Temporary Assistance To Needy Families (TANF): 2006-07

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At-a-Glance

The Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program is a federally funded program established through the state. The TANF program was originally called Aid for Dependent Children (AFDC). The TANF program primarily serves parents with dependent children and families below the poverty level. It also provides Adult Basic Education (ABE) program services to parents and their children. Through the ABE program, participants are able to obtain the General Education Development (GED) certificates. Literacy and English as a Second Language (ESL) classes are also offered to participants. The program’s community liaisons help students with life skills training and immigration-related legal issues. To be eligible for program participation, the student must be at least 18 years old. However, a 16-year old court-ordered student or a 17-year old student that has been formerly withdrawn from school may also receive services. Of the 17 TANF sites located in the Dallas County area, 15 were in the city of Dallas, and one each was in the cities of Mesquite and Irving. The sites in the city of Dallas were located in the Oak Cliff and Pleasant Grove areas.

Demographics

A total of 848 students participated in the TANF program. A student breakdown by site showed 782 students were enrolled at the sites in Dallas, 45 at the sites in Irving, and 21 at the sites in Mesquite. Most (82%) of the 848 students were Hispanic female students.

Of the 31 teachers who participated in the program, 16 were African American, 14 were Hispanic, and 1 was White. Sixty-eight percent (68%) of the teachers were females.

Of the 13 instructional coordinator positions, nine were filled and four remained vacant. Five of the nine instructional coordinators were males and four were females. Most of the coordinators were Hispanic.

Budget

The program’s budget was an integral part of the Adult Basic Education (ABE) program budget of $3,324,157. Additional budget and expenditures information is provided in the ABE At-a-Glance (EA07-001-4) report.

Program Outcomes

A total of 27 (3.2%) TANF students passed the GED test.

Conclusion

The program’s GED test results for this year have not been encouraging due to the low passing rate of 3.2% out of 848 students (mostly Hispanic students) who took part in the program.

Recommendations

- Since the program serves a predominantly Hispanic population, program management should consider the following to help increase the students’ GED passing rates.
  - Increase the number of clock hours that students received literacy and English lessons.
  - Hire more qualified full-time ESL teachers to reflect the 82% Hispanic student population in the program.
  - Students should be encouraged (e.g. provide incentives) to continue to attend classes until graduation.
  - Daycare services should be provided to children whose parents lack such services while in class.