

# TRANSMITTAL LETTER

August 23, 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 Falls City Independent School District (FCISD).

This review is intended to help FCISD 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 IBM Corporation.

I have made a number of recommendations to improve FCISD's efficiency. I also have highlighted a number of "best practices" in district operations-model programs and services provided by the district's administrators, teachers and staff. This report outlines 33 detailed recommendations that could save FCISD more than \$312,000 over the next five years, while reinvesting more than \$21,000 to improve educational services and other operations. Net savings are estimated to reach more than \$291,000-savings that the district can redirect to the classroom.

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

I am also pleased to announce that the report is available on my Window on State Government Web site [www.window.state.tx.us/tspr/fallscity/](http://www.window.state.tx.us/tspr/fallscity/).

Sincerely,



Carole Keeton Rylander  
Texas Comptroller

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In March 2001, Texas Comptroller Carole Keeton Rylander began a review of the Falls City Independent School District (FCISD) as part of a four-district project that also included reviews of the neighboring Karnes City, Kenedy and Runge school districts. These four districts are located geographically near each other in Karnes County. Based upon more than six months of work, this report identifies FCISD's exemplary programs and suggests concrete ways to improve district operations. If fully implemented, the Comptroller's 33 recommendations could result in net savings of \$291,694 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](http://www.window.state.tx.us).*

### **TSPR in Falls City ISD**

As the review began in March 2001, FCISD was one of two Recognized school districts in Karnes County. The Comptroller contracted with International Business Machines (IBM), an international computer hardware, software and consulting firm headquartered in New York, to assist with the review. The team interviewed district employees, school board members, parents, business leaders and community members and held a public forum on Tuesday, March 20, at the Falls City School Cafeteria from 5 to 8 p.m. To obtain additional comments, the review team conducted small focus group sessions with teachers, administrators and staff, 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.

To ensure stakeholders had an opportunity to give comment to TSPR, surveys were sent to parents, students, and district staff and a public forum was held at the school for community comment. More than 400 surveys were mailed out and a total of 197 respondents answered surveys. Fifteen campus and central administrators and support staff, 19 teachers, 111 parents and 52 students completed written surveys. Details from the surveys and the public forum appear in **Appendices A** 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).

FCISD selected peer districts for comparisons based on similarities in student enrollment, student performance and community and student demographics. The districts chosen were Bland, Campbell, Fruitvale, Martinsville and Moulton.

During its more than six-month review, TSPR developed recommendations to improve operations and save taxpayers more than \$312,824 by 2005-06. Cumulative net savings from all recommendations (savings minus recommended investments or expenditures) would reach \$291,694 by 2005-06.

A detailed list of costs and savings by recommendation appears in **Exhibit 5**. Many TSPR recommendations would not have a direct financial impact but would improve the district's overall operations.

On August 16, 2001, the Texas Education Agency released the TAAS results for the 2000-01 school year. FCISD received an overall Exemplary Rating, up from the 1999-2000 rating of Recognized. According to these latest reports, the district now has two Exemplary schools. This represents a change from last year of one Exemplary and one Recognized school. Because this information came late in the review process, and because information regarding the cumulative test results will not be available until November 2001, the data presented throughout the rest of this report reflects 1999-2000 information.

### **Acknowledgments**

The Comptroller's office and IBM wish to express their appreciation to the FCISD Board of Trustees, the former superintendent, Robert E. Dwight, district employees, students, parents and community residents who helped during the review.

### **Falls City ISD**

FCISD is located in Karnes County, about 50 miles southeast of San Antonio. The district's population is more than 87 percent Anglo, while the rest of the county is more than 40 percent Hispanic, 40 percent Anglo, and a mix of other ethnicities, according to the 2000 US Census. Many of the families trace their roots to European immigrants who settled in the area in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The largest employers are educational services and the county government. Ranching and farming are also key components of the county's economy, with many FCISD parents traveling to San Antonio daily to work at jobs there.

In 2000-01, the district served a population of 338 students: 87.6 percent are Anglo and 12.4 percent Hispanic. **Exhibit 1** details the demographic characteristics of the FCISD, its peer school districts, Region 3 and the state.

## **Exhibit 1 Demographics of FCISD, Peer Districts,**

**Region 3 and State Student Populations  
2000-01**

<b>District Name</b>	<b>Enrollment</b>	<b>African American</b>	<b>Anglo</b>	<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Economically Disadvantaged</b>
<b>Falls City</b>	<b>338</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>87.6%</b>	<b>12.4%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>23.7%</b>
Moulton	356	0.8%	81.7%	17.4%	0.0%	48.3%
Campbell	311	1.6%	93.6%	4.5%	0.3%	30.5%
Bland	544	2.6%	85.3%	11.0%	1.1%	26.3%
Martinsville	323	6.2%	86.1%	7.7%	0.0%	50.5%
Fruitvale	357	0.6%	91.0%	8.1%	0.3%	60.2%
<b>Region 3</b>	<b>55,852</b>	<b>11.0%</b>	<b>45.1%</b>	<b>42.5%</b>	<b>1.4%</b>	<b>50.0%</b>
<b>State</b>	<b>4,071,433</b>	<b>14.0%</b>	<b>42.0%</b>	<b>41.0%</b>	<b>3.0%</b>	<b>49.2%</b>

*Source: TEA, PEIMS 2000-01.*

The district's annual budget for 2000-01 is \$2.49 million. Compared to its peer districts, FCISD is tied for the second highest property tax rate and third highest taxable property value per pupil (**Exhibit 2**).

**Exhibit 2  
FCISD Adopted Tax Rate and Taxable Property Value  
Compared to Peer Districts and State  
2000-01**

<b>District Name</b>	<b>Tax Rate</b>	<b>Taxable Property Value per Pupil</b>
<b>Falls City</b>	<b>\$1.5000</b>	<b>\$99,577</b>
Moulton	\$1.2890	\$124,226
Campbell	\$1.4022	\$119,347
Bland	\$1.4783	\$91,074
Martinsville	\$1.5900	\$67,972
Fruitvale	\$1.5000	\$89,088

*Source: Comptroller's Office 2000.*

The percentage of FCISD students passing TAAS was second highest among all its peer districts and above the regional and state averages in reading, writing, mathematics and all tests taken (**Exhibit 3**).

**Exhibit 3**  
**Percent of FCISD, Region 3 and State**  
**Students Passing TAAS, All Levels**  
**1999-2000**

<b>District Name</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Math</b>	<b>All Tests</b>
Moulton	98.3%	100.0%	97.8%	97.3%
<b>Falls City</b>	<b>94.0%</b>	<b>92.6%</b>	<b>94.7%</b>	<b>90.5%</b>
Bland	93.3%	98.1%	94.2%	89.5%
Campbell	86.4%	85.4%	89.2%	80.7%
Fruitvale	86.6%	83.9%	88.2%	79.9%
Martinsville	91.8%	83.3%	87.4%	79.7%
<b>Region 3</b>	<b>90.3%</b>	<b>90.5%</b>	<b>91.2%</b>	<b>84.1%</b>
<b>State</b>	<b>87.4%</b>	<b>88.2%</b>	<b>87.4%</b>	<b>79.9%</b>

*Source: TEA, AEIS 1999-2000.*

FCISD is a small district with a static student growth and a fairly static tax base, without any major commercial property. The district is a Recognized district with two campuses; the high school is rated Exemplary, a rarity among Texas school districts. It receives the preponderance of its funding from the state, but because only 23.7 percent of students are economically disadvantaged. FCISD does not qualify for various state and federal funds for special populations. FCISD trustees and the community pride themselves on a pay-as-you-go philosophy that requires projects be funded from general revenue, limiting a number of programs such as facilities and technology. FCISD is consequently faced with the following challenges:

- Planning for the future to gain community support
- Eliminating unnecessary costs
- Using available funds more efficiently

**Key Findings and Recommendations**

*Planning For The Future To Gain Community Support*

- ***Develop a long-range facilities plan.*** The district has no facilities plan and makes maintenance decisions on a yearly basis. Work often stops partway through construction or maintenance when funding runs out. Planning will allow the district to adequately fund change and make the community more aware of FCISD's facilities needs.
- ***Develop a safety and security plan for the district.*** The district has no comprehensive plan to deal with a crisis, whether a natural disaster, such as a tornado or an act of violence. While the number of safety incidents in the district is small, the district must remain alert to ensure it is protecting district students and staff.

### ***Eliminating Unnecessary Costs***

- ***Establish Meals Per Labor Hour (MPLH) standards for staffing Food Services.*** FCISD does not use the industry MPLH standard, or any other standard, to determine how efficiently the food service organization is in FCISD. By implementing a standard the district could potentially eliminate unnecessary staff and save over \$24,000 annually.
- ***Evaluate bus routes and consolidate those that overlap.*** A number of FCISD bus routes overlap, with buses running while only partially full. Eliminating some routes will help reduce operating costs by several thousand dollars annually and still provide safe and efficient transportation of children to school.
- ***Sell the district-owned house.*** The head coach lives in a small district-owned house. While the district requires the coach to live in the house, the coach is paying below market value for use of the house and is not building equity in a home. Selling the house to the coach or another party can benefit both the district and its staff.
- ***Eliminate guaranteed overtime payments for maintenance work.*** FCISD guarantees overtime payments for maintenance staff. Guaranteeing overtime costs is highly unusual and does not appear necessary according to the records provided by the district. The district can save several thousand dollars annually by paying overtime only when overtime is necessary.

### ***Use Available Funds More Efficiently***

- ***Implement a rotating K-12 curriculum review cycle.*** While the district has reviewed some aspects of curriculum over the last several years, it does not have a comprehensive review schedule.

By regularly reviewing curriculum the district will ensure that it is providing the most current curriculum to its students.

- ***Account for compensatory education dollars in the campus improvement plans.*** Districts are required by law and state regulations to account for the way the district plans to use compensatory dollars to supplement student programs identified as at-risk of dropping out. FCISD will not only be complying with new audit requirements by including this information in its plans, but will also ensure that at-risk students are being adequately served.
- ***Use "sweep" accounts to increase investment income on idle cash balances.*** The district currently does not have a depository agreement that calls for "sweep" accounts and consequently not earning as much interest as it might. FCISD would increase interest income on idle cash balances if this money were put in high interest bearing accounts each night.

### **Exemplary Programs and Practices**

TSPR identified numerous "best practices" in FCISD. Through commendations in each chapter, the report highlights model programs, operations and services provided by FCISD 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:

- ***FCISD emphasizes employee Food Service training and exceeds sanitation standards.*** Unlike many small districts, FCISD emphasizes and supports food service worker training and good sanitation. As a result, FCISD food receives high marks and many parents come and eat with their children whenever they can.
- ***FCISD uses student created surveys to assess Food Services.*** Students took on a project in class to determine what other students liked and disliked about the food and the service in FCISD. Adjustments were made after the results were reviewed and students felt they had been heard.
- ***FCISD uses distance learning to enhance curriculum options.*** The district uses technology to provide advanced classes to students that they would otherwise not have access to. Classes are delivered through Palo Alto Community College and delivered electronically to the district.

- ***FCISD uses a parent involvement coordinator to involve the community in school functions.*** FCISD uses Title I funds to pay a person to act as a liaison between the district and the community. The liaison uses letters, notes and even student handbooks to keep parents informed, schedules parent-teacher conferences, hosts school social events, creates the district calendar and many other duties. Parent and community surveys gave high ratings to FCISD's overall communication.
- ***Board members exceed training requirements.*** Board members are exceeding the state requirement for board member training. Training assists board members to better understand their roles as policy makers rather than administrators.
- ***FCISD emphasizes community learning.*** Through various strategies, grants and the use of technology trains students, teachers and community members. FCISD provides evening and weekend classes for community members and parents on using the Internet and Windows operating system software. FCISD also uses distance learning technology to bring continuing education classes taught by Palo Alto Community College into the district.
- ***FCISD has an up-to-date fixed asset inventory that is well-maintained.*** TEA rules requires districts to maintain a fixed asset inventory. An inventory helps districts by reducing theft and providing documentation in the event of missing items.

### **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 minimum. Proposed investments of additional funds usually are related to increased efficiencies or savings or improved productivity and effectiveness.

TSPR recommended 33 ways to save FCISD more than \$312,000 in gross savings over a five-year period. Reinvestment opportunities will cost the district \$21,000 during the same period. Full implementation of all recommendations in this report could produce net savings of more than \$291,000 by 2005-06 (**Exhibit 4**).

**Exhibit 4**  
**Summary of Net Savings**  
**TSPR Review of Falls City Independent School District**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Total</b>
2001-02 Initial Annual Net Savings	\$48,092
2002-03 Additional Annual Net Savings	\$56,183
2003-04 Additional Annual Net Savings	\$56,183
2004-05 Additional Annual Net Savings	\$56,183
2005-06 Additional Annual Net Savings	\$56,183
One Time Net (Costs)/Savings	\$36,000
<b>TOTAL SAVINGS PROJECTED FOR 2001-2006</b>	<b>\$291,694</b>

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 FCISD 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.







	principal. P. 69							
18	Issue a Request for Proposals to provide third party administration of third-party provided insurance programs including 403(b) compliance. p. 70	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
19	Implement a sick leave bank program. p. 71	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
20	Institute a formal cross training plan over business related functions. p. 72	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
21	Develop a formal procedures manual for the business office that details day-to-day operations. p. 72	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
22	Cease making guaranteed overtime payments for maintenance work. p. 73	\$2,796	\$2,796	\$2,796	\$2,796	\$2,796	\$13,980	\$0
23	Develop and implement a year-round budget calendar. p. 76	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
24	Execute a formal vendor agreement and require substantiation of commission checks. p. 77	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

25	Form a committee of superintendents, Regional Education Service Center representatives and representatives from the Texas Education Agency to explore the opportunities for shared financial services. p. 81	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Totals-Chapter 3</b>		<b>\$12,983</b>	<b>\$12,983</b>	<b>\$12,983</b>	<b>\$12,983</b>	<b>\$12,983</b>	<b>\$64,915</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Chapter 4 Operations</b>								
26	Evaluate food service employees and involve them in setting performance targets on an annual basis. p. 91	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
27	Establish Meals Per Labor Hour standards and evaluate the cafeteria's productivity based on the district's actual operation. p. 93	\$16,182	\$24,273	\$24,273	\$24,273	\$24,273	\$113,274	\$0
28	Turn off vending machines during lunch to comply with federal guidelines. p. 94	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
29	Implement a bus safety program to include bus evacuation drills. p. 100	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0



# CHAPTER 1

## DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

This chapter examines Falls City Independent School District's (FCISD) organization, management and community involvement four sections:

- A. Board Governance
- B. District Management
- C. Personnel Management
- D. Community Involvement

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

### **BACKGROUND**

FCISD is a small district with 338 students in 2000-01 that is managed by a superintendent, a high school principal and an elementary principal.

The present Falls City Independent School District was organized in 1949 as Falls City Common Consolidated County Line School District. The district was organized by consolidating smaller "Common" districts and parochial schools including Falls City, Hobson, Ehlers (in Wilson County), Deweesville, Laake, Cestohowa, Holy Trinity Parochial School of Falls City and Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parochial School of Cestohowa.

An agreement was reached with the parochial schools that the newly formed school system would employ certified teachers from their schools. Consequently, nuns of the Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament and the order of Felician Sisters taught in the consolidated system into the 1990's.

A classroom building and gymnasium were built between 1949-1950 in Falls City on a site adjacent to a 1938 four-room brick building. Frame classroom buildings from the other schools were moved to the site and used as a cafeteria, a band hall and an athletic field house.

A Board of Trustees governed the school. The administration consisted of a superintendent and two principals. However, the district was partially under the jurisdiction of a County Superintendent whose office supervised

the various funds, approved some procurements, processed disbursements and kept the employee and some student records.

The district began as a twelve-grade system, and graduated its first class in 1950. FCISD added kindergarten in the 1970's. The Beaver was chosen as the school's mascot and a teacher in 1950 who has since retired but still lives in the district wrote the school song, "Hail Beavers."

In September 1974, the system became the Falls City Independent School District (FCISD). All functions were transferred from the County Superintendent's office to the FCISD superintendent. In 1976, the Texas Education Agency found the school to be fully accredited with no deficiencies.

# CHAPTER 1

## DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

### A. BOARD GOVERNANCE

An elected Board of Trustees governs each Texas school district and directs the management of the schools. School board members are elected by district residents either at-large, district-wide or from single-member districts.

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 and regulations and controlling court decisions. 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 the district's expense by a Texas certified 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 FCISD board consists of seven members each elected for a three-year term (**Exhibit 1-1**).

**Exhibit 1-1**  
**Falls City ISD Board of Trustees**  
**May 2001**

<b>Board Member</b>	<b>Board Position</b>	<b>Term Expires</b>	<b>Occupation</b>
Garrett Jurgajtis	President	May 2004	Metal Building Company Salesman
Marilyn Nieschwietz	Vice President	May 2004	Postal Worker
Raymond Dziuk	Secretary	May 2003	Feed Mill Owner/Worker
Ivan Jaskinia	Member	May 2002	Operation Tech/Oil Company
Gary Moy	Member	May 2003	Geologist
Michael Pruski	Member	May 2002	Farmer
Gerald Sekula	Member	May 2002	Banker

*Source: Falls City ISD Superintendent's Office.*

Board meetings are held in the Superintendent's office on the third Wednesday of each month beginning at 7:00 PM. Prior to July 2001, board meetings were held on the third Tuesday of each month.

**FINDING**

The board is meeting or exceeding training requirements set for board members. **Exhibit 1-2** presents an overview of the minimum annual continuing education requirements prescribed by the Texas law and rules established by the State Board of Education and the Texas Education Agency for new, as well as experienced board members.

**Exhibit 1-2**  
**Overview of Continuing Education Requirements for School Board Members**

<b>Type of Continuing Education</b>	<b>First Year Board Member</b>	<b>Experienced Board Member</b>
Local District Orientation	Required within 60 days of election or	Not required

	appointment	
Orientation to the Texas Education Code	3 hours	Not required
Update to the Texas Education Code	Incorporated into Orientation to the Texas Education Code	After legislative session: of sufficient length to address major changes
Team-building Session/Assessment of Continuing Education Needs of the Board-Superintendent Team	At least 3 hours	3 hours, optional
Additional Continuing Education, based on assessed need and Framework for School Board Development	At least 10 hours	At least 5 hours
<b>Total Minimum Number of Hours</b>	<b>16 hours, plus local district orientation</b>	<b>3 hours, plus update</b>

*Source: Texas Association of School Boards.*

**Exhibit 1-3** lists the in-service training received by the FCISD board members from July 1999 through May 2001.

**Exhibit 1-3  
Falls City ISD Trustee In-Service Attendance  
Texas Association of School Board Hours Earned**

<b>Board Member</b>	<b>July 1999 to August 2000</b>	<b>September 2000-Present</b>
Garrett Jurgajtis	10.75	10.75
Marilyn Nieschwietz	12.75	10.75
Raymond Dziuk	10.75	10.75
Ivan Jaskinia	10.75	10.75
Gary Moy	12.00	9.5
Michael Pruski	22.25	9.5
Gerald Sekula	10.75	10.75

*Source: Falls City ISD Superintendent's Office.*

## COMMENDATION

**All board members are meeting or exceeding the required number of hours for training.**

## FINDING

The Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) recommends that school districts review all policies at least every five years. The FCISD board uses the services of TASB to review its Legal portion of the policies in the policy manual and performs this review every two years to coincide with the state legislative review of educational laws.

FCISD has a second portion of its policy book titled LOCAL. While the board reviewed policies in 1998, it has not updated the local policies since 1994. Policies needing to be updated include: Accounting: Financial Reports and Statements, Safety Program/Risk Management, Payroll Procedures and Insurance and Annuities Management.

### **Recommendation 1:**

**Review and update LOCAL policies every five years.**

## IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The board and superintendent initiate review of district LOCAL policies and update when necessary.	November 2001
2.	The superintendent schedules the next review five years in the future.	Fall 2006

## FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

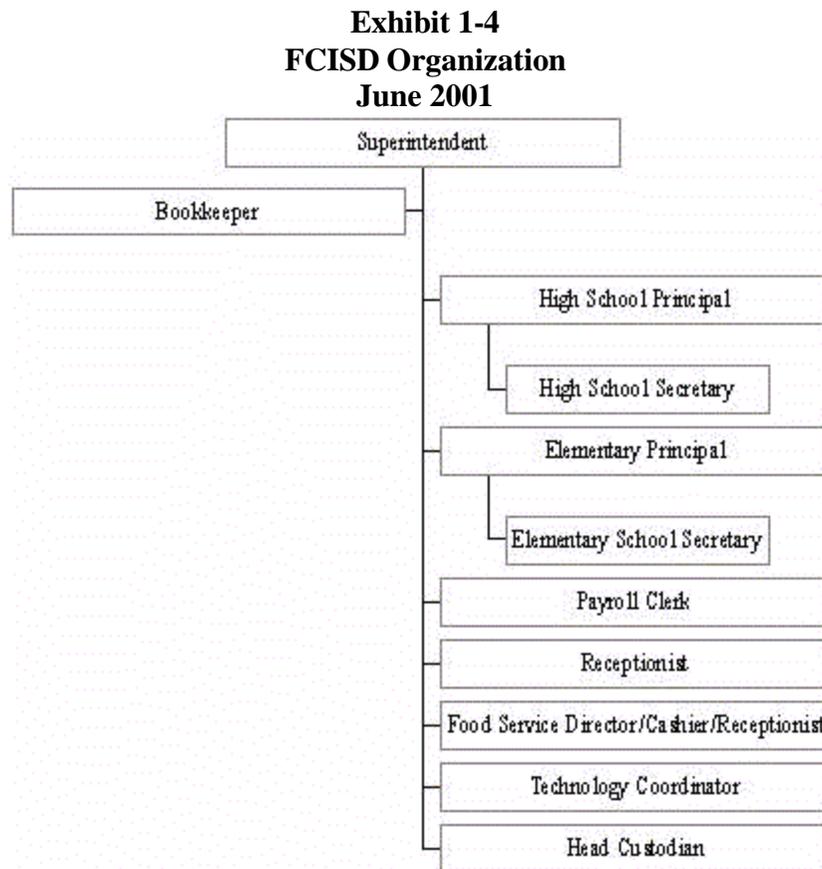
# CHAPTER 1

## DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

### B. DISTRICT MANAGEMENT

The FCISD administration consists of a superintendent and two principals, high school and elementary. Support staff includes a food service director, a bookkeeper, a payroll clerk, a technology coordinator, a maintenance employee and two office secretaries who are responsible for answering phones and clerical duties. All administrative support staff report directly to the superintendent.

**Exhibit 1-4** is the FCISD administrative organization.



*Source: Interview with FCISD Superintendent.*

The Texas Education Code specifies that 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 to 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.

## **FINDING**

The superintendent was given a one-year extension to his contract without community input on April 15, 2001. On May 15, 2001, the superintendent resigned his position at FCISD and accepted a position at another Texas educational facility effective June 15, 2001.

Board members said they were looking for a dynamic superintendent who would aggressively pursue building updates, curriculum review and be a "teacher of teachers." While the board members generally agreed on the basic skills and personality traits of a new superintendent, they varied widely on the key issues and performance expectations associated with the superintendent position.

In the Hamilton ISD, for example, the board carefully developed its priorities and sought out a superintendent that had the skill sets they felt they needed to help the district achieve those goals. For example, boards may establish a goal of increasing student achievement. In evaluating superintendent candidates, they can assess each candidate on the individual's past ability to raise student performance from one year to another. Another objective might be to increase the financial position of the district. The board can evaluate how candidates have previously managed the tax rate, fund balance, grant programs and cost containment.

### **Recommendation 2:**

**Establish clear and measurable expectations to hire and evaluate the superintendent.**

Since the board is beginning the process of selecting a superintendent, these expectations should be in place prior to the interviews and final selection. In selecting a new superintendent, key performance areas should be used to evaluate the strength and capabilities of candidates in meeting the needs of FCISD. Once the superintendent is in place, the board and the superintendent should establish goals and objectives that can be quantified and against which progress can be measured.

### **IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The board meets to determine the requirements for a superintendent.	October 2001
2.	The board adopts a set of requirements for hiring and evaluation.	October 2001
3.	The board uses criteria to evaluate candidates and select a new superintendent.	October 2001
4.	The board establishes key milestones, monitors progress, and holds periodic meetings, as necessary, with the superintendent.	Ongoing
5.	The board conducts the annual review of the superintendent using the criteria it has established.	September 2002

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

### **FINDING**

FCISD does not have a manual of standard operating procedures linked to board policies. Because the district is small and there are few central office staff, each person performs their tasks with little need for instruction. This practice can be a problem when the person performing the task is not there or leaves the district unexpectedly. One district reviewed by TSPR was more than six months behind on bank reconciliations because the only person who knew how to do the reconciliations became seriously ill. Standard operating procedures for purchasing, personnel management and budgeting prevent violations of board policy or state laws by clearly detailing how policies are to be implemented.

FCISD, while not having a procedures manual, has hired a former district superintendent as an interim superintendent to assist with daily operations and serve as educational chief executive officer until a permanent replacement can be hired.

**Recommendation 3:**

**Develop standard operating procedures' manual to accompany all approved board policy.**

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent directs staff to document day-to-day operating procedures.	October 2001
2.	The superintendent, staff and district campus administrators review procedures to verify that all areas of district operations are addressed and that procedures and policies are included.	December 2001
3.	The administrators create a procedures manual and handbooks as needed.	January 2002
4.	The superintendent presents new procedures manual and handbooks to the board for review and approval.	March 2002

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

# CHAPTER 1

## DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

### C. PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

Personnel and human resources management is a critical function of a school district. Successful management of personnel includes efficient recruiting, hiring, classification and compensation, benefit administration, training and development and performance evaluation. Compliance with equal employment opportunity statutes and other applicable federal and state laws, and the establishment of fair and workable policies, procedures and training are important for the recruitment and retention of competent staff.

The superintendent and the building principals conduct FCISD human resource functions.

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

- Development of wage and salary schedules;
- Administration of salary systems, including placement of positions on salary schedules and periodic review of schedules to ensure competitiveness with other employers;
- Classification of all positions;
- Development of job descriptions for all positions and the periodic update/modification of job descriptions to reflect changes in responsibilities;
- Development of personnel staffing tables and review of staff allocation formulas;
- Administration of an employee grievance process;
- Recruitment of personnel to fill vacant positions;
- Maintenance of required employees records;
- Administration of certification and permit processes;
- Issuance of contracts and non-renewal or dismissal notices;
- Placement of substitutes;
- Recruitment and placement of student teachers;
- Development of board policies regarding personnel issues;
- Development and administration of an employee benefits program; and
- Preparation of periodic report to address local board and state reporting requirements.

In the FCISD the superintendent and designee are responsible for:

- Preparing all reports required by the Teacher Retirement System, Texas Employment Commission and the Texas Education agency;
- Preparation of application for funds from available sources other than those delegated to the assistant superintendent or the Business office;
- Preparation of regular and special reports as requested by the board of Trustees or superintendent;
- Work with principals and staff to define personnel needs regarding instruction management;
- Interviewing and screening all job applicants;
- The administration of personnel operations, both certified and support;
- Performance of exit interview;
- Preparation of all applications for funds required within the framework of the Minimum Foundation Salary Program;
- Recommending salary and benefit changes to superintendent and board;
- Determining salaries and calculating payroll changes, when applicable, of all personnel within the district;
- Informing the business office of all payroll information necessary to the issuance of payroll checks;
- Preparation of all reports and records necessary for the fullest utilization of federal program funds;
- Hearing appeals from parents regarding bus drivers and discipline;
- Student teacher orientation for cooperating teacher in-service;
- Preparation of personnel statistical reports for superintendent and board;
- Representing superintendent at various functions;
- Work with secondary attendance secretaries and attendance office to identify school dropouts; and
- Approval of calendars of personnel who work over 185 days per year.

FCISD must comply with federal laws governing human resources management, including the Fair Labor Standards Act, which governs wages and hourly payments; the American 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. The district must also abide by state laws governing school district personnel administration in employee grievance, due process, termination and contract renewal (Section 21, Texas Education Code).

The Texas Education Agency's The Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) categorizes school district staff into three groups: 1) professional staff, which includes teachers, professional support staff, campus administrators and central administrators, 2) educational aides, and 3) auxiliary.

**Exhibit 1-5** describes the number of full-time equivalent positions (FTEs) employed by the district from 1996-97 through 2000-01 compared to the number of students.

**Exhibit 1-5  
FCISD Staff FTEs versus Total Students  
1996-97 through 2000-01**

<b>Staff Category</b>	<b>1996-97</b>	<b>1997-98</b>	<b>1998-99</b>	<b>1999-2000</b>	<b>2000-01</b>	<b>Percent Change 1996-2001</b>
Teachers	29.0	28.4	30.3	29.2	30.5	5%
Professional Support	0.5	0.8	2.6	1.8	1.8	260%
Campus administration	2.0	2.0	1.7	1.6	1.6	(20%)
Central administration	1.0	2.0	1.0	0.3	0.3	(70%)
Educational aides	5.0	7.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	(40%)
Auxiliary staff	13.1	12.4	18.1	17.6	18.6	42%
<b>Total staff</b>	<b>50.6</b>	<b>52.6</b>	<b>56.7</b>	<b>53.5</b>	<b>55.8</b>	<b>10.3%</b>
<b>Total Students</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>338</b>	<b>0.3%</b>

*Source: TEA, AEIS, 1996-97 through 1999-2000, PEIMS 2000-01 and FCISD Business Office.*

Staff increased by more than 10 percent while student growth remained almost static at 0.2 percent growth. **Exhibit 1-6** describes the average staff salaries for FCISD and peer districts for 1999-2000.

**Exhibit 1-6  
Average Staff Salaries for  
FCISD and Peer Districts  
1999-2000**

<b>District</b>	<b>Teachers</b>	<b>Professional Support</b>	<b>Campus Administration</b>	<b>Central Administration</b>
Moulton	\$37,520	\$42,404	\$47,500	\$60,000
Martinsville	\$34,509	\$35,611	\$54,138	\$65,790
Fruitvale	\$33,990	\$37,424	\$49,350	\$41,000
<b>Falls City</b>	<b>\$37,191</b>	<b>\$36,667</b>	<b>\$49,079</b>	<b>\$63,500</b>
Campbell	\$32,943	\$28,630	\$46,943	\$60,000
Bland	\$34,654	\$35,372	\$50,080	\$66,800

*Source: TEA, AEIS, 1999-2000.*

The Falls City central administrative staff includes the superintendent, bookkeeper, payroll clerk, and two secretaries. Professional support includes a therapist, a counselor, a librarian and a nurse. Auxiliary staff includes maintenance personnel, custodians, cafeteria workers and bus drivers. The average teacher salary at FCISD is the second highest salary among the peer group. The average professional support salary is the third highest among the peer group. The average salary for campus administration is also the third highest among the peer group and the average salary for central administration is the third highest among the peer group.

**Exhibit 1-7** shows teacher FTE's by years of experience.

**Exhibit 1-7**  
**FCISD Teachers FTEs by Years of Experience**  
**1996-97 through 2000-01**

<b>Years of Experience</b>	<b>1996-97</b>	<b>1997-98</b>	<b>1998-99</b>	<b>1999-2000</b>	<b>2000-01</b>	<b>Percent Change</b>
Beginning Teachers	0.0	2.0	2.0	3.0	0.0	0%
1-5 years	4.0	3.5	5.0	4.0	7.0	75.0%
6-10 years	7.0	5.0	5.0	2.0	1.0	(85.7%)
11-20 years	10.1	11.0	10.4	12.3	13.0	28.7%
More than 20 years	7.9	6.9	6.8	9.0	10.0	26.6%

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

**Exhibit 1-8** shows that FCISD's average years of teacher experience is higher than the state and region.

**Exhibit 1-8**  
**FCISD, Region 3, Peer Group Average and State Years of Teaching Experience**  
**1996-97 through 2000-01**

Entity	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01
<b>FCISD</b>	<b>13.9</b>	<b>13.1</b>	<b>12.3</b>	<b>13.7</b>	<b>14.6</b>
Region 3	13.8	13.9	13.2	13.4	13.2
Peer Group	13.6	12.9	12.8	13.1	13.1
State	11.7	11.8	11.8	11.9	11.0

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

**FINDING**

The district does not have a plan to promote and retain employees who acquire teacher certification. FCISD is a district with the second highest teacher turnover rate among its peer group during 1999-2000 at 21.2 percent per year. Since 1995-96 FCISD has the second highest average salary rate among the peer group. The turnover rate is high for four main reasons:

- Difficulty in retaining teachers in a district where employee benefits are limited and costly;
- Teacher retirements are increasing;
- Limited community activities to attract and retain new teachers; and
- Employer-paid benefits of regional school districts draw qualified candidates from FCISD.

**Exhibit 1-9** details FCISD teacher turnover rates as compared to peer districts. In 2000 the rate was 21.2 percent, an increase of 10.4 percentage points. In the majority of peer districts turnover decreased during the period of 1995-96 to 1999-2000, while in FCISD turnover doubled during the same period.

FCISD employed between 31 and 33 teachers during 1997-2001. During this period, the district employed 4 bandmasters, 3 Spanish teachers and 6 coaches. During 2000-01 the district experienced no turnover.

**Exhibit 1-9**  
**FCISD Teacher Turnover Rates**  
**as Compared to Peer Districts**  
**1995-96 through 1999-2000**

<b>District</b>	<b>1995-96</b>	<b>1996-97</b>	<b>1997-98</b>	<b>1998-99</b>	<b>1999-2000</b>
Bland	14.8%	9.1%	9.1%	25.9%	16.2%
Campbell	24.0%	44.8%	34.2%	16.7%	26.7%
<b>Falls City</b>	<b>10.8%</b>	<b>20.2%</b>	<b>17.9%</b>	<b>19.3%</b>	<b>21.2%</b>
Fruitvale	22.3%	31.5%	6.9%	6.9%	16.8%
Martinsville	41.6%	0.2%	7.4%	7.4%	11.5%
Moulton	11.0%	7.1%	7.6%	9.0%	6.5%

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

As shown in **Exhibit 1-6**, FCISD has the second highest teacher salary in the peer group. FCISD also has the most experienced teachers of its peers, which may account for the higher than average salaries. Starting teacher salaries are \$24,240, which is the state minimum. While surveys show that job satisfaction is high, recruiting new teachers into positions at FCISD when positions become available is a significant task. Seventy percent of current teachers have always lived in the community or came back to FCISD after receiving their teaching credentials.

Two support employees are pursuing additional education in an effort to obtain certification as teachers. FCISD does not provide these individuals an incentive to ensure that they will return to FCISD as teachers when they are certified.

When job vacancies occur, they are posted throughout the district on teacher's bulletin boards, Region 3, advertised in local newspapers, San Antonio newspapers, listed with TASA, and advertised in Troops to Teachers. District administrators attend job fairs; however, job fairs are held too early in the hiring cycle and FCISD must compete with school districts offering much higher salaries and benefit packages.

The superintendent has expressed serious concerns about attracting new teachers to FCISD.

**Recommendation 4:**

**Develop and implement a plan to recruit and retain highly qualified teachers.**

FCISD will benefit by encouraging existing staff to pursue a career in teaching.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent and principals develop a plan that includes incentives for promotion and retention of existing staff who obtain teacher certification.	November 2001
2.	The superintendent proposes the promotion and retention plan to the school board for approval.	December 2001
3.	FCISD employees are informed about the promotion and retention plan.	January 2002
4.	Eligible employees enroll in the promotion and retention plan.	February 2002

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

# CHAPTER 1

## DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

### **D. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

School districts are a vital part of communities, especially small communities. Providing accurate and timely information to the public builds positive relationships with parents, area businesses, civic and faith organizations and other citizens. Accurate information allows the citizens to draw conclusions and make decisions based on fact rather than rumor and gossip. An effective school district not only communicates its goals and accomplishments, but also solicits input from the community to establish its goals. The manner in which school districts perform this function affects how the public views the district.

Community involvement is an important part of a quality education system. It enables parents, taxpayers, business and civic leaders, community organizations, public officials and others with a stake in public education to understand the challenges facing the district and become involved in activities that support student learning. Many of these activities have high visibility in the community and are often coordinated through a district office that reports directly to the superintendent.

### **FINDING**

FCISD has a parent involvement coordinator paid through Title I who acts as a liaison between the community and the school district. The coordinator is constantly seeking new and innovative ways to reach out to the community and increase school-community relations. The district has developed the following outreach activities, which are employed during the school year:

- Communicates regularly with parents by either a letter, note or by a student notebook.
- Sends welcome letters home with information packs to students' parents at the beginning of the year.
- Creates a monthly calendar that details school events, holidays, and major tests dates.
- Encourages parental assistance at school through the Book Fair, Parent Teacher Organizations, athletic events, and grant writing/review.
- Notifies media for special events such as parent's night, school plays, band concerts and Veterans' Day Assembly.
- Provides intermittent social events for parents and students such as walk to school day, grandparent's day and Open House.

- Offers summer cheerleading, basketball and baseball camps and summer classes in computers.
- Invites parents to eat with their child during Texas School Lunch week.
- Schedules parent and teacher conferences at convenient after-school hours or visits the parents at their home if unable to make it school.

## **COMMENDATION**

**FCISD is using a parent involvement coordinator to pursue many unique ways to involve the community.**

# CHAPTER 2

## EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

This chapter examines the educational service delivery and performance measures of the Falls City Independent School District in the four sections:

- A. Student Performance
- B. Special Programs
- C. Student Safety
- D. Computers and Technology

School districts offer educational services to students through a variety of programs, including regular and special programs designed to provide quality services based on individual student needs. School districts must follow minimum state and federal guidelines when delivering educational services, though most districts strive to go beyond the minimum. A district's ability to effectively deliver educational services is affected by a number of factors; two of the most important are the availability and distribution of resources.

### BACKGROUND

Since 1993, Texas has rated and accredited districts and schools based on specific performance measures including the reading, writing and mathematics portions of the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS), dropout rates and attendance rates. Districts are evaluated each year. FCISD was rated Recognized in 1999-2000.

FCISD is served by Regional Education Service Center III (Region 3).

**Exhibit 2-1** shows the grade levels served and enrollments by school for 1999-2000 and 2000-01.

**Exhibit 2-1**  
**Campuses, Grade Levels and Enrollment**  
**1999-2000 and 2000-01**

<b>Campus</b>	<b>Grade Levels</b>	<b>1999-2000 Enrollment</b>	<b>2000-01 Enrollment</b>	<b>Percent Change</b>
Falls City Elementary	K-6	187	186	(0.5%)
Falls City High School	7-12	148	152	2.7%

<b>Total</b>		<b>335</b>	<b>338</b>	<b>0.9%</b>
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Source: TEA, AEIS 1999-2000 and PEIMS 2000-01.

**Exhibit 2-2** shows that the Falls City School district is composed of a majority of Anglo students.

**Exhibit 2-2  
Demographics and Accountability Ratings by Campus  
1999-2000**

<b>Campus</b>	<b>Grades Served</b>	<b>Enrollment</b>	<b>African American</b>	<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>Anglo</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Accountability Rating</b>
Elementary School	K-6	187	0.0%	10.7%	89.3%	0.3%	Recognized
High School	7-12	148	0.0%	10.1%	88.5%	1.4%	Exemplary
District Profile		335	0.0%	10.4%	89.0	6%	Recognized

Source: TEA, AEIS, 1999-2000. Figures may not add due to rounding.

**Exhibit 2-3** shows that Falls City has experienced a slight decrease in student population over the four-year period. Four of the six school districts in the comparison group showed an increase in student population.

**Exhibit 2-3  
FCISD, Peer District, Region 3 and State Growth Rates  
1996-97 to 1999-2000**

<b>Entity</b>	<b>1996-97</b>	<b>1997-98</b>	<b>1998-99</b>	<b>1999-2000</b>	<b>Difference</b>
Bland	444	484	486	539	95
Campbell	306	314	336	329	23
<b>Falls City</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>-2</b>
Fruitvale	354	363	345	323	-31
Martinsville	266	294	299	300	34
Moulton	377	377	362	378	1
<b>Region 3</b>	<b>57,684</b>	<b>57,730</b>	<b>57,361</b>	<b>56,590</b>	<b>-1,094</b>

State	3,828,975	3,891,877	3,945,367	3,991,783	162,808
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Source: TEA, AEIS, 1996-97 to 1999-2000.

**Exhibit 2-4** shows that the comparison group consists of a higher percentage of Anglo students when compared to the state and region. FCISD has the second highest percent of Hispanic students when compared to the peer districts. All schools in the comparison group have significantly fewer Hispanic students when compared to the state and region. FCISD has no African American students though all other schools in the comparison group have a small percentage of African American students. FCISD ranked with Campbell ISD in having the fewest limited English proficiency (LEP) students. FCISD has the lowest percentage of Economically Disadvantaged students among peer districts, state and region.

**Exhibit 2-4**  
**Ethnicity, LEP, Economically Disadvantaged Students**  
**FCISD, Peer Districts, Region 3 and State**  
**1999-2000**

Entity	Anglo	Hispanic	African American	Other	LEP Students	Economically Disadvantaged Students
Bland	85.7%	10.2%	2.4%	1.7%	4.1%	28.9%
Campbell	93.6%	4.9%	1.2%	0.3%	1.2%	34.0%
<b>Falls City</b>	<b>89.0%</b>	<b>10.4%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>0.6%</b>	<b>1.2%</b>	<b>21.2%</b>
Fruitvale	92.0%	6.5%	1.2%	0.3%	4.3%	53.9%
Martinsville	88.0%	7.0%	5.0%	0.0%	3.3%	45.3%
Moulton	80.2%	19.6%	0.3%	0.0%	3.7%	50.0%
<b>Region 3</b>	<b>45.8%</b>	<b>41.8%</b>	<b>11.1%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>5.0%</b>	<b>50.1%</b>
<b>State</b>	<b>43.1%</b>	<b>39.6%</b>	<b>14.4%</b>	<b>2.9%</b>	<b>13.9%</b>	<b>49.0%</b>

Source: TEA, AEIS 1999-2000. Figures may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

**Exhibit 2-5** shows the attendance rate of FCISD to rank first among peer districts three out of four years. Attendance rate is higher than both state and region. FCISD dropout rate is second lowest among peer districts over

the four-year period. Dropout rate for Region 3 and the state is higher than FCISD.

**Exhibit 2-5**  
**Attendance and Dropout Rate of FCISD Students Compared to**  
**Peer Districts, Region 3 and the State**  
**1996-97 to 1998-99\***

Entity	Attendance Rate	Attendance Rate	Attendance Rate	Dropout Rate	Dropou Rate	Dropout Rate
	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99
Bland	95.2	95.5	95.5	0.0	0.0	0.4
Campbell	95.9	95.2	94.8	0.0	2.3	0.5
<b>Falls City</b>	<b>98.1</b>	<b>97.8</b>	<b>98.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>0.0</b>
Fruitvale	95.2	95.1	95.6	0.7	1.2	1.2
Martinsville	96.3	96.0	96.3	0.0	0.0	0.7
Moulton	97.7	97.9	97.7	0.1	1.6	0.0
<b>Region 3</b>	<b>95.2</b>	<b>95.4</b>	<b>95.7</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>1.0</b>
<b>State</b>	<b>95.2</b>	<b>95.3</b>	<b>95.4</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>1.6</b>

*Source: TEA, AEIS 1996-97 through 1998-99. \* most current figures available.*

**Exhibit 2-6** shows the 1999-2000 student-teacher ratios in FCISD, Region 3, state and peer districts. FCISD ranks third when compared to peer districts in student-teacher ratio.

**Exhibit 2-6**  
**Student-Teacher Ratio in FCISD, Region 3, State and Peer Districts**  
**1999-2000**

Entity	Student Teacher Ratio
Martinsville	10.1:1
Campbell	10.9:1
<b>Falls City</b>	<b>11.1:1</b>
Fruitvale	11.5:1

Moulton	11.8:1
Region 3	13.7:1
Bland	14.0:1
State	14.9:1

Source: TEA AEIS 1999-2000.

**Exhibit 2-7** shows that FCISD dedicates significantly more of its budget to classroom instruction expenditures as the state as a percentage of total expenditures. FCISD ranked fifth highest in the percent of bud get for this purpose when compared to peer districts.

**Exhibit 2-7**  
**FCISD, Region 3, State and Peer Districts Classroom Instruction Expenditures**  
**As a Percentage of Total Expenditures**  
**1999-2000**

Entity	Total Expenditures	Classroom Instruction Expenditures	Classroom Instruction Expenditures as a Percentage of Total Expenditures
Bland	\$3,503,357	\$1,787,643	51.0%
Campbell	\$2,354,503	\$1,243,185	52.8%
<b>Falls City</b>	<b>\$2,392,328</b>	<b>\$1,338,991</b>	<b>56.0%</b>
Fruitvale	\$2,149,049	\$1,058,983	49.3%
Martinsville	\$2,228,754	\$1,176,604	52.8%
Moulton	\$2,504,268	\$1,487,937	59.4%
<b>Region 3</b>	<b>\$359,637,710</b>	<b>\$193,725,935</b>	<b>53.2%</b>
<b>State</b>	<b>\$25,364,399,671</b>	<b>\$13,166,780,206</b>	<b>51.3%</b>

Source: TEA, AEIS, 1999-2000.

# CHAPTER 2

## EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

### A. STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Effective instruction depends upon adequate human and fiscal resources and on support from the district's central office. The school administrative and instructional team must be qualified and active in planning and implementing the curriculum. TAAS performance, the primary factor in determining a district's accountability ratings, depends on effective instruction.

TAAS is administered in grades 3-8 and 10 and includes a reading and mathematics test in grades 3-8 and 10 and a writing assessment in grades 4, 8 and 10. Science and Social Studies are included in grade 8, but are not included in determining accountability ratings. Because there are five tests administered in grade 8, this grade level usually has the lowest percentage of students passing all tests taken. The Spanish version of TAAS is given in grades 3-6.

**Exhibit 2-8** shows that in all categories all students surpassed state scores. Economically disadvantaged students scored below state level in reading. Economically disadvantaged students scored above the state level in writing and mathematics. Anglo students scored above the state levels in all categories. Hispanic students scored above the state scores in reading, mathematics and in all tests. Hispanic students were the only student group scoring below the state in writing, which represents eight students.

**Exhibit 2-8**  
**Percent of FCISD and State Students Passing TAAS, All Grade Levels**  
**1999-2000**

Student	Reading	Writing	Mathematics	All Tests
All	94.0%	92.6%	94.7%	90.5%
Hispanic	90.0%	75.0%	90.0%	85.0%
Anglo	94.5%	94.9%	95.3%	91.2%
Economically Disadvantaged	83.8%	93.3%	92.1%	81.6%
<b>State</b>	<b>87.4%</b>	<b>88.2%</b>	<b>87.4%</b>	<b>79.9%</b>

*Source: TEA, AEIS, 1999-2000.*

**Exhibit 2-9** shows that FCISD students improved scores in reading and mathematics over the five-year timeframe. Writing scores ranged between 81.5 percent and 97.1 percent during this period.

**Exhibit 2-9**  
**Percent of All Students Passing TAAS, All Grade Levels**  
**1995-96 to 1999-2000**

Subject	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Reading	90.1%	93.6%	86.4%	94.3%	94.0%
Math	87.9%	93.6%	88.1%	90.7%	94.7%
Writing	92.9%	90.5%	81.5%	97.1%	92.6%

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

**Exhibit 2-10** shows the percentage of Hispanic students passing TAAS reading improved by 33.7 percent. The percentage of Hispanic students passing mathematics increased by 21.2 percent and those passing writing increased by 15 percent.

**Exhibit 2-10**  
**Percent of Hispanic Students Passing TAAS**  
**1995-96-1999-2000**

Subject	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Reading	56.3%	88.2%	73.7%	100%	90%
Math	68.8%	82.4%	75.0%	87.5%	90%
Writing	60.0%	90.0%	40.0%	100%	75%

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

**Exhibit 2-11** shows reading scores for Anglo students improved by 0.1 percent; mathematics scores improved by 4.9 percent and writing scores decreased by 1.2 percent.

**Exhibit 2-11**  
**Percent of Anglo Students Passing TAAS**  
**1995-96 to 1999-2000**

Subject	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Reading	94.4%	94.3%	88.1%	93.7%	94.5%

Math	90.4%	95.0%	90.0%	91.0%	95.3%
Writing	96.1%	90.6%	87.3%	96.7%	94.9%

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

**Exhibit 2-12** shows the scores of Economically Disadvantaged students improved by 8 percent in reading by 13.3 percent in mathematics and by 26.6 percent in writing.

**Exhibit 2-12**  
**Percent of Economically Disadvantaged Students Passing TAAS**  
**1995-96 to 1999-2000**

Subject	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Reading	75.8%	86.7%	87.9%	85.3%	83.8.0%
Math	78.8%	88.9%	80.0%	75.0%	92.1.0%
Writing	66.7%	83.3%	92.3%	100.0%	93.3.0%

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

**Exhibit 2-13** shows students surpassed the state scores at all grade levels in reading and mathematics. Fourth grade writing fell below the state by 1.8 percent.

**Exhibit 2-13**  
**Percent of FCISD and State**  
**Elementary Students Passing TAAS**  
**1999-2000**

Grade/Subject	FCISD	State
3rd Reading	91.3%	87.9%
3rd Math	83.3%	80.6%
4th Reading	96.2%	89.9%
4th Writing	88.5%	90.3%
4th Math	96.3%	87.1%
5th Reading	96.2%	87.8%
5th Math	100.0%	92.1%
6th Reading	96.2%	86.0%

6th Math	100.0%	88.5%
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Source: TEA, AEIS 1999-2000.

**Exhibit 2-14** shows that seventh grade students exceeded state levels in reading and mathematics. Eighth grade students fell below state levels in reading and mathematics and surpassed state scores in writing, science and social studies. Tenth grade student scores surpassed the state in reading, writing and mathematics.

**Exhibit 2-14**  
**Percent of FCISD and State**  
**High School Students Passing TAAS**  
**1999-2000**

<b>Grade/Subject</b>	<b>FCISD</b>	<b>State</b>
7th Reading	95.7%	83.5%
7th Math	95.7%	88.1%
8th Reading	84.2%	89.6%
8th Writing	94.7%	84.3%
8th Math	89.5%	90.2%
8th Science	94.7%	88.2%
8th Social Studies	89.5%	71.8%
10th Reading	95.7%	90.3%
10th Writing	95.7%	90.7%
10th Math	95.7%	86.8%

Source: TEA, AEIS 1999-2000.

**FINDING**

There is no districtwide K-12 curriculum review process in place. The high school principal reported mathematics for grades K-12 was the only curriculum revised during the last school year. Teachers told the review team the entire district curriculum has not been reviewed since the current superintendent arrived in the district in December 1998. The teachers agree the curriculum needs to be updated across all grade levels. Similar comments were made in the surveys of the community, teachers and students.

Surveys showed graduates were having difficulty in mathematics in their post high school settings and FCISD set about to address the deficiencies. Numerous parents commented in the community survey regarding the perceived low quality of the mathematics program. Teachers said curriculum at the middle grade levels (grades 5-8) were not aligned with either the elementary curriculum or the high school curriculum. Some evidence of this may be seen in drop in grade 8 reading scores that are somewhat lower than other scores. For instance, FCISD uses video conferencing to supplement the pre-calculus and calculus courses and the curriculum has not been updated to reflect this additional delivery method.

FCISD depends on Region 3 and Region 20 for curriculum support and teachers attend curriculum workshops at both centers.

**Recommendation 5:**

**Implement a rotating K-12 curriculum review cycle.**

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent forms a curriculum review task force comprised of teachers from all curricular areas.	October 2001
2.	The curriculum task force establishes a five-year curriculum review cycle.	December 2001
3.	The board approves the proposed curriculum review plan.	January 2002
4.	The curriculum review task force begins review of curriculum.	February 2002

**FISCAL IMPACT**

Assuming eight teachers will be paid a \$500 stipend to work on the task force, the district will have a one-time cost of \$4,000.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2001-02</b>	<b>2002-03</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2005-06</b>
Implement a rotating K-12 curriculum review cycle.	(\$4,000)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

# CHAPTER 2

## EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

### **B. SPECIAL PROGRAMS**

Students with special needs require special programs delivered by either regular classroom teachers, compensatory or remedial-education teachers, special education teachers or instructional aides. School districts receive additional funding from state and federal sources to offset the additional cost of delivering many of these special programs.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which the U.S. Congress re-authorized in 1997, mandates a free and appropriate public education for all children with disabilities. Accommodations must be made to provide equal learning opportunities to students in special education classes and those with dyslexia, attention deficit disorder and/or hyperactivity.

IDEA was passed to protect the rights of parents and children in educational decision-making. The law requires schools to develop an individual education plan (IEP) for every child who is served in a special education program. The law also requires that students be served in the least restrictive environment and their educational program closely aligned to those of children not in special education. The law also requires the inclusion of students with disabilities in state and district assessment programs.

An effective special education program should include:

- Pre-referral intervention in regular education;
- Referral to special education for evaluation;
- Comprehensive, nondiscriminatory evaluation;
- Initial placement through an Admission, Review and Dismissal (ARD) committee meeting
- Provision of educational services and supports according to a written Individual Education Plan;
- Annual program review;
- Three year re-evaluation; and
- Provisions for dismissal from the special education program.

ARD committee exemptions from TAAS are granted to individual special education students in a process controlled by the ARD committee on each campus. Each special education student receives an annual progress evaluation by the ARD committee, which includes the regular education

teacher, the special education teacher, an assessment person and an administrator who is empowered to commit the school district to whatever services are determined necessary by the ARD committee.

The Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) on each campus granted individual bilingual/English as a Second Language (ESL) students LEP exemptions from TAAS. This committee is comprised of the same types of positions as the ARD committee but instead of a special education teacher, the LPAC committee includes a bilingual or ESL teacher.

### Special Education

**Exhibit 2-15** shows the number of special education students and teachers in comparison to its peer districts.

**Exhibit 2-15**  
**Special Education Students and Teachers and Amount/Percent**  
**Budgeted for Special Education**  
**FCISD and Peer Districts**  
**1999-2000**

District	Student Enrollment		Teachers (FTEs)		Budget	
	Number of Special Education Students	Percent of Total Student Enrollment	Number of Special Education Teachers	Percent of Total Number of Teachers	Budgeted Amount	Percent of Total Budget
Bland	98	18.2	4.0	10.4	\$302,825	16.9
Campbell	77	23.4	2.0	6.6	\$295,764	12.4
<b>Falls City</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>13.1</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>6.8</b>	<b>\$134,733</b>	<b>10.1</b>
Fruitvale	51	15.8	2.0	7.1	\$133,058	8.9
Martinsville	50	16.7	2.7	9.0	\$169,240	14.4
Moulton	42	11.1	2.2	6.8	\$93,648	8.8
<b>Region 3</b>	<b>7,371</b>	<b>13.0</b>	<b>368.7</b>	<b>8.9</b>	<b>\$23,186,110</b>	<b>12.0</b>
<b>State</b>	<b>482,427</b>	<b>12.1</b>	<b>25,738.5</b>	<b>9.6</b>	<b>\$1,624,099,643</b>	<b>12.4</b>

*Source: TEA, AEIS, 1999-2000.*

Expenditures for the special education program are outlined in **Exhibit 2-16**. Expenditures in special education have risen from 7.6 percent of the

overall budget in 1995-96 to 10.1 percent of the budget in 1999-2000. Per pupil expenditures have risen from \$1,705 in 1995-96 to \$3,062 in 1999-2000. Growth in the special education population has remained level. A high of 45 students was identified as needing special services in 1997-98. The lowest special education population enrollment occurred in 1996-97 with 41 students identified in the special education program.

FCISD sends two severe needs students to Kenedy ISD for special education services.

**Exhibit 2-16**  
**Expenditures for the Special Education Program**  
**1995-96 to 1999-2000**

Category	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Special education expenditures	\$75,062	\$65,974	\$79,590	\$92,928	\$134,733
Percentage of budget	7.6%	6.1%	6.8%	7.6%	10.1%
Special education students served	44	41	45	42	44
Percentage of total student population	13.1%	12.2%	13.9%	12.7%	13.1%
Expenditures per student	\$1,706	\$1,609	\$1,769	\$2,213	\$3,062

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

**At-Risk Compensatory Education**

In addition to regular classroom programs, other instructional programs provide special support for students at risk of dropping out and students who are not performing on grade level.

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 purpose is to raise their achievement levels and reduce the dropout rate. To determine the appropriate accelerated or compensatory program, 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 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 evaluation criteria. Each district is responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of the locally designed program.

The criteria used to identify students in at-risk situations are defined in Section 29.081 of the Texas Education Code. The definition includes 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; or 5) is pregnant or a parent. The definition also includes 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 Subchapter B, Chapter 39; 3) is a student of limited English proficiency, as defined by 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 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).

Funding allocated under state compensatory education is based on the number of economically disadvantaged students in the district and must supplement regular program funds - not replace those funds. The number of economically disadvantaged students is determined by averaging the best six months' enrollment in the national school lunch program of free or reduced-priced lunches for the preceding school year.

## **FINDING**

Examination of the district and campus improvement plans shows that the plans have no detail to account for compensatory funds expenditures. The district was unable to provide documentation supporting the expenditure of compensatory funds. The district's improvement plan (DIP) does not specify if compensatory-funded resources are used to supplement, rather

than supplant, the regular education program. Texas Education Code (TEC), Section 11.252 states that a district improvement plan must include a needs assessment and a detailed, measurable plan for improvement. TEC, Section 11.252 states that a district improvement plan must include:

"A comprehensive needs assessment; measurable district performance objectives; strategies for improvement of student performance; resources needed to implement identified strategies; staff responsible for ensuring the accomplishment of each strategy; timelines for ongoing monitoring of the implementation of each improvement strategy; and formative evaluation criteria for determining periodically whether strategies are resulting in intended improvement of student performance."

A review of the district improvement plan dated October 2000 includes objectives and outcomes, but no cost information.

Texas Administrative Code (TAC) 19 TAC Chapter 109, Subchapter (b), requires districts to follow specific guidelines on reporting procedures and allocating compensatory education funds. The rules state that:

"Each district shall ensure that supplemental direct costs and personnel attributed to compensatory education and accelerated instruction are identified in district and/or campus improvement plans at the summary level for financial units or schools. Each district shall maintain documentation that supports the attribution of supplemental costs and personnel to compensatory education. Districts must also maintain sufficient documentation supporting the appropriate identification of students in at-risk situations, under criteria established in TEC Section 29.091."

FCISD prepares a budget for compensatory funds, but does not include the budget figures in the DIP or the campus improvement plan (CIP).

**Recommendation 6:**

**Develop district and campus improvement plans that comply with state mandates for compensatory funds.**

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent directs the high school principal to develop a campus improvement plan that meets state mandates for compensatory funds.	November 2001
2.	The high school principal provides the elementary principal the requirements in state law describing campus improvement plans.	December 2001

3.	The superintendent, high school principal, and the elementary principal review each campus improvement plan to ensure that requirements are met.	January 2002
4.	The superintendent and the bookkeeper develop procedures to report the amount and use of supplemental funds received by the school.	February 2002

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

# CHAPTER 2

## EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

### C. STUDENT SAFETY

To provide a safe and secure learning environment, safety and security programs must include elements of prevention, intervention and enforcement, as well as cooperation with municipal and county governments. Discipline management and alternative education programs are key tools in this process.

Historically, the smallness of a town, the closeness of the school buildings and the familiarity of all people involved protected schools from harm. However, these factors are no longer as strong as they once were and each school district faces safety and security issues.

The Texas Legislature has addressed aspects of school violence. The safety of students and school employees is a major concern for all. Because of the priority placed on the safety and security of our children by parents, educators, taxpayers and the community, the Texas Legislature has continued to address school violence by establishing major safety and security-related revisions in the Texas Education Code.

**Exhibit 2-17** summarizes major legislation related to school safety and security for the past four legislative sessions.

**Exhibit 2-17**  
**Major School Safety and Security Initiatives of the Texas Legislature**  
**1993-1999**

Legislation	Summary
<b>1993 Legislature</b>	
House Bill 23	Requires information sharing between law enforcement and schools on student arrests for serious offenses; requires school principals to notify law enforcement if criminal activity occurs or is suspected of occurring on campus.
Senate Resolution 879	Encourages collaboration between the Texas Education Agency and Department of Public Safety in the recording of criminal incidents in the schools.
House Bills 633 and 634	Outlines the commissioning and jurisdiction of peace officers for school districts.

House Bill 2332	Authorizes the State Board of Education to establish special-purpose schools or districts for students whose needs are not met through regular schools.
Senate Bill 16	Defines drug-free zones for schools.
Senate Bill 213	Creates the safe schools checklist.
Senate Bill 155	Creates the Texas Youth Commission.
Senate Bill 1	Revamps the Education Code and laws on safety and security in schools, including the requirement for districts to establish alternative education programs and, in counties with populations above 125,000, to establish juvenile justice alternative education programs.
	<b>1997 Legislature</b>
Senate Bill 133	Rewrites the safe schools provision of the Education Code.
	<b>1999 Legislature</b>
Senate Bill 260	Allows the expulsion of a student who assaults a school district employee.
Senate Bill 1580	Creates the Texas Violent Gang Task Force.
	<b>1999 Legislature</b>
Senate Bill 1724	Requires each school district to annually report (beginning with 1999-2000) the number, rate, and type of violent and criminal incidents occurring on each campus, and requires them to include a violence prevention and intervention component in their annual campus improvement plans.
Senate Bill 1784	Allows school districts to use private or public community-based dropout recovery education programs to provide alternative education programs.
Senate Bill 152	Raises to a state jail felony the act of placing graffiti on school property.
House Bill 1749	Encourages school districts and juvenile probation departments to share information on juvenile offenders.

*Source: Compiled by Texas School Performance Review, 1999.*

## **FINDING**

FCISD does not have a safety and security plan. School doors are left unlocked during school hours. Visitors are not required to sign in or wear a visitor badge. Falls City is a close-knit community where residents know each other and participate in school events together. Due to the geographic location of FCISD, the heavy involvement of the community in the district, the existence of only one campus, and the size of the student population, the need for security has not yet become an issue.

At FCISD, building administrators have the primary responsibility for safety and security within their school. **Exhibit 2-18** provides a comparison between FCISD and its peer districts on the budgeted dollars for Security and Monitoring Services for school year 1999-2000. The Constable and County Sheriff volunteer time at sporting events.

**Exhibit 2-18**  
**Dollars Budgeted on Security and Monitoring Services**  
**FCISD and Peer Districts**  
**1999-2000**

<b>District</b>	<b>Budgeted Expenditures</b>
Campbell	\$13,593
Bland	\$18,500
<b>Falls City</b>	<b>\$0</b>
Fruitvale	\$0
Martinsville	\$32,230
Moulton	\$0

*Source: TEA, AEIS, 1999-2000.*

Principals stated that all doors are kept open because no problems were anticipated given the small community of Falls City. Although FCISD is a small school district, doors left open create the possibility that an unknown person entering the building could compromise the safety of students, teachers and staff. More commonly, however, access to the grounds by a non-custodial parent is an issue for every district. This places FCISD in a precarious situation. Student lockers are in one location and kids need to come and go between classes. Administrators stated that if the lockers were secured, students would have a difficult time gaining access to their lockers.

The schools are rarely used for evening activities beyond parent meetings, athletic activities and school board meetings.

**Recommendation 7:**

**Develop a safety and security plan for the district.**

Doors can be equipped to allow students to leave the facility in an emergency without being operable from the outside. A closely monitored main entrance should be the only way for a parent or any other visitor to enter the school. Enforcement of such a policy will restrict access to the school building and decrease the possibility that an unwanted visitor will walk into the building.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent meets with the building principals, the director of Maintenance and the Chief of Police to develop a plan that will decrease the danger of an open door policy.	October 2001
2.	The superintendent presents the plan to the board for approval.	October 2001
3.	The superintendent instructs all staff on the new plan.	November 2001
4.	Each supervisor monitors the implementation of the plan.	December 2001

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

**FINDING**

FCISD has no written policy on dangerous chemicals kept in teachers' classrooms.

Teachers store educational and cleaning chemicals in their classroom. Additionally, some teachers bring "special" chemicals from home to perform experiments. Examples of chemicals in classrooms include bleach and sulphuric acid.

Hazardous materials pose a danger to unsupervised children. School buildings are not secured and some students remain in the school buildings during recess, lunchtime and after dismissal. In the absence of constant supervision, access to dangerous chemicals is a serious safety concern.

**Recommendation 8:**

**Develop and implement a policy for chemical storage in classrooms.**

The policy should detail what chemicals are allowed to be stored, how the chemicals are to be secured and who has access to the chemicals. Procedures should also be created to ensure that chemicals are to be handled with utmost care when teaching. Developing a policy will reduce the possibility of an accident occurring.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The principals meet with the janitor and 4 or 5 teachers to develop a policy addressing the use/storage of dangerous chemicals in the teachers' room.	October 2001
2.	The principals present the policy to the superintendent for approval.	October 2001
3.	The superintendent presents the policy to the board for approval.	November 2001
4.	The principals conduct meetings explaining the new policy to all staff members.	November 2001

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

# CHAPTER 2

## EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

### D. COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

Regardless of structure, a school district must be organized to ensure that the entire organization's instructional and administrative requirements for the planning, implementation, integration and support of existing and new technologies can be achieved.

Network infrastructure is the underlying system of cabling, phone lines, hubs, switches, routers and other devices. Especially for rural districts, a sound and reliable infrastructure serves as a critical portal to a vast number of education-related resources and references not often found within the local community. It facilitates collaboration between teachers for instructional strategies and eliminates distance barriers often restricting a student's exposure to experiences outside the local community.

Through the use of local, technology allotments and Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund Board (TIFB) funds, FCISD has extended its network infrastructure beyond the original token ring network to a fast Ethernet network for enhanced Internet access and delivery of curriculum through video conferencing.

**Exhibit 2-19** provides a list of grants and funding received to build the district's technology infrastructure and acquire supporting technology assets.

**Exhibit 2-19**  
**FCISD Technology Funding Sources**

	<b>1997-98</b>	<b>1998-99</b>	<b>1999-2000</b>	<b>2000-01</b>
TIFB - PS3, PS6, PS9	\$100,000	\$0	\$48,997	\$49,996
State Technology Allotment	\$9,867	\$9,566	\$9,588	\$8,727
E-rate	\$0	\$10,285	\$8,713	\$4,444
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$109,867</b>	<b>\$19,851</b>	<b>\$67,298</b>	<b>\$63,167</b>

*Source: FCISD Technology Coordinator.*

The FCISD network includes the following:

- Fiber backbone providing gigabit (1000/mb) Ethernet bandwidth for video conferencing capabilities in support of distance learning;
- Districtwide fast Ethernet LAN providing 10/100 (mb) to computer labs, classrooms and administrative office network drops;
- Token ring network providing 16 mbps to support instructional computing in elementary classrooms;
- Networked workstations are Intel-based PCs running a series of operating systems to include DOS 5.0, Windows 3.1, Windows 95/98 and Windows NT 4.0;
- IBM ICLASS network (token ring) used to deliver instructional programs to elementary classrooms;
- 3Com and Cisco switches and a Cisco router;
- 4 - NT file servers and a Novel 3.2 Server;
- 2 - T1 connections provided by Southwestern Bell to Region 3 and the Alamo Community College;
- Intergate Internet Server.

Regional Service Center Computer Cooperative (RSCCC) administrative applications from Region 3 are used by FCISD to support financial and student management processing. The RSCCC business software includes financial management, human resources and payroll. STMRPC student demographic software includes scheduling, grade reporting, attendance, registration and health services. Additional software used to support both administrative and instructional objectives is provided in **Exhibit 2-20**.

**Exhibit 2-20**  
**FCISD Administrative and Instructional Software**

Function/Technology Area	Software
Student Management	STMRPC - Student demographic Software Electronic Gradebook
Financial Management	RSCCC - Business Software
Curriculum Development/Instructional Management	Tekstar Electronic Library
Library Management	Follet Library Management Software
PEIMS Processing	RSCCC - Business Software STMRPC - Student demographics software
High School Computer Labs	Microsoft Office Hyperstudio
Elementary Computer Lab	Accelerated Reader JumpStart Hyperstudio TLC Math, Science and Reading ICLASS Instructional Software

Network Management/Administration	Computer Associates - Ship It (Auto ghosting software) Computer Associates - Aim It (Auto inventory control) ArcServe 6.0 - Automated data backup software
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*Source: FCISD Technology Coordinator.*

The rural and remote nature of FCISD has required the district to adopt alternative curriculum delivery strategies from those traditionally found within the K-12 education environment. Through the analysis of AEIS data and trends, FCISD realized that traditional instructional methods did not properly prepare students for college. FCISD realized the need to provide access to an enriched curriculum for college bound, disadvantaged, Hispanic and special education students. Through the use of TISB grants and e-rate rebates, FCISD has implemented distance learning through Alamo Community College providing district students with access to more specialized and enriched curricula.

## **FINDING**

FCISD implemented a distance learning strategy for extending the district's course offerings and to provide students with alternative learning opportunities. FCISD plans to use this instructional strategy to train teachers, staff and community members. Lower entrance scores and a declining trend in students preparing for college created the need for FCISD to offer advanced classes through distance learning.

Classes are delivered through Palo Alto Community College. **Exhibit 2-21** provides a schedule of the district's distance learning offerings for 2000-01. The district is working with other local universities and community colleges to expand the current class offerings and provide a continuing education curriculum for district staff and community members.

### **Exhibit 2-21 FCISD 2000-01 Distance Learning Schedule**

<b>Class - 2000-01 Schedule</b>	<b>Period - Time</b>	<b>Days Offered</b>	<b>Semester</b>
U.S. Government - DC 2305	1st - 7:56-8:54	MWF	Fall
U.S. History - 1301	2nd - 8:58-9:50	MWF	Fall
English - 1301	2nd - 8:58-9:50	MWF	Fall
Macro Economics - 2301	1st - 7:56-8:54	MWF	Spring

U.S. History - 1302	2nd - 8:58-9:50	MWF	Spring
English - 1302	2nd - 8:58-9:50	MWF	Spring
Math 2412.075 Pre Calculus	6th - 1:40-2:50	MWF	Spring

*Source: FCISD Technology Coordinator.*

FCISD is a pioneer in successfully implementing distance learning delivery. None of FCISD's peer districts use distance learning or video conferencing in support of student instruction. During telephone interviews, a few peer districts indicated an understanding of the importance in providing an extended curriculum and dual credit opportunities to students. However, most were in the planning stages or awaiting grant approval.

**Exhibit 2-22** provides an overview of distance learning within the peer districts.

**Exhibit 2-22  
Peer District Comparison  
Distance Learning Implementation/Use**

<b>Peer District</b>	<b>Student Population</b>	<b>Distance Learning Available? (Y/N)</b>	<b>Distance Learning Status</b>
Falls City	335	Y	Implemented and in use
Martinsville	310	N	Video Conferencing for Staff Development only
Fruitvale	360	N	Not used or in the planning stages
Bland	536	N	Expected TIF grant award to support implementation
Campbell	350	N	Selected for a wireless distance learning pilot by Region
Moulton	290	N	Selected for a wireless distance learning pilot by Region

*Source: Telephone interviews with peer districts.*

**COMMENDATION**

**FCISD has implemented a learning strategy that provides students with an extended and more enriched curriculum.**

## **FINDING**

Training is one of the most critical factors in determining whether technology is used effectively. 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. Students must have continuous exposure to technology not only in the learning process, but also as a standard tool in their daily activities. FCISD has extended their instructional mission to members of the Falls City community by enhancing their technical skills in support of work-related requirements. Due to its size and rural nature, FCISD is the central node of the community and has established a number of initiatives to train its students, teachers and community members.

Recently, FCISD was awarded an Intel Master Teacher grant. This grant provides funding, equipment and staff development to for an FCISD trainer to supplement the district's efforts in integrating technology and curriculum.

FCISD provides evening and weekend classes to community members and parents on the use of the Internet and Windows and standard productivity tools. Through the use of distance learning, FCISD will provide access to continuing education classes through Palo Alto Community College as well as other higher education facilities. FCISD offers students Summer Computer Camps with a focus on Internet-based research projects, construction of project portfolios and vital job-related skills.

## **COMMENDATION**

**FCISD is creating a learning community by using a number of strategies, grants and technologies to train students, staff and community members.**

### ***Management and Technical Support***

## **FINDING**

The district does not have the resources to support the district's technology environment and ensure the effective use and integration of technology into the education process. FCISD does not have a formal technology organization. The district's technology coordinator also has teaching, network administration and grant writing responsibilities. A part-time computer lab aide assists teachers in adopting and using technology in

support of instructional delivery. Similar to other small district's FCISD must rely on additional staff for technology troubleshooting and support as part of their regular position responsibilities. For example, the PEIMS coordinator, librarian and office administrative aides provide staff and students within their areas with minor troubleshooting assistance while the technology coordinator is actively involved in teaching.

The district must rely on grant funding to support large investments in the district's technology environment and ensure the effective use and integration of technology into the education process. The formal technology organization is simple. The district technology coordinator is the network administrator, grant writer, director of technology professional development, adult technology instructor, network troubleshooter and minor computer repair person. When the technology coordinator is unavailable, TIF Tech campus teachers handle minor troubleshooting and application assistance. Additionally, a part-time elementary computer lab aide assists teachers in the computer lab.

**Exhibit 2-23** provides an overview of the district's funded technology support resources.

**Exhibit 2-23**  
**FCISD Technology Resources**

<b>Technology Resource</b>	<b>Responsibilities</b>
Technology Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain district network</li> <li>• Procure and install new hardware and software</li> <li>• Deliver technology training to teachers, students and administrative staff</li> <li>• Leadership in technology research, planning and grant writing</li> <li>• Coordinates with service providers and technology partners</li> </ul>
Part-time Computer Lab Aide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assist teachers with the use and integration of technology in support of instruction</li> <li>• Assist with training and in-service initiatives</li> </ul>

*Source: FCISD Technology Coordinator.*

FCISD uses a number of technology service providers to supplement their current technology support resources. **Exhibit 2-24** provides a list of technology service providers and a description of the services provided.

To extend their purchasing power and provide an environment for improved technical support through workstation standards, FCISD entered into a computer lease/purchase agreement for their last major computer purchase. FCISD is conducting additional analysis to determine whether this procurement approach should be continued.

**Exhibit 2-24**  
**FCISD Technology Service Providers**

<b>Technology Service Provider</b>	<b>Service Description</b>
Internet Inc.	Hardware contract for the Intergate Server
Region 3	Internet services through Esconett and training
Southwestern Bell	T-1 line to support internet connectivity
Mitchell Engineering	Infrastructure design, installation, and warranty
AllStar Systems	Computer Leasing
Palo Alto Community College	Video Conferencing

*Source: FCISD Technology Coordinator.*

FCISD is fortunate to have a technology coordinator with both an instructional and technology background. Especially in a rural and remote district like FCISD, this balance of skill and experience is difficult to find and therefore must be leveraged accordingly. The technology coordinator has sole responsibility for managing and maintaining the district's technology resources, but also provides the majority of leadership in the integration of technology and curriculum in addition to actual teaching responsibilities. Actual teaching responsibilities have been reduced to professional development, summer computer camp and adult computer literacy classes to compensate for time requirements of these duties.

To better leverage the technology coordinator's instructional and technology talents, the district should participate in a technology support consortium with neighboring districts for workstation repair and standard "break/fix" and troubleshooting type requirements.

Through the use of various grant and state allocated funds, FCISD has experienced a significant increase in technology resources without an adequate increase in district support and also has a number of other technology initiatives that will require dedicated attention. Examples of technology related activity or plans that have impacted the district's need for additional technical resources include:

- Significant increase in computer workstations (61 to 127);
- Maintenance and management of a distance learning network;
- Upgrade of server hard drives to support installation and use of network management tools;
- Design and implementation of a help desk tool;
- Migration and upgrade of workstations to a standard configuration and operating system; and
- Extension of technology in support of teacher training, student learning and network administration.

Districts of similar size and rural environment are experiencing similar support issues. Fruitvale is currently working to establish an agreement with local districts to share technology service/support resources. Fruitvale hopes to have the agreement in place prior to the beginning of the next school year.

Karnes City recently hired a highly skilled technical resource staffer.

**Recommendation 9:**

**Establish a shared services agreement with Karnes City ISD for technical support.**

Districts of similar size and rural location to FCISD have difficulties finding and funding a dedicated technical resource with the skills necessary to support the increasing use and installation of district technologies. These shared challenges among neighboring districts place a high probability of success for a technology support consortium.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The technology coordinator contacts Karnes City ISD to participate in a shared services agreement for technical support.	October 2001
2.	The technology coordinator meets with the Karnes City technology director to discuss the shared services agreement and the district's requirements for technology support.	October 2001
3.	The technology coordinator and Karnes City technology director draft the shared services agreement.	November 2001
4.	The shared services agreement is reviewed and approved by the Karnes City and Falls City ISD superintendents.	December 2001
5.	The shared services agreement is presented to the Fall City ISD board for approval.	January 2002
6.	The shared services agreement is implemented and technical	February

support is delivered as stipulated by the shared services agreement.	2002
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**FISCAL IMPACT**

The Karnes City technical resource would be paid a stipend for 100 hours per year at a rate of \$32.76 per hour for a total of \$3,276 to provide support to the Falls City ISD. This is calculated by dividing the average teacher salary and benefit rate of \$42,426 by 185 days of instruction, then dividing by 7 hours per day for an hourly rate of \$32.76 per hour. This includes an average salary of \$37,191, and benefits of \$5,235 at the rate of 14.075 percent. The shared services agreement would be implemented for the first year and renewed should the district continue to require additional technical support. The first year cost is based on one-half year of services.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2001-02</b>	<b>2002-03</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2005-06</b>
Establish a shared services agreement with Karnes City ISD for technical support.	(\$1,638)	(\$3,276)	(\$3,276)	(\$3,276)	(\$3,276)

**FINDING**

FCISD does not have a comprehensive written board-approved disaster recovery plan. Regardless of size, an organization should have an established plan for dealing with unanticipated disruptions of service and off-site storage of district data.

FCISD has a simple, informal plan of keeping backups on tape, diskettes and CD-ROMs. The technology coordinator does not keep a copy of the backups off-site.

Data specific to financial, student management and PEIMS are managed, stored and protected through Region 3.

FCISD uses ArcServe software to perform automated tape backup for networked servers. The Intergate server and some of the district's network servers are configured with Redundant Arrays of Inexpensive Disks (RAID) protection disk mirroring. RAID provides redundant disk mirroring and allows the district to recover from a disk crash or failure. Although ArcServe and RAID are used, backup media is not stored off-site. The close proximity of the FCISD school buildings places a higher risk of loss due to a disaster.

**Exhibit 2-25** summarizes some key elements of a disaster recovery plan.

**Exhibit 2-25**  
**Key Elements of a Disaster Recovery Plan**

<b>Step</b>	<b>Details</b>
Build the disaster recovery team.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify a disaster recovery team that includes key policy makers, building management, end-users, key outside contractors and technical staff.</li> </ul>
Obtain and/or approximate key information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop an exhaustive list of critical activities performed within the district.</li> <li>• Develop an estimate of the minimum space and equipment necessary for restoring essential operations.</li> <li>• Develop a timeframe for starting initial operations after a security incident.</li> <li>• Develop a list of key personnel and their responsibilities.</li> </ul>
Perform and/or delegate key duties.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop an inventory of all computer technology assets, including data, software, hardware, documentation and supplies.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• Make plans to procure hardware, software and other equipment as necessary to ensure that critical operations are resumed as soon as possible.</li> <li>• Establish procedures for obtaining off-site backup records.</li> <li>• Locate support resources that might be needed, such as equipment repair, trucking and cleaning companies.</li> <li>• Arrange with vendors to provide priority delivery for emergency orders.</li> <li>• Identify data recovery specialists and establish emergency agreements.</li> </ul>
Specify details within the plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify individual roles and responsibilities by name and job title so that everyone knows exactly what needs to be done.</li> <li>• Define actions to be taken in advance of an occurrence or undesirable event.</li> <li>• Define actions to be taken at the onset of an</li> </ul>

	<p>undesirable event to limit damage, loss and compromised data integrity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify actions to be taken to restore critical functions.</li> <li>• Define actions to be taken to re-establish normal operations.</li> </ul>
Test the plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Test the plan frequently and completely.</li> <li>• Analyze the results to improve the plan and identify further needs.</li> </ul>
Deal with damage appropriately.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If a disaster actually occurs, document all costs and videotape the damage.</li> <li>• Be prepared to overcome downtime on your own; insurance settlements can take time to resolve.</li> </ul>
Give consideration to other significant issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not make a plan unnecessarily complicated.</li> <li>• Make one individual responsible for maintaining the plan, but have it structured so that others are authorized and prepared to implement if it is needed.</li> <li>• Update the plan regularly and whenever changes are made to your system.</li> </ul>

*Source: National Center for Education Statistics, "Safeguarding Your Technology." (Modified by TSPR)*

**Recommendation 10:**

**Formalize a written disaster recovery plan that is applicable to the district's size and environment and test it.**

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The technology coordinator, with assistance from Region 3 and neighboring districts, determines requirements for a disaster recovery plan.	October 2001
2.	The technology coordinator develops a plan and procedure for scheduled back ups and off-site storage of local data.	November 2001
3.	The technology coordinator presents the plan to the	January

	Superintendent for approval.	2002
4.	The disaster recovery plan is implemented and tested.	February 2002

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

### **FINDING**

Other than the Acceptable Use Policy described in the district's Technology Plan, there are no formal procedures specific to district technology operations and management. The technology coordinator provides district users with a user request log located outside the coordinator's office door, however, the procedure for submitting service requests is not documented.

Although not viewed as a valuable investment of time especially in smaller organizations with limited resources, this documentation will provide immediate benefits for FCISD as they experience an increase in technical support and a requirement to coordinate resources among consortium partners and establish a formal help desk function and tool.

The technology coordinator is also responsible for grant writing and acquisition to fund technology initiatives.

Number nine on TSPR's Top 10 ways to improve public schools and innovative implementation approaches states, "Adopt policies and procedures - who knows who will be doing this job tomorrow." This approach suggests that districts develop procedures using a step-by-step approach documenting daily activities associated with department functions and that show employees how to carry out board and department policy. Many Texas Districts have realized that developing and implementing well-written and organized procedures:

- implement and assure compliance with board policies as well as documenting the intent of those policies;
- protect the institutional knowledge of an organization, so that as experienced employees leave, new employees have the benefit of the others' years of experience;
- provide the basis for training new employees; and
- offer a tool for evaluating employees based on their adherence to procedures.

### **Recommendation 11:**

**Establish policies and procedures for technology operations, management and support.**

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The Technology Coordinator outlines the functions and processes specific to the technology support organization.	January 2002
2.	The Technology Coordinator contacts neighboring districts to determine availability of technology support policies and procedures that can be used as collateral for developing policies and procedures specific to FCISD.	February 2002
3.	The Technology Coordinator develops a draft set of policies and procedures and presents them to the district and campus technology committees.	March 2002
4.	The policies and procedures are presented to the board for review and approval.	April 2002
5.	The technology policies and procedures are distributed and implemented.	May 2002

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

# CHAPTER 3

## FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

This chapter addresses financial management of the Falls City Independent School District (FCISD) in seven sections:

- A. Asset and Risk Management
- B. Cash Management
- C. Risk Management
- D. Organization and Management
- E. Budgeting
- F. Purchasing Management
- G. Shared Service Opportunities

Financial management in school districts involves effective planning, budgeting, managing and maximizing resources. A district's ability to perform these tasks affects its relationships with its employees, vendors, funding agencies and the local community. Financial management is most effective when a district allocates and spends its resources using a system of established priorities; when internal controls are in place and operate as intended; when financial information is provided in a timely way and in useful formats; and when staff resources and technology are leveraged to achieve the best results.

School districts must maintain and operate effective financial management systems in a highly regulated environment. They must meet financial management requirements established by federal and state laws, rules and regulations. The Texas Education Agency's (TEA) Financial Accountability System Resource Guide outlines accounting and reporting requirements for Texas school districts. Internally developed policies and procedures, Generally Accepted Accounting Principles, and Governmental Accounting Standards Board guidelines also affect school districts' financial management activities.

Texas school districts have a fiduciary responsibility to protect publicly financed assets provided to educate children. Cash, employees, land, buildings, equipment and borrowing capacity all are school district assets. The goal of asset and risk management is to protect these assets from financial losses resulting from unforeseen events.

An effective asset and risk management program aims to control costs by ensuring that the district is adequately protected against all significant losses with the lowest possible insurance premiums. This includes the identification and measurement of risk and techniques to minimize the impact of risk.

## BACKGROUND

FCISD's budget for 2000-01 was more than \$2.4 million. **Exhibit 3-1** presents FCISD's 2000-01 budgeted expenditures by function compared to the state.

### Exhibit 3-1 Falls City and State Budgeted Expenditures by Function as a Percentage of Total Expenditures 2000-01

Function (Code)	Falls City (2000- 2001)	Percent ( of Total)	State 2000-01	Percent (of Total)
Instruction (11, 95)	\$1,416,188	56.7%	\$13,871,475,883	51.3%
Instruction related services (12,13)	\$28,406	1.1%	\$711,993,126	2.6%
Instructional leadership (21)	\$7,324	0.3%	\$327,217,968	1.2%
School leadership (23)	\$157,783	6.3%	\$1,413,048,962	5.2%
Support services-student (31,32,33)	\$59,884	2.4%	\$1,080,558,025	4.0%
Student transportation (34)	\$57,289	2.3%	\$676,770,906	2.5%
Food services (35)	\$119,506	4.8%	\$1,315,831,789	4.9%
Co-curricular/extracurricular Activities (36)	\$129,773	5.2%	\$601,620,200	2.2%
Central administration (41,92)	\$171,195	6.9%	\$946,025,510	3.5%
Plant maintenance and operations (51)	\$182,665	7.3%	\$2,598,036,618	9.6%
Security and monitoring services (52)	\$0	0%	\$153,117,054	0.6%
Data processing services (53)	\$52,286	2.1%	\$298,526,325	1.1%
Other*	\$113,703	4.6%	\$3,061,791,569	11.3%
<b>Total Budgeted Expenditures</b>	<b>\$2,496,002</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$27,056,013,935</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: TEA PEIMS 2000-01.

\*Includes any operational expenditures not listed above and all non-

*operational expenditures such as debt service, capital outlay and community and parental involvement services.*

**Exhibit 3-2** shows how FCISD's budgeted funds were distributed in 2000-01 compared to peer districts and state average for the instruction category. The chart ranks the districts and state average based on the percentage of expenditures on instruction. FCISD ranks second for spending on instruction.

**Exhibit 3-2**  
**FCISD, Peer Group and State Budgeted Expenditures for Instruction**  
**Function**  
**as a Percentage of Total Budgeted Expenditures**  
**2000-01**

<b>Entity</b>	<b>Total ( Instruction ( Expenditures</b>	<b>Total (Budgeted (Expenditures</b>	<b>Percent ( Spent on ( Instruction</b>
Moulton	\$1,538,565	\$2,511,366	61.3%
<b>Falls City</b>	<b>\$1,416,188</b>	<b>\$2,496,002</b>	<b>56.7%</b>
Campbell	\$1,211,899	\$2,321,033	52.2%
Martinsville	\$1,149,003	\$2,224,365	51.7%
State	\$13,871,475,883	\$27,056,013,935	51.3%
Bland	\$1,714,621	\$3,358,221	51.1%
Fruitvale	\$1,044,942	\$2,225,426	47.0%

*Source: TEA, PEIMS 2000-01.*

District expenditures per student increased 15.8 percent from 1997-98 to 2000-01 (**Exhibit 3-3**).

Instruction and instructional leadership spending increased 16.5 percent, or \$595 per student, while school leadership increased 36.5 percent.

**Exhibit 3-3**  
**FCISD Expenditures Per Student**  
**1997-98 through 2000-01**

<b>Expenditure Category</b>	<b>1997- 98</b>	<b>1998- 99</b>	<b>1999- 2000</b>	<b>2000- 01</b>	<b>Percent Change 1997-98 to</b>
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					<b>2000-01</b>
Instruction and Instructional leadership	\$3,617	\$3,700	\$4,029	\$4,212	16.5%
School leadership	\$342	\$419	\$445	\$467	36.5%
Central administration	\$360	\$448	\$507	\$506	40.6%
Other operating	\$1,456	\$1,562	\$1,874	\$1,863	27.9%
<b>Total operations</b>	<b>\$5,775</b>	<b>\$6,129</b>	<b>\$6,855</b>	<b>\$7,048</b>	<b>22.0%</b>
<b>Total non-operations</b>	<b>\$601</b>	<b>\$210</b>	<b>\$286</b>	<b>\$337</b>	<b>(43.9%)</b>
<b>Total per student</b>	<b>\$6,376</b>	<b>\$6,339</b>	<b>\$7,141</b>	<b>\$7,385</b>	<b>15.8%</b>

Source: TEA, AEIS, 1997-98 to 1999-2000, PEIMS 2000-01.

Exhibit 3-4 presents a four-year summary of district revenues.

**Exhibit 3-4**  
**FCISD Budgeted Revenues by Source**  
**1997-98 through 2000-01**

Revenue ( Source	1997-98 (Revenues	Percent of ( all Revenues	1998-99 (Revenues	Percent of ( all Revenues	1999-2000 ( Revenues	Percent of ( all Revenues	2000-01 ( Revenues	Percent of ( all Revenues	Percent Change (1997-98 to 2000-01
Local	\$500,600	25.9%	\$500,600	23.8%	\$503,400	20.1%	\$564,223	21.7%	12.7%
State	\$1,309,444	67.8%	\$1,449,400	69.0%	\$1,832,067	73.0%	\$1,854,933	71.4%	41.6%
Federal	\$39,200	2.0%	\$39,200	1.9%	\$47,500	1.9%	\$57,000	2.2%	45.4%
Other local and Intermediate	\$82,960	4.3%	\$111,360	5.3%	\$127,290	5.0%	\$122,725	4.7%	47.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,932,204</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>\$2,100,560</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>\$2,510,257</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>\$2,598,881</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>34.5%</b>

Source: TEA, AEIS 1997-2000, PEIMS 2000-01.

As illustrated in **Exhibit 3-4**, total revenues for the district increased from \$1,932,204 to \$2,598,881 or 34.5 percent between 1997-98 and 2000-01. During this same period, state revenues grew from \$1,309,444 to \$1,854,933 or 41.6 percent.

The local property tax rate did not increase 1997-98 to 2000-01, while enrollment increased 4.3 percent. Local property values remained approximately the same over that period. FCISD levies the maximum \$1.50 tax permitted by law.

**Exhibit 3-5** outlines the maintenance and operations tax rates, interest and sinking fund tax rates, total tax rates, total property values, total students and the dollar value per student.

**Exhibit 3-5  
FCISD Tax Rates  
1997-98 through 2000-01**

<b>Description</b>	<b>1997-98</b>	<b>1998-99</b>	<b>1999-2000</b>	<b>2000-01</b>	<b>Percent Change 1997-98 to 2000-01</b>
Maintenance and operations tax rate	\$1.500	\$1.500	\$1.500	\$1.500	0.0%
Interest and sinking fund tax rate	\$0.000	\$0.000	\$0.000	\$0.000	0.0%
Total tax rate	\$1.500	\$1.500	\$1.500	\$1.500	0.0%
Total Property Value	\$33,676,887	\$34,319,730	\$33,420,183	\$33,657,142	(0.05%)
Total Students	324	332	335	338	4.3%
Value per student	\$103,941	\$103,373	\$99,762	\$99,577	(4.2%)

*Source: TEA, AEIS 1997-98 to 1999-2000, PEIMS 2000-01.*

The district administration office staff consists of a superintendent, bookkeeper, payroll clerk, food services director and high school principal's secretary. Since the district is small, there is no business manager and the superintendent serves as the chief financial officer. The superintendent is then responsible for overseeing and participating in business activities such as budgeting, accounts payable, accounts receivable, payroll, food services, and transportation. The bookkeeper primarily serves as the superintendent's assistant.

# CHAPTER 3

## FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

### A. ASSET AND RISK MANAGEMENT

FCISD's superintendent has overall responsibility for cash management, investment management, risk management and fixed assets. The bookkeeper assists the superintendent with day-to-day tasks.

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) defines fixed assets as purchased or donated items that are tangible in nature, have a useful life longer than one year, have a unit value of \$5,000 or more, and may be reasonably identified and controlled through a physical inventory system. The Texas Education Agency's *Financial Accountability System Resource Guide* requires assets costing \$5,000 or more to be recorded in the fixed asset group of accounts. Items costing less than \$5,000 are recorded as an operating expense of the appropriate fund under TEA guidelines.

To improve control and accountability, these guidelines allow school districts to establish lower thresholds for equipment costing less than \$5,000. For example, computer and audiovisual equipment worth less than \$5,000 does not have to be accounted for in the fixed asset group of accounts. Some districts, however, maintain lists of such assets to improve control and accountability.

### FINDING

FCISD has an up-to-date fixed asset assessment. During the 1999-2000 school year the district contracted with a third party to complete a fixed asset appraisal. Prior to this, the district's fixed asset inventory system was incomplete and out of compliance with the board policy on fixed assets.

The district now keeps a running list of changes for the fixed asset inventory. **Exhibit 3-6** shows the balances of FCISD's fixed assets as report in the 1999-2000 financial statement.

As shown in **Exhibit 3-6**, 48 percent of FCISD's fixed assets include assets such as furniture, equipment and vehicles that can reasonably be inventoried.

**Exhibit 3-6**  
**FCISD Fixed Assets as of**  
**August 31, 2000**

<b>Description</b>	<b>Balance</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Land	\$53,387	1.5%
Buildings	\$1,805,569	50.1%
Construction in Progress	\$0	0%
Furniture, Equipment and Vehicles'	\$1,746,508	48.4%
Capital Leases	\$0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,605,464</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Source: FCISD 2000 Auditor's Report.*

TEA guidelines also state:

"Certain fixed assets, such as furniture and equipment, should be inventoried on a periodic basis. Annual inventories taken usually at the end of the school term before the staff members leave are recommended. Discrepancies between the fixed asset/inventory list and what is on hand should be settled. Missing items should be listed and written off in accordance with established policy."

#### **COMMENDATION**

**FCISD has an up-to-date fixed asset appraisal and has taken proactive steps to keep the appraisal current.**

# CHAPTER 3

## FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

### **B. CASH MANAGEMENT**

For a school district to achieve its instructional goals and objectives, cash and investments must be managed daily. Effective cash and investment management involves establishing and maintaining beneficial banking relationships, timely and accurate forecasting of cash requirements so that funds are available when needed and maximizing returns on assets deposited in appropriate, approved and safe investment vehicles.

The FCISD board designates the superintendent as the investment officer for the district. As the chief financial agent for the district, the superintendent has day-to-day responsibility for managing the district's cash and investments and reports to the board. The district has an agreement with Falls City National Bank to manage the district's money. The district does not use an external investment advisor other than Falls City National Bank.

On a daily basis the superintendent or the bookkeeper checks balances and authorizes any transfers. The superintendent and the bookkeeper perform bank reconciliation on a timely basis. As of April 2001 all bank accounts had been reconciled.

The bookkeeper is also responsible for processing accounts receivable and processing accounts payable. In addition, the superintendent and his secretary have signature authority. Deposits are prepared by the bookkeeper and taken to the bank on a daily basis.

The district has a depository agreement with Falls City National Bank. The original agreement was a two-year agreement signed on July 1, 1997 and ended on August 31, 1999. The board approved a motion extending that agreement for an additional two-years. The present agreement will end on August 31, 2001. Under the terms of the agreement, the bank holds district funds and is the investment portfolio manager. Additionally, a school board member is on the Bank's Board of Directors. He excuses himself on votes on banking matters.

The district generates cash from three general sources: local, state and federal revenues. Property taxes represent the primary source of cash and are generated through tax assessments on local property values. During 1999-2000, cash generated from property taxes was 20 percent of cash receipts, revenues from state sources were 73 percent and 7 percent was

from federal and other sources. Property tax collections peak in December and most state revenues are received in October.

The district maintains four bank accounts for normal operations. Campus and student activity fund checking accounts are deposited into a separate account. These funds support campus-based activities such as booster clubs and student government and are maintained at the campus level.

**Exhibit 3-7** summarizes funds held in checking accounts as of March 31, 2001 and describes each account's purpose.

**Exhibit 3-7  
FCISD Bank Accounts  
As of March 31, 2001**

<b>Financial Institution</b>	<b>Account Name</b>	<b>Balance at March 31, 2001</b>	<b>Purpose of Account</b>
Falls City National Bank	Operating Fund	\$1,675	Controlled disbursement account
Falls City National Bank	Payroll	\$65	Clearing account
Falls City National Bank	Contingency Fund	\$403,681	Controlled disbursement account
Falls City National Bank	Flex Plan	\$2,632	Controlled disbursement account
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$408,053</b>	

*Source: FCISD Business Office.*

Falls City National Bank is the district's investment manager. Board investment policy calls for the use of a variety of investment vehicles to achieve the district's investment goals of safety, liquidity and maturity sufficient to meet anticipated cash requirements. The primary objectives of the district's investment policy, last updated in November 1999, are as follows:

SUITABILITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only investments authorized by law and described further in Policy CA (Legal), shall the board permit district funds to be invested.</li> </ul>
SAFETY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The main goal of the investment program is to ensure</li> </ul>

	safety, as well as to maximize financial returns within current conditions within policy.
LIQUIDITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assets of the District shall be invested in instruments whose maturities do not exceed one year from the time of purchase, subject to exceptions as stated in policy.</li> </ul>
MATURITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The District's investment portfolio shall have sufficient liquidity to meet anticipated cash flow requirements, projected on a weekly, monthly and annual basis.</li> </ul>
DIVERSITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The investment portfolio shall be diversified in terms of investment instruments, maturity scheduling, and financial institutions to reduce risk of loss resulting from over concentration of assets in a specific class of investments, specific maturity or specific issuer.</li> </ul>
YIELD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitoring shall be done at least quarterly as required by law, and more often as economic conditions warrant by using appropriate reports, indices or benchmarks for the type of investment.</li> </ul>

**Exhibit 3-8** provides a description of the types of investment instruments in the district's portfolio.

**Exhibit 3-8  
Description of Investments**

<b>Type of Investment</b>	<b>Description</b>
Direct Obligations of the U.S. government	Direct obligations of the U.S. government, its agencies with no stated maximum maturity from the date of purchase. The total portfolio may contain an unlimited percentage of this type security. No pro rata balance guideline exists in policy.
Other U.S. Obligations	Other obligations, the principle and interest on which are guaranteed or insured by, or backed by the full faith and credit of the United States. The total portfolio may contain an unlimited percentage of this type security. No pro rata balance guideline exists in policy.
Certificates of	Fully collateralized non-negotiable certificates of deposit

Deposit	issued by a bank doing business in Texas. The total portfolio may contain an unlimited percentage of this type security. No pro rata balance guideline exists in policy.
Bankers' Acceptances	Prime domestic bankers acceptances with a maximum maturity not to exceed 270 days. The total portfolio may contain an unlimited percentage of this type security. No pro rata balance guideline exists in policy.
Commercial Paper	Commercial paper that is rated, at time of purchase, not less than A1/P1 by at least two nationally recognized credit rating agencies, and with a maximum maturity not to exceed 270 days. The total portfolio may contain an unlimited percentage of this type security. No pro rata balance guideline exists in policy.
Repurchase Agreements (Repos)	Agreement between two parties whereby one sells the other a security at a specified price with a commitment to repurchase it at a later date for another specified price. These agreements have a defined termination date. Most repos are overnight transactions.
Constant Dollar Government Investment Pools	A professionally managed pool of funds composed of cash deposits from a large group of cities, counties, school districts or local governments.
No Load Mutual Funds	As described in Sec. 2256.014, use of this instrument shall be limited to a "sweep account" in conjunction with the district's checking account(s) with its depository bank. The dollar-weighted average stated maturity must be 90 days or less.

*Source: FCISD Policy Book.*

As of April 27, 2001, the date of the most recent available investment report, the district had funds with a book value of approximately \$402,961 in various investments allowed by its investment policy.

**Exhibit 3-9** summarizes the portfolio as of April 27, 2001 including monthly yield rates for March 2001.

**Exhibit 3-9  
Investment Portfolio as of March 29, 2001**

Type of Investment	Book Value at March, 2001	Quarterly 2001 Yield
Municipal Bonds	\$303,019	5.57%

Texas School Bonds	\$99,942	4.75%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$402,961</b>	<b>5.16%</b>

*Source: FCISD April Pledge Report from Falls City National Bank.*

## **FINDING**

The district does not possess an investment strategy for school funds. The district also uses its depository, Falls City National Bank as the portfolio manager. Board policy on investments states that the superintendent or other person designated by Board resolution shall serve as investment officer of the district; shall recommend appropriate legally authorized and adequately secured investments; and shall invest district funds as directed by the board in accordance with the district's written investment policy and generally accepted accounting principles. The policy further states, under the Safety and Investment Management section, "The main goal of the investment program is to ensure its safety, as well as maximize financial returns within current market conditions in accordance with this policy."

FCISD uses Falls City National Bank as its depository. Texas school districts bid and issue depository contracts for a two-year period; however, the district is permitted to renew its depository contract for an additional two-year term if the district considers the service satisfactory. The district's current contract ends on August 31, 2001. Falls City National Bank maintains all bank accounts for the district, including operations, payroll and flex plan. The district pays no service charges for banking services. All accounts are interest bearing earning variable interest rates. As required by state law, the depository agreement also provides for the pledge of acceptable securities to protect district funds on deposit at the bank at any given time.

FCISD's depository agreement does not specify an investment strategy in accordance with board investment policies. FCISD uses the TASB board policy service and all policies are current as recommended by TASB. The district does not specify an investment strategy or choose the investment vehicles for use by Falls City National Bank. The bank manages all idle funds.

Texas school districts frequently make arrangements within their depository contracts for placing idle depository bank 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.

FCISD is classified as a type 2 payee for state funding purposes. A type 2 payee classification means that most of the district's state funding is received in the first few months of the fiscal year. Local property taxes are levied in October and become delinquent on February 1; the district typically collects more than 85 percent of its levy by the end of February. Thus the district has excess funds for extended periods of time that can be invested.

If all funds on deposit as of April 27, 2001 were invested overnight at a rate of 5.70 percent, instead of the 3.95 percent rate paid on March 2001 bank deposits, the district could realize an additional \$10,337 annually (**Exhibit 3-10**). The first-year savings reflect the investment of idle bank funds in higher yielding investment vehicles effective July 1, 2001.

**Exhibit 3-10**  
**Annual Funds Generated from Increased Investment Earnings**  
**On Overnight Investment of Daily Bank Cash Balance**

Description	One-Fourth Times Deposits
Balance available for investment	\$590,698
Estimated overnight interest rate	5.70%
Annual estimated interest earnings	\$33,669
Current account rate	3.95%
Current interest earnings estimate	\$23,332
<b>Average earnings</b>	<b>\$10,337</b>

*Source: IBM calculation.*

In March 2001 the district was paid an average interest rate of 3.95 percent on funds on deposit, and not invested, at the depository bank. This rate is significantly lower than current "sweep" accounts which are paying upwards of 5.70 percent. Earning a higher rate of interest on idle funds will provide the district increased interest earnings.

**Recommendation 12:**

**Modify the depository agreement to provide a "sweep" account for idle cash balances into higher yielding investments on an overnight basis and develop an investment strategy.**

Cash forecasting is necessary to make arrangements for an overnight "sweep" of cash balances. The district should increase the time spent on its monthly and daily cash forecasting activities to project the balances available for investment in overnight securities. These forecasts should consider the timing of federal and state aid payments, local property tax levies and collections, accounts payable disbursements and interest earnings.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent requests a sweep account proposal from the district's depository.	October 2001
2.	The superintendent presents sweep account proposal to the Board.	November 2001
3.	The board approves sweep agreement with depository.	November 2001
4.	FCISD begins realizing additional interest earnings.	December 2001

**FISCAL IMPACT**

The calculation for this estimate is shown in **Exhibit 3-10**.

<b>Fiscal Impact</b>	<b>2001-02</b>	<b>2002-03</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2005-06</b>
Modify the depository agreement to provide a "sweep" account for idle cash balances into higher yielding investments on an overnight basis and develop a systemic investment strategy.	\$10,337	\$10,337	\$10,337	\$10,337	\$10,337

**FINDING**

The district does not use direct deposit for payroll. The district processes payroll twelve times per year. While the district has been abiding by the Texas Depository specification for banking services, the district has not requested that the depository permit direct deposit. Ninety percent of FCISD employees bank at Falls City National Bank.

By using direct deposit the district will increase security of payroll, and reduce the number of checks issued and needed.

The Business manager of the Midland ISD, implemented a fully automated wire transfer program for its employees. Midland reported significant improvement over the previous payroll distribution method. The system allows quicker access to data and allows school officials to redirect staff members to other duties.

According to the superintendent, given the small office staff, it is "just another thing to worry about."

**Recommendation 13:**

**Implement a direct deposit plan for all employees.**

If FCISD experienced direct deposit participation among all employees, the district could maximize cash flow, increase accuracy and reduce payroll costs by not issuing paper checks.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent contacts the appropriate personnel on the implementation of a direct deposit program.	October 2001
2.	The superintendent develops and circulates enrollment information to employees describing the benefits of direct deposit.	November 2001
3.	All employees begin receiving pay via direct deposit.	December 2001

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

**FINDING**

Internal controls over the preparation of accounts payable and payroll checks are weak. The business office does not possess proper internal controls for the processing of checks. The district prepares paychecks on a monthly basis and accounts payable checks monthly and on an as-needed basis. The bookkeeper prepares checks as scheduled and under the direction of the superintendent. During the 2001 fiscal year, the district will process accounts payable and payroll checks in excess of \$2 million.

Each check is prepared with the approval of the superintendent, although in some instances the approval is received after the check is prepared. Following preparation, the superintendent reviews the checks. Then, both superintendent and bookkeeper sign all checks. This creates a conflict of interest and breakdown of internal controls as the same individuals who approve payment requisitions, approve the preparation of checks, and finally reconcile the bank statements of these expenditure accounts.

All checks and processed purchase orders are shown to the board during board meetings.

The separation of asset maintenance and bookkeeping functions is necessary to ensure that assets are properly safeguarded from unauthorized uses and that accounting information is reliable. According to the TEA's Financial Accountability System Resource Guide, school districts should segregate responsibilities for collection and deposit preparation from those for recording cash receipts and general ledger entries.

TEA suggests the following policies regarding controls over cash and investment balances:

- Segregation of responsibilities for cash receipts functions from those for cash disbursements.
- Segregation of responsibilities for disbursement preparation and disbursement approval functions from those for recording or entering cash disbursements information on the general ledger. Segregation of responsibilities for disbursement approval from those for the disbursement, voucher preparation and purchasing functions.
- Segregation of responsibilities for entries in the cash receipt and disbursement records from those for general ledger entries.
- Segregation of responsibilities for preparing and approving bank account reconciliations from those for other cash receipt or disbursement functions.
- If electronic data processing is used, maintain the principle of segregated duties within processing activities.

TEA also suggests a number of procedural controls for collections, disbursements, custody, detail accounting and general ledger maintenance in the area of cash and investment handling.

#### **Recommendation 14:**

**Require the Board Treasurer be listed as one of two signatories on all checks, and reassign bank reconciliation duties to the receptionist.**

The superintendent should be required to approve all expenditures and check requests. The superintendent should be replaced by the Board Treasurer as one of two signatories on district checks. The Board Treasurer is a recognized financial agent of the school district. In FCISD, where the office staff is small, having a board signature on checks will improve the system of checks and balances and comply with TEA guidelines for the oversight of cash and investments. Additionally, bank reconciliations should be re-assigned to the payroll secretary to provide adequate division of duties and improve internal controls.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The board approves a policy of internal controls including the signature of the Treasurer on all checks.	October 2001
2.	The superintendent notifies Falls City National Bank of the changes in signatories, and executes necessary account information changes.	November 2001
3.	The Board Treasurer and bookkeeper begin signing all checks.	December 2001
4.	The payroll secretary begins monthly reconciliation of all bank accounts.	December 2001

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

**FINDING**

The district does not have a written policy or standard operating procedures on the regulation and use of district credit cards. There are no controls placed upon employees prior to leaving the district with a credit card. District employees do not use their district credit cards prudently. FCISD has five Visa cards available for use by employees. In a review of Visa statements for the period of September 2000 through March 2001, purchases that should have been made on a district purchase order were made by credit card, state sales taxes were paid on purchases where they should not have been paid. From a sampling credit card statement and receipts, the district paid \$58.75 in sales tax.

School employees, such as administrators, coaches and the high school student activity fund advisor are permitted to "sign-out" a district credit card for use when traveling or needing to make a district purchase. In some instances the district can obtain discounts by paying with a credit

card rather than using a purchase order. Additionally, the district holds a Sam's Club card.

After using a credit card, an employee is supposed to return the card with all receipts to the bookkeeper in the administration office. The bookkeeper then reconciles the charges to the statement for monthly payment. The superintendent then approves the credit card company monthly payments.

**Recommendation 15:**

**Develop a policy and standard operating procedures for the use of the district's credit cards.**

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent proposes a policy and standard operating procedures for the use of district credit cards.	October 2001
2.	The board approves the proposed policy and standard operating procedures for credit card usage.	November 2001
3.	Credit card policy and standard operating procedures become effective.	November 2001
4.	The board reviews credit card statements, billings, and payments on a quarterly basis for compliance with policy and standard operating procedures.	January 2002

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

**FINDING**

Accounts payable and payroll checks do not provide the district with fraud security. When district checks are processed and issued, an invitation exists for fraudulent activities since district checks do not contain a fraud-preventing watermark. District checks do not prevent fraud when copied by clearly printing the word "void" on the check.

The district purchases checks from a vendor recommended by Region 3.

**Recommendation 16:**

**Require check vendor to ensure district checks contain a watermark, and the word "void" is clearly viewed when a check is copied.**

## **IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent requires check vendor to enhance fraud security measures.	October 2001
2.	The bookkeeper orders new district checks with enhanced security measures.	October 2001
3.	The bookkeeper begins using new checks.	December 2001

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

# CHAPTER 3

## FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

### C RISK MANAGEMENT

FCISD's insurance program consists of property and casualty insurance, group health care and employee benefit plans and workers' compensation insurance. **Exhibit 3-11** details the insurance portfolio for FCISD.

**Exhibit 3-11**  
**FCISD Property Casualty Coverage as of August 31, 2000**

Company	Type Coverage	Policy Limits	Deductible Amount	Policy Period	Premium Costs
Texas Political Subdivisions Joint Self-Insurance Fund	Building and contents	\$3,605,464	\$2,500	1-5-01 to 1-5-02	\$7,159
Safeco	Commercial Crime	\$10,000	\$1,000	1-5-01 to 1-5-02	\$294
Texas Political Subdivisions Joint Self-Insurance Fund	General Liability	\$1,000,000	None	1-5-01 to 1-5-02	\$842
Burns and Wilcox	Professional Legal Liability	\$1,000,000	\$5,000	1-15-01 to 1-15-02	\$2,727
Texas Political Subdivisions Joint Self-Insurance Fund	Band Equipment	\$70,559	\$250	1-5-01 to 1-5-02	\$197
Texas Political Subdivisions Joint Self-Insurance Fund	Auto Fleet	\$100,000 - \$300,000	\$500	1-5-01 to 1-5-02	\$2,761

*Source: FCISD Superintendents' Office.*

*Employee Benefits*

FCISD's Benefits Office resides in the superintendent's office under the supervision of the payroll secretary who reports to the superintendent. The payroll secretary helps the superintendent evaluate employee benefit plans and monitor costs. The payroll secretary performs the day-to-day activities of the benefits administration, which are listed below:

- Assist employees who walk in with benefit questions;
- Process benefit enrollment, change and cancellation forms;
- Conduct benefits orientation for new employees;
- Process retired employee benefits such as retiree life insurance;
- Coordinate employee benefit deductions;
- Act as liaison among employees, providers and insurance companies;
- Review and edit payroll reports to prepare payment to insurance companies;
- Process special insurance benefits for employees on Family Medical Leave Act;
- Process Teacher Retirement System of Texas forms;
- Meet with insurance companies to review open enrollment materials; and
- Provide COBRA administration.

In September 2000, the district renewed its contract for health insurance with the Fortis Insurance Co. District employees dislike this company's coverage and characterize it as inadequate, cumbersome and a "necessary evil." Fortis Insurance Co. was the lowest bidder when quotes were sought during the summer of 2000. The district purchases the insurance through an agent in Corpus Christi. Fortis has offered poor customer service to FCISD. From surveys and interviews it was ascertained that the company does not respond in a timely manner to client phone calls, and the district has never received a master agreement for the district plan.

The district contributes \$100 toward each employee for the purchase of health insurance. Employees, if they chose to purchase a policy, must contribute the balance of the monthly fee. The current cost for family coverage is \$299.93, with the employee share being \$199.93 per month. Presently there are new in-network doctors in Karnes County.

**Exhibit 3-12** explains the various types of health care plans offered to employees of FCISD.

**Exhibit 3-12**  
**FCISD Summary of Health Benefits**

Fortis Insurance Company		
	In-Network	Out-of-Network
<b>Calendar Year Deductible</b>		
• Individual	\$500	\$1,500
• Family	\$1,500	\$3,000
<b>Annual out-of-pocket Maximum</b>		
• Individual	\$2,000	\$5,000
• Family	\$4,000	\$10,000
<b>Coinsurance</b>	No	No
<b>Precertification</b>	Yes	Yes
<b>Lifetime Maximum</b>	\$5,000,000	\$5,000,000
<b>Pre-existing Condition Limitation</b>	No	No
<b>Physician Services</b>		
• Office Visits	\$25 first visit/\$50 thereafter	Deductible, then 70%
• Primary Care	\$25 first visit/\$50 thereafter	Deductible, then 70%
• Specialist	\$25 first visit/\$50 thereafter	Deductible, then 70%
• Preventative Care	80%	
• Maternity	\$25 first visit/80% thereafter	Deductible, then 70%
• Mental Health	\$25 first visit/\$50 thereafter	Deductible, then 70%
• Specialists and Consultants	\$25 first visit/\$50 thereafter	Deductible, then 70%
<b>Hospital Services</b>		
• Inpatient	\$500/\$1000 per event, then 80%	Non-network deductible, then 70%
• Outpatient	\$500/\$1000 per event, then 80%	\$150 access fee, then 80%
• Emergency Room	\$150 per visit, then deductible and 80%	Non-network deductible, then 50%
• Mental Health	Office co pay, then 80%	
<b>Substance Abuse</b>	Office co pay, then 80%	Non-network deductible then 70%
<b>Diagnostic X-Ray and Lab</b>	80%	80%

Fortis Insurance Company		
	In-Network	Out-of-Network
<b>Rehabilitation and Physical Therapy</b>	80%	80%
<b>TMJ Services Office Visits</b>	80%	Non-network deductible then 50%
<b>Home Health Care</b>	100% up to 160 hours	100 % up to 160 hours
<b>Family Planning</b>	80%	Non-network deductible then 50%
<b>Infertility Services</b>	None	Not covered
<b>Prescription Drugs</b>	Retail: \$10 generic co pay for 30 days; \$45 brand co pay for 30 days Mail Order: \$20 generic co pay for 90 days; \$90 brand co pay for 90 days.	Not Covered

Source: FCISD Superintendent's Office.

Exhibit 3-13 summarizes the FCISD life insurance program.

**Exhibit 3-13**  
**Summary of FCISD Life Insurance Coverage**  
**As of March 2001**

Coverage	Rate	Volume	Monthly Premium	Rate Guarantee
Basic Life	.1428/\$1,000	\$240,000	\$172.00	1 year

Source: FCISD Superintendent's Office.

**Exhibit 3-14** summarizes the FCISD unemployment compensation program. The FCISD unemployment compensation program administrator is currently the Texas Association of School Boards.

**Exhibit 3-14**  
**Summary of FCISD Unemployment Compensation Coverage**  
**As of March 2001**

Coverage Period	Calendar Year Wages	2000-01 Rate	2000-01 Contribution
10-01-00 to 10-01-01	\$1,753,230	.001025	\$1,797

Source: FCISD Superintendent's Office.

**FINDING**

The superintendent, bookkeeper and high school principal are not bonded. The district's insurance coverage does not include a crime policy. The superintendent and the bookkeeper handle incoming cash for deposit in district accounts. The high school principal handles cash from the student activity fund.

All persons who are responsible for cash must be bonded to protect the public from simple errors and negligence.

The district currently owns a Commercial Crime Coverage Policy, but has not have an employee dishonesty provision for all employees who handle cash.

**Recommendation 17:**

**Obtain a cash bond for the superintendent, bookkeeper and high school principal.**

Through bonding employees, the district will protect monies and securities as well as any other type of financial asset. Bonding indemnifies covered employees who are required by law to give bonds for the faithful

performance of their service against loss through dishonest acts of persons employed by the district.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1. The superintendent notifies the insurance company to add the superintendent, bookkeeper and high school principal to the policy.	September 2001
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**FISCAL IMPACT**

The cost per bond is estimated at \$50 per employee, per year for a \$20,000 bond. Three employees times \$50 per bond equals \$150 total.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2001-02</b>	<b>2002-03</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2005-06</b>
Obtain a cash bond for the superintendent, bookkeeper and high school principal.	(\$150)	(\$150)	(\$150)	(\$150)	(\$150)

**FINDING**

The district has not reviewed the third party administrator (TPA) contract since 1997 and is not in compliance with the insurance purchasing guidelines as published by TEA. The district has contracted with Riata Financial of New Braunfels, for these services. This contract covers life insurance, disability insurance, cancer insurance and 403(b) plans in which employees may participate. During team interviews and teacher focus groups it was determined that choices are limited and customer service is poor as witnessed by the interviewer. When the payroll secretary requests information from the insurance agent, such as the insurance contract, the company fails to fulfill the district's request.

Dental insurance third-party administrator services are provided by Blue Cross Blue Shield of Texas.

The third party administrator is responsible for processing of claims on behalf of FCISD and district employees.

This district would benefit from up-to-date market practices through issuance of a Request for Proposals for third party administrative services.

**Recommendation 18:**

**Issue a Request for Proposals to provide third party administration of third-party provided insurance programs including 403(b) compliance.**

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The payroll secretary develops a bid specification package for third party benefit administration services and presents the package to the superintendent.	October 2001
2.	The board secretary advertises for quotations.	November 2001
3.	The payroll secretary summarizes, and verifies the quotations.	December 2001
4.	The school board approves winning bid.	December 2001
5.	The superintendent executes a contract with the approved firm.	December 2001

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

**FINDING**

The district does not offer a sick leave bank for employees. FCISD employees are granted five days of sick leave under Texas law, and the school district contributes one day per year. The state days are cumulative. The FCISD days can only accumulate to a total of two then the employee loses a day. An employee can never carryover more than two FCISD days. Employees who exhaust their sick leave, and who are not eligible for leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) lose pay when they do not report to work. This can affect staff who have children who are chronically ill or who experience health problems themselves.

A sick leave bank program permits employees to donate - usually one day per year - to a central bank in the school district. Employees who have exhausted their sick leave may then apply to a sick leave bank committee to use a specified number of days. The district has established a sick leave bank.

All full-time employees would be permitted enroll in the bank by contributing days of accrued or anticipated local sick leave to the bank. Employees who have joined the sick leave bank and who are unable to perform their duties due to an unexpected critical illness, surgery, injury or

other temporary disability may use up to 30 days from the sick leave bank each school year

**Recommendation 19:**

**Implement a sick leave bank program.**

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent appoints a committee comprised of teachers, support staff, an administrator, and a board member to develop sick leave bank policies and standard operating procedures.	October 2001
2.	The committee reports recommendations to the Superintendent.	November 2001
3.	The superintendent submits recommendations for approval by the Board.	December 2001
4.	The board approves the sick leave bank policy and standard operating procedures.	December 2001
5.	The sick leave bank policy becomes effective.	January 2002

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

# CHAPTER 3

## FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

### D. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

#### FINDING

The district has been chosen to participate in the Teacher Retirement System of Texas (TRS) pilot program that reports benefits over the Internet. The Benefits Services Transformation (BeST) project began in January 2001 and had Falls City electronically submit new file formats for the January regular payroll report and the new member data report. TRS chose 36 reporting entities out of the 1,312 participating employers to begin the first phase of this project. A representative from the Region 3 stated that entities were chosen for this pilot program because of their knowledge and timeliness in reporting TRS retirement benefit information.

#### COMMENDATION

**FCISD has embraced and excelled in complying with TRS reporting requirements.**

#### FINDING

District administration staff members are not cross-trained in other business functions, thereby limiting the versatility of staff resources.

Interviews revealed that there is no cross-training plan for employees. If someone is absent there is no one to perform those duties until the individual returns. For example, the bookkeeper stated that she could not complete all of the payroll duties if the payroll clerk was out of the office for an extended period. The payroll clerk has created checklists to document job requirements but there is nothing formalized in other positions.

#### **Recommendation 20:**

#### **Institute a formal cross-training plan for business-related functions**

By cross-training employees, the district will enable itself to cover day-to-day operations if an emergency or illness occurred. In addition, employees will broaden their skills in school finance.

#### IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE

1.	The superintendent meets with administrative staff to determine what functions should be cross-trained and prepares a plan on how frequently cross-training should occur.	October 2001
2.	The superintendent meets with staff monthly to determine if cross-training is working.	October 2001

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

## **FINDING**

The district does not have a formal procedures manual that documents and governs all fiscal operations by functional area. In the absence of a procedures manual, administrative office employees cannot function outside of their area of responsibility. The lack of a procedure manual is a hindrance during times of prolonged illness or employee turnover.

Smaller districts often function without a formal written procedures manual because someone in the district has been responsible for a particular function for many years and others become dependent upon their institutional knowledge. Written procedures assist district personnel in following a process from beginning to end should they need to perform that function suddenly.

### **Recommendation 21:**

#### **Develop a formal procedures manual for the business office that details day-to-day operations.**

A procedures manual provides direction on the correct methods for processing specific transactions and serves as a training tool for new employees. In addition, a procedures manual provides a source of continuity and uniformity especially when there is turnover in staff.

## **IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent creates a team of staff members to draft procedures manual.	October 2001
2.	The team meets to review procedure drafts and edit the drafts.	November 2001
3.	The team brings them to the superintendent to review and provide input.	December 2001

4.	The superintendent approves procedures and reviews procedures with the board.	January 2002
5.	Once the superintendent approves procedures, the team compiles the procedures into the new Falls City administrative procedures manual.	February 2002

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

### **FINDING**

A review of the district's overtime expenditure category revealed that the district is paying the maintenance manager 16 hours of guaranteed overtime each month. Guaranteed overtime is highly unusual. Additionally, the superintendent or no other employee verifies that the time is worked. Each month, the maintenance manager is required to fill out a timesheet and document his hours worked. This employee is to be paid 40 hours per week. A review of this employee's timesheets from August 1999 through March 2001 revealed that the district paid this employee 16 hours of overtime each month for a total of \$4,459.52. On one of the timesheets it was noted "guaranteed 16 hours per the superintendent." None of the twenty timesheets had any justification for the overtime or any approval signature from the superintendent. From August 1999 through July 2000, the maintenance manager documented that he worked 44 hours each week giving 16 overtime hours but from August 2000 through March 2001 the employee documented 40 hours per week and still is being paid 16 hours of overtime.

The maintenance manager stated that although the timesheets document 40 hours the manager is putting in more hours in the month. The maintenance manager further stated that the superintendent said that the board had approved the 16 overtime hours per month.

### **Recommendation 22:**

**Cease making guaranteed overtime payments for maintenance work.**

### **IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent eliminates guaranteed overtime payments.	October 2001
2.	The board approves the conditions under which overtime payments can be made for maintenance work.	November 2001

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

The costs to this recommendation were calculated by using an annual increase of 26 cents to the maintenance manager 2000 hourly rate of \$9.45, which is \$9.71 per hour including benefits. This rate is then multiplied at time and a half for 16 hours per month for 12 months [(\$9.71 per hour x 1.5 for overtime pay) x 16 hours of guaranteed pay x 12 months=\$2,796].

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2001-02</b>	<b>2002-03</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2005-06</b>
Cease making guaranteed overtime payments for maintenance work.	\$2,796	\$2,796	\$2,796	\$2,796	\$2,796

# CHAPTER 3

## FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

### **E. BUDGETING**

The link between planning and budget preparation makes school district budgets unique. School district budgets are often considered the ultimate policy document since they are the financial plan a school district uses to achieve its goals and objectives. School district budgets reflect:

- Public choices about what goods and services the district will produce;
- District's priorities;
- Relative weight given to the influence of various participants and interest groups in the budget development process; and
- Methods a district used to acquire and use its resources.

The budget itself is the method for ensuring that school district administrators are accountable to the taxpayers.

The state, TEA and local school districts formulate legal requirements for school district budgets. State and federal grants also may impose additional legal requirements. District administrators and the superintendent are responsible for preparing district budget guidelines and the budget calendar. Because the guidelines and calendar create a framework for the entire budget development process, their careful design is critical to an efficient and effective process.

### **FINDING**

The district does not use a year-round budget calendar. In March of each year, the superintendent and the bookkeeper begin work on the next year's budget. They start reviewing salary projections, revenue and expenditure categories, and district needs for the next year. In May, the principals assess the budget need with their teachers and communicate back to the superintendent their issues or concerns. In either May or June, a board workshop is held to discuss the overview of next year's budget with board members. Throughout August the preliminary budget is prepared and the board approves the final budget before the end of August.

A budget calendar lists critical dates for the preparation, submission and review of campus budgets for the school district and are prepared at the district level. The budget calendar often contains a column which shows who is responsible for each activity listed. This column is helpful to users since a quick scan of the calendar allows each of them to identify those

activities in the budget development process for which they are responsible.

**Exhibit 3-15** details year-round budget calendar for the United ISD and can serve as a template for FCISD. UISD begins in January with the adoption of the budget format and building through September when the process is evaluated and timelines adjusted where necessary.

**Exhibit 3-15  
United ISD Budget Calendar**

<b>Month</b>	<b>Action</b>
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopt budget format, calendar and assumptions.</li> <li>• Conduct workshop for program managers on budget format.</li> <li>• Prepare preliminary estimates of enrollment, revenue and costs.</li> </ul>
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare program budgets and submit to directors.</li> <li>• Collect feedback from school-related stakeholder groups for guidance in budget decision making.</li> <li>• Issue campus based allocations.</li> </ul>
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board discusses revenue projections, allocations and costs.</li> <li>• Issue budget packets.</li> <li>• Conduct budget development workshop for campus administrators.</li> </ul>
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and revise budget projections.</li> <li>• Distribute budget update to all stakeholder groups and district personnel.</li> </ul>
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board reviews salary increase proposals.</li> <li>• Executive offices submit budgets to business office.</li> <li>• Superintendent reviews projections.</li> <li>• Media strategy is outlined.</li> </ul>
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board reviews salary increase proposals.</li> <li>• Preliminary discussions of new budget requests.</li> <li>• Discuss special revenue fund budgets.</li> <li>• Consider requests for technology and equipment fund budgets.</li> <li>• Formal presentation of budget to Board.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold public budget forums.</li> </ul>
July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approve proposed budget including facilities fund.</li> <li>• Publicize meeting to adopt proposed budget with 10 days' notice.</li> </ul>
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Superintendent posts 72-hour notice of meeting of board to adopt budget and approve salary increases.</li> <li>• Board adopts budget, approves salary increases, and effective tax rate.</li> <li>• Publish effective and rollback tax rates, schedules, and fund balances.</li> <li>• Publish Notice of public hearing as needed.</li> <li>• Hold public forums; schedule and announce meeting to adopt tax rate 3-14 days from this date.</li> <li>• Publish notice of vote on tax rate.</li> <li>• Post 72-hour notice for meeting at which the adopts tax rate.</li> <li>• Conduct meeting to adopt tax rate.</li> </ul>
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess budget process timeline and adjust where necessary.</li> </ul>

*Source: United ISD.*

**Recommendation 23:**

**Develop and implement a year-round budget calendar.**

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent and administrative staff prepare a budget calendar.	October 2001
2.	The superintendent presents the budget calendar to the board for their approval.	November 2001
3.	The board approves the calendar.	December 2001
4.	The superintendent implements the calendar for the 2002-03 school year.	January 2002

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

# CHAPTER 3

## FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

### F. PURCHASING MANAGEMENT

This section examines the Falls City Independent School District's (FCISD) purchasing function. 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.

An effective purchasing system requires several essential components. One of the most important is a good organization that is staffed with well-trained people. Roles and related responsibilities must be clearly defined and be adapted to meet the unique operating environment of the organization. Although purchasing organization structures may vary, most provide similar functions. An administrative role in purchasing typically:

- Approves purchase orders and service contracts, including competitive procurement specifications and tabulations;
- Assists in the development and modification of purchasing policies and procedures and is responsible for the implementation of such policies and procedures;
- Resolves problems encountered within the purchasing function;
- Establishes and monitors good working relations with vendors;
- Provides for communication with vendors (for example, pre-competitive procurement conferences and competitive procurement openings) 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.

In order to maximize the efficiency of its purchasing function, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) recommends that the purchasing function be centralized within the district. The Council of State Governments publication, *State and Local Governmental Purchasing*, defines centralized purchasing as "a system of purchasing in which authority, responsibility, and control of activities are concentrated in one administrative unit." Decentralized purchasing is defined as "a system of purchasing in which there is a varying degree of delegation of authority,

responsibility and control of purchasing activities to the several using agencies."

A centralized purchasing function is essential to efficiency in purchasing for the following reasons:

- Small volume purchases can be consolidated into larger volume purchases for the entire district;
- Vendors and the business community have a single central contact within the district;
- The Purchasing Department and its personnel have experience and are trained in purchasing, sourcing, prices and vendor relations that saves the district money and allows for a more efficient process; and
- The Purchasing Department and its personnel are trained in state and federal laws and local board policies applicable to purchasing, providing for better compliance.

At FCISD, if a teacher or principal needs to order something, they contact the bookkeeper for a blank purchase order (PO) which is a multi-part form. The teacher or principal receives a blank PO and the teacher or principal completes it. The principal approves the PO and sends it to the superintendent for approval. Once approved, the bookkeeper or the teacher orders the goods. When the goods come one copy of the PO is sent back to the bookkeeper stating the items were received and the bookkeeper batches PO with the invoice and processes the payable.

## **FINDING**

The district is unable to verify vending commission checks. The district has an agreement with a local proprietor to stock vending machines. There is no formal agreement documented and when the review team requested backup for vending machine contracts, all we received were copies of the commission checks. The bookkeeper stated that each month the district receives a check from the proprietor. The total amount of commissions the district received from March 1999 through March 2001 was \$2,188.

### **Recommendation 24:**

**Execute a formal vendor agreement and require substantiation of commission checks.**

## **IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent develops an agreement and presents it for board approval.	October 2001
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2.	The superintendent instructs the vendor to provide backup documentation with commission checks.	October 2001
3.	The bookkeeper provides monthly follow up to ensure vendors comply with the agreement.	November 2001

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

# CHAPTER 3

## FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

### G. SHARED SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

The position of the school district business manager has evolved into a profession that is separate and distinct from that of the superintendent or principal. As a result, superintendents and principals in small school districts, who have been involved in school district operations, are finding it increasingly difficult to keep up with the rapidly changing requirements.

In addition, small school districts are unable to match the salaries of large school districts for highly trained and experienced business office personnel. Thus, these districts have more problems adjusting to changes in school finance and budgeting laws and in maintaining efficient business operations.

There are increasing reports of mistakes made by small district personnel that cause the district extreme hardships. A simple PEIMS reporting mistake can impact a district's funding for a number of years.

All school districts are required to perform an array of business services. In some manner, the business services listed in **Exhibit 3-16** must be performed by all school districts.

**Exhibit 3-16**  
**Business Services Performed in Most School Districts**

• Accounting	• Preparation of Financial Report
• Purchasing	• Investment of School District Funds
• Invoice Processing	• Cash Flow Analysis
• Bank Reconciliations	• Food Service Accounting
• Fixed Asset Management	• PEIMS Reporting
• Purchasing	• Board Reporting
• Payroll Processing and Benefits Reporting	• State Aid Calculations
• Grant Reporting	• Student Enrollment Projections
• Budgeting	• Student Activity Fund Accounting
• Personnel Reporting	• Long Range Budgeting
• Managing and Supervision	• Tax Assessing/Collecting

*Source: TSPR.*

How well districts are able to accomplish these complicated tasks depends on the knowledge and expertise of the personnel that districts are having increasing difficulty hiring.

**FINDING**

Each of the four districts in Karnes County are uniquely challenged to provide the wide array of business services required of school districts in Texas.

In FCISD the superintendent has ultimate responsibility for many of the financial aspects of the district's operations. Supporting the superintendent are the bookkeeper and payroll clerk.

As shown in **Exhibit 3-17**, FCISD is using a number of approaches to accomplish the financial and business related tasks of the district.

**Exhibit 3-17  
Business and Financial Tasks in FCISD**

<b>Task</b>	<b>Performed by Regional Education Service Center</b>	<b>Performed In-House by the Position Shown</b>	<b>Contracted Service with Entity Shown</b>	<b>Not Performed in FCISD</b>
Accounting		Bookkeeper		
Purchasing		Superintendent, Bookkeeper		
Invoice Processing		Bookkeeper		
Bank Reconciliations		Bookkeeper		
Fixed Asset Management		Superintendent		
Payroll Processing and Benefits Reporting		Payroll clerk		
Grant Reporting		Technology Director		
Budgeting		Superintendent, Bookkeeper, Principal		

Personnel Reporting		Superintendent		
Managing and Supervision		Superintendent		
Preparation of Financial Reports		Bookkeeper	External Auditor	
Investment of School District Funds		Bookkeeper, Superintendent	Bank	
Cash Flow Analysis		Superintendent, Bookkeeper		
Food Service Accounting		Food Service Director		
PEIMS Reporting		PEIMS Coordinator		
Board Reporting		Superintendent		
State Aid Calculations		Superintendent		
Student Enrollment Projections		Principals		
Student Activity Fund Accounting		High school Principal, Bookkeeper		
Long Rang Budgeting		Superintendent		
Tax Assessing/Collecting			Karnes County Tax Assessor Collector	

*Source: FCISD Superintendent's office.*

In June 1999, Regional Education Service Center XI (Region 11) in Fort Worth submitted a proposal to TEA for "Improving Texas School District Financial Management." One component of the proposal was the development of a model business support services cooperative to help smaller school districts and charter school to perform any and all business functions. As part of this effort, Region 11 researched the use of cooperative financial services in and outside of Texas.

After reviewing and analyzing the various models from various states, Region 11 found six workable models for providing business services in

small school districts and charter schools in Texas, which are summarized below:

### **Model I - Business Services Provided by School Districts or Charter Schools**

- School districts or charters maintain their own business services departments
- The Regional Education Service Center (RESC) in the area perform business services as needed using RESC staff, retirees or other contracted groups or individuals.

### **Model II - Business Services Provided by Each RESC**

- School Districts or Charter Schools contract with the RESC to perform all business services.
- Business services provided by the RESC are full time, part time, interim, or "as needed."
- RESC staff, qualified retirees, or the use of an incubator to directly train school district employees performs business services.

### **Model III-Business Services Provided on a Multi-Regional Basis**

- School Districts or Charter Schools contract with the RESC to perform business services.
- This model assumes that four "Mega-RESC's" will be appropriately staffed to fully perform all business services.
- Each multi-regional RESC will provide services to four other RESCs. These smaller RESCs may also provide some business services or may provide interface services for school districts or charter schools in their regions.
- Business services provided by the RESC are full time, part time, interim or "as needed."
- The RESC staff, qualified retirees, or the use of an incubator to directly train school district employees performs business services.
- This model tracks the original Multi-Regional Processing Centers that provided data processing services in the early 70s.

### **Model IV-Business Services Provided by Shared Personnel**

- School districts or charter schools co-op business services between and/or among each other.
- These districts or school approver an inter-local governmental agreement, which specifies the responsibilities of the cooperative and the responsibilities of each of the school districts with the cooperative.

- The RESC can provide technical assistance to the cooperative including development of the agreement, housing and incubator, hosting and assisting with the cooperative board meeting, etc.
- A fiscal agent would be appointed (this could be one of the member school districts or the RESC), and the cooperatives employees would become employees of the fiscal agent.
- The incubator could be provided by the RESC or by the cooperative

**Model V-Business Services Provided by Shared Personnel (Minimum Enrollment Required by the State)**

- School Districts or Charter Schools co-op business services between and/or among each other in order to reach the minimum enrollment required by the state.
- The RESC could provide technical assistance, incubator training, or perform fiscal agent duties.
- This model is the same as Model IV; however, it requires a certain minimum aggregate enrollment for the participating school districts or charter schools.

**Model VI-Privatized Business Services**

- School districts or charter schools purchase business services from a private company.
- The RESC could provide technical assistance and/or incubator services in order to train school district employees.

Clearly the scenarios can be "mixed and matched" in any combination or format desirable to school districts, charter schools and services centers. The use of these models, in conjunction with business services provided by RESCs throughout the state, could be a viable and option for school districts and charter schools to procure professional business services in a cost-efficient manner.

**Recommendation 25:**

**Form a committee of superintendents, Regional Education Service Center representatives and representatives from the Texas Education Agency to explore the opportunities for shared financial services.**

While this recommendation is directed toward districts in Karnes County, other neighboring districts that could benefit from a shared services arrangement should also be invited to participate. Further, districts may find that they will benefit from some combination of scenarios and may

wish to break off to work in smaller groups of two or three districts, rather than in a larger cooperative. All of these options should be thoroughly explored to ensure that the best interests of the districts are fully understood and protected.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent contacts the Regional Education Service Center to set up a superintendent meeting with any interested districts in the Region, RESC staff and staff from TEA.	October 2001
2.	The superintendent attends the meeting and discusses a plan to fully explore the various options for cooperative financial services within the Region.	November 2001
3.	The committee researches all of the options, with each superintendent regularly providing information and input about their respective district's operations, needs and board concerns.	December 2001 - March 2002
4.	The superintendent shares the various options with the board for final consideration and review.	April 2002
5.	The board reviews the options and determines the best course of action for the district in the coming year, approving any needed budget or staffing adjustments for the coming year.	May - June 2002
6.	The superintendent works with fellow superintendents and regional staff to implement the plan.	June - August 2002
7.	The district implements the new approach and closely monitors the districts participation to ensure the success of the plan.	August 2002 and Ongoing

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

# CHAPTER 4

## OPERATIONS

This chapter examines the operations of Falls City Independent School District (FCISD) in three sections:

- A. Food Service
- B. Transportation
- C. Facilities

Efficient, effective school operations and quality pupil services support a school district's educational mission. For children to learn, facilities must be adequately planned to accommodate projected student enrollment, effectively managed to create an environment conducive to learning that is energy efficient and appropriately maintained to ensure student and employee safety. Food must be nutritious, appealing, and available to all children, regardless of economic status. Pupil transportation must be safe and deliver children to and from school and extracurricular activities in sufficient time to meet school bell times and extracurricular schedules.

# CHAPTER 4

## OPERATIONS

### A. FOOD SERVICE

Food service operations in schools are responsible for providing students and staff with a nutritious breakfast and lunch served at a reasonable cost in a safe, clean and accessible environment. Each of these responsibilities must be accomplished in compliance with federal and state regulations, as well as local board policy. The predominant goal of the school lunch program, as defined under the National School Lunch Plan, is to provide proper nutrition to all students so that they can learn and succeed in the classroom.

FCISD's Food Service operation is funded from two sources:

- Student and adult meal sales; and
- Federal reimbursements for all qualified students who eat school meals.

Public school food service directors need to efficiently offer meals and ensure compliance with nutrition standards and federal guidelines. Increasing student meal participation is important to a school district not only because of the federal reimbursements it receives for every student who participates in meal programs, but because it ensures that students receive adequate nutrition as directed by the National School Breakfast and Lunch Programs.

FCISD works diligently to identify all students eligible for free and reduced meal prices, and maximizes use of federal lunch reimbursements.

The Texas School Food Service Association (TSFSA) has identified 10 standards of excellence for evaluation of 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.

The National School Lunch Act (NSLA) mandates that school meals "safeguard the health and well-being of the nation's children." Participating schools must serve lunches that are consistent with the applicable recommendations of the most recent Dietary Guidelines for Americans including: eating a variety of foods; choosing a diet with plenty of grain products, vegetables and fruits; choosing a diet moderate in sugars and salt; and choosing a diet with 30 percent or less of calories from fat and less than 10 percent of calories from saturated fat. In addition, lunches must provide, on average over each school week, at least 1/3 of the daily Recommended Dietary Allowances for protein, iron, calcium and vitamins A and C. Under the Traditional Food-Based Menu Planning Approach, the approved NSLA process for menu planning, schools must comply with specific component and quantity requirements by offering five food items from four food groups. These groups are: meat or meat alternate, vegetables and/or fruits, grains/breads, and milk. This is known as the Type-A meal. Minimum portion sizes are established by ages and grade groups.

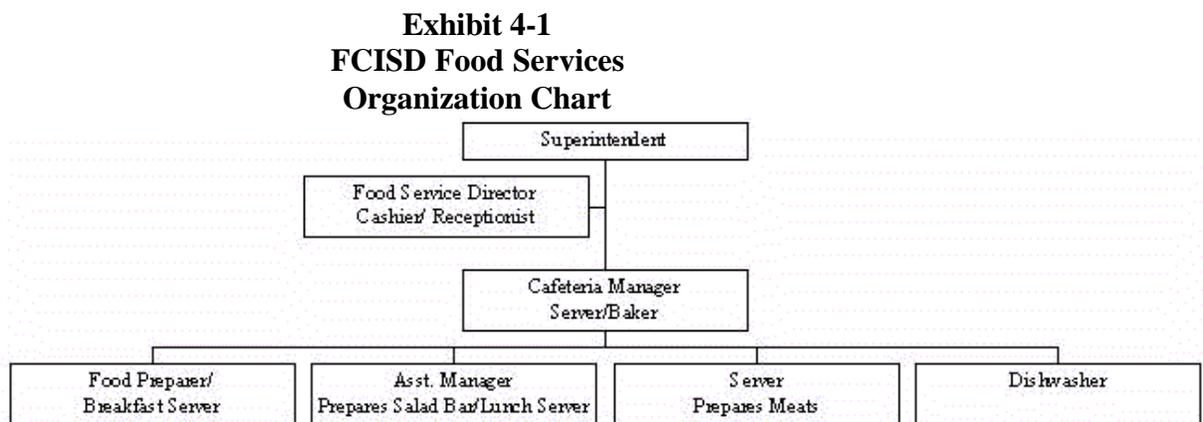
FCISD's Food Services department serves about 302 students daily. The district participates in the National School Lunch program and offers students nutritionally balanced meals daily. Free and reduced-price meals are available based on financial need. FCISD implements "Offer" versus "Serve" for breakfast and lunch. "Offer" versus "Serve" allows the students to refuse any one component they do not intend to eat. For breakfast students are required to take three of the four components, and three of the five components for lunch. FCISD serves students the same meal regardless of grade level. FCISD does not have a snack bar or offer federally approved snacks. Falls City, however, does offer students a salad bar with various vegetables to choose from. Snack machines are located in the district but turned off during lunchtime.

FCISD has one central cafeteria located between the elementary and high school buildings. It houses the kitchen, a small eating area and pantry space for food storage. The cafeteria operates one serving line featuring the regular menu. The district offers an open campus policy allowing students to leave campus for lunch. Most students, however, choose to eat in the cafeteria. Students in eighth grade must have a parental consent form in order to leave campus for lunch. Students in grades 9-12 can leave campus for lunch without parental consent. If a student returns late on multiple occasions the off-campus privilege is revoked. Meal prices are set annually by the board. The last increase approved by the board was in

June/July 2000, where the lunch price was increased from \$1.25 to \$1.40. As of August 2000 FCISD experienced a loss of \$3,483, reducing retained earnings of \$10,273 to \$6,790, which is less than one third of one month's expense for operation of the Food Service.

The FCISD Food Service department follows the following chain of command: the cafeteria aides report to the assistant manager who reports to the cafeteria manager. If any problems arise they are then communicated to the superintendent.

**Exhibit 4-1** describes the organization of Falls City food services program.



*Source: FCISD Cafeteria Manager, March 2001.*

**Exhibit 4-2** represents the federal 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 for two prior consecutive years and have breakfast costs higher than the full breakfast reimbursement rates. Falls City does not qualify for the severe need reimbursement.

**Exhibit 4-2  
FCISD Federal Reimbursement Rates  
Breakfast and Lunch  
2000-01**

Category	Breakfast	Lunch
Full Price	\$0.21	\$0.19
Reduced Price	\$0.82	\$1.62

Free	\$1.12	\$2.02
Severe Need	\$0.21	Plus \$0.02 in districts with 60% or more free and reduced price lunches served during the 1998-1999 school year

Source: TEA, Notice of Reimbursement Rates for 2000-01, July 10, 2000.

**Exhibit 4-3** details the food service expenditures for the period of 1996 through 1999.

**Exhibit 4-3**  
**FCISD Food Service Program**  
**Budget to Expenditures**  
**1996-97 through 1999-2000**

Expenditure	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Food	\$40,506	\$32,497	\$38,323	\$38,835
Payroll	\$35,881	\$40,335	\$46,506	\$48,695
Social Security	\$507	\$524	\$601	\$605
Group Health Ins	\$1,050	\$2,117	\$4,100	\$4,800
Workers Comp	\$4,596	\$2,563	\$16	\$1,439
Teacher Retirement	\$581	\$138	\$2,952	\$2,854
Non-Food	\$1,922	\$3,076	\$1,798	\$2,583
Commodities	\$7,708	\$8,354	\$6,724	\$5,917
Miscellaneous	\$544	\$807	\$955	\$658
Unemployment	\$37	\$38	\$38	\$0
Travel	\$0	\$0	\$29	\$153
Miscellaneous Contracted Services	\$0	\$0	\$540	\$800
Contracted Maintenance and Repair	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,803
TRS Care-on-Behalf of Payments	\$0	(\$26)	\$0	\$0
Depreciation Expense	\$0	\$0	\$610	\$1,125
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$93,332</b>	<b>\$90,423</b>	<b>\$103,192</b>	<b>\$110,277</b>

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

**Exhibit 4-4** states FCISD Food Service meal prices for the 2000-01 school year.

**Exhibit 4-4  
FCISD Food Service Meal Prices**

Meal	Price
Breakfast Elementary & Secondary	\$0.75
Breakfast Elementary & Secondary (Reduced Price)	\$0.30
Lunch Elementary (Regular)	\$1.25
Lunch Elementary (Reduced Price)	\$.35
Lunch Secondary (Regular)	\$1.40
Lunch Secondary (Reduced Price)	\$.40
Lunch-Adult faculty lunch or salad bar	\$1.75
Lunch-Adult non-faculty	\$2.50
Adult Breakfast	\$.75

*Source: FCISD Food Service Director.*

The federal Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) Food Code of 1999 was adopted by the State of Texas in July 1999. The code is a compendium of food safety guidelines based on the most current scientific information. The FDA Food Code is endorsed by the USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and provides a model by which state regulatory agencies may develop or update their own food safety rules. The Food Code is used as a reference by more than 3,000 state and local regulatory agencies that oversee food safety in restaurants, grocery stores, nursing homes and other institutional and retail settings such as school cafeterias.

**FINDING**

FCISD cafeteria staff take the initiative each summer to enroll in food service workshops. FCISD cafeteria staff have attended: Quantity food preparation training (1995), Lunch/Breakfast compliance monitoring (1996), Interpersonal Skills (1996), Menus in minutes (1997), food service sanitation (1997), Commodity application and agreement forms for school food service (1998), Safety (1998), and Sanitation (1999). The workshops provide them opportunity to enhance their skills professionally and keep up-to-date on ever changing health regulations. The FCISD staff understands that the workshops help them grow professionally and allow

them to provide the best service to their students, whom they consider both family and customers.

Cafeteria staff take pride in their professionalism and invest their skills in Falls City through their "home" cooked meals, careful preparation and workplace cleanliness. As a result of their summer training, Falls City food service has increased their knowledge of safety and sanitation enabling them to score high on the TDH reviews.

**Exhibit 4-5** displays the results available from the TDH reviews of the FCISD kitchen completed in 1997, 1998 and 1999. FCISD achieved scores above 80 from the TDH indicating above average performance in their cafeteria.

**Exhibit 4-5**  
**Falls City Cafeteria Compliance with**  
**Texas Department of Health Standards Reports**

<b>School Year</b>	<b>Texas Department of Health Report Total Score</b>
1999	97
1997	96
1996	84

*Source: Food Establishment Inspection Reports, 1996 through 1999, FCISD.*

**COMMENDATION**

**Falls City provides training for cafeteria staff to improve services to students and exceed sanitation standards.**

**FINDING**

FCISD Food Service has noted successes with their menus. Menus are planned and published daily in the local newspaper. The menus do vary in consideration of commodities available and special holidays. Hamburger is the most common meal served (29 times in 10 months) followed by pizza and chili dogs (12 and 11 times respectively over the last 10 months). Community members have been known to come in and eat with children. The children themselves are generally pleased with the service and the menu selections.

Falls City English Honors Class conducted a study in February 2001 reviewing FCISD food service's menus. Their study recorded fish as the students' 11<sup>th</sup> most favorite meal. Their study also recorded the cafeteria serving the fish entrée only four times in the last year. The least enjoyed servings, according to the study, are peas and carrots ranking 25<sup>th</sup> at the bottom of their list. In general, it's a unanimous decision that chicken and dumplings is one of the schools most preferred meals.

## **COMMENDATION**

**FCISD used students to survey fellow students regarding meal preferences and used the survey to adjust menus.**

## **FINDING**

The cafeteria staff uses food and supplies efficiently. When the merchandise boxes arrive, they are dated to control for expiration. Older boxes are moved forward and newly arrived materials are placed in the rear until they become necessary to use. Cafeteria staff uses the "First in, First out" method, whereby the first products brought in are the first items consumed. Using this method is efficient because it reduces potential waste and keeps staff informed of what products need to be used first. This method of inventory control can be replicated in school districts where food often expires.

## **COMMENDATION**

**Falls City cafeteria staff is successful in eliminating waste by consuming products before their expiration dates.**

## **FINDING**

FCISD does not provide Food Service employees written improvement targets and goals as to what they need to do to perform their jobs more efficiently. Job descriptions do exist but they are kept in the business office and have not been updated since 1997. Regardless of the size of the school, or number of students who are served, employees need to be effectively managed and developed. This involves setting and implementing performance standards and controls, monitoring, mentoring, developing and coaching personnel.

FCISD conducts oral evaluations for food service employees and does not complete written evaluations. Additionally, employee improvement targets and goals should be set with each employee evaluation.

During interviews, employees said that defined job performance criteria, used in conducting personnel evaluations, did not exist. The use of performance-based job expectations helps employees know what their job responsibilities are and how their manager will evaluate them based on those criteria outlined in their job expectations. Employees can then be engaged in the process of setting their expectations, and should be encouraged to give and receive feedback about their job performance.

**Recommendation 26:**

**Evaluate food service employees and involve them in setting performance targets on an annual basis.**

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The Food Services manager meets with the superintendent to develop a format for employee job expectations, requirements and appraisals.	October 2001
2.	The superintendent begins using the formats to set goals and expectations and to document the job performance of the Food Service manager and employees.	November 2001

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

**FINDING**

FCISD does not know what the meal per labor hour rate is for the district. FCISD was unable to provide the total number of hours food service staff works per day. FCISD employs five employees who carry out food service duties. During interviews, the food service director informed the review team that the district is not required to track meals per labor hour information unless they claim severe need reimbursement, which FCISD does not.

The formula for calculating meals per labor hour is: number of employees times hours worked per day times the number of meals, divided by total hours per day.

**Exhibit 4-6** shows the Falls City average daily participation in breakfast and lunch between August 2000 and January 2001.

**Exhibit 4-6**  
**Average Daily Participation in Breakfast and Lunch**  
**August 2000 through January 2001**

Month	Average Daily Attendance	Average Daily Lunch Participation	Daily Participation Rate	Average Daily Breakfast Participation	Daily Participation Rate
August	341	249	73%	59	17%
September	336	245	72%	61	18%
October	335	246	73%	61	18%
November	335	242	72%	68	20%
December	334	235	70%	59	17%
January	330	232	71%	57	17%
<b>Average</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>18%</b>

*Source: FCISD, Reimbursement Claim Worksheets for School Lunch and Breakfast Programs.*

**Exhibit 4-7** displays the percent for average student participation of FC ISD and its peer districts.

**Exhibit 4-7**  
**Percent Student Average Daily Participation in Food Service Program**  
**By Peer Districts 1998-99 to 2000-01**

District	1998-99		1999-2000		2000-01	
	Lunch	Breakfast	Lunch	Breakfast	Lunch	Breakfast
Martinsville	71.6	29.6	77.2	31.6	74.8	31.4
<b>Falls City</b>	<b>71.3</b>	<b>22.6</b>	<b>68.3</b>	<b>19.9</b>	<b>71.7</b>	<b>18.4</b>
Moulton	62.1	17.5	62.9	14.7	64.0	16.9
Fruitvale	60.8	20.0	59.7	24.2	67.7	30.5
Campbell	60.4	28.4	61.1	36.5	62.1	37.8
Bland	59.3	17.2	65.0	20.0	67.2	20.1

*Source: TEA Child Nutrition Programs 1998-99 to 2000-01.*

**Exhibit 4-8** shows FCISD and peer districts expenditures comparison between 1997-98 and 2000-01. Over the last four years, Falls City has ranked either first or second in Food Service expenditures when compared to its peer districts. In the 2001 school year, Falls City ranked second for least expenditures compared to the peer districts.

**Exhibit 4-8**  
**FCISD and Peer District Food Services Expenditures Comparison**  
**1997-98 to 2000-01**

<b>District Name</b>	<b>1997-98</b>	<b>1998-99</b>	<b>1999-2000</b>	<b>2000-01</b>
Campbell	\$124,370	\$118,512	\$129,227	\$116,103
<b>Falls City</b>	<b>\$92,079</b>	<b>\$96,523</b>	<b>\$111,606</b>	<b>\$119,506</b>
Martinsville	\$94,420	\$92,162	\$124,891	\$125,711
Fruitvale	\$129,561	\$122,064	\$122,000	\$127,000
Moulton	\$123,128	\$127,131	\$123,344	\$129,836
Bland	\$136,225	\$147,250	\$149,221	\$165,593

*Source: TEA, PEIMS 1997-98 to 2000-01.*

**Exhibit 4-9** shows Falls City ISD and peer districts expenditures per student between 1997-98 and 2000-01. The chart illustrates Falls City as the district spending the second least per student in 2000-01. Bland ISD ranks first spending the least amount at \$305 per student.

**Exhibit 4-9**  
**FCISD and Peer District Food Services Expenditures per Student**  
**1997-98 to 2000-01**

<b>District Name</b>	<b>1997-98</b>	<b>1998-99</b>	<b>1999-2000</b>	<b>2000-01</b>
Bland	\$281	\$302	\$276	\$305
<b>Falls City</b>	<b>\$284</b>	<b>\$290</b>	<b>\$333</b>	<b>\$353</b>
Fruitvale	\$356	\$353	\$377	\$355
Moulton	\$326	\$351	\$326	\$367
Campbell	\$396	\$352	\$392	\$375
Martinsville	\$321	\$308	\$416	\$389

Source: TEA, PEIMS 1997-98 to 2000-01.

**Exhibit 4-10** shows a MPLH-based on total number of meals served according to industry standards.

**Exhibit 4-10**  
**Meals Per Labor Hour (MPLH)/Total Hours**

Number of Meal Equivalents	Conventional System <sup>a</sup>		Convenience System <sup>b</sup>	
	Low	High	Low	High
Up to 100	8	10	10	12
101-150	9	1	11	13
151-200	10-11	12	12	14
251-300	13	15	15	16
301-400	14	16	16	18
401-500	14	17	18	19
501-600	15	17	18	19
601-700	16	18	19	20
701-800	17	19	20	22
801-900	18	20	21	23
901+	19	21	22	23

Source: D.V. Pannell-Martin, *School Foodservice Management*, 5<sup>th</sup> Ed.

<sup>a</sup> Conventional system is preparation of some foods from raw ingredients on premises using some bakery breads and prepared pizza, and washing dishes).

<sup>b</sup> Convenience system is using a maximum amount of processed foods (for example, using all bakery breads, prefried chicken, and proportioned condiments and washing only trays or using disposable dinnerware).

FCISD Food Service operation resembles the conventional system of food preparation. The lowest hourly salary paid to a Food Service employee is \$7.25 per hour. Food Service employees work 186 days per year.

**Recommendation 27:**

**Establish Meals Per Labor Hour standards and evaluate the cafeteria's productivity based on the district's actual operation.**

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The Food Service director reviews the number of staff on hand and compiles the total number of hours worked for the staff on a particular day. Use the number of meals served on a given day and calculate what the Meals Per Labor Hour is.	October 2001
2.	The Food Service director will develop a plan for the cafeteria to increase productivity.	November 2001
3.	The Food Service director identifies possible reduction of staff according to the productivity level at the cafeteria.	December 2001
4.	The Food Service director and managers use the MPLH guidelines as one method to evaluate performance.	Ongoing

**FISCAL IMPACT**

In **Exhibit 4-6** the district served an average of 241 lunches and 61 breakfasts per day between August 2000 and January 2001, for a number of meals served per day of 302. According to district timesheets, five staff work 8 hours each day, for a total of 40 hours per day. Forty hours per day divided into 302 meals per day results in an MPLH of 7.55. In **Exhibit 4-10** the average number of meals per labor hours for food operation FCISD size is 14 MPLH. By increasing the number of MPLH to the standard could reduce staffing by 18 hours per day (302 meals per day divided by 14 MPLH equals 22 hours. Forty hours minus 22 hours equals 18 hours) or 3,348 hours per year (186 days x 18 hours). The district can save \$24,273 per year by raising MPLH to 14 (3,348 x \$7.25). Savings in the first year would be reduced by three months because implementation would not take effect until December.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2001-02</b>	<b>2002-03</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2005-06</b>
Establish Meals Per Labor Hours standards and evaluate the cafeteria's productivity based on the district's actual operation.	\$16,182	\$24,273	\$24,273	\$24,273	\$24,273

**FINDING**

A total of ten vending machines are available during the day. Two snack machines provide cookies, chips, candy and other caloric snacks. The other eight consist of mainly Coke products like PowerAde, Dasani Water and 2 juice machines. The snack machines are refilled every two or three days depending on how empty the machines are. FCISD maintains a ten-year contract with Coca-Cola as of November 16, 1999.

The vending machines are located in the school courtyard, and are not turned off during lunch.

**Recommendation 28:**

**Turn off vending machines during lunch to comply with federal guidelines.**

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent drafts a memorandum to turn off vending machines during lunch.	October 2001
2.	Vending machines are turned off during lunch.	November 2001

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

# CHAPTER 4 OPERATIONS

## B. TRANSPORTATION

The primary goal of every school district's transportation department is to transport all students to and from school and approved extracurricular functions in a timely, safe and efficient manner.

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 state reimburses Texas school districts for transporting regular, special education and career and technology program students. The Texas Legislature sets state funding rules, and the Texas Education Agency (TEA) administers the program. School districts receive funding for transporting regular education students living two or more miles from the school they attend. The state does not reimburse districts for transporting students living within the two-mile radius of the school unless hazardous walking conditions exist between the student's home and the school. For example, if a student must cross a major highway without a crossing signal, the circumstances would qualify as a hazardous condition, and the cost of transporting that student would be reimbursed by the state. A school district must use local funds to cover actual costs incurred that are more than the reimbursable state allotment.

For regular education students, the state reimburses districts for qualifying transportation expenses based on linear density, which is the ratio of the average number of regular education students transported daily to the number of miles traveled daily for those students. TEA has defined seven linear density groups, and allocates per-mile reimbursements to school districts based on the district's linear density grouping. **Exhibit 4-11** shows the seven categories as defined by TEA.

**Exhibit 4-11**  
**Categories of State Linear Density**  
**Reimbursement for Regular Bus Routes**

Category	Linear Density	Reimbursement
----------	----------------	---------------

	<b>Range</b>	<b>per Mile</b>
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.*

Reimbursable miles are the miles driven on routes with students on board; deadhead miles or maintenance miles are not reimbursable. TEA evaluates these group assignments every two years by recalculating linear densities.

A school district may receive state funding to transport regular and special program students between home and school, and career and technology students to and from vocational training locations. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) sets the funding rules. The state does not fund extracurricular transportation, such as trips to after-school and weekend events. Local funds must pay for transportation costs not covered by the state.

All special education transportation, except for certain field trips, is eligible for state reimbursement. The Texas Legislature capped reimbursement for special program transportation at \$1.08 per mile. FCISD does not transport any special education children. Kenedy transports the few children with exceptions as part of the Karnes County consortium for special education transportation.

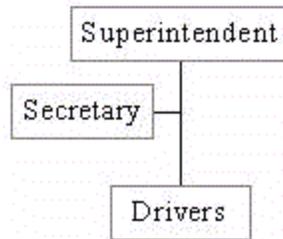
The state reimburses career and technology education transportation costs based on the previous year's actual cost-per-mile for that type of transportation.

As with all aspects of Falls City Independent School District (FCISD), the Transportation Department has not experienced many changes over the years.

FCISD's Transportation Department operates six routes with 12 daily runs covering 90,290 miles annually, transporting 200 students daily and 36,000 students annually.

The superintendent of schools is not only the director of Transportation, but a bus driver, too. FCISD employs six bus drivers and has a linear density of .627. A staffing chart for the FCISD Transportation Department is shown in **Exhibit 4-12**.

**Exhibit 4-12**  
**FCISD Transportation Department Organization**  
**2000-01**



*Source: FCISD Superintendent.*

**Exhibit 4-13** details the transportation program of Falls City ISD as compared to the peer districts.

**Exhibit 4-13**  
**FCISD and Peer Districts, Staffing Comparisons**  
**2000-01**

District	Clerical/Technical	Auxiliary
Falls City	1 Secretary	5 drivers 1 mechanic
Bland	1 Part-time secretary	8 drivers 1 maintenance worker
Campbell	1 Secretary	7 drivers
Fruitvale	None	6 drivers 1 mechanic
Martinsville	1 Secretary	5 drivers
Moulton	1 Secretary	6 drivers 1 mechanic

*Source: Telephone/email survey with FCISD and peer districts.*

To receive state funding, all Texas school districts must submit two reports to TEA by July of each year. The first of those reports, the *School Transportation Operation Report*, is designed to establish a cost-per-mile to be used for reimbursement in the fiscal year following the report.

**Exhibit 4-14** shows that over the last four years, FCISD's operations costs in transportation have decreased more than 7.7 percent, while total route mileage has decreased by more than 12.5 percent. In 1996-97 no buses

were purchased (as noted in the chart under Capitol Outlay), using the last three years, the operating costs have declined minimally. The district purchased two used buses in 2000, which will allow the FCISD to better control maintenance costs.

**Exhibit 4-14**  
**FCISD Summary of School Transportation Operations Reports**  
**1996-97 through 1999-2000**

	<b>1996-97</b>	<b>1997-98</b>	<b>1998-99</b>	<b>1999-2000</b>	<b>Percent Change</b>
<b>Operations Cost</b>					
Salaries & Benefits	\$51,081	\$50,962	\$52,490	\$55,460	8.6%
Purchased & Contracted Services	\$10,292	\$11,640	\$7,163	\$4,384	(57.4%)
Supplies & Materials	\$12,602	\$11,900	\$13,676	\$20,814	65.2%
Other Operating Expenses	\$3,172	\$3,280	\$3,560	\$3,750	18.2%
Debt Service	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	0%
Capital Outlay	\$75,449	\$74,777	\$74,777	\$68,000	(9.8%)
<b>Total Operations Costs</b>	<b>\$152,596</b>	<b>\$152,559</b>	<b>\$151,666</b>	<b>\$152,408</b>	<b>(0.12%)</b>
<b>Mileage Summary</b>					
Route mileage	43,493	43,493	45,560	48,590	11.72%
Extra/Co-curricular Mileage	27,800	28,200	30,300	29,000	4.32%
Non-School Organizations Mileage	0	0	0	0	0%
Other Mileage	9,000	11,020	12,178	12,700	41.1%
<b>Total Annual Mileage</b>	<b>80,293</b>	<b>82,713</b>	<b>88,038</b>	<b>90,290</b>	<b>12.45%</b>
<b>Cost per Mile-Regular</b>	<b>\$1.90</b>	<b>\$1.84</b>	<b>\$1.72</b>	<b>\$1.68</b>	<b>(11.58%)</b>
<b>Cost per Mile-Special</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>0%</b>

*Source: FCISD Transportation Department.*

**Exhibit 4-15** shows how FCISD's operations costs for transportation compare to its peer districts.

**Exhibit 4-15**  
**FCISD and Peer Districts, Comparison of Operations Costs**  
**1999-2000**

School District	Salaries & Benefits	Purchased & Contracted Services	Supplies & Materials	Other Operating Expenses	Debt Service	Capital Outlay	Total Operating Costs
Bland	\$32,713	\$2,586	\$12,277	\$2,212	\$15,500	\$24,610	\$89,899
<b>Falls City</b>	<b>\$55,460</b>	<b>\$4,384</b>	<b>\$20,814</b>	<b>\$3,750</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$68,000</b>	<b>\$152,408</b>
Campbell	\$25,219	\$1,994	\$9,465	\$1,705	\$11,125	\$19,796	\$69,304
Fruitvale	\$16,458	\$1,301	\$6,177	\$1,113	\$0	\$20,180	\$45,229
Martinsville	\$17,148	\$2,569	\$6,436	\$2,815	\$10,050	\$8,107	\$47,125
Moulton	\$24,188	\$1,845	\$7,884	\$4,110	\$8,577	\$6,125	\$52,729

*Source: TEA, School Transportation Operations Reports, 1999-2000.*

**Exhibit 4-16** compares mileage data between FCISD and the peer districts.

**Exhibit 4-16**  
**FCISD and Peer Comparison of Mileage Data**  
**1999-2000**

School District	Route Mileage (incl. Deadhead)	Extra/Co-Curricular Mileage	Non-School Organizations Mileage	Other Mileage	Total Annual Mileage	Cost per mile (Regular)
Bland	88,031	31,885	0	5,250	125,166	\$1.73
<b>Falls City</b>	<b>48,590</b>	<b>29,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>12,700</b>	<b>90,290</b>	<b>\$1.68</b>
Campbell	56,760	33,225	0	0	89,985	\$1.60
Fruitvale	32,230	35,005	0	8,125	75,360	\$1.78
Martinsville	52,035	24,785	0	9,030	85,850	\$1.80
Moulton	60,690	26,965	0	4,795	92,450	\$1.58

*Source: TEA, School Transportation Operations Reports, 1999-2000.*

Other information obtained from the peer districts' *School Transportation Operations Reports* shows that FCISD has the third highest level of route mileage, but the fourth highest cost per mile.

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.

**Exhibit 4-17** shows the route data for FCISD for five years, beginning with the 1995-96 school year.

**Exhibit 4-17**  
**FCISD Summary of Route Services Reports**  
**1995-96 through 1999-2000**

	<b>1995-96</b>	<b>1996-97</b>	<b>1997-98</b>	<b>1998-99</b>	<b>1999-2000</b>
<b>Regular Program</b>					
Annual Standard Ridership	28,080	24,300	24,300	25,560	36,000
Annual Standard Mileage	52,380	46,350	43,493	46,259	57,420
Linear Density	0.536	0.524	0.559	0.553	0.627
Allotment per Mile	\$0.79	\$0.79	\$0.79	\$0.79	\$0.79
Annual Mileage (incl. hazardous)	52,380	46,350	43,493	46,259	57,420
Total Daily Ridership	156	135	135	142	200
Hazardous Annual Mileage	0	0	0	0	0
Hazardous Daily Ridership	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Special Program</b>					
Total Daily Ridership	0	0	0	0	0
Total Annual Mileage	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Career and Technology Program</b>					
Total Daily Ridership	0	0	0	0	0
Total Annual Mileage	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Allotments</b>					

Regular Program	0	0	0	0	0
Special Program	0	0	0	0	0
Career and Technology Program	0	0	0	0	0
Private Program	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Allotment</b>	\$41,380	\$36,617	\$34,359	\$36,545	\$45,362

*Source: TEA School Transportation Route Service Status, 1995-96 to 1999-2000.*

**Exhibit 4-18** shows FCISD linear density and state allotments for 1999-2000 compared to peer districts. FCISD has the lowest linear density compared to its peer districts and obtains 46 percent of its operating revenue from the state allotment.

**Exhibit 4-18  
FCISD and Peer Districts, Linear Density and State Allotment  
1999-2000**

<b>School District</b>	<b>Linear Density (Riders per Mile)</b>	<b>Allotment per Mile</b>	<b>Total State Allotment</b>	<b>Percent of Operating Costs</b>
Bland	0.855	\$0.84	\$105,139	65%
<b>Falls City</b>	<b>0.627</b>	<b>\$0.79</b>	<b>\$45,362</b>	<b>46%</b>
Campbell	0.785	\$0.95	\$85,485	48%
Fruitvale	0.975	\$0.78	\$58,780	51%
Martinsville	0.790	\$0.84	\$72,114	55%
Moulton	1.18	\$0.96	\$88,752	52%

*Source: TEA, School Transportation Operations Reports, 1999-2000.*

FCISD also has the third highest cost-per-rider when compared to its peer districts

**(Exhibit 4-19).**

**Exhibit 4-19  
FCISD and Peer Districts, Comparison of Cost per Rider  
1999-2000**

<b>School District</b>	<b>Total Annual Operating Costs</b>	<b>Annual Ridership</b>	<b>Cost Per Rider Per Day</b>
Bland	\$185,450	52,525	\$3.53
<b>Falls City</b>	<b>\$152,408</b>	<b>36,000</b>	<b>\$4.23</b>
Campbell	\$170,333	35,707	\$4.77
Fruitvale	\$138,955	42,399	\$3.28
Martinsville	\$144,635	36,125	\$4.00
Moulton	\$148,780	29,500	\$5.04

*Source: TEA, School Transportation Operations Reports, 1999-2000.*

**Exhibit 4-20** shows how the age of FCISD buses compares to the age of peer district buses.

**Exhibit 4-20**  
**FCISD and Peer District, Comparison of Age of Buses**  
**1999-2000**

<b>District</b>	<b>Age of Buses</b>			<b>Total Number of Buses</b>	<b>Percent Greater Than 10 Years</b>
	<b>1-5 Years</b>	<b>5-10 Years</b>	<b>10 Years or Greater</b>		
Bland	2	3	2	7	29%
<b>Falls City</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>73%</b>
Campbell	1	3	1	5	20%
Fruitvale	3	2	4	9	44%
Martinsville	1	1	3	5	60%
Moulton	1	2	2	5	40%

*Source: TEA, School Transportation Operations Reports, 1999-2000.*

*Policies and Procedures*

Effective management is built upon sound, clearly written and legally valid policies. The board adopts policies governing the operations of schools and school districts. Districts use procedures to show district employees how to carry out the policies in their various organizational units.

## **FINDING**

The district does not conduct bus evacuation drills for students. Bus evacuation drills are strongly recommended by the Texas Department of Public Safety to ensure student safety in the event of an accident.

Chapter 34 of the Texas Education Code, section 002 discusses safety standards in student transportation. Each school district is charged with meeting or exceeding the safety standards for school buses. The Texas Department of Public Safety, the Texas Education Agency, the Texas General Services Administration, and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration all publish guidelines for school bus safety programs.

### **Recommendation 29:**

#### **Implement a bus safety program to include bus evacuation drills.**

Materials to develop a program are available from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, and the Texas Department of Transportation, Kids Only program.

Bus evacuation drills can be completed on school property before school once each semester.

## **IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent and the business manager jointly develop a bus safety program.	September 2001
2.	The superintendent implements the safety program.	October 2001

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

### *Operations*

## **FINDING**

FCISD has not studied consolidating existing bus routes and lacks a formal routine schedule. The district transports students in the two-mile exception zone and does not receive reimbursement for these routes, and transports all students who live across Highway 181, the major highway in Karnes County.

The district's philosophy of transporting students, according to the superintendent, is to keep students on buses no longer than 30-45 minutes each way.

Bus 35 travels 52 miles per day and transports an average of 38 children. Bus 35 travels out of Falls City on a route which includes traveling on Highway 181. The route continues along Farm Road 1144 and drives along Farm Road 53, returning to Farm Road 1144, and then to Highway 181.

Bus 8 travels 58 miles per day and transports an average of 39 students per day. Bus 8 departs Falls City traveling southwest along Farm Road 791 to Ranch Road 1344.

Bus 33 travels 40 miles per day and transports an average of 50 students per day. Bus 33 departs Falls City traveling southeast on Highway 181 to Farm Road 81. Traveling south on Farm Road 81, Bus 33 continues almost to Turkey creek before changing directions and traveling northwest on Highway 181 back to Falls City.

Bus 8 and bus 35 are operating under capacity. Both buses are 69 passenger buses and can accommodate more students. Bus 8 can accommodate 30 additional students at 100 percent capacity, and bus 33 can accommodate 19 additional students at 100 percent capacity. Mileage costs are \$1.95 per mile.

As shown, a number of these routes overlap or there are some buses operating under capacity.

Three major highways, Routes 123, 181 and 791 all go through the district. The district prefers to use larger - 60 passenger buses - because the district superintendent believes they are easier to see.

**Recommendation 30:**

**Evaluate all bus routes and consolidate those that overlap.**

**Consolidate Route 35 into Routes 8 and 33**

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent reviews all bus routes to determine where transportation savings can be achieved.	October 2001
2.	The superintendent develops maps detailing each bus route and overlaps.	November 2001

3.	The superintendent evaluates in-town routes to determine where routes can be combined.	November 2001
4.	The superintendent reassigns students from bus route 35 to routes 8 and 33.	December 2001
5.	The superintendent implements new routes.	February 2002
6.	The superintendent monitors bus routes and scheduling to ensure safe, efficient and timely transportation of students.	March 2002

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

Based on the existing schedule, and bus capacity, FCISD can eliminate one bus route through consolidation.

<b>Area of Savings</b>	<b>Calculations</b>		<b>Estimated Savings</b>		
Mileage costs for one bus	52 miles per day X 180 days X cost per mile \$1.95		\$18,252		
Revenue from equipment sale. 1994 International 69 passenger.	\$5,000		\$5,000		
<b>Total Savings</b>			<b>\$23,252</b>		
<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2001-02</b>	<b>2002-03</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2005-06</b>
Sell bus	\$5,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Evaluate all bus routes and consolidate those that overlap.	\$18,252	\$18,252	\$18,252	\$18,252	\$18,252
<b>Net Total Savings</b>	<b>\$23,252</b>	<b>\$18,252</b>	<b>\$18,252</b>	<b>\$18,252</b>	<b>\$18,252</b>

#### *Vehicle Maintenance*

### **FINDING**

The district does not have a preventative maintenance program for school vehicles. According to the superintendent, maintenance is completed on an as-needed basis. The district maintenance employee completes basic vehicle maintenance. The district contracts with an outside vendor for large-scale maintenance needs.

School buses typically have useful lives of between 10 and 15 years, with well-maintained buses lasting longer. FCISD has six buses 10 years or older. It is also important to ensure that the buses wear evenly. The

average FCISD regular education bus accumulates 9,570 miles annually, not including activity runs.

**Exhibit 4-21** details the principally used bus inventory for FCISD.

**Exhibit 4-21  
2001 FCISD School Bus Inventory**

<b>Passenger Capacity</b>	<b>Year of Manufacture</b>	<b>Manufacturer</b>	<b>Mileage</b>
59	1980	International	145,651
69	1994	International	97,552
69	1994	International	95,970
69	1998	International	75,004
69	1998	International	75,640

*Source: FCISD Superintendent's Office.*

Some districts develop mileage targets for regular and special education buses as a tool to assign buses so that mileage can be accumulated evenly among buses. Others rotate buses, using mileage targets to identify which route combinations most evenly accrue mileage. FCISD does not rotate buses.

**Recommendation 31:**

**Implement a preventative maintenance schedule for all school vehicles.**

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The superintendent and the head mechanic develop a list of preventative maintenance items to be addressed at regular intervals.	October 2001
2.	The mechanic implements preventative maintenance schedule.	November 2001

**FISCAL IMPACT**

The recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

# CHAPTER 4

## OPERATIONS

### **C. FACILITIES**

District facilities are a critical part of the academic program. Facilities that are well designed and maintained enhance a program. Facilities that are poorly designed and maintained are a detriment and can cause meaningful education to decline.

A facilities program begins with the architect and then flows from the skill of the construction worker. If the architect has designed a functional building and the construction worker has been true to his trade, it then becomes the school district's responsibility to maintain equipment in peak operating condition, provide a clean school and safe working environment, ensure that facilities comply with applicable local, state, and federal building regulations, and minimize utility costs.

A complete facilities study includes a review of maintenance and custodial staff and services, energy conservation, and planning for the needs of the future. A review should also be made of the policies and procedures of the district as they relate to school plants.

FCISD owns and operates one educational campus. There is one main building, three portable classrooms, a band hall/field house, the district cafeteria, the district vocational building, and the library/classroom. This district also owns one single family dwelling in Falls City immediately behind the school complex.

FCISD has recently completed their Phase I renovation plan. This facility effort included the addition of 12 elementary classrooms, air conditioning and heating the elementary facility built in 1964, and new roofing on the entire previously existing elementary plant, band hall, athletic field house and gymnasium. The district also constructed a bus pick-up and drop-off area as well as a covered waiting area and sidewalks to connect all district buildings.

The district has a steady population history. The FCISD has maintained a student population slightly over three hundred for the last six years.

### **FINDING**

FCISD owns a single family dwelling immediately behind the school complex where a district employee resides. The district originally obtained the house for use by superintendents. The former superintendent did not

reside in the home. The FCISD athletic director and his family reside in the house and pay \$100 per month for rent. The employee is responsible for paying all utility bills.

On January 19, 2000 the board unanimously appointed a school district employee to live in the school-owned residence each year.

In addition to charging the employee below market value rent for the district-owned home, the district does not issue a federal 1099-MISC to the employee each year. By living in the district-owned home at below market value cost the employee is receiving a district paid benefit and should be taxed according to Internal Revenue Service guidelines. Any employee receiving benefits where the benefit to the employee is greater than the cost - and other employees are not receiving like benefits - should be issued a 1099-MISC for the benefit portion.

The FCISD-owned house is a one story home and has three bedrooms, one bathroom, five total rooms, a 60' X 80' size lot, and is located at the corner of Pecan and Rubie Streets in Falls City. The house was built in 1956, and contains 855 total square feet.

FCISD has not taxed the athletic director for the benefits received by living in the district-owned house at below market rent.

### **Recommendation 32:**

#### **Sell the district-owned house and return the house to the tax rolls.**

While this practice may appear to be an immediate benefit for the employee, there are significant negative long range implications for the employee. For example, the employee is not accruing equity in a home. Consequently, when the employee retires or leaves the district they have no equity in the property to transfer to their new residence. To mitigate such problems, some public and private schools began building an equity account for the resident employees based upon the amount of rent paid on the facility. At the time the employee left the district, some portion of the escrow account would be transferred to the employee for a down payment on their next residence. FCISD does none of this, leaving the employee exposed to future financial difficulties. Finally, the district is not receiving property tax on the residence because the district owns it. According to the Garfield Farm Mutual Insurance Association the house is valued at \$35,000.

The district should offer the house to the current resident at or below market value and carry the note with a market rate of interest. If the current resident takes it, charge no down payment and just let them start

making payments. If they don't want it, put it on the market and sell it outright.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The board approves the sale of the district-owned house through an auction, directs the superintendent to select an auctioneer for the sale, and sets an auction date.	October 2001
2.	The house auction is held.	November 2001
3.	The board closes on the house and realizes the revenue.	December 2001

**FISCAL IMPACT**

The fiscal impact is taken from the September 1, 2000 Garfield Farm Mutual Insurance Association invoice. Based on a \$1.50 per \$100 valuation tax rate, annual tax revenues on the \$35,000 property would result in \$525 in additional annual revenues.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2001-02</b>	<b>2002-03</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2005-06</b>
Sell the district-owned house and return the house to the tax rolls.	\$35,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Tax revenues	\$525	\$525	\$525	\$525	\$525
Net Savings	\$35,525	\$525	\$525	\$525	\$525

**FINDING**

FCISD has no long-range facilities plan. The district has a construction plan referred to as Phase I and Phase II. The district recently completed Phase I of that construction plan with Pfluger and Associates. That process saw the district open a new section of the elementary area offering the addition of 12 new elementary classrooms.

FCISD plans to continue Phase II of its proposed building project. This project proposes an additional two classrooms for the vocational program as well as renovations to the secondary campus that would include: modifying corridors, entrances, electric and fire alarm systems to meet the American Disabilities Act (ADA) and fire and building code compliance; renovations of the high school roof, ceilings, lighting, and air

conditioning; and the addition of ADA compliant dressing, shower, and restroom facilities.

Phase II for the elementary program translates to: the modification of restrooms, corridors, entrances, electrical and fire alarm systems; installation of ceilings and lighting; the encapsulation of existing asbestos contained flooring; modernization of air conditioning by moving away from window units; upgrading the small auditorium seating; and adding drinking fountains.

The district has not begun Phase II. This project was not begun because the district does not want to go into a bonded capital improvement project but instead wants to complete Phase II with local and state monies when they become available.

**Exhibit 4-22** shows TEA's key components for a facilities planning process.

**Exhibit 4-22**  
**TEA Recommended Facilities Planning Process**

<b>Program Element</b>	<b>Mission</b>	<b>Responsibilities</b>	<b>Deliverables</b>
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 structures	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.*

### **Recommendation 33:**

#### **Develop a long-range facilities master plan.**

The district should establish a facilities committee to work with the superintendent, review demographic projections and review time schedules and priorities associated with the planning for new facilities. The committee could be composed of 25 - 30 members, including district administration, teachers, non-certified staff, and members of the community.

Priorities should be set and progress should be regularly reported to the board and community at large.

#### **IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

1.	The board establishes a committee and nominates citizens to participate.	October 2001
2.	The superintendent seeks staff to participate on the committee.	November 2001
3.	The committee prepares a priority list of facility needs and meets with the public to discuss plan and obtain feedback.	December 2001
4.	The committee includes community input in recommendations and combines the priorities into a recommended five-year plan.	December 2001
5.	The superintendent provides cost analysis of each proposal and a fiscal plan for the next five years and presents plan to board.	January 2002
6.	The board reviews the plan and approves.	March 2002
7.	The superintendent annually reviews the plan and updates when necessary.	Ongoing

#### **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

# Appendix A

## PUBLIC FORUM AND FOCUS GROUP COMMENTS

As part of Falls City Independent School District performance review, a public forum was held at the Falls City School Cafeteria on March 20. Members of the public were invited to record comments they have regarding the FCISD education system. Community members and school staff who participated in the public forums gave their comments about the 12 areas under review. These comments illustrated community perceptions of FCISD and do not reflect the findings or opinion of the Comptroller or review team. The following is a summary of comments received by focus area.

### **DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT**

- Our school board is doing a very good job. Very communicative and organized. Set goals long and short and seem to get it all done amongst the many issues that arise monthly.
- For many years the superintendent and management was excellent. However the last few years have been lacking.
- Despite what the talk is I think our superintendent is doing a great job. Small group talk has really set him to be the "bad guy." New people to the district have always been accepted slowly or not at all. Ask the coaches-they have the greater turnover. I feel they need to respect the position if not the person.
- There are nine coaches in this district and they teach an average of only three classes. Coach gets a house paid for by the district. No teacher can be hired who is not a coach-a policy for the last five years.
- A small school definitely has more going for a child. The whole community gets involved with raising the child and everyone watches out for your children.
- More information needs to be provided to all parents who have children in the district. There is very little communication from the board to the parents.
- There isn't input from the site-based committee. The meetings are few and far in-between. Any decision or topic discussed is often overruled or changed by some "higher authority."
- The relationship between the administration and faculty is strained. This has resulted in a poor morale among the staff.

### **EDUCATION SERVICE**

- No assistance for under-performing students-parents have to do it all.
- FCISD students are very competitive in all levels and facets and excel so I would say the delivery (education service) is excellent. The different programs provided within the education realm are outstanding as well. Case management is done, but as students mainstream more follow-up and review could be done. (Special education and gifted and talented.)
- Math manipulatives are hard to come by!
- Teachers help students with tutorials, extra credit work, etc.
- Super programs.
- More sports for girls such as soccer, volleyball; too much emphasis is placed on football.
- Teachers are doing poorly with regard to feedback from homework, helping students with problems and utilizing more reading skills.
- More communication from teachers to parents regarding student failures, accomplishments and discipline.
- Curriculum - my daughter in kindergarten learned to read very well and has great writing skills; this is my only experience with curriculum.
- As with many small schools in Texas, athletics reigns! Many decisions in the curriculum revolve around the athletic programs.
- Those students who are non-athletic seem to be put aside, even in the classroom.
- Athletes require a lot of early morning tutoring by teachers.
- We definitely do not need more after-school tutoring for the children who need it. In all areas of learning.
- The school needs to let the better teachers teach the children that are struggling. It seems the better teachers are given to the upper students who learn easily. It also seems that people who work at the school, their children get the choice teachers. Why is that?
- TAAS testing is the worst thing to happen to schools. Teachers are teaching a test not teaching class.
- More information when the children are getting into high school would be nice.
- A study skills class would be handy also.
- Need more gifted and talented programs including offering other foreign languages besides Spanish. Would be nice to have a magnet program for area schools to include agriculture, medicine, etc. and incorporate top students for all areas; need study course on how to take tests.
- The state as a whole needs to quit teaching to the TAAS test. If actual teaching of "How to Learn" is applied, students will do well. Students need to be challenged more with less group projects since students live so far away.

## COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Great community involvement!
- Parents are core to this school!
- Very supportive of teachers!
- Help their children in all areas of homework!
- Communication between class and home is good in elementary; teachers in K-4 respond by notes to parents. Don't know about upper level!
- School is always open to any group or organization.
- Most parents help their children at home daily with homework.
- Extremely good parental involvement.
- Church and school work very well together. The school has no athletics on Wednesdays. This is the "religious night" in this community.
- Community extremely involved; excellent student-parent participation.
- This is one thing that Falls City does very well. They are always calling upon parents of the students to help out and be involved. The school also gives back to the community through 4-H, FFA and band membership, etc.
- Parents seldom work through the chain of command. Quite often school board members get phone calls at home over an issue that hasn't been addressed by the teacher.

## PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

- Done by the books. Difficult hiring at times because the increase in applicants of hometown people. That is tough.
- Too many local people working here.
- Less coaches and more aides to help students.
- We have a good staff. However, occasionally hiring practices have more sports-oriented teachers in mind in the upper classes. Elementary teachers are excellent.
- The hiring practices are somewhat to be desired. I know of practices of hiring "cheaper, younger" teachers and less qualified. Cutting costs on staff should not be the top priority. Is this not age discrimination? Site-based committees are a joke. You're told what is happening and how monies have already been earmarked. Facilities planning needs some work. Look at the classrooms that have been built. No input from community, very little from teachers.
- Teachers are responsive to children's needs. Students/teachers ratios remain low.
- I feel this school is lacking in this area to promote new teaching ideas and reviewing staff to make sure they are in the classrooms

with the students and really teaching them to learn instead of memorizing.

- Health Insurance-HA! I realize this is statewide, however, I also think it is ridiculous to question the shortage of teachers!

## **FACILITIES**

- FCISD improving. Need for expansion and renovation is being met slowly but surely. We are thankful. The buildings are well maintained-and grounds.
- Nice facilities-need improvement in restrooms.
- We have been trying to build new facilities, however, funds are limited. Custodial Services are good, grounds are neat and clean at all times.
- Schools are clean and well-kept.

## **ASSET AND RISK**

- Glad to see the health insurance issue up in Austin.
- We need the group insurance improved.
- Because we are so small-our health insurance stinks-teachers pay for this!!
- If you don't take the health insurance, where does the allotted money go? Could optional insurance be considered?
- A better health insurance plan would be nice. There has to be a better company than ours.

## **FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

- We are financially punished by the state for having a small priority population.
- Budgeting systems and reports are organized and accurate and available for the public upon request.
- Taxes are high-so let's see the best!
- I think for the most part budgeting is good, however, there is too much influence on sports and sports equipment and facilities. We need science labs and technology in high school and elementary schools.
- We are discriminated against as far as funding is involved due to ours being mostly Anglo children. Our school needs as much work and repair as other schools. Please don't penalize our children for the lack of a minority.
- Little information regarding finance is sent to parents.

## **PURCHASING**

- Usually purchase the low-cost items. Secretary stresses importance of watching pennies.
- We run out of basic supplies such as paper towels for wiping hands!
- Should never be short of paper!

## **FOOD SERVICE**

- Always clean-always good warm nutritious food.
- Ladies of food service do a fabulous job.
- Staff very friendly- great cooks!
- Food service is excellent!
- Cafeteria is serving good food. However, a large facility to accommodate the secondary school to avoid rushing children.

## **COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY**

- Very good job by our technical coordinator.
- Have many programs for high school students (video conferencing) to get college credits.
- Every classroom with computers. And-great labs for entire class at 1 and 2 Levels.
- Great facilities.
- We shine here!!
- We are having in-services on technology regularly.
- Any technology help that I needed was provided.
- We have an excellent technology teacher, however, we need more hardware and software.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

- Buses make it out far in the country.
- Would be nice for in town taxpayers to get bus service to school. Would decrease congestion at school parking lot in the morning.
- Let's keep buses safe!
- Our students are safely transported by bus to all school functions.
- Scheduling is good, need new buses, probably smaller to accommodate small routes.
- New buses are needed.
- Buses need to be air-conditioned because of heat.

## **SAFETY AND SECURITY**

- Board relations with law enforcement-usually rare (very) for need.
- Drug dog visits as required-usually no positive results.

- Sheriff department and principals work well together; if we need them, they are here.
- I just don't believe in the whole class getting punished when only one or two people cause the trouble.
- School discipline is wonderful. I have no problems in this area.
- Excellent discipline, safety, security program and low enforcement involvement.
- I feel comfortable with the security aspect.

# Appendix B

## PARENT SURVEY RESULTS

### *Demographic Data*

**TOTAL RESPONSES AS OF May 4, 2001: 111**

**Note: Numbers may not add to 100 due to rounding.**

1.	<b>Gender (Optional)</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>							
		27%	73%							
2.	<b>Ethnicity (Optional)</b>	<b>Anglo</b>	<b>African American</b>	<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>Asian</b>	<b>Other</b>				
		98%	0%	2%	0%	0%				
3.	<b>How long have you lived in Water Valley ISD?</b>			<b>0-5 Years</b>	<b>6-10 Years</b>	<b>11 Years or More</b>				
				6%	4%	90%				
4.	<b>What grade level(s) does your child(ren) attend?</b>			<b>PK</b>	<b>K</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
				2%	9%	4%	11%	4%	6%	2%
				<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>
				2%	11%	6%	4%	9%	2%	6%

### **A. District Organization & Management**

<b>Survey Questions</b>		<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
1.	The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.	29%	28%	8%	23%	12%
2.	School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.	10%	19%	14%	39%	18%
3.	The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	9%	4%	8%	18%	61%
4.	The superintendent is a	0%	10%	13%	36%	41%

respected and effective business manager.					
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## B. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5. The district provides a high quality of services.	17%	46%	5%	10%	22%
6. Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.	5%	15%	15%	37%	28%
7. The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	32%	18%	5%	20%	25%
8. The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	29%	28%	20%	23%	0%
9. The district has effective educational programs for the following:					
a) Reading	29%	28%	19%	23%	1%
b) Writing	26%	22%	12%	26%	14%
c) Mathematics	7%	6%	7%	45%	35%
d) Science	37%	7%	22%	15%	19%
e) English or Language Arts	27%	11%	3%	25%	34%
f) Computer Instruction	25%	42%	4%	27%	2%
g) Social Studies (history or geography)	17%	12%	8%	35%	28%
h) Fine Arts	22%	33%	7%	30%	8%
i) Physical Education	28%	23%	4%	24%	21%
j) Business Education	27%	20%	6%	25%	22%
k) Vocational (Career	14%	27%	22%	16%	21%

	and Technology) Education					
	l) Foreign Language	25%	21%	3%	34%	17%
10.	The district has effective special programs for the following:					
	a) Library Service	19%	22%	5%	33%	21%
	b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	3%	17%	9%	49%	22%
	c) Special Education	9%	6%	9%	43%	33%
	d) Head Start and Even Start programs	12%	12%	4%	40%	32%
	e) Dyslexia program	8%	16%	6%	44%	26%
	f) Student mentoring program	8%	14%	6%	44%	28%
	g) Advanced placement program	29%	30%	13%	23%	5%
	h) Literacy program	13%	19%	12%	39%	17%
	i) Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	23%	18%	14%	29%	16%
	j) Summer school programs	6%	20%	10%	46%	18%
	k) Alternative education programs	20%	35%	17%	12%	16%
	l) "English as a second language" program	26%	29%	11%	26%	8%
	m) Career counseling program	8%	25%	13%	25%	29%
	n) College counseling program	13%	29%	8%	39%	11%
	o) Counseling the parents of students	18%	30%	12%	20%	20%
	p) Drop out prevention program	37%	21%	6%	15%	21%

11.	Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	26%	23%	16%	26%	9%
12.	Teacher turnover is low.	37%	26%	12%	15%	10%
13.	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	13%	26%	20%	39%	2%
14.	A substitute teacher rarely teaches my child.	14%	10%	23%	38%	15%
15.	Teachers are knowledgeable in the subject areas they teach.	41%	27%	19%	11%	2%
16.	All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.	29%	18%	10%	23%	20%
17.	Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	28%	26%	21%	24%	1%
18.	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	18%	26%	11%	34%	11%
19.	The district provides a high quality education.	11%	24%	26%	26%	13%
20.	The district has a high quality of teachers.	28%	30%	3%	24%	15%

### C. Community Involvement

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
21.	The district regularly communicates with parents.	32%	31%	15%	20%	2%
22.	District facilities are open for community use.	40%	18%	14%	12%	16%
23.	Schools have plenty of	17%	44%	6%	23%	10%

	volunteers to help students and school programs.					
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#### D. Facilities Use and Management

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
24.	Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff, and the board provide input into facility planning.	28%	26%	22%	24%	0%
25.	Schools are clean.	20%	27%	11%	14%	28%
26.	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	19%	21%	29%	22%	9%
27.	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	36%	32%	8%	16%	8%
28.	The district uses very few portable buildings.	31%	20%	19%	21%	9%
29.	Emergency maintenance is handled expeditiously.	21%	19%	24%	31%	5%

#### E. Asset and Risk Management

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
30.	My property tax bill is reasonable for the educational services delivered.	19%	26%	28%	23%	4%
31.	Board members and administrators do a good job explaining the use of tax dollars.	13%	30%	12%	27%	18%

#### F. Financial Management

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
32.	Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers.	2%	15%	26%	4%	53%
33.	Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	18%	26%	19%	34%	3%
34.	The district's financial reports are easy to understand and read.	5%	8%	16%	29%	42%
35.	Financial reports are made available to community members when asked.	4%	11%	10%	28%	47%

### G. Purchasing and Warehousing

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
36.	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	27%	16%	16%	25%	16%
37.	Textbooks are in good shape.	28%	30%	28%	9%	5%
38.	The school library meets student needs for books and other resources.	14%	16%	23%	38%	9%

### H. Food Services

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
39.	My child regularly purchases his/her meal from the	25%	19%	24%	27%	5%

	cafeteria.					
40.	The school breakfast program is available to all children.	9%	6%	7%	43%	35%
41.	The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	13%	26%	6%	39%	16%
42.	Food is served warm.	26%	25%	20%	26%	3%
43.	Students have enough time to eat.	33%	19%	8%	19%	21%
44.	Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.	32%	13%	31%	20%	4%
45.	Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	41%	30%	9%	11%	9%
46.	Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	22%	11%	29%	30%	8%
47.	Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	27%	13%	23%	25%	12%
48.	Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	30%	9%	35%	22%	4%

### I. Transportation

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
49.	My child regularly rides the bus.	24%	13%	24%	28%	11%
50.	The bus driver maintains discipline on the bus.	15%	35%	22%	26%	2%
51.	The length of the student's bus ride is reasonable.	39%	24%	7%	13%	17%
52.	The drop-off zone at the school is safe.	7%	12%	5%	45%	31%
53.	The bus stop near mv	25%	23%	12%	27%	13%

	house is safe.					
54.	The bus stop is within walking distance from our home.	11%	42%	18%	16%	13%
55.	Buses arrive and depart on time.	35%	25%	19%	17%	4%
56.	Buses arrive early enough for students to eat breakfast at school.	13%	24%	2%	39%	22%
57.	Buses seldom break down.	28%	23%	21%	3%	25%
58.	Buses are clean.	33%	42%	5%	19%	1%
59.	Bus drivers allow students to sit down before taking off.	4%	24%	8%	48%	16%
60.	The district has a simple method to request buses for special events.	24%	22%	26%	28%	0%

### J. Safety and Security

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
61.	Students feel safe and secure at school.	29%	16%	27%	23%	5%
62.	School disturbances are infrequent.	14%	26%	13%	38%	9%
63.	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	38%	22%	21%	14%	5%
64.	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	35%	18%	30%	17%	0%
65.	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	28%	19%	12%	24%	17%
66.	Security personnel have a good working relationship with	30%	9%	19%	22%	20%

	principals and teachers.					
67.	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	24%	23%	11%	21%	21%
68.	A good working arrangement exists between the local law enforcement and the district.	31%	19%	15%	32%	3%
69.	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	18%	25%	12%	19%	26%
70.	Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	24%	18%	12%	28%	18%

### K. Computers and Technology

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
71.	Teachers know how to teach computer science and other technology-related courses.	28%	22%	14%	31%	5%
72.	Computers are new enough to be useful to teach students.	16%	34%	13%	21%	16%
73.	The district meets student needs in computer fundamentals.	18%	26%	11%	28%	17%
74.	The district meets student needs in advanced computer skills.	27%	31%	9%	35%	-2%
75.	Students have easy access to the internet.	22%	15%	16%	34%	13%

# Appendix B

## PARENT SURVEY RESULTS

### VERBATIM

- Some teachers are coaches and really don't care about schoolwork, just about sports and we really do not learn much in those classes.
- Excellent High School Principal
- FFA - Ag dept. What do they learn?
- Teachers are one of our state's most important resources. The teachers need to have a state health insurance program. They are at the bottom of the state employees as far as benefits go. Teachers spend more time in a day with your child than you do. Give them a few benefits that they can live with.
- I feel the kindergarten program is terrible. Considering what my child has to learn this year, I strongly feel that a part of it should have been taught in kindergarten. I do think that FCISD has a very poor kindergarten program. I feel more effort needs to be directed for the kindergarten program. I also feel that FCISD puts too much attention into the sports program and not enough into education.
- Math program needs help. Students who go on to college have difficulty in math. Too much emphasis is placed on the athletic program and the athletes. Maybe a little less involvement in athletics and more time spent on instruction and preparing the students for the future and college. If you are not an athlete at Falls City you may be a nobody. Nothing should be more important than education. Dual credit courses are very effective.
- Falls City ISD lacks in the math program. We have a teacher who has been here for years and doesn't teach the kids. There have been numerous complaints against him to the Principal and Superintendent and nothing was ever done. The kids make good grades on the report cards in his classes but learn nothing. The Board has heard complaints also but nothing was ever documented and done. We also have a history teacher that does not teach.
- There is definitely an athletic preference going on. More focus on athletics than education. Also, the children that participate in athletics are given special treatment. They are not disciplined along the same lines for like violations. I also feel my school dollars (taxes) should be used for education instead of new uniforms whenever a coach sees fit. These athletes will not make a career playing sports. The teachers are also teaching out of their specialties. This is to work around the coaches' schedule. This whole school needs an overhaul. I hope this gets through. I do not have any fear of my name being published. If anyone needs more

information they should do an audit at the school. Maybe that would open some eyes. Thank you.

- Falls City ISD has excellent parental cooperation and consistently high TAAS scores. One of my biggest concerns is the poor math curriculum in the high school. The majority of graduating seniors usually have to take remedial math classes when they get to college. Would like to see some additional emphasis in the various science courses and a more diverse choice of elective subjects. In my opinion, the elementary campus is way above average and I can see little room for improvement. Standards are high for students, teachers and administrators.
- If you are not liked by the teachers or coaching staff it's down hill from there. If you don't have a certain last name you won't get any punishment cause this is one of the All Stars on the football team. When they drink, vandalize in town they don't get in trouble. But still get to play on team starting because board dads will raise a ruckus. Mostly they care about sports instead of education. Brings money to the school but the girls still don't have a decent dressing room (football has it all).
- Discipline is not fair. Last year two girls got caught cheating on the Internet yet neither was punished. A teacher falls asleep in class, therefore making my daughter have to go to the other teacher for tutoring. Is this what my hard earned money is for? (taxes) Unfortunately, there are drugs at this school. I feel more random drug checks are needed. On a whole, I feel Falls City is a good school with the majority of teachers being of high quality. One year in high school my child's history test consisted of questions concerning sports. (The teacher was also the football coach.) I don't feel this type of lax teaching will prepare my child for college. The school nurse is only available part-time. I feel the nurse should be there when the children are in school (all day). Thank you.
- Not real pleased with performance of our superintendent. Some board members listen better than others. Principal is doing a great job. We have a lot of very qualified teachers but there are a few that need to be replaced. On the average discipline is handled fairly, but there were times it was not. On the whole though, our school has a pretty good system and the general quality of education is good, especially primary grades.
- College bound students have to make the first year of college with intro classes in math and language. Needs an extra person on busses to control problem students. Needs volunteer programs at school. Needs mentoring at school. Needs summer school program. Currently offers five days during summer.
- I am a parent in the Falls City ISD. Falls City ISD is a great place for your kids to go to school, but they are lacking in the area of

educational delivery. Having had a child who has recently graduated and another child still in the school system, I have come to realize that this school district is lacking in preparing these students for college, especially in the area of math. Furthermore, I believe more emphasis is being placed on athletics than academics. There is no money to hire extra math teachers and tutors, but there is money available for the baseball and tennis teams to attend two and three night tournaments, etc. This has happened just recently. Yes, sports are great but these students will not play sports for a living once they graduate. They enter the real world, where what you know is what you get. Please address the issue that money is being spent in an unnecessary way with these out-of-town tournaments.

- I am very pleased with the current administration. The high school Principal has gained a whole lot of respect. He is very strict but yet maintains a great relationship with the students. The cafeteria needs better menus. I dislike the fast food, microwaveable menus currently being served.
- I like the school district and am very impressed with the current administration. The only complaint I have is the food being served in the cafeteria. My kids always complain about not getting enough to eat. As a parent, I have a problem with the menu. I do not feel that "nachos" are good enough as a main entrée. Nachos are snacks, not lunch.
- The staff and administration have been instrumental in preparing my child for college.
- You should not be so concerned on monitoring performance at Falls City ISD as you should be at the one school in our county that caused this questionnaire. You should exhaust your resources on them instead of all the time, paper and money it caused you to do this mailout.
- I think that FCISD should have a female guidance counselor because some of the female students feel uncomfortable talking to a male counselor about specific topics. Also, we need some type of "life" class to teach students about the real world. The library also needs a second librarian so it will be open even when the first one is gone. Newer facilities for junior high and high school students, better parking, more communication between the school board and parents and students, more available computers in library.
- The State of Texas needs to address the needs of small town schools and pay the highly qualified teachers on an equal basis to their large district peers. It is a disgrace that teachers in smaller school districts are paid at such low levels and Texas should be ashamed. These teachers do a much better job than teachers in San Antonio, Houston, Dallas, etc., but are rewarded with lower pay

and less benefits. Maybe Texas thinks the children in small schools are not important enough to have exceptional teachers.

- We feel that our children have a great advantage being able to attend a small rural school. However, due to the size the school is not able to offer courses available in larger schools.
- I think Falls City ISD is a great place for children to attend school. It is a safe place that encourages academic excellence. The staff, including the administrators and teachers, do a great job.
- I believe my children are being educated quite well. Most of the teachers are very good with the kids. We also believe that support at home with the studies is a major part in a child's ability to want to study in school. At this point I am pleased with the school
- Falls City needs more high-end classes like physics.
- Our superintendent lacks the necessary skills to run our district effectively.
- The educational performances are excellent. I have a child in special education and his needs are met. Our school's main problem is the administration and lack of good budget skills. Our superintendent lacks these skills and is not a good leader or respected member of our community. We have an excellent principal.
- I would like to see a copy of school board minutes go out after each meeting. The cafeteria is excellent (food and staff).
- Fifth and Seventh graders need a better science teacher. Seventh grade history is not really teaching them what they need to know.
- Falls City ISD is small but carries a "punch" and takes great pride in their students. Our computer lab definitely needs improvement and needs to be enlarged.
- Lunch period is too short.
- Falls City school is excellent. However, we are lacking in mathematics skills. Our students are not ready for college when it comes to math. We are lower in TAAS results in the category of math. We are lacking in funds for actual buildings and a school van.
- I believe that they need better math teachers. Also, phonics needs to be brought back. A lot of our children do not know how to spell and read because of this. Also, I feel very strongly about the punishing. If one or two people do something wrong I firmly believe that only those persons should be punished. I teach my child to respect and be good but if they keep getting punished for whatever everyone else is doing then they might as well be bad also. Please look into this.
- For a small school there is too much emphasis on sports. Grades are raised for certain students during certain seasons. Reports of "students who don't play football don't get honors". If a child does not participate in sports they do not excel. Some teachers have

been in Falls City for too long and don't have the capability to teach a certain type of child. A teacher knowing a family well is a disadvantage as well as an advantage. We've seen too many administrators and certain teachers come and go in the last few years. Yet math, especially algebra I is failing first year college students from Falls City.

- I'm glad my child is able to be enrolled in FCISD.
- I feel we need better math teachers from seventh grade up. I also believe that the punishment is not fair. If one or two people do something wrong then only they should be punished, not the whole class. I would hope you'd look into this. This is a big problem in our school.
- The school board is aware of a recent confrontation between the superintendent and a parent. As parents, we hear about the school's problems from some of our friends who work at the school from time to time. Most of what we hear is about how rude the superintendent is toward the bus drivers, teachers and cafeteria staff. In public, however, we think he is knowledgeable enough, but we don't interact with him much.
- A major complaint is the amount of homework for elementary students-between one and two hours. School board members' children are given preferential treatment. There is also discrimination, not just racial, but against new students (transferees).
- My children are receiving a well-rounded education with very few problems. This is why I live here. I graduated from Falls City and have always taken pride in that. I have a student at SWT and he has received an outstanding English background. He has had to adapt to math but has done well. Both my younger children read well and can write for their ages very well. Elementary teachers are very good in giving an all-around education. Of course, the school has problems but I don't worry about things like someone shooting them and we do not have any gang problems.
- I feel the seventh graders are not receiving enough instruction in science at this time. Their regular science teacher is a coach and he switched with the homemaking teacher for this class so he could coach softball. What little information I get from my seventh grader, they are not learning history. It's almost like a free class to do what you want.
- I consider the FCISD to be the top school in the county and surrounding counties. Teachers treat children as if they are their own. All parents are involved. Creates less time for gangs, drugs, etc. If children have spare time they use it for extra-curricular activities. Any child who wishes to participate in sports is allowed to even if you are not the best.

- I'm pleased with my son's high school English, science, BCIS and math classes. His world geography class is a joke. His dance class doesn't dance-they have study hall or goof-off time. Last year's math class was very poor. Athletics has been a disappointment - long practices and not much playtime. I feel like some children are favored-especially administrators and coaches. Some grades are based on whether you compete in contests or not. I don't agree with that.
- We need more funds for programs for vocational programs. We have some very good teachers who care about the students. We need more parent volunteers.
- Our English teachers in the high school are excellent. We have a computer and business teacher that does an excellent job in teaching our students. Our math department has improved. An excellent job with the band and color guard.
- You should not be so concerned on monitoring performance at Falls City ISD as you should be at the one school in our county that caused this questionnaire. You should exhaust your resources on them instead of all the time, paper and money it caused you to do this maillot.
- Falls City schools are the heart of the community. Attendance at school events is high. Students attending events away from the school campus are expected to conduct themselves in a respectful manner.
- Falls City is a highly qualified and talented campus. There is a problem with complacency in elderly teachers (not just at FCISD but the school system as a whole). Also, school financing is a problem in poorer districts as FCISD. This is also a problem in the entire state. Dollar for dollar, FCISD does more than any school district in the state. We just need more money. The state school system needs a share of the lottery for building additional classrooms.

# Appendix C

## DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT STAFF SURVEY RESULTS

### *Demographic Data*

**TOTAL RESPONSES AS OF MAY 4, 2001: 15**

**Note: Numbers may not total to 100 due to rounding.**

1.	<b>Gender (Optional)</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>				
		41%	59%				
2.	<b>Ethnicity (Optional)</b>	<b>Anglo</b>	<b>African American</b>	<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>Asian</b>	<b>Other</b>	
		92%	0%	8%	0%	0%	
3.	<b>How long have you been employed by Falls City ISD?</b>		<b>1-5 years</b>	<b>6-10 years</b>	<b>11-15 years</b>	<b>16-20 years</b>	<b>20+ years</b>
			58%	17%	8%	8%	8%
4.	<b>Are you a(n):</b>						
	<b>a. administrator</b>	8%	<b>b. clerical staffer</b>	25%	<b>c. support staffer</b>	67%	
5.	<b>How long have you been employed in this capacity by Falls City ISD?</b>						
	<b>1-5 years</b>	50%	<b>6-10 years</b>	25%	<b>11-15 years</b>	9%	
	<b>16-20 years</b>	8%	<b>20+ years</b>	8%	<b>No Answer</b>	0%	

### **A. District Organization and Management**

<b>Survey Questions</b>		<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
1.	The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.	28%	25%	13%	27%	7%
2.	School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.	18%	41%	10%	18%	13%
3.	The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	3%	12%	7%	17%	61%

4.	The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	2%	8%	11%	21%	58%
5.	Central administration is efficient.	31%	12%	8%	45%	4%
6.	Central administration supports the educational process.	11%	27%	1%	33%	28%
7.	The morale of central administration staff is good.	15%	22%	15%	44%	4%

### **B. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement**

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
8.	Education is the main priority in our school district.	21%	25%	8%	27%	19%
9.	Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.	18%	50%	4%	15	13%
10.	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	12%	25%	18%	27	18%
11.	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	15%	46%	15%	15%	9%
12.	The district has effective educational programs for the following:					
	a) Reading	31%	28%	9%	21%	11%
	b) Writing	21%	47%	21%	5%	6%
	c) Mathematics	28%	17%	28%	6%	21%
	d) Science	35%	27%	26%	10%	2%
	e) English or Language	5%	29%	22%	41%	3%

	Arts					
	f) Computer Instruction	19%	37%	26%	11%	7%
	g) Social Studies (history or geography)	18%	32%	12%	32%	6%
	h) Fine Arts	11%	26%	38%	22%	3%
	i) Physical Education	25%	27%	24%	19%	5%
	j) Business Education	19%	18%	9%	33%	21%
	k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	8%	56%	10%	24%	2%
	l) Foreign Language	15%	40%	21%	18%	6%
13.	The district has effective special programs for the following:					
	a) Library Service	9%	35%	31%	21%	4%
	b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	17%	51%	8%	16%	8%
	c) Special Education	37%	45%	5%	5%	8%
	d) Head Start and Even Start programs	38%	42%	6%	11%	3%
	e) Dyslexia program	16%	46%	18%	15%	5%
	f) Student mentoring program	18%	46%	18%	13%	5%
	g) Advanced placement program	17%	25%	17%	29%	12%
	h) Literacy program	16%	41%	14%	18%	11%
	i) Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	27%	31%	12%	17%	13%
	j) Summer school programs	9%	48%	15%	19%	9%
	k) Alternative education programs	26%	14%	10%	34%	16%
	l) "English as a second language" program	16%	28%	18%	28%	10%

	m) Career counseling program	10%	55%	19%	4%	12%
	n) College counseling program	11%	41%	13%	28%	7%
	o) Counseling the parents of students	16%	22%	15%	29%	18%
	p) Drop out prevention program	18%	17%	16%	44%	5%
14.	Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	11%	28%	24%	22%	15%
15.	Teacher turnover is low.	16%	17%	10%	25%	32%
16.	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	7%	41%	8%	25%	19%
17.	Teacher openings are filled quickly.	21%	40%	8%	9%	22%
18.	Teachers are rewarded for superior performance.	19%	13%	24%	26%	18%
19.	Teachers are counseled about less than satisfactory performance.	7%	25%	42%	17%	9%
20.	All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.	11%	26%	18%	25%	20%
21.	The student-to-teacher ratio is reasonable.	11%	36%	18%	25%	10%
22.	Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	12%	28%	12%	23%	25%
23.	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	15%	26%	28%	29%	2%

### C. Personnel

<b>Survey Questions</b>		<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
24.	District salaries are competitive with similar positions in the job market.	2%	22%	12%	35%	29%
25.	The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.	5%	33%	8%	41%	13%
26.	Temporary workers are rarely used.	11%	25%	16%	43%	5%
27.	The district successfully projects future staffing needs.	8%	26%	20%	25%	21%
28.	The district has an effective employee recruitment program.	1%	16%	21%	26%	36%
29.	The district operates an effective staff development program.	12%	24%	16%	20%	28%
30.	District employees receive annual personnel evaluations.	16%	18%	18%	31%	17%
31.	The district rewards competence and experience and spells out qualifications such as seniority and skill levels needed for promotion.	5%	23%	20%	34%	18%
32.	Employees who perform below the standard of expectation are counseled appropriately and timely.	0%	33%	26%	18%	23%
33.	The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	5%	25%	18%	25%	27%
34.	The district's health	5%	29%	8%	29%	29%

	insurance package meets my needs.					
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#### D. Community Involvement

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
35.	The district regularly communicates with parents.	11%	1%	15%	48%	25%
36.	The local television and radio stations regularly report school news and menus.	8%	36%	13%	25%	18%
37.	Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.	4%	31%	18%	32%	15%
38.	District facilities are open for community use.	17%	30%	16%	28%	9%

#### E. Facilities Use and Management

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
39.	Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff and the board provide input into facility planning.	23%	27%	20%	15%	15%
40.	The architect and construction managers are selected objectively and impersonally.	17%	11%	16%	29%	27%
41.	Schools are clean.	12%	40%	11%	15%	22%
42.	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	15%	29%	15%	18%	23%
43.	Repairs are made in a	26%	45%	18%	5%	6%

	timely manner.					
44.	Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	22%	41%	7%	25%	5%

### F. Financial Management

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
45.	Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers.	17%	28%	12%	24%	19%
46.	Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	13%	21%	41%	18%	7%
47.	The district's financial reports are easy to understand and read.	5%	22%	31%	12%	30%
48.	Financial reports are made available to community members when asked.	25%	13%	25%	29%	8%

### G. Purchasing and Warehousing

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
49.	Purchasing gets me what I need when I need it.	6%	32%	24%	10%	28%
50.	Purchasing acquires the highest quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.	12%	27%	27%	12%	22%
51.	Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for the requestor.	12%	24%	22%	8%	34%

52.	The district provides teachers and administrators an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment.	17%	30%	18%	12%	23%
53.	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	5%	28%	12%	34%	21%
54.	Textbooks are in good shape.	12%	15%	15%	52%	6%
55.	The school library meets student needs for books and other resources for students.	16%	47%	22%	11%	4%

#### H. Safety and Security

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
56.	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	10%	29%	12%	22%	27%
57.	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	0%	18%	15%	41%	26%
58.	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	13%	19%	26%	24%	18%
59.	Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	9%	41%	26%	23%	1%
60.	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	8%	5%	12%	22%	53%
61.	A good working arrangement exists between local law enforcement and the district.	12%	21%	22%	41%	4%
62.	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	9%	50%	11%	23%	7%

## I. Computers and Technology

	<b>Survey Questions</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
63.	Students regularly use computers.	18%	30%	6%	21%	25%
64.	Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	18%	25%	16%	15%	26%
65.	Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	5%	40%	18%	25%	12%
66.	Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	18%	16%	11%	35%	20%
67.	The district meets students needs in computer fundamentals.	22%	19%	5%	25%	29%
68.	The district meets students needs in advanced computer skills.	31%	26%	14%	18%	11%
69.	Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	31%	24%	19%	8%	18%

# Appendix C

## DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT STAFF SURVEY RESULTS

### VERBATIM

- Excellent. As rated by TEA always recognized or exemplary.
- Overall FCHS meets the needs as far as the elementary goes. For High School-because of some teachers who are involved in athletics-our needs are not being met when it comes to being prepared for college. Our students are not prepared for the hard work needed. Our vocational and tech program sucks. Many of our students would gladly learn a vocational or tech skill (auto mechanics, hair styling, building trades) but we lack a teacher in this area. Too many coaches for a I-A school. Try 7 or 8. We still have a school bus problem. We purchased two used buses last year but have on the routes three very old and worn out buses-20 years old and 23 years old and 1 diesel that is about 15 years old. Too much money is invested into our athletic programs and not enough into the safety of our children. Poor dirt roads that are not always maintained in a proper and timely fashion.
- I feel FCISD provides a good education for our students, but is definitely lacking in preparing them for college math. We have smart students that have a hard time with college math. A little too much emphasis is put on sports by our administration-not so much the coaches but more so the superintendent and principal. They are former coaches and I feel this makes a difference. A lot of money is spent on the athletics programs at FCISD.
- Need improvement on offering support and direction for the "workbound" students. We excel on the college-bound student support. More tech prep would be nice. Because of our size we lack Ed service delivery in fine art area for students. Band program is improving. Elementary school-wide music is weekly. Could improve in areas of dance, drama, painting, craft, etc. We excel in meeting athletic needs. I'd like to see more needs met-personality and talents. I guess because of our financial and racial situations we do not have a head start or Pre-K. Three day cares exist, though, that provide a good ed. foundation for those who pay. In the area of grievance procedure; usually, complainers are frowned upon and concerns not investigated holistically. So we have low morale and small group "cliques" as a result. I will not complain about our size. I know money comes when size and risk increase. I'd much rather have the above suggestions than suggestions related to gang, violence, pregnancy, drugs and vandalism. I

definitely support the smaller size, so we know each student by name, personality, tendencies of profile and needs.

- FC school is not reaching its potential. Sports and stock shows, not education, are the priorities and this reflects in the poorly prepared students who graduate from FC High. These students are neither prepared for college or life in the workforce. FC has too many coaches and too few courses to prepare students for college. Vocational courses are few and inefficient or ineffective. Some teachers are not qualified to teach their subjects and most attend no professional development to stay abreast with current teaching practices. Students who cannot pass TAAS are placed in special education and ARD out so they can graduate. Students are also placed in danger daily by riding buses that are improperly maintained and unsafe. To sum it up, it is sad that what we pay in taxes we can't turn out better students.
- Too many teachers' aides are at school and taking over the class. Superintendent shows little or no respect for teachers or parents who do not put sports first. Does not back up teachers with discipline for kids. No money for education but for sports. Sports come first.
- I answered no opinion to some questions only because I felt I did not know enough about some issues to form an opinion. I think we have good dedicated teachers and that our students do well academically and also as they graduate and go out into the world.
- I work in the lunchroom and don't really have access to a lot of information but I feel our school is doing a good job.
- I believe that the students of Falls City ISD get a fair education. As in any field you can always have improvement in some area or another.

# Appendix D

## STUDENT SURVEY RESULTS

### *Demographic Data*

**TOTAL RESPONSES AS OF May 4, 2001: 52**

**Note: Numbers may not total to 100 due to rounding.**

1.	<b>Gender (Optional)</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>			
		27%	73%			
2.	<b>Ethnicity (Optional)</b>	<b>Anglo</b>	<b>African American</b>	<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>Asian</b>	<b>Other</b>
		98%	0%	2%	0%	0%
3.	<b>What is your classification?</b>	<b>Junior</b>	<b>Senior</b>			
		40%	60%			

### **A. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement**

<b>Survey Questions</b>		<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
1.	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	15%	28%	8%	23%	26%
2.	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	9%	19%	14%	39%	19%
3.	The district has effective educational programs for the following:					
	a) Reading	24%	58%	5%	12%	1%
	b) Writing	25%	54%	5%	11%	5%
	c) Mathematics	26%	61%	4%	5%	4%
	d) Science	24%	65%	3%	6%	2%
	e) English or Language Arts	22%	55%	7%	11%	5%
	f) Computer	25%	55%	8%	8%	4%

	Instruction					
	g) Social Studies (history or geography)	26%	58%	5%	11%	0%
	h) Fine Arts	18%	41%	15%	11%	15%
	i) Physical Education	32%	62%	3%	3%	0%
	j) Business Education	21%	35%	16%	21%	7%
	k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	28%	33%	12%	21%	6%
	l) Foreign Language	25%	28%	16%	31%	0%
4.	The district has effective special programs for the following:					
	a) Library Service	28%	22%	16%	2%	32%
	b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	7%	41%	8%	16%	28%
	c) Special Education	4%	40%	8%	26%	22%
	d) Student mentoring program	4%	31%	50%	12%	3%
	e) Advanced placement program	1%	16%	21%	26%	36%
	f) Career counseling program	12%	32%	10%	18%	28%
	g) College counseling program	16%	23%	18%	40%	3%
5.	Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	14%	30%	18%	10%	28%
6.	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	5%	15%	15%	37%	28%
7.	The district provides a high quality education.	11%	18%	5%	41%	25%
8.	The district has high quality teachers.	6%	28%	20%	23%	23%

9.	Schools are clean.	8%	28%	11%	27%	26%
10.	Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	9%	28%	19%	23%	21%
11.	Repairs are made in a timely manner.	14%	22%	12%	26%	26%
12.	Emergency maintenance is handled timely.	3%	6%	7%	45%	39%

### B. Purchasing and Warehousing

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
13.	There are enough textbooks in all my classes.	9%	7%	22%	15%	47%
14.	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	2%	11%	3%	25%	59%
15.	Textbooks are in good shape.	8%	42%	4%	27%	19%
16.	The school library meets student needs for books and other resources.	10%	12%	8%	35%	35%

### C. Food Services

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
17.	The school breakfast program is available to all children.	11%	33%	7%	30%	19%
18.	The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	9%	23%	4%	24%	40%
19.	Food is served warm.	6%	20%	6%	25%	43%
20.	Students have enough	8%	27%	22%	16%	27%

	time to eat.					
21.	Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.	7%	21%	3%	34%	35%
22.	Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	5%	11%	2%	19%	63%
23.	Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	4%	22%	5%	33%	36%
24.	Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	1%	17%	9%	49%	24%
25.	Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	0%	6%	9%	43%	42%

#### D. Transportation

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
26.	I regularly ride the bus.	2%	12%	4%	40%	42%
27.	The bus driver maintains discipline on the bus.	2%	16%	6%	44%	32%
28.	The length of my bus ride is reasonable.	5%	14%	6%	44%	31%
29.	The drop-off zone at the school is safe.	6%	30%	13%	23%	28%
30.	The bus stop near my house is safe.	8%	19%	12%	39%	22%
31.	The bus stop is within walking distance from our home.	7%	18%	14%	29%	32%
32.	Buses arrive and leave on time.	8%	20%	10%	46%	16%
33.	Buses arrive early enough for students to eat breakfast at	4%	35%	17%	12%	32%

	school.					
34.	Buses seldom break down.	15%	29%	11%	26%	19%
35.	Buses are clean.	3%	25%	13%	25%	34%
36.	Bus drivers allow students to sit down before taking off.	4%	29%	8%	39%	20%

### E. Safety and Security

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
37.	I feel safe and secure at school.	7%	30%	12%	20%	31%
38.	School disturbances are infrequent.	8%	21%	6%	15%	50%
39.	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	8%	23%	16%	26%	27%
40.	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	7%	26%	12%	15%	40%
41.	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	3%	26%	20%	39%	12%
42.	Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	9%	10%	23%	38%	20%
43.	Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	8%	27%	19%	11%	35%
44.	A good working arrangement exists between the local law enforcement and the district.	7%	18%	10%	23%	42%
45.	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	4%	26%	21%	24%	25%
46.	Safety hazards do not	5%	26%	11%	34%	24%

	exist on school grounds.					
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### F. Computers and Technology

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
47.	Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	3%	24%	26%	26%	21%
48.	Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	1%	30%	3%	24%	42%
49.	Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	6%	31%	15%	20%	28%
50.	The district offers enough classes in computer fundamentals.	5%	18%	14%	12%	51%
51.	The district meets student needs in advanced computer skills.	11%	44%	6%	23%	16%
52.	Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	7%	26%	22%	24%	21%

# Appendix D

## STUDENT SURVEY RESULTS

### VERBATIM

- I wish we could check our e-mail and also get longer lunch periods.
- I hate this school.
- I very strongly think that a lot of things in this school are not fair. Things are mainly judged on who you are. What your last name is. Do your parents have anything important to do with this school and most important of all, do you play sports!!!
- It's great.
- Not bad, but nothing compared to European schools.
- Better math classes. Scores are too low.
- Our principal is bad.
- I guessed at all questions so don't take it for real.
- Students need to be aware of school board meetings. A spring break needs to be offered. More time needs to be given for the consumption of lunch.
- There are no technical classes like computer graphics or programming (even Runge has programming classes). Personally, I'd like to see Java classes.
- I really didn't like this survey.
- I think that our school district is real good.
- The teachers do their best with the equipment and resources that they have, but we seem to be lacking funds for some things.
- We will be out of here in a year and we really could care less.
- I think the educational programs are fine. I truly think we do not have enough work. The reason my grades are as high as they are is because most teachers don't really teach; they just give us the work.
- I don't think that this school has enough programs for the future. I think they need to offer more classes like SAT/ASAT classes, different foreign languages, more "art type" classes. Spring break stinks. We have to come to workout during spring break. A lot of the teachers are rude and don't respect the students. They gossip too much. We also need a girl counselor for the girls in this school. Cheaper lunches, longer homework.
- I think that it is fair.
- The teachers allow the students get away with too much. In one of my classes we don't do anything and get an "A" and get Algebra II credit. That's not right.

# Appendix E

## TEACHER SURVEY RESULTS

### *Demographic Data*

**TOTAL RESPONSES AS OF May 4, 2001: 19**

**Note: Numbers may not total to 100 due to rounding.**

1.	<b>Gender (Optional)</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>			
		79%	21%			
2.	<b>Ethnicity (Optional)</b>	<b>Anglo</b>	<b>African American</b>	<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>Asian</b>	<b>Other</b>
		95%	0%	5%	0%	0%
3.	<b>How long have you been employed by Falls City ISD?</b>	<b>1-5 years</b>	<b>6-10 years</b>	<b>11-15 years</b>	<b>16-20 years</b>	<b>20+ years</b>
		32%	16%	10%	11%	31%
4.	<b>What grades do you teach this year?</b>					
	<b>Pre-Kindergarten</b>	<b>Kindergarten</b>	<b>First</b>	<b>Second</b>	<b>Third</b>	
	0%	5%	8%	7%	8%	
	<b>Fourth</b>	<b>Fifth</b>	<b>Sixth</b>	<b>Seventh</b>	<b>Eighth</b>	
	5%	8%	6%	7%	14%	
	<b>Ninth</b>	<b>Tenth</b>	<b>Eleventh</b>	<b>Twelfth</b>		
	15%	16%	12%	18%		

### **A. District Organization and Management**

	<b>Survey Questions</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
1.	The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.	29%	26%	11%	24%	10%
2.	School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.	14%	30%	11%	29%	16%
3.	School board members work well with the	6%	8%	8%	17%	61%

	superintendent.					
4.	The school board has a good image in the community.	1%	9%	12%	28%	50%
5.	The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	24%	28%	7%	28%	13%
6.	The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	8%	21%	8%	35%	28%
7.	Central administration is efficient.	24%	20%	10%	32%	14%
8.	Central administration supports the educational process.	25%	26%	14%	25%	10%
9.	The morale of central administration staff is good.	9%	25%	17%	42%	7%

## B. Educational Service Delivery and Performance Measurement

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
10.	Education is the main priority in our school district.	21%	26%	18%	25%	10%
11.	Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.	28%	24%	11%	24%	13%
12.	The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	14%	26%	14%	25%	21%
13.	The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	33%	12%	25%	11%	20%
14.	The district provides curriculum guides for all	31%	18%	15%	18%	18%

	grades and subjects.					
15.	The curriculum guides are appropriately aligned and coordinated.	15%	35%	13%	34%	3%
16.	The district's curriculum guides clearly outline what to teach and how to teach it.	18%	24%	17%	23%	18%
17.	The district has effective educational programs for the following:					
	a) Reading	20%	24%	21%	23%	12%
	b) Writing	25%	24%	15%	22%	14%
	c) Mathematics	16%	22%	16%	25%	21%
	d) Science	17%	38%	7%	28%	10%
	e) English or Language Arts	8%	20%	12%	35%	25%
	f) Computer Instruction	14%	29%	17%	27%	13%
	g) Social Studies (history or geography)	10%	33%	9%	33%	15%
	h) Fine Arts	23%	25%	7%	24%	21%
	i) Physical Education	25%	26%	5%	26%	18%
	j) Business Education	12%	30%	12%	30%	16%
	k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	12%	30%	12%	29%	17%
	l) Foreign Language	22%	28%	15%	26%	9%
18.	The district has effective special programs for the following:					
	a) Library Service	24%	25%	13%	23%	15%
	b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	8%	33%	12%	33%	14%
	c) Special Education	23%	25%	13%	23%	16%
	d) Head Start and Even	21%	28%	15%	27%	9%

	Start programs					
	e) Dyslexia program	9%	40%	16%	15%	20%
	f) Student mentoring program	12%	35%	11%	34%	8%
	g) Advanced placement program	17%	26%	14%	25%	18%
	h) Literacy program	28%	19%	11%	30%	12%
	i) Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	19%	26%	20%	24%	11%
	j) Summer school programs	27%	22%	11%	20%	20%
	k) Alternative education programs	10%	34%	14%	32%	10%
	l) "English as a second language" program	18%	25%	16%	23%	18%
	m) Career counseling program	30%	20%	22%	18%	10%
	n) College counseling program	18%	22%	25%	20%	15%
	o) Counseling the parents of students	20%	25%	20%	24%	11%
	p) Drop out prevention program	15%	30%	15%	30%	10%
19.	Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	12%	26%	19%	24%	19%
20.	Teacher turnover is low.	22%	28%	15%	26%	9%
21.	Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	16%	26%	14%	28%	16%
22.	Teacher openings are filled quickly.	23%	26%	11%	27%	15%
23.	Teachers are rewarded for superior performance.	14%	35%	11%	33%	8%

24.	Teachers are counseled about less than satisfactory performance.	18%	26%	21%	25%	11%
25.	Teachers are knowledgeable in the subject areas they teach.	11%	22%	16%	20%	32%
26.	All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.	16%	23%	23%	21%	19%
27.	The student-to-teacher ratio is reasonable.	26%	25%	13%	24%	13%
28.	Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	18%	22%	20%	28%	14%

### C. Personnel

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
29.	District salaries are competitive with similar positions in the job market.	11%	26%	25%	25%	14%
30.	The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.	12%	26%	23%	24%	16%
31.	Temporary workers are rarely used.	9%	30%	10%	28%	24%
32.	The district successfully projects future staffing needs.	7%	8%	21%	26%	39%
33.	The district has an effective employee recruitment program.	13%	31%	16%	30%	11%
34.	The district operates an effective staff	5%	20%	17%	31%	29%

	development program.					
35.	District employees receive annual personnel evaluations.	11%	21%	13%	28%	28%
36.	The district rewards competence and experience and spells out qualifications such as seniority and skill levels needed for promotion.	25%	22%	18%	20%	16%
37.	Employees who perform below the standard of expectation are counseled appropriately and timely.	23%	21%	22%	19%	16%
38.	The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	13%	28%	17%	27%	16%
39.	The district's health insurance package meets my needs.	20%	24%	20%	23%	14%

#### **D. Community Involvement**

	<b>Survey Questions</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
40.	The district regularly communicates with parents.	18%	26%	13%	24%	21%
41.	The local television and radio stations regularly report school news and menus.	18%	34%	7%	32%	11%
42.	Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.	22%	27%	16%	25%	11%
43.	District facilities are open for community	23%	20%	25%	19%	14%

use.					
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### E. Facilities Use and Management

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
44. The district plans facilities far enough in the future to support enrollment growth.	19%	18%	31%	16%	17%
45. Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff and the board provide input into facility planning.	33%	22%	17%	20%	9%
46. The architect and construction managers are selected objectively and impersonally.	14%	22%	27%	20%	18%
47. The quality of new construction is excellent.	20%	20%	25%	19%	17%
48. Schools are clean.	21%	17%	29%	15%	19%
49. Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	21%	22%	21%	20%	17%
50. Repairs are made in a timely manner.	16%	32%	17%	30%	6%
51. Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	26%	20%	11%	33%	12%

### F. Financial Management

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
52. Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and	12%	30%	14%	28%	18%

	teachers.					
53.	Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	18%	26%	12%	25%	25%
54.	Financial resources are allocated fairly and equitably at my school.	6%	30%	17%	29%	20%

### G. Purchasing and Warehousing

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
55.	Purchasing gets me what I need when I need it.	24%	22%	23%	21%	11%
56.	Purchasing acquires the highest quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.	11%	33%	14%	31%	12%
57.	Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for the requestor.	18%	14%	17%	13%	39%
58.	Vendors are selected competitively.	23%	32%	14%	30%	3%
59.	The district provides teachers and administrators an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment.	7%	37%	10%	36%	12%
60.	Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	21%	26%	16%	25%	13%
61.	Textbooks are in good shape.	24%	21%	22%	19%	16%
62.	The school library meets the student needs for books and other resources.	10%	33%	16%	32%	11%

## H. Food Services

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
63.	The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	28%	19%	16%	25%	13%
64.	Food is served warm.	29%	19%	18%	21%	15%
65.	Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.	30%	23%	13%	21%	14%
66.	Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	31%	17%	19%	15%	19%
67.	Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	24%	15%	12%	31%	18%
68.	Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	31%	40%	11%	16%	2%
69.	Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	18%	36%	12%	21%	13%

## I. Safety and Security

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
70.	School disturbances are infrequent.	24%	38%	15%	14%	9%
71.	Gangs are not a problem in this district.	28%	38%	16%	16%	3%
72.	Drugs are not a problem in this district.	16%	37%	11%	21%	15%
73.	Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	18%	45%	14%	14%	9%
74.	Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	27%	42%	11%	17%	3%
75.	Security personnel are	22%	175	19%	17%	25%

	respected and liked by the students they serve.					
76.	A good working arrangement exists between local law enforcement and the district.	24%	25%	13%	29%	9%
77.	Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	13%	32%	14%	23%	18%
78.	Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	22%	29%	11%	26%	12%

### J. Computers and Technology

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
79.	Students regularly use computers.	28%	21%	9%	25%	17%
80.	Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	19%	33%	8%	29%	11%
81.	Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	16%	25%	10%	28%	21%
82.	Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	17%	29%	18%	19%	17%
83.	The district meets student needs in classes in computer fundamentals.	21%	31%	9%	20%	19%
84.	The district meets student needs in classes in advanced computer skills.	32%	22%	12%	12%	22%
85.	Teachers and students have easy access to the	19%	38%	7%	10%	26%

Internet.					
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# Appendix E

## TEACHER SURVEY RESULTS

### VERBATIM

- Falls City is a great place to work and teach. It is a great place to go to school because I was also a student at Falls City.
- I feel Falls City ISD has a lot of great things going for it. Those that are not up to standards are weeded out quickly and we maintain a high level of expectations.
- Teachers are not felt welcome at school board meetings (especially by the superintendent). Much conflict between superintendent and board. Sports are our main priority. History classes are playing chess games-not studying history. Poor staff development. I would like the teachers to evaluate the principals. Elementary principle talks to staff in an unprofessional manner. I would like to see minutes of board meetings in paper like other schools. School calendar is made up by the superintendent and principal not staff or site based. Few site-based meetings this year.
- Several factors influence the education performance of FCISD. If these factors were addressed adequately, our "tiny" district would be outstanding. The morale of FCISD administration and staff is crippling an otherwise excellent district. The conflict between the superintendent and staff causes great tension and due to the size of our school is acknowledged by the students and parents. I realize that being a very small district also creates a disadvantage for a competitive group insurance policy. However, many spouses of our teachers are either ranchers or stay-home mothers and whole families are dependent on the school insurance. Not only is the premium cost staggering, but the benefits thereafter are ridiculous. In the aftermath of the "Texas 7" escape situation, I find it amazing that the Texas Legislature is reviewing the prison system and employee benefits. Media, in all the eagerness to attack the present system, harped on the poor wages, benefits and understaffing. What is amazing is that Texas teachers, college educated, who also receive poor wages, benefits and are understaffed, are not a priority. Obviously, guarding Texas prisoners is more important than educating Texas students.
- The educational performance of Falls City ISD is excellent. I resent having to waste our time with this review because we have one school district in our county that is run by idiots.
- We have too many coaches. Unfortunately, most of them do no teaching even if they have classroom responsibilities. Too much money, time and effort is spent on sports and not enough on the education of our students.

- Too many coaches for the number of students. Too much money spent on athletics.
- Our salary and health benefits are bad. The community, parents and staff members are great. Falls City education records are great. Good kids and teachers. Administration personnel concerns me.
- I feel that our school puts way too much emphasis on sports, in time and in money.
- The last two years have not been a comfortable working and learning environment. It is difficult to do my job when others who don't are never told anything. It is disturbing to watch and hear older kids talk about playing chess games as well as going to the softball field. I'm not sure what they do there for a social studies class. We are very blessed with a good portion of good families, and smart kids, and I feel like we don't do enough as a whole. A lot of the more experienced teachers still work hard. Some of the younger teachers lack pride in their job and have no common sense. I believe experience is very important. My health insurance is very poor. I'm not sure why.
- Main office support staff-secretary and two aids-see that the main office runs smoothly. Math skills are lacking. Nine outdoor water fountains were purchased during 1999-2000 school year and have not been installed.
- Sometimes I feel sports is primary and education secondary. (But sports do seem to have more funding because they have more benefits-we depend on state funding-obviously not enough). Every time we ask for something we get the same reply "It's not in the budget". Overall, I like my school and I think we do pretty good with what we do have. It could be better, though.
- As you see from page 1, I have been a teacher in this district for 20+ years. Perhaps the biggest problem is that education is not the main priority in our district. I see that too much time and money is spent for extra-curricular activities, namely, sports. There seems to be no shortage of funds when it comes to sports. Much time is taken out of the regular day for extra-curricular activities. Students leave school early to travel to contests after school. This cannot be avoided, but when minutes in the classroom are calculated, these students are missing a lot of instructional time. Extra-curricular activities must be a part of a well-rounded program, but at the same time, money was cut from the UIL budget which was only about \$1,500 to begin with and from the library budget. Was money also cut from the athletic budget? In the past year, we have been told to watch our paper consumption, or, "You can't have any paper until next week." I really don't know the reason. We have many coaches on staff, who in a seven-period day, teach only three academic courses. Can we afford this luxury? Extra assignments are given to the regular classroom teachers (for example class

sponsorships) with the coaches very seldom doing their share of the work. We are told, "Everyone has a full plate." The coaching staff is paid for each sport they coach. The regular teachers are not compensated for the extra work they do. A hiring practice of the school for about the past five years has been that any new teacher hired must also be a coach. We have a total of nine coaches who are working with the different sports. A little too excessive. Many of these problems come from the fact that we do not have an effective site-based decision making system in place. As a campus, we have not met for the past year and a half to discuss and reach a consensus on anything that takes place on our campus. Having SBDM in place prior to the last two years proves that it makes a difference in the morale of the staff and helps the school. Please do not think that I am using these comments as an avenue to complain, but there are definitely many issues that need to be addressed that can help the district save money and be more efficient moving money into the classroom, where it needs to be spent. I am also a taxpayer of the district and would like to meet with you to discuss some of these issues. Thank you.