

**DEPARTMENT OF PROGRAM  
EVALUATION:  
AGENDA 2003-04**

**DPE Publication Number 03.01**

## **PREFACE**

The Department of Program Evaluation (DPE), within AISD's Office of Accountability, is charged with evaluating federal, state, and locally funded programs in the Austin Independent School District. DPE works with program staff throughout the district to design and carry out formative and summative program evaluations. The evaluations report objectively on program implementation and outcomes, and serve to inform program staff, decision-makers, and other planners in the district. AS staffing permits, DPE responds to information needs at all levels.

Each year, DPE staff develop an agenda that identifies programs to be evaluated and services to be provided. At the end of each school year, DPE submits mandated reports to various federal, state, and local funding agencies, and develops narrative reports reviewing district program implementation and outcomes. Findings are used by program staff to improve programs and by district decision-makers to make programmatic and budgetary decisions for the district.

DPE staff coordinate research requests with external agencies, such as universities and governmental organizations. DPE staff also conduct annual surveys of district students, parents, and staff. In addition to the evaluations and other activities outlined in this document, DPE staff routinely handle internal and external data requests. The DPE Evaluation Team (E-Team), entering its second year of existence, assists with special projects, as needed, throughout the year.

The evaluation agenda is prepared during the summer before each school year, to obtain agreement among decision-makers that the proper and most critical information needs will be addressed in a timely and useful manner in the coming year. The agenda is developed through an interactive process involving the staff of DPE, the staff and program managers of special programs, and the Executive Director of Accountability.

This agenda describes methodology of the planned evaluations and other services to be provided in the 2003-04 school year. The plans provide the blueprints for the evaluation staff to follow throughout the year. An overview is included in the Agenda for each planned evaluation and service.

Overviews for each planned evaluation and service included in this document are presented in the following format:

1. A heading, which gives the names of the program, the program manager, and the evaluation staff;
2. A brief program description, which provides general information about the program, the features of the program, its goals and objectives, and other information pertinent to understanding its importance to the district;
3. Evaluation objectives, which enumerate the purpose of the evaluation or service; and
4. Scope and method, which delineate the breadth of the evaluation or service and the methods by which relevant data will be collected and analyzed.

Readers of the agenda are encouraged to direct their comments and questions about the planned evaluations and services included in this document to the DPE contact persons named in the overviews.

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**PREFACE** ..... 1

**TABLE OF CONTENTS** ..... 3

**DPE ORGANIZATION CHART; 2003-04**..... 4

**2003-04 EVALUATION OVERVIEWS** ..... 4

**2003-04 EVALUATION OVERVIEWS** ..... 5

    Accelerated Reading Intervention Tutoring Programs ..... 6

    Bilingual Education and English as a Second Language Programs ..... 8

    Dell Foundation College Readiness Programs ..... 10

    E-Team Special Projects ..... 12

    Employee Coordinated Survey ..... 13

    Elementary Counseling Demonstration Grant ..... 16

    Follow-Up on the Class of 2001 ..... 18

    Gear Up Austin: Impacting Lives Project..... 20

    Making An Impact: Middle School Drug Prevention and School Safety Coordinator Initiative ..... 22

    Optional Extended Year Program ..... 25

    Parent and Community Involvement ..... 28

    Prekindergarten Program ..... 31

    Reading First..... 34

    Research by External Agencies or Individuals ..... 38

    State Compensatory Education ..... 39

    Technology Applications Readiness Grants for Empowering Texas TARGET Grant 41

    Title I A and D Programs ..... 44

    Title II A Teacher and Principal Training and Recruitment Fund..... 50

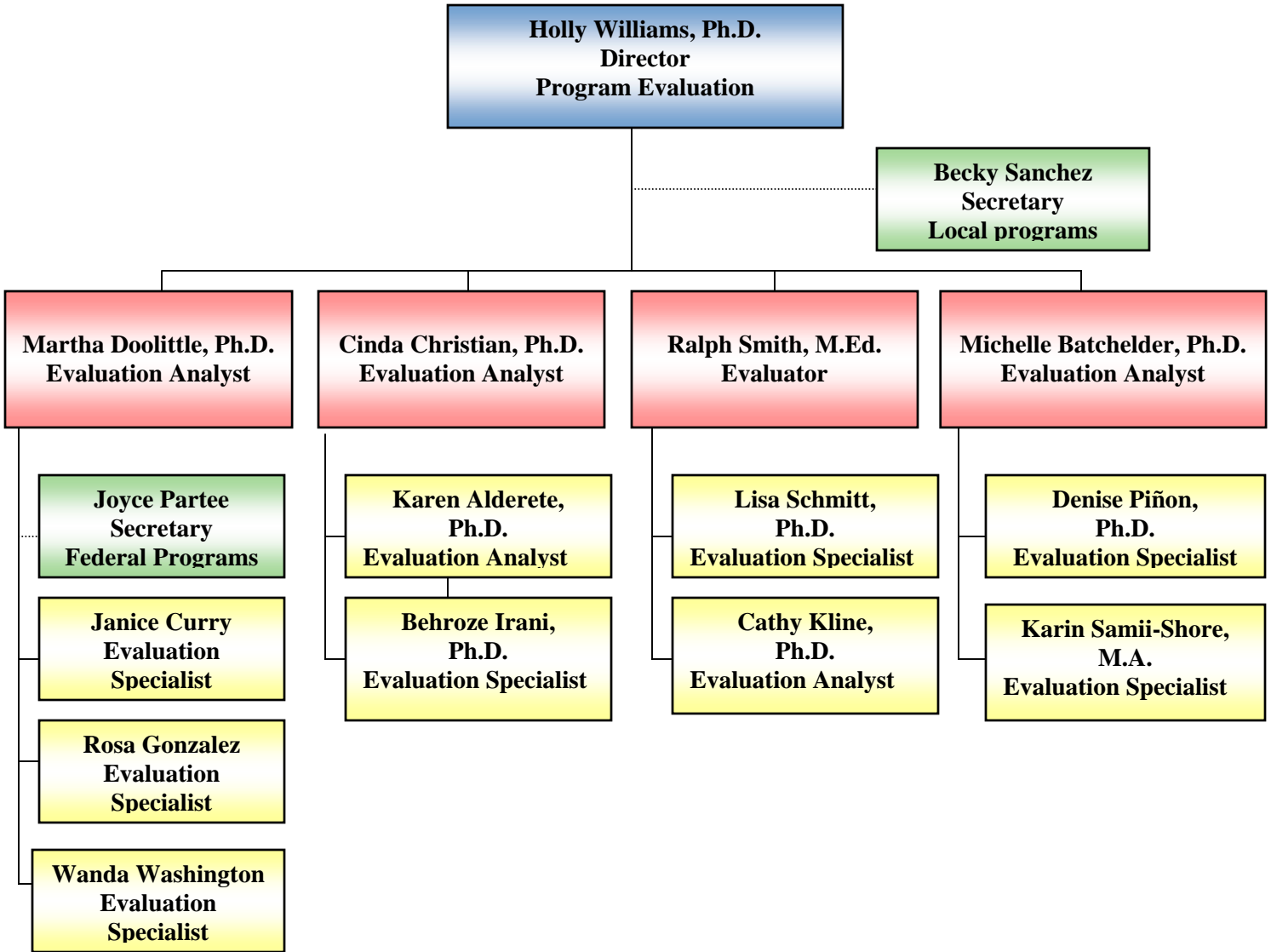
    Title II D Enhancing Education Through Technology ..... 52

    Title IV Safe And Drug-Free Schools And Communities Program ..... 54

    Title V Innovative Education Program Strategies (Formula Grant)..... 58

    21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers Grant ..... 60

DPE ORGANIZATION CHART; 2003-04



**2003-04 EVALUATION OVERVIEWS**

## ACCELERATED READING INTERVENTION TUTORING PROGRAMS

Program Managers: Maria Hohenstein, Marty Hougen  
Grants Manager: Peggy Mays  
Evaluation Supervisor: Martha Doolittle  
Evaluation Staff: Janice Curry

### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Accelerated Reading Intervention (ARI) grant from the Texas Education Agency provides funds to school districts to improve early elementary literacy and reading skills among struggling readers, including students with dyslexia. During the past four years, the ARI grant was used to fund the Austin Independent School District's (AISD) summer literacy program for elementary students in grades kindergarten through 2, the *Summer Opportunity to Accelerate Reading (SOAR)*. When the new state assessment program (TAKS) went into effect in 2002-03 along with the new state requirement that all third graders must pass the third grade reading assessment to be promoted to fourth grade, the state and the school district added third grade students who were reading below grade level to the group served by ARI. During 2002-03, all elementary campuses had ARI funds during the regular school year to provide accelerated reading instruction in literacy and reading to kindergarten – grade 3 students.

During 2003-04, funds will be available to serve kindergarten through grade 4 students. The goal of this approach is to use diagnostic assessments to identify early those children in grades kindergarten through 4 who are having difficulty with literacy skills and reading. These children will be able to participate in one of several intervention sessions offered during the school year by campus staff. Curriculum materials aimed at improving specific literacy skills will be used according to the needs of the children. Accelerated reading groups will be small (no larger than eight students) and will be offered either during the school day or after school. The final session offered in June 2004 will serve students in kindergarten through grade two who are reading below grade level and will serve those third graders who have failed the TAKS reading assessment in spring 2004. The goal will be to improve the children's reading skills and pass the TAKS offered in the summer so that they can be promoted to fourth grade.

Student eligibility for receiving accelerated reading instruction will be based on the following reading assessments administered during the school year: *Texas Primary*

*Reading Inventory (TPRI), Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA), and/or Flynt-Cooter (FC) informal reading inventory. All teachers providing instruction and intervention will have completed specific professional development prior to the beginning of the program.*

**EVALUATION OBJECTIVES**

1. To evaluate the district's efforts to meet the district and state goal that all students read at or above grade level upon exiting third grade.
2. To provide information for decision makers on program effectiveness to facilitate decisions about program modification.

**SCOPE AND METHOD**

The use of ARI funds in AISD will be to provide accelerated reading instruction and intervention to those elementary students determined to be at risk in literacy and reading skills, including students with dyslexia. The evaluation will include monitoring the progress of those students who participate in this program throughout the year. The assessment data used as a pre- and post-test in the program will be collected. In addition, the number and percentage of third grade students who participate in the program and who pass TAKS reading in 2004 will be investigated. Other quantitative data to be examined will include budget expenditures, student and teacher demographics, and the number of students on grade-level in reading at the beginning and end of the program. Recommendations for the 2004-05 program will be made based on all data collected.

**BILINGUAL EDUCATION AND ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE PROGRAMS**

Program Director: Della May Moore  
Evaluation Supervisor: Martha Doolittle  
Evaluation Staff: Rosa María González

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS**

Texas law requires that upon entry to a school district, all students with a Language Other Than English (LOTE) be assessed to determine their level of English proficiency. Students identified as Limited English Proficient (LEP) (also known as English Language Learners, ELL) must be provided one of two basic programs: Bilingual Education (BE), a program of dual-language instruction including instruction in the home language and English as a Second Language (ESL); BE is provided only to students in any language classification in elementary school for which there are 20 or more students enrolled in the same grade level; parent permission is required; and English as a Second Language (ESL), a program of specialized instruction in English provided to students in elementary school not receiving bilingual education, either because a class is not available or because of parent refusal, and to students in grades 6 through 12; parent permission is required.

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 includes the Title III Part A grant, Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient and Immigrant Students (P.L. 107-110) (See legislation at <http://www.ed.gov/legislation/ESEA02/pg39.html>). The purpose of this grant is to provide funds to school districts to assist in teaching English to limited English proficient (LEP) students at all grade levels and help these students meet the same challenging state academic standards required of all students. These supplemental funds may be used to support specialized student instruction, staff's professional development, staff stipends, instructional supplies and materials, providing community/family coordination and outreach for LEP children and their families, and other relevant efforts. In addition, the school district must provide ongoing assessment and evaluation of student academic progress in English language proficiency (reading, writing, oral) and in meeting the state academic standards as measured by the state-mandated tests, the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS). The Austin

Independent School District has \$1,764,954 (including \$177,904 of immigrant funds) as a Title III grant planning amount for 2003-04.

**EVALUATION OBJECTIVES**

1. To document the impact of the district's BE/ESL Programs on student academic performance, per federal and state law.
2. To provide information for district decision makers on program effectiveness to facilitate decisions about program modification.

**SCOPE AND METHOD**

In order to comply with local, state and federal evaluation and reporting requirements, the evaluation will focus on assessing the impact of the district's Bilingual Education (BE) and English as a Second Language (ESL) Programs on the academic progress of its LEP students, and the extent to which they are becoming proficient in English. In response to these program goals and evaluation requirements, the following analyses will be conducted annually (except where indicated) for the 2003-04 evaluation:

- Student performance (progress) on state-mandated academic tests for LEP students served, LEP students who have exited the program, and immigrant students;
- A summary of district professional development completed in BE/ESL subject areas;
- A summary of instructional capacity of new teachers and numbers of potential teaching personnel.

Completion of the narrative report is anticipated in for September 2004.

Submission of state-required information for the Texas Education Agency (TEA) is expected at about the same time. However, the specific data to be included in this required biennial report to TEA, to satisfy Title III guidelines, are still being determined at this time.

## **DELL FOUNDATION COLLEGE READINESS PROGRAMS**

Grant Manager: Rene Sanchez

Evaluation Staff: Ralph Smith

### **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

Through a grant provided by the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation, AISD has consolidated and expanded under one umbrella several initiatives focused on increasing the number of high school graduates who enroll in post-secondary institutions. The 2003-04 school year marks the second year in which the District has received support for these programs from the foundation.

Project ADVANCE (Assess, Decide, Visit, Apply Now for your College Education) aims to continue to increase enrollment of AISD graduates in post secondary institutions by:

- Increasing resources and expertise in AISD high schools resulting in a broader and more in depth dissemination of higher education, financial aid and scholarship information to high school students, parents, students and faculty.
- Developing and coordinating high school partnerships with Austin area businesses and colleges to assist students with applications for college admissions, the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, scholarship applications and college admissions testing.
- Providing intensive college advising services for all students, but particularly for target populations, including first generation college goers, under represented minority groups, students with special learning needs, and students with limited English proficiency.
- Creating and implementing a postsecondary planning and preparatory curriculum for both faculty and parents where the same postsecondary expectations are created in each student.

The Dell Foundation grant also is supporting the District's AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) program, which is expanding into six additional high schools in 2003-04. AVID is a program designed to help underachieving students with academic potential prepare for entrance into colleges and universities. In the program, a majority of the participants are primarily from low-income and ethnic minority

backgrounds. In AVID, these students are placed in a college prep academic program, and are provided a support system to help students achieve in these classes.

Finally, the grant also provides support to the expansion of Project SMART, an initiative directed toward middle and high school students. In 2003-04, Project SMART will add Reagan, Lanier, and Akins high schools. Funds are made available for additional teacher units, that will serve as direct tutors or team teachers on campuses to support activities and programs based on individual schools' needs, to increase the passing rate on the TAKS examinations and to increase the number of students who will graduate on the Recommended High School Plan. The nucleus of this program was the District's Blueprint Schools initiative in 2002-03.

**OBJECTIVES**

To provide information for decision makers on program effectiveness to facilitate decisions about program modification.

**SCOPE AND METHOD**

DPE staff will work with the District's grant manager and individual program managers, as well as with the Dell Foundation grant officer, to identify key indicators of the programs successes. DPE has an advantage in having evaluated the AVID program since its inception, and process and outcome variables for that program are well developed. However, although Project ADVANCE and Project SMART are entering their second year, success metrics for those programs are still somewhat nascent. The DPE evaluator will work with AISD and Dell Foundation staff to finalize these indicators and will assist the grant staff with data collection, summary, and reporting on a thrice-yearly cycle as required the Dell Foundation. In addition, it is expected that the evaluator will produce a brief report on program activities for internal district use.

## **E-TEAM SPECIAL PROJECTS**

Evaluation Supervisor: Maria Whitsett

Evaluation Staff: Cathy Kline, Lisa Schmitt

### **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

The E-Team was formed for the purpose of responding to the more urgent data needs of the Superintendent and his Cabinet. Data requests typically require data collection, analysis and reporting within a relatively short time period, to provide timely information for decision-making purposes. The E-Team also is involved in ongoing data collection efforts to assist in the monitoring of the Board's Executive Limitations and Results policies, including the development of the Annual Performance Report. These efforts include the following:

- District-wide climate surveys of student, staff and parent stakeholder groups.
- Collecting and reporting data on academic achievement.
- Collecting and analyzing data from the High School Exit Survey.

### **EVALUATION OBJECTIVE**

To provide data summaries and interpretations in a timely manner for use by district administrators in decision-making.

### **SCOPE AND METHOD**

Using a variety of data sources (e.g., AEIS reports, census reports, national reports on student achievement, national graduate-tracking reports, comparative data from other Texas school districts, campus reports) brief summary reports are created to address specific questions of interest as they arise throughout the year.

## **EMPLOYEE COORDINATED SURVEY**

Evaluation Supervisor: Cinda Christian

Evaluation Staff: Behroze Irani

### **DESCRIPTION**

In the early 1980s, the predecessor office to the Department of Program Evaluation (DPE) developed an employee survey system that permitted sampling of survey items across respondents, thus providing the means to collect information on a wide variety of district programs and activities, while minimizing the paperwork burden on teachers and other staff. The number of items any individual teacher could receive was capped at 24, for example. The survey system also permitted items to be targeted to specific respondent groups, such as special education teachers, or to a random sample of respondents. The annual survey replaced multiple, separate evaluation data collections and afforded a vehicle to other district staff to gather opinion data efficiently. Through the mid-1980s and into the early 1990s, teachers, other professionals, and administrators were surveyed annually about specific programs, as well as on a broad range of topics of general interest, such as school climate, instructional television, dropout prevention efforts, parent involvement, and teacher career goals. Surveys were administered during faculty meetings, resulting in a return rate in the high 90s.

The Employee Coordinated Survey was first administered during the 1992-1993 school year. This survey differed from previous years' employee surveys in that items were no longer sampled across staff. Instead, single-topic surveys were sent to participants targeted according to the instructions from the staff submitting survey items (e.g., all bilingual/ESL teachers or a 20% random sample of all teachers). Coordination ensured that participants received the survey for only a limited number of programs. Separate instructions and information provided by evaluation staff were inserted into individual envelopes that were mailed directly to each administrator or campus professional. There was a 78% overall return rate. Subsequent administrations of the Coordinated Survey have followed nearly the same procedures, with similar return rates.

Questions addressing customer (employee) satisfaction with central office services were included for the first time in the 1999-2000 Employee Coordinated Survey. Items addressed departmental areas such as Human Resources, Accountability,

Instructional Technology, and Maintenance and Housekeeping. Results from these survey items were used as baseline data for comparisons in future years. A summary report of the customer satisfaction items was prepared for the Deputy Superintendent for Accountability and Information Systems.

#### **EVALUATION OBJECTIVES**

1. To serve as a vehicle for DPE staff to gather opinion information to support the evaluation of programs;
2. To provide district administrators with a means to obtain information about various programs and policies of interest;
3. To provide district administration with a means to obtain information about levels of employee satisfaction with central office services; and
4. To replace multiple, separate data collections that might otherwise occur by using a single, coordinated data collection that minimizes the paperwork burden on teachers and other staff.

#### **SCOPE AND METHOD**

The 2002-2003 Employee Coordinated Survey will be administered in January and February 2003, and will follow the same procedures used in previous years. Area supervisors and associate superintendents will be encouraged to participate, and the items they generate will be included in the survey. Teachers, administrators, classified staff, and other professionals will be surveyed to answer questions related to the evaluations of federal Title programs; customer service provided by central offices; and other topics and programs such as bilingual education and services for students with dyslexia and learning differences. As much as possible within the limits of the system, participants will be surveyed according to instructions from the staff submitting the survey items (e.g., 20% random sample of all teachers).

As in the past, individual envelopes with the participant's name on a removable label will be sent via campus mail. In addition, an instruction sheet that includes the DPE contact person's name and phone number will be attached with each survey. The anticipated return rate for the survey is between 70% and 90%. For purposes of survey administration, individual participants will not be anonymous, but the confidentiality of their responses will be protected. Only aggregate data will be reported. When the survey has been completed, the computer files linking responses to individuals will be erased.

- Survey results will be analyzed and reported as follows:
- Survey results will be reported by category (e.g., the survey items related to bilingual education).
- For each survey item, number of responses will be tabulated for each response option (e.g., “strongly agree,” “agree,” etc.) by type of respondent (i.e., teachers, other professionals, administrators, and classified staff) and, by level (e.g., campus and central or elementary, middle/junior high school, and high school).
- For each survey item, the number of surveys that were sent, returned, invalid/blank, and valid will be reported.
- Aggregate results will be sent to the persons who submitted the survey items (e.g., the results of bilingual education items will be sent to the director of bilingual education).
- A complete set of results will be maintained on file in DPE, along with work papers (communications, printouts, etc.) detailing the survey process.
- A summary report of the customer satisfaction items will be prepared comparing results from the 2002-2003 survey to those of previous years, whenever possible.

## ELEMENTARY COUNSELING DEMONSTRATION GRANT

Program Administrators: Charlotte Winkelmann and Dianna Groves

Evaluation Supervisor: Cinda Christian

Evaluation Staff: Behroze Irani

### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The *Getting Ahead of the Need: Comprehensive Counseling for Elementary Schools* project is designed to make available a model strategy to alter the structure for providing counseling so that all students gain the skills and competencies to be successful academically, personally, and socially. The project delivers services for violence prevention and early intervention to students in 14 high-need AISD elementary schools. Implementation is based on the four components of the comprehensive developmental counseling model: guidance curriculum, individual planning, responsive services, and system support. Specifically, using *Live This! The Guidance Curriculum for All Students*, counselors provide students with weekly guidance lessons addressing personal/social skills, conflict resolution, decision-making, responsible behavior, motivation to achieve, and career planning. Individual planning is facilitated through the *Individual Academic Career Planning (IACP)* process, whereby developmentally appropriate educational and career exploration and planning activities are provided for students in grades 5 and 6. Responsive services for individual students and targeted groups of students focused on removing barriers to academic success and strengthening skills addressed in classroom guidance. Responsive services are also the focus of campus IMPACT teams, who coordinate comprehensive interventions aimed at specific needs. System support is comprised of professional development targeted to increase skills of counselors, teachers, and administrators in working with diverse populations of students, promoting violence prevention, developing a solution-focused learning environment, and connecting students and families to community resources.

### EVALUATION OBJECTIVE

The primary purpose of the evaluation is to provide information for decision-makers on program effectiveness to facilitate decisions about program modification. In addition, information gathered in the process of evaluation will be utilized for the final annual progress report made to the United States Department of Education.

## **SCOPE AND METHOD**

During the third year of the Elementary Counseling Demonstration Grant, the goals of the evaluation are to continue longitudinal data collection and assess progress made toward meeting the grant objectives.

Specifically, to assess the effectiveness of the program, both academic progress and social development of the children at the 14 target schools and at a representative sample of comparison schools will be monitored. Academic progress will be measured using TAAS/TAKS scores and retention rates. Social development will be measured using data generated from the Student Evaluation instrument developed to assess the two strands of the guidance curriculum, conflict resolution and responsible behavior, which are being given continued emphasis by target school campuses. The Student Evaluation utilizes teacher's ratings of children on established criteria for age appropriate conduct in these two areas. Teachers also will be surveyed regarding their perceptions of the impact of classroom guidance lessons on student social development. In addition, student discipline data from district records will be utilized. It is expected that implementation of the program will provide students at target schools with greater access to guidance counseling services, which should be evident in their competence and progress in the areas of conflict resolution and responsible behavior, as well as academic progress, when compared to non-target school students.

Because a major focus of the program is to provide counselors with the time to focus on counseling duties and minimize administrative and testing tasks, additional documentation of how counselor time is utilized will be collected for assessment regarding the impact of direct service availability on student progress. In addition, documentation of other program activities, such as professional development, IMPACT team meetings and interventions, and educational and career exploration and planning sessions, will be made.

## **FOLLOW-UP ON THE CLASS OF 2001**

Evaluation Staff:                      Ralph Smith, Karen Alderete

### **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

Automated follow-up data (electronic linkages of records from post-secondary institutions and several state agencies) are being made available through the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) and the National Student Loan Clearinghouse (NSLC) to determine higher education participation rates and employment outcomes and trends for AISD graduates of the Class of 2001. In past years, DPE was able to access student-level records directly through an agreement with the Career Development Resources office of the Texas Workforce Commission, who provided that service under contract with the Texas Education Agency. Recently, however, THECB has assumed responsibility for this project. Because of a federal interpretation of FERPA guidelines, THECB has ruled that student-level data can no longer be shared with students' former school districts. This year, DPE will request summaries of outcome data from THECB for those graduates attending public, in-state institutions of higher learning. In addition, for the first time, DPE will also be working with records from the National Student Loan Clearinghouse (NSLC), the nation's largest source for post-secondary student degree and enrollment verification. Data from NSLC will complement that provided by THECB; NSLC can provide data on students attending both out-of-state and private institutions of higher learning, while THECB only collects data for students in public, in-state institutions.

### **OBJECTIVES**

1. To provide the District and high school campuses with follow-up data on their graduates.
2. To develop a sustained collection of longitudinal data that will inform the district about college enrollment and employment trends for AISD graduates.
3. To analyze and report follow-up data as they relate to the impact of district initiatives and programs whose goals are directly applicable to post-secondary planning (e.g., GEAR UP, Project ADVANCE, etc.).
4. To provide information for decision makers, program managers, and funding agencies.

**SCOPE AND METHOD**

College enrollment rates for the district will be examined by ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, graduation plan option, and by high school campus for the Class of 2001 (the latest cohort for which enrollment data are available). If available, statewide follow-up data will be used as a basis of comparison for the District's enrollment rates. Community college versus four-year institution participation also will be examined, and enrollment at specific institutions will be reported. Finally, enrollments in out-of-state and private institutions will be examined for the first time.

If available from THECB, employment data for AISD graduates will also be examined. Trends in industry of employment will be presented. Wages will be determined for groups by ethnicity, gender, high school campus, and graduation option. In addition, unemployment trends will be examined if those data become available.

## **GEAR UP AUSTIN: IMPACTING LIVES PROJECT**

Program Administrator: Sari Waxler  
Evaluation Supervisor: Cinda Christian  
Evaluation Staff: Karen Alderete

### **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

GEAR UP (*Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs*) is a federally funded initiative encouraging low income, at-risk students to have high expectations, stay in school, and complete the required courses to enter college. In its 4<sup>th</sup> year, the GEAR UP Austin Project serves a cohort of 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade students providing intensive support services relevant to college preparation. The GEAR UP Project consists of four program components: Academic Intervention, Enhanced Guidance and Counseling, Teacher Professional Development, and Parent Involvement.

### **EVALUATION OBJECTIVES**

- To comply with federal law requiring an annual evaluation of the GEAR UP program, and
- To provide project decision-makers with information on program effectiveness necessary to support implementation decisions.

### **EVALUATION QUESTIONS**

- For each project component, what services work effectively towards meeting program performance objectives?
- For each project component, what are the outcomes for GEAR UP participants?

### **SCOPE AND METHOD**

The evaluation staff will use multiple quantitative and qualitative data related to clearly defined performance measures to determine the effectiveness of the project. GEAR UP stakeholders will be provided with formative and summative data to make project implementation decisions, assess the progress of cohort students, and to evaluate the degree to which promising practices are being adapted. A detailed description of data collection activities follows.

#### **Academic Intervention**

Evaluation staff will collect student demographic data, TAAS/TAKS scores, attendance rates, dropout rates, grade level retention/promotion data, numbers of students in recommended and advanced high school graduation plans, course enrollment data,

report card grades, and SAT/ACT scores. Project database records will supply information regarding GEAR UP student services and contact hours. Project staff will participate in an interview concerning the academic interventions implemented. Further, cohort students may participate in focus group discussions to extend the understanding of project impact on students.

### **Enhanced Guidance and Counseling**

Evaluation staff will collect information pertaining to high school graduation plans, course enrollment, and SAT/ACT scores. Project database records will supply information regarding GEAR UP student services provided and participant contact hours. Project staff will participate in an interview addressing issues related to college and career preparation. Cohort students will complete an annual survey designed to gather information about their college preparation needs, expectations for post-secondary education, and perceived educational outcomes. Cohort students may participate in focus group discussions to extend the understanding of project impact on students. Field notes and observations will be used to track project partner participation and the quality of those services.

### **Professional Development**

Evaluation staff will obtain continuing education data for teachers of GEAR UP students, budget information, teacher participation records, course evaluations, and anecdotal information to document the professional development of GEAR UP teachers and any resulting outcomes for improved teaching and learning. Field notes and observations may be used to provide additional information.

### **Parent Involvement**

Evaluation staff will use project database records to obtain data regarding GEAR UP parent services and contact hours. Project staff will provide activity descriptions. Field notes and observations will provide further information regarding GEAR UP parent support services. Parents will complete an annual survey designed to gather information about their parenting needs, child's educational needs, expectations for post-secondary education, and perceived outcomes for their children. Project staff will participate in an annual interview concerning the quality of parent services provided and outcomes for participants.

**MAKING AN IMPACT: MIDDLE SCHOOL DRUG PREVENTION AND  
SCHOOL SAFETY COORDINATOR INITIATIVE**

Program Administrators: Stan Brein  
Evaluation Supervisor: Cinda Christian  
Evaluation Staff: Behroze Irani

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

*Making an Impact*, AISD's Middle School Drug Prevention and School Safety Coordinator Initiative, provides for four Coordinators to bring in outside resources, programs, and contacts to the middle schools, and to provide other services such as participation as members of campus IMPACT teams.

The availability of Middle School Drug Prevention and School Safety Coordinators enables campuses to put a greater emphasis on the provision of opportunities that benefit the parents of all students, middle school faculty, and community members through improved community-school network development. In addition to bringing outside resources, programs, and contacts to the middle schools, Coordinators will participate as members of the campus IMPACT Teams to help resolve system, group, and individual student issues that interfere with the learning process. Another element of the Coordinator role is to focus on services to students in the transition years (5<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> grade and 8<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> grade), years that make students especially vulnerable to pitfalls such as substance use, violence, and dropping out of school.

The goal of *Making An Impact* is to prevent and reduce both drug and alcohol use and school violence. This goal will be met by supporting four middle school coordinators in the implementation of the following four objectives:

- Participation on IMPACT teams;
- Development and implementation of programs based on campus needs assessment and research;
- Facilitation of knowledge about and participation of faculty, students, parents and community members in drug and violence prevention programming; and
- Facilitation of increased service delivery participation by community agencies and organizations.

## **EVALUATION OBJECTIVES**

The goal of the evaluation is to provide district administrators with data and recommendations to facilitate decision-making and project improvement. In addition, the evaluator will assist in putting together the annual progress report required of the district as a grant recipient by the Department of Education.

## **SCOPE AND METHOD**

The *Making an Impact* project involves a combination of formative and summative evaluation. The evaluation will be conducted through a collaborative effort of a part-time evaluator, funded through this grant, and the Coordinators, themselves. While the Coordinators are responsible for individual campus needs assessments and monitoring of programs implemented at those campuses, the funded evaluator will do the following:

- Provide technical assistance to Coordinators as needed;
- Coordinate data collection across campuses;
- Act as a liaison to the district; and
- Provide access to district level data such as student discipline offense records, student dropout and retention records, demographic data, campus-specific information on students, staff, and parents/community, current district and campus drug/violence prevention resources, survey findings, and available Title IV program evaluation reports.

Program goals will be evaluated by examining the following:

- The success of the Coordinators in their role as facilitators;
- The success of the individual programs, activities, and community connections that are brought to the campuses by the Coordinators;
- The longitudinal changes over time in AISD middle school student drug and safety issues, providing inferences about how these changes were impacted by the Coordinator project;
- The district student discipline records and dropout and retention rates of students in 5<sup>th</sup> through 9<sup>th</sup> grades; and
- The comparisons between needs and campus resources both before and after the implementation of the Coordinator project.

Implementing the *Making an Impact* project will result in several tangible outputs. Documents will be produced for all necessary local, state and federal reporting.

Coordinators will produce a prevention resource guide that will be made widely available. Coordinators will share what they have learned with others in the community and state through their participation in conferences, resource fairs, collaborations on other grants and projects, etc. The audience for this information will include district personnel, community agency professionals, colleagues in other school districts, and representatives at the state education agency who work with Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities programs.

### **OPTIONAL EXTENDED YEAR PROGRAM**

Grant Manager: Mary Thomas  
Evaluation Supervisor: Martha Doolittle  
Evaluation Staff: Wanda Washington

#### **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

The Optional Extended Year Program (OEYP) is a supplemental state grant program, initiated in 1995 as a result of Senate Bill 1. In past years, OEYP has assisted school districts in providing students in grades kindergarten through eight with additional instructional time to master the State's challenging content standards and student performance standards. Recent legislation by the Texas state legislature in 2003 expands OEYP to serve students through grade 12. Students served by the OEYP are those students who are identified as likely not to be promoted to the next grade level for the succeeding school year because they do not meet district standards or policies for promotion on the basis of academic achievement or demonstrated proficiency of the subject matter of the course or grade level. [TEC Section 42.152(p) and 29.082(a).]

Texas schools participating in OEYP receive funds for an eight-month period beginning in January and ending in August. The Austin Independent School District (AISD) received \$1,447,364 in OEYP funds during 2002-03 and targeted students in grades four through eight in core academic areas such as reading, language arts, mathematics, and social studies. In spring 2003, almost all of the district's elementary schools provided after-school accelerated reading intervention to at-risk fourth and fifth graders. In summer 2003, OEYP funds were used to support summer school programs for students at risk of being retained in grades four through eight.

Students in OEYP must be promoted to the next grade level if they attend 90% of the instructional days of the program and satisfy the academic requirements for promotion unless a parent of the student presents a written request to the school principal that the student not be promoted to the next grade level. Based on the district policy, the district has the discretion of promoting students who attend less than 90% of the OEYP days. If a student is promoted in this way, the school district must use innovative practices to ensure that the student is successful in school in succeeding years.

Therefore, the primary focus of the program is to immediately reduce and ultimately eliminate student retention. OEYP grant funds can be used for academic

support programs that accommodate various school-day options: extended day, extended week, and summer school. At this time, the district's specific OEYP plan for 2003-04 is not yet final but it will be determined based on projected academic student needs and an estimate of the new tentative entitlement for 2003-04.

Annually in September, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) requires each district that received OEYP funds to report basic demographic information about the students who participated in program activities, along with information on the numbers of students who were retained or promoted as a result of their participation. The data reported are for the previous school year. In addition to this student data submission for the state's public education information management system (PEIMS), TEA requires districts to report data on student pre-assessments, average number of students in OEYP classes, follow-up activities for students participating in a 30-day program, promotion status of students in grades 6-8 taking multiple courses in summer school that they failed during the regular school term, number of school district staff participating in OEYP activities, program expenditures, and the numbers of parents directly involved in OEYP activities.

#### **EVALUATION OBJECTIVES**

1. To document AISD's OEYP student participation, activities, staff participation, parent participation, and expenditures, per state requirements;
2. To review longitudinal data on student participation, attendance, promotion, and retention patterns as well as staffing; and
3. To provide program managers and district decision makers with critical information for program planning and modification.

#### **SCOPE AND METHOD**

Evaluation of OEYP activities throughout the year will provide data for the annual mandatory program performance, expenditure, and PEIMS reports to TEA. The evaluation will include the following: demographic and academic summary information on student participants in OEYP, descriptive cost analysis of OEYP activities, and feedback on program activities from staff. For instance, class rosters from participating schools and information entered in the district's student data system will be used for verification of PEIMS submission data. In addition, surveys to principals, teachers, and mentors at participating schools will provide a variety of program information. For instance, the level of parent participation in OEYP-sponsored activities also will be

reported on the principal survey in terms of numbers of parents involved by type of activities. Longitudinal analyses will examine district student records and program records on student participation in OEYP activities over the past four years and subsequent student performance on relevant academic measures (e.g., retention or promotion, graduation, etc.). Special attention will be given to students' grade level and rate of retention over time. Suggestions for program improvement will be obtained from principals, the program manager, and other school staff where applicable.

## **PARENT AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

Program Administrators: Fred Estrello, Mary Thomas

Evaluation Supervisor: Martha Doolittle

Evaluation Staff: Wanda Washington

### **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

Parent involvement is a key element of the Austin Independent School District's (AISD) efforts to enhance students' academic and social success. The district has a parent involvement policy to promote parent involvement through six strategies: communication, student learning, decision-making, volunteering, parenting, and collaboration with community. The district and each of its campuses have parent representation on advisory councils. Each campus improvement plan (as well as the district improvement plan) requires a component to address parent involvement. Those campuses that receive federal Title I funds must have parent-school compact agreements for every student describing how communication will occur, and how academic achievement will be fostered.

District resources, including federal Title I and local Account for Learning monies, help address these efforts. The district's goal is to build partnerships that benefit students, parents, schools, and the community. One way in which AISD staffing and services are provided to support parent involvement is through parent support specialists at most of AISD's Title I schools. The parent support specialists provide workshops for parents and community members on various topics to enhance and encourage their participation in the education of children, make home visits, provide adult literacy training, translate information when necessary, and network with local agencies to maximize the amount of securable social services available to parents. In addition, they serve on various committees, are members of campus IPACT teams (that plan assistance to at-risk students), participate in campus decision-making activities, coordinate public relations services between the school and community, assist with special enrollments (e.g., after-school classes, summer school, and Extend-A-Care), provide support and coordination for summer school parent activities, and generally support parental and community involvement in the schools.

Another district resource provided to support parent involvement is the Parent Involvement Programs office and staff. During the school year, campus staff and AISD

parents can take advantage of the opportunities for parent involvement that are available through the Parent Involvement Programs office, a part of AISD's Department of School, Family and Community Education, located in the Family Resource Center at Allan Elementary. The Parent Involvement Programs specialist oversees this office and provides training for the parent support specialists, coordinates parent involvement activities districtwide, facilitates Title I and Title I Migrant Parent Advisory Council (PAC) meetings, sets up staff development/workshops, publishes or makes available parenting periodicals, and provides on-site adult literacy classes for parents. A parent support specialist also works at the Family Resource Center to provide assistance to other parent support staff (at public and non-public schools) upon request, help coordinate summer school parent activities, assist the Department of Program Evaluation in the coordination of the district's parent survey, provide staff development/training to parent support specialists, assist with PAC meetings, and perform other parent involvement tasks upon request for or in collaboration with the Parent Involvement Programs specialist.

For several years, the district's Parental Involvement Advisory Council (PIAC), which grew out of AISD's Parent Involvement Task Force that helped prepare the district's parent involvement policy, has provided guidance and suggestions to district staff on ways to improve parent involvement and support. The membership of the PIAC includes parent support staff, district Partners in Education representation, the Austin Parent-Teacher Association president, district evaluation staff, district community education staff, as well as city and regional representatives. The Parent Involvement Programs specialist serves as an active resource member of the PIAC, working with other Council members to advise district program staff and bring in national parent, family and community presenters.

**EVALUATION OBJECTIVES**

1. Evaluate the participation and quality of parents' involvement within AISD attendance zones, per federal law.
2. Gather data on school staffs' perceptions and knowledge of parent involvement, as well as the frequency of school staffs' parent involvement activities.
3. Document parent support staffs' activities and the use of other entitlement funds in parental involvement activities.

4. Document parent involvement activities at schools without parent support staff.
5. Document AISD's parent and community involvement, including the work of AISD's Department of School, Family and Community Education, Austin Partners in Education, and the Parent Involvement Advisory Council.

**SCOPE AND METHOD**

The mandatory evaluation of AISD's parent and community involvement efforts will include analysis of data such as parent participation and parent involvement activities conducted in the schools with various entitlement and local funds. The evaluation report will include such summary information as well as results of various AISD parent and staff surveys conducted during the year. These surveys will assess parents' and staffs' perceptions and knowledge of parent involvement as well as measure the level and types of parent participation in the schools. Specifically, a district-sponsored survey will be sent to parents in AISD's attendance area (including both public and private schools) to assess the extent of parent involvement as defined by the AISD Board policy. These survey data will be examined for evidence of progress toward district and campus goals of encouraging parent involvement. A staff survey will be sent to parent support specialists and principals to document the number and type of parent involvement activities they coordinate, including specific data required for state and federal reporting. Annual summary data documenting the activities of AISD's Partners in Education and AISD's Parent Involvement Advisory Council will be obtained (through information requests, meetings, interviews) and reported in context of the progress being made toward achieving district goals of parent involvement.

## **PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAM**

Program Director: Anita Uphaus  
Evaluation Supervisor: Martha Doolittle  
Evaluation Staff: Janice Curry

### **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

The Austin Independent School District (AISD) prekindergarten program is an important component of the state and district goal of having every student reading on grade level by the end of third grade. Half-day prekindergarten programs are mandated and funded by the State of Texas for all four-year-olds who are limited English proficient (LEP), low income, or homeless. All AISD prekindergarten programs are full-day. In 2003-04, all eligible students will be served in 65 of the 74 AISD elementary school campuses. AISD uses both Title I Part A funds and state Prekindergarten Expansion grant funds to support its pre-K programs. Part of the state requirements for the program includes measuring and reporting demographics as well as academic progress of the students participating in the program.

### **EVALUATION OBJECTIVES**

1. To describe pre-K program participants and services, per state and federal reporting requirements.
2. To provide information for decision makers on program effectiveness to facilitate decisions about program modification.

### **SCOPE AND METHOD**

Program effectiveness for pre-K in the area of language arts will be determined by gains on the English language *Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-III* (PPVT-III) and the Spanish language *Test de Vocabulario en Imágenes Peabody* (TVIP). The PPVT-III and TVIP measure knowledge of receptive (hearing) vocabulary. To measure achievement gains for pre-K students, the PPVT-III and the TVIP will be administered in the fall and in the spring to a random sample of students at each elementary campus with prekindergarten students. Gains will be calculated based on the pre-and posttest scores. All students are tested in English; Spanish-speaking LEP students are also tested in Spanish.

Comparisons to be reported in the evaluation will include student performance on the PPVT-III for English monolingual, Spanish-speaking LEP, and all students; and on

the TVIP for Spanish-speaking students. In addition, student achievement gains on the PPVT-III and the TVIP for Title I and non-Title I schools will be reported. A multi-year study of prekindergarten achievement among student participants also will be included in the evaluation.

In 2003-04, the primary mathematics specialist will assist with the development of a prekindergarten mathematics assessment that will be aligned with the state's *Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines (1999)*. These guidelines represent a voluntary and recommended set of content guidelines in nine content areas (e.g., language arts, math, science, etc.) that are aligned with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for grades kindergarten through twelve. A sample of teachers who have participated in TEXTEAMS training (25% of AISD prekindergarten teachers have been trained) will be asked to pilot the assessment with their students in fall 2003 and spring 2004. The assessment will be given in small groups and will use topics of higher interest that can be connected to the lives of prekindergarten students and to the curriculum. The new *DLM Early Childhood Express* curriculum will be a resource for the development of the assessment instrument. These assessment data will be gathered and summarized in this first trial period.

The quantity and quality of professional development completed by pre-K teachers will be documented and reported. Of special interest will be the district's collaboration with the Charles Dana Center at the University of Texas in providing pre-K teachers with TEXTEAMS professional development. TEXTEAMS is correlated with the state *Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines (1999)*.

Questions to be addressed by this evaluation include the following:

- To what extent are pre-K students making language arts (receptive vocabulary) achievement gains as a result of participation in the pre-K program? (Annual and long-term analysis of progress)
- To what extent have gains in receptive vocabulary improved for schools that have moved from half-day to full-day programs?
- To what extent are pre-K students making mathematics achievement gains as measured by the new pre-K mathematics assessment?

- How much training do pre-K teachers complete annually? What are teachers' perceptions about the benefits of their training with regard to improved teaching? (Surveys, teacher experience, and professional development records)
- Do students who attended pre-K in AISD have better grade three TAKS reading performance than similar students in AISD who did not attend pre-K?

## **READING FIRST**

Grant and Program Managers: Marty Hougen, Maria Hohenstein, Peggy Mays  
Evaluation Supervisor: Martha Doolittle  
Evaluation Staff: Janice Curry

### **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

The purpose of Reading First is to ensure that all children in America learn to read well by the end of third grade. The Reading First program comes from the Title I Part B Subpart 1 grant within the legislation of the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*, and is intended to assist school districts in applying research-based instructional reading programs in kindergarten through grade 3 in order to teach all children to read. Reading First also focuses on providing significantly increased teacher professional development to ensure that all teachers, including special education teachers, have the skills they need to teach these programs effectively. Additionally, the program provides assistance in preparing classroom teachers to effectively screen, identify and overcome reading barriers facing their students. The program provides assistance in selecting or developing effective instructional materials, programs, learning systems and strategies to implement methods that have been proven to teach reading. Reading First also provides assistance for the selection and administration of screening, diagnostic and classroom-based instructional reading assessments with proven validity and reliability, in order to measure where students are and monitor their progress.

Scientifically based reading research has identified five essential components of effective reading instruction. To ensure that children learn to read well, explicit and systematic instruction must be provided in these five areas: phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, reading fluency, and reading comprehension. The Austin Independent School District (AISD) has applied for Reading First funds in the approximate amount of \$2,337,182. The grant application has been accepted for funding and the final grant award will be determined upon successful negotiation with TEA. The Reading First plan for AISD includes all the required components of the grant:

- A core reading program for all students (90 minutes daily) at kindergarten through grade 3 that includes phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension;

- An intervention program (additional 30 minutes daily), with eligibility based on assessments, to provide three levels of reading intervention to those students determined to be below grade level in reading skills;
- Extensive professional development for teachers, principals, reading coaches, and special education teachers; and
- A testing component that includes screening/diagnostics (three times yearly), monitoring assessments (once every other week), and norm-referenced tests (annually) of students' reading levels throughout the program.

In addition, the AISD Reading First program will keep parents informed and involved regarding the academic program goal of improving reading skills. The grant program efforts will have intensive intervention for those early elementary students with the greatest reading needs. Program services are to be provided to nine targeted schools, 34 additional eligible schools, and in some cases all elementary schools districtwide. Eligibility was determined by the percentage of students at a campus eligible for Title I Part A funding (i.e., economically disadvantaged) and by the percentage of students who were below state passing standards on TAAS Reading 2002.

#### **EVALUATION OBJECTIVES**

1. To determine the extent to which Reading First program strategies are being implemented as planned at district elementary campuses;
2. To investigate the impact of professional development on student academic outcomes and teachers' classroom practices;
3. To summarize the extent to which the Reading First program impacts improvement in students' reading achievement as assessed through state and local measures; and
4. To inform district decision makers on program implementation and effectiveness in order to facilitate decisions about program delivery or improvement.

#### **SCOPE AND METHOD**

Both quantitative and qualitative data will be gathered for students, staff, and parents at several points in time during the length of the grant period. These data will allow monitoring and evaluation of the program in terms of providing formative information for program improvement and summative information to assess the effectiveness of program outcomes. All data will be gathered at the nine targeted AISD

schools, and where appropriate data will be gathered at the 43 eligible AISD schools and in some cases districtwide.

### **Program Implementation**

The extent to which local Reading First program activities are being implemented as planned (e.g. 3-Tier Reading Model, Professional Development, Mentoring, Screening, Monitoring Outcomes, Parent Involvement and Feedback) will be monitored through the following methods: surveys of principals, reading coaches, and teachers; reading coaches' feedback based on classroom observations; parent participation rates and surveys; and analysis of student outcomes in reading (including all assessment data and number of students referred for specialized services based on reading).

### **Professional Development**

The impact of professional development on instructional leadership, teacher knowledge and attitudes, classroom practices and student outcomes will be measured using the following data: reading coaches' observations of staff in classroom setting (target schools only); follow-up with staff on effectiveness and use of knowledge/skills learned gained through professional development (survey); staff opinions on technical support received (survey); student achievement data, including TPRI and Tejas LEE, screening and diagnostic tests, TAKS, and the state-selected norm-referenced test; and student referrals for services. In addition, the quantity and quality of professional development provided through the grant will be measured in the following ways: counts of staff participating in grant-supported professional development (sign-in sheets); self-reported opinions on quality of grant-supported professional development (survey); and self-reported opinions on quality of program materials/curricula etc. (survey).

### **Student Outcomes**

The efficacy of the program in reducing the number of students referred to special education on the basis of low performance in reading will be measured by monitoring the number of students referred to special education for reading at the end of each school year. The 2003-04 school year will provide baseline information for evaluating the efficacy of programs. Referrals in reading will be analyzed each year to determine if the number of special education referrals is reduced.

Increases in student reading proficiency as evidenced by improved levels of student performance on standardized and diagnostic reading assessments will be monitored and reported by AISD in the following areas:

- K-2 teachers will use the state-developed TPRI and Tejas LEE screening/diagnostic tests to identify each student's reading abilities and determine which specific skills need to be strengthened.
- Grade 3 teachers will use the screening/diagnostic test that is under development by the state to identify students in need of reading skills to be strengthened. In addition, grades 1-3 will participate in the state selected norm-referenced test, and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade TAKS Reading data will be analyzed.
- Ongoing monitoring of student progress using the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) assessment.

Reductions in the number of students requiring tutorial assistance or remediation in reading will be monitored by tracking number of students served by type of service: number of students identified as at risk for reading difficulties; number of at-risk students receiving Tier 2 and 3 reading intervention; and number of students eligible for summer school reading instruction. The students who receive reading intervention during the school year also will be monitored. Results will be reported to campus and district personnel. By the second year of the program there should be a decrease in the number of grade 1-3 students needing intervention if the program is to be successful. The number of students requiring further reading interventions should decrease each year.

All required information on program outcomes will be reported to the Texas Education Agency for each reporting period as needed. In addition, data will be provided to the Texas Institute for Measurement, Evaluation, and Statistics (TIMES) as part of the state and national evaluation for the Reading First grant. Information from the Reading First grant evaluation will be shared and coordinated with data from other reading grants occurring in the district, such as the Accelerated Reading Instruction program.

**RESEARCH BY EXTERNAL AGENCIES OR INDIVIDUALS**

Evaluation Supervisor: Michelle Batchelder

Evaluation Staff: Karin Samii-Shore

**DESCRIPTION**

Facilitation and supervision of research conducted by parties external to AISD are provided through a formal application and data collection process. This process provides guidelines that protect staff and students from unnecessary or burdensome data collection, ensure compliance with current laws concerning privacy and research, and contribute to the quality of research conducted in AISD. Proposal forms, questions about the external research process, and proposal criteria may be accessed through the AISD web page at [www.austin.isd.tenet.edu/about/accountability/research/index.phtml](http://www.austin.isd.tenet.edu/about/accountability/research/index.phtml).

Following are the procedures for submitting an external research proposal. Copies of proposals are submitted to the Coordinator of External Research along with a \$25 processing fee. The Coordinator reviews proposals to be sure they are complete. The Coordinator then convenes a review committee that may decide to recommend the proposal for principal approval, not to recommend the proposal for principal approval, or ask for revisions. Proposals that are recommended for approval typically have high value to the researcher and AISD, use small and easily accessed samples, and use little or no class time to collect data. Once a proposal is recommended the Coordinator assists the researcher in selecting schools and contacting principals for approval to implement. Finally, written reports of the research are collected by the Coordinator, who disseminates the results to individuals and campuses likely to benefit from knowledge of the research findings.

The Coordinator also keeps a database of all research proposals. Data generated from the database include: the percentage of proposals accepted; the number of research projects involving elementary, middle, and high schools; the percentage of projects that study different topic areas; and the number and types of external parties who are doing research in AISD. External parties include, but are not necessarily limited to, graduate students, professors, and educational research organizations.

## **STATE COMPENSATORY EDUCATION**

Program Administrator: Julie Lyons  
Evaluation Supervisor: Michelle Batchelder  
Evaluation Staff: Denise Piñon Carrejo

### **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

State Compensatory Education (SCE) funds are provided to assist school districts in serving students at risk of academic failure. In AISD, these funds supplement a broad range of programs. Several of these programs, including the Alternative Learning Center, Alternative Center for Elementary Students (ACES), In-School Suspension, Garza High School, and the DELTA (Diversified Education through Leadership, Technology, and Academics) program, are considered alternative education. Some supported programs and services, such as Communities in Schools, are broad in nature, while others, such as the school year and summer reading programs, are topically focused.

School support services such as Visiting Teachers and Pregnancy Related Services also are supplemented by SCE. Additionally, some SCE funds are used to target services to students during the vulnerable period of transition into secondary school (i.e., high school transition funds and Ninth-Grade Initiatives), or for students at risk of dropping out of school (i.e., Absent Student Assistance Program). Other recipients of SCE funds include programs that provide secondary level tutorial assistance for students and summer school.

### **EVALUATION OBJECTIVE**

Many of these programs are evaluated, either by the staff in the Office of Program Evaluation or by program staff. The 2003-2004 evaluation will identify and briefly describe each of the programs, and include a more focused evaluation of DELTA. The effectiveness of the SCE program as a whole also will be described, based on state mandated performance indicators. A primary purpose of the evaluation is to facilitate decisions about the program by providing information to program managers and decision-makers about program effectiveness. Another purpose of the evaluation is to meet any reporting requirements established by the Texas Education Agency (TEA).

**SCOPE AND METHOD**

The evaluation of DELTA program will focus on the effectiveness and needs of these programs. For DELTA, evaluators will continue to collect data on the courses taken by students who are part of the program and track school completion rates where possible. For the Visiting Teachers program, evaluators will present data on student referrals to the program and the number and types of services provided. The Alternative Learning Center and Communities in Schools programs are evaluated by program staff and will only be described in the current evaluation. The Department of Program Evaluation (DPE) will provide a separate evaluation for the school year and summer reading programs. Garza Independence High School is for Adequate Yearly Progress under No Child Left Behind along with all AISD campuses.

In addition to the required SCE performance indicators (e.g., test scores and high school completion rates available from the Texas Education Agency), additional program and student information will be collected to describe the student population served and any changes to existing programs. A brief overview of the At-Risk population in AISD will be provided.

**TECHNOLOGY APPLICATIONS READINESS GRANTS FOR EMPOWERING TEXAS**

**TARGET GRANT**

Program Director: William Lewis  
Evaluation Supervisor: Michelle Batchelder  
Evaluation Staff: Karin Samii-Shore

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

The Technology Applications Readiness Grants for Empowering Texas (TARGET) is an 18-month project that provides technology and technological training to teachers who serve disadvantaged and diverse populations. The AISD TARGET project, Students Succeeding in Reading and Technology (SSRT) is a collaboration among fourteen elementary schools in AISD, two economically disadvantaged campuses in the Leander school district, two Austin-area private schools, and St. Edward's University. The SSRT project will provide hardware and software to 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade teachers at all participating campuses as well as professional development in the use of educational technologies and content area technology integration. Teachers will develop and implement a Unit of Practice (UOP) that integrates technology into a lesson that focuses on reading. Additionally, teachers will use software designed to help struggling readers improve their reading and comprehension and an on-line technology skills program that assists students in learning news technologies. The SSRT program will fund the following activities for the 2003-2004 school year:

- The purchase and installation of computer hardware and software;
- Professional development in the use of specific technologies (e.g., READ180; a computer-based reading program for struggling readers and Learning.com; an online technology skills program) so that teachers can use these tools in their classrooms effectively;
- Professional development that addresses the integration of technology into regular classroom lessons to increase student understanding in the area of reading and other core subjects;
- Professional development that includes instructional methodologies in line with other district initiatives (e.g., the Principles of Learning) and current research on effective instruction;

- Stipends so that teachers can attend professional development offered throughout the year;
- Follow up professional development to ensure that teachers implement knowledge and skills in the classroom; and
- The establishment and maintenance of local professional networks to facilitate teacher collaboration about advances in technology, content, and pedagogy.

#### **EVALUATION OBJECTIVES**

- To provide information that will help district decision makers improve the program, by examining the quality and effectiveness of the professional development it provided and linking those features to student achievement;
- To document the extent and quality of implementation to facilitate ongoing changes in the program and thereby increase the it's effectiveness; and,
- To provide information to the Texas Education Agency about the quality and impact of the SSRT program.

#### **SCOPE AND METHOD**

The evaluation will describe the professional development funded by Title II, Part D, Technology Applications Readiness Grants for Empowering Texas (TARGET) as required by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). During the 2003-2004 academic year, the evaluators will assess the quality of the professional development, follow-up sessions, and teacher collaboration facilitated by the SSRT program through participant surveys and observations. To gather information about the impact of the program on instruction, classrooms will be observed and students and teachers will be interviewed. Changes in students' technology skills will be assessed by examining changes in students' answers on locally designed assessments of technology skills and technological proficiency as measured by technology assessments that are currently under development. Core content area achievement will be examined by comparing the scores of participating and non-participating students on relevant TAKS objectives and by documenting their reading proficiency as determined by READ180 assessments. The extent of student and teacher participation in the READ180 and Learning.com activities and will be assessed and the relationship of these activities to student achievement will be examined. Participants and staff will be interviewed about their perceptions of program effectiveness and ways to

improve the program. The number and topic of the Units of Practice developed by teachers will be documented.

## TITLE I A AND D PROGRAMS

Grant Manager: Mary Thomas  
Evaluation Supervisor: Martha Doolittle  
Evaluation Staff: Wanda Washington

### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Title I is a compensatory education program supported by funds from the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, amended by the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (IASA) (P.L. 103-382), and reauthorized by the Leave No Child Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) (P.L. 107-110). With the reauthorized law, five major national and state goals have been adopted:

- By 2013-2014, all students will reach high standards, at a minimum attaining proficiency or better in reading/language arts and mathematics.
- All limited English proficient students will become proficient in English and reach high academic standards, at a minimum attaining proficiency or better in reading/language arts and mathematics.
- By 2005-2006, all students will be taught by highly qualified teachers.
- All students will be educated in learning environments that are safe, drug free, and conducive to learning.
- All students will graduate from high school.

As stated in the legislation (see <http://www.ed.gov/legislation/ESEA02/pg1.html>), the purpose of Title I is 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 D funds help school districts serve students who are placed in local correctional facilities for delinquent youth.

According to the law, the level of Title I Part A funding for a school *district* (local education agency, or LEA) is based on the percentage of low-income students 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 lunch. Schools are ranked in the spring of each year on the basis of the 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 that are below 75% low-income 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. AISD chose to fund campuses with Title I monies if the percentage of low-income children was 50% or more. In 2002-03 there were 66 AISD Title I schools with schoolwide program designation. In 2003-04, another campus will have received Title I designation. All students in a schoolwide program are considered eligible for Title I assistance. Schools with a targeted assistance program must use Title I funds only for supplementary educational services for eligible children who are failing or at risk of failing to meet state standards. Schoolwide programs have considerable flexibility in using federal education funds appropriately, subject to rules established by USDE. The goal is to provide all students with the benefits of combined funding sources.

The 2003-2004 AISD Title I Part A tentative entitlement is \$15,475,479. AISD will provide Title I funds to 67 schools: 51 elementary schools, 11 middle/junior high schools, and five high schools. These schools have 50% or more low-income students. Prior to allocations being determined for AISD schools, some funds are set aside on a per pupil basis for private schools and facilities for neglected youth within the district's attendance zone that have students eligible for Title I funded services. For 2003-04 there are 15 private schools and three facilities for neglected youth that have been allocated Title I A funds.

AISD's Title I Part D tentative entitlement for 2003-04 is \$164,991 to be used to support instructional programs serving students at five facilities for delinquent youth in the AISD attendance zone. The purpose of Title I Part D is similar to Title I Part A in the following way: provide 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. In addition, Title I Part D also has the following goals:

- To provide children and youth with the services needed to make a successful transition from institutionalization to further schooling or employment; and

- To prevent at-risk youth from dropping out of school, and to provide dropouts, and children and youth returning from correctional facilities or institutions for neglected or delinquent children and youth, with a support system to ensure their continued education. (nclb, 2001; <http://www.ed.gov/legislation/esea02>)

#### **EVALUATION OBJECTIVES**

- To document programs funded with Title I (A and D) monies in accordance with federal law, thereby providing summary data on the numbers of students served, how funds were spent, student progress on the state's academic achievement standards, and teacher quality;
- To inform decision makers on Title I program effectiveness to facilitate decisions about program modification, and to provide operational recommendations for improving program delivery.

#### **SCOPE AND METHOD**

##### **Accountability, Assessment, and Title I Part A**

The state of Texas changed to a new, more challenging state academic testing system in 2002-03, and during this time TEA carried over school accountability ratings for 2002 to 2003. However, performance on the new state tests, Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), will be monitored, and academic improvement (adequate yearly progress) is still the goal for all schools. At this point in time, the State Board of Education and the Texas Education Agency agreed on a phase-in process for determining individual student passing standards for the TAKS. During 2002-03, the TAKS cut score for passing was placed at 2 standard deviations from the mean; during 2003-04, the TAKS cut score will be at 1 standard deviation from the mean. AISD's TAKS data will be examined at the district level for all students, and will be disaggregated by ethnicity, English proficiency status, economic status, and special education status. Only the students who are enrolled in the district as of October 2003 and who remain in the district to take the TAKS in spring 2004 will be included for accountability purposes.

Senate Bill 4 passed by the 76<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature in 1999 placed even more importance on state academic tests for accountability. In 2003, students were required to pass the new TAKS reading at grade 3 to be promoted to grade 4. This continues this year. During 2005, promotion of 5<sup>th</sup> graders to grade 6 will depend on these students passing TAKS reading and mathematics in 2005.

Therefore, in the 2003-04 Title I A evaluation, several analyses of student academic test performance will be examined. TAKS passing rates will be reported for Title I schools and for the district overall, including passing rates by disaggregated student groups. The TAKS analyses will be conducted according to both state (when these are announced) and federal accountability standards. Changes in Title I status for a school will be taken into consideration in the analysis. Other academic data to be examined in the Title I A evaluation include AISD results on the state's academic tests for students in special education, the SDAA (State-Developed Alternative Assessment). The SDAA is based on the state TEKS (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills), and assesses special education students' academic performance in reading, mathematics, and writing. Analyses for this test also will be done with both state (when announced) and federal accountability standards in mind.

### **Homeless Students**

Homeless students are served in AISD with Title I Part A funds and other federal funds. Homeless students are identified according to federal definition: students who lack fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residences, or who reside in a supervised shelter or institution or in a place not intended for human residence. This includes students who are "doubled up" at a friend's home because their families do not or cannot provide a safe residence.

In AISD, a homeless liaison and support team, Project HELP, are active in helping schools to identify and serve homeless students. For example, Project HELP ensures that an information packet is distributed to all AISD schools, helping school staff to identify homeless students (for federal reporting purposes) and to refer them to support services provided in the area. Title I A funds are used to provide academic support, school materials, transportation and other services to homeless students. Additionally, at one school, determined by survey to serve the greatest number of homeless students in the district, Title I A funds are used to pay for the salary of a counselor for those students. All AISD schools must report the number of homeless students served and the services provided as part of an annual report to TEA.

### **Private Schools**

Some private schools in the AISD attendance area apply for and receive Title I Part A funds. These schools offer instructional and support services to economically and

academically disadvantaged students. Schools return a survey detailing their use of Title I A funds as well as the number of students served, disaggregated by gender, ethnicity, grade level, and types of instructional and support services provided. Information on numbers of students served is included in the annual report due to TEA in August. Because private schools do not report through PEIMS, each school is required to provide evidence of academic growth of students served using tests given in fall 2003 and spring 2004. These data will be obtained through surveys to those schools. Finally, private schools will be invited to participate in a parent involvement survey being given to all AISD campuses. Results will be reported back to participating campuses (see parent involvement section in this agenda). At this time, 15 private schools will be participating in the Title I Part A program.

### **Facilities for Neglected Youth and Facilities for Delinquent Youth**

During 2003-04, three facilities for neglected youth will be allocated funds from Title I Part A, and five facilities for delinquent youth will be allocated funds from Title I Part D. Information gathered from these facilities on students served is part of the required annual report that AISD provides to TEA. Typical academic measures, such as TAKS or norm-referenced test data, are not gathered from these facilities by AISD because of inflexible court appearance dates, or removals of some youth from this school district to another district or a different setting. Therefore, the focus of evaluation activities for the facilities for neglected or delinquent youth is to collect data such as program descriptions (including goals and objectives), demographics on student served (e.g., grade level, gender, ethnicity), instructional and support services provided to students, academic performance outcomes (e.g., numbers of graduates, numbers of students who return to regular classroom), and program expenditures. These data will be included in the report to TEA.

### **Teacher and Paraprofessional Quality**

Part of the new federal NCLB legislation for the Title I A grant program includes a major goal of ensuring that all children are taught by well-trained and highly qualified teachers and paraprofessionals. Therefore, the district's progress toward having experienced teachers and instructional paraprofessionals on every campus by 2005-06 will continue to be monitored. The evaluation will examine the following data for instructional teachers and paraprofessionals at every campus: years of teaching

experience, highest academic degree obtained, certification (and field/specialty), curriculum area of instruction, and level of professional development received annually. These data will be obtained in coordination with district staff in human resources, staff development, and grant programs, as well as evaluation staff responsible for the Title II A program (see separate agenda elsewhere in this report).

### **Parent Involvement**

Parent involvement is a core requirement for the Title I Part A program as well as many other Title programs. In fact, a minimum of one percent of a district's Title I entitlement must be reserved by the district (when the allocation is over \$500,000) to support parent involvement activities. Further, parents must be involved in planning and decision making on how funds are to be used at the district and campus levels. A written parent involvement policy must be available, updated and communicated to parents at the district and campus levels. A school-parent compact, required for every child at every campus receiving Title I funds, must be developed by parents and school staff, must define responsibilities of school and parents in improving student performance, and must describe how ongoing communication will occur between parents and school staff. Data to verify parent involvement and activities at AISD campuses as well as documentation of parent support staff activities will be collected during the year. The Parent Involvement program agenda elsewhere in this agenda report provides more details on the evaluation of this Title I component.

**TITLE II A TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL TRAINING AND RECRUITMENT FUND**

Program Director: Mary Thomas  
Evaluation Supervisor: Michelle Batchelder  
Evaluation Staff: Denise Piñon Carrejo

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

Title II, Part A, Teacher and Principal Training and Recruitment Fund of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB; Public Law 107-110) provides grants “to increase student achievement through strategies such as improving teacher and principal quality and increasing the number of highly qualified teachers in the classroom and highly qualified principals and assistant principals in schools.” The program emphasizes improving instruction and student performance in core academic subjects and focuses on training, recruiting, and retaining highly qualified teachers and principals. Program activities will align with curriculum content standards and student assessments designated by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). The program also will support strategies to boost the academic achievement of students who are economically disadvantaged or who have diverse learning styles. In addition, Title II A funds will be shared with local private schools to participate in professional development.

**EVALUATION OBJECTIVES**

- To assist with a needs assessment for professional development and hiring;
- To evaluate modules of the New Teacher Academy (NTA);
- To provide descriptions of program activities and expenditures as required by TEA; and
- To facilitate decisions about how to improve the program including the hiring, professional development, and retention of highly qualified staff.

**SCOPE AND METHOD**

Department of Program Evaluation (DPE) staff will conduct the needs assessment specified in P.L. 107-110 for professional development and hiring “to take into account the activities that need to be conducted in order to give teachers the means, including subject matter and knowledge and teaching skills, and to give principals the instructional leadership skills to help teachers, to provide students with the opportunity to meet challenging State and local student academic achievement standards.” The AISD

Coordinated Survey will be used to survey teachers and principals. DPE also will assist curriculum staff with additional measures to collect information about the professional development and hiring needs of teachers and principals to meet these goals.

To evaluate modules of the New Teacher Academy, DPE staff will examine the extent to which new teachers learn and implement the classroom management skills and Principles of Learning (POL) covered at the NTA. At the end of each module and at least once during the school year, teachers will complete a survey to examine the content on classroom management and POL disseminated at the NTA. In addition, DPE staff will assist the staff of the Professional Development Academy in the development of protocols that principals and mentors will use to examine implementation of classroom management skills and the Principles of Learning. Briefs that discuss descriptive statistics will be distributed to program staff and other key stakeholders.

This evaluation also will document program expenditures and activities according to TEA guidelines and distribute a brief summary report for local stakeholders. The evaluation will include counts of teachers who benefit from recruitment and retention activities, of teachers and paraprofessionals who participate in training to become highly qualified, and of teachers hired to reduce class size. Descriptions of the professional development funded by Title II A will include information about core subject area addressed as well as the duration and span of the activities.

**TITLE II D  
ENHANCING EDUCATION THROUGH TECHNOLOGY**

Program Director: Jeffery Meyer  
Evaluation Supervisor: Michelle Batchelder  
Evaluation Staff: Karin Samii-Shore, Denise Piñon Carrejo

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

The Title II D, Enhancing Education Through Technology Fund of 2001, as described by the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB Public Law 107-110) provides funding for technology and technological training to help teachers integrate technology into classrooms to increase students' achievement in technological and core content areas. In 2003-2004, professional development funded by Title II D will primarily provide two types of professional development: (1) MAESTRO training and support to help teachers develop and implement integrated technology units focusing on areas where students are performing below the standard on the TAKS test; and (2) advanced technology sessions for teachers so that schools can offer and teach more advanced technology courses. The content of Title II D funded professional development is aligned with the TEKS, other district-wide initiatives, such as Principles of Learning, and current research on effective instruction for using technology. The Title II D program will fund the following activities:

- Professional development that addresses effective use of educational technology as an instructional tool to increase student understanding in the core academic subjects;
- Release time with stipends or pay for substitutes so that teachers can attend or deliver professional development offered throughout the year;
- Professional development in advanced technology software (e.g., digital animation and digital video techniques); and
- Follow-up professional development to assist teachers in successfully implementing their technology units in the classroom.

**EVALUATION OBJECTIVES**

- To provide information that will help district decision-makers improve the program by examining changes in teachers' and students' technology skills, and the quality and effectiveness of program implementation;

- To increase the number and type of advanced technology coursework offered and taught on secondary campuses; and
- To comply with federal law requiring an annual report about programs funded with Title II-D monies.

**SCOPE AND METHOD**

The evaluation will describe the professional development activities funded by Title II, Part D, Enhancing Education Through Technology Fund as required by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). Additionally, during the 2003-2004 academic year, the evaluators will gather data on the number of program participants and the duration and topic area of activities. The evaluation will assess the changes in teachers' and students' technology skills by examining changes in participants' self-reported level of proficiency. Additionally, to gather information about the impact of the program on instruction, classrooms will be observed, and students and teachers will be interviewed. Changes in student achievement will be assessed by comparing pre- and post-surveys of technology skills and by comparing the core content knowledge of participating and non-participating students as measured by the TAKS. Participants and staff will be interviewed about their perceptions of program effectiveness and ways to improve the program. The number and type of integrated technology units (called Units of Practice or UOPs) will be described. Finally, the number and type of advanced technology courses offered and taught on each high school campus will be documented.

## TITLE IV SAFE AND DRUG-FREE SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES PROGRAM

Program Administrator: Stan Brein  
Evaluation Supervisor: Holly Williams  
Evaluation Staff: Cinda Christian

### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Since the 1987-88 school year, the Austin Independent School District (AISD) has received funding through the federal Title IV Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities (SDFSC) Act. This funding originated in 1986 under Public Law 99-570 as the Drug-Free Schools program and was subsequently amended as the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities program through the *Improving America's Schools Act of 1994* (Public Law 103-382). The grant encourages the creation of safe, disciplined, and drug-free learning environments that help all children meet challenging academic standards. The grant allows for the support of school-based programs to help prevent youth violence and alcohol/drug use. The SDFSC grant monies are intended to supplement, but not supplant, local school districts' efforts toward prevention of substance abuse and toward the promotion of a safe, violence-free school environment.

The U.S. Department of Education originally adopted the Principles of Effectiveness in 1998 to improve accountability among grant recipients in the use of Title IV funds. The Principles provide a framework to help grant recipients design, implement, and evaluate programs and activities that are effective. The Principles were revised for 2002 to include an emphasis on parent involvement and student risk and protective factors. Briefly, the six Principles are as follows:

1. **Needs Assessment:** A grant recipient shall base its programs on a thorough assessment of objective data about the drug and violence problems in the schools and communities served.
2. **Measurable Goals and Objectives:** A grant recipient shall, with the assistance of a local or regional advisory council, establish a set of measurable goals and objectives, and design its programs to meet those goals and objectives.
3. **Research-based Programs:** A grant recipient shall design and implement its programs for youth based on research or evaluation that provides evidence that the programs used prevent or reduce drug use, violence, or disruptive behavior among youth.

4. **Risk and Protective Factors** A grant recipient shall analyze the prevalence of "risk factors, protective factors, buffers, assets, or other variables," identified through scientifically based research.
5. **Parent Involvement** A grant recipient shall develop programs and services in consultation with and input from parents.
6. **Evaluation:** A grant recipient shall evaluate its programs periodically to assess its progress toward achieving its goals and objectives, and use its evaluation results to refine, improve, and strengthen its program, and to refine its goals and objectives as appropriate.

In the past five years, the district SDFSC staff have taken steps to develop and implement a comprehensive, integrated drug and violence prevention program with curriculum that included adaptations of proven or promising research-based programs and practices. Along with meeting federal guidelines for Title IV, this effort is in accordance with local directives to mutually align: (1) the school district's comprehensive improvement plans with its SDFSC program plan; (2) all campus improvement plans with their respective SDFSC program plans; and, (3) evaluation with program planning for improvement.

For 2003-04, the AISD Title IV tentative entitlement is approximately \$500,000. Funds are used to support district-level programs and initiatives that serve students and parents. Funds are also set aside for private schools and facilities for neglected or delinquent youth that are located within AISD's attendance zones. Finally, some funds are set aside for grant administration, coordination, school support, and evaluation. According to requirements established by the Texas Education Agency, the evaluation of the 2003-04 SDFSC program must include monitoring of the extent of the drug and violence problems at both the district and campus level. In addition, the participation levels of students, staff and parents in the district's Title IV funded activities will be assessed. Efforts will be made to assess the effectiveness (i.e., cost effectiveness, impact on reducing student substance use and violence) of AISD's SDFSC-funded drug and violence prevention programs.

#### **EVALUATION OBJECTIVE**

To provide information for decision-makers on needs assessment, measurable goals and outcomes, and program effectiveness to facilitate decisions about program

modification. This is in accordance with federal law requiring an annual evaluation of programs funded with Title IV monies (P.L. 103-382, §4177 (b)(1)(A) and §4117 (b), and as required under TEC §29.081, and ensuring the Principles of Effectiveness (1998, revised 2002). In addition, state legislation requires school districts to provide information annually on the number and rate of violent incidents as well as a description of the violence prevention and intervention efforts being made (Texas Senate Bill 1724).

## **SCOPE AND METHOD**

### **District Incident Data**

Per the Texas Education Agency's (TEA) Title IV SDFSC grant evaluation requirements, data must be gathered on a yearly basis to track the number and type of student discipline and arrest incidents that occur on campuses. These data consist of any type of student discipline referral, suspension, expulsion or arrest related to drugs, alcohol, tobacco, violence (e.g., assaults, gang violence), weapons, or vandalism. This information is collected from campuses through the district's student discipline database. All discipline data are submitted to TEA through PEIMS 425 Discipline Records. This information will be used at the campus and district levels to track progress toward reduction of student discipline offenses related to grant objectives and to assess program effectiveness.

### **Coordinated Staff Survey**

The Office of Program Evaluation conducts an annual random survey of district employees. A sample of campus staff will be asked about their opinions of the presence of alcohol and drugs on campuses and safety concerns. In addition, questions will be included on staff familiarity with and training in SDFSC-relevant curricula or topics.

### **Student Drug and Safety Survey**

The evaluation will conduct a random survey of 4<sup>th</sup> thru 12<sup>th</sup> grade students to assess student substance use and perceptions of safety on their campuses.

### **District Program Analysis**

AISD offers three programs districtwide – PAL, ROPES, INVEST/Positive Families. PAL is a peer-mentoring program in which older students are matched with younger students at their own schools or in other schools within the same vertical team. The ROPES program couples physical challenges with workshops focused on improving peer relationships, standing up to social pressures, and developing leadership.

INVEST/Positive Families are school-based programs for secondary students (and their families) who have been referred to the Alternative Learning Center for first time drug offenses (mandatory removals) or first time violent offenses (discretionary removals). This year, the evaluation of districtwide programs will emphasize the INVEST and Positive Families programs due to a corresponding expansion of the programs. Both process and outcome evaluations will be conducted, examining components including curriculum implementation, discipline data, and ALC recidivism rates of program participants.

**Campus Programs**

Individual campuses may offer programs aimed at their own specific needs. Each participating campus will be required to submit a proposal that outlines planned drug and violence prevention activities and details how the campus plan adheres to the Principles of Effectiveness. Each proposal must include an explanation of how the campus Title IV program will address identified campus needs, advance the Title IV grant goals and objectives, and be evaluated for effectiveness at the campus level.

## TITLE V INNOVATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM STRATEGIES (FORMULA GRANT)

Program Director: Stanley Brein  
Evaluation Supervisor: Michelle Batchelder  
Evaluation Staff: Denise Piñon Carrejo

### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Title V provides federal funds to states through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (P.L. 107-110). States receive Title V funds based on their school-age population and then allocate at least 85% of these funds to local districts based on enrollment. Title V can support programs or services in the following targeted assistance areas:

- School reform activities that are consistent with the *Goals 2000: Educate America Act*;
- State and local efforts to accomplish the National Education Goals;
- State and local agencies' implementation of promising educational reform programs;
- Innovation and educational improvement, including support for library services and instructional and media materials; and
- Meeting the special educational needs of at-risk and high-cost students.

Local education agencies are encouraged to maximize the effectiveness of Title V funds by coordinating with other federal and state programs to provide an integrated, coherent delivery of services to increase student achievement. In 2003-2004, AISD will use Title V funds to support staff positions in several programs at AISD campuses and to fund activities and materials at private schools in the district area. Positions and programs funded by Title V are described below.

### **Advancement by Individual Determination (AVID)**

Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) is a program designed to help underachieving students with academic potential prepare for entrance into colleges and universities. Program participants are primarily from low income and diverse ethnic backgrounds. Title V money will be used to fund four FTEs (full-time equivalents) in the AVID program.

### **Partners in Education Volunteer and Mentor Coordinator**

The Partners in Education Program provides mentors to needy students throughout the district. The mentors are volunteers, working on their own time or with the support of their employers. Title V funds a .60 FTE for a coordinator who recruits, trains, and tracks the activities of mentors.

### **Private Schools and Neglected or Delinquent Facilities**

By law, Title V funds are available through AISD to private, nonprofit schools and neglected or delinquent facilities within AISD boundaries. Private, nonprofit schools and neglected or delinquent facilities may use Title V funds to purchase library materials, computer hardware or software, or other equipment.

### **Visiting Teachers**

As part of the Department of School Support for AISD, the mission of the visiting teacher program is to support campuses in achieving success for all students by connecting district and community resources and providing direct and indirect services to students, parents, and staff. The district has 18 visiting teachers, six of whom are employed part-time; Title V monies will fund 2.3 FTE's for the visiting teacher program.

### **EVALUATION OBJECTIVE**

To provide information for decision makers and the Texas Education Agency about the students served by Title V funds, the services provided with the funds, and the perceived effectiveness of those services.

### **SCOPE AND METHOD**

The evaluator will conduct surveys of all campus staff funded through Title V and will collect information from district administrators about their perceptions of the effectiveness of the positions funded through Title V. Information regarding expenditures will be collected from district budget reports. From private schools and facilities for neglected or delinquent students, the evaluator will administer a survey to staff about Title V expenditures and their perceptions of the grant's effectiveness. Findings about expenditures and staff perceptions of the grant's effectiveness will be summarized in a report to TEA and in a feedback report.

## **21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTERS GRANT**

Grant Manager: Ruth Becker

Evaluation Staff: Ralph Smith

### **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

The purpose of the Texas 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21<sup>st</sup> CCLC) Grant Program is to provide opportunities for communities to establish or expand activities in community learning centers to: (1) offer academic enrichment, including providing tutorial services to help children, particularly students who attend low-performing schools, meet state and local student academic achievement standards in core academic subjects, such as reading, mathematics, and science; (2) offer students a broad array of additional services, programs, and activities, such as youth development activities, drug and violence prevention programs, counseling programs, art, music, and physical education and fitness programs, and technology education programs that are designed to reinforce and complement the regular academic program of participating students; and (3) offer families of students served by community learning centers opportunities for literacy and related educational development. Program services must be offered only when schools are not in session (before or after school, during holidays or summer recess). Austin ISD's 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC grant, awarded by the Texas Education Agency in Summer 2003, will serve the communities of four elementary schools (Graham, Jordan, Walnut Creek, and Winn), as well as Dobie Middle School, in 2003-04. The grant cycle is projected for three school years.

### **OBJECTIVES**

To provide information for decision makers and the funding agency on program effectiveness to facilitate decisions about program modification, continuation, and possible expansion.

### **SCOPE AND METHOD**

DPE staff will work with the District's grant manager and campus program staff to identify key indicators of the programs' successes. The funding entity, the Texas Education Agency, has not yet finalized reporting requirements. Once established, the evaluator will work with grant staff to operationalize reporting requirements, and will assist with data collection and summaries as requested by the grant manager.

**AUSTIN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**Superintendent of Schools**

Pascal D. Forgione, Jr., Ph.D.

**Division of Accountability**

Maria Whitsett, Ph. D.

**Department of Program Evaluation**

Holly Williams, Ph.D.

Karen Alderete, Ph.D.

Michelle Batchelder, Ph.D.

Cinda Christian, Ph.D.

Janice Curry

Martha Doolittle, Ph.D.

Rosa Gonzalez

Behroze Irani, Ph.D.

Cathy Kline, Ph.D.

Joyce Partee

Denise Piñon, Ph.D.

Karin Samii-Shore, M.A.

Becky Sanchez

Lisa Schmitt, Ph.D.

Ralph Smith, M.Ed.

Wanda Washington



**Board of Trustees**

Doyle Valdez, President

Ingrid Taylor, Vice President

Ave Wahrmond, Secretary

Cheryl Bradley

Johna Edwards

John Fitzpatrick

Rudy Montoya, Jr.

Robert Schneider

Patricia Whiteside