State Compensatory Education
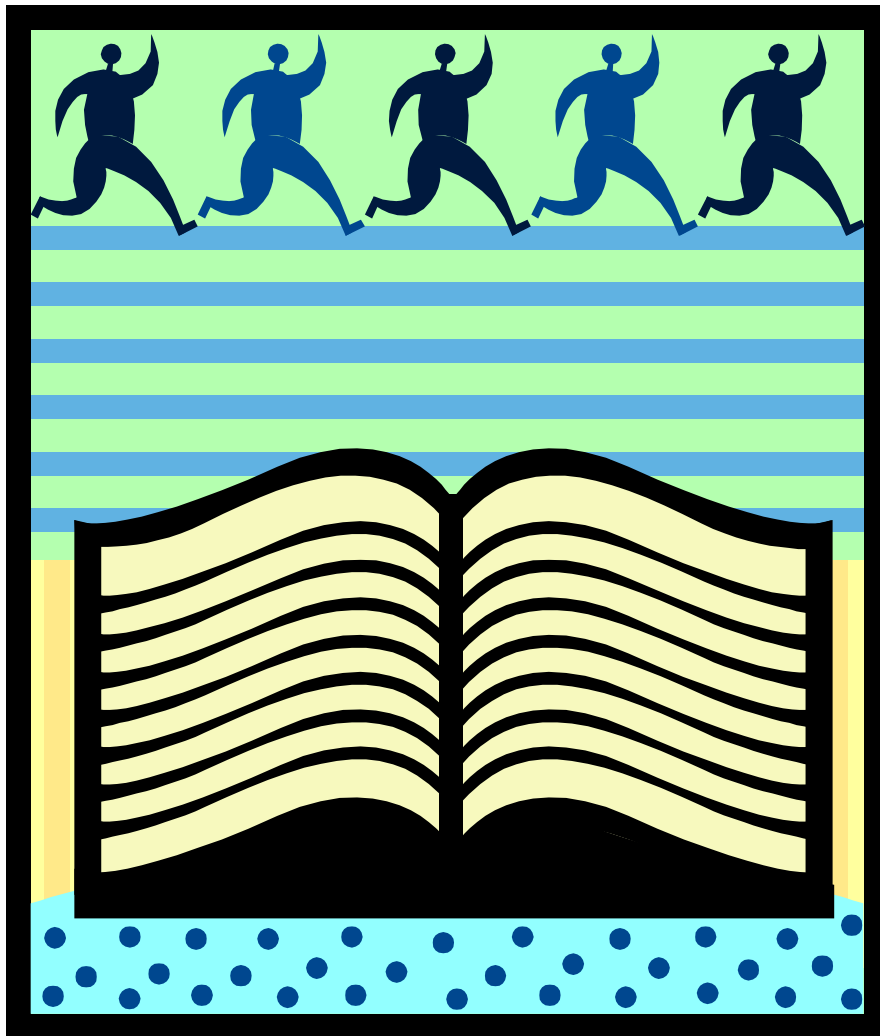
2002-2003 Evaluation Report

AUSTIN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

DEPARTMENT OF PROGRAM EVALUATION

OCTOBER 2003

State Compensatory Education, 2002-2003 Evaluation Report

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

State Compensatory Education (SCE) is a supplemental program with two aims: (a) to reduce the dropout rate and (b) to increase the academic performance of students identified as being at risk of dropping out of school. SCE is described in Subchapter B, Chapter 39 of the Texas Education Code. In 2001, Senate Bill 702 amended the criteria for identifying at-risk students and for measuring the effectiveness of SCE programs. According to the Texas Education Code §29.081, districts must evaluate the effectiveness of SCE programs using two measures, student performance on assessment instruments and rates of high school completion, to show the reduction of any disparity in performances between students at risk of dropping out of school and all other district students. The purpose of SCE is to design and implement an appropriate compensatory, intensive, or accelerated instruction program that enables at-risk students to be performing at grade level at the conclusion of the next regular school term.

SCE funds must be used for programs or services that are supplemental to the regular education program. Also, funds must be allocated in such a way that the indirect cost allotment does not exceed 15%, and no more than 18% is used to fund Disciplinary Alternative Education Programs. SCE funds may be used to support a program eligible under Title I guidelines at campuses where at least 50% of the students are educationally disadvantaged. Austin ISD allocated a total of $25,500,000 for the 2002-03 school year to support a variety of programs and services, and 369.53 full time equivalent positions (FTEs) for staff. This allocation amounts to an approximate cost of $707 per student identified as at-risk.

The most current, available school completion data show that graduation rates among students identified as at-risk and all other students improved from 2001 to 2002. Dropout rates among students in both groups also decreased. Yet the disparity in school completion between at-risk students and all other students increased slightly from 0.7% for the Class of 2001 cohort to 0.9% for the Class of 2002 cohort.

Progress in reducing disparity as shown on state assessment results remains inconclusive due to the differences between the previous state assessment, known as the

Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS), and the new Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), which was administered for the first time in 2003. The TAKS is intended to be more rigorous and conceptual than the TAAS. Differences between these two assessments limit the year-to-year comparisons about performance that are possible from 2002 to 2003. Analyses of TAKS performance at the high school level were also limited because most, but not all, students are required to take the TAKS. Some students were "grandfathered" under the requirement to take and pass the TAAS to graduate. Results for 2003 showed that for each content area of the TAKS, fewer students classified as at-risk met the passing standard than their peers who were not at-risk in 2002-03. This is consistent with prior years' TAAS data.

In addition to providing program descriptions, findings regarding the students served, and general recommendations for all SCE funded services, the Department of Program Evaluation (DPE) evaluated three State Compensatory Education programs exclusively during the 2002-03 school year. Others were assessed without DPE's support. Evaluation results and specific recommendations for Diversified Education through Leadership, Technology, & Academics (DELTA), Visiting Teachers, and the Virtual School Pilot (VSP) are provided in this report. Brief summaries of evaluation findings for each are provided below:

- The 3,025 students in the DELTA program in traditional high schools, ALC, and La Fuente Learning Center earned a total of 2,628 credits in 2002-03.[1] The total number of credits earned in 2002-03 is 35% higher than the total from 2001-02 and shows growth in the number of DELTA credits earned per enrolled student.

- From August 2002 through May 2003, 35 students from 11 campuses participated in the Virtual School Pilot. Students in the VSP completed 70% of the courses they started in the program. Among students who started during 2002-03, 12 students remained in the program at the end of Spring 2003, but 19 withdrew for reasons other than graduation, with most of those reasons due to work or family issues.

- Records indicate that 1,875 students were referred to Visiting Teachers (VTs) in 2002-03. Eighty-nine percent of VT services were provided in the form of home

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[1] Data from Garza Independence High School and Gardner-Betts Juvenile Justice Center were not available from the DELTA database that tracks enrollment and earned credits.

visits, participation in IMPACT teams[2], assistance with medical needs, and participation in Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) committees. In a satisfaction survey of parents and guardians whose children received services from VTs, 80% of parents (*n=56*) reported that they were "completely satisfied" with the services provided by their VT.

As described by Schmitt (2003), problems in tracking students served by some SCE-funded programs remain. Several programs such as DELTA, the Virtual School Pilot, and Visiting Teachers, have data systems in place to track the services provided or the progress of students served by these programs. For other programs, such as tutorials, progress in reducing the achievement gap between identified at-risk students served and others cannot be measured because participating students are not tracked individually. Thus, the extent to which these funds are effective in serving at-risk students remains unclear.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- District and campus staff should review SCE-funded programs to ensure that all SCE programs target at-risk students and that the programs work to help close the achievement gap between at-risk and all other students.

- Tracking efforts could be improved through either use of a single system or creation of adequate means to link student-level data across the current systems.

- The district and/or campus staff should review the expenditures of campus SCE allocations to ensure that campuses are using these funds for materials, staff, and/or programs related to the goals of SCE.

- In the spirit of meeting the legislative goal of SCE-funded programs to help students perform at grade level by the end of the next regular term (Texas Education Code §29.081a.), district staff should add a specific goal of examining the progress of at-risk students served according to this measure.

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[2] IMPACT Teams are solution-focused groups at every AISD campus charged with developing and coordinating prevention and intervention services for students who are at risk of dropping out of school. IMPACT Teams also coordinate delivery of social services to students and their families.

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PART 1: INTRODUCTION

STATE COMPENSATORY EDUCATION

State Compensatory Education (SCE) is a supplemental program designed to eliminate any disparities in: (a) student performance on assessment instruments administered under Subchapter B, Chapter 39 of the Texas Education Code, and (b) the rates of high school completion between students at risk of dropping out of school, as defined by Texas Education Code §29.081, and all other students. SCE funds are designated for designing and implementing an appropriate compensatory, intensive, or accelerated instruction program that enables at-risk students to be performing at grade level at the conclusion of the next regular school term. Districts therefore must identify the needs of at-risk students and examine student performance data resulting from the state assessment instruments. Using this needs assessment, district and campus staff design appropriate strategies to help at-risk students and must include these strategies in the campus and/or district improvement plans.

The district's allotment for SCE is determined in accordance with guidelines from the state's Foundation School Program (Texas Education Code §42.152). The allotment is based on the average of the highest six months' enrollment of students that qualify in the national school lunch program for free- or reduced-price lunches the preceding school year. Districts receive an additional allotment for students without disabilities who reside in residential placement facilities in a district in which the students' parents or guardians do not reside, and also are entitled to receive an allotment for each student who is in a remedial and support program because the student is pregnant or a parent. The district budgeted $25,500,000 for SCE, which supported a variety of programs and 369.53 full-time equivalents (FTEs) for staff in the 2002-03 school year. The district's expenditures on SCE-funded programs amounted to an approximate cost of $707 per student identified as at-risk. Table 1.1 lists the programs and services implemented in the district that were partially or fully supported through SCE in 2002-03.

Table 1.1 Austin ISD State Compensatory Education Budget, 2002-03

Program/Service	Budgeted	FTEs
Alternative Education		
Alternative Learning Center	$1.91 M	41.00
Garza Alternative High School	$ .78 M	13.00
Dill Alternative Center (now ACES)	$ .26 M	6.00
Dropout Prevention		
DELTA (dropout recovery)	$1.58 M	32.00
Dropout Prevention	$1.02M	9.00
Reading		
Reading Recovery	$3.86 M	76.00
Summer Services	$2.32 M	0.00
Social Services		
Elementary School Counselors	$3.43 M	62.00
Communities in Schools	$ .54 M	0.00
Visiting Teachers	$ .47 M	15.00
Non AFL Parent Involvement	$ .15 M	0.00
Campus Allocations		
Account for Learning	$5.89 M	112.71
9th Grade Initiatives	$ .06 M	0.00
Secondary Transition Programs	$ .28 M	0.00
Secondary Tutorials	$ .18 M	0.00
Discipline Programs		
ISS Monitors	$ .55 M	26.00
Student Discipline	$ .35 M	6.00
Other	$2.3 M	0.00
TOTAL	$25.5 M	369.53

Data Source: AISD Office of Budget and Planning

SCE funds must be used for programs or services that are supplemental to the regular education program. They must be allocated in such a way that the indirect cost allotment does not exceed 15%, and no more than 18% of the total allocation is used to

fund Disciplinary Alternative Education Programs. SCE funds may be used to support a program eligible under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, and as provided by Public Law 107-110 at campuses where at least 50% of the students are educationally disadvantaged. For schoolwide programs funded by SCE, a comprehensive description must be provided in each relevant Campus Improvement Plan.

SCE legislation requires schools to develop programs that will meet the needs of at-risk students in order to close the achievement gap between at-risk and non-at-risk students. However, several of AISD's designated programs supply campuses with funds to be used for tutorials and transition activities that target at-risk students. Although these funds are intended to help close the achievement gap between at-risk and non-at-risk students, it is difficult to measure the progress toward this goal for all students served. The extent to which these funds serve at-risk students for the purpose of reducing the achievement gap remains unclear because individual students are not tracked. Efforts are underway to develop tracking systems for most, but not all of these programs, which would improve evaluations of program success.

AT-RISK POPULATION IN AUSTIN ISD, 2002-03

In 2002-03, 46% of AISD students (n=36,060) were identified as at-risk, compared with 52% of students (n=39,685) in 2000-01. Students may be identified as at-risk for any one or more of the indicators listed in Table 1.2. The three most frequent reasons for at-risk identification in 2002-03 were the same as those for 2001-02. In examining statistics related to the at-risk criteria, it is important to note that the percentage of students identified as at-risk increases with each grade level, due to the increased opportunities for meeting the at-risk criteria.

Table 1.2: At-Risk Indicators

At-Risk Indicators	
Most Frequent	• Assessment Related (TAKS or TAAS)
	• Student identified as LEP
	• Retained in one or more grades
Less Frequent	• Student is pregnant or is a parent
	• Currently failing two or more courses (grades 7-12)
	• Failed two or more courses in preceding school year (grades 7-12)
	• Previously reported to have dropped out of school
	• Placement in an Alternative Education program
	• Expelled under Chapter 37 in preceding or current year
	• Parole, probation, Conditional release
	• Did not perform satisfactorily on readiness assessment (Pre-K, K, or grades 1, 2, 3)
	• Student resides in a residential treatment facility
	• Student was homeless in accordance with federal law.
	• In custody or care of DPRS/ referred to DPRS in the current school year

Source: PEIMS Submission Binder, communication with AISD PEIMS coordinator

Table 1.3 shows that American Indian, Asian, African American, and Hispanic students were more often met criteria for being identified as at-risk than would be expected from their overall group representation in the AISD student population. Also, among those students identified as at-risk in 2002-03, 70% were Hispanic. As in 2001-02, Hispanic students comprised the largest ethnic group among at-risk students, and Anglo students comprised the smallest, at 14% of all at-risk students in 2002-03.

Table 1.3: Number and Percentage of AISD Students in Each Ethnic Group Identified as At-Risk and the Overall Ethnic Profile of AISD Students in 2002-03

		American Indian	Asian	African American	Hispanic	White
Students Within Each Ethnic Group Identified as At-Risk	**%**	32%	47%	43%	62%	21%
	n	(67)	(974)	(4,820)	(25,090)	(5109)
All AISD Students by Ethnic Group	**%**	.27%	3%	14%	52%	31%
	n	(211)	(2,100)	(11,294)	(40,605)	(24,398)

Source: Fall 2002 PEIMS Data

TEXAS ASSESSMENT OF KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS (TAKS) PERFORMANCE

Under the legislative requirements of State Compensatory Education, an evaluation must measure the district's progress in decreasing any disparity in performance on achievement assessments between at-risk and all other students. Results from the 2003 TAKS were examined and compared across these two student groups for grades 3 through 10. Table 1.4 shows the percentage of students who met the standard for passing each content area of the TAKS by at-risk status.

Table 1.4: Percentage and Number of AISD Students who Passed Each Content-Area TAKS* by At-Risk Status in 2002-03

	Grade Levels Tested	At-Risk		Not At-Risk	
		%	*n*	%	*n*
Reading; Eng. Lang. Arts	3-9; 10-11	58.4	7,383	90.3	22,114
Mathematics	3-11	48.3	6,029	86.2	20,804
Writing	4, 7	64.4	1,863	93.4	5,731
Science	5, 10, 11	44.8	1,558	82.7	4,296
Social Studies	8, 10, 11	75.2	2,700	94.9	4,674

*Results reflect data for students in grades 3 through 10. Spanish language TAKS data are not included in this table; by definition, all Spanish TAKS takers are LEP, and therefore meet at-risk criteria.
Source: AISD TAKS student records

Four caveats are necessary for interpreting the data in Table 1.4: First, some high school students who are actually required to pass the Texas Assessment of Academic Skill (TAAS) as a graduation requirement may have taken the TAKS, and their results are reflected in Table 1.4. While all 10th and 11th graders were required to take the TAKS, the exit exam required for 11th graders to graduate, and for most repeating 10th graders, was the TAAS test. (Note that data from 11th graders was not included in Figure 1.4.) Students who passed or needed to pass the TAAS for graduation may have had decreased motivation to do well on the TAKS.

Second, because the TAKS content exams are given to specified grade levels across grades 3-11, the comparisons shown in Table 1.4 do not reflect the disparity in achievement for the entire district. For example, an evaluation of the Accelerated

Reading Instruction grant for 2002-03 shows that there was a smaller disparity among third grade students who participated in this reading intervention (who had been identified as at risk for reading below grade level) and AISD third graders as a whole(Curry, 2003). Among third graders who were eligible to take the TAKS, 82% of those in the ARI program passed during the three spring and summer test administrations compared 95% for the district. Note also that in Table 1.4, results labeled "Reading" are for Reading in grades 3-9 and English Language Arts in grade 10.

Third, the data do not reflect scores on the Spanish language version of TAKS. All Spanish test takers are designated limited English proficient, and therefore meet the at-risk criteria. Finally, with the advent of the new state assessment, TAKS in 2003, it is impossible to compare 2003 performance results with previous years using TAAS data because the two assessments differ significantly. Because the TAKS was designed to be more conceptually challenging than the TAAS, statements about progress across school years in reducing the disparity in performance on the state assessment would be unjustified.

SCHOOL COMPLETION

Another major legislative requirement under State Compensatory Education is that an evaluation measure the district's progress in reducing any disparity in the rates of high school completion between students at risk of dropping out of school and all other district students. Data from the Texas Education Agency's publication, *Secondary School Completion and Dropouts in Texas Public Schools: Supplemental District Data* from 2000-01 and 2001-02 were used to make this assessment of progress. As of the completion of this report, data from 2002-03 were not available. At-risk students' graduation, dropout, and school continuation rates in the longitudinal cohorts of the Class of 2001 and Class of 2002 are shown in Table 1.5, and compared with all students in the longitudinal cohorts. From 2001 to 2002, graduation rates for both groups of students increased, and dropout rates decreased. The disparity between students who are at risk of dropping out and students who are not at risk does not appear to be decreasing; the disparity in graduation rates was 0.7% in 2001 and 0.9% in 2002. Additionally, the dropout rates for at-risk students were *lower* than those for all students in both 2001 and

2002. This finding may be related to the greater percentages of at-risk students who
continued high school, and therefore, took more than four years to graduate.

Table 1.5: Graduation, Dropout and Continuation Rates Among At-Risk and Non-At-Risk Students in AISD for the Classes of 2001 and 2002

	2001			2002		
	Percentages of Students who:			*Percentages of Students who:*		
	Graduated	Dropped Out	Continued High School	Graduated	Dropped Out	Continued High School
At-Risk	71.6	8.4	17.1	74.8	6.0	15.9
All Students	72.3	10.7	13.4	75.7	8.9	12.1
Disparity	*-0.7*	*-2.3*	*3.7*	*-0.9*	*-2.9*	*3.8*

Source: Texas Education Agency: Secondary school completion and dropouts in Texas public schools, 2000-01 and 2001-02.

STATE COMPENSATORY EDUCATION PROGRAM EVALUATION, 2002-03

In addition to providing program descriptions and general recommendations for
all SCE-funded services, the Department of Program Evaluation (DPE) evaluated three
State Compensatory Education programs that were not evaluated by other departments in
AISD during the 2002-03 school year. Evaluation results and specific recommendations
for the Diversified Education through Leadership, Technology, & Academics (DELTA)
program, the Virtual Schools Pilot, and Visiting Teachers program are provided in this
report. Some SCE programs were evaluated only on the basis of overall program goals
for at-risk students and all others in the 2002-03 school year; these include a variety of
campus allocations that either proved difficult to examine for effectiveness, or were
evaluated in 2001-2002 (Schmitt, 2003).

PART 2: SPECIFIC PROGRAMS EVALUATED BY THE AISD DEPARTMENT OF PROGRAM EVALUATION IN 2002-03

DIVERSIFIED EDUCATION THROUGH LEADERSHIP, TECHNOLOGY, & ACADEMICS (DELTA)

DELTA is a dropout prevention and course credit recovery program that has been in place since 1995 in AISD. It is an open-entry, open-exit program that employs individualized and self-paced instruction through the use of NovaNET computer software to deliver a TEKS-aligned curriculum. The purpose of DELTA is to assist students in earning credits and passing the state assessment. DELTA is targeted at students aged 14-21 who have already dropped out or are at risk of dropping out of high school. Through computer-based coursework supplemented by a variety of assignments and projects, students may complete high school courses and earn credits, thereby allowing students a route to graduation that fits the scheduling requirements of those who might otherwise drop out of school. Students may pace themselves and work a maximum of 20 hours per week in the DELTA lab. DELTA also affords students the option of accelerating course completion and earning multiple credits in a short amount of time. DELTA has served an increasing number of students each year and has helped more than 4,500 students earn high school diplomas. In 2002-03, DELTA received a State Compensatory Education allocation of $1,581,652, compared with $1,710,000 in 2001-02.

Teachers and computer lab assistants receive NovaNET training and meet regularly with program managers to ensure the delivery of a quality curriculum. Program managers, with feedback from teachers, review the curriculum to ensure that it meets state and local requirements each year. DELTA is funded through State Compensatory Education and additional sources such as 9th Grade Bridges to Success, Title I, Dropout Prevention, and others. DELTA is available at every traditional AISD high school campus, Gonzalo Garza Independence High School, the Alternative Learning Center (ALC), the Gardner-Betts Leadership Academy, and La Fuente Learning Center at Cristo Rey Catholic Church. As in 2001-02, the DELTA curriculum also was used to serve a small number of students at home through the Virtual School Pilot (VSP), as described in this report starting on page 14. This evaluation describes the progress of students served through high school DELTA labs, ALC, and the La Fuente Learning Center. Findings

from the program at Garza High School are discussed separately below and in the section entitled Alternative Education Programs.

STUDENTS SERVED

According to teacher records, DELTA served 3,011 students in the 11 traditional high schools and the Alternative Learning Center (ALC), plus 14 students at La Fuente Learning Center for a total of 3,025 students served during the 2002-03 regular school year.[3] The enrollment in 2002-03 represents a 12% increase from the enrollment in 2001-02. A total of 858 DELTA students graduated during the 2002-03 school year, comprising 28% of all 2002-03 DELTA students. Of the seniors served in DELTA during the 2002-03 school year, 64% graduated from high school during Spring 2003 or before. Preliminary reports from DELTA staff show that an additional 116 students graduated during Summer 2003.

Table 2.1: Number of Students Served and Number and Percentage of DELTA Students who Graduated, 1995-2003

Year	Number of Students Served Aug. - May	High School Graduates	% of DELTA Graduates Aug.-June
2002-2003	3,025	858	28%
2001-2002	2,706	827	31%
2000-2001	2,313	602	26%
1999-2000	1,946	601	31%
1998-99	1,711	523	30%
1997-98	1,624	568	35%
1996-97	1,518	403	27%
1995-96	987	310	31%

Note: Number of graduates does not include students at Garza Independence High School due to inadequate identification methods for DELTA students at Garza. *Sources: 2002-03 Teacher reports, 2001-02 SCE Evaluation (Schmitt, 2003) and DELTA Fifth Year Implementation report (Keswick, 2000)*

Table 2.2 shows that over the past five years, the percentages of freshmen and seniors served has decreased slightly (four percentage points each since 1997-98), while the percentages of sophomores and juniors served has increased by three and four percentage points, respectively, since 1997-98.

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[3] Data for Summer school 2003 students were not available at the time this report was prepared.

Table 2.2: Percentage and Number of DELTA Students in Each Grade Level
Since 1997-98

Grade Level	School Year*				
	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2001-02	2002-03
9th Grade	18% (299)	16% (273)	16% (310)	12% (299)	14% (425)
10th Grade	15% (237)	17% (296)	17% (325)	19% (466)	18% (550)
11th Grade	18% (297)	20% (351)	23% (430)	22% (524)	22% (663)
12th Grade	49% (791)	45% (783)	43% (828)	47% (1127)	45% (1351)

*2000-01 data are not available due to changes in data collection for DELTA that year.
Note: Totals by grade are as of the end of the school year. Due to reporting errors, totals
do not match total number of students served.
*Sources: 2002-03 AISD Student Records, 2001-02 SCE Evaluation (Schmitt, 2003) and
DELTA Fifth Year Implementation report (Keswick, 2000)*

Table 2.3 shows that from 1997-98 to 2002-03, the percentage of students in
DELTA who are classified as Limited English Proficient (LEP) grew from 4% in 1997-
98 to 12% in 2002-03. The percentage of LEP students in DELTA is comparable to the
percentage of LEP students in the districtwide high school population, which is 10%
overall, but ranges from 14% at the 9th grade level to 6% at the 12th grade level. The
percentage of DELTA students who meet the qualification criteria for the federal free or
reduced-price lunch program increased overall from 36% in 1997-98 to 43% in 2002-03.
Appendix A1 shows a longitudinal account from 1997-98 through 2002-03 of DELTA
students by ethnicity. The percentages of DELTA students by ethnic group did not
change significantly from 2001-02. Since 1997-98, however, the percentage of Hispanic
students in DELTA increased such that they comprised over half (54%) of the DELTA
student group in 2002-03. The percentages of African American and White students in
DELTA during 2002-03 were 23% and 22%, respectively.

Table 2.3: Number and Percentage of Students Identified as Limited English Proficient, or Low Income Since 1997-98

Identification	School Year*				
	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2001-02	2002-03
Limited English Proficient	4% (66)	3% (51)	5% (91)	11% (271)	12% (349)
Economically Disadvantaged	36% (584)	35% (600)	25% (479)	38%[†] (746)	43% (1288)

*2000-01 data are not available due to changes in data collection for DELTA that year.
[†] This figure was recalculated from that reported by Schmitt, 2003.
Note: Totals by grade are as of the end of the school year. Due to reporting errors, totals do not match total number of students served.
Sources: 2002-03 AISD Student Records, 2001-02 SCE Evaluation (Schmitt, 2003), and DELTA Fifth Year Implementation report (Keswick, 2000)

CREDITS EARNED

Table 2.4 shows that students in traditional high schools, ALC, and La Fuente Learning Center earned a total of 2628 credits through DELTA, 87% of which were earned in English, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science/Health courses. The total number of credits earned in 2002-03 is 35% higher than the total in 2001-02, and shows growth in the number of DELTA credits earned per enrolled student. In 2002-03, 87% percent of students enrolled in DELTA earned credits; for 2001-02, 72% of students earned credits. Appendix A2 shows DELTA credit information by course in more detail.

Table 2.4: DELTA Credits Earned at Traditional High Schools, 2002-03 and 2001-02

Subject Area	2002-03		2001-02	
	Number of Credits Earned	% of Total Credits	Number of Credits Earned	% of Total Credits
English	723.5	28%	500.5	26%
Mathematics	494	19%	434	22%
Social Studies	769	29%	559	29%
Science/Health	307	12%	226.5	12%
Electives	334.5	13%	227	12%
Total Credits Earned	2628	100%	1947	100%

Source: DELTA teacher reports, 2001-02; 2001-02 State Compensatory Education Evaluation Report (Schmitt, 2003)

Starting in 2002-03, students who were in 8th grade or lower on January 1, 2001 are required to take the new state assessment, the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), as part of their graduation requirements. Given that the TAKS was administered for the first time in 2002-03 and TAAS, the previous state assessment, differed significantly, longitudinal comparisons of DELTA students are not possible. Most significantly, none of the high school students in 2002-03 were under the requirement to pass the exit level TAKS that year in order to graduate. As described in this report's introduction, the Texas Education Agency administered the TAKS to all 10th and 11th grade students in 2002-03, regardless of whether TAAS or TAKS were part of their graduation requirements, to obtain more information about the new test. Students who may have already passed the TAAS for graduation may have had less incentive to perform well on the TAKS, and they may not have been prepared for the different rigors of the TAKS. Therefore, the performance of DELTA students on the TAKS, as compared with their non-DELTA peers, would not accurately reflect outcomes due to the DELTA program.

LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (LEP) DELTA STUDENTS

In the 2001-02 State Compensatory Education evaluation report, Schmitt (2003) described the effectiveness of DELTA with students of limited English proficiency (LEP) in terms of credits earned. In 2001-02, the percentage of LEP students earning credits through DELTA at traditional high schools (48%) closely resembled the percentage of non-LEP students at traditional high schools (52%) who earned credits through DELTA. In 2002-03, LEP students comprised 13% of the DELTA participants in 2002-03, and non-LEP students comprised 87%. In a statistical comparison of expected and actual credits earned, LEP students would be expected to earn 13% of all credits. In 2002-03 LEP students earned 14% of all credits, and non-LEP students earned 86%. This finding suggests that LEP students are able to succeed in DELTA, as shown by course credits earned, at the same rate that non-LEP students currently demonstrate.

GARZA INDEPENDENCE HIGH SCHOOL DELTA STUDENTS

Students served at Garza by the DELTA program are difficult for staff to identify as a separate group because students throughout the high school may use NovaNET resources as a supplement to their course work, without adhering to the full DELTA curriculum. Additionally, because of the supplemental use of DELTA, Garza students

are not registered with the AISD course ID number for DELTA; consequently, DELTA course credits cannot be systematically analyzed. Student data from Garza were therefore analyzed separately. According to teacher and registrar records at Garza, DELTA served approximately 35% of the students who graduated in 2002-03 and Summer 2003 combined. Table 2.5 shows the number of Garza High School graduates who participated in DELTA.

Table 2.5: 2002-03 Garza Independence High School Graduates Utilizing the DELTA Curriculum

Garza HS Graduates	Number of DELTA Students	Percentage
August 2002—May 2003 (*n*=129 graduates)	42	33%
Summer 2003 (*n*=36 graduates)	15	42%
Total (*n*=165)	*57*	*35%*

Source: Garza High School Registrar and DELTA Staff

DATA INTEGRITY ISSUES

Issues related to the tracking of DELTA students and course credits earned through the program remain. Austin ISD currently maintains a DELTA course ID number for scheduling purposes. As described by Schmitt (2003), the DELTA course ID number has not been used consistently for all DELTA students, and as such, has not been sufficient for tracking DELTA students. Moreover, revisions to the district's Course Master that are underway for 2003-04 will very likely affect DELTA course ID numbers. Alternatively, DELTA students and course credits are tracked through a separate DELTA database. In this database, teachers are required to submit data continuously for each student throughout the school year. Although generally accurate, teacher reports occasionally include incorrect student ID numbers or other incomplete information. In addition to these issues, current DELTA data are incomplete due the lack of information provided regarding DELTA participants at Garza, as explained above.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Future evaluations of the DELTA program should include an analysis of TAKS performance by DELTA students with a suitable comparison group. Also, the TAKS analysis should take into account the content area that represents the DELTA course subjects in which students earned credits.

- Improve the DELTA database by implementing student ID verification and other database mechanisms that will help ensure quality data.

VIRTUAL SCHOOL PILOT

Texas Senate Bill 975, passed in 2001, called for the establishment of a pilot program under which school districts could offer electronic courses to students. The program, dubbed the Virtual School Pilot (VSP), would target districts with higher than average numbers of at-risk students, dropouts, or underserved gifted and talented students. The purpose of the VSP is two-fold, according to the Texas Education Agency (TEA). First, the VSP allows TEA to collect information about the costs and benefits to districts and students of offering electronic courses. Second, the VSP provides a mechanism for districts to access funding through the state's Foundation School Program (FSP) for students who might not otherwise generate state funding.[4] As a pilot program, the VSP was mandated to expire in September 2003, but has been re-authorized under SB1108, Texas Education Code, §29.909. Under SB 1108, districts may be entitled to funding based on the average daily attendance (ADA) of a student based on several factors including hours of contact and course completion, but also a "method approved by the commissioner," which may possibly leave funding in question.

As in the 2001-02 school year, Austin ISD continued its participation in the VSP during 2002-03. The district's objectives in participating in the VSP were to provide supplemental academic support for students at risk of dropping out and increase school completion. Austin ISD received no state funding for administering the VSP, but did receive a waiver from attendance accounting standards. The district's program managers notified high school campus and DELTA staff about the VSP program and the guidelines

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[4] According to Austin ISD's VSP program manager, TEA's subsequent changes to requirements for accessing state funding would have required the district to incur costs that were not previously budgeted; as a result, the district did not receive FSP funds for its students in the VSP.

for identifying students who might benefit. Campus administrators, counselors, or visiting teachers could refer students to VSP. (See the evaluation section about Visiting Teachers below.) Students were then required to apply for entry to the program through the Department of School Support Services. Priority was given to students who met any of the following criteria:

- currently receiving pregnancy related services;
- working full-time for economic reasons;
- having special/extenuating circumstances that prevent school attendance
- lacking day care (for parenting teens);
- being placed on the Johnston or Reagan High School leaver list[5]; or
- holding 15 or more credits and needing additional support to graduate.

Laptop computers were provided by Computers for Learning, a local organization that distributes refurbished computers, and Internet access was donated by Grande Communications. Students accessed the DELTA curriculum via computer from their homes and met with the VSP teachers at least once per week. Students were required to do at least 15 hours of schoolwork per week or risk dismissal from the VSP. Two teachers were assigned to work with the approximately 20 students who were participating in the program at any given time.

STUDENTS SERVED AND CREDITS EARNED

From August 2002 through May 2003, 35 students from 11 campuses participated in the Virtual School Pilot. Of the 35 students, three graduated and one had a graduation pending her passing the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS). Twelve students were still enrolled in courses through the VSP at the end of the Spring 2003 semester, and 19 withdrew for reasons other than graduation, as shown in Table 2.6. Most of the students who withdrew did so due to work or family issues, suggesting that this group of students continues to face serious challenges to school completion even though course materials and assistance were available in their homes.

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[5] The original proposal for VSP included the goal of reducing the number of students on the leaver lists at Johnston and Reagan High Schools. For 2003-04, this criterion has been eliminated.

Table 2.6: VSP Student Withdrawals for Reasons other than Graduation, 2002-03

Withdrawal Reason	Number of VSP Student Withdrawals
Work/Family Issues	11
Enrolled at Another Campus	4
Not Meeting VSP Guidelines	3
Health Issues	1
TOTAL	**19**

Source: VSP Teacher Data, 2002-03

Table 2.7 shows the number of courses started and completed by students during 2002-03 and Summer 2003, plus the number of credits earned by subject area. Of the courses started by VSP students, 70% were completed. The greatest number of credits earned were in English courses followed by courses in Social Studies.

Table 2.7: VSP Credits Earned, 2002-03 and Summer 2003

Subject Area	Number of Courses Started	Number of Courses Completed	Number of Credits Earned* 2002-03 School Year	Number of Credits Earned* Summer 2003
English	35	28	14	3
Social Studies	24	14	7	3.5
Mathematics	18	11	7.5	2
Electives	4	4	2	3
TOTAL	**81**	**57**	**30.5**	**11.5**

*Note that courses completed were often worth .5 credits.
Source: VSP Teacher Data, 2002-03

RECOMMENDATIONS

- District staff should continue to monitor the VSP program for effectiveness in terms of credits earned and school completion.

- Future evaluations should examine more closely the factors related to work and family that cause students to withdraw from the VSP so that these issues may be addressed if possible.

- District leaders should lobby for definitive and effective funding of VSP through state resources, including funding through the average daily attendance formula, given VSP's preliminary record of helping students complete most of the courses they begin, and ultimately earn credits toward graduation.

VISITING TEACHERS

The Visiting Teacher program provides a team of professionals that serve all AISD schools to help students with problems related to academic, social, and emotional adjustment. The goal of the visiting teacher program is to provide assistance that will minimize barriers that impact students' academic success and well-being. Visiting Teachers (VTs) serve in a social worker/counselor capacity to maintain and improve communications and relationships between families and schools and to provide a variety of services to families with children who are having difficulty at school or at home. VTs are licensed social workers or professional counselors with Masters degrees in counseling, social work, psychology, or education; many hold both an advanced degree and professional license. As the liaison between school, home, and community resources, the VT addresses a range of issues in a variety of ways. VTs consult with both school and support staff regarding individual student needs such as medical, emotional, economic, academic, and counseling needs. They provide direct, confidential crisis counseling services for students as needed and routinely make home visits to counsel families. They serve as facilitators, speakers, or consultants at various parent, student, or other discussion groups and serve on community boards and in professional groups.

VTs receive referrals from a variety of sources including students, parents, school staff, and community agencies. They are assigned to schools according to district feeder patterns in order to maintain consistency with students throughout their school progression. See Table B1 in Appendix B for a list of issues that Visiting Teachers commonly address. In 2002-03, the VT program received an allocation of approximately $530,000 from the State Compensatory Education budget, similar to the program's budget in 2001-02. The budget included funding for 18 VTs including full- and part-time positions, and partially funded the salary of the program manager.

CLIENTS SERVED

Records indicate that 1,875 students were referred to VTs in 2002-03. Table 2.1 shows the service categories and percentage of overall services provided in 2002-03. Note that more than one type of service may be provided to individual students. Eighty-nine percent of VT services were provided in the categories of home visits, participation in school support meetings such as those involving IMPACT teams, assistance with medical needs, and participation in Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) committees.

Table 2.8: Number and Percentage of Services Provided by Visiting Teachers by Category for 2002-03

Service Category	Number of VT Services Provided	Percentage of VT Services Provided
Home Visits/Family Contacts	4590	53.0%
School Support Meetings (Impact/LST)	1527	17.6%
Medical Needs (Medical/Dental/Mental Health/Vision & Hearing)	1018	11.7%
ARDs	567	6.5%
Basic Needs (Food/Shelter/Clothing/Child Care)	348	4.0%
Student Removed from School--Leaver	152	1.8%
Campus/Family Crisis Intervention Support	120	1.4%
Facilitator/Professional Development	99	1.1%
Community Meetings	82	0.9%
Social Histories	64	0.7%
Court Appearance	63	0.7%
Community Contracts	19	0.2%
LearningWalks	17	0.2%
TOTAL	8666	100%

Data Source: Visiting Teacher Service Logs, 2002-03

CLIENT SURVEY

To examine the level of satisfaction with VT services among parents of students who were referred, a survey was conducted with parents who received a home visit from a VT. [†] (See endnote on page 21 regarding the VT survey.) Visiting teachers delivered stamped, addressed survey cards to parents of elementary and secondary students when they made home visits from October 2002 to March 2003. Postcards given to parents

were in either English or Spanish, as appropriate, and parents were asked to complete the survey card and return it through the mail to the district's Office of Program of Evaluation. More surveys distributed by the larger team of VTs were returned this year compared to last year. Clients of 16 of the 18 visiting teachers returned survey cards in 2002-03, for a total of 71 surveys representing 43 schools (23 elementary and 20 middle and high schools). First-time clients in 2002-03 represented 79% of the sample.

Eighty percent of parents (*n=56*) reported that they were "completely satisfied" with the services provided by their VT. None of the respondents indicated that they were dissatisfied. Seven parents added written comments to the bottom of the postcards about individual VTs who assisted them, all of which were positive; one parent even attached a handwritten letter. Among parents of elementary students, 78% (*n=29*) reported affirmatively that their children were doing better or were more comfortable at school since the VT worked with the family; one responded negatively, and 19% (*n=7*) did not respond to this question. Among parents of secondary students, 67% (*n=22*) agreed (and none disagreed) that the visiting teacher helped their child stay in school, while 9% (*n=3*) were neutral, and 24% (*n=8*) did not respond. Finally, all 71 respondents reported on the survey that they would recommend the VT service. (See Appendix B for a detailed description of survey results.)

STAFF SURVEY

In Winter of 2003, 332 teachers, campus professionals and administrators responded to a survey on the district's Employee Coordinated Survey about the effectiveness of the services provided by VTs. Among administrators who responded (*n=33*), 76% agreed[6] that the services provided by the school's VT help to minimize student problems that interfere with school success. This result is statistically similar to the 84% who agreed with the same statement in 2002. Only 9% of administrators disagreed with the statement in 2003, as was the case in 2002. Although these results suggest that school administrators are largely satisfied with the services provided by their assigned VT, a finding among teachers on this question showed that many may be unfamiliar with the services of visiting teachers. Forty-two percent (*n=86*) of the 207

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[6] In descriptions of the staff survey results, responses of "agree" or "strongly agree" have been collapsed as "agree," similar to responses of "disagree" and "strongly disagree" responses that were collapsed as "disagree."

elementary teachers who responded and 56% (*n=25*) of 45 secondary level teachers reported that they "don't know" about the effectiveness of VTs in minimizing student problems that affect school success (Figure 2.4). From the "*don't know*" response to this question, teachers may have been uncertain either about VT's effectiveness or about the services that VTs can provide, or both. Also, if teachers do not know which students are served by VTs, or how many, teachers may feel unable to respond to a survey question about program outcomes related to minimizing student problems.

Figure 2.4: Ratings of the Statement: "*Services Provided by the Visiting Teacher Assigned to my School Help Minimize Student Problems that Affect School Success*" by Administrators and Teachers

Administrators (n=33)

Don't
Know
3%
Agree
76%
Disagree
9%
Neutral
12%

Teachers (n=252)

Don't Know
44%
Agree
30%
Neutral
18%
Disagree
8%
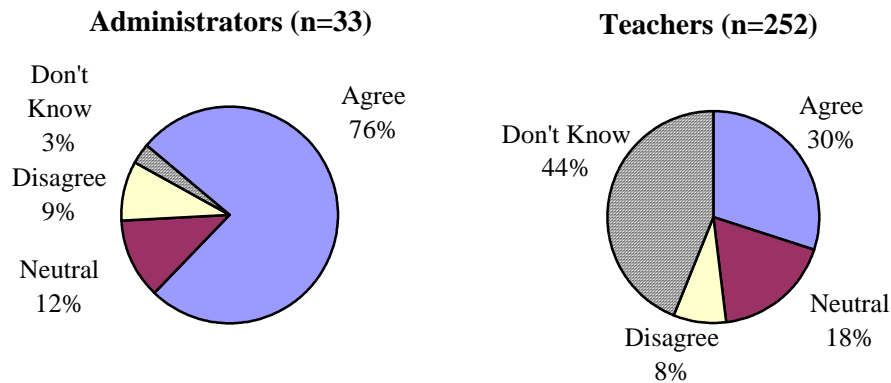
Source: 2003 AISD Employee Coordinated Survey

CONCLUSIONS

Responses to the VT client and campus staff surveys indicate that both groups are satisfied with the services provided by the visiting teachers. Parents reported that VTs have been instrumental in helping elementary children adjust positively to school and for helping secondary students remain in school. As was the case last year, however, the survey did not identify clients' reasons for satisfaction and suggestions for improvement. The survey of campus staff showed that administrators believe VTs are effective at minimizing student problems that affect school success, but also suggested teachers (especially at the secondary level) were not knowledgeable about how VTs served students, nor of how well the students were served. Finally, VTs have continued to document information about students and families they serve, but student ID numbers are not connected systematically to the services provided. Evaluation of the program's impact on student outcomes is therefore difficult.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Campus administrators should make teachers aware of the VT program as another resource available to their campus' student body.

- Visiting Teachers and program staff should track individual students and the services provided (including the students' ID numbers) to better evaluate the impact of specific VT services on students. In this way, services provided can be evaluated separately, and program managers and staff might enhance their decisions about how best to help students in the future.

- To gather comprehensive information about the services provided, an array of survey methods should be used in the future. Students' families, for example, could be contacted by telephone or in a personal interview to ask open-ended questions.

- Improve survey questions aimed at clients and campus staff. Ideas for improvement and reasons for satisfaction with VT's services could be solicited from students' families. Campus staff should be asked on the Employee Coordinated Survey if they are familiar with the VT program before being asked to assess the quality of services.

END NOTE

[†] The State Compensatory Education evaluation report for 2001-02 (Schmitt, 2003) recommended that a representative sample of Visiting Teacher clients be surveyed about their perceptions of the VT program. In addition to the sample drawn through home visits, a second random sample of 180 clients who had not been visited at home during 2002-03 was selected. Eighteen surveys (10% of the sample) were returned as undeliverable due to incorrect addresses. Only nine postcards were completed and returned, yielding a response rate of 5%. Although data from this group were statistically similar to those from respondents who received surveys from VTs, these data were eliminated due to the markedly weak response rate. Reasons for the low response rate of the families of students referred may be related to the high mobility rate (as documented in student records), coupled with the personal issues faced by the families that can lead to referrals to the VT program. Handing the survey cards directly to clients in a home visit, as was done in 2001-02 and 2002-03 by VTs, appeared to yield higher response rates than the mailed survey.

PART 3: ADDITIONAL AISD STATE COMPENSATORY EDUCATION PROGRAMS

A total of 12 SCE-funded programs are described in this report section. The first two are part of the district's alternative and disciplinary alternative education programs. The next six programs are coordinated by the district to address a particular goal (e.g., improved reading instruction, dropout prevention and reduction, or decreased student absenteeism). In some cases, these programs are administered in conjunction with outside agencies, such as Communities in Schools or the Travis County Constables. The last four programs are administered on the campuses that receive allocations through SCE; these programs aim to improve student academic achievement and progress.

ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

GONZALO GARZA INDEPENDENCE HIGH SCHOOL (GARZA)

In 2002-03, Gonzalo Garza Independence High School (Garza) received an SCE allocation of $776,000. Garza is the district's sole non-disciplinary alternative high school and has been in operation since Spring 1997. Garza's non-traditional approach to learning is characterized by an integrated, inter-disciplinary curriculum that is problem- and project-based and enhanced by access to technology. Students at Garza complete all their coursework independently and at their own pace. Students attend school in four hour blocks of time in the morning, afternoon, or evening and are given the opportunity to choose among three levels of rigor in the curriculum. Within these levels students can choose, for example, between taking a final exam or creating a portfolio of their work.

Garza teachers participate in professional development throughout the school year. Up until 2003, the Texas Education Agency's Office of Alternative Education Accountability annually conducted evaluations of Garza as part of the state's accountability system. In the last available state ratings from 2002, Garza received a rating of "AE: Acceptable" from the Texas Education Agency. Garza's preliminary 2003 Adequate Yearly Progress status is *status pending* due to the small numbers analyses to be calculated by TEA.

ALTERNATIVE LEARNING CENTER (ALC)

In 2002-03, the Alternative Learning Center (ALC) received an SCE allocation of $1,909,000. The purpose of the ALC is to provide an alternative educational placement (AEP) for middle or high school students assigned as a consequence of inappropriate behavior as defined by the district's Code of Conduct, campus rules, or the Texas Education Code §37.006. Students may be sent to the ALC to complete a regular or special program, or they may be sent for a specific extended period of time.

The ALC program focuses on teaching students appropriate behavior and providing opportunities to practice this behavior in a group setting engaging in cooperative activities. Strengthening academic skills to bring students to grade-level proficiency is another major goal of the program. Student success is defined as the successful reintegration of students into their home schools with the behaviors, knowledge, and skills necessary to succeed.

OTHER PROGRAMS

SUMMER PROGRAMS

A total of $2.3 million in State Compensatory Education funds were used in 2002-03 to support a number of summer programs such as those described below:

- Bilingual summer school targeted pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students who were eligible for bilingual/ESL instructional services. The month-long program is designed to improve language and literacy skills.

- S.O.A.R. provided reading and literacy skills intervention to students entering grades 1-3. Students were identified based on their performance on the *Texas Primary Reading Inventory* (TPRI) and *Developmental Reading Assessment* (DRA). The 21-day summer program utilizes an individualized balanced literacy plan, including reading aloud to students, shared reading and writing, interactive writing, word study, guided reading, and independent reading. The 2002-03 S.O.A.R. Evaluation, conducted by the AISD Department of Program Evaluation, will be described in the evaluation report on Accelerated Reading Instruction (ARI), and will be available online in Fall 2003.

- SUCCESS offers students who have completed grades 3-5 the opportunity to advance their skills in reading and/or math. Students who have not passed

TAAS reading, writing, or mathematics or who are at risk of being retained
are eligible to attend SUCCESS. SUCCESS is evaluated by the AISD
Department of Program Evaluation as part of the annual Optional Extended
Year Program Summary.

Both the Accelerated Reading Instruction and SUCCESS reports may be accessed
online at the following address: http://www.austin.isd.tenet.edu/about/
accountability/ope/reports.phtml.

READING RECOVERY

In 2002-03, Reading Recovery received a SCE allocation of $3,860,045 and
served 811 students. Reading Recovery is an early intervention program targeted at first
grade students who are having the most difficulty learning to read (the lowest 20%-33%
in reading skills). The goal of the program is to help students develop effective reading
and writing strategies so that they can work within the range of average reading levels in
the regular classroom. Reading Recovery teachers assess referred students' text reading
level with the *Observation Survey* to identify those most in need of Reading Recovery.

All elementary campuses are assigned a literacy support specialist who is trained
in Reading Recovery. These specialists are supervised by Reading Recovery Teacher
Leaders, who oversee the literacy support program and train Reading Recovery teachers.
Teacher Leaders must complete a year of training at a Reading Recovery training site to
be certified. Professional development for teachers begins with a year of graduate level
study and is followed by ongoing training in succeeding years. The Reading Recovery
Council of North America conducts an annual evaluation through the National Data
Evaluation Center (www.readingrecovery.org). Teacher Leaders and administrators at
every site systematically collect and report data on every child. Each site receives
evaluation results that may be used in local decision making.

COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS (CIS)

In 2002-03, Communities in School (CIS) received a SCE allocation of $540,000.
In addition, CIS was able to garner additional resources to enhance the services provided
to AISD students. CIS leveraged additional funds from its own grants, contracts, and
donations, plus in-kind volunteers, university interns, and professional services. CIS
provides school-based social services at 29 campuses and the Home Instructional

Program for Pre-School Youngsters (HIPPY) at 3 elementary schools. The HIPPY program is targeted at parents of pre-kindergarten students. A Parent Educator meets once a week to help guide parents in how they can prepare their children for school. The other programs offered by CIS enhance social services at schools to better enable at-risk students to benefit from instruction. Selected schools have high levels of risk in the following categories: percentage of students passing TAAS or TAKS, attendance, percentage of students on the free or reduced-price lunch program, and percentage of students disciplined. CIS provides each campus with a social worker program manager and may provide additional staff including Americorp workers, caseworkers, interns, and volunteers who help with tutoring, mentoring, and serve as class aides.

The CIS program manager and AISD campus staff jointly develop a program plan that describes the needs of students and services to be provided by CIS. With approval by the campus principal, this program plan becomes part of the Campus Improvement Plan and is updated throughout the year. CIS staff attend meetings, trainings, and planning days that amount to approximately 16 hours per month. CIS provides campus and districtwide reports at the end of each school year. These reports indicate the number of students receiving services at each campus and information about the academic, behavioral, and attendance improvements among the students served. Graduation rates and improvements in reducing the dropout rate also are monitored by CIS.

COORDINATION OF DROPOUT INTERVENTION

For the last three school years, the District Improvement Plan (DIP) has included specific goals related to dropout prevention and reduction. In 2002-03, the DIP's Annual Performance Objectives included a goal of reducing dropouts among all students to 1.2% or less. This target compares to a 2001-02 goal of reducing the dropout rate to 1.9% or less for all students, and an actual rate of 1.5%.

Approximately $1.02 million in SCE funds were allocated to dropout prevention efforts in 2002-03. SCE resources for dropout intervention funded dropout coordinators and a variety of programs and services during the school year and summer that are designed to reduce the number of dropouts. Services and programs included summer reading programs, DELTA, the Absent Student Assistance Program (described below) and parent involvement resources and training.

ABSENT STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (ASAP)

The Absent Student Assistance Program (ASAP) is funded by SCE for dropout prevention and intervention efforts. ASAP is a seven-year-old collaborative effort between AISD and the Travis County Constables. Its purposes are to improve school attendance by notifying parents when their children are absent, keep students in school, and prevent their involvement with the juvenile justice system. ASAP also is a valuable resource in preventing a student from dropping out of school. All AISD schools are expected to utilize ASAP for Grades 1 through 9.

In 2002-03, modifications to ASAP were implemented to utilize funds more effectively. These changes included the following:

- Hire five attendance specialists to provide training, coordinate activities, and provide direct services to five high school campuses with the highest need.
- Purchase and install messaging machines for each secondary campus to enhance the timely notification of parents about a student's absence.
- Target Constables' visits on a more deliberate basis, for example, at the request of the campus IMPACT Team after a visit with the student and parent or guardian has occurred or been attempted by district personnel.
- Bring the AISD Police Department, the City of Austin Police Department, and the Constables together for "sweeps" to be conducted by Constables in high need areas to return students to school and/or link them with the assessment center.
- Increase funding for the Truancy Court Master Pilot Program at Travis High and Mendez Middle Schools to expand the program to all grade levels. The expansion would allow program managers to seek grant funding for extending the pilot program to other district campuses.
- Design and implement a campaign to educate students and their families about compulsory education requirements and create a districtwide awards program focused on attendance.

During the 2002-03 school year, the AISD Dropout Prevention and Reduction Coordinator tracked a variety of indicators of ASAP's success including dropout numbers, attendance rates, number of visits by Constables, and truancy court docket sizes and processing times.

IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION (ISS) MONITORS & AFTER SCHOOL DETENTION

In 2002-03, In-School Suspension (ISS) monitors received a SCE allocation of $547,000. ISS monitors are provided to each secondary campus to operate campus-based in-school suspension centers as an alternative to removal to the ALC. Through ISS, minor discipline infractions are addressed without removal from campus for an extended period of time, and students continue to receive instruction in each course to the extent possible. Additionally, $230,000 was budgeted for after-school detention programs at all middle and high school campuses. Because ISS programs are no longer listed as a state-approved SCE program, SCE funds are not being used to fund ISS in 2003-04.

CAMPUS ALLOCATIONS

ACCOUNT FOR LEARNING

Account for Learning (AFL), begun in 1999-2000, is a local funding source designed to increase equity in the resources provided to campuses with high percentages of economically disadvantaged students. AFL provides resources such as instructional support and extended learning opportunities that are components of high quality reading and mathematics instruction, and its primary goal is to increase student achievement in those areas. In 2002-03, AFL received a SCE allocation of $5,888,000. AFL's supplemental funding is provided to campuses with a large percentage of the student population qualifying for the federal free or reduced-price lunch program. AFL elementary schools have 70% or more students meeting these criteria, while middle/junior high schools have at least 65%, and high schools have at least 50% of their populations meeting these criteria. In 2002-03, 42 elementary, nine middle school, and five high school campuses were selected for assistance through AFL.

Each AFL-funded campus receives an increased per-pupil allotment and funds for parent/community liaisons and campus instructional coaches. Additionally, all elementary campuses receive funding for summer school and study trips, and middle/junior high schools receive funding for tutorials and extended-learning opportunities. AFL funding also supports a variety of summer programs.

SECONDARY TUTORIALS

In 2002-03, the Secondary Tutorials program received a SCE allocation of $178,000. Secondary Tutorials funds are distributed to all middle/junior high schools

and high schools. Money may be spent on a variety of strategies including one-on-one tutoring, study groups, TAAS/TAKS workshops, study skills, and parent activities.

SECONDARY TRANSITION PROGRAMS

In 2002-03, Secondary Transition programs received a SCE allocation of $275,000. Secondary Transition funds are provided to each secondary campus on a per-pupil basis for use in easing the transition from elementary to middle school or from middle to high school.

9TH GRADE INITIATIVES

In 2002-03, the 9th Grade Initiatives received a SCE allocation of $61,000. The initiative's services may include tutorials, study groups, support for mentors, "buddy system" programs, and other innovative approaches for improving student achievement. High schools are encouraged to collaborate with community resources such as college work study, the VICTORY Tutorial Program, and the AISD Partners in Education.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- District staff should maintain lists of all at-risk students, with their local ID numbers, who are served by each of the SCE-funded programs and services. Because SASI (the district's student records system) contains a field used to denote which students are at-risk, additional fields should be created to capture the actual services provided to at-risk students, so that SCE services can be tracked and effectiveness evaluated. In this way, the effectiveness of particular programs and services may be monitored in terms of student achievement and school completion outcomes. Additionally, individual programs may be evaluated to determine the progress of participating at-risk students in meeting the legislative goal of performing at grade level by the end of the next regular term.

- The objectives for reducing disparities between at-risk students and those not at-risk resonate with Austin ISD's Executive Limitation 12 on Curriculum and Instruction. Therefore, district staff should address the legislative intent for all at-risk students to be performing at grade level by the conclusion of the next regular school term by including performance objectives and action plans for SCE programs.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: DELTA

Table A1: Percentage and Number of DELTA Students Served
by Ethnicity, 1997-2003

Year*	African-American	Asian	Hispanic	Native American	White
2002-03	23% (686)	2% (50)	54% (1600)	.2% (6)	22% (647)
2001-02	21% (436)	2% (48)	54% (1096)	.1% (2)	23% (461)
1999-2000	20% (373)	1% (27)	49% (925)	.3% (5)	30% (578)
1998-99	20% (352)	2% (37)	45% (773)	.3% (5)	31% (544)
1997-98	20% (317)	2% (32)	47% (761)	.3% (6)	31% (508)

*2000-01 data are not available due to changes in data collection for DELTA that year.
Note: Totals by grade are as of the end of the school year. Due to reporting errors, totals do not match total number of students served.
Sources: 2002-03 AISD Student Records, 2001-02 SCE Evaluation (Schmitt, 2003), and DELTA Fifth Year Implementation report (Keswick, 2000)

Table A2: DELTA Course Credits Earned, 2002-03 and 2001-02

Subject Area	DELTA Courses	Credits Earned 2002-03	Credits Earned 2001-02
English	English 1	132.5	88.5
	English 2	167.5	110
	English 3	222	136.5
	English 4	201.5	165.5
	English Total	**723.5**	**500.5**
Mathematics	Algebra 1	92	84
	Algebra 2	21.5	17
	Geometry	190	153
	Math Modeling 1	160.5	155
	Math Modeling 2	30	25
	Mathematics Total	**494**	**434**
Social Studies	Government	116	110.5
	US History	165.5	138
	World History	152.5	95.5
	World Geography	213.5	129
	Economics	121.5	86
	Social Studies Total	**769**	**559**
Science/Health	Integrated Physics & Chemistry	127	108
	Biology	120	67
	Health	60	51.5
	Science/Health Total	**307**	**226.5**
Electives	*Electives Total*	**334.5**	**227**
Sum Total of Credits Earned		**2628**	**1947**

Sources: 2002-03 Teacher reports from traditional campuses, ALC, and La Fuente Learning Center at Cristo Rey Church; 2001-02 State Compensatory Education Evaluation Report (Schmitt, 2003)

APPENDIX B: VISITING TEACHERS PROGRAM

Table B1: Student and Family Issues Addressed by Visiting Teachers

	Issues Addressed
School Problems	School crises Academic adjustment School/home communication Non-attendance/truancy Delinquent student conduct Disruptive, out-of-control behavior
Home Problems	Home/school communication Catastrophic event: illness, accident, fire, death Chronic illness Domestic violence Child abuse/neglect
Personal Problems	Basic human needs: clothing, food, shelter, medical/dental care Drug/alcohol abuse Teen pregnancy/parenting Mental health issues Suicide, grief, loss Incarceration

Source: AISD Website, Student Support Services Visiting Teacher Information

Table B2: Visiting Teacher Client Survey Responses, 2002-03

Survey Item	Yes *n* (%)	No *n* (%)
Have you used the Visiting Teacher(s) service before?	16 (23%)	55 (78%)
Is your child doing better or more comfortable at school since the Visiting Teacher worked with your family? (Elementary)	29 (78%)	1 (3%)
Would you recommend the Visiting Teacher(s) to someone?	71 (100%)	0 (0%)

	Strongly Agree *n* (%)	Somewhat Agree *n* (%)	Neutral *n* (%)	Somewhat Disagree *n* (%)	Strongly Disagree *n* (%)
The Visiting Teacher helped my child to stay in school. (Secondary)	20 (61%)	2 (6%)	3 9%	0	0

Source: Visiting Teacher Client Survey, 2002-03

REFERENCE LIST

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