

NCLB Title I, Part A Research Brief, 2009–2010

Overview

The purpose of this report is to summarize briefly compliance and service data from the federal Title I, Part A grant funds received by the Austin Independent School District (AISD) during 2009–2010. The Title I, Part A grant provides federal funds to state and local education agencies under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB; Public Law 107-110, 2001) for the purpose of improving elementary and secondary educational programs in both public and private, nonprofit schools and institutions.

Funding

Title I, Part A funds flow from the U.S. Department of Education through the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to qualifying Texas school districts. A school's Title I, Part A funding is determined by the percentage of low-income students living in the school's attendance area. In AISD, a child is low income if he or she is eligible for free or reduced-price meals. Schools are ranked annually 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 allocation can be used school wide if 40% or more of the children residing in the school's attendance zone are low income.

In 2009–2010, more than half (\$14,922,854) of AISD's Title I Part A allocation (\$31,592,165) went to its 69 Title I schools (52 elementary, 11 middle, and 6 high). About \$14.6 million was allocated for provision of support programs and services to students, staff, and parents at schools (e.g., school improvement at specific campuses, school choice transportation, services to eligible students at private schools and facilities for neglected students, summer school, homeless student services, parent involvement, curriculum and instruction, professional development activities). Grant administration allocation of \$1.9 million included indirect costs, human resources, accountability, program evaluation, and grant office compliance. Total grant expenditures for the year were near \$23,942,315 (76%). Most expenditures were used to pay salaries (71%).

Program Highlights



Students. AISD students attending 70 Title I schools accounted for 53% of the total 2009–2010 student population. Most Title I students were economically disadvantaged (90%) and Hispanic (78%), and 45% were English language learners (ELLs).

Teachers. AISD teachers' average years of teaching experience was 8.4 years district wide, 7.4 years at Title I schools, and 9.5 years at non-Title I schools.

Funding. AISD Title I schools and district support services to schools received most of the district's \$31.5 million Title I allocation. The approximate Title I cost per student served was \$532 in 2009–2010.

Students

AISD’s total student population in Fall 2009 was approximately 84,675, and of that 53% ($n = 44,950$) attended Title I schools (Table 1). Almost 90% of Title I school students were economically disadvantaged (63% district wide), 78% were Hispanic (59% district wide), and 45% were ELLs (29% district wide). By end of the academic year, approximately 47,925 students had been served by AISD Title I schools. Title I services also were provided to 1,774 AISD homeless students, 145 private school students, and 50 students at facilities for neglected youth.

Table 1. AISD Student Demographics, Fall 2009

AISD student demographic	District ($n = 84,675$)	Title I schools ($n = 44,950$)	Non-Title I schools ($n = 39,675$)
Ethnicity			
American Indian / Alaska Native	0.3	0.1	0.4
Asian / Pacific Islander	3.6	1.3	6.3
Black	11.3	14.2	8.0
Hispanic	58.9	78.4	36.8
White	25.8	5.9	48.4
Economically disadvantaged	63.3	89.6	33.6
English language learner/limited English proficiency (ELL/LEP)	29.0	44.9	11.1
Special education	9.5	9.7	9.4

Source. AISD Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) records, Fall 2009

Teaching Staff

According to data submitted to TEA by AISD about teacher qualifications, 100% of teachers in 2009–2010 were highly qualified. All 6,379 AISD teachers participated in and completed professional development activities during the school year, as required by statute. Among AISD teachers, average years of teaching experience was 8.4 years district wide, 7.4 years at Title I schools, and 9.5 years at non-Title I schools.

Academic Performance

Because one of the major goals of Title I is to ensure all students are supported in achieving academic success, a comparison analysis was conducted to examine how students at AISD Title I schools performed on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), compared with how students at non-Title I schools performed.

Texas public schools are required by law to assess students’ skills in reading or English language arts (ELA), mathematics, writing, science, and social studies. This report reviews AISD’s results for the 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). Table 2 provides a summary of AISD students’ TAKS performance by Title I and non-Title I school groups, as compared with the district’s results for each major subject area from 2008 through 2010. All school groups made progress

in passing TAKS from 2008 to 2010, with greatest gains made in science. The gap between students' passing rates at Title I schools and at non-Title I schools remains. However, that gap was reduced between 2008 and 2010 in the areas of writing, math, science, and social studies

Table 2. AISD Students Meeting Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) Passing Standards, by Subject and Title I School Status, 2008, 2009, and 2010

TAKS subject and school groups	% Passing 2008	% Passing 2009	% Passing 2010	Percentage point change, 2008 to 2010	Percentage point gaps between Title I and non-Title I school groups, 2008 and 2010		Percentage point change in gap from 2008 to 2010
					2008	2010	
Reading/English language arts					13%	13%	0%
Title I	80%	81%	81%	1%			
Non-Title I	93%	94%	94%	1%			
All schools	86%	87%	88%	2%			
Writing					11%	8%	3%
Title I	84%	86%	88%	4%			
Non-Title I	95%	96%	96%	1%			
All schools	88%	90%	91%	3%			
Mathematics					15%	12%	3%
Title I	69%	71%	76%	7%			
Non-Title I	84%	87%	88%	4%			
All schools	76%	78%	83%	7%			
Science					23%	16%	7%
Title I	57%	62%	71%	14%			
Non-Title I	80%	84%	87%	7%			
All schools	70%	74%	81%	11%			
Social studies					12%	7%	5%
Title I	80%	84%	90%	6%			
Non-Title I	92%	95%	97%	5%			
All schools	88%	91%	95%	7%			

Source. AISD TAKS records 2008 through 2010

Title I Summer School Activities

Title I funding supported the summer programs of 15 AISD Title I schools: five high schools (Lanier, Reagan, Travis, LBJ, and Eastside Green) and 10 elementary schools (Allison, Cook, Govalle, Linder, McBee, Palm, Pickle, Wooldridge, Rodriguez, and Wooten). Every high school summer program involved TAKS tutoring, primarily with the focus on exit level TAKS. All but one program also included a course credit recovery and dropout recovery services. The purposes of the elementary summer school programs were evenly split: one-third of the programs helped students improve English/language arts skills, one-third helped students with reading and mathematics, and one-third described the program generically as intervention. One elementary summer school program previewed 5th-grade science concepts for incoming students. The length of elementary school summer programs was either 3 weeks or 3.5 weeks long; one elementary campus held three sessions for 3 days and one for 2.5 weeks. High school summer programs were more variable in length than were elementary programs. High school programs ranged from 3 to 9 weeks in length, with an average of 5 weeks.

The total amount Title I monies budgeted for summer school was \$170,635, and the total expended was \$134,137. Most of these funds were spent on teacher compensation (about \$116,000). Additional monies were spent on school leadership (less than \$15,000), parent involvement (about \$2,000), and custodial services (about \$1,000). Based on records submitted by schools, a total of 779 students were served by these Title I programs, and of those, 686 (88%) either received academic course credit or were recommended for promotion to the next grade, based on their attendance and performance during the summer school session. The estimated cost per student served was \$172.

Accountability Ratings

By state and federal laws, public school districts and schools are rated annually in an accountability system based on various student participation and performance indicators. In the Texas state accountability system, student indicators are performance on all TAKS subject areas (grades 3 through 11), dropout rates (grades 7 and 8), and high school completion rates (based on grades 9 through 12). A summary of the 2010 state accountability ratings for AISD schools (by Title I status) are shown in Table 3, along with the prior year's ratings. AISD Title I schools, non-Title I schools, and thus all AISD schools had increases in the numbers and percentages of schools that earned exemplary and recognized ratings, while the numbers and percentages of schools that earned academically acceptable and unacceptable ratings decreased. Examining 2010 state ratings by school groups, a higher percentage of non-Title I schools (51%) than of Title I schools (16%) had exemplary ratings. However, a higher percentage of Title I schools (35%) than of non-Title I schools (29%) had recognized ratings. Similarly, a higher percentage of Title I schools (48%) than of non-Title I schools (20%) had academically acceptable ratings.

Table 3. AISD Schools, by State Accountability Ratings, 2010

AISD schools and ratings	2008	2009	2010 *	Percentage point change
Number of AISD Title I schools	72	68	69	
Number of AISD Non-Title I schools	47	51	53	
Number of All AISD schools	119	119	122	
Exemplary rating				
Title I schools	4%	6%	16%	+ 12%
Non-Title I schools	33%	50%	51%	+ 18%
All schools	14%	22%	29%	+ 15%
Recognized rating				
Title I schools	14%	34%	35%	+ 21%
Non-Title I schools	25%	18%	29%	+ 4%
All schools	18%	28%	33%	+ 15%
Academically acceptable rating				
Title I schools	68%	50%	48%	- 20%
Non-Title I schools	39%	30%	20%	- 19%
All schools	58%	43%	37%	- 21%
Academically unacceptable rating				
Title I schools	14%	10%	1%	- 13%
Non-Title I schools	3%	2%	0%	- 3%
All schools	10%	7%	1%	- 9%

Source. Texas Education Agency state accountability ratings 2008, 2009, 2010

* Indicates that, in 2010, 12 schools were either not rated or were rated in the state alternative accountability system.

In the federal accountability system, student indicators used to determine school and district ratings include participation and performance in the state’s reading/ELA and mathematics assessments, high school graduation rates, and student attendance rates. AISD as a district did not make adequate yearly progress (AYP) in 2010. However, in 2010, 257 (21%) Texas school districts did not make AYP. Among the seven districts comparable to AISD, six did not meet AYP.¹ Of the 115 AISD schools rated in the standard federal accountability system, 109 made AYP, of which 64 were Title I schools. Six AISD schools did not make AYP, of which four were Title I schools. Table 4 summarizes the AYP ratings for AISD schools from 2008 to 2010. During this time, the percentages of AISD schools (regardless of Title I status) meeting AYP requirements increased.

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

Table 4. AISD Schools, by Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Ratings, 2010

AISD Schools and ratings	2008	2009	2010	Percentage point change
Met AYP				
Title I schools	88%	94%	94%	+ 6%
Non-Title I schools	83%	95%	96%	+ 13%
All schools	86%	94%	95%	+ 9%
Missed AYP				
Title I schools	12%	6%	6%	- 6%
Non-Title I schools	17%	5%	4%	- 13%
All schools	14%	6%	5%	- 9%

Source. Texas Education Agency federal accountability ratings 2008, 2009, 2010

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 2009–2010, approximately 757 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 three Title I schools in some stage of school improvement status. Two of these Title I schools met AYP in 2010, 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.

Funding Considerations

A summary of Title I expenditures as of August 31, 2010, are presented in Table 5. The majority of funds were spent on instruction (62%). In addition, some other areas in which Title I funds were spent included curriculum and instructional staff development (12%), instructional leadership (6%), and school leadership (5%). As required by the grant, AISD spent more than 1% of its budget on parent involvement, using approximately 3% (more than \$700,000) of total expenditures on these activities. The percentage of funds spent on instruction alone (62%) was close to that (65%) required by the adopted amendments to the Texas Commissioner of Education’s rules regarding a district’s financial

accountability rating system (Texas Education Code, §39.20419; Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 109, Subchapter AA, effective 2006). If instructional resources, staff development, and instructional leadership expenditures are added, then AISD Title I expenditures exceeded the required amount.

Table 5. AISD Title I Part A Expenditures, by Function, 2010

Title I A expenditure function	Expenditure *	Percentage
Instruction	\$14,755,744	62%
Instructional resources and media services	\$141,615	<1%
Curriculum and instructional staff development	\$2,983,677	12%
Instructional leadership	\$1,438,371	6%
School leadership	\$1,299,408	5%
Guidance and counseling services	\$309,285	1%
Social work services	\$628,784	3%
Health services	\$66,180	<1%
Student transportation	\$349,036	1%
Co-curricular and extracurricular activities	\$670	<1%
General administration	\$3,325	<1%
Plant maintenance and operations	\$1,356	<1%
Security and monitoring services	\$10,503	<1%
Data processing services	\$437,729	2%
Parent/community services	\$809,046	3%
Indirect costs	\$707,586	3%
Total expenditures	\$23,942,315	100%

Source. AISD Finance records as of August 31, 2010

* Expenditures are rounded to the nearest dollar.

Future Evaluations

Most Title I, Part A funds go to schools based on a per-student basis. Some funds are concentrated to provide certain services district wide. Decision makers should decide which services and activities ought to be investigated to ensure the most efficient and coordinated use of Title I funds, whether at the campus or district level. In the past, evaluation efforts have remained close to the collection of data required by the TEA, as follows:

- Expenditures by various categories (e.g., private schools, preschool program, administration, professional development, school improvement, homeless, facilities for neglected youth)
- Counts of various student groups served (e.g., AISD Title I schools, homeless, private school, facilities for neglected youth)
- Counts of teachers employed and receiving professional development opportunities
- Verification of district compliance

Some components of Title I services and activities are evaluated as part of other projects or are summarized for simple participation data. These include bilingual, prekindergarten, summer school, private schools, facilities for neglected youth, homeless students, teachers’ professional development opportunities, Positive Behavior Support (PBS), and parent involvement. However, some of the following activity and service areas could be investigated further in the future for effectiveness and

efficiency, if district decision makers provide directives to study them, and if adequate data collection methods and evaluation plans are in place:

- Campus-level analysis of use of funds
- Focus schools
- School choice and supplemental educational services
- Curriculum support (e.g., coordinators and program support staff by subject area)
- Associate superintendents

References

NCLB. (2001). Title I: Improving the academic achievement of the disadvantaged. Retrieved from <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/pg1.html>

Texas Education Code. (2006). Adopted amendments to 19 TAC Chapter 109, Subchapter AA, Commissioner's rules concerning Financial Accountability Rating System. Retrieved from <http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/rules/commissioner/adopted/0706/109-1002-ltradopt.html>