

THE 2005-06 EXTENDED YEAR OPERATIONS: SUMMER SCHOOL PROGRAMS

EA06-160-4

At-A-Glance

The Dallas Independent School District provided extended-year educational services for eligible students in elementary, middle, and high schools to receive remedial instruction for promotion to the next grade level. High school students also had the opportunity to recover course credits at a cost of \$70 per course. Tuition waiver vouchers were offered to those students who were economically disadvantaged and had failed a course. However, vouchers were not available for those students who had passed all courses, were economically disadvantaged, and wanted to take additional courses. Enrichment courses also were offered at all grade levels.

Local and legal policies require the district to offer summer school services to students to reduce retention and provide students having academic difficulties the opportunity for promotion to the next grade level. Middle and high school programs enabled students to enroll in courses necessary to complete coursework and recover credits. District policy states that any student in Grades 1-8 who fails to meet the criteria for promotion to the next grade level may attend extended-year programs (i.e., summer school) in applicable content areas. Students who attend at least 90% of the summer school program days and demonstrate proficiency of course content at grade level will be promoted to the next grade level. However, meeting the 90% attendance criterion only allowed students to be eligible for promotion. Home school principals, using the EIE (Legal) and district (Local) policy as guides, along with teachers and parents, made the final promotion/retention decision. Thus, successful attendance at summer school was not the only criterion used by home school principals to determine a student's promotion/retention status. Summer school also offers enrichment courses that allowed students to accelerate or enhance their educational experiences

There were 35 elementary, 9 middle, and 9 high schools that served as summer school

sites. Overall, 22,709 students were recommended for summer school. Of these, 17,301 actually attended.

Budget

Table 1 shows summer school expenditures by funding source. The total expenditure for the Summer School Program was about 8 million dollars. The largest expenditure was from Title I funds (38.8%,) followed by ARI/AMI expenditures at 28.6%. These expenditures accounted for \$5,470,565 (about 68%) of the total expenditures for the program.

Table 1

Summer School Expenditures
by Funding Source

Fund	\$ Expended	% of Total
OEYP Formula-Based	994,230	12.4
Federal, Title I Program	3,187,039	39.8
Local Funds	1,533,485	19.2
ARI/AMI Funds	<u>2,283,526</u>	28.6
Total	\$7,998,280	100.0

Elementary Level

The district identified 16,655 elementary students who met the requirements to attend summer school. However, only 11,255 enrolled. Of the total identified, 68.4% were Hispanic, 28.3% were African American, 2.5% were Anglo, 0.5% were Asian American and 0.2% were Native American.

Promotion and retention results indicated that 13,072 (78.5%) of the 16,655 were promoted to the next grade. Among the 11,255 who attended summer school and met the promotion criterion, 83.3% were promoted to the next grade. Of those not attending summer school (3,697), 68.5% were promoted to the next grade.

Of the 3rd grade students attending summer school, 1,451 did not pass the TAKS Reading test prior to summer school, 870 (60.0%) were

promoted. Of these, 87 (10.0%) were recommended but did not attend summer school, 84 (9.7%) were not recommended to attend summer school and 699 (80.3%) were recommended and attended summer school.

Of the 2,664 fifth graders who did not pass the spring TAKS, 2,102 were promoted. Of those promoted, 222 (10.6%) were recommended but did not attend summer school, 123 (5.9%) were not recommended even though they did not pass the spring TAKS, and 1,757 (83.6%) were recommended and attended summer school.

Middle School Level

Middle school students accounted for 2,529 of the total number of students recommended for summer school. Of these 2,225 attended. The overall course-passing rate was 85.7%, which was slightly higher than the 85.0% for the 2005 summer school program.

When investigating the promotion rates among 8th grade students who failed the spring TAKS Reading test and attended summer school and those who failed the spring TAKS Reading test and did not attend summer school, it was found that about 96% of those who failed the spring TAKS Reading test and attended summer school were promoted and approximately 81% of those who failed the spring TAKS Reading test and did not attend summer school were also promoted.

High School Level

The high school general education component enrolled a total of 3,525 students in 53 general education courses. Of the total attending, 143 were seniors of which 79 graduated. An additional 100 students graduated who participated in the Reconnect Program.

Teacher and Administrator Surveys

Teachers, regardless of level, indicated that the Curriculum Guide was the most helpful resource. Principals praised both the quality of the summer school curriculum and staff at their sites. Suggestions for improvement of the Summer School Program included:

- Design a better summer school enrollment form, with clearer instructions and coding.
- Provide for better communication and planning between AMI/ARI/MLEP and the summer school office to avoid conflicting information and requests.

- Allow summer school administrators to select the entire campus staff.
- Coordinate and deliver materials and supplies before the start date of summer school.

Recommendations

The findings indicate that there was a lack of consistency in the application of the standards to be promoted to the next grade. Therefore, the following recommendation are offered:

- Steps should be taken to ensure that policies are in place with clear standards as to who should and should not be recommended for summer school so that there will consistency throughout the district.
- Promotion rates among students who attended summer school and those who did not were quite similar. Therefore, the administrative staff should investigate the lack of consistency in the application of standards to be promoted to the next grade.
- On the secondary level, students were allowed to take courses if they failed or wished to seek additional course credit. However, disadvantaged students who were unable to pay the \$70.00 tuition were only provided a tuition waiver if they failed a course. Students who were both successful in their academic studies and were economically disadvantaged were prohibited economically from pursuing additional credit course work. Thus, it is recommended that all disadvantaged students, regardless of whether they passed all course work or not should be allowed to attend summer school through the use of a tuition waiver program.
- Elementary and secondary teachers indicated that remedial students continue to have difficulty staying abreast of the standard curricula. This finding was substantiated through classroom observations. Thus, it is suggested that alternative curricula be developed for students in need of remedial education.