



# Austin Independent School District

## Department of Program Evaluation

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## TITLE I FACILITIES FOR NEGLECTED OR DELINQUENT YOUTH SUMMARY REPORT: 2005-2006

Title I is a compensatory education program supported by funds from the U.S. Department of Education through the Elementary and Secondary Act of 1965 and reauthorized by the Leave No Child Behind Act of 2001 (Public Law 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. State and local education agencies that have high concentrations of low-income children receive Title I funds.

This report includes a descriptive summary of the facilities for neglected and/or delinquent youth that are within the attendance zones of the Austin Independent School District (AISD) and that received Title I funds during 2005-2006. Details are included about the use of Title I funds, demographics of students served, and program outcomes for students at these facilities. Traditional academic data are not included because these facilities do not maintain student-level academic data (e.g., test scores or grades). These data are maintained by the students' home campuses.

### DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAMS AT FACILITIES FOR NEGLECTED YOUTH

Three facilities for neglected youth, Lifeworks Shelter, Presbyterian Children's Home and Services, and Settlement Home, were allocated \$31,605 from Title I, Part A funds in 2005-2006, based on the reported case loads of students served in October 2004. Lifeworks Shelter did not spend its share (\$9,450) of the total allocation. Together, Presbyterian Children's Home and Services and Settlement Home spent their collective share (\$22,155) of the allocation. Of the allocation for instructional funds, 87% (\$19,334) was expended during the year on contracted tutoring (off- and on-site) services in reading and mathematics; 1% (\$115) was expended on general supplies and materials; and 1% (\$115) was expended on other operating costs. The remaining 11% (\$2,591) was not spent.

Students from the AISD attendance area and other Texas school 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 placements dictates whether they attend school in a public or secured, in-house

setting. During 2005-2006, 15 youths in grades 5 through 12 were served at these two facilities using Title I, Part A funds. Of the students served, 100% were female, 47% were White, 40% were Hispanic, and 13% were African American. A brief summary of survey results from staff at these facilities for neglected youth is presented below.

### **PRESBYTERIAN CHILDREN'S HOME AND SERVICES**

The Presbyterian Children's Home and Services is a non-profit, family, group foster home that receives residents through voluntary or private placement by a parent, guardian, or self-referral if the student is 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 student. Most youths are placed in the home by a parent or guardian. The home has two rotating sets of foster parents and one director. The general instructional program provides facility-wide curriculum. The facility used Title I, Part A funds in the 2005-2006 school year to serve 6 females, one of whom graduated from an AISD high school. Because of these students' extreme need for academic remediation services, Presbyterian Children's Home utilized Huntington Learning Center tutoring services in reading and mathematics, paid for by Title I funds, as the instructional program of choice. Regular school staff and volunteers provided the children with scheduled after-school homework assistance, assistance with special school projects, and reading practice. Although the facility had more than 100 volunteers who offered services throughout the school year on specific projects, 20

active volunteers assisted regularly at the home with after-school tutoring, mentoring, cooking, yard work, and transportation to and from regular AISD school activities.

### **SETTLEMENT HOME**

Settlement Home is a private, non-profit residential treatment center and foster home program for severely abused girls ages 7 to 17. Students attend AISD public schools or an on-site academic program. The academic instructional program includes a year-round, on-campus charter school for special education students, and a tutoring program for all children in the residential and foster group home program. Title I funds were used to contract services from the Achievement Learning Center for tutoring, educational coordination, and support services (e.g., facilitating communication between students and staff, problem solving) to targeted students attending AISD schools. Settlement Home served 9 students during the 2005-2006 school year and returned 4 students to regular AISD classrooms.

In addition to the Title I funded activities, 25 community volunteers (individuals and organizations) provided services to the targeted students. These volunteers included 9 who served as mentors to the students, 2 tutors, 3 health and fitness instructors, 2 etiquette and social skills trainers, 2 cottage support volunteers, and one each who provided motivational speaking and free haircuts. Three organizations and two businesses (Austin Jr. Forum, Wild Basin Wind, University of Texas Orange Jackets, Mom's Best Friend, and the Settlement Club) provided social and recreational opportunities and activities for students throughout the school year.

## **DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAMS AT FACILITIES FOR DELINQUENT YOUTH**

Four facilities for delinquent youth were allocated \$140,543 in Title I, Part D funds during 2005-2006, based on their October 2004 caseloads. The facilities included Phoenix Academy of Austin, Travis County Juvenile Detention Center, Travis County Leadership Academy, and Texas Youth Commission's Turman Halfway House. Of the funds allocated, approximately 97% (\$136,411) was expended during the year. Three facilities (Phoenix Academy of Austin, Travis County Juvenile Detention Center, and Travis County Leadership Academy) spent 55% (\$77,593) of their allocation for on-site instructional staff. The other facility, Turman Halfway House, sent resident youths to regular AISD classes and used its Title I funds for other instructional support. Together, the four facilities spent 36% (\$49,823) of the total allocation on instructional supplies, materials, and equipment; 5% (\$7,983) on other operating costs; and 1% (\$1,012) on purchased and contracted services. The remaining 3% (\$4,132) was not spent.

During 2005-2006, 1,777 youths were served at these facilities using Title I funds. Of the students served, 74% were male, 54% were Hispanic, 26% were African American, 19% were White, and 1% each were Asian/Pacific Islander or American Indian/Alaskan Native. A brief summary of survey results from staff at these facilities is presented below.

### **TRAVIS COUNTY JUVENILE DETENTION CENTER**

Travis County Juvenile Detention Center (TCJDC) served 1,483 students in

grades 3-12 and non-graded levels in 2005-2006. All students in the facility were provided on-site supplementary instruction. The program offered instruction based on the state mandated Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) curriculum, focusing on English, mathematics, and reading during the regular school year. In addition, TCJDC offered an on-site half-day summer program for students at the end of the regular school year that focused on reading, mathematics, science, and social studies. Four teachers were hired to teach the first summer session of 2006. Title I funds were used to provide staff development for these summer school teachers and to purchase computers and related equipment, calculators, instructional videos and DVDs, textbooks, school curriculum supplies, and supplementary reading materials.

In addition to these Title I funded activities, TCJDC provided a variety of other services to resident youths. Volunteer staff from two agencies (Austin/Travis County Health Department and the Texas Department of Health) provided sexuality/health education for the student residents in a series of weekly lessons. The Austin Public Library continued the designation of TCJDC as a site for the release of surplus books. Library staff met with students monthly, recommended books for reading, and signed students up for library cards. Students continued to use an educational website found last year by a member of TCJDC's teaching staff. The website promotes writing, teaching, and appreciation of student writing through essay and poetry writing contests. Several students participated in writing and art contests

during the year. Of students served by TCJDC, 1,010 (68%) were returned to regular AISD classrooms during 2005-2006.

#### **TRAVIS COUNTY JUVENILE SHELTER-LEADERSHIP ACADEMY**

The Travis County Juvenile Shelter-Leadership Academy (TCLA) served 111 students (72 males and 39 females) aged 11 to 18 during 2005-2006 and provided on-site core course instruction, life skills and character education classes, and transitional halfway housing. In addition, a support program staff of caseworkers, probation officers, and round-the-clock house parents offered intensive supervision for residents. The Leadership Academy is supervised by the AISD Alternative Learning Center principal.

Title I funds were used to provide two summer sessions to help students recover core course credits and to purchase computers, graphing calculators, copiers, curriculum supplies, and magazines. Six volunteers from local groups (Saint Edwards University, University of Texas, Huston Tillotson University, and a community church) provided tutoring and mentoring services to students on a regular basis. The facility returned 60 (54%) of the students served to AISD regular classrooms.

#### **PHOENIX ACADEMY OF AUSTIN**

Youth aged 11 to 18 from AISD and other Texas school districts 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 TEKS-based curriculum designed to bridge the gap between regular classrooms and

instructional time spent at the facility. In addition, the facility offers course remediation. Thus, the program allows students time for both remediation and accrual of needed course credits. Title I funds primarily were spent on supporting the year-round curriculum and teacher salaries for summer school. The Academy served 104 students in 2005-2006. Twenty-three of these students had been enrolled previously in regular AISD classes and all were returned to regular AISD classrooms during the school year.

#### **TEXAS YOUTH COMMISSION FACILITY: TURMAN HALFWAY HOUSE**

The Texas Youth Commission (TYC) Facility in Austin, known as Turman Halfway House, provides services to youth transitioning from high-restriction juvenile correctional facilities to the community. During their stay at the facility, youths aged 11 through 19 and older are required to attend 8 weeks of independent living skills classes and on-site re-socialization counseling groups that use the TYC re-socialization curriculum. The re-socialization curriculum is based on cognitive behavior theory and addresses areas related to each student's individual law-breaking behavior, social skills, goal setting, and plans for success in education. Students also are enrolled in and required to attend AISD high schools. General education, general education development (GED), and/or career and technology courses are options, depending on individual needs. In 2005-2006, Turman Halfway House served 79 youths. Title I funds were used to support the salary of a summer school instructor for reading and mathematics classes. Six

community volunteers provided mentoring or chaplaincy services to students during the 2005-2006 school year, and eight volunteers supported the program through fund-raising efforts.

**ACADEMIC PROGRESS FOR STUDENTS IN FACILITIES FOR DELINQUENT YOUTH**

Delinquent youth facility staff were required to complete survey questions regarding program performance for the Texas Education Agency (TEA) *Title I, Part D, Subpart 2 Performance Report* submitted by AISD staff. Facility staff were asked to rate their effectiveness in meeting program objectives as defined by the state:

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

Academic impact measurements were categorized as limited, moderate, or great, representing respectively at least 70%, 80%, or 90% of the students making academic progress. Most delinquent facilities described their impact on the four program objectives as moderate or great (Table 1). One facility in operation under new facility management indicated “new program” for its rating, when in actuality it had an upgrade in facility management staff and program objectives. Two facilities indicated that some objectives were not applicable (N/A).

**DELINQUENT FACILITIES PROGRAM COORDINATION**

AISD’s Alternative Learning Center (ALC) coordinated instructional and transition activities at the four delinquent facilities during 2005-2006. ALC received \$16,270 in Title I funds. Of that amount, \$9,014 was used primarily for insuring that student records were transmitted between the public schools and the facilities.

Table 1: 2005-2006 Title I Part D Program Objectives Ratings as Self-Reported by Facilities for Delinquent Youth

| Objectives   | Phoenix Academy | TCLA            | TCJDC        | Turman House |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|--------------|--------------|
| Helping students maintain and improve educational achievement.                 | Moderate impact | Great impact    | Great impact | New program  |
| Accruing School credits.   | Limited impact  | Great impact    | N/A          | New program  |
| Making transition to regular program or other local education agency programs. | Moderate impact | Great impact    | Great impact | New program  |
| Complete secondary school and or obtain employment after leaving the facility. | N/A             | Moderate impact | N/A          | New program  |

Source: AISD Program Evaluation Records 2005-2006.

## SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A review of program goals and outcomes, numbers of students served, and program impact ratings indicates that the majority of these facilities for neglected or delinquent youth funded by Title I were effective in supporting grant goals and in keeping with AISD’s goal to improve student achievement. Collectively, in 2005-2006, the 6 facilities served 1,792 students, returned 1,097 (61%) of those served to regular AISD classrooms, and graduated 4 AISD students. One facility had one student accepted into an undergraduate college program. Another facility enabled three out-of-district students to earn enough credits while attending AISD high school campuses to return to their home schools and graduate.

Since 2000-2001, these facilities have served 10,720 youths who were enrolled in regular AISD classrooms (Table 2). They returned 60% (n = 6,445) of those youths back to regular AISD classrooms; graduated 1% (n = 96) through the regular AISD or GED programs; and provided the remainder of the youth (40%, n = 4,275) with services until they exited the program (e.g., by withdrawal, run away, judicial removal, or transition from one facility to another). By providing these at-risk youths with opportunities to achieve academically, these facilities supported AISD’s vision of providing every student with an excellent education.

Although each of these facilities can return students to AISD regular classrooms,

Table 2: Numbers of Neglected or Delinquent Students Served, Returned to Regular Classroom, and Graduated from 2000-2001 to 2005-2006

| Year             | Neglected or Delinquent Youth Returned to Regular Classroom |                               | Neglected Youth Who Graduated |     |
|------------------|---|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----|
|                  | Served  | Returned to Regular Classroom | Regular Diploma               | GED |
| <b>2000-2001</b> | 1,718   | 1,218 (71%)                   | 2                             | 8   |
| <b>2001-2002</b> | 1,775   | 1,209 (68%)                   | 3                             | 11  |
| <b>2002-2003</b> | 1,996   | 1,060 (53%)                   | 16                            | 9   |
| <b>2003-2004</b> | 1,800   | 933 (52%)                     | 3                             | 2   |
| <b>2004-2005</b> | 1,639   | 928 (57%)                     | 8                             | 30  |
| <b>2005-2006</b> | 1,792   | 1,097 (61%)                   | 2                             | 2   |
| <b>Total</b>     | 10,720  | 6,445 (60%)                   | 34                            | 62  |

Source: Curry, J., Doolittle, M., Husky, B., Koehler, H., Washington, W., & Williams, H. (2000). Washington, W. (2001, 2002, 2003, 2004); AISD Program Evaluation Records 2005-2006. Please note that facility participation in the Title I program is optional, and some facilities have opted to participate or not, based on their student populations.

only the facilities for neglected youth are able to provide graduation programs. Table 2 presents six years of data for all facilities regarding the return of students back to regular AISD classrooms; however, it only provides graduation information for facilities for neglected youth.

Because of ongoing staff development activities and campus visits by the AISD grant coordinator, few problems occurred in program operation. Although infrequent, the following occurrences during 2005-2006 raised concerns regarding the program management:

1. Failure of some facilities to spend Title I allocations
2. Staff turnover at several facilities causing delays in the return of needed information or data
3. Use of “new program” rating by one facility, not allowing for an adequate measure of effectiveness in meeting program objectives, as defined by the state
4. Expressions of uncertainty by some facility staff about how to report program outcome data (e.g., number of students returned to the classrooms, number of credits earned)

These are issues of concern because they affect the degree to which facility programs are managed effectively and the accuracy with which critical data showing grant compliance are reported to AISD. Because a district’s continuation of funding at current levels is dependent upon demonstration of accountability and compliance with grant policy, the following recommendations are made for this program:

1. Facility managers must familiarize themselves with program guidelines and other instructions provided by TEA and AISD.
2. Facilities must ensure that they have a complete understanding of reporting requirements and are able to keep auditable student data.
3. Facilities must be responsive to spending program allocations.
4. Facilities cannot use the “new program” designation as a rating for program impact.
5. AISD staff should continue to work closely with these facilities to keep the data collection process structured.

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