AUSTIN PARTNERS IN EDUCATION EVALUATION REPORT, 2008–2009

Austin Independent School District
Department of Program Evaluation

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Austin Partners in Education (APIE) is a nonprofit organization that helps the Austin community and classrooms work together to ensure academic excellence and personal success for students in the Austin Independent School District (AISD). APIE facilitated numerous programs during the 2008–2009 school year. Activities ranged from coaching reading groups in 2nd-grade classrooms to helping 12th-grade students prepare for college entrance exams. More than 2,200 students and 94 teachers in elementary, middle, and high schools were supported by APIE throughout 2008–2009. The number of students served increased by 22.8% compared with the number served the previous school year.

APIE programs were evaluated during the 2008–2009 school year by staff in AISD's Department of Program Evaluation (DPE). In this process, both qualitative and quantitative data pertaining to clearly defined performance measures were collected, including student demographic, course passing, and testing data; teacher, counselor, volunteer, and student surveys; and classroom observations. The data were analyzed for each program.

Surveys of teachers, volunteers, and students showed very positive results overall. Teachers and volunteers reported feeling supported and appreciated by APIE staff. The effectiveness of the support APIE provided teachers and volunteers likely resulted in better retention of participants, an opportunity to recruit more teachers and volunteers, and a better relationship between teachers and volunteers.

Student satisfaction and engagement with APIE programs varied by program and school level. Satisfaction and engagement were high among survey respondents in PIM at elementary schools, PIL, and CR. PIM respondents at the middle and high school levels, however, indicated a low level of program satisfaction and engagement. Classroom observations of the programs showed that volunteers and teachers appeared to be following program protocols and procedures; however, scores varied only slightly.

In the area of academic outcomes, the differences between APIE and non-APIE students were not significant during the 2008–2009 school year; however, some significant differences were found for student outcomes in the examination of year-to-year progress for the PIM program at the elementary and middle school levels, and in the Partners in Reading (PIR) and Compañeros en Lectura (CEL) programs.

In the PIM program at the elementary level, a significantly higher percentage of APIE students passed the TAKS math test from one year to the next. The same was not true of the comparison group. At the middle school level, PIM participants increased the level at which they were passing the math TAKS from one year to the next, and the comparison students did not.

In the Partners in Reading (PIR) and Compañeros en Lectura (CEL) programs, APIE students experienced a significant increase in the percentage of students reading at grade-level between the beginning and end of the year. The comparison students did. Comparing between school years, the percentage of students reading at grade level at the end of the school year decreased for both groups, and this decrease was significant ($p < .05$) only for the comparison group. Thus, it appears the APIE program may have prevented a larger decrease in the percentage of children reading at grade level from one year to the next.

The PIM program did not have a significant academic impact at the high school level. Although academic outcomes were positive for participants in the PIL program, it was not possible to discern a program-related academic impact, as the comparison group had positive outcomes as well. Volunteer survey responses regarding student engagement may indicate that PIL volunteers need additional support to engage students.

No significant difference was found between the college readiness of students who participated in the College Readiness (CR) program and the readiness of those who did not. APIE support services and student participation in APIE college readiness tutoring were not documented consistently, so program influences could not be determined.

Although there were no significant differences between the APIE and comparison students during the 2008-2009 school year, and for most indicators, the differences the comparison group and APIE participants experienced between school years were negligible, it is also apparent from student surveys that the program is impacting students in a positive way.

What accounts for these mixed results? Student engagement and academic self-confidence are variables that influence student learning and academic achievement. It is likely, given student survey responses, that APIE volunteers have a positive impact on these variables in some programs. It could be that significant changes in student learning are occurring among APIE participants during a school year, but results measured by TAKS scores take longer to evolve. Other variables affecting student achievement may simply have a stronger influence than APIE program effects on student learning. For example, day-to-day classroom instruction, parent engagement, and/or daily attendance all influence student learning. It might be proposed that the mentor-student relationship built by APIE's educational support activities produced positive impacts on learning which were not realized within the single school year. Thus, other indicators should be measured to capture the impact the mentoring relationship, and APIE programs in general, have on student learning.

Overall, APIE programs appeared to be having some degree of positive impact on students' lives. The following recommendations are provided to help program staff make APIE programs even more effective.

1. *Explore new ways to engage middle and high school math students.* To make an academic impact on middle and high school math students might require a different strategy for engaging them than is currently practiced. DPE staff recommend working with AISD instructional specialists to explore the development of a new model for engaging teens in learning math.

2. *Place greater focus on the indirect impact APIE programs have on student achievement.* Although the academic outcomes for most programs showed few differences between APIE participants and comparison groups, these programs might have had a measurable impact on other variables influencing academic achievement (e.g., motivating students to want to learn, boosting students' confidence in their academic abilities, and creating a classroom climate in which students feel encouraged to ask for help when they need it). DPE staff recommend exploring the possible indirect influences of the program and working with DPE to develop measurable indicators.

3. *Revise the observation rubric.* The measurement scale could be expanded to show a greater degree of detail regarding the classroom environment and participant interactions. This modification would (a) provide program staff with information needed to support teachers, volunteers, and students and (b) provide evaluation staff with information needed to identify best practices and the relationship of those practices to student outcomes.

4. *Explore more ways to decrease volunteer absences.* APIE instituted new procedures in 2008–2009 to try to decrease volunteer absences. These included covering the impact of volunteer absences in trainings and calling volunteers who did not attend when expected. These measures might need to be supplemented to achieve the desired result. Given the negative impact volunteer absences have on children and classrooms, it might be useful to look at other local agencies that work with volunteers and serve children or other vulnerable populations who depend on the attendance of a volunteer. It might be helpful to talk to the volunteer managers of such agencies to share strategies for decreasing volunteer absences and to explore ways to decrease the disruption of the classroom when a volunteer is absent. Volunteers had suggestions about how to improve attendance (e.g., allowing them to volunteer for a semester rather than a school year). It might be helpful to do a focus group with the volunteers who had many absences to understand how the agency could better accommodate

volunteer needs or better screen for people who will make a consistent commitment to the children.

5. *Expand data collection for the CR program.* Collecting program participant records will provide the information necessary to truly measure the impact of this program.

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INTRODUCTION

Austin Partners in Education (APIE) is a nonprofit organization that helps the Austin community and classrooms work together to ensure academic excellence and personal success for students in the Austin Independent School District (AISD). APIE facilitated numerous programs during the 2008–2009 school year. Activities ranged from coaching reading groups in 2nd-grade classrooms to helping 12th-grade students prepare for college entrance exams. More than 2,200 students and 94 teachers in elementary, middle, and high schools were supported by APIE throughout 2008–2009. The number of students served increased by 22.8% compared with the number served the previous school year.

APIE staff continued to use a study group approach to facilitate student learning. Teams of volunteers were placed in classrooms and worked with groups of three to five students for one class period each week, providing tutoring, guidance, and encouragement.

DESCRIPTION OF THE APIE STUDY GROUP PROGRAMS

APIE supported classrooms through a variety of targeted programs to meet student needs. A description of the programs evaluated within this report follows.

- APIE's Partners in Math (PIM) program helped 5th- through 12th-grade students build their math skills during weekly study group sessions facilitated by volunteers who shared their enjoyment of math and real-world experiences involving math.
- APIE's Partners in Reading (PIR) program worked with 2nd-grade students to increase their reading fluency and comprehension skills during weekly sessions facilitated by volunteers who modeled enjoyment of reading and provided support and encouragement to the students.
- APIE's Compañeros en Lectura (CEL) program was modeled after PIR and designed specifically for Spanish speakers. The program assisted Spanish-speaking 2nd-grade students develop their reading fluency and comprehension skills.
- APIE's Partners in Literature (PIL) program promoted reading comprehension and critical thinking skills for struggling middle school students. Using a structured curriculum, volunteers facilitated small group discussions with students about a variety of reading materials.
- APIE's College Readiness (CR) program provided information about college readiness standards and supplied tutoring for high school students who were eligible to graduate but were not currently passing the stringent college readiness

standards on state or college admissions assessments. The program provided customized study plans and materials based on each student's needs.

PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

Approximately 2,229 students in elementary, middle, and high schools were served by APIE during the 2008–2009 school year. Compared with the district as a whole, APIE programs served greater percentages of Hispanic, African American, English language learner (ELL), and economically disadvantaged students (Table 1).

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Students Participating in APIE Programs, 2008–2009

	African American	Hispanic	White	ELL	Economically disadvantaged
District	12.1%	58.0%	26.4%	28.3%	60.8%
APIE	14.7%	77.2%	6.6%	37.2%	90.1%

Source. Texas Education Agency, Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS), 2007–2008 and AISD student enrollment records, 2008–2009

METHODS

PURPOSE

The purpose of this evaluation, conducted by AISD's Department of Program Evaluation (DPE) staff, was to provide information about program outcomes to facilitate decisions about program implementation and improvement.

EVALUATION QUESTIONS

For each APIE program, the evaluation focused on three major questions:

- Did program participants (teachers, volunteers, and students) feel supported by the programs?
- What were the academic outcomes for APIE program participants?
- How did the academic outcomes of APIE participants compare with those of similar non-participants?

DATA COLLECTION

The evaluation used both qualitative and quantitative data pertaining to clearly defined performance measures to determine program outcomes. A description of these data sources follows.

Student Demographic and Academic Data

District information systems provided student demographic data; course enrollment and grades; and Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA), Texas Assessment of Knowledge and

Skills (TAKS), Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), and ACT (originally, American College Testing) data.

Participant Surveys

In Spring 2009, teacher, volunteer, and student surveys were administered to the participants to elicit descriptions of their experiences with and feelings about participation in APIE programs. The survey questions used a 4-point rating scale (i.e., *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree*) or were open ended. The survey questions and results summaries are provided in Appendices A, B, and C.

The response rates for the various participant groups varied. Four hundred and twelve (39%) students, 43 (48%) teachers, and 393 (54%) volunteers completed a survey. Upon closer examination of these rates, it was determined that the volunteer responses could be considered representative of the volunteer group. Because of their lower response rates, results for students and teachers should be interpreted with caution.

Classroom Observations

AISD's DPE and APIE staff collaboratively designed a classroom observation rubric. The rubric specified the most desirable implementation level and described the qualitatively different levels that lead to the optimal level. The rubric was built through an examination of literature, observations, and discussions with knowledgeable program staff. In the fall semester, DPE and APIE staff engaged in a series of training sessions designed to calibrate classroom observers and piloted the instrument. Revisions were made to the instrument, and the final version (Appendix D) was used to conduct 248 observations across 100 different classrooms in Spring 2009.

DATA ANALYSIS

To determine precise outcomes for APIE programs and to isolate the influences of other programs, DPE staff used a mixed-methods approach to analyze and interpret data. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Qualitative data were analyzed using content analysis techniques to identify important details, themes, and patterns within open-ended survey responses. Results from all analyses were triangulated to determine the effectiveness of the project's service implementation and outcomes for its participants.

To more definitively determine whether student outcomes might be associated with participation in APIE programs, many of the data analyses compared the academic outcomes of students participating in APIE programs with the academic outcomes of similar students who did not participate in the programs. Specifically, the students within classes supported by

APIE volunteers were compared with similar non-APIE-supported classes within the same school. The classrooms were matched based on the class type (e.g., a regular versus an advanced placement or a special education class). If similar classrooms were not available within the same school, classes of students from neighboring schools with similar demographic and academic characteristics were selected. Furthermore, the data analyses comparing APIE students with non-APIE students only included those who were enrolled in the fall and spring semesters for at least 6 months.

EVALUATION RESULTS

In this section, the program evaluation results are presented for each area of data collection described in the preceding section of this report.

ACADEMIC OUTCOMES

To investigate whether APIE programs had an impact on academic outcomes, APIE participants were compared with non-APIE participants with respect to their TAKS and DRA scores at the elementary school level and the TAKS scores, average course grades and course passing rates at the middle and high school levels. Across APIE programs, APIE students experienced positive outcomes in many instances. Although the differences between APIE and non-APIE students were not significantly different during the 2008–2009 school year, significant differences in student outcomes were found in the examination of year-to-year progress. Detailed results by program follow.

Partners in Math

This math support program was provided at the elementary, middle, and high school levels, and outcomes were primarily measured using TAKS performance indicators. Math TAKS test passing rates were summarized along with passing rates with a 2200 scale score or higher. The 2200 level of passing the TAKS is generally considered a threshold for attaining postsecondary success. Objectives 1 and 6 in Table 2 refer to the TAKS objectives that were a focus of APIE tutoring throughout the school year. Objective 1 called for students to demonstrate an understanding of numbers, operations, and quantitative reasoning. Objective 6 was to have students demonstrate an understanding of the mathematical processes and tools used in problem solving. Detailed results by school level follow in Tables 2, 3, and 4.

PIM: Elementary school

The 2008–2009 school year was the first year that PIM was implemented at four elementary schools: Brown, Oak Springs, Sanchez, and Travis Heights. Two hundred and twenty-eight students were served. Within the 2008-2009 school year, APIE students surpassed the

comparison group on all indicators, although none of these differences were significant (Table 2).

Student outcomes also were examined across school years and revealed positive results. APIE students experienced a significant increase ($p < .05$) in the percentage of students passing the TAKS math test in Spring 2009, compared with the percentage of those students passing the previous year. Although the TAKS passing percentages from year to year also increased for the comparison group, the increase was not statistically significant. Moreover, both the APIE and non-APIE students experienced a significant increase in their math TAKS average scale scores, compared with their scores from the previous year. The difference in the average math scale score across the school years was greater for APIE students than for non-APIE students.

Table 2. PIM Elementary School Participants' and Comparison Students' TAKS and Course Results, 2007–2008 and 2008–2009

Variable	2007 – 2008 Baseline data		2008 - 2009		Year-to-year difference	
	APIE students	Comp. students	APIE students	Comp. students	APIE students	Comp. students:
n=	89	224	170	365		
% Passing Math TAKS	60%	63%	**74%**	68%	**14***	5
% Passing Math TAKS at 2200 level	42%	37%	**52%**	43%	10	6
% Items correct on Math TAKS Obj 1	73%	74%	**76%**	73%	3	-1
% Items correct on Math TAKS Obj 6	62%	60%	**67%**	66%	5	6
Average Math TAKS scale score	2149	2137	**2233**	2173	**84***	**36***

Source. AISD student enrollment and TAKS test files prepared by DPE
Note. * indicates a statistically significant difference ($p < .05$)

PIM: Middle school

PIM served 498 students at the following six middle schools: Ann Richards Academy, Bedichek, Kealing, Martin, O'Henry, and Webb. The examination of academic outcomes between APIE and non-APIE students within the 2008-2009 school year yielded mixed results (Table 3). Greater percentages of APIE students passed the TAKS math test and passed their math course, while the comparison group had greater percentages of students passing the Math TAKS test with a scale score of 2200 and passing specific TAKS objectives. The comparison group also had a greater average TAKS scale score and math course grade.

Student outcomes also were examined across school years (Table 3). Compared with the previous year, the percentages of students passing the math TAKS increased significantly ($p < .05$) for both the APIE and non-APIE students. The increase between the school years for APIE students was greater than for the comparison group. Additionally, APIE students experienced a significant increase in the average math TAKS scale score between the two school years. For other indicators, the year-to-year changes for both groups were negligible.

Table 3. PIM Middle School Participants' and Comparison Students' TAKS and Course Results, 2007–2008 and 2008–2009

Variable	2007 – 2008 Baseline data		2008 - 2009		Year-to-year difference	
	APIE students	Comp. students	APIE students	Comp. students	APIE students	Comp. Students
n=	221	1,517	294	1,661		
% Passing Math TAKS	63%	69%	**74%**	73%	**10***	**4***
% Passing Math TAKS at 2200 level	37%	46%	37%	45%	0	-1
% Items correct on Math TAKS Obj 1	67%	71%	67%	70%	0	-1
% Items correct on Math TAKS Obj 6	63%	71%	67%	70%	4	-1
Average scale score on Math TAKS	2128	2196	2165	2196	**37***	0
Average math course grade	79	80	80	81	1	1
% Course passing	90%	90%	**91%**	90%	1	0

Source. AISD student enrollment and TAKS test files prepared by DPE
Note. * indicates a statistically significant difference ($p < .05$)

PIM: High school

PIM served 264 students at Eastside Memorial and LBJ High Schools. Within the 2008-2009 school year, APIE students had a greater average TAKS math score, average course grade, and course passing rate compared with non-APIE participants. Both student groups (APIE and comparison students) experienced a decline from the previous year in three of the five categories. In all cases, the decrease was less for APIE participants. The comparison group experienced declines from the previous year in all categories, and for this group, the decreases in the percentage of students passing their TAKS math test and passing their math course were

statistically significant ($p < .05$). Overall, given the lack of significant changes for APIE participants and the small differences in academic outcomes between the APIE participants and the comparison students, it was not possible to discern an academic program impact at the high school level.

Table 4. PIM High School Participants' and Comparison Students' TAKS and Course Results 2007–2008 and 2008–2009

Variable	2007 – 2008 Baseline data		2008 - 2009		Year-to-year difference	
	APIE students	Comp. students	APIE students	Comp. students	APIE students	Comp. students
Students in analyses	75	86	92	122		
% Passing Math TAKS	51%	57%	41%	43%	-10	**-14***
% Passing Math TAKS at 2200 level	25%	28%	25%	27%	0	-1
Average TAKS scale score	2098	2125	**2088**	2084	-10	-41
Average Course Grade - Algebra I	78	82	**79**	76	1	-6
% Passing Course	88%	91%	**81%**	80%	-7	**-11***

Source. AISD student enrollment and TAKS test files prepared by DPE
Note. * indicates a statistically significant difference ($p < .05$)

Partners in Reading/Compañeros en Lectura

In 2008-2009, PIR and CEL were present in 17 elementary schools and served 1,154 students. The 17 elementary schools that participated were Allison, Barrington, Becker, Blackshear, Brooke, Dawson, Norman, Oak Springs, Odom, Pecan Springs, Pillow, Sanchez, St. Elmo, Travis Heights, Widen, Wooldridge, and Wooten. The Diagnostic Reading Assessment (DRA) was used to assess 2nd graders' reading levels. The DRA measures students' reading growth over time and was administered at the beginning of the year (BOY), middle, and end of the year (EOY). The score achieved at each of these intervals indicated whether a student was reading at grade level at that time.

Within the 2008-2009 school year, APIE students surpassed the comparison group on all indicators, although none of these differences were significant (Table 5). From the beginning to the end of the 2008-2009 school year, both student groups progressed in their reading abilities, evidenced by the positive difference in DRA scores and in the percentage of students reading at grade level over this period. However, the increase in the percentage of

students reading at grade-level between the beginning and end of the year was only significant ($p < .05$) for the APIE participants. The significant difference from BOY to EOY means that APIE students made significant progress in comparison with non-participants. Comparing between school years, the percentage of students reading at grade level at the end of the school year decreased for both groups, and this decrease was significant ($p < .05$) only for the comparison group. Thus, it appears the APIE program may have prevented a larger decrease in the percentage of children reading at grade level from one year to the next.

Table 5. Students Reading at Grade Level and Average Reading Score for PIR and CEL Participants and Comparison Students, 2007–2008 and 2008–2009

Variable	2007 – 2008 Baseline data		2008 - 2009		Year-to-year difference	
	APIE students	Comp. students	APIE students	Comp. students	APIE students	Comp. students
n=	675	130	737	139		
% of students at grade level on DRA at BOY	47%	48%	**48%**	47%	1	-1
% of students at grade level on DRA at EOY	62%	63%	**60%**	49%	-2	**-14***
Average EOY DRA score	16	16	**26**	24	10	8
Difference in DRA score (BOY–EOY)	11	11	**10**	9	-1	-1
Difference in % on grade level (from BOY to EOY)	15*	15*	**12***	2	-3	-13

Source. AISD student enrollment and DRA test files prepared by DPE
Note. * indicates a statistically significant difference ($p < .05$)

In general, the PIR program was designed for English speakers, and the CEL program for Spanish speakers. However, the curriculum the 2nd graders received had some crossover. Some CEL students were introduced to materials in English. Some bilingual classrooms used both sets of materials. The DRA could be taken in English or Spanish, and some students not identified as ELLs took the test in Spanish.

To understand the impact these APIE programs had on both Spanish and English speakers, it was important to look at both students identified as ELLs and the language in which students took the DRA (Table 6). A summary of findings follows.

- In contrast with the comparison group, a lower percentage of APIE ELL students started the year reading at grade level; yet, a higher percentage of APIE

ELLs ended the year at grade level. This finding was consistent for APIE ELL students taking either the English or Spanish version of the assessment.

- The increase in the percentage of APIE students reading at grade level at the end of the year was greatest for ELL students. However, the increase for the APIE non-ELL students was not far behind.
- More than 98% of the non-ELL students took the DRA in English. At BOY, a higher percentage of APIE students were reading at grade level, compared with non-APIE students. Although the percentage reading at grade level increased 10 points for APIE participants at EOY, the percentage remained the same for the comparison group.

In sum, these APIE reading programs were considered beneficial to all participants; however, the analysis by ELL and test language showed that the program was particularly helpful to Spanish speakers.

Table 6. APIE and Comparison Students Reading at Grade Level at BOY and EOY According to DRA, 2008–2009

		English			Spanish		
	Group	Number tested BOY/EOY	% at grade level BOY	% at grade level EOY	Number tested BOY/EOY	% at grade level BOY	% at grade level EOY
ELL	APIE participants	56/61	41.1	**49.2**	336/355	45.8	**60.3**
	Comparison group	11/7	45.5	14.3	102/107	50.0	**55.1**
Non-ELL	APIE participants	313/316	51.1	**61.1**	4/5	50.0	40.0
	Comparison group	24/24	37.5	37.5	0/1	0.0	0.0
Total	APIE participants	369/377	49.6	**59.2**	340/360	45.9	**60.0**
	Comparison group	35/31	40.0	32.3	102/108	50.0	**54.6**

Source. AISD student enrollment and DRA test files prepared by DPE

Partners in Literature

PIL was offered at Webb Middle School and served 57 students. Comparison classes with similar student characteristics were obtained from Mendez Middle School. The academic outcomes for both groups were analyzed.

On all indicators within the 2008-2008 school year, the comparison group surpassed the APIE participants, although none of these differences were significant (Table 7). Comparing across school years, both student groups had significantly greater ($p < .05$) percentages of students passing the TAKS, percentages passing at the 2200 level, and average scale scores in Spring 2009, compared with the previous year. The results for the students participating in the PIL program were positive; however, the comparison group also experienced positive academic outcomes. Therefore, it was not possible to discern a program-related academic impact.

Table 7. PIL Participants' and Comparison Students' TAKS and Course Results, 2007–2008 and 2008–2009

Variable	2007 – 2008 Baseline data		2008 - 2009		Year-to-year difference	
	APIE students	Comp. students	APIE students	Comp. students	APIE students	Comp. students
n =	35	261	44	290		
% Passing Reading TAKS	57%	66%	82%	85%	**25***	**19***
% Passing Reading TAKS at 2200 level	20%	36%	41%	58%	**21***	**22***
Average Reading TAKS scale score	2117	2140	2183	2251	**66***	**111***
Average English/Language Arts course grade	81	82	81	83	0	1
% Course passing	88%	96%	84%	96%	-4	0

Source. AISD student enrollment and TAKS test files prepared by DPE
Note. * = significant difference ($p < .05$)

College Readiness

APIE's CR program expanded from five to eight schools in the 2008–2009 school year and served students at Anderson, Austin, Bowie, Garza, Lanier, LBJ, McCallum, and Travis High Schools. Although all high school students could access the CR services provided by APIE, 761 students were targeted to receive support services if they passed portions of the TAKS English and math tests necessary for graduation but failed to meet the Texas Success Initiative (TSI) standard developed by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board indicating their readiness to enroll in an institution of higher education. (See Appendix F for a detailed description of the TSI standard.)

Campus staff did not consistently document the number of students receiving APIE support services including college readiness counseling, individualized study plan development, and tutoring. Thus, the program's influence on participating students, compared with non-participants, could not be determined. The data presented below are only considered descriptive of the college readiness levels of the identified target group of students enrolled in APIE and non-APIE supported high schools.

A variety of test scores (e.g., from the ACT, ASSET, SAT, and TAKS tests) were examined to determine the college readiness status of the students targeted by APIE program staff. At the end of the 2008-2009 school year, 42% of the targeted students enrolled in APIE supported schools, and 46% of the comparison group met the college readiness standard (Table 8). The results for APIE target students and comparison students were not found to be significantly different. The results for the APIE students were similar to those found in the 2007–2008 school year. The results across APIE and non-APIE high schools varied widely (Table 9).

Table 8. Students Who Met TSI College Readiness Standard, 2007–2008 and 2008–2009

	APIE target Students 2007–2008 (n=652)	**APIE target Students 2008–2008 (n=761)**	**Comparison students 2008–2009 (n=425)**
# Passing TSI college readiness standard	275	320	196
% Passing TSI college readiness standard	42.1%	42.0%	46.1%

Source. AISD student enrollment and test files prepared by the DPE, June 2009

Table 9. Students Who Met TSI College Readiness Standard by School, 2008–2009

	High school	Target students	Number college ready	Percentage college ready
APIE	Austin	131	75	57.3
	Lanier	90	15	16.7
	McCallum	97	48	49.5
	Travis	86	13	15.1
	Anderson	87	44	50.6
	Bowie	186	99	50.6
	LBJ	57	13	22.8
	Garza	27	13	48.2
	All APIE Students	**761**	**320**	**42.1**
Non-APIE	Reagan	41	15	36.6
	Crockett	152	70	46.1
	Akins	212	103	48.6
	Eastside	20	8	40.0
	All Non-APIE Students	**425**	**196**	**46.1**

Source. AISD student enrollment and test files prepared by the DPE, June 2009

SURVEY RESULTS

In this section of the report, the results from the teacher, counselor, volunteer, and student surveys are discussed. The surveys provided information about perceived academic impact and insights about the programs' best practices and challenges. The surveys also provided insight into impacts other than of an academic nature that the program may have had on students. All of the surveys contained two types of questions. The first type were statements to which respondents reacted by marking *strongly disagree*, *disagree*, *agree*, or *strongly agree*. The second type were open-ended questions that allowed respondents to write their answers in the spaces provided.

Survey results were primarily positive for all programs and participant groups (Table 10). Mean scores of 3 or higher indicated responses of *agree* or *strongly agree*, and scores less than 3 indicated responses of *disagree* or *strongly disagree*. In the categories investigated (i.e., overall program satisfaction, academic impact, student engagement, teacher support, and program management), the mean scores were lowest for all participants in the area of student engagement for PIM at the middle and high school level. The mean student engagement score also was lower for volunteers working with the PIL program.

Table 10. Survey Results by Program and Survey Category

Program	Survey taker	Program satisfaction	Academic impact	Student engagement	Teacher support	Program management
PIM - HS	Teachers (n = *)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Students (n = 40)	2.89	2.98	2.82	n/a	3.06
	Volunteers (n = 21)	3.41	3.14	2.92	n/a	3.17
PIM - MS	Teachers (n = 8)	3.23	3.48	2.81	3.31	3.25
	Students (n = 209)	2.93	2.90	2.82	n/a	3.27
	Volunteers (n = 99)	3.46	3.20	2.91	n/a	3.23
PIM - ES	Teachers (n = 5)	3.80	3.60	3.53	3.65	3.88
	Students (n = 90)	3.37	3.31	3.32	n/a	3.56
	Volunteers (n = 46)	3.45	3.36	3.14	n/a	3.29
PIR/CEL	Teachers (n = 24)	3.37	3.19	3.35	n/a	3.28
	Volunteers(n = 194)	3.49	3.39	3.34	n/a	3.29
PIL	Teachers (n = *)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Students (n = 13)	3.41	3.36	3.17	n/a	3.84
	Volunteers (n = 10)	3.35	3.05	2.78	n/a	3.08
CR	Counselors (n = *)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Students (n = 52)	3.40	3.32	3.32		3.50
	Volunteers (n = 46)	3.23	3.22	3.12		2.94

Source. Teacher, volunteer and student APIE surveys, Spring 2009
Note. * indicates there were fewer than five respondents. Values were omitted to preserve confidentiality.

Teacher Survey Summary

Teacher responses were very positive (see Appendix A). Ninety-eight percent of the teachers who responded to the survey indicated that APIE staff made them feel appreciated, and 98% reported they believed the APIE programs made an overall positive difference for their students. All of the teacher respondents participating in APIE's CEL, PIR, or PIL programs believed the study groups helped improve student reading skills as well as student interest in reading. Ninety-three percent of the teacher respondents indicated they would like to participate again in the next school year, and 98% would recommend APIE programs to other teachers. The only question posed to all the teachers that had a mean rating of less than 3 was "Most of my volunteers attended every week." This question received an average rating of 2.88, and 60% of respondents agreed with the statement.

Open-Ended Survey Response Summary for APIE Teachers

Teachers who facilitated APIE tutoring programs in classrooms across the district were asked to complete open-ended prompts on their surveys. These responses were examined to

provide evidence that the program was implemented according to program expectations and to identify outcomes for students, teachers, and volunteers.

The teachers discussed the aspects of their APIE programs they liked best. Teachers wrote favorably about their students' interactions with volunteers and were grateful they had the opportunity to forge relationships with other adults who were earnestly concerned about their students' futures. One teacher said what she liked best about the program was "the connection that the students make to an adult who cares about their success in school." Another teacher wrote, "I like that students get to work with volunteers who genuinely seem to want to help them." Several teachers also felt the small group setting was valuable.

Although their responses were overwhelming positive, the teachers also were asked to identify the aspects of their APIE programs they would like changed. The most common concern expressed by teachers was volunteer absences. Twenty-five percent of teachers who submitted an open-ended response indicated concerns about the regular attendance of volunteers. According to one teacher, "Too many volunteers make too many absences." More specifically, a few teachers described how chronic absences affected students. For example, one teacher wrote,

> "Penalties to volunteers who do not show up, are late, or do not communicate their absences to the teacher [is what I would like changed]. It was a serious problem this year, and makes me unsure about continuing with the program. Kick them out, make them pay a fine, do community service, whatever. I can't just flake out on my students and they can't either. Dealing with the emotional repercussions of no-shows from kids whose parents are picked up on warrant roundups every other month is exhausting, especially when you are simultaneously merging 3 groups of varied-leveled readers and managing other volunteers."

Teachers wrote that volunteer absences disrupted the classroom because groups had to reorganize to accommodate the children who were without their volunteer. Teachers also wrote about the disappointment students felt when their volunteer did not walk through the classroom door. The disappointment was greater when the volunteer had not communicated that he or she would be absent. Volunteer absences may have made it more difficult for relationships to develop between the students and the volunteers.

Surveys are a helpful tool for tracking progress on initiatives to improve the program experience for the groups involved. In 2007–2008, teachers were very positive about the program. When asked what they liked least, they offered suggestions of things they wanted to change:

- They wanted more support materials and resources for volunteers to use with students and recommendations of activities for volunteers and students.
- They were concerned about volunteer absences.
- They wanted training to learn how to better use the volunteers in the classroom.
- They wanted volunteers to receive more training so volunteers could better manage student behavior and engage all students in a group.

The one consistent concern shared by teachers in both 2007–2008 and 2008–2009 was volunteer absences. In 2008–2009, volunteer absence was the only theme that emerged from the teacher responses to the question of what they wanted to change. It is natural for some absences to occur; however, the problem appears to have been more prevalent in the 2008–2009 school year because 40% of teacher respondents indicated disagreement with the statement that most of their volunteers attended every week (Appendix A), compared with only 18% of teachers indicating disagreement in 2007–2008 (Looby & Gore, 2008).

The second emergent theme was related to APIE's reading materials and activities. In 2008-2009, many teachers indicated the reading materials and activities were what they liked *best* about the program, in contrast to the previous year when reading materials and activities surfaced as a concern. Building on the quality instructional resources provided by APIE, teachers requested more reading comprehension tasks. The change in the nature of teacher comments about their instructional resources may indicate APIE successfully addressed teacher concerns about instructional materials. The previous year's concerns about training of teachers and volunteers did not arise in 2008-2009.

Volunteer Survey Summary

Volunteer responses on the APIE program surveys were overwhelmingly positive (Appendix B). The average scale response for questions answered by all volunteers was more than 3, indicating that the volunteers agreed or strongly agreed with the statements posed. When asked whether APIE staff made the volunteers feel appreciated, 99% of the volunteers agreed. Ninety-eight percent of the volunteers reported they felt appreciated by the teachers, as well, and 97% responded that they would recommend this program to other volunteers. The question posed to all volunteers that had the lowest average rating (3.03) was "I attended every week." About 25% of volunteers disagreed with this statement. In 2007–2008, the percentage responding that they did not attend every week was almost the same, at 23% (Looby and Gore, 2008).

Open-Ended Survey Response Summary for APIE Volunteers

Learning more about the volunteer experience helps APIE identify best practices with volunteer management. Also, open-ended questions allow new opinions and ideas to surface. The volunteers were asked to identify the aspects of their APIE programs they liked best. Most volunteer respondents identified their interactions with students as their most rewarding experience in the program. Explanations for this ranged from witnessing student epiphanies or intellectual breakthroughs on tough problems (e.g., the so-called aha! moments described by one volunteer) to the opportunities to develop strong bonds and relationships with the students they mentored. The following responses from volunteers encapsulate these sentiments:

> "Those 'aha' moments with the students and when all the students were participating [are what I liked best]."
>
> "I enjoyed interacting with the students and influencing them in a positive manner."
>
> "[I liked] being a positive influence in the students' lives."
>
> "[I liked] specific moments when I feel like I really help a student understand the material or feel a sense of confidence in themselves and their ability to figure out a problem on their own. It seems that a lot of them (in 8th grade) have preconceived notions about whether or not they are capable, and it affects their confidence level and willingness to work. Sometimes I feel like I explain something or otherwise motivate them to keep trying and believing it is possible for them."

In addition, several volunteers wrote positively about how the organization and program were structured and lauded the quality and comprehensiveness of the materials provided to volunteers. One volunteer wrote, "The volunteer binder was a great resource & allowed me to use appropriate materials for each week." Commenting about how well organized the program was, another volunteer wrote, "The APIE staff and _____ were great about communicating with volunteers. The program was well organized." Several volunteers wrote enthusiastically about their interactions with their program coordinator. For example, one volunteer responded, "____ was a GREAT facilitator. She made the volunteers feel important. Her respect for the role, the classroom, and the teacher/students created a balance that worked."

The volunteers provided comments related to what they would like changed about the program. Several volunteers recommended tailoring the curriculum to target different levels of learners. For instance, one volunteer wrote, "The material was way beyond the level of some of the kids. They don't know what a 'yard' is, do not know their multiplication tables, yet we are

calculating square yards." Similarly, one volunteer suggested, "More materials for the more challenged readers. Fluency [is] not really an issue if they don't know the words." Conversely, some volunteers found the material insufficiently challenging and recommended greater differentiation in the difficulty level of the learning materials: "More materials for high-performing students. It was hard to keep my kids challenged." In this same vein, another volunteer commented, "More materials for upper level students."

Student Survey Summary

The APIE survey results for student respondents were positive (Appendix C). Most students (84%) said they liked meeting with their volunteer, and 90% said they participated actively when they worked with their volunteer. Of the student respondents who participated in the PIM or PIL programs, 84% reported their grades improved as a result of their participation, 91% said the program was helpful to them, and 50% said they came to school more often because of their volunteer. Of the student respondents who participated in the CR program, 96% said the program made a positive difference for them, and 91% said the volunteer helped them improve their college entrance exam scores. Students in the PIR and CEL programs were not surveyed because they were too young.

When the surveys were examined by program, mean student responses to survey questions for PIM at the middle and high school levels were below 3 for three of the four applicable categories (Table 10). A mean score below 3 indicated that students disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statements posed. The lowest average response was in the student engagement category. In contrast, mean student survey responses pertaining to student engagement at the elementary level were not of concern.

Open Survey Response Summary for APIE Student Participants

Of the 412 APIE students who completed a survey, 373 responded to an open-ended question that asked them to identify what they liked best about the APIE volunteer(s) with whom they worked during the school year. A sizeable number of students reported that their volunteer was helpful and imparted new strategies to solving difficult problems. Student respondents also praised the personal attributes of volunteers, describing some as "funny" and "nice." Several claimed volunteers improved their academic preparation, particularly for the TAKS test. Further, their comments indicated the academic support they received from the volunteers was interlaced with emotional support. Examples of student comments include the following:

> "What I like best about having a volunteer is that when I don't understand something, they are the ones that help me."

"We do math problems & he helps me understand the problems that are hard."

"They helped me learn new ways of solving things."

"She's funny, cool, and helps me with Math and I appreciate her for that. When I ask her a question she always has an answer."

"[What] I like best about having a volunteer is that they help me relax from pressure of getting ready for TAKS."

Students participating in APIE programs also were asked what they would like to change about the time they spend with their volunteer or the APIE program in general. Although the response made most frequently was that "nothing" about the program should be changed, many students requested additional opportunities to work with volunteers (e.g., lengthening the amount of time allocated to the program during the school day and increasing the number of days per week volunteers visit classrooms). Another common theme that emerged from students' comments, mirroring the recommendations made by volunteers, was to enliven the instructional materials with "funner" activities. According to one student, "I think I want to change for him to have a little more fun when we are doing math." It appears the students were challenging the program to help them meet higher expectations by making the materials more interesting and engaging.

When the students were asked to provide any other thoughts or comments related to the APIE programs, they emphasized their satisfaction with the program and its effectiveness in improving their academic skills. Volunteer absences did not appear as a theme in student comments.

APIE Classroom Observations

APIE and DPE staff observed classrooms to see whether teachers and volunteers followed the program protocols and procedures covered in their training. It would be difficult to interpret academic outcomes and survey results without knowing whether the program was implemented as intended or not. Both good and poor results can be attributed to a program if that program is being implemented well. However, if teachers or volunteers stray far from how a program is meant to be, how to interpret the program's results becomes unclear.

Classroom observations confirmed that students and volunteers primarily worked in small groups, and the number of students in each group varied. APIE staff assigned an average of five volunteers to each classroom, and an average of six student study groups were present in each classroom. A description of classroom groupings is provided in Table 11.

Table 11. Study Groups by Student Group Size, 2008–2009

	No Volunteer	One-on-one tutoring	2 students in group	3 students in group	4 students in group	5 or more students in group
Percentage of groups with….	2.9	5.6	26.0	44.6	17.3	3.3

Source. APIE Classroom Observation Records, 2008–2009

Overall, the results across observations were highly positive, indicating that teachers and volunteers were implementing the program as intended (Appendix F). On a scale of 1 to 3, the mean observation score for Classroom Environment was 2.9. The mean observation scores for Volunteer Role and Teacher Role were 2.7, and the mean score for Student Role was 2.9. The observations revealed several highlights:

- Classroom Environment: The classroom arrangements were conducive to group study, and materials were readily available.
- Volunteer Role: Most volunteers exhibited positive attitudes while working with students and were able to implement their lessons effectively.
- Teacher Role: Teachers allocated most of the class time to study group work while volunteers were in the classroom.
- Student Role: Most students appeared happy during their interaction with the volunteers and were actively engaged.

The observations also revealed a few areas for which the mean observation scores were less than 2.5. Although these mean scores are not considered to be negative, program staff may need to clarify program expectations and/or offer volunteers extra support. They also may need to revisit expectations for volunteer and student interactions.

- Classroom Environment: The time it took to get started and the consistency of volunteer assignments to students varied by program.
- Volunteer Role: Volunteer arrival times, collective entry into the classroom, and conversation with students beyond the scope of instruction varied by program.
- Teacher Role: Teacher assistance with student behavioral issues varied by program.
- Student Role: Student disruption of lessons varied by program.

Overall, the variation between observation scores was not large enough for the results to prove instructive. A more detailed rubric could help identify under which conditions students excel academically and which elements of the APIE programs are most essential for student success.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

This section of the report provides a discussion of program implementation and student outcome highlights and challenges in relation to the program evaluation questions.

PROGRAM SUPPORT

It was evident from teacher and volunteer survey responses that both participant groups felt supported and appreciated by APIE staff. Without this feeling of support and satisfaction with the program overall, it is unlikely that about 90% of the teacher and volunteer survey respondents would express a desire to continue to participate in APIE programs. It would also make it very difficult for APIE to expand its programs to more classrooms and schools. The effectiveness of the support APIE provided teachers and volunteers likely resulted in better retention of participants, an opportunity to recruit more teachers and volunteers, and a better relationship between teachers and volunteers. Satisfaction with the programs also probably contributed to creating a positive environment for learning.

Student satisfaction and engagement with APIE programs varied by program and school level. Satisfaction and engagement were high among survey respondents in PIM at elementary schools, PIL, and CR. PIM respondents at the middle and high school levels, however, indicated a low level of program satisfaction and engagement.

These measures are important because students' level of engagement affects their learning. Studies show that learning involves both cognition and emotion (Park & Reifel 2009). A volunteer's enthusiasm, hands-on activities, appealing materials, and opportunities for success can influence the level of student engagement, and thus the likelihood that a student will learn. Students' confidence in their ability to do the work is an element of engagement. Studies show that students who believe they have the capacity to produce a desired effect are more likely to be engaged in math and reading, and this engagement leads to improved performance (Alvermann 2003; National Mathematics Advisory Panel, 2008). A recent study of AISD students showed that students' ratings of their academic self-confidence were significantly related to TAKS passing rates (Cornetto & Schmitt, in press). APIE volunteers have a unique opportunity to impact student achievement by increasing students' academic confidence and thus their level of engagement in their school work.

Therefore, approaches taken to engage middle and high school students in learning math need to be examined. Focusing attention on improving student engagement in the PIM program at the middle and high school levels might lead to a larger academic impact for the PIM program participants.

ACADEMIC OUTCOMES FOR APIE STUDENTS

The consideration of APIE student outcomes in relation to the comparison group and across school years is important because the comparison group represents what would occur academically in the absence of the APIE program. Because the programs' intention was to improve students' academic success, one would hope students who participated did better academically than similar students who did not participate in the program. For instance, if the students had not participated in an APIE program, how would they have fared academically? If no difference or a very small difference was found between the groups, then the effectiveness of the program needs to be further explored.

There is some indication of program influence on the academic performance of elementary and middle school students in the PIM program. At the elementary level, a significantly higher percentage of APIE students passed the TAKS math test from one year to the next. The same was not true of the comparison group. At the middle school level, APIE students increased the level at which they were passing the math TAKS from one year to the next, and the comparison students did not.

At the same time, there were no significant differences in academic performance between the APIE and comparison students during the 2008-2009 school year, and for most indicators, the differences the comparison group and APIE participants experienced between school years were negligible. However, it is also apparent from student surveys that the program is impacting students in a positive way.

In addition to student engagement, academic self-confidence, and student achievement, what accounts for these mixed results? It could be that significant changes in student learning are occurring among APIE participants during a school year, but results measured by TAKS scores take longer to evolve. Other variables affecting student achievement may simply have a stronger influence than APIE program effects on student learning. For example, day-to-day classroom instruction, parent engagement, and/or daily attendance all influence student learning.

Another factor influencing learning among APIE participants is the mentor-student relationship. Mentoring can have a positive impact on student academic confidence, grades, attendance, behavior, and attitudes about school (Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools, 2005). Successful academic mentoring programs include relationship-building activities in addition to tutoring or other types of direct educational support. It might be proposed that the mentor-student relationship built by APIE's educational support activities produced positive impacts on learning which were not realized within the single school year. Thus, other indicators

should be measured to capture the impact the mentoring relationship, and APIE programs in general, have on student learning. Further, APIE may want to consider implementing activities to strengthen the mentor-student relationship to increase the impact of its programs.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

APIE has undertaken the mission of promoting effective community and school partnerships to assist all students in successfully preparing for college and future careers. Toward this end, APIE developed multiple programs to assist students at numerous grade levels and from different socioeconomic strata. Generally, program results were promising. Program participants (i.e., teachers, volunteers, and students) felt supported by the programs, and students experienced positive outcomes. In some cases, the positive outcomes may have been influenced by APIE program participation.

The following recommendations are provided for program staff consideration in making APIE programs even more effective.

1. *Explore new ways to engage middle and high school math students*. To make an academic impact on middle and high school math students might require a different strategy for engaging them than is currently practiced. DPE staff recommend working with AISD instructional specialists to explore the development of a new model for engaging teens in learning math.

2. *Place greater focus on the indirect impact APIE programs have on student achievement.* Although the academic outcomes for most programs showed few differences between APIE participants and comparison groups, these programs might have had a measurable impact on other variables influencing academic achievement (e.g., motivating students to want to learn, boosting students' confidence in their academic abilities, and creating a climate in the classroom in which students feel encouraged to ask for help when they need it). DPE staff recommend exploring the possible indirect influences of the program and working with DPE to develop measurable indicators.

3. *Revise the observation rubric.* The measurement scale could be expanded to show a greater degree of detail regarding the classroom environment and participant interactions. This modification would (a) provide program staff with information needed to support teachers, volunteers, and students and (b) provide evaluation staff with information needed to identify best practices and the relationship of those practices to student outcomes.

4. *Explore more ways to decrease volunteer absences.* APIE instituted new procedures in 2008–2009 to try to decrease volunteer absences. These included covering the impact of volunteer absences in trainings and calling volunteers who did not attend when expected.

These measures might need to be supplemented to have the desired result. Given the negative impact volunteer absences have on children and classrooms, it might be useful to look at other local agencies that work with volunteers and serve children or other vulnerable populations who depend on the attendance of a volunteer. It might be helpful to talk to the volunteer managers of such agencies to share strategies about how to decrease volunteer absences. It might also be worthwhile to explore ways to decrease the disruption of the classroom when a volunteer is absent. Volunteers had suggestions about how to improve attendance (e.g., allowing them to volunteer for a semester rather than a school year). It might be helpful to do a focus group with the volunteers who had many absences to understand how the agency could better accommodate volunteer needs or better screen for people who will make a consistent commitment to the children.

5. *Expand data collection for the CR program*. Collecting program participant records will provide the information necessary to truly measure the impact of this program.

APPENDICES

Appendix A. Summary of Teacher Survey Responses, 2008–2009

Teacher survey responses	Mean	Strongly agree 4	Agree 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1
The preparation I received from Austin Partners in Education (APIE) prepared me well for this program.	3.28	33%	63%	5%	0%
I understand my role in the execution of this program.	3.42	47%	49%	5%	0%
The APIE staff has made me feel appreciated.	3.56	58%	40%	2%	0%
I am satisfied with the level of communication I have with APIE staff.	3.52	57%	41%	0%	2%
I am satisfied with the level of teacher-volunteer communication.	3.14	37%	42%	19%	2%
I feel supported by APIE staff.	3.57	60%	38%	2%	0%
Having volunteers in my classroom supports my work as a teacher (or as a counselor or Advance Facilitator).	3.57	57%	43%	0%	0%
The volunteers make me feel appreciated.	3.5	52%	45%	2%	0%
APIE staff makes it easy to have volunteers in my classroom.	3.45	55%	36%	10%	0%
Most of my volunteers attended every week.	2.88	31%	29%	38%	2%
As a result of having volunteers in my classroom, my classroom is more connected to the community.	3.24	26%	71%	2%	0%
Most of my students behave well during the study group sessions.	3.23	28%	67%	5%	0%
Most of my students participate actively in their group.	3.4	43%	55%	2%	0%
I enjoy participating in this Partners in Education program each week.	3.58	63%	33%	5%	0%
This program is a good use of my students' time.	3.55	57%	41%	2%	0%
This program aligns with my instructional goals.	3.5	55%	41%	5%	0%
My students enjoy participating in this program each week.	3.6	60%	41%	0%	0%

Teacher survey responses	Mean	Strongly agree 4	Agree 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1
The materials provided were appropriate for my students.	3.51	54%	43%	3%	0%
The materials provided were interesting to my students.	3.51	51%	49%	0%	0%
I would like to participate in this program next year.	3.53	60%	33%	8%	0%
I would recommend this program to others.	3.57	60%	38%	2%	0%
This program makes an overall positive difference for my students.	3.57	60%	38%	2%	0%

The questions below were posed to some, not all of the teachers, depending on the program.

Teacher survey responses	Mean	Strongly agree 4	Agree 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1
Participating in this program has helped students improve their grades and/or TAKS scores.	3.33	33%	67%	0%	0%
My students have a deeper understanding of class material because of this program.	3.31	39%	54%	8%	0%
Most of my students' attitudes about school have improved because of their participation in the study groups.	3	33%	33%	33%	0%
My students come to school more often because of this program.	2.67	13%	40%	47%	0%
This program has broadened my students' view of the world.	3.29	35%	59%	6%	0%
Participation in the program has increased my students' reading comprehension.	3.04	19%	67%	15%	0%
Participating in the program has helped students improve their college entrance exam scores.	2.5	0%	50%	50%	0%
Participating in the program has helped students improve their DRA scores.	3.04	20%	64%	16%	0%

Teacher survey responses	Mean	Strongly agree 4	Agree 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1
Participation in the program has improved my students' ability to read fluently.	3.2	20%	80%	0%	0%
This program is beneficial for my students' social development.	3.28	28%	72%	0%	0%
This program makes my students feel like their volunteer supports their success.	3.4	44%	52%	4%	0%
This program has increased my students' interest in reading.	3.2	20%	80%	0%	0%

Appendix B. Summary of Volunteer Survey Responses, 2008–2009

Volunteer survey responses	Mean	Strongly agree 4	Agree 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1
The preparation I received from APIE prepared me well for this program.	3.3	34%	62%	3%	1%
I understand my role in the execution of this program.	3.43	45%	54%	1%	1%
The APIE staff has made me feel appreciated.	3.67	68%	31%	1%	0%
I am satisfied with the level of communication I have with APIE staff.	3.56	58%	39%	2%	0%
I am satisfied with the level of teacher-volunteer (or Advance facilitator-volunteer) communication.	3.31	41%	51%	7%	1%
The teacher (or Advance facilitator) appreciates me.	3.54	58%	40%	2%	1%
This program makes an overall positive difference for my students.	3.45	48%	49%	2%	1%
As a result of this volunteer experience, I know more about public schools today.	3.33	43%	47%	9%	1%
As a result of this volunteer experience, I am more interested in our public schools.	3.33	41%	51%	7%	1%
My time is used effectively in the classroom.	3.25	37%	53%	9%	1%
Most of my students behave well during the classroom coaching sessions.	3.11	27%	59%	12%	2%
Most of my students participate actively in their group.	3.16	32%	55%	12%	2%
I attended every week.	3.03	30%	45%	24%	2%
I enjoy participating in this Partners in Education program each week.	3.48	54%	39%	6%	0%
My participation in this program was a meaningful volunteer experience.	3.52	59%	36%	5%	1%
I would like to participate in this program next year.	3.33	46%	43%	10%	1%
I would recommend this program to others.	3.49	53%	44%	2%	1%
The materials provided were appropriate for my students.	3.27	38%	53%	9%	1%
The materials provided were interesting to my students.	3.05	27%	54%	17%	2%

The following questions were posed to volunteers in only some of the programs, not all.

Volunteer survey responses	Mean	Strongly agree 4	Agree 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1
My students have a deeper understanding of class material because of this program.	3.09	23%	63%	13%	1%
Most of my students' attitudes about school have improved because of their participation in the classroom coaching sessions.	2.91	15%	62%	22%	1%
This program has broadened my students' view of the world.	2.89	13%	64%	21%	2%
Having lesson plans in advance makes me a more effective volunteer.	3.37	46%	46%	8%	1%
Participation in the program has increased my students' reading comprehension.	3.26	32%	61%	7%	0%
Participation in the program has improved my students' ability to read fluently.	3.29	35%	58%	7%	0%
This program is beneficial for my students' social development.	3.37	40%	57%	3%	0%
This program makes my students feel like I support their success.	3.58	58%	42%	0%	0%
This program has increased my students' interest in reading.	3.28	33%	62%	5%	0%

Appendix C. Summary of Student Survey Responses, 2008–2009

Student survey responses	Mean	Strongly agree 4	Agree 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1
I talk to my volunteer about things that are important to me.	2.73	23%	38%	28%	11%
My volunteer and I talk about things I didn't know before.	3.07	35%	42%	18%	5%
I like meeting with my volunteer.	3.22	42%	42%	12%	4%
I am on my best behavior when I work with my volunteer.	3.26	39%	48%	10%	2%
I participate actively when I work with my volunteer.	3.3	41%	49%	9%	1%
My volunteer comes every week.	3.16	40%	40%	16%	4%
The activities I worked on with my volunteer are interesting.	3.05	32%	46%	19%	4%

The following questions were posed to students in the PIM and/or the PIL programs.

Student survey responses	Mean	Strongly agree 4	Agree 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1	Program
I think this program is helpful to me.	3.3	40%	51%	6%	2%	PIL & PIM
Working with my volunteer has helped me to improve my grades or TAKS scores.	3.13	32%	51%	14%	3%	PIL & PIM
I feel better about school because of working with my volunteer.	2.93	26%	46%	23%	5%	PIL & PIM
I come to school more often this year because of my volunteer.	2.56	20%	30%	36%	14%	PIL & PIM
I understand more about math because of my work with my volunteer.	3.09	32%	49%	15%	4%	PIM
I like math.	2.72	31%	30%	18%	21%	PIM
I am good at math.	2.87	27%	44%	19%	11%	PIM
My volunteer is good at math.	3.53	63%	30%	5%	3%	PIM

Student survey responses	Mean	Strongly agree 4	Agree 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1	Program
I understand more about reading because of my work with my volunteer.	3.5	50%	50%	0%	0%	PIL
I like reading.	3	33%	42%	17%	8%	PIL
I am a strong reader.	2.92	25%	50%	17%	8%	PIL
I liked what I read with the volunteers.	3.5	50%	50%	0%	0%	PIL

The following questions were posed to students in the CR program.

Student survey responses	Mean	Strongly agree 4	Agree 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1
I became aware of the College Readiness standards through:					
a. Meetings with my Advance facilitator and/or college counselor	3.3	44%	47%	5%	5%
b. Meetings with volunteers	3.19	35%	51%	12%	2%
c. Letters home to my parents	2.48	24%	21%	33%	21%
The College Readiness program makes a positive difference for me.	3.46	50%	46%	4%	0%
Working with my volunteer has helped me to improve my college entrance exam scores.	3.27	39%	52%	8%	2%
I feel supported by the volunteer.	3.5	54%	42%	4%	0%
There is always a volunteer for me to work with on college readiness.	3.56	58%	40%	2%	0%
I feel prepared for college after working with the volunteer(s).	3.24	36%	54%	8%	2%
Participating in College Readiness is convenient for me.	3.45	47%	51%	2%	0%
I would recommend this program to others.	3.44	50%	46%	2%	2%

Appendix D. Classroom Observation Rubric

FOCUS	1	2	3	NOTES
Classroom Environment	The classroom arrangement does not allow for each volunteer to work with a group of students.	The classroom is arranged so that some volunteers can work with a group of students.	The classroom is arranged so that each volunteer is working with a group of students.	
	It takes more than 3 minutes after volunteer arrival for students to be seated in groups.	Within 3 minutes of volunteer arrival, students were seated in their groups.	Most or all students are seated in their group upon volunteer arrival.	
	Based on student and volunteer reactions, it appears few volunteers sit with the same students each week.	Based on student and volunteer reactions, it appears volunteers sit with some of the same students each week.	Based on student and volunteer reactions, it appears most volunteers consistently sit with the same students each week.	Please indicate "**N/A**" if you are not able to determine.
	None or few of the groups had learning materials readily provided.	Some groups had learning materials readily provided.	All groups had all learning materials readily provided.	
Volunteer Role	Few volunteers arrive on time.	Some volunteers arrive on time.	Most or all volunteers arrive on time.	
	Few volunteers enter the classroom as a group.	Some volunteers enter the classroom as a group.	Most or all volunteers enter the classroom as a group.	
	Few volunteers show positive attitude.	Some volunteers show positive attitude.	Most or all volunteers show positive attitude.	
	Few volunteers effectively implement the lesson objectives.	Some volunteers effectively implement the lesson objectives.	Most or all volunteers effectively implement the lesson objectives.	
	Few volunteers attempt to guide and redirect student behavior.	Some volunteers attempt to guide and redirect student behavior.	Most or all volunteers attempt to guide and redirect student behavior.	
	Few or no volunteers engage in conversation beyond the scope of instruction.	Some volunteers engage in conversation beyond the scope of instruction.	Most or all volunteers engage in conversation beyond the scope of instruction.	

FOCUS	1	2	3	NOTES
Teacher/counselor Role	The teacher/counselor does not greet the volunteers when they arrive.	The teacher/counselor greets some of the volunteers when they arrive.	The teacher/counselor greets all of the volunteers when they arrive.	
	The teacher/counselor is out of the classroom for 3 minutes or more for a non-emergency.	The teacher/counselor is not actively monitoring activities.	The teacher/counselor is actively monitoring the volunteers and students.	Please indicate "**N/A**" if there is a substitute.
	The teacher/counselor does not assist with behavior or curriculum issues.	The teacher/counselor occasionally assists in dealing with any behavior or curriculum issues.	The teacher/counselor assists promptly in dealing with any behavior or curriculum issues (if needed).	
	Little or no class time is allocated to group work.	Some of the class time is allocated to group work.	Most of the class time is allocated to group work.	
	The teacher/counselor does not acknowledge volunteers upon their leaving.	The teacher/counselor acknowledges volunteers upon leaving.	The teacher/counselor expresses appreciation upon volunteers' leaving.	
Student Role	Few or no students appear happy to see their volunteer.	Some students appear happy to see their volunteer.	Most or all students appear happy to see their volunteer.	
	Few or no students appear happy during the lesson.	Some students appear happy during the lesson.	Most or all students appear happy during the lesson.	
	Few students are actively engaged in the work.	Some students are actively engaged in the work.	Most or all students are actively engaged in the work.	
	Student behavior disrupts the lesson in most groups.	Student behavior disrupts the lesson in some groups.	Student behavior disrupts the lesson in few or no groups.	

Appendix E. Texas Success Initiative College Readiness Standards

College readiness standards can be achieved through a combination of TAKS, SAT, ACT, or ASSET test scores. In math, a student must have a minimum TAKS score of 2200; an SAT composite score of 1070, with a math score of 500; an ACT composite score of 23, with a math score of 19; or an ASSET math score of 38. In reading, a student must have a minimum TAKS score of 2200; an SAT composite score of 1070, with a reading score of 500; an ACT composite score of 23, with a reading score of 19; or an ASSET reading score of 41. In writing, a student must have a minimum TAKS ELA score of 3; an SAT composite score of 1070, with a writing score of 500; an ACT composite score of 23, with a writing score of 19; or an ASSET writing score of 6 (or 5 with an objective score of 40).

Appendix F. Mean Observation Scores, by Focus Area and Program, Spring 2009

FOCUS	1	2	3	ALL (N = 202)		PIM (n = 78)	PIR (n = 72)	CEL (n = 48)	PIL (n = 4)
Classroom Environment	The classroom arrangement does not allow for each volunteer to work with a group of students.	The classroom is arranged so that some volunteers can work with a group of students.	The classroom is arranged so that each volunteer is working with a group of students.		3	3	3	3	3
	It takes more than 3 minutes after volunteer arrival for students to be seated in groups.	Within 3 minutes of volunteer arrival, students were seated in their groups.	Most or all students are seated in their group upon volunteer arrival.		2.6	2.5	2.7	2.6	2
	Based on student and volunteer reactions, it appears few volunteers sit with the same students each week.	Based on student and volunteer reactions, it appears volunteers sit with some of the same students each week.	Based on student and volunteer reactions, it appears most volunteers consistently sit with the same students each week.		2.9	2.8	2.9	2.9	2.3
	None or few of the groups had learning materials readily provided.	Some groups had learning materials readily provided.	All groups had all learning materials readily provided.	2.9	2.9	2.9	3	3	3

FOCUS	1	2	3	ALL (N = 202)		PIM	PIR	CEL	PIL
Volunteer Role	Few volunteers arrive on time.	Some volunteers arrive on time.	Most or all volunteers arrive on time.		2.6	2.7	2.7	**2.4**	**3**
	Few volunteers enter the classroom as a group.	Some volunteers enter the classroom as a group.	Most or all volunteers enter the classroom as a group.		2.5	2.6	2.5	**2.3**	**3**
	Few volunteers show positive attitude.	Some volunteers show positive attitude.	Most or all volunteers show positive attitude.		**3**	**2.9**	**3**	**3**	**3**
	Few volunteers effectively implement the lesson objectives.	Some volunteers effectively implement the lesson objectives.	Most or all volunteers effectively implement the lesson objectives.		**2.9**	2.8	**2.9**	**2.9**	**3**
	Few volunteers attempt to guide and redirect student behavior.	Some volunteers attempt to guide and redirect student behavior.	Most or all volunteers attempt to guide and redirect student behavior.		2.8	2.7	**2.9**	**2.9**	**3**
	Few or no volunteers engage in conversation beyond the scope of instruction.	Some volunteers engage in conversation beyond the scope of instruction.	Most or all volunteers engage in conversation beyond the scope of instruction.	2.7	**2.4**	**2**	2.6	2.5	**2.3**

FOCUS	1	2	3	ALL (N = 202)		PIM (n = 78)	PIR (n = 72)	CEL (n = 48)	PIL (n = 4)
Teacher/counselor Role	The teacher/counselor does not greet the volunteers when they arrive.	The teacher/counselor greets some of the volunteers when they arrive.	The teacher/counselor greets all of the volunteers when they arrive.		2.6	2.5	2.6	2.8	3
	The teacher/counselor is out of the classroom for 3 minutes or more for a non-emergency.	The teacher/counselor is not actively monitoring activities.	The teacher/counselor is actively monitoring the volunteers and students.		2.6	2.8	2.5	2.4	2.5
	The teacher/counselor does not assist with behavior or curriculum issues.	The teacher/counselor occasionally assists in dealing with any behavior or curriculum issues.	The teacher/counselor assists promptly in dealing with any behavior or curriculum issues.		2.6	2.8	2.7	2.3	2
	Little or no class time is allocated to group work.	Some of the class time is allocated to group work.	Most of the class time is allocated to group work.		2.9	2.9	3	3	2.8
	The teacher/counselor does not acknowledge volunteers upon their leaving.	The teacher/counselor acknowledges volunteers upon leaving.	The teacher/counselor expresses appreciation upon volunteers' leaving.	2.7	2.6	2.7	2.5	2.6	3
Student Role	Few or no students appear happy to see their volunteer.	Some students appear happy to see their volunteer.	Most or all students appear happy to see their volunteer.		2.8	2.7	3	2.9	3
	Few or no students appear happy during the lesson.	Some students appear happy during the lesson.	Most or all students appear happy during the lesson.		2.9	2.9	2.9	3	3
	Few students are actively engaged in the work.	Some students are actively engaged in the work.	Most or all students are actively engaged in the work.		2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	3
	Student behavior disrupts the lesson in most groups.	Student behavior disrupts the lesson in some groups.	Student behavior disrupts the lesson in few or no groups.	2.9	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.9	2.3

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