



# Austin Independent School District

## Department of Program Evaluation

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## TITLE I FACILITIES FOR NEGLECTED OR DELINQUENT YOUTH SUMMARY REPORT: 2006–2007

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 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. 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 the 2006–2007 school year. Details are included about the use of Title I funds, demographics of students served, and program outcomes for students at these facilities, per state and federal program reporting requirements. Traditional academic data are not included because these facilities do not maintain student-level academic data, such as test scores or grades. These data are maintained by the students' home campuses.

### DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAMS AT FACILITIES FOR NEGLECTED YOUTH

Two facilities for neglected youth (i.e., Presbyterian Children's Home and Services, and Settlement Home) were allocated \$17,450 in Title I Part A funds during 2006-2007, based on reported case loads of students served in October 2005. Of the total allocation, 99% (\$17,259) was expended during the year on contracted tutoring (off- and on-site) services in reading and mathematics. The remaining 1% (\$191) for general supplies 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 placement dictates whether they attend school in a public or a secured, in-house setting. During 2006–2007, 16 youths were served at these facilities with the use of Title I Part A funds. Of the students served, 100% were female, 56% were White, 38% were African American, and 6% were Hispanic. A brief summary of survey results from staff at these facilities for neglected youth is presented in this report.

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

The Presbyterian Children's Home and Services is a nonprofit 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 (i.e., 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 during the 2006–2007 school year to serve 6 females. Because of these students' extreme need for academic remediation services, Presbyterian Children's Home utilized Achievement 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, nonprofit 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, and problem solving) to targeted students attending AISD schools. Settlement Home served 10 students during the 2006–2007 school year. Of the 10 students, 8 successfully attended regular AISD classes while residing at the facility.

In addition to the activities funded by Title I, more than 30 community volunteers (i.e., individuals and organizations) provided services to the targeted students. These volunteers included 6 who served as mentors to the students; 2 tutors; 2 etiquette and social skills trainers; 3 cottage support volunteers; and one each who provided motivational speaking, free haircuts, spiritual life services, a dance class, and food bank pickup services. 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.

### **STAFF DEVELOPMENT**

Both facilities participated in five Building Integrity seminars and hosted them on their campuses. These seminars were designed to address curriculum development, character building, and self-discipline for academics and student behavior. These various seminars were

designed for students and staff, but as of this time, Settlement Home has hosted one for staff only.

### **ACADEMIC PROGRESS FOR STUDENTS IN FACILITIES FOR NEGLECTED YOUTH**

During the 2006–2007 school year, 16 youths were served at these facilities. Of the 16 youths served, 56% (n = 9) successfully attended regular AISD classes while residing at the facilities.

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

Four facilities for delinquent youth were allocated \$147,253 in Title I Part D funds during the 2006–2007 school year, based on their October 2005 caseloads. The facilities included Phoenix Academy of Austin, Travis County Juvenile Detention Center (TCJDC), Travis County Leadership Academy, and Texas Youth Commission’s (TYC) Turman Halfway House. Of the funds allocated, approximately 85% (\$124,721) was expended during the year. Three facilities (Phoenix Academy of Austin, TCJDC, and Travis County Leadership Academy) spent 60% (\$87,725) of their allocation for on-site instructional staff. The other facility (Turman Halfway House) used its Title I funds to provide tutoring to students preparing to take the General Education Diploma (GED) test. Of the remaining funds, the four facilities spent 16% (\$23,386) on instructional supplies, materials, and equipment; 7% (\$10,005) on purchased and contracted services; 2% (\$3,605) on other operating costs; and the remaining 15% (\$22,532) was not spent. The unspent amount is not a cause for concern because the majority of youths who arrived at the Turman House facility were

transitory (i.e., en route to another Texas facility) and already had GEDs or credits.

During 2006–2007, 1,795 youths were served at these facilities using Title I funds. Of the students served, 70% were male, 55% were Hispanic, 26% were Black, 17% were White, and 1% each were Asian/Pacific Islander or American Indian/Alaskan Native.

AISD’s Alternative Learning Center (ALC) coordinated instructional and transition activities at the four delinquent facilities during 2006–2007. ALC received \$10,985 in Title I funds. It expended \$11,006 on payroll cost (e.g., extra duty pay, FICA, workers’ compensation, and teacher retirement) for a stipend for transitional activities. Each facility is supervised by the ALC principal. A brief summary of survey results from staff at these facilities is presented below.

### **TRAVIS COUNTY JUVENILE DETENTION CENTER (TCJDC)**

TCJDC served 1,450 students in grades 3 through 12 and non-graded levels in the 2006–2007 school year. 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 and focused on core academic subjects (e.g., English/reading, mathematics, science, and social studies) 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; this program focused on reading, mathematics, science, and social studies. One half-time teacher aide was hired to staff the math lab during the regular school year and 4 teachers were hired to teach the first summer session of

2007. Title I funds were used to provide staff development opportunities for these staff and to purchase computers and related equipment, 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 up students for library cards. Students continued to use an educational website identified by a member of TCJDC's teaching staff. The website promotes writing, teaching, and appreciation of student writing through essay or poetry writing contests. Several students participated in writing and art contests during the year. Of students served by TCJDC, 547 (38%) returned to regular AISD classrooms during the 2006–2007 school year.

#### **TRAVIS COUNTY JUVENILE SHELTER-LEADERSHIP ACADEMY (TCLA)**

The TCLA served 142 (96 males and 46 females) students ages 11 to 18 during the 2006–2007 school year 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 of residents.

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. Twelve volunteers from local groups (i.e., Saint Edwards University, University of Texas, Huston Tillotson University, and a community church) provided art therapy, character education, and tutoring and mentoring services to students on a regular basis. The facility returned 90% (128) of the students served to AISD regular classrooms. Also, 3 non-AISD students graduated with diplomas.

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

Youth ages 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 to support the year-round curriculum and teachers' summer school salaries. In 2006–2007, the Academy served 128 students; 17 of these had been enrolled previously in regular AISD classes and 13 returned to regular AISD classrooms during the school year. One of the 13 graduated from a local high school at the end of the school year.

## **TYC'S FACILITY, TURMAN HALFWAY HOUSE**

The 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 11 through 19 years of age and older are required to attend 8 weeks of independent living skills classes and participate in 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 several areas, including education. Students are also enrolled in and required to attend AISD high schools. General education, general education development (GED), and career and technology courses are options, depending on individual needs.

Title I funds were used to support the salary of a GED tutor for students preparing to take the GED test. In the 2006–2007 school year, Turman Halfway House served 75 non-AISD youths. Sixty-four of these students already had earned GED certificates or accrued credits by the time they arrived at Turman House. The remaining 11 attended regular AISD classes, and 3 of the 11 were forwarded graduation credentials (e.g., a diploma and two GED certificates) from their previous facility at the end of the school year. Six community volunteers provided mentoring or chaplaincy services to students during the 2006–2007

school year, and eight volunteers supported the program through fund-raising efforts.

### **STAFF DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

All facilities participated in five Building Integrity seminars. These seminars were designed to address curriculum development, character building and self-discipline for academics and student behavior. The seminars were held with both students and staff on the campuses of TCLA, Phoenix House, and TCJDC.

### **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 (see Table 1). Two facilities indicated that some objectives were not applicable (N/A).

Table 1: 2006–2007 Title I Part D Program Objectives Ratings, as Self-Reported by Facilities for Delinquent Youth

Objectives	Phoenix Academy	TCLA	TCJDC	Turman House
Help students maintain and improve educational achievement	Moderate impact	Great impact	Great impact	Moderate impact
Accrue school credits	Moderate impact	Great impact	N/A	Moderate impact
Make the transition to regular program or other LEA programs	Moderate impact	Great impact	Great impact	Moderate impact
Complete secondary school and/or obtain employment after leaving the facility	Moderate impact	Great impact	N/A	Moderate impact

Source: AISD Program Evaluation Records 2006–2007

### SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A review of program goals and outcomes, numbers of students served, and program impact ratings indicates that 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, during the 2006–2007 school year, the six facilities served 1,811 students, returned 1,439 (80%) of those served to regular AISD classrooms, and graduated one AISD student through AISD’s regular high school graduation plan. Travis County Leadership and Turman House each had 3 out-of-district students who had earned enough credits while attending AISD high school campuses to return to their home school and graduate through a regular high school graduation plan or GED program at their schools.

Since the 2000–2001 school year, these facilities have served 12,531 youths who were enrolled in regular AISD classrooms. They returned 63% (n = 7,884) of these youths back to regular Texas classrooms; graduated 1% (n = 97) through the regular AISD or GED programs; and provided the remaining 37% (n = 4,647) with services until the youths exited the program (e.g.,

withdrawal, runaway, judicial removal, transition from one facility to another). See Table 2 for longitudinal data from 2000–2001 to 2006–2007. 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 regular classrooms, only the facilities for neglected youth are able to provide graduation programs.

Because AISD Program Evaluation records showed a noticeable increase in the number of youth being returned to regular Texas classrooms in the past two years, school staff was asked if any special process or procedures had been put into place in recent years. School staff replied that a change in procedures that involved informing probation officials and the receiving schools of the student’s impending arrival at their campus had been implemented in school year 2005-2006. The procedure seemed to be even more effective in the second year of implementation because the adults (probation officials) and students knew what to expect and were more compliant with those expectations.

Table 2: Numbers of Neglected or Delinquent Students Served, Returned to Regular Texas Classrooms, and Graduated, from 2000–2001 to 2006–2007

Year	Neglected or Delinquent Youth Returned to Regular Texas Classrooms		Neglected Youth Who Graduated	
	Served	Returned to regular Texas classrooms	Regular diploma	GED
2000–2001	1,718	1,218 (71%)	2	8
2001–2002	1,775	1,209 (68%)	3	11
2002–2003	1,996	1,060 (53%)	16	9
2003–2004	1,800	933 (52%)	3	2
2004–2005	1,639	928 (57%)	8	30
2005–2006	1,792	1,097 (61%)	2	2
2006–2007	1,811	1,439 (80%)	1	0
<b>Total</b>	12,531	7,884 (63%)	35	62

Source: Curry et al. (2000); Washington, Doolittle, & Williams (2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005); AISD Program Evaluation Records 2006–2007. 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 population.

Because of ongoing staff development activities, campus visits by the AISD grant coordinator, and communications with AISD Program Evaluation staff when applicable, few problems occurred in program operation. However, the complexity and amount of data requested by the Texas Education Agency regarding neglected or delinquent youths placed in Texas facilities have increased twofold over the past two years giving rise to twice as much time spent on review and analyses of data. Although infrequent, the following occurrences during the 2006-2007 school year raised concerns regarding the program management:

- Some facilities failed to spend all of their Title I allocations
- Two-party (e.g., the administrator, the head teacher) completion of survey documentation on students served

caused delays in the acquisition of completed information or data. These were issues of concern because they affected the degree to which facility programs were managed effectively and the accuracy with which critical student data were reported to AISD to show grant compliance. Because a district's continuation of funding levels is dependent upon demonstrating accountability and compliance with grant policy, the following recommendations were made for this program:

1. District staff must set aside more time to work with facilities' staff to ensure that they have a complete understanding of reporting requirements, including data on students served, and
2. Facility managers must review all documents before submission to other AISD staff to ensure the documents are complete.

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