



Austin Independent School District

Department of Program Evaluation

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TITLE I, PART A SUMMARY REPORT: 2007–2008

The Title I, Part A program provides federal funds to state and local education agencies under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB; Public Law 107-110). The purpose of Title I, Part A is to enable state and local educational agencies to support the improvement of elementary and secondary educational programs in both public and private, non-profit schools and institutions. According to NCLB, Title I funds may be used to support schools in providing opportunities for children to acquire the knowledge and skills outlined in the state content standards and to meet the state performance standards developed for all children. Title I, Part A funds help local education agencies serve schools with high concentrations of low-income students.

Title I, Part A funds in Texas are allocated by the U.S. Department of Education to the Texas Education Agency (TEA). Funds flow from the TEA to qualifying Texas school districts. According to the law, the level of Title I, Part A funding for a school *district* (local education agency, or LEA) is based on census data for the percentage of low-income students, ages 5 to 17, living in the district attendance area. Title I, Part A funding for a *school* is determined by the percentage of low-income students living in the school attendance area. For district purposes, a child is defined as low income if he or she is eligible for free or reduced-price meals. Schools are ranked in the spring of each year on the basis of the projected percentage of low-income children residing in the school's attendance area. Districts must serve schools with 75% or more low-income students residing in their attendance area. Remaining schools with less than 75% low-income students are served in rank order, as funding allows. A school's Title I, Part A program can be schoolwide if 40% or more of the children residing in the school's attendance zone are low income.

In the 2007–2008 school year, Austin Independent School District (AISD) allocated Title I monies to 72 schoolwide campuses (55 elementary schools, 11 middle schools, 5 high schools, and 1 special campus) where low-income children accounted for 58% or more of the student population. AISD's 2007–2008 total Title I allocation was \$29,477,466 (\$22,317,619 entitlement and \$7,159,847 roll forward), and \$14,714,606 was allocated directly to schools. Funds also were used to support programs and services across the district (e.g., parent involvement programs, homeless student services, curriculum and instruction, professional development activities, and grant administration).

TITLE I STUDENTS AND STAFF

STUDENTS

According to district student records submitted to the TEA, the number of AISD Title I students has increased gradually over the past several years, from 35,641 in 2000 to 46,671 in 2007. Title I students represented 56.5% of the total AISD student population in 2007. AISD Title I schools tend to have higher percentages of African American (15%) and Hispanic (76%) students than do AISD non-Title I schools (8% and 35%, respectively). In addition, Title I schools tend to serve higher percentages of students who are at risk (71%) and have limited English proficiency (LEP, 43%) than do non-Title I schools (39% and 9%, respectively).

Title I support services were provided to 1,744 homeless students during the 2007–2008 school year. Title I funds also were used to provide services to 167 students at participating private schools and to 11 students at participating facilities for neglected youth, all within the AISD attendance zone.

STAFF

NCLB requires school districts to have a plan for all teachers in core academic subject areas (e.g., reading or English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies) to become highly qualified. In NCLB, “highly qualified” essentially means that teachers who teach in any core subject area must have a bachelor’s degree or full state certification in that subject area. According to district and state records, at the beginning of 2007–2008, 100% of AISD’s regular education and special education teachers were highly qualified. Another requirement for all Texas public school teachers is that they complete annual

professional development activities, and district records show that all (n = 5,832) AISD teachers completed some type of professional development activity in the past year.

NCLB also requires that all paraprofessionals providing instructional support for core academic subject areas in schools be highly qualified. For 2007–2008, AISD reported that 437 paraprofessional staff provided instructional support at Title I schools, and all were qualified to do so (e.g., had a higher education degree, had 2 years of study completed at a higher education institution, or passed a rigorous state or local exam).

STUDENT ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Texas public schools are required by law to assess students’ skills in reading or English language arts, mathematics, writing, science, and social studies. This report reviews AISD’s results for the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS). These tests, based on the state-mandated curriculum, the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), are administered to Texas public school students in grades 3 through 11 in the following subject areas: reading (grades 3 through 9); English language arts (ELA) (grades 10 and 11); writing (grades 4 and 7); mathematics (grades 3 through 11); science (grades 5, 8, 10, and 11); and social studies (grades 8, 10, and 11). Preliminary AISD accountability TAKS results are reported in Table 1.¹

¹ Accountability results are not final until TEA releases Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) data later in the year.

Table 1: AISD Students Meeting TAKS Passing Standards, by Subject, for Title I Schools, Non-Title I Schools, and All Schools, 2007 and 2008

TAKS subject by school group		Percentage passing TAKS 2007	Percentage passing TAKS 2008	Percentage point change from 2007 to 2008
Reading or English language arts				
	Title I schools	77	80	3
	Non-Title I schools	91	93	2
	All schools	83	87	4
Writing				
	Title I schools	85	84	(1)
	Non-Title I schools	94	95	1
	All schools	89	88	(1)
Mathematics				
	Title I schools	64	69	5
	Non-Title I schools	81	84	3
	All schools	71	77	6
Science				
	Title I schools	56	57	1
	Non-Title I schools	77	80	3
	All schools	68	70	2
Social studies				
	Title I schools	77	80	3
	Non-Title I schools	92	92	0
	All schools	85	88	3

Source: TEA Accountability Data Tables as of October 2007, August 2008; AISD TAKS Records as of July 2008
 Note. Data in this table summarize all students in AISD’s accountability subset (non-mobile), with a scored test across appropriate administrations and with a scale score equal to or greater than 2100. Decreases are noted in parentheses. All percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number.

TAKS results showed some small improvements across the district from 2007 to 2008 in reading or ELA, mathematics, science, and social studies. A slight decrease occurred in writing. The lowest passing rates occurred in science and mathematics. Overall, the passing rates were higher at non-Title I schools than at Title I schools, but followed similar patterns. Percentage point gains from 2007 to 2008 were greater at Title I schools than at non-Title I schools in TAKS reading or ELA, mathematics, and social studies. Students at non-Title I schools showed greater gains in science from 2007 to 2008.

ACCOUNTABILITY RATINGS

By law, under the state and federal accountability systems, each Texas public school and district is given accountability ratings annually. These systems include a variety of student participation and performance indicators that determine the schools’ and districts’ ratings. In the Texas accountability system, the ratings a school and district can receive are exemplary, recognized, academically acceptable, academically unacceptable, and not rated. The state accountability system indicators include academic performance by students in all

subject areas on TAKS (grades 3 through 11), dropout rates (grades 7 and 8), and completion rates (grades 9 through 12). The state accountability system requires that accountability subset data be examined for all students and for the following student groups: White, Hispanic, African American, and economically disadvantaged. In 2008 ratings, 15 AISD schools were rated exemplary, 19 were rated recognized, 63 were rated academically acceptable, and 11 were rated academically unacceptable. Five schools were rated academically acceptable in the alternative education accountability system, and 6 schools were not rated. Of the district's exemplary schools, 3 were Title I and 12 were non-Title I. Among the district's Title I schools, 14% (n = 10) were recognized, and among the district's non-Title I schools, 19% (n = 9) were recognized. The majority of the district's Title I schools (68%, or n = 49) and about a third of its non-Title I schools (30%, or n = 14) were academically acceptable. Ten academically unacceptable schools in the district were Title I schools and one was non-Title I.

The federal accountability rating system evaluates schools annually for adequate yearly progress (AYP). Participation and performance in the state's reading/ELA and mathematics assessments are used, along with high school graduation rates and elementary and middle school attendance rates. Similarly, the federal accountability system uses the accountability subset of students and examines academic assessment results for all students and for multiple student groups (i.e., African American, Hispanic, White, economically disadvantaged, LEP, special education). In addition, the AYP system includes non-TAKS

assessment data for LEP students and students served by special education. Preliminary AYP ratings will be released by the TEA in October 2008. Actions must be taken by Title I schools if they do not meet AYP. Title I schools that miss AYP in the same area for 2 years in a row are placed in Title I school improvement (i.e., these schools must offer students the choice to enroll at other AISD campuses and must revise their campus improvement plans). Title I schools that miss AYP for 3 or more consecutive years must offer their economically disadvantaged students access to supplementary educational services. Title I schools that miss the same subject area standards for 4 consecutive years are required to develop corrective action plans. Title I schools in their 5th consecutive year of missing AYP in the same area must develop a restructuring plan. At this time, AISD has one Title I school that reached its 5th year of missing AYP and was ordered by TEA to be closed or restructured. This school is being reopened as 2 new schools that give students across AISD the option of enrolling. Non-Title I schools that did not meet AYP also must address areas of need in their campus improvement plans, but do not have the other sanctions required of Title I schools.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Although AISD is making gains with respect to the percentages of students passing state-mandated assessments (e.g., TAKS), room for improvement exists, as evidenced by the disparity between students' performance at Title I schools and non-Title I schools in recent years (Doolittle, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007). AISD must continue to focus on providing accelerated instruction and support

for those students and subject areas in greatest need (i.e., for mathematics and science, especially at middle and high schools; for LEP students; and for students receiving special education services).

The intent of NCLB's Title I, Part A program is to improve the entire educational program at a school and to support all students in their efforts to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to meet state academic performance standards. Thus, those students who are in greatest academic need should be identified early and supported throughout the school year with academic interventions. If district and state educational goals for student success are to be met, AISD staff must attempt to identify key characteristics of successful schools—whether they are Title I or non-Title I schools—to improve student success throughout the district.

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