



Austin  
Independent School District

# **STRATEGIC PLAN**

**2005-2010**

*Approved by the Superintendent and Cabinet  
July 25, 2005*

*Endorsed by the Board of Trustees  
August 8, 2005*

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# **AISD STRATEGIC PLAN, 2005-2010**

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## ***LIST OF ACRONYMS AND TERMS USED IN THE STRATEGIC PLAN***

- ACC.** Austin Community College.
- AISD.** Austin Independent School District.
- AP.** Advanced Placement.
- APIE.** Austin Partners in Education.
- CAC.** Campus Advisory Council.
- CAMPO.** Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization.
- CAN.** Community Action Network.
- CAPCOG.** Capital Area Council of Governments.
- CATE.** Career and Technology Education.
- Chapter 41.** Part of the Texas Education Code requiring the recapture of local tax revenues from property rich school districts to be redistributed to property poor ones.
- CIP.** Campus Improvement Plan.
- DAC.** District Advisory Council.
- DIP.** District Improvement Plan.
- ELEVAR.** English Learners and Educators Versed in Academic Rigor.
- EL.** Executive Limitation (policy of the Board of Trustees delineating responsibilities and expectations of the Superintendent).
- ELL.** English Language Learner.
- ESL.** English as a Second Language.
- GACC.** Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce.
- LEP.** Limited English Proficiency.
- MSA.** Metropolitan Statistical Area.

**NCLB.** No Child Left Behind (federal legislation).

**OPCR.** Office of Planning and Community Relations.

**PEIMS.** Public Education Information Management System.

**RISE.** Rigorous Instruction in Spanish and English.

**SDAA.** State Developed Alternative Assessment, used in Special Education as an alternative to TAKS.

**SREB.** Southern Regional Education Board.

**SWOT.** Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats.

**TAKS.** Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills.

**TEKS.** Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills.

**TITLE I.** First title of No Child Left Behind, relating to Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged.

**UT.** University of Texas.

**Vertical Team.** A group of schools consisting of a high school and its feeder middle and elementary schools.



**Austin**  
Independent School District

**STRATEGIC PLAN  
2005-2010**

**INTRODUCTION**



## ***A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES, SUPERINTENDENT AND CABINET, AND STRATEGIC PLANNING PANEL***

The Board of Trustees, Superintendent and Cabinet, and Strategic Planning Panel wish to thank the many community organizations, members of the public, and AISD staff who provided valuable input to the development of this Strategic Plan. We all share in and work toward a common educational mission, and the Strategic Plan will better enable us to achieve the results we desire and expect for all of our students.

The AISD Strategic Plan for 2005-2010 clearly focuses on education. We firmly believe that all of our students should be as well educated as any in the world, and that all of our students have the capacity to be high achievers. More simply, our students are the reason why we are here. But the Strategic Plan also addresses community, staff, and resource concerns to provide a balance in perspectives to ensure that all parts of the district organization work together to achieve excellence.

We want to assure all stakeholders of AISD that it is our clear intent that the Strategic Plan be implemented. In keeping the plan a living document, the district will refer to it in decision making, align other planning efforts with it, and use it to evaluate our progress toward achieving improvement.

### **AISD BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Doyle Valdez, President, At-Large Position 8  
Ave Wahrmond, Vice-President, District 4  
Patricia Whiteside, Secretary, District 6  
Cheryl Bradley, District 1  
Johna Edwards, District 3  
John Fitzpatrick, At-Large Position 9  
Rudy Montoya, District 2  
Robert Schneider, District 7  
Mark Williams, District 5

### **SUPERINTENDENT**

Dr. Pascal D. Forgione, Jr., Superintendent

### **CABINET**

Dr. David Duty, Director, Intergovernmental Relations  
Dr. Peggy Gordon, Associate Superintendent, Middle Schools  
Dr. Janis Guerrero, Executive Director, Planning & Community Relations

Dr. Rosalinda Hernandez, Associate Superintendent, High Schools  
Michael Houser, Executive Director, Human Resources  
Dr. Marcus Nelson, Director, Secondary Blueprint Schools  
Dr. Yolanda Rocha, Associate Superintendent, Elementary Schools, South  
Karen Sperry, Chief of Staff  
Larry Throm, Chief Financial Officer  
Claudia Tousek, Associate Superintendent, Elementary Schools, North  
Mel Waxler, General Counsel  
Dr. Darlene Westbrook, Chief Academic Officer  
Dr. Maria Whitsett, Executive Director, Accountability

## **STRATEGIC PLANNING PANEL**

### *Co-Chairs:*

John-Michael Cortez, President, Empresa Materials, Inc.  
Ashton Cumberbatch, Police Monitor, City of Austin  
Sandy Dochen, Community Relations & Public Affairs Manager, Texas, IBM

### *Panelists:*

Amy Averett, Executive Director, Austin Voices for Education & Youth  
John Blazier, Blazier, Christensen, Bigelow & Virr, PC  
Sheryl Cole, Cole & Powell, PC  
Dr. Denise Collier, Executive Director, Curriculum, AISD  
Ramon DeJesus, Owner, RDJ & Sons  
Alberto Gonzalez  
Dr. Peggy Gordon, Associate Superintendent, Middle Schools, AISD  
Pamela Hall, Director, Recruiting & Staffing, AISD  
Dr. Rosalinda Hernandez, Associate Superintendent, High Schools, AISD  
Ben Ornelas, Austin Energy  
Buddy Owen, M.D.  
Rosa Peña, Principal, Zavala Elementary School, AISD  
Yolanda Reyes, Teacher, Sims Elementary School, AISD  
Rev. Ivie Rich, Baptist Ministers Union  
Carlos Rios, Principal, Travis High School, AISD  
Dr. Celina Russell, Principal, Dobie Middle School, AISD  
Lisa Sanchez, Teacher, Johnston High School, AISD  
Larry Throm, Chief Financial Officer, AISD  
Tamara Vannoy, Region VIII Vice-President, Texas PTA  
Dr. Darlene Westbrook, Chief Academic Officer, AISD  
Dr. Maria Whitsett, Executive Director, Accountability, AISD

### *Facilitators:*

Dr. Janis Guerrero, Executive Director of Planning & Community Relations  
Joey Crumley, AICP, Supervisor of Planning

## SECTION ONE Strategic Plan Framework

### Policy Direction

The Board of Trustees made an important change in district governance when it adopted the Policy Governance model. Policy Governance focuses the work of the Board of Trustees on policy decisions, not the day-to-day operational issues of the district. Policy Governance boards adopt sets of broad policies based on values and focused on end results. These policies direct the Superintendent, who acts as the chief executive officer of the district.

In developing the Strategic Plan, the responsibility of the Superintendent was to ensure that the Vision and Mission, Results Policies, and Executive Limitations established by the Board of Trustees were appropriately addressed:

#### *Vision*

“In partnership with our community, AISD will be recognized for providing each student with a rigorous education.”

#### *Mission*

“All students will progress academically and intellectually, and will graduate prepared for personal success and inspired to contribute to society.”

#### *Results Policies*

The Results Policies outline the achievements and outcomes for all students desired by the Board of Trustees and the community. The Results Policies cover the areas of academic achievement, college and career, the arts, citizenship, personal development, and health and safety. (The detailed Results Policies are provided in Appendix A.)

#### *Executive Limitations*

The Executive Limitations are the boundaries within which the Board of Trustees delegates responsibility for the day-to-day operations of the district to the Superintendent. The Executive Limitations cover several areas related to staff and stakeholder treatment, budget and finance, asset protection, curriculum and instruction, textbooks and instructional materials, learning environment and discipline, and facilities. (The detailed Executive Limitations are provided in Appendix B.)

## Strategic Planning Charter

There are no regulatory requirements for school districts in Texas to develop strategic plans, so development of a strategic plan by AISD was totally a proactive decision. As no content or format standards were available to guide plan development, an important preliminary step in the planning process was to establish a Strategic Planning Charter to clarify roles and expectations.

The Strategic Planning Charter is provided on the following page. Although it is brief, the Strategic Planning Charter involved considerable review and editing before ultimately being approved by the Superintendent and Cabinet and endorsed by the Board of Trustees. Laying out this “plan for the plan” provided a solid cornerstone for development of the Strategic Plan.

## STRATEGIC PLANNING CHARTER

*The Board of Trustees directs the Superintendent to develop, with stakeholder input, a Strategic Plan for reflecting the Board's Vision and Mission, achieving its Results Policies, and working within its Executive Limitations. Accordingly:*

1. The Strategic Plan will support current successes while at the same time identifying opportunities for improvement realistically within our capacity.
2. The Superintendent and Cabinet will have ultimate responsibility for approving and amending the Strategic Plan.
3. The Board will be kept informed of major aspects of the strategic planning process and will have opportunities for discussion and comment.
4. A select group of subject matter experts and community leaders will provide input to development of the Strategic Plan and review and comment on drafts of the plan.
5. The District Advisory Council and general public will also have opportunity to review and comment on drafts of the Strategic Plan.
6. Development of the Strategic Plan will be driven by thorough and reliable data compiled by the planning staff.
7. The Strategic Plan will be a concise and compelling document, providing a set of key performance indicators.
8. The Strategic Plan will serve to stabilize and focus the work of the district by establishing clearly defined priorities.
9. A major determining factor in the consideration of new initiatives within the district will be alignment with the Strategic Plan.
10. Planning staff will assist departments and campuses in aligning their planning efforts with the Strategic Plan.
11. The Strategic Plan will incorporate a process for annual review, to ensure that the plan remains current, to report on performance, and to consider the strategic status of programs and initiatives.

*Adopted by the Superintendent and Cabinet, June 1, 2004  
Endorsed by the Board of Trustees, June 28, 2004*

## SECTION TWO

### Community and District Profile

Austin, named for Texas colonist and political leader Stephen F. Austin, was chartered as the capital of the Republic of Texas in 1839, and became the state capital when Texas was admitted to the Union in 1845. Austin, which also serves as the county seat of Travis County, is located on the Colorado River in Central Texas along the transition between the rugged Texas Hill Country and the fertile Gulf Coastal Plain.

From Barton Springs and the Highland Lakes to scenic hills and one of the largest bat colonies in North America, the natural features of the Austin are major attractions to both residents and visitors. Austin is also a vibrant cultural center. Austin is one of the few cities in the United States with its own symphony, opera, and ballet, and is known as the “Live Music Capital of the World.” Austin is also home to numerous art galleries, museums, and theater companies. The University of Texas at Austin is one of the nation’s largest research universities, and several other institutions of higher learning are located in the Austin area. Austin is recognized as one of the nation’s intellectual capitals and as a draw to creative people of all types.

Austin, known as the “Silicon Hills,” has become one of the nation’s prominent high-tech centers. Austin is now one of the top wireless cities. Austin has also become one of the top locations in the nation for filmmaking. Austin is consistently ranked highly in many national “best places” lists, including best places to live and work, best places for business, best places to raise a family, and best places to retire.

It is not surprising that Austin continues to be one of the fastest-growing cities in the state and in the nation. In 2002, the population of Austin was estimated at 680,899 and the population of the Austin-San Marcos Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) – which includes Bastrop, Hays, Caldwell, Travis, and Williamson counties – was estimated at 1,306,627. It is also not surprising that people from all over the nation and the world choose to live in Austin, providing for a population rich in diversity.

As indicated in the *AISD Basic Data* on the following page, the almost 80,000 students enrolled in the 111 schools of AISD are reflective of this diverse population. The boundaries of AISD include most of the City of Austin and much of Travis County. Of the 29 public school districts in the MSA, AISD is the largest, followed by Round Rock, Leander, Pflugerville, Hays, Georgetown, Bastrop, Del Valle, San Marcos, and Eanes. AISD is also the third-largest employer in the MSA, behind the University of Texas and Dell.

Note: Additional information on trends in the Austin area related to population, economy, and education is included in Section Fourteen.

## **AISD BASIC DATA, 2004-2005**

### **Our Students<sup>1</sup>**

African American	10,662	13.33%
Asian	2,222	2.78%
Hispanic	43,747	54.72%
Native American	197	0.25%
White	23,122	28.92%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>79,950</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

*Economically Disadvantaged = 46,831 (58.58%)*

*Limited English Proficiency (LEP) = 18,169 (22.73%)*

### **Our Schools<sup>1</sup>**

Elementary Schools	74
Middle Schools	17
High Schools	12
Special Campuses	8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>111</b>

### **Our Employees<sup>2</sup>**

Teachers	5,388
Administrators	388
Other Professionals	802
Other Employees	4,136
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>10,714</b>

*Average Teacher Salary = \$40,500*

*AISD is the third-largest employer in the MSA*

### **Our Budget<sup>2</sup>**

Operations*	\$656,104,017
Food Service	\$27,350,456
Debt Service	\$48,166,986
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$731,621,459</b>

*Tax Rate = \$1.623/\$100 valuation (lowest of any school district in Central Texas)*

*Taxable Value = \$40,191,751,980*

*Bonded Debt = \$449,036,948*

*Recapture (Chapter 41) Payment = \$135,501,051*

*\*Net Operational Budget (after Recapture) = \$520,602,966*

*Net Operational Expenditure per Student = \$6,512*

<sup>1</sup>Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS), 11/04

<sup>2</sup>AISD Close-Up, 2004-2005

## SECTION THREE

### Highlights of Recent AISD Achievements

Following are highlights of recent achievements made by AISD. For more information about these and other AISD achievements, please visit the AISD website at [www.austinisd.org](http://www.austinisd.org).

- ★ As indicated in the table below, from 2003 to 2004, Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) passing rates increased in all subject areas for all AISD students and each student group.

Ethnicity	Reading		Writing		Math		Social Studies		Science	
	%	Δ	%	Δ	%	Δ	%	Δ	%	Δ
African American	71	+9	86	+16	54	+9	81	+8	46	+12
Hispanic	73	+8	85	+11	62	+9	78	+6	51	+12
White	94	+4	96	+2	90	+5	97	+3	90	+9
All Students	81	+7	89	+8	72	+8	86	+4	66	+10

% = Percentage of students meeting passing standard in 2004

Δ = Change from 2003 in percentage points

- ★ Seven AISD campuses were rated Exemplary and 16 were rated Recognized by the Texas Education Agency in 2004.
- ★ Pillow Elementary School was honored as a National Blue Ribbon School in 2004.
- ★ AISD recently ranked sixth on the Forbes list of “Best Education in the Biggest Cities,” after Boston, Salt Lake City, Raleigh, New Orleans, and Philadelphia.
- ★ In 2004, 89% of responding high school seniors indicated on exit surveys that they intended to continue their education.
- ★ In 2004, 145 AISD students were named for National Merit achievement.
- ★ From 2003 to 2004, AISD high schools realized approximately a 6% increase in college applications and an 11% increase in scholarship funds received.
- ★ From 2000 to 2003, AISD’s four-year high school completion rate increased from 87.1% to 93.8%.
- ★ From 2000 to 2004, AISD students graduating on the State Recommended High School Plan increased from 24% to 69%.

- ★ From 2000 to 2004, the number of Advanced Placement exams taken by AISD students increased by 33.2%.
- ★ In 2004, AISD students earned an average composite score of 1,032 on the 2004 SAT college entrance exam, exceeding the state and national averages by 40 and six points, respectively.
- ★ AISD's Gifted and Talented Program served 6,231 students in 2004.
- ★ In 2004, 60 AISD students graduated with recognition in the International Baccalaureate Program.
- ★ AISD's current tax rate of \$1.623/\$100 valuation is the lowest of any school district in Central Texas.
- ★ AISD recently received the state's highest rating of Superior Achievement under the Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas.
- ★ A recent study by the Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce stated that AISD's schools are comparable if not superior to the benchmarked cities of Denver, Phoenix, Raleigh-Durham, and Seattle.
- ★ In 2004, with strong voter approval, AISD passed a major bond initiative totaling \$519.5 million for new school construction and other improvements.
- ★ Austin Community College (ACC) and AISD recently collaborated on *College Connection*, a program designed to introduce more students to higher education while still in high school, and to encourage those students to pursue post-secondary education. This program provides all AISD graduates with an opportunity to receive full admission to ACC.
- ★ The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency recently inducted AISD as a member of its Green Power Leadership Club. AISD is the largest purchaser of green power among all public school districts in the nation, and the tenth-largest overall purchaser in the nation.
- ★ In 2004, AISD added 19 National Board Certified teachers to its ranks, bringing the total to 67, more than any other school district in Texas.
- ★ In 2004, over 10,000 AISD students in grades K-5 participated in *Marathon Kids*, a fitness program in which children run a marathon (26.2 miles) in increments, combined with eating nutritionally.

## SECTION FOUR Current AISD Initiatives

Following are summaries of some major initiatives currently underway at AISD, which have important implications to the Strategic Plan. For more information about these and other AISD initiatives, please visit the AISD website at [www.austinisd.org](http://www.austinisd.org).

### Comprehensive Education Plan

AISD is implementing a comprehensive and coherent education plan for all campuses and all grades to enhance teaching and learning. This plan will help us raise achievement levels for all students and progress toward eliminating achievement gaps. The plan provides a strong alignment between the written, taught, and tested curricula. The main elements of the plan include:

- Focus on the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)
- Principles of Learning framework (see Appendix C)
- Instructional Planning Guides and Advanced Planning Guides in core academic areas
- Benchmark assessments
- Interventions for struggling learners
- Ongoing professional development

### High School Redesign

The High School Redesign Initiative came about from the results of our own internal review and from the results of two outside reports: an audit of AISD career and college preparation conducted by the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB); and a report on AISD school organizational climates by the University of Texas. Much of our reform work is centered on addressing the seven challenges and associated recommendations in the SREB audit (see Appendix D).

In developing reform plans for each high school, considerable input will be obtained from administrators, teachers, students, parents, and community members. The main elements of the initiative include:

- Implementing the Comprehensive Education Plan (described above)
- Strengthening Career and Technology Education (CATE) offerings to create strong programs in all high schools, with career pathways and majors that are closely aligned with current and projected Austin job markets
- Establishing pipelines to college for all students (which will be greatly facilitated by the *College Connection* collaborative program with ACC)

- Implementing the *Four Rs* (Rigor in curriculum, instruction, and assessment; Relevance in learning to student interests and opportunities; Relationships between students and their peers and caring adults; and Results to support and sustain redesign)

### **Blueprint Initiative**

AISD has identified six under-performing elementary and middle schools to serve as prototypes for future efforts to raise student achievement. Intensive restructuring of these “blueprint” schools includes providing well-qualified teachers, proven leadership, consistent systems and procedures, specific curricula, and additional staff development and student support services. This initiative is designed to gain sustainable improvement in each of the blueprint schools

### **Character Education**

In order to address the holistic needs of all its students, AISD is continuing to place emphasis on providing character education. Across all AISD campuses exist a growing number and variety of character education programs. Recently, under Results Policy R-6, pertaining to personal development skills, the Board of Trustees approved a character education “touchstone.” The touchstone is a set of ten desired character traits for all students, and each trait will be incrementally implemented district-wide through a variety of activities: Respect, Courage, Caring, Honesty, Perseverance, Responsibility, Integrity, Self-Discipline, Trustworthiness, and Fairness.

### **English Language Learners**

AISD is resolute about raising the academic achievement of its English Language Learners (ELLs), and is engaged in implementing a district-wide initiative, *English Learners and Educators Versed in Academic Rigor* (ELEVAR). At the elementary level, *Rigorous Instruction in Spanish and English* (RISE) is a framework built on providing all ELLs equal access to the standard curriculum while providing coherent programs in bilingual education or English as a Second Language (ESL). At the middle school level, *Read 180* is an intensive opportunity for the acceleration of language and reading skills that serves the largest number of ELLs. At the high school level, the International High School has been established to better serve immigrant students new to the American school system. The International High School is complemented by the International Welcome Center, which receives families and students, completes assessments of reading and language skills, and recommends school placement for immigrant students.

## Bond Program

In 2004, with strong voter approval, AISD successfully passed a major bond program totaling \$519.5 million. Implementation of this initiative will involve:

- Building eight new schools and 92 additional classrooms
- Renovating existing campuses and athletic facilities
- Upgrading campus security
- Purchasing low-emission school buses
- Refinancing district debt

A special oversight committee will assist the district in ensuring that the implementation of the bond program will be marked by timely completion, sound workmanship, and the wise use of public dollars.

## Campus Safety

In 2004, a special Community Safety Task Force formed by AISD presented recommendations for ensuring that campuses are safe, conducive to learning, and free from disruption. These recommendations addressed district policies, campus facilities, campus climate, and continuum of care for students. AISD is actively moving to implement these recommendations, and recently adopted policies addressing the prevention and intervention of bullying and sexual harassment. As recommended by the task force, the district is also using research-based *Positive Behavior Supports* as a framework for creating and sustaining positive learning environments. Other important measures related to safety include: dress codes for students and staff; closed campuses during lunch at high schools; and safety goals and strategies in all Campus Improvement Plans. Additionally, the 2004 Bond Program includes \$20.9 million for improving campus security.

## Customer Service Initiative

The Customer Service Initiative has two objectives. The first of these objectives is to create an organizational culture oriented toward providing quality customer service. In working to achieve this objective, AISD is continuing to provide targeted staff training centered on Guidelines for Model Customer Service (see Appendix E). In addition, the district has created an Ombudsman position which plays an important role in informal dispute resolution, providing general information, and clarifying policies and procedures. Together, these actions help promote an enhanced customer service environment. The second objective of the Customer Service Initiative is to monitor and assess various customer service efforts. AISD conducts several customer service satisfaction surveys as well as random telephone calls and site visits to assess customer service practices.



**Austin**  
Independent School District

**STRATEGIC PLAN  
2005-2010**

**STRATEGIC DIRECTION**



## SECTION FIVE

### What Will AISD Look Like in 2010?

When considering the overall implementation of the Strategic Plan, a clear picture can be painted of what AISD will look like in five years. Following are attributes that will make **AISD a recognized world class school district by 2010**. These attributes are presented according to the balance of perspectives described in Section Six for achieving overall excellence: *education, staff, community, and resources*.

#### Education

By 2010, all AISD students will be achieving at higher levels in all subject areas, and achievement gaps between student groups will be eliminated. For all student groups, attendance rates, completion rates, participation rates in advanced courses, and post-secondary enrollment will be significantly higher.

By 2010, the number of Exemplary or Recognized AISD campuses will be significantly higher and no campuses will be Academically Unacceptable. Rigorous academics will be required at all levels, with emphasis on literacy, math, and science, and priority will be placed on bringing ELLs to grade level or beyond quickly and effectively. A standardized curriculum will be firmly in place, broadly understood, and consistently applied.

By 2010, all AISD high schools will graduate students who have experienced focused areas of study based on their individual needs and interests and who have a leg up on college and career, and all high schools will provide smaller, more intimate learning communities. Middle schools will prepare students for high school and encourage exploration of college and career options. Early childhood centers at various locations will be piloted or implemented.

By 2010, student guidance and advisement systems will be in place that include long-term relationships with adults, course and major selection, and college and career planning. Character education, positive behavior support systems, supports for struggling learners, and standardized expectations and supports for culturally relevant teaching and learning will be regularly applied in all classrooms. All campuses will provide safe and nurturing learning environments.

#### Staff

By 2010, AISD teachers and principals will be more closely representative of the diverse student population, will receive competitive compensation and benefits, and have more opportunities for focused and relevant professional development. At all

AISD campuses, teachers and principals will be highly qualified, highly motivated, and retained effectively. The percentage of bilingual teachers and master teachers will be significantly higher.

By 2010, AISD employees will have more opportunities for supports, mentoring, and leadership training. AISD employees will have greater expectations of career development and opportunities for promotion within the organization. Employee collaboration and collegiality will be the norm, and morale, trust, and pride will be consistently high. AISD will be widely regarded as a premier employer, and the best in the field of education will seek out AISD.

## **Community**

By 2010, significantly more parents and community members will be actively involved in schools and education, and greater interest in volunteerism will be maintained. Through cooperative efforts and partnerships, schools will serve more as community centers and providers of varied before- and after-school programs.

By 2010, all AISD campuses and offices will practice established customer service protocols, and a basic customer service orientation will be expected district-wide. The percentage of students, parents, and community members satisfied with the quality of AISD services and responsiveness will be consistently high. Both in perception and practice, the role of AISD in the community will be one of leadership and vitality, and AISD will clearly present the best available option for Austin children to receive a quality educational experience.

## **Resources**

By 2010, AISD strategic planning and budgetary processes will be well integrated, and resource decisions will be reflective of strategically identified needs. Facility maintenance will be guided by an automated scheduling and tracking system, and maintenance projects will be consistently implemented in a timely and efficient manner. The consideration of any future bond programs will be informed by a comprehensive, long-range facilities plan. AISD facilities and operations will consistently complement other local and regional planning efforts.

By 2010, all AISD technology will be current to industry standards and highly efficient, and all data systems will be secure and readily accessible to authorized users. AISD campuses and offices will be largely paperless. Technology will be integrated into every classroom and effectively applied. Textbooks will be largely supplemented or replaced by always-current electronic information. All students will have access to computers when needed and be adept in using them at school and at home.

## **SECTION SIX**

### **Overarching Goals, Priorities, and Strategies**

As stated in the Strategic Planning Charter, the Strategic Plan is intended to be a concise and compelling document, providing overall guidance to the district. As also referred to in the Strategic Planning Charter, and described further in Section Eleven, several action plans aligned with the Strategic Plan will provide considerably more detail on specific implementation steps, responsibilities, timeframes, targets, and deliverables. The Strategic Plan will serve as an umbrella document over these other plans.

### **Overarching Goals**

In considering emerging priorities and strategies, the Strategic Planning Panel discovered some cross-cutting points which evolved into overarching goals. In addition, in considering the trends and challenges that will likely impact the district, the Board of Trustees recognized some important steps the district must take to successfully adapt to a changing educational environment, which also evolved into overarching goals.

Following are the combined overarching goals identified by the Strategic Planning Panel and the Board of Trustees, not listed in any particular order:

- A. Ensure that the district meets the needs of all student groups, with emphasis on high priority student populations, including African American adolescents and recent immigrant English Language Learners.
- B. Promote the value of teachers to society and esteem for the teaching profession.
- C. Take a proactive rather than a reactive approach to preventing and solving problems.
- D. Establish strong expectations for organizational excellence and the accountability of district leadership.
- E. Support flexibility, innovation, and positive risk-taking, and reward success.
- F. Develop and nurture a professional culture of leadership, motivation, creativity, and collaboration at each campus dedicated to student learning to fully meet the needs of all students.

- G. Raise the awareness, expectations, and preparation of all students for meeting the demands of postsecondary education and the job market.
- H. Become more responsive as a district to the needs and expectations of our customers to promote and maintain our position in the region as a leading provider of quality education.
- I. Fundamentally restructure our resource allocation from the long-standing system based on equity in inputs (dollars per pupil) to equity in outcomes and excellence for all.

## Priorities and Strategies

The Strategic Planning Panel met on eight occasions between early November, 2004 and mid January, 2005. As described in Section Fourteen, the panel considered input from several other stakeholder groups in formulating its recommendations on priorities and strategies (see Appendix F). These priorities and strategies were subsequently approved by the Superintendent and Cabinet with some modifications, and endorsed by the Board of Trustees.

For each of the six priorities, alignments with applicable governance policies are indicated (“R” for Results Policies and “EL” for Executive Limitations). The first three priorities deal with *education*, particularly the areas of student achievement, holistic educational experience, and learning environment. In order to ensure overall excellence, the other three priorities provide a balance in perspectives, and address the areas of *staff*, *community*, and *resources*.

### PRIORITY 1

#### *Education – Student Achievement*

Raise achievement of all students to the world class level while effectively eliminating achievement gaps between student groups.

#### Policy Alignments

R-2 (Academic Achievement)  
 R-3 (College/Career)  
 EL-12 (Curriculum/Instruction)  
 EL-13 (Textbooks/Instructional Materials)

#### Strategies

- 1.1 Develop and implement a sustainable high school redesign program that is based on best practices and broad input, that includes a strong focus on academic rigor, relevance, and relationships which results in career/college preparation and college entry, and that is supported by programs in the middle grades.

- 1.2 Support struggling learners in academics, attendance, and behavior through a three-tiered intervention model for appropriate interventions at the campus, classroom, and individual student levels.
- 1.3 Ensure that the district's educational standards and the Principles of Learning are understood by all teachers and implemented consistently in the classroom.
- 1.4 Develop "campus report cards" that provide information on factors that contribute to academic success in a comprehensive yet clear and understandable manner.
- 1.5 Develop bilingual teachers to provide effective instruction in academic Spanish and academic English.
- 1.6 Establish pilots for early childhood learning centers as prototypes for district-wide expansion.
- 1.7 Ensure that the academic and personal needs of African American adolescents and other students of high risk are effectively addressed.

## **PRIORITY 2**

### ***Education – Holistic Educational Experience***

Provide a quality educational experience that will develop the whole child – intellectually, socially, emotionally, physically, and ethically.

### **Policy Alignments**

- R-4 (Arts)
- R-5 (Citizenship)
- R-6 (Personal Development)
- R-7 (Health/Safety)
- EL-12 (Curriculum/Instruction)
- EL-13 (Textbooks/Instructional Materials)

### **Strategies**

- 2.1 Expand the range and availability of support services and after-school programs.
- 2.2 Incorporate best practices into efforts to extend and/or restructure the school day and school year, especially as the district redesigns high schools to include rigorous and varied academic course offerings.
- 2.3 Place greater emphasis on the importance of cultural connections to teaching and learning, and promote broader appreciation of cultural diversity.

- 2.4 Infuse character education throughout the curriculum and activities at all campuses, and include character education components in all Campus Improvement Plans.

### **PRIORITY 3**

#### ***Education – Learning Environment***

Provide a caring, safe, and orderly environment for all students.

#### **Policy Alignments**

R-7 (Health/Safety)

EL-15 (Learning Environment/Discipline)

#### **Strategies**

- 3.1 Ensure that all district facilities are safe and secure, and include safety and nurturing environment components in all Campus Improvement Plans.
- 3.2. Expand opportunities for meaningful student input into district and campus decisions.
- 3.3 Ensure that students have access as necessary or appropriate to guidance and other counseling services from their counselors and other support staff for personal and crisis intervention services.
- 3.4 Ensure presence of safety trained personnel during all school related activities, and provide greater adult supervision on campuses before, during, and after school.
- 3.5 Ensure district-wide implementation of research-based behavior support systems that promote student personal development through engaging and interactive teaching, and through modeling and reinforcing expected student behaviors.

### **PRIORITY 4**

#### ***Staff***

Recruit, develop, retain, and reward highly effective teachers and administrators.

#### **Policy Alignments**

EL-4 (Staff Treatment)

EL-5 (Staff Compensation)

## Strategies

- 4.1 Develop and implement a comprehensive, long-range plan to provide greater supports and incentives, including compensation, to teachers, principals, and staff, and encourage highly effective teachers to continue service in our highest need schools.
- 4.2 Encourage continued enhancements to professional development, particularly in providing training that meets the specific needs, experience, and job descriptions of teachers and staff, and in providing internal career and leadership development.
- 4.3 Improve internal communications to ensure that all interactions between staff are characterized by mutual respect and dignity.
- 4.4 Ensure the campus reconstitution process does not result in loss of highly effective staff to other districts, other professions, or early retirement.
- 4.5 Achieve greater diversity in the district workforce through both recruitment and retention efforts.

## PRIORITY 5

### Community

Build strong partnerships with parents and the community at the classroom, campus, and district levels.

### Policy Alignments

EL-3 (Treatment of Stakeholders)

## Strategies

- 5.1 Create and implement a variety of ways to actively engage, involve, and respond to parents and the community, including volunteerism and partnerships, and the effective utilization of Campus Advisory Councils and Parent Support Specialists.
- 5.2 Create a district endowment through community investment to reward highly effective teachers and principals.
- 5.3 Enhance customer service, particularly through welcoming environments, effective communication with the public, ongoing staff training and results monitoring, and more multi-language information.

- 5.4 Encourage greater ongoing dialog and cooperation with community organizations and other local governments, participate in and align with other regional planning efforts, expand on facilities co-use with other local governments, and promote schools as multi-purpose centers that connect to their communities.
- 5.5 Develop and implement a Community Relations Plan aligned with the Strategic Plan that includes public awareness, communications, customer service, stakeholder engagement and involvement, community and regional partnerships, and Strategic Plan implementation.

## **PRIORITY 6**

### **Resources**

Provide strategic alignment and sound stewardship of resources, including funding, personnel, technology, and facilities.

### **Policy Alignments**

- EL-1 (Global Executive Constraint)
- EL-6 (Staff Evaluation)
- EL-7 (Budgeting/Financial Planning)
- EL-8 (Financial Administration)
- EL-9 (Asset Protection)
- EL-16 (Facilities)

### **Strategies**

- 6.1 Ensure that all students and staff have access to current, effective, secure, and sustainable technology.
- 6.2 Align with the Strategic Plan the District Improvement Plan (DIP), Campus Improvement Plans (CIPs), and other district planning efforts related to personnel, technology, and facilities, and ensure consideration of the Strategic Plan and these aligned plans in the budget process.
- 6.3 Place emphasis on addressing the greatest needs in allocation of resources.
- 6.4 Assess means of aligning staff performance expectations at all levels of the organization with the Strategic Plan and applicable action plans.
- 6.5 Ensure successful implementation of capital projects, both in new construction and maintenance, and ensure exemplary facilities and operations.

## SECTION SEVEN Performance Indicators

In order to monitor progress toward accomplishment of the Strategic Plan, the Strategic Planning Panel developed a set of “dashboard” metrics. As such, they are not intended to be comprehensive; rather, they are representative of the overarching goals, priorities, and strategies. The district monitors a number of other performance indicators, such as those related to the Results Policies. The performance measures recommended by the Strategic Planning Panel (see Appendix G) were approved by the Superintendent and Cabinet with some modifications (including changing the “measures” to “indicators”), and endorsed by the Board of Trustees. As described in Section Ten, reporting on the performance indicators will be part of an annual strategic assessment process.

The following performance indicators for the Strategic Plan are grouped according to the balance of perspectives described in Sections Five and Six for achieving overall excellence: *education, staff, community, and resources.*

### ***Education – Student Achievement***

1. Campus ratings (Exemplary, Recognized, Academically Unacceptable) under state accountability system.
2. State assessment results (TAKS, SDAA) for all students and each student group.
3. Grade level advancement rates for all students and each student group.
4. Graduation rates under the Recommended or Distinguished Plan for all students and each student group.
5. Participation rates in Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate courses for all students and each student group.
6. Percent of students admitted to post-secondary education (including *College Connection*) for all students and each student group.
7. Percentage of teachers with bilingual certification.
8. Average daily attendance at the elementary, middle, and high school levels for all students and each student group.

### ***Education – Holistic Educational Experience***

9. Percentage of high school students surveyed indicating that they participated in extracurricular activities, including music, theater/drama, dance, sports, academic competitions, journalism, and speech/debate.

10. Percentage of high school students surveyed indicating that their high school helped to further develop their knowledge and skills in performing/fine arts, teamwork, creative thinking, problem solving, conflict resolution, and personal health/fitness.

### **Education – Learning Environment**

11. Percentage of students surveyed indicating they feel safe in their learning environments.
12. Percentage of students surveyed indicating that an adult is available at their school if they have a problem.

### **Staff**

13. Retention rates for teachers and administrators.
14. Average teacher and administrator salaries, with comparisons to other comparable districts.
15. Percentages of minority teachers and administrators.

### **Community**

16. Value of partnerships, in terms of number of mentors, number of tutors, number of volunteer hours, cash donations, and in-kind donations.
17. Percentage of parents surveyed indicating that school staff treated them with courtesy and welcomed their participation.

### **Resources**

18. Average local funding expenditure per pupil and average teacher experience at high-need\* campuses.
19. Percentage of bond projects completed on-time and within the total budget for the 2004 Bond Program.
20. Average availability of district-wide technology services.
21. Average district refresh cycle for industrial hardware and infrastructure.

\* Receiving funding under Title I of No Child Left Behind (NCLB), relating to Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged.



**Austin**  
Independent School District

**STRATEGIC PLAN  
2005-2010**

**STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION**



## **SECTION EIGHT**

### **Communications Plan**

The first step toward implementation of the Strategic Plan will be to develop and carry out a detailed Communications Plan within the first eight weeks after the Strategic Plan is finalized. The Communications Plan will help build stakeholder awareness and understanding of the Strategic Plan, and the district's commitment to its implementation. In all stages of the Communications Plan, an important message will be the importance of "living the plan" to ensure that the vision for 2010 is realized.

Initial steps in the Communications Plan will include a formal presentation of the Strategic Plan to the Board of Trustees, and posting of the Strategic Plan and executive summary on the district website, including Spanish language versions.

Presentations on the Strategic Plan will be provided to a number of key stakeholder groups throughout the community and region. The Strategic Plan and district expectations will be communicated to all AISD staff through an email message from the Superintendent, and through various presentations to central administration and campuses.

In addition to being available on the district website, hard copies of the Strategic Plan will be distributed to district offices and campuses, and will be provided to key stakeholder groups and public libraries. Press releases will further announce the availability of the Strategic Plan.

## **SECTION NINE**

### **Consideration of New District Initiatives**

A Staff Focus Group (see Appendix H) met on seven occasions from late September to early November of 2004 to develop specific recommendations on processes for implementing the Strategic Plan. The implementation processes, approved by the Superintendent and Cabinet with some modifications, relate directly to specific provisions of the Strategic Planning Charter, and are intended to help ensure that the Strategic Plan remains a vital document. One of these processes deals specifically with the consideration of new district initiatives.

AISD will always be open to considering new initiatives that can help improve the quality of services, but this process will help stabilize the workload of the district and maintain sharp focus on our stated mission and priorities. As detailed in Appendix I, this process will serve to screen or filter new district initiatives in order to ensure they are consistent with the Strategic Plan, and are based on thorough assessment of data, need, and feasibility, and involve the input of all appropriate stakeholders.

As explained in Appendix I, this process targets district-level initiatives – those involving or affecting all or several campuses, or all or several central administration functions. This process also distinguishes between elective and non-elective initiatives (i.e., those that are required but in which the district still has some latitude in implementing).

## SECTION TEN Annual Strategic Assessment

Another implementation process recommended by the Staff Focus Group deals specifically with an annual strategic assessment. This process will ensure that the Strategic Plan remains current. Annually, planning staff with assistance from the Strategic Planning Panel will assess:

- Performance indicators
- Overall progress toward implementation of the Strategic Plan
- Any implications to specific district programs and initiatives
- Any revisions or amendments\* to the Strategic Plan that may be needed
- Cooperative efforts with other local and regional planning entities (as described in Section Fourteen)
- Any additional plans or studies that may be needed

The results of this assessment process will be presented in the form of an annual Strategic Plan report for approval by the Superintendent and Cabinet and presentation to the Board of Trustees. The report will also be provided to stakeholder groups and the general public.

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\*Revisions are changes to the data or informational components of the Strategic Plan. Revisions must be approved by the Superintendent and Cabinet, but do not require stakeholder input. Any plan revisions will be presented to the Board of Trustees and made generally available in the form of replacement pages.

Amendments are changes to the overarching goals, priorities, strategies, or performance indicators, or implementation processes of the Strategic Plan. Whereas these components of the plan were developed through stakeholder input, any changes to them will require opportunity for stakeholder review and comment. Any plan amendments must be approved by the Superintendent and Cabinet, and provided to the Board of Trustees for consideration. Upon finalization, plan amendments will be made generally available in the form of replacement pages.

## **SECTION ELEVEN** **Aligned Action Plans**

Action plans are an important component of an overall strategic plan. Action plans provide details on major steps that need to be taken to implement a strategic plan, as well as responsibilities, timeframes, targets, and deliverables. Action plans may either be included in the strategic plan document, or prepared and presented separately, but clearly aligned with the strategic plan. The AISD Strategic Plan takes the latter approach, as recommended by the Staff Focus Group.

Several district plans have been identified by the Staff Focus Group as well as the Strategic Planning Panel for alignment with the Strategic Plan, as illustrated in Appendix J. Because these plans provide details regarding specific functions of the district organization, they will serve as action plans under the umbrella of the Strategic Plan. All of these plans will be used to inform the budget process.

Alignment between the Strategic Plan and the other plans described below will be accomplished through identifying correspondence between major plan components, such as goals, priorities, objectives, and strategies. Planning staff will coordinate alignment efforts. This process will ensure that major district planning efforts are all in synch with policy and strategic direction.

### **District and Campus Improvement Plans**

As illustrated in Appendix J, the DIP aligns directly with the Strategic Plan, and the CIPs in turn align with the DIP. The DIP is required by state law, and is revised on an annual basis. The clear focus of the DIP is increased achievement for all students. However, the DIP also addresses closely related topics such as graduation, attendance, advanced academics, preparation for college and career, safety and violence prevention, specialized programs, and parental involvement. Steps in the DIP are based on a detailed needs assessment.

CIPs are also required by state law, and are also revised on an annual basis. CIPs address the same topics as the DIP, but on a campus-specific basis. Each campus receives a detailed needs assessment for CIP development.

### **Other Action Plans**

Other plans aligned with the Strategic Plan include the Technology Plan, Facilities Plan, Community Relations Plan, and Personnel Plans. Although, as illustrated in Appendix J, these other plans do not directly align with the DIP and CIPs, inter-relationships will naturally exist, as they will between these other plans themselves. Therefore, close coordination and the involvement of all appropriate stakeholders will be necessary in the development and implementation of these plans.

### [Technology Plan](#)

In 2001, the district prepared its *Vision for Technology, 2001-2005*. A new Technology Plan is currently being developed, and will address such areas as integration of technology in teaching and learning, information services, systems architecture, systems support, and technology resources. The Technology Plan will cover a five-year period and be updated as necessary or appropriate.

### [Facilities Plan](#)

A long-range plan to address facility needs and school attendance boundaries has been directed by the Board of Trustees. As an important preliminary step, a detailed database is currently being developed to help track facility improvement needs and results. Preparations are currently being made for development of the long-range plan which will cover at least a five-year period. Development of the plan will include research into other school district plans as well as input from the Bond Oversight Committee. When completed, the plan will provide a clear nexus between educational design and facility design, and guide the consideration of future bond programs.

### [Community Relations Plan](#)

Strategy 5.5 of the Strategic Plan calls for development of a comprehensive Community Relations Plan. This plan will address the areas of public awareness, communications, customer service, stakeholder engagement and involvement, community and regional partnerships, and Strategic Plan implementation. Preparations for development of this plan will begin soon. This plan will serve to replace the annual strategic plan for the Office of Planning and Community Relations, and will cover a five-year period.

### [Personnel Plans](#)

A Recruiting and Staffing Plan is prepared by Human Resources on an annual basis. This plan outlines action steps aimed at recruiting and hiring highly qualified administrators, teachers, and other professional staff. The plan also seeks to achieve diversity in the district's professional workforce. In addition, a special committee is currently considering possible strategies related to staff retention, particularly compensation options. A specific plan of action will be developed based on the recommendations of this committee.

### [Other Possible Action Plans](#)

The implementation details for each of the strategies will largely be included in the action plans described above. However, through the annual strategic assessment process described in Section Ten, the need for other possible action plans may be identified.





**Austin**  
Independent School District

**STRATEGIC PLAN  
2005-2010**

**STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS**



## SECTION TWELVE

### Strategic Planning Process Overview

Development of the AISD Strategic Plan began in June 2004 with the establishment of the Strategic Planning Charter, and concluded in August 2005 with the publishing of the final plan document. This one-year planning process included several steps and the involvement of a number of individuals and groups. Implementation of the Strategic Plan will occur through the end of the 2010 plan period.

Following are various steps in the Strategic Plan process, presented in chronological order:

Timeframes	Planning Steps
June 2004	Strategic Planning Charter
	Strategic Benchmarking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Characteristics of Highly Effective Schools</li> <li>▪ Strategic Planning Best Practices</li> <li>▪ Examples of School District Strategic Plans</li> </ul>
July - September 2004	Environmental Scan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Stakeholder Input on Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats</li> <li>▪ Stakeholder Input on Possible Strategic Plan Priorities</li> <li>▪ Trends and Challenges</li> <li>▪ Other Local and Regional Planning Efforts</li> </ul>
September - November 2004	Staff Focus Group on Strategic Plan Implementation Processes
November 2004 - January 2005	Strategic Planning Panel on Priorities, Strategies, and Performance Indicators
February 2005	Review of Strategic Planning Panel Recommendations
March - April 2005	Preparation and Internal Review of Draft Strategic Plan
May - June 2005	Public Review and Comment Period
July 2005	Preparation and Internal Review of Final Strategic Plan; Development of Communications Plan
August - September 2005	Carry out Communications Plan (presentations to Board and stakeholder groups, distribution of plan documents)
September 2005 - August 2010	Strategic Plan Implementation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Annual Strategic Assessment</li> <li>▪ Consideration of New Initiatives</li> <li>▪ Aligned Action Plans</li> </ul>

Certain steps in the strategic planning process are described in more detail in the following sections: Strategic Benchmarking in Section Thirteen; Environmental Scan in Section Fourteen; and Draft Strategic Plan in Section Fifteen.

## SECTION THIRTEEN Strategic Benchmarking

In developing a quality strategic plan for a school system, it is important to recognize what makes the best schools as well as the best strategic plans. Following are the results of considerable research into the characteristics of highly effective schools, strategic planning best practices, and examples of strategic plans from other school districts.

### Characteristics of Highly Effective Schools

In developing and implementing its programs and initiatives, AISD has a long and strong history of benchmarking with successful school systems across the country. The references listed in Appendix K provide valuable insight specifically into the characteristics of highly effective schools. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list, for there are indeed many sources on this topic; however, this list is representative of the information available.

Although these sources may offer different perspectives on the characteristics of highly effective schools, a comparison reveals that certain points tend to be shared by many of them (not listed in any particular order):

- Highly qualified teachers
- An organizational culture of respect, communication, and collaboration
- Strong accountability and performance monitoring systems
- Emphasis on providing more instructional time for reading and math
- Professional development and supports aligned with individual and school needs
- Data-driven decision-making and intervention strategies
- Meaningful involvement of adults, at home and in school
- Consistent application of curriculum standards in the classroom
- Focus on low-performing schools and needs-based allocation of resources
- High expectations for all students and teachers that are well-communicated
- More intimate school settings
- Safe and orderly learning environments
- Strong partnerships with the community
- Rigor in instruction and assessment
- Strong, effective, and fair leaders
- Clear and well-communicated expectations

All of these are sound points, and can be found interwoven in the recent achievements, current initiatives, and strengths of AISD discussed in Sections Three, Four, and Fourteen respectively, as well as the overarching goals, priorities, and strategies presented in Section Six.

## Strategic Planning Best Practices

Strategic planning has been around for a long time, with its roots in the military and business. However, over the last several years strategic planning has been embraced by much of the public sector. For such a longstanding and broadly applied discipline, it would be expected that an abundance of literature exists on strategic planning, and this is indeed the case.

Although not an exhaustive list, the references provided in Appendix L are representative of the available literature and contain a significant amount of useful information. If one thing can be gleaned from these sources, it is that there is no universal approach or standard template for developing a strategic plan. However, comparatively there is still considerable common ground among these sources as to best practices in the strategic planning process:

- Prepare to plan – develop a “plan for the plan”
- Research what other organizations are doing well
- Conduct an environmental scan – research data, identify trends and challenges, and analyze organizational strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT)
- Identify all stakeholders and solicit meaningful input throughout the planning process – create a sense of stakeholder ownership of the plan
- Seek improvement based on assessment of needs, and challenge the organization, but within realistic parameters – create a plan that is largely accomplishable
- Develop compelling and clear vision and mission statements
- Ensure that the plan reflects a balance of organizational perspectives
- Identify proactive priorities and implementation strategies (or goals and objectives) focused on the organization’s vision and mission
- Identify performance indicators or measures for monitoring
- Develop action plans – the details of who does what by when
- Communicate the final plan to all stakeholders
- Provide progress reports on plan implementation
- Provide at least an annual review of the plan – it should not be set in stone
- Live the plan – have it available at meetings for reference, and align budgeting, operations, other planning efforts, and employee performance expectations with it
- Acknowledge success

As indicated in Section Twelve, the processes for developing and implementing the AISD Strategic Plan builds squarely on these practices.

## Examples of School District Strategic Plans

Not all school districts, even some of the nation's largest, have strategic plans. However, strategic planning by school districts is growing, as it is in much of the public sector. Searching the Internet will readily yield numerous school district strategic plans. To a significant extent, this is a result of strategic planning by school districts being a requirement in several states. In many other states, though, including Texas, school districts are not required to produce strategic plans, but a number of them have taken on that responsibility.

Appendix M lists strategic plans from 140 school districts across the United States and Canada, compiled as part of the preliminary work going into development of the AISD Strategic Plan. Some of these plans are only a page or two in length, and some are well over a hundred pages – some are very basic in presentation, and some are quite elaborate – but they collectively represent a significant body of work from which to draw a variety of ideas and perspectives.

## SECTION FOURTEEN Environmental Scan

An “environmental scan” provides a detailed assessment of internal and external conditions, forces, and variables. The environmental scan for the AISD Strategic Plan consisted of: SWOT analysis; evaluation of possible Strategic Plan priorities; research into pertinent trends; assessment of challenges; and identification of linkages to other local and regional planning efforts.

### Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats

The SWOT analysis relied on the perspectives of over 70 individuals, including community and business leaders and district staff (see Appendix N). Following is a summary of the most frequently occurring responses that came from the individual interviews (not listed in any particular order):

#### Strengths

- Strong, stable leadership
- Continued emphasis on college and career preparation
- Continued progress in raising achievement for all students and working to eliminate achievement gaps
- Reduction in dropouts
- Community support
- Rigorous instructional standards and high expectations for all students
- Strong alignment of written, taught, and tested curricula
- Principles of Learning framework
- Improvements in data systems and instructional technology
- Greater emphasis on character education and positive behavioral supports
- Successes with ELLs
- Safer and more orderly learning environments

#### Weaknesses

- Achievement gaps still exist among student groups
- Need to look at the big picture and how everything connects
- More active involvement of parents
- Need for greater diversity among teachers and administrators
- Need for better communications, both internally and externally
- Overworked and underpaid staff with low morale
- Crisis-oriented or damage-control mentality
- Lack of an organization-wide customer service orientation

## Opportunities

- Partnerships with colleges, businesses, and community groups
- Resource sharing with other local governments
- Strong community arts and cultural support
- Students and parents as resources
- Schools as community centers
- To be the best urban school district in the nation

## Threats

- More ELLs and at-risk students
- Loss of socio-economic and ethnic diversity within the district
- Increasing expectations and requirements with limited resources
- Loss of high quality teachers and principals
- Political enemies of public schools and alternatives to public schools
- Keeping up with technology needs
- Keeping up with safety and security needs

## **Possible Strategic Plan Priorities**

In the over 70 individual interviews described above, perspectives were also gained on possible Strategic Plan priorities. Following is a summary of the most frequent responses that came from the individual interviews (not listed in any particular order):

- Continuing to raise achievement levels for all students and progressing to eliminate achievement gaps
- Improving attendance rates and decreasing dropout rates
- Addressing the needs of ELLs
- Redesign of high schools
- Greater emphasis on college and career preparation
- Recruitment and retention of highly effective teachers and administrators
- Attaining more active parental and community involvement
- Providing more culturally relevant instruction
- Implementing educational standards in every classroom
- Better integrating technology with instruction
- Maintaining safe and orderly learning environments
- Building greater diversity in the professional workforce of the district
- Providing sound stewardship of district resources

In addition to a number of individuals, the Board of Trustees provided input on possible priorities to the Strategic Planning Panel (see Appendix O). Also, the District Advisory Council and Austin Council of PTAs provided recommendations on possible priorities to the panel (see Appendices P and Q, respectively).



An online survey was also created to gain input on possible Strategic Plan priorities from the general public, district staff, and Campus Advisory Councils (which consist of parents, teachers, other campus staff, and students). The results of the online survey are provided in Appendix R.

## Trends

Research into pertinent trends was conducted by planning staff in the areas of population, economy, and education. Following are salient points under each of these areas.

### Population

- Texas has the second-highest state birth rate in the nation. The total population of the state grew 7.9% between 2000 and 2003, compared to 4.3% for the nation; the total population of Travis County grew 5.7%.
- As of 2003, Texas is a “majority-minority” state (i.e., more than half of the total state population is other than White). Travis and Tarrant are now the only metropolitan counties in Texas with a White majority population. The White percentage of the population is 49.5% for the state, and 53.7% for Travis County.
- Between 2000 and 2003, the Hispanic population of Travis County grew by 9.5%.
- Between 2000 and 2003, the percentage of people in Travis County who speak English less than very well grew 15.5%.
- The total population of Texas is projected to increase from 20,851,829 in 2000 to 24,178,507 in 2010 (an increase of 15.95%). The Hispanic population of Texas is projected to increase from 6,669,666 in 2000 to 11,742,820 in 2010 (an increase of 76.15%).
- The total population of Travis County is projected to increase from 812,280 in 2000 to 963,120 in 2010 (an increase of 18.57%). The Hispanic population of Travis County is projected to increase from 229,048 in 2000 to 327,367 in 2010 (an increase of 42.93%).

### Economy

- The Austin regional unemployment rate is beginning to show signs of declining, and is currently at 4.6%.
- Construction of new houses increased 14.2% in the Austin region between 2000 and 2004.
- Consumer spending in the Austin region increased 6.0% between 2003 and 2004.
- The median household income in Travis County is 12.1% higher than that for the state, and 4.7% higher than that for the nation.
- Between 2000 and 2003, the number of households in the Austin region facing affordable housing challenges (i.e., 30%+ of income spent on housing costs) increased 41.8%.
- At 16.3%, Texas has the eighth-highest state poverty rate in the nation. In Travis County, 14.0% of the population lives in poverty.

## Education

- For every 100 ninth-graders in Texas, 64 graduate from high school on time and only 13 go on to earn at least an associate's degree.
- In Texas, Whites are three times more likely to attend college than Hispanics, and five times more likely than African Americans.
- In Travis County in 2003, 40.6% of the population aged 25 and over had at least a bachelor's degree, compared to 24.5% for the state and 26.5% for the nation. However, the figure for Travis County is down from 43.1% in 2001.
- Between 2000 and 2003, the population of Travis County aged 25 and over with less than a ninth grade education increased from 5.5% to 8.4%.

## **Challenges**

AISD is a strong and successful organization, but the environment does include some weaknesses and threats, multiple priorities, and certain demographic trends with implications for planning. This environment will produce several challenges for the continued success of AISD over the next five years (not presented in any particular order):

- Increases in the number of ELLs as well as persons in poverty will place greater demands on fully meeting the needs of all students and their families.
- Progressing toward closing achievement gaps among student groups, and preparing all students for successful careers and continuing education will continue to be challenging.
- College and career preparatory programs will need to keep pace with changing job market demands.
- Increases in total enrollment will result in the need for more schools, teachers, and principals. Along with this demand will be increasing desires and expectations for smaller class sizes as well as smaller schools.
- Maintaining the safety and security of district facilities and transportation will continue to be a concern.
- Demands on keeping up with current technology and integrating technology into the classroom will continue.
- More public school users will rent while more public school nonusers will own homes and pay taxes, creating a potential impact on district revenues. Loss of socio-economic diversity may also impact the district's tax base.
- Recruiting and retaining Special Education, Bilingual, math, and science teachers will continue to be difficult in a competitive market.



- Options to public schools will require that the district engage and involve its customers and encourage their sense of ownership and investment in the system. The district will need to manage public perceptions and build awareness of successes.
- Finding the resources to provide adequate incentives and supports to retain highly qualified teachers and principals will continue to be difficult, particularly for high-need schools.
- Providing increased professional development for all teachers will be important so that they are better prepared to meet the specific needs of their students. It will be particularly important to provide accelerated development of beginning teachers.

### **Linkages to Other Local and Regional Plans**

A number of entities in the Austin area are actively involved in long-range planning. As described below, the AISD Strategic Plan provides several linkages to other local and regional plans.

#### [Envision Central Texas](#)

*Envision Central Texas* was completed in 2004 after a two-year planning process involving a substantial regional effort and extensive public input. *Envision Central Texas* points out that AISD is a major part of a complete educational system that is vital to the overall quality of life in the Austin area. The AISD Strategic Plan supports *Envision Central Texas* through:

- ☞ Contributing to a skilled and educated regional workforce
- ☞ Helping build a sense of opportunity and possibility within the community
- ☞ Providing continued commitment to environmental protection and resource conservation
- ☞ Encouraging public engagement and involvement
- ☞ Underscoring the important role of public schools in neighborhoods

#### [City of Austin](#)

The AISD Strategic Plan supports long-range planning efforts of the City of Austin, primarily through maintaining a collaborative intergovernmental partnership and contributing to the economic base of the community. AISD works with the City of Austin to support its *Watershed Protection Master Plan* and *Sustainable Communities Initiative* through Land Development Standards Agreements and School Impact Analyses, particularly in the areas of environmentally sensitive development practices and resource conservation. Results Policy R-5, pertaining to citizenship, is particularly supportive of the *Sustainable Communities Initiative*, in that R-5 states all students will understand and respect the broad range of cultures,

languages, and belief structures in the community, as well as participate in the political process, contribute to the community, and be good stewards of the environment. In addition, R-6, pertaining to personal development skills, supports the sustainability tenets of providing equal opportunities for individual development and maximizing the use of individual abilities.

The City of Austin is amending the *Austin Tomorrow Plan* through development and adoption of individual *Neighborhood Plans*. A number of these plans have already been adopted, but several more are either underway or pending initiation. Involvement of schools and school communities in these planning efforts helps provide the broad level of participation desired in the process and will continue to be encouraged. The AISD Strategic Plan supports the goals of the *Austin Tomorrow Plan* and its amending *Neighborhood Plans* through:

- ☞ Lending to the desirable image and character of neighborhoods
- ☞ Preserving the varied historical, architectural, and cultural inheritance of Austin
- ☞ Helping the local economy through providing a stable, high-level workforce
- ☞ Assuring the sensitivity of development to environmental features
- ☞ Practicing sound resource conservation
- ☞ Helping to provide recreational facilities to meet the needs of Austin's citizens
- ☞ Improving the planning, management, funding, and delivery of health and human services

### [Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce](#)

In 2003, the Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce (GACC) released *Opportunity Austin*, a long-range plan consisting of five strategies to promote economic development. One of the strategies relates to improving regional competitiveness and, among other things, states the importance of building workforce quality through ensuring that regional educational standards, performance, and capacity are maintained at competitive levels. The AISD Strategic Plan is squarely focused on providing a world-class education for all students and fully preparing them for successful careers and continuing education.

The AISD Strategic Plan also supports the specific Education and Workforce Mission of GACC through: enhancing the capacity of K-12 education to graduate academically prepared students; ensuring that greater numbers and a broader spectrum of students attend postsecondary education; and ensuring that effective workforce training programs exist to meet the needs of a continually evolving employment sector.

## [University of Texas](#)

The Strategic Plan of the University of Texas (UT) focuses on providing a quality college education, but the plan also acknowledges the importance of a quality K-12 education and directs a number of supportive programs. In this regard, the AISD Strategic Plan provides close linkages to the University of Texas Strategic Plan in the following areas:

- ☞ Application of instructional technology
- ☞ Reinforcing programs focusing on literacy, math, and science
- ☞ Promotion of the arts
- ☞ Tutoring, mentoring, and other volunteer programs
- ☞ Children's wellness
- ☞ Teacher training and development
- ☞ Educational innovation (as supported by the University's Charles A. Dana Center and Distance Education Program)
- ☞ Expertise and resource sharing
- ☞ Providing avenues for meaningful community involvement

## [Austin Partners in Education](#)

Austin Partners in Education (APIE) was found in 1983 by AISD and GACC with the purpose of encouraging businesses, community organizations, and individuals to partner with public schools in enhancing the quality of education. Partners may share expertise, volunteer time, or donate funding or materials. The AISD Strategic Plan supports all aspects of the APIE Strategic Plan, including its mission to create and foster effective community and school partnerships that support and enrich student learning and success, and its strategic action areas:

- ☞ Student Mentoring
- ☞ Student Tutoring
- ☞ Instructional Technology
- ☞ Career Development
- ☞ Campus Beautification
- ☞ Materials Acquisition
- ☞ Recognition of Partners and Contributions (Annual "Salute" Program)

## [Austin Community College](#)

The mission of the Austin Community College Master Plan, 2004-2006, closely parallels an important focus of the AISD Strategic Plan, in that emphasis is placed on preparing students for successful lives through providing an array of academic and vocational programs. Further, the AISD Strategic Plan is supportive of the stated values in the Austin Community College Master Plan:

- ☞ Open and responsible exchange of ideas (Communication)
- ☞ An open door to educational potential (Access)
- ☞ Targeted actions to address students and internal needs within available resources (Responsiveness)
- ☞ A commitment to integrity and exemplary standards (Excellence)
- ☞ Personal and professional ownership that generates accountability (Stewardship)

### [Community Action Network](#)

The Community Action Network (CAN) works to achieve sustainable social, health, educational, and economic outcomes through active community engagement. CAN recently established Key Areas of Focus to provide strategic direction for its efforts. The AISD Strategic Plan supports CAN's efforts in striving for excellence in all schools and promotes its message that "Good Community is Good Business."

In 2001, with considerable public input, CAN prepared an *Urgent Issues Action Plan*, and this plan is still used to guide community dialogs. The AISD Strategic Plan supports the educational, workforce, health, and safety targets of this plan, including:

- ☞ Recruiting and retaining highly qualified teachers
- ☞ Preparing all students to succeed in higher education and the workforce
- ☞ Increasing student enrollment in advanced courses
- ☞ Consistently communicating high expectations for all students
- ☞ Addressing the whole needs of each student
- ☞ Facilitating community access to information and resources
- ☞ Keeping students in school and on track to attain their educational goals
- ☞ Placing emphasis on early education
- ☞ Providing safe and nurturing learning environments for all students

### [Travis County](#)

Travis County has developed Strategic Directions for Health and Human Services which the AISD Strategic Plan supports in the following ways:

- ☞ Meeting the physical and mental health needs of all children
- ☞ Promoting healthy behaviors
- ☞ Helping meet employer needs to support economic success
- ☞ Encouraging work-based learning activities for in-school youth
- ☞ Applying a wraparound approach to providing systems of care to children and families
- ☞ Focusing on high-risk children and families
- ☞ Providing safe and accessible after-school programs
- ☞ Promoting community partnerships and collaboration

## Other Plans

The AISD Strategic Plan supports the *Mobility 2030 Plan* of the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO), the *Clean Air Action Plan* for the Austin Metropolitan Statistical Area prepared by the Central Texas Clean Air Coalition, and *All Systems Go Long-Range Transit Plan* being developed by the Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority, specifically through application of “green building” standards and phased replacement of school buses with cleaner emission vehicles. In addition, as previously mentioned, R-5 states that all students will be good stewards of the environment. Further, the promotion of safe routes to school, combined with student health initiatives, will encourage more students to walk or bike to and from school.

The AISD Strategic Plan also supports the *Regional Solid Waste Management Plan* of the Capital Area Council of Governments (CAPCOG). Most AISD schools recycle at least aluminum and paper, and the district as a whole gives preference to the purchase of recycled products. In addition, awareness of and practicing resource conservation are integral to ensuring that all students will be good stewards of the environment, under R-5.

## Ongoing Efforts

AISD is committed to ongoing coordination and cooperation with other entities to better guarantee the success of various local and regional plans that have similar aims. This commitment is clearly articulated in Implementation Strategy 5.4 of the AISD Strategic Plan.

The AISD Board of Trustees and Superintendent hold regular meetings with the Austin City Council as well as the Board of Trustees of ACC. These meetings allow for continued dialog and collaborative efforts. The AISD Board of Trustees is also represented on the City of Austin’s Planning Commission and Bond Advisory Committee. AISD continues its strong working relationship with GACC, UT, and APIE in furthering quality education and building the workforce of tomorrow. AISD planning staff will continue to work with planners in other local and regional organizations to promote ongoing coordination and cooperation.

As indicated in Section Ten, part of the annual strategic assessment process will include an assessment of the relationships between the AISD Strategic Plan and other local and regional plans. Implementation of the AISD Strategic Plan will have implications to education and workforce in the Austin area, and the implementation of other local and regional plans may have implications to AISD. For example, the effects of “Smart Growth” on urban infill could affect total AISD enrollment and facility needs; proposed transportation networks may also affect population distributions, as well as traffic patterns near schools.

## SECTION FIFTEEN Draft Strategic Plan

As indicated in the preceding sections, the Strategic Plan was developed through extensive stakeholder input. A plan developed by only a few people will probably not be of great value to a large and complex organization. By contrast, a plan developed with meaningful input from all stakeholders is more likely to be successful because all parties involved have an opportunity for participation and ownership.

The Draft Strategic Plan was approved by the Superintendent and Cabinet and presented to the Board. The draft plan was made available on May 13, 2005, with a public review and comment period extending through June 30, 2005. A press release was issued, and advertisements in English and Spanish were placed in local newspapers, and the media were responsive in notifying the public. A summary of outreach activities is provided in Attachment S.

The Draft Strategic Plan was placed on the district website, and various stakeholder groups, district staff, and the general public were invited to provide online comments. The over 70 individuals who were interviewed as part of the environmental scan were also invited to provide online comment. In addition, a special public meeting was conducted, with the co-chairs of the Strategic Planning Panel presiding (see Attachment T).

As indicated in Attachment U, input was received in the form of online comments, public meeting comments, comments from the Board of Trustees, and written comments from GACC. In total, 53 comments were received in 39 topical areas, with the highest frequency of any topic being three occurrences.

The Superintendent and Cabinet carefully reviewed the input received on the Draft Strategic Plan and shared their assessment with the Board of Trustees. Ultimately, the number of revisions made were not great, reflective of the thorough consensus building process that went into drafting the plan.



**Austin**  
Independent School District

**STRATEGIC PLAN  
2005-2010**

**APPENDICES**



## APPENDIX A AISD Board of Trustees Results Policies

### **R-1 Mission**

All students will progress academically and intellectually, and will graduate prepared for personal success and inspired to contribute to society.

### **R-2 Academic Achievement**

All students will think critically and analytically and will achieve at high academic levels that meet or exceed state and national performance standards, including TAKS, effectively eliminating any achievement gap.

Students will:

- 2.1 Be proficient in language arts:
  - 2.1.1 Reading
  - 2.1.2 Writing
  - 2.1.3 Oral Communications
    - 2.1.3.1 Speaking
    - 2.1.3.2 Listening
- 2.2 Be proficient in mathematics.
- 2.3 Be proficient in sciences.
- 2.4 Be proficient in social studies:
  - 2.4.1 Economics/Government
  - 2.4.2 Geography
  - 2.4.3 History
- 2.5 Be proficient in technology.
- 2.6 Be proficient in a second language.

### **R-3 College/Career**

All students will demonstrate and understand the skills, knowledge, work habits, attitude, leadership, and teamwork required by employers for success in the 21st century workplace.

Students will:

- 3.1 Explore and experience a wide range of career options in relation to their interests and aptitudes.
- 3.2 Graduate as a Texas Scholar with a jumpstart on college and career success, including consideration of:
  - Postsecondary credit
  - Industry certification
  - Scholarship opportunities

- 3.3 Demonstrate and understand the skills and knowledge to:
- Successfully enroll in postsecondary education
  - Access financial aid
  - Transition into the workforce
  - Be successful in a variety of jobs and careers

#### **R-4 Arts**

All students will participate in and appreciate the arts.

Students will:

- 4.1 Use the visual, performing, or musical arts for:
- 4.1.1 Exploration
  - 4.1.2 Communication
  - 4.1.3 Self expression

#### **R-5 Citizenship**

All students will be productive members of the community and know the values of democracy.

Students will:

- 5.1. Understand and respect the broad range of cultures, languages, and belief structures in our community.
- 5.2 Demonstrate civic responsibility:
- 5.2.1 Vote and participate in the political process
  - 5.2.2 Contribute positively to the community, including volunteering
  - 5.2.3 Be good stewards of the environment

#### **R-6 Personal Development Skills**

All students will demonstrate the aptitude, attitude, skills, and self-esteem to lead responsible, fulfilling, and respectful lives.

Students will:

- 6.1 Effectively solve problems by managing resources, such as:
- Time
  - Money
  - Information
  - Human Resources
- 6.2 Identify and accomplish personal goals
- 6.3 Compete and cooperate as circumstances require.
- 6.4 Acquire the skills to manage conflict.

6.5 Demonstrate good character traits of:

- Responsibility
- Respect
- Perseverance
- Caring
- Self-discipline
- Honesty
- Trustworthiness
- Integrity
- Courage
- Fairness

6.6 Demonstrate practical, real-world skills, including financial management skills.

### **R-7 Health and Safety**

All students will understand the components of a healthy lifestyle.

Students will:

- 7.1 Know the components of good physical health, including nutrition and fitness.
- 7.2 Make healthy decisions.
- 7.3 Know how to protect personal safety.
- 7.4 Understand how to access help and support for themselves and others.

## APPENDIX B

### AISD Board of Trustees Executive Limitations

#### EL-1 Global Executive Constraint

The Superintendent shall not cause or allow any practice, activity, decision or organizational condition which is unlawful, unethical, unsafe, disrespectful, imprudent or in violation of Board policy.

#### EL-2 Emergency Superintendent Succession

In order to protect the Board in the event of sudden and unexpected loss of Superintendent services, the Superintendent shall not fail to assure that at least one designated executive staff member is familiar with Board and Superintendent issues and processes and is capable and trained to assume Superintendent responsibilities on an emergency basis, should the need arise.

#### EL-3 Treatment of Stakeholders

With respect to treatment of parents, students and the public, the Superintendent shall not cause or allow conditions, procedures, actions or decisions which are unlawful, unethical, unsafe, disrespectful, disruptive, undignified or in violation of Board policy. Accordingly, the Superintendent may not:

1. Use methods of managing information that fail to protect confidential information.
2. Fail to provide a process for the effective and efficient handling of complaints and concerns.
3. Fail to establish policies and procedures to ensure organizational compliance with all federal and state laws, including those dealing with ethnic, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religious and age discrimination.
4. Fail to establish the clear expectation that all employee behaviors and attitudes contribute to an organizational culture that is open and responsive, treating stakeholders with respect, dignity and courtesy, and establishing a system-wide process for monitoring that culture.
5. Fail to assure a system of communication that provides for timely and full information, providing for reasonable two-way interaction.

#### EL-4 Staff Treatment

With respect to treatment of paid and volunteer staff, the Superintendent shall not cause or allow conditions, procedures, actions or decisions which are unlawful, unethical, unsafe, disrespectful, disruptive, undignified or in violation of Board policy. Accordingly, the Superintendent may not:

1. Fail to make reasonable background inquiries and checks prior to hiring any paid personnel or utilizing the services of any volunteers who have unsupervised contact with students.
2. Fail to establish an organizational structure that is designed to meet the functional needs of the district and is not personality based.
3. Fail to use a well-defined system for recruiting and selecting the most highly qualified and best-suited candidates for employment, meeting established criteria.
4. Operate without written personnel policies which:
  - a. Clearly state personnel rules and procedures for staff;
  - b. Provide for effective handling of complaints;
  - c. Include adequate job descriptions for all staff positions;
  - d. Include an effective personnel performance evaluation system;
  - e. Protect against sexual harassment;
  - f. Protect against any form of discrimination based upon race, color, creed, religion, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or other personal attributes.
5. Fail to protect confidential information.
6. Fail to establish policies and procedures to assure an organizational culture that conforms with the following values:
  - a. Open and honest communication in all written and interpersonal interactions;
  - b. Respect for others and their opinions;
  - c. Focus on common organizational goals as expressed in Board **Results** policies;
  - d. The right of staff to appropriate confidentiality;
  - e. Commitment to the integrity and the positive image of the district, its leaders and staff;



- f. Respect for cultural diversity.
7. Fail to honor the terms of consultation agreements with staff.
8. Fail to provide staff with an opportunity to become familiar with the provisions of this policy.
9. Fail to provide adequate initial pre-service training and on-going support for all academic and administrative personnel.

#### **EL-5 Staff Compensation**

The Superintendent shall not fail to develop compensation and benefit plans that adequately reward employees consistent with the applicable marketplace, with organizations of comparable size and type and within available resources. Accordingly, the Superintendent may not:

1. Change his or her own compensation and benefits or contract terms.
2. Fail to develop and implement salary schedules and pay plans for employees that:
  - a. Compensate the district's teachers based upon their education and prior experience;
  - b. Provide that employees who fail to meet non-negotiable job expectations may not be retained;
3. Fail to develop and implement compensation plans that reflect the applicable marketplace to attract and maintain top quality staff.
4. Fail to explore the feasibility of linking compensation to performance.

#### **EL-6 Staff Evaluation**

With respect to evaluation of employees, the Superintendent shall not fail to develop, maintain and administer an evaluation system that links all employee performance with their contribution toward achieving the Board's **Results** policies and their compliance with the Board's organizational limitations policies, and their behaviors and attitudes that contribute to the district's organizational culture and values. Accordingly, the Superintendent may not:

1. Fail to develop and administer an evaluation system for all academic and administrative personnel that is designed to:
  - a. Improve instruction;
  - b. Measure and document and communicate the full range of performance ratings, from unsatisfactory, satisfactory, and excellent performance;
  - c. Link teacher and administrator performance with varied measures of student performance that are consistent and coherent throughout the district;
  - d. Assure that instructional time is used to students' maximum advantage.
2. Fail to develop and administer an effective evaluation system for classified personnel.
3. Fail to communicate the results of evaluations to each evaluated employee.
4. Fail to provide to the Board an annual report on the effectiveness of the evaluation system and its alignment with the Board's **Results** policies.

#### **EL-7 Budgeting/Financial Planning**

Financial planning for any fiscal year shall not deviate materially from the Board's **Results** policies, risk fiscal jeopardy to the district or fail to be derived from a multi-year plan. Accordingly, the Superintendent may not develop and present a budget which:

1. Is not presented in a summary format understandable to the Board and that clearly indicates the relationship between proposed expenditures and the Board's **Results** priorities and the impact of those funding priorities.
2. Fails to be accompanied by a three-year forecast.
3. Fails to adequately describe revenues and expenditures, tax rates, rollback rates, and district property values.
4. Fails to show the amount spent in each fund, function, and object for the most recently completed fiscal year, the amount budgeted for each fund, function and object for the current fiscal year and the amount recommended for the next fiscal year.
5. Fails to disclose budget planning assumptions.
6. Plans for the expenditure in any fiscal year of more funds than are conservatively projected to be available during the year.

7. Propose to reduce the total fund balance in the General Fund to less than 50% of the optimum according to the fund balance and cash flow calculation worksheet in the Annual Financial Reports.
8. Fails to provide adequate and reasonable budget support for Board development and other governance priorities, including the costs of district elections, fiscal audits, Board and committee meetings, Board memberships and district legal fees.
9. Fails to take into consideration fiscal soundness in future years or ignores the building of organizational capabilities sufficient to achieve **Results** in future years.
10. Fails to reflect anticipated changes in employee compensation, including inflationary adjustments, step increases, performance increases and benefits.

#### **EL-8 Financial Administration**

With respect to the actual, ongoing administration of the district's financial assets, the Superintendent shall not cause or allow material deviation from the annual budget or budget policy adopted by the Board, cause or allow any fiscal condition that is inconsistent with achieving the Board's **Results**, or places the long term financial health of the district in jeopardy. Accordingly, the Superintendent may not:

1. Expend more funds than have been received in the fiscal year to date unless revenues are made available through other legal means, including the use of tax anticipation notes, fund balances, and the authorized transfer of funds from reserve funds.
2. Indebt the organization.
3. Expend funds from reserve funds unless authorized by the Board.
4. Permanently transfer unencumbered monies from one fund to another.
5. Fail to settle payroll and debts in a timely manner.
6. Commit to any single, non-budgeted purchase or expenditure greater than \$50,000 without approval of the Board.
7. Make any purchase:
  - a. Without exercising reasonable precaution against conflict of interest;
  - b. Without having considered comparative prices based on items of similar quality;
  - c. Without considering a balance between long-term quality and cost.
8. Fail to use a competitive bidding procedure for the purchase of all supplies, materials and equipment, and any contracted services except professional services, as allowed by state law, in the amount of \$25,000 or more.
9. Allow reports or filings required by any state or federal agency to be overdue or inaccurately filed.
10. Receive, process or disburse funds under controls that are insufficient under generally accepted accounting procedures.
11. Fail to arrange for the annual audit of all district funds and accounts following the close of the fiscal year.
12. Fail to aggressively pursue receivables after a reasonable grace period.
13. Fail to keep complete and accurate financial records by funds and accounts in accordance with generally recognized principles of governmental accounting.
14. Fail to publish and post a financial condition statement annually.
15. Fail to present a monthly financial balance statement to the Board.

#### **EL-9 Asset Protection**

The Superintendent shall not allow assets to be unprotected, inadequately maintained, inappropriately used or unnecessarily risked. Accordingly, the Superintendent may not:

1. Fail to maintain insurance coverage against theft and casualty losses to 100% of replacement value.
2. Fail to maintain insurance coverage against liability losses to Board members, staff and the district itself in an amount that is reasonable for school districts of like size.
3. Fail to ensure that facilities and equipment are not subject to improper wear and tear or insufficient maintenance.
4. Expose the district, the Board or staff to legal liability.
5. Fail to protect intellectual property, information and files from loss or significant damage.



6. Fail to properly preserve and dispose of all records related to affairs or business of the district.
7. Invest funds in securities that are not authorized by Board policy as reflected by the attached EL 9-E. [See Policy CDA (LOCAL)]
8. Acquire, encumber or dispose of real property.
9. Endanger the district's public image or credibility, thereby jeopardizing its ability to accomplish its mission.
10. Fail to maintain a current and accurate inventory of all district fixed assets.
11. Fail to maintain and protect the district's data management systems, technology infrastructure, telecommunication system, Internet service, and other district hardware and software.

#### **EL-10 Communication and Counsel to the Board**

With respect to providing information and counsel to the Board, the Superintendent shall not fail to give the Board as much information as necessary to allow Board members to be adequately informed. Accordingly, the Superintendent may not:

1. Fail to submit monitoring data required by the Board in a timely, thorough accurate and understandable fashion, directly addressing provisions of the Board policies being monitored.
2. Fail to submit to the Board a list of reports required by State and Federal agencies.
3. Fail to advise the Board in a timely manner of trends, facts and information relevant to the Board's work.
4. Fail to advise the Board of significant transfers of money within funds or other changes substantially affecting the district's financial condition.
5. Fail to advise the Board of changes in assumptions upon which Board policy has been established.
6. Fail to provide for the Board as many staff and external points of view and opinions as needed for fully informed Board decisions.
7. Fail to advise the Board of anticipated significant media coverage.
8. Fail to advise the Board if, in the Superintendent's opinion, the Board or individual members are not in compliance with the Board's policies on **Governance Process** and **Board-Superintendent Relations**.
9. Present information in unnecessarily complex or lengthy form and that is unrelated to Board policy.
10. Fail to provide a process for official Board, officer and committee communications.
11. Fail to work with the Board as a whole except when:
  - a. Fulfilling individual requests for information, provided such requests are not disruptive or do not require a material amount of staff time or resources;
  - b. Working with officers or committees duly charged by the Board;
  - c. Communicating with the president.
12. Fail to report in a timely manner any actual or anticipated noncompliance with any Board **Results** or **Executive Limitations** policy.
13. Fail to supply for the consent agenda all items delegated to the Superintendent that are required by law or contract to be Board-approved, along with adequate information necessary to keep the Board informed.
14. Fail to establish a procedure for informing the Board in a timely manner of the administrative disposition of complaints presented by the Board to the Superintendent.
15. Fail to appropriately inform and involve the Board in events and news conferences related to significant district activities.
16. Fail to produce a summary report of program revenues and expenditures upon request by a majority of the Board.

#### **EL-11 Annual Report to the Public**

The Superintendent shall not fail to prepare and publish an annual progress report to the public, that is clear and concise, which includes the following items:

1. Student performance data indicating student progress toward accomplishing the Board's **Results** policies.

2. Information about school district strategies, programs and operations intended to accomplish the Board's **Results** policies.
3. Revenues, expenditures and balances of major budget funds of the district.

### **EL-12 Curriculum and Instruction**

The Superintendent shall not fail to ensure that the district implements curriculum and instruction that includes clearly defined academic standards for specific courses of study. Accordingly, the Superintendent may not:

1. Fail to develop and implement academic standards that meet or exceed state and nationally recognized model standards.
2. Fail to develop a curriculum aligned with and designed to enable students to meet or exceed the established standards.
3. Fail to develop or select assessments that will adequately measure each student's progress toward achieving the standards.
4. Fail to ensure that the curriculum includes all legally required and Board approved courses and programs.
5. Fail to ensure that the curriculum and instruction actively address the needs of all students including students who have been suspended from regular programs.
6. Fail to ensure that the curriculum and instruction include opportunities for students to develop talents and interests in more specialized areas.
7. Fail to assure that the curriculum and instruction address the different needs of students of various backgrounds and abilities.
8. Fail to encourage innovative or experimental programs, carefully monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of all such programs and informing the Board annually about their effectiveness.
9. Fail to ensure that all curriculum and instruction are regularly evaluated and modified as necessary to assure their continuing effectiveness.
10. Fail to ensure that the Board is informed of any significant deletions, additions or modifications of any instructional programs.
11. Fail to consider class size and school organization as important components of student achievement.
12. Fail to ensure that all staff members are qualified and trained to perform the responsibilities assigned to them.
13. Enter into contract with outside providers for management of instructional services.
14. Fail to ensure that the identification, referral and assessment procedures for specialized instructional programs are fairly and consistently applied across all student subgroups and in all schools.

### **EL-13 Textbook and Instructional Materials Selection**

The Superintendent shall not fail to recommend textbooks and to select instructional materials that advance the achievement of the Board's **Results** policies. Accordingly, the Superintendent may not:

1. Fail to ensure appropriate input from the following groups as textbooks are reviewed and selected: students, parents, teachers, administrators, community members and other staff members involved in developing the education program.
2. Fail to assure the selection of instructional materials that contribute toward continuity, integration and articulation of the curriculum by course and program.
3. Fail to consider the needs of all learners when recommending textbooks and selecting instructional materials.
4. Fail to provide a procedure for the scheduled evaluation of materials and textbooks, and a procedure for reviewing such materials upon formal request by a parent or other stakeholder.
5. Fail to develop and implement appropriate policies governing access to and utilization of electronically distributed or available information, including Internet access and e-mail.
6. Fail to provide appropriate text and materials in the student's language of instruction.

#### **EL-14 District Calendar**

The Superintendent shall not fail to develop and recommend to the Board for adoption a district calendar for the school year, in accordance with state law, that provides for the number of instruction and contact hours and days determined by the Board and that best meets the instructional needs of students. Accordingly, the Superintendent may not:

1. Implement a school district calendar that plans for fewer than 187 contract days, including provisions for student instruction/contact time, staff development, and parent-teacher conferences.
2. Fail to consider a reasonable balance between the instructional needs and the extracurricular obligations of students.
3. Fail to consider important religious holidays as the calendar is developed.
4. Fail to ensure that any change in the calendar, except for emergency closings or other interruptions due to unforeseen and uncontrollable circumstances, be preceded by adequate and timely notice to students, parents and teachers.
5. Fail to assure the availability of a copy of the calendar for all parents/guardians of students enrolled in district schools.
6. Fail to appropriately involve teachers, administrators, students and the community in developing the calendar.

#### **EL-15 Learning Environment/Discipline**

The Superintendent shall not fail to establish and maintain a learning environment that is safe, conducive to effective learning and free from unnecessary disruption. Accordingly, the Superintendent may not:

1. Fail to adopt an administrative policy on conduct and discipline which conforms to the state requirements and that:
  - a. Prohibits the use of drugs, alcohol or tobacco products by students or adults on school property and at school-sponsored events;
  - b. Prohibits the presence of firearms or other dangerous weapons on school property and at school-sponsored events;
  - c. Prohibits any form of violence on school property and at school-sponsored events;
  - d. Provides for the discipline of special education students consistent with their IEP;
  - e. Establishes procedures for student interrogations, searches and arrests;
  - f. Establishes procedures to afford students, parents and school personnel due process with regard to student conduct and discipline issues;
  - g. Establishes procedures for written appeal to the Board from a decision to expel or deny admission to a student;
  - h. Provides for the expulsion or administration of other appropriate discipline of students deemed to be habitually disruptive;
  - i. Establishes the district's student attendance policy.
2. Fail to appropriately involve teachers, administrators, students and the community in developing the policy.
3. Fail to arrange to have the conduct and discipline policy distributed once to each enrolled student and once to each new student in the district.
4. Fail to distribute to each student or parent copies of any significant changes in the policy.
5. Fail to ensure that a copy of the policy, and any significant changes to the policy, are posted or available for inspection in each school building.
6. Fail to ensure that the policy and discipline referral procedures are fairly and equitably applied in all schools and across all student subgroups.
7. Fail to identify students at risk of suspension or expulsion and provide opportunities to help them avoid suspension or expulsion.
8. Fail to report to the Board, on an annual basis, aggregate discipline data including disciplinary actions and offenses.
9. Fail to ensure that appropriate disciplinary information is communicated to teachers and counselors who have direct contact with the disciplined students.

## EL-16 Facilities

The Superintendent shall not fail to assure the availability of physical facilities that support the accomplishment of the board's Results policies, that are safe, effectively used, and properly maintained. Accordingly, the Superintendent may not:

1. Fail to develop a long-term facilities plan to establish priorities for construction, renovation and maintenance projects. In setting those priorities, the Superintendent shall not fail to:
  - a. Assign highest priority to the correction of unsafe and significantly overcrowded conditions;
  - b. Include maintenance costs as necessary to enable facilities to reach their intended life cycles;
  - c. Plan, budget for and schedule preventive maintenance;
  - d. Plan, budget for and schedule system replacement when new schools open, schools are renovated or systems replaced;
  - e. Disclose assumptions on which the plan is developed, including growth patterns and capacity, and the financial and human capital impact individual projects will have on other parts of the organization;
  - f. Identify and account for environmental impacts of land use and efficient building design.
  - g. Involve other tax-supported local entities as appropriate.
2. Fail to use facilities efficiently and effectively, including establishing an annual cycle of review for student attendance zones and school capacity.
3. Fail to proactively seek cooperative arrangements with other public and private entities to ensure efficient planning and use of facilities and services.
4. Fail to develop a plan for public use of buildings and facilities that includes:
  - a. Definition of permitted uses;
  - b. A fair and reasonable fee structure;
  - c. Clear delineation of user expectations, including safety, behavior, cleanup, security, insurance and damage repair;
  - d. Consequences and enforcement procedures for public users who fail to follow the established rules.
5. Unreasonably deny the public's use of facilities, as long as student functions and the academic program are not compromised and the intended use is within established district guidelines.
6. Allow facilities to be unclean, unsanitary or unsafe.
7. Buy or sell real property or build, renovate or close buildings without Board authorization.
8. Recommend land acquisition without first determining by means including independent third-party verification of growth patterns, comparative costs, construction and transportation factors and any extraordinary contingency costs due to potential environmental, natural and man-made risks.
9. Fail to include consideration of life-cycle costs as capital decisions are made.
10. Fail to adequately manage the cost and schedule of school construction work, including the authorization of construction change orders for:
  - a. School Bond Program projects that exceed the available project and program contingencies established for such change order work; and
  - b. Annual Maintenance and Operations (M&O) funded projects that exceed twenty-five percent (25%) of the original construction contract amount, except as approved otherwise by the Board of Trustees.
11. Fail to survey primary site users on their level of satisfaction with completed bond and plant improvement projects and maintenance projects or work.



## **APPENDIX C**

### **The Principles of Learning**

AISD is working in partnership with the Institute for Learning of the University of Pittsburgh to implement the *Principles of Learning* in our schools. The Institute's philosophy is that all students, with appropriate effort, are capable of high achievement and high-level thinking, regardless of their backgrounds.

#### **Organizing for Effort**

An effort-based school replaces the assumption that aptitude determines what and how much students learn with the assumption that sustained and directed effort can yield high achievement for all students. Everything is organized to evoke and support this effort, to send the message that effort is expected and that tough problems yield to sustained work. High minimum standards are set and assessments are geared to the standards. All students are taught a rigorous curriculum, matched to the standards, along with as much time and expert instruction as they need to meet or exceed expectations.

#### **Clear Expectations**

If we expect all students to achieve at high levels, then we need to define explicitly what we expect students to learn. These expectations need to be communicated clearly in ways that get them "into the heads" of school professionals, parents, the community and, above all, students themselves. Descriptive criteria and models of work that meets standards should be publicly displayed, and students should refer to these displays to help them analyze and discuss their work. With visible accomplishment targets to aim toward at each stage of learning, students can participate in evaluating their own work and setting goals for their own effort.

#### **Fair and Credible Evaluations**

If we expect students to put forth sustained effort over time, we need to use assessments that students find fair; and that parents, community, and employers find credible. Fair evaluations are ones that students can prepare for: therefore, tests, exams and classroom assessments--as well as the curriculum--must be aligned to the standards. Fair assessment also means grading against absolute standards rather than on a curve, so students can clearly see the results of their learning efforts. Assessments that meet these criteria provide parents, colleges, and employers with credible evaluations of what individual students know and can do.

#### **Recognition of Accomplishment**

If we expect students to put forth and sustain high levels of effort, we need to motivate them by regularly recognizing their accomplishments. Clear recognition of authentic accomplishment is a hallmark of an effort-based school. This recognition

can take the form of celebrations of work that meets standards or intermediate progress benchmarks en route to the standards. Progress points should be articulated so that, regardless of entering performance level, every student can meet real accomplishment criteria often enough to be recognized frequently. Recognition of accomplishment can be tied to opportunity to participate in events that matter to students and their families. Student accomplishment is also recognized when student performance on standards-based assessments is related to opportunities at work and in higher education.

### **Academic Rigor in a Thinking Curriculum**

Thinking and problem solving will be the "new basics" of the 21st century. But the common idea that we can teach thinking without a solid foundation of knowledge must be abandoned. So must the idea that we can teach knowledge without engaging students in thinking. Knowledge and thinking are intimately joined. This implies a curriculum organized around major concepts that students are expected to know deeply. Teaching must engage students in active reasoning about these concepts. In every subject, at every grade level, instruction and learning must include commitment to a knowledge core, high thinking demand, and active use of knowledge.

### **Accountable Talk**

Talking with others about ideas and work is fundamental to learning. But not all talk sustains learning. For classroom talk to promote learning it must be accountable--to the learning community, to accurate and appropriate knowledge, and to rigorous thinking. Accountable talk seriously responds to and further develops what others in the group have said. It puts forth and demands knowledge that is accurate and relevant to the issue under discussion. Accountable talk uses evidence appropriate to the discipline (e.g., proofs in mathematics, data from investigations in science, textual details in literature, documentary sources in history) and follows established norms of good reasoning. Teachers should intentionally create the norms and skills of accountable talk in their classrooms.

### **Socializing Intelligence**

Intelligence is much more than an innate ability to think quickly and stockpile bits of knowledge. Intelligence is a set of problem-solving and reasoning capabilities along with the habits of mind that lead one to use those capabilities regularly. Intelligence is equally a set of beliefs about one's right and obligation to understand and make sense of the world, and one's capacity to figure things out over time. Intelligent habits of mind are learned through the daily expectations placed on the learner. By calling on students to use the skills of intelligent thinking--and by holding them responsible for doing so--educators can "teach" intelligence. This is what teachers normally do with students they expect much from; it should be standard practice with all students.

## Self-Management of Learning

If students are going to be responsible for the quality of their thinking and learning, they need to develop--and regularly use--an array of self-monitoring and self-management strategies. These meta-cognitive skills include noticing when one doesn't understand something and taking steps to remedy the situation, as well as formulating questions and inquiries that let one explore deep levels of meaning. Students also manage their own learning by evaluating the feedback they get from others; bringing their background knowledge to bear on new learning; anticipating learning difficulties and apportioning their time accordingly; and judging their progress toward a learning goal. These are strategies that good learners use spontaneously and all students can learn through appropriate instruction and socialization. Learning environments should be designed to model and encourage the regular use of self-management strategies.

## Learning as Apprenticeship

For many centuries most people learned by working alongside an expert who modeled skilled practice and guided novices as they created authentic products or performances for interested and critical audiences. This kind of apprenticeship allowed learners to acquire complex interdisciplinary knowledge, practical abilities, and appropriate forms of social behavior. Much of the power of apprenticeship learning can be brought into schooling by organizing learning environments so that complex thinking is modeled and analyzed, and by providing mentoring and coaching as students undertake extended projects and develop presentations of finished work, both in and beyond the classroom.

## APPENDIX D

### College and Career Preparation Challenges and Recommendations

The following Challenges and associated Recommendations were included in a recent audit of AISD college and career preparation conducted by the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB):

#### Challenge 1

*Give all students access to a rigorous academic core curriculum and a focused area of in-depth study.*

#### Recommendations:

1. Require four credits in college preparatory mathematics.
2. Expect students to complete a concentration
3. Revise the language arts curriculum.
4. Phase out all low-level academic courses.
5. Enroll more poor and minority students in rigorous academic classes with support.

#### Challenge 2

*Improve transitions from middle grades to high school and from high school to college and careers.*

#### Recommendations:

##### Middle Grades to High School

1. Offer a summer bridge program.
2. Provide freshmen catch-up courses.
3. Engage middle grades and high school teams in identifying readiness skills for high school work.
4. Realign middle grades curriculum and instruction to high school readiness indicators.
5. Establish ninth grade small learning communities.
6. Develop a support class.

##### High School to College and Career

(Using the senior year to ready students for college and careers)

1. Require a mathematics course.
2. Give ACC placement exams.
3. Enroll students who pass in joint enrollment classes.
4. Enroll students who fail in readiness classes.
5. Expand dual credit offerings.
6. Expand Advanced Placement (AP) course offerings and improve pass rates.

### Challenge 3

*Improve the quality of instruction and raise classroom standards and expectation.*

#### Recommendations:

1. Move standards into classroom instruction.
2. Require professional development on research-based teaching strategies.
3. Adopt literacy goals.
4. Train all teachers to use reading and writing strategies.
5. Bring mathematics, science, and career/technical teachers together to align instruction.
6. Develop district policies that demonstrate a commitment to high expectations.
7. Create student study teams.
8. Consider a new schedule.

### Challenge 4

*Expand career/technical education offerings aligned to postsecondary programs, industry standards, and labor market demands and enroll more students in these programs.*

#### Recommendations:

1. Develop a master plan for career clusters and concentrations.
2. Align courses within each career cluster to an associate degree or certificate program.
3. Establish a high-quality career institute at each high school and at other locations.
4. Make technical literacy the primary purpose of CATE courses.
5. Seek external certification of programs.
6. Expect students to pass certification exams in their areas of concentration.
7. Strengthen work-site learning.
8. Rethink how high schools assist students and parents in exploring career and education opportunities and setting goals.

### Challenge 5

*Create a strengthened education and career advisement program through a teacher advisement system.*

#### Recommendations:

1. Implement a teacher adviser system.
2. Develop a grade-level advisory system.
3. Make parents full partners in planning and monitoring students' programs of study.

## Challenge 6

*Strengthen the support system to help struggling learners.*

### Recommendations:

1. Expand and strengthen extra help to assist students to meet course standards.
2. Create student study teams.
3. Develop a full court press to help students pass state graduation exams.
4. Establish a standards-based system of grade and credit recovery.

## Challenge 7

*Develop strong building-level teams involving principals, assistant principals, and teacher leaders.*

### Recommendations:

1. Create a district leadership academy.
2. Create small learning communities.
3. Make the principal's primary responsibility curriculum, instruction, and student achievement.
4. Teach school leadership teams how to use data to make decisions.

## APPENDIX E Guidelines for Model Customer Service

### ❖ Guidelines for Effective Communication

#### *Putting Callers on Hold:*

1. Always ask callers if you may put them on hold.
2. Wait for a response.
3. Tell callers why they are being put on hold.
4. Get back quickly to the person on hold.

#### *Transferring Calls:*

1. Explain why the caller is being transferred and to whom.
2. Ask the caller if he or she minds being transferred.
3. Make sure someone is there to answer the call before you hang up.
4. Tell the person to whom you are transferring the call the caller's name and the nature of the call.

### ❖ Guidelines for Telephone Calls

1. Personally answer the main line in each department. When times are too busy and the call goes to voicemail, provide choices for the departments where they can leave a message.
2. Answer all calls within three rings.
3. Greet each caller with the name of the department and your name "Austin ISD Office of Accountability. This is Mary Brown. How may I help you?"
4. Give each caller your full attention. If it is an urgent call, especially from a parent, take responsibility for seeing the problem is resolved.
5. Give callers a choice before transferring them to voicemail.
6. Change your voicemail message to reflect when you are out of the office for 2 or more days and give callers an alternative person to call.
7. Return most calls within 24-48 hours.
8. Provide the number that a call is being transferred to and stay on the line until the call is successfully transferred. Ask the caller to call you back if the call goes awry.

### ❖ **Guidelines for Dealing with Difficult Customers**

1. Let the customer vent and listen. Don't argue. Don't defend.
2. Don't interrupt. Avoid getting trapped in a negative filter by putting a label on the customer.
3. Express empathy to the customer.
4. Listen attentively and show you are listening.
5. Ask questions to help clarify your understanding of the concern.
6. Offer options and agree on next steps.
7. Thank the customer.
8. Take action and follow through, involving your supervisor if necessary.

### ❖ **Guidelines for Walk-Ins and Visitors**

1. Greet each walk-in or visitor immediately and if necessary, ask him or her to wait until you are done with the customer you are currently working with.
2. Let non-English speaking visitors know you will get them assistance in their language as soon as possible.
3. Thank all walk-ins and visitors for coming in.
4. Tell people when you do not know the answer and then refer them to someone who does.

## APPENDIX F

### Strategic Planning Panel Recommendations on Priorities and Strategies

#### **PRIORITY 1**

*Raise achievement of all students to the world class level while closing achievement gaps between student groups.*

#### **Strategies**

- 1.1 Develop and implement a sustainable high school redesign program that is based on best practices and broad input, that includes a strong focus on academic rigor and career and college preparation, and that is supported by programs in the middle grades.
- 1.2 Expand the truancy court model and other programs that support school attendance.
- 1.3 Ensure that the educational standards developed by the district are understood by all teachers and applied consistently in the classroom.
- 1.4 Develop “campus report cards” that provide information on factors that contribute to academic success in a comprehensive yet clear and understandable manner.
- 1.5 Increase efforts to secure bilingual teachers, and provide more opportunities for dual language instruction in Spanish and English, especially in early grades.
- 1.6 Establish pilots for early childhood learning centers as prototypes for district-wide expansion.

#### **PRIORITY 2**

*Provide an educational experience that will develop the whole child – intellectually, socially, emotionally, physically, and ethically.*

#### **Strategies**

- 2.1 Expand the range and availability of student and family support services and after school programs.
- 2.2 Establish pilots to provide greater choice in courses and activities through extending and restructuring the school day and school year, based on best practices.
- 2.3 Integrate service learning with applications to real world issues into curriculum at all levels.
- 2.4 Place greater emphasis on the importance of cultural connections to teaching and learning, and promote broader appreciation of cultural diversity.
- 2.5 Continue focus on providing a variety of character education programs and activities at all campuses, and include character education strategies in all Campus Improvement Plans.

### **PRIORITY 3**

*Provide a caring, safe, and orderly environment for all students.*

#### **Strategies**

- 3.1 Promote physical environments that ensure the safety and visibility of students on all campuses, and include safety strategies in all Campus Improvement Plans.
- 3.2 Expand opportunities for meaningful student input into district and campus decisions, including representation on district and campus advisory committees.
- 3.3 Ensure that guidance counselors have sufficient opportunities to provide personal and crisis intervention services.
- 3.4 Ensure presence of safety trained personnel during all school related activities, and provide greater adult supervision on campuses after school.

### **PRIORITY 4**

*Recruit, develop, and retain highly effective teachers and administrators.*

#### **Strategies**

- 4.1 Develop and implement a comprehensive, long-range plan to provide greater supports and incentives to teachers, principals, and staff, and encourage highly effective teachers to continue service in our highest need schools.
- 4.2 Encourage continued enhancements to professional development, particularly in providing training that meets the specific needs, experience, and job descriptions of teachers and staff, and in providing internal career and leadership development.
- 4.3 Improve internal communications to ensure that all interactions between staff are characterized by mutual respect and dignity.
- 4.4 Ensure the campus reconstitution process does not result in loss of highly effective staff to other districts, other professions, or early retirement.
- 4.5 Achieve greater diversity in the district workforce through both recruitment and retention efforts.

### **PRIORITY 5**

*Build strong partnerships with parents and the community at both the campus and district levels.*

#### **Strategies**

- 5.1 Create and implement a variety of ways to actively engage, involve, and respond to parents and the community, including volunteerism and the development and promotion of Parent Support Specialists.

- 5.2 Create a district endowment through community investment to reward highly effective teachers and principals.
- 5.3 Enhance customer service, particularly through welcoming environments, effective communication with the public, ongoing staff training and results monitoring, and more multi-language information.
- 5.4 Encourage greater ongoing dialog and cooperation with other regional entities, participate in and align with other regional planning efforts, expand on facilities co-use with other local governments, and promote schools as multi-purpose centers that connect to their communities.
- 5.5 Develop and implement a Community Relations Plan – including communications, customer service, stakeholder engagement and involvement, and community and regional partnerships – aligned with the Strategic Plan.

## **PRIORITY 6**

*Provide strategic alignment and sound stewardship of district resources – funding, personnel, technology, and facilities.*

### **Strategies**

- 6.1 Increase resource sharing between campuses.
- 6.2 Place emphasis on addressing the greatest needs in the allocation of district resources.
- 6.3 Ensure that all students and staff have access to current technology, and ensure the development and implementation of a long range technology plan that is comprehensive and sustainable.
- 6.4 Ensure consideration of the strategic plan in the budget process, align the District Improvement Plan and Campus Improvement Plans with the Strategic Plan, and align other district planning efforts related to personnel, technology, and facilities with the Strategic Plan.
- 6.5 Ensure successful bond implementation through on-time and on-budget delivery, and active involvement of the Bond Oversight Committee.
- 6.6 Align staff performance expectations with the Strategic Plan at all levels of the organization.

## APPENDIX G

### Strategic Planning Panel Recommendations on Performance Measures

#### PRIORITY 1

*Raise achievement of all students to the world class level while closing achievement gaps between student groups.*

#### Performance Measures

1. Increase in percentage of campuses receiving Exemplary or Recognized status.
2. Increase in grade level advancement rates for all students and by student group.
3. Increase in graduation rates under the Recommended or Distinguished Plan for all students and by student group.
4. Increase in participation rates in Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate courses for all students and by student group.
5. Increase in percent of students indicating they intend to enroll in post-secondary education for all students and by student group.
6. Increase in average daily attendance at the elementary, middle and high school levels for all students and by student group.
7. Increase in percentage of teachers with bilingual certification.

#### PRIORITY 2

*Provide an educational experience that will develop the whole child – intellectually, socially, emotionally, physically, and ethically.*

#### Performance Measures

8. Increase in percentage of parents surveyed indicating that schools helped their children explore the visual, performing, or musical arts.
9. Increase in percentage of high school students surveyed indicating their schools helped them understand and develop their personal abilities and talents.

#### PRIORITY 3

*Provide a caring, safe, and orderly environment for all students.*

#### Performance Measures

10. Increase in percentage of students surveyed indicating they feel safe in their learning environments.
11. Increase in percentage of students surveyed indicating that an adult is available at their school if they have a problem.

#### **PRIORITY 4**

*Recruit, develop, and retain highly effective teachers and administrators.*

##### **Performance Measures**

12. Decrease in teacher attrition rate.
13. Increase in percentage of teachers with 5+ years of experience at high-need (i.e., Title I) campuses, with comparison to percent of teachers with 5+ years experience district-wide.
14. Increase in average teacher salary, with comparisons to other comparable districts in the state.
15. Increase in percentage of minority teachers and administrators.

#### **PRIORITY 5**

*Build strong partnerships with parents and the community at both the campus and district levels.*

##### **Performance Measures**

16. Increase in value of partnerships, in terms of number of mentors, number of tutors, number of volunteer hours, cash donations, and in-kind donations.
17. Increase in percentage of parents surveyed indicating that school staff treated them with courtesy and welcomed their participation.

#### **PRIORITY 6**

*Provide strategic alignment and sound stewardship of district resources – funding, personnel, technology, and facilities.*

##### **Performance Measures**

18. Percentage of bond projects completed on-time and on-budget.
19. Decrease in average replacement rate of district computers.

## **APPENDIX H**

### **Staff Focus Group on Strategic Plan Implementation Processes**

The following AISD staff served on the focus group:

*Members:*

Dr. Brenda Berry, Principal, Graham Elementary School  
Dr. Denise Collier, Executive Director of Curriculum  
Leroy Davis, Principal, Kealing Junior High School  
Dr. Barbara Gideon, Principal, Crockett High School  
Pamela Hall, Director of Recruiting and Staffing  
Dr. Cathy Kline, Supervisor of Campus & District Accountability  
Kathleen Laurel, Director of Internal Audit  
Ann Lillie, Principal, Summitt Elementary School  
Julie Lyons, Director of State and Federal Accountability  
John Moore, Executive Director of Educational Support  
Geoff Rips, Coordinator of Foundation Development  
Dr. Celina Russell, Principal, Dobie Middle School  
Gray Salada, Executive Director of Technology  
Norman Self, Executive Director of Financial Services  
Larry Throm, Chief Financial Officer  
Paul Turner, Executive Director of Facilities  
Dr. Maria Whitsett, Executive Director of Accountability  
Dr. Holly Williams, Director of Program Evaluation

*Facilitators:*

Dr. Janis Guerrero, Executive Director of Planning & Community Relations  
Joey Crumley, AICP, Supervisor of Planning

## APPENDIX I Consideration of New District Initiatives

Following are explanations of terms that appear in this appendix:

**Initiative.** A program, procedure, or project (e.g., study, research, pilot).

**New.** Means original, or significantly changed or expanded.

**District-level.** Involves or affect all or several campuses, or all or several central administration functions. (Campus-level initiatives will follow a similar process at Associate Superintendent direction.)

**Elective.** Refers to a proactive or voluntary rather than a required initiative.

**Non-elective.** Refers to state and federal requirements and initiatives from the Board of Trustees or Superintendent (i.e., those that are required, but in which the district still has some latitude in implementing). By their nature, no preliminary screening is involved.

This appendix includes two processes:

Process A – Consideration of Elective New District-Level Initiatives

Process B – Consideration of Non-Elective New District-Level Initiatives

Also included in this appendix, related to both Process A and Process B above, are:

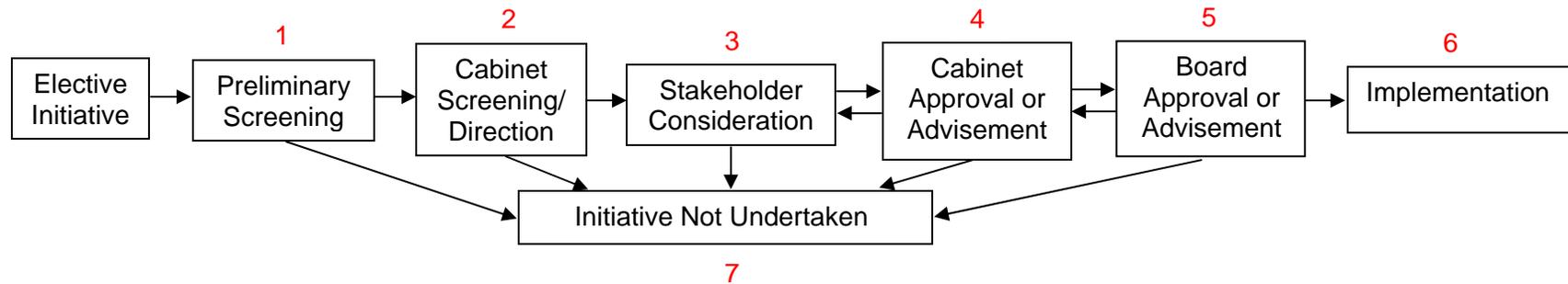
Guidance Questions

Format for Proposal to Cabinet

Instructions for Proposal to Cabinet

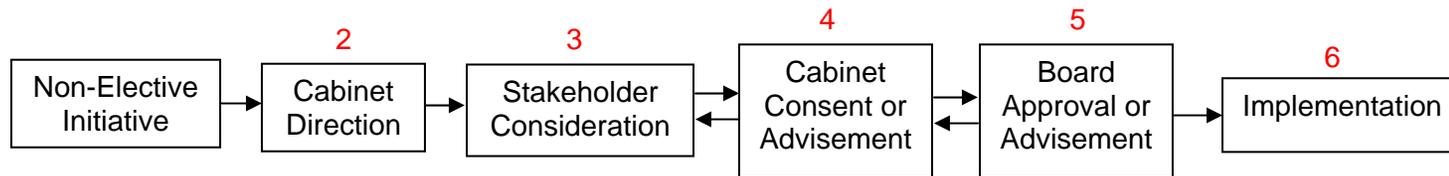
Format for Implementation Plans

## Process A – Consideration of Elective New District-Level Initiatives



- 1 Preliminary screening of electives occurs at the appropriate supervisory level (i.e., one of the following: Chief Academic Officer, Chief Financial Officer, Chief of Staff, General Counsel, Executive Director of Planning and Community Relations, Executive Director of Accountability, Executive Director of Technology, Executive Director of Human Resources). The guidance questions provided may be used as applicable to assist in screening, or other screening mechanisms that are available may be used.
- 2 Cabinet must also screen initiatives at an early stage before they proceed to more detailed consideration. Cabinet may also provide some initial direction. In addition to a brief description of the initiative, provide Cabinet with a summary of responses to the applicable guidance questions (no required format at this step).
- 3 If Cabinet decides the initiative should proceed, stakeholder representatives must be consulted. Stakeholder consideration can be achieved through informal dialog or meetings; however, one or more stakeholder representatives may request a more formal review committee approach. The Office of Planning and Community Relations (OPCR) will be available for coordination/facilitation. Information from the previous two steps should be shared with stakeholder representatives.
- 4 If the item proceeds to Cabinet for action, a proposal (in the format provided) is completed and signed by stakeholder representatives. The stakeholder representatives decide who should complete the proposal and present to Cabinet. Curriculum subject area initiatives may not always go to Cabinet; rather, they may go through District Advisory Council (DAC) or Campus Advisory Council (CAC) processes. The determination of Cabinet is recorded on the proposal (i.e., proceed to implementation, send back to stakeholders for more information or revision, reject the initiative). OPCR maintains a central file of proposal forms.
- 5 If Board approval or advisement is required, a copy of the Cabinet proposal should be included in supporting information provided to the Board.
- 6 Prior to implementation, a detailed implementation plan must be developed (OPCR will be available for assistance). Completed implementation plans should be copied to OPCR for placement in the central file. Any subsequent progress reports or evaluations should also be copied to OPCR.

## Process B – Consideration of Non-Elective New District-Level Initiatives



- 1 Step 1 (Preliminary Screening) is not applicable to this process.
- 2 Although no screening is involved in this process, Cabinet may still provide some initial direction. In addition to a brief description of the initiative, Cabinet may desire a summary of responses to some of the guidance questions provided (no required format at this step).
- 3 Again, stakeholder consideration may be achieved either through informal dialog, meetings, or a more formal review committee approach (OPCR will be available for coordination/facilitation).
- 4 Once the initiative is ready to be taken to Cabinet, a proposal (in the format provided) is completed and signed by stakeholder representatives. The determination of Cabinet is recorded on the proposal (i.e., proceed to implementation, or send back to stakeholders for more information or revision). OPCR maintains a central file of proposal forms.
- 5 If Board approval or advisement is required, a copy of the Cabinet proposal should be included in supporting information provided to the Board.
- 6 Prior to implementation, a detailed implementation plan must be developed (OPCR will be available for assistance). Completed implementation plans should be copied to OPCR for placement in the central file. Any subsequent progress reports or evaluations should also be copied to OPCR.

## Guidance Questions (See Step 1 in Process A or Process B)

*The following guidance questions may be used as applicable:*

1. Is the initiative time-sensitive?
2. Does the initiative represent a distinct opportunity for the district?
3. Are there any prior reviews or approvals (e.g., budget, DIP, CIP)?
4. Is there a clearly established or demonstrable need? Are supporting data available?
5. What are the benefits or expected results, particularly those pertaining to student achievement?
6. Is there any risk of not undertaking the initiative?
7. To what extent does the initiative align with Board Results Policies and Executive Limitations, the strategic plan, and any other applicable plans?
8. Will the initiative require any policy or regulatory changes?
9. Who are all of the stakeholders, and to what extent are they involved or affected?
10. Is public input required or appropriate?
11. Are there any direct or potential implications to business processes or service delivery?
12. What if anything might the initiative replace?
13. What are the associated technology requirements?
14. What are the associated costs?
15. Is sufficient funding already available?
16. Are existing staff levels sufficient?
17. Is existing infrastructure (systems, equipment, materials, facilities) sufficient?
18. Are there any life-cycle (i.e., beyond initial startup) requirements that need to be considered?
19. Are there any implementation requirements that need to be considered (e.g., stakeholder communications and coordination, timeframes for completion, major tasks and responsibilities, checkpoints, evaluation)?
20. Based on all associated requirements, is the initiative realistic and appropriate?

**Format for Proposal to Cabinet  
(See Step 4 in Process A or Process B)**

TYPE/SOURCE:

RECOMMENDED CABINET ACTION:

DESCRIPTION:

STAKEHOLDERS:

ALIGNMENT:

TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT:

DATA SUPPORT:

OTHER REQUIREMENTS:

IMPLEMENTATION:

STAKEHOLDER POSITIONS:

Position: <input type="checkbox"/> Support <input type="checkbox"/> Support Conditionally <input type="checkbox"/> Do Not Support
Comments:
Signature: _____ Date: _____ [Printed Name] [Title]

Cabinet Determination:
<input type="checkbox"/> Approved for Implementation
<input type="checkbox"/> Returned to Stakeholders for Additional Work
<input type="checkbox"/> Rejected
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Explain):
As Applicable, Cabinet Prioritization or Special Instructions:
Copy to OPCR for Central File (Date):

## Instructions for Proposal to Cabinet (See Step 4 in Process A or Process B)

*The proposal is intended to be an executive level decision-making tool and should usually take no more than two to three pages, but may include attachments as appropriate.*

### TYPE/SOURCE

Identify the type of initiative (elective or non-elective) and the source of the initiative.

### RECOMMENDED CABINET ACTION

Provide a recommendation for Cabinet action (i.e., review and approval, or consent).

### DESCRIPTION

Provide a summary of the new initiative, including purpose, benefits or expected results (particularly those pertaining to student achievement), time sensitivity, and any risk of not undertaking the initiative.

### STAKEHOLDERS

List all areas of the district (departments, campuses) that are involved in or affected by the new initiative, and identify their representatives.

### ALIGNMENT

Provide a summary of how the new initiative aligns with Board policy, the strategic plan, and any other plans, as applicable. Also describe alignment with any similar programs, and explain what if anything the initiative will replace.

### TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT

Provide a summary of the extent to which technology support will be needed.

### DATA SUPPORT

Provide a summary of the extent to which data support will be needed.

### OTHER REQUIREMENTS

Provide a summary of other requirements such as cost, funding sources, staffing, and infrastructure (equipment, materials, space).

### IMPLEMENTATION

Provide a summary of any important implementation requirements, such as:

- Continuing stakeholder communications and coordination
- Timeframes for completion, milestones, and deliverables
- Major tasks and responsibilities
- Checkpoints, monitoring, progress reports
- Evaluation

### STAKEHOLDER POSITIONS

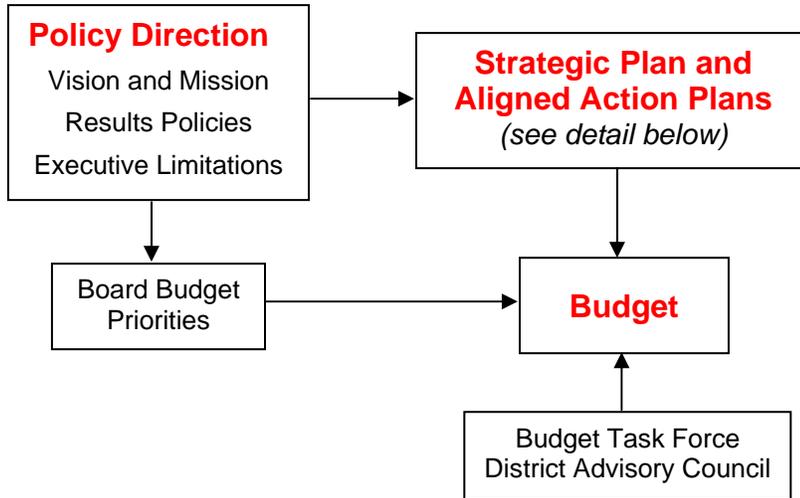
Provide a position check-off on the proposal from each stakeholder representative, and any comments. Copy and paste additional position blocks as needed.

## Format for Implementation Plans (See Step 6 in Process A or Process B)

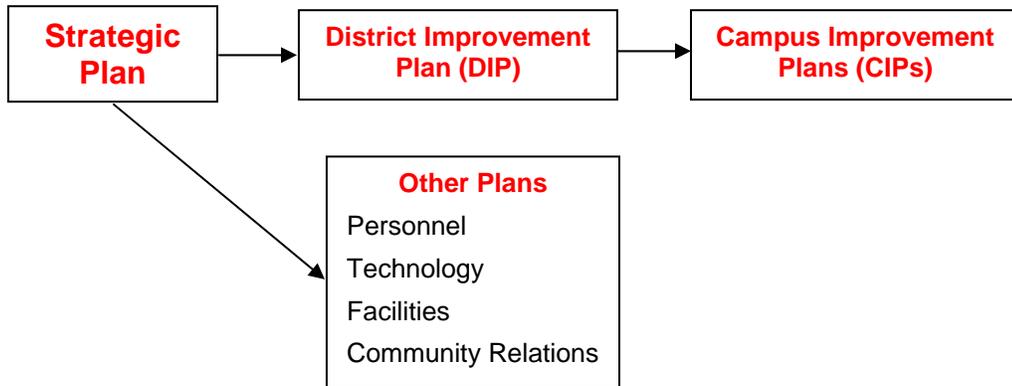
*Note: OPCR will be available to assist in the development of implementation plans. Completed implementation plans should be copied to OPCR for placement in the central file.*

1. Provide a brief description of the new initiative.
2. Identify the implementation team (representatives of involved or affected parties).
3. Identify the implementation leaders (i.e., persons responsible for signoffs).
4. State the goals and objectives of the initiative.
5. Provide an overall timeline for implementing the initiative (indicate milestones).
6. Provide a detailed work breakdown structure for implementing the initiative
  - Tasks
  - Responsibilities
  - Timeframes
  - Deliverables
7. Provide a detailed budget for implementing the initiative.
8. Describe how implementation of the initiative will be monitored
  - Performance measures
  - Data to be collected
  - Progress reports
9. Identify maintenance and/or life-cycle requirements
10. Attachments
  - Data, other supporting information as appropriate
  - Signoffs

## APPENDIX J Strategic Plan Relationships



### *Detail of Strategic Plan and Aligned Action Plans*



Note: Although the other plans are not shown to directly align with the DIP and CIPs, inter-relationships will naturally exist, as they will between the other plans themselves. Therefore, close coordination and the involvement of all stakeholders will be necessary in the development and implementation of all these plans.

## APPENDIX K

### References on Characteristics of Highly Effective Schools

The following references are not listed in any particular order:

1. *High Achieving Schools Initiative: Final Report*. University of New Mexico, 2004.
2. *Characteristics of Successful Schools*. Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2003.
3. *Nine Characteristics of High Performing Schools*. Washington State School System Improvement Resource Guide, 2004.
4. *High Student Achievement: How Six School Districts Changed into High-Performance Systems*. Gordon Cawelti and Nancy Protheroe, 2001.
5. *Characteristics of Effective Schools*. University of Idaho, College of Education, 2001.
6. *Foundations for Success: Case Studies of How Urban School Systems Improve Student Achievement*. Council of the Great City Schools, 2002.
7. *Characteristics of Effective Schools*. University of Maryland, College of Education, 2001.
8. *Effective Practice Characteristics*. Boston Plan for Excellence in the Public Schools, 2003.
9. *Correlates of Effective Schools: The First and Second Generation*. Lawrence W. Lezotte, 1991.
10. *Common Elements of Effective Schools*. Education World, 2004.
11. *A Study of Effective Practices in Virginia Schools*. Virginia Department of Education, 2000.
12. *Case Studies of High-Performing, High-Technology Schools*. North Central Regional Educational Laboratory, 2004.
13. *Ten Traits of High Performing Schools*. Florida School Report, 2004.
14. *Best Practices of High-Performing School Systems: Framework and State Studies*. National Center for Educational Accountability, 2003.

15. *No Excuses: Lessons from 21 High-Performing, High-Poverty Schools*. The Heritage Foundation, 2000.
16. *Head of the Class: Characteristics of Higher Performing Urban High Schools in Massachusetts*. Massachusetts Institute for a New Commonwealth, Center for Education Research, 2003.
17. *The Secrets of Can-Do Schools*. National Staff Development Council, 2003.
18. *Dispelling the Myth: High-Poverty Schools Exceeding Expectations*. The Education Trust, 1999.
19. *Driven to Succeed: High-Performing, High-Poverty, Turnaround Middle Schools*. University of Texas, Charles A. Dana Center, 2002.
20. *Characteristics of More Successful Schools*. Comprehensive Regional Assistance Center Consortium, Region VI, 1997.
21. *Beyond Islands of Excellence: What Districts Can Do to Improve Instruction and Achievement in All Schools*. Learning First Alliance, 2003.
22. *What Might a High Performance School Look Like?* J.A. and Kathryn Albertson Foundation, 2004.

## APPENDIX L

### References on Strategic Planning Best Practices

The following references are not listed in any particular order:

1. *Education Criteria for Performance Excellence*. Baldrige National Quality Program, 2004.
2. *Top 10 Ways to Improve Public Schools*. Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts, 2000.
3. *Strategic Planning Best Practices*. Dennis C. Bausman. Clemson University, 2003.
4. *Outcome-Based Strategic Planning Approach for Schools*. Center for Strategic Planning, 2001.
5. *Strategic Planning Criteria*. North Central Association, Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement.
6. *Best Practices, Report Number 3: Strategic Planning*. Community Associations Institute Research Foundation, 2001.
7. *Strategic Planning for America's Schools*. William J. Cook, Jr., Ph.D. The Cambridge Group, Revised Edition V, 2001.
8. *Strategic Planning for Public Schools*. Texas Association of School Boards, 2004.
9. *Effective Strategic Planning: Getting Your Organization Focused and Directed*. The Enterprise Foundation, 1999.
10. *Strategic Planning: What Works...and What Doesn't*. American Productivity and Quality Center, 1999.
11. *Planning Strategically*. University of Texas, College of Education, 2002.
12. *Tips for Effective Strategic Planning*. Christine D. Keen. HR Magazine, August, 1994.
13. *Strategic Planning*. David Peterson. ERIC Digest Series, Number EA 41, 1989.
14. *Basic Guidelines for a Successful Planning Process*. Carter McNamara, Ph.D., 1999.

15. *Best Practices for Long-Term Planning.* Illah Nourbaksh, Ph.D. and Ofer Matan, Ph.D., 2002.
16. *What Makes Strategic Plans Work Well?* David T. Conley. School Administrator, December, 1994.
17. *Five Good Ideas about Strategic Planning.* James Appleyard, 2004.
18. *Model Planning Process Overview.* Washington State School System Improvement Resource Guide, 2004.

**APPENDIX M**  
**Reference Strategic Plans from Other School Districts**

ABC Unified (CA)	Eanes (TX)	Lewiston (ID)	Portland (OR)
Alexandria (VA)	East Grand Rapids (MI)	Liberty (MO)	Poudre (CO)
Ann Arbor (MI)	East Hartford (CT)	Limestone (ON)	Rainy River (ON)
Arlington (VA)	East Prairie (IL)	Little Rock (AR)	Reed Union (CA)
Arlington Central (NY)	Edina (MN)	Littleton (CO)	Rio Rancho (NM)
Arlington Heights (IL)	El Paso (TX)	Los Angeles Unified (CA)	Riverview (WA)
Ashland (MA)	Evergreen (WA)	Madison County (FL)	Rochester (NY)
Atlanta (GA)	Exeter-West Greenwich (RI)	Mahomet-Seymour (IL)	Rock Island-Milan (IL)
Avon Grove (PA)	Fairbanks (OH)	Manteca Unified (CA)	Ross (CA)
Bangor (ME)	Fairborn (OH)	Marion County (FL)	Round Rock (TX)
Bear Valley (CA)	Falmouth (MA)	McKinleyville (CA)	Rutherford County (NC)
Bellingham (WA)	Fargo (ND)	Meridian (WA)	Salem (VA)
Bexley (OH)	Federal Way (WA)	Metro Nashville (TN)	Salt Lake City (UT)
Boise (ID)	Forest Grove (OR)	Miami-Dade County (FL)	San Jose (CA)
Brandywine (DE)	Fort Bend (TX)	Monterrey Peninsula (CA)	San Mateo-Foster City (CA)
Boulder Valley (CO)	Fort Worth (TX)	Montgomery County (MD)	San Ramon Valley (CA)
Broward County (FL)	Fox River Grove (IL)	Mount Baker (WA)	Santa Cruz (CA)
Burlingame (CA)	Fulton County (GA)	Mountain View-Whisman (CA)	Seattle (WA)
Carmel Clay (IN)	Grand Blanc (MI)	Nantucket (MA)	South Redford (MI)
Carrollton (GA)	Green Bay (WI)	Newport News (VA)	Spokane (WA)
Central Montcalm (MI)	Guilford County (NC)	North Brookfield (MA)	Stanwood-Comano (WA)
Chapel Hill-Carrboro (NC)	Hamilton County (TN)	Northside (TX)	Superior-Greenstone (ON)
Charleston County (SC)	Hamilton-Wentworth (ON)	Ontario-Montclair (CA)	Syracuse (NY)
Charlotte-Mecklenburg (NC)	Harnett County (NC)	Orleans Parish (LA)	Thompson (CO)
Charlottesville (VA)	Hastings-Prince Edward (ON)	Orinda Union (CA)	Tracy (CA)
Cobb County (GA)	Hillsborough County (FL)	Osseo Area (MN)	Tredyffrin-Easttown (PA)
Colorado Springs (CO)	Hilton (NY)	Ottawa-Carleton (ON)	Upper Canada (ON)
Community Consolidated (IL)	Horry County (SC)	Park Hill (MO)	Virginia Beach (VA)
Dallas (TX)	Indianapolis (IN)	Pasadena Unified (CA)	Waterloo (ON)
Davis (UT)	Indian River County (FL)	Pearl River (NY)	Whitley County (IN)
Dearborn (MI)	Jefferson County (CO)	Peoria (IL)	Wichita (KS)
Decatur (GA)	Kellogg (ID)	Pittsburgh (PA)	Wilmington (MA)
Decatur (IL)	Ketchikan Gateway (AK)	Pleasanton (CA)	Woodstock (IL)
Dedham (MA)	Lake Washington (WA)	Pocatello-Chubbuck (ID)	Worcester County (MD)
Dubuque (IA)	Lawrence (KS)	Port Angeles (WA)	York Region (ON)

**APPENDIX N**  
**Individuals Interviewed During Plan Development\***

**Community and Business Leaders**

Name	Representing
Jeffrey Richard	Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce
Ashton Cumberbatch	City of Austin; Cultural Connections to Teaching and Learning Task Force
Trayce McDaniel	Capital City African America Chamber of Commerce
Ivy Rich	Black Ministers Union; Cultural Connections to Teaching and Learning Task Force; Budget Task Force
Wanda Rogers	Austin Partners in Education
Mae Leonard	People's Forum
Ada Anderson	Ada Anderson Foundation
Melissa Harvey	Capital City African America Chamber of Commerce
Sterling Lands	Safety Task Force
Gus Garcia	City of Austin
Raphael Quintanilla	Austin Community College
Louis Malfaro	Education Austin
Marc Rodriguez	Greater Austin Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
Ben Ornales	Austin Partners in Education; City of Austin
Nora Comstock	Las Comadres
Veronica Rivera	Austin Community College
Lydia Agraz	Time Warner Cable
Eliza May	Austin Partners in Education; Greater Austin Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
Alberto Gonzales	District Advisory Council
Celia Israel	Safety Task Force; Mission Resources
Amy Averett	Austin Voices for Education & Youth; District Advisory Council
Sandy Dochen	Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce; IBM; Budget Task Force
Sally Yaryan	Austin Board of Realtors
John Blazier	Austin Partners in Education; Bond Advisory Committee
Elizabeth Christian	Elizabeth Christian & Associates
Ed Sharp	University of Texas at Austin
Earl Maxwell	Austin Area Research Organization; Budget Task Force
Olga Cuellar	Del Fuente Center
Raul Alvarez	Austin City Council
Greg Gibson	Gibson Consulting Group

**District Staff**

Name	Title
Dr. Pat Forgione	Superintendent
Karen Sperry	Chief of Staff
Dr. Darlene Westbrook	Chief Academic Officer
Dr. Maria Whitsett	Executive Director, Accountability
Dr. Yolanda Rocha	Associate Superintendent, Elementary Schools, South
Dr. Peggy Gordon	Associate Superintendent, Middle Schools
Dr. Marcus Nelson	Director, Secondary Blueprint Schools
Claudia Tousek	Associate Superintendent, Elementary Schools, North
Terry Morganti-Fisher	Director, Professional Development
Geoff Rips	Coordinator, Foundation Development

## District Staff (continued)

Name	Title
Pat Fuller	Chief of District Police
Pam Hall	Director, Recruiting & Staffing
Dr. Gloria Williams	Director, School, Family, & Community Education
Mel Waxler	General Counsel
Dr. Denise Collier	Executive Director, Curriculum
Dr. Linda Webb	Assistant Director, Curriculum
Dr. David Duty	Director, Intergovernmental Relations
Joan Altobelli	Director, Special Education
Julie Lyons	Director, State & Federal Accountability
John Moore	Executive Director, Educational Support
Paul Turner	Executive Director, Facilities
Dr. Holly Williams	Director, Program Evaluation
Gray Salada	Executive Director, Technology
Larry Throm	Chief Financial Officer
Della May Moore	Director, Bilingual Education
Dr. Rosalinda Hernandez	Associate Superintendent, High Schools
Chris Carillo	Director, Food Service
Michael Houser	Human Resources
Dr. Linelle Clark	Coordinator, Dropout Prevention/Reduction
Fred Estrello	Program Specialist, Family Resource Center
Jane Nethercut	Coordinator, Peer Assistance Programs
Andy Welch	Director, Communications
Dr. David Kernwein	Principal, Anderson High School
Rhonda Boyer	Program Specialist, Advanced Academics
Pat Werner	Teacher, Becker Elementary School
Stacia Crescenzi	Teacher, Dobie Middle School
Gail Belcher	Principal, Bedichek Middle School
Pat Fuller	Principal, Casey Elementary School
Vicki Baldwin	Principal, Garza High School
Cynthia Knox	Teacher, Covington Middle School
Leroy Davis	Principal, Kealing Junior High School
Carlos Rios	Principal, Travis High School
Dr. Jane Ross	Assistant Principal, Pearce Middle School
Lisa Sanchez	Teacher, Johnston High School

*\* These individuals were interviewed as part of the environmental scan, and were also invited to provide online comments on the Draft Strategic Plan.*

**APPENDIX O**  
**Board of Trustees**  
**Input on Strategic Plan Priorities**

*The following input on Strategic Plan priorities was provided by the Board of Trustees on 11/29/04, and forwarded to the Strategic Planning Panel.*

1. Closing the achievement gap between student groups and raising achievement levels for all students.
  - a. Diversity in the district workforce
  - b. More culturally relevant instruction
  - c. Continued focus on college and career preparation
  - d. Getting standards into the classroom
2. Recruiting and retaining qualified, experienced teachers and administrators.
3. Providing stewardship of district resources.
  - a. Strong stewardship in implementation of the bond
  - b. Improving the budget process to identify and fund what works
  - c. Facilities use management
4. Placing a strong focus on secondary education.
  - a. Better preparation of middle school students and addressing their needs
  - b. Restructuring of high schools
5. Building strong community partnerships and parent support.
  - a. Community engagement and strategic partnerships
  - b. Parental engagement

**APPENDIX P**  
**District Advisory Council**  
**Recommendations on Strategic Planning Priorities**

1. Raising achievement levels for all students and closing achievement gaps between student groups.
2. Ensuring that all English Language Learners are proficient in both English and their native language and advance socially and academically.
3. Providing all students with equal access to experienced teachers and quality resources.
4. Working to enhance the recruitment and retention of experienced and well-qualified teachers and administrative staff.
5. Ensuring that special area classes (e.g., music, art, physical education) are the same size as regular classes.
6. Ensuring that all campuses have necessary teaching and administrative staffing levels.
7. Working to optimize meaningful parental participation/accountability.

*The members of the District Advisory Council  
are listed on the following page.*

## **AISD DISTRICT ADVISORY COUNCIL**

### **Co-Chairs**

Buddy Owen, Parent  
Dr. Jane Ross, Assistant Principal

### **Members**

Shaintay Abudya, Parent  
Amy Averett, Community Representative  
Vicki Baldwin, At-Large Member  
Linda Beavan, Teacher  
Vickie Black, Parent  
Cheryl Bollish, Teacher  
Cheryl Bradley, Board of Trustees Representative  
Pat Butler, Principal  
BB Coffill, Classified Staff Representative  
CJ Colin, Austin Council of PTAs  
Ramon DeJesus, Parent  
Vicki Everett, Teacher  
Julia Fletcher, Principal  
Kate Friday, Parent  
Patty Gaston, Parent  
Diane Gonzales, Parent  
Alberto Gonzalez, At-Large Member  
Pam Gonzalez, Teacher  
Gerald Guerra, Parent  
Craig Hackler, Parent  
Roger Henson, Teacher  
Amy Jessee, Teacher  
Linda Johnson, Teacher  
Cornel Jones, Principal  
Linda Klar, Business Representative  
Cynthia Knox, Teacher  
Julie Lyons, Administrative Staff Representative  
Frances Martinez, Teacher  
Joe Moore, Teacher  
Sonia Morales, Parent  
Varshna Naramunchi-Jackson, Parent  
Tammy Phuong, Teacher  
Pascual Piedfort, At-Large Member  
Yolanda Reyes, Teacher  
Douglas Rhodenbaugh, Teacher  
Janie Ruiz, Principal  
Lizelle Santiago, Teacher  
Sue Shoopman, Teacher  
Stacey Silverman, Parent  
Michael Simmang, Parent  
Constance Skeete, Teacher  
Barbara Spelman, Principal  
Suzanne Stein, Community Representative  
Karen Stevens, Parent  
Kari Sulak, Teacher  
Laura Tuma, Parent  
Sheryl Van Hoose, Teacher  
Linda Velasquez, Parent  
Tomi Welch, Parent  
Dee Willars, Teacher



**APPENDIX Q**  
**Austin Council of PTAs**  
**Recommendations on Strategic Plan Priorities**

1. Schools and families should work together in partnership to help all students achieve their academic and personal potential.
2. AISD should provide students rigorous and challenging academic curriculum *and* access to music, art, physical education, and other programs that contribute to student growth.
3. Every campus should be accountable for informing parents about student progress, encouraging parent participation, and educating parents about how to support their children.
4. Campus and district administrators should encourage parent participation by supporting and working with campus PTAs.
5. Principals, assistant principals, and parent support specialists should be accountable for working cooperatively with PTAs to improve their schools.
6. AISD should work at the campus and district levels with PTAs and other stakeholders to develop strategies that encourage the involvement of *all* parents, regardless of their race, culture, ethnic background, or economic status.
7. Parents must feel welcome and valued at campuses. This philosophy must permeate the district from top to bottom, from the boardroom to the classroom.
8. Parents should have the opportunity to participate in district planning initiatives through Campus Advisory Councils, the District Advisory Council, other district committees, workshops, and other mechanisms.
9. Every child should be and feel safe – before, during, and after school.
10. AISD should employ multiple measures – not just standardized test scores – to evaluate progress and help students develop a lifelong love of learning.

*The officers of the Austin Council of PTAs  
are listed on the following page.*

**AUSTIN COUNCIL OF PTAs  
Officers**

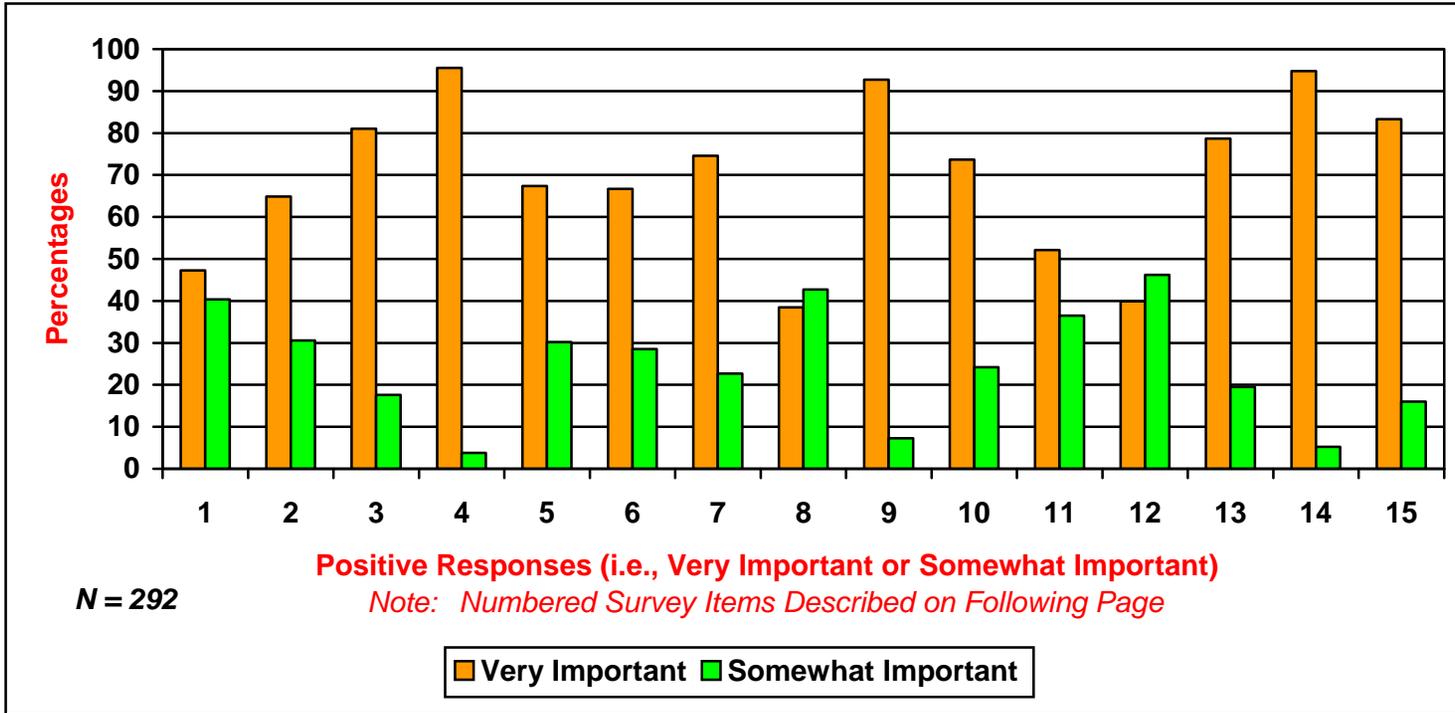
**Administrative Officers:**

Marshall Bruni, President  
Pascual Piedfort, First Administrative Vice-President  
Ross Pumfrey, Second Administrative Vice-President  
Lynn Brown, Treasurer

**Vertical Team Vice-Presidents:**

Laurie Allen, McCallum Vertical Team  
Nancy Barton, Anderson Vertical Team  
Stacey Bennett, Bowie Vertical Team  
Don Brooks, LBJ Vertical Team  
Betty Davis, Crockett Vertical Team  
Linda Green, Reagan Vertical Team  
Yolanda Leija, Lanier Vertical Team  
Tracey Marchbanks, Austin Vertical Team  
Nancy Taute, Travis Vertical Team  
Linda Velasquez, Akins Vertical Team

**APPENDIX R**  
**Online Survey of Strategic Plan Priorities**  
**Summary of Positive Responses**



<b>RESPONDENT CATEGORIES*</b>	
Parent	51.7%
Student	0.7%
AISD Employee	42.8%
Campus Advisory Council Member	33.4%
Non-Parent Community Member	14.5%

\*Some respondents indicated more than one category.

## **Online Survey of Strategic Plan Priorities**

### **Description of Survey Items**

*Survey respondents were asked to rate each of the following as either Very Important, Somewhat Important, Not That Important, or Not Important at All:*

1. Providing students and parents with adequate information on building students' character.
2. Providing students and parents with adequate information on ways to foster positive student behavior.
3. Ensuring that all students have equal access to current technology and instructional materials.
4. Ensuring that all students have equal access to qualified and experienced teachers.
5. Raising achievement levels for all students.
6. Closing achievement gaps between student groups.
7. Optimizing parental participation and parental accountability for student behaviors including discipline, attendance, and academics.
8. Building a quality customer service orientation for staff throughout the district.
9. Enhancing the recruitment and retention of qualified, experienced teachers, counselors, and administrators.
10. Preventing dropouts and increasing education completion rates.
11. Ensuring that all English language learners are proficient in both English and their native language.
12. Ensuring that all English language learners advance socially.
13. Ensuring that all English language learners advance academically.
14. Ensuring that all students learn in a safe, pleasant, and nurturing environment.
15. Preparing students for successful college and career experiences.

**APPENDIX S**  
**Summary of Outreach Activities for Review of the Draft Strategic Plan**  
**(May 13 - June 30, 2005)**

	Stakeholders	Activities
1.	Community Action Network	Presentation and invitation to comment
2.	Austin Partners in Education	Presentation and invitation to comment
3.	District Advisory Council	Presentation and invitation to comment
4.	Austin Council of PTAs	Invitation to comment
5.	Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce	Invitation to comment (announcement appeared in GACC newsletter)
6.	Greater Austin Hispanic Chamber of Commerce	Invitation to comment (announcement appeared in GAHCC newsletter)
7.	Capital City African American Chamber of Commerce	Invitation to comment
8.	Austin Asian Chamber of Commerce	Invitation to comment
9.	Austin Area Research Organization	Invitation to comment
10.	Campus Advisory Councils	Invitation to comment (via memo to principals)
11.	AISD Staff	Invitation to comment (via email)
12.	General Public	Invitation to comment (via website, ads, PSA)
13.	General Public	Newspaper ads (English and Spanish) on draft plan, opportunity for online comment, and public meeting
14.	General Public	Public meeting (June 15 at Garza High School)
15.	Media	PSA on draft plan, opportunity for online comment, and public meeting (articles appeared in Austin American-Statesman and Rumbo; talk show topic on KLBJ-590)
16.	Over 70 Individual Community and Business Leaders*	Invitation to comment
17.	Board of Trustees	Invitation to public meeting
18.	Strategic Planning Panel	Invitation to comment

\* Previously interviewed during plan development

**APPENDIX T**  
**Summary of Public Meeting on Draft Strategic Plan**  
**June 15, 2005**

**ATTENDANCE**

Name	Affiliation
Cheryl Bradley	AISD Trustee
John-Michael Cortez	Strategic Planning Panel
Joey Crumley	AISD Planning & Community Relations
Ashton Cumberbatch	Strategic Planning Panel
Marcos de Leon	El Concilio LULAC 4814
Sandy Dochen	Strategic Planning Panel
Johna Edwards	AISD Trustee
Pat Forgione	AISD Superintendent
Martha Garcia	AISD Bilingual Education Program
Alberto Gonzalez	Strategic Planning Panel; District Advisory Council
Janis Guerrero	AISD Planning & Community Relations
Sheila Guzman	Community Member
Jackie Kraal	Librarian, Zilker Elementary School
Robert Martinez	Community Member
Thomas Meredith	Rumbo Newspaper
Constanza Morales	Rumbo Newspaper
Norma Saavedra	Parent
Xochitl Salazar	Texas News Watch
Robert Schneider	AISD Truster
Shannon A. Stuckhouse	Student, University of Texas
Barbara Ariles Torsberg	Facilitator, Garza High School
Darlene Westbrook	AISD Chief Academic Officer
Mark Williams	AISD Trustee

**PROCEEDINGS**

**Introductory Remarks**

- The meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m. in the cafeteria of Garza Independence High School, with the co-chairs of the Strategic Planning Panel presiding (John-Michael Cortez, Ashton Cumberbatch, and Sandy Dochen). An announcement was made that Spanish translation services were available.
- Mr. Cortez introduced members of the Board of Trustees present, as well as the Superintendent. He said this meeting was the culmination of a year-long process, including considerable input from district stakeholders. He pointed out that the Strategic Planning Panel itself was composed of a diverse membership.
- Mr. Cortez went over the importance of having a strategic plan. He said it provides a set of concise, clear priorities and a focused set of strategies for

achieving them. He pointed out that the last strategic plan developed by the district was in the early 1990s, and it was important at this time for the district to take a good look at where it is now and where it wants to be five years from now.

- Mr. Dochen spoke to the importance of having continuity in district leadership, and said the approach the district is taking toward overall planning represents a sign of organizational maturity. He said a considerable amount of research went in to the development of the plan, including analysis of best practices and review of the strategic plans of several other school districts. He pointed out that the plan includes specific procedures for ensuring that it remains a vital document that does not sit on the shelf.
- Mr. Cumberbatch said that it was good to have a plan that “talks the talk,” but successful implementation of the plan means “walking the walk.” In other words, the district will have to live the plan every day in order to make it truly effective. He said the Strategic Planning Panel would continue to serve the district by providing input during the annual plan review process, including an annual report on the progress of plan implementation. He added that any proposed changes to the priorities and strategies of the plan would require additional stakeholder input.
- Dr. Forgione stated that silos were not an effective way to build an organization and grow over time. He said the plan provided a very clear vision, a good vision. He said the plan was developed in a very dynamic environment, with a rising tide of expectations across the state and higher standards, along with major shift in demographics toward a greater number of Hispanics and people living in poverty. He said we needed to reexamine our systems and processes, and not conduct business as usual, in order to gain high achievement for all students.
- Dr. Forgione explained that the plan vision reflected a balance in perspectives necessary to gain overall excellence: education, staff, community, and resources. He said the plan included some “stretch” goals, such as totally eliminating achievement gaps, that were ambitious yet necessary.
- Dr. Forgione thanked the members of the Strategic Planning Panel as well as district planning staff for their work on the plan.

## Overview of Plan

- Dr. Guerrero and Mr. Crumley provided a brief overview of the plan’s overarching goals, priorities, and strategies. The overarching goals represented points that tended to cut across all or several of the priorities and strategies. The six priorities included three on education, one on staff, one on community, and one on resources. Under these priorities were 31 specific strategies for implementation. The strategic direction portion of the plan also included 21 performance indicators for assessing plan progress.
- Mr. Crumley explained that the strategic plan would serve as an umbrella over other district plans – such as student achievement, technology, facilities, personnel, and community relations – with these other plans providing a greater level of detail.

## Public Comments

Following are the main points made by six persons who addressed the co-chairs of the Strategic Planning Panel:

1. Norma Saavedra
  - Felt the panel did a magnificent job and applauded the Board
  - Felt the district would have been better off with such a plan sooner
  - How do we better engage major stakeholders and get them involved, and get their help
  - Overarching Goal A identifies certain student groups – why were they singled out – were any left out
  - Not sure what happens next – need to get the word out
  - The community relations plan needs to be multi-pronged to involve all stakeholders
2. Robert Martinez
  - Felt the community relations plan needed to really include involvement, and it would be important to get the whole community working together – religious and educational groups need to be included
  - The plan needs to specifically identify who stakeholders are
  - How do we ensure that Campus Advisory Councils are active and effective
3. Barbara Ariles Torsberg
  - As an educator, appreciates having such a plan, especially that it stresses a proactive rather than reactive approach
  - Felt we need to better communicate what is already working well, and not reinvent the wheel – need to share successes with each other
4. Jackie Kraal
  - Liked the plan, especially the alignment with Campus Improvement Plans
  - When the principal lives the plan, things will get done
  - Need to ensure that the plan is tied to the allocation of resources
  - Campus Advisory Councils need instructions sooner on development of Campus Improvement Plans
5. Alberto Gonzalez
  - Felt working on the Strategic Planning Panel was rewarding – the values of many people were discussed
  - Felt the several of the overarching goals needed to be stated in terms of both administrative and campus levels
  - Pointed out that dual language programs were edited out of the panel's recommendations by the Cabinet, and recommended that they be put back in – felt that the enrichment of students was being overlooked
  - Felt the basic orientation of the district needs to be dignity and respect for all
  - Need to continue emphasizing technology in the classroom

6. Sheila Guzman

- Concerned that there were no Spanish speakers in the audience
- Felt a lot of people did not know about this meeting and the plan

**Closing Remarks**

- Mr. Crumley said that based on the input received tonight that the public review and comment period would be extended through the end of June.
- The Strategic Planning Panel co-chairs thanked everyone for coming and participating.
- The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

**APPENDIX U**  
**Summary of Stakeholder Input on Draft Strategic Plan**

	Input Topics	Source*	Frequency
1.	Plan needs to be tied to CIPs	O,P	3
2.	More staff training/development	O	3
3.	Need full-time counselors on all campuses	O	2
4.	Need to better attract/retain bilingual teachers	O	2
5.	Language of strategic direction is vague	O	2
6.	Need salary increases for teachers	O	2
7.	More teacher mentors and other supports	O	2
8.	Resource allocations to give campuses what they need to succeed	O	2
9.	Standardized testing is over-emphasized	O	2
10.	Better communications with stakeholders	O	2
11.	More stakeholder input/involvement	O,P	2
12.	Not clear on what happens next	P	2
13.	Elementary special area classes overcrowded	O	1
14.	High-need schools need more resources	O	1
15.	More emphasis/value placed on the arts	O	1
16.	Elementary schools seem to be slighted	O	1
17.	Any linkages to UT planning efforts?	O	1
18.	Place more emphasis on addressing the needs and raising achievement of Hispanics	O	1
19.	More adult supervision on campuses	O	1
20.	Place more emphasis on addressing the needs and raising achievement of African Americans	O	1
21.	Need smaller, more intimate campuses	O	1
22.	More consideration to special needs students	O	1
23.	Will there be sufficient funding to achieve the vision?	O	1
24.	Need to make sure customer service is stressed	O	1
25.	Include SDAA as a measure of achievement	O	1
26.	More sensitive to cultural diversity	O	1
27.	Why does Overarching Goal A single out certain groups, and why are other groups not mentioned?	P	1
28.	Who are stakeholders?	P	1
29.	Need to ensure CACs are active and effective	P	1
30.	How can we better let each other know about things that are working well?	P	1
31.	Why not research successful dual language programs and try a pilot; outside funding is available	P	1
32.	Provide more opportunities for enrichment programs	P	1
33.	Add performance indicator on completion of a fourth year of science, math, and foreign language	G	1

	Input Topics	Source*	Frequency
34.	Add strategy to execute student completion of the College Connection Initiative	G	1
35.	Provide annual quantitative benchmarks for performance indicators	G	1
36.	Add performance indicator on completion rate through the College Connection Initiative	G	1
37.	To Performance Indicator 2, add "to include college ready performance for tenth and exit level test-takers"	G	1
38.	Add performance indicator on National Assessment of Educational Progress for fourth and tenth grade students	G	1
39.	Could people taking the online survey choose more than one respondent category?	B	1

- \* O = Online Comments
- P = Public Meeting Comments
- B = Board of Trustees Comments
- G = GACC Written Comments

