

THE 2006-07 EXTENDED YEAR OPERATIONS: SUMMER SCHOOL PROGRAMS

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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. 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 one through eight 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. The summer school program offered enrichment courses that allowed students to accelerate or enhance their educational experiences.

There were 37 elementary, 12 middle, and 11 high schools that served as summer school sites. Overall, 25,083 students were recommended for summer school. Of these, 20,429 actually attended.

Budget

Table 1 shows summer school expenditures by funding source. The total expenditure for the Summer School Program was about 8.4 million dollars. The largest expenditure was from Title I funds (52.6%,) followed by ARI/AMI expenditures at 24.8%. These expenditures accounted for \$6,489,137 (about 77%) of the total expenditures for the program.

Table 1
Summer School Expenditures
by Funding Source

| Fund | \$ Expended | % of Total |
|--------------------------|------------------|------------|
| OEYP Formula-Based | 617,049 | 7.3 |
| Federal, Title I Program | 4,410,927 | 52.6 |
| Local Funds | 1,280,429 | 15.3 |
| ARI/AMI Funds | <u>2,078,210</u> | 24.8 |
| Total | \$8,386,615 | 100.0 |

Elementary Level

The district identified 17,450 elementary students who met the requirements to attend summer school. However, only 12,845 enrolled. Of the total identified, 69.9% were Hispanic, 26.3% were African American, 2.9% were Anglo, 0.7% were Asian American and 0.2% were Native American.

Promotion and retention results indicated that 13,988 (80.2%) of the 17,450 were promoted to the next grade. Among the 10,788 who attended summer school and met the promotion criterion, 84.0% were promoted to the next grade. Of those not attending summer school (3,200), 70.3% were promoted to the next grade.

Of the grade three students attending summer school, 1,993 did not pass the TAKS Reading test prior to summer school, 1,411 (70.8%) were promoted. Of these, 97 (6.9%) were recommended but did not attend summer school, 213 (15.1%) were not recommended

and did not attend summer school and 1,101 (78.0%) were recommended and attended summer school.

Of the 2,441 fifth graders who did not pass the spring TAKS, in reading, 2,007 were promoted. Of those promoted, 105 (5.2%) were recommended but did not attend summer school, 246 (12.3%) were not recommended and did not attend summer school, and 1,656 (82.5%) were recommended and attended summer school.

Of the 1,920 fifth graders who did not pass the spring TAKS, in math, 1,546 were promoted. Of those promoted, 109 (7.1%) were recommended but did not attend summer school, 206 (13.3%) were not recommended and did not attend summer school, and 1,231 (79.6%) were recommended and attended summer school.

Middle School Level

Middle school students accounted for 2,744 of the total number of students recommended for summer school. Of these 2,735 attended. The overall course-passing rate was 86.3%, which was slightly higher than the 85.7% for the 2006 summer school program.

When investigating the promotion rates among grade eight 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 87.7% of those who failed the spring TAKS Reading test and attended summer school were promoted and 88.1% 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 4,849 students in 55 general education courses. Of the total attending, 177 were seniors of which 52 graduated.

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:

- Modify the curriculum to meet the needs of students who need basic phonics, remedial

instruction, lots of practice, slower paced instruction, differentiated instruction, small group instruction, and more time to cover objectives.

- Create a reading curriculum for students who have difficulty reading by offering phonics, decoding/fluency skills, more vocabulary building activities, and on-line words with pronunciation.
- Need to have timely delivery of enough supplies and materials listed in the curriculum; prior to the beginning of summer school.
- Better communication and planning between AMI/ARI/LEP and Extended year Office to avoid conflicting information and requests.
- Hire more math and science teachers; and train assistant principals about the summer school program.

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 recommendations are offered:

- Schools should be encouraged to follow district policy and summer school guidelines as to who should and should not be recommended for summer school, so that there will be consistency throughout the district.
- Under the current structure of the Summer School Program, a student may be recommended to attend summer school for credit recovery. However, this evaluation found that students who did not actually attend summer school were still promoted to the next grade level. It is recommended that the administrative staff investigate the lack of consistency in the application of the standards to be promoted to the next grade.
- Elementary and secondary teachers indicated that remedial students continue to have difficulty staying abreast of the standard curricula. This finding was substantiated through teacher surveys. Thus, it is suggested that alternative curricula be developed for students in need of remedial education.