

Title I Facilities for Neglected or Delinquent Youth Summary Report, 2003-2004

Author: Wanda Washington
Evaluation Specialist

Title I is a compensatory education program supported by funds from the U.S. Department of Education through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 and reauthorized in the Leave No Child Behind Act of 2001 (P.L. 107-110). The purpose of Title I is to provide opportunities for children to acquire the knowledge and skills described in state academic content standards for all children. Title I provides funds to state and local education agencies that have high concentrations of low-income children in participating schools.

This report includes a descriptive summary of the facilities for neglected and/or delinquent youth that are within the attendance zones of the Austin Independent School District (AISD), and that received Title I funds during 2003-04. Details are included about the use of Title I funds, demographics of students served, and program outcomes for these facilities, per state and federal requirements. Traditional academic data are not included because these facilities operate individualized on-site instructional programs for children who are wards of the state of Texas, or who are placed in such facilities with the intent of eventually mainstreaming the students into regular Texas public school classrooms. In addition, these facilities are not required to report student-level academic data such as test scores or grades on the district's Title I program service report to the Texas Education Agency (TEA), because these data already are included with all other data reported for the students' home campuses.

FACILITIES FOR NEGLECTED YOUTH

Two facilities for neglected youth were allocated \$36,800 in Title I Part A funds in 2003-04 based on reported case load of students served in October 2003. The facilities were Settlement Home and Presbyterian Children Home Services. Of the funds allocated, 97% (\$35,821) was expended during the year on tutoring (off-and on-site) in reading and mathematics, tutoring supplies, computers, computer tables, classroom furniture, software, ACT and SAT guides and preparation books, a cordless headphone system with headphones for classroom instruction, and a digital video camera. Students from the AISD attendance area and other Texas school districts are placed in these facilities because of abuse, neglect, and/or emotional and behavioral problems. Regardless of their residency status, these youths attend AISD's public schools or in-house classes at the facilities. The nature of their placements dictates whether they attend school in a public or secured, in-house setting.

During 2003-04, 79 youths were served at these two facilities using Title I Part A funds. Of the students served, 100% were female; 24% were African American, 32% were Hispanic, 43% were White, and 1% were American Indian. Students served were in grades 4 through 12 with the majority in secondary school grades (87%). A brief summary of survey results from staff at these facilities is presented below.

Settlement Home

Settlement Home is a private, non-profit residential treatment center and foster home program for severely abused girls ages 7 to 17. The academic instructional program includes a year-round, on-campus elementary and secondary school for special education students, and a tutoring program for all children in the residential and foster group home program. The goal of the facility is to provide academic instruction (through classroom instruction and individual tutoring) and skill building to all residents to help them improve academic achievement. Nine staff members (2 full-time special education teachers; 3 full-time teacher's aides; 1 education supervisor; and 3 part-time tutors) provided instructional services to students. Title I funds were spent on computer software, supplies, and one instructional lab table. Seventeen volunteers, individuals, and community organizations worked with the students throughout the school year. Three of the 17 volunteers provided weekly individual academic tutoring to the students. Three organizations provided bi-annual, monthly or weekly services. The Soroptomist Club provided two financial educational workshops during the school year; the Austin Junior Forum provided monthly cultural educational dinner events; and the YMCA provided twice-weekly opportunities to students for gym time and exercising at its facility. Seven volunteers taught sewing & gardening, provided piano lessons/classes, and had cultural activities, while the other four provided weekly Girl Scout groups and foster grandparents' services. Settlement Home served 73 students in grades 4-12 in 2003-04. Six of the 73 students graduated through the AISD regular instructional program (n=3) and two earned General Education Development (GED) (n=2) certificates.

Presbyterian Children's Home

The Presbyterian Children's Home Services is a non-profit family group foster home that receives residents through voluntary or private placement by a parent, guardian, or self-referral if the student is 18 years or older. Contributions toward maintenance (room and board) are paid on a sliding scale based on the income of the person who placed the student. Most youths are placed in the home by a parent or guardian. The facility currently reserves 6 placement slots for

qualifying school-age females. The home has two rotating sets of foster parents and one director. The general instructional program provides facility-wide services. However, because of the six students' extreme need for academic remediation services, Presbyterian Children's Home utilized private (Huntington Learning Center) tutoring services in reading and mathematics as the instructional program of choice. Regular school staff and volunteers provided the children with scheduled after-school homework time, assistance with special school projects, and reading practice. All six children served in 2003-04 were identified as having special education needs. Although the facility has more than 100 volunteers who offer services throughout the school year on specific projects *only*, there are 30 active volunteers who assist at the home with after-school tutoring, mentoring, transportation to and from regular AISD school activities, cooking, and yard work. Title I funds were used to pay for the contracted services provided by Huntington Learning Center.

FACILITIES FOR DELINQUENT YOUTH

Five facilities for delinquent youth were allocated \$198,880 in Title I Part D funds in 2003-04 based on students reported in the October 2003 caseload. The facilities included The Oaks Treatment Center, Phoenix House, Travis County Juvenile Detention Center, Travis County Leadership Academy, and Turman Halfway House (Texas Youth Commission). Of the funds allocated, approximately 88% (\$175,088) was expended during the year. Most funds (55% or \$96,971) were spent on instructional supplies, materials, and equipment. Forty-one percent (or \$71,516) was spent on payroll, 3% (or \$5,100) on indirect costs and other operating cost, and 1% (or \$1,500) on purchased and contracted services. Students from the AISD attendance area and other Texas school districts are placed in these facilities because of delinquency, and the nature of their placement dictates whether they attend school in a public or secured, in-house setting. These facilities are not required to report individual student level academic data such as test scores or grades on the district's Title I program service report to TEA because these data already are included with all other data reported for the students' home campuses.

During 2003-04, 1,721 youths were served at these facilities using Title I Part D funds. Of the students served, 70% were male, 30% were female; 25% were African American, 50% were Hispanic, 24% were White, and 1% were Asian/Pacific Islander or American Indian/Alaskan Native. A brief summary of survey results from staff at these facilities is presented on the following pages.

Travis County Juvenile Detention Center (TCJDC)

Travis County Juvenile Detention Center (TCJDC) (formerly the Gardner-Betts Juvenile Justice Center) served 1,237 students in grades 4-12 in 2003-04. All students were provided on-site supplementary instruction. The program offered a Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) based curriculum focusing on English, mathematics and reading in content areas during the regular school year. In addition, TCJDC offered an on-site half-day summer program for students at the end of the regular school year that focused on the core subjects. Four teachers were hired to teach the first summer session of 2004. Title I funds were used to provide staff development for the summer school teachers, and to purchase computers, reading materials, graphing calculators, instructional magazines, textbooks, school supplies, and supplementary reading materials. Two students attended AISD's Optional Extended Year Program summer session outside of the facility. Staff from two volunteer agencies, Austin/Travis County Health Department and the Texas Department of Health, provided sexuality/health education for the residents in a series of weekly lessons. Eight hundred thirty-seven (837) students were returned to regular classroom settings during 2003-04.

The Oaks Psychiatric Treatment Center

Youths, ages 5 to 21, live at the Oaks Psychiatric Treatment Center, a year-round group home facility. The teachers, all certified in special education (4 special education and 4 mental health associates), are part of the treatment team for the students. The instructional curriculum provided is individualized to serve students in grades K-12, and includes GED and pre-vocational classes. In addition, there are two summer sessions that allow students to gain credits toward graduation. The residents receive on-site and after-school supplementary instruction tailored to their specific educational needs. The Oaks served 137 students in 2003-04. Title I funds were used to purchase computers, software, workbooks, instructional DVD's and videos, an on-line Princeton Review Educational Program, GED materials, basic school supplies, a lap top computer, and staff development registration fees. The school does not use community volunteers because of confidentiality issues. The school returned 5 students to the regular classroom.

Travis County Juvenile Shelter-Leadership Academy

One hundred seventeen students (94 males and 23 females), ages 13 to 17, were provided on-site instruction, counseling, health, dental, and dropout prevention services, and transitional halfway housing at this facility for delinquent youth. In addition, a support program staff of

caseworkers, probation officers, and round-the-clock house parents offered intensive supervision of residents while they were at the halfway house, attending their home school, or taking GED classes. The Title I-funded program at the Leadership Academy is supervised by the AISD Alternative Learning Center principal. Title I funds were used to purchase materials, supplies, and computers, and to pay the three summer school teachers' salaries. The facility returned 14% or 16 of its registered delinquent youth to Austin ISD regular classrooms.

Phoenix Academy of Austin

Youth, ages 13 to 16, participate in both residential and day-treatment substance abuse recovery programs at the Phoenix Academy. The Title I supplementary instructional program, implemented through the facility's summer session, offers a TEKS-based curriculum designed to bridge the gap between the regular AISD classroom and instructional time spent at the facility. The facility offers course remediation and the regular AISD core curriculum. Thus, the program allows students time for remediation and generation of needed course credits. Four staff (one of whom was a certified teacher) provided instructional services to the targeted students. Courses for credit were targeted during the summer to enable students to increase their credits toward graduation. A remedial program also was offered for middle school students in core subjects to ensure that they passed to the next grade. The Academy served 148 students in 2003-04 and returned 75 students to regular classrooms during the regular school year.

Turman Halfway House

Turman Halfway House or the Texas Youth Commission Facility provides eight weeks of independent living skills classes to its resident offenders. During their stay at the facility, youths, ages 16-21, are required to attend on-site re-socialization counseling groups that address areas related to their individual law-breaking behavior, social skills, goal-setting and plans for success in several areas including education. They are also enrolled in and required to attend various Austin ISD high schools. General education, general education development (GED), and/or career and technology courses are options, depending on individual needs. In 2003-04, Turman Halfway House served 82 youths in guidance and counseling on site. Title I funds were used to purchase technology lab equipment (computers, printers, and supplies), regular school supplies, recreational equipment/supplies, and to pay a consultant for assistance with setting up the technology lab. The technology lab was used during summer school to instruct students in computer operations classes, enhance independent living skills, and facilitate the students'

Success Plans Writing project. Nine community volunteers provided mentoring, tutoring, or Chaplaincy services during the 2003-04 school year.

ACADEMIC PROGRESS FOR STUDENTS IN FACILITIES FOR DELINQUENT YOUTH

Only delinquent facilities were required to complete survey questions on program performance and data sources for the TEA Title I, Part D, Subpart 2 Performance Report submitted by AISD staff. Facility staffs were asked to rate their programs' academic impact on students served. Academic impact measurements were categorized as limited, moderate, or great (representing respectively at least 70%, 80%, or 90% of the students making academic progress). A summary of evaluation responses indicated that staff at one facility, Travis County Juvenile Detention Center, rated program objectives as being 90% effective in meeting the following program objectives:

- 1) help students maintain and improve educational achievement,
- 2) accrue school credits that meet state requirements for grade promotion and secondary school graduation,
- 3) make transition to a regular program or other local education agency (LEA) programs, and
- 4) complete secondary school or equivalency requirements.

The Travis County Juvenile Shelter-Leadership Academy staff rated program impact as 90% and 80% effective respectively for objectives 1 and 2. Turman Halfway House rated program impact as 90% effective in meeting objectives 1-3 and 80% meeting objective 4. Staff at the Phoenix Academy and The Oaks rated program impact as moderate (80%) for all four objectives.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A review of program goals and outcomes, numbers of students served, and program impact ratings indicates that the majority of the facilities funded by Title I have been effective in supporting grant goals and in keeping with AISD's goal to improve student achievement. Collectively the seven facilities served 1,800 students, and returned 933 (52%) of those served to regular AISD classrooms, and graduated 5 students (3 through regular high school graduation plans and 2 through a GED program at Settlement Home) in 2003-04. Although both delinquent and neglected facilities can return students to AISD regular classrooms, only some neglected facilities have graduation programs. Therefore, the numbers reported in Table 1 are for trends in *student graduation at facilities for neglected youth* that have graduation programs and that

received Title I funds over the past four years. Please note that facility participation in the Title I program is optional, and some opt to go in and out of the program as their funding population rises or falls.

Table 1: Number of Students Served and Graduation Trends for AISD Facilities for Neglected Youth with Graduation Programs for 2000-01 Through 2003-04

Year	Facilities for Neglected Youth Graduation Demographics		Total
	Regular	GED	
2000-2001	2	8	10
2001-2002	3	11	14
2002-2003	16	9	25
2003-2004	3	2	5
Total	24	30	54

Data Source: AISD Title I Evaluation Report, 2000-01; AISD Facilities for Neglected or Delinquent Youth Summary Reports: 2001-02, 2002-03, & Program Evaluation Records 2003-04.

Survey results showed that most of the facilities for delinquent youth were supporting the academic progress of students at the 90% or 80% levels of effectiveness. However, review of surveys from three facilities (The Oaks, Phoenix Academy, and Turman Halfway House) showed that staff at these facilities consistently used data source categories, such as Other, Teacher Observations, or Texas Youth Commission statistics and performance measures (of which the latter is unique to Turman Halfway House’s program). These choices of measures (because they are subjective) may have contributed to their rating objectives as having moderate (80%) impact on student achievement in most cases. Because accurate self-reported performance ratings are crucial to program improvement, it is recommended *that staff at all facilities for delinquent youth review and apply consistently the specific existing impact measures to their program objectives (both measures and objectives are defined by TEA) rather than using the less-specific category, Other, to support an objective. This process will help staff provide a more accurate assessment of their facilities’ impact on student success based on a standard of measurement that has been defined for all facilities in Texas.* Also, another concern arose during the review of one of the delinquent facility’s program description, when it used the phrase “vocational education”. This terminology has not been used by the U. S. Department of Labor for several years in the labeling and clustering of selective career and technology education course offerings.

Because the current terminology reflects a more expanded and inclusive description of career and technology education course offerings, *it is recommended that facilities describe the services they offer students using the same terminology as the U. S. Department of Labor. Because the AISD Title I Grant Coordinator already provides staff development for these facilities on a year-round basis, these topics could be added to the current training schedule.*

Because of ongoing staff development and campus visits by the AISD Grant Coordinator, very few problems were encountered during data collection. However, there is a steady turnover in program coordinators or directors. Thus, a third recommendation is that *AISD grant and program evaluation staff continue to work closely with these facilities to keep the data collection process structured so that facility staff will know about, and work routinely to address, required data reporting needs and timelines.*

AUSTIN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Superintendent

Pascal Forgione, Jr., Ph.D.

Office of Accountability

Maria Whitsett, Ph.D.

Department of Program Evaluation

Holly Williams, Ph.D.

Project Supervisor

Martha Doolittle, Ph.D.

Author

Wanda Washington



Board of Trustees

Doyle Valdez, President

Ave Wahrmond, Vice President

Patricia Whiteside, Secretary

Cheryl Bradley

Rudy Montoya, Jr.

Johna H. Edwards

Mark Williams

Robert Schneider

John Fitzpatrick

Austin Independent School District
Department of Program Evaluation
1111 W. Sixth Street
Austin, TX 78703
(512) 414-1724