

**Optional Extended Year Program Summary
2001-2002**

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FOREWORD

The Optional Extended Year Program is a supplemental state grant program first introduced as a Retention Reduction Pilot Program from 1993-1995 for students in first grade. The success of the Retention Reduction Program led to greater support for such initiatives in the Texas legislature. The Optional Extended Year Program (OEYP) was initiated in 1995 as a result of Senate Bill 1 in order to provide extended learning opportunities for students in kindergarten through grade 8 who are at risk of academic failure.

The primary focus of an OEY program is to immediately reduce and ultimately eliminate the need for student retention by providing additional instructional time for students to master the State's academic performance standards (Texas Education Code Section 42.152 & 29.082). OEY programs are designed to accommodate four school-day options; 1) extended day; 2) extended week; 3) intersession for year-round schools; and 4) summer school. A school district may provide instructional services during any of these programs for a period of time not to exceed 30 days.

Since 1993, the Austin Independent School District (AISD) has used the OEY program for extended day, extended week, year-round schools' March intersession, and summer school to reduce the number of AISD students at risk of being retained. For 2001-02, AISD conducted its OEY program during the summer of 2002 at 32 schools and served 2,609 students who would be retained without the benefit of summer school, and/or students who needed to recover course grades for promotion purposes.

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) sets the criteria for promotion, and provides OEY program policy on class size (no more than 16 students to a class and no fewer than 8), attendance, staff development and parental involvement. This report provides operational and outcome (attendance, promotion, parent involvement, and staff development) data as well as recommendations to assist district program planners, administrators (principals), grants staff, and school support services staff in the planning and delivery of services to students at risk of not being promoted to the next grade.

AISD OEY Program Description

At the elementary school level, AISD's summer program used 15 cluster sites that provided literacy and mathematics classes through the SUCCESS curriculum to students in grades 3-5 who would be retained without summer school. At the middle school level, the SMART program offered grade recovery for promotion at 6 middle school sites for students who were at risk of being retained in grades 6-7 because they had failed to pass at least three of four core subjects during the regular school year. These core subjects were language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. At-risk students in grade 8 were served through the BRIDGES to 9th Grade summer program at the high school they would attend if promoted. BRIDGES summer sites were located at 11 high school campuses. These students also were at-risk due to failure of a core course.

Evaluation Objectives

1. To document and report AISD's OEY program activities and expenditures, per state law.
2. To summarize the participation of parents in AISD's OEY activities.
3. To provide AISD decision-makers with recommendations to enhance the operation of the district's OEY program in order to promote academic success.

Reporting Requirements

Around mid-September, TEA requires each district that receives OEY funds to submit OEY information as part of the district's electronic Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) report and the OEY Evaluation Report. The OEY PEIMS data contain basic demographic information about the students who participated in OEY program activities (*i.e.*, student's name, PEIMS ID number, campus enrollment number, grade level, OEY program type, program start date, and any OEY student absence dates).

Because a school district's OEY Program funding allocation for the succeeding school year is dependent upon the total number of participants reported to TEA in the previous school year, AISD's summer cluster sites' data on daily attendance and class rosters were reconciled with the district's student database prior to the electronic transmission of the PEIMS report to TEA. (This process eliminated the risk of AISD staff reporting different participant totals for the district in both reports submitted to TEA.)

Approximately 10 days after an electronic data submission, districts are required to submit an OEY Program Evaluation and a Final Expenditure report. The following information about AISD's students and parents who participated in 2001-2002 OEY programs was reported to TEA:

- number of students by grade level who were eligible for OEY programs;
- number of students by grade level who participated in an OEY program at least one day;
- numbers of students retained or promoted;
- average OEY class size;
- numbers of students promoted or failed in grades 6-8 who took 1-3 courses in the summer that they had failed during the regular school year; and
- number of staff and parents involved in OEY activities.

To substantiate the PEIMS count and gather the data for the TEA OEY evaluation report, teachers were asked to provide information about their students on a roster provided by staff from the Office of Program Evaluation. Data requested were: 1) student demographics (name, student ID number, current grade); 2) daily attendance; 3) academic classes attended; 4) pre- and posttest data for program participants; and 5) student promotion or retention recommendations.

Staff from AISD's Office of Program Evaluation also gathered data from the district's student database, principals at summer school cluster sites, various curriculum and program coordinators, the OEY grant manager, other summer school staff, the Family Resource Center's parent support specialist, and the PEIMS coordinator to complete the evaluation report.

Expenditures

AISD received OEY program funds in January 2002. The Final Expenditure report submitted in September 2002 by AISD as part of TEA OEY Evaluation Report for 2001-2002 showed a total project cost of \$1,244,080. Payroll costs for summer school staff and other program support staff made up the largest share of the project budget at \$1,060,601 (85%). Instructional and office supplies, textbooks, testing materials, and janitorial supplies cost \$135,498 (11%). Other operating costs such as refreshments, transportation, awards and incentives cost \$35,606 (3%). Contracted services (e.g., child care for parental involvement activities or nursing services) cost \$12,375 (1%).

Staffing and Staff Development

In 2001-02, AISD used OEY funds to hire 277 staff members, and of these, 203 were teachers and 76 were other staff (e.g., principals, teacher aides, counselors, clerks, parent support specialists, evaluation associate, special education and bilingual support staff). In addition, 75 teachers worked in the summer programs but were funded through other district resources. Table 1 reflects only the number of teachers funded through OEYP.

Table 1: OEY 2001-2002 Instructional Staff by
Summer Program

Summer Program	# of Teachers
Student Understanding Can Culminate in Excellence in Summer School (SUCCESS)-Grades 3-5	148
Project SMART Summer Middle School-Grades 6-7	9
BRIDGES to the 9th Grade-Grade 8	51
Total	203

Source: AISD Grants Office Records, 2002

All 32 campuses that conducted OEY programs provided one or more staff development sessions during 2001-2002. The topics for staff development included curricular rigor and delivery, grading and promotion or retention policies, data reporting requirements, student skills and needs, procedures and policy, and planning. The academic content of summer school staff development usually included training in the use of the balanced literacy instructional approach

for SUCCESS teachers; relevant curriculum materials (math, reading, social studies, and special education modifications) for secondary teachers; and TEKS and/or curricula alignment for all teachers. AISD curriculum specialists provided training in assessment/testing techniques, and portfolio expectations. Staff development was also provided on behavioral management, attendance, program schedules, pay, staff assignments, student registration, and staff planning and preparation.

Parent Involvement

All 32 campuses provided one or more parent involvement activities during 2001-2002. The most common methods of notifying parents about the program and their child/children's eligibility for participation included: letters/flyer to parents, forms sent home to parents, phone calls to parents, AISD's TV access channels, and the AISD website.

AISD schools hosting the summer OEY programs held a variety of activities during June 2002 to engage parents in their child's learning. The parents were notified through invitations, memos, newsletters, brochures, and phone calls about the activities. The following list includes the most common parent involvement activities reported by summer school staff and the *attendance totals* for the categories:

- Phone calls and parent conferences (71);
- Workshops (32);
- Back to School Night; Open House, Registration, Parent Day (979); and
- End of School Awards and Recognition Ceremony (1,274).

Staff survey records completed by summer school principals showed a duplicate count of 2,420 parents (1,986 parents of elementary students and 434 parents of secondary students) participated in OEY program activities during summer 2002.

Program Completion, Student Promotion and Retention

Teachers in the OEY summer programs made recommendations for student promotion or retention based on their students' pre- and posttest scores (where available), academic work, and attendance. However, student promotion or retention is not necessarily predicated upon pre- and post test data, student's academic work, or attendance, because Senate Bill 1 under which OEYP was initiated in 1995 allows students who attend the program's activities to be promoted to the next grade in one of four situations: 1) meeting program's attendance requirements and district's academic requirements; 2) meeting academic requirements only; 3) meeting attendance

requirements only; or 4) meeting neither attendance nor academic requirement (*subjective student placement*). The final decision on promotion/retention is made by the home school principal and /or the parent of the student.

OEY program rosters with student data, including pre- and posttest scores, attendance information, and recommendations for promotion or retention, were provided to the home school principals who verified the teachers' recommendations for students. The verified data were analyzed to complete the TEA OEY Program Evaluation report and to provide principals with promotion or retention data on their students. These student data summaries became a part of each student's cumulative record.

Table 2 shows that 2,609 students attended at least one day of the OEY summer program in 2001-2002. Of that number, 2,471 (95%) were promoted in the following ways:

- 71% (n=1,742) met the district's 90% attendance requirement and the academic requirement of achieving a grade of 70 or above in courses taken;
- 15% (n=366) met only the academic requirement;
- 7% (n=179) met only the attendance requirement; and
- 7% (n=184) met neither the district's attendance nor academic requirements), but were promoted.

OEYP students who met only the attendance requirement or met neither academic nor attendance requirements were considered placed in the next grade rather than promoted. These placements occur at the discretion of the home school principals. The largest number of students promoted was 553 in 3rd grade. Of that number, 142 students were placed (80 met only the attendance requirement and 62 met neither the attendance or academic requirement). The total number of retained students was 135 (5%) as shown in Table 3. The largest number of retained students occurred at grade 8 (48).

Table 2: Number and Percent of Students Promoted for AISD Students Served in OEY Program 2001-2002

Grade Level	Total Participants	Number & Percent Promoted	Number & Percent Meeting Attendance & Academic Requirement	Number & Meeting Only Academic Requirement	Number & Percent Meeting Only Attendance Requirement	Number & Percent Meeting Neither Academic Nor Attendance Requirement
3	576	553 (96%)	313 (57%)	98 (18%)	80 (14%)	62 (11%)
4	486	466 (96%)	274 (59%)	103 (22%)	44 (9%)	45 (10%)
5	246	236 (96%)	120 (51%)	65 (27%)	25 (11%)	26 (11%)
6	264	248 (94%)	224 (90%)	16 (6%)	1 (4%)	7 (3%)
7	494	473 (96%)	425 (90%)	32 (7%)	5 (1%)	11 (2%)
8	543	495 (91%)	386 (78%)	52 (11%)	24 (5%)	33 (6%)
Totals	2,609	2,471 (95%)	1,742 (71%)	366 (15%)	179 (7%)	184 (7%)

Source: TEA Optional Extended Year Program Evaluation Report, 2001-02

Table 3: Number and Percent of Students Retained for AISD Students Served in OEY Program 2001-2002

Grade Level	Total Participants	Number & Percent of Students Retained	Number & Percent of Students Retained By Parent Request
3	576	22 (4%)	1 (0.2%)
4	486	18 (4%)	2 (0.4%)
5	246	10 (4%)	0
6	264	16 (6%)	0
7	494	21 (4%)	0
8	543	48 (9%)	0
Totals	2,609	135 (5%)	3 (0.1%)

Source: TEA Optional Extended Year Program Evaluation Report, 2001-02

Middle School Course Performance

Table 4 shows data (unduplicated counts) reported to TEA on the number of students in grades 6-8 taking courses in the summer that they had failed during the regular school year. Overall, course passing rates for students taking one or more courses failed during the regular school year were high with 96.5% (1,014) of middle school students passing summer courses. Ninety students in grades 6-8 took one course in summer school that they had failed during regular school year 2001-02, and 89% (80) passed that summer course. Ninety-seven percent (838) of 860 students in grades 6-8 passed two courses in the summer that they had failed during the regular school term. Ninety-five percent (96) of 111 students passed the three courses that they had failed during the regular school year.

Table 4: Course Pass/Fail Data for Students in Grades 6-8
Taking Failed Regular-Term Courses During OEY Summer 2002

Grade	One Course Failed Regular Term		Two Courses Failed Regular Term		Three Courses Failed Regular Term	
	Number & Percent Passed	Number & Percent Failed	Number & Percent Passed	Number & Percent Failed	Number & Percent Passed	Number & Percent Failed
6	7 (70%)	3 (30%)	151 (99%)	2 (1%)	N/A	N/A
7	31 (91%)	3 (9%)	359 (99%)	4 (1%)	N/A	N/A
8	42 (91%)	4 (9%)	328 (95%)	16 (5%)	96 (95%)	5 (5%)
Total	80 (89%)	10 (11%)	838 (97%)	22 (3%)	96 (95%)	5 (5%)

Source: TEA Optional Extended Year Program Evaluation Report, 2001-02

NOTE: Promotion totals and percentages contain some placements.

Operational Issues

The OEY campus staff experienced some operational difficulties due mainly to the introduction of a new data system for recording OEY student attendance data electronically at each cluster site. For instance, most attendance specialists had difficulty entering the OEY attendance data such as the student's starting date, absentees, and withdrawals. In addition, a number of attendance specialists experienced computer network difficulties at their schools which delayed data entry. Also, the rigor of processing attendance data during the brief summer school program caused a number of errors to be left without corrections and some data were missing. All of these data errors had to be reconciled over a two and one-half month period by the Office of Program Evaluation (OPE) staff responsible for the OEY program evaluation. These staff had to reconcile the district PEIMS attendance data and the master class roster files submitted by campus staff in order to arrive at data that was consistent for reporting to TEA.

Summary

Review of the data shows two positive academic outcomes for the OEY summer program at AISD in 2002: 1) the majority (2,108 or 85%) of at-risk students served were promoted upon completion of the program meeting the academic and attendance standard; 2) most (96.5%) middle school students were able to take and pass a variety of core courses allowing for more recovery of needed credits. However, the 184 students (7%) who were promoted in spite of not meeting academic or attendance requirements raises concern because approximately 34% of those students were 3rd graders.

Recommendations

With the arrival of the TAKS tests and stricter promotion standards, and with the knowledge that OEYP can provide for a maximum of 30 days of instruction, the following recommendations are made to enhance OEYP's academic contribution to AISD's instructional program:

- *District administrators should encourage schools to use the OEY day or week program options (in addition to summer school) in cases where the schools can determine early (end of first semester) that their students need more instructional time. A day or week program can provide more timely learning opportunities for at-risk students in need of extra academic support, giving students multiple opportunities to pass the TAKS. The 30-day option can also be used for summer opportunities as a last resort for children with academic needs at the end of the regular school year.*
- *Also, District staff should discourage use of the TEA selective placement option, because it does not address or alter the student's academic needs and it is in direct conflict with AISD's vision of providing every student with an excellent education. AISD must begin intervention earlier in the school year using other resources and OEY funds to assist all students who are struggling academically, especially in reading.*

By maximizing academic and economic opportunities through the use of these various options for instruction, all students who need more instructional time can be served more efficiently. Intervening with at-risk students earlier in the school year should reduce the number of students who need to attend summer school. This would result in a reduction in the number of sites needed to serve students and a reduction in summer costs such as transportation, staff, and utilities.

The following recommendations are directed toward improving program operation and helping to ensure more accurate record keeping:

- *During the school year, the district's training staff responsible for the student data system should provide training for all campus attendance specialists or data clerks on recording OEYP attendance according to the project's specifications.*

- *The training staff should also set up a post-training monitoring system to review on a regular basis the data entered by campus staff and the process used by these staff to record attendance. A monitoring system of this nature would catch errors sooner and allow the attendance specialists opportunities to correct the errors themselves, gain insight into how the errors occurred, and empower them to avoid making those errors again.*
- *Because the summer 2002 OEY programs were brief and the requirements for rigor in record-keeping were so great, it is recommended that program managers build in 4-6 hours of additional clerical time for each attendance specialist hired in their summer budget.*
- *Summer 2002 marked the first time two sets of records (electronic attendance entered by the attendance specialists and classroom rosters kept by each teacher) were kept independently. Electronic data entry was required for PEIMS submitted to TEA, and classroom rosters kept by teaching staff were required for district documentation by TEA. There were errors in both sets of data. This caused an excessive amount of time to be spent in reconciling the PEIMS attendance and classroom roster data in order to complete the data for the PEIMS' electronic submission and the OEY program evaluation report. Therefore, it is recommended that district staff set aside *planning time in advance of the program start date to look at data issues and time lines that relate to OPE staff's responsibility and analytical needs for completing the TEA OEY Program Evaluation Report.**

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