



Austin Independent School District

Department of Program Evaluation

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TITLE I, PART A SUMMARY REPORT: 2008–2009

The purpose of this report is to summarize key compliance and service data from the federal Title I, Part A program funds received by the Austin Independent School District (AISD) during the 2008–2009 school year. 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, nonprofit 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 (i.e., 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 use Title I, Part A funds to 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 school wide if 40% or more of the children residing in the school's attendance zone are low income. In the 2008–2009 school year, AISD allocated Title I, Part A funds to 68 school-wide campuses (52 elementary, 11 middle, and 5 high schools) where the percentages of low-income children ranged from 45% to 99%. AISD's 2008–2009 Title I, Part A allocation was \$29,966,727 (\$24,754,631 entitlement and \$5,212,096 roll forward); of this, \$14,661,587 (59%) was allocated directly to AISD schools. Approximately \$13 million also were allocated for coordination and provision of support programs and services to students, staff, and parents at schools across the district (e.g., school improvement at specific campuses, school choice, private schools and facilities for neglected students, summer school, homeless student services, parent involvement, curriculum and instruction, professional development activities). Total expenditures for the year were approximately \$23,832,737 (79% of entire allocation).

TITLE I STUDENTS AND STAFF

According to district student records submitted to the TEA, the number of AISD students attending Title I school-wide campuses has increased gradually over the past several years, from 35,641 in 2000 to 44,830 in 2008. Students at Title I schools represented 54% of the total AISD student population in 2008. AISD Title I schools tend to have higher percentages of African American (15%) and Hispanic (78%) students than do AISD non-Title I schools (8% and 37%, respectively). In addition, Title I schools tend to serve higher percentages of students who are at risk (72%) and have limited English proficiency (LEP) (45%) than do non-Title I schools (39% and 11%, respectively). Title I support services were provided to 1,950 homeless students during 2008–2009. Title I support services also were provided to 215 students at participating private schools and to 18 students at participating facilities for neglected youth, all within the AISD attendance area.

NCLB requires school districts to have a plan for all teachers in core academic subject areas (e.g., reading or English language arts [ELA], 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, in 2008–2009, 100% of AISD’s regular education and special education teachers were highly qualified. Another requirement for all Texas school districts that receive Title funds is that all teachers must complete annual professional development activities. District records show that 100% of

AISD teachers completed some type of professional development activity in the past year.

NCLB also requires that all paraprofessionals providing instructional support to students for core academic subject areas be highly qualified. That is, these staff must do one of the following: have a higher education degree, complete 2 years of study at a higher education institution, or pass a rigorous state or local exam. For 2008–2009, AISD reported 100% of paraprofessional staff at Title I schools were highly qualified.

STUDENT ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Texas public schools are required by law to assess students’ skills in reading or ELA, 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); ELA (grades 10 and 11); mathematics (grades 3 through 11); science (grades 5, 8, 10, and 11); and social studies (grades 8, 10, and 11). AISD accountability TAKS results for 2007, 2008, and 2009 are reported in Table 1.

Gains in percentages of students passing TAKS occurred from 2007 to 2009 for all schools, Title I schools, and non-Title I schools. Students at Title I schools showed the greatest gains during this period in reading/ELA, math, and social studies, while students at non-Title I schools showed the greatest gains in writing and science.

However, the passing percentages for students at Title I schools remained below that of students at non-Title I schools in all subject areas. Figure 1 shows that the largest gaps in 2009 TAKS passing rates between students at Title I and non-Title I schools were in science

(22) and math (16), while the smallest gaps were in writing (10) and social studies (11). The gaps in student TAKS performance between Title I schools and non-Title I schools remain large.

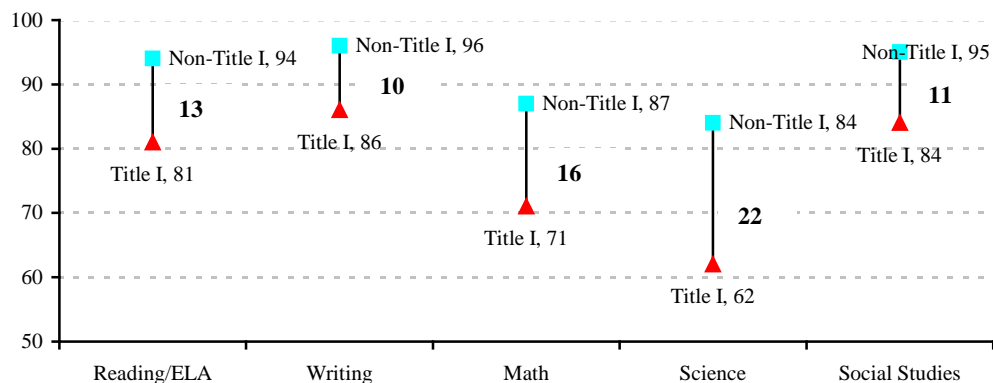
Table 1. Percentages of AISD Students Meeting TAKS Passing Standards, by Subject and Title I School Status, 2007, 2008, and 2009

Subject	Passing 2007	Passing 2008	Passing 2009	Percentage point change, 2007 to 2009	Percentage point gaps between Title I and non-Title I	
					2007	2009
Reading/ELA					14%	13%
Title I schools	77%	80%	81%	4%		
Non-Title I schools	91%	93%	94%	3%		
All schools	83%	86%	87%	4%		
Writing					9%	10%
Title I schools	85%	84%	86%	1%		
Non-Title I schools	94%	95%	96%	2%		
All schools	89%	88%	90%	1%		
Math					17%	16%
Title I schools	64%	69%	71%	7%		
Non-Title I schools	81%	84%	87%	6%		
All schools	71%	76%	78%	7%		
Science					21%	22%
Title I schools	56%	57%	62%	6%		
Non-Title I schools	77%	80%	84%	7%		
All schools	68%	70%	74%	6%		
Social Studies					15%	11%
Title I schools	77%	80%	84%	7%		
Non-Title I schools	92%	92%	95%	3%		
All schools	85%	88%	91%	6%		

Source. AISD student TAKS records, as of July 2009

Note. The 2009 accountability results will not be final until TEA releases AEIS data later in the year.

Figure 1. Gaps in AISD TAKS 2009 Passing Rates, by Title I School Status



Source. AISD student TAKS records, as of July 2009

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.

STATE ACCOUNTABILITY

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: African American, Hispanic, White, and economically disadvantaged. Preliminary state accountability ratings for AISD schools are as follows: 24 (22%) exemplary, 30 (28%) recognized, 46 (43%) acceptable, and 8 (7%) unacceptable; 6 were not rated.

Comparing ratings of Title I schools with non-Title I schools, 6% (n = 4) of Title I schools and 50% (n = 20) of non-Title I schools achieved an exemplary rating. In addition, 34% (n = 23) of Title I and 18% (n = 7) of non-Title I schools achieved the recognized rating. There were 50% (n = 34) of Title I schools and 30% (n = 12) of non-Title I schools that achieved the acceptable rating. There were 10% (n = 7) of Title I schools and

2% (n = 1) of non-Title I schools that received an unacceptable rating.

Looking at the changes in schools' state ratings over time from 2007 to 2009, as shown in Table 2, the percentages of schools that received exemplary ratings increased, regardless of Title I status, with non-Title I schools showing the largest increase in percentages of schools receiving exemplary status during the 2-year period (29%). Title I schools showed the greatest increase in receiving recognized ratings between 2007 and 2009 (25% increase). The percentages of schools receiving acceptable ratings decreased from 2007 to 2009, regardless of school type. The percentage of Title I schools receiving unacceptable ratings decreased by 4% from 2007 to 2009, while non-Title I schools showed a 2% increase in unacceptable ratings during this period.

Of particular concern to the district are those schools at most risk of being closed due to consecutive years of unacceptable ratings. For example, at the end of the 2007–2008 school year, TEA ordered AISD to close Johnston High School, a Title I school that had received unacceptable ratings for 5 consecutive years. TEA subsequently approved the district's plan to reopen Johnston as a new school—Eastside Memorial High School. At the end of the 2008–2009 school year, TEA ordered AISD to close Pearce Middle School, a Title I school that had received unacceptable ratings for 5 consecutive years. TEA then approved the district's plan to repurpose and reopen Pearce for 2009–2010.

Table 2. Percentages of AISD Schools, by State Accountability Ratings, by Title I Status, 2007 Through 2009

Schools and Ratings	2007	2008	2009	Percentage point change, 2007 to 2009
Number of Title I Schools	70	72	68	
Number of Non-Title I Schools	45	47	51	
Number of All Schools	115	119	119	
Exemplary				
Title I schools	0%	4%	6%	+ 6%
Non-Title I schools	21%	33%	50%	+ 29%
All schools	7%	14%	22%	+ 15%
Recognized				
Title I schools	9%	14%	34%	+ 25%
Non-Title I schools	35%	25%	18%	- 17%
All schools	17%	18%	28%	- 11%
Acceptable				
Title I schools	77%	68%	50%	- 27%
Non-Title I schools	44%	39%	30%	- 14%
All schools	66%	58%	43%	- 23%
Unacceptable				
Title I schools	14%	14%	10%	- 4%
Non-Title I schools	0%	3%	2%	+ 2%
All Schools	10%	10%	7%	- 3%

Source. AISD state accountability ratings, 2007, 2008, 2009

FEDERAL ACCOUNTABILITY

The federal accountability rating system evaluates schools annually for adequate yearly progress (AYP). The following indicators are used in determining federal accountability ratings: participation and performance in the state's reading/ELA and mathematics assessments, high school graduation rates, and student attendance rates. The federal accountability system uses the accountability subset of students and examines academic assessment results for all students and for the following student groups: African American, Hispanic, White, economically disadvantaged, LEP, and special education. AYP ratings were released by TEA in August 2009. For the first time, AISD as a district did not meet AYP.

However, there were 218 (18%) districts in Texas that did not make AYP. Among the 7 districts comparable to AISD, 5 did not meet AYP¹. Of the 108 AISD schools rated in the standard federal accountability system, 102 made AYP, of which 64 were Title I schools. Six AISD schools did not make AYP, of which 4 were Title I schools. Table 3 summarizes the AYP ratings for AISD schools from 2007 to 2009. During this time, the percentages of AISD schools (regardless of Title I status) meeting AYP requirements increased.

¹ Seven comparable districts are Corpus Christi, Dallas, El Paso, Fort Worth, Houston, San Antonio, and Ysleta.

Table 3. Percentages of AISD Schools, by Federal AYP Accountability Ratings, by Title I Status, 2007 Through 2009

Schools and Ratings	2007	2008	2009	Percentage point change, 2007 to 2009
Met AYP				
Title I schools	81%	88%	94%	+ 13%
Non-Title I schools	87%	83%	95%	+ 8%
All schools	83%	86%	94%	+ 11%
Missed AYP				
Title I schools	19%	12%	6%	- 13%
Non-Title I schools	13%	17%	5%	- 8%
All schools	17%	14%	6%	- 11%

Source. AISD federal accountability ratings, 2007, 2008, 2009

Note. AISD 2009 AYP ratings are preliminary until confirmed by TEA later in the fall.

Non-Title I schools that do not meet AYP must address areas of need in their campus improvement plan, but do not have other sanctions required of Title I schools. Title I schools that miss AYP in the same area for 2 years in a row (Stage 1) are placed in Title I school improvement status. These schools must offer students the choice to enroll at other campuses and must revise their campus improvement plans. During 2008-2009, approximately 776 middle and high school students used the NCLB choice option to transfer from Title I schools that did not meet AYP to non-Title I schools in the district.

Title I schools that miss AYP for 3 consecutive years (Stage 2) must provide school choice, revise their campus improvement plans, and offer their economically disadvantaged students access to free supplementary educational services. Title I schools that miss AYP in the same subject area for 4 consecutive years (Stage 3) are required to do all the prior-mentioned activities and must develop corrective action plans. Title I schools in their 5th consecutive year of missing AYP (Stage 4) in the same subject area also must develop a restructuring

plan. If the Title I school reaches its 6th consecutive year of missing AYP (Stage 5), the school must implement an alternative governance arrangement, as stated in the campus restructuring plan (i.e., reopen as a charter school, replace all or most of the staff, contract for private management of the school, turn the school's operation over to TEA, or some other restructuring arrangement). At this time, AISD has 8 Title I schools in some stage of school improvement status. Five of these Title I schools met AYP in 2009, yet according to state and federal rules, they must attain the met-AYP status for 2 years in a row (on the same indicator that caused them to miss AYP) before they can come out of school improvement status. Thus, these schools must continue school improvement procedures.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

AISD's Title I schools have shown improvements over the past several years with respect to students' TAKS passing rates and to the percentages of schools attaining exemplary and recognized state accountability ratings, as well as meeting federal AYP ratings. However, academic achievement gaps still exist in all subject areas between students at Title I schools and those at non-Title I schools, especially in science and mathematics. The gaps in TAKS performance between Title I and non-Title I schools have not closed at a fast enough pace for the district to be able to show significant improvement.

FISCAL AND PROGRAM CONSIDERATIONS

The district's strategic improvement plan should guide a critical examination of how AISD Title I, Part A funds and staffing are used as part of the entire district's plan for use of monetary and personnel resources to improve student academic success. District staff should coordinate efforts to focus on Title I schools with the highest academic needs, and apply best practices from schools where improvements have been maintained.

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