

**DEPARTMENT OF PROGRAM  
EVALUATION:  
AGENDA 2004-05**

**DPE Publication Number 04.01**

## **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 staff work with program staff throughout the district to design and carry out formative and summative 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 develops an agenda that identifies programs to be evaluated and services to be provided. At the end of each program cycle, DPE staff submits mandated reports to federal, state, and local funding agencies. During the summer, following the school year, DPE staff develops narrative reports reviewing district program implementation and outcomes. Recommendations are incorporated by program staff to improve programs and findings are used by district decision-makers to make programmatic and budgetary decisions for the district.

DPE staff coordinates research requests with external agencies, such as universities and governmental organizations. DPE staff conducts annual surveys of district students, parents, and staff. In addition to evaluations and other activities outlined in this document, DPE staff routinely handles internal and external data requests.

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, and the Executive Director of Accountability.

This agenda describes methodology of the planned evaluations and other services to be provided in the 2004-05 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 describe 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.
5. 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.

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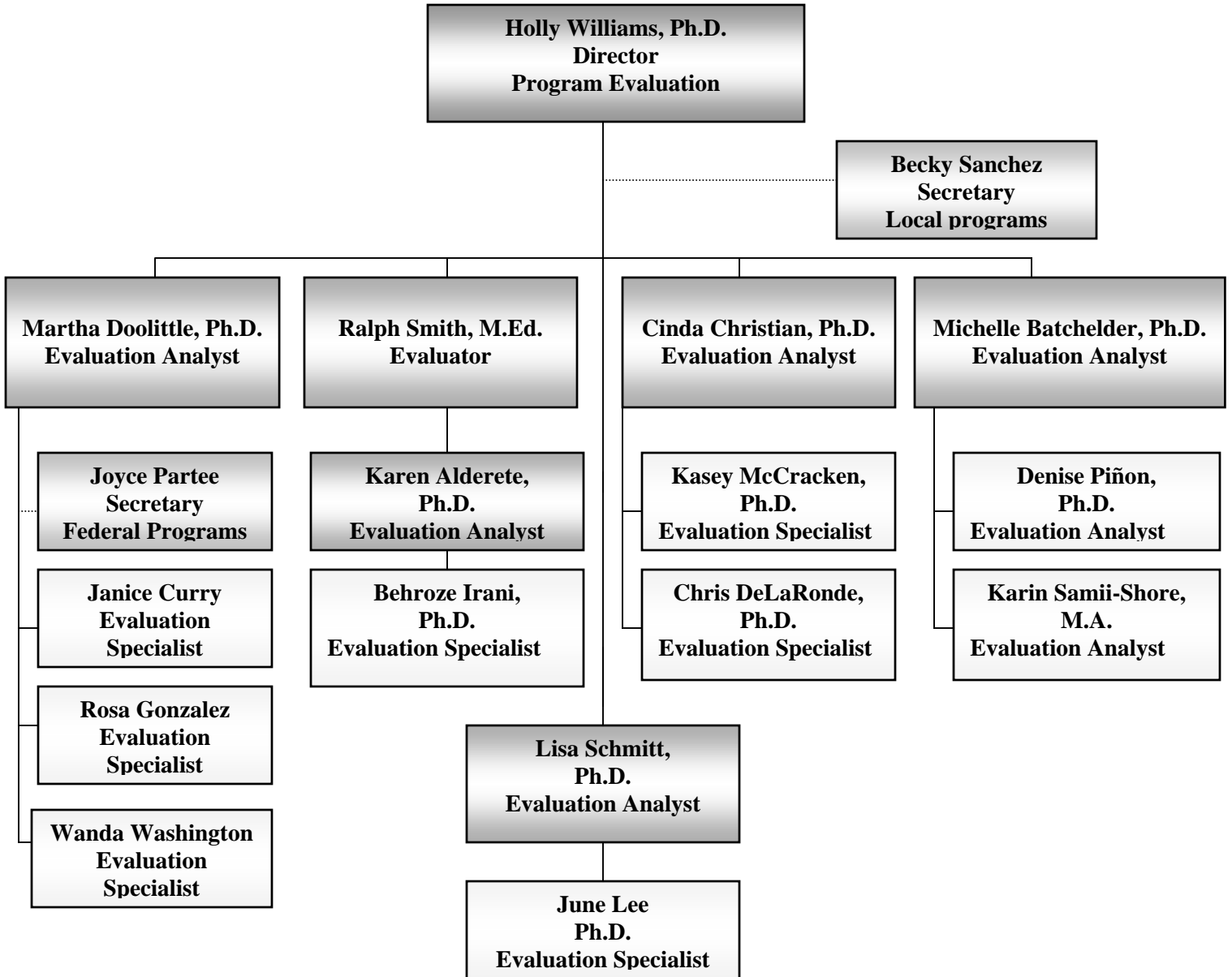
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DPE ORGANIZATION CHART; 2004-05



**2004-05 EVALUATION OVERVIEWS**

**ACCELERATED READING INSTRUCTION AND ACCELERATED MATHEMATICS  
INSTRUCTION PROGRAMS**

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

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

The Accelerated Reading Instruction (ARI) entitlement from the Texas Education Agency provides funds to school districts to improve early elementary literacy and reading skills of kindergarten through grade 5 students at risk of reading difficulties, including dyslexia. A parallel component of the state initiative, Accelerated Mathematics Instruction (AMI), provides early mathematics intervention for kindergarten through grade 5 students who are at risk of difficulty in mathematics.

AISD's ARI/AMI plan for 2004-05 will have an emphasis on reading instruction for grade 3 and on mathematics instruction for grades 4 and 5, although other grades can be served based on need. Other funds may supplement the services provided to students (see Optional Extended Year Program agenda on page 25 of this document). An additional allotment will be used during summer session for students who fail TAKS at grades 3 through 5.

Diagnostic assessments will be used to identify early those children who are having difficulty with reading or with mathematics. These children will participate in one of several intervention sessions offered during the school year by campus staff. In reading, 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. A final session will be offered in June and serve students who have failed the grade 3 or 5 TAKS reading or grade 4 or 5 TAKS mathematics assessments in the spring. The goal is to have these children pass the TAKS offered in the summer so that they can be promoted to the next 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)*, *Tejas LEE*, *Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA)*, and/or *Flynt-Cooter (FC) informal reading inventory*.

For mathematics eligibility, students who failed the 2004 grade 3 or 4 TAKS mathematics assessment and/or who score low on the district's beginning of year benchmark tests in mathematics (grades 4 or 5) will be eligible to be served in 2004-05. Similarly, curriculum materials used will be appropriate to the needs of the children receiving intervention. Sessions will be offered either after school or during school, and intervention group size will be small. A summer session also will be available for fourth and fifth grade mathematics.

All teachers providing instruction will have completed specific professional development prior to the beginning of the program.

### **EVALUATION OBJECTIVES**

Evaluation objectives include the following:

- 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;
- To evaluate the district's efforts to meet the district and state goal that all students will be able to meet fourth and fifth grade TEKS mathematics achievement requirements; and
- To provide information for decision makers on program effectiveness in order to facilitate decisions about program modification.

### **SCOPE AND METHOD**

ARI funds in AISD will be used to provide accelerated reading instruction and intervention to those elementary students determined to having reading difficulties, including dyslexia. AMI funds will be used in AISD to provide accelerated mathematics instruction to those elementary students having difficulties in mathematics. The evaluation will include monitoring the progress of those students who participate in this program throughout the year. The pre- and post-test assessment data will be collected and analyzed. In addition, data will be summarized for those elementary students who participate in the program and who pass TAKS reading in 2005, as well as those fourth and fifth grade students participating in the program and who pass TAKS mathematics in 2005. Students participating in reading or mathematics interventions funded by a source other than ARI or AMI will be documented during the year. Analysis of student data will be the same as for those students served by ARI or AMI. Other quantitative data to be examined will include budget expenditures, student and teacher demographics, and the

number of students on grade-level in reading and in mathematics at the beginning and end of the program. Curriculum staff including program managers will be surveyed about the quality of the programs. Recommendations for the 2005-06 program will be made based on all data collected. Two reports will be produced that summarize the grant program results, one to be sent to the Texas Education Agency, and one for publication in the district.

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

Program Director: Della May Moore  
Assistant Program Director: Martha Garcia  
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 (ELLs), 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) offered in grades prekindergarten through 6 (elementary). BE is provided only to students in any language classification for which there are 20 or more students enrolled in the same grade level and parent permission is required.
- English as a Second Language (ESL), a program of specialized instruction in English provided to students not receiving bilingual education and to students whose parents refuse dual-language instruction. Parent permission is required. The program is offered in middle and high schools to students in grades 6-12.

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 grant provides funds to school districts to assist in teaching English to LEP students at all grade levels, so that these students meet the same challenging state academic standards required of all students. These supplemental funds may be used to: support specialized student instruction; provide professional development to staff; acquire instructional supplies and materials; provide 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, listening, speaking) 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 a planning amount of \$2,110,807 (including \$508,423 of immigrant funds) in Title III grant funds for 2004-05. Other state and local funds also will help support the education of ELLs.

AISD will implement a major instruction and curriculum initiative in 2004-05 known as ELEVAR, English Learners and Educators Versed in Academic Rigor. The purpose of ELEVAR is to raise the academic achievement of English language learners by providing students with a rigorous curriculum that ensures students will gain content knowledge and academic English for successful progress toward graduation and beyond. At the elementary level, ELEVAR will be implemented through the RISE (Rigorous Instruction in Spanish and English) instructional framework. The focus of RISE is to increase gradually the amount of English instruction provided to students across subject areas as they progress by grade level.

#### **EVALUATION OBJECTIVES**

Evaluation objectives include the following:

- To document the impact of the district's BE/ESL Programs on student academic performance in reading, writing, listening, and speaking, per federal and state law; and
- 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 progress and performance indicators will be investigated for the 2004-05 evaluation:

- Student performance (pre-post progress) will be gauged on state-mandated academic assessments for LEP students served, LEP students who have exited the program, and immigrant students; assessments include *Oral Language Protocol*, *Reading Proficiency Test in English*, *Tejas LEE* or *Texas Primary Reading Inventory*, and the *Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills*;

- A summary of district professional development completed by district staff in BE/ESL subject areas, including the ELEVAR focused initiative;
- Extent of implementation of the new instructional framework, Rigorous Instruction in Spanish and English (RISE).

Completion of the narrative report is anticipated in September 2005. A report to TEA is submitted on a biennial basis with the next report due in 2006.

## COORDINATION OF EXTERNAL RESEARCH AND EVALUATION IN AISD

Evaluation Supervisor: Lisa Schmitt

Evaluation Staff: June Lee

### DESCRIPTION

Facilitation and supervision of research and evaluation conducted by parties external to AISD are provided through a formal application and data collection process. This process provides guidelines that: 1) protect staff and students from unnecessary or overly burdensome data collection; 2) ensure compliance with current laws concerning privacy and research; and, 3) 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 proposals for research or evaluation. Copies of proposals are submitted to the Coordinator of External Research and Evaluation 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 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 conducting research and evaluation in AISD. External parties include, but are not necessarily limited to, graduate students, professors, and educational research organizations.

**DELL FOUNDATION COLLEGE READINESS PROGRAMS**

Grant Manager: Rene Sanchez  
Evaluation Staff: Karen Alderete

**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 2004-05 school year marks the third 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 continuously 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, 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 is also supporting the District's AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) program, which expanded into all high schools in 2003-04. AVID is a program designed to help underachieving students with academic potential prepare for entrance into colleges and universities. A majority of the program participants are from low-income and ethnic minority backgrounds. In AVID, students

are placed in a college prep academic program and are provided a support system to help achieve in class.

Finally, the grant provides support to the expansion of Project SMART, an initiative directed toward middle and high school students. In 2004-05, Project SMART will operate at selected secondary campuses. 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.

#### **EVALUATION OBJECTIVE**

Evaluation objectives include the following:

- To provide information for decision makers on program effectiveness to facilitate decisions about program modification, and
- To provide data to the Dell Foundation's board of directors.

#### **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. Having evaluated the AVID program since its inception, and DPE staff already have developed both process and outcome variables to gauge implementation and results of that program. While Project ADVANCE and Project SMART are newer initiatives, much progress has been made toward the refinement of respective program success indicators. The DPE evaluator will assist the grant staff with data collection, summarization, and report completion on a thrice-yearly cycle as required by the Dell Foundation.

## **E-TEAM SPECIAL PROJECTS**

Evaluation Supervisor: Lisa Schmitt

Evaluation Staff: June Lee

### **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

The E-Team was formed for the purpose of responding to the more urgent data and information needs of the Superintendent and his Cabinet. 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 monitoring 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**

Evaluation objectives include the following:

- To provide focused information, data summaries and interpretations in a timely manner for use by district administrators in decision-making; and
- To assist in monitoring the Board's Executive Limitations and Results policies, including the development of the Annual Performance Report.

### **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, district survey results), brief summary reports are created to address specific questions of interest as they arise throughout the year.

**EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND CRISIS MANAGEMENT GRANT PROGRAM**

Program Administrator: Stan Brein  
Evaluation Staff: Cinda Christian

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

Nine Travis County independent school districts and area emergency management representatives have joined forces to form the Travis County School Safety Consortium (TCSSC). Those districts are Austin, Del Valle, Eanes, Lago Vista, Lake Travis, Leander, Manor, Pflugerville and Round Rock. The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools-Emergency Response and Crisis Management Grant Program provides grants to local educational agencies (LEAs) to improve and strengthen emergency response and crisis management plans, including training of school personnel, students and parents. The first set of awards came in 2003 and totaled \$38 million. Austin ISD, on behalf of the Travis County School Safety Consortium, received one grant.

The consortium, through planning and coordination, endeavors to provide direction that allows district and school officials as well as first responders to better react if and when disaster strikes. Its goal is to improve and strengthen emergency response and crisis management plans through a collaborative, community-wide effort to ensure that every school in Travis County has a current, viable and responsive plan.

To this end, the consortium is developing model emergency response and crisis management plans that incorporate the four phases of emergency management. These plans must be specific to individual districts yet possess a commonality to ensure smooth and coordinated management of any major emergency or disaster. They also must be supported with appropriate training at all levels from student to administration and with a program of scheduled exercises to test the readiness of each Travis County school. As such, the Consortium goals are to:

- Develop and use consistent emergency plans, common vocabulary and materials.
- Prepare all emergency management and crisis response plans in redundant formats including hard copy, as secure Internet files and on CD-ROMs.
- Ensure accommodations for all stakeholders in the preparedness process, including persons with disabilities, mobility impairment and persons who speak languages other than English.

- Implement contingency plans for communication system failure.
- Train in-district personnel in all four phases of emergency management.

**EVALUATION OBJECTIVES**

Evaluation objectives include the following:

- To comply with evaluation requirements of the grant, and
- To provide project decision-makers with information on program implementation status and effectiveness.

**SCOPE AND METHOD**

DPE staff will work with AISD's program coordinator to gather information to document the frequency and types of training provided, strategies used to disseminate information to all stakeholders, strategies used to achieve the above stated program goals, and the progress toward meeting each of the stated goals. The evaluator will work with grant staff to meet reporting requirements, and will lead data collection and reporting efforts as requested by the grant manager and as required by the U.S. Department of Education.

## **EMPLOYEE COORDINATED SURVEY**

Evaluation Supervisor: Lisa Schmitt

Evaluation Staff: June Lee

### **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 reliable and representative 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 current version of 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**

Evaluation objectives include the following:

- To serve as a vehicle for DPE staff to gather opinion information to support the evaluation of programs;
- To provide district administrators with a means to obtain information about various programs and policies of interest;
- To provide district administration with a means to obtain information about levels of employee satisfaction with central office services; and
- 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 2003-2004 Employee Coordinated Survey will be administered in January and February 2004, and will follow procedures similar to those 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).

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, a display will show the frequency with which each response option (e.g., “strongly agree,” “agree,” etc.) is selected 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.

## **FOLLOW-UP ON THE CLASS OF 2003**

Evaluation Staff: Karen Alderete, Lisa Schmitt

### **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

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. Because of a federal interpretation of FERPA guidelines, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (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 the Texas Education Agency for those graduates attending public, in-state institutions of higher learning. In addition, DPE also will be working with records from the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC), the nation's largest source for post-secondary student degree and enrollment verification. Data from NSC will complement that provided by TEA; NSC can provide data on students attending both out-of-state and private institutions of higher learning, while TEA only collects data for students in public, in-state institutions.

### **EVALUATION OBJECTIVES**

Evaluation objectives include the following:

- To provide the District and high school campuses with follow-up data on their graduates.
- To develop a sustained collection of longitudinal data that will inform the district about college enrollment and employment trends for AISD graduates.
- 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.).
- 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 2003 (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 TEA, employment data for AISD graduates also will 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 Staff: Karen Alderete, Behroze Irani

### **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 5<sup>th</sup> year, the GEAR UP Austin Project serves a cohort of 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<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**

Evaluation objectives include the following:

- 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**

Evaluation questions include the following:

- 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, TAKS scores, attendance rates, grade level retention/promotion data, course enrollment data, course grades, and SAT/ACT scores. Project database records will supply information regarding GEAR UP student services and contact hours. Project staff and students will participate in interviews to extend the understanding of project impact on students. Tutors and teachers will complete an annual survey designed to gather information about the ongoing academic preparation needs of GEAR UP cohort students.

Enhanced Guidance and Counseling: Evaluation staff will collect information pertaining to course enrollments and SAT/ACT scores. Project database records will supply information regarding GEAR UP student services provided and participant contact hours. Project staff and cohort students will participate in interviews addressing issues related to college and career preparation. Cohort students, tutors, and teachers will complete an annual survey designed to gather information about student college preparation needs, expectations for post-secondary education, and perceived educational outcomes. 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.

**OPTIONAL EXTENDED YEAR PROGRAM**

Grant Staff: Julie Lyons, Mary Thomas  
Program & Curriculum Staff: Carmen Barrera, Brenda Burrell, Donna Calzada, Dale  
Fowler, Peggy Gordon, Maria Hohenstein, Peggy Mays  
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 elementary or middle school students with additional instructional time to master the State's challenging curriculum and performance standards. Legislation passed in 2003 by the Texas state legislature expanded OEYP to serve students in kindergarten through grade 11. Students in grade 12 can be served if they have been identified as unlikely to graduate before the next school year. Students served by the OEYP are those 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 642.152(p) and 29.082(a).]

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 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 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. Thus, the program can offer services to students before or after the regular school day, on Saturdays, and/or during summer school. The total program for the year cannot exceed 30 days per student (where one day equals four hours

of instruction) without a special waiver from the Texas Education Agency (TEA) for follow-up services. There is a class size limit of one teacher to 16 students, and all teachers in the program must receive professional development prior to the start of the program. In addition, provisions must be made to make parents aware of the program.

Annually in September, the 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. The student data are submitted through the state's public education information management system (PEIMS). Another report to TEA on OEYP requires districts to report data on program activities, professional development activities, program expenditures by component, and parent involvement activities.

The Austin Independent School District (AISD)'s maximum entitlement for 2004-05 is \$392,713. Use of funds will be based on projected student academic needs across the district and on the availability of other fund sources for student academic support.

Tentative plans for use of funds are as follows:

- Students will be served at elementary, middle, and high school levels.
- Students who are eligible to be served are at risk of being retained the next school year.
- The program will be offered in Fall 2004 and Spring 2005 (no OEYP summer).
- The elementary schools will offer an accelerated instruction program kindergarten through grade five. It will be extended day (before or after school) or extended week (Saturday) programs for students in reading and mathematics. All 74 elementary schools can offer one or more sessions based on student need. The program will be funded through ARI, AMI, and OEYP.
- The middle schools program will be concentrated at five middle schools, with support for students in grades 6, 7, and 8 who are at risk in reading and mathematics.
- The high schools program will be offered at three high schools, for those students who need to recover course credits or prepare to pass the TAKS

(exit-level) in order to graduate. A concentration will be on reading and mathematics.

### **EVALUATION OBJECTIVES**

Evaluation objectives include the following:

- To document AISD's OEYP student participation, activities, staff participation, parent participation, and expenditures, per state requirements;
- To review longitudinal data on student participation, attendance, promotion, and retention patterns as well as staffing; and
- 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. District finance records will provide a summary of program allocations and expenditures. 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 will be reported on the principal survey in terms of numbers of parents involved by type of activities. Longitudinal analyses will examine records on student participation in OEYP activities over the past four years and subsequent student performance on relevant academic measures (e.g., TAKS, course grades, grade level retention or promotion). Suggestions for program improvement will be obtained from principals, program managers, 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 policy [GK (Local) Community Relations] to promote parent involvement through six strategies: communication, student learning, decision-making, volunteering, parenting, and collaboration with community. Parents are also among the district's key stakeholders, and thus, are a critical part of the district's mission to have every child progress academically and graduate prepared to contribute to society. In accordance with law, the district and each of its campuses have parent representation on advisory councils. The district improvement plan and every campus improvement plan require a component to address parent involvement. Those campuses that receive federal Title I funds must have parent-school compacts for every student that describe how communication will occur and how academic achievement will be fostered.

District resources, including federal Title I funds and local 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 support parent involvement is through parent support specialists at many AISD schools. The parent support specialists: 1) provide workshops for parents and community members on various topics to enhance and encourage their participation in the education of children; 2) make home visits; 3) provide adult literacy training; 4) translate information when necessary; and, 5) network with local agencies to maximize the amount of securable social services available to parents. In addition, they provide professional development to campus staff, serve on various committees, are members of campus IMPACT Teams (that review and plan for assistance to at-risk students), participate in campus decision-making activities, coordinate services between the school and community, assist with special enrollments (e.g., after-school classes, summer school), 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 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, a part of AISD's Department of School, Family and Community Education, located at the Family Resource Center in the Annex of Allan Elementary School. The Parent Involvement Programs specialist oversees the Center 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, 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, parents, 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**

Evaluation objectives include the following:

- Evaluate the extent and quality of parents' involvement within AISD attendance zones, per federal law.
- Gather data on school staffs' perceptions and knowledge of parent involvement, as well as the frequency of school staffs' parent involvement activities.

- Document parent support specialists' activities and the use of other entitlement funds in parental involvement activities.
- Document parent involvement activities at schools without parent support staff.
- 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, awareness, and self-reported participation with regard to parent-school relations and communication. Department of Program Evaluation staff will conduct the parent survey, and details of this survey are highlighted elsewhere in this document. The 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 local, 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. Data will be provided to staff in the AISD Department of School, Family and Community Education who will prepare a mid-year and end-of-year report for each campus that has a parent support specialist. These reports will summarize key performance indicators for parent involvement and support.

## **POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORT**

Program Administrator: John Moore  
Evaluation Supervisor: Cinda Christian  
Evaluation Staff: Chris De La Ronde, Kasey McCracken

### **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

Positive Behavior Support (PBS) is a systematic approach to develop pro-active interventions that create a positive behavioral environment within a school. PBS uses a broad range of systemic and individualized strategies to promote positive student behaviors and change disruptive or destructive behaviors. This is accomplished by a Behavior Support Team who implements effective interventions at the school-wide, classroom, and student levels rather than the traditional solution of focusing solely on the student. The program is designed to both prevent and intervene on problem behavior and requires school-wide responsibility for teaching positive student behaviors. PBS also requires regular and consistent methods for teaching and reinforcing positive behaviors, as well as regular and consistent methods for dealing with misbehaviors. Toward this end, data are used to monitor behaviors and adjust strategies. This approach is first adopted within the school-wide system to serve as a foundation and preventative component. Next, specialized group interventions may be needed for students who do not respond to school-wide efforts, allowing students to access services. Finally, for students who do not respond to sound school-wide and group interventions, a more intensive functional behavioral assessment may be necessary.

During the 2003-2004 school year, two schools served as pilot sites for the program and began implementation of the school-wide component. For the 2004-2005 school year, a total of sixteen schools will receive district support through Title IV and Title V funding for the implementation of PBS on their campuses.

It is expected that implementation of the program will result in reduced problem behavior, decreased disciplinary referrals, improved overall school climate, and consequently, improved academic achievement.

### **EVALUATION OBJECTIVES**

Evaluation objectives include the following:

- To provide information regarding the program's level of implementation and effectiveness to stakeholders. Such information will facilitate decisions about program modification and possible expansion.
- To provide information for a comprehensive evaluation report to be published in November 2005.

#### **SCOPE AND METHOD**

During the first year of the project, the goals of the evaluation are to ensure that procedures are in place for data collection and to assess the level of implementation at the sixteen schools, including an assessment of program effectiveness at the pilot sites. Several methods will be used to assess the level of implementation and program effectiveness. Specifically, students, parents, teachers, and staff will be surveyed regarding their perceptions of the school and classroom environments. Interviews with key staff as well as school and classroom observations will be conducted to supplement the survey data. In addition, the School-wide Evaluation Tool (SET) will be used to measure the following key components of the program: 1) expectations defined, 2) behavioral expectations taught, 3) ongoing system for rewarding students meeting expectations, 4) system for responding to behavioral violations, 4) monitoring and decision making, 5) management, and 6) district level support.

## **PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAM**

Program Staff: Anita Uphaus, Brian Mowry

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 to have 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 2004-05, all eligible students will be served in 67 of the 74 AISD elementary school campuses. AISD uses local, state, and federal funds to support its prekindergarten programs. One of the state requirements for the program is measuring and reporting demographics as well as academic progress of the students participating in the program.

### **EVALUATION OBJECTIVES**

Evaluation objectives include the following:

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

### **SCOPE AND METHOD**

Program effectiveness for prekindergarten 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 prekindergarten 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 pretest and posttest scores. All students are tested in English; Spanish-speaking LEP students also are 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.

A prekindergarten mathematics curriculum assessment will be piloted during the 2004-05 school year. It has been created to address the state's *Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines (1999)*. These guidelines are recommended in nine content areas (e.g., language arts, math, science, etc.) and are aligned to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for grades kindergarten through twelve. A group of ten teachers who have participated in the creation of the mathematics assessment instrument will pilot the assessment with their students during the 2004-05 school year. The new *DLM Early Childhood Express* curriculum was the primary resource for the development of the assessment instrument. These assessment data will be gathered and summarized.

The quantity and quality of professional development completed by prekindergarten teachers will be documented and reported. In addition, data on teacher years of experience will be summarized.

Questions to be addressed by this evaluation include the following:

- To what extent are prekindergarten students making language arts (receptive vocabulary) achievement gains as a result of participation in the prekindergarten program? (Annual and long-term analysis of progress)
- To what extent are prekindergarten students making mathematics achievement gains as measured by the new prekindergarten mathematics assessment?
- How much training do prekindergarten 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 prekindergarten in AISD have better grade three TAKS reading performance than similar students in AISD who did not attend prekindergarten?

## **STATE COMPENSATORY EDUCATION PROGRAM**

Program Administrator: Julie Lyons  
Evaluation Supervisor: Cinda Christian  
Evaluation Staff: Chris De La Ronde

### **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

In Austin ISD, State Compensatory Education (SCE) funds are allocated in accordance with state regulations to assist students at risk of academic failure. SCE is a supplemental program with two aims: to reduce the dropout rate and increase the academic performance of students identified as being at risk of dropping out of school (Subchapter B, Chapter 39 of the Texas Education Code). SCE funds supplement a broad range of programs in Austin ISD, including the Alternative Learning Center, Alternative Center for Elementary Students (ACES), Garza High School, Leadership Academy, the blueprint schools, DELTA (Diversified Education through Leadership, Technology, and Academics), and the Virtual Schools Program. Other recipients of SCE funds include programs that provide academic assistance to immigrant students, secondary level tutorial assistance, and summer school.

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 immediate risk of dropping out of school (e.g., child care program, Absent Student Assistance Program). Additionally, school support services such as elementary counselors, school and community liaison services, and homebound pregnancy related services also are supplemented by SCE.

### **EVALUATION OBJECTIVES**

Evaluation objectives include the following:

- To identify and briefly describe each of the programs, and include a more focused evaluation of DELTA and of the School & Community Liaison services.
- To describe the effectiveness of the SCE program as a whole, based on state-mandated performance indicators.
- To facilitate decisions about SCE by providing information to program managers and decision-makers about program effectiveness.

- To meet reporting requirements established by the Texas Education Agency (TEA).

**SCOPE AND METHOD**

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. A brief overview of the at-risk population in AISD will be provided. The evaluation of the DELTA program will focus on its effectiveness in meeting the academic needs of the students served. The evaluator will continue to analyze course credit and graduation data for DELTA students. The Alternative Learning Center, Garza Independence High School, and the Communities in Schools program are evaluated by program staff or the Texas Education Agency and will only be described in the current evaluation.

## **TECHNOLOGY APPLICATIONS READINESS GRANTS FOR EMPOWERING TEXAS**

Program Director: William Lewis

Evaluation Staff: Karin Samii-Shore, Michelle Batchelder

### **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

The Technology Applications Readiness Grants for Empowering Texas (TARGET) is a project that provides technology and technological training to teachers who serve disadvantaged and diverse populations. The AISD TARGET project, called Students Succeeding in Reading and Technology (SSRT), is a collaboration among twenty-four elementary schools in AISD, four 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 work with SSRT staff to determine individualized technology goals. These goals may include: 1) developing and/or implementing a Unit of Practice (UOP) that integrates technology into a lesson that focuses on reading; 2) using software designed to help struggling readers improve their reading and comprehension; and, 3) using an on-line technology skills program that assists students in learning new technologies and that examines student technology progress. The SSRT program will fund the following activities for the 2004-2005 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 for teachers so that they 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**

The evaluation objectives for this project are to provide information to help district decision makers improve the program by the following:

- Examining the quality and effectiveness of the professional development provided by the program, including links to student achievement;
- Documenting the extent and quality of implementation for formative decision making; and,
- Providing information to both district leadership and, 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 the Technology Applications Readiness Grants for Empowering Texas (TARGET) as required by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). During the 2004-2005 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 participants will be interviewed. Students' technology skills will be assessed by examining changes in students' answers on assessments of technology skills and technological proficiency. Student achievement in core content areas 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 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 topics of the Units of Practice developed by teachers will be documented.

## TEXAS HIGH SCHOOL COMPLETION AND SUCCESS GRANT

Grant Managers: Ralph Huhn  
Evaluation Staff: Behroze Irani, Karen Alderete

### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

This purpose of this program is to support the establishment and implementation of comprehensive high school completion and success initiatives. AISD's program will target low-performing and under-performing high schools through student-focused competitive intervention grants that will provide direct and indirect (support) services to students in grades 9-12.

AISD's program will be targeted toward students at six minority-majority high schools, all of which have high percentages of economically disadvantaged students (Akins, Crockett, Johnston, Lanier, Reagan, Travis high schools) and four-year graduation rates below the state average.

Program goals of the grant include:

- Increasing student achievement, as demonstrated through improved TAKS scores and increased credit accrual;
- Increasing the number of students who graduate in 4 years after entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade;
- Increasing the number of students who graduate "college ready," as demonstrated through acquiring required credits for promotion and taking Advanced Placement (AP)/International Baccalaureate (IB) courses, and taking rigorous courses leading to a college-preparatory diploma; and
- Decreasing the number of criminal incidents and non-criminal incidents on the campus.

Local program goals mirror those of the grant and include a specific call for an increase in percent of students passing all TAKS tests taken.

### EVALUATION OBJECTIVE

Evaluation objective is:

- 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**

The evaluator will work closely with project staff to develop and refine program benchmarks and to establish indicators for successful program implementation and outcomes. To the extent possible, existing reporting systems will be utilized to produce data to address these program variables, and the evaluator will work with staff from other district programs and initiatives (e.g., GEAR UP, AVID, Project ADVANCE, and Smaller Learning Communities) to share information on implementation and outcomes between programs. Because several of these initiatives are well established in the district, suitable reporting mechanisms may already exist, or may only require slight modifications. In addition to quantitative data identified below, the evaluator will identify program areas that are best illuminated through qualitative data, and will identify or develop data collection mechanisms (surveys, interviews, focus groups, etc.) to that end.

DPE staff will collaborate with program staff to identify and/or create data collection instruments and processes as necessary. Data for performance measures (e.g., # students in extended day/year programs, # students failing/denied credit due to attendance problems, TAKS scores, Benchmark scores, etc.) are available through the District's central student database systems (SASIXp and Scholar) or may be obtained from annual AEIS reports (e.g., annual dropout rates). Participant rosters will be collected for before school, after school, Saturday school, and during school opportunities for interventions and credit recovery. In addition, teacher participation in professional development activities will be obtained from the district professional development database, and relevant information will be gleaned from districtwide surveys (including the AISD Parent Survey, the High School Exit Survey, the Employee Coordinated Survey, Student Climate Survey, and the annual Student Substance Use & Safety Survey) to examine the perceptions of students, staff, and parents regarding campuses participating in the THSCS program.

## TITLE I PART A AND PART D PROGRAMS

Grant Managers: Julie Lyons, 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 were 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

meals. 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 2003-04 there were 67 AISD Title I schools with schoolwide program designation. In 2004-05, two more campuses will have Title I designation bringing the total to 69. 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 2004-05 AISD Title I Part A tentative entitlement for planning purposes is \$17,256,030. AISD will provide Title I funds to 69 schools: 52 elementary schools, 11 middle/junior high schools, and 6 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 2004-05 there are 36 private schools and 4 facilities for neglected youth that have been allocated Title I Part A funds.

AISD's Title I Part D tentative entitlement for 2003-04 is \$210,186 to be used to support instructional programs serving students at 5 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: both are intended to 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**

Evaluation objectives include the following:

- 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 of 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**

Performance on the new state assessment program, the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), which is based on the state curriculum standards, the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), will be monitored in 2004-05 relative to performance levels in 2003-04. The State Board of Education and the Texas Education Agency have adopted 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 error of measurement units from the mean; during 2003-04, the TAKS cut score was at 1 standard error of measurement units from the mean. In 2004-05, the TAKS cut score for passing will be at the Board-recommended passing standard. AISD's TAKS data will be examined at the district level for all students, for students at Title I schools and non-Title I schools, 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 2004 and who remain in the district to take the TAKS in spring 2005 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 TAKS in Reading at grade 3 to be promoted to grade 4. This requirement continues this year. In addition, for spring 2005, promotion of 5<sup>th</sup> graders to grade 6 will depend on these students passing TAKS in both Reading and Mathematics. Therefore, an additional analysis of TAKS data will focus on student performance at these grade levels, comparing the percentages of students meeting TAKS passing standards across the district, at Title I schools, and non-Title I schools, and disaggregating data by student groups.

Other academic data to be examined include AISD results on the state's assessment program for identified students in special education, the SDAA (State-Developed Alternative Assessment). The SDAA is based on the state TEKS and assesses special education students' academic performance in reading, mathematics, and writing. Analyses for these tests also will be done with 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: they are 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 Part A funds are used to provide academic support, school materials, transportation and other services (including referrals to social services) to homeless students. Additionally, at one school, determined by survey to serve the greatest number of homeless students in the district, Title I Part A funds are used to pay for the salary of a counselor for those students. AISD annually must report to TEA the number of homeless students served at all campuses and the services provided to those students.

### **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 Part 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 to TEA. 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 and documentation from those schools. At this time, 34 private schools are expected to participate in the Title I Part A program.

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

During 2004-05, 3 facilities for neglected youth will be allocated funds from Title I Part A, and 5 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. The student and program data will be included in the report to TEA.

### **Teacher and Paraprofessional Quality**

Part of the new federal NCLB legislation for the Title I Part A program includes the 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 amount of professional development received annually. These data will be obtained in coordination with district staff in human resources, professional development, and grant programs, as well as evaluation staff responsible for the Title II Part A program (see separate agenda elsewhere in this document).

### **Parent Involvement**

Parent involvement is a core requirement for the Title I Part A program as well as many other entitlement 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 document provides more details on the evaluation of this Title I component.

### **Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)**

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) is a federal accountability requirement within the NCLB law guiding school districts that receive Title I Part A funds. The AYP is a combination of analyses used to examine progress in student achievement (performance as measured by TAKS, SDAA, and RPTE), student participation in assessment (on these critical tests), high school graduation rates, school attendance rates at elementary and middle schools, and middle school dropout rates. If districts or schools do not meet minimum requirements set for annual progress on these measures, then the district or school could be given the designation of "needs improvement". In such cases, the district or school would have to develop a plan for how the entire educational program would be

improved. If the “needs improvement” status is repeated for a district or school in two consecutive years, then further sanctions would apply for those schools/districts receiving Title I funds. Although AYP results are received from the federal and state agencies when schools have begun the next school year, this evaluation will report prior year’s results when released and will view those data in relation to those schools’ performance measures and program interventions.

**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**

Evaluation objectives include the following:

- To assist with a needs assessment for professional development and hiring that will inform the District Improvement Plan;
- To develop a measure to evaluate all of the professional development tracked through PDA e-Campus;
- To evaluate the effectiveness 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, including paraprofessionals.

## **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. DPE staff also will document actions taken to collect information about the professional development and hiring needs of teachers and principals in devising a districtwide professional development program.

DPE staff will collaborate with the Director of Professional Development and staff to develop a measure for evaluating all of the professional development tracked through PDA e-Campus. In addition, DPE staff will evaluate modules of the New Teacher Academy by examining the extent to which new teachers learn and implement the classroom management skills, Principles of Learning (POL), and the AISD curriculum presented at the NTA. At the end of each training day, teachers will complete surveys to describe effectiveness of the training. Briefs that present and interpret descriptive statistics will be discussed with the Department of Professional Development staff and be distributed to other key stakeholders.

This evaluation also will document program expenditures and activities according to TEA guidelines and result in distribution of a brief summary report for local stakeholders. The evaluation will include counts of teachers who: 1) benefit from recruitment and retention activities; 2) participate in training to become highly qualified along with paraprofessionals who similarly engage in training; and, 3) were hired to reduce class size. Descriptions of the professional development funded by Title II A will include information about core subject areas addressed, as well as the duration and span of the activities.

**TITLE II D  
ENHANCING EDUCATION THROUGH TECHNOLOGY**

Program Director: Jeffery Meyer  
Evaluation Staff: Karin Samii-Shore

**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 2004-2005, activities and services funded by Title II D will provide: (1) differentiated professional development sessions to help teachers integrate technology into core content area curriculum and (2) work sessions for teachers and staff in core content areas to integrate Technology Applications TEKS into the district's Instructional Planning Guides (IPGs). 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 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 work sessions or professional development or deliver professional development offered throughout the year; and
- Stipends, extra-duty pay, and tuition for teachers attending Technology Applications Certification Training.

**EVALUATION OBJECTIVES**

The evaluation objectives will provide information to help district decision-makers improve the program by:

- Examining changes in teachers' and students' technology skills;
- Documenting the number and types of advanced technology coursework offered and taught on secondary campuses; and

- Complying with federal law requiring an annual report about programs funded with Title II, Part 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 2004-2005 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 levels of proficiency and by reporting students' scores on an assessment of technology skills. Additionally, to gather information about the impact of the program on instruction teachers and students will be surveyed and changes in students' knowledge and skills will be assessed by comparing pre- and post-surveys of technology skills. Participants and staff will be interviewed about their perceptions of program effectiveness and ways to improve the program. 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: Cinda Christian  
Evaluation Staff: Kasey McCracken

### 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 six 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 2004-05, the AISD Title IV tentative entitlement is \$477,413. 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 coordination, school support, and evaluation. According to requirements established by the Texas Education Agency, the evaluation of the 2004-05 SDFSC program must include monitoring of the extent of the drug and violence problems at both the district and campus levels. 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**

Evaluation objectives include the following:

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

decisions about program modification 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).

- 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 as required by state legislation (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 Department 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, and 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).

In addition to these districtwide programs, Title IV also will contribute to implementation of Positive Behavioral Support (PBS) at sixteen target campuses within the district. PBS is a systematic approach to promoting pro-social behaviors and reducing disruptive and destructive behaviors among students. An essential component of PBS is the establishment of a school-based Behavior Support Team that includes representatives from across all role functions within a school, including administrators, teachers, resource officers, and support staff. This team is responsible for using data to develop, implement, and evaluate PBS activities within their school (See PBS agenda on page 31).

This year, the evaluation of districtwide programs will emphasize the INVEST/Positive Families programs and the ROPES program. Both process and outcome evaluations will be conducted, examining components including curriculum implementation, discipline data, and ALC recidivism rates of program participants. In addition, evaluation efforts will be devoted to examining the implementation and early outcomes of the PBS program at the sixteen targeted campuses.

### **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

Program Director: Stanley Brein  
Evaluation Supervisor: Cinda Christian  
Evaluation Staff: Chris De La Ronde

### 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 2004-2005, 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.

### **Bilingual Education Initiative**

English Learners and Educators Versed in Academic Rigor (ELEVAR) is a three-year partnership between Austin ISD and the Institute for Learning (IFL) that began in Fall, 2003. The purpose of ELEVAR is to raise the academic achievement of English language learners (ELLs) by providing students with a rigorous curriculum that ensures entry into post-secondary education. All instruction is based on the Austin ISD curriculum and the Instructional Planning Guides. Title V funding will be used to support professional development programming related to ELEVAR. This professional

development will provide general education teachers with rigorous, pedagogical strategies for engaging ELLs in learning content knowledge and Academic English.

### **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 will partially fund one of the four mentoring positions through a contract with Austin Partners in Education.

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

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.

### **Positive Behavior Support**

Positive Behavior Support (PBS) is a systematic approach to creating a positive behavioral environment within a school by using a Behavior Support Team to develop interventions at the school-wide, classroom, and student levels. Sixteen schools will receive Title V funding for the implementation of PBS on their campuses (See PBS agenda on page 31). At the district-level, Title V monies will fund .30 FTE for a coordinator who will manage the district PBS initiative and 2.0 FTEs for PBS trainers. As an additional component of the PBS initiative, Title V funding also will be used to support the districtwide implementation of character education programs.

### **School and Community Liaisons**

As part of the Department of School Support for AISD, the mission of the School and Community Liaisons (SCLs) 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 17 SCL FTEs, and Title V monies will fund 1.8 FTEs for this program.

### **EVALUATION OBJECTIVE**

Evaluation objectives is:

- 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 a survey of all campus staff funded through Title V and will collect information from district administrators about their perceptions of the effectiveness of the positions. The evaluator also will administer a survey to staff at private schools and facilities for neglected or delinquent students to gather information about Title V expenditures and staff perceptions of the grant's effectiveness. Information regarding expenditures will be collected from district budget reports. In addition, a variety of both process and outcome measures will be used to monitor the implementation and early outcomes of the PBS initiative. Findings about expenditures and the programs' effectiveness will be summarized in a report to TEA and in a feedback report.

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

Grant Managers: Ruth Becker, Shirlene Justice

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 grants, awarded by the Texas Education Agency in Summer 2003 and Summer 2004, will serve the communities of twenty AISD schools in 2004-05. The cycles for the four grants are projected for three school years.

### **EVALUATION OBJECTIVE**

Evaluation objective is:

- The evaluation objective is 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 managers and campus program staff to identify key indicators of the programs' successes. The evaluator will work with grant staff to operationalize reporting requirements, and will lead the extensive data collection and reporting efforts as requested by the grant manager and as required by the Texas Education Agency.

**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

Chris De La Ronde, Ph.D.

Martha Doolittle, Ph.D.

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