



# Austin Independent School District

## *Department of Program Evaluation*

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## **TITLE V, PART A SUMMARY REPORT: 2005-2006**

Title V, Part A–Innovative Programs provides federal funds to states under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (Public Law 107-110). The purpose of Title V, Part A is to enable state and local educational agencies to support the improvement of elementary and secondary educational programs in both public and private, non-profit schools and institutions. According to Section 5101 of the No Child Left Behind Act, Title V funds may be used to:

- support local education reform efforts that are consistent with and promote statewide education reform efforts;
- implement promising educational reform and school improvement programs, identified through scientifically based research;
- provide a continuing source of innovation and educational improvement, including support programs to provide library services and instructional and media materials;
- meet the educational needs of all students, including those at risk of dropping out of school; and
- improve school, student, and teacher performance through professional development activities and class size reduction programs.

A school district that receives Title V funding must use those funds to supplement and, to the extent practicable, to increase the level of funds that would be made available in the absence of Title V funding. In no case, however, may a school district supplant local funds by replacing them with Title V funds.

Title V funding is allocated to states based on their school-aged population. A school district's entitlement, in turn, is based on the number of students enrolled in the district and in participating private, non-profit schools. For the 2005-2006 school year, Austin Independent School District (AISD) received an allocation of \$266,623. With a roll-forward amount of \$56,134 from 2004-2005, a total of \$322,757 was available under Title V. This amount is less than half of that available during the 2004-2005 school year, in which the district had \$664,815 in available funds. This decrease is a result of both a reduction in the federal allocation and a smaller roll-forward amount.

## DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAMS

In 2005-2006, the district spent \$278,992 on several school improvement efforts, as described below. Table 1 shows the programs that were supported by Title V funds, their expenditures, the amount of full-time equivalent (FTE) staff funded for each program, and the number of students served in each program. Expenditures for management and evaluation of Title V, across all programs, also are listed.

### SCHOOL TO COMMUNITY LIAISONS

School to Community Liaisons (SCLs) are a team of mental health professionals who provide a wide range of services to help students succeed in school. Their efforts are intended to minimize barriers to students' well-being and their academic success. SCLs work with school staff, agencies, and parents to meet the individual academic, medical,

emotional, and basic economic needs of students. As a liaison between families and schools, SCLs serve students in a social worker/counselor capacity. They advocate for students, contract out-of-district services, gather information to assess the need for special services, and provide crisis counseling. SCLs are housed at the high schools and serve all students and campuses in their respective vertical feeder patterns.

During the 2005-2006 school year, the Department of Student Support Services employed a total of 13 full-time and 4 part-time SCLs. Title V funded one part-time SCL (.50 FTE) and a portion of two full-time SCLs (.30 FTE and .50 FTE, with the remaining FTEs coming from local and Title I funds). In total, the SCL program provided 3,663 students across the district with 11,259 services. The Title V-funded SCLs served 378 students at 3 high schools, 3

**Table 1: 2005-2006 Title V Program Expenditure Summary**

Title V Component	Actual Expenditure	Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Staff	Students Served
School to Community Liaisons	\$72,487	1.30	378
Character Education*	\$55,976	1.00	81,155
Mentor/Volunteer Coordinator	\$43,059	N/A	1,700
Private Schools and Neglected or Delinquent Facilities	\$30,454	N/A	7,138
Institute for Learning	\$30,000	N/A	N/A
Positive Behavior Support/Region XIII	\$13,000	N/A	11,801
Management/Evaluation	\$34,016	.45	N/A
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$278,992</b>	<b>2.75</b>	<b>88,293**</b>

Sources: AISD financial records as of July 14, 2006, Department of State and Federal Accountability, Department of Student Support Services, and reports from individuals working with funded programs

\* Initiative targeting all students in the district (N = 81,155)

\*\* Unduplicated sum of students served from public and private schools and facilities.

middle schools, and 14 elementary schools. These students received 1,370 services, most of which included consultation at IMPACT team<sup>1</sup> meetings, short-term problem solving, or provision of information.

For more information about AISD's SCL program, see the *State Compensatory Education, 2005-2006* evaluation report (Christian, in press), available online at <http://www.austinisd.org/inside/accountability/evaluation/reports.phtml>.

### **CHARACTER EDUCATION**

The Character Education program in AISD is designed to provide a comprehensive approach to modeling and reinforcing positive character traits. Specifically, the initiative is intended to engage the school, family, and community in providing students with the character skills necessary for putting the maximum sustained effort into academics, resulting in more productive and safer schools. Following the district's Community Safety Task Force and the superintendent's joint recommendation, the initiative was developed in 2004-2005, based on nationally recognized principles of character education. During the 2005-2006 school year, the program was implemented district-wide at the classroom and campus levels, with a variety of activities designed to encourage student participation. Five of the character skills (respect, courage, caring, honesty, and perseverance) that make up the district's character education touchstones were taught

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<sup>1</sup> IMPACT teams are multidisciplinary teams (including the assistant principal, counselor, nurse, SCL, and other professionals) at every AISD campus that develop individualized plans for students at risk of dropping out of school, based on a review of academic and discipline records.

in 2005-2006, with the remaining five (responsibility, self-discipline, fairness, integrity, and trustworthiness) planned to be taught during the 2006-2007 school year.

Title V funded 1.0 FTE for a character education specialist who coordinated the district-wide campus implementation of the character education initiative. The character education specialist provided direct training to six campus facilitators, who had not received any previous training regarding the district's implementation criteria and the character education toolkit. The specialist also developed campus banners announcing the district's touchstones and yearly foci. In addition, the specialist conducted site development meetings with campuses about the direction of the program and developed partnerships with area businesses to provide incentives for students.

More information about AISD's Character Education program is available online at [http://www.austinisd.org/academics/docs/CharacterEd\\_2005\\_01.pdf](http://www.austinisd.org/academics/docs/CharacterEd_2005_01.pdf).

### **COORDINATOR OF MENTORS AND VOLUNTEERS**

During 2005-2006, Title V funds were used once again to support the Austin Partners in Education (APIE) program. The key goals of APIE included: (a) supporting the academic success of students at all levels through mentoring and tutoring efforts; (b) increasing the number of students who apply to college and receive financial aid; (c) supporting school technology needs through partnerships with business organizations and individuals; and (d) communicating the needs and successes of schools and students, thereby increasing the business community's

support of the district. APIE used Title V funds to support a mentor coordinator. The APIE mentor coordinator primarily was responsible for the intake and training of mentors, as well as for working with program coordinators to develop and sustain middle school mentoring programs based on best practices. Other responsibilities included training AISD staff, working with AISD campuses to coordinate APIE services, and building relationships with businesses and organizations to leverage resources for AISD schools.

In the fall of 2005, the mentor coordinator trained 101 program coordinators from 64 AISD campuses. These training sessions consisted of a review of best practices for successful programs, including information regarding recruitment, student enrollment, volunteer intake, and matching students and volunteers. The training also included information regarding the important role mentors play, strategies for retaining mentors, and information about protecting students from sexual predators.

To recruit mentors throughout the year, enrollment packets consisting of mentor profile forms, reference forms, and background check information, were e-mailed to volunteers. The mentor coordinator received and reviewed the completed materials before they were sent to the mentors' respective campuses. More than 2,500 volunteers were processed through the DPS background check system. In addition, the mentor coordinator conducted 56 mentor training sessions during the school year, resulting in 289 mentors being trained. APIE's partnership with Big Brothers/Big Sisters at both

Fulmore and Webb middle schools, and the Communities in Schools partnership at Pearce Middle School, enabled these organizations to assume program management for these campuses. To recognize and retain volunteers, two volunteer appreciation events and two cultural diversity seminars were held in the fall and spring. The first appreciation event included 125 volunteers and campus staff; the spring event included 225 volunteers and coordinators. Mary Black, president of Accelerating Latino Academic Success, facilitated the diversity seminars, which brought 70 volunteers and coordinators together.

More information about APIE is available online at [http://www.austinisd.org/community/apie/index.phtml](http://www.austinisd.org/community/apiie/index.phtml).

#### **PRIVATE SCHOOLS AND NEGLECTED OR DELINQUENT FACILITIES**

By law, Title V funds are available through the district to private, non-profit schools and to facilities that serve neglected and delinquent youth within the AISD boundaries. Staff at private, non-profit schools and facilities for neglected and delinquent youth were contacted in spring 2005 about participating in Title V and the other federal entitlement grant programs available to them. Title V funds were allocated for services to approved schools and facilities on a per-pupil basis for the purchase of items selected by the schools. All purchases were made through AISD and met the requirement of benefiting the schools' or facilities' populations as a whole. The district retains title to and exercises administrative control over all

equipment and supplies. A total of \$30,454 in Title V funds was spent by 34 private, non-profit schools and facilities that served 7,138 students. These funds were used for the purchase of library books, reference materials, and media (e.g., videos and software). Eleven schools and facilities received a web-based subscription service from Questia Media, Inc. and received training regarding its use. One private school did not request services, despite funds being allocated for the benefit of its students.

### **INSTITUTE FOR LEARNING**

The work of The Institute for Learning (IFL) at AISD is part of an ongoing partnership that began in the 2000-2001 school year. For 2005-2006, the contract between the IFL and AISD totaled \$430,000, with Title V contributing \$30,000. The IFL, in collaboration with AISD, provided a professional development program designed to sharpen existing knowledge and use of the Principles of Learning (POLs) and IFL tools that support learning for all students. The program continued to build systems that incorporate the POLs into the day-to-day practices of all educators. The focus was on deepening AISD's understanding of the POLs, attaining higher levels of POL implementation, and building strong ownership for the work.

The program also centered on observing effective practices through use of LearningWalks, the IFL signature tool for improving teaching and learning. Led by administrators or teacher leaders, the LearningWalk is an organized tour of a school's halls and classrooms, using the

POLs to focus on the instructional core. Participants spend 5 to 10 minutes in each of several classrooms looking at student work and classroom artifacts and talking with students and teachers. One of the hallmarks of the LearningWalk is that observation of the instructional core is filtered through the eyes and voices of students. Through these observations, walkers collect evidence about how a teacher's work affects student learning. Between classroom visits, participants gather in the hall to discuss what they learned in the last room and to generate questions that, if asked of teachers, might stimulate them to think more deeply about practice. At the end of the LearningWalk, participants work with the leader of the walk to refine observations and questions; to look for patterns within the school; and to think about next steps for the school, particularly with respect to professional development.

In addition, several training sessions focused on the IFL's system of Disciplinary Literacy (DL), designed to engage principals, teachers, and coaches in teaching methods used with diverse populations of students in middle and high schools. Specifically, DL teaches school staff how to include all students, even those in the very early stages of developing academic competence in the English language, to engage in cognitively demanding tasks within the major academic areas. The goal is for students to demonstrate increased mastery of the major academic areas through more effective processing of complex written texts, difficult problems, and challenging inquires.

During the 2005-2006 school year, the work of the IFL strongly influenced district practices. In addition to the professional development provided to teachers and administrators, the IFL also encouraged AISD staff to think about how they could establish systems that build the sustainability of their work. For the 2006-2007 year, AISD leaders have committed to supporting DL, a full-time IFL liaison, and additional days of mathematics professional development for another year.

### **POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORT**

Positive Behavior Support (PBS) is a school-wide systems approach designed to promote pro-social behaviors and a culture of competence, to reduce chronic disruptive and destructive behaviors among students, and to meet the needs of children with significant behavior challenges. The goal of PBS is to improve school climate through the development of systems and strategies that address individual student needs on every campus. Designed both to prevent and to intervene in problem behavior, the program requires school-wide responsibility for teaching positive student behaviors. Schools are expected to develop and implement regular and consistent methods for teaching and reinforcing positive behaviors, as well as for dealing with misbehaviors. An essential component of PBS is the establishment of a school-based behavior support team that includes representatives of all role functions within a school, including administrators, teachers, resources officers, and support staff. This team is responsible for using data to develop, implement, and evaluate PBS activities within its school.

Following pilot implementation in 2003-2004, a cohort of 16 AISD schools received district support for the implementation of PBS on their campuses in 2004-2005. Fifteen new schools began implementation during the 2005-2006 school year. PBS support specialists: (a) facilitated training for campuses regarding organizing and maintaining behavior support teams, (b) organized school-wide student behavior support systems, (c) provided classroom management support for teachers, and (d) monitored the effectiveness of campus behavior support efforts and outcomes. Title V provided \$13,000 in funds for the Region XIII Education Service Center as part of a contractual agreement for additional PBS support. Region XIII provided the training for five elementary schools and served as coaching support for one of the PBS specialists. In addition, Region XIII provided ongoing coaching, consultation, and technical support to the PBS teams and staff coaches at five middle schools, two high schools, and the Alternative Learning Center, as well as consultation and technical support at two middle schools on an as-needed basis.

Twelve additional campuses (10 elementary schools, 1 middle school, and 1 high school) are scheduled to begin PBS implementation in 2006-2007. For more information about AISD's PBS program, see the *Positive Behavior Support Evaluation, 2004-2005* report (Christian, McCracken, & De La Ronde, 2006), available online at <http://www.austinisd.org/inside/accountability/evaluation/reports.phtml>.

## MANAGEMENT AND EVALUATION

A total of \$34,016 of the Title V funds was spent on administration and evaluation of the grant and its activities, including direct and indirect costs. The Title V grant covered .20 FTE of a staff member in the Department of State and Federal Accountability, who monitored program expenditures and assisted private, non-profit schools and facilities that serve neglected and delinquent youth. In addition, the Title V grant supported .25 FTE of an evaluator from the Department of Program Evaluation. The evaluator collected data from district staff regarding Title V-funded programs and from staff at private, non-profit schools and facilities for neglected and delinquent youth regarding program expenditures. The evaluator also prepared the compliance and performance report that was submitted to the Texas Education Agency, which detailed expenditures, the numbers of students served, and numbers of staff trained for each funded program.

## SUMMARY

A variety of programs were funded through Title V in 2005-2006. At an end-of-year advisory council meeting for the grant, program managers reported their accomplishments and how their work benefited students. Given the large decrease in allocated funds (68% of the previous year's entitlement, but only 40% of the previous year's operating budget, due to the large rollover amount that year) and cuts made to some programs, the district still was able to fund several programs and initiatives that benefited thousands of students. In 2006-2007, however, the district faces an even greater challenge because additional

cuts at the federal level have decreased AISD's projected entitlement to only \$106,070. Including an estimated \$35,000 in roll-forward funds, the total amount available for 2006-2007 will be approximately \$141,070. More than ever, program components must be considered and evaluated carefully to ensure that available funds meet the educational needs of students in AISD and in community schools and facilities.

## REFERENCES

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- Christian, C., McCracken, K., & De La Ronde, C. (2006). *Positive Behavior Support evaluation, 2004-2005* (DPE Publication 04.15). Austin, TX: Austin Independent School District.

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