

Administration, on how Austin's high schools can better prepare students for challenging careers.

Early in 2005, Dr. Forgione will seek the Board's direction on how the District should proceed to redesign its high schools and their programs, based on the data accumulated, the advice of national experts and feedback from Austin clients and constituents.

Parent University

During 2003, GEAR UP, Project ADVANCE, and AISD's Guidance and Counseling Department collaborated to provide a series of free **Parent University** classes focused on providing families with the essential knowledge needed to prepare their children for college. AISD will continue to offer Parent University classes throughout the 2004-05 school year.

Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP)

GEAR UP is a federally-funded college readiness program that began serving AISD students during the 2000-01 school year. GEAR UP expects to improve student academic performance; expand student knowledge of post-secondary options, preparation, and financing; and increase the rate of student enrollment in post-secondary education. In the tenth grade during the 2003-04 school year,

- 2,484 students were each provided with an average of 52 contact hours of college preparation services per student.
- 1,697 students participated in GEAR UP tutoring services with an average of 25 hours per student.
- 149 students completed a PSAT preparation course. In Fall 2003, there was an 18 percent increase in the number of 10th grade students taking the PSAT test across AISD.
- 235 students in 10th grade took the ASSET test (for college admissions).
- 79 students successfully completed dual credit college courses.

College Readiness Initiative

In the fall of 2002, AISD implemented a college readiness initiative funded by the Michael and Susan Dell Foundation. The initiative is designed to increase college enrollment among previously underserved student populations. Now in its third year, the three components (Project ADVANCE, Project SMART, and AVID) work to better prepare these students academically and to help them apply to college and receive scholarships and financial aid. Project SMART provides certified teachers for six AISD schools to tutor students at or below passing in 8th grade math or 9th grade Algebra so these students can successfully complete the Recommended High School Plan. AVID provides study skills and tutoring to support students advancing to honors and AP classes. Project ADVANCE places a facilitator on each high school campus to work with students who may not have been considering college, working with students and their families to help them apply for college, financial aid, and scholarships.

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

—(Board of Trustees 'Results-6')

Personal Development Skills Personal Development Skills

The Guidance and Counseling Department serves students in the following ways:

- Counselors help all students identify personal goals and select graduation plans.
- The Guidance Curriculum provides the framework for the development of competencies through regular classroom presentations.
- Counselors conduct support groups as needed.
- Counselors design appropriate interventions for students in coordination with campus IMPACT teams.

During the 2003-04 school year:

- 91 percent of all students in grades 5-12 completed Individual Academic Career Plans (IACPs).

In addition to the Guidance and Counseling curriculum, a variety of Character Education programs — such as Second Step, Foundations, Character Counts, Preparing Responsible Individuals Dedicated to Excellence (PRIDE), Capturing Kids' Hearts, etc. — are utilized at all grade levels in the District. Also, the middle school *Skills for Living* course teaches personal development, acceptance of responsibility, self-image and decision-making, and other practices that promote positive development.



I Am AISD. As a counselor, I have the opportunity to work with children in the areas of building character and self esteem, and in meeting emotional needs. Knowing I've done something for one student that made his day a little better is the greatest feeling in the world.
Jeannette Salazar, Counselor
Linder Elementary School



I Am AISD. Kids come first — always. If I question what I am doing, I ask myself "Does this put students first?" I put myself in their place. I do not ask them to do anything that I would not myself. I try to treat my students in the same way that I want to be treated. My responsibility and honor is to teach and challenge all of my students.
Dedra Standish, Teacher
Rosedale School