



*Dallas Independent School District*

**FINAL REPORT OF 2007-2008  
TITLE II, PART D, ENHANCING EDUCATION THROUGH  
TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM GRANT  
EA08-183-2**

**DEPARTMENT OF EVALUATION  
AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

*Michael Hinojosa, Ed. D. Superintendent of Schools*



Dallas Independent School District

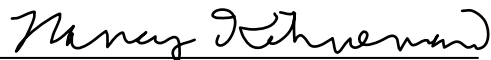
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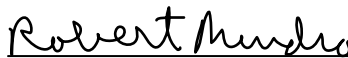
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Rebecca Dyer

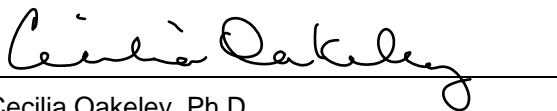
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Dallas, Texas  
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Table of Contents

Abstract..... 2

PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION..... 2

MAJOR EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND RESULTS..... 5

    Methodology ..... 5

        2.1 What was the effectiveness of the grant's contribution to the Beginning Teacher  
            Institute Program? ..... 5

        2.2 What was the effectiveness of the Title II, Part D grant's contribution to the  
            Dallas ISD Online program? ..... 6

        2.3 What was the effectiveness of the Title II, Part D grant's contribution to the  
            Services to Private Schools program? ..... 7

        2.4 What was the effectiveness of the New Horizons program?..... 7

        2.5 What was the effectiveness of the Interactive Video Conferencing program?..... 8

        2.6 What was the effectiveness of the Texas Computer Education Association  
            Scholarships (TECA) program? ..... 9

SUMMARY ..... 11

**FINAL REPORT  
EVALUATION OF THE TITLE II, PART D, ENHANCING EDUCATION  
THROUGH TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM**

Project Evaluator: Rebecca Dyer

**ABSTRACT**

This evaluation examined the implementation of the Title II, Part D enhancing Education Through Technology grant program during the 2007-2008 school year. In 2007-2008, 11 teachers received stipends for successfully completing the requirements of the Beginning Teacher Institute. In connection with No Child Left Behind, Dallas ISD provided services to Private Schools to integrate technology into the curriculum. The Catholic Diocese of Dallas was the largest private school recipient. Dallas ISD Online is a subscription website content management service used to provide training for Dallas ISD teachers. New Horizons provided district employees with 325 days of computer training specializing in Microsoft® applications funded by the grant. The Interactive Video Conferencing program fielded 11 video carts, bringing the number of carts to 53. Seven hundred and forty teachers completed basic training on the carts' operation, resulting in 247 video courses or events held for students' enrichment. The grant helped fund 108 teacher technologists to attend the Texas Computer Association annual meeting in Austin, Texas in February 2008.



## PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

The Instructional Technology (IT) department of the Dallas Independent School District managed the Title II, Part D, Enhancing Education Through Technology grant awarded by the U.S. Department of Education for the 2007-2008 school year. The grant provided funds to the district to facilitate improvements in the use of technology as part of educational delivery strategies employed by the district. The grant ran from July 1, 2007, through June 30, 2008. The IT department applied the funding to six major program areas within the district:

- Beginning Teacher Institute
- Dallas ISD Online
- Services to Private Schools
- New Horizons training classes
- Interactive Video Conferencing
- Texas Computer Education Association (TCEA) Scholarships

Each of these programs was carefully integrated into a districtwide plan to prepare both teachers and students to embrace and integrate technology in the school, workplace and home.

Instructional Technology continues to support the District Technology Plan which has evolved four over-arching educational goals. Each goal provides a solution to a specific area that, when combined, creates an environment whereby student achievement becomes the primary goal. The four goals are: 1) Academic, 2) Business Systems, 3) Infrastructure, and 4) Equitable Access.

### Academic Goals

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- Afford students the opportunity to interface seamlessly with technology, to deepen their understanding of subject area content, and to enrich their knowledge of the world.
  - Create a school/community relationship where all stakeholders communicate resulting in a sustainable partnership mutually beneficial to the learning community.
  - Establish district-wide lines of communication and collaboration that promote quality
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instruction, learning, equity, and access for all members of the district's community.

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#### Business Systems Goals

- The system must support the instructional decision-making process, enhance community and parental interactions, and help achieve instructional goals.
- Interoperability of all components is essential since the distribution and interconnection of information technology empowers users. Interoperability is best achieved in the long run through open technology, open systems, and technology standards.

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#### Infrastructure Goals

- Insure the accuracy of the information needed to support the students and various departments.
- Provide a stable server environment.

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#### Equitable Access Goals

- To achieve equity, not only in the schools, but also in the homes of the students in the district, Technology Services will put into practice a systemic process that will ultimately place a computer (workstation) in the home of each student enrolled in the district.

Beginning Teacher Institute. The BTI is a part of both the New Teacher Mentoring and Development and the Educational Technology Departments. The BTI was limited to 13 first- or second-year teachers and focused on ways to deepen beginning teachers' understanding of their disciplines, students, and classroom instruction. In 2007-2008, the BTI focused on technology integration into the teaching process for these new teachers. The grant provided for training and mentoring of BTI participants by teacher technologists.

Services to Private Schools. Public Law 107-110, No Child Left Behind, requires that local education agencies set aside funds to provide equitable services to participating area private schools. These expenditures must be equal to the expenditures set aside for participating

public school children, after accounting for the number and educational needs of the children to be served. The district provided funding to several private schools, with the Catholic Diocese of Dallas being the largest recipient.

Dallas ISD Online. This is a subscription website management program. The district buys subscriptions for Dallas ISD departments to post online training and other material on a website for access by teachers and other staff.

New Horizons. New Horizons is a commercial provider of technical training on the use of computer applications such as Microsoft® Word®, Excel®, PowerPoint®, and others. The grant funded training for district employees through New Horizons.

Interactive Video Conferencing. This initiative provided video carts, training and stipends for teachers and their students to participate in interactive video conferencing.

TCEA Scholarships. The following description of TCEA appeared on its website at [www.tcea.org](http://www.tcea.org):

The Texas Computer Education Association is the largest state organization devoted to the use of technology in education. Founded in 1980, the organization has been very active throughout Texas supporting instructional technology. Our primary focus is on integrating technology into the K-12 environment and providing our members with state-of-the-art information through conferences, workshops, newsletters, the Internet, and collaborations with higher education and business. TCEA is affiliated with the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE), which provides a two-way channel of information throughout the world.

TCEA is divided into twenty areas across Texas so that the needs of our members can be more easily met. These twenty areas are defined by the Regional Education Service Centers. We encourage our members to stay in touch with the area directors so that everyone will be an active member. There are numerous area conferences and activities in which educators and students can participate, as well as our large annual state conference. The conferences and contests will link you with other professionals in your geographic area as well as across the state ([www.tcea.org](http://www.tcea.org), 2008).

The TCEA Scholarships program paid for 108 Dallas ISD teacher technologists and technology staff members to attend the 28<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Convention & Exposition meeting held in Austin, Texas February 4-8, 2008. The scholarship program provided a stipend to defray registration, hotel, and other costs.

## MAJOR EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND RESULTS

### Methodology

This evaluation reports on the activities of 6 programs in relation to technology usage within the district. Data for this evaluation were developed by examining documents, conducting interviews with key program personnel, and conducting surveys of participants or stakeholders within some programs' areas of operation.

#### *2.1 What was the effectiveness of the grant's contribution to the Beginning Teacher Institute program?*

This year marked the 5<sup>th</sup> consecutive year of the Beginning Teacher Institute, sponsored by New Teacher Mentoring and Development and the Educational Technology Departments. The BTI was limited to 13 first- or second-year teachers and focused on ways to deepen beginning teachers' understanding of their disciplines, students, and classroom instruction. In 2007-2008, the BTI focused on technology integration into the teaching process for these new teachers. Four master teachers facilitated the training sessions around four components: 1) Classroom Environment, 2) Student Centered Learning, 3) Professional Responsibilities, and 4) Learning Partnerships. In 2007-2008, eleven teachers completed their project to integrate technology into the teaching process. Teachers received a stipend of \$500 for attending at least 13 of the 15 sessions. The grant also provided a \$250 stipend to teachers who successfully completed a project. The projects involved introducing technology to students in a grade-appropriate and relevant way. Most teachers used the project stipend to purchase materials or equipment and access to websites or software. This project was required to be based on content Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and had to include the use of technology TEKS in classroom instruction. A digital camera was provided for each school to document the environment and student centered learning. Teachers prepared a PowerPoint™ presentation of their BTI accomplishments to be presented at the end of their training period.

*2.2 What was the effectiveness of the Title II, Part D grant's contribution to The Dallas ISD Online program?*

Dallas ISD Online is a continuation of what was previously called the Blackboard Project, a subscription website content management service. Blackboard Incorporated provides educational software to individuals, businesses and schools nationwide. The Blackboard Academic Suite software is geared to public school systems. Dallas ISD first utilized Blackboard in 2003-2004 as a place to host district-specific online training applications suitable for the Blackboard environment. Blackboard provided server space and a website shell for subscribers to post training, bulletin boards or other educationally oriented material. The subscriber was responsible for developing and maintaining the content of each website. Each individual user had to be licensed. The total number of Blackboard users stands at 8,314. These users participated in some of the 427 active courses designed to meet a variety of needs. This was the final year to subscribe to Blackboard. Funds were set aside to incorporate Moodle in Fall 2008. Moodle is an open source course management system designed to create and manage quality online courses. The software is used all over the world by universities, schools, companies and independent teachers. Moodle is open source and completely free for teachers to use. In Moodle, teachers take on the role of course developers and have the ability to be the instructor for the course or to assign non-editing teachers as instructors. As of July 30, 2008, over 17,000 users were registered including all teachers, paraprofessionals, campus administrators and central administrators. Of these, 41 administrators and 129 teachers were trained as instructors. Access is through [www.mydallasisonline.org](http://www.mydallasisonline.org).

Almost 100 interested campus staff members attended a seven week "Moodle U" training. The goal was to develop a library of well-made courses addressing identified needs. Each participant was informed of the new initiative and developed a lesson on a topic of interest to them. These courses were separated into 29 categories and sub-categories. The best courses available on the Blackboard portal have been archived and restored to the new Moodle installation. Together, courses migrated from Blackboard and the new ones developed at Moodle

U, make up the new, 264 course library. As an incentive, the participants were rewarded with a Tablet PC, web camera and a CD drive. Other teachers and departments had the opportunity to take Moodle training through Professional Development sessions.

Reaction to the move to Moodle has been overwhelmingly positive. Because Moodle offers the opportunity to increase the number of accounts offered by 250% over Blackboard, while saving considerable fees, interest in presenting staff development for teachers and professional employees has grown. Plans are currently underway in several departments for development of training offering the option of online courses.

### *2.3 What was the effectiveness of the Title II, Part D grant's contribution to the Services to Private Schools program?*

In connection with No Child Left Behind, Dallas ISD provided services to area private schools. The Catholic Diocese of Dallas was the largest recipient. Not all funding for the activities reported here came from Title II, Part D funding sources.

The Diocese used its funding primarily for hardware and subscriptions to digital media in 2007-2008. All 19 Diocese schools subscribed to Unitedstreaming™, an online subscription service that provides digital media on a variety of subject areas including foreign language, secondary math, science, and language arts. Virtual field trips and connection with the Jason Project library were available through the service. Some schools purchased laptops for the technology specialist on the campus and others invested in desktop computers, flashdrives for teachers, a variety of software and audio/video accessories.

### *2.4 What was the effectiveness of the New Horizons program?*

New Horizons provides computer training, specializing in Microsoft® applications, nationwide. District employees were eligible for grant funded training at the Dallas facility throughout the year. New Horizons training supplements free training provided through the districtwide Technology Training program available to teachers after school hours. During 2007-2008, the grant funded 325 days of Type A training at New Horizons. Type A training

includes desktop applications such as Microsoft™ Access™, Word™, Excel™ and PowerPoint™. The complete training catalog may be viewed at [www.newhorizons.com](http://www.newhorizons.com).

### *2.5 What was the effectiveness of the Interactive Video Conferencing program?*

The Interactive Video Conferencing program began implementation during the 2006-2007 school year fielding 31 video conferencing carts to district schools. Another 11 were funded through the grant and 11 new schools were equipped with carts as part of their technology offerings from the Capital Bond program. The Instructional Technology Department personnel facilitated training and assistance with presentations for all schools with Interactive Video conferencing carts.

Carts were equipped with a flat screen monitor, a Kodak projector and speaker system, and other equipment necessary to facilitate an interactive conference. The equipment was a camera and audio system that integrates video and audio inputs from several sites for sound, picture, and display among several small to medium sized conferencing locations. Each cart was assigned to a managing technologist trained to be responsible for maintaining the software configuration in an up-to-date status and ensuring any needed hardware maintenance is performed. Carts assigned to schools may be checked out from the managing technologist to facilitate conferences around the district.

Seven hundred and forty teachers completed basic training on the carts' operation in 2007-08, up from 110 teachers in 2006-2007. Training evaluations revealed positive feedback that participants learned more about and were motivated to use video conferencing. These teachers were authorized to check the carts out from the managing technologist. Instructional Technology offered a 12 hour basic training course to teams of three district teachers or staff seeking to become qualified to use the equipment. One of the teachers on the team received six additional hours of advanced training to become the managing technologist. Managing technologists received a stipend for duties performed.

The most frequent complaint among users was the quality of the connections because of small bandwidth. For 2008-09, carts will use a direct connection with Region 10 dedicated to video conferencing. Plans are in place to have the ability for up to 16 sites to connect at once for a conference or virtual field trip.

The Interactive Video Conferencing program hosted a total of 247 courses or events. Sixty video conferences were held in the fall, increasing to 185 by the end of the spring semester. Subjects varied and included math, science, Texas and American History, Reading/Language Arts, descriptive writing and performing arts. Elementary schools hosted the majority of video conference events (229), involving 7,848 students. Middle schools hosted 16 events with 403 students participating. High schools had 2 events and 152 participating students.

Through video conferencing, students have shared classroom activities with other students from around the U.S., Canada and England. They have visited museums in St. Louis and Cleveland, NASA and the Reef Aquarium in Australia. In June 2008, teacher technologists correlated available virtual field trips to the Curriculum Planning Guides.

In addition to the training program, the Instructional Technology department hosted 34 teachers to attend the Texas Distance Learning conference held March 24 through 27 in Galveston, Texas. The theme for the conference was *Sail Into Distance Learning*. Breakout sessions featured topics related to teaching online and video conferencing. This conference serves as an inspiration to teachers and helps them form a vision of how video conferencing can enrich their classroom.

#### *2.6 What was the effectiveness of the Texas Computer Education Association Scholarships (TECA) program?*

The TCEA scholarship program funded 108 teacher technologists to attend the 28<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Convention & Exposition held in Austin, Texas, February 4 through 8, 2008. The theme was *TCEA 2008 Discover Your Destination*. The conference was attended by teachers, librarians, technologists, administrators, specialists, principals and other technology stakeholders. Exhibitors included computer supplies and accessory providers, software vendors, systems and

networking products suppliers, training and education materials suppliers, classroom product suppliers, and others.

Program management surveyed the attendees to learn what they found most helpful or innovative about the conference. One hundred and six attendees responded to the survey, for a 98% response rate. Due to the nature of the information requested, all questions on the survey were open-ended. Only the most frequent responses will be discussed here.

Technology integration was the focus of the topic or skills of the workshops for 83% of the attendees. Almost 50% attended workshops on podcasting, presentation software and computer lab lessons. After attending this conference, 97% feel they are better able to integrate technology into the classroom. The remaining 3% stated they were already comfortable with technology integration.

When asked about the most innovative products at the convention, teachers most frequently cited products by Smartboard interactive whiteboard and the Mimeo products that make any board perform like a whiteboard. A number mentioned wireless, infrared student response systems offered by several vendors. Many others were also named. District attendees most often cited the presentations on Podcasting and "CSI: Computer and science and math integration" as the best presentations. The closing session, demonstrating how a technology class can reclaim the desire to learn for students, also ranked high in the best presentation category.

When asked what respondents thought would be a worthy project from another Texas school district to consider, a week long summer technology camp, podcasting and participating in the Bluebonnet Bowl were mentioned. Several teachers commented that every teacher should have a web page. Teachers were asked to list the product, service or training presented at the conference that could most benefit Dallas ISD. Leading responses featured Smartboard technology and applications, followed other types of offerings that turn any board into a whiteboard. Conference attendees also frequently replied that ongoing or more training on current technology would be beneficial to Dallas ISD. The 106 respondents listed 50 specific

websites and several website content areas as being potentially appropriate and beneficial to be featured on the Instructional Technology department website.

#### SUMMARY

The Dallas ISD Instructional Technology department used grant monies to fund six technology programs needed in the district during the 2007-2008 school year. Grant funding supported 11 new teachers as they completed projects for the Beginning Teacher Institute. The grant provided funds for technology integration to private schools, primarily the Catholic Diocese of Dallas.

The Interactive Video Conferencing program delivered 22 video conferencing carts to schools in 2007-2008, bringing the number of carts in use to 53. Seven hundred and forty teachers completed basic training on the carts' operation and these teachers hosted a total of 247 courses or events.

In 2007-2008, scholarship stipends partially funded 108 teacher technologists to attend the 28<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Convention & Exposition of the Texas Computer Education Association in Austin, Texas. Attendees were able to review and examine technology related offerings, including hardware, software, packaged instructional programs, classroom teaching aids, and other products.

The grant funded 325 days of Type A training at New Horizons for district employees. Type A training includes desktop applications such as Microsoft<sup>™</sup> Access<sup>™</sup>, Word<sup>™</sup>, Excel<sup>™</sup> and PowerPoint<sup>™</sup>.

Recommendations. This grant collects many small projects under one administrative roof for grant purposes. This structure improves the efficiency of the grant acquisition process. By combining many technology projects into one grant, the district is better able to demonstrate the need for grant funds devoted to technology training and integration. The 2006-07 Final Report on Enhancing Education through Technology recommended the Instructional Technology Department improve the oversight and accountability of funding for the various projects. The Technology Department has documentation of all services and product requisitions provided for with this grant money.