

Title I Facilities for Neglected or Delinquent Youth Summary Report: 2002-2003

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Title I is a compensatory education program supported by funds from the U.S. Department of Education through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 and reauthorized in the Leave No Child Behind Act of 2001 (P.L. 107-110). The purpose of Title I is to provide opportunities for children to acquire the knowledge and skills described in state academic content standards for all children. Title I provides funds to state and local education agencies that have high concentrations of low-income children in participating schools.

This report includes a descriptive summary of the facilities for neglected youth and the facilities for delinquent youth within the attendance zone of the Austin Independent School District (AISD) that received Title I funds during 2002-03, and summarizes the use of Title I funds, demographics of students served, and program outcomes from these facilities, per state and federal requirements. Traditional academic data are not included because these facilities operate individualized on-site instructional programs for children who are wards of the state of Texas, or who are placed in such facilities with the intent of eventually mainstreaming the students into regular Texas public school classrooms. In addition, these facilities are not required to report student-level academic data such as test scores or grades on the district's Title I program service report.

FACILITIES FOR NEGLECTED YOUTH

Three facilities for neglected youth were allocated \$2,519 in Title I Part A funds in 2002-2003 based on the estimated number of eligible students they serve. The facilities included Settlement Home, Lifeworks Shelter, and Presbyterian Children Home Services. Of the funds allocated, 100%+ (\$2,571.35) was expended during the year on computer-related equipment and software, general supplies, testing materials, and professional services. Individuals from the AISD attendance area and other Texas districts are placed in these facilities because of abuse, neglect, and/or emotional and behavioral problems. Regardless of their residency status, these youths attend AISD's public schools or in-house classes at the facilities. The nature of their placement dictates whether they attend school in a public or secured, in-house setting.

During 2002-03, 214 youth were served at these facilities using Title I Part A funds. Of the students served, 32% were male, 68% were female; 36% were African American, 33% were Hispanic, and 31% were White. Students served were in grades 3 through 12 with the majority in secondary grades (95%). A brief summary of survey results from staff at these facilities is presented below for each.

Settlement Home

Settlement Home is a private, non-profit residential treatment center and foster home program for severely abused girls ages 7 to 17. The academic instructional program includes an on-campus elementary and secondary school for special education students, and a tutoring program for all children in the residential and foster group home program. The goal of the facility is to provide academic instruction, tutoring, and skill building to all residents to help them improve their academic achievement levels. Nine staff members (2 full-time special education teachers; 3 full-time teacher's aides; 1 education supervisor; and 3 part-time tutors) provided instructional services to students. Title I funds were spent on computer software, supplies and one instructional lab table. Ten community volunteers worked with the students throughout the school year. Six of the 10 volunteers provided weekly individual academic tutoring to the students, while the other four provided weekly Girl Scout groups, cooking classes for all residents of the facility, and twice-weekly opportunities for gym time or exercising. Settlement Home served 60 students in grades 3-11 in 2002-03. Seven of the 60 students were returned to a regular AISD classroom setting during the school year.

Lifeworks Shelter

Lifeworks is an emergency shelter, primarily financed with federal and state money, that serves homeless youth in grades 6 to 12 until they can be enrolled in AISD or an alternative education program. Title I funds were used to purchase a computer and to provide specific staff training in de-escalation of volatile behavior and other crisis situations. Four interns and 25 volunteers provided weekly year-round tutoring and social work support. The facility served 152 students in 2002-03. Sixteen Lifeworks students graduated from high school, nine students received GEDs, and seven were returned to the regular classroom.

Presbyterian Children's Home

The Presbyterian Children's Home Services is a non-profit family group foster home that receives residents through voluntary or private placement by a parent, a guardian, or self-referral if 18 years or older. Contributions toward maintenance (room and board) are paid on a sliding scale based on the income of the person who placed the child. Most youths are placed in the home by a parent or guardian. The facility currently reserves 6 placement slots for qualifying school-age females. The home has two rotating sets of foster parents and one director. The instructional program provides facility-wide services. Presbyterian Children's Home instructional program utilized staff and volunteers to provide children with scheduled after-school homework time, assistance with special school projects, and reading practice. All four children served in 2002-03 were identified as having special education needs. Although the facility has more than 100 volunteers who offer services throughout the school year on specific projects *only*, there are 30 active volunteers who assist at the home with after-school tutoring, mentoring, transportation to and from regular AISD school activities, cooking, and yard work. Title I funds were used to purchase educational videos regarding social issues and used for conference registration for one of the house parents.

FACILITIES FOR DELINQUENT YOUTH

Four facilities for delinquent youth were allocated \$127,801 in Title I Part D funds in 2002-03 based on the estimated number of eligible students they serve. The facilities included The Oaks Treatment Center, Phoenix House, Travis County Juvenile Detention Center, and Travis County Leadership Academy. Of the funds allocated, approximately 91% (\$115,916) was expended during the year, mostly on instructional supplies, materials, and equipment (68%) and on instructional salaries (26%). Individuals from the AISD attendance area and other Texas districts are placed in these facilities because of delinquency, and the nature of their placement dictates whether they attend school in a public or secured, in-house setting. These facilities are not required to report individual student level academic data such as test scores or grades on the district's Title I program service report.

During 2002-03, 1,782 youth were served at these facilities using Title I Part D funds. Of the students served, 68% were male, 32% were female; 27% were African American, 46% were Hispanic, 25% were White, and 1% were Asian/Pacific Islander or American Indian/Alaskan

Native. A brief summary of survey results from staff at these facilities is presented below for each.

Travis County Juvenile Detention Center (TCJDC)

Travis County Juvenile Detention Center (TCJDC) (formerly the Gardner-Betts Juvenile Justice Center) served 1,329 students, grades 4-12 in 2002-03. All students were provided on-site supplementary instruction. The program offered a TEKS-based curriculum focusing on English, mathematics and reading in content areas during the regular school year. In addition, TCJDC offered an on-site summer program for students at the end of the regular school year. Four program teachers were hired to teach the first summer session of 2003. Title I funds were used to provide staff development for the summer school teachers, and to purchase computers, reading kits, school supplies, and supplementary reading materials. Staff from two volunteer agencies, Austin/Travis County Health Department and the Texas Department of Health, provided sexuality/health education for the residents in a series of weekly lessons. Nine hundred and twenty-nine (929) students were returned to regular classroom settings during 2002-03.

The Oaks Psychiatric Treatment Center

Youths, ages 5 to 21, live at the Oaks Psychiatric Treatment Center, a year-round group home facility. The teachers, all certified in special education (4 special education and 4 mental health associates), are part of the treatment team for the students. The instructional curriculum provided is individualized to serve students in grades 3-12, and includes GED and pre-vocational classes. In addition, there are two summer sessions that allow students to gain credits toward graduation. The residents receive on-site and after-school supplementary instruction tailored to their specific educational needs. The Oaks served 161 students in 2002-03. Title I funds were used to purchase computers, a printer, software, workbooks, videos, an on-line Princeton Review Educational Program, GED materials, a DVD player, and basic school supplies. The school does not use community volunteers because of confidentiality issues.

Travis County Juvenile Shelter-Leadership Academy

Eighty-four students, ages 13 to 17, were provided on-site instruction and transitional halfway housing at this facility for delinquent youth. In addition, a support program staff of caseworkers, probation officers, and round-the-clock house parents offered intensive supervision of residents while they were at the halfway house, attending their home school, or taking GED classes. The Title I funded program at the Leadership Academy is supervised by the AISD

Alternative Learning Center principal. Title I funds were used to provide the three summer school teachers' salaries.

Phoenix Academy of Austin

Youth, ages 13 to 16, participate in both residential and day-treatment substance abuse recovery programs at the Phoenix Academy. The Title I supplementary instructional program, implemented through the facility's summer session, offers a curriculum designed to bridge the gap between the regular AISD classroom and instructional time spent at the facility. The facility offers course remediation and the regular AISD core curriculum; thus, the program allows students time for remediation and generation of needed credits. Four staff (one of whom was a certified teacher) provided instructional services to the targeted students. Courses for credit were targeted during the summer to enable students to increase their credits toward graduation. A remedial program also was offered for middle school students in core subjects to ensure that they passed to the next grade. The Academy served 208 students in 2002-03 and returned 100 students to regular classrooms during the regular school year.

ACADEMIC PROGRESS FOR FACILITIES FOR DELINQUENT YOUTH

Only delinquent facilities were required to complete survey questions on program performance and data sources necessary for the TEA Title I, Part D, Subpart 2 Performance Report. Facility staffs were asked to rate their programs' academic impact on students served. Academic impact measurements were categorized as limited, moderate, or great (representing respectively at least 70%, 80%, or 90% of the students making academic progress). A summary of evaluation responses indicated that staff at two facilities, Travis County Juvenile Detention Center and Travis County Juvenile Shelter-Leadership Academy, rated program objectives as being 90% effective in meeting the following program objectives:

- 1) help students maintain and improve educational achievement,
- 2) accrue school credits that meet state requirements for grade promotion and secondary school graduation,
- 3) make transition to a regular program or other local education agency (LEA) programs, and
- 4) complete secondary school or equivalency requirements.

The Phoenix Academy’s staff rated program impact as moderate (80%) for objectives’ 1 and 4 and great for objectives’ 2 and 3. Staff at The Oaks rated program impact as moderate (80%) for objectives 1-3 and limited (70%) for objective 4.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Review of program goals and outcomes, numbers of students served, and program impact ratings indicates that the majority of the facilities funded by Title I have been effective in supporting grant goals and are in keeping with AISD’s goal to improve student achievement. Collectively the seven facilities served 1,996 students, and returned 1,060 of those served to regular AISD classrooms. One neglected facility, Lifeworks Shelter, graduated 25 students (16 through regular high school graduation plans and 9 through a GED program) in 2002-03. Although both delinquent and neglected facilities can return students to the AISD classrooms, only some neglected facilities have graduation programs. Therefore, the numbers reported in Table 1 are for trends in student graduation only at facilities for neglected youth that received Title I funds over the past three years. Please note that facility participation in the Title I program is optional, and some opt to go in and out of the program, so the column with numbers of facilities over three years in Table 1 was not totaled.

Table 1: Number of Students Served and Graduation Trends for 2000-01-2002-03

Year	# Facilities for Neglected or Delinquent Youth	# Served	Facilities for Neglected Youth Graduation Demographics		Total
			Regular	GED	
2000-2001	8	1,718	02	08	10
2001-2002	8	1,775	03	11	14
2002-2003	7	1,996	16	09	25
Total		5,489	21	28	49

Data Source: AISD Title I Evaluation Report, 2000-01; AISD Facilities for Neglected or Delinquent Youth Summary Report: 2001-02; and AISD Program Evaluation records, 2003-03.

Survey results showed that most of the facilities for delinquent youth were supporting the academic progress of students at the 90% or higher level of effectiveness. Because The Oaks ratings were lower for 2002-03 than in the past, a second review of their methods for measuring program impact was conducted. The review showed that staff at the facility consistently used the “Other” category, in which they included measures that were already listed in the individual

categories. This factor may have contributed to their rating objectives 1-3 as having moderate (80%) impact on student achievement, and objective 4 as having limited (70%) impact. Because accurate self-reported performance ratings are crucial to program improvement, it is recommended *that staff at all facilities for delinquent youth review and apply consistently the specific existing impact measures to their program objectives rather than using the less-specific “Other” category. This process will help staff provide a more accurate assessment of their facilities’ impact on student success. Because the AISD Grant Coordinator already provides staff development for these facilities on a year-round basis, this topic could be added to their current training schedule.*

Also, based on other self-reported activities, students from these facilities are participating in programs sponsored by agencies from outside of AISD. Because these students have successfully returned to AISD classrooms, graduated from AISD, and/or received a GED through AISD, it is also recommended that *AISD’s program staff coordinate with community, state, and other federal projects that are connected to these facilities to promote student success in the community.*

Because of ongoing staff development and campus visits by the AISD Grant Coordinator, very few problems were encountered during data collection. However, there is a steady turnover in program coordinators or directors. Thus, a third recommendation is that *AISD grant and program evaluation staff continue to work closely with these facilities to keep the data collection process structured so that facility staff will know required data reporting needs and timelines.*

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