



Austin Independent School District

Department of Program Evaluation

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TITLE I FACILITIES FOR NEGLECTED OR DELINQUENT YOUTH SUMMARY REPORT: 2007–2008

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 (NCLB) 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 serve populations with high concentrations of low-income children receive Title I funds.

This report includes a descriptive summary of the facilities for neglected or delinquent youth that are within the attendance zones of the Austin Independent School District (AISD) and that received Title I funds during the 2007–2008 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 (e.g., test scores and grades), which 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 LifeWorks Emergency Shelter) were allocated \$23,750 from Title I, Part A funds during 2007–2008, based on reported case loads of students served in October 2006. Of the total allocation, 88% (\$20,906) was expended during the year on contracted tutoring (off- and on-site) services in reading and mathematics (\$15,328) and general supplies (\$5,578).

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 2007–2008, 11 youths were served at these facilities with the use of Title I, Part A funds. A brief summary of survey results from staff at these facilities for neglected youth follows.

LIFEWORKS EMERGENCY SHELTER

LifeWorks is a private, nonprofit organization that provides a continuum of housing services for runaway and homeless youth in Travis County. These services include Street Outreach (case management and support for runaway and homeless youth living on the street); Emergency Shelter (emergency support for runaway, homeless, and pregnant/parenting youth); Transitional Living (educational, employment, and housing support for runaway and homeless youth); Supportive Housing (housing and job assistance for abused or homeless young adults or teen parents).

The LifeWorks Emergency Shelter is a nonprofit organization that receives residents through voluntary walk-ins or private placement by a parent or managing conservator. The shelter provides services to youth ages 10 through 19 who may be (a) returning to local schools from correctional facilities and (b) at risk of dropping out of school because of personal, academic, language, or juvenile criminal issues. Issues that can place a youth at risk include being pregnant, being a teen parent, being a gang member, being a defendant in the juvenile justice system, being one year behind expected grade level, having uncoordinated special education services, and limited proficiency in English (LEP).

LifeWorks Emergency Shelter served five youths during the 2007–2008 school year. Two youth care workers and two case managers provided in-house and support services. When feasible, parents and/or conservators were involved in the selection of services and the development of individualized educational plans for each resident youth. Title I funds were used to purchase computers, monitors, printers, educational software, and contracted services from the Achievement Learning Center for tutoring services in reading and mathematics. In addition to staff guiding computer assisted instruction, regular staff and a volunteer helped the youths to use the computers and accompanying software.

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 or guardian, or by 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 a facility-wide curriculum.

The facility used Title I, Part A funds during the 2007–2008 school year to serve six youths. 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 20 volunteers who offered services throughout the school year on specific projects, 4 active volunteers assisted regularly at the home with after-school tutoring, mentoring, cooking, yard work, and transportation to and from regular AISD school activities.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The LifeWorks Emergency Shelter and the Presbyterian Children's Home and Services participated in five Building Integrity seminars, which were hosted on their campuses. These seminars were designed for students and staff, and were the second in a series of seminars designed to address curriculum development, character building, and self-discipline for academics and student behavior. At the end of the Building Integrity seminars, staff discussed budgetary balances and campus plans, and shared recommendations for effective spending. In addition to the seminars, special meetings were held in the spring and summer to discuss efficiency in campus planning and reporting of program performance (e.g., meeting program goals and performance objectives, providing complete student data). Title I also provided funds for staff to attend the 2007–2008 Title I Statewide NCLB Parent Involvement Conference.

ACADEMIC PROGRESS FOR STUDENTS IN FACILITIES FOR NEGLECTED YOUTH

During the 2007–2008 school year, 11 youths were served at these facilities. Of the 11 youths served, one graduated with a diploma and another successfully attended regular AISD classes while they were residing at the facilities. Nine students requiring service remain at the facility.

DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAMS AT FACILITIES FOR DELINQUENT YOUTH

Four facilities for delinquent youth were allocated \$120,000 from Title I, Part D funds during the 2007–2008 school year, based on their October 2006 caseloads. The facilities were 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 88% (\$105,964) was expended during the year. Three facilities (Phoenix Academy of Austin, TCJDC, and Travis County Leadership Academy) spent 60% (\$71,731) of their allocation for on-site instructional staff. The other facility (Turman Halfway House) used its Title I funds to provide tutoring to students attending regular AISD classes and those preparing to take the General Education Diploma (GED) test. Of the remaining funds, the four facilities spent 25% (\$29,554) on instructional supplies, materials, and equipment.

During 2007–2008, 1,600 youths were served at these facilities using Title I funds. Of the students served, 76% were male, 56% were Hispanic, 25% were Black, 17% were White, 1% were Asian/Pacific Islander, and 1% were American Indian/Alaskan Native.

AISD's Alternative Learning Center (ALC)'s principal supervised and coordinated instructional and transition activities at the four delinquent facilities during 2007–2008. ALC received \$10,000 in Title I funds. It expended \$9,761 on payroll costs for a stipend for transitional activities.

At the same time, AISD's Educational Support Services Department (ESSD) coordinated the implementation of AISD's dropout and reduction initiative, the Five Promises project, which served youths from these four facilities and their families. Five Promises is a part of America's Promise Alliance, which believes the success of children is grounded in experiencing the Five Promises: caring adults; safe place; healthy start; an effective education; and opportunities to help others at home, in school, and in the community. ESSD received \$8,000 in Title I funds during 2007–2008 to assist with the first stage of implementing this dropout and reduction

initiative. This stage included establishment of middle and high school support clubs and a dropout prevention summit. Between October 2007 and June 2008, ESSD expended \$242 on supplies and materials (e.g., incentives, shirts, certificates, reproduction) for the middle and high school support clubs' activities. In Spring 2008, it expended \$6,283 on the project's first public venture, a Teen Success Summit, held April 12, 2008. AISD's Internet News and Media Service staff released a final report about the Teen Success Summit, declaring it an overwhelming success that drew more than 700 participants, including students, parents, and business and community stakeholders (AISD, 2008). A brief summary of survey results from staff at these facilities is presented in the following section.

TRAVIS COUNTY JUVENILE DETENTION CENTER (TCJDC)

TCJDC served 1,230 students in grades 4 through 12 and in non-graded levels during the 2007–2008 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, at the end of the regular school year, TCJDC offered an on-site, half-day summer program for students that 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 four teachers were hired to teach the first summer session of 2008. 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 (e.g., high-interest magazines about technology, sports, and mechanics).

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 through a series of weekly lessons. The Austin Public Library continued to designate 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, and features essay and poetry writing contests. Several students participated in writing and art contests during the year. Of students served by TCJDC, 529 (43%) returned to regular AISD classrooms during the 2007–2008 school year.

TRAVIS COUNTY JUVENILE SHELTER-LEADERSHIP ACADEMY (TCLA)

During the 2007–2008 school year, Travis County Juvenile Shelter-Leadership Academy, a residential facility for juvenile delinquents, served 160 (124 male and 36 female) students ages 11 through 18 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, computer accessories, curriculum supplies, and magazines. Twenty-one 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 93% (148) of the students served to AISD regular classrooms. Also, three non-AISD students graduated with diplomas.

PHOENIX ACADEMY OF AUSTIN

Youth aged 11 through 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 the regular classroom 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. In the 2007–2008 school year, Title I funds primarily were spent to support the year-round curriculum and teachers' summer school salaries. In 2007–2008, the Academy served 127 students; 13 of these had been enrolled previously in regular AISD classes and 10 returned to regular AISD classrooms during 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 (e.g., in education). Students also are enrolled in and required to attend classes at AISD high schools. General education, GED, and career and technology courses are options, depending on individual needs.

Title I funds were used to support the salaries of two tutors. These tutors worked with students attending regular AISD classes and those preparing to take the GED test. Four community volunteers provided mentoring or chaplaincy services to students in 2007–2008, and eight volunteers supported the program through fund-raising efforts.

In the 2007–2008 school year, Turman Halfway House served 83 non-AISD youths. Thirty-seven of these students already had earned GED certificates or accrued credits by the time they arrived at Turman House and received transition services only. Of the remaining students, 12 attended GED classes at an Austin Urban League location, 9 were in transit to another facility, and 25 attended regular AISD classes. During the 2007–2008 school year, 16 students obtained employment, 6 earned graduation credentials (e.g., a diploma and five GED certificates), 2 were accepted into postsecondary education, and 1 enrolled in external job training education.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

All facilities participated in the five Building Integrity seminars that were offered to the facilities for neglected youth. As stated before, these seminars were designed for students and staff and 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. At the end of the integrity seminars, staff discussed budgetary balances and campus plans, and shared recommendations for effective spending. In addition to the seminars, special meetings were held in the spring and summer to discuss efficiency in campus planning and reporting of program performance (e.g., meeting program goals and performance objectives, providing complete student data). Title I also provided funds for staff at the delinquent facilities to attend the 2007–2008 Title I Statewide NCLB Parent Involvement Conference.

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 the following 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, and represented 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 indicated that some objectives were not applicable (N/A).

Table 1: 2007–2008 Title I Part D Program Objectives Ratings, as Self-Reported by Facilities for Delinquent Youth

Objective	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	Limited impact
Complete secondary school and/or obtain employment after leaving the facility	Moderate impact	Moderate impact	N/A	Limited impact

Source: AISD Program Evaluation Records 2007–2008

Since the 2000–2001 school year, these facilities have served 14,142 youths who were enrolled in regular AISD classrooms or local institutes of learning offering GED certificates. They returned 65% (n = 9,138) of these youths back to regular Texas classrooms; graduated 1% (n = 107) through the regular AISD or GED programs; and provided 35% (n = 4,897) with services until the youths exited the program (e.g., withdrawal, runaway, judicial removal, transition from one facility to another). Table 2 presents longitudinal data from 2000–2001 to 2007–2008. By providing 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 could return students to AISD regular classrooms, only the facilities for neglected youth were able to provide graduation programs.

Table 2: Neglected or Delinquent Youth Served, Returned to Regular Texas Classrooms, and Graduated, 2000–2001 to 2007–2008

School year	# Served	# (%) Returned to regular classroom	# Graduated with regular diploma	# Graduated with 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
2007–2008	1,611	1,254 (78%)	2	8
Total	14,142	9,138 (65%)	37	70

Source: AISD Program Evaluation Records 2001-2002 through 2007-2008

Note: Facility participation in the Title I Program was optional.

Table 2 shows that these facilities served 200 fewer Texas youth in 2007–2008 than they did in 2006–2007 which resulted in a reduction in the number of incarcerated youth served by AISD facilities. Because 37 students had earned GED certificates before they arrived at the facilities, they were ineligible for instructional services. This reduction in the number of incarcerated youth allowed the facilities to increase the numbers of students receiving individual or small group instruction, and to increase the amount of lab time for youth using on-site computers to do homework. Thus, the number of students needing academic service was reduced from 1,611 to 1,574, of which the facilities returned 1,254 to regular Texas classrooms.

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 2007–2008 school year, the six facilities served 1,611 students, returned 1,254 (78%) of those served to regular Texas classrooms, and graduated 2 students through AISD’s regular high school graduation plan. Collectively, Travis County Leadership and Turman House had 8 out-of-district students who had earned enough credits while attending AISD high school campuses or partner facilities to return to their home schools and graduate through a regular high school graduation plan or GED program at their schools.

Because of ongoing staff development activities (e.g., discussions regarding budget and campus plans, spring and summer meetings about efficiency in campus planning and in progress

reporting), campus visits by the AISD grant coordinator, and communications with AISD DPE staff, few problems occurred in program operation. Also, the change in procedures that involved informing probation officials and the staff at receiving schools about students' impending arrival at their campus (implemented in school year 2005–2006) may have contributed to the sharp increase in returning Texas students to their class rooms from 2005–2006 to 2006–2007, because probation officials, school staff, and students knew what to expect and were more compliant with those expectations. However, the complexity and amount of data regarding neglected or delinquent youths placed in Texas facilities that was requested by the TEA increased twofold over the past 3 years. Also, the unpredictable counts of serviceable residents created unanticipated budget credits in allocations at the end of a school year.

During the 2007–2008 school year:

- Some facilities failed to spend all of their Title I allocations.
- Some staff failed to complete all survey items, causing delays in the collection of complete information or data.

These issues 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 is dependent upon demonstrating accountability and compliance with grant policy, the following recommendations are made for this program:

1. District staff should schedule mandated meetings to work with facilities' staff to ensure they have a complete understanding about reporting requirements (e.g., data about students served) and spending their allocations.
2. Facility managers must review all documents before submission to other AISD staff to ensure the documents are complete.

REFERENCES

Austin Independent School District. (2008, June 18). *Teen success summit report*. Retrieved August 7, 2008, from http://www.austinisd.org/academics/docs/drpi_Report.pdf

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