



Austin Independent School District

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A SUMMARY OF AISD'S OPTIONAL EXTENDED YEAR PROGRAM ACTIVITIES, 2005-2006

The Optional Extended Year Program (OEYP), funded by a grant from the state, provides extended learning opportunities for students in kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12) who are at risk of academic failure. The primary focus of an OEYP is to reduce and ultimately eliminate the need for student grade-level retention by providing additional instructional time for students to master the state's academic performance standards (Texas Education Code Sections 42.152 & 29.082). OEYP activities occur outside the regular school day. OEYP is designed to accommodate four school-day options: (a) extended day, (b) extended week, (c) intersession for year-round schools, and (d) summer school. A school district may provide instructional services during any of these programs for a period of time not to exceed 30 days. Participating students must receive a minimum of 240 minutes of instruction to meet Texas Education Agency (TEA) reporting requirements. Since 1993, the Austin Independent School District (AISD) has used the OEYP to reduce the number of AISD students at risk of academic failure.

TEA sets the guidelines for grade promotion through OEYP, and provides OEYP policies regarding class size (i.e., no more than 16 students to a class and no fewer than 8); attendance (i.e., a minimum of 240 minutes); staff development training; and parental involvement.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A number of people worked with the AISD Department of Program Evaluation (DPE) to develop and implement the 2005-2006 OEYP evaluation. Many thanks go to AISD Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) staff, AISD Support Services staff, principals, program managers, and grant staff.

EVALUATION OBJECTIVES

In spring 2006, an electronic survey was sent to the principals (n = 83) who held OEYPs on their campuses during the 2005-2006 school year. Eighty-four percent (n = 70) completed the survey, but not all respondents answered every survey item. The evaluation assembled information from their responses to survey questions about program strategies, staff development training sessions, parent involvement, program information, curricula, and expectations for success. The evaluation focused on four specific objectives relevant to district reporting needs:

- to document and report AISD's OEYP activities, per state law;
- to summarize the participation of parents in AISD's OEYP activities;
- to gather information from OEYP principals regarding program implementation, including curriculum and expectations for program participants; and
- to provide AISD decision makers, principals, program managers, and other school staff with 2005-2006 program data to enhance the operation of AISD's 2006-2007 program.

AISD'S OPTIONAL EXTENDED YEAR PROGRAM CONFIGURATION

During 2005-2006, OEYP supported activities at 83 campuses. In grades K through 5, programs provided accelerated, supplemental services (e.g., literacy and mathematics instruction) to students

whose eligibility scores were 50% or fewer items correct on the Beginning of the Year (BOY) benchmark test for reading and/or math. In grades 6 through 8, reading and mathematics intervention or remediation instruction was provided to eligible students. In grades 9 through 12, the funds supported students who were seeking credit recovery courses in several subjects. Students could participate in an extended day (before or after school), an extended week (Saturday), or a combination of the two. All OEYPs included parental involvement activities; staff development sessions for teachers; and student performance evaluations (i.e., attendance, pre- and post-test information, classroom performance, and promotion/retention information).

Program Strategies

AISD curriculum staff developed a curriculum for structured classes that incorporated an interdisciplinary program, and required staff to deliver the materials at a more rigorous, accelerated pace to provide additional instructional time before school, after school, or on Saturdays. The collective strategies used most often by schools participating in OEYP included state-designated curriculum or campus-determined areas of focus and were reported to TEA as part of the compliance report for 2005-2006. Table 1 shows the curriculum areas of focus for which collective strategies were reported by principals (n = 70), and the frequency of their use.

Table 1: Percentages of Principals' Responses about Use of Instructional Strategies in Their 2005-2006 OEYP

Instructional Strategies	% Used Most Often	% Not Used At All
Reading or language arts programs	99	1
Accelerated reading instruction (ARI)	96	4
Accelerated math instruction (AMI)	93	7
Mathematics and /or science programs	91	9
Problem solving	90	10
English as a second language (ESL)	86	14
Mentoring	82	7
Follow-up activities	79	21
Integration of technology	77	23
Parent partnerships	74	26
Readiness for next grade	74	26
Interdisciplinary program strategies	70	30

Source: AISD OEYP Principal Survey, 2005-2006

Staff Development Sessions

Principals (n = 70) reported offering staff development training for their teachers prior to implementation of the OEYP. The staff development topics mentioned most often by principals were:

- assessment strategies (n = 66),
- questioning strategies (n = 64),
- researched-based practices (n = 63),
- teaching strategies in a content area (n = 61),
- accelerated instruction (n = 58), and
- grouping patterns (n = 55).

The other topics mentioned were learning styles, mentoring, cultural and linguistic diversity, interdisciplinary instruction, team teaching, and integrating technologies.

Parent Involvement

When principals were asked how they informed parents that an OEYP was

available to their child/children, the vast majority (97%, n = 67) said they used letters to parents and parent-teacher conferences. Survey results indicated that 14,459 elementary and secondary parents participated in OEYP activities during the 2005-2006 school year. This number was more than double the number of parents (n = 5,820) who participated in the 2004-2005 OEYP (Washington, 2006). Principals reported coffees, conferences, workshops, literacy activities, and literacy nights as examples of activities they used most often to involve parents of students participating in their campus OEYP. Table 2 shows the parent involvement activities reported by principals (n = 53) responding to the survey. The small-group parent activities, many of which were one-of-a-kind events, were too numerous to list in the table; a separate event listing is available from AISD DPE records.

Table 2: OEYP Parent Involvement Activities Reported Most Often by Principals, 2005-2006

Activity	# Parents Participating
Literacy fairs and nights (math, reading, science)	4,250
Coffee talks with principal, parent-teacher conferences	2,857
Open house, orientation, PTA meetings	1,579
*Small-group parent involvement activities	1,396
Back to school night	1,306
“Family” night literacy activities	834
Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) preparation	629
Grade level meetings	558
OEYP information and invitation activities	525
October Fest, Soul Food Night, fund raising, phone calls	525
TOTAL	14,459

Source: AISD OEYP Principal Survey, 2005-2006

*Note: Small-group parent activities were too numerous to list.

When principals were asked to rate the frequency with which their campuses provided parents with services to increase parent involvement on their campuses, most (n = 67) reported using conferences with parents. A majority of the principals also reported using materials and meetings in the home language of parents and parent training about reinforcing reading skills at home. Less than half of the principals reported offering child care for parents involved in OEYP activities (42%, n = 29) and a similar percentage reported involving parents as partners in the development of the program (40%, n = 28). Twenty-six percent (n = 18) of principals reported using parents as teacher assistants in classroom and extension services and providing parent training in technology. The fact that few principals used these activities to involve parents on their campuses is not a cause for concern because all of these activities are governed by AISD and TEA policies, which stipulate the strict

use of certified staff, specific curricula, trained data entry staff, and budget allocations.

PROGRAM INFORMATION, CURRICULA, AND EXPECTATION FOR SUCCESS

Of the 70 principals who returned the survey, 92% (n = 58) agreed that they had received adequate information about the OEYP grant. Eighty-six percent (n = 55) agreed that communication with OEYP managers was adequate. Also, 86% (n = 55) of the principals indicated that PEIMS staff provided school staff with adequate training about data entry and reporting, and that school staff were comfortable with entering and reporting PEIMS attendance data from their campuses. Seventy-nine percent (n = 50) of responding principals agreed that expectations for student success were met, and 60% (n = 38) indicated that parent involvement at their schools was good.

PRINCIPALS' COMMENTS OR RECOMMENDATIONS ABOUT USING OEYP FUNDS

When principals were asked to make comments or recommendations about how the district might enhance the use of OEYP funds, 31% (n = 22) responded. Of the 22 respondents, 32% (n = 7) mentioned reducing the paperwork associated with aspects of OEYP (e.g., attendance, promotion, and retention); they indicated this paperwork had increased compared with that required in previous years. Twenty-three percent (n = 5) recommended using OEYP funds to

- address academic needs earlier in the school year,
- hire after-school staff to do data entry tasks,
- allocate amounts based on the level of need and campus size,
- continue funding credit recovery programs, and
- implement credit recovery curricula at the middle school level.

Eighteen percent (n = 4) recommended providing more information to campuses with new OEYPs; promoting idea exchanges; and sharing best practices related to curricula, teaching strategies, and materials.

Respondents made other comments about the need for

- district improvement in communication with and coordination of campus staff

- handling attendance data entry;
- a district-wide list of teachers willing to teach after-school classes at other campuses;
- an instructional specialist;
- after-school transportation;
- use of OEYP funds during the regular school day (not allowed under current program rules); and
- holding summer school classes instead of Saturday classes for high school students because credit recovery and the passage of TAKS are more problematic for at-risk high school students than is attendance; however, attendance can become a problem because many students do not want to give up their Saturdays, and therefore stop coming to classes.

PROGRAM COMPLETION, STUDENT PROMOTION, AND RETENTION

Principals and teachers in OEYPs completed records that showed whether OEYP students on their campuses were to be promoted or retained, based on the students' pre-and post-test scores (where available), academic work, and attendance. An electronic copy of the *PEIMS Edit + Reports Data Review* (resubmission), dated October 12, 2006, showed that 8,428 students attended at least one day of an OEYP in 2005-2006. Of that number, 8,093 were promoted and 335 were retained. See Table 3 for promotion/retention data by grade level and program type.

Table 3: Promotion/Retention Data by Grade Level for Students who Participated in AISD's OEYP, 2005-2006

Grade Level	# Enrolled	# Promoted	# Retained	Grade Level	# Enrolled	# Promoted	# Retained
K	91	88	3	06	707	691	16
1	362	333	29	07	222	207	15
2	367	331	36	08	175	169	6
3	2,249	2,183	66	09	316	244	72
4	1,433	1,406	27	10	87	73	14
5	2,257	2,217	40	11	114	108	6
TOTAL	6,759	6,558	201	12	48	43	5
				TOTAL	1,669	1,535	134

Source: PEIMS Edit + Reports Data Review, 2005-2006: OEYP Extended Collection and Resubmission, October 12, 2006

SUMMARY

Of the 8,428 students who participated in the 2005-2006 OEYP, 96% (n = 8,093) were promoted. Since 2000-2001, the district has used OEYP funds to serve 24,438 students who would have been retained without the benefit of supplemental instruction. Of that number, 96% (n = 23,439) have been promoted. Table 4 shows that AISD has an overall 96% success

rate for the promotion of students it served over the past 6 years. Because the majority of students were promoted at the end of each school year, fewer summer school resources were needed to serve the remaining students who were at risk of being retained. As shown in Table 5, the program actively involved 33,530 parents in a variety of OEYP activities during this 6-year period.

Table 4: Number of AISD Students and Percentage Promoted in OEYP by Grade-Level Ranges, 2001-2001 to 2005-2006

School Year	Grade Level Ranges Served	School Semester	# Served	% Promoted
2000-2001	K-8	Intersession & Summer	3,518	96
2001-2002	3-8	Summer	2,609	95
2002-2003	4-8	Spring & Summer	2,312	97
2003-2004	3-8	Spring & Summer	3,565	97
2004-2005	K-12	Fall & Spring	4,006	94
2005-2006	K-12	Fall & Spring	8,428	96

Source: Optional Extended Year Program Summary Reports: 2000-2001 through 2005-2006

Table 5: Number of Parents Involved in OEYP Activities,
 2000-2001 to 2005-2006

School Year	# Parents Involved
2000-2001	2,909
2001-2002	2,420
2002-2003	3,917
2003-2004	4,005
2004-2005	5,820
2005-2006	14,459
TOTAL	33,530

Source: *Optional Extended Year Program Summary Reports: 2000-2001 through 2005-2006*

Note: *Parents may have attended more than one event; therefore, the total participation count for this period includes duplicates.*

REFERENCES

Principals' responses to survey questions indicated they were in compliance with the following TEA OEYP policies:

- providing training for accelerated instructional staff,
- using state-designated curricula and approved instructional strategies,
- notifying parents about the availability of the program, and
- involving parents in various OEYP activities.

Their responses also indicated agreement with the program managers' and grant staff's planning and implementation of the 2005-2006 OEYP.

Principals expressed concerns about the amount of paperwork associated with PEIMS OEYP record keeping (e.g., entering, and correcting all data) for which they and their staffs were responsible because they had not performed many of these tasks in prior years. However, staff will be more familiar with program implementation in 2006-2007, so, the record keeping associated with program operations should be easier to manage.

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