

This chapter of the report describes the Food Services department operations of the Eagle Pass Independent School District (EPISD) in the following areas:

- A. Management and Operations
- B. Nutritional Education
- C. Student Meal Participation
- D. Facilities and Maintenance

Public school food and nutrition services are charged with providing appealing and nutritionally sound breakfasts and lunches to elementary and secondary students as economically as possible.

The Texas School Food Service Association (TSFSA) has identified 10 standards of excellence for evaluating school food service programs. TSFSA states that effective programs should:

- Identify and meet current and future needs through organization, planning, direction and control;
- Maintain financial accountability through established procedures;
- Meet the nutritional needs of students and promote the development of sound nutritional practices;
- Ensure that procurement practices meet established standards;
- Provide appetizing, nutritious meals through effective, efficient systems management;
- Maintain a safe and sanitary environment;
- Encourage student participation in food service programs;
- Provide an environment that enhances employee productivity, growth, development and morale;
- Promote a positive image to the public; and
- Measure success in fulfilling regulatory requirements.

BACKGROUND

EPISD is subject to coordinated reviews by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) under the School Lunch and Breakfast Agreement, a legal contract between TEA and EPISD. The last coordinated administrative review was conducted in 1996. Findings resulted in timely and responsive corrective actions by the Food Services department.

At the end of each school year, districts must renew an agreement on the Child Nutrition Programs Information Management System

(CNPIMS). Yearly sanitation and safety inspections are to be conducted by state, county or city health departments, but Eagle Pass, has no health inspector.

EPISD participates in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast programs. The district serves students in 14 elementary schools, one middle school, one junior high school and two high schools. Students are served meals in all the schools, and approved snacks are sold in all cafeterias.

The Food Services department uses the ACCU-SCAN System in some cafeterias and a manual system in others. Some ACCU-SCAN machines are broken; however, the system is outdated and cannot be repaired.

All students enrolled in EPISD schools are eligible to eat free under the Special Assistance Provision 2. This provision allows schools to serve all students participating, free meals for a four-year period. During the next three years, the school makes no new eligibility determinations and counts only the total number of reimbursable meals served each day. Reimbursement during these years is determined by applying the percentages of free and reduced-price and paid meals served during the corresponding month of the base year to the total meal count for the claiming month.

At the end of each four-year period, the TEA may approve four-year extensions if the income level of the school's population remains stable. Schools choosing this alternative must pay the difference between federal reimbursement and the cost of providing all meals at no charge from sources other than federal funds.

During the first year, or base year, the school makes eligibility determinations and takes meal counts by type of reimbursement classification.

In Managing Child Nutrition Programs: Leadership for Excellence, Martin and Conklin maintain that child nutrition programs, especially in sizeable school districts, constitute very large businesses that provide an abundance of managerial, financial, human resources and health opportunities and challenges.

Exhibit 10-1 provides EPISD's financial information for 1998 through 1999-2000.

Exhibit 10-1
EPISD Child Food Services Department

**Actual Financial Information
1998-1999 through 1999-2000**

Category	1998-1999 Actual	Percent of Total	1999-2000 Actual	Percent of Total
Revenues				
Fund Balance (net equity)	(\$173,715)		(\$218,302)	
Food Sales	\$563,945	11%	\$577,553	11%
Other Local Revenue	\$158,661	3%	\$108,382	2%
Federal and state	\$4,249,090	85%	\$4,533,663	87%
Total Revenue	\$4,971,696		\$5,219,598	
Expenditures				
Payroll	\$2,008,738	39%	\$2,186,141	42%
Benefits	\$553,141	11%	\$638,450	12%
Professional and Contracted Services	\$37,388	1%	\$21,934	0%
Supplies and Materials				
Food	\$1,587,551	31%	\$1,605,966	31%
Commodities	\$218,945	4%	\$245,040	5%
Other	\$518,280	10%	\$484,077	9%
Travel and Subsistence	\$275	0%	\$878	0%
Depreciation	-		-	
Other	\$164,979	3%	\$72,799	1%
Debt Service				
Capital Outlay	\$55,538	1%	\$8,900	0%
Total Expenditures	\$5,144,835		\$5,191,386	
Profit and Loss	(\$173,139)		(\$224,358)	

Source: TEA, PEIMS 1998-99 through 1999-00 and Eagle Pass ISD.

Exhibit 10-2 shows the comparison of revenue between EPISD and its peer districts. Among the peer districts, EPISD ranked second for percentage increase in revenue for the years of 1996-97 through 2000-01.

Exhibit 10-2
EPISD and Peer District Food Service Actual* Revenue Comparison
1995-96 through 1999-2000

District	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01*	Percent Change
Eagle Pass	\$4,202,993	\$4,624,545	\$4,971,696	\$5,219,598	\$6,340,370	51%
San Benito	\$2,895,581	\$3,251,505	\$3,561,447	\$3,892,065	\$3,936,838	36%
Harlandale	\$5,931,140	\$5,982,228	\$6,343,642	\$6,427,139	\$6,460,432	9%
South San Antonio	\$4,233,393	\$4,484,451	\$4,475,338	\$4,382,743	\$4,519,279	7%
San Felipe/Del Rio	\$3,229,496	\$3,294,427	\$3,434,295	\$3,199,418	\$3,652,044	13%
Mission Cons.	\$4,236,181	\$4,599,343	\$4,509,813	\$4,980,251	\$5,586,000	32%
Weslaco	\$4,250,280	\$4,262,488	\$4,522,006	\$5,622,071	\$6,902,400	62%

Source: TEA, PEIMS 1996-97 through 2000-01 and Eagle Pass ISD.

**Budgeted data is used because actual data is not available for 2000-01.*

Exhibit 10-3 gives a comparison of expenditures between EPISD and its peer districts. EPISD ranked second in percentage increase for expenses for the years of 1996-97 through 2000-01.

Exhibit 10-3
EPISD and Peer District Food Service Actual*Expenditures
Comparison
1995-96 through 1999-2000

District	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01*	Percent Change
South San Antonio	\$4,194,722	44,394,830	\$4,639,639	\$5,202,655	\$4,892,699	17%

Eagle Pass	\$4,179,580	\$4,589,035	\$5,144,835	\$5,264,185	\$6,122,068	46%
San Benito	\$2,872,689	\$3,265,894	\$3,318,512	\$3,709,275	\$3,578,769	25%
Harlandale	\$6,473,046	\$6,168,402	\$6,543,826	\$6,454,685	\$6,586,555	2%
San Felipe/Del Rio	\$3,450,955	\$3,724,885	\$3,751,237	\$3,546,786	\$3,571,590	3%
Mission Cons.	\$4,433,375	\$4,705,225	\$4,639,130	\$5,080,282	\$5,579,880	26%
Weslaco	\$4,185,675	\$4,229,029	\$4,303,148	\$4,486,381	\$6,187,903	48%

Source: TEA, EPISD 1996-97 through 2000-01 and Eagle Pass ISD.

*Budgeted data is used because actual data is not available for 2000-01.

Exhibit 10-4 compares the expenses per student between EPISD and its peer districts. EPISD ranked second in percentage increase per student for expenses for the years of 1996-97 through 2000-01.

Exhibit 10-4
EPISD and Peer District Expense per Student
1996-97 through 2000-01

District	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	Percent Change
South San Antonio	\$411	\$430	\$454	\$510	\$489	19%
Eagle Pass	\$339	\$370	\$408	\$420	\$464	37%
San Benito	\$331	\$429	\$382	\$427	\$402	21%
Harlandale	\$434	\$414	\$439	\$433	\$454	5%
San Felipe-Del Rio	\$344	\$371	\$374	\$353	\$356	3%
Mission Cons.	\$369	\$392	\$386	\$423	\$447	21%
Weslaco	\$321	\$324	\$330	\$344	\$460	43%

Source: TEA, EPISD 1996-97 through 1999-2000 and PEIMS 2000-01.

Chapter 10

FOOD SERVICES

A. MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS

Food services within school districts undergo constant change as a result of evolving federal, state and local regulatory processes. They must adapt to advances in technology; demographic changes; societal and community expectations; new food product availability; participation in federal food commodities programs; and competition from vending machines and other food venues on school premises. In addition, they must also contend with high schools being classified as open or closed and the changing needs and tastes of students as both food consumers and customers.

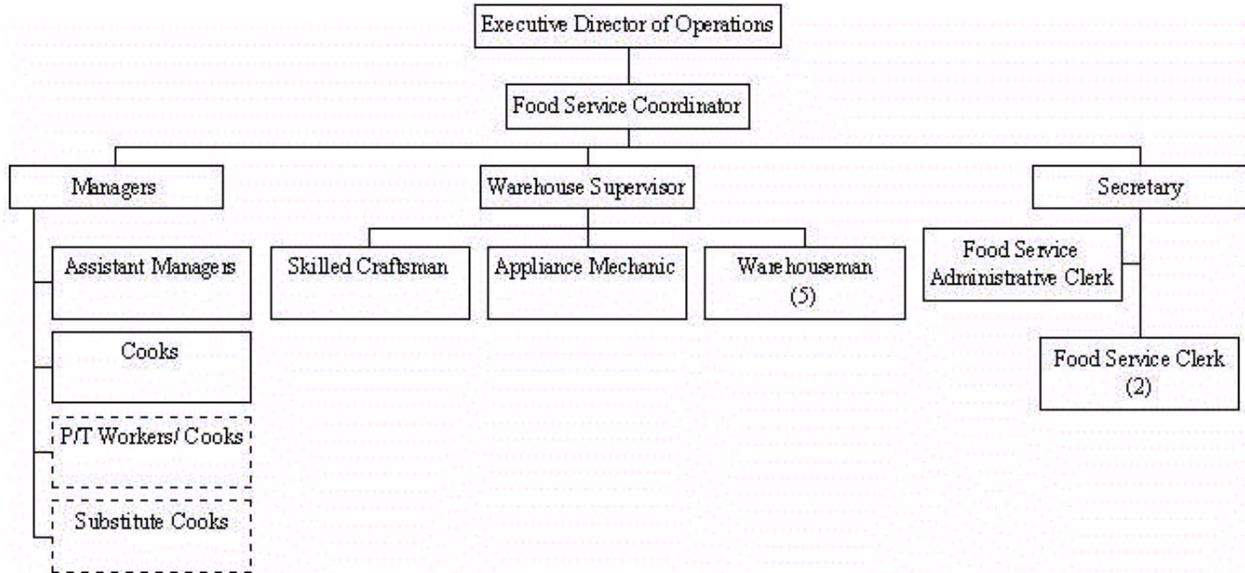
Food Services coordinators in school districts must plan for a multitude of contingencies that affect revenues and services. They must develop, implement, manage and evaluate programs that can respond to situations such as emergencies, equipment breakdowns, meal distribution from centralized locations, expanded school days and after-school snack and summer feeding programs. Nutrition programs must also create universal breakfast programs, incorporating child nutrition and food programs into school district health programs and make child nutrition programs an integral part of their respective community's social services system.

EPISD Food Services department has a total of 113 employees, including 64 cafeteria cooks, 18 managers, 18 assistant managers, six warehouse employees, three clerical and support employees, two maintenance employees, one coordinator and one secretary. Prior to the recent requirement for all employees to have a GED there were approximately 40 to 50 cafeteria substitute pool workers who were available to EPISD department of Food Services to replace permanent employees who are on sick or bereavement leave during normal work hours. The GED requirement has reduced the availability of substitute employees dramatically, and at the present time, the department is unable to readily fill absent positions. There are only an average of six available substitute employees.

The district has employed the Food Services coordinator for 10 years. The coordinator has a 226-day contract, and his annual salary is \$53,000. The coordinator has attended workshops provided by TEA, but he does not have any certifications from TSFSA.

Exhibit 10-5 presents the organizational structure of the EPISD Food Service department.

Exhibit 10-5
EPISD Nutrition Services Organization
2000-2001



Source: EPISD Food Services department.

The team interviewed the cafeteria managers both individually and in groups at the central food services office. Additionally, the review team visited 15 schools to observe meal services, kitchen sanitation and workflow efficiency. The review team also interviewed cafeteria managers and focus groups. The 15 cafeteria managers all had strong working knowledge of their kitchens staffing, equipment needs and menus. Managers reported they had no computers, and they are not allowed to make decisions on menus or specifications for food items.

FINDING

EPISD does not have specific job descriptions and performance evaluation criteria for Food Services employees. The lack of specific job duties and standards has led to inconsistent management and control of the Food Services operations. To effectively manage a \$5 million operation, serving a population of more than 12,000 students, performance standards and consistent evaluations must be established.

Although job descriptions are not required by law for any employer, they are necessary for several reasons. Job descriptions help in:

- Interviewing and selecting employees;
- Orienting new employees;
- Evaluating the performance of an employee;
- Motivating employees;

- Comparing pay between employees;
- Providing proof of the essential functions of a job for purposes of the Americans with Disabilities Act;
- Providing a defense in workers' compensation and civil law suits;
- Providing evidence that practices are fair, if challenged to defend them in court.

The TSFSA *Standards of Excellence Manual* recommends developing performance standards and current job duties and conducting annual performance appraisals for each Food Services employee.

In Bastrop ISD, the Food Services manager and cafeteria managers evaluate each employee using performance-based and job-specific job descriptions. Each employee and manager performs a self-evaluation using the job description. The employee and manager determine the final evaluation score. The manager uses the evaluation to pinpoint areas for improvement and additional training and areas in which competency and/or proficiency has been achieved. The employees have positive opinions about the process.

Although the Food Services department's policy manual in EPISD lists some general job duties, there are no performance criteria or self-evaluation tools for all positions including management. In a focus group with cafeteria managers, the lack of an effective evaluation process was discussed. Employees are not sure of management's expectations and perform at different levels. The use of performance based job descriptions allow employees to improve in specific areas and give or receive feedback on their jobs. The evaluation process should include performance standards that are outlined in the job description.

Exhibit 10-6 shows a template recommended by Managing Child Nutrition Programs, Martin and Conklin 1999 for food managers.

Exhibit 10-6
Important Functions of Food Service Operations

Functional Area	Tasks
Customer Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops standard for prompt, courteous and efficient service. • Evaluates efficiency of serving area. • Establishes quality standard in the presentation, merchandising, taste and service of food. • Evaluates serving methods to ensure students are served quickly. • Recommends solutions to problems with the

	service of food.
Sanitation and Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitates development of sanitation procedures and cleaning schedules. • Ensures proper storage and handling of chemicals and cleaning schedules. • Maintains an effective insect and rodent control system. • Establishes safety standards and rules. • Monitors food service unit compliance with health and safety rules established by federal, state and local agencies. • Considers safety requirements when ordering equipment.
Financial Management and Record Keeping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operates the program within budget. • Implements control in all cost categories (for example, labor, food, supplies, operating). • Establishes financial objectives for the food service operation. • Supervises free and reduced-price meal applications and verification process. • Establishes a system to ensure Food Service fiscal accountability.
Food Production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluates food quality. • Establishes procedures to ensure appropriate temperatures of foods during preparation, transportation and service. • Establishes procedures for portion control. Delegates authority and responsibility for food production and service to unit managers. • Establishes procedures to provide and preserve maximum nutritional value of food. • Works with unit managers to evaluate the food production system and food quality and revises the system as needed to improve operations.
Procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determines the type and quality of food and supplies to be purchased based on student needs and resources. • Maintains a system for proper storage and distribution of food and supplies throughout the district.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures that food, supplies and equipment are purchased to meet specifications. • Maintains a purchasing system consistent with USDA and state purchasing guidelines. • Establishes a purchasing system to secure food and supplies used by district food service units.
Program Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assesses program compliance with federal, state and/or local regulations. • Revises school Food Service program operations based on changes in federal, state and/or local regulations. • Informs staff and school food service program personnel of federal, state and local government regulations that affect program operations. • Communicates changes to school Food Service personnel. • Cooperates with federal agencies and personnel responsible for the administration and review of district food service programs.

Source: Managing Child Nutrition Programs, Martin and Conklin 1999.

Recommendation 53:

Develop job descriptions, performance standards and evaluation criteria for the Food Services operation.

The Food Services department should standardize all job descriptions and update them every three years. The department of Food Services should also have a process in place to review each job description. Job descriptions should include a job summary; detailed duties and responsibilities, skills required to perform the job, the importance of job duties and tasks, when and how often the tasks are performed and a description of the job environment.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINES

1.	The executive director of Operations develops job descriptions and job performance standards for all Food Services positions and presents them to the Human Resources director.	August 2001
2.	The Human Resources director presents the job descriptions and job performance standards to the superintendent for approval.	August 2001

3.	The Food Services coordinator and employees are presented with the job descriptions and performance standards and begins evaluation of performance with the new standards.	August 2001
4.	The executive director of Operations evaluates the coordinator's performance for the first 90 days.	November 2001
5.	A new action plan is prepared for the year based on the results of the evaluations.	November 2001
6.	The executive director of Operations evaluates the coordinator yearly.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented using existing resources.

FINDING

EPISD does not have an automated Point-Of-Sale System (POS) to track student eligibility, daily cash, participation rates, daily financial records and free and reduced-price meal applications. Regulators define a point-of-sale meal count as that point in the Food Service operation when a determination can accurately be made that a reimbursable free, reduced-price or paid meal has been served to an eligible child. The current systems for tracking financial information are vague and confusing. In addition, the anonymity of eligibility for each child must be protected. EPISD uses the ACCU-SCAN system to verify students are participating.

With the ACCU-SCAN system, a worker swipes a card in a machine, and the machine creates a report similar to a cash register report at the end of the meal period. The manager or assistant manager enters each student's number at the end of the cafeteria line. The manager manually transfers this information to a ledger, and a driver sends the information to the central office. Many of the machines are not working and parts are not available. In addition, cashiers use cash registers for faculty and guest purchases.

This manual process creates several problems. The review team observed long lines at the high school where the students forgot their cards. The manager had to locate the card for entry, causing delays. Finally, this system does not generate any computerized reports. The coordinator and secretary must spend a significant amount of time manually compiling information. From interviews, it is estimated that the manual compilation of reports and verification of student identification numbers is the equivalent of one full-time employee at each of the district's 18 cafeterias.

Point-of-sale (POS) systems process cafeteria sales quickly, track all meals and items sold and generate management reports. Such a system can ensure student confidentiality and compliance with government regulations and reduce processing time and labor hours.

According to *The Administrator's Reference Manual of the Texas Education Agency for Child Nutrition Programs*, acceptable point-of-sale counting and claiming procedures are required in determining reimbursable meals. Any alternate counting or collection procedure must provide for an employee to be stationed at the end of the serving line to monitor and record the types of meals selected to ensure each meal claimed for reimbursement meets the meal requirements.

Full-time employees are contracted for 180 days and earn \$7.62 per day.

Recommendation 54:

Purchase a Point-Of-Sale System to maintain financial accountability, increase participation and protect student anonymity.

For effective financial management, timely information on food services finances must be available and accurate.

The system also should be integrated with all systems used by the Food Services department.

The manager and staff could be trained to operate an automated system and financial reports could be generated. The team consulted with several point-of-sale systems vendors, and the cost for a system in EPISD would be approximately \$5,500 per school. The potential increase in reimbursements, reduction in labor and increased participation would more than offset the cost.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINES

1.	The Food Services coordinator contacts TEA for the list of approved vendors of POS systems and the requirements for a Request for Proposal.	August 2001
2.	The Food Services coordinator submits the request for proposal to the executive director of Operations and superintendent for approval.	August 2001
3.	The superintendent presents the request to the school board for approval.	September 2001
4.	The Purchasing Department releases the Request for	October 2001

	Proposal to potential vendors.	
5.	The Purchasing Director and Food Services coordinator approve the vendor and the system is purchased.	November 2001
6.	The Food Services coordinator and vendor train the managers and assistant managers and the implementation of the system at a rate of three schools per month until completed.	December 2001 - May 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

The POS system will enable EPISD to eliminate one full-time equivalent (FTE) in each school. Eighteen full time employees working 7.5 hours per day at \$7.62 per hour times 180 days (includes 20 percent benefits) would result in a cost reduction of \$185,166. The cost savings will be \$1,029, per school per month. Due to the phased implementation, the first year savings are estimated to be \$101,871. The cost of the implementation of the system would be \$99,000, resulting in a net savings of \$2,871 for the first year.

Recommendation	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Purchase a Point-Of-Sale (POS) System.	(\$99,000)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Increase student participation.	\$101,871	\$185,166	\$185,166	\$185,166	\$185,166
Net Savings/(Costs)	\$2,871	\$185,166	\$185,166	\$185,166	\$185,166

FINDING

EPISD has not had regular inspections by the Texas Department of Health (TDH) as required by TEA since 1998. Because the county is not conducting regular inspections, the TSPR team conducted an inspection following the Federal Food Code Guidelines. Although the team found the kitchen to be clean and in general compliance with the Federal Food Code for sanitation, lack of air conditioning in some kitchens, lack of equipment, poor floor conditions and other maintenance issues are in need of immediate attention.

USDA Child Nutrition Program regulations require that a local state, city or county representative perform a sanitation inspection at least yearly in all school kitchens and cafeterias. TDH is responsible for the inspections of the kitchens in EPISD. The Food Services coordinator said that the inspector who performed the inspections in the past retired, and no one

had contacted him to continue the inspections. The lack of regular inspections by TDH also occurs in several school districts. The directors in these school districts contact TDH for inspections.

Recommendation 55:

Arrange for the health inspector to inspect all EPISD cafeteria kitchens at least once a year as required by law.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINES

1.	The Food Services coordinator contacts the health inspector in Uvalde, Texas to arrange for health inspections.	August 2001
2.	The Food Services coordinator implements all recommendations cited on the inspection forms.	October 2001
3.	The cafeteria managers monitor safety and sanitation on a daily basis.	October 2001 and Ongoing
4.	Cafeteria managers and employees receive yearly updates on safety and sanitation from Region 20 in-service programs.	May 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 10

FOOD SERVICES

B. NUTRITION EDUCATION

The American Dietetic Association, the Society for Nutrition Education and the American School Food Service Association (ASFSA) have developed a position statement outlining the need for comprehensive school-based nutrition programs and services for all the nation's elementary and secondary students.

It is important to evaluate the role that school meals play in helping students learn more effectively while improving their immediate and future health. Research has shown that school food and nutrition programs are important to both learning readiness and good health. Childhood obesity has become the third most prevalent disease of children and adolescents in the United States. Many large districts view school meals as an integral part of the total education process and allocate money to ensure quality and maintain affordability. Policy decisions are increasingly made to provide all students the skills and environment they need to adopt healthy eating and dietary behaviors.

The School Meals Initiative mandates that EPISD meet the nutrient standards established by the USDA for fat and energy (caloric) content.

FINDING

EPISD does not provide nutrition education as a component of the Child Nutrition Programs, health education or any curriculum. The coordinator of Food Services and the cafeteria managers do not provide ongoing education or distribute any nutritional information to students. In focus groups, students revealed limited knowledge of nutrition, the food guide pyramid and the importance of fruits and vegetables in their diet.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, healthy eating patterns in childhood and adolescence promote optimal childhood health, growth and intellectual development; prevent immediate health problems, and may prevent long-term health problems such as coronary heart disease, cancer and stroke. The Nutrition Education and Training (NET) program, administered by the USDA, recommends in its strategic plan that by the year 2000 nutrition education should be a major component of child nutrition programs and offered in all schools. The American Dietetic Association, Society for Nutrition Education and the American School Food Service Association issued a position statement on

school-based nutrition programs that outlines programs and services that should be offered.

The Spring ISD Food Services has improved its nutrition education efforts by offering programs such as National School Breakfast and Lunch Week, 5-A-Day, Texas School Breakfast and Lunch Week, printed menus that include nutrition games and information and a Food Services department Web site.

Within the School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program, USDA has implemented the School Meals Initiative for Healthy Children. USDA recognizes the importance of encouraging children to accept meals with reduced fat content. Merely enacting policy will not accomplish change. This is why USDA established Team Nutrition to implement "Making Food Choices," a nutrition education, training, and technical assistance program. The mission of Team Nutrition is to improve the health of children by creating innovative public and private partnerships that promote healthy food choices. In 1995, USDA awarded \$4.4 million in Team Nutrition grants to enable states to expand training and technical assistance activities to local food service personnel. USDA also is working with American Culinary Federation to share recipes and techniques in food service preparation with the school food service community.

Recommendation 56:

Provide nutrition education at all grade levels as a component of health education programs and coordinate nutrition education with the Food Services department.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINES

1.	The Food Services coordinator develops a plan for implementing nutrition education in the EPISD schools.	November 2001
2.	The Food Services coordinator meets with the principals and presents the plan.	December 2001
3.	The principals adopt the new nutrition education program and present it to the teachers in the schools.	January 2002
4.	The cafeteria managers in each school serve as a resource for the teachers and assist in scheduling education sessions.	March 2002
5.	The Food Services coordinator and principals evaluate the nutrition education program each quarter and make necessary changes.	May 2002

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 10

FOOD SERVICES

C. STUDENT MEAL PARTICIPATION

EPISD participates in the National School Breakfast and Lunch programs, Summer Feeding Program and the Donated Commodities Program. Students who live in households in which the household income is less than 185 percent of the federal poverty level receive a reduced-price meal. Students receive a free meal if the household income is less than 130 percent of the federal poverty level. The state reimburses EPISD for student meal costs and breakfast costs. EPISD is provided funds under Provision 2 so that all of the students are eligible for free meals. In addition, there are snack bars, a la carte meals and snack items sold.

Exhibit 10-7 shows the reimbursement rates for each eligible breakfast and lunch served. Severe need breakfast funding is available to schools that served 40 percent or more of the lunches free or at reduced prices two years ago and that have breakfast costs higher than the regular breakfast reimbursement rates.

Exhibit 10-7
Eagle Pass ISD Federal Reimbursement Rates
For Breakfast and Lunch 2000-2001

	Breakfast	Lunch
Full	\$0.21	\$0.21
Reduced	\$1.03	\$1.64
Free	\$1.33	\$2.04

Source: TEA.

FINDING

EPISD is not maximizing its participation in the National School Lunch and Breakfast Program. **Exhibit 10-8** shows the district's average daily participation (ADP) by percent along with its peer districts. Although EPISD's lunch ADP is similar to its peer districts, participation is expected to be higher when all students can eat for free under Provision 2. Since everyone is eligible to eat free, it is possible, although not probable, that the district could achieve a 100 percent participation rate.

Exhibit 10-8
EPISD and Peer Districts' Lunch
Percentage Of Average Daily Participation
1995-96-1999-00

District	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Eagle Pass	43%	75%	78%	71%	78%
Harlandale	65%	71%	74%	72%	68%
Weslaco	67%	67%	73%	76%	64%
San Felipe-Del Rio Consolidated	70%	72%	72%	76%	75%
Mission Consolidated	72%	70%	73%	72%	72%
San Benito Consolidated	77%	77%	78%	81%	78%
South San Antonio	81%	89%	91%	86%	90%

Source: TEA Child Nutrition Program District Profiles 1995-96 through 1999-2000.

Increasing student meal participation in the National School Breakfast and Lunch Programs is important to school districts because it helps ensure that more students receive adequate nutrition. A district also receives federal reimbursements for every student that participates.

In EPISD, there are barriers to student participation. These barriers include long lines, a lack of variety in menus, the quality of the food, vending machine competition and a lack of a reimbursable Type A meal in the a la carte line. A reimbursable Type A meal under the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) is defined as a school lunch that contains a specified quantity of each of the food components (meat/meat alternate, vegetable, fruit, grains/breads and milk). The quantities vary by age/grade group. A minimum of five food items must be offered prior to the point-of-service to meet the reimbursement requirements.

Wimberley ISD (WISD) introduced a la carte food combinations that qualified as a reimbursable meal during the 1998-99 school year. WISD was the first of its peers to qualify its a la carte lunch line for NSLP reimbursement. Examples of a la carte menu items qualifying as reimbursable meals are vegetables, fruits, Frito pies and milk.

Recommendation 57:

Increase federal reimbursements by requiring all a la carte snack bars in the schools to provide lunch options that qualify for federal reimbursement.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINES

1.	The Food Services coordinator and the cafeteria managers determine the secondary schools percentage of participation.	August 2001
2.	The coordinator of Food Services and the cafeteria managers develop the menu plans for the Type A reimbursable meal for the a la carte lines and train the cashiers.	August 2001
3.	The plan is presented to school principals and marketed to the students.	September 2001
4.	Pilot the plan in a school for implementation and expand to schools that have a high percentage of free and reduced meals.	December 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

If the district can increase participation rates, the productivity of staff will improve, however, no savings are estimated.

FINDING

According to participants in three focus groups, EPISD's lunch participation rates are low due to a limited menu variety and a lack of food choices. As with every other district in Texas, lunch participation is much higher in elementary schools, and tends to decrease steadily in secondary schools. Low participation in secondary schools is often lower because the students go off campus to eat or they are more interested in eating from a la carte lines or vending machines than from a full service line. EPISD has closed campuses, so secondary students cannot leave during lunch and, since all students can eat free, there should be an incentive to eat in the cafeteria. However the following problems were noted:

- The kinds of meals for which the district is reimbursed in all of the schools are the same and offer no choices or variety.
- Student focus groups totaling approximately 50 students at four schools (one high school, one middle school and two elementary schools) said there was a lack of genuine ethnic food choices available.
- Students said the food lacked taste, flavor and seasoning.
- There was no marketing of food items no brand named food items are offered.

- The secondary schools have an a la carte line but choices are limited.
- The food was not always as nutritious as it might be (for example, lunchmeat with 15 grams of fat, and Skittles served for breakfast).

In an attempt to offset a declining fund balance, the coordinator has limited menus and removed popular choices. In discussions with the coordinator of Food Services and the executive director of Operations, the district has contacted Region 20 for the services of a Registered Dietitian to nutritionally analyze the menus. The district hired a teacher who works in the district and has a nutrition background. The teacher assists the Food Service director in writing menus and reviews food presentation on an hourly basis. In December 2000, the coordinator of Food Services created a nutrition advisory council to assist in menu evaluation.

Recommendation 58:

Expand menus and recipes to include more food choices, brand named foods and meals that taste good.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINES

1.	The Food Services management team meets with representatives from food service vendors to evaluate new food items.	August 2001
2.	Cafeteria managers test food and menu items in selected schools and issue surveys for feedback.	September 2001
3.	The Food Services coordinator submits the menus to Region 20 for approval.	October 2001
4.	The Food Services management team evaluates the menus and results of student surveys.	Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

EPISD's breakfast participation is 33 percent. It is fifth lowest among its peer districts. Participation is negatively affected by the time at which meals are served, poor menu choices, bus schedules and a general lack of involvement and support by school principals. With all of EPISD students eligible for free meals, EPISD should have higher breakfast participation rates. Students and teachers said the following in focus groups:

- Students are rushed and do not have time to eat breakfast.
- Teachers complain about the lack of breakfast choices.
- Cafeteria managers said lack of principal support is the greatest obstacle to increasing student participation.

According to the TEA Child Nutrition Programs District Profile, EPISD received \$787,332 in reimbursements for regular breakfast.

Exhibit 10-9 shows the percentage of average daily participation (ADP) for breakfast in EPISD and peer districts.

Exhibit 10-9
EPISD and Peer District Breakfast Percent
Of Average Daily Participation
1995-96 through 1999-2000

District	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
South San Antonio	25%	63%	64%	60%	63%
Weslaco	30%	30%	32%	36%	59%
Harlandale	21%	44%	48%	50%	51%
San Benito Consolidated	38%	38%	42%	48%	49%
Eagle Pass	16%	27%	30%	30%	33%
Mission Consolidated	31%	29%	31%	28%	32%
San Felipe-Del Rio Consolidated	22%	23%	24%	24%	25%

Source: TEA Child Nutrition Program District Profiles 1995-96 through 1999-2000.

Grab and go breakfasts for elementary children that are served in the classroom are another way to increase breakfast participation. This practice is used in EPISD's Kennedy Elementary, and the participation has increased by 86 percent. The coordinator of Food Services suggested this idea to the Language Development Center, and it was rejected because the teachers did not want to take the time to serve the children in the classroom. At Memorial Junior High, students can purchase food from the snack bar.

Other districts have increased breakfast participation by implementing inventive programs. For example, in Austin ISD, one elementary school

extended the time for breakfast so that each child came through the line and was greeted by the principal or assistant principal. Participation increased by 30 percent, and each child was given the opportunity to get a good start for the day. In addition, one high school in Austin increased the breakfast participation by 40 percent by offering a sack breakfast cart. Fort Bend ISD is offering sack breakfasts to students to increase their school breakfast participation.

Recommendation 59:

Increase breakfast participation by implementing new programs and offering alternative serving methods.

The Food Services Department should publicize the breakfast program to students, faculty and parents. In the secondary schools, second breakfast programs, grab-and-go breakfasts and adding new menu items could increase breakfast participation. The times for serving breakfast should be evaluated to eliminate any barrier to participation.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINES

1.	The Food Services coordinator identifies the existing barriers to participation and presents a report to the executive director of Operations.	August 2001
2.	The Food Services coordinator develops a plan to increase participation and submits it to the executive director of Operations.	August 2001
3.	The Food Services coordinator and cafeteria managers develop and conduct a customer survey for students and faculty for ideas to improve food services.	August 2001
4.	The Food Services coordinator contacts product managers to request help in providing promotional giveaways.	September 2001
5.	The Food Services coordinator develops a plan to implement ideas and programs.	October 2001
6.	The Food Services coordinator and cafeteria managers work with principals to implement programs in each school and remove barriers affecting participation.	November 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

Based on 1999-2000 reimbursements for breakfast of \$787,332, a 10 percent increase would result in additional annual revenues of \$78,733. Considering an estimated 60 percent cost for food and other supplies

EPISD could realize additional revenues of \$31,493 annually by increasing breakfast participation by 10 percent.

Recommendation	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Increase breakfast participation by implementing new programs and offering alternative serving methods.	\$31,493	\$31,493	\$31,493	\$31,493	\$31,493

FINDING

EPISD vending machines are located in the cafeterias and they are operating during meal service, in direct violation of the Federal Competitive Food Policy. Competitive food sales are also allowed at most secondary schools to provide funding for various school activities. Vending machines are numerous and readily accessible at most secondary schools and provide high fat, high sodium, low-protein and high amounts of simple carbohydrate items that students eat in place of a nutritious lunch.

Vending machines are routinely located in or near all of the secondary school cafeterias that the review team visited. While a few are turned off during lunch periods, they are most often turned on for the duration of meal times and block lunch periods at the secondary schools.

The review team observed many students eating chips and drinking soft drinks from the vending machines instead of eating foods from the cafeteria. Some cafeteria managers report that sales are affected by as much as 60 percent a day. In the high school, a focus group was conducted right after the lunch period with 13 randomly chosen students on their eating habits and dietary preferences. As a group, the 13 students spent \$11 at the vending machines that day. Their reasons for choosing vending machines over reimbursable lunches included a variety of negative views of the cafeteria including long lines, a lack of variety and the small serving sizes offered by the cafeteria. The students demonstrated virtually no knowledge of nutrition during the focus group.

The Texas Education Agency's *Administrator's Reference Manual*, Section 16.1 states:

School districts must establish rules or regulations as necessary to control the sale of foods in competition with meals served under the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs. Such rules and regulations shall prohibit the sale of foods of minimal nutritional value in the food service area during the breakfast and lunch periods. The restricted foods

may be sold, at the discretion of local school officials, in other areas of the school campus throughout the school day.

The Competitive Food Regulation restricts certain categories of food items including:

- Soda water - any carbonated beverage. No products shall be excluded from this definition because it contains discrete nutrients added to the food such as vitamins, minerals and protein;
- Water Ices - any frozen sweetened water such as Popsicles and flavored ice with the exception of products that contain fruit or fruit juices;
- Jellies and Gums - a mixture of carbohydrates made predominately from natural or synthetic gums and other ingredients that form an insoluble mass for chewing; and
- Certain candies - any processed foods made predominately from sweeteners or artificial candy, jellies and gums, marshmallow candies, fondant, licorice, spun candy and coated popcorn.

Recommendation 60:

Enforce the regulations to control competitive food sales, including vending machines, as required by the Child Nutrition Programs and as outlined in the TEA Administrator's Reference Manual.

Although revenues from vending would be affected by enforcing TEA's guidelines, lunch participation (type A lunch and a la carte) would likely increase.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINES

1.	The Food Services coordinator circulates a copy of the policy to all principals.	August 2001
2.	The Food Services coordinator prepares a report for the deputy superintendent and superintendent showing the revenue impacts in vending machines.	August 2001
3.	The superintendent informs the board of the lost revenues and the nutritional implications for the children.	September 2001
4.	The Food Services coordinator conducts a pilot study in selected schools, in which vending machines are not turned on during meal times, and competitive food sales are limited to twice a month.	September 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 10

FOOD SERVICES

D. FACILITIES AND MAINTENANCE

FINDING

EPISD has an active recycling program for paper and cans. Section 361.425 of the Health and Safety Code requires school districts, among other governmental entities, to recycle aluminum, steel containers, paper, cardboard and other items and that at least 40 percent of their solid waste materials be recycled. In EPISD, school kitchens save all boxes and cans each day. The warehouse driver picks up the items and delivers them to the Eagle Pass Recycling Center. There is no financial benefit to the district, however, it supports the City of Eagle Pass, reducing the amount of waste in the kitchens and is an excellent example for students.

COMMENDATION

EPISD recycles all boxes, paper and cans used in the school kitchens.

FINDING

EPISD's lack of timely preventive maintenance is an ongoing problem, especially in the older cafeterias, which affects daily operations, productivity, employee morale and in some cases, meal participation.

Cafeteria managers generate maintenance work orders and give them to the Food Services coordinator who then places the service requests with the Maintenance Department. The Maintenance Department assigns employees to report to complete maintenance requests. The cafeteria managers are not notified when their maintenance requests are received or when the requested maintenance will be performed.

One assistant manager had a request book for submitted maintenance requests. Numerous requests were more than one year old and had not yet been completed. One-half of the older schools' managers said the kitchen floors at their school were in poor condition. The review team conducted an on-site safety and sanitation inspection that confirmed problems with leaks, broken equipment, inadequate or total lack of air conditioning, cracked tiles, chipped paint, walls with holes and other maintenance problems.

EPISD cafeteria managers reported in a focus group that maintenance requests were not completed in a timely fashion, affecting productivity

and in some cases the ability to serve some menu items. Cafeteria managers stated they had large equipment in need of repair or replacement.

Recommendation 61:

Develop a system to monitor turnaround time for maintenance requests.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINES

1.	The Food Services coordinator and the coordinator of Facilities and Maintenance meet to discuss turnaround time and delays.	August 2001
2.	The executive director of Operations, Food Services coordinator and cafeteria managers provide documentation of time taken for repairs and maintenance.	September 2001
3.	The executive director of Operations, Food Services coordinator and superintendent devise a proposed plan to address a specified time for maintenance requests to be completed after the request has been handed in.	September 2001
4.	The executive director of Operations monitors the implementation of the proposed plan.	October 2001 - Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The EPISD's serving kitchens do not comply with many of the Federal Food Code requirements. The three new facilities-Sam Houston, Rosita Valley and Pete Gallego-do not have adequate storage or necessary small equipment. Five school kitchens are not air-conditioned, and many have inadequate air conditioning. Kitchens that have air conditioning do not have air conditioning in the storage areas. The team found temperatures exceeding the Federal Food Code requirements for kitchens and cafeterias during its site visits in 15 schools. Fans are used in many kitchens to circulate air, which is in violation of the Federal Food Code.

The Rosita Valley Literacy Academy is serving food to students in an area that is not designed for serving. There is inadequate electrical wiring, which prevents equipment from properly functioning. This is causing the food to be served at an incorrect temperature. There are no sinks designated for hand washing, inadequate refrigeration and no dish

machine. The children must eat on disposable trays, which are an added expense that prevent the food from being served at a proper temperature.

Managers in the new schools are borrowing equipment or bringing it from home to operate. When the coordinator was asked about this problem, he said that he had no money to equip these kitchens. During focus groups with the review team, cafeteria managers presented lists of equipment that have been requested.

Recommendation 62:

Conduct a needs assessment of existing kitchens and prepare a plan to upgrade all kitchens to the Federal Food Code.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINES

1.	The Food Services coordinator and cafeteria managers develop a list of all equipment and facility maintenance needs	August 2001
2.	The Food Services coordinator presents the list to the executive director of Operations for review and approval.	August 2001
3.	The executive director of Operations submits the list to the director of Finance to determine funding requirements.	September 2001
4.	The needs assessment is presented to the superintendent for review.	October 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 11

SAFETY AND SECURITY

This chapter covers the safety and security functions of Eagle Pass Independent School District (EPISD) in the following areas:

- A. Discipline Management
- B. Security Operations

Keeping staff and children safe and secure in school is a primary objective of all school district operations.

BACKGROUND

In Texas and throughout the country, there has been a steady progression of changes to laws governing the safety and security of students in public schools. In 1994, the U.S. Congress re-authorized the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act, which requires school districts to institute a comprehensive safe and drug-free schools program.

In 1997, the U.S. Congress re-authorized the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act with notable changes. The revisions require school districts to provide appropriate education services to students with disabilities, and make it easier to remove dangerous or violent students with special needs from the classroom. The law also permits the removal of students with disabilities from regular education programs if they are involved with drugs or bring weapons to school.

In 1995, the Texas Legislature revised major safety and security related provisions in the Texas Education Code. Under the revised code, each school district must adopt a Student Code of Conduct, following the advice of a district level committee and the county juvenile board. Other provisions require districts to remove students who engage in serious misconduct and place them in alternative education programs (AEPs). In addition, law enforcement and local school district officials must share specific information about the arrest or criminal conduct of students.

The Texas Education Code requires the school district, the juvenile board and juvenile justice systems in counties with a population of 125,000 or more to establish a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program (JJAEP). The JJAEP operates under the jurisdiction of the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission. Its objective is to educate youths who are incarcerated or on probation. Also in 1997, the Texas Legislature revised the safe schools provisions of the Education Code. The revisions require the prominent posting of the Student Code of Conduct, clarify removal

procedures for offenses committed by students within 300 feet of school property and apply compulsory attendance laws to JJAEP.

In 1999, at Comptroller Carole Keeton Rylander's urging, the Legislature again revised the Education Code, requiring each school to include goals and methods for violence prevention and intervention in its annual campus improvement plans. The Board of Trustees for each school district is also required to publish an annual report to parents and the community that includes the number, rate and type of violent or criminal incidents that occurred on each district campus. The report must also include all information concerning school violence prevention and intervention policies, and procedures that the district is using to protect students.

Safety and security programs must include elements of prevention, intervention and enforcement, as well as cooperation with all local law enforcement agencies. Discipline management and alternative education programs are key tools in this process.

Chapter 11

SAFETY AND SECURITY

A. DISCIPLINE MANAGEMENT

Alternative education programs (AEP) became mandatory with the adoption of Chapter 37 of the Texas Education Code in 1995. Section 37.008 of the Texas Education Code provides detailed information on the provisions of such programs.

As specified in the code, each school district shall provide an alternative education program:

- In a setting other than a student's regular classroom;
- On or off the regular school campus;
- For students who are assigned to the alternative education program to be separated from students who are not assigned to the program;
- That focuses on English language arts, mathematics, science, history and self-discipline;
- For student's educational and behavioral needs; and
- That provides supervision and counseling.

On-campus AEPs may use certified personnel. However, off-campus AEPs may use instructional personnel as they choose, except for students receiving special education or bilingual education services.

An off-campus AEP is not required to comply with the state's school-day length provision, but funding is based on attendance in the same manner as other programs. Off-campus programs must be conducted in a completely separate facility from all campuses serving students in the regular education program.

An AEP may not be held in the same room as an in-school suspension program or any other room which contains students who are not assigned to the AEP. Districts may continue to provide transportation services and allow students to engage in activities such as eating in the same cafeteria as other students.

Districts develop local policies that explain how the district will "provide for a student's educational needs" and provide counseling services for students during placement in an AEP.

EPISD operates an off-campus discipline program, DeLuna Discipline Center, that is located in the former Eagle Pass High School Building. When the high school principals determine the misbehavior of a student

warrants placement at the discipline center, the coordinator of Pupil Services serves as the hearing officer and determines the number of days a student is assigned to the De Luna Discipline Center. Initial assignments range from a low of 10 days to a maximum of 60 days depending upon the severity of the infraction and when the infraction occurs during a grading period. The majority of students are assigned 30 days. In the case of special education students, an Admission, Review and Dismissal (ARD) committee convenes to determine the most appropriate educational setting.

The coordinator of Pupil Services manages the De Luna Discipline Center alternative education program. Two teachers, two aides and a secretary staff the program. The counselor from the Frank Chisum Regional Technical Center serves the students at the De Luna Discipline Center one day each week. Counselors from the students' home schools also assist with counseling on a called basis.

Students work independently on course materials through a self-paced instructional program. The individualized program parallels as close to their home school program as possible. The self-paced computer assisted instruction program, Nova Net, and programmed learning modules are divided into ninety-minute blocks of independent work. In addition, students participate in group discussion sessions to improve their social skills and self-discipline.

Students must satisfactorily complete all assigned work, maintain appropriate behavior and have satisfactory daily attendance to return to the home campus. All students assigned to the center must demonstrate their ability to conform to school rules. Failure to do so will result in a recommendation for expulsion from EPISD. Four students were expelled from the DeLuna Center in 1999-2000.

EPISD does not provide student transportation to the alternative center.

Enrollment by grade level for 1996-97 through 1999-2000 at De Luna Discipline Center is presented in **Exhibit 11-1**.

Exhibit 11-1
Enrollment in De Luna Discipline Center
1996-97 through 1999- 2000

Grade Level	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Seventh-Eighth	36	51	52	49
Ninth	14	26	35	39
Tenth	17	22	11	7

Eleventh	3	8	4	4
Twelfth	5	4	5	6
Total Students	75	111	107	105

Source: Coordinator - EPISD Pupil Services.

When the student completes the assigned term, the coordinator of Pupil Services arranges for a student, parent, principal, counselor and coordinator conference at the home campus. Additionally, the coordinator of Pupil Services does periodic telephone checks with the student's counselor.

The EPISD discipline alternative program cost per pupil is lower than two of its peer districts and higher than two of its peer districts (**Exhibit 11-2**). The enrollment data represents the number of students enrolled on October 29, 1999. Mobility enrollment represents the number of students in membership at the school for less than 83 percent of the school year. AEP placements generally range from 10 days to one semester in length.

Exhibit 11-2
EPISD and Per District AEP
Enrollment and Operating Costs
1999-2000

District	AEP Enrollment	Mobility Enrollment	Cost of AEP 1999-2000	Cost per Student
Mission ISD Community AEP	59	109	\$200,000	\$3,390
South San Antonio ISD Alternative	37	145	\$558,608	\$15,098
Eagle Pass ISD DeLuna Center	14	104	\$271,013	\$19,358
Harlandale ISD Alternative Center	59	216	\$1,594,175	\$27,020
San Benito CISD Positive Redirection	19	55	\$778,632	\$40,981

Source: TEA, AEIS 1999-2000.

The Texas Education Code requires school districts to adopt a Student Code of Conduct establishing standards for student behavior. Depending on the level of offense and the frequency of occurrence, various discipline management techniques are suggested for teachers, campus administrators, district police departments and district administrators. For example, minor offenses may require student-teacher conferences or detention, while major offenses may require expulsion or placement in an AEP.

EPISD's discipline management program is coordinated through the Pupil Services department with significant involvement by campus administrators and the district's Police Department. The coordinator of Pupil Services is responsible for conducting student hearings for recommended placements at the discipline center, determining the length of the assignment at the discipline center, and monitoring and tracking student disciplinary actions.

The Pupil Services department publishes and distributes EPISD's Student Code of Conduct to principals, teachers, students and parents at the beginning of each school year to ensure familiarity with the district's disciplinary process and consequences for misbehavior. Each year, every EPISD campus also prepares and distributes a parent-student handbook that includes many of the provisions of the code of conduct, as well as discipline policies that pertain exclusively to that campus. Both the English and Spanish versions of the Student Code of Conduct are included in one booklet. The principals, assistant principals and the district's Police Department are responsible for enforcing the district's discipline management policies and procedures. The district's Police Department provides police officers and security guards for all secondary campuses. Police officers patrol the elementary campuses.

EPISD prints the Code of Student Conduct in English and Spanish and includes both versions in one document. Specific responsibilities found in the handbook are for students, parents, teachers and administrators, EPISD student dress code, uniform policy, student code of conduct disciplinary techniques, levels of misconduct with possible discipline options and explanations of teacher removals, emergency removals, discipline guidelines for students with disabilities and due process procedures.

FINDING

EPISD campuses do not handle discipline consistently.

General guidelines for imposing discipline are given. Factors to be considered include: seriousness of the offense, student's age, frequency of

misconduct, student's attitude and potential effect of the misconduct on the school environment.

The EPISD's Code of Conduct outlines five levels of infractions. The five levels are: Level I - Teacher Directed; Level II - Administrator Intervention; Level III - Suspension or Removal to AEP; Level IV - Required Removal to Alternative Education Program; and Level V - Expulsion. Each of the five levels lists a variety of discipline options or responses and procedures to follow when applying the options.

Exhibit 11-3 provides examples of the levels of offenses and possible consequences outlined in the Student Code of Conduct.

**Exhibit 11-3
Levels of Offenses and
Consequences from Student Code of Conduct**

Level	Examples of Offenses
Level I Teacher Directed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cheating and/or copying the work of other students. • Dress code violations. • Eating in class. • Failure to bring required classroom materials and/or assigned work to all classes. • Failure to deliver and/or return written communications between home and school. • Making excessive noise. • Refusal to participate in classroom. • Un-excused tardiness to class. • Violation of rules and/or procedures established by teacher(s). • Any other act which impedes the orderly classroom procedures or interrupts the orderly operation of the class.
Level II Administrator Intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being defiant. • Defacing or destroying school property if such conduct would not otherwise meet the elements of criminal mischief or graffiti. • Disruptive behavior on the school bus. • Participating in a food fight. • Loitering in unauthorized areas. • Possession of beepers, or other cellular phones or other electronic devices. • Posting unauthorized material on school grounds. • Profanity or offensive language.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any repeated chronic behavior described in Level 1 with proper documentation provided to administration. • Skipping class. • Truancy. • Use of any tobacco products. • Interfering with school authorities and programs through boycotts, sit-ins or trespassing.
<p>Level III Suspension or optional removal to AEP</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aggressive, disruptive action that substantially disrupts or materially interferes with school activities. • Any ethnic or racial slurs which seriously disrupt the educational process. • Continuous disruptive behavior on the school bus. • Defiance of the authority of school personnel. • Engaging in acts of intimidation, which interfere with another student's desire or willingness to participate in the educational process. • Failure to adhere to terms of behavior contracts. • Failure to comply with reasonable request of school personnel. • Fighting or inciting others to fight. • Gambling or Hazing. • Indecency/unsolicited sexual proposal/sexual harassment. • Interfering with school authorities. • Misdemeanor criminal mischief or graffiti. • Misdemeanor stealing/theft of property in an amount under \$750. • Repeated disciplinary infractions of Level I and/or Level II offenses. • Possession of a knife or fireworks. • Participation in illegal organization such as a fraternity, or a gang. • Any other acts of serious misconduct that disrupt the school environment, • including but not limited to student walkouts. • Reasonable belief that the student has engaged in conduct defined as a felony offense other than those defined in Title 5, Penal Code, and the continued presence of the student in the regular classroom threatens the safety of other students or teachers or will be detrimental to the educational process.
<p>Level IV Required</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any drug-related offense, including possession of drug paraphernalia.

removal to AEP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burglary of an EPISD facility or vehicle. • Committing a serious act or offense while under the influence of alcohol. • Engaging in an offense punishable as a felony for which expulsion is not required. • Engaging in assault which is defined as intentionally, knowingly or recklessly causing bodily injury to another. • Felony stealing. • Possessing, using or being under the influence of alcohol. • Public/Indecent exposure. • Retaliation against any school employee by engaging in conduct including but not limited to threatening to harm another by an unlawful act in retaliation for the person's performance of official duties. • Selling, giving, or being under the influence of alcohol, marijuana, a controlled • drug, other controlled substance found in Chapter 481, Health & Safety Code or dangerous drug found in Chapter 483, Health & Safety Code. • Conduct occurring off school campus while the student is not in attendance at a school sponsored or school related activity if the student receives deferred adjudication for conduct defined as a felony in Title 5, Penal Code, or a court or jury finds that the student has engaged in delinquent conduct or the superintendent/designee reasonably believes that the student has engaged in conduct defined as a felony offense in Title 5, Penal Code.
Level V Expulsion for Serious Offenses	<p>Optional Expulsion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continues to engage in serious or persistent misbehavior that violates the Student Code of Conduct while placed in an AEP. • Selling, giving or delivering to another person or possessing, using or being under the influence of any amount of marihuana or a controlled substance. • Engaging in criminal mischief under Section 28.03, Penal Code, if the conduct is punishable as a felony. <p>Engages in conduct that contains the elements of assault.</p> <p>Required Expulsion:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaging in conduct that is grounds for required expulsion against any employee or volunteer in retaliation for or as a result of the person's employment or association with a school district, without regards to whether the conduct occurs on or off school property or while attending a school related or school-sponsored activity on or off of school property. • Uses, exhibits, or possesses a firearm defined as any device designed, made or adapted to expel a projectile through a barrel by using the energy generated by an explosion or burning substance, Section 46.01(3) Penal Code. • Uses, exhibits or possesses an illegal knife. • Uses, exhibits, or possesses a club to include an instrument that is specially designed to inflict serious bodily injury or death by striking a person, included but not limited to black jack, nightstick, mace or tomahawk, Section 46.01 (1) Penal Code. • Uses, exhibits or possesses a weapon listed as prohibited weapon under Section 46.05, Penal Code. Including an illegal knife, firearm, sword, spear, tomahawk, club, throwing instrument designed to cut or stab, dagger, knuckles, etc.
Level I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detention-(teacher led) before school or after school • Teacher-student conference • Parent contact • Counselor-student conference • Verbal corrections in appropriate manner • Other appropriate in-class disciplinary actions as outlined by campus administrators.
Level II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behavioral contracts. • Corporal Punishment. • Denial of school transportation privileges. • Detention (Campus). • Parental contact by phone and written notification to parent/guardian with 24 hours. • Referral to law enforcement authorities. • Required administrator-parent-student conference. • Restitution. • Suspension. • Work detail/clean-up. • Any other appropriate action determined by

	administration.
Level III	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referral to principal/designee in writing. • Required administrator/student/parental conference. • Referral of the student to an Alternative Education Program (AEP). • Referral to Law Enforcement. • Removal of transportation services. • Restitution/Restoration. • Suspension for up to three school days per occurrence. • Any other appropriate disciplinary actions determined by the administration.
Level IV	Required Removal to Alternative Education Program (AEP).
Level V	Optional Expulsion for first listed offenses in Level, required expulsion for offenses in Level V that violate sections of the Penal Code.

Source: 2000-01 Student Code of Conduct.

General guidelines in the EPISD Code of Conduct list steps to be followed when using corporal punishment. In school suspension is neither described nor listed among the possible discipline techniques, but is being used at all secondary schools.

Wide variance occurred among the schools in the discipline used for misconduct labeled disruptive behavior and violation of the code of conduct (**Exhibit 11-4**).

Exhibit 11-4
EPISD Secondary School Disciplinary Actions for
Disruptive Behavior and Violations of the Code of Conduct
1999-2000

	Eagle Pass Junior High	Memorial Junior High	Eagle Pass High School	EPHS- CC Winn	FCRTC Alternative High School
Enrollment	818	1,010	1,807	1,195	158
In-School Suspension	34	5	51	5	0
Out of School	336	17	148	37	1

Suspension					
AEP Placement	19	10	16	4	1
Expulsion	1	0	0	0	0

Source: TEA, AEIS 1999-2000 and EPISD Academic Excellence Indicator System Report, 1999-2000.

EPISD schools are not following the Code of Student Conduct guidelines for assessing penalties. EPISD schools assessed in-school suspension and out-of school suspension for some offenses listed as Level IV and Level V offenses (**Exhibit 11-5**).

The Code of Student Conduct lists any drug-related offense, including possession of drug paraphernalia, selling, giving, delivering, possession, using or being under the influence of marijuana, a controlled drug or other controlled substance and retaliation against any school employee by engaging in conduct including but not limited to threatening to harm another by an unlawful act in retaliation for the person's performance of their official duties as Level IV acts of misconduct. Level IV and Level V acts of misconduct require, at minimum, removal to an Alternative Education Program (AEP).

Exhibit 11-5
EPISD Student Disciplinary Action Summary
1999-2000

Infraction and Level	Discipline Action Taken			
	In-School Suspension	Out of School Suspension	AEP Placement	Expulsion
Disruptive Behavior Level I-V	56	287	27	0
Alcohol, marijuana and controlled substances Level IV-V	2	40	51	2
Glue/Aerosol Paint Abuse Level V	1	0	0	0
Retaliation vs. school employee Level IV	1	2	5	0

Assault vs. employee/volunteer Level V	0	1	1	2
Possession illegal knife or prohibited weapon Level 5	0	6	0	0
Infraction and Level	In-School Suspension	Out of School Suspension	AEP Placement	Expulsion
Code of Conduct Violation Level II-V	43	268	23	1
Criminal mischief Level III-IV	1	3		0
Terrorist Threat Level	0	2	1	0
School related gang violence Level III	0	6	2	0
Total	104	615	111	5

Source: EPISD office of Research, Evaluation/PEIMS, Evaluating Performance AEIS Report and EPISD Code of Student of Conduct.

Recommendation 63:

Update the Code of Student Conduct to standardize discipline policies and the consequences for violations.

The student code of conduct should be re-written to focus on a standard list of offenses and consequences. In addition, administrators should receive training in applying the consequences consistently.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The coordinator of Pupil Services chairs a committee including parents, teachers, students, principals, assistant principals and the EPISD police chief to review the code of student conduct for any omissions and to create a standardized list of violations and disciplinary consequences.	August 2001
2.	The coordinator of Pupil Services forwards the proposal to the	August 2001

	superintendent, principals, assistant principals and police chief for review.	
3.	The superintendent, principals, assistant principals and police chief review the proposal and provide suggestions for improvement.	August 2001
4.	The coordinator of Pupil Services and selected members of the committee revise the standardized list based on the suggestions and forward the final version to the superintendent and board for approval.	August 2001
5.	The board reviews and approves the revised code of conduct, making any necessary changes.	September 2001
6.	The coordinator of Pupil Services reviews the Code of Student Conduct with school administrators.	September 2001
7.	The coordinator of Pupil Services monitors the application of the Code of Student Conduct prescribed consequences.	September 2001 and Ongoing

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

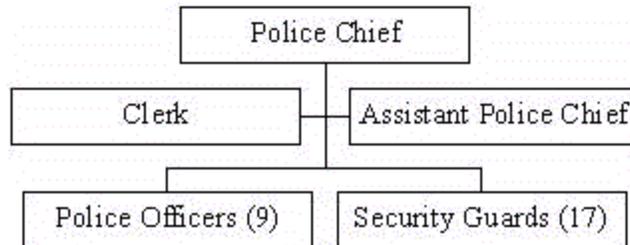
Chapter 11

SAFETY AND SECURITY

B. SECURITY OPERATIONS

EPISD's school-based security program operates as a school-based law enforcement agency with 11 full-time police officers, including a chief of police, an administrative clerk and 17 security guards, which include three substitutes. The police chief, a Texas Department of Public Safety Officer for 15 years, has been with the EPISD since May 2000. **Exhibit 11-6** shows the organization structure summary of EPISD's Police Department

Exhibit 11-6
Organization of EPISD Police Department
2000-01



Source: EPISD police chief.

Each police officer is a certified Texas Peace Officer licensed by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Education. **Exhibit 11-7** describes the services EPISD's Police Department provides.

Exhibit 11-7
Services Provided By
EPISD Police Department

Service	Description
Uniformed Police and Security Guard Presence	Includes uniformed police and security guards stationed at the high school, middle schools and one elementary school.
Mobile Police Patrol	The department patrols all EPISD campuses, except Bolivar, with marked police cars, motorcycles, bicycles and mounted police.
Law Enforcement	Provides primary law enforcement at EPISD schools, and responds to all calls for service involving disruptive

	students, criminal conduct and other offenses on EPISD property.
Rules and Policy Enforcement	Assists campus administrators in the enforcement of school rules, discipline policies and the Student Code of Conduct.
Emergency Management	The office of the chief of police provides assistance and direction to campus administrators during a crisis or emergency. Develops crisis management plans and emergency procedures.
Traffic Safety Program	Provides school crossing guards for elementary schools and one middle school.
Athletic Event Security	Provides law enforcement and security services at EPISD athletic events, including monitoring metal detectors at high school basketball games.
Money Courier Service	Provides courier and escort services for large deposits, including varsity football game revenues, tax office collections and daily food service deposits.
Convoys and Escorts	Provides motorized escorts for all out of town varsity football games and school parades.
Investigative Services	Investigates crimes occurring on EPISD properties, campuses or school-sponsored events. One officer is a full-time investigator.
Corps of Cadets Program	Provides one full-time police officer to serve as an instructor at middle schools for the Corps of Cadets program. This extracurricular program is designed to develop young men and women into leaders, emphasizing pride, respect, self-worth and confidence.

Source: EPISD Police Department.

Exhibit 11-8 presents the assignment of EPISD Police Department personnel by location.

**Exhibit 11-8
EPISD Police Department
Assignment By Location
2000-01**

Campus/ Department	Police Officers	Security guards	Total
Police chief - entire district	1	0	1

Eagle Pass High School	4	4 (two subs)	8
EPHS - CC Winn Campus	1	4	5
Eagle Pass Junior High School	1	3 (one sub)	4
Memorial Junior High School	2	3	5
All Elementary Schools	2	0	2
Transportation	0	2	2
De Luna Education Center	0	1	1
Total	11	17	28

Source: EPISD Police Department.

The key full-time providers of security services are police and security guards. Unlicensed security guards are responsible for monitoring hallways, entrances and exits at schools. Many security guards are positioned throughout Eagle Pass High School and the EPHS - CC Winn Campus to make sure students move between classes in an orderly manner, and to make sure there are no unauthorized entries or exits. Security guards check student hall passes, escort disruptive students to the assistant principal, and perform other duties.

The number of citations issued by EPISD police increased by 145.4 percent from 1998-99 to 1999-2000, as shown in **Exhibit 11-9**.

Exhibit 11-9
EPISD Police Department
Citation Statistics by Offense
1997-98 through 1999-2000

Offense	1998-99	1999-2000	Percent Increase (Decrease)
Disorderly conduct affray	54	135	150.0%
Assault by contact	17	44	158.8%
Offensive (vulgar) language	9	18	100.0%
Profane language	8	14	75.0%
Possession of tobacco products	6	8	33.3%
Obscene display	3	1	(66.7%)

Driving offenses	3	1	(66.7%)
Public intoxication	2	15	650.0%
Disruption of class	2	6	200.0%
Theft under \$50	2	2	0.0%
Criminal mischief	1	1	0.0%
Possession of controlled substance	1	0	(100.0%)
Assault by threats	0	11	100.0%
Trespassing on school grounds	0	4	100.0%
Verbal confrontation	0	1	100.0%
Terrorist threats	0	1	100.0%
Interfering with duties of police officer	0	1	100.0%
Harassment	0	1	100.0%
Solicitation of gangs	0	1	100.0%
Totals	108	265	145.4%

Source: EPISD Police Department. 1998-99 information is for six months (February through August).

The Police Department's budget has increased nine percent since 1997-98 (**Exhibit 11-10**).

Exhibit 11-10
Cost of Operating EPISD PD
1997-98 through 2000-01

Budget Category	Actual 1997-98	Actual 1998-99	Budget 1999-2000	Budget 2000-01	Percent Change
Salaries and benefits	\$538,874	\$705,088	\$839,683	\$609,330	13%
Contracted services	\$11,984	\$16,355	\$13,673	\$3,900	(67%)
Supplies and materials	\$13,192	\$13,490	\$13,882	\$3,000	(77%)
Travel and other	\$775	\$0	\$1,200	\$3,000	287%
Capital outlay	\$4,960	\$68,859	\$8,000	\$2,245	(55%)
Totals	\$569,785	\$803,792	\$876,438	\$621,475	9%

Source: AEIS Data, Texas Education Agency and EPISD Financial Services Records.

FINDING EPISD is in the process of reviewing its Drug and Violence Prevention Plan to ensure all programs and components are implemented and effective. A Drug Education Prevention Program Committee has been established, in addition to the Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Advisory Council, to provide input specifically from campus, community, central administration and support personnel.

Based on preliminary Incidence Report data and a strong and clear call from the community at large, the Superintendent of Schools appointed additional members to the committee to focus their immediate efforts at the secondary level.

The purpose of the Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Program is to:

- support programs that prevent violence in and around schools;
- prevent the illegal use of alcohol, tobacco and drugs;
- involve parents; and
- coordinate with related federal, state, and community efforts and resources to promote safe and drug-free schools and communities.

COMMENDATION

EPISD has taken a proactive stance to combat drug use and violence in schools and the community.

FINDING

EPISD is not using electronic security equipment that it previously purchased at the high school campuses. According to the Chief of Police and other district administrators, the equipment is being stored at the police department.

Parent focus groups at EPHS for the 9th and 10th grade indicated a concern with security. During the TSPR site visit, EPHS had an uninvited visitor incident that resulted in sexual harassment of a special education student. EPISD has also experienced an increase in offenses over the past two years.

Recommendation 64:

Use previously purchased electronic security equipment at EPISD high school campuses.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The Chief of Police informs high school campus administrators that EPISD will deploy and use electronic security equipment for security purposes.	August 2001
2.	The Chief of Police instructs high school campus administrators in the use of the electronic security equipment.	August 2001
3.	EPISD high school campuses begin using the electronic security equipment on a regular basis with the help of the police department.	September 2001

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Appendix A

PUBLIC FORUM COMMENTS

The following are comments collected from the public forums held in the Eagle Pass Independent School District on November 8 and 9, 2000 at Memorial Junior High School and Eagle Pass Junior High School, respectively.

The comments below illustrate community perceptions of Eagle Pass ISD and do not reflect the findings and opinions of the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts or the review team.

- We have been working very diligently in the recent past. Diligently enough to finally reach Recognized status for the first time. Things have been progressive, our students are expected to learn more and in earlier grades. My concern is based on the fact that the district organization and management is currently focused on politics and not the students.
- We have had problems with educational programs and policies. There are also problems with staff development policies.
- Some positions are being created without school board approval.
- We need better high school counselors who can counsel students and help them out with graduation plans.
- I am an EPISD employee who is very disappointed in the state of affairs of our district.
- Need secondary programs to help our slow readers - keep kids from dropping out!
- We need to focus on advanced programs not be satisfied with TAAS - need to focus on improving our SAT and ACT scores.
- We need so much direction in curriculum. No instructional leadership is coming from central office - it's all strictly management.
- Food is terrible - need to improve its "palatability" - Kids throw away entire tray without tasting anything!
- The concern I have is that at Kennedy School we have grades from Pre K to 2nd grade. This is a new school and is a lot better than I expected. One of the concerns that I have is that Pre K and K don't go to computer classes. On the other hand 1st and 2nd go to computers every day. Why can't they (1st & 2nd) go 3 times a week and Pre K & K 2 times a week? Also how are you all going to be able to control 2 schools at the old junior high? The cafeteria is very small for one school; how are you all going to serve 2 schools? The parking lot is big, but completely out of control.

- Need more that will empower the children - especially SENIORS! My son was discouraged to participate in dual credit program - empowerment is the key for the counselor's mission!
- Equal facility opportunity (athletics) for girls - my daughter has been coming into athletics at 6 a.m. to accommodate the boys for the afternoon use of the gym.
- There is a boys baseball team at junior high level, why haven't they allowed a girls softball competitive team to participate - there is a large group of young ladies waiting for this opportunity! What happened to Title 9?
- Busing for after school athletics students is great, my daughter loves it!
- Safety and Security - speaking of the E.J. Crew - I feel that the security staff seems to be available at all the functions. I feel safe dropping off my daughter at evening functions and I know they know her by her first name. I feel secure that if something should occur, they can do the job effectively and notify parents and authorities immediately.
- No instructional emphasis or leadership. Too much TAAS!
- We bus "2" miles instead of state mandated "1"!
- We are understaffed at the central office - should be more emphasis on curriculum. Instruction is on a back burner since new administration took over.
- Equipment purchased at alarming rates but instructional needs are not being addressed.
- Metal detector was purchased but has never been used!
- My "A" student son is below average on a national level (SAT scores).
- Advanced level courses take back seat to electives and extra-curricular activities.
- Educational Services is fine, but I think that we need more certified teachers.
- Food Services - I know that school gives our children food that is healthy for them but I suggest that once before school starts, cafeteria personnel should be given a small training or seminar on how to prepare or serve food to our children. I know and understand that there are a lot of kids, but I can let you know for a fact that if you prepare your food with interest and care and serve it properly our children would eat it and less food would be thrown away. Maybe offer different foods or meals instead of having a snack bar.
- Safety and Security - We do have security at our schools, but I think that security guards should also be given proper training or proper handling of the students. I know and understand that when this happens, if a child is fighting it is very hard to stop it, but training can work miracles.

- We need to realize that teaching to the TAAS is not enough - our children can't cut it in college - TAAS measures basic skills.
- Curriculum - pace too fast - timeliness does not allow individualization.
- Six weeks tests are very poorly made - does not reflect what is taught half of the time - old tests used over and over.
- Gifted and talented - student's needs are not addressed - we're losing them because they are bored - no technology involved - more work - not hands-on or stimulating.
- Spec Ed - not properly served - Special Ed aides are used for substitute teachers - Spec Ed teachers are teachers but are not provided all materials or they are not looking!
- Health Insurance - need relief - our insurance is eating our budget up! Benefits were reduced, but costs went up.
- P.T.O's at schools should be positive and for the children's needs. Should not be a power trip.
- Parents need notification if an uncertified teacher is teaching their children.
- Hiring Practices - here based on credentials not favors - Site-based decision-making committees are often carefully picked and they know beforehand who's getting hired.
- Salaries need to be raised to keep experienced teachers - new teachers are practically making the same amount as experienced teachers.
- Elementary School Fund - where and how is it used?
- Budgeting - why do some schools have so much more than others - etc. - materials, supplies, technology?
- Why do some schools let their teachers' order up-to-date materials while others get nothing?
- It is great to have a new board and a new superintendent.
- The problem/concerns in the schools were here way before new administration.
- Food Service - More nutritious, low fat, balanced diet.
- Many children have food allergies and the menu is subject to change without notice - this leaves many children without eating.
- Choice of menu should be allowed.
- Menu should be geared towards food choices that children like.
- Safety belts are needed on buses.
- Training for bus drivers
- More restrooms and water fountains
- Class ratio - classes are too large with no relief in sight.
- Custodians should be required to mop the rooms.
- Rooms need to be dusted.
- Duct systems are very dirty - this is hurting our children and teachers.
- Rooms leak - mold is bad!

- What happened to zero tolerance?
- Principals need to be firm - follow policy!
- Children need to feel safe in our schools.
- Internet - Let's get wired!
- Even if we were wired our computers could not keep up - too old, no memory, old systems
- Need TV's, VCR's for classrooms - used as teachers aid.
- The use of a telephone should be available.
- Who decides who gets to be on the textbook committees?
- Some textbooks that are adopted might not have been the best choices because it is difficult to decide when you have gone to see how the books really work.

Appendix B

TEACHER SURVEY

- A. Demographic Data/Survey Questions
- B. Teacher Comments

Demographic Data

TOTAL RESPONSES AS OF JANUARY 22, 2001							340	
1.	Gender (Optional)	Male	Female	No Response				
		35%	58%	7%				
2.	Ethnicity (Optional)	Anglo	African American	Hispanic	Asian	Other	No Response	
		10%	0%	78%	1%	2%	9%	
3.	How long have you been employed by Eagle Pass ISD?		1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	20+ years	No Response
			28%	22%	12%	9%	28%	1%
4.	What grade(s) do you teach this year (circle all that apply)?							
	Pre-Kindergarten	Kindergarten	First	Second	Third			
	2%	4%	5%	7%	8%			
	Fourth	Fifth	Sixth	Seventh	Eighth			
	8%	8%	8%	9%	8%			
	Ninth	Tenth	Eleventh	Twelfth				
	9%	8%	8%	8%				

A. District Organization & Management

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
1. The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.	3%	24%	35%	24%	14%	0%

2.	School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.	3%	31%	28%	25%	13%	0%
3.	School board members work well with the superintendent.	7%	24%	48%	16%	4%	1%
4.	The school board has a good image in the community.	3%	22%	19%	39%	16%	1%
5.	The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	4%	21%	30%	23%	22%	0%
6.	The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	4%	21%	38%	19%	16%	2%
7.	Central administration is efficient.	3%	22%	20%	34%	21%	1%
8.	Central administration supports the educational process.	4%	36%	17%	26%	15%	2%
9.	The morale of central administration staff is good.	2%	10%	33%	29%	26%	0%

B. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

Survey Questions	Strongly	Agree	No	Disagree	Strongly	No
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		Agree		Opinion		Disagree	Response
10.	Education is the main priority in our school district.	16%	41%	4%	27%	11%	1%
11.	Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.	7%	40%	8%	28%	17%	0%
12.	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	5%	32%	27%	24%	11%	1%
13.	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	5%	37%	28%	23%	7%	0%
14.	The district provides curriculum guides for all grades and subjects.	14%	67%	6%	9%	3%	1%
15.	The curriculum guides are appropriately aligned and coordinated.	8%	41%	9%	32%	10%	0%
16.	The district's curriculum guides clearly outline what to teach and how to teach it.	7%	39%	9%	33%	12%	0%
17.	The district has						

	effective educational programs for the following:						
	a) Reading	8%	60%	9%	18%	4%	1%
	b) Writing	7%	58%	9%	23%	2%	1%
	c) Mathematics	9%	67%	8%	14%	2%	0%
	d) Science	6%	53%	16%	19%	3%	3%
	e) English or Language Arts	7%	62%	11%	17%	2%	1%
	f) Computer Instruction	7%	56%	15%	17%	5%	0%
	g) Social Studies (history or geography)	5%	52%	16%	21%	4%	2%
	h) Fine Arts	4%	40%	20%	25%	10%	1%
	i) Physical Education	8%	58%	18%	11%	5%	0%
	j) Business Education	4%	41%	38%	14%	3%	0%
	k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	5%	40%	37%	12%	4%	2%
	l) Foreign Language	5%	41%	36%	13%	4%	1%
18.	The district has effective special programs for the following:						
	a) Library Service	7%	49%	16%	21%	6%	1%
	b) Honors/Gifted and Talented	6%	56%	12%	20%	6%	0%

	Education						
	c) Special Education	9%	57%	6%	19%	7%	2%
	d) Head Start and Even Start programs	7%	52%	35%	3%	1%	2%
	e) Dyslexia program	5%	45%	26%	18%	6%	0%
	f) Student mentoring program	3%	34%	33%	22%	7%	1%
	g) Advanced placement program	6%	48%	29%	12%	3%	1%
	h) Literacy program	4%	44%	33%	15%	3%	2%
	i) Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	8%	46%	22%	18%	6%	0%
	j) Summer school programs	11%	60%	11%	10%	7%	1%
	k) Alternative education programs	14%	55%	16%	11%	4%	0%
	l) "English as a second language" program	6%	50%	14%	21%	8%	1%
	m) Career counseling program	4%	30%	34%	22%	9%	1%
	n) College counseling program	3%	27%	37%	23%	9%	1%
	o) Counseling the parents of students	3%	31%	29%	24%	11%	2%

	p) Drop out prevention program	4%	34%	35%	19%	6%	2%
19.	Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	12%	46%	12%	22%	6%	2%
20.	Teacher turnover is low.	2%	23%	31%	26%	14%	4%
21.	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	1%	27%	19%	39%	13%	1%
22.	Teacher openings are filled quickly.	2%	27%	21%	37%	12%	1%
23.	Teachers are rewarded for superior performance.	1%	5%	11%	40%	41%	2%
24.	Teachers are counseled about less than satisfactory performance.	2%	43%	23%	22%	9%	1%
25.	Teachers are knowledgeable in the subject areas they teach.	11%	59%	16%	11%	3%	0%
26.	All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs	4%	32%	12%	29%	23%	0%

	and art classes.						
27.	The student-to-teacher ratio is reasonable.	4%	39%	6%	31%	20%	0%
28.	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	13%	64%	9%	10%	3%	1%

C. Personnel

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
29.	District salaries are competitive with similar positions in the job market.	3%	30%	7%	33%	26%	1%
30.	The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.	2%	41%	19%	26%	11%	1%
31.	Temporary workers are rarely used.	2%	16%	24%	42%	15%	1%
32.	The district successfully projects future staffing needs.	1%	21%	23%	36%	18%	1%
33.	The district has an effective employee recruitment program.	1%	22%	34%	27%	15%	1%
34.	The district operates an effective staff development	3%	38%	17%	27%	15%	0%

	program.						
35.	District employees receive annual personnel evaluations.	17%	76%	5%	1%	1%	0%
36.	The district rewards competence and experience and spells out qualifications such as seniority and skill levels needed for promotion.	2%	16%	17%	34%	30%	1%
37.	Employees who perform below the standard of expectation are counseled appropriately and timely.	3%	33%	28%	25%	10%	1%
38.	The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	1%	48%	30%	14%	6%	1%
39.	The district's health insurance package meets my needs.	2%	20%	5%	21%	51%	1%

D. Community Involvement

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
40. The district regularly	6%	53%	17%	19%	4%	1%

	communicates with parents.						
41.	The local television and radio stations regularly report school news and menus.	5%	51%	12%	21%	10%	1%
42.	Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.	2%	29%	11%	38%	19%	1%
43.	District facilities are open for community use.	4%	46%	24%	18%	8%	0%

E. Facilities Use and Management

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
44.	The district plans facilities far enough in the future to support enrollment growth.	2%	27%	12%	33%	26%	0%
45.	Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff and the board provide input into facility planning.	2%	24%	22%	32%	19%	1%
46.	The architect and	1%	14%	49%	19%	17%	0%

	construction managers are selected objectively and impersonally.						
47.	The quality of new construction is excellent.	1%	24%	23%	27%	24%	1%
48.	Schools are clean.	7%	61%	6%	18%	8%	0%
49.	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	6%	51%	9%	26%	8%	0%
50.	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	4%	34%	12%	37%	12%	1%
51.	Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	7%	46%	21%	19%	6%	1%

F. Financial Management

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
52.	Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers.	2%	32%	23%	26%	16%	1%
53.	Campus administrators are well	3%	30%	34%	21%	11%	1%

	trained in fiscal management techniques.						
54.	Financial resources are allocated fairly and equitably at my school.	3%	32%	20%	26%	18%	1%

G. Purchasing and Warehousing

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
55.	Purchasing gets me what I need when I need it.	2%	24%	13%	41%	18%	2%
56.	Purchasing acquires the highest quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.	2%	26%	34%	25%	12%	1%
57.	Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for the requestor.	1%	21%	31%	29%	14%	4%
58.	Vendors are selected competitively.	1%	25%	44%	19%	7%	4%
59.	The district provides teachers and administrators an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment.	4%	45%	17%	24%	9%	1%

60.	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	6%	53%	9%	23%	7%	2%
61.	Textbooks are in good shape.	6%	61%	11%	16%	5%	1%
62.	The school library meets the student needs for books and other resources.	9%	53%	7%	21%	9%	1%

H. Food Services

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
63.	The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	2%	32%	14%	28%	22%	2%
64.	Food is served warm.	3%	62%	13%	11%	10%	1%
65.	Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.	6%	77%	4%	7%	4%	2%
66.	Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	6%	60%	8%	17%	7%	2%
67.	Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	10%	67%	5%	11%	6%	0%
68.	Cafeteria staff is	14%	59%	9%	10%	8%	1%

	helpful and friendly.						
69.	Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	13%	64%	10%	8%	4%	1%

I. Safety and Security

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
70.	School disturbances are infrequent.	5%	55%	6%	24%	9%	1%
71.	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	1%	16%	15%	42%	24%	2%
72.	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	1%	10%	13%	44%	30%	2%
73.	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	1%	16%	14%	46%	23%	0%
74.	Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	6%	44%	32%	10%	6%	2%
75.	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	4%	29%	42%	18%	5%	2%
76.	A good working arrangement exists between	8%	49%	32%	7%	2%	2%

	the local law enforcement and the district.						
77.	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	5%	37%	9%	26%	22%	1%
78.	Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	2%	38%	19%	27%	12%	2%

J. Computers and Technology

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
79.	Students regularly use computers.	16%	66%	2%	11%	3%	2%
80.	Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	13%	50%	4%	22%	9%	1%
81.	Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	10%	54%	10%	21%	4%	1%
82.	Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	11%	51%	9%	18%	10%	1%
83.	The district meets student needs in classes in	9%	51%	11%	20%	9%	0%

	computer fundamentals.						
84.	The district meets student needs in classes in advanced computer skills.	6%	32%	28%	24%	8%	2%
85.	Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	6%	27%	11%	28%	27%	1%

Appendix B

TEACHER SURVEY

Teacher Comments:

The narrative comments below reflect the perceptions and opinions of Eagle Pass ISD teacher survey respondents and do not reflect the findings and opinions of the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts or the review team.

- The students, overall, have been making gains on TAAS. Experienced teachers are expected to mentor new teachers and this is wonderful. However, teachers (mentors) should be compensated accordingly. When given raises, experienced teachers salaries should be incremented fairly. As it is now, "new" teachers salaries are almost as "high" as someone who has taught for 15 years.
- We need to have a better working environment between the community, central office and board members. There is too much politics in our educational needs.
- I have never seen the morale so low; especially among the people who have been here the longest. The biggest problem I see is that a great majority of new employees are graduates from the local "night class" colleges - many don't even have a command of the English language and yet they serve as an example for our students.
- Our biggest problem is the problem of gang members in our schools. A lot of students go to school with fear, and that is totally unfair to these good students.
- Curriculum Department does not effectively support campus teachers.
- Maintenance Dept. does is not committed to performing repairs on a timely manner. Ceiling boards that are damaged by water have not been replaced since last year. Some campuses that have been constructed within the last year or two have roof leaks. Some text books are not delivered on time.
- Although no entity is perfect, it is my belief, that students are receiving a good quality education in our community. The district is always trying to improve its TAAS test results. The community has approved several bond issues to build new facilities and improve the existing ones. In my opinion our district is a good one.
- I am concerned about the Bilingual Program. Kids are exiting not knowing either language. This causes much frustration for both student and teacher. Also, "timelines" are not realistic. I am to continue teaching according to them even if there is no mastery.
- We have a great deal to be proud of!

- Students are excused regularly (during school hours) for field trips, conferences with college reps, different testing, etc. In my opinion, students need to spend time in classrooms. All these "extra" things can be handled after school or maybe on Saturdays. Also, administration interrupts at will any time of day for "petty" things.
- Equipment is not distributed fairly in the district.
- The students need more access to the Internet. The district pays a lot of money for internet access but the students do not get to use it enough. Also, the athletic facilities are too old and are too few. The practice facilities need more attention and more money spent on them. (Example: soccer fields, football fields, baseball fields).
- The educational performance has improved greatly, but I still feel we have a ways to go. Especially with our secondary schools because I see many of our students taking college classes and struggling.
- Our school and our district has done well in the TAAS, but we have concentrated too much on this test that we have left out other things which our children should be taught.
- The technology department is extremely inadequate. I have two computers in the classroom (both from the 1980's) and neither one works.
- A big concern is the Special Education Program. There are several related services offered by the district, however, if a parent does not request them the Special Education Staff do not offer these services to the students. Most parents are not aware or informed, so the Special Ed. Students' needs are not being met.
- I think the school district is doing a great job in maintaining the educational performance at a good level. The district is doing better on the TAAS scores. This means that teachers, administration and students are doing a great job.
- This district for a long time has lacked leadership and people who can set proper examples. Our buildings are falling apart and leaking with every drizzle.
- I believe we have an excellent education program. Students are learning more every year. Teachers are working harder. Teacher's needs, need to be taken care of. We need better pay and less paperwork.
- District salaries need to compete with other school districts.
- I feel that the community should be more involved (for example, let parents who work come in during their coffee break to read a story to the children). Politics is another thing that makes our school system hard to deal with.
- There is a big need on health insurance. Does not meet the needs of the employee.
- The implementation of district curriculum timelines have helped improve educational performance since 1994 to the present. I

believe they should be continued as well as the district six weeks tests, which also have driven the district to unified success across the district overall.

- Quality of cafeteria food is not nutritious. Health insurance is very high. The co-payment went up \$20 per medicine also for doctor visit.
- The performance of our students is declining with the schedule being kept. We need to establish block scheduling.
- EPISD has a very workable and advanced system of education in comparison to other districts. The curriculum is consistently changing to conform to all students' needs. Delivery of this curriculum is aptly done by experienced caring teachers. This yields very good results.
- EPISD is very efficient except in materials for the students needs.
- The district really needs to work on staff development. Most teachers feel that most of the districts in-services are a waste of their time.
- No fine arts in elementary. No music teacher, instruments provided. No internet, computers do not have enough memory other than for AR. We need physical education gyms so students can excel in PE for better, strong and healthier minds instead of just watched TV during rain or cold weather.
- I believe overcrowding in the classroom hinders the overall performance of the student and the teacher. Those who teach elective classes suffer considerably due to outrageous numbers in their classes and little to no equipment to use or support from administration when problems do arise.
- The lunchtime for teachers and students (30 min) is not enough time to eat. Compare to last year where teacher and students had 45 min to 1 hr lunchtime. Keeping the gates locked from 9:00 am to 3:30 pm is ridiculous.
- I feel that we in Sp. Ed. have a difficult time getting what we need. We are not taken serious because it is everyone's (or most everyone) opinion that all we do is baby sit.
- Lack of disciplinary measures for student misconduct is prevailing throughout the district, this is an area where something has to be done.
- We teachers need to be trusted. We know how to do our job. Administrators should leave us alone. The new superintendent is not trying to lead us. She's trying to make the school district her own.
- Teaching is fun for me. I just wished my school administrators lightened up a bit. We the staff, at one time were told not to talk while performing our extra duty assignments.
- Health insurance too expensive for teachers who have children.

- I feel that students in Eagle Pass are getting burned out too soon because teachers are under pressure to teach TAAS objectives. Students are doing test drills and worksheets all the time. Extra curricular or fine arts classes should be introduced in elementary school.
- I find it infuriating that a first year teacher only makes \$4,000 less than an eighth year teacher. We are obviously the lowest paid teachers in this area, and our insurance only adds to the problem. A teacher who pays premiums for themselves and a child pays over \$250 a month - approximately \$3,000 in a year, and that amount is for a lousy provider.
- I believe teachers certified in math and bilingual should receive extra monies. I believe the priority of the EPISD district should be on the students. Health care should be made available to employees at reasonable rates and that meets parents needs. I believe qualified teachers should be rewarded for superior performance. I strongly believe that our children deserve the best education possible with a certified teacher.
- EPISD has many dedicated educators. The quality of education is outstanding. Yet, we often hear the negative aspects of our jobs and often feel like administrators are waiting for us to make a mistake. Our creativity in teaching is sometimes stifled.
- The gains in the educational performance of EPISD are due to the dedication and hard work of the classroom teachers, especially the veterans who have weathered principals, superintendents, and school boards throughout their careers. Teachers have been and will continue to be the backbone of their district, even though they have continually been under appreciated, under paid and over worked.
- The need for free insurance for all school employees should be a priority.
- I do not believe that our school district does enough to prepare students for life beyond the classroom. Like many districts, we concentrate too much on the TAAS (a minimum-skills test) and not enough on advanced placement/college prep courses as well as career and technology courses. Too many of our students graduate with no real plan for the future.
- Teachers should have more input on evaluating programs. Teachers should be able to evaluate administration and school board yearly.
- Educational reform is needed to address the needs not only of the academically oriented student, but also of the work-oriented student. Many of the vocational/business/skill programs are non-existent, while the advanced placement programs have taken over the majority of students.

- I am happy and proud of my school district. In many ways we are ahead of other districts and always looking for innovative ideas to try out, but in things such as the internet - many elementary schools have no access yet.
- The addition of a police force to the district was well intentioned, but there are individuals on the force and in school administration that are interpreting their own laws to meet their intents.
- The district should give more than \$500 a year for a master's degree. It tells us that a master's degree isn't worth much. Also, people with special training in deaf education or visual impairments should be compensated more than regular classroom teachers. It took me 2 years at my own expense to get this special training.
- I would like to see two high schools, not two campuses of the same school. There is too much responsibility to one campus and not enough on the other one.
- The overall performance of this school district is good - our students prove this in their testing. Teaching could be better if teachers had more materials, resources, etc. The main problem with the district is lack of discipline.
- To meet TEA standards in science, more equipment is needed. Class size should be no more than 24 students per class or have a lab assistant when experiments are conducted. This is for the safety of students and teacher.
- The main problem in my opinion is the student-teacher ratio. This really creates a problem when students need more one to one teaching.
- We have been told on several occasions that computers w/ internet would be put in classrooms and it has yet to be done.
- To effectively serve the Kickapoo students the school district must hire at least 5 Kickapoo tutors. Kickapoo language needs to be recognized by the school district as bilingual program.
- Too many educational dollars are spent outside the classroom. The secondary schools should have been divided a long time ago. I fear that the net results of our labors are inadequately prepared citizens and students for the future of our community and their future education.
- I feel that our district is falling behind the times. Our seniors are leaving our school with not enough knowledge to help them in college.
- Unfortunately, the only type of reporting done through the local news media is gossip.
- Technology department is too slow in responding to malfunctioning computers. In department meetings; our existence (job) is regularly threatened. While I believe these are idle - they are unprofessional and hurt morale.

- I feel the educational performance at the elementary level far surpasses the education at the secondary level. I do not feel money is spent appropriately in the district. Fortunately, at the elementary level, we have excellent teachers who care. We spend a lot of our own money because the funds are not wisely used. If I had a child in the secondary level - I would move or home school.
- The school district lacks a fundamental thing - teacher trust. Parents are the number one concern of this district, not the students. This leads to a system of mediocrity as proven by the college acceptance rate of graduates from Eagle Pass High School.
- I applaud the efforts of administration in trying to build as many schools as they can. The last 6 years have been years of tremendous growth for the education process and those people who come up with creative ways to help fund the new school construction should be constructed even though the tax rate levels are very high. This community just does not have a strong enough tax base to support such a growth.

Appendix C PRINCIPAL AND ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL SURVEY

Demographic Data

TOTAL RESPONSES AS OF FEBRUARY 6, 2001							34
1.	Gender (Optional)	Male	Female	No Response			
		56%	38%	6%			
2.	Ethnicity (Optional)	Anglo	African American		Hispanic	Asian	Other
		3%	0%		94%	0%	3%
3.	How long have you been employed by Eagle Pass ISD?	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	20+ years	No Response
		0%	9%	9%	26%	56%	0%
4.	What grades are taught in your school?						
	Pre-Kindergarten	Kindergarten	First	Second	Third		
	18%	26%	47%	44%	47%		
	Fourth	Fifth	Sixth	Seventh	Eighth		
	50%	47%	44%	15%	15%		
	Ninth	Tenth	Eleventh	Twelfth			
	12%	12%	9%	9%			

A. District Organization & Management

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
1.	The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.	12%	35%	18%	24%	12%	0%
2.	School board	18%	32%	18%	18%	15%	0%

	members listen to the opinions and desires of others.						
3.	School board members understand their role as policymakers and stay out of the day-to-day management of the district.	12%	21%	9%	29%	29%	0%
4.	The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	18%	15%	15%	29%	24%	0%
5.	The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	15%	9%	24%	29%	21%	3%
6.	Central administration is efficient.	3%	32%	21%	26%	18%	0%
7.	Central administration supports the educational process.	12%	32%	12%	26%	18%	0%
8.	The morale of central administration staff is good.	0%	12%	6%	47%	35%	0%

B. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
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9.	Education is the main priority in our school district.	21%	50%	3%	18%	9%	0%
10.	Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.	21%	65%	0%	9%	6%	0%
11.	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	3%	38%	15%	35%	9%	0%
12.	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	0%	53%	21%	21%	6%	0%
13.	The district provides curriculum guides for all grades and subjects.	32%	56%	3%	9%	0%	0%
14.	The curriculum guides are appropriately aligned and coordinated.	21%	53%	0%	21%	6%	0%
15.	The district's curriculum guides clearly outline what to teach and how to teach it.	18%	65%	0%	15%	0%	3%
16.	The district has effective educational	12%	65%	9%	9%	6%	0%

	programs for the following:						
	a) Reading	12%	62%	9%	12%	6%	0%
	b) Writing	9%	68%	3%	15%	6%	0%
	c) Mathematics	6%	56%	3%	24%	9%	3%
	d) Science	6%	74%	3%	12%	6%	0%
	e) English or Language Arts	6%	53%	18%	18%	6%	0%
	f) Computer Instruction	6%	56%	9%	21%	9%	0%
	g) Social Studies (history or geography)	6%	50%	12%	21%	12%	0%
	h) Fine Arts	3%	62%	12%	21%	3%	0%
	i) Physical Education	3%	44%	50%	0%	3%	0%
	j) Business Education	3%	44%	50%	0%	3%	0%
	k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	3%	41%	47%	9%	0%	0%
	l) Foreign Language						
17.	The district has effective special programs for the following:	9%	56%	9%	24%	3%	0%
	a) Library Service	6%	68%	12%	12%	3%	0%
	b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	18%	71%	3%	6%	3%	0%

c) Special Education	0%	65%	29%	3%	0%	3%
d) Head Start and Even Start programs	9%	68%	6%	15%	3%	0%
e) Dyslexia program	3%	44%	29%	21%	3%	0%
f) Student mentoring program	0%	56%	26%	15%	3%	0%
g) Advanced placement program	6%	62%	21%	12%	0%	0%
h) Literacy program	6%	62%	9%	21%	3%	0%
i) Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	9%	71%	6%	12%	3%	0%
j) Summer school programs	9%	71%	9%	9%	0%	3%
k) Alternative education programs	6%	56%	21%	15%	3%	0%
l) "English as a second language" program	0%	47%	35%	9%	9%	0%
m) Career counseling program	12%	65%	9%	9%	6%	0%
n) College counseling program	0%	41%	35%	9%	12%	3%
o) Counseling the parents of students	3%	44%	21%	21%	9%	3%
n) Drop out	6%	50%	18%	18%	6%	3%

	prevention program						
18.	Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	18%	65%	6%	12%	0%	0%
19.	Teacher turnover is low.	9%	50%	12%	29%	0%	0%
20.	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	0%	59%	12%	21%	6%	3%
21.	Teachers are rewarded for superior performance.	0%	15%	9%	56%	21%	0%
22.	Teachers are counseled about less than satisfactory performance.	6%	74%	12%	6%	3%	0%
23.	All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.	6%	53%	3%	29%	9%	0%
24.	Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	32%	62%	0%	6%	0%	0%
25.	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	26%	71%	0%	3%	0%	0%

C. Personnel

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
26.	District salaries are competitive with similar positions in the job market.	0%	26%	9%	56%	9%	0%
27.	The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.	3%	56%	12%	26%	3%	0%
28.	Temporary workers are rarely used.	0%	44%	12%	44%	0%	0%
29.	The district successfully projects future staffing needs.	3%	32%	15%	47%	3%	0%
30.	The district has an effective employee recruitment program.	0%	21%	18%	47%	15%	0%
31.	The district operates an effective staff development program.	3%	47%	15%	24%	12%	0%
32.	District employees receive annual personnel evaluations.	24%	74%	0%	3%	0%	0%
33.	The district rewards	3%	15%	6%	53%	24%	0%

	competence and experience and spells out qualifications such as seniority and skill levels needed for promotion.						
34.	Employees who perform below the standard of expectation are counseled appropriately and timely.	3%	76%	12%	6%	3%	0%
35.	The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	9%	74%	15%	3%	0%	0%
36.	The district's health insurance package meets my needs.	0%	21%	0%	41%	38%	0%

D. Community Involvement

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
37.	The district regularly communicates with parents.	12%	68%	6%	12%	3%	0%
38.	Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.	3%	50%	9%	32%	6%	0%

39.	District facilities are open for community use.	6%	76%	12%	6%	0%	0%
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E. Facilities Use and Management

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
40.	Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff and the board provide input into facility planning.	0%	50%	24%	18%	6%	3%
41.	Schools are clean.	12%	79%	3%	6%	0%	0%
42.	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	6%	68%	6%	18%	3%	0%
43.	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	3%	50%	6%	32%	9%	0%
44.	Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	9%	65%	3%	18%	6%	0%

F. Financial Management

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
45.	Site-based budgeting is used	3%	76%	6%	9%	6%	0%

	effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers.						
46.	Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	0%	65%	21%	9%	3%	3%
47.	Financial resources are allocated fairly and equitably at my school.	3%	91%	0%	0%	6%	0%

G. Purchasing and Warehousing

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
48.	Purchasing gets me what I need when I need it.	3%	44%	9%	38%	6%	0%
49.	Purchasing acquires high quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.	3%	41%	21%	29%	6%	0%
50.	Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for the requestor.	3%	50%	12%	24%	12%	0%
51.	The district provides teachers and	9%	74%	6%	12%	0%	0%

	administrators an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment.						
52.	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	9%	68%	9%	15%	0%	0%
53.	Textbooks are in good shape.	12%	79%	6%	3%	0%	0%
54.	The school library meets student needs for books and other resources.	9%	76%	3%	9%	3%	0%

H. Food Services

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
55.	The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	3%	44%	9%	38%	6%	0%
56.	Food is served warm.	9%	74%	3%	12%	3%	0%
57.	Students have enough time to eat.	21%	79%	0%	0%	0%	0%
58.	Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.	21%	76%	0%	0%	0%	3%
59.	Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	12%	68%	0%	21%	0%	0%

60.	Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	24%	74%	0%	3%	0%	0%
61.	Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	15%	65%	3%	12%	6%	0%
62.	Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	12%	82%	0%	6%	0%	0%

I. Transportation

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
63. The drop-off zone at the school is safe.	12%	76%	3%	6%	3%	0%
64. The district has a simple method to request buses for special events.	9%	76%	3%	12%	0%	0%
65. Buses arrive and leave on time.	0%	74%	3%	21%	3%	0%
66. Adding or modifying a route for a student is easy to accomplish.	0%	50%	24%	21%	6%	0%

J. Safety and Security

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
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67.	Students feel safe and secure at school.	24%	71%	0%	0%	0%	6%
68.	School disturbances are infrequent.	24%	68%	3%	6%	0%	0%
69.	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	0%	18%	15%	56%	12%	0%
70.	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	0%	12%	9%	62%	18%	0%
71.	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	0%	18%	9%	65%	6%	3%
72.	Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	0%	65%	26%	9%	0%	0%
73.	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	0%	44%	44%	9%	3%	0%
74.	A good working arrangement exists between the local law enforcement and the district.	12%	68%	18%	3%	0%	0%
75.	Students receive fair and equitable	21%	68%	3%	9%	0%	0%

	discipline for misconduct.						
76.	Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	9%	59%	9%	24%	0%	0%

K. Computers and Technology

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
77.	Students regularly use computers.	35%	53%	0%	12%	0%	0%
78.	Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	26%	59%	0%	12%	3%	0%
79.	Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	21%	59%	0%	15%	6%	0%
80.	The district meets student needs in computer fundamentals.	9%	53%	12%	18%	9%	0%
81.	The district meets student needs in advanced computer skills.	6%	35%	29%	24%	6%	0%
82.	Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	3%	68%	6%	21%	3%	0%

83.	Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	3%	38%	3%	32%	24%	0%
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Principal and Assistant Principal Comments:

The narrative comments below reflect the perceptions and opinions of Eagle Pass ISD principal and assistant principal survey respondents and do not reflect the findings and opinions of the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts or the review team.

- The unfocused direction by current Central Office Administration and the lack of educational leadership by the school board jeopardize our success.
- The educational performance of EPISD has been great in the past years and we have been improving every year. Yet this school year, morale is low.
- Our district is a recognized district. Some principals feel that there is not enough support from central administration and that they are too eager to side with parents thus justifying their efforts at moving people around. Principals and assistant principal's confidence is being destroyed.
- My comments are positive in all areas of EPISD. I have pride and support education in Eagle Pass.
- Administration needs to recruit more qualified teachers. Better pay for teachers and administrators. Parents need to respect and follow chain of command.
- I really do not feel our district is in dire need of drastic changes. If it has achieved recognized status - great things have to be going on a daily basis. Thanks!
- My opinions on the district organization and management are as of this 2000-2001 school year - We have worked hard to achieve the recognized status in spite of problems with the school board and the administration. I'm proud of our hard work. I would not have my son enrolled here, if I felt otherwise.
- At my campus all monies budgeted to one account are spent wisely. Everything on this campus is geared toward providing the best environment to students for student success.
- I feel that more programs should be created to meet students' needs. I feel that school hours should be flexible according to student needs. Support programs such as childcare, employment counseling and Social Services should be provided.
- We are moving in the right direction.

- I am extremely happy with the new administration which is focused on getting things in order so that our students can get the best possible education. Principals have not been cooperative.
- District currently going through administrative changes. This change has created problems due to some administrators not using good communication skills to relate the message. Communication is a definite concern in my opinion.

Appendix D

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT STAFF SURVEY

Demographic Data

TOTAL RESPONSES AS OF FEBRUARY 6, 2001							257		
1.	Gender (Optional)		Male	Female	No Response				
			29%	63%	8%				
2.	Ethnicity (Optional)		Anglo	African American	Hispanic	Asian	Other	No Response	
			3%	0%	87%	0%	2%	8%	
3.	How long have you been employed by Eagle Pass ISD?			1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	20+ years	No Response
				0%	23%	18%	11%	23%	25%
4.	Are you a(n):	a. administrator	b. clerical staffer	c. support staffer (i.e., transportation, food services, etc.)			No Response		
		12%	28%	46%			14%		
5.	How long have you been employed in this capacity by Eagle Pass ISD?			1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	20+ years	No Response
				0%	24%	17%	12%	15%	33%

A. District Organization & Management

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
1. The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.	3%	28%	24%	25%	18%	2%
2. School board	4%	32%	21%	28%	14%	1%

	members listen to the opinions and desires of others.						
3.	The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	4%	27%	27%	22%	18%	2%
4.	The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	3%	27%	29%	21%	17%	3%
5.	Central administration is efficient.	2%	36%	18%	28%	14%	2%
6.	Central administration supports the educational process.	5%	42%	18%	21%	13%	1%
7.	The morale of central administration staff is good.	2%	17%	26%	22%	32%	1%

B. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
8.	Education is the main priority in our school district.	17%	37%	7%	27%	10%	2%
9.	Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest	3%	34%	28%	25%	8%	2%

	programs and materials that they believe are most effective.						
10.	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	2%	28%	31%	30%	7%	2%
11.	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	2%	36%	31%	23%	6%	2%
12.	The district has effective educational programs for the following:	4%	56%	18%	16%	4%	2%
	a) Reading	4%	54%	19%	17%	4%	1%
	b) Writing	5%	53%	18%	18%	5%	1%
	c) Mathematics	2%	50%	24%	15%	6%	3%
	d) Science	4%	56%	19%	16%	3%	2%
	e) English or Language Arts	5%	55%	20%	14%	4%	2%
	f) Computer Instruction	3%	51%	25%	15%	4%	2%
	g) Social Studies (history or geography)	3%	47%	24%	16%	7%	3%
	h) Fine Arts	4%	59%	24%	9%	3%	1%
	i) Physical Education	3%	49%	31%	11%	4%	2%
	j) Business Education	3%	49%	29%	12%	5%	2%
	k) Vocational (Career and	3%	47%	30%	14%	5%	1%

	Technology) Education						
	l) Foreign Language						
13.	The district has effective special programs for the following:	7%	50%	20%	16%	5%	2%
	a) Library Service	6%	61%	15%	12%	4%	3%
	b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	10%	53%	16%	15%	5%	1%
	c) Special Education	6%	50%	30%	11%	2%	1%
	d) Head Start and Even Start programs	4%	44%	27%	16%	7%	2%
	e) Dyslexia program	5%	35%	32%	20%	5%	3%
	f) Student mentoring program	5%	51%	26%	14%	2%	2%
	g) Advanced placement program	4%	46%	32%	12%	3%	3%
	h) Literacy program	5%	43%	21%	22%	7%	2%
	i) Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	10%	56%	14%	14%	4%	2%
	j) Summer school programs	9%	56%	21%	12%	2%	0%
	k) Alternative education	7%	47%	25%	16%	4%	1%

	programs						
	l) "English as a second language" program	4%	35%	28%	24%	7%	2%
	m) Career counseling program	2%	34%	29%	25%	7%	3%
	n) College counseling program	3%	32%	25%	28%	9%	3%
	o) Counseling the parents of students	3%	39%	24%	25%	6%	3%
	p) Drop out prevention program	4%	56%	18%	16%	4%	2%
14.	Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	13%	42%	13%	25%	5%	2%
15.	Teacher turnover is low.	2%	36%	35%	14%	9%	4%
16.	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	3%	25%	21%	34%	15%	2%
17.	Teacher Openings are filled quickly	3%	29%	22%	33%	12%	1%
18.	Teachers are rewarded for superior performance.	2%	14%	20%	42%	21%	1%
19.	Teachers are counseled about less than satisfactory	2%	29%	33%	23%	9%	4%

	performance.						
20.	All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.	5%	40%	18%	23%	13%	1%
21.	The student - to-teacher ratio is reasonable.	2%	41%	18%	28%	9%	2%
22.	Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	11%	70%	7%	7%	2%	3%
23.	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	11%	50%	19%	12%	7%	1%

C. Personnel

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
24. District salaries are competitive with similar positions in the job market.	2%	21%	13%	40%	22%	2%
25. The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.	2%	32%	27%	23%	14%	2%
26. Temporary workers are rarely used.	3%	21%	25%	36%	12%	3%

27.	The district successfully projects future staffing needs.	1%	18%	25%	36%	17%	3%
28.	The district has an effective employee recruitment program.	1%	25%	31%	26%	15%	2%
29.	The district operates an effective staff development program.	2%	41%	22%	21%	11%	2%
30.	District employees receive annual personnel evaluations.	9%	78%	5%	4%	2%	2%
31.	The district rewards competence and experience and spells out qualifications such as seniority and skill levels needed for promotion.	2%	18%	18%	36%	25%	1%
32.	Employees who perform below the standard of expectation are counseled appropriately and timely.	4%	23%	22%	31%	19%	1%
33.	The district has a fair and timely grievance	2%	39%	30%	15%	13%	1%

	process.						
34.	The district's health insurance package meets my needs.	1%	25%	5%	23%	45%	1%

D. Community Involvement

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
35.	The district regularly communicates with parents.	6%	46%	19%	19%	9%	1%
36.	local television and radio stations regularly report school news and menus.	8%	45%	13%	24%	9%	1%
37.	Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.	1%	25%	21%	37%	15%	1%
38.	District facilities are open for community use.	5%	42%	22%	21%	9%	1%

E. Facilities Use and Management

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
39.	Parents, citizens, students.	3%	28%	26%	28%	14%	1%

	faculty, staff and the board provide input into facility planning.						
40.	The architect and construction managers are selected objectively and impersonally.	2%	21%	44%	17%	14%	2%
41.	Schools are clean.	9%	56%	10%	16%	7%	2%
42.	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	7%	50%	10%	19%	12%	2%
43.	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	4%	42%	12%	26%	15%	1%
44.	Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	7%	53%	13%	17%	9%	1%

F.Financial Management

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
45. Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers.	3%	33%	39%	14%	8%	3%

46.	Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	4%	31%	35%	19%	9%	2%
47.	The district's financial reports are easy to understand and read.	2%	32%	39%	18%	6%	3%
48.	Financial resources are allocated fairly and equitably at my school.	2%	23%	49%	16%	9%	1%

G. Purchasing and Warehousing

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
49.	Purchasing gets me what I need when I need it.	3%	36%	15%	31%	13%	2%
50.	Purchasing acquires high quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.	3%	33%	29%	23%	12%	0%
51.	Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for the requestor.	3%	28%	37%	22%	8%	2%
52.	The district provides	4%	60%	19%	11%	4%	2%

	teachers and administrators an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment.						
53.	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	5%	50%	19%	17%	7%	2%
54.	Textbooks are in good shape.	4%	61%	19%	12%	3%	1%
55.	The school library meets student needs for books and other resources.	7%	53%	17%	11%	11%	1%

H. Safety and Security

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
56. Gangs are not a problem in this district.	3%	12%	12%	48%	24%	1%
57. Drugs are not a problem in this district.	2%	10%	12%	46%	30%	0%
58. Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	2%	16%	14%	43%	25%	0%
59. Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	5%	46%	30%	12%	5%	2%
60. Security	3%	39%	33%	18%	5%	2%

	personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.						
61.	A good working arrangement exists between the local law enforcement and the district.	7%	57%	23%	8%	2%	3%
62.	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	5%	39%	13%	23%	16%	4%

I. Computers and Technology

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
63.	Students regularly use computers.	17%	67%	6%	5%	2%	3%
64.	Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	14%	57%	12%	12%	3%	2%
65.	Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	8%	49%	19%	19%	2%	3%
66.	The district meets student needs in computer fundamentals.	7%	60%	14%	12%	5%	2%

67.	The district meets student needs in advanced computer skills.	9%	57%	17%	12%	4%	1%
68.	Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	7%	43%	23%	19%	5%	3%
69.	Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	8%	30%	19%	26%	14%	3%

Summary of District Administrative and Support Staff Survey Comments

The narrative comments below reflect the perceptions and opinions of Eagle Pass ISD administrative and support staff survey respondents and do not reflect the findings and opinions of the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts or the review team.

- Conflicts among administrators are detracting from the educational priorities in the district. (most frequent response)
- Morale is low. (most frequent response)
- The district needs to direct more attention to the needs of both high and low performing students.
- Personnel need better training (i.e., teachers, special education staff, support personnel).
- Goods and supplies for classroom instruction are slow to arrive.
- There is a lack of communication between central and campus administrators.
- Salaries are not commensurate with assigned duties and responsibilities (i.e., transportation, teachers and administrators).
- The special education program needs to be improved (i.e., materials, adaptive equipment, more and better trained teachers and aids, compliance monitoring).
- Principals need to work more closely with teachers to ensure that they are given the support they need to succeed with the children under their control.
- Intimidation rather than motivation is being used by campus and central office administrators.

- Long range planning could help the district to become proactive rather than reactive.
- A better insurance program could help attract high quality teachers.
- Teachers are trying very hard to teach each student - teachers are great.
- Student safety and security needs to be a priority - more drug programs, better discipline on buses, more gang and violence prevention.
- Employees need to be given drug tests.
- Principals and Facilitators need to be more supportive of teachers.
- The schools need more and better computers for the students.
- Substitute teachers need better training and/or should not be used as frequently.
- Consider contracting for services such as: transportation, maintenance, printing and food service.
- Teacher aides are being assigned responsibilities for things that are normally assigned to teachers or administrators.
- Some board members are more interested in politics than education.
- Employee evaluations need to be done more regularly and based upon unbiased, measurable criteria.
- The curriculum of the district needs to be aligned and clarified so that teachers have a useful resource.
- Cafeteria menus need to be evaluated for nutritional content and made more appetizing.
- Facilities are being built but older facilities in the district are in need of repair and renovation.
- Students are not being adequately prepared for college.
- Libraries and classrooms are not fully equipped with modern technology and students are not receiving the computer classes they need.
- Migrant students have been recognized in their TAAS scores in the last 3 years.
- Employees at all levels need to be held accountable for their actions.
- Parents need to have more of a voice in their children's education.
- There needs to be a chain of command for complaints from parents and employees in the district.
- Custodians are not security guards or hall monitors, they should not have to supervise students.

Appendix E PARENT SURVEY

Demographic Data

TOTAL RESPONSES	67
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1.	Gender (Optional)	Male	Female	No Response			
		22%	69%	9%			
2.	Ethnicity (Optional)	Anglo	African American	Hispanic	Asian	Other	No Response
		6%	0%	82%	1%	0%	11%
3.	How long have you lived in Eagle Pass ISD?		0-5 years	6-10 years	11 years or more	No Response	
			12%	7%	66%	15%	
4.	What grade level(s) does you child(ren) attend (circle all that apply)?						
	Pre-Kindergarten	Kindergarten	First	Second	Third		
	4%	11%	7%	8%	9%		
	Fourth	Fifth	Sixth	Seventh	Eighth		
	8%	13%	6%	6%	9%		
	Ninth	Tenth	Eleventh	Twelfth			
	4%	7%	6%	4%			

A. District Organization and Management

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
1. The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.	9%	43%	12%	25%	7%	4%

2.	School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.	12%	37%	16%	24%	7%	4%
3.	The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	16%	39%	25%	10%	9%	1%
4.	The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	15%	31%	36%	9%	7%	2%

B. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
5.	The district provides a high quality of services.	10%	51%	10%	16%	7%	6%
6.	Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.	12%	43%	16%	24%	4%	1%
7.	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	4%	40%	30%	16%	7%	3%
8.	The needs of the work-bound student	3%	48%	34%	4%	4%	7%

	are being met.						
9.	The district has effective educational programs for the following:						
	a) Reading	22%	57%	4%	12%	1%	4%
	b) Writing	24%	55%	6%	12%	1%	3%
	c) Mathematics	21%	63%	4%	9%	1%	2%
	d) Science	19%	60%	6%	12%	1%	2%
	e) English or Language Arts	21%	61%	4%	10%	1%	3%
	f) Computer Instruction	21%	52%	6%	12%	6%	3%
	g) Social Studies (history or geography)	19%	57%	7%	10%	3%	4%
	h) Fine Arts	15%	45%	16%	12%	10%	2%
	i) Physical Education	18%	55%	16%	9%	1%	1%
	j) Business Education	10%	33%	39%	12%	1%	5%
	k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	12%	39%	30%	12%	1%	6%
	l) Foreign Language	9%	39%	24%	18%	1%	9%
10.	The district has effective special programs for the following:						
	a) Library Service	19%	46%	18%	10%	4%	3%

b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	24%	52%	12%	9%	3%	0%
c) Special Education	24%	45%	18%	6%	7%	0%
d) Head Start and Even Start programs	21%	40%	22%	6%	4%	7%
e) Dyslexia program	15%	25%	43%	7%	4%	6%
f) Student mentoring program	10%	34%	36%	9%	3%	8%
g) Advanced placement program	16%	46%	22%	9%	1%	6%
h) Literacy program	13%	42%	30%	4%	7%	4%
i) Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	19%	28%	31%	15%	6%	1%
j) Summer school programs	27%	46%	15%	9%	3%	0%
k) Alternative education programs	24%	43%	19%	7%	3%	4%
l) "English as a second language" program	21%	43%	28%	4%	3%	2%
m) Career counseling program	13%	40%	25%	13%	3%	6%
n) College counseling program	16%	36%	30%	12%	4%	2%

	o) Counseling the parents of students	12%	45%	16%	18%	7%	2%
	p) Drop out prevention program	12%	42%	25%	12%	6%	3%
11.	Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	30%	45%	9%	7%	9%	0%
12.	Teacher turnover is low.	12%	34%	28%	13%	6%	7%
13.	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	9%	31%	22%	27%	10%	1%
14.	A substitute teacher rarely teaches my child.	16%	42%	12%	19%	9%	2%
15.	Teachers are knowledgeable in the subject areas they teach.	19%	49%	13%	15%	3%	1%
16.	All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.	24%	42%	10%	16%	7%	1%
17.	Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	28%	51%	4%	6%	9%	2%

18.	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	24%	34%	19%	19%	1%	3%
19.	The district provides a high quality education.	15%	52%	12%	16%	4%	1%
20.	The district has a high quality of teachers.	9%	55%	18%	13%	3%	2%

C. Community Involvement

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
21.	The district regularly communicates with parents.	16%	46%	12%	22%	3%	1%
22.	District facilities are open for community use.	12%	43%	24%	16%	4%	1%
23.	Schools have plenty of volunteers to help students and school programs.	1%	39%	21%	30%	7%	3%

D. Facilities Use and Management

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
24.	Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff, and the board provide input	7%	34%	28%	22%	6%	3%

	into facility planning.						
25.	Schools are clean.	24%	51%	4%	15%	4%	2%
26.	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	24%	52%	4%	10%	7%	3%
27.	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	22%	46%	9%	13%	9%	1%
28.	The district uses very few portable buildings.	9%	30%	19%	28%	13%	1%
29.	Emergency maintenance is handled expeditiously.	15%	48%	24%	9%	4%	0%

E. Asset and Risk Management

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
30. my property tax bill is reasonable for the educational services delivered.	10%	22%	25%	21%	16%	6%
31. Board members and administrators do a good job explaining the use of tax dollars.	9%	21%	15%	37%	12%	6%

F. Financial Management

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
32.	Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers.	7%	30%	37%	16%	6%	4%
33.	Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	7%	28%	40%	16%	4%	5%
34.	The district's financial reports are easy to understand and read.	6%	16%	40%	28%	6%	4%
35.	Financial reports are made available to community members when asked.	3%	21%	49%	19%	4%	4%

G. Purchasing and Warehousing

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
36.	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	19%	55%	4%	13%	4%	5%
37.	Textbooks are in good shape.	22%	48%	6%	18%	3%	3%

38.	The school library meets student needs for books and other resources.	18%	42%	6%	19%	12%	3%
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H. Food Services

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
39.	My child regularly purchases his/her meal from the cafeteria.	13%	19%	15%	30%	15%	8%
40.	The school breakfast program is available to all children.	40%	49%	4%	1%	1%	5%
41.	The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	10%	25%	15%	24%	22%	4%
42.	Food is served warm.	12%	46%	12%	18%	6%	6%
43.	Students have enough time to eat.	6%	37%	1%	33%	18%	5%
44.	Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.	13%	58%	6%	9%	10%	4%
45.	Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	9%	42%	18%	18%	10%	3%

46.	Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	18%	52%	7%	10%	6%	7%
47.	Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	18%	39%	16%	15%	6%	6%
48.	Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	15%	48%	16%	13%	1%	7%

I. Transportation

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
49.	My child regularly rides the bus.	13%	15%	21%	24%	15%	12%
50.	The bus driver maintains discipline on the bus.	4%	28%	52%	3%	4%	9%
51.	the length of the student's bus ride is reasonable.	1%	25%	49%	7%	7%	11%
52.	the drop-off zone at the school is safe.	19%	42%	28%	4%	3%	4%
53.	the bus stop near my house is safe.	10%	33%	43%	4%	6%	4%
54.	The bus stop is within walking distance from our home.	10%	33%	46%	6%	1%	4%

55.	Buses arrive and depart on time.	10%	36%	40%	9%	1%	4%
56.	Buses arrive early enough for students to eat breakfast at school.	6%	37%	42%	9%	3%	3%
57.	Buses seldom break down.	4%	34%	51%	7%	0%	4%
58.	Buses are clean.	4%	34%	48%	9%	1%	4%
59.	Bus drivers allow students to sit down before taking off.	9%	31%	48%	6%	3%	3%
60.	The district has a simple method to request buses for special events.	16%	33%	36%	9%	3%	3%

J. Safety and Security

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
61.	Students feel safe and secure at school.	13%	57%	9%	10%	7%	4%
62.	School disturbances are infrequent.	15%	43%	10%	16%	10%	6%
63.	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	9%	22%	12%	28%	24%	5%
64.	Drugs are not	6%	16%	13%	31%	27%	7%

	a problem in this district.						
65.	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	9%	22%	10%	34%	21%	4%
66.	Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	12%	43%	33%	1%	9%	2%
67.	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	12%	43%	25%	12%	6%	2%
68.	A good working arrangement exists between the local law enforcement and the district.	10%	54%	21%	9%	4%	2%
69.	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	13%	36%	19%	16%	12%	4%
70.	Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	6%	30%	27%	19%	12%	6%

K. Computers and Technology

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
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71.	Teachers know how to teach computer science and other technology-related courses.	6%	39%	15%	4%	4%	32%
72.	Computers are new enough to be useful to teach students.	12%	61%	6%	3%	4%	14%
73.	The district meets student needs in computer fundamentals.	13%	61%	10%	7%	7%	2%
74.	The district meets student needs in advanced computer skills.	12%	43%	21%	12%	10%	2%
75.	Students have easy access to the internet.	4%	22%	16%	19%	6%	33%

Parent Survey Verbatim Comments

The narrative comments below reflect the perceptions and opinions of Eagle Pass ISD parent survey respondents and do not reflect the findings and opinions of the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts or the review team.

- I am pleased with the education given to our children. I am all for more discipline in the classrooms. Although I know discipline should start at home, some parents do not take the time to do so.
- I am very content with the educational performance my children have received so far. The teachers that they have had are professionals to the extent of the word. I feel that the teacher and parent involvement has been a great factor in their success.

- Overall, the teachers are to be commended. Although the facilities, materials and assistance is not adequately available they do without.
- Most of the district's students are sub par in grammar and spelling, however, on account of years wasted on the whole language approach to teaching English and language arts.
- As a parent I have seen a real good change in the school board in the way they are very interested in the better education of our children. In the past two years to present, is when we've notice the real good change. As a student, my wife and I graduated from Eagle Pass ISD schools and we both agree that thanks to this new school board and superintendent, a lot of real good has happen to our community. Keep up the good work.
- As a parent, I wish we had a program where parents could learn today's technology. I need help in all of my subject to in order to help my child during difficult task.
- I would like the school provide more technical program for students, reinforce computer programs. Teachers and principal are very professional; they meet high education standards to our students.
- Teachers at local elementary school are excellent. They go out of their way to help my children. EPISD is not very proficient in determining methods for six weeks exams (six weeks test don't comply with time lines or they usually have mistakes).
- Teachers at a campus a long time tend to lack interest in extra activity only a few and always the same will be helping out.
- School buses are overcrowded and bus drivers are rude and do not pay attention to the children.
- As a parent, I feel that the needs of the less privileged are a high priority and that my son with average needs is being left behind. I think that the attention that is given low-income migrant students should be provided for all.
- Our Sp. Ed. program is so bad, I know that some speech teachers do not have enough time to meet with the students. They do not have the personnel for so many schools.
- The district needs to pay more attention to the safety of students.
- We need better cafeteria food.
- I wish there was a good dyslexic program, starting with identifying the dyslexic students (this is not being done by a professional psychologist).
- I receive notices to attend meetings on the same day with no prior notice. Unqualified teachers. Teachers with no discipline over students. Only 5 percent of graduates are college ready. Low student attendance. Need better parent support and parent involvement during sports events.
- All in all, the district meets my child's needs.