

Austwell-Tivoli Independent School District



LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD

SEPTEMBER 2005



LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD

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October 6, 2005

Dr. Antonio Aguirre
Superintendent, Austwell-Tivoli Independent School District

Dear Dr. Aguirre:

The attached report reviews the management and performance of the Austwell-Tivoli Independent School District's (ATISD's) educational, financial, and operational functions.

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

The staff of the Legislative Budget Board appreciates the cooperation and assistance that your staff and MGT of America provided during the preparation of this report.

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

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John O'Brien", written over a horizontal line.

John O'Brien
Deputy Director
Legislative Budget Board

cc: Carlton Hopper
Darren Kelso
Marilyn Pagel
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

AUSTWELL-TIVOLI INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT MANAGEMENT AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Austwell-Tivoli Independent School District's (ATISD's) school review report includes 29 commendable practices and 33 recommendations for improvement. The following executive summary highlights significant accomplishments, findings, and recommendations, and provides a general overview of the district. A copy of the full report can be found at www.lbb.state.tx.us.

SIGNIFICANT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Through an emphasis on literary activities, ATISD achieved passing rates on the state assessment of English/Language Arts that are greater than 99 percent at the 7th through 11th grade levels for 2003–04.
- ATISD supports all teachers in the English as a Second Language (ESL) endorsement process and thus ensures it is adequately prepared to serve limited English proficient students. It funds the costs of the study materials, the test, and re-certification to indicate the teacher is ESL endorsed.
- ATISD has established a minimum general fund balance to protect itself from fluctuations in its tax base caused by changes in oil and gas values. It has set aside \$300,000 as the minimum general fund balance.
- ATISD has negotiated a depository contract that provides interest rates above the market interest rate.
- ATISD has an effective process for minimizing food waste by obtaining a likely lunch count with student attendance each morning.

SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS

- ATISD teachers do not have adequate training to provide differentiated instruction to meet the needs of students with different abilities and learning styles.
- ATISD lacks scope and sequence curriculum guides for the core academic subjects, which contributes to gaps in instruction and inconsistent student performance across grade levels and subject areas.
- ATISD's library does not meet the state-recommended standards in staffing or in its book and media collection.

- ATISD has not developed staffing standards for guidance and counseling services, resulting in limited hours of availability to students and parents.
- ATISD lacks a process for long-term strategic planning.
- ATISD has not maximized the potential for generating funds through grant writing.
- ATISD lacks an external auditor rotation policy. It has retained the same audit firm since 1986–87 without issuing a request for proposals (RFP) for audit services, reducing assurance that the audit fees are competitive.
- ATISD does not have a comprehensive business procedures manual to provide continuity in the event of employee turnover.
- ATISD has not refunded its outstanding bonds for savings in a market where interest rates are lower than those the district is currently paying.
- ATISD does not have a formal long-range facilities and equipment replacement plan to guide its spending.

SIGNIFICANT RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Recommendation: Provide staff development to teachers in how to differentiate instruction in the general education classrooms.** ATISD teachers do not have adequate training to provide differentiated instruction to meet the needs of students with different abilities and learning styles. The lack of differentiated instruction has contributed to students falling behind in some subject areas and to a high retention rate at some grade levels. The district has attempted to address this problem through tutoring and grade retention if necessary. While tutoring can be an effective tool, the research on grade retention overwhelmingly indicates that it increases the risk of students dropping out of school. ATISD has consistently retained a high percentage of students in 7th and 8th grades, and in 2003–04 also retained a large percentage of students in kindergarten and 1st grade at 9.1 and 25 percent, respectively. In 2002–03, the district retained 25 percent of both its 1st and 8th grade classes, which significantly exceeds the state averages of

5.9 and 1.7 percent, respectively. This retention rate is not an anomaly. ATISD has exceeded the retention rate as compared to the state and the Regional Education Service Center III (Region 3) since 2000–01.

While the district is working toward improving academic performance, the schools have failed to provide adequate differentiated opportunities. Neither the faculty at the elementary or secondary level have received staff development specific to the differentiation of instruction for diverse learners. Differentiated instruction can improve the overall instruction for all students. It offers a variety of learning options designed to tap into different readiness levels, interests, and learning profiles of students. In a differentiated classroom, the teacher uses a variety of techniques, including the following: ways for students to explore curriculum content; sense-making activities through which students can come to understand information and ideas; and options through which students can demonstrate what they have learned. ATISD should provide staff development to teachers in how to differentiate curriculum in the general education classrooms. By incorporating differentiated instruction in the general education curriculum, ATISD will better meet the individual needs, abilities, and interests of its students.

- **Recommendation: Develop scope and sequence curriculum guides for the core academic subjects.** ATISD lacks scope and sequence curriculum guides for the core academic subjects, which contributes to gaps in instruction and inconsistent performance across grade levels and subject areas. A scope and sequence curriculum guide provides the framework for teaching a developmental progression of academic skills in a particular subject area.

Instead of curriculum guides, ATISD uses the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), the state-developed curriculum, as the foundation for instruction in all subject areas. The principals expect the teachers to address the TEKS in their lesson plans and to incorporate them in the lesson cycle in order to prepare students for the high-stakes state assessment, the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS). While teachers are able to access the TEKS on the Internet, the TEKS does not provide the specificity and teaching strategies available in curriculum guides.

As measured by the TAKS, district students do well in reading/language arts and writing, but not as well in math, science, and social studies. In 2003–04, the district had overall passing rates of 95 percent in reading and 96 percent in writing. It had a 78 percent passing rate in math, a 58 percent passing rate in science, and an 87 percent passing rate in social studies. The passing rates vary significantly by subject and by grade level. For example, in 2003–04, the district's passing rates in math were greater than 99 percent at the 3rd, 91 percent at the 4th, 69 percent at the 5th, greater than 99 percent at the 6th, 73 percent at 7th, 40 percent at the 8th, and 73 percent at the 9th grades.

Overall, the variability in performance across subject areas and grade levels suggest that the TEKS is an inadequate substitute for scope and sequence curriculum guides. Curriculum guides can provide an instructional framework for teachers in instructional units, TEKS, activities, and schedule of instruction.

ATISD administrators are aware of the gaps in student performance by subject area and have attempted to address this issue. At the elementary level, the teachers worked with a facilitator to develop a scope and sequence guide for teaching science. This was the only scope and sequence curriculum guide available in the district in 2004–05. ATISD should develop scope and sequence curriculum guides for the core academic subjects to help teachers with the pacing and delivery of instruction. It should also develop a process for updating the curriculum guides every three years. Well-developed scope and sequence curriculum guides will ensure a vertical alignment of the curriculum from grade to grade and that students obtain the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in the following grade.

- **Recommendation: Adopt a staffing standard for staffing guidance and counseling services and create a full-time counselor position.** ATISD does not have staffing standards for guidance and counseling services, resulting in limited hours of availability to students and parents. The high school Spanish/gym teacher serves as a part-time counselor for both the elementary and the high school. The teacher is a certified counselor whose contract includes counseling as part of the position's job responsibilities. All the high school teachers in the district get two conference periods per day; the counselor gets an extra conference period to provide

counseling and guidance services. The structure of guidance services is informal with no specific schedule for elementary or secondary guidance services. At the high school, teachers often assume the role of providing guidance support to students and assisting them with college advisement, completion of applications for admission, scholarships, and financial aid.

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), a regional accrediting association for colleges and schools, recommends that each school with up to 249 students fund a half-time counselor position. (SACS is one of six regional accrediting agencies in the United States that promote school improvement.) ATISD does not meet the SACS recommendation that each school have at least a half-time counselor. The Texas Education Code (TEC) §§33.001 and 33.005-33.006 require each counselor at an elementary, middle, or junior high school, to offer guidance to students and their parents regarding the importance of higher education, coursework designed to prepare students for higher education, and financial aid availability and requirements. All school counselors must assume responsibilities for working with school faculty and staff, students, parents, and communities to plan, implement, and evaluate a developmental guidance and counseling program. The guidance and counseling program is required to include:

- a guidance curriculum to help students develop their full educational potential;
- a responsive services component to intervene on behalf of any student whose immediate personal concerns or problems put the student's continued educational, career, personal, or social development at risk;
- an individual planning system to guide a student as the student plans, monitors, and manages his or her own educational, career (including interests and career objectives), personal, and social development; and
- a system support to strengthen the efforts of teachers, staff, parents, and other members of the community in promoting the educational, career, personal, and social development of students.

The district does not comply with the TEC requirements for providing comprehensive guidance and counseling services. ATISD should adopt regionally accepted standards for staffing guidance and counseling services and

create a full-time guidance counselor position that can adequately provide guidance, counseling, and post-secondary transition services to the district's students. The Spanish/gym teacher would become a full-time teacher. The counselor should develop and implement a high quality, comprehensive, developmental school guidance and counseling program in accordance with state standards. By adopting staffing standards and hiring a full-time counselor, the district can help ensure that the district provides its students with adequate guidance services.

- **Recommendation: Adopt the state standards for staffing the library and updating the library collection.** ATISD's library does not meet the state-recommended standards in staffing or in its library collection. In 2004–05, a teacher staffed the library for 1.5 periods a day. The librarian position was unfilled as of summer 2005. Due to the limited library hours, the students and teachers had limited access to the media materials, and there was no one to collaborate with teachers in planning for student use of library resources. The district lacks a policy, procedure, or plan for updating the current library collection or ensuring that it is adequate to meet the needs of students and faculty.

The Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC) provides criteria for identifying library programs as exemplary, recognized, acceptable, or below standard in five areas: library learning environment, curriculum integration, resources, library program management, and facilities. ATISD is below recommended standards in each area. ATISD's library does not meet the state-recommended standards in staffing or in its book and media collection. A school of less than 500 students should maintain one certified librarian to meet the minimum requirements of the acceptable criterion. In 2004-05, ATISD had 157 students.

ATISD should adopt the state standards for staffing and updating the library collection. The district should create and staff a full-time certified librarian position. This position should initiate a plan to study and upgrade the current library holdings to better meet the needs of district students and provide library support to teachers.

- **Recommendation: Expand the current district improvement planning process to include long-term strategic planning that links to the budget.** ATISD lacks a process for

long-term strategic planning. Although the district annually updates detailed district and campus improvement plans (DIP and CIPs) designed primarily to guide instruction and student services, it lacks a long-range strategic planning process that addresses all areas of district operations.

The District Educational Improvement Committee (DEIC) develops the annual DIP. The DEIC is the only district-wide committee and includes the superintendent, principals, six teachers, the technology coordinator, three parents, one business representative, and one community representative. It meets at least three times per year and reviews TAKS scores and district issues. Site-based decision-making (SBDMs) committees at each school develop the CIPs. Each SBDM team includes the school principal, all school staff, a parent representative, and a community representative. The teams tailor the DIP goals and objectives to meet the specific needs of each school.

While ATISD has an adequate DIP and CIPs, these plans do not provide a long-range vision and specific plans for meeting the district's needs. A long-range strategic plan addresses a district's overall mission and vision for student success, includes operational areas, and links to the budget. ATISD plans and budgets for the current year only based on the needs and requirements identified in the annual planning process.

An effective five-year strategic plan prioritizes a district's goals and specifies courses of action, timelines, and required resources. It includes a method for evaluating the district's progress and for adjusting the plan as needed. It should include all district functions and link to the district's budget. ATISD should expand the annual district improvement planning process to include long-term strategic planning. By developing a long-range strategic plan, the district ensures that it plans for meeting both the district's instructional and operational areas including facilities, technology, transportation, and food services.

- **Recommendation: Contract with a grant writer.** ATISD has not maximized the potential for generating funds through grant writing. There is no one individual in the district responsible for researching and writing grants. Any staff member may choose to research, write, and pursue outside grant funding. This process has been relatively ineffective. In 2004–05, the district technology coordinator

submitted an application for a Library Grant of \$160,000. Although the ATISD application made it through the preliminary round, it did not make it to the final round. The lack of sufficient alternative funding sources prevents ATISD from expanding its spending for educational programs.

Some small school districts that cannot afford to hire a full-time grant writer contract for these services. The district superintendent and contract writer work together to identify potential grants, and the grant writer completes the grant application for a fee of between three and five percent of the total grant awarded, depending on the grant. One small school district has secured between \$200,000 and \$300,000 in grant funds for several years from this type of arrangement.

School districts can also develop shared service agreements for grant writing with other school districts. For example, a school district shared a grant writer with two other districts for an annual fee of \$10,000. In the five-year period from 1996–97 to 2000–01, the grant writer obtained approximately \$150,000 to \$200,000 per year in funding from various sources for each district.

Grant writers can assist districts in obtaining support from federal and state programs, foundations, and the business community, and they can conduct research to match the district's needs with specific funding opportunities. ATISD should contract with a grant writer to submit at least five grant proposals per year. The additional funds could be used to expand educational services including updating the library collection.

- **Recommendation: Adopt a policy for the periodic competitive procurement of external audit services.** ATISD lacks an external auditor rotation policy. It has retained the same audit firm since 1986–87 without issuing a request for proposals (RFP) for audit services, reducing assurance that the audit fees are competitive. Even though the audit firm rotates personnel on the engagement to ensure the auditor's independence, the district does not have assurance that it is getting the most competitive services. ATISD paid \$8,495 for audit services in 2003–04, more than any of its peer districts.

The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) recommends that governmental entities enter into multiyear agreements when

contracting with independent auditors to allow for greater continuity and help minimize the potential for disruption in connection with the audit. It recommends that governmental entities use a competitive process for the selection of independent auditors on a periodic basis and that the process actively seeks all qualified firms available to perform the annual audit.

Many school districts have established policies for the periodic use of a competitive process for the procurement of external audit services. For example, some school districts engage an external auditor annually for a maximum of five years. At the end of the five-year period, the district issues a request for proposal (RFP). The process does not preclude the district from re-engaging the prior auditor, but it does provide the district with assurance that audit fees are competitive.

The board should adopt a policy that requires the competitive procurement of external audit services every five years. This will provide for continuity of audit services and assurance that the fees charged are competitive. The superintendent should use the sample RFP available from the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and include costs as one of the criteria for evaluating the responses.

- **Recommendation: Create and adopt a comprehensive business procedures manual.** ATISD does not have a business procedures manual to provide guidance for district employees or continuity in the event of employee turnover. The bookkeeper is solely responsible for creating and completing all financial transactions for the district and although this position has software manuals for using the financial accounting system and access to TEA's Financial Accountability System Resource Guide (FASRG), no one else in the district possesses this knowledge. Without a procedures manual, staff would have difficulty completing business tasks in the bookkeeper's absence.

A comprehensive business procedures manual documents the district's accounting policies and procedures and defines the processes used to create and complete financial transactions. It describes how to perform tasks and explains the purpose of procedures as they relate to the internal control structure. The GFOA states that accounting manuals should include the policies and procedures for accounting and other finance related functions, such as accounts payable, payroll, budgeting, investments, cash receipts,

and financial reporting. The district should update the procedures manual annually and whenever there is a change in policy.

The bookkeeper should create, and the district should adopt, a comprehensive business procedures manual. It should include all functions the business office controls or supports, including payroll, accounts payable, cash management, purchasing, tax collections, accounting, and budgeting. When completed, the district should post the manual on its website for easy access by all district personnel.

- **Recommendation: Refund outstanding bonds for savings to reduce the debt service tax rate.** ATISD has not refunded its outstanding bonds for savings in a market where interest rates are lower than those the district is currently paying on its outstanding bonds. The tax-exempt bond interest rates have been near historic lows several times since 2003. Bonds sold prior to 2000 are generally at a significantly higher interest rate than the current market. The 1999 bonds had coupon rates of between 4.8 to 6.5 percent. Market rates in August 2005 average 4.25 percent.

A refunding is a refinancing of outstanding debt that may be undertaken to restructure outstanding debt and to provide the issuer with future savings. A refunding can occur when the bonds are callable or in advance of the call date. An advance refunding uses the proceeds from the sale of the refunded bonds to purchase securities that mature in amounts to make the required payments before the call date of the refunded bonds. On the call date, the final securities mature and the refunded bonds are paid in full.

ATISD had debt service requirements of \$1.6 million including principal and interest on its Unlimited Tax School Building Bonds – Series 1999 on August 31, 2004. Scheduled payments for principal and interest in 2004–05 total \$105,303. The bonds mature serially, and the final payment is due February 2019. Although the bonds are not callable until 2009, the district can advance refund the bonds.

Some school districts have refunded outstanding bonds during this period of low interest rates for a significant savings. For example, one school district refunded \$5.7 million in outstanding bonds for a gross savings of \$570,940 over the life of the bonds. ATISD should refund its outstanding bonds to reduce the Interest and Sinking (I&S) tax rate, which is used to pay debt

service. The superintendent should contact the district's financial advisor to begin the process of refunding the district's bonded indebtedness to take advantage of current interest rates.

- **Recommendation: Develop a long-range facilities plan as part of an overall strategic plan to help the district prioritize its facilities spending.** ATISD does not have a formal long-range facilities and equipment replacement plan to ensure adequate resources for timely maintenance. Its most recent construction is the elementary school, completed within budget in 2001. Other than the elementary school, each of the district's facilities is at least 22 years old. Its largest facility, the high school, is 51 years old.

ATISD's facilities include the two schools, a library, the central office, a theater room, a weight room, a music/health/parent involvement portable, an unused track house, a bus garage, an equipment storage area, and a residential property.

The only major renovations the district has completed on these facilities were re-roofing the residential house in 1997 and re-roofing the high school in 1998. There are several unresolved facility issues including the following: a bat infestation at the elementary school; an unusable track field; lack of air conditioning in the gymnasium, problems with the floor in the gymnasium; and lack of sidewalks from the elementary school to the cafeteria. The district may also need to replace or repair major equipment in the cafeteria.

Because the district does not have a long-range facilities plan, it does not have a process for prioritizing competing facilities needs and wants. The Texas Education Code encourages school districts to develop a long-range facilities plan before making major capital investments. When formulating a facilities plan, the school district should allow for input from teachers, students, parents, taxpayers, and other interested parties who reside within the school district.

ATISD should develop a long-range facilities plan as part of an overall strategic plan to help it prioritize its facilities spending. The plan should address the replacement of major equipment such as cafeteria and maintenance equipment.

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT ATISD

- ATISD is located in Refugio County, a few miles from the Gulf Coast and 30 miles north of

Rockport. The district is in an isolated rural area sustained by the oil and gas industry. It draws students from Austwell and Tivoli.

- ATISD is a property-wealthy school district with a 2004–05 property value per student at \$1,952,746. The district is ranked 16th in property wealth out of 1,031 districts.
- Student enrollment has decreased from 199 in 1998–99 to 157 in 2004–05. There has been a steady decline in student enrollment. (For 2005–06, the district expects an increase of nine students attributable to two families moving into the district.)
- In 2004–05, ATISD was predominantly Hispanic at 63.7 percent and just under the state average in its percentage of economically disadvantaged students at 55.4 percent compared to the state average of 55.5 percent.
- Of the 34 full-time equivalent staff in 2004–05, 18.8 were teachers.
- In 2005, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) rated each of the district schools *Academically Acceptable*.
- Sixty-seven percent of ATISD students passed all sections of the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) in 2003–04, which is comparable to the 68 percent passing average for the state. ATISD did very well in Reading/Language arts with a passing rate of 95 percent. Its lowest passing rates were in math at 78 percent, which is slightly higher than the 76 percent state average, and science at 58 percent, which is significantly lower than the 72 percent state average.
- Dr. Antonio Aguirre has served as the district's superintendent since 1998 and has worked in the district for 29 years. Dr. Aguirre is a graduate of ATISD and continues to live in the community.
- ATISD is a member of the Regional Education Service Center III (Region 3). The district contracts with Region 3 for staff development, membership in purchasing cooperatives, and use of the Regional Service Center Computer Cooperative (RSCCC) for financial services, and Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) functions.
- ATISD partners with Victoria College to provide dual-enrollment courses online.
- Senator Ken Armbrister and Representative Geanie Morrison represent ATISD.

SCHOOLS

- One elementary school (K-6)
- One high school (7-12)

2004–05 STUDENT DATA

- 157 students enrolled
- 63.7 percent Hispanic
- 34.4 percent White
- 1.9 percent African American
- 55.4 percent economically disadvantaged

2003–04 FINANCIAL DATA

- ATISD spent \$11,981 per student compared to the state average of \$7,084 in per student actual operating expenditures. Total actual expenditures were more than \$2.1 million.
- Fund balance: 0.9 percent in 2003–04 total budgeted expenditures (undesignated component). The district keeps a designated portion of the budget as a savings to offset years in which the revenue from local taxes is lower than expected.
- Total effective tax rate (2003–04): \$1.3666 (\$1.330 Maintenance and Operations and \$0.0366 Interest and Sinking).

2003–04 PERCENT SPENT ON INSTRUCTION

- Of the total actual expenditures, ATISD spent 50.0 percent on instruction, which is higher than the state average of 46.0 percent. In operating expenditures only, ATISD spent 52.9 percent on instruction, which is below the state average of 57.9 percent.

The following chapters each begin with a summary of the district’s accomplishments, findings, and recommendations included in the chapter. Detailed explanations of each accomplishment and finding/recommendation follow the summary and include fiscal impacts. Each recommendation in the summary section lists a page number that corresponds to its detailed explanation.

In addition, each chapter contains a page number reference for additional information on the chapter topic included in the general information section of the appendices. The chapters each conclude with a fiscal impact chart listing the chapter’s recommendations and associated savings or costs for 2005–06 through 2009–10.

The appendices contain a general information section, Community Open House and focus group comments, and results of the teacher, parent and student surveys.

The following table summarizes the fiscal impact of the 33 recommendations contained in this report.

FISCAL IMPACT

	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09	2009–10	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) OR SAVINGS	ONE TIME SAVINGS OR (COSTS)
Gross Savings	\$2,405	\$92,272	\$91,859	\$91,409	\$90,959	\$368,904	\$5,000
Gross Costs	(\$170)	(\$69,767)	(\$69,767)	(\$69,767)	(\$69,767)	(\$279,238)	(\$23,255)
Totals	\$2,235	\$22,505	\$22,092	\$21,642	\$21,192	\$89,666	(\$18,255)



Chapter 1

Educational Service Delivery

Austwell-Tivoli Independent School District

CHAPTER 1

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

To be successful, a school district must use its human and financial resources efficiently and its system for the delivery of curriculum effectively. A well designed and managed process for directing instruction, maintaining the curriculum, using assessment data to evaluate and monitor programs, and providing adequate resources to support programming efforts is essential for a district to meet the needs of the students it serves.

In 2004–05, Austwell-Tivoli ISD (ATISD) served 157 students in two separate buildings — an elementary school (kindergarten through 6th grade) and a high school (7th through 12th grade). The student population is predominately Hispanic at 63.7 percent. Its percentage of Anglo and African American students are 34.4 percent and 1.9 percent, respectively. ATISD has 87 students (or 55.4 percent) who are economically disadvantaged, which is slightly lower than the state average of 55.5 percent.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Through an emphasis on literary activities, ATISD achieved passing rates on the state assessment of English/Language Arts that are greater than 99 percent at the 7th through 11th grade levels for 2003–04.
- ATISD has prioritized providing its students with technology to enhance learning.
- ATISD supports all teachers in the English as a Second Language (ESL) endorsement process and thus ensures it is adequately prepared to serve limited English proficient students. It funds the cost of study materials, the test and re-certification.

FINDINGS

- ATISD teachers do not have adequate training to provide differentiated instruction to meet the needs of students with different abilities and learning styles.
- ATISD lacks scope and sequence curriculum guides for the core academic subjects, which contributes to gaps in instruction and inconsistent student performance across grade levels and subject areas.
- ATISD has implemented a mandatory tutoring program to help students who are doing poorly in some academic areas, but the time allocated for tutoring is not sufficient to provide adequate remediation.

- ATISD does not have an effective process for pre-screening students before referral for special education services.
- ATISD does not adequately train the Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) committees in granting appropriate exemptions from state assessments. It is exempting a significantly greater percentage of students with disabilities from taking state assessments than the state average.
- ATISD's library does not meet the state-recommended standards in staffing or in its book and media collection.
- ATISD has not developed staffing standards for guidance and counseling services, resulting in limited hours of availability to students and parents.
- ATISD does not provide many opportunities for students to participate in higher-level courses, nor does it adequately recruit students to take the advanced courses it does offer through its dual high school/college enrollment program.
- ATISD has a limited career and technology program. It meets the basic state requirements in its course offerings but does not offer students the opportunity to develop advanced skills in any one area.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Recommendation 1 (p. 12): Provide staff development to teachers in how to differentiate instruction in the general education classrooms.** By differentiating instruction in the general education curriculum, ATISD teachers will better meet the individual needs, abilities, and interests of diverse learners and decrease retention rates.
- **Recommendation 2 (p. 14): Develop scope and sequence curriculum guides for the core academic subjects.** Scope and sequence curriculum guides in core academic subjects will help teachers with the pacing and delivery of instruction.
- **Recommendation 3 (p. 17): Increase the time allotted for mandated tutorials to help underachieving students.** ATISD should expand remedial education for students who are underachieving within the context of classroom instruction at the elementary level and by one elective class period per day at the high school level. By providing increased tutoring time to

underachieving students, ATISD can help ensure it meets federal requirements for adequate yearly progress.

- **Recommendation 4 (p. 19): Strengthen the pre-referral process to ensure that as many students as possible succeed in the general education curriculum.** The pre-referral team should develop strategies for working with students in the regular classroom and document their effectiveness before referring them for special education services. Given the No Child Left Behind limits on the percentages of students whom schools can assess using alternative methods, it is important that as many students as possible succeed in the general education program.
- **Recommendation 5 (p. 20): Provide staff development to Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) teams about appropriate exemptions of students with disabilities from state assessments.** By training ARD teams in appropriate exemptions of students with disabilities, ATISD will increase the number of special education students who participate in state assessments in keeping with federal law.
- **Recommendation 6 (p. 21): Adopt the state standards for staffing the library and updating the library collection.** ATISD should hire a full-time librarian and upgrade the library book collection to offer comprehensive library and media services to students.
- **Recommendation 7 (p. 21): Adopt a staffing standard for staffing guidance and counseling services and create a full-time counselor position.** ATISD should hire a full-time guidance counselor to provide guidance, counseling, and post-secondary transition services to all its students. A full-time counselor can adequately serve both the elementary and secondary schools.
- **Recommendation 8 (p. 23): Expand opportunities for students to take advanced courses and develop a procedure for recruiting students into these classes.** ATISD should expand opportunities for students to participate in advanced courses by working with local institutions of higher education to develop and offer dual enrollment courses.
- **Recommendation 9 (p. 23): Develop articulation agreements with local colleges or other school districts to expand career and technology education opportunities for**

students. By expanding opportunities for career and technology courses, ATISD will create opportunities for students to gain marketable skills and explore possible career paths.

DETAILED ACCOMPLISHMENTS

READING PERFORMANCE

Through an emphasis on literary activities, ATISD achieved passing rates on the state assessment of English/Language Arts that are greater than 99 percent at the 7th through 11th grade levels for 2003–04.

ATISD's pass rates on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) exceeded or matched the state pass rates for 3rd through 11th grade. During on-site interviews, the secondary language arts teacher credited the secondary school success on the emphasis teachers place on both fiction and nonfiction reading. At the elementary school, teachers use a basal reading series, the Accelerated Reading Program, individual and small group tutoring, and ongoing progress monitoring of student performance through Individual Student Profiles to ensure that all students develop good reading and writing skills.

The International Reading Association asserts that literacy development is an ongoing process that requires as much attention in adolescence as it does in childhood. Due to the increasing demand for literacy in order to achieve success, the association believes that adolescent learners require the following elements in their instruction:

- a wide variety of reading material that appeals to their interest;
- instruction that builds their skills and desire to read increasingly complex materials;
- assessment that reveals their strengths as well as their needs; and
- expert teachers across the curriculum.

ATISD demonstrates these characteristics in secondary reading, language arts, and across the curriculum. The elementary reading program is a balanced reading approach and focuses on the five basic areas of reading: phonological awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension.

STUDENT TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES

ATISD has prioritized providing its students with access to technology to enhance learning. Even though only half the students in the district have access to a home computer, the district ensures that each student has access to a computer, software, the Internet, and other technology while at school.

One of the district’s 2004–05 goals was to “use technology as a tool to make learning more relevant for everyone.” To accomplish this goal, the district has invested in a variety of technology infrastructure, hardware, and software.

Exhibit 1-1 lists the technology the district makes available to students.

All ATISD classrooms have direct connections to the Internet and at least one desktop computer. Computers are also available in three labs (two in the high school and one in the elementary school), with additional laptops available on carts for teachers to use in their classrooms. In 2004–05, the district had a 2:1 student-to-computer ratio. This ratio exceeds the state recommended ratio of no more than four students per computer.

**EXHIBIT 1-1
ATISD COMPUTER INFRASTRUCTURE, HARDWARE, AND SOFTWARE
2004–05**

<p>Computer Infrastructure Hardware: (Category 5, 100 mbps backbone)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Linux® web/email server 1 Windows® 2000 application server 1 Windows® 2003 application server 2 Linux® intranet servers 1 Windows NT® 4 application 1 Linux® Learning Management server 1 Cisco® 380 router 9 Cisco® 100 mbps switches 2 3Com® 100 mbps switches 3 Cisco® Aironet® access points 20 Cisco® Aironet® client adapters 25 Windows® 98 desktops 20 Windows® 98 laptops 40 Windows® XP desktops 20 Windows® XP laptops 10 Windows® 2000 desktops 10 Linux® desktops 15 Palm® M130 handheld computers 6 Palm® Zire™ 71 handheld computers 81 Palm® Tungsten™ E handheld computers 1 Palm® Zire™ 72 handheld computer 5 Imaginable probe interfaces for Palm® handheld 42 AlphaSmart® Dana portable computers 8 network laser printers 30 Ink jet printers 1 large format printer 10 individual laser printers 1 distance learning studio 2 portable video conference units 7 LCD projectors 6 digital cameras 2 digital video cameras 4 flatbed scanners 2 document cameras <p>Software Licenses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100 students – Scantron Performance SeriesSM online testing service 5 instructors – Scantron Classroom Wizard™ online testing service 75 users – GoKnow Handheld Learning Environment™ service 1 school – Accelerated Reader™ 2 levels – Lightspan Achieve Now™ software (Playstation and PC versions) 60 users– Inspiration® 35 users– Kidspiration® <p>Misc. Electronics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50 TI 82 graphing calculators
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Source: Austwell-Tivoli ISD, Technology Plan, 2003.

On the review team’s survey, 84.2 percent of students agreed or strongly agreed that the district has effective computer instruction. A majority of students also agreed or strongly agreed with the following survey statements:

- Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom. (100%)
- Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom. (84.2%)
- Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction. (89.5%)
- The district offers enough classes in computer fundamentals. (73.7%)
- The district meets student needs in advanced computer skills. (73.7%)
- Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet. (89.5%)

Parents who responded to the review team survey showed similar levels of satisfaction with the district’s technology instruction and computer access for students.

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE ENDORSEMENT

ATISD prioritizes English a Second Language (ESL) endorsement for all its teachers. In 2001, the K-12 principal initiated a 3-year plan to get all the district teachers ESL endorsed. The district has worked closely with the Region 3 bilingual/ESL consultant, through its shared services agreement, to ensure that all district teachers can teach limited-English proficient (LEP) students.

The Region 3 consultant does an initial orientation to engage teachers in the ESL process by explaining how ESL strategies benefit the whole classroom. For

example, the consultant explains how hands on modeling, use of manipulatives, drama, and song are effective instructional strategies with all student populations.

The district uses Title II funds to purchase study guides for teachers choosing to pursue ESL endorsement at approximately \$40 per guide, and pays the test and endorsement fees at approximately \$80 each. The Region 3 consultant provides a 2-day review for the exam four times per year, a session before each exam. In 2005–06, all the elementary school teachers in ATISD will be ESL endorsed.

While the district does not have large numbers of LEP students, it is ensuring that it is adequately prepared to serve these students at whatever grade level they enter the district.

DETAILED FINDINGS

DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION (REC. 1)

ATISD teachers do not have adequate training to provide differentiated instruction to meet the needs of students with different abilities and learning styles. The lack of differentiated instruction has contributed to students falling behind in some subject areas and to a high retention rate at some grade levels.

ATISD has attempted to address the needs of students who fall behind through tutoring and if necessary retention. The risk of retention is that research consistently shows that retained students are more likely to drop out of school than their peers. In 2003–04, the district held back 25 percent of its 1st and 8th grade classes, which significantly exceeds the state averages of 5.9 and 1.7 percent. This retention rate is not an anomaly. ATISD has exceeded the retention rate as compared to the state and Region 3 since 2000–01 (**Exhibit 1–2**).

**EXHIBIT 1-2
STUDENT RETENTION RATES
ATISD, REGION 3, AND STATE
2000–01 THROUGH 2003–04**

GRADE LEVEL	RETENTION RATES											
	2000–01			2001–02			2002–03			2003–04		
	ATISD	Region 3	State	ATISD	Region 3	State	ATISD	Region 3	State	ATISD	Region 3	State
K	0	4.6	2.3	14.3	3.6	2.6	0	3.3	2.7	9.1	2.2	2.9
1	5.9	5.7	5.8	0	5.7	5.8	0	5.1	5.9	25.0	7.2	5.9
2	0	3.9	3.1	5.9	3.2	3.5	0	3.6	3.5	0	5.1	3.5
3	0	2.2	2.2	0	2.6	2.5	0	3.0	2.5	0	4.0	2.9
4	0	1.5	1.3	0	1.4	1.4	0	1.2	1.3	0	1.8	1.6
5	0	1.2	0.8	0	0.8	0.8	0	0.9	0.7	0	0.8	0.9
6	0	2.2	1.6	0	1.6	1.5	0	2.1	1.4	0	1.7	1.4
7	0	2.2	2.8	17.6	2.1	2.5	22.2	2.5	2.2	8.3	2.7	2.3
8	0	1.5	1.9	7.1	1.3	1.9	0	1.0	1.6	25.0	2.1	1.7

Source: Texas Education Agency, Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS), 2000–01 through 2003–04.

ATISD has consistently retained a high percentage of students in 7th and 8th grades, and in 2003–04 retained a large percentage of students in kindergarten and 1st grade at 9.1 and 25 percent, respectively.

In 2003–04, ATISD also exceeded its peers in retention rates at all grade levels, with the exception of McMullen County ISD for kindergarten (**Exhibit 1-3**).

The National Dropout Prevention Center (NDPC) among other organizations, has studied retention. In its spring 2000 newsletter, the NDPC noted, “The evidence of retention practices’ negative effect on students’ emotional development, social behavior, academic achievement, and dropping out continues to be overwhelming.” According to the Intercultural Development Research Association, 64 out of 65 studies on retention conducted from 1990 to 1997 found retention to be at best ineffective and at worst harmful to students.

While the district is working toward improving academic performance, the schools have failed to adequately provide differentiated opportunities. Neither the faculty at the elementary or secondary level have received staff development specific to the differentiation of instruction for diverse learners. Students come to the classroom with various levels of readiness to learn, interests, and learning styles. A differentiated instruction model can improve the overall instruction for all students. A differentiated instruction model is also an appropriate approach for students who are gifted and talented, as documented in the district’s Gifted/Talented Plan. The review team found an example of differentiation for G/T students during an on-site interview with a high school teacher. During class discussions, the teacher asks her higher ability students to respond to higher-level questions to engage them in critical thinking skills.

A differentiated classroom offers a variety of learning options designed to tap into different readiness

levels, interests, and learning profiles of students. In a differentiated classroom, the teacher uses a variety of techniques, including the following: ways for students to explore curriculum content; sense-making activities through which students can come to understand information and ideas; and options through which students can demonstrate what they have learned.

Differentiation of Instruction in the Elementary Grades by Carol Tomlinson (1999) suggests that teachers can differentiate at least four classroom elements based on student readiness, interest, or learning style. They can differentiate content, process, products, and the learning environment using the following techniques:

To differentiate content:

- incorporate reading materials at varying readability levels;
- audiotape text materials;
- vary spelling or vocabulary lists by readiness levels of students;
- present ideas through both auditory and visual means;
- use reading buddies; and
- meet with small groups to re-teach an idea or skill for struggling learners, or to extend the thinking or skills of advanced learners.

To differentiate process:

- use tiered activities;
- provide interest centers;
- have students develop personal agendas;
- offer manipulatives or other hands-on supports; and
- vary the length of time a student may take to complete a task in order to provide additional

**EXHIBIT 1-3
RETENTION RATES BY GRADE LEVEL
ATISD VS. PEER DISTRICTS
2003–04**

GRADE LEVEL	ATISD	BUENA VISTA ISD	MCMULLEN COUNTY ISD	MATAGORDA ISD	PRINGLE-MORSE ISD
K	9.1%	0%	10%	0%	0
1	25.0%	0%	0%	14.3%	0
2	0%	0%	0%	0%	0
3	0%	0%	0%	0%	0
4	0%	0%	0%	0%	0
5	0%	0%	0%	0%	0
6	0%	0%	0%	0%	0
7	8.3%	0%	0%	0%	0
8	25.0%	0%	0%	0%	0

Source: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2003–04.

support for a struggling learner or to encourage an advanced learner to pursue a topic in greater depth.

To differentiate products:

- give students options of how to express knowledge of required learning;
- use rubrics that match and extend students' varied skills levels;
- allow students to work alone or in small groups on their products; and
- encourage students to create their own product assignments as long as the assignments contain required elements.

To differentiate the learning environment:

- provide places in the room for students to work quietly and without distraction, as well as places for small group work;
- include materials that reflect a variety of cultures and home settings;
- establish clear guidelines for independent work that matches individual needs;
- develop routines that allow students to get help when teachers are busy with other students and cannot help them immediately; and
- help students understand that some learners need to be physically active to learn, while others do better quietly.

The district does have a tool to assess how teachers perform in the classroom. The elementary school principal uses the Walk-Through Form for Curriculum-Instruction-Assessment (**Exhibit 1-4**). Among other things, the tool assesses whether teachers vary teaching strategies to meet the needs of all students.

Small class sizes make it easier to implement differentiation of instruction. **Exhibit 1-5** compares ATISD's class sizes to its peers by grade at the elementary level and subject at the secondary level. While slightly larger than most of its peers in most classes, ATISD still has small class sizes compared to state limits on class size.

ATISD should provide staff development to teachers in how to differentiate curriculum in the general education classrooms. By incorporating differentiated instruction in the general education curriculum, ATISD will better meet the individual needs, abilities, and interests of its students, which should result in reduced retention and remediation rates.

ATISD should provide a minimum of 20 hours in online staff development in differentiated instruction to teachers through the existing contract with Region 3 for a cost of \$750 during 2005–06. The district should offer the staff development after the school day and pay each teacher a stipend of \$15 hour for 20 hours of staff development. The estimated cost for 19 teachers, at a rate of \$15 per hour x 20 hours is \$5,700 in stipends, plus \$192 in associated benefits for a total of \$5,892 in stipends. Combined with the \$750 paid to Region 3, implementing this recommendation will cost approximately \$6,642.

CURRICULUM GUIDES (REC. 2)

ATISD lacks scope and sequence curriculum guides for the core academic subjects, which contributes to gaps in instruction and inconsistent performance across grade levels and subject areas. A scope and sequence refers to the developmental progression of academic skills in a particular subject area.

The district does well in reading/language arts and writing, but students have not performed as well in math, science, and social studies as measured by the TAKS. ATISD uses the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), the state-developed curriculum, as the foundation for instruction in all subject areas. The principals expect the teachers to address the TEKS in their lesson plans and to incorporate them in the lesson cycle in order to prepare students for the high-stakes state assessment, the TAKS, which is based on the TEKS. While teachers are able to access the TEKS on the Internet, the TEKS does not provide the specificity and teaching strategies available in curriculum guides.

Exhibit 1-6 compares the percentage of ATISD students passing TAKS standards in 2002–03 and 2003–04 to peer districts and the state average. None of the districts has a sufficient number of African American students for their results to be reportable. In 2003, ATISD had an overall passing rate of 52 percent (sum of all grades and all subjects) and scored lower than McMullen County and Buena Vista ISDs, the two other K-12 school districts in the peer group. It raised its passing rate in 2004, scoring 67 percent, compared to 63 percent for Buena Vista and 73 percent for McMullen County. In 2004, ATISD scored well above Region 3 for Hispanic students, but well below the Region for Anglo students. It is important to note that in small school districts, small changes in the numbers of students dramatically affect percentages.

Exhibit 1-7 compares ATISD's TAKS pass rates in reading, mathematics, writing, and science to its peer districts for 2002–03 and 2003–04. In 2004, with a passing rate of 95 percent, ATISD scored higher in reading than all of its peers. The district also did well

**EXHIBIT 1-4
ATISD WALK-THROUGH FORM FOR CURRICULUM-INSTRUCTION-ASSESSMENT**

		OBSERVED	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT		
CURRICULUM:	TEKS Folders Used				
	Alignment of Curriculum				
	Lesson Plans Complete				
INSTRUCTION:	Struggling/G/T Learners				
	Global/Analytical Learners				
	Concrete/Abstract Learners				
	Sequential/Random Learners				
	Multiple Intelligence				
	Student's Feeling of Belonging				
	Student's Self-Perceptions				
	Safety Issues/Concerns				
	Hearing				
	Vision				
	Fine Motor/Gross Motor				
	Attention Span				
	Higher Order Thinking/Learning Keys Concepts/Principles				
	Learning Relevant/Connected to Disciplines/Real World				
Questioning Strategies					
Varied Instructional Strategies/Activities					
Differentiation					
Displaying of Student Work					
ASSESSMENTS:	Formative				
	Summative				
	Continuous Improvement				
	Results Driven				
	Multiple Forms				
	Ongoing Diagnostic				
ANALYSIS TOOL: BLOOM'S TAXONOMY AND ERICKSON'S STRUCTURE OF KNOWLEDGE					
LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY	EVALUATION				
	SYNTHESIS				
	ANALYSIS				
	APPLICATION				
	COMPREHENSION				
	KNOWLEDGE				
		FACTS	TOPICS	CONCEPTS	GENERALIZATIONS/ PRINCIPLES
LEVEL OF COMPLEXITY					

Source: Austwell-Tivoli ISD, Austwell-Tivoli Elementary School, Principal's office, 2004.

in writing with a passing rate of 96 percent. In math, ATISD scored slightly higher than Buena Vista for both 2003 and 2004 and lower than McMullen County for both years. In science, ATISD scored significantly lower than Buena Vista and McMullen County in both years. In 2004, ATISD's passing rate was 58 percent compared to 86 percent for Buena Vista and 79 percent for McMullen County. In 2004, ATISD also scored lower in social studies than Buena Vista and McMullen County.

Exhibit 1-8 compares the ATISD and state TAKS pass rates by subject area and grade level for 2002–03 and 2003–04. In both years, ATISD pass rates were

below state pass rates in the areas of: math at the 5th, 6th, and 8th grade; science at the 5th and 11th grade; and social studies at the 8th grade. In 2002–03, the 4th, 7th and 8th grades scored below the state averages in math; the 10th and 11th grades in science; and the 11th grade in social studies. In 2003–04, it exceeded the state pass rate in 5th and 7th through 11th grades in reading; 6th, 7th, and 9th through 11th grades in math; 10th and 11th grades in science; and all tested grades in social studies and writing.

Overall, this data indicates inconsistent instruction of the TEKS across grade levels that lead to

EXHIBIT 1-5
ATISD AND PEER DISTRICTS CLASS SIZE AVERAGES BY GRADE AND SUBJECT
2003–04

ELEMENTARY	ATISD	BUENA VISTA ISD	MATAGORDA ISD	MCMULLEN COUNTY ISD	PRINGLE-MORSE ISD
K	13.0	10.0	10.0	12.0	8.0
1	13.0	6.0	7.0	9.0	6.0
2	10.0	7.0	9.0	6.0	9.0
3	6.0	6.0	5.0	7.0	9.0
4	15.0	7.0	11.0	11.0	11.5
5	16.0	6.0	11.0	9.0	10.2
6	12.0	6.0	5.0	12.0	6.7
SECONDARY					
English/Language Arts	10.9	5.8	N/A	9.2	9.3
Foreign Languages	8.0	5.0	N/A	14.0	19.0
Mathematics	10.9	6.5	N/A	7.2	5.7
Science	12.7	7.2	N/A	12.0	7.0
Social Studies	15.8	5.9	N/A	10.0	10.5

Source: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2003–04.

EXHIBIT 1-6
STUDENTS MEETING TAKS 2004 PASSING STANDARDS (SUM OF ALL GRADES TESTED)
2002–03 AND 2003–04

DISTRICT	ALL STUDENTS		HISPANIC		ANGLO		ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED	
	2004	2003	2004	2003	2004	2003	2004	2003
Austwell-Tivoli	67%	52%	67%	50%	68%	56%	63%	48%
Buena Vista	63%	58%	50%	62%	77%	56%	53%	51%
Matagorda	67%	50%	67%	50%	67%	47%	56%	60%
McMullen County	73%	62%	61%	43%	83%	81%	64%	53%
Pringle-Morse	79%	72%	77%	63%	80%	85%	74%	61%
Region 3	67%	57%	57%	46%	79%	69%	57%	46%
State	68%	58%	58%	48%	81%	72%	57%	46%

Source: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2003–04.

EXHIBIT 1-7
ATISD AND PEER DISTRICTS TAKS RESULTS
MET PASSING STANDARD IN READING, MATHEMATICS, WRITING, AND SCIENCE
2002–03 AND 2003–04

SUBJECT	ATISD		BUENA VISTA ISD		MATAGORDA ISD		MCMULLEN COUNTY ISD		PRINGLE-MORSE ISD	
	2004	2003	2004	2003	2004	2003	2004	2003	2004	2003
Reading	95%	86%	91%	87%	71%	58%	88%	82%	91%	84%
Mathematics	78%	67%	75%	66%	83%	62%	84%	73%	82%	82%
Writing	96%	71%	83%	93%	88%	58%	93%	91%	>99%	75%
Science	58%	42%	86%	68%	56%	80%	79%	57%	91%	50%
Social Studies	87%	76%	>99%	95%	67%	50%	98%	73%	--	>99%

Source: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2003–04.

inconsistent student performance on the TAKS in math, science, and social studies. Scope and sequence curriculum guides can provide an instructional framework for teachers in instructional units, TEKS, activities, and schedule of instruction.

ATISD administrators are aware of the gaps in student performance by subject area and have attempted to address this issue. At the elementary level, the teachers worked with a facilitator to develop a scope and sequence guide for teaching

science. The guide was developed in 2004–05.

Exhibit 1-9 shows an example of what the guide includes. This was the only scope and sequence curriculum guide available in the district in 2004–05. Scope and sequence curriculum guides can ensure that teachers pace the curriculum and consistently provide instruction of grade level TEKS.

ATISD should develop scope and sequence curriculum guides for the core academic subjects to help teachers with the pacing and delivery of

**EXHIBIT 1-8
ATISD AND STATE TAKS PASS RATES BY GRADE LEVEL
2002-03 AND 2003-04**

GRADE LEVEL	READING/ENGLISH				MATHEMATICS				SCIENCE			
	ATISD		STATE		ATISD		STATE		ATISD		STATE	
	2004	2003	2004	2003	2004	2003	2004	2003	2004	2003	2004	2003
3	>99%	>99%	91%	86%	>99%	>99%	90%	84%	--	--	--	--
4	91%	93%	86%	82%	91%	47%	87%	81%	--	--	--	--
5	85%	70%	80%	74%	69%	90%	82%	78%	36%	60%	70%	58%
6	80%	87%	80%	87%	>99%	85%	78%	71%	--	--	--	--
7	>99%	69%	83%	82%	73%	42%	71%	63%	--	--	--	--
8	>99%	90%	90%	84%	40%	45%	67%	62%	--	--	--	--
9	>99%	94%	85%	76%	73%	65%	61%	55%	--	--	--	--
10	>99%	89%	76%	70%	80%	67%	64%	61%	70%	25%	65%	56%
11	>99%	71%	87%	70%	89%	67%	85%	68%	78%	38%	85%	68%

GRADE LEVEL	SOCIAL STUDIES				WRITING			
	ATISD		STATE		ATISD		STATE	
	2004	2003	2004	2003	2004	2003	2004	2003
3	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
4	--	--	--	--	91%	80%	91%	84%
5	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
6	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
7	--	--	--	--	>99%	62%	91%	82%
8	73%	64%	88%	87%	--	--	--	--
9	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
10	90%	89%	88%	80%	--	--	--	--
11	>99%	78%	97%	90%	--	--	--	--

Source: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2003-04.
--Indicates subject areas not tested.

instruction. It should also develop a process for updating the curriculum guides every three years. Well-developed scope and sequence curriculum guides will ensure a vertical alignment of the curriculum from grade to grade and that students obtain the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in the following grade.

The district should use a curriculum consultant from Region 3 (as part of the district’s agreement with Region 3) to assist the teachers in the initial development of the scope and sequence curriculum guides during the summer months. The district should pay the teachers who develop the curriculum guide stipends funded through Title I and Title II funds. The review team estimates that the fiscal impact of this recommendation will be a cost of approximately \$4,603, assuming 30 hours of work at \$15 per hour for a mix of 10 elementary and secondary teachers (\$4,500) plus \$103 in benefits.

REMEDIAL EDUCATION (REC. 3)

ATISD has implemented a mandatory tutoring program to help students who are doing poorly in some academic areas, but the time allocated for tutoring is not sufficient to provide adequate remediation.

ATISD offers 30 minutes of mandatory tutoring as part of the regular school day for students doing

poorly. In addition, 30 minutes to one hour of volunteer tutoring is available for students after school. In 2004-05, very few elementary school students were in mandatory tutoring (12 students), but at the high school approximately 60 students were required to participate in tutoring due to poor academic performance as reflected in grades, assessments, or teacher observations.

The tutorial process is informal but more structured than a typical study hall. At the secondary level, students attend tutorials with specific teachers depending on their academic needs. The tutorials focus on giving students more time to complete assignments, master academic subject requirements, and avoid failing grades. At the elementary level, the classroom teacher works with the students in the academic area of deficit. Teachers review the need for tutorials every grading period. The voluntary tutorials follow the same format as mandatory tutorials, though few students stay after school for this opportunity.

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requires all schools to meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), which refers to the *growth needed in the proportion of students who achieve state standards of academic proficiency*. Schools that receive federal Title I funds to improve learning among disadvantaged students that fail to make AYP for two years in a row are considered in need of

**EXHIBIT 1-9
ATISD EXAMPLE OF SCOPE AND SEQUENCE CURRICULUM GUIDE – KINDERGARTEN
SCIENCE**

UNIT	TEKS	ACTIVITY	DAY	RESOURCES
Unit: September Five Senses	TEKS K.1A K.2ACD K.4A	Activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A box or bag filled with items to represent the five senses. • Show the items to the children one at a time, discussing each item's characteristics. • List the five senses on a piece of chart paper and draw a picture next to each word. 	10	Early Childhood Units for Science Worksheets, pages 27, 28, 29, 30, 32, 33. Holt Science worksheet, page 103 Teacher Assessments
		Activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the sense of sight. • Take children outside to watch cloud shapes. • Ask children what kinds of pictures they see. • Have children squirt white tempera paint on a blue construction paper and fold. Unfold to see what kind of picture emerges. 		
		Activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the sense of touch. • Have a bag filled with different items. • Ask students to reach in and feel. • How does it feel? Soft, hard, rough, smooth, wet, and dry. • Use tempera paint to make hand prints. 		
		Activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the sense of hearing. • Have children sit quietly for about 30 seconds. Then ask them what sounds they heard; list on the chalkboard. Were the sounds loud or soft? 		

Source: Austwell-Tivoli ISD, Austwell-Tivoli Elementary School, Principal's office 2004.

improvement and face a variety of consequences. These consequences include offering parental choice of schools and transportation to better-performing schools, providing supplemental help to disadvantaged students, and implementing various corrective actions.

Exhibit 1-10 shows the ATISD Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Data for 2002–03 as reported by the Texas Education Agency. As can be seen, the district met AYP standards in 2002–03. In addition, ATISD has made considerable improvement in student academic performance from 2001–02 to 2002–03. It can be further seen, however, that a lower percentage of Hispanic and economically disadvantaged students are meeting the set standard than their Anglo peers.

Thirty minutes of mandatory tutoring is not adequate to maintain Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) over time, especially at the high school level, where 81 percent of the student body requires tutoring. Additional time for remediation ensures that these students master the TEKS and are adequately prepared for the TAKS, particularly in math, science,

and social studies, based upon the lower assessment scores in these areas as previously shown.

Current research suggests that there is greater potential for closing the achievement gap through concrete steps and best practices, such as tutoring. (Schwartz, ERIC Digest, 2001). Examples of best practices for closing the achievement gap include increased instructional time in reading, mathematics, and other basic skills; challenging curricula and instructional strategies; learning resources such as computer technology and trained staff in its use; and supplemental individualized educational supports including tutoring by professionals or trained adult volunteers and peers.

ATISD should increase the time allotted for mandatory tutorials. ATISD should expand remedial education for students who are underachieving within the context of classroom instruction at the elementary level and by one elective class period per day at the high school level. Teachers should also incorporate re-teaching strategies within the class

**EXHIBIT 1-10
AUSTWELL-TIVOLI ISD
ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS DATA
2002-03**

	ALL STUDENTS	AFRICAN AMERICAN	HISPANIC	ANGLO	ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED
Performance in Reading/Language Arts 2002-03 TAKS					
Met Standard	75	*	45	28	41
Number Tested	84	*	52	30	48
% Met Standard	89.3%	*	86.5%	93.3%	85.4%
Student Group %	100.0%	1.2%	61.9%	35.7%	57.1%
2001-02 TAKS					
Met Standard	58	*	36	21	28
Number Tested	87	*	62	24	48
% Met Standard	66.7%	*	58.1%	87.5%	58.3%
Change 2002 to 2003	22.6	0.0	28.4	5.8	27.1
Performance in Mathematics 2001-2002 TAKS					
Met Standard	66	*	39	26	34
Number Tested	82	*	51	29	46
% Met Standard	80.5%	*	76.5%	89.7%	73.9%
Student Group %	100.0%	1.2%	62.2%	35.4%	56.1%
2001-02 TAKS					
Met Standard	57	*	37	20	27
Number Tested	87	*	62	24	47
% Met Standard	65.5%	*	59.7%	83.3%	57.4%
Change 2002 to 2003	15.0	0.0	16.8	6.4	16.5

* Numbers less than five have not been cited due to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) 34CFR Part 99.1 and Texas Education Agency Procedures OP 10-03.
Source: Texas Education Agency, data for Austwell-Tivoli ISD, Final 2003 Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) status.

instruction to decrease the need for additional tutorials.

PRE-REFERRAL PROCESS (REC. 4)

ATISD does not have an effective process for pre-screening students before referral for special education services. School administrators said the district uses the Review Existing Assessment Data (READ) process, but failed to document the intervention strategies that the teachers implement in the general education classroom before referring the student for a special education assessment. The process the district uses may be contributing to an over-identification of students with special needs. In 2003-04, the district served 16.9 percent of its students in special education compared to the state average of 11.6 percent.

The READ process begins with a request for review from a teacher or parent. If the request comes from a teacher, the campus administrator reviews the concerns with the teacher, and together they review the existing testing data, class information, and

grades. After reviewing the data, they decide whether the problems the student is having warrant an evaluation by the READ committee, which includes the general education teacher, special education teacher, diagnostician, parent, and administrator. If a request is from a parent, it goes straight to the READ committee. The committee reviews the student's grades and obtains feedback from all the student's teachers to determine whether to refer the student for a special education assessment. The district lacks consistent documentation of pre-referral interventions and instructional strategies.

The Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §89.1011 states that before a referral for special education services occurs, districts should consider making all support services available to students having trouble in the regular classroom, including tutoring and compensatory education. Many school districts establish pre-referral committees to work with teachers in developing plans or strategies to help the struggling student succeed in the general education setting.

Exhibit 1-11 shows the number of ATISD students receiving various disability services. There is an unduplicated count of 32 students identified with disabilities, the majority of whom have learning disabilities.

**EXHIBIT 1-11
ATISD STUDENTS BY PRIMARY
DISABILITY
2004–05**

PRIMARY DISABILITY	NUMBER	PERCENT OF ATISD DISABLED STUDENTS
Orthopedically Impaired	*	*
Other Health Impaired	*	*
Visually Impaired	*	*
Mental Retardation	*	*
Emotionally Disturbed	*	*
Learning Disabled	18	56.3
Speech/ Language Impaired	5	15.6
Total	32	100.0

* Numbers less than five have not been cited due to FERPA 34CFR Part 99.1 and Texas Education Agency procedures OP 10-03. Source: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS, 2004.

An effective pre-referral process would provide teachers with strategies for working with struggling students and guard against misidentification of students as learning disabled. This is in keeping with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which states that all students are entitled to a general education first and that a pre-referral process reduces the need to label children as disabled in order to address their learning needs.

NCLB requires general educators to use interventions grounded in scientifically-based research to help students who are not on track to meet the law’s requirement that all students be at or above grade level in all core subjects by 2013–14. It requires the pre-referral team process to review, establish, and document the scientifically based interventions that the teacher, school, and district have attempted. The team must document each intervention with baseline data and data points to determine the success or failure of the intervention. A summary of research on the pre-referral process shows many benefits, including: reduction of special education referrals for evaluation; increased teacher consultation; individual student modifications; increased teacher training; and increased class wide

interventions such as cooperative learning models, computer-based instruction, and peer tutoring.

With NCLB requirements for intervention and accountability and the IDEA support for a pre-referral process, it is necessary that the general education program become responsible for a functional pre-referral program. The New Mexico Public Education Department’s Regional Education Cooperatives (RECs) have developed a comprehensive pre-referral process. The RECs developed child study team manuals that the state distributed to school personnel throughout New Mexico. Based upon the consistent pre-referral process, data shows a decrease in the referrals for special education services.

ATISD should strengthen the pre-referral process to ensure that as many students as possible succeed in the general education curriculum. The pre-referral team should develop strategies for working with students in the regular classroom and document their effectiveness before referring them for special education services. Given NCLB’s limits on the percentages of students whom schools can assess using alternative methods, it is important that as many students as possible succeed in the general education program.

PARTICIPATION IN STATE ASSESSMENTS (REC. 5)

ATISD does not adequately train the Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) committees in granting appropriate exemptions from state assessments. The state uses two assessments for measuring student learning of the TEKS, the TAKS and the State Developed Alternative Assessment (SDAA).

The TAKS measures knowledge of the state curriculum in several subject areas by grade level. The SDAA assesses special education students who receive instruction in the TEKS but for whom TAKS is an inappropriate measure of their academic progress. It measures progress in reading, writing, and math at levels determined by the student’s ARD committee rather than at the student’s assigned grade level. ATISD is exempting a significantly greater percentage of students with disabilities from taking either of these assessments than average for the state, Region 3, and its peer districts.

Exhibit 1-12 compares ATISD to its peer districts, Region 3, and the state averages in TAKS/SDAA ARD exemptions for students with disabilities. In 2003–04, ATISD exempted 3.5 percent of its special education students from the state assessments. The state average was 2 percent, and the region average was 2.1 percent.

**EXHIBIT 1-12
ATISD AND PEER DISTRICTS
TAKS/SDAA ARD EXEMPTIONS FOR
STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
2002-03 AND 2003-04**

DISTRICT	PERCENTAGE EXEMPTED	
	2004	2003
Austwell-Tivoli ISD	3.5%	1.5%
Buena Vista ISD	0.0%	4.5%
Matagorda ISD	0.0%	0.0%
McMullen County ISD	1.8%	1.9%
Pringle-Morse ISD	1.4%	0.0%
Region 3	2.0%	1.9%
State Average	2.1%	1.7%

Source: Texas Education Agency, Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS), 2003-04.

ATISD should provide staff development to ARD teams on appropriate exemptions of students with disabilities from taking state assessments. The district can obtain this training free of cost as part of its membership in the Goliad Special Education Cooperative.

LIBRARY SERVICES (REC. 6)

ATISD's library does not meet the state recommended standards in staffing or in its book and media collection. It lacks the staffing and library collection to provide appropriate library and media services for its students.

In 2004-05, the elementary special education teacher also served as the district librarian. The special education teacher was a certified librarian and kept the library open 1.5 periods per day. This teacher resigned at the end of the school year and as of July 2005, the district had not filled the position. Due to the limited time the library was open, the students and teachers had limited access to the media materials, and the librarian was unable to collaborate with teachers in planning for student use of library resources.

The Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC) provides criteria for identifying library programs as exemplary, recognized, acceptable, or below standard in five areas: library learning environment, curriculum integration, resources, library program management, and facilities. It bases staffing standards on the school's average daily attendance (ADA).

Exhibit 1-13 shows the TSLAC staff guidelines for library media services in Texas public schools. A school of less than 500 students should maintain one certified librarian to meet the minimum requirements of acceptable.

Because of limited time, the part-time librarian was unable to develop a policy, procedure, or plan for

updating the current library collection or ensuring that it is adequate to meet the needs of students and faculty.

ATISD should adopt the state standards for staffing and updating the library/media collection. The district should create and staff a full-time librarian position. This position should initiate a plan to study and upgrade the current library holdings to better meet the needs of district students and provide library media support to teachers.

The estimated annual cost of a full-time library media specialist is \$32,337, assuming a starting salary of \$28,740 per year plus annual benefits of \$3,597. The district should hire a full-time librarian effective in 2006-07.

GUIDANCE SERVICES (REC. 7)

ATISD has not developed staffing standards for guidance and counseling services, resulting in limited hours of availability to students and parents. The high school Spanish/Gym teacher serves as a part-time counselor for both schools.

The teacher is a certified counselor and his contract includes counseling as part of his job responsibilities. All the high school teachers in the district get two conference periods per day; the counselor gets an extra conference period which he uses to provide counseling and guidance services. The structure of guidance services is informal with no specific schedule for elementary or secondary guidance services. At the high school, teachers often assume the role of providing guidance support to students and assisting them with college advisement, completion of applications for admission, scholarships and financial aid.

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), recommends that each school with up to 249 students fund a half-time counselor position. (SACS is one of the six regional accrediting agencies in the United States that promote school improvement.)

TEA developed A Model Comprehensive, Developmental Guidance and Counseling Program for Texas Public Schools: A Guide for Program Development, Pre-12th Grade to help ensure that all students in Texas benefit from high quality, comprehensive, developmental school guidance and counseling programs. The guide provides a model for school guidance and counseling programs and a process for tailoring the model to meet the diverse needs of students in local school districts.

According to the guide, a high quality, comprehensive, developmental guidance and counseling program benefits the parents, students,

**EXHIBIT 1-13
TSLAC SCHOOL LIBRARY STANDARDS
PROFESSIONAL AND PARAPROFESSIONAL STAFFING
2004**

AREA	STANDARD		
	EXEMPLARY	RECOGNIZED	ACCEPTABLE
STAFFING PROFESSIONAL:	AT LEAST:	AT LEAST:	AT LEAST:
0-500 ADA	1.5 Certified Librarians	1.0 Certified Librarian	1.0 Certified Librarian
501-1,000 ADA	2.0 Certified Librarians	1.5 Certified Librarian	1.0 Certified Librarian
1,001-2,000 ADA	3.0 Certified Librarians	2.0 Certified Librarians	1.0 Certified Librarian
2,001- + ADA	3.0 Certified Librarians + 1.0 Certified Librarian for each 700 students	2.0 Certified Librarians + 1.0 Certified Librarian for each 1,000 students	2.0 Certified Librarian
STAFFING PARAPROFESSIONAL:	AT LEAST:	AT LEAST:	AT LEAST:
0-500 ADA	1.5 paraprofessionals	1.0 paraprofessionals	0.5 paraprofessionals
501-1,000 ADA	2.0 paraprofessionals	1.5 paraprofessionals	1.0 paraprofessionals
1,001-2,000 ADA	3.0 paraprofessionals	2.0 paraprofessionals	1.5 paraprofessionals
2,001 - + ADA	3.0 paraprofessionals + 1.0 paraprofessionals for each 700 students	2.0 paraprofessionals + 1.0 paraprofessionals for each 1,000 students	2.0 paraprofessionals

Source: Texas State Library and Archives Commission, School Library Programs: Standards and Guidelines for Texas, 2004.

teachers, administrators, school board members, and counselors in the following ways:

- Parents have a fuller understanding of the guidance program and access to guidance services and can be more effectively involved in children’s education and career planning.
- Students increase their knowledge and skills in decision-making, goal-setting, planning, problem solving, communicating, interpersonal effectiveness, and cross-cultural effectiveness. All students have access to counselors for assistance with personal/social concerns, as well as academic and career planning.
- Teachers collaborate with counselors to enhance the cognitive and affective development of students and have a fuller understanding of the guidance program.
- Administrators have a fuller understanding of the guidance program, a basis for determining staff and funding allocations, and a means for evaluating and expanding the program to the community.
- School boards have a fuller understanding of the guidance program and a more defined rationale for inclusion of guidance in the school system.
- Counselors benefit from clearly defined responsibilities, elimination of non-guidance functions, and a framework to provide developmental guidance.

School counselors can help students stay engaged in school through helping them resolve numerous issues, including the following:

- poor school attitudes and behaviors;

- test anxiety;
- peer relationships;
- study skills;
- career planning;
- suicide ideation;
- school safety;
- harassment issues;
- conflict resolution;
- college choice;
- scholarship resources, and
- financial aid applications.

The Texas Education Code Section (TEC) §§33.001, 33.005-33.006 requires each counselor at an elementary, middle, or junior high school, to offer guidance to students and their parents regarding the importance of higher education, coursework designed to prepare students for higher education, and financial aid availability and requirements. All school counselors must assume responsibilities for working with school faculty and staff, students, parents, and communities to plan, implement, and evaluate a developmental guidance and counseling program. The guidance and counseling program is required to include:

- a guidance curriculum to help students develop their full educational potential;
- a responsive services component to intervene on behalf of any student whose immediate personal concerns or problems put the student's

continued educational, career, personal, or social development at risk;

- an individual planning system to guide a student as the student plans, monitors, and manages his or her own educational, career (including interests and career objectives), personal, and social development; and
- a system support to strengthen the efforts of teachers, staff, parents, and other members of the community in promoting the educational, career, personal, and social development of students.

Some school districts in Texas help fund counseling services through the Medicaid Administrative Claiming Project (MAC), which provides school districts with the ability to receive reimbursement for certain outreach and case management activities.

ATISD should adopt widely accepted standards for staffing guidance and counseling services and create a full-time guidance counselor who can adequately provide guidance, counseling, and post-secondary transition services to the district’s students. The counselor should develop and implement a high quality, comprehensive, developmental school guidance and counseling program.

The estimated annual cost of a full-time counselor is \$37,260 assuming a starting salary of \$33,553 per year plus annual benefits of \$3,707. ATISD should explore Medicaid direct reimbursement for eligible services provided by the counselor to recoup some of the costs associated with this position. The estimated fiscal impact of this position is \$37,260 beginning in 2006–07.

ADVANCED COURSES (REC. 8)

ATISD does not provide many opportunities for students to participate in higher-level courses nor does it adequately recruit students to take the advanced courses it does offer through its dual high school/college enrollment program. Due to its size, the district does not have the capacity to offer advanced placement (AP) classes. In order to give students the opportunity to take advanced-level classes, the district has collaborated with a local

community college to offer dual-enrollment opportunities, but it does not adequately recruit students to take these classes.

The district has the capacity to provide dual-enrollment courses online through an articulation agreement with Victoria College, but very few ATISD students enroll in these classes. **Exhibit 1-14** compares ATISD enrollment in advanced courses with the state and Region 3 averages for 2001–02 and 2002–03. The district enrolled a significantly smaller percentage of students in advanced courses (at 15.5 percent in 2001–02 and 7.9 percent in 2002–03) than the state average of 19.4 percent in 2001–02 and 19.7 percent in 2002–03. The percentages are also lower than Region 3’s averages of 17.8 and 16.1 percent for those years. Moreover, the majority of ATISD students who enrolled in advanced courses in 2002–03 were Anglo, at 17.6 percent, compared to 4.4 percent Hispanic. During on-site visits, school administrators reported that no students enrolled in advanced courses for 2003–04. Advanced course enrollment in ATISD has decreased annually during the last three years.

ATISD should expand opportunities for advanced courses and develop a procedure for recruiting students into these classes. It should expand opportunities for students to participate in advanced-level classes by pursuing a partnership with the University of Houston at Victoria, in addition to its partnership with Victoria College. To engage student interest in dual-enrollment opportunities, the district should survey student interest in advanced courses and base their offerings on student interest.

CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION (REC. 9)

ATISD has a limited career and technology program. It meets the basic state requirements in its course offerings but does not offer students the opportunity to develop advanced skills in any one area.

School districts are required to provide a curriculum that offers each student the opportunity to master the basic skills and knowledge necessary for managing the dual roles of family member and wage earner and gaining entry-level employment in a high-

**EXHIBIT 1-14
ATISD AND STATE STUDENT ENROLLMENT IN ADVANCED COURSES
2001–02 AND 2002–03**

DISTRICT	ALL STUDENTS		AFRICAN AMERICAN		HISPANIC		ANGLO		ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED	
	2003	2002	2003	2002	2003	2002	2003	2002	2003	2002
Austwell-Tivoli ISD	7.9%	15.5%	*	*	4.4%	12.2%	17.6%	25.0%	3.3%	3.8%
Region 3	17.8%	16.1%	8.3%	7.2%	11.0%	9.3%	24.0%	22.4%	9.5%	8.0%
State Average	19.7%	19.4%	12.7%	12.5%	15.3%	14.9%	24.4%	23.8%	13.4%	13.1%

* Numbers less than five have not been cited due to FERPA 34CFR Part 99.1 and Texas Education Agency procedures OP 10-03.
SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2003–04.

skill, high-wage job or continuing the student’s education at the post-secondary level. School districts must offer career and technology education (CATE) courses in three of eight career and technology educational areas:

- agricultural science and technology
- business education
- health science technology
- home economics
- industrial technology
- marketing
- trade
- industrial and career orientation.

ATISD meets the state requirements in its career and technology education classes at the high school, but students have no opportunity for advanced study in any one of these areas. The majority of students at Austwell-Tivoli High School enroll in CATE classes to meet graduation requirements.

Exhibit 1-15 shows the district’s career and technology education classes.

Exhibit 1-16 shows total ATISD graduates, the numbers planning to attend college, and the percentage of graduates from 1995–96 through 2001–02. As the exhibit shows, the percentage of graduates who indicated plans to attend collage has consistently remained at 60 percent or higher. This leaves approximately 40 percent of students who plan to enter the workforce or seek vocational training programs.

To help prepare students for success in the workforce, many school districts develop articulation agreements with local career and technical training facilities or community colleges to enhance opportunities for students to develop marketable skills or to prepare them for more advanced study in a technical field. Courses offer dual high/school college credit.

Santa Gertrudis ISD, a small school district with less than 300 students, developed a strong instructional technology program. High school students can enroll in a four-year career/technology program that begins with basic computer application and graphic skills

**EXHIBIT 1-15
ATISD CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION CLASSES
2003–04**

Business Education	
•	Keyboarding
•	Word Processing Applications
•	BCIS I and II
•	Accounting I and II
Trade and Industrial Education	
•	Technical Introduction to Computer Aided Drafting
•	Introduction to Computer Maintenance
•	Introduction to Advertising
Career Orientation	
•	Career Connections
Marketing Education	
•	Marketing Yourself

Source: Austwell-Tivoli ISD, Austwell-Tivoli High School, Principal’s office, 2004.

**EXHIBIT 1-16
ATISD COLLEGE-BOUND AND TOTAL GRADUATES
1995–96 THROUGH 2001–02**

YEAR	TOTAL GRADUATES	TOTAL COLLEGE BOUND	PERCENTAGE OF GRADUATES
1995–96	11	7	63.6%
1996–97	11	7	63.6%
1997–98	11	9	81.8%
1998–99	10	6	60.0%
1999–00	13	9	69.2%
2000–01	7	5	71.4%
2001–02	11	7	63.6%

Source: Austwell-Tivoli ISD, Annual TASP Report of Student Performance, 2003.

and culminates with experience in business management and entrepreneurship. As seniors, students work in the production, marketing, sales, and service of computers.

ATISD should develop articulation agreements with community colleges to expand career and technology education for students. Given the district's relative isolation from community colleges, ATISD should explore offering dual enrollment credit courses via

distance learning for students who seek training in a technical field. Alternatively, ATISD could develop its own sequence of CATE classes in one specific area based on student interests.

For background information on Educational Service Delivery, see p. 63 in the general information section of the appendices.

FISCAL IMPACT

RECOMMENDATIONS		2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) OR SAVINGS	ONE-TIME (COSTS) OR SAVINGS
CHAPTER 1: EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY								
1.	Provide staff development to teachers in how to differentiate instruction in the general education classrooms.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$6,642)
2.	Develop scope and sequence curriculum guides for the core academic subjects.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$4,603)
3.	Increase the time allotted for mandated tutorials to help underachieving students.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
4.	Strengthen the pre-referral process to ensure that as many students as possible succeed in the general education curriculum.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
5.	Provide staff development to Assessment, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) teams about appropriate exemptions of students with disabilities from state assessments.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
6.	Adopt the state standards for staffing the library and updating the library collection.	\$0	(\$32,337)	(\$32,337)	(\$32,337)	(\$32,337)	(\$129,348)	\$0
7.	Adopt a staffing standard for staffing guidance and counseling services and create a full-time counselor position.	\$0	(\$37,260)	(\$37,260)	(\$37,260)	(\$37,260)	(\$149,040)	\$0
8.	Expand opportunities for students to take advanced courses and develop a procedure for recruiting students into these classes.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

FISCAL IMPACT (CONTINUED)

RECOMMENDATIONS		2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) OR SAVINGS	ONE-TIME (COSTS) OR SAVINGS
CHAPTER 1: EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY								
9.	Develop articulation agreements with local colleges or other school districts to expand career and technology education opportunities for students.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Totals-Chapter 1		\$0	(\$69,597)	(\$69,597)	(\$69,597)	(\$69,597)	(\$278,388)	(\$11,245)



Chapter 2

Leadership and Management

Austwell-Tivoli Independent School District

CHAPTER 2

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

This chapter covers district leadership, organization and management, human resources, and community involvement in Austwell-Tivoli ISD (ATISD).

Successful management of a school district ensures districts structure systems for effective and efficient education of its students. The board and superintendent are responsible for ensuring the district provides for student needs. School boards set district goals for student achievement and financial viability, adopt policies for school district administration, and approve plans and budgets. The superintendent sets the district organizational structure to facilitate management, guides the district planning process, provides administrative and instructional leadership, and recommends staffing and funding allocations.

The ATISD superintendent has held this position since 1998–99 and has worked in the district for 28 years. His contract is up for renewal in 2007–08.

The district bookkeeper and the superintendent's secretary manage most of the human resources functions for the district. With supervision from the district principals and the superintendent, they post and advertise job vacancies; process new hires and substitutes; track employee qualifications, certifications, assignments, transfers, resignations, and retirements; and maintain job descriptions and personnel records.

Personnel costs are typically a school district's single largest expense. ATISD employees 33.5 staff and in 2004–05, its payroll costs accounted for 71.8 percent of the district's annual budget.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- The superintendent has established a process to ensure that the board members meet their required continuing education hours each year.
- The superintendent maintains frequent contact with the board members and effectively supports them in the completion of their duties.
- ATISD has established a cost-effective and efficient means of keeping its board policies updated and online through a contract with the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB).
- ATISD provides a comprehensive parent involvement program at the elementary level.
- ATISD has effective recruiting, hiring, retention, and personnel planning practices.
- ATISD principals are supportive of the continued professional growth of teachers, as evidenced by thorough annual evaluations.

FINDINGS

- ATISD lacks a process for long-term strategic planning.
- ATISD does not have a process for long-range student enrollment projections.
- The superintendent and district principals do not meet on a regular basis, limiting optimal communications and coordination of efforts.
- ATISD has not maximized the potential for generating funds through grant writing.
- ATISD is not maximizing community and business resources to augment educational services.
- ATISD does not have an adequate process for maintaining its website. It is not up to date and most of its links do not function.
- Although the ATISD policy manual is available online, it is not available on the district's own website, making it difficult for staff, students, parents, and community members to access district policies.
- ATISD does not have an effective process for conducting background checks on all its employees and volunteers to help ensure the safety of students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Recommendation 10 (p. 32): Expand the current district improvement planning process to include long-term strategic planning that links to the budget.** Long-term strategic planning addresses school district needs in both instructional and non-instructional areas, including facilities, transportation, and other operational areas and is linked to the district budget.
- **Recommendation 11 (p. 34): Complete five- and 10-year student enrollment projections.** Long-range enrollment projections will help the district plan for future staff and facilities needs. ATISD administrators should develop long-range enrollment projections and update them annually as they complete informal enrollment projections for the upcoming year.
- **Recommendation 12 (p. 35): Conduct regular meetings of the administrative staff.** By meeting regularly, district administrators can better coordinate instructional efforts and activities between the two schools. The meetings will also provide a formal setting in which

district administrators can generate ideas and refine strategies for meeting district goals.

- **Recommendation 13 (p. 35): Contract with a grant writer.** By contracting with a grant writer to submit at least five grant applications per year, the district can expect to raise enough money to initiate and support additional services for students and teachers.
- **Recommendation 14 (p. 36): Create an education foundation.** With the establishment of a non-profit education foundation, ATISD will have the opportunity to secure additional monetary resources to enhance its library program and other needs, as identified.
- **Recommendation 15 (p. 36): Develop a process to update and maintain the district website.** An updated and functioning website will be a valuable tool for keeping the community at large and ATISD parents informed of district information, events and policies; and provide a link for parents to communicate with teachers by email.
- **Recommendation 16 (p. 37): Provide access to ATISD policies through the district website.** A hyperlink from the district website to its policies, which are maintained on the TASB website, will facilitate stakeholder access to the most up-to-date policies.
- **Recommendation 17 (p. 37): Develop a process to conduct periodic background checks on current employees, substitutes, and volunteers.** The district should develop an administrative policy that requires updating background checks on a portion of its employees each year so that every employee has an updated check every five years. The district should also require background checks of school volunteers and substitutes.

DETAILED ACCOMPLISHMENTS

BOARD MEMBER TRAINING

The ATISD superintendent has established a process to ensure that the board members meet their required continuing education hours each year. The superintendent tracks each board member's continuing education hours and verifies that each board member meets the annual board training requirements. The result is that board members meet the state-required training hours in each area and exceed the requirements in overall training hours. The superintendent uses TASB's Continuing Education Credit Reporting Service (CECRS) to track all board member training.

The State Board of Education requires board members to attend 10 hours of continuing education hours the first year of service and 5 hours annually in subsequent years (TAC, Title 19, Part II, Section 61.1). In addition to the continuing education hours, all board members should participate in an annual team-building session with the district superintendent and in a biennial legislative update session to stay current with changes in state statutes. New board members must attend a three-hour orientation session. The required training helps board members understand their roles, stay informed of laws and regulations affecting school districts, and develop skills specific to their individual needs. In total, first-year members must attend 16 hours of training and continuing members must attend eight hours annually. The Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) categorizes board training into three tiers: Tier 1 is orientation, Tier 2 focuses on teamwork, and Tier 3 includes all other continuing education topics.

ATISD has four board members (elected since 2003) and all have met their new member orientation and continuing education hours.

Exhibit 2-1 shows the number of hours of training ATISD board members have attended since January

EXHIBIT 2-1 ATISD'S BOARD OF TRUSTEES TRAINING* JANUARY 2002 THROUGH MAY 2005

MEMBER NAME	YEAR FIRST ELECTED	HOURS TIER 1	HOURS TIER 2	HOURS TIER 3**	TOTAL	APPROXIMATE HOURS PER YEAR
Carlton Hopper	1993	0.00	9.00	38.00	47.00	13.43
Darren Kelso	2000	0.00	9.00	25.25	34.25	9.78
Marilyn Pagel	2002	1.00	9.00	55.50	65.50	26.20
Chris Camacho	2003	4.00	6.00	34.50	44.50	29.67
Mary Julia Flores	2003	1.00	6.00	38.50	45.50	30.33
Cindy Myers	2003	4.00	6.00	31.75	41.75	27.83
Greg Duenez	2004	3.00	0.00	24.00	27.00	27.00

*Does not include former Board members.

**Includes some Tier 1 hours for the required legal updates received as part of governance conferences.

SOURCE: Texas Association of School Boards, Board Member Continuing Education Report, additional documentation provided by Austwell-Tivoli ISD, Superintendent's office, June 2005.

2002 by category. Most experienced ATISD board members exceed the state requirements for continuing education by more than double the eight hours required each year.

EFFECTIVE BOARD COMMUNICATION

The superintendent maintains frequent contact with the board members and effectively supports them in the completion of their duties.

In interviews, all board members expressed a high level of satisfaction with the superintendent's communication and support efforts. They characterized the communication between the superintendent and the board as open, two-way, and frank. The superintendent keeps each board member informed of any critical event on the campuses. Long-time board members noted that there have been no problems in district administration since the current superintendent was contracted in 1998–99. On his 2004–05 evaluation, all board members rated the superintendent's board relations as "exceptional."

The board members also praised the materials and support that the superintendent provides so they can function effectively. The board meets once per month and receives a board packet on the Thursday or Friday before the Monday meeting. All board members judged the materials sufficient to understand each agenda item.

The superintendent's communication style with the board has created a high-level of cooperation and mutual support between the district and its board.

BOARD POLICIES ONLINE

ATISD has established a cost-effective and efficient means of keeping its board policies updated and online through a contract with TASB. In addition to maintaining the required copy in the central office, ATISD now has access to its policies online through the TASB website.

To access the policies through TASB's online service, an individual must know the URL. The superintendent provided the URL to all district staff in an e-mail message. Community members and parents can obtain the URL through the superintendent's office. The district procedure has been to provide the URL to all who ask for it.

The district contracted with TASB in September 2004 to assist them in reviewing all the district policies for legal compliance and completeness and to place the policies online. The board, superintendent, and the principals worked with TASB staff to review all of the district's policies. They discussed each policy and identified those requiring update. The district administrators and

board agreed that the process, while lengthy, was worthwhile. They found several policies that needed updating to reflect the current legal environment and current district practices.

ATISD paid \$3,944 for the policy review process and will pay TASB \$575 per year to keep its policies updated and online. When the ATISD board votes to update, amend, or create new policies, the superintendent sends the information to TASB so that it can make the necessary edits to the electronic documents.

This process provides electronic, searchable access to ATISD policies that is more convenient than reviewing a paper-based manual. In addition, online access eliminates the cost of paper and copying when distributing policy revisions.

ELEMENTARY PARENT INVOLVEMENT PROGRAM

ATISD provides a comprehensive parent involvement program at the elementary level.

During on-site interviews, school administrators and teachers reported excellent parent participation in the elementary school's parent involvement program, which is coordinated by the district's Parent Liaison using Title I funds. Examples of ATISD parent involvement activities include:

- Family Get-Together Cookout;
- Technology for You and Your Child;
- Family Math Night;
- The Magic of Education;
- Christmas Make It and Take It;
- Christmas Musical Program;
- Insurance for Kids;
- ATISD Science Fair; and
- Open House Under the Sun.

Austwell-Tivoli Elementary School also publishes a quarterly newsletter and *Principal's Bulletin* and distributes them to all parents. These publications keep parents informed of district news and upcoming events.

In a survey conducted by the elementary school principal, the faculty and staff rated the following parent involvement activities as the most effective:

- Crafts night;
- Principal's Advisory Council;

- Science fair in conjunction with the parent involvement program’s family science night;
- End-of-year awards ceremony;
- Fund raising; and
- Principal’s newsletter.

In addition, faculty and staff of the elementary school are available to meet with parents and maintain open communication regarding the education of their students.

RECRUITING, HIRING, AND RETENTION

The district has effective recruiting, hiring, retention, and personnel planning practices.

The district does not have a written recruiting plan but has been successful in recruiting sufficient numbers of qualified applicants when there is an opening. Both principals attend job fairs and post job openings on the Regional Education Service Center III (Region 3) website. If the schools have a specific need, such as for a special education or math teacher, the principals contact the local colleges, universities, or the Goliad Special Education Cooperative to recruit potential applicants. Both principals and the superintendent report that they typically get several “drop-in” applicants per year who seek out ATISD employment because of the district’s solid reputation.

In 2003–04, the high school principal filled three vacancies. This was unusual in that the district typically does not need to hire more than two teachers per campus each year. Last year, however, one teacher retired, another transferred to a larger district, and a third left to work at a non-profit entity. In response to the district’s recruiting efforts, the principal reported there were more than 10 qualified applicants for the three positions. The elementary principal recently posted an opening available for 2005–06 on the Region 3 website and quickly had three qualified candidates.

The district’s hiring process includes the following elements: an initial screening of all applications, a

group interview, an assessment of candidates for skill and fit, a ranking of the candidates in order of preference, and a background check on the top-rated candidate. At the elementary school, the principal and all the teachers conduct a group interview of each candidate in search of teacher personality and skills that complement the existing staff. At the high school, the principal and a committee of teachers also conduct group interviews and assess each candidate for fit as much as teaching ability. The superintendent usually meets with each candidate informally. Once the principals select their top candidates, they forward their recommendations to the superintendent for approval. At the high school level, the principal rank-orders the acceptable candidates, in case the top choices accept other positions before the district can extend an offer. The superintendent reviews the list and then forwards the recommendations to the board for review and approval.

Once the district hires a new teacher, it provides a special in-service to review any areas of concern for new teachers. Principals assign a mentor to each new teacher and maintain open door policies to help new teachers adjust.

Both principals actively work to support the growth and development of ATISD teachers. For example, teachers’ personnel files show that principals frequently conduct classroom observations and make recommendations for improvement. The principals also encourage teachers to participate in staff development workshops.

The district has effectively retained its teachers.

Exhibit 2-2 compares the average years of experience of ATISD teachers with those in the peer districts. As the exhibit shows, ATISD teachers have an average of 17.1 years’ experience, which is the highest of all the peers and 5.3 years more than the state average. Moreover, more than one-third of ATISD teachers have more than 20 years’ experience, well above the peer and state averages.

Non-teaching and administrative employees also have many years of experience as shown in **Exhibit**

EXHIBIT 2-2 AVERAGE YEARS TEACHING EXPERIENCE ATISD, PEER DISTRICTS, AND STATE 2003-04

DISTRICT	AVERAGE YEARS TEACHING EXPERIENCE	PERCENT OF TEACHERS WITH MORE THAN 20 YEARS EXPERIENCE
Austwell-Tivoli	17.1	35.7%
Buena Vista	14.4	38.9%
Matagorda	8.0	12.5%
McMullen County	12.0	15.5%
Pringle-Morse	12.7	8.1%
Peer Average	11.8	18.8%
State Average	11.8	20.9%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS), 2003-04.

2-3. On average, ATISD employees have 16 years of experience, 15 with the district. Four of the 15 staff members have worked for ATISD for more than 20 years.

Exhibit 2-4 compares actual average 2004–05 salaries in ATISD with its peers. ATISD pays lower average salaries to teachers, campus administrators, and central administrator than the average for its peer group and the state average.

The superintendent believes that the main attractions of the district are the salaries offered, the small class size, and the students themselves. Although the salaries are not as high as the average of the peers selected for this review, there are few other opportunities in the Austwell-Tivoli area for those who want to live there. The school district offers higher compensation than most other local positions. The superintendent also said teachers and staff continue to work in the district because the students

are generally well-mannered and pleasant to work with.

With five teachers having more than 20 years experience each, the administrators are aware that they must be prepared for retirements in the near future. **Exhibit 2-5** lists the ATISD teachers and their years of experience.

Both principals and the superintendent actively plan for upcoming retirements, in order to preserve the skill set of the district. At the elementary school, the next teacher likely to retire is one who is also the only one in the district certified in a particular area of specialty. The elementary principal is already working to certify another teacher in that specialty so that there will be no break in the district’s skill set once the current teacher retires.

**EXHIBIT 2-3
ATISD STAFF AND ADMINISTRATOR YEARS OF EXPERIENCE
AS OF MAY 2005**

STAFF TYPE	TOTAL YEARS' EXPERIENCE	TOTAL YEARS IN DISTRICT
Superintendent	29	28
Principal	24	5
Principal	12	8
Bookkeeper	28	28
Maintenance Supervisor	5	5
Secretary	10	10
Secretary	13	13
Secretary	17	17
Aide	19	19
Aide	19	19
Custodian	2	2
Custodian	36	36
Custodian	18	18
Head Cook	4	4
Assistant Cook	9	9
Staff Average	16	15

SOURCE: Austwell-Tivoli ISD, May 2005.

**EXHIBIT 2-4
AVERAGE SALARIES
ATISD, PEERS, AND STATE
2004–05**

DISTRICT	TEACHERS	SUPPORT STAFF	CAMPUS ADMINISTRATION	CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION
Austwell-Tivoli	\$38,733	\$45,802	\$56,950	\$72,353
Buena Vista	\$38,435	N/A	N/A	\$85,700
Matagorda	\$36,415	N/A	N/A	N/A
McMullen County	\$42,654	\$46,557	\$72,376	\$97,631
Pringle-Morse	\$39,527	\$20,338	\$68,500	\$68,500
Peer Average	\$39,258	\$33,448	\$70,438	\$83,944
State Average	\$41,009	\$48,839	\$69,373	\$94,427

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS, 2004–05. The peer district average was calculated by summing the average salaries of the peer districts and dividing by the number of districts with comparable positions.

**EXHIBIT 2-5
ATISD TEACHER YEARS OF EXPERIENCE
AS OF MAY 2005**

TEACHER TYPE	TOTAL YEARS' EXPERIENCE	TOTAL YEARS IN DISTRICT
Elementary Teacher	0	2*
Elementary Teacher	3	1
Elementary Teacher	9	6
Elementary Teacher	13	0
Elementary Teacher	17	4
Elementary Teacher	17	11
Elementary Teacher	23	21
Elementary Teacher	25	5
Elementary Teacher	31	18
Elementary Teacher Average	15	8
High School Teacher	0	0
High School Teacher	0	0
High School Teacher	0	0
High School Teacher	1	1
High School Teacher	12	1
High School Teacher	17	17
High School Teacher	19	9
High School Teacher	19	10
High School Teacher	31	31
High School Teacher	35	20
High School Teacher Average	13	9

SOURCE: Austwell-Tivoli ISD, May 2005.

*Note: Served two years as instructional aide.

**ANNUAL EVALUATIONS OF
TEACHERS**

ATISD principals are supportive of the continued professional growth of teachers, as evidenced by thorough annual evaluations. Each principal uses a computerized evaluation form to rate the teachers in the following eight domains:

- Active, Successful Student Participation in the Learning Process;
- Learner-Centered Instruction;
- Evaluation and Feedback on Student Progress;
- Management of Student Discipline, Instructional Strategies, Time and Materials;
- Professional Communication;
- Professional Development;
- Compliance with Policies, Operating Procedures, and Requirements; and
- Improvement of Academic Performance of All Students on the Campus.

The review team analyzed the annual evaluations for all of the district's teachers. Every teacher had a current evaluation on file. The principals made detailed comments on the evaluations and indicated a high degree of involvement in directing the growth of the teacher. The comments also indicated that principals routinely and regularly observed each

teacher in the classroom. The annual teacher evaluations reflect the district's high teaching standards and efforts to continuously improve.

DETAILED FINDINGS

STRATEGIC PLANNING (REC. 10)

ATISD lacks a process for long-term strategic planning. Although the district annually updates detailed district and campus improvement plans (DIP and CIPs) designed primarily to guide instruction and student services, it lacks a long-range strategic planning process that addresses all areas of district operations. Long-range strategic plans set goals for five years out determined by demographic and facility studies, among other variables.

The District Educational Improvement Committee (DEIC) is responsible for the annual development of the DIP. It is the only district-wide committee and includes the superintendent, principals, six teachers, the technology coordinator, three parents, one business representative, and one community representative. The DEIC meets at least three times per year. The superintendent leads the committee in regular reviews of TAKS scores and district issues.

Exhibit 2-6 provides the district's 2004–05 goals and objectives, as outlined in the DIP.

Each ATISD school has a site-based campus improvement team to develop the CIPs. The campus improvement teams include the school principal, all school staff, parent representatives, and community

**EXHIBIT 2-6
ATISD DISTRICT IMPROVEMENT PLAN
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES
2004-05**

GOALS
1. ATISD will achieve an exemplary rating on AEIS in 2004-05 school year. 2. ATISD will provide a safe and orderly learning environment. 3. ATISD will use technology as a tool to make learning more relevant for everyone. 4. ATISD will maintain an efficient and effective budgetary process. 5. ATISD will maintain a strong school/community partnership.
OBJECTIVES
1. All student groups taking the TAKS Reading test will meet or exceed a 90% passing rate. 2. All student groups taking the TAKS Mathematics test will achieve a 90% or better passing rate. 3. All student groups taking the English Language Arts TAKS test will achieve a 90% or better passing rate. 4. All student groups taking the TAKS Social Studies test will achieve a 90% or better passing rate. 5. All students taking the TAKS Science test will achieve a 90% or better passing rate. 6. All students taking the TAKS Writing test will achieve a passing rate of 95% or better. 7. The dropout rate will remain less than 0.5% for all student groups. 8. The district student attendance will be 95% or higher. 9. Increase the percentage of students taking college entrance exams. 10. The district will maintain a strong Parent Involvement Program. 11. The district will maintain a low incidence of violence. 12. The district will provide for the safety of all students. 13. The district will provide a safe environment for all students and school personnel. 14. All student groups will become proficient in the use of the district's technology. 15. The district will maintain a high level of technological proficiency for all staff members. 16. The district will maintain financial stability. 17. The district will improve student performance in special programs. 18. The district will maintain a strong school/community relationship.

SOURCE: Austwell-Tivoli ISD, District Improvement Plan, 2004-05.

representatives. The teams include the DIP goals and objectives in the school plans but tailor them to meet the needs of each individual school.

While ATISD has an adequate DIP and CIPs, these plans do not provide a long-range vision and specific plans for meeting the district's needs. A long-range strategic plan addresses a district's overall mission and vision for student success, includes operational areas, and links to the budget. ATISD plans and budgets for the current year only based on the needs and requirements identified in the annual planning process.

A long-range plan considers the needs of an organization as a whole. Strategic planning addresses these three questions:

- Where are we today?
- Where are we going?
- How do we get there?

An effective five-year strategic plan prioritizes a district's goals; specifies courses of action, timelines, and required resources; and increases the overall effectiveness of the district planning process. It includes a method for evaluating the district's progress and for adjusting the plan as needed. The strategic plan includes all district functions and links to the district's budget. Brazosport ISD has

developed a nationally recognized strategic planning and continuous improvement planning process, as detailed in the book, *Closing the Achievement Gap: No Excuses*. The planning process helped Brazosport dramatically increase the achievement of all students, regardless of race, gender, or income level. In addition, Regional Education Service Center IV (Region 4) has developed a good strategic planning process, and its leaders have expertise in the processes used in Brazosport ISD.

ATISD should expand the current district improvement planning process to include long-term strategic planning that links to the budget. Long-term strategic planning addresses school district needs in both instructional and non-instructional areas including facilities, transportation, and other operational areas. A district strategic plan would include the annual goals and objectives already found in the DIP but would also include longer-range goals, would be linked to the budget, and would encompass the district as an entire organization.

The ATISD superintendent should contact an Education Service Center to arrange a team training session on strategic planning. Based on the costs of training offered by Region 4, the estimated cost of such training is \$1,000. Including travel and per diem for board members, the superintendent, and both principals would result in an overall one-time cost of

approximately \$1,800 (\$1,000 cost of training + 800 for travel expenses).

**ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS
(REC. 11)**

ATISD does not have a process for long-range enrollment projections. The district has an effective informal process for projecting enrollment from one year to the next, but no process for developing longer-range enrollment projections.

The district is so small that the central office staff is able to make reasonably accurate enrollment projections each year for the upcoming year. At the end of each year, the superintendent meets with his staff to discuss which families might be moving out of the district’s service area, which families have children who will be old enough to enter kindergarten in the fall, and whether any new business activities might lead to new families moving into the district. From these discussions, the superintendent develops an informal enrollment projection for the upcoming year. Given the nature of the community and the fact that it does not

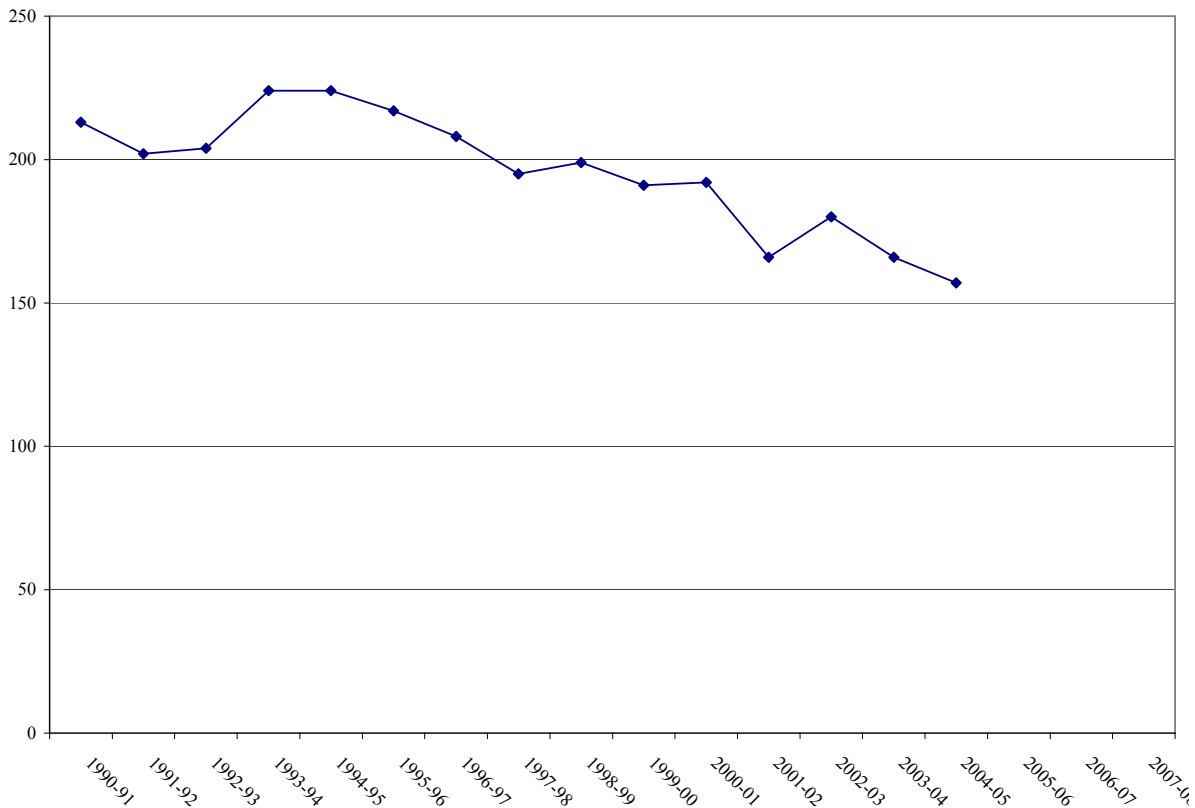
currently have any major new business development to spur relocation to the area, this process yields a sufficiently accurate projection.

The district does not currently develop longer-range enrollment projections largely because its current planning processes do not require it. The problem with not having a formal process for projecting long-term enrollment trends is that the district is not able to project future needs for staff and facilities in order to plan appropriately. **Exhibit 2-7** provides a graph of ATISD enrollment since 1990–91. As the exhibit shows, ATISD enrollment has generally declined.

ATISD is not able to predict whether the gradual decline in student population will continue. Accurate projection of enrollment is important because average daily attendance affects district funding.

Killeen ISD annually completes five-year enrollment projections using the cohort survival method. Per the Texas Education Agency, the cohort survival method of projecting student enrollments is the most widely used method in the country.

**EXHIBIT 2-7
ATISD ENROLLMENT
SINCE 1990-91**



SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 1990–91 through 2004–05.

Annual 5- and 10-year enrollment projections provide a base for effective strategic planning. Although no enrollment projections guarantee 100 percent accuracy, the patterns of enrollment by grade level are helpful in planning the best use of school facilities and resources.

ATISD should develop and implement a process for conducting 5- and 10-year enrollment projections at the end of each year, when it completes its informal enrollment projection for the upcoming year. These projections will help the district adequately anticipate future staff and facilities needs. Region 3 can provide expertise in enrollment projection techniques.

ADMINISTRATOR MEETINGS (REC. 12)

The superintendent and district principals do not meet on a regular basis, limiting optimal communication and coordination of efforts.

The superintendent does not hold regular staff meetings with the district principals to coordinate instructional efforts. Instead, the superintendent meets informally with each principal when there is a specific need. In interviews with the review team, both ATISD principals said that the superintendent is always available. Moreover, they said he actively leads the instructional efforts in the district. This was corroborated in the LBB surveys, where 63.1 percent of parents agreed or strongly agreed that the “superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader,” as did 72.2 percent of teachers.

However, because the three instructional leaders do not meet on a regular, scheduled basis, the district loses the opportunity for improved communication and coordination efforts to raise student achievement at all levels.

Just for the Kids (JFTK, at <http://www.just4kids.org/>) is a national non-profit organization founded in 1995 and sponsored by the National Center for Educational Accountability. Based on a series of 2003 case studies, JFTK created the Texas Best Practices Framework. The framework outlines three levels of best practices—district, school, and classroom—in high-performing Texas districts. JFTK organizes these best practices under five themes it found consistently in high-performing schools across the nation.

As part of reaching the best practice level in the theme area of “staff selection, leadership, and capacity building,” JFTK found that high-performing districts, “schedule structured collaborations for school administrators...enabling principals across the district to meet and discuss specific issues and needs.”

The district should conduct regular meetings of the administrative staff. The superintendent should meet on a regular, formalized basis with the two principals. Even in small organizations, regular, scheduled communications improve strategic focus. Regular meetings should also foster increased coordination of instructional efforts and activities between the two schools. With regular meetings, the superintendent could lead efforts to link the initiatives of the individual schools to improve student performance.

GRANT WRITING (REC. 13)

ATISD has not maximized the potential for generating funds through grant writing.

The district relies on its staff to pursue various forms of grant funding. Individual staff members may choose to research, write, and pursue any outside grant funding. Thus far, this process has yielded few results.

Since 2002, the district has received relatively little in the form of grants. In November 2002, ATISD received \$10,242 as part of a countywide Wetlands Grant. District staff did not write this grant. In 2004–05, the district technology coordinator submitted an application for a Library Grant of \$160,000. Although the ATISD application made it through the preliminary round, it was ultimately eliminated.

The lack of sufficient alternative funding sources prevents ATISD from expanding its spending for educational programs.

Lago Vista Independent School District (LVISD) had a shared services grant writer that pursues grants for its district and two other districts until 2002. The grant writer worked with district for six years and received a salary of \$10,000 from LVISD plus various additional fees from the other shared districts. In the five-year period from 1996–97 to 2000–01, the grant writer obtained approximately \$150,000 to \$200,000 per year in funding from various sources for each district.

San Perlita Independent School District (SPISD) currently works with a grant writer on contract. Together, the superintendent and grant writer identify likely grants. The grant writer completes the grant application for a fee of between three and five percent of the total grant awarded, depending on the grant. For each of the last several years, SPISD has secured between \$200,000 and \$300,000 in grant funds from this arrangement.

Grant writers can assist districts in obtaining support from federal and state programs, foundations, and the business community, and they can conduct

research to match the district's needs with specific funding opportunities.

ATISD should contract with a grant writer to submit at least five grant proposals per year. The fiscal impact of this recommendation should be a net increase in funds for the district. The district could contract with a grant writer on a per grant basis for approximately \$2,000 each, or a total of \$10,000 per year. The district may also choose to develop an arrangement like that in SPISD, paying the grant writer a percentage of the grant funds awarded. Given the success of Lago Vista and San Perlita ISDs, it would be reasonable to expect a grant writer to secure an average of \$75,000 per year in grants. This would yield a net benefit to the district of approximately \$65,000 per year beginning in 2006–07 (\$75,000 - \$10,000 in contract fees). There would be a cost of \$10,000 in the first year, for the grant writer to research and write grants.

EDUCATION FOUNDATION (REC. 14)

ATISD is not maximizing community and business resources to augment educational services.

ATISD administrators and staff identified a number of areas of need to support the district's educational efforts. For example, the district does not have the resources to keep the library open in the summer and the community does not have a library leaving the students without access to summer reading material. The community also lacks summer enrichment opportunities for its youth.

Many districts create education foundations to garner community and business resources to support educational services. Districts typically establish education foundations as non-profit, 501(c)(3) organizations. As such, the foundations are eligible to accept donations from individuals and organizations and direct those funds to support district activities. Many education foundations develop fundraising campaigns to solicit support from all district stakeholders. They also sponsor programs that enrich standard school programs, recognize student and teacher achievement through grants and scholarships, and provide opportunities for community growth through education.

Lancaster ISD has an active education foundation providing funds for innovative teaching grants and scholarships. Since its establishment in 2003, the foundation has raised more than \$100,000 to support district teaching initiatives.

While ATISD is located in a small, rural community with few commercial businesses, it can take advantage of the resources available through the oil and gas industry in the area. The district's largest

taxpayer is an oil and gas company whose holdings are concentrated in the Gulf Coast areas of Texas and Louisiana. Although privately held, this oil and gas company would likely be a logical starting point for initial financial support of the foundation. Three of the other top 10 taxpayers in the district are also energy companies who may support the creation of an ATISD education foundation.

The district should create an education foundation as a non-profit, 501(c)(3), organization. With the establishment of a non-profit education foundation, ATISD should have the opportunity to secure donations, and engage in fund raising activities targeted for specific school or district initiatives. In addition, ATISD can use education foundation funds to support additional staff and personnel for the school district. The foundation's charter would guide the use of funds. A conservative estimate of what an education foundation can raise annually is \$15,000. If established in 2005–06, the district can expect the foundation would begin raising funds in 2006–07.

DISTRICT WEBSITE (REC. 15)

The district does not have an adequate process for maintaining its website. It is not up to date and most of its links do not function. Through 2004–05, the district's part-time technology coordinator was responsible for fully developing and maintaining the website, but due to other duties was unable to effectively complete this task. As of 2005–06, the technology coordinator is a full-time position and district administrators believe the coordinator will have time to effectively complete all responsibilities.

The ATISD website is located at <http://www.atisd.net/> and is readily accessed through common Internet search engines and the Region 3 website. The home page loads quickly and is attractive, with animation and student photographs, but only two of its 19 links function, the links to the school calendar and to the Goliad Special Education Cooperative. Based on the calendar of events listed on the home page, it appears that the website was last updated in September 2004. The following is a list of the links on the homepage:

- School board
- District information
- District calendar
- Central office
- Elementary school
- Cafeteria menu
- Employment

- Policy manual
- Testing
- Administrator information
- Parent information
- Student information
- Teacher information
- Goliad Co-op
- Handhelds
- Staff e-mail
- Immunizations
- Code of Conduct
- Hot sites

The district's technology coordinator is responsible for developing and maintaining the district's website, however due to other job responsibilities this position was unable to adequately maintain the website. Through 2004–05, the district's technology coordinator was a part-time position. The technology coordinator was a high school teacher with two free class periods per day (out of a total of seven) to support instructional and administrative technology at both the elementary and secondary schools and the central office. This individual's responsibilities included maintaining the website. The district hired a full-time technology coordinator effective in 2005–06.

Districts with effective and updated websites have one person with skills in webmastering assigned to maintain the website.

ATISD should develop a process to update and maintain the district website. An updated and functioning website will be a valuable tool for keeping the community at large and ATISD parents informed of district information, events, and policies, and it will provide a link for parents to communicate with teachers by e-mail.

There is no fiscal impact associated with this recommendation. According to district administrators, the full-time technology coordinator will be responsible for updating and maintaining the website.

ONLINE POLICY MANUAL (REC. 16)

Although the ATISD policy manual is available online, it is not available on the district's own website, making it difficult for staff, students, parents, and community members to easily access district policies. As noted earlier in this chapter, the ATISD policies online reside on the TASB web

servers. However, ATISD does not provide a link to the TASB website from its own website.

The ATISD online policy manual is not password-protected. However, in order to access the online policies, users must know the privately distributed URL (Uniform Resource Locator). This level of protection prevents random individuals browsing the overall TASB website from accessing ATISD's policy manual.

ATISD administrators know the URL and can give it to anyone they wish, but this creates a potential barrier to viewing the manuals for staff, parents, and students who may want to search policies anonymously.

Among the four peers selected for this study, only McMullen County ISD also has its policies online through the TASB website. McMullen County ISD provides a hyperlink to its policies through its own website.

The district should provide a hyperlink to its policies on the TASB website through its own website so that all stakeholders can readily reference the most up-to-date policies. The technology coordinator should add the hyperlink to Hot sites link on the ATISD webpage.

BACKGROUND CHECKS (REC. 17)

The district does not have an adequate process for conducting background checks on current employees and volunteers to help ensure the safety of students.

Currently the district only conducts background checks on candidates recommended for hire, so it has a background check on every new employee. District policy DC (Local) states, "The District shall obtain criminal history record information on a person the District intends to employ." The district does not conduct background checks on current employees or volunteers. Instead, it relies on district policy DFBB (Local), which states that the district will terminate employees for "failure to report any arrest, conviction, or deferred adjudication for any felony or any crime involving moral turpitude as required by policy." However, relying on an employee to incriminate himself by reporting an arrest or conviction leaves the district open to risk.

The Texas legislature amended the Texas Education Code Section 22.083 in 2001 to allow school districts to conduct background checks on all employees. At the end of May 2001, the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) notified ATISD that the district could access an online service to quickly check employee backgrounds for criminal records for a charge of \$1 per search. ATISD took advantage of the DPS offer and conducted a background check on

all former and current employees. The background check found only one employee with a criminal record, a teacher who had already left the district.

ATISD still uses DPS for these background checks. The online DPS service is on a secure website and available only to entities authorized by the Legislature. The service provides access to a computerized criminal history file compiled from records provided by courts and criminal justice agencies throughout Texas. It includes information on felonies and Class A and B misdemeanors.

The review team verified that the district has completed background checks on all prospective employees since 2001. However, the district has not checked the backgrounds of current employees since 2001, nor does it have a policy requiring periodic rechecks of criminal histories.

Marble Falls ISD performs DPS criminal history checks on all employees, substitutes, and volunteers at the time of their initial involvement with the district. The district rechecks volunteers after two years and checks substitutes and employees on a rotation of every three or four years.

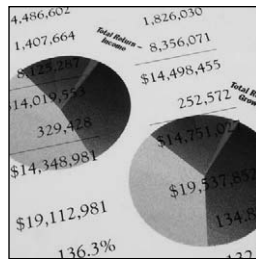
ATISD should develop a process to conduct periodic background checks on current employees, substitutes, and volunteers. It should develop an administrative policy requiring updated background checks on a portion of its employees each year so that every employee has an updated check every five years. This practice will help protect students from employees and volunteers with criminal records that would prevent them from serving the school district.

The fiscal impact from this recommendation will be minimal. The district has 34 full- and part-time staff members. By staggering background checks of staff members (seven background checks annually), the district can ensure that it rechecks each staff member's criminal history every five years for a total annual cost of \$7. The district should also conduct background checks on volunteers (eight to twelve per year) and substitutes (five to seven per year). The total annual cost is estimated at no more than \$30.

For background information on Leadership and Management, see p. 71 in the general information section of the appendices.

FISCAL IMPACT

RECOMMENDATIONS		2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) OR SAVINGS	ONE-TIME (COSTS) OR SAVINGS
CHAPTER 2: LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT								
10.	Expand the current district improvement planning process to include long-term strategic planning that links to the budget.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$1,800)
11.	Complete five- and 10-year student enrollment projections.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
12.	Conduct regular meetings of the administrative staff.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
13.	Contract with a grant writer.	\$0	\$65,000	\$65,000	\$65,000	\$65,000	\$260,000	(\$10,000)
14.	Create an education foundation.	\$0	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$60,000	\$0
15.	Develop a process to update and maintain the district website.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
16.	Provide access to ATISD policies through the district website.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
17.	Develop a policy to conduct periodic background checks on current employees, substitutes, and volunteers.	(\$30)	(\$30)	(\$30)	(\$30)	(\$30)	(\$150)	\$0
Totals-Chapter 2		(\$30)	\$79,970	\$79,970	\$79,970	\$79,970	\$319,850	(\$11,800)



Chapter 3

Financial Management and Technology

CHAPTER 3

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY

The state classifies Austwell-Tivoli ISD (ATISD) as a property-wealthy district due to its oil and gas property values. Wealthy districts are those subject to the equalized wealth provisions of the Texas Education Code (TEC) where the property value per weighted average daily attendance (WADA) exceeds \$305,000 for the 2004–05 school year and are generally referred to as Chapter 41 school districts. WADA is a value calculated by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). The calculation for WADA includes a number of factors such as property value, estimated tax value, average daily attendance (ADA), and tax collection. WADA values may change frequently. Chapter 41 districts must either send funds back to the state or select one of several options to dilute their property value per WADA. ATISD sends funds directly back to the state.

The bookkeeper is responsible for all the district's business functions including payroll, accounts payable, state and federal reports, budgeting, and financial accounting and reporting. The bookkeeper is also responsible for the accuracy of financial data submissions to TEA for the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS). In 2002–03, TEA gave ATISD a Superior Achievement rating on its School Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas (School FIRST). The district also obtained a clean audit report from its external auditors for 2003–04.

In technology, the district currently has 125 computers available for students and staff, with an additional number of peripheral devices such as printers, scanners, digital cameras, and so forth. In 2004–05, the district paid a high school teacher a stipend to devote two class periods per day to technical support, network maintenance, website maintenance, administrative database support, technology planning, and technology staff development. Effective 2005–06, the district hired a full-time technology coordinator.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ATISD has established a minimum general fund balance to protect itself from fluctuations in its tax base caused by changes in oil and gas values.
- ATISD has negotiated a depository contract that provides interest rates above the market interest rate.
- ATISD maintains a comprehensive list of assets and conducts annual inventories.
- ATISD uses a cash flow spreadsheet to monitor its cash position and ensure adequate funds are

available to meet the district's cash requirements.

- ATISD uses just-in-time delivery for most products, eliminating the need for a central warehouse and the storing and inventory of goods and supplies.
- ATISD uses its shared services agreement with Region 3 to support its administrative operations with a high level of automation.

FINDINGS

- ATISD lacks an external auditor rotation policy. It has retained the same audit firm since 1986–87 without issuing a request for proposals (RFP) for audit services, reducing assurance that the audit fees are competitive.
- ATISD principals do not have electronic access to their school's budget and expenditure information even though the district's financial software offers this capacity.
- ATISD does not have a comprehensive business procedures manual to provide continuity in the event of employee turnover.
- ATISD does not bond employees nor does it obtain employee crime insurance on individuals responsible for investments or cash, placing the district at risk of loss.
- ATISD does not provide workplace safety training for employees.
- ATISD has not refunded its outstanding bonds for savings in a market where interest rates are lower than those the district is currently paying.
- ATISD utilizes a manual purchase requisition process that is time-consuming and labor-intensive.
- ATISD annually updates its technology plan but does not have a long-range plan to guide the district's growth and development in technology.
- ATISD teachers do not have sufficient training and support to fully integrate technology into the curriculum.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Recommendation 18 (p. 43): Adopt a policy for the periodic competitive procurement of external audit services.** A policy that requires the district to competitively procure external audit services every five years provides continuity of audit services and provides the

district with assurance that the fees charged are competitive.

- **Recommendation 19 (p. 43): Provide the school principals access to financial information through the accounting software.** Principals can most effectively manage their campus budgets with timely and accurate financial information. With electronic access to financial information, the principals will be able to independently manage their campus budgets.
- **Recommendation 20 (p. 44): Create and adopt a comprehensive business procedures manual.** The business procedures manual will be a valuable resource in training new employees and providing accountability for the business functions. It should include all the functions the business office controls or supports, including payroll, accounts payable, cash management, purchasing, tax collections, accounting, and budgeting.
- **Recommendation 21 (p. 44): Bond employees or purchase employee crime insurance to cover employees that are responsible for investments or handle cash.** By bonding employees or purchasing crime insurance, the district will protect itself from significant loss due to employee fraud or theft.
- **Recommendation 22 (p. 45): Provide workplace safety training for all district employees.** By providing regular safety programs and training workshops, the district will reduce the risk of employee injuries. Workplace safety training should include accident prevention, proper storage and use of chemicals, appropriate steps to reduce the risk of infection from bodily fluids, and response to safety hazards.
- **Recommendation 23 (p. 45): Refund outstanding bonds to reduce the debt service tax rate.** By refunding the outstanding bonds at a lower interest rate, ATISD will be able to reduce its Interest and Sinking (I&S) tax rate. Bonds sold before 2000 are generally at a significantly higher interest rate than the current market. The 1999 bonds had coupon rates of between 4.8 to 6.5 percent. Market rates in August 2005 averaged 4.25 percent. A refunding of outstanding bonds will result in savings to the district.
- **Recommendation 24 (p. 46): Automate the purchase order process.** Region 3 is piloting an automated purchasing system. ATISD should contact Region 3 to see if this program is

available to them. An automated purchase order process is more efficient and provides greater accountability than a manual process.

- **Recommendation 25 (p. 47): Develop a long-range technology plan.** The long-range technology plan should be part of an overall district strategic plan. It should include equipment replacement policies and innovative funding ideas to support the district's ongoing technology expenditures. It would serve to guide the district's growth and development in technology.
- **Recommendation 26 (p. 48): Provide additional training and support to teachers in integrating technology into the curriculum and classroom.** By augmenting staff development and support services in technology, the district will ensure that teachers more effectively use the available technology resources.

DETAILED ACCOMPLISHMENTS

FUND BALANCE

ATISD has established a minimum general fund balance to protect itself from fluctuations in its tax base caused by changes in oil and gas values. It has set aside \$300,000 as the minimum general fund balance.

The district has set aside this money to ensure that it can function in years when there is reduced revenue. The general fund is the most significant account: it includes state aid and local maintenance taxes and finances core district services.

The board established this minimum general fund balance in 1999–2000. **Exhibit 3-1** presents the fund balance as a percent of expenditures.

The administration considers these funds as available only for catastrophic situations such as a large decrease in taxable values. By setting aside this portion of the general fund balance, the district provides financial protection against uncontrollable changes.

DEPOSITORY CONTRACT

ATISD has negotiated a depository contract that provides interest rates above the market interest rate. The district bid its depository contract as required by the Texas Education Code (TEC) Subchapter G in 2001 and again in 2005. The TEC requires school districts to bid their depository contract at least once every two biennia. Districts can renew the depository contract for one biennium if they are satisfied with the terms and conditions of the contract and the services provided by the depository bank. The

**EXHIBIT 3-1
FUND BALANCE AS A PERCENT OF EXPENDITURES
1999–2000 THROUGH 2003–04**

	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
Revenues	\$1,708,567	\$1,720,458	\$1,678,223	\$2,530,973	\$3,117,823
Expenditures	(\$1,593,000)	(\$1,727,873)	(\$1,713,646)	(\$2,569,180)	(\$2,837,587)
Other sources and uses	(\$18,885)	\$28,879	(\$16,805)	(\$25,165)	(\$23,328)
Net change in fund balance	\$96,682	\$21,464	(\$52,228)	(\$63,372)	\$256,908
Beginning fund balance	\$325,264	\$421,946	\$443,410	\$391,182	\$327,810
Ending fund balance	\$421,946	\$443,410	\$391,182	\$327,810	\$584,718
Fund balance as a percent of expenditures	26.5%	25.7%	22.8%	12.8%	20.6%

SOURCE: Austwell-Tivoli ISD, annual audit reports, 1999–2000 through 2003–04.

district renewed the depository contract in 2003 because they were able to negotiate favorable terms.

The bid for the 2005–07 biennium includes interest rates on certificates of deposit five to eight basis points above the 91-day T-Bill rate, no service charges, no compensating balance requirement, interest-bearing checking accounts with a rate of seven basis points above the 91-day T-Bill rate, and a wide range of services. The bank collateralizes the district’s deposits at 125 percent of the ledger balance.

The depository contract allows the district to keep all funds invested and earn interest above the 91-day T-Bill rate while securing them from loss. ATISD has benefited from favorable rates and no service charges by competitively bidding its depository contract.

FIXED ASSETS

The district effectively accounts for all of its fixed assets. It keeps a list of all of its fixed assets such as buildings, buses, land, food service equipment, vehicles, and other equipment costing \$5,000 or more. A second list includes items not defined as fixed assets, such as video cameras, digital stopwatches, computers and peripherals, desks, and chairs. District employees inventory all assets annually. The lists of fixed assets and the annual inventory provide an internal control mechanism for reducing the risk of loss.

TEA defines fixed assets as purchased or donated items that are tangible with a unit cost of greater than \$5,000 and a useful life of more than one year.

**EXHIBIT 3-2
FIXED ASSETS
2003–04**

CATEGORY	BEGINNING BALANCE	ADDITIONS	DELETIONS	ENDING BALANCE
Land	\$19,121	\$0	\$0	\$19,121
Buildings and Improvements	\$2,385,472	\$0	\$0	\$2,385,472
Furniture and Equipment	\$344,497	\$0	\$0	\$344,497
Total Assets	\$2,749,090	\$0	\$0	\$2,749,090

SOURCE: Austwell-Tivoli ISD, annual audit report, 2003–04.

Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Statement 34 requires districts to depreciate fixed assets, increasing the importance of the fixed asset management system. Planning and control of fixed asset transactions is crucial to the long-range financial plan of the district. **Exhibit 3-2** lists the values of ATISD’s fixed assets.

Accurate information concerning the district’s fixed assets is essential to ensure the district has adequate insurance coverage and the information necessary to file a claim if a loss occurs.

CASH FLOW FORECASTS

ATISD uses a cash flow spreadsheet to monitor its cash position and ensure adequate funds are available to meet the district’s cash requirements. The bookkeeper updates the spreadsheet with actual data monthly to provide a more accurate projection of the district’s cash position.

The bookkeeper started using TEA’s spreadsheet in 2004–05 and said the district previously calculated the district’s cash flow manually. The cash flow spreadsheet helps the bookkeeper ensure that all future inflows and outflows are in the cash flow forecast.

Exhibit 3-3 presents an excerpt from the 2004–05 cash flow forecast.

By knowing the district’s cash requirements and the amounts available for investment, the bookkeeper is able to invest funds for longer periods to achieve a higher interest rate. Likewise, the bookkeeper can provide at any time an up-to-date picture of the cash

EXHIBIT 3-3
CASH FLOW FORECAST
2004–05

	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
Beginning Cash Balance	\$507,438	\$205,697	\$264,880	\$421,869
RECEIPTS				
Transfers From CDs	\$0	\$150,000	\$0	\$0
Tax Collections – Current	\$0	\$28,000	\$3,646,349	\$81,871
Tax Collections - Delinquent	\$3,955	\$3,323	\$1,903	\$1,131
Penalties & Interest	\$0	\$725	\$757	\$564
Other Local Revenue	\$2,221	\$7,118	\$4,298	\$4,484
State Revenue - Available School Fund	\$2,466	\$7,399	\$5,590	\$6,412
State Revenue - Foundation	\$14,131	\$10,991	\$0	\$0
Other State Revenue	\$2,911	\$2,750	\$1,250	\$1,250
Federal Indirect	\$5,254	\$367	\$6,426	\$62,195
Total Revenue	\$30,938	\$210,674	\$3,666,573	\$157,907
DISBURSEMENTS				
Payroll Net Checks	(\$70,915)	(\$64,667)	(\$63,452)	(\$63,341)
TRS Deposit	(\$19,869)	(\$19,853)	(\$20,658)	(\$20,687)
IRS Deposit	(\$13,694)	(\$12,293)	(\$11,161)	(\$11,168)
Deduction Checks	(\$17,763)	(\$16,852)	(\$17,041)	(\$17,260)
Total Payroll	(\$122,240)	(\$113,665)	(\$112,312)	(\$112,456)
Transfers to CDs	\$0	\$0	(\$3,300,000)	\$0
Cash to TEA	(\$147,443)	\$0	\$0	\$0
Expenditures other than payroll	(\$62,996)	(\$37,826)	(\$97,271)	(\$101,943)
Total Expenditures	(\$332,679)	(\$151,491)	(\$3,509,584)	(\$214,399)
Net Change in Cash	(\$301,741)	\$59,183	\$156,989	(\$56,492)
Ending Cash Balance	\$205,697	\$264,880	\$421,869	\$365,378
CDS				
Beginning Cash Balance	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$150,000	\$3,450,000
Cashed out CDs	\$0	(\$150,000)	\$0	\$0
Purchased CDs	\$0	\$0	\$3,300,000	\$0
Ending Balance	\$300,000	\$150,000	\$3,450,000	\$3,450,000
Total Cash & Investments	\$505,697	\$414,880	\$3,871,869	\$3,815,378

SOURCE: Austwell-Tivoli ISD, Superintendent's office, May 2005.

position of the district for the superintendent and the board.

JUST IN TIME DELIVERY

ATISD uses just-in-time delivery for most products. This eliminates the need for a central warehouse and the storing and inventory of goods and supplies.

In reviewing the district's facilities and storage areas, the review team found little to no storage of goods and supplies. The food services department manages its stock on a one- or two-week cycle, depending on the type of commodity. While on site, the review team noted that almost no milk remained after the last lunch the day before the next milk delivery. The district uses the bus barn to store small quantities of air conditioning filters, tissue, hand soap, trash liners, paper towels, mop heads, and floor cleaners.

The district has some surplus items on site, but not an excessive number. Use of just-in-time delivery

ensures that ATISD is not spending excessive amounts on ordering surplus supplies.

ADMINISTRATIVE TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES

ATISD uses its shared services agreement with Region 3 to support its administrative operations with a high level of automation.

Teachers have their own computers for administrative functions and all of them complete grading responsibilities using GradeQuick.

At the central office, administrators use the Regional Service Center Computer Cooperative (RSCCC) software, which provides a number of accounting and budget reports. Currently the district is using RSCCC for payroll, finance, budget, fixed assets, food services, and PEIMS functions, including discipline and attendance data. District staff is considering using the requisition module as well. The

district pays \$8,313 per year for RSCCC, including \$4,070 for the student components and \$4,243 for the business modules. Region 3 provides training at no extra cost, as part of the district’s shared services agreement. ATISD also uses other technology resources available from Region 3, including its planning software.

Use of RSCCC software reduces the time district personnel must spend on tasks for payroll, finance, budget, fixed asset, and other functions. This reduces overall costs to ATISD and ensures that the district is using an established module to provide oversight of necessary planning and operational functions.

DETAILED FINDINGS

EXTERNAL AUDIT SERVICES (REC. 18)

ATISD lacks an external auditor rotation policy. It has retained the same audit firm since 1986–87 without issuing a request for proposals (RFP) for audit services, reducing assurance that the audit fees are competitive. The district’s bookkeeper said that the audit firm rotated personnel on the engagement in order to ensure the auditor’s independence.

The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) states in its recommended practice for audit procurement:

...governmental entities should enter into multiyear agreements when obtaining the services of independent auditors. Such agreements allow for greater continuity and help to minimize the potential for disruption in connection with the independent audit. Multiyear agreements can also help to reduce audit costs by allowing auditors to recover certain “start-up” costs over several years, rather than over a single year...

TEA’s Financial Accountability System Resource Guide (FASRG) concurs that an annual RFP is not appropriate and states, “Expenses for administering and preparing the request for qualifications can be substantial.”

Although not required by law, the FASRG states, “A request for a proposal from independent audit firms can enhance the effectiveness of the audit procurement process.” The GFOA also recommends that governmental entities use a competitive process

for the selection of independent auditors on a periodic basis and that the process actively seeks all qualified firms available to perform the annual audit.

As shown in **Exhibit 3-4**, ATISD paid more than each of its peers for external audit services in 2002–03 and 2003–04. The fees paid in each year are for the audit of the preceding year. Fees were significantly higher for all districts in 2002–03 due to the implementation of new auditing and reporting standards and the TEA requirement for the dropout and state compensatory education audits.

Many school districts have established policies for the periodic use of a competitive process for the procurement of external audit services. For example, Hays Consolidated ISD engages its external auditor annually for a maximum of five years. At the end of the five-year period, the district issues an RFP. The process does not preclude the district from re-engaging the prior auditor, but it does provide the district with assurance that audit fees are competitive.

The board should adopt a policy that requires the competitive procurement of external audit services every five years. This will provide continuity of audit services and provide the district with assurance that the fees charged are competitive. The superintendent should use the sample RFP available from TEA and include costs as one of the criteria for evaluating the responses.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION (REC. 19)

ATISD principals do not have electronic access to their school’s budget and expenditure information even though the district’s financial software offers this capacity. The principals rely on monthly reports generated by the bookkeeper. The principals said the reports are timely and useful. However, in order to know what funds they have available at any one time, the principals must ask the bookkeeper. The lack of easy access to daily financial information makes it difficult for the principals to independently manage their budgets.

The central office uses the Regional Service Center Computer Cooperative (RSCCC) software and receives support from Region 3. The software is

**EXHIBIT 3-4
EXTERNAL AUDIT FEES
1999–2000 THROUGH 2003–04**

DISTRICT	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
Austwell-Tivoli	\$4,850	\$4,850	\$4,850	\$12,889	\$8,495
Buena Vista	\$7,362	\$8,081	\$6,150	\$10,810	\$8,150
Matagorda	\$5,879	\$8,273	\$3,670	\$6,500	\$5,300
McMullen County	\$4,950	\$4,950	\$4,950	\$9,900	\$7,050
Pringle-Morse	\$6,410	\$6,200	\$6,200	\$18,250	\$7,500

Source: Texas Education Agency, Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS), 1999–2000 through 2003–04.

capable of generating reports for the general ledger, subsidiary ledgers, and budget-to-actual expenditure reports. The budget-to-actual reports include expenditures, encumbrances, and budget balances. The RSCCC system is capable of providing information for multiple users.

Many school districts have financial information available online to all budget managers and have trained the budget managers to use the system. School district budget managers (including principals) make more well-informed decisions when they have current financial information available at their school or department level. This reduces the need for central administration to produce monthly reports, since school administrators have online access and can print reports if they need them.

ATISD administration should provide the school principals access to financial information through the accounting software. This will allow the principals to independently manage their budgets and reduce the number of requests for information from the bookkeeper.

Adding online access to the district's financial system will cost the district \$110 (\$55 per principal computer). This is a one-time cost.

BUSINESS PROCEDURES MANUAL (REC. 20)

ATISD does not have a comprehensive business procedures manual to provide guidance for district employees or continuity in the event of employee turnover. Although the bookkeeper has software manuals for using the financial system and access to the Financial Accountability System Resource Guide (FASRG), the district lacks a comprehensive business procedures manual to provide guidance to the district's employees.

A comprehensive business procedures manual documents the district's accounting policies and procedures and defines the processes used to create and complete financial transactions. An effective manual describes how tasks should be performed and explains the purpose of procedures as they relate to the internal control structure.

The bookkeeper is solely responsible for creating and completing all financial transactions for the district. If the bookkeeper were unable to perform the duties of the position for a period or if the bookkeeper left the district, ATISD would be in a bind without a procedures manual to assist them in completely business tasks.

The GFOA has issued a statement supporting accounting policies and procedures manuals. GFOA states that accounting manuals should include the

policies and procedures for accounting and other finance related functions, such as accounts payable, payroll, budgeting, investments, cash receipts, and financial reporting.

Many school districts have accounting policy and procedure manuals. These manuals define the authority and responsibility of all employees in financial management. They indicate the positions responsible for specific tasks, those that can authorize transactions, and those responsible for the security of records and assets. Effective accounting manuals are updated annually and whenever a change occurs in the policies or procedures. Updated procedures manuals are a valuable resource in training new employees and providing accountability for the business functions. Region 3 has provided the district with an example business procedures manual that ATISD can tailor to fit its actual practices.

The district should create and adopt a comprehensive business procedures manual based on the manual Region 3 provided. The business procedures manual should include all functions the business office controls or supports, including payroll, accounts payable, cash management, purchasing, tax collections, accounting, and budgeting. When completed, the district should post the manual on its website for easy access by all district personnel.

FRAUD AND THEFT PROTECTION (REC. 21)

ATISD does not bond employees nor does it obtain employee crime insurance on individuals responsible for investments or cash, placing the district at risk of loss. The superintendent is the designated investment officer for the district and the bookkeeper processes investment transactions as needed. The bookkeeper is also the only person with access to the financial accounting system and processes all transactions for the district. The superintendent's secretary receives cash deposits from the elementary and high schools for safekeeping and transfers it to the bank. The high school principal's secretary receives cash from students and teachers throughout the year.

A bond is an insurance contract in which an agency guarantees payment to an employer in the event of unforeseen financial loss through the actions of an employee. There are three basic types of bonds: named employee, position, and blanket. Bonds generally are continuous in that they do not expire on a given date. Employee crime insurance is a form of bond that is renewable annually. These policies expire each year; the district must renew them annually to ensure that no gap in coverage occurs.

The review team found no indication of fraud, theft, or other dishonest acts. However, employee theft can occur over time and can reach enormous levels. While dishonesty is almost never expected, it is a common source of surprise and disappointment. By not insuring itself against employee dishonesty, the district has left itself potentially susceptible to financial loss due to possible acts of its employees.

Many school districts purchase crime insurance or bond specific employees to protect the district from risk of financial loss due to employee acts. The district should bond or purchase employee crime insurance to cover employees that are responsible for investments or handle cash. The superintendent should request quotes for employee crime coverage and select the policy that represents the best value for the district. This will provide the district with protection from losses due to employee acts.

The fiscal impact of this recommendation would be approximately \$140 per year, according to TASB. This cost is based on the district's size and its lack of prior claims.

WORKPLACE SAFETY TRAINING (REC. 22)

ATISD does not provide workplace safety training to employees. The district has not provided training for employees on reducing the risk of job-related injuries or safety in the workplace, nor does it provide annual training to employees about blood-borne pathogens as required by the Texas Department of State Health Services.

Although the district has experienced a minimal number of workers' compensation claims, employees are more likely to injure themselves if they do not receive training in workplace safety. Workplace safety includes accident prevention, proper storage and use of chemicals, appropriate steps to reduce the risk of infection from bodily fluids, response to safety hazards, and avoidance of injury from strenuous physical activities.

The district purchases workers' compensation insurance from TASB, which provides videos, inspections, and training programs to districts that have workers' compensation coverage with them. The superintendent said the district has a number of training videos, but that the district does not use them. Based on the inventory of training videos and materials received from TASB, the district has 35 training manuals, videos, and reports on workplace safety.

Many districts have implemented safety-training programs for employees. These districts provide regular safety programs and training workshops to

ensure the safety of their employees. Many of these have secured reductions in their overall insurance premiums through providing workplace safety training.

ATISD should provide workplace safety training for all district employees. The superintendent should schedule regular safety programs for all employees quarterly. The district can use the training videos and manuals supplied by TASB. The safety programs should include training on blood-borne pathogens annually to comply with state law.

BONDED INDEBTEDNESS (REC. 23)

ATISD has not refunded outstanding bonds for savings in a market where interest rates are lower than those paid on the outstanding bonds. The tax-exempt bond interest rates have been near historic lows several times since 2003. Bonds sold before 2000 are generally at a significantly higher interest rate than the current market. The 1999 bonds had coupon rates of between 4.8 to 6.5 percent. Market rates in August 2005 averaged 4.25 percent.

A refunding is a refinancing of outstanding debt. A refunding may be undertaken to restructure outstanding debt and to provide the issuer with future savings. An advance refunding uses the proceeds from the sale of the refunding bonds to purchase securities that mature in amounts to make the required payments before the call date of the refunded bonds. On the call date, the final securities mature and the refunded bonds are paid in full.

The district had debt service requirements of \$1,574,296 including principal and interest on its Unlimited Tax School Building Bonds – Series 1999 on August 31, 2004. Scheduled payments for principal and interest in 2004–05 total \$105,303. Following the 2004–05 payment ATISD will have an outstanding balance on the remaining principle of \$1,050,000. The bonds mature serially, and the final payment is due February 2019. A refunding can occur when the bonds are callable or in advance of the call date. Although the bonds are not callable until 2009, the district is able to advance refund the bonds.

Many school districts have refunded outstanding bonds during this period of low interest rates. Some of these school districts have saved 10 percent or more of their future payments after issuance costs. For example, Nacogdoches ISD refunded \$5.7 million in outstanding bonds for a gross savings of \$570,940 over the life of the bonds.

The district should refund its outstanding bonds to reduce the Interest and Sinking (I&S) tax rate. The superintendent should contact the district's financial

advisor to begin the process of refunding the district's bonded indebtedness to take advantage of current interest rates.

The estimated savings are conservative using a calculated yield of 5 percent. The bond index yield is at 4.25 percent as of August 2005. Many Texas school districts can negotiate better interest rates than the bond index yield due to the AAA Texas Public School Fund guarantee. The review team calculated the savings by taking the difference between the 5 percent calculated yield and the 4.25 percent bond index yield, which results in a yield index rate of 0.75 percent. Using the yield difference, ATISD should achieve an annual savings of \$7,463 in 2006–07. The actual dollar amount of the savings will decrease over time, due to the longer term of the bond and interest rate increases. The district can use the savings in the debt service fund to reduce the I&S tax rate.

PROCUREMENT PROCESS (REC. 24)

ATISD utilizes an inefficient manual purchase requisition process that is time-consuming and labor-intensive. The purchase requisition process is paper-driven from purchase initiation through the creation of the purchase order.

The school or department staff manually completes the purchase requisition and submits it for internal approval. The purchase requisition is sent to the

superintendent's office, where it is date stamped and checked for the correct budget code. The district's bookkeeper checks for fund availability. If funds are available, the bookkeeper sends the purchase requisition to the superintendent for approval. Once approved, a purchase order is typed up and given to the superintendent for signature. The requestor's order is placed by phone, fax, or mail. The purchase order is then disbursed, sending the original to the vendor, requestor, and bookkeeper.

Automated online purchase order systems expedite the process of requesting and receiving instructional supplies. A review of various ATISD data relating to requisition/purchase orders indicates a wide range in processing time. The review team randomly selected a sample of 15 individual requisitions for detailed review and analysis of processing times. **Exhibit 3-5** illustrates the processing timeline for this sample. As the exhibit shows, the sample had an average processing time of 2.9 calendar days to process a purchase requisition.

The industry standard for processing requisitions in automated purchasing systems is approximately two to three business days. Additionally, an automated purchasing system reduces or eliminates the number of paper purchase requisitions, and users electronically submit their requisitions for approval.

**EXHIBIT 3-5
ATISD PURCHASE ORDER PROCESSING TIME
FOR RANDOMLY SAMPLED ITEMS**

PURCHASE REQUISITION DATE	PURCHASE ORDER NUMBER	PURCHASE ORDER DATE	AMOUNT	DAYS BETWEEN PURCHASE REQUISITION AND PURCHASE ORDER
1/7/2005	33683	1/10/2005	\$110.82	3
10/11/2004	33478	10/18/2004	\$123.76	7
11/18/2004	33583	11/19/2004	\$3,532.13	1
9/2/2004	33339	9/3/2004	\$159.12	1
3/30/2005	33951	3/31/2005	\$168.76	1
3/30/2005	33944	3/31/2005	\$2,308.19	1
2/8/2005	33802	2/8/2005	\$1,241.14	0
10/5/2004	33442	10/7/2004	\$3,092.29	2
2/1/2005	33773	2/2/2005	\$1,250.09	1
3/26/2004	33015	3/30/2004	\$155.60	4
11/13/2003	32695	11/13/2003	\$87.99	0
3/23/2004	32987	3/24/2004	\$181.58	1
10/15/2003	32627	10/20/2003	\$3,790.00	5
4/23/2004	33080	5/5/2004	\$71.99	12
5/13/2004	33130	5/17/2004	\$7,580.00	4
Average Processing Days				2.9

SOURCE: Austwell-Tivoli ISD, purchasing records, May 2005.

Region 3 is currently piloting an automated purchasing system project in Bloomington ISD. This pilot project utilizes an automated purchase requisition system. The program may be available for other users by the fall of 2005. Region 3 will make this software available to member districts it serves at no additional charge.

The district should automate the purchase order process. ATISD should contact Region 3 to see if this program is available to them. An automated purchase order process is more efficient and provides greater accountability than a manual process.

LONG-RANGE TECHNOLOGY PLAN (REC. 25)

ATISD annually updates its technology plan but does not have a long-range plan to guide the district’s growth and development in technology.

The district has made it a priority to provide its students with technology tools to enhance learning. One of its 2004–05 goals is to “use technology as a tool to make learning more relevant for everyone.” Teachers are using technology to teach students at every grade level.

A technology planning committee that included the superintendent, principals, technology coordinator,

several teachers, three parents, a business representative, and a community representative developed ATISD’s 2005–06 *Technology Plan*. The committee developed the plan based on needs assessments that included student and teacher surveys. Teachers also completed the Texas STaR Chart, a TEA initiative to assist teachers in assessing and monitoring their progress toward integrating technology into the classroom.

The district’s Technology Plan outlines a number of technology needs, as shown in **Exhibit 3-6**.

However, the board did not fund all of the needs identified in the Technology Plan for 2005–06. Each year, the technology coordinator works with whatever is available in the district budget to try to meet the district’s technology needs. In some years, the district has spent almost nothing on technology. According to the coordinator, the summer of 2004 was the first year since 2001–02 that the district spent funds on technology.

Overall, the district lacks a well-developed plan to guide its technology spending. For example, in the summer of 2004, the district received more technology funds from E-Rate than it expected. The E-Rate is the federal discount available to schools and libraries for the acquisition of telecommunication services. Discounts range from 20 to 90 percent and are based on economic

**EXHIBIT 3-6
IDENTIFIED ATISD TECHNOLOGY NEEDS
2005–06**

AREA	NEEDS
Teaching and Learning	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase integration of technology into curriculum. 2. Provide adequate software and hardware to insure district is meeting all requirements of TEKS, including email, keyboarding, word processing, spreadsheets, and databases. 3. More access to computer peripherals such as digital cameras, projectors, and electronic microscopes.
Educator Preparedness	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish an online technology help center. 2. Create online courses to assist teachers in learning new technology at their own pace. 3. Insure that all teachers have met the SBEC standards for Technology Applications. 4. Provide training on creating web pages, presentation software, and handheld technology to help teachers integrate technology into all areas of instruction.
Administration and Support	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide technical assistance to teacher for designing and implementing technology activities into the classroom. 2. Increase the amount of time technology staff can spend on assisting teachers in integrating technology. 3. Make technology director a full-time position. 4. Hire a library media specialist to help in technology integration training.
Infrastructure for Technology	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improve the wireless LAN in the high school to eliminate dead spots and provide service to the gymnasium and cafeteria. 2. Establish a five-year replacement cycle for remaining computers. 3. Purchase laptop computers and projectors for all classrooms. 4. Upgrade all NT 4 servers within one year.

SOURCE: Austwell-Tivoli ISD, *Technology Plan*, 2005–06.

disadvantage and geographic location. ATISD chose to spend the unexpected funds on handheld computers for all teachers and students in the high school. Introducing handheld computing into the classroom is innovative. However, the district did not make this purchase as part of a long-range technology plan, and the implementation has been rocky. Some teachers have not embraced the technology, and other teachers are still attempting to find a use for the handheld computers.

In addition, the district does not have a replacement policy for its technology equipment. The technology coordinator tries to secure enough funding each year to maintain a five-year replacement cycle, but there is no district policy to support this effort. As a result, some of the district hardware is older than five years. Some computers still have Windows 95, which cannot be upgraded to the newer Windows XP software.

The International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE), an internationally recognized non-profit organization dedicated to advancing the effective use of technology in K–12 education, publishes a Technology Support Index rubric to assist school districts in determining their needs in a variety of technology support areas. In the Index, school districts fall into one of four categories for various areas of technology usage and support. Those categories are:

- emergent (beginning support capability);
- islands (isolated areas of effective support);
- integrated (very good support provided in most areas); and
- exemplary (excellent support in most areas).

Exhibit 3-7 shows the ISTE standards for equipment replacement cycles. Based on this standard, ATISD is emergent, because it has no formal replacement policy.

The National Center for Educational Statistics released the National Education Technology Plan in January 2005. This plan outlines seven action steps districts should take to prepare today’s students for

the technology challenges of tomorrow. These action steps are:

1. Strengthen Leadership
2. Consider Innovative Budgeting
3. Improve Teacher Training
4. Support E-Learning and Virtual Schools
5. Encourage Broadband Access
6. Move Toward Digital Content
7. Integrate Data Systems

Districts that utilize this plan use all of these steps and are supported and informed by a district technology plan that is long-range and strategic in nature.

The district should develop a long-range technology plan as part of an overall district strategic plan. This long-range plan should include equipment replacement, policies, and innovative funding ideas to support the district’s ongoing technology expenditures.

TECHNOLOGY TRAINING FOR TEACHERS (REC. 26)

ATISD teachers do not have sufficient training and support to fully integrate technology into the curriculum.

Both the district’s *Technology Plan* and a survey of elementary teachers indicate that teachers want more training in technology integration.

In the summer of 2004, the ATISD technology coordinator provided technology training on four different days. He provided training in:

- Presentations in the Classroom
- Spreadsheets in the Classroom
- Basic Handheld Computer Operations
- Handheld Computers in the Classroom

District staff believes the introduction of handheld computers for all students has had only limited success due to the lack of training for teachers.

**EXHIBIT 3-7
INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR TECHNOLOGY IN EDUCATION (ISTE)
TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT INDEX FOR TECHNICIAN STAFFING**

INDEX AREA	SCHOOL DIVISION STAGE OF TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT			
	EMERGENT	ISLANDS	INTEGRATED	EXEMPLARY
Cycling of Equipment	No replacement cycle	Equipment is placed on a replacement cycle greater than 5 years.	Equipment is placed on a 4–5-year replacement cycle.	Equipment is placed on a 3-year replacement cycle.

SOURCE: International Society for Technology in Education, www.iste.org, March 2005.

School administrators, teachers, and the technology coordinator noted that the technology coordinator has had limited time to maintain computer hardware or train teachers in the use of available software. As a result, some teachers have been reluctant to attempt new forms of technology integration in the classroom.

The ISTE Technology Support Index identifies exemplary districts as having these staff development practices:

- A comprehensive staff development program is in place that touches all staff. The program is progressive in nature and balances incentive, accountability, and diverse learning opportunities.
- Online training opportunities are provided for staff both onsite and remotely and represent a diversity of skill sets.
- Expectations for all staff are clearly articulated and are broad in scope. Work functions include performance expectations and are part of the organizational culture.
- Technical staff receives ample training as a normal part of their employment, including training towards certification.
- The professional development program includes basic troubleshooting, used as a first line of defense in conjunction with technical support.

Based on the ISTE standards, ATISD does not meet the requirements for having exemplary staff development in technology integration. The district does not have a comprehensive approach to staff development in the area of technology, online training opportunities do not exist, it has not clearly articulated expectations for staff, and basic troubleshooting is not part of the professional development program.

ATISD should provide more training and support for teachers in integrating technology into the curriculum and classroom. Because the district created a full-time technology coordinator position, beginning in August 2005, there will be no fiscal impact to this recommendation. Ensuring that teachers are successfully integrating technology into the classroom will be one of the full-time coordinator’s regular responsibilities.

For background information on Financial Management and Technology see p. 73 in the general information section of the appendices.

FISCAL IMPACT

RECOMMENDATIONS		2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) OR SAVINGS	ONE-TIME (COSTS) OR SAVINGS
CHAPTER 3: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY								
18.	Adopt a policy for the periodic competitive procurement of external audit services.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
19.	Provide the school principals access to financial information through accounting software.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$110)
20.	Create and adopt a comprehensive business procedures manual.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
21.	Bond employees or purchase employee crime insurance to cover employees that are responsible for investments or handle cash.	(\$140)	(\$140)	(\$140)	(\$140)	(\$140)	(\$700)	\$0
22.	Provide workplace safety training for all district employees.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

FISCAL IMPACT (CONTINUED)

RECOMMENDATIONS		2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) OR SAVINGS	ONE- TIME (COSTS) OR SAVINGS
CHAPTER 3: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY								
23.	Refund outstanding bonds to lower the debt service tax rate.	\$0	\$7,463	\$7,050	\$6,600	\$6,150	\$27,263	\$0
24.	Automate the purchase order process.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
25.	Develop a long-range technology plan.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
26.	Provide additional training and support to teachers in integrating technology into the curriculum and classroom.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Totals-Chapter 3		(\$140)	\$7,323	\$6,910	\$6,460	\$6,010	\$26,563	(\$110)



Chapter 4

Support Services

CHAPTER 4

SUPPORT SERVICES

This chapter covers the district's support services including facilities, food service, transportation, and safety and security. ATISD's facilities include an elementary school, a secondary school, a central office, two portable buildings that serve as library and music/health/parent involvement rooms, a former metal shop now serving the theater arts class, a weight room located in a free-standing building, a bus barn, and a private residence rented to the elementary principal. The newest facility, the elementary school, was built in 2001, while the oldest facility, the high school, was built in 1954.

The district's food services operation consists of a cook and an assistant cook, supported by three maintenance staff, and two school secretaries. They provide daily breakfast and lunch to all district students in one shared cafeteria. In 2003–04, the district served 9,509 breakfast and 20,520 lunch meals. Nearly two-thirds of ATISD students, 64 percent, are eligible for free or reduced-price meals. The district averages meal participation rates of 27 percent for breakfast and 68 percent for lunch. The district operates an open campus policy for lunch.

ATISD participates in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), and the School Breakfast Program (SBP). Districts that participate in the federal lunch program receive cash subsidies and donated commodities from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for each eligible meal they serve. In return, the district must serve its students meals that meet federal guidelines for nutritional value and offer free or reduced-price meals to eligible students. Total revenues in 2003–04 were \$58,849, not including an in-district operating transfer from the General Fund of \$23,328 to cover total expenditures of \$82,177.

The district's transportation service has a fleet of four school buses, two sport utility vehicles, and one van available for student transportation. ATISD provides transportation services to students in accordance with the Texas Education Code (TEC), which authorizes but does not require Texas school districts to provide transportation for students between home and school, from school to career and technology training locations, and for extracurricular activities. For 2004–05, ATISD operated two routes per day, each morning and afternoon, with each bus carrying an average daily ridership of 33 students to school and home on regular runs. The district does not have any routes designated as hazardous and does not provide any transportation to students living within two miles of school. ATISD operates numerous additional bus trips for athletic,

educational, and extracurricular programs. It does not operate special education routes.

ATISD buses operate on a schedule to support bell times. Elementary (K–6) begins at 7:50AM, and the high school at 7:55AM. In the afternoon, the elementary school ends at 2:55PM, and the high school at 3:25PM. Multiple runs are not necessary.

In its safety and security function, the district has a Code of Conduct that establishes standards for student behavior and complies with provisions stated in Chapter 37 of the Texas Education Code (TEC). Beginning in 1999–2000, TEC §11.253 requires each school district to report annually the number, rate, and type of violent and criminal incidents at each school. Additionally, districts must include violence prevention and intervention components in their annual campus improvement plans.

The district does not employ security guards or have a communication system in place. It contacts the local county law enforcement agency when intervention is necessary.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ATISD has an effective process for minimizing food waste by obtaining a likely lunch count with student attendance each morning.
- The district utilizes menus and training provided through Region 3 to serve its students healthy meals containing a minimum of sugar, in compliance with Texas Department of Agriculture guidelines.
- ATISD provides efficient student transportation by regularly reviewing its routes for possible improvements and paying existing staff to serve as bus drivers.
- ATISD has used counseling to significantly reduce its numbers of discipline incidents.

FINDINGS

- ATISD does not have a formal long-range facilities and equipment replacement plan to ensure adequate resources for timely maintenance.
- ATISD does not monitor and staff its food services operation according to Meals Per Labor Hour (MPLH) industry standards.
- ATISD does not provide its custodial staff with sufficient training.
- ATISD does not have an efficient workload structure for custodial staff. The custodial staff

consistently works overtime due to assignments in the cafeteria.

- ATISD does not have a policy in place that secures the keys to the district's buses during the school day.
- ATISD lacks a spare bus policy and maintains more spare buses than it needs.
- ATISD has a board-approved policy requiring visitors to check in with the school administrative office, but does not strictly enforce a visitor sign-in and badge policy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Recommendation 27 (p. 54): Develop a long-range facilities plan as part of an overall strategic plan to help the district prioritize its facilities spending.** Given the district's small size and limited financial resources, it should include as part of this plan the replacement of major equipment such as cafeteria and maintenance equipment.
- **Recommendation 28 (p. 56): Monitor Meals Per Labor Hour and staff Food Services accordingly.** The district first should eliminate the daily work of the district's two full-time custodians in the cafeteria and rely on the part-time custodian and two cafeteria staff to complete dishwashing and other cleaning activities. Then, the district can establish additional goals to further improve cafeteria productivity over time.
- **Recommendation 29 (p. 57): Provide regular annual training for custodial staff.** As with all employee groups, the custodial staff benefits from regular training, both to learn new information and to refresh previous training.
- **Recommendation 30 (p. 58): Develop an efficient workload structure for custodians and eliminate overtime for full-time custodians.** The district can eliminate custodial overtime by making the food service staff responsible for washing dishes during the lunch period instead of having the full-time custodians complete this task. This will save custodians 1.5 hours per day, enabling them to eliminate one hour from the scheduled workday. They could spend the additional half hour previously spent in the cafeteria on other cleaning duties.
- **Recommendation 31 (p. 58): Develop and implement a policy to secure the bus keys.** District administrators should select a place to keep the bus keys secure and ensure that bus drivers do not leave the keys in the buses while

the buses are not in use. In this way, the district ensures that the buses are safe from unauthorized use.

- **Recommendation 32 (p. 59): Develop and implement a spare bus policy.** The district should base the policy on the number of spare buses that it would need to support the bus fleet at any given time. Resulting from this policy, the district should maintain one spare bus and sell one bus. It should sell one of the four buses in its fleet and maintain one of the remaining three buses as a spare.
- **Recommendation 33 (p. 59): Enforce the visitor sign-in policy and provide visitors with badges.** ATISD should require all visitors to sign in at the front office of either the elementary school or high school and to wear an identifying badge while on campus. By enforcing the visitor sign-in policy, the district ensures that it is aware of who is in the schools at all times and increases security.

DETAILED ACCOMPLISHMENTS

PRELIMINARY LUNCH COUNT

ATISD has an effective process for minimizing food waste by obtaining a likely lunch count with student attendance each morning.

Each morning during the attendance process, district staff collects a count of the number of students who plan to buy lunch that day. Each ATISD teacher counts attendance in the first period of the day. They also ask students whether they plan to purchase or receive lunch from the school cafeteria. The two school secretaries tally the lunch count and provide it to the district cook in time to prepare for lunch. The cook then prepares an additional 10 meals. The additional meals are for students who want seconds, high school students who plan to eat off-campus but then change their minds, or for parents, and visitors.

During the on-site review, the review team observed two days' of lunches. There was minimal overproduction and little wasted food. This process enables the cook to have a reasonably accurate count of the lunch meals to prepare and to minimize food waste through overproduction.

CHILD NUTRITION MENUS

The district utilizes menus and training provided through Region 3 to serve its students healthy meals containing a minimum of sugar that are in compliance with Texas Department of Agriculture guidelines.

The Texas Public School Nutrition Policy went into effect August 1, 2004. The policy limits the number

of grams of fat and sugar students may have each week and requires schools to phase out deep fat frying in food preparation. In addition, portion sizes for food items such as chips, cookies, bakery items, and frozen desserts are limited.

The district cook worked with Region 3 personnel to develop healthy menus. Region 3 personnel supplied different menus and ATISD cooks attended regional training on menu planning. ATISD also cycles its menus to provide some variety in the healthy choices.

The review team analyzed several weeks’ of school menus. The cafeteria rarely offers treats such as cookies and ice cream to students. Instead, the district generally offers a fruit choice.

Although the ATISD kitchen has a fryer, the cooks no longer use it. The cooks hope to soon move the fryer out of the kitchen to make room for another oven or a warming unit.

In observing lunch periods during the on-site review, the review team found a high degree of student acceptance of even such items as broccoli with cheese. The review team conducted an informal trash can audit and observed that students consumed nearly all the food they took.

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

ATISD provides efficient student transportation by regularly reviewing its routes for possible improvements and paying existing staff to serve as bus drivers.

Exhibit 4-1 shows the amounts ATISD and the peer districts spent on transportation in 2003–04, as reported through the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS). ATISD spent much less than the peer average on transportation as a percentage of its total budget. At 1.6 percent of its budget, ATISD’s spending on transportation was also more than one percentage point below the state average.

**EXHIBIT 4-1
DISTRICT SPENDING ON TRANSPORTATION
ATISD, PEER DISTRICTS, AND STATE
2003–04**

DISTRICT	TOTAL SPENT ON TRANSPORTATION	PERCENT OF DISTRICT BUDGET
Austwell-Tivoli	\$31,936	1.6%
Buena Vista	\$41,711	2.6%
Matagorda	\$29,823	2.3%
McMullen County	\$130,647	5.4%
Pringle-Morse	\$91,077	6.7%
Peer District Average	\$73,315	4.3%
Statewide	\$819,367	2.7%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS), Actual All Funds, 2003–04.

Exhibit 4-2 shows the district’s transportation expenditures for the last three years by category. Although the district has increased salaries over the past three years, purchased a new bus that increased depreciation expenses, and increased its total route-related mileage, overall it has managed to decrease its cost per mile.

Exhibit 4-3 compares the 2003–04 cost efficiency as measured by the cost per mile for ATISD and its peers. As the exhibit shows, ATISD has a lower cost per mile, indicating a higher level of cost efficiency, than two of its peers.

The superintendent reviews routes and ridership annually. The superintendent is responsible for reviewing route efficiency and determining whether route design is optimal. He rides each route at the beginning of each school year and considers overall route mileage, along with the addition of stops for new students as well as the removal of stops for students who no longer attend school or no longer desire to ride the bus.

The district saves money both by utilizing existing employees to drive regular and extracurricular routes and by paying employees on a per trip basis rather than hourly basis. The district’s regular route drivers are the maintenance director and two teachers. The maintenance director drives a route each morning and afternoon. One teacher drives only a morning route, and the other drives only an afternoon route. By utilizing existing employees, the district does not have to seek out part-time or full-time bus drivers. Part-time bus driver positions typically have high turnover, because employees do not qualify for benefits they desire and often need full-time employment. Hiring full-time drivers would require the district to pay benefits. In addition, the district pays each employee \$16 per route driven, regardless of the length of the route or the employee’s hourly rate in their full-time position. With the current three regular route drivers, the district is saving money by paying each \$16 for routes that are typically slightly

EXHIBIT 4-2
ATISD TRANSPORTATION EXPENDITURES BY CATEGORY
2001-02 THROUGH 2003-04

CATEGORY	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	PERCENT CHANGE, 2001-02 THROUGH 2003-04
Salaries	\$10,225	\$11,253	\$12,999	27%
Purchased and Contracted Services	\$7,482	\$3,485	\$4,668	(38%)
Supplies	\$9,449	\$7,298	\$8,222	(13%)
Depreciation/Other Operating	\$5,317	\$8,975	\$18,568	249%
Debt Service	\$0	\$0	\$0	NA
Capital Outlay	\$14,244	\$0	\$0	(100%)
Total Expenses	\$46,717	\$31,011	\$44,457	(5%)
Total Route-Related Mileage	24,336	24,300	26,672	10%
Total Extracurricular/Co-curricular	24,820	24,500	23,927	(4%)
Cost per Mile	\$0.95	\$0.64	\$0.88	(7%)

NOTE: The 2003-04 total does not match the actual expenditures of the previous exhibit because depreciation is not rolled up into the actual expenditures but is shown here as an item.

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, ATISD Transportation Operations Cost and Mileage reports, 2001-02 through 2003-04.

EXHIBIT 4-3
DISTRICT COST EFFICIENCY
ATISD AND PEER DISTRICTS
2003-04

DISTRICT	COST PER MILE
Austwell-Tivoli	\$0.88
Buena Vista	\$0.54
Matagorda	\$4.00
McMullen County	\$1.09

NOTE: Data for Pringle-Morse ISD is not available due to a data submission error to the Texas Education Agency, PEIMS.

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, ATISD Transportation Operations Cost and Mileage reports, 2003-04.

more than one hour in length. PEIMS appropriately accounts for and accurately records the amounts paid to salaried employees who also drive a bus route.

COUNSELING TO REDUCE STUDENT INCIDENTS

ATISD has used counseling to significantly reduce its numbers of discipline incidents. It reduced the number of discipline incidents by 35 percent from 2001-02 to 2003-04. Principals attributed the decline to their working more closely with the small number of students who cause the discipline incidents. They have conducted one-on-one counseling sessions with troubled students and held conferences with parents. Both principals also make a point of being visible on campus to prevent trouble before it starts.

District and school administrators said that most student discipline incidents are relatively minor. Of the 19 violations in 2003-04, 18 were violations of the student code of conduct; the other was a criminal mischief incident. For 10 of the code of conduct violations, students received in-school suspension.

For the remaining nine incidents, students received out-of-school suspension.

Exhibit 4-4 compares the number of discipline incidents for ATISD and its peer districts over the past three years. ATISD student incidents decreased from 2001-02 to 2003-04, while they increased at three of the four peer districts.

The principals have succeeded in significantly reducing the number of discipline incidents by paying particular attention to this area over the past few years.

EXHIBIT 4-4
DISCIPLINE INCIDENT STATISTICS
ATISD AND PEERS
2003-04

DISTRICT	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
Austwell-Tivoli	29	33	19
Buena Vista	5	6	12
Matagorda	*	34	35
McMullen County	5	18	*
Pringle-Morse	15	8	*
Peer Average	6	17	19

* Numbers less than five have not been cited due to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) 34CFR Part 99.1 and Texas Education Agency Procedures OP 10-03.

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS data, 2001-02 through 2003-04.

DETAILED FINDINGS

FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT PLANNING (REC. 27)

The district does not have a formal long-range facilities and equipment replacement plan to ensure adequate resources for timely maintenance.

Exhibit 4-5 lists the district’s current facilities. ATISD’s most recent construction was its new elementary school completed within budget in 2001. Other than the elementary school, each of the district’s facilities is at least 22 years old. Its largest facility, the high school, is 51 years old.

The only major renovations the district has completed on these facilities were re-roofing the residential house in 1997 and re-roofing the high school in 1998.

District and school administrators mentioned a number of unresolved facility issues including the following:

- The elementary school recently had a bat infestation under its roofline that it may not yet have resolved.
- The district no longer uses its track for meets because it is in such disrepair.
- ATISD no longer uses the track house and adjacent bleachers, and the district is considering donating the bleachers to the local area wildlife refuge.
- The district plans to install air conditioning in the gymnasium, both to make it more comfortable during games and to keep the gym floor from sweating, which poses a safety hazard for players during games and students during physical education classes.
- The district replaced a portion of the floor in the gymnasium in June 1998 but had to patch one section in August 2003 due to rot caused by a lack of air flow underneath. The district installed

air vents during the 2003 work; however, the repaired spot is now buckling and needs repairing again.

- The superintendent would like to convert the old metal shop into an area for theater classes or a multipurpose area, but it may be cheaper to build new than to renovate.
- There is no direct sidewalk for elementary students to use when walking from the classroom areas of the schools to the cafeteria.
- The elementary students have no covered area in which to play during rainy weather, other than the gym, if it is available.

In the area of major equipment, district staff raised a number of concerns that may soon require capital expenditures.

- One of the cafeteria refrigerators is now on its second compressor.
- Because of the state-required menu changes, the cafeteria staff would like to sell the fryer they no longer use and put a warmer or convection oven in its place.
- None of the staff knows how old the cafeteria dishwasher is, and it has broken down several times in recent years.
- The cafeteria could effectively use additional freezer space, especially when the USDA delivers commodities.

Because the district does not have a long-range facilities plan, it does not have a process for prioritizing these competing facilities needs and

**EXHIBIT 4-5
ATISD FACILITIES INVENTORY
2004–05**

FACILITY	YEAR OF ORIGINAL CONSTRUCTION	SQUARE FOOTAGE
High School	1954	27,120
Elementary School	2001	14,280
Library	1975	2,000
Central Office (previously a home economics suite of classrooms)	1966	6,076
Theater Room (previously a metal shop)	1983	4,800
Weight Room	1964	2,400
Music/Health/Parent Involvement Portable	1969	768
Track House (not in use)	1979	1,080
Bus Garage	1964	4,000
Equipment Storage	1970	864
Residential House (rented by elementary principal)	1959	1,550
TOTAL		64,938

SOURCE: Austwell-Tivoli ISD, Superintendent’s office, May 2005.

wants. In addition, ATISD does not have a working plan to guide its search for potential additional funding sources, such as grants or business partners to help with facility needs.

The Texas Education Code states:

School districts are encouraged to formulate a long-range facilities plan prior to making major capital investments. When formulating a plan, a school district's process should allow for input from teachers, students, parents, taxpayers, and other interested parties that reside within the school district. Major considerations should include: (A) a description of the current and future instructional program and instructional delivery issues; (B) the age, condition, and educational appropriateness of all buildings on the campus (in district), considering condition of all components and systems as well as design flexibility, including an estimate of cost to replace or refurbish and appropriate recommendations; (C) verification of the suitability of school site(s) for the intended use, considering size, shape, useable land, suitability for the planned improvements, and adequate vehicular and pedestrian access, queuing, parking, playgrounds and fields, etc.; and (D) a time-line and a series of recommendations to modify or supplement existing facilities to support the district's instructional program.

The Council of Educational Facility Planners International identifies the following nine steps in an effective facilities master planning process:

1. Establish an organization and specify the roles and responsibilities.
2. Collect data about such factors as enrollments, facilities, community expectations, and the educational program.
3. Analyze the collected data and identify trends, directions, and goals.
4. Develop alternative ways of achieving the ends identified by analysis of collected data.
5. Assess the feasibility of each identified alternative.
6. Select the preferred or "best" alternative(s).
7. Develop a facilities master plan to achieve the chosen alternative(s).
8. Implement the plan, provide the required facilities, and put the developed facilities into use.
9. Evaluate the completed facilities and initiation update of the facilities master plan.

The National Clearinghouse for Educational Facilities publishes a number of guides to help school districts effectively plan their facilities. One

such guide is the book *Schools as Centers of Community: A Citizen's Guide for Planning and Design*.

The district should develop a long-range facilities plan as part of a strategic plan to help it prioritize its facilities spending. Given the district's small size and limited financial resources, it should include as part of this plan the replacement of major equipment such as cafeteria and maintenance equipment.

STAFF HOURS DEVOTED TO MEAL PREPARATION (REC. 28)

ATISD does not monitor and staff its food services operation according to Meals Per Labor Hour (MPLH) industry standards. District staff devotes 21 total labor hours per day preparing breakfast and lunch, which is inefficient compared to national standards for productivity.

The district employs two full-time cooks to prepare breakfast and lunch. Both work the same schedule, 6:00AM to 2:00PM, with half an hour for lunch, for a total of eight hours each per day. Primarily, the district prepares meals using a conventional system, beginning with raw ingredients and with little dependence on convenience foods other than delivered baked goods.

In addition to the cooks, each of the school secretaries works in the lunch room for half an hour each day, for a total of one labor hour, checking off rosters of students who select a reimbursable lunch and collecting money from students and adults. The district's two full-time custodians spend 1.5 hours each day, for a total of three labor hours, assisting in dishwashing and cafeteria clean-up after the second lunch period. The district's part-time custodian works two hours per day assisting in the cafeteria. In total, the district staff spends 21 hours per day supporting the breakfast and lunch programs.

The industry standard for assessing cafeteria productivity is the Meals Per Labor Hour (MPLH). To calculate MPLH, divide the number of meal equivalents served by the total number of labor hours required to produce those meals. One lunch meal equals one meal equivalent. Breakfast meals typically require less preparation. The recommended conversion factor considers three breakfast meals equal to one meal equivalent. A district that serves one breakfast and one lunch to one student has served 1.33 meal equivalents to that student.

Exhibit 4-6 outlines the MPLH industry standards used to evaluate staff productivity. If the MPLH rate is lower than the recommended rate, either the number of meals served is low or the number of hours worked is high. The number of hours worked is a function of two variables: the number of staff

**EXHIBIT 4-6
INDUSTRY STANDARD
RECOMMENDED MEALS PER LABOR
HOUR FOR CONVENTIONAL SYSTEM
2004–05**

NUMBER OF MEAL EQUIVALENTS	LOW PRODUCTIVITY	HIGH PRODUCTIVITY
Up to 100	8	10
101 – 150	9	11
151 – 200	10-11	12
201 – 250	12	14
251 – 300	13	15

SOURCE: Cost Control for Food Services, Third Edition, July 2000.

employed and the hours worked per worker. For districts with an MPLH below industry standards, the food service operation would have to either increase the number of meals served or reduce the number of labor hours in order to achieve the recommended MPLH.

Currently, considering all of the various ATISD staff involved in the daily cafeteria operation, the district spends 21 hours each day. Together they produce, serve, and clean for an average of 114 lunches and 53 breakfasts per day. Counting every three breakfasts as one meal, this translates to an average of 132 meal equivalents per day. This equates to an MPLH of 6.3, below industry standard recommendations. **Exhibit 4-7** provides ATISD cafeteria productivity figures for 2003–04.

The industry standard for the type of cooking system ATISD uses is between nine and 11 meals per labor hour. With a current MPLH of 6.3, the district is below industry standards.

The district should monitor MPLH and improve its cafeteria productivity by assigning staff accordingly.

**EXHIBIT 4-7
ATISD CAFETERIA PRODUCTIVITY
2003–04**

MONTH	NUMBER OF LUNCH MEALS SERVED	NUMBER OF BREAKFAST MEALS SERVED	MEAL EQUIVALENTS ¹	NUMBER OF SCHOOL DAYS	LABOR HOURS	MPLH ²
August 2003	1,165	452	1,316	10	210	6.3
September 2003	2,519	1,089	2,882	20	420	6.9
October 2003	2,689	1,241	3,103	23	483	6.4
November 2003	1,826	1,004	2,161	16	336	6.4
December 2003	1,658	750	1,908	14	294	6.5
January 2004	2,268	1,039	2,614	20	420	6.2
February 2004	2,311	1,056	2,663	20	420	6.3
March 2004	2,017	999	2,350	18	378	6.2
April 2004	2,119	957	2,438	20	420	5.8
May 2004	1,948	922	2,255	19	399	5.7
Total	20,520	9,509	23,690	180	3,780	6.3

¹ Number of lunch meals + (number of breakfast meals / 3).

² Meal Per Labor Hour.

SOURCE: Texas Department of Agriculture, April 2005.

The district first should eliminate the daily work of the district’s two full-time custodians in the cafeteria and rely on the part-time custodian and two cafeteria staff to complete dishwashing and other cafeteria-related activities. This would improve ATISD’s MPLH figure to approximately 8.2. Then the district can establish additional goals to further improve cafeteria productivity over time.

There is no fiscal impact associated with this recommendation. Savings from this area are detailed elsewhere in this chapter.

CUSTODIAL TRAINING (REC. 29)

ATISD does not provide its custodial staff with sufficient training. As a result, custodial staff are concerned that they do not have the knowledge to properly clean and maintain district facilities.

The district has two full-time custodians and a part-time custodian. One of the two full-time custodians has worked for the district for almost 20 years; the other has three years as a full-time custodian with the district. Neither has attended any formal custodial training in areas such as Materials Safety Data Sheets (MSDS), safety, safe lifting, air quality control, and chemical storage. The only workshop training the two full-time custodians attended in 2004–05 was hosted by a vendor selling products and machines.

The custodians expressed concerns over whether they are adequately cleaning and following the best cleaning procedures. One expressed concern because she works in the kitchen at lunchtime and is sometimes called away to deal with issues in lavatories and then returns to the kitchen. Although she is diligent about washing her hands, she remains concerned with whether she is doing everything possible to prevent food contamination. Custodians also said that they feel inadequately trained in the

areas of safe lifting, properly using MSDS, chemical handling, air quality control, and workplace safety. By not providing for training in these areas, the district places itself at risk of accidents or improper cleaning that could cause injury.

In the Williamsburg-Jamestown City County (WJCC) school division in Virginia, the facilities maintenance department has developed an exemplary custodial manual that forms the basis for its in-house training program. The *WJCC Public Schools Supervisor Manual: Guidelines for Managing Custodial Operations* manual is comprehensive. WJCC uses it regularly in in-house training programs. In addition to expected topics such as safety, evaluation review process, overtime policy, time cards, and leave reporting, the manual contains chapters on:

- effective leadership;
- WJCC sanitation standards;
- sample pictures of acceptable and unacceptable cleaning results;
- custodial cleaning frequencies;
- custodial staffing guidelines; and
- cleaning procedures.

This manual and the regular training conducted from it serve as the basis of a highly regarded and exemplary custodial operation at WJCC.

Neither Region 3 nor Regional Education Service Center IV (Region 4) currently provides structured training for custodians. Region 4 develops and provides such training at the request of specific districts. Region 4 has provided extensive training for maintenance and custodial supervisors for several dozen districts.

ATISD should provide regular annual training of its custodial staff, to keep them informed of new information, cleaning techniques, and new and revised standards, and to refresh previous training. The superintendent should meet with the custodians and the director of maintenance to prioritize the training areas of greatest need. He should then seek to secure low-cost or no-cost training videos and manuals, from Region 3, Region 4, or custodial vendors. If these are not sufficient, the superintendent should contact Region 4 to request more specialized training.

CUSTODIAL STAFFING (REC. 30)

ATISD does not have an efficient workload structure for custodial staff. The custodial staff consistently works overtime due to assignments in the cafeteria. The two full-time ATISD custodians assist with

cafeteria operations in addition to cleaning. As a result, they regularly work overtime, resulting in an added expense to the district.

Both full-time custodians work from 7:00AM to 4:30PM, with a half-hour lunch break. Even without any unexpected overtime, these custodians work nine hours per day, resulting in one hour of overtime each per day. Based on the custodians' current hourly salaries, the district spent \$4,809 in 2004–05 in overtime payments for 340 planned overtime hours. The estimated savings for 2005–06 have been prorated by 6 months for a savings \$2,405.

As part of their regular duties, the custodians assist in the cafeteria during the lunch periods. They both work in the cafeteria from 11:00AM to 12:30PM, washing dishes and then cleaning the cafeteria. Another part-time custodian works from 11:00AM to 2:30PM, also assisting in the cafeteria during lunch periods for two hours. This part-time custodian is a retired district employee who only works on days when school is in session. During the summer, the two full-time custodians work 40-hour weeks and perform deep cleaning, including shampooing carpets, stripping floors, and sometimes painting. They do not typically work overtime in the summer.

The district should develop an efficient work load structure for custodians and eliminate overtime for full-time custodians. One way to do this is to eliminate the custodians' dishwashing duties during the lunch period. This will save custodians 1.5 hours per day, enabling them to eliminate one overtime hour from the scheduled workday. They could spend the additional half hour previously spent in the cafeteria on other cleaning duties. The savings to the district from eliminating custodial overtime would be \$4,809 per year beginning in 2006–07. Savings for 2005–06 were prorated by six months.

BUS SECURITY (REC. 31)

ATISD does not have a policy in place that secures the keys to the district's buses during the school day. The ATISD staff customarily leaves the keys in the ignition of the buses during the day, placing the district at risk of theft and potentially liable for accidents or injury.

The bus drivers leave the keys in the unlocked buses to make access convenient for the different drivers on each route. The maintenance director drives one route in the morning and another in the afternoon. One teacher only drives the second morning route. Another teacher only drives the second afternoon route. Rather than coordinate the handing off of keys from one driver to the other, district staff leave the keys in the buses.

Because buses are easily accessible by students and the public, this practice could result in unauthorized use. The bus drivers park the buses during the day in a fairly remote corner of the campus. Someone could steal a bus and be gone for hours before the staff notices it is missing.

Where feasible, school districts must seek to reduce risk to property and minimize liability. Locking vehicles and securing keys when the vehicles are not in use reduces the risk anyone will steal those vehicles.

District administrators should develop and implement a policy to secure the bus keys. The superintendent should designate a location in the front office of the high school or in the central office to drop off and retrieve bus keys as needed. Alternatively, the district could secure the keys in the bus garage.

TRANSPORTATION FLEET (REC. 32)

ATISD lacks a spare bus policy and is maintaining more spare buses than it needs.

ATISD has an active fleet of four buses, two sports utility vehicles, a van, and one truck (**Exhibit 4-8**). The fleet has an average mileage of 88,491. The district replaced one bus in the last three years, and it requires two buses for existing daily regular transportation routes. ATISD uses the third bus as a spare, while the fourth bus supplies a source of spare parts or serves as an additional spare.

Districts typically use 10 to 12 years as the expected life span of a bus, although mileage, level of maintenance upkeep, and engine condition can greatly affect these figures. Using this measure, the district has one bus, the 1993, that exceeds these parameters.

The generally accepted range for school bus fleet spares is 10 to 20 percent of the regularly scheduled peak bus usage; however, best practices nationally

show the percentage of spare school buses at 10 percent. The factors affecting the spare bus ratio are fleet age, effectiveness of the maintenance program, climatic and operating environment, fleet mix, and training program. For ATISD, this standard would require it to maintain one spare bus.

ATISD should develop and implement a spare bus policy. Resulting from this policy, the district should maintain one spare bus and sell one bus. With an average ridership of 33 students, the district can liquidate one bus without affecting transportation services and realize a one-time revenue gain. The district should sell its oldest bus, a 1993 International that it currently uses as a spare.

Based on the bus age and mileage, the district should be able to sell the 1993 International for approximately \$5,000.

VISITOR PROCEDURES (REC. 33)

ATISD has a board-approved policy requiring visitors to check in with the school administrative office, but does not strictly enforce a visitor sign-in and badge policy.

Board policy GKC (Local) states, “all visitors must first report to the campus administrative office. This shall apply to parents, board members, volunteers, social service workers, invited speakers, maintenance and repair persons not employed by the district, salespersons, representatives of the news media, former students, and any other visitors.”

The ATISD Employee Handbook further states, “All visitors are expected to enter any district facility through the main entrance and sign in or report to the building’s main office. Authorized visitors will receive directions or be escorted to their destination. Employees who observe an unauthorized individual on the district premises should immediately direct him or her to the building office or contact the administrator in charge.”

**EXHIBIT 4-8
ATISD ACTIVE FLEET INVENTORY BY MODEL YEAR
2004–05**

YEAR	VEHICLE	USE	TOTAL MILEAGE
1993	International Bus	Spare & Extracurricular	118,000
1998	International Bus	Route & Extracurricular	112,242
2000	International Bus	Route & Extracurricular	77,323
2004	International Bus	Route & Extracurricular	25,945
1993	Chevrolet Suburban	Extracurricular	184,228
1999	Chevrolet Suburban	Extracurricular	93,776
-	Chevrolet Van	Extracurricular	31,429
-	Truck	Maintenance; Not for Student Transport	64,982
Total			707,925
Average			88,491

SOURCE: Austwell-Tivoli ISD, Superintendent's office, May 2005.

However, the district does not strictly enforce either the policy or procedure. The review team observed several parents enter the cafeteria to eat lunch with their children. Some of these parents entered through the cafeteria door and did not first sign in at the front office. The review team also entered the school grounds without signing into a visitor’s log.

During the school day, there are multiple potential entry points to both ATISD schools. Because of the layout of the campuses and the need for elementary students to go to the high school campus for meals, most exterior doors on both schools remain unlocked during the day. These unsecured entry points could present a problem if district staff is not vigilant about identifying all campus visitors and ensuring they have approval to enter the schools. Currently the district does not provide approved visitors with identification badges. In districts that require badges, such badges assure all staff encountering a visitor on campus that the visitor has visited the front office, signed in, and received approval to access the campus.

As noted in School Review’s *Keeping Texas Children Safe in School*, safe school districts require visitors to sign in and wear badges. They instruct their teachers and staff to stop anyone on the campus without a badge and direct them to the main office. Districts with effective visitor policies require all visitors to sign in, check identification, and verify the purpose of the visit. If the visitor is a parent, they cross-check

the identification with a roster of all parents of the students in the school. Many schools issue numbered visitor badges that are difficult to duplicate and require visitors to return badges when leaving to maintain badge control.

Killeen ISD utilizes badges for both substitute teachers and visitors. These badges are laminated and numbered. Substitutes must return the badges when they finish substituting for the day so that they cannot later use the badge to gain unauthorized campus access.

The district should improve enforcement of the visitor sign-in policy and provide visitors with badges. ATISD should require all visitors to sign in at the front office of either the elementary school or high school and to wear an identifying badge while on campus.

ATISD can implement this recommendation with minimal fiscal impact. The district should be able to create a small set of laminated and numbered visitor badges for less than \$100. Visitors should receive a badge when they sign in and return it when they leave. The school secretaries should maintain accountability of the badges to ensure none are lost.

For background information on Support Services, see p. 83 in the general information section of the appendices.

FISCAL IMPACT

RECOMMENDATIONS		2005--06	2006--07	2007--08	2008--09	2009--10	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) OR SAVINGS	ONE-TIME (COSTS) OR SAVINGS
CHAPTER 4: SUPPORT SERVICES								
27.	Develop a long-range facilities plan as part of an overall strategic plan to help the district prioritize its facilities spending.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
28.	Monitor Meals Per Labor Hour and staff Food Services accordingly.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
29.	Provide regular annual training for custodial staff.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
30.	Develop an efficient workload structure for custodians and eliminate overtime for full-time custodians.	\$2,405	\$4,809	\$4,809	\$4,809	\$4,809	\$21,641	\$0

FISCAL IMPACT (CONTINUED)

RECOMMENDATIONS		2005--06	2006--07	2007--08	2008--09	2009--10	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) OR SAVINGS	ONE- TIME (COSTS) OR SAVINGS
CHAPTER 4: SUPPORT SERVICES								
31.	Develop and implement a policy to secure the bus keys.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
32.	Develop and implement a spare bus policy.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$5,000
33.	Enforce the visitor sign-in policy and provide visitors with badges.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$100)
Totals-Chapter 4		\$2,405	\$4,809	\$4,809	\$4,809	\$4,809	\$21,641	\$4,900



Appendices

GENERAL INFORMATION

CHAPTER 1 EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

This section includes supplemental information and data for the education service delivery functions that did not appear in the findings.

FEDERAL ENTITLEMENT PROGRAMS

Federal entitlement funds are budgeted on a per pupil allocation basis to eligible schools and target supplemental educational interventions for students who have difficulty with skill mastery and meeting performance expectations. In 2004–05, ATISD received \$87,346 in Title I entitlement funds, \$15,583 in Title II entitlement funds, and \$856 in Title V federal entitlement funds.

The federal Title I program provides funds to ensure that all children have the opportunity to receive a high quality education and reach mastery on state academic standards and assessments. ATISD used its Title I funds (\$87,346) to support the compensatory education program district-wide.

Title II provides funds to support and help improve teacher quality and increase the number of highly qualified teachers and principals. Title II focuses on using research-based practices to prepare, train, and recruit high-quality teachers.

Title V supports activities related to promoting challenging academic achievement standards, improved student academic achievement, and overall education reform. Examples of programs include recruitment and retention of highly qualified teachers, technology, school improvement programs, academic intervention programs for at-risk students, and dropout prevention. In 2004–05, ATISD spent the \$856 in Title V, Part A funds to support the G/T program at the high school.

DISTRICT GOALS

The ATISD District Improvement Plan (DIP) includes the following goals for 2004–05:

- achieve exemplary status on the Academic Excellence Information System (AEIS);
- provide a safe and orderly learning environment;
- use technology as a tool to make learning more relevant for everyone;
- maintain an efficient and effective budgetary process; and
- maintain a strong school/community partnership.

The Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) objective as identified in the DIP is that all

student groups will achieve or exceed a 90 percent passing rate in each of the subject areas.

Additional goals on the DIP include the following:

- The district student attendance will be 95 percent or higher.
- There will be an increase in the percentage of students taking college entrance exams.
- All student groups will become proficient in the use of the district's technology.
- The district will maintain a strong parental involvement program.
- The district will maintain a low incidence of violence.
- The district will provide for the safety of all students.
- The district will provide a safe environment for all students and school personnel.
- The district will maintain a high level of technological proficiency for all staff members.
- The district will maintain financial stability.
- The district will improve student performance in special programs.
- The district will maintain a strong school/community relationship.

ATISD recognizes its strengths in the DIP as follows:

- high attendance percentage at the elementary level;
- low dropout rate;
- improvement of all students in English Language Arts;
- very active parent involvement at the elementary level;
- reading scores above 80 percent for two years (all students remained constant or improved);
- no reported student violence; and
- writing scores improved for all students.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

Austwell-Tivoli Elementary School completes an annual comprehensive needs assessment as part of the development of the CIP. The needs assessment is an ongoing process: the principal encourages faculty and staff input and uses the input in the decision-making process. The elementary school staff keeps the students, parents, and community informed

through the student's daily tracker, frequent principal bulletins, and a teacher's newsletter published each six weeks by grade level. Parent and community input is encouraged at every parent involvement program activity.

Exhibit A-1 shows the results of the 2004–05 Austwell-Tivoli Elementary School Needs Assessment.

Exhibit A-2 shows the results of the Principal Effectiveness Survey administered at the elementary school. The principal uses this information to continue or modify programs, policies, and procedures.

The Austwell-Tivoli High School has identified goals and objectives for the 2004–05 school year, as shown in **Exhibit A-3** and **Exhibit A-4**. They are similar to the district goals and objectives. It places particular emphasis upon improved academic achievement of all students.

INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS

ATISD offers three graduation plans: Minimum Program, Recommended Program, and Distinguished Achievement Program. All students in the district enroll in the Recommended Program or the Distinguished Achievement Program. The state requires that districts automatically place all incoming

EXHIBIT A-1 AUSTWELL-TIVOLI ELEMENTARY SCHOOL NEEDS ASSESSMENT RESULTS 2004–05

A.	Instructional and Curriculum
1.	Seek an alternative to the Accelerated Reading Program or format the existing program so that it is compatible with available district technology
2.	Maintain the minimum 30-minute contact time in the computer lab by all grade
3.	Purchase and implement Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) software in science, reading and mathematics
4.	Continue to seek techniques to improve the music/fine arts program
5.	Continue to seek means to increase the high school Buddy Tutor Program
6.	Continue to support the art program at all grade levels by integrating art in core areas
7.	Focus on team teaching and vertical alignment of all core subjects
8.	TAKS results indicate a curriculum focus on science at all levels
9.	TAKS 4th grade – seek commended performance for 2004–05
10.	Design activities for gifted/talented student and at-risk students to used during the curriculum period
11.	TAKS 6th grade – focus on all skills in mathematics; increase science lab activities to prepare students for the junior high curriculum; focus on TAKS data to raise reading scores above 90%
B.	Professional Development
1.	Continue with the vision that every teacher in the elementary be English as a Second Language-endorsed
2.	Encourage teachers to seek advanced training in science (Regional Education Service Center III), mathematics (Sharon Wells), reading acquisition (Reading Academy), and dyslexia education (University of Houston)
3.	Utilize Title IIA funds as an incentive for teacher professional staff development and certification
4.	Provide campus-based in-service in science curriculum and instruction
C.	Student Services
1.	Focus on a public relations program which will enhance the image of Austwell-Tivoli Elementary
2.	Participate more in county-wide activities for children
3.	Provide first aid training for Mrs. Saenz
4.	Engage in partnership with the University of Houston LEAD program to explore ways to provide a mentoring program using personnel from nearby industry
D.	Safe and Drug Free Schools
1.	Install a sidewalk from the east entrance to the cafeteria as funds become available
2.	Continue with the partnership between ESC III Title IV and ATISD
3.	Utilize county law enforcement for "Just Say No" program and activities
4.	Continue with the canine contraband detector program
E.	Parental Involvement and Communications
1.	Teachers will encourage parents volunteers for classroom assistance
2.	Begin needs assessment for an English-as-a-Second Language Program for adults
3.	Design a minimum of 10 parental involvement activities for 2004–05
F.	Campus Beautification
1.	Seek parent/student volunteers to help maintain the campus grounds
2.	Engage in a partnership with Refugio County Law Enforcement to use trustees during non-school time to perform campus maintenance

SOURCE: Austwell-Tivoli Elementary School, Principal's office, 2005.

EXHIBIT A-2
AUSTWELL-TIVOLI ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
SUMMARY OF PRINCIPAL EFFECTIVENESS SURVEY SUBMITTED BY FACULTY AND
STAFF
2004–05

1. What specific programs, policies, or procedures should I continue to implement?
 - Crafts night
 - Accelerated Reading Program
 - Principal's Advisory Council
 - Science Fair in conjunction with Parent Involvement Program Family Science Night
 - Field trips
 - End-of-Year awards ceremony
 - Fund raising
 - Dyslexia education
 - Absentee policy
 - Parent involvement program
 - Principal's newsletter
 - Texas Public Schools Week
 - Straightway Program and other motivational programs in conjunction with other schools
 - Morning routine
 - Rotating bulletin board schedule in the hallways
 - Discipline and supervision policies
 - Pecan Valley Area Health Education Center
 - After school dismissal procedure
 - AYUDA All-Stars Program
 - Teacher duties policy
 - University of Houston LEAD Program
2. Which specific programs, policies, or procedures should I discontinue?
 - Musicals to be limited to one at Christmas
 - Consider having a musical during Public Schools Week in March
 - Consider a less elaborate spring musical
 - Reduction of Parent Involvement Program evening activities
 - Reduce Parent Involvement Program to three activities: Make-it Take-it at Christmas, the science fair/Parent Involvement Program Family Science Night and one other (perhaps a motivational guest speaker)
 - Mandatory attendance to evening activities
 - Do away with needless paperwork
 - Discourage birthday parties in the classroom; acknowledgment in the morning is sufficient.
3. What specific programs, policies, or procedures should I begin?
 - Longer play period for kindergarten through 3rd grade students
 - Parent Involvement Program technology nights
 - Music program during the school day
 - Music program with a music teacher
 - New computers, projector and computer on a cart for every room
 - More programs for gifted students
 - More reading programs
 - Programs that help students about caring, sharing, and getting along with peers (conflict resolution)
 - Counselor for elementary campus
 - Sing the school song and the National Anthem on a regular basis
 - Open computer lab after school for parents and students not having access at home
 - Elementary technology teacher or technology aide for the elementary school
 - More activities during the 30-minute enrichment period
 - Reading program involving secondary students reading to younger children
 - Rules and regulations for the computer lab
 - Need time during faculty meetings for issues and concerns
 - Need more help during the lunch period
 - Consider scheduling the bulk of school programs and assemblies around available days in February, March, and April

SOURCE: Austwell-Tivoli Elementary School, Principal's office, 2005.

EXHIBIT A-3
AUSTWELL-TIVOLI HIGH SCHOOL
CAMPUS IMPROVEMENT PLAN GOALS
2004–05

Goals
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintain a low annual dropout rate and an attendance rate of at least 95% so that all students will graduate from high school 2. Improve school and community relations 3. Provide supplemental services to special population students by utilizing state compensatory funds, federal funds, and other revenues that become available 4. Maintain a violence-free campus through prevention and intervention providing all students an opportunity to be educated in environments that are safe, drug-free, and conducive to learning 5. Improve the performance of students in special populations including G/T, special education, and ESL 6. Have all students will reach high standards, at a minimum attaining proficiency or better in reading/language arts and mathematics by 2013–14 7. Utilize a variety of technological resources 8. Develop a clear and focused school vision and mission 9. Have highly qualified teachers teach all students.

SOURCE: Austwell-Tivoli High School, Principal's office, 2004.

EXHIBIT A-4
AUSTWELL-TIVOLI HIGH SCHOOL
CAMPUS IMPROVEMENT PLAN OBJECTIVES

OBJECTIVES
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parents/guardians will be expected to have their child attend school regularly to achieve a campus-wide attendance rate of 95% or higher. 2. Citizens in the community will become more involved through school participation in community projects, improving school and community relations. 3. To utilize state compensatory education funds to provide services to at-risk students. 4. Utilize funds available to provide supplemental services to special population students. 5. To maintain a low incidence of violence and continued lack of finding by the canine contraband detection service. 6. To provide enrichment opportunities to G/T students. 7. To provide resource services to special education students. 8. All students will meet minimum expectations on the TAKS English/Language Arts test. 9. All students will meet minimum expectations on the TAKS Reading test. 10. All students will meet minimum expectations on the TAKS Writing test. 11. All students will meet minimum expectations on the TAKS Math test. 12. All students will meet minimum expectations on the TAKS Science test. 13. All students will meet minimum expectations on the TAKS Social Studies test. 14. To increase the number of students achieving Commended Performance on the TAKS English/Language Arts test. 15. To increase the number of students achieving Commended Performance on the TAKS Reading test. 16. To increase the number of students achieving Commended Performance on the TAKS Math test. 17. To increase the number of students achieving Commended Performance on the TAKS Writing test. 18. To increase the number of students achieving Commended Performance on the TAKS Science test. 19. To increase the number of students achieving Commended Performance on the TAKS Social Studies test. 20. To increase the number of students taking college entrance exams. 21. To increase the percentage of students who meet state criteria on the SAT and/or ACT. 22. To increase the percentage of students who meet state criteria on the SAT and/or ACT. 23. To incorporate technology into the regular curriculum. 24. To align the curriculum between the elementary and high school campuses. 25. To recruit and retain highly qualified teachers.

SOURCE: Austwell-Tivoli High School, Principal's office, 2004.

9th grade students in the Recommended Program, unless otherwise requested by the parents.

To graduate under the Recommended Program in four years, students must receive:

- four credits in English,

- three credits in science,
- four credits in social studies,
- three credits in math,
- two credits in physical education,

- two credits in foreign language,
- three and one-half credits in electives,
- one credit in technology application,
- one credit in fine arts, and
- one-half credit in health and speech (see **Exhibit A-5**).

The Distinguished Achievement Program requires a greater number of credits in foreign language, and includes four advanced measures, including:

- An original research project;
- PSAT score-quality as Commended Scholar; and
- 3.0 GPA or higher in a college credit class.

Exhibit A-6 shows the Austwell-Tivoli High Master Schedule for 2004–05. The school has 11 full-time teachers who maintain two planning periods and teach five classes per day. The superintendent teaches one class of theatre arts, and some teachers have dual responsibilities. For example, the Spanish teacher also serves as the guidance counselor, and

the math teacher served as the technology coordinator.

ATISD offers the following extracurricular activities for its students:

- volleyball;
- basketball;
- cross country;
- tennis;
- track;
- golf;
- University Interscholastic League (UIL) Literary; and
- One Act Play.

State laws as well as rules of the UIL govern eligibility for participation in many of these activities. UIL is a statewide association overseeing interdistrict competition. The following requirements apply to all extracurricular activities:

**EXHIBIT A-5
AUSTWELL-TIVOLI HIGH SCHOOL
RECOMMENDED PROGRAM FOR THE FOUR-YEAR-PLAN
2004–05**

24 Credits Required		
4 Credits – English English I English II English III English IV	3 Credits – Science Int. Physics and Chemistry (IPC) Biology-required Chemistry Physics Aquatic Science Environmental Systems	4 Credits – Social Studies U.S. History World History World Geography U.S. Government (1/2) Economics (1/2)
3 Credits – Math Algebra I Algebra II Geometry Pre-calculus Calculus	2 Credits – Physical Education PE 1A (1/2) PE 1B (1/2) PE 2A (1/2) PE 2B (1/2)	2 Credits – Foreign Language Spanish I Spanish II
3 ½ Credits – Electives Journalism BCIS I & II Keyboarding Word Processing Applications Comp. Aided Drafting PC Repair Career Connections Intro. to Advertising Intro. to Marketing Accounting Yearbook Office Aid	1 Credit – Technology Applications Web Mastering Desktop Publishing Multimedia Computer Science	½ Credit – Fine Arts Art Theatre Prod (1/2 per year) ½ Credit – Health Health ½ Credit – Speech Communication Applications

SOURCE: Austwell-Tivoli High School, Principal's office, 2005.

EXHIBIT A-6 MASTER SCHEDULE

TEACHER	1 ST	2 ND	3 RD	4 TH	LUNCH	5 TH	6 TH	7 TH
	7:55-8:50	8:55-9:45	9:55-10:45	10:50-11:40	11:40-12:10	12:15-1:05	1:10-2:00	2:35-3:25
Aguirre, A.				Theatre Arts				
Anderson, K.		Chemistry	Science-7	Science-8		IPC	Biology	
Garcia, G.			Spanish I	Spanish II		Spanish III		HS PE
Garza, F.		Art				Art	Art	
Gleghorn, K.	Algebra I		Calculus Algebra II	Web Mastering			Multimedia	
Hanselman, J.	Math-7		Math-8			Geometry	Algebra II	Texas History
Valle, E.	Resource	Resource	Resource	Resource		Resource	Resource	Resource
Lumpkin, W.	U.S. History-11	World History		Government		JH PE		HS PE
Mutschler, B.	English IV	English 11	English III			Speech	English I	
Schumacher, D.	Health	Elementary PE	Elementary PE	Elementary PE			JH PE	HS PE
Simmons, L.		U.S. History 8	BCIS	Accounting		Recordkeeping /Advertising	JH Keyboarding	
Tate, C.	Reading-8	Reading-7	World Geography	Language Arts-7				Language Arts-8

SOURCE: Austwell-Tivoli High School, Principal's office 2005.

- A student who receives at the end of a grading period a grade below 70 in any academic class, other than a class identified as honors or advanced by either the State Board of Education or the local Board of Trustees, may not participate in extracurricular activities for at least three school weeks.
- A student with disabilities who fails to meet the standards in the individual education plan (IEP) may not participate for at least three school weeks.
- An ineligible student may practice or rehearse.
- A student may use in a school year up to ten absences not related to post-district competition, a maximum of five absences for post-district competition before state, and a maximum of two absences for state competition. All extracurricular activities and public performances, whether UIL activities or other activities approved by the Board, are subject to these restrictions.
- A student who misses a class because of participation in an activity without approval will receive an unexcused absence.

The Student Handbook further documents that sponsors of student clubs and performing groups may establish standards of behavior that are stricter than those for students in general.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is a federal law that gives guidance and

direction for providing special education services to students with disabilities. Originally passed in 1975 as the Education for all Handicapped Children Act, Congress reauthorized IDEA in 1997 and again in 2004. Many provisions of the IDEA amendments address and clarify procedures for improving education and related services to students with disabilities. IDEA establishes six principles that govern the education of students with disabilities. **Exhibit A-7** summarizes these six basic principles.

IDEA defines special education as specially designed instruction, at no cost to the child's parents, to meet the unique needs of a student with disabilities (20 U.S.C., §1401 (25)). A student is eligible for special education and related services if the student has a disability as identified by IDEA and because of the disability, needs specially designed instruction. IDEA mandates a two-part standard for eligibility. To be determined eligible for special education services, students must meet both standards for eligibility, including:

- **categorical element** – the student must have a disability as identified by IDEA; and
- **functional element** – the disability may cause the student to need special education services.

The legal mandate driving inclusive education for students with disabilities throughout the United States is IDEA. The definition of least restrictive environment (LRE) is contained in the law and has set the precedent for movement toward inclusive education. IDEA requires that:

...to the maximum extent appropriate, handicapped children, including those children in

**EXHIBIT A-7
SIX PRINCIPLES GOVERNING THE EDUCATION OF
STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

- **Zero reject:** A rule against excluding any student.
- **Nondiscriminatory evaluation:** A rule requiring schools to evaluate students fairly to determine if they have a disability and, if so, what kind and how extensive.
- **Appropriate education:** A rule requiring schools to provide individually tailored education for each student based on the evaluation and augmented by related services and supplementary aids and services.
- **Least restrictive environment:** A rule requiring schools to educate students with disabilities with students without disabilities to the maximum extent appropriate for the students with disabilities.
- **Procedural due process:** A rule providing safeguards for students against schools' actions, including a right to sue in court.
- **Parental and student participation:** A rule requiring schools to collaborate with parents and adolescent students in designing and carrying out special education programs.

SOURCE: *Exceptional Lives: Special Education in Today's School*, 2004.

public and private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with children who are not handicapped, and that special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of handicapped children from the regular educational environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the handicap is such that education in the regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily [(IDEA, Section 1412 (5) (B))].

ATISD practices inclusive education for students with disabilities. Students with disabilities participate in the general education curriculum for the majority of the school day. Special education teachers provide individualized or small group instruction in the general education classroom, as well as in a pullout program. Teachers ensure that classrooms provide the necessary accommodations for students with disabilities.

The Goliad Special Education Cooperative provides technical assistance and support to ATISD in the delivery of special education services in the following areas:

- professional development;
- curriculum design
- promotion, retention, and placement;
- evaluation and assessment;
- attendance;
- student records;
- student discipline; and
- public complaints.

GIFTED AND TALENTED

In 2003–04, ATISD identified 9.6 percent of its students as gifted and/or talented.

The district's G/T plan states:

Gifted students need a qualitatively differentiated program that provides time for work with other gifted students, time for further development of leadership abilities, and time for work on creative self-directed projects. Through a multi-dimensional teaching approach, the program emphasizes learning processes involving both the cognitive and affective domains. The goal is to enable students to acquire the skills necessary to become intellectually and creatively productive adults capable of making significant contributions to the community, state, and nation.

State law defines G/T students as those who excel consistently or who show the potential to excel in any one or combination of the following areas:

- general intellectual ability;
- specific subject matter aptitude;
- creative and productive thinking ability;
- leadership ability;
- ability in the visual and performing arts; and,
- psychomotor ability.

These students require educational experiences beyond those normally provided by the regular program in order to realize their contribution to self and society. G/T children are those identified by professionally qualified persons who by virtue of outstanding abilities are capable of high performance.

In ATISD, committees including principals, classroom teachers, and other administrative personnel are responsible for identifying students in grades 3 through 12 who are eligible for G/T services. The committees have two primary proposes:

- assimilate the data necessary to identify those students who merit further assessment and consideration in the identification process; and
- guarantee that each student nominated for the gifted program receives equal and fair treatment.

The district 2002–03 Gifted and Talented Plan describes goals for the program in the following areas:

- identification process;
- program organization;
- curriculum development;
- staff development;
- parent and community involvement; and
- evaluation revisions and adjustments.

Exhibit A-8 expands on each of the program goals.

SAT/ACT PARTICIPATION

Exhibit A-9 shows the percentage of students in ATISD and peer districts who participated in SAT/ACT Testing. ATISD has a significantly higher participation rate than the state and region averages for 2001–02 and 2002–03.

Exhibit A-10 shows the percentage of students in ATISD who scored at or above criterion, 1110 on the SAT or 24 on the ACT on the SAT/ACT in 2001–02 and 2002–03. In both years, the district scored significantly higher than the state and region averages. While ATISD may have a small student enrollment, this data shows that the majority of the high school students take the SAT/ACT, and a number of students (higher than state average) successfully meet or exceed the criterion of college placement examinations.

EXHIBIT A-8 GOALS FOR THE GIFTED AND TALENTED PROGRAM DEVELOPED IN 2003

1. Identification
 - To identify students from all segments of the community who are gifted/talented in grades 3-12 using multiple and specific criteria.
 - To identify students in grades K-12 who are gifted in general intellectual ability, specific academic aptitude, and productive thinking ability through the use of multiple and specific criteria.
2. Program Organization
 - To develop a variety of program alternatives that will meet the unique learning needs of gifted/talented students in grades K-12.
3. Curriculum Development
 - To design and implement a differentiated curriculum for gifted/talented students in grades K-12 that will provide for student growth and development through both cognitive and affective domains.
 - To develop differentiated curriculum for students in grades K-12 who are gifted or evidence potential advanced abilities in any one of the following content areas: reading, language arts, math, science, or social studies.
4. Staff Development
 - To provide an ongoing program of staff development in gifted/talented education for district personnel.
 - To provide awareness training in gifted education for all school personnel and in-depth in-service activities for those involved in program planning and implementation. Personnel who implement the G/T program must have 30 hours of training.
 - To provide continuous in-service and gifted/talented education.
5. Parent and Community Involvement
 - To plan and carry out strategies to involve parents and other community members in the program(s) for gifted/talented students.
 - To develop a plan for building understanding of the program for parents and community members.
6. Evaluation, Revisions, and Adjustments
 - To develop a plan to evaluate both programs and student progress.
 - To develop a comprehensive design to make any needed adjustments in program implementation and maintain its effectiveness.
 - To develop and implement a comprehensive evaluation, revision, and adjustment design to determine program effectiveness and student progress and outcomes.

SOURCE: Austwell-Tivoli ISD, Superintendent's office, 2005.

**EXHIBIT A-9
SAT/ACT PERCENT OF STUDENTS
TESTED
ATISD AND PEER DISTRICTS
2001-02 AND 2002-03**

DISTRICT	PERCENT STUDENTS TAKING SAT/ACT EXAMS	
	2003	2002
Austwell-Tivoli	63.6%	72.7%
Buena Vista	85.7%	37.5%
Matagorda*	N/A	N/A
McMullen County	62.5%	61.5%
Pringle-Morse*	N/A	N/A
Region 3	55.3%	55.6%
State Average	62.4%	61.9%

* Matagorda ISD is a pre-K-6 school district, and Pringle-Morse is a pre-K-8 district.
NOTE: N/A denotes data not available.
SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS), 2003-04.

**EXHIBIT A-10
SAT/ACT AT OR ABOVE CRITERION
ATISD AND PEER DISTRICTS
2001-02 AND 2002-03**

DISTRICT	DISTRICT AVERAGE	
	2003	2002
Austwell-Tivoli	42.9%	37.5%
Buena Vista	0%	*
Matagorda	N/A	N/A
McMullen County	0.0%	50.0%
Pringle-Morse	N/A	N/A
Region 3	20.8	21.1
State Average	27.2%	26.6%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2002-03.

GRADUATION RATES

Exhibit A-11 shows the 2003 graduation rates for ATISD, peer districts, the region, and the state. With a 93.3 percent graduation rate, ATISD exceeds the graduation rates for the region, state, and Buena Vista ISD. In ATISD, 100 percent of Anglo students graduated in 2003 as compared to 87.5 percent of Hispanic students and 83.3 percent of economically challenged students.

**EXHIBIT A-11
GRADUATION RATES
ATISD, PEER DISTRICTS, AND THE STATE
CLASS OF 2003**

DISTRICT	ALL STUDENTS	AFRICAN AMERICAN	HISPANIC	ANGLO	ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED
Austwell-Tivoli	93.3%	--	87.5%	100%	83.3%
Buena Vista	88.9%	--	*	100%	80%
McMullen County	100%	--	100%	100%	100%
Region 3	88.7%	86.3%	82.4%	93.2%	82.3%
State	84.2%	81.1%	77.3%	84.8%	77.8%

* indicates masked results due to small numbers to protect student confidentiality.
-- indicates zero observations reported for this group.
SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2003-04.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

ATISD participates in ongoing and diverse staff development through Region 3 and the Goliad Special Education Cooperative. Exhibit A-12 shows examples of staff development provided by Region 3 as part of the district's contract for services.

The Goliad Cooperative provides ongoing staff development and on-site technical assistance to ATISD on its delivery of special education services.

**CHAPTER 2
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

This section includes supplemental information and data for the district organization, leadership and management functions that did not appear in the findings.

ATISD SCHOOL BOARD

All seven board members serve three-year terms on a rotating basis. Exhibit A-13 lists the current board members, along with the year elected, current board position, and dates terms expire.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

In 2004-05, the district employed 34 staff. Exhibit A-14 shows how ATISD has organized its staff. Unless otherwise specified, all of the positions are full-time equivalents.

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFFING

ATISD has three administrative positions—one superintendent and two principals. One of the ATISD principals serves as principal full-time; the other principal teaches a science class every other year. The ATISD superintendent teaches an elective high school fine arts class in addition to his administrative duties.

Exhibit A-15 compares the administrative staffing of ATISD with its peers as reported in the AEIS and PEIMS data. ATISD has a higher than average number of campus administrators, at 1.5, than the

EXHIBIT A-12 REGION 3 CONTRACTED SERVICES FOR STAFF DEVELOPMENT 2003–04

Leadership Academy
School Board and Superintendent Leadership Development
Curriculum Contracted Services
Math/Science Contracted Services
Instructional Resources Cooperative
Library Support Services
Living Materials
Bilingual/ESL Contracted Services
Career and Technology Education
Gifted and Talented
Technology – Closing the Gap

SOURCE: Regional Education Service Center III, 2005.

EXHIBIT A-13 ATISD BOARD OF TRUSTEES 2004–05

MEMBER NAME	YEAR FIRST ELECTED	CURRENT BOARD POSITION	YEAR CURRENT TERM EXPIRES
Carlton Hopper	1993	President	2008
Darren Kelso	2000	Vice-President	2007
Marilyn Pagel	2002	Secretary	2008
Chris Camacho	2003	Member	2006
Mary Julia Flores	2003	Member	2007
Cindy Myers	2003	Member	2006
Greg Duenez	2004	Member	2007

SOURCE: Austwell-Tivoli ISD, Superintendent's office, May 2005.

peer average of 0.6. However, all of the peers selected for this study have just one school, while ATISD has two.

There are 173 Texas consolidated or independent school districts with exactly two schools, according to the Texas Education Association's *Texas Electronic Directory*. Of these, five have just one administrator serving as superintendent and principal of each school. In 38 two-school districts, there are two administrators filling the three roles of superintendent and principal of each school. Some of these have one administrator serving as principal of both schools with a different administrator serving as superintendent. In others, the superintendent also serves as principal of one of the schools with another administrator serving as principal of the second school. In the remaining 130 two-school districts, three separate administrators fill the roles of superintendent and principals. **Exhibit A-16** provides a breakdown of the average enrollment by the number of administrators for Texas two-school districts, compared to ATISD. ATISD is included in the figures for two-school districts with three administrators.

Exhibit A-17 provides the staffing guidelines developed by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools for schools with an enrollment of less than 250 students.

PAYROLL EXPENSES

ATISD budgeted nearly \$1.5 million for payroll for 2004–05. **Exhibit A-18** shows the 2004–05 budgeted expenses for payroll as percentage of total expenses.

MINORITY TEACHERS

Exhibit A-19 compares the percentages of Hispanic and Anglo students with the percentage of Hispanic and Anglo teachers in ATISD and the peers. ATISD is 64 percent Hispanic in its student body and 25 percent Hispanic in its teachers.

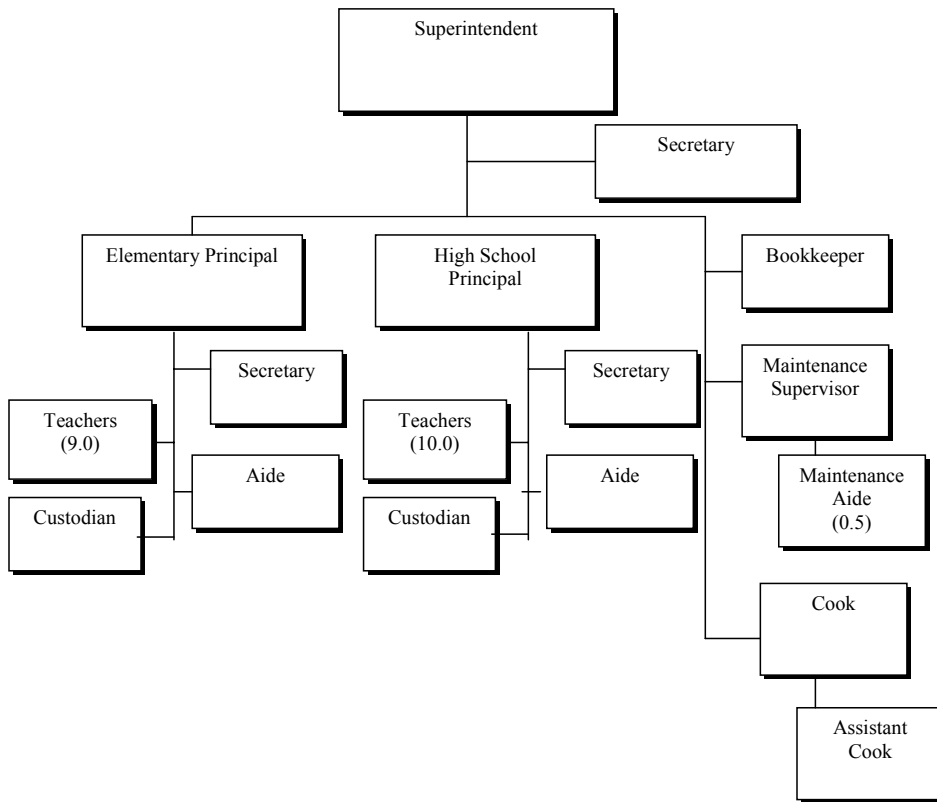
EMPLOYEE MANUAL

The district provides all staff with an employee manual in either electronic or paper format, depending on employee preference.

The manual includes these sections:

- District information
 - Description of the district
 - District map
 - Mission statement
 - District goals and objectives
 - Board of trustees
 - Board meeting schedule for 2004–2005

**EXHIBIT A-14
ATISD STAFFING ORGANIZATION
2004-05**



SOURCE: Austwell-Tivoli ISD, Superintendent's office, May 2005.

- Administration
- School calendar
- Helpful contacts
- School directory
- Employment compensation and benefits
- Leaves and absences
- Employee relations and communications
- Complaints and grievances
- Employee conduct and welfare
- General procedures
 - Bad weather closing
 - Emergencies
 - Purchasing procedures
 - Name and address changes
 - Personnel records

- Building use
- Termination of employment
- Student issues

LEGAL EXPENSES

ATISD pays an Austin law firm an annual retainer of \$495 to represent the district in legal matters. In 2004-05 the only additional legal expense was \$67.50 paid to the same firm for a response to an audit letter. The district had no legal expenditures beyond the retainer fee in either 2002-03 or 2003-04.

Exhibit A-20 compares ATISD's legal expenses in the past year with those of its peers. As the exhibit shows, ATISD's annual legal expenses are low in comparison to its peers.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

The ATISD bookkeeper, who reports to the superintendent, is responsible for most financial functions.

EXHIBIT A-15
NUMBER OF ADMINISTRATIVE POSITIONS
ATISD AND PEER DISTRICTS
2004–05

DISTRICT	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS	CAMPUS ADMINISTRATION	CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION	STUDENT ENROLLMENT
Austwell-Tivoli	2	1.5	0.9	166
Buena Vista	1	0.0	1.0	103
Matagorda	1	0.0	0.0	66
McMullen County	1	1.0	1.0	160
Pringle-Morse	1	0.5	1.5	98
Peer District Average	1	0.4	0.9	107

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS and Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS), 2004–05. The peer district average was calculated by summing the number of administrators for each category in each peer district and dividing by 4.

EXHIBIT A-16
AVERAGE STUDENT ENROLLMENT BY NUMBER OF ADMINISTRATORS
(SUPERINTENDENT AND PRINCIPALS)
IN TWO-SCHOOL DISTRICTS
2004–05

NUMBER OF ADMINISTRATORS (SUPERINTENDENT AND PRINCIPALS)	DISTRICTS STATEWIDE	AVERAGE STUDENT ENROLLMENT
One (superintendent also serves as both principals)	5	242
Two	38	274
Three	130	434
Total	173	394

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, Texas Electronic Directory and PEIMS, May 2005.

EXHIBIT A-17
SOUTHERN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS
STAFFING STANDARDS FOR SCHOOLS
2005

STAFF TYPE	STAFF RECOMMENDED FOR SCHOOL WITH <250 STUDENTS
Administrative Head	1.0
Administrative or Supervisory Assistants	0.0
Guidance Professionals	0.5
Library or Media Specialists	0.5
Support Staff for Administration, Library Media or Technology	1.0 (0.5 elementary)

SOURCE: Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), Standards Assessment Tool, Accreditation Standards for Public School, 2005.

EXHIBIT A-18
ATISD AND PEER DISTRICTS
BUDGETED EXPENDITURES AS PERCENT OF TOTAL
2004–05

DISTRICT	TOTAL EXPENDITURES	PAYROLL COSTS	OTHER OPERATING COSTS	DEBT SERVICE	CAPITAL OUTLAY
Austwell-Tivoli	\$2,206,421	67%	22%	5%	6%
Buena Vista	\$1,703,302	71%	26%	0%	3%
Matagorda	\$1,895,518	36%	62%	2%	0%
McMullen County	\$3,091,698	59%	22%	12%	7%
Pringle-Morse	\$1,536,636	69%	25%	0%	7%
State Average	\$32,258,126,258	73%	16%	10%	1%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS, 2004–05.

**EXHIBIT A-19
ATISD AND PEERS
MINORITY TEACHERS COMPARED TO THE STUDENT BODY
2004–05**

DISTRICT	TOTAL ENROLLMENT	PERCENT HISPANIC STUDENTS	PERCENT ANGLO STUDENTS	PERCENT HISPANIC TEACHERS	PERCENT ANGLO TEACHERS
Austwell-Tivoli	157	64%	34%	25%	75%
Buena Vista	126	59%	39%	11%	89%
Matagorda	62	16%	84%	13%	88%
McMullen County	180	47%	53%	10%	90%
Pringle-Morse	90	44%	56%	0%	100%
Peer Average	123	46%	53%	12%	88%
State Average	4,383,871	45%	38%	20%	70%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS, 2004–05.

**EXHIBIT A-20
ATISD AND PEER LEGAL EXPENSES
2003–04**

DISTRICT	LAW FIRM ON RETAINER?	2003-04 LEGAL EXPENSES, INCLUDING ANY RETAINER
Austwell-Tivoli	Yes	\$495
Buena Vista	Yes	\$1,500
Matagorda	No	\$8,315
McMullen County	No	N/A
Pringle-Morse	No	\$907
Peer District Average	No	\$3,574

SOURCE: Fax survey of peer districts, May 2005. The peer district average was calculated by summing the average of the peer districts and dividing by 3.

The bookkeeper’s major financial duties include the following:

- performing the payroll, accounts payable, accounts receivable, accounting, and budgeting functions;
- ensuring compliance of the district’s accounting function with laws, rules, and regulations;
- compiling the annual operating budget and all amendments to the budget;
- preparing and publishing the annual and monthly financial reports;
- acting as the liaison with the external auditors;
- providing cash management and investment functions and preparing related reports;
- administering the employee benefits program; and
- maintaining the district’s fixed assets records.

The superintendent is the district’s designated investment officer, provides all financial information to the board, and provides guidance to and oversees the bookkeeper. The superintendent’s secretary

provides internal controls in the financial functions by preparing deposits, acting as custodian of the check stock, and maintaining employee records. The secretary also maintains the listings of district property not defined as fixed assets.

ATISD invests all funds with its depository bank; insures itself against loss for real and personal property, liability, school professional legal liability, and vehicle loss or damage; provides health and life insurance for its employees; provides student accident insurance for its students; maintains inventories of the district’s assets; and has one outstanding bond issue.

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

TEA requires districts’ financial operations to comply with the guidelines of the Financial Accountability System Resource Guide (FASRG). The FASRG combines requirements for financial management from a variety of sources into one guide for Texas school districts.

The most current financial data available for all districts are the 2004–05 budget and student enrollment and staffing reports, available through TEA’s Public Education Information Management

System (PEIMS). The bookkeeper is responsible for submitting all financial data for PEIMS. PEIMS budget reports provide the beginning of the year budget data and include the General Fund, Food Service Fund, and Debt Service Fund. It specifically excludes all other funds because they are not legally required to have an officially adopted budget. For comparison of tax rates, property values per student, and actual revenues and expenditures, the most current information available for all districts (2003–04) is from the Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS). This information includes the audited financial data for all funds in each district.

Exhibit A-21 presents student enrollment, percentage of economically disadvantaged students, property value per student, and total tax rate for ATISD, its peer districts, and the state.

Texas school districts receive revenue from three primary sources: local sources, state funding, and federal programs. Property taxes provide the primary local source of funds for most school districts. School districts develop and adopt their tax rate while county appraisal districts appraise the value of property within the district. The combined rate applies to the assessed property value to compute the district's total tax levy. Property values are important determinates of school funding at the state and local level. There is an inverse relationship between local property wealth and state aid: the greater the property wealth of the district, the greater the amount of revenue raised locally but the lower the amount of state aid.

ATISD is a property wealthy district. Property wealthy districts are those subject to the equalized wealth provisions of the Texas Education Code (TEC) in which the property value per weighted average daily attendance (WADA) exceeds \$305,000 for the 2004–05 school year, generally referred to as Chapter 41 school districts. WADA is a value calculated by TEA based on a number of factors including property value, estimated tax value, average daily attendance (ADA), and tax collection. Chapter 41 districts must either send funds back to the state or select one of several options to dilute their property value per WADA.

ATISD receives federal funds to augment educational and vocational opportunities and to assist in providing students with nutritious meals.

Exhibit A-22 presents a comparison of budgeted revenue for all funds by source for ATISD, its peer districts, and the state on a per student basis. In 2004–05, ATISD has the second lowest total revenue per student. All of the peer districts rely on local revenues for the majority of their budgeted revenues. This reduces local tax revenue by the amount of the wealth equalization payments the districts budgeted.

ATISD's total revenues have increased by 15.6 percent from 1999–2000 through 2003–04. The largest increase in a revenue source was in local tax revenues. **Exhibit A-23** compares revenues by source for 1999–2000 through 2003–04. This reduces local tax revenue by the amount of the wealth equalization payments the districts budgeted.

EXHIBIT A-21 ATISD AND PEER ECONOMIC INDICATORS

DISTRICT	NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED 2004–05	PERCENTAGE ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED 2004–05	PROPERTY VALUE PER STUDENT 2004–05	TOTAL TAX RATE 2004–05
McMullen County	180	47.80%	\$1,604,424	\$1.4800
Austwell-Tivoli	157	55.40%	\$1,952,746	\$1.3666
Buena Vista	126	66.70%	\$1,651,603	\$1.5000
Pringle-Morse	90	63.30%	\$1,340,417	\$1.4000
Matagorda	62	85.50%	\$2,082,352	\$1.4000
State	4,383,871	55.50%	\$206,729	\$1.5580

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS, 2004–05; Comptroller of Public Accounts, 2004 Preliminary Tax Rates.

EXHIBIT A-22 REVENUE SOURCES ATISD, PEER DISTRICTS, AND STATE 2004–05

REVENUE SOURCE	MATAGORDA	PRINGLE-MORSE	MCMULLEN COUNTY	AUSTWELL-TIVOLI	BUENA VISTA	STATE
Local Tax	\$25,452	\$15,448	\$15,814	\$12,533	\$10,776	\$3,930
Other Local	\$89	\$443	\$822	\$219	\$401	\$251
State	\$1,053	\$1,231	\$470	\$992	\$473	\$2,800
Federal	\$645	\$402	\$214	\$396	\$262	\$273
Total	\$27,239	\$17,524	\$17,320	\$14,140	\$11,912	\$7,254

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS, 2004–05.

**EXHIBIT A-23
ATISD REVENUE SOURCES
1999–2000 THROUGH 2003–04**

REVENUE SOURCE	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	PERCENT INCREASE FROM 1999–2000
Local Tax	\$1,565,681	\$1,643,533	\$1,526,316	\$1,557,153	\$1,942,213	24.0%
Other Local	\$163,429	\$93,859	\$58,357	\$63,725	\$50,180	(69.3%)
State	\$162,262	\$199,457	\$164,042	\$190,774	\$190,497	17.4%
Federal	\$164,379	\$104,617	\$87,391	\$143,309	\$192,581	17.2%
Total	\$2,055,751	\$2,041,466	\$1,836,106	\$1,954,961	\$2,375,471	15.6%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS, 1999–2000 through 2003–04.

Exhibit A-24 presents the wealth equalization payments ATISD paid from 1999–2000 through 2003–04. ATISD has budgeted \$2.1 million for wealth equalization payments in 2004–05. The increase in the wealth equalization payments is due to increasing property values.

ATISD levies property taxes composed of a maintenance and operations (M&O) component and an interest and sinking (I&S) component. The M&O component funds the general operations, and the I&S component pays a district’s bonded indebtedness. Exhibit A-25 presents the tax rates for ATISD, the peer districts, and the state.

ATISD’s total tax rate decreased by 8.3 percent from 1999–2000 through 2003–04. The M&O component decreased by 5.8 percent during this period and is set

at \$1.33 for 2004–05. ATISD’s debt service tax rate has also decreased by 45.7 percent due to property value growth during this period and was set at \$0.0366 for 2004–05. Exhibit A-26 shows the ATISD tax rate from 1999–2000 through 2003–04.

ATISD contracts with the Refugio County Tax Assessor/Collector to collect its taxes for one percent of the taxes levied for their services. It also contracts with the Refugio County Tax Assessor/Collector for the collection of delinquent taxes. The delinquent taxpayer pays Refugio County a 15 percent penalty of the taxes due.

The district offers discounts for the early payment of taxes as allowed by law. The discounts are three percent if paid in October, two percent if paid in November, and one percent if paid in December.

**EXHIBIT A-24
ATISD WEALTH EQUALIZATION PAYMENTS
1999–2000 THROUGH 2003–04**

	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
Payment Amount	\$9,190	\$0	\$99,546	\$870,994	\$1,043,026

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS, 1999–2000 through 2003–04.

**EXHIBIT A-25
TAX RATES
ATISD, PEER DISTRICTS, AND STATE
2003–04**

TAX TYPE	BUENA VISTA	MCMULLEN COUNTY	PRINGLE-MORSE	MATAGORDA	AUSTWELL-TIVOLI	STATE
Maintenance and Operations	\$1.5000	\$1.3300	\$1.4000	\$1.4000	\$1.3300	\$1.4469
Debt Service	\$0.0000	\$0.1500	\$0.0000	\$0.0000	\$0.0366	\$0.1111
Total Tax Rate	\$1.5000	\$1.4800	\$1.4000	\$1.4000	\$1.3666	\$1.5580

SOURCE: Comptroller of Public Accounts, 2004 Preliminary Tax Rates.

**EXHIBIT A-26
TAX RATE
1999–2000 THROUGH 2003–04**

TAX TYPE	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	PERCENT INCREASE FROM 1999–2000
Maintenance and Operations	\$1.5000	\$1.4955	\$0.9171	\$1.5000	\$1.4134	(5.8%)
Debt Service	\$0.1000	\$0.1045	\$0.0664	\$0.0662	\$0.0543	(45.7%)
Total Tax Rate	\$1.6000	\$1.6000	\$0.9835	\$1.5662	\$1.4677	(8.3%)

SOURCE: Austwell-Tivoli ISD, annual audit, 2003–04.

This provides taxpayers with an incentive to pay taxes before the February due date and allows ATISD to have funds available for operations.

The oil and gas industry comprises the bulk of ATISD’s property wealth. The top 10 taxpayers represent 49.2 percent or \$150.5 million of the district’s total appraised value. The concentration of taxable property in the oil and gas industry creates variations in total taxable values over time, as oil and gas prices change.

Exhibit A-27 shows the appraised value, tax levy, current year levy collected before discounts, delinquent taxes collected, and penalty and interest collected for 1999–2000 through 2003–04. ATISD has total tax collections ranging from 99.8 to 100.4 percent of the levy. Appraised values have more than doubled during this period.

The FASRG requires school districts to account for expenditures by the type or object of the expenditure. **Exhibit A-28** presents budgeted expenditure information as a percent of total for ATISD, its peer districts, and state by object code description for 2004–05. ATISD budgets the largest percentage of its expenditures for payroll. These

expenditures do not include wealth equalization payments.

Chapter 1 of the FASRG also mandates the use of function codes by school districts to track expenditures for different school district operations. **Exhibit A-29** presents budgeted expenditures per enrolled student by function code for ATISD and its peer districts. These budgeted expenditures include payroll, contracted services, supplies, other operating, debt service, and capital outlay object codes. The other expenditures line item includes the debt services and capital outlay object codes and any other functional code not listed in the table to equal to total expenditures. These expenditures do not include wealth equalization payments.

ATISD budgets 47.7 percent of its total expenditures for instruction compared to the state average of 56.3 percent. The functional expenditures presented in **Exhibit A-30** include the payroll costs, professional and contracted services, supplies and materials, and other operating costs object codes. These expenditures do not include wealth equalization payments.

**EXHIBIT A-27
ATISD TAX COLLECTIONS
1999–2000 THROUGH 2003–04**

DESCRIPTION	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	PERCENT INCREASE FROM 1999–2000
Appraised Value	\$100,941,253	\$105,619,411	\$169,867,921	\$159,335,158	\$208,445,030	106.5%
Tax Levy	\$1,615,060	\$1,689,911	\$1,670,651	\$2,495,507	\$3,059,348	89.4%
Current Taxes	\$1,590,064	\$1,661,969	\$1,653,466	\$2,463,268	\$3,040,762	91.2%
Delinquent Taxes	\$12,724	\$16,908	\$10,813	\$17,317	\$20,221	58.9%
Penalties and Interest	\$9,533	\$8,730	\$6,597	\$10,079	\$9,559	.0027%
Total Collections	\$1,612,321	\$1,687,607	\$1,670,876	\$2,490,664	\$3,070,542	90.6%
Percent of Total Collections to Levy	99.8%	99.9%	100.0%	99.8%	100.4%	0.6%

SOURCE: Austwell-Tivoli ISD, annual audits, 1999–2000 through 2003–04.

**EXHIBIT A-28
EXPENDITURE BY OBJECT
ATISD, PEER DISTRICTS, AND STATE
2004–05**

OBJECT	BUENA VISTA	PRINGLE-MORSE	AUSTWELL-TIVOLI	MCMULLEN COUNTY	MATAGORDA	STATE
Payroll Costs	71.4%	68.9%	67.0%	58.9%	35.6%	72.6%
Other Operating	25.6%	24.6%	22.3%	22.1%	62.3%	16.4%
Debt Service	0.0%	0.0%	4.8%	12.1%	2.1%	9.6%
Capital Outlay	3.0%	6.5%	5.9%	6.8%	0.0%	1.4%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS, 2004–05.

**EXHIBIT A-29
PER STUDENT EXPENDITURE BY FUNCTION
2003-04**

FUNCTION (CODE)	MATAGORDA	MCMULLEN COUNTY	PRINGLE-MORSE	AUSTWELL-TIVOLI	BUENA VISTA	STATE
Instruction (11)	\$8,916	\$5,997	\$8,467	\$5,988	\$6,822	\$3,677
Instructional Resources and Media Services (12)	\$56	\$408	\$402	\$155	\$116	\$120
Curriculum and Staff Development (13)	\$1	\$36	\$82	\$59	\$19	\$71
Instructional Leadership (21)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$4	\$0	\$85
School Leadership (23)	\$1,328	\$717	\$674	\$1,206	\$596	\$394
Guidance, Counseling and Evaluation Services (31)	\$0	\$399	\$1	\$128	\$36	\$214
Social Work Services (32)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$14
Health Services (33)	\$0	\$154	\$111	\$5	\$2	\$66
Student Transportation (34)	\$733	\$706	\$1,003	\$235	\$442	\$195
Food Services (35)	\$917	\$787	\$889	\$579	\$639	\$373
Co-/Extracurricular Activities (36)	\$3	\$647	\$177	\$365	\$633	\$172
General Administration (41)	\$15,319	\$1,397	\$1,809	\$1,602	\$1,549	\$262
Plant Maintenance/Operations (51)	\$2,586	\$1,713	\$1,672	\$1,848	\$2,029	\$745
Security and Monitoring Services (52)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$10	\$0	\$51
Data Processing Services (53)	\$59	\$900	\$677	\$366	\$229	\$87
Other Expenditures	\$654	\$3,316	\$1,111	\$1,505	\$408	\$832
Total	\$30,572	\$17,177	\$17,075	\$14,055	\$13,520	\$7,358

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS, 2004-05.

**EXHIBIT A-30
OPERATING EXPENDITURE FUNCTIONS
ATISD AND STATE
2004-05**

FUNCTION (CODE)	ATISD		STATE	
	BUDGET	PERCENT OF BUDGET	BUDGET	PERCENT OF BUDGET
Instruction (11, 95)	\$940,100	47.7%	\$16,118,450,371	56.3%
Instructional-Related Services (12)	\$24,277	1.2%	\$525,318,107	1.8%
Curriculum/Staff Development (13)	\$9,259	0.5%	\$310,860,548	1.1%
Instructional Leadership (21)	\$700	0.0%	\$371,395,976	1.3%
School Leadership (23)	\$189,276	9.6%	\$1,727,503,540	6.0%
Guidance Counseling Services (31)	\$20,091	1.0%	\$937,725,775	3.3%
Social Work Services (32)	\$0	0.0%	\$63,285,165	0.2%
Health Services (33)	\$825	0.0%	\$287,602,279	1.0%
Student Transportation (34)	\$36,850	1.9%	\$855,072,756	3.0%
Food Services (35)	\$90,850	4.6%	\$1,633,707,456	5.7%
Co-curricular/Extracurricular Activities (36)	\$57,350	2.9%	\$754,237,672	2.6%
Central Administration (41, 92)	\$251,450	12.8%	\$1,149,010,142	4.1%
Plant Maintenance and Operations (51)	\$290,190	14.7%	\$3,266,349,808	11.4%
Security and Monitoring Services (52)	\$1,500	0.1%	\$222,924,019	0.8%
Data Processing Services (53)	\$57,400	2.9%	\$383,462,260	1.3%
Total	\$1,970,118	100.0%	\$28,607,396,924	100.0%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS, 2004-05.

The 2001 Legislature enacted SB 218, which requires the implementation of a financial accountability rating system. In compliance with this mandate, TEA established the School Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas (School FIRST). In 2003–04, the district published an annual report describing its financial performance and discussed the report at a public hearing on September 20, 2004.

ATISD received a superior achievement rating on the 2003 School FIRST accountability program. It ranked favorably on 20 of the 21 criteria in the system. The only criterion for which the district did not receive a favorable rating was the percentage spent on instruction.

External audits provide a review of the district's compliance with established standards and practices. The external audit provides an annual financial and compliance report, an examination of the expenditure of federal funds, and a report to management on internal accounting controls.

The Texas Education Code (TEC) §44.008 requires school districts to undergo an annual external audit performed by a certified public accountant. The scope of the external audit is financial in nature and designed to provide reasonable assurance that the financial statements fairly present the financial condition of the district. The audits cover the period between September 1 of the previous calendar year and August 31 of the next year. All of the audit reports stated that the financial statements were a fair representation of the district's financial condition and did not report any material weaknesses in internal controls.

INVESTMENTS

Effective cash management practices ensure that districts collect funds in a timely manner and that they invest them in secure instruments with maximum earning potential. Districts must safeguard cash and investments against the risk of loss by holding cash in accounts guaranteed by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC). For amounts more than the FDIC coverage, the institution should provide a depository bond or pledge securities to the district in an amount equal to or greater than the amount exceeding FDIC coverage. International Bank of Commerce (IBC) pledges securities held in safekeeping by the Federal Reserve Bank for deposits in excess of FDIC coverage.

The maturity of the investments should match the fluctuating cash flow demands of the district. Effective cash management provides the district with additional revenue to fund essential programs and operations by providing market rates of return on the

maximum amount of cash not needed to fund immediate needs.

Texas school districts must comply with the Texas Education Code (TEC) Chapter 45 and Subchapter G in the selection of a depository bank. ATISD renewed its depository agreement with IBC for the 2003–05 biennium in accordance with the TEC. The original depository contract was the result of the district's bid for depository services in 2000–01. It awarded IBC the depository contract for the 2005–07 biennium after the district evaluated the four bids received.

The district complies with all provisions of the Public Funds Investment Act (PFIA). The PFIA, Chapter 2256 of the Texas Government Code, governs the investment of governmental funds. ATISD meets these requirements with their investment policy, an investment strategy approved by the board, an annual review of the policy and strategy by the board, investment officer designated by the board, investment policy presented to and acknowledged by IBC, an annual compliance audit, investment officer attending required training, and investment reports submitted to the board monthly.

The district invests in certificates of deposit (CD) with its depository bank. **Exhibit A-31** presents ATISD's cash and investments as of April 30, 2005. IBC pledged \$5.6 million in securities in ATISD's name at the Federal Reserve Bank to secure cash and investment. The interest rate on CDs is the stated rate, and the interest rate on the checking accounts is calculated based on the average ledger balance for the month.

INSURANCE

An effective risk management program provides a safe environment for students and employees, minimizes workers' compensation claims and costs, controls costs by ensuring that the district is adequately protected against significant losses with the lowest possible insurance premiums, and provides sound and cost-effective health insurance for district employees. To ensure the district protects itself against significant losses, it must have accurate insurable values for district property and the ability to document all property it owns. Annual appraisals of property values and inventories of fixed assets provide for accurate insurable values and documentation of district property. Districts assess hazards and implement programs to reduce those hazards to minimize claims and reduce premiums for workers' compensation.

ATISD insures itself against losses through various insurance companies. **Exhibit A-32** presents the coverage for property, electronic equipment, general

**EXHIBIT A-31
ATISD CASH AND INVESTMENTS
APRIL 2005**

ACCOUNT	PURCHASE DATE	MATURITY DATE	INTEREST RATE	FUND	AMOUNT
Certificate of Deposit	2/11/2005	5/13/2005	2.56%	General	\$300,000
Certificate of Deposit	3/28/2005	5/27/2005	2.52%	General	\$1,000,000
Certificate of Deposit	4/19/2005	5/21/2005	2.64%	General	\$550,000
Certificate of Deposit	4/28/2005	6/28/2005	2.90%	General	\$300,000
Checking			2.69%	General	\$465,318
Certificate of Deposit	3/14/2005	5/14/2005	2.77%	Debt Service	\$32,000
Checking			2.61%	Debt Service	\$5,564
Total					\$2,652,882

SOURCE: Austwell-Tivoli ISD, Superintendent's office, investment report and bank statements, April 2005.

**EXHIBIT A-32
ATISD INSURANCE COVERAGE
2004-05**

COVERAGE	COMPANY	LIMIT	DEDUCTIBLE	COST
Buildings and Contents	Allstate	\$5,843,987	\$25,000	\$40,473
Electronic Equipment	Allstate	\$24,410	\$1,000	\$300
General Liability	TASB	\$1,000,000	\$1,000	\$1,188
Educators' Legal Liability	TASB	\$1,000,000	\$1,000	\$4,375
Automobile Liability	Trident	\$500,000	\$1,000	\$3,745
Automobile Physical Damage	Trident	\$500,000	\$1,000	Included
Total				\$50,081

SOURCE: Austwell-Tivoli ISD, Superintendent's office, coverage documents declarations, May 2005.

liability, educators' legal liability, and automobile liability and physical damage.

The district also purchases coverage for unemployment insurance and workers' compensation insurance from TASB. The district provides athletic/student accident insurance for students involved in University Interscholastic League (UIL) activities at a cost of \$3,715 annually and a catastrophic coverage policy for students involved in sports at a cost of \$500 annually.

The district provides a contribution of \$240 per month toward health insurance coverage for all full-time employees through TRS-Active Care, and employees may add dependents to the coverage at their cost. The district provides a \$10,000 life insurance policy for each full-time employee. Other insurances are available to employees at their expense.

PURCHASING AND WAREHOUSING

Purchasing includes activities related to obtaining materials, supplies, equipment, and services required to operate schools and serve educational programs. Efficient purchasing requires management processes that ensure a district purchases materials, supplies, equipment, and services vital to the school's mission

in the right quantity from a competitive source, delivers them to the correct location in a timely manner, and stores them in a secure location. Districts must obtain goods and services according to the specifications of the users at the lowest possible cost and within state laws and regulations, including the state's general government purchasing and bid requirements and the Texas Education Code.

ORGANIZATION

ATISD operates a centralized purchasing system. The superintendent is responsible for developing, reviewing, and evaluating bids, approving purchase orders, and supervising the processing of checks to vendors. ATISD is a member of the Region 3 purchasing cooperative and uses the awarded vendors for purchasing items available through the cooperative.

PURCHASING WITH CREDIT CARDS

ATISD has nine different credit cards from local and national vendors, including Texaco, Office Depot, Wal-Mart, Hobby Lobby, and HEB Food Store. The schools and departments can use either a purchase order or one of the district's credit cards. When utilizing the credit cards, staff checks the appropriate card out of the superintendent's office, makes the

purchase, and then returns the card with receipt to the superintendent’s office.

With vendor-specific cards, the user automatically gets the allowed tax exemption. With a nationally recognized card, such as VISA or MasterCard, the district has to first pay the tax and then file for reimbursement or have the user remember to ask for the tax exemption each time the card is used.

The district does not carry month-to-month balances on any of its nine cards, so it does not pay interest.

TECHNOLOGY

ATISD currently has 125 computers available for students and staff, with an additional number of peripheral devices, such as printers, scanners, digital cameras, and so forth. **Exhibit A-33** provides a breakdown of the district’s current technology infrastructure. Some of these resources are primarily available for staff use, but because they are located in classrooms, they could also be available to students.

**EXHIBIT A-33
NUMBER AND TYPES OF ATISD
TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES
2004–05**

CATEGORY	NUMBER AVAILABLE
Windows® 98 Desktop Computers	25
Windows® 98 Laptop Computers	20
Windows® XP Desktop Computers	40
Windows® XP Laptop Computers	20
Windows® 2000 Desktop Computers	10
Linux® Desktop Computers	10
Handheld Computers	103
Dana® Portable Computers	42
Laser Printers	18
Inkjet Printers	30
Large Format Printer	1
LCD Projectors	7
Digital Cameras	6
Digital Video Cameras	2
Flatbed Scanners	4
Total Number Of Devices	338

SOURCE: Austwell-Tivoli ISD, Technology Plan, 2004–05.

TECHNOLOGY DEPLOYMENT

The district maintains a T-1 circuit to provide data and video services. It also has an Internet service provider with an unlimited number of nodes to provide Internet access. All ATISD classrooms in both schools have direct connections to the Internet. In addition, the district has several hotspots for wireless connection to the Internet.

In 2003–04, the district purchased Palm® handheld computers for every student in grades 7 through 12. While there have been some implementation issues with these handheld computers, teachers are able to use them in a variety of ways. In two classrooms, teachers have beamed quizzes to students through the handheld computers. Students respond to the quiz and submit their answers wirelessly. The teacher can then compile instant results and determine whether further instruction or remediation is necessary in that particular subject area.

Another classroom of students has used the laptops to program robots on loan from Region 3 for a science laboratory. Students worked in pairs to attempt to program the robots to follow a specific course outlined on paper. Students in kindergarten completed a digital classroom project, studying nouns and verbs. For the capstone exercise of this project, students created Microsoft® PowerPoint® presentations. Elementary students are also heavy users of the district’s AlphaSmart® Dana devices, which are rugged versions of a laptop computer. Students use them for word processing, spreadsheets, and electronic presentations. ATISD kindergartners use them as often as twice a week during some curriculum areas.

Beyond the Microsoft® Office suite of products, the district provides additional software resources to students. It has a school license for Accelerated Reader™ and two levels of the Lightspan Achieve Now™ software for use on both playstations and PCs. ATISD has a 60-user license for Inspiration® and a 35-user license for Kidspiration®. All of these software packages are standards-based for which studies have shown improved student learning.

TECHNOLOGY COORDINATOR

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) requires that students be technology-literate by the end of the eighth grade. The required Texas Technology Applications enrichment curriculum supports these requirements by focusing on teaching, learning, and integration of digital technology skills across the curriculum at all grade levels. Only half of the district’s students have access to a computer at home, so making technology available in the classroom is critical for a significant portion of the ATISD student body.

Until August 2005, the district had not had a full-time technology support position. To support all of its technology, ATISD paid one teacher a stipend of \$2,500 plus \$2,340.11 for an extra 10 days’ work, for a total of \$4,840.11 per year to serve as the technology coordinator. The teacher had two free class periods per day (out of seven) to support

instructional and administrative technology at both the elementary and secondary schools and the central office. The teacher reported that he spent far more time than two periods per day supporting both administrative and instructional technology needs in the district. However, even with the large amount of time spent, he did not believe the district received adequate support. Teachers and administrators noted that many of the computers in the student computer lab were not working and that the technology coordinator did not have time to fix them.

The International Society for Technology Education Technology Support (ISTE) Index includes a rubric for determining staffing needs for information technology technicians, as shown in **Exhibit A-34**. Based on its 2004–05 staffing ratio of 125 school computers per 0.28 FTE technician (an effective ratio of 446 computers to one full-time technician), ATISD fell into the “emergent” category for technician staffing.

In the summer of 2005 the district created a full-time technology coordinator position. This coordinator will assume the duties previously completed by the part-time technology coordinator but will also provide support for greater technology integration in the classroom. The full-time coordinator will oversee educational technology for students and staff development and technical assistance to teachers. The coordinator will ensure that teachers receive adequate training in the integration of technology across the curriculum and that students are technology-literate.

**CHAPTER 4
SUPPORT SERVICES**

FEDERAL LUNCH PROGRAM

In 2003–04, federal spending for the National School Lunch Program totaled \$6.5 billion. This federal support comes in the form of a cash reimbursement for each meal served, depending on the economic status of the student. The poorest students qualify for free lunches, while others qualify for reduced-price lunches. **Exhibit A-35** shows the 2004–05 school year basic federal reimbursement rates for breakfast and lunch.

**EXHIBIT A-34
INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR TECHNOLOGY IN EDUCATION (ISTE)
TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT INDEX FOR TECHNICIAN STAFFING**

INDEX AREA	SCHOOL DIVISION STAGE OF TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT			
	EMERGENT	ISLANDS	INTEGRATED	EXEMPLARY
Technician Staffing to Computer Ratio (number of computers: technician)	250:1	150:1 to 250:1	75:1 to 150:1	Less than 75:1

SOURCE: International Society for Technology in Education, www.iste.org, March 2005.

MEAL PRICES

ATISD charges elementary students \$0.75 for breakfast and \$1 for lunch. It charges high school students \$1 for breakfast and \$1.50 for lunch. Guests pay \$2 for breakfast and \$3 for lunch.

Students may prepay for any number of meals. Teachers may purchase lunch “on account” and pay for their meals monthly.

The district is implementing a plan, decided in June 2005, to move to the Universal Feeding program, also known as Provision 3. Under this program, all students will receive breakfast and lunch for free. The district will receive a federal payment equal to its reimbursement for free meals in 2004–05. ATISD will use general funds to cover the remaining costs previously paid by full-price and reduced-price meal revenues.

BREAKFAST AND LUNCH PARTICIPATION

Exhibit A-36 compares average student participation in the ATISD breakfast and lunch programs to its peers for a three-year period, from July 2001 through June 2004. ATISD’s breakfast participation rate was well below that of each of its peers and almost 27 percentage points below the peer average. The district’s lunch participation rate was also below each of its peers and more than 15 percentage points below the peer average.

Exhibits A-37 and A-38 compare ATISD’s student participation rates in the breakfast and lunch programs compared with its peers for 2003–04. ATISD’s breakfast participation was the lowest of the peer group for every month, and in five of the 10 months, its lunch participation was the lowest of the group.

The cook estimated that an average of 45 students eat school breakfast daily, most of them elementary school children. **Exhibit A-39** shows the daily fluctuation for elementary students for December 2004 through March 2005.

Exhibit A-40 shows average monthly ATISD participation in breakfast and lunch by school. Participation among high school students is much

**EXHIBIT A-35
NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH AND
BREAKFAST REIMBURSEMENT RATES
2004–05**

STUDENT CATEGORY	LUNCH	BREAKFAST
Free Lunches	\$2.24	\$1.23
Reduced-Price Lunches	\$1.84	\$0.93
Paid Lunches	\$0.21	\$0.23

SOURCE: United States Department of Agriculture,
<http://www.fns.usda.gov>, April 2005.

**EXHIBIT A-36
STUDENT LUNCH AND BREAKFAST
PARTICIPATION RATES
ATISD AND PEER DISTRICTS
JULY 2001 THROUGH JUNE 2004**

DISTRICT	AVERAGE BREAKFAST PARTICIPATION	AVERAGE LUNCH PARTICIPATION
Austwell- Tivoli	27.32%	61.86%
Buena Vista	46.15%	76.07%
McMullen County	47.37%	70.18%
Pringle- Morse	69.09%	86.36%
PEER AVERAGE	54.20%	77.54%

NOTE: Matagorda ISD is not included because the district did not respond to requests for data.

SOURCE: Texas Department of Agriculture, April 2005.

lower than among elementary students. Among the elementary students eating breakfast, most qualify for free or reduced-price meals. Among the elementary students eating lunch, slightly more than half qualify for free or reduced-price meals. Approximately 30 elementary students per day pay the full-price for lunch. Among the high school students eating ATISD meals, approximately two-thirds qualify for free or reduced-price meals.

The ATISD cook is working with the technology coordinator to implement menu development software and hopes to begin using it in August 2005. The cook has also worked with staff at Region 3 to introduce greater menu variety. She has discussed the possibility of implementing student tasting sessions to identify popular new items.

COORDINATED REVIEW EFFORT

The Texas Department of Agriculture conducts Coordinated Review Efforts (CREs) every five years. The Department of Agriculture completed a CRE of the ATISD child nutrition program on December 11, 2003.

In its review, the Department of Agriculture team noted that ATISD had very organized food service

records, particularly the free and reduced-price applications, which contained no errors in the production records.

The review had two non-fiscal findings, which were that ATISD needed to complete food production records of the meals served and claimed for reimbursement at the high school; and that it did not correctly record the total amount of food prepared on three days.

The district submitted a Corrective Action Plan for these deficiencies, which the Department of Agriculture accepted, closing the CRE.

VENDING MACHINES

ATISD operates two vending machines on the high school campus. They are located in a covered outdoor area that is not adjacent to the cafeteria. The vending machines are on a timer and do not allow purchases before the end of the school day.

FACILITIES ORGANIZATION

The director of Maintenance is responsible for maintaining the district facilities. This position is responsible for the following tasks:

- making minor facility repairs;
- performing minor vehicle maintenance tasks;
- securing and coordinating the outside contractors for renovation and repairs the director cannot make;
- mowing;
- weeding the campuses;
- replacing light bulbs and air conditioning filters; and
- picking up and burning all the trash.

The director of Maintenance supervises the work of the part-time custodian who only works in the cafeteria during lunch periods. The building principals supervise the two full-time custodians who are responsible for daily cleaning of the facilities.

CUSTODIAL STAFFING

The full-time custodians jointly clean more than 57,000 square feet per day.

All parents and students who responded to the LBB surveys conducted as part of this review agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "Schools are clean." Nearly all teachers, 88.9 percent, said the same.

The Association of School Business Officials International (ASBO) bases custodial staffing on an

**EXHIBIT A-37
STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN THE SCHOOL BREAKFAST PROGRAM
ATISD AND PEER DISTRICTS
2003-04**

MONTH	AUSTWELL-TIVOLI	BUENA VISTA	MATAGORDA	MCMULLEN COUNTY	PRINGLE-MORSE	PEER AVERAGE
August 2003	27.95%	51.49%	40.82%	57.96%	71.91%	55.55%
September 2003	33.54%	50.50%	50.00%	54.19%	80.00%	58.67%
October 2003	33.54%	50.49%	69.12%	53.25%	85.11%	64.49%
November 2003	39.13%	51.46%	46.81%	52.29%	80.00%	57.64%
December 2003	33.54%	56.48%	44.21%	50.63%	78.13%	57.36%
January 2004	32.30%	54.21%	43.75%	43.31%	82.65%	55.98%
February 2004	32.92%	57.43%	67.69%	49.69%	81.63%	64.11%
March 2004	34.78%	52.78%	72.73%	54.72%	79.80%	65.01%
April 2004	29.81%	56.48%	64.62%	54.66%	80.00%	63.94%
May 2004	30.43%	50.93%	66.15%	53.70%	77.55%	62.08%

SOURCE: Texas Department of Agriculture, April 2005.

**EXHIBIT A-38
STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN THE SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM
ATISD AND PEER DISTRICTS
2003-04**

MONTH	AUSTWELL-TIVOLI	BUENA VISTA	MATAGORDA	MCMULLEN COUNTY	PRINGLE-MORSE	PEER AVERAGE
August 2003	72.67%	89.11%	58.16%	90.45%	95.51%	83.31%
September 2003	78.26%	83.17%	66.67%	77.42%	95.79%	80.76%
October 2003	72.67%	83.50%	89.71%	78.57%	97.87%	87.41%
November 2003	70.81%	78.64%	62.77%	77.78%	85.26%	76.11%
December 2003	73.29%	78.70%	63.16%	78.75%	95.83%	79.11%
January 2004	70.19%	79.44%	64.58%	61.15%	96.94%	75.53%
February 2004	72.05%	84.16%	92.31%	73.29%	93.88%	85.91%
March 2004	69.57%	78.96%	93.94%	76.73%	92.93%	85.64%
April 2004	65.84%	86.11%	93.85%	74.53%	94.00%	87.12%
May 2004	63.98%	77.78%	92.31%	74.07%	94.90%	84.77%

SOURCE: Texas Department of Agriculture, April 2005.

**EXHIBIT A-39
VARIATION IN ATISD ELEMENTARY LUNCH PARTICIPATION
2004-05**

MONTH	HIGHEST NUMBER OF ELEMENTARY STUDENTS EATING LUNCH	LOWEST NUMBER OF ELEMENTARY STUDENTS EATING LUNCH	VARIATION
December 2004	76	68	8
January 2005	75	62	13
February 2005	80	65	15
March 2005	95	67	28

SOURCE: Austwell-Tivoli ISD, Food Services records, May 2005.

EXHIBIT A-40
RECENT PARTICIPATION RATES IN ATISD BREAKFAST AND LUNCH PROGRAMS
2004-05

MONTH	AVERAGE NUMBER OF ELEMENTARY STUDENTS EATING BREAKFAST	AVERAGE NUMBER OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS EATING BREAKFAST	AVERAGE NUMBER OF ELEMENTARY STUDENTS EATING LUNCH	AVERAGE NUMBER OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS EATING LUNCH
December 2004	35.4	6.0	70.9	45.8
January 2005	35.5	7.9	70.8	42.2
February 2005	39.1	9.5	73.2	39.6
March 2005	41.4	9.2	75.3	34.2

SOURCE: Austwell-Tivoli ISD, Food Services records, May 2005.

expected average productivity of 2,500 square feet per staff-hour of work, for an eight-hour cleaning period, which equals 20,000 square feet per custodian.

One custodian cleans the high school, the central office, the library, and the theater room. The other cleans the elementary school and the music portable. They jointly clean the gymnasium, the weight room, mop the cafeteria floor, and help with dishwashing during the lunch periods.

Exhibit A-41 shows the facilities and square footage cleaned by district's two full-time custodians. Each custodian cleans an average of 28,722 square feet per day.

EXHIBIT A-41
ATISD FACILITIES CLEANED BY FULL-TIME CUSTODIANS
2004-05

FACILITY	SQUARE FOOTAGE
High School	27,120
Elementary School	14,280
Library	2,000
Central Office	6,076
Theater Room	4,800
Weight Room	2,400
Music/Health/Parent Involvement Portable	768
Total	57,444

SOURCE: Austwell-Tivoli ISD, Superintendent's Office, May 2005.

TRANSPORTATION ORGANIZATION

All seven bus drivers have other full-time jobs in the district. Three of them have contracted positions with the district, the other four do not have district contracts.

The district does not have any mechanics and relies on the dealership for maintenance.

TRANSPORTATION BUS FLEET

ATISD has a fleet of four buses, two sport utility vehicles, and one van available for student transportation.

Exhibit A-42 compares ATISD's fleet of buses and other vehicles to its peers.

TRANSPORTATION LINEAR DENSITY

Texas school districts receive state funding for transportation based on their linear density. Linear density is calculated by dividing the number of route miles driven by the number of students transported on regular routes, counting only those students who live more than two miles away from their school or who live on designated hazardous routes. TEA has defined seven linear density groups and allocates per-mile reimbursements based on each group.

Exhibit A-43 shows the seven categories as defined by TEA. School districts receive more in state reimbursements as their linear density increases, which encourages districts to design efficient routes with full buses. Reimbursable miles are those miles driven on routes with students on board. Deadhead miles, or miles driven without students on board, and maintenance miles, also driven without students, are not reimbursable. TEA evaluates its group assignments every two years by recalculating linear densities.

The calculation of linear density does not count students who live within two miles of their schools but who receive bus transportation, unless they live along a route designated by the district's board as being too hazardous for the students to walk. For example, if a student must cross a major road without a crossing signal, a hazardous condition exists. School districts may apply to TEA for additional reimbursement funds of up to 10 percent of their regular transportation allotment for busing students on designated hazardous routes. Districts count students who live on hazardous routes in the same manner as students who live more than two miles away including them in the linear density calculation.

BUS EVACUATION DRILLS

The Texas Department of Public Safety strongly recommends bus evacuation drills to ensure student safety in the event of an accident.

**EXHIBIT A-42
ATISD AND PEER TRANSPORTATION FLEETS
2003-04**

DISTRICT	NUMBER OF BUSES BY AGE			TOTAL BUSES	NUMBER PASSENGER CARS	NUMBER PASSENGER VANS	TOTAL VEHICLES
	1-5 YRS	6-10 YRS	>10 YEAR				
Austwell-Tivoli	1	1	1	3	2	1	6
Buena Vista	3	1	1	5	1	3	9
Matagorda	2	0	0	2	1	0	3
McMullen County	5	2	4	11	2	0	13

NOTE: Pringle-Morse ISD not shown due to data submission problems to the Texas Education Agency, PEIMS.
SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, School Transportation Operations Reports, 2003-04.

Exhibit A-44 compares the frequency of bus evacuation drills for ATISD and the peer districts.

The district has three non-bus vehicles available for extracurricular student transportation. Exhibit A-45 provides a breakdown of the number of athletic and other extracurricular trips by month for the district and the number of times the district used a bus or other vehicle to transport students. The total number of trips does not match the total number of times the district used a bus or other vehicle because some trips required more than one vehicle. As the exhibit shows, the district most often uses its passenger vans and cars for extracurricular trips.

SAFETY AND SECURITY ORGANIZATION

The superintendent and building principals are primarily responsible for enforcing safety and security policies, developing crisis response plans,

**EXHIBIT A-43
STATE LINEAR DENSITY REIMBURSEMENT FOR REGULAR BUS ROUTES**

CATEGORY	LINEAR DENSITY RANGE	REIMBURSEMENT PER MILE
1	.000-.399	\$0.68
2	.400-.649	\$0.79
3	.650-.899	\$0.88
4	.900-1.149	\$0.97
5	1.150-1.649	\$1.11
6	1.650-2.399	\$1.25
7	2.400-9.999	\$1.43

SOURCE: Texas Education Code, Article III, Section 1.

**EXHIBIT A-44
BUS EVACUATION DRILLS ATISD AND PEER DISTRICTS
2004-05**

DISTRICT	BUS EVACUATION DRILL FREQUENCY
Austwell-Tivoli	Twice per year
Buena Vista	Twice per year
Matagorda	Once per year
McMullen County	Twice per year
Pringle-Morse	Once per year

SOURCE: Austwell-Tivoli ISD, Superintendent's office, and fax survey of peer districts, May 2005.

leading district response to any actual crises, and providing safe and secure campuses.

SAFETY AND SECURITY POLICIES

The ATISD board has adopted a number of policies related to safety and security, including policies that address the following topics:

- bomb threat procedures;
- closing of school;
- disturbances, disorders, or demonstrations;
- fire drills and safety precautions;
- motor vehicle rules;
- narcotics, dangerous drugs, or alcohol;
- peace officers;
- playgrounds;
- safety inspection for hazards;
- safety program;
- school grounds supervision;
- trespassers; and
- vandalism and burglary.

ATISD has responded to the requirements of Chapter 37 of the Texas Education Code and developed a *Student Code of Conduct*. The district has also developed a *Crisis Management Manual*, outlining procedures of what to do in case of an emergency, such as bomb threats, hurricanes, and tornadoes.

The district's Employee Handbook includes this statement regarding safety:

The district has developed and promotes a comprehensive program to ensure the safety of its employees, students, and visitors. The safety program includes guidelines and procedures for responding to emergencies and activities to help reduce the frequency of accidents and injuries. To prevent or minimize injuries to employees, coworkers, and students and to protect and conserve district equipment, employees must comply with the following requirements:

- Observe all safety rules.

EXHIBIT A-45
ATISD EXTRACURRICULAR TRIPS IN BUSES AND OTHER VEHICLES
2004–05

MONTH	ATHLETIC TRIPS	OTHER TRIPS	TOTAL TRIPS	TIMES BUS USED	TIMES VAN OR CAR USED
May 2004	2	14	16	4	12
June 2004	0	0	0	0	0
July 2004	0	1	1	0	1
August 2004	0	1	1	0	1
September 2004	2	5	7	1	7
October 2004	1	14	15	1	14
November 2004	8	12	20	8	12
December 2004	8	6	14	5	9
January 2005	7	5	12	3	9
February 2005	10	3	13	4	10
March 2005	10	9	19	6	14
April 2005	13	14	27	6	24
Total	61	84	145	38	113

SOURCE: Austwell-Tivoli ISD, Superintendent's officet, June 2005.

- *Keep work areas clean and orderly at all times.*
- *Immediately report all accidents to their supervisor.*
- *Operate only equipment or machines for which they have training and authorization.*

Employees must sign a form to acknowledge receipt and understanding of the handbook.

PHYSICAL SECURITY

The only security equipment used by ATISD is a motion-sensitive security system. Both the elementary and secondary buildings have movement detector security systems that notify assigned administrators regarding intrusions. The district does not have video cameras on campus.

Exhibit A-46 shows the district's spending on safety and security items from 2001–02 through 2003–04. These figures do not include the \$125 the district spends each year for unannounced visits by drug detection dogs, at a rate of \$125 per visit with five visits per year. [$\$125 \times 5 = \625] The local sheriff's office provides routine patrol.

EXHIBIT A-46
DISTRICT SPENDING ON SECURITY & MONITORING SERVICES
2001–02 THROUGH 2003–04

YEAR	TOTAL SPENT ON SAFETY & SECURITY	PERCENT OF DISTRICT BUDGET
2003–04	\$1,244	0.1%
2002–03	\$1,500	0.1%
2001–02	\$1,500	0.1%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, AEIS, 2001–02 through 2003–04.

Exhibit A-47 compares ATISD's spending on security monitoring with those of its peers for 2004–05. Although ATISD spends comparatively

EXHIBIT A-47
SPENDING ON SECURITY MONITORING
ATISD AND PEER DISTRICTS
2004–05

DISTRICT	ACTUAL EXPENDITURES ON SECURITY MONITORING	PERCENT OF TOTAL BUDGET
Austwell-Tivoli	\$1,259	0.1%
Buena Vista	\$0	0.0%
Matagorda	\$0	0.0%
McMullen	\$0	0.0%
Pringle-Morse	\$0	0.0%
State Total	\$206,439,567	0.7%

SOURCE: Texas Education Agency, PEIMS Actual All Funds, 2004–05.

more of its budget on security monitoring, it spends less than the statewide average of 0.7 percent.

In after-hours campus inspections, the review team found all exterior doors and windows locked. Several motion-sensitive lights around the campus provide a deterrent to thieves.

CRISIS MANAGEMENT MANUAL

The district has an up-to-date crisis manual.

ATISD board policy CKC (Local) states, "Each campus shall have emergency procedures focusing on safety for students and school personnel that can be implemented on short notice. The superintendent or designee shall develop a crisis management plan and update it yearly."

The district updated its Crisis Management Manual in May 2005. This handbook provides district personnel with procedures to follow in various kinds of emergencies, important phone numbers, and accident and reporting forms.

The handbook has two main sections titled: Building Level Crisis and Districtwide Crisis. Some of the subsections include:

- Bomb Threats/Telephone Threats
- Intruder in Building with a Weapon
- Parent Procedures for Picking Up Children in Crisis
- Shelter in Place (General)
- Shelter in Place/Crisis Kit
- Suicide Questionnaire
- Warning Signs of Violent Behavior and Possible Prevention Ideas
- Weather Closing
- Bus and Auto Accidents on Trips Away from District
- Hurricane Disaster Planning
- Tornado Disaster Planning

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

The district has a Student Code of Conduct.

Texas law requires each school district to prepare a Student Code of Conduct to provide students clear behavior standards. Section 37.001 of the Texas Education Code requires the district's school board, in consultation with the district's site-based decision-making committee, to adopt a Student Code of Conduct. The Student Code of Conduct must specify the circumstances in which the district may remove a student from a classroom, campus, or alternative program. It must also specify conditions authorizing or requiring an administrator to transfer a student to an alternative education program and the steps for student suspension. The Student Code of Conduct sets forth student rights and responsibilities while at school and school-related activities and the consequences for violating school rules.

ATISD based its Student Code of Conduct on the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) *Model Student Code of Conduct*. TASB created the model to assist each district in developing a local Student Code of Conduct. The TASB model referenced the legal requirements and offered suggestions to each district to include in their own Student Code of Conduct. ATISD began with this model and personalized it to develop its own code.

The ATISD Student Code of Conduct includes three main sections: Standards for Student Conduct, General Misconduct Violations, and Removal from the Regular Educational Setting. Within each of these sections, the district includes a two-column chart, listing the behaviors on one side and the consequences on the other. The bulk of the 20-page main document reviews details of the three ways in which the district may remove a student from the regular educational setting, either by suspension, placement in a Disciplinary Alternative Program, or expulsion. The manual has a glossary.

Both the student and parent must sign a form acknowledging receipt of the handbook and stating that they understand the handbook governs student behavior.

DRILLS AND SAFETY PROGRAMS

Currently, the ATISD schools conduct various safety drills including monthly fire drills; periodic tornado/bad weather drills; bus evacuation drills each semester; periodic drills on how to respond to chemical spills or hazardous materials; and periodic lockdown drills.

In the past year, the district had an actual lockdown incident. A nearby resident was conducting target practice on his property. As soon as the district staff heard the weapon firing, district staff responded properly and completed a lockdown of the campus.

ATISD staff attends safety training at Region 3, as well as the district-run "Safe and Drug-Free School" workshop held each year. Other safety programs include fire safety programs provided yearly by the Austwell and Tivoli Volunteer Fire Department. The Department of Public Safety also sponsors an annual Bike Rodeo to teach bicycle safety to all children.

COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSE COMMENTS

As part of the Austwell-Tivoli Independent School District (ATISD) performance review, a community open house was held at the district cafeteria on May 10, 2005. The Legislative Budget Board (LBB) invited parents, district staff and the general public to record their opinions regarding the ATISD education system. Participants commented on the 12 areas under review.

These comments do not necessarily reflect the findings or opinion of the LBB or review team. The following is a summary of the comments organized by focus area.

DISTRICT LEADERSHIP, ORGANIZATION, AND MANAGEMENT

- Principals need to listen to parents without drawing conclusions before matters are settled.
- Need more input on teacher evaluations.

FOOD SERVICES

- More foods that are pleasing to students.
- Variety of foods that students can pick from, not to serve the same foods week to week.
- Consideration for diabetes, and borderline diabetic dieting.
- Students don't like the food. They prefer to go home and have lunch there.

COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

- Hire an IT Director or Computer Aide for computer labs.
- Inventory of technology equipment needed. How accurate?
- Need more computers and updated software.

FACILITIES

- Hire another custodian. Not enough staff to keep the building the way they should.
- Need new equipment, i.e., wet-vac, buffer.
- Floor in gym needs repair. Bleachers went through the floor about 4 years ago. Fixed?
- Roof doesn't drain properly (high school) and ceiling leaks.
- Need training for the custodial department—chemicals, floors, etc.
- Facilities are well maintained.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Involvement is par for the size of the school.
- Adult classes, GED, Technology.
- More parent involvement in the school.
- School needs more phone lines.
- Some parents are afraid of the Principal.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

(no comments)

ASSET AND RISK MANAGEMENT

(no comments)

HUMAN RESOURCES

- More counselors are needed, i.e., for G/T students
- A counselor is needed

PURCHASING

- Need new kitchen equipment, i.e., dishwasher, steam tables, ovens.
- Need new tables for cafeteria.

TRANSPORTATION

- Why do we have 4 school buses? Money could be spent on kids.
- Need policy for drivers in accidents.
- Students need to be more responsible for taking care of transportation vehicles.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

- Being a small school, I think we are a little lax.
- More safety policies/drills.
- Houses across the street need to be checked for firearms.
- More drills on fire safety, tornado, hurricane, major hazard drill (HAZMAT).
- Need to take security measures, especially in restrooms. A year ago there was a fight inside a rest room (2 kids—5th grade). School didn't do anything at that time.
- Students are threatened by other students.

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

- Need more programs for students, i.e., homemaking, shop, business, career opportunities, music, gifted and talented (G/T).
- Need better math teacher.

- Agree with above points.... band/music. May need additional teachers aides for assistance for students not keeping up with the class.
- Incentives for possible drop-outs. Many students are not encouraged enough to follow through with studies.
- Need more computer programs. Computer teacher in Elementary School.
- Need to teach more classes on health issues. Kids need more knowledge on these subjects.
- Bad relation between principal and students.
- Lack of communication between principal and teachers

TEACHER SURVEY RESULTS

AUSTWELL-TIVOLI INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT MANAGEMENT AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW

(total number = 18)

Demographic Data

Totals may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

1.	GENDER (OPTIONAL)	MALE	FEMALE
		33.3%	66.7%

2.	ETHNICITY (OPTIONAL)	NO RESPONSE	AFRICAN AMERICAN	ANGLO	HISPANIC	ASIAN	OTHER
		0.0%	0.0%	61.1%	0.0%	33.3%	5.6%

3.	HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN EMPLOYED BY ATISD?	NO RESPONSE	1-5 YEARS	6-10 YEARS	11-15 YEARS	16—20 YEARS	20+ YEARS
		0.0%	55.6%	11.1%	11.1%	5.6%	16.7%

4.	WHAT GRADE(S) DO YOU TEACH THIS YEAR?		
	PRE-KINDERGARTEN	KINDERGARTEN	FIRST GRADE
	2.0%	4.0%	4.0%
	SECOND GRADE	THIRD GRADE	FOURTH GRADE
	4.0%	4.0%	4.0%
	FIFTH GRADE	SIXTH GRADE	SEVENTH GRADE
	5.0%	0.0%	8.0%
	EIGHTH GRADE	NINTH GRADE	TENTH GRADE
	8.0%	11.0%	11.0%
	ELEVENTH GRADE	TWELFTH GRADE	
	10.0%	9.0%	

A. DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1. The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.	0.0%	72.2%	27.8%	0.0%	0.0%
2. School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.	0.0%	83.3%	11.1%	0.0%	5.6%
3. School board members work well with the superintendent.	16.7%	55.6%	27.8%	0.0%	0.0%
4. The school board has a good image in the community.	11.1%	66.7%	16.7%	0.0%	5.6%
5. The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	22.2%	50.0%	16.7%	11.1%	0.0%
6. The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	27.8%	38.9%	16.7%	16.7%	0.0%
7. Central administration is efficient.	33.3%	55.6%	11.1%	0.0%	0.0%
8. Central administration supports the educational process.	38.9%	50.0%	11.1%	0.0%	0.0%
9. The morale of central administration staff is good.	38.9%	38.9%	16.7%	5.6%	0.0%

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.	44.4%	55.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
11. Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.	50.0%	44.4%	0.0%	5.6%	0.0%
12. The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%
13. The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	16.7%	44.4%	27.8%	11.1%	0.0%
14. The district provides curriculum guides for all grades and subjects.	33.3%	38.9%	11.1%	16.7%	0.0%
15. The curriculum guides are appropriately aligned and coordinated.	16.7%	44.4%	27.8%	11.1%	0.0%
16. The district's curriculum guides clearly outline what to teach and how to teach it.	11.1%	27.8%	38.9%	22.2%	0.0%
17. The district has effective educational programs for the following:					
a) Reading	22.2%	66.7%	5.6%	5.6%	0.0%
b) Writing	22.2%	61.1%	11.1%	5.6%	0.0%
c) Mathematics	27.8%	55.6%	16.7%	0.0%	0.0%
d) Science	16.7%	66.7%	11.1%	5.6%	0.0%
e) English or Language Arts	22.2%	72.2%	0.0%	5.6%	0.0%
f) Computer Instruction	22.2%	61.1%	5.6%	11.1%	0.0%
g) Social Studies (history or geography)	16.7%	61.1%	16.7%	5.6%	0.0%
h) Fine Arts	5.6%	55.6%	16.7%	22.2%	0.0%
i) Physical Education	27.8%	55.6%	16.7%	0.0%	0.0%
j) Business Education	22.2%	38.9%	38.9%	0.0%	0.0%
k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	0.0%	27.8%	44.4%	22.2%	5.6%
l) Foreign Language	11.1%	38.9%	27.8%	22.2%	0.0%
18. The district has effective special programs for the following:					
a) Library Service	0.0%	22.2%	16.7%	50.0%	11.1%
b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	5.6%	33.3%	33.3%	27.8%	0.0%
c) Special Education	5.6%	83.3%	0.0%	11.1%	0.0%
d) Head Start and Even Start programs	0.0%	16.7%	22.2%	50.0%	11.1%
e) Dyslexia program	16.7%	66.7%	16.7%	0.0%	0.0%
f) Student mentoring program	5.6%	27.8%	44.4%	16.7%	5.6%
g) Advanced placement program	5.6%	16.7%	50.0%	22.2%	5.6%
h) Literacy program	5.6%	22.2%	44.4%	27.8%	0.0%
i) Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	5.6%	22.2%	50.0%	16.7%	5.6%
j) Summer school programs	0.0%	5.6%	33.3%	55.6%	5.6%
k) Alternative education programs	0.0%	5.6%	38.9%	44.4%	11.1%
l) "English as a second language" program	11.1%	38.9%	38.9%	11.1%	0.0%
m) Career counseling program	0.0%	11.1%	66.7%	16.7%	5.6%

**B. EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT
(CONTINUED)**

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
n) College counseling program	5.6%	22.2%	50.0%	16.7%	5.6%
o) Counseling the parents of students	0.0%	16.7%	44.4%	33.3%	5.6%
p) Drop out prevention program	5.6%	11.1%	55.6%	16.7%	11.1%
19. Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	38.9%	44.4%	16.7%	0.0%	0.0%
20. Teacher turnover is low.	5.6%	55.6%	22.2%	11.1%	5.6%
21. Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	27.8%	66.7%	0.0%	5.6%	0.0%
22. Teacher openings are filled quickly.	5.6%	66.7%	16.7%	11.1%	0.0%
23. Teachers are rewarded for superior performance.	5.6%	27.8%	44.4%	22.2%	0.0%
24. Teachers are counseled about less than satisfactory performance.	11.1%	44.4%	44.4%	0.0%	0.0%
25. Teachers are knowledgeable in the subject areas they teach.	38.9%	55.6%	5.6%	0.0%	0.0%
26. All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs and art classes.	16.7%	72.2%	5.6%	5.6%	0.0%
27. The student-to-teacher ratio is reasonable.	77.8%	22.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
28. Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	61.1%	38.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

C. PERSONNEL

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
29. District salaries are competitive with similar positions in the job market.	22.2%	55.6%	11.1%	11.1%	0.0%
30. The district has a good and timely program for orienting new employees.	11.1%	66.7%	11.1%	11.1%	0.0%
31. Temporary workers are rarely used.	11.1%	44.4%	38.9%	0.0%	5.6%
32. The district successfully projects future staffing needs.	11.1%	61.1%	22.2%	5.6%	0.0%
33. The district has an effective employee recruitment program.	11.1%	44.4%	33.3%	11.1%	0.0%
34. The district operates an effective staff development program.	11.1%	66.7%	16.7%	0.0%	5.6%
35. District employees receive annual personnel evaluations.	55.6%	38.9%	5.6%	0.0%	0.0%
36. The district rewards competence and experience and spells out qualifications such as seniority and skill levels needed for promotion.	11.1%	33.3%	44.4%	5.6%	5.6%

C. PERSONNEL (CONTINUED)

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
37. Employees who perform below the standard of expectation are counseled appropriately and timely.	11.1%	38.9%	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%
38. The district has a fair and timely grievance process.	5.6%	50.0%	33.3%	5.6%	5.6%
39. The district's health insurance package meets my needs.	16.7%	66.7%	5.6%	5.6%	5.6%

D. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
40. The district regularly communicates with parents.	55.6%	44.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
41. The local television and radio stations regularly report school news and menus.	0.0%	16.7%	66.7%	5.6%	11.1%
42. Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.	0.0%	55.6%	33.3%	5.6%	5.6%
43. District facilities are open for community use.	22.2%	55.6%	22.2%	0.0%	0.0%

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.	11.1%	50.0%	33.3%	5.6%	0.0%
45. Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff, and the board provide input into facility planning.	5.6%	61.1%	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%
46. The architect and construction managers are selected objectively and impersonally.	0.0%	55.6%	44.4%	0.0%	0.0%
47. The quality of new construction is excellent.	5.6%	33.3%	44.4%	16.7%	0.0%
48. Schools are clean.	33.3%	55.6%	5.6%	5.6%	0.0%
49. Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	27.8%	50.0%	11.1%	11.1%	0.0%
50. Repairs are made in a timely manner.	27.8%	55.6%	11.1%	5.6%	0.0%
51. Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	33.3%	44.4%	22.2%	0.0%	0.0%

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 teachers.	22.2%	50.0%	22.2%	5.6%	0.0%
53. Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	16.7%	50.0%	27.8%	5.6%	0.0%
54. Financial resources are allocated fairly and equitably at my school.	22.2%	66.7%	11.1%	0.0%	0.0%

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.	22.2%	55.6%	16.7%	5.6%	0.0%
56. Purchasing acquires the highest quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.	16.7%	44.4%	27.8%	11.1%	0.0%
57. Purchasing processes are not cumbersome for the requestor.	16.7%	66.7%	11.1%	5.6%	0.0%
58. Vendors are selected competitively.	16.7%	38.9%	44.4%	0.0%	0.0%
59. The district provides teachers and administrators an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment.	11.8%	35.3%	29.4%	23.5%	0.0%
60. Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
61. Textbooks are in good shape.	38.9%	55.6%	5.6%	0.0%	0.0%
62. The school library meets the student needs for books and other resources.	5.6%	33.3%	11.1%	33.3%	16.7%

H. FOOD SERVICES

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
63. The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	5.6%	44.4%	33.3%	16.7%	0.0%
64. Food is served warm.	16.7%	77.8%	0.0%	5.6%	0.0%
65. Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.	33.3%	66.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
66. Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	44.4%	55.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
67. Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
68. Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	61.1%	38.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
69. Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

I. SAFETY AND SECURITY

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
70. School disturbances are infrequent.	66.7%	27.8%	5.6%	0.0%	0.0%
71. Gangs are not a problem in this district.	77.8%	16.7%	5.6%	0.0%	0.0%
72. Drugs are not a problem in this district.	27.8%	50.0%	16.7%	5.6%	0.0%
73. Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	55.6%	38.9%	5.6%	0.0%	0.0%
74. Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	11.1%	27.8%	61.1%	0.0%	0.0%
75. Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	11.1%	22.2%	66.7%	0.0%	0.0%
76. A good working arrangement exists between local law enforcement and the district.	22.2%	72.2%	5.6%	0.0%	0.0%

I. SAFETY AND SECURITY (CONTINUED)

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
77. Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	27.8%	66.7%	5.6%	0.0%	0.0%
78. Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	11.1%	66.7%	22.2%	0.0%	0.0%

J. COMPUTERS AND TECHNOLOGY

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
79. Students regularly use computers.	55.6%	38.9%	0.0%	5.6%	0.0%
80. Students have regular access to computer equipment and software in the classroom.	27.8%	50.0%	11.1%	11.1%	0.0%
81. Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	27.8%	66.7%	0.0%	5.6%	0.0%
82. Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	16.7%	55.6%	11.1%	16.7%	0.0%
83. The district meets student needs in classes in computer fundamentals.	27.8%	66.7%	0.0%	5.6%	0.0%
84. The district meets student needs in classes in advanced computer skills.	11.1%	38.9%	38.9%	11.1%	0.0%
85. Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	52.9%	41.2%	0.0%	5.9%	0.0%

PARENT SURVEY RESULTS

AUSTWELL-TIVOLI INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT MANAGEMENT AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW

(total number = 19)

Demographic Data

Totals may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

1.	GENDER (OPTIONAL)	MALE	FEMALE
		15.80%	63.20%

2.	ETHNICITY (OPTIONAL)	NO RESPONSE	AFRICAN AMERICAN	ANGLO	HISPANIC	ASIAN	OTHER
		10.50%	5.30%	42.10%	42.10%	0.00%	0.00%

3.	STATEMENT	NO RESPONSE	0-5 YEARS	6-10 YEARS	11 YEARS OR MORE
	How long have you lived in Lancaster ISD?	5.30%	31.60%	15.80%	47.40%

4.	WHAT GRADE LEVEL(S) DOES YOUR CHILD(REN) ATTEND?		
	PRE-KINDERGARTEN	KINDERGARTEN	FIRST GRADE
	0.00%	5.30%	5.30%
	SECOND GRADE	THIRD GRADE	FOURTH GRADE
	10.50%	15.80%	5.30%
	FIFTH GRADE	SIXTH GRADE	SEVENTH GRADE
	21.10%	10.50%	21.10%
	EIGHTH GRADE	NINTH GRADE	TENTH GRADE
	31.60%	21.10%	15.80%
	ELEVENTH GRADE	TWELFTH GRADE	
	31.60%	10.50%	

A. DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1. The school board allows sufficient time for public input at meetings.	10.5%	47.4%	26.3%	10.5%	5.3%
2. School board members listen to the opinions and desires of others.	10.5%	36.8%	36.8%	10.5%	5.3%
3. The superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	26.3%	36.8%	21.1%	5.3%	10.5%
4. The superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	26.3%	31.6%	21.1%	15.8%	5.3%

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.	21.1%	36.8%	10.5%	26.3%	5.3%
6. Teachers are given an opportunity to suggest programs and materials that they believe are most effective.	21.1%	47.4%	21.1%	5.3%	5.3%
7. The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	15.8%	26.3%	26.3%	26.3%	5.3%
8. The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	10.5%	21.1%	21.1%	42.1%	5.3%

B. EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT (CONTINUED)

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
9. The district has effective educational programs for the following:					
a) Reading	31.6%	52.6%	10.5%	5.3%	0.0%
b) Writing	26.3%	52.6%	10.5%	5.3%	5.3%
c) Mathematics	26.3%	36.8%	10.5%	21.1%	5.3%
d) Science	26.3%	47.4%	10.5%	10.5%	5.3%
e) English or Language Arts	26.3%	52.6%	15.8%	5.3%	0.0%
f) Computer Instruction	26.3%	52.6%	5.3%	10.5%	5.3%
g) Social Studies (history or geography)	26.3%	52.6%	10.5%	10.5%	0.0%
h) Fine Arts	10.5%	36.8%	10.5%	31.6%	10.5%
i) Physical Education	21.1%	57.9%	10.5%	5.3%	0.0%
j) Business Education	15.8%	26.3%	26.3%	21.1%	10.5%
k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	5.3%	10.5%	36.8%	31.6%	10.5%
l) Foreign Language	10.5%	26.3%	36.8%	15.8%	10.5%
10. The district has effective special programs for the following:					
a) Library Service	10.5%	31.6%	21.1%	21.1%	15.8%
b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	5.3%	26.3%	21.1%	31.6%	15.8%
c) Special Education	21.1%	47.4%	10.5%	15.8%	5.3%
d) Head Start and Even Start programs	5.3%	5.3%	42.1%	36.8%	5.3%
e) Dyslexia program	0.0%	15.8%	42.1%	26.3%	10.5%
f) Student mentoring program	5.3%	15.8%	31.6%	36.8%	5.3%
g) Advanced placement program	0.0%	10.5%	31.6%	42.1%	10.5%
h) Literacy program	0.0%	21.1%	26.3%	31.6%	10.5%
i) Programs for students at risk of dropping out of school	5.3%	10.5%	31.6%	36.8%	15.8%
j) Summer school programs	0.0%	10.5%	36.8%	31.6%	15.8%
k) Alternative education programs	5.3%	10.5%	36.8%	31.6%	15.8%
l) "English as a second language" program	5.3%	36.8%	47.4%	0.0%	10.5%
m) Career counseling program	5.3%	26.3%	21.1%	31.6%	15.8%
n) College counseling program	5.3%	26.3%	26.3%	31.6%	10.5%
o) Counseling the parents of students	5.3%	36.8%	15.8%	21.1%	21.1%
p) Drop out prevention program	5.3%	21.1%	31.6%	15.8%	21.1%
11. Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	15.8%	57.9%	21.1%	5.3%	0.0%
12. Teacher turnover is low.	5.3%	36.8%	21.1%	21.1%	5.3%
13. Highly qualified teachers fill job openings.	15.8%	26.3%	36.8%	10.5%	10.5%
14. A substitute teacher rarely teaches my child.	10.5%	36.8%	10.5%	26.3%	15.8%
15. Teachers are knowledgeable in the subject areas they teach.	26.3%	42.1%	21.1%	10.5%	0.0%
16. All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, science labs, and art classes.	21.1%	63.2%	0.0%	15.8%	0.0%
17. Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	0.0%	26.3%	15.8%	26.3%	26.3%
18. Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	21.1%	36.8%	21.1%	15.8%	5.3%

B. EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT (CONTINUED)

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
19. The district provides a high quality education.	26.3%	31.6%	26.3%	5.3%	10.5%
20. The district has a high quality of teachers.	21.1%	47.4%	26.3%	0.0%	5.3%

C. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
21. The district regularly communicates with parents.	21.1%	36.8%	0.0%	26.3%	10.5%
22. District facilities are open for community use.	15.8%	26.3%	31.6%	10.5%	10.5%
23. Schools have plenty of volunteers to help students and school programs.	10.5%	26.3%	26.3%	26.3%	5.3%

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.	10.5%	26.3%	36.8%	15.8%	10.5%
25. Schools are clean.	31.6%	68.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
26. Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	26.3%	47.4%	10.5%	10.5%	5.3%
27. Repairs are made in a timely manner.	26.3%	52.6%	5.3%	10.5%	5.3%
28. The district uses very few portable buildings.	31.6%	63.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
29. Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	26.3%	42.1%	21.1%	10.5%	0.0%

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.	15.8%	36.8%	36.8%	5.3%	5.3%
31. Board members and administrators do a good job explaining the use of tax dollars.	15.8%	31.6%	36.8%	5.3%	10.5%

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.	10.5%	21.1%	42.1%	15.8%	5.3%
33. Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	15.8%	31.6%	36.8%	0.0%	10.5%
34. The district's financial reports are easy to read and understand.	10.5%	15.8%	42.1%	15.8%	10.5%
35. Financial reports are made available to community members when asked.	10.5%	31.6%	36.8%	10.5%	5.3%

G. PURCHASING AND WAREHOUSING

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
36. Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	26.3%	63.2%	5.3%	5.3%	0.0%
37. Textbooks are in good shape.	26.3%	57.9%	5.3%	10.5%	0.0%
38. The school library meets student needs for books and other resources.	21.1%	42.1%	5.3%	10.5%	21.1%

H. FOOD SERVICES

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
39. My child regularly purchases his/her meal from the cafeteria.	10.5%	57.9%	0.0%	15.8%	10.5%
40. The school breakfast program is available to all children.	26.3%	73.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
41. The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	21.1%	31.6%	21.1%	10.5%	15.8%
42. Food is served warm.	21.1%	47.4%	15.8%	10.5%	5.3%
43. Students have enough time to eat.	21.1%	63.2%	0.0%	5.3%	10.5%
44. Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.	26.3%	68.4%	0.0%	5.3%	0.0%
45. Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	26.3%	57.9%	15.8%	0.0%	0.0%
46. Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	26.3%	47.4%	10.5%	5.3%	10.5%
47. Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	42.1%	52.6%	5.3%	0.0%	0.0%
48. Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	31.6%	52.6%	0.0%	15.8%	0.0%

I. TRANSPORTATION

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
49. My child regularly rides the bus.	15.8%	21.1%	31.6%	21.1%	0.0%
50. The bus driver maintains discipline on the bus.	10.5%	26.3%	47.4%	15.8%	0.0%
51. The length of the student's bus ride is reasonable.	15.8%	42.1%	42.1%	0.0%	0.0%
52. The drop-off zone at the school is safe.	15.8%	52.6%	31.6%	0.0%	0.0%
53. The bus stop near my house is safe.	15.8%	36.8%	47.4%	0.0%	0.0%
54. The bus stop is within walking distance from our home.	15.8%	31.6%	52.6%	0.0%	0.0%
55. Buses arrive and depart on time.	15.8%	42.1%	42.1%	0.0%	0.0%
56. Buses arrive early enough for students to eat breakfast at school.	15.8%	57.9%	26.3%	0.0%	0.0%
57. Buses seldom break down.	15.8%	52.6%	26.3%	5.3%	0.0%
58. Buses are clean.	15.8%	42.1%	36.8%	0.0%	5.3%
59. Bus drivers allow students to sit down before taking off.	10.5%	57.9%	31.6%	0.0%	0.0%
60. The district has a simple method to request buses for special events.	10.5%	47.4%	31.6%	5.3%	0.0%

J. SAFETY AND SECURITY

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
61. Students feel safe and secure at school.	26.3%	52.6%	5.3%	5.3%	10.5%
62. School disturbances are infrequent.	26.3%	57.9%	0.0%	15.8%	0.0%
63. Gangs are not a problem in this district.	31.6%	57.9%	10.5%	0.0%	0.0%
64. Drugs are not a problem in this district.	15.8%	26.3%	15.8%	26.3%	15.8%
65. Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	21.1%	52.6%	15.8%	10.5%	0.0%
66. Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	10.5%	0.0%	78.9%	0.0%	10.5%
67. Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	10.5%	0.0%	84.2%	0.0%	5.3%

J. SAFETY AND SECURITY (CONTINUED)

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
68. A good working arrangement exists between the local law enforcement and the district.	15.8%	36.8%	26.3%	15.8%	5.3%
69. Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	21.1%	52.6%	5.3%	10.5%	10.5%
70. Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	15.8%	31.6%	26.3%	21.1%	5.3%

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.	21.1%	47.4%	15.8%	15.8%	0.0%
72. Computers are new enough to be useful to teach students.	21.1%	63.2%	5.3%	5.3%	5.3%
73. The district meets student needs in computer fundamentals.	31.6%	52.6%	5.3%	0.0%	10.5%
74. The district meets student needs in advanced computer skills.	15.8%	57.9%	10.5%	5.3%	10.5%
75. Students have easy access to the internet.	21.1%	63.2%	5.3%	5.3%	5.3%

STUDENT SURVEY RESULTS

AUSTWELL-TIVOLI INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT MANAGEMENT AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW

(total number = 19)

Demographic Data

Totals may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

1.	GENDER (OPTIONAL)	MALE	FEMALE
		31.6%	63.2%

2.	ETHNICITY (OPTIONAL)	NO RESPONSE	AFRICAN AMERICAN	ANGLO	HISPANIC	ASIAN	OTHER
		5.3%	0.0%	15.8%	73.7%	0.0%	5.3%

3.	WHAT IS YOUR CLASSIFICATION?	JUNIOR	SENIOR
		52.6%	47.4%

A. EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1. The needs of the college-bound student are being met.	10.5%	63.2%	15.8%	5.3%	0.0%
2. The needs of the work-bound student are being met.	5.3%	47.4%	36.8%	5.3%	0.0%
3. The district has effective educational programs for the following:					
a) Reading	36.8%	52.6%	10.5%	0.0%	0.0%
b) Writing	26.3%	63.2%	10.5%	0.0%	0.0%
c) Mathematics	21.1%	73.7%	5.3%	0.0%	0.0%
d) Science	10.5%	73.7%	15.8%	0.0%	0.0%
e) English or Language Arts	31.6%	63.2%	5.3%	0.0%	0.0%
f) Computer Instruction	10.5%	73.7%	15.8%	0.0%	0.0%
g) Social Studies (history or geography)	21.1%	57.9%	10.5%	10.5%	0.0%
h) Fine Arts	15.8%	47.4%	26.3%	5.3%	0.0%
i) Physical Education	15.8%	68.4%	5.3%	5.3%	5.3%
j) Business Education	10.5%	36.8%	36.8%	15.8%	0.0%
k) Vocational (Career and Technology) Education	0.0%	36.8%	47.4%	15.8%	0.0%
l) Foreign Language	5.3%	63.2%	15.8%	15.8%	0.0%
4. The district has effective special programs for the following:					
a) Library Service	5.3%	10.5%	42.1%	26.3%	10.5%
b) Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	5.3%	26.3%	42.1%	26.3%	0.0%
c) Special Education	15.8%	52.6%	31.6%	0.0%	0.0%
d) Student mentoring program	0.0%	26.3%	52.6%	15.8%	5.3%
e) Advanced placement program	0.0%	21.1%	63.2%	5.3%	10.5%
f) Career counseling program	0.0%	15.8%	63.2%	10.5%	10.5%
g) College counseling program	0.0%	31.6%	36.8%	21.1%	10.5%
5. Students have access, when needed, to a school nurse.	5.3%	21.1%	21.1%	42.1%	10.5%

A. EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT (CONTINUED)

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
6. Classrooms are seldom left unattended.	15.8%	47.4%	10.5%	21.1%	5.3%
7. The district provides a high quality education.	21.1%	52.6%	15.8%	10.5%	0.0%
8. The district has high quality teachers.	5.3%	63.2%	26.3%	0.0%	5.3%

B. FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
9. Schools are clean.	26.3%	73.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
10. Buildings are properly maintained in a timely manner.	26.3%	63.2%	10.5%	0.0%	0.0%
11. Repairs are made in a timely manner.	26.3%	57.9%	15.8%	0.0%	0.0%
12. Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	26.3%	52.6%	21.1%	0.0%	0.0%

C. PURCHASING AND WAREHOUSING

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
13. There are enough textbooks in all my classes.	26.3%	68.4%	0.0%	5.3%	0.0%
14. Students are issued textbooks in a timely manner.	26.3%	52.6%	21.1%	0.0%	0.0%
15. Textbooks are in good shape.	10.5%	47.4%	15.8%	26.3%	0.0%
16. The school library meets student needs for books and other resources.	5.3%	21.1%	26.3%	31.6%	15.8%

D. FOOD SERVICES

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
17. The school breakfast program is available to all children.	42.1%	47.4%	10.5%	0.0%	0.0%
18. The cafeteria's food looks and tastes good.	5.3%	36.8%	31.6%	15.8%	10.5%
19. Food is served warm.	5.3%	73.7%	15.8%	5.3%	0.0%
20. Students have enough time to eat.	5.3%	63.2%	15.8%	5.3%	10.5%
21. Students eat lunch at the appropriate time of day.	15.8%	68.4%	10.5%	5.3%	0.0%
22. Students wait in food lines no longer than 10 minutes.	15.8%	73.7%	5.3%	5.3%	0.0%
23. Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	15.8%	73.7%	5.3%	5.3%	0.0%
24. Cafeteria staff is helpful and friendly.	63.2%	31.6%	5.3%	0.0%	0.0%
25. Cafeteria facilities are sanitary and neat.	31.6%	63.2%	5.3%	0.0%	0.0%

E. TRANSPORTATION

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
26. I regularly ride the bus.	0.0%	42.1%	21.1%	26.3%	10.5%
27. The bus driver maintains discipline on the bus.	10.5%	52.6%	26.3%	10.5%	0.0%
28. The length of my bus ride is reasonable.	5.3%	42.1%	52.6%	0.0%	0.0%

E. TRANSPORTATION (CONTINUED)

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
29. The drop-off zone at the school is safe.	15.8%	63.2%	21.1%	0.0%	0.0%
30. The bus stop near my house is safe.	15.8%	47.4%	36.8%	0.0%	0.0%
31. The bus stop is within walking distance from our home.	15.8%	36.8%	47.4%	0.0%	0.0%
32. Buses arrive and depart on time.	15.8%	63.2%	21.1%	0.0%	0.0%
33. Buses arrive early enough for students to eat breakfast at school.	10.5%	57.9%	26.3%	0.0%	0.0%
34. Buses seldom break down.	36.8%	15.8%	31.6%	15.8%	0.0%
35. Buses are clean.	10.5%	52.6%	31.6%	5.3%	0.0%
36. Bus drivers allow students to sit down before taking off.	31.6%	36.8%	31.6%	0.0%	0.0%

F. SAFETY AND SECURITY

SURVEY QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
37. I feel safe and secure at school.	21.1%	68.4%	10.5%	0.0%	0.0%
38. School disturbances are infrequent.	15.8%	57.9%	21.1%	5.3%	0.0%
39. Gangs are not a problem in this district.	73.7%	15.8%	10.5%	0.0%	0.0%
40. Drugs are not a problem in this district.	5.3%	47.4%	47.4%	0.0%	0.0%
41. Vandalism is not a problem in this district.	5.3%	63.2%	31.6%	0.0%	0.0%
42. Security personnel have a good working relationship with principals and teachers.	0.0%	5.3%	84.2%	0.0%	10.5%
43. Security personnel are respected and liked by the students they serve.	0.0%	5.3%	78.9%	5.3%	10.5%
44. A good working arrangement exists between the local law enforcement and the district.	10.5%	26.3%	57.9%	5.3%	0.0%
45. Students receive fair and equitable discipline for misconduct.	10.5%	52.6%	21.1%	10.5%	5.3%
46. Safety hazards do not exist on school grounds.	0.0%	42.1%	42.1%	15.8%	0.0%

G. 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.	31.6%	68.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
48. Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	10.5%	73.7%	15.8%	0.0%	0.0%
49. Computers are new enough to be useful for student instruction.	15.8%	73.7%	5.3%	5.3%	0.0%
50. The district offers enough classes in computer fundamentals.	0.0%	73.7%	10.5%	10.5%	5.3%
51. The district meets student needs in advanced computer skills.	0.0%	73.7%	10.5%	15.8%	0.0%
52. Teachers and students have easy access to the Internet.	31.6%	57.9%	10.5%	0.0%	0.0%