

At a Glance

The Dallas Independent School District's (DISD) Office for Dropout Prevention and Community Outreach began implementing the 2004-2005 Texas Grants to Reduce Academic Dropout program during the first-quarter of 2004. The \$478,087 grant, issued by the Texas Education Agency (TEA), was aimed at six high schools (Adamson, Molina, Kimball, SOC, Sunset and Carter) and seven middle schools (Atwell, Browne, Greiner, Stockard, Storey, Hulcy and Quintanilla) located in DISD's Areas 4 and 6.

This evaluation examines the implementation of the grant program from February 1, 2004 through August 31, 2005. The grant was used to fund activities in three principal areas: Student Mentoring, Parental Involvement and Academic Tutoring. There were 8 major program components: Big Brothers Big Sisters mentoring, Hispanic Women's Network of Texas workshops, Las Llaves del Éxito/Keys to Success college fairs, Princeton Review PSAT tutoring, Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) tutoring, Parent Academies and Computer Aided Instruction.

Program Components

Youth Mentoring Program - Big Brothers Big Sisters. The Big Brothers Big Sisters of Dallas identified and screened a candidate pool of qualified adult mentors. These mentors were matched with appropriate DISD students beginning in October 2004. DISD placed public service announcements (PSA) in English on WFAA, Channel 8, and in Spanish on Telemundo, Channel 39, advertising the program and inviting students to apply. The PSA featured DISD's "School Zone Dallas" youth, 10 high school students competitively selected to host DISD CCTV programs of special interest throughout the year to students, parents and the community. More information on DISD's Youth Mentoring Program is available at <http://www.dallasisd.org/insidedisd/depts/mentoring/program.htm> (Youth Mentoring Program, 2004). Students from six schools

served by the grant participated in the program in 2004-2005.

Hispanic Women's Network of Texas. The HWNT conducted three Education Series Seminars in 2004-2005. The principal purpose of these seminars was to acquaint high school aged Hispanic girls with the diversity of educational, career and life choices available to them. Presenters and sponsors also served as positive role models to these young women. In 2004-2005, 410 DISD students were listed as participating in some aspect of HWNT programs. Of these students, 134 attended schools served by the grant, including Adamson, Molina, Kimball South Oak Cliff and Sunset. Fifty-four had participated for more than one year. There were 17 9th grade, 21 10th grade, 33 11th grade, and 63 12th grade participants. The first of these workshops was presented at Mountain View College on November 13, 2004. The second workshop was held at Texas Christian University on February 12, 2005. The third workshop was hosted by HWNT on February 12, 2005 and was held at Oklahoma University

Las Llaves del Éxito/Keys to Success. DISD presented two Las Llaves del Éxito/Keys to Success workshops in 2004-2005. The first occurred Saturday, October 23, 2004, at Mountain View Community College, and the second was presented at UNT-Dallas on February 5, 2005. These workshops were aimed toward preparing high school juniors and seniors for the college admissions process, and to begin the process of making informed career choices. DISD provided transportation between the workshop and area high schools. The district provided continental breakfast foods and lunch for attendees and workers. Although the focus was tailored for DISD students, admission was free and open to anyone interested in learning more about college admissions, regardless of their student affiliation or academic status. Parents were encouraged to accompany their students. Some activities, tax preparation for example, were geared directly toward helping parents be prepared for their children's college entrance process.

Princeton Review PSAT Tutoring Program. Classes for the Princeton Review provided PSAT/SAT tutoring program for Area 4 were conducted from September 7 through October 6, 2004. Area 4 students attended nine 55-minute classes at their home campus (SOC, Kimball and Carter) on a rotating pullout basis during the school week. Area 6 students from Adamson, Molina and Sunset attended three 3-hour workshop sessions held on consecutive Fridays at Mountain View College. DISD provided round-trip transportation for these students.

Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS). TAKS tutoring was provided to Area 4 and Area 6 middle school students in danger of failing the TAKS test under the grant. Reading was tutored on October 30, 2004, and Mathematics was tutored on January 29, 2005, at the University of North Texas Dallas campus. Both sessions started at 9:00 a.m. and ended at 1:00 p.m. The district provided transportation to and from students' home schools for the tutoring sessions. DISD teachers provided the tutoring.

Parent Academies. Twelve Parent academies were presented throughout the grant period. Attendees included parents of DISD students in grades PK through 12. All of the parent academies featured a variety of sessions, displays, and information booths intended to acquaint parents with key information that could be used to help their children. Refreshments were available in the school cafeteria

Formal sessions included "TEKS to TAKS," "Dallas ISD 101," "Yes You Can!," gang awareness, and others. Information booths were set up by a multitude of school and community organizations offering a wealth of information and guidance to parents, students and educators. Booth sponsors included the League of Women Voters, Companion College, T.J. Reconnection Center, the Intake Center, Youth and Family Centers, Safe and Drug Free Health Education, Counselors, Adult Basic Education, ROTC, Psychological Services and a multitude of others.

Parent Institute for Quality Education. In 2004-2005 the Dallas Concilio introduced the program to two grant-served DISD middle and two high schools in Areas 4 and 6, graduating 181 parents from these schools. The grant served Browne Middle School (46 graduates) and Kimball High School (9 graduates) in Area

4, Quintanilla Middle School (91 graduates) and Sunset High School (35 graduates) in Area 6. Parents enrolled in the PIQE program were encouraged to take a pre-test and post-test of their knowledge of items believed critical to their ability to foster improved academic success in their children.

Computer Aided Instruction. Computer Aided Instruction (CAI) is an after-school program funded by the grant that receives supplementary funding from the DISD Alternative Programs Department. The program targets select students and provides intensive, computer based, self-paced instruction designed to help at-risk middle school students earn promotion to the ninth grade. The classes were held at Boude Storey Middle School and Raul Quintanilla Middle School. Orientation for Storey and Quintanilla students and parents was held on September 14, 2004, at their respective schools. Training for Storey staff was held on September 20th and 21st. Training for Quintanilla staff was held on September 21st and 23rd. Staff for each tutoring location consisted of at least one counselor, one or two security monitors and two to three teachers per night. There were 50 evening sessions scheduled.

The nighttime CAI program served 50 students at Storey, and resulted in 32 promotions to high school. The program served 65 students at Quintanilla and 54 were eligible for promotion by the end of the school year

Summary

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