

*Agency Coordination for*

# YOUTH PREVENTION & INTERVENTION

October 2021

TEXAS  
JUVENILE★JUSTICE  
DEPARTMENT



Texas Department of  
Family and Protective Services



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# Executive Summary

The following report was prepared by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, the Texas Juvenile Justice Department, the Texas Education Agency, and the Texas Military Department in accordance with Article IX, Section 17.05 of the 2020-2021 General Appropriations Act. The named state agencies were directed to coordinate the delivery of juvenile delinquency prevention and dropout prevention and intervention services. Additionally, this group was required to submit a report to the Legislative Budget Board providing detailed monitoring, tracking, utilization, outcome, and effectiveness information on all juvenile delinquency prevention and dropout prevention and intervention services for the preceding five fiscal year period.

To carry out this work, an interagency workgroup was formed with representation from the four named state agencies. The interagency workgroup collaborates to achieve the following goals:

1. Increase interagency understanding of state programming regarding juvenile delinquency prevention and dropout prevention and intervention services;
2. Identify key considerations in service coordination, planning, and delivery; and
3. Identify opportunities to enhance the coordination, planning, and delivery of prevention and intervention services.

In the following report, each of the named agencies summarizes its juvenile delinquency prevention and dropout prevention and intervention efforts by providing a snapshot of services, eligibility criteria, and outcomes from each program for which data is tracked. The complete matrix is found in Appendix A. Additionally, each agency submits brief overviews of its dropout and delinquency prevention efforts, including monitoring information, outcomes, and available data.

This report includes the legislatively-required information and a description of coordination activities accomplished by the workgroup to date. The report also includes an examination of the continuing impact of truancy reform enacted by the 84<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature on the delivery of dropout prevention, delinquency prevention, and intervention services; the prevalence of serious mental health concerns in youth served by these prevention and intervention programs; and opportunities to further improve the coordination of services.

# Section 1: Legislative Charge

Article IX, Section 17.05 of the 2020-2021 General Appropriations Act reads as follows:

From funds appropriated above for the purpose of juvenile delinquency prevention and dropout prevention and intervention services, the Department of Family and Protective Services, the Juvenile Justice Department, the Texas Education Agency, and the Texas Military Department shall coordinate the delivery of juvenile delinquency prevention and dropout prevention and intervention services. Juvenile delinquency prevention and dropout prevention and intervention services are programs or services that are aimed at preventing academic failure, failure on state assessments, dropout, juvenile delinquency, truancy, runaways, and children living in family conflict. Each of the agencies listed above shall coordinate services with the others to prevent redundancy and to ensure optimal service delivery to youth at risk of engaging in delinquency and/or dropping out of school. Programs shall demonstrate effectiveness through established outcomes.

Not later than October 1 of each year, the agencies shall provide to the Legislative Budget Board, detailed monitoring, tracking, utilization, outcome, and effectiveness information on all juvenile delinquency prevention and dropout prevention and intervention services for the preceding five fiscal year period. The reports shall include information on the impact of all juvenile delinquency and dropout prevention and intervention initiatives and programs delivered or monitored by the agencies.

## Section 2: Interagency Workgroup: A Shared Understanding

Through coordination of services, the workgroup members of the agencies named in Rider 17.05 established a shared understanding of priorities that will lead to optimal success in supporting positive youth development and decreasing dropout and delinquency rates. These priorities include the following:

- (1) **Recognize that trauma impacts the way children and youth think, learn, and behave.** Science has proven that the stress hormones that result from trauma can impact a developing brain, and when present in high levels and/or over long periods, stress hormones can physically alter structures in a child’s brain that control decision-making, regulation of emotions, and the processing of information. Accordingly, programs that prevent, treat, or mitigate the impact of trauma increase resilience and strengthen children and youth.<sup>1</sup>
- (2) **Implement interventions that target both risk factors and protective factors linked to reducing dropout and delinquency.** To holistically reduce dropout and delinquency rates, it is essential to both target those child and youth with the highest risk factors and to teach them protective factors that build their resilience to inevitable life challenges so that they are more successful at home, in school, and as adults.
- (3) **Align and coordinate with other programs that target common risk and protective factors.** A strong interconnectedness exists among dropout, delinquency, and other social problems such as truancy, substance abuse, abuse and neglect, suicide, teen pregnancy, and domestic violence. Prevention efforts that focus exclusively on one domain and fail to acknowledge the strong interconnectedness among risk factors stunt state goals to reduce negative outcomes and increase positive outcomes.
- (4) **View prevention and intervention efforts as a continuum** and on-going endeavors. Resiliency develops over time by building upon protective factors, such as relationships established in early childhood, and evolving as a child grows into school age and adolescence. **This continuum of support must include families, schools, and communities in order to best increase protective factors and decrease risk factors among children and youth.**
- (5) **Recognize the roles of families, schools, and communities in increasing protective factors and decreasing risk factors** among children and youth. Families, schools and communities can present both risk factors (dropout, delinquency, social concerns and support gaps) and opportunities to introduce protective factors. Targeting these environments for intervention efforts is vital.
- (6) **Recognizing the research-based connection between mental health and dropout rates.** According to the National Institute of Mental Health, approximately one in five youth aged 13 – 18 will experience a severe mental disorder at some point during their life. Canadian researchers found that older teens living with depression were twice as likely to drop out of high school as their peers without depression. This was the first study of its kind to assess depression symptoms among high school students the year before dropout.<sup>2</sup>
- (7) **Identify efficiencies in service delivery models that resulted from implementation changes due to the COVID-19 pandemic.** During the pandemic, all service delivery models were affected and modified to account for the health and safety of child and family participants. Through this process, each partner agency experienced new efficiencies, such as virtual service provision, that may impact long-term

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<sup>1</sup> Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. SAMHSA’s concept of trauma and guidance for a trauma-informed approach. HHS publication no. (SMA) 14-4884. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

<sup>2</sup> Dupéré, Véronique, et al. “High School Dropout in Proximal Context: The Triggering Role of Stressful Life Events.” *Child Development*, vol. 89, no. 2, Mar. 2018, pp. e107–e122. EBSCOhost, doi:10.1111/cdev.12792.

program design and operation. It is important to document and share these learnings.



# Section 3: An Overview of Juvenile Delinquency and Dropout Prevention and Intervention Services in Texas

## COVID-19 Impact on Service Implementation

The COVID-19 pandemic led to increased risk factors for many families, including mental health concerns, increased economic insecurity, and inability to reach out to local supportive resources due to health concerns and/or lack of technology to remotely engage. The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services tracks child maltreatment fatalities and near-fatality trends and noticed an increase in both during the summer of 2020. The Texas Juvenile Justice Department program referrals decreased but referrals for violent crimes increased during this time. Overall, all partner organizations experienced a decrease in program enrollments due to the pandemic and required programs to radically adapt to new safety protocols.

In the face of this challenge, all partners worked quickly to enact new safety requirements to provide continuous services to client families. Texas began sheltering in place in select communities by mid-March 2020, and all programs adjusted protocols and implementation to account for the health and safety of staff and clients. Virtual services were offered in programs where this was feasible.

## **Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS)**

### **Prevention and Early Intervention Programs**

The Prevention and Early Intervention Division (PEI) within DFPS was created by statute in 1999 and is charged with leading the state in child maltreatment prevention activities and strategies. PEI contracts with community-based agencies and organizations to fund community-level programs designed to promote positive outcomes for children, youth, and families and create thriving communities in order to prevent risks of child maltreatment, delinquency, and truancy and to strengthen a family or youth before crisis occurs. Services are voluntary and are provided at no cost to participants; however, not all services are available statewide. While DFPS considers all prevention efforts strategies to strengthen families and outcomes for children, certain programs also have a preventative effect on juvenile delinquency and potential for school drop-out. The Community Youth Development (CYD), Statewide Youth Services Network (SYSN), and Family and Youth Success (FAYS) programs are specifically designed to target services to older children and promote positive youth development.

An analysis of Texas rates of dropouts and delinquency show a disparate number of children and youth of minorities and/or from high-risk communities in the juvenile justice system and truancy courts. CYD, SYSN, and FAYS serve children and youth in high-risk areas across the state, and have the opportunity and a demonstrated, historical impact to affect a positive change for youth. As such, these programs address disparities by improving outcomes for children and youth belonging to a minority or high-risk community.

### **COVID-19 Response**

DFPS continues to support grantees in navigating the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The majority of PEI programs had to shift to providing services virtually, a process that required dexterity on the part of both PEI and the grantees. Through the support of federal and state partners, Texas has also been able to learn from and share ideas with other states, all of which are troubleshooting the same challenges. PEI helped grantees organize around immediate needs such as technological equipment, for both grantees and families; virtual program implementation; accessing basic needs for families; and various contractual concerns.

In spring 2020, PEI met with grantees weekly (virtually) to address concerns and continued to meet with Local Implementation Agencies (LIAs) with increased frequency. PEI also worked to quickly leverage its universal parenting tips website and electronic newsletters to disseminate resources and information to both Texas families and PEI grantees regarding COVID-19. The Texas PEI COVID-19 resource page can be

found by following this link: <https://www.getparentingtips.com/parents/COVID-19-real-talk/family-resource-bank.asp>. PEI also developed a new instructional video to add to their campaign series about stress, adding information and references of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The video, “How to Manage Parenting Stress,” and accompanying article is available at the following link: <http://getparentingtips.com/parents/parenting-stress-and-self-care/default.asp>. Of note: during this same time, PEI was in the process of launching a new community-facing, parenting tip website, GetParentingTips.com, and retiring their Help and Hope public awareness campaign and website; both sites were updated throughout spring 2020 to ensure information was timely, accurate and useful to the general public.

Outreach and recruitment were drastically impact by the pandemic. Grantees used creative methods to address this, including virtual community meetings, drive-through basic needs events such as food distributions, and recruiting via past clients. PEI also partnered with the Bright by Text program, a nationwide text messaging service for parents and caregivers of children 0-8, as a means for added connection to families during a time of isolation. As an element of its universal prevention campaign, PEI is working with Texas Public Broadcasting and grantees to increase family enrollment and to connect families to valuable local resources. In summer 2020, PEI began sending statewide messages via Bright by Text to families, including information on child and family health and safety. Some topics include mental health, water safety, safe sleep, COVID-19 resources, and gun safety.

**Monitoring, Tracking, and Effectiveness**

PEI monitors contracts through a statewide monitoring plan based on an annual risk assessment of contracted grantees that includes analysis of fiscal, administrative, and programmatic areas. Contracts are also regularly monitored through a review of data and reports from the Prevention and Early Intervention Reporting System (PEIRS) and quarterly program reports submitted by each contractor. If a deficiency or concern is identified regarding contract performance, contract managers and/or program specialists work with contractors to implement a Corrective Action Plan. Performance outcomes, outputs, and efficiencies are listed below by fiscal year.

**Community Youth Development**

Through the Community Youth Development (CYD) program, PEI provides funding and technical assistance to community-based organizations that foster positive youth development and build healthy families and resilient communities. CYD grantees provide juvenile delinquency prevention services in 23 targeted zip codes with a high incidence of juvenile crime and other risk factors. Communities prioritize and develop prevention services according to local needs. Core programmatic components include mentoring, youth leadership development, and parental involvement, as well as ancillary programming providing life-skills classes, conflict resolution, tutoring, career preparation, and recreation. The 87<sup>th</sup> Legislature continued support for CYD with approximately \$1,000,000 in federal funding.

Client Eligibility: Youth ages 6-17, with a focus on youth ages 10-17, who live in or attend school in one of the designated zip codes.

Available performance outcomes, outputs, and efficiencies for Fiscal Years 2016-2020 are listed below:

**Table 1. Community Youth Development**

	Fiscal Year 2016	Fiscal Year 2017	Fiscal Year 2018	Fiscal Year 2019	Fiscal Year 2020
Percentage of CYD youth not referred to juvenile probation	98.3%	98.4%	98.14%	98.10%	98.49%
Annual number of youth served	15,538	15,159	17,324	19,219	15,580
Average monthly number of youth served	5,836	5,083	8,323	9,317	6,792

Source: DFPS Databook

**STATEWIDE YOUTH SERVICES NETWORK**

The Statewide Youth Services Network (SYSN) program creates a statewide network of youth programs aimed at positive youth development for youth ages 6 to 17. PEI funds allow state-level grantees to identify

areas that may benefit from additional resources and target specific support to local communities. Examples of service provided through SYSN include mentoring and youth skills development. These programs seek to prevent juvenile delinquency and create positive outcomes for youth by increasing protective factors.

Client Eligibility: At-risk youth between the ages of 6-17 years of age, with an emphasis on youth ages 10-17.

Available performance outcomes, outputs, and efficiencies for Fiscal Years 2016-2020 are listed below:

**Table 2. Statewide Youth Services Network**

	Fiscal Year 2016	Fiscal Year 2017	Fiscal Year 2018	Fiscal Year 2019	Fiscal Year 2020
Percentage of SYSN youth not referred to juvenile probation	98.8%	98.8%	98.59%	98.9%	98.99%
Annual number of youth served	4,015	3,866	3,718	3,964	3,550
Average monthly number of youth served	2,330	2,296	2,728	3,038	2,159

Source: DFPS Databook

### **FAMILY AND YOUTH SERVICES**

The Family and Youth Success (FAYS) program addresses family conflict and everyday struggles while promoting strong families and youth resilience. Every FAYS provider offers one-on-one coaching or counseling with a trained professional and group-based learning for youth and parents. FAYS programs also operate a 24-hour hotline for families having urgent needs.

Client Eligibility: Families with youth under 18 years old who are dealing with family conflict or every day struggles. In some areas of the state, FAYS provides services only to families with children 6-17 years of age.

Available performance outcomes, outputs, and efficiencies for Fiscal Years 2016-2020 are listed below:

**Table 3. Family and Youth Success Program**

	Fiscal Year 2016	Fiscal Year 2017	Fiscal Year 2018	Fiscal Year 2019	Fiscal Year 2020
Percentage of FAYS youth not referred to juvenile probation	98.30%	95.00%	93.75%	93.58%	94.20%
Annual number of youth served	24,974	25,278	25,971	25,208	20,343
Average monthly number of youth served	5,942	6,142	7,056	8,155	5,963

Source: DFPS Databook

### **Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD)**

#### **PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAMS**

The Prevention and Early Intervention Programs of the Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD) are authorized in section 203.0065 of the Texas Human Resources Code. The programs were first initiated in early 2012 when the Texas Juvenile Justice Board established a community-based prevention and early intervention funding strategy from existing resources. Beginning in Fiscal Year (FY) 2014, TJJD received a legislative appropriation to support this strategy.

Section 203.0065 of the Texas Human Resources Code defines prevention and intervention services as “programs and services intended to prevent or intervene in at-risk behaviors that lead to delinquency, truancy, dropping out of school, or referral to the juvenile justice system.” The statute defines populations to be served through these services are at-risk youth, ages six through 17 years old and their families.

Probation departments collaborate with a variety of providers to offer a range of services to youth ages 6 to 17 years who are at increased risk of later involvement with the juvenile justice system. Some departments collaborate with local community youth service organizations to provide educational assistance, mentoring, character development, and skills building (e.g., problem solving, anger management, conflict resolution skills, etc.) after school or during summers. Other departments focus on providing parents of at-risk youth with the skills, services, and supports they need to better manage their children’s challenging behaviors.

Through a competitive request for proposals process in early 2012, TJJJ initially awarded \$1.4 million in grant funds to 24 probation departments to implement prevention and early intervention programs for youth who were not under departmental supervision, but who were identified to be at increased risk of delinquency, truancy, dropping out of school, or referral to the juvenile justice system. Since then, TJJJ has increased funding and added several grants. Prevention and early intervention grant funds were provided to support 31 counties in Fiscal Year 2020, totaling \$2,571,050.

In March of FY 2020, many of the prevention and intervention programs funded by TJJJ were put on hold while the state shut down in response to COVID-19. At the time, nearly all of these programs required face-to-face contact, and little was understood about exactly how virus transmission occurred. Eventually, some of these programs moved to a virtual model much the way school districts implemented virtual learning.

As a result of the pandemic and the subsequent economic downturn, in June of 2020, TJJJ was required to reduce its funding for the FY 2020-2021 biennium allocation by 5%. This resulted in cuts to many programs across the agency, including but not limited to the prevention and intervention programs funded by the agency for FY 21. TJJJ funds for these programs were discontinued at the end of FY 2020. The 87<sup>th</sup> legislature reinstated TJJJs prevention and intervention funding for FY 2022-2023. As a result, TJJJ has distributed a request for proposals to the probation field for FY 2022 to re-establish prevention and intervention programs run by local probation departments.

**Monitoring, Tracking, and Effectiveness**

Contracts for the prevention and early intervention services are regularly reviewed through the submission of annual fiscal and programmatic reports, monthly data provision, and quarterly data reports. If a deficiency or issue is identified regarding performance, TJJJ staff works with grant recipients to immediately remedy the situation. Data is analyzed to assess rates of successful program completion and the prevention programs’ impact on participants’ likelihood to be formally referred to the juvenile justice system. Additionally, agreements with the Texas Education Agency facilitate data matches for participants with parental consent to assess the prevention programs’ impact on discipline referrals, school absences, and graduation rates for students aged 17 and up.

Available performance outcomes, outputs, and efficiencies for fiscal years 2016-2020 are listed below:

**Table 3. TJJJ Prevention and Early Intervention Programs**

	Fiscal Year 2016	Fiscal Year 2017	Fiscal Year 2018	Fiscal Year 2019	Fiscal Year 2020
Number of youth who started in program during the fiscal year	3,083	3,046	3,140	2,693	2,102
Number of youth who ended the program during the fiscal year	3,328	2,766	3,006	3,239	2,235
Percentage of youth completing prevention program successfully	90.6%	92.1%	92.0%	93.5%	95.4%
Percentage of eligible youth not referred to juvenile probation during program participation	96.7%	96.8%	96.2%	96.7%	Available Oct. 2022
Number of youth for whom consents were received (not unduplicated)	1,587	1,467	1,334	1,312	Available Oct. 2022
Percentage of youth with the same or fewer school absences	60.5%	55.5%	53.9%	55.0%	Available Oct. 2022
Number of youth with discipline referrals (not unduplicated)	804	857	695	659	Available Oct. 2022

	Fiscal Year 2016	Fiscal Year 2017	Fiscal Year 2018	Fiscal Year 2019	Fiscal Year 2020
Percentage of youth with the same or decreased number of discipline referrals	77.9%	80.3%	79.6%	75.1%	Available Oct. 2022

Data indicate that 2,102 youth started a TJJD-funded prevention and early intervention programs during fiscal year 2020. On average, program participants were younger (age 12) than youth formally referred to juvenile probation departments (age 15). For the 2,235 youth who ended their participation in a program in fiscal year 2020, 52.7% were male and 47.3% were female. Approximately 79.1% of the youth served were members of a racial or ethnic minority group. Successful completions accounted for 95.4% of programs that ended during the fiscal year, while 4.6% of programs ended unsuccessfully because the youth failed to comply with the terms of the program.

The average length of services varied with the type of program provided, from time-limited intensive activities to year-round community-based out-of-school programs, with an average of 233 days in programming. Programs ending successfully had a longer average length of stay compared to programs ending unsuccessfully, 238 days versus 117 days, respectively. The average length of stay for the 32 prevention and intervention programs ranged from 31 days to 875 days, and are grouped as follows:

- Eight programs – less than 100 days
- Fourteen programs – between 100 and 199 days
- Four programs – between 200 and 299 days
- Six programs – 300 days or more

The majority, or 71.5%, of program participants did not have a prior referral. Of the 638 program participants with a prior referral, 92.8% had a prior referral for a status offense or a conduct indicating a need for supervision (CINS) offense. Program participants with a prior referral had, on average, only one prior referral.

TJJD received data from the Texas Education Agency on students with a consent form signed by a parent or guardian. An analysis of this data compared student absence rates and disciplinary referrals during the twelve-weeks prior to entering a TJJD-funded prevention and intervention program and the twelve-weeks after program completion. For students completing a program in fiscal year 2019 and included in this analysis (N=1,312), 46.6% experienced a decrease in absence rates after program exit, while 8.5% maintained their absence rate after program exit. In sum, 55.0% of students included in the analysis were able to maintain or have fewer absences after program participation.

Additionally, among students completing a program in fiscal year 2019 and included in this analysis (N=659), 55.2% continued to have the same number of disciplinary referrals after program exit, while 19.9% experienced a decrease in the number of disciplinary referrals after program exit. In sum, 75.1% of students included in the analysis were able to maintain or have fewer disciplinary referrals after program participation.

The Texas Education Agency also provided high school graduation and high school equivalency certificate information on students with a consent form signed by a parent or guardian. For students completing a TJJD-funded prevention and intervention program between fiscal years 2012 and 2019 and included in this analysis (N=8,709), 23.3% graduated high school or earned a high school equivalency certificate sometime between the start of the 2010-2011 school year and the end of the 2019-2020 school year. Of the students that did not graduate high school nor earn a high school equivalency certificate, 80.6%, were age 17 or younger at the end of the 2019-2020 school year.

Appendix A describes the programs by county and includes funding amounts, number of students served,

counties served, eligibility, data elements collected, and evidence of effectiveness.

## **Texas Education Agency (TEA)**

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) provides state and federal grants to school districts, charter schools, non-profit organizations, and other eligible entities to implement dropout prevention related services for grade K-12 students who are identified as at-risk of dropping out of school. Specifically, TEA administers numerous services and programs aligned with best-practice research to mitigate barriers for students at-risk of dropping out of school. Throughout this report an overview of these programs and services are outlined.

### **Division of Highly Mobile and At-Risk Student Programs**

The Highly Mobile and At-Risk Student Programs Division was established in 2017 to improve resources and supports to address the needs of highly mobile and at-risk students. Specifically, this Division serves special populations including foster care, homeless, military connected, pregnancy related services, child abuse and neglect reporting, including human trafficking prevention, and mental and behavioral health. In addition to serving these specific populations, the Division participates in several state stakeholder advisory and legislatively required committees to strengthen collaboration and services for at-risk students. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, to support districts with mitigating challenges and providing guidance for highly mobile and at-risk students, the Division created several FAQ documents, tools, resources, and templates. Visit [TEA COVID-19 Special Populations](#), Highly Mobile and At-Risk for more information. Additionally, to address mental and behavioral health see, [TEA COVID-19 General Support](#), Mental Health.

Greater details concerning each program area are provided below:

**Table 4. Student Group by Enrollment, Texas Public Schools (2020-2021)**

	<b>Total Number</b>	<b>Percent of Population</b>
<b>Foster Care</b>	17,090	.3%
<b>Homeless</b>	57,811	1.1%
<b>Military</b>	144,683	2.7%
<b>Total Number of At-Risk Students</b>	2,636,849	49.1%
<b>Total Number of Students</b>	5,371,586	100%

### **Foster Care and Student Success Initiative:**

The TEA Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) total enrollment count for school year 2020-2021 identified 17,090 students in foster care enrolled in Texas Public schools. Due to similarly reported data from Texas Department of Family and Protective Services during fiscal year 2020, Texas schools are under-reporting students in foster care by 11,000 students.

**Table 5. Grade 9 Four-Year Longitudinal Graduation and Dropout Rates for Students in Foster Care<sup>3</sup>, Class of 2018, 2019, 2020**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Graduation Rate</b>	<b>Dropout Rate</b>
<b>2020</b>	61.4%	23%
<b>2019</b>	62.6%	25%
<b>2018</b>	63.4%	22.5%

- TEA is in the process of updating the Texas Foster Care and Student Success Resource Guide and will make it available in the 2021-2022 school year.

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<sup>3</sup> Students identified as in foster care at any time while attending Grades 9-12 in Texas public schools.

- TEA adopted Commissioner Rules<sup>4</sup> concerning school transitions for students who are in substitute care<sup>5</sup> and students experiencing homelessness, to support implementation of TEC § 25.007. These rules define how districts must support students, in the event of a school move, and ease the burden of school transitions.
- TEA is in the process of developing a local education agency self-assessment, that can be used by LEAs to assess the effectiveness of their services and supports for students in foster care. This is in alignment with the Results Driven Accountability system, that integrates highly mobile student groups (foster care, homeless, military-connected) as a required group in the 21-22 school year.
- TEA continues to serve on the Supreme Court of Texas Children’s Commission Foster Care Education Committee and related work groups in collaboration with interagency stakeholders to develop tools and resources to support improving student education outcomes.
- Information regarding TEA Foster Care and Student Success is available on the agency’s [webpage](#).

### Texas Education for Homeless Children and Youth (TEHCY) Program

The TEA Public Education information Management System (PEIMS) snapshot data for the 2020-2021 school year identified 57,811 students as homeless. This was a decrease from 78,296 in 2019-20 (20,485 or 7.57%). This decrease in identification could be attributed to the eviction moratorium. As a provision of ESSA, states are required to report graduation and dropout rates for students experiencing homelessness. The chart below provides graduation and dropout rates from 2017 to 2020.

**Table 6. TEHCY Graduation and Dropout Rates, 2017-2019**

Year	Graduation Rate	Dropout Rate
2020	80.5%	11.5%
2019	79.8%	12.6%
2018	80%	11.8%
2017	72.1%	17.7%

Graduation rates increased slightly (0.7%), as compared to 2019, and dropout rates decreased by 1.1%. These percentages remain improved from the graduation and dropout rates reported in 2019 and 2018. Additionally, TEHCY 2020-2021 Program Initiatives are listed below:

- **Sub-Grants to LEAs** - Texas Education for Homeless Children and Youth (TEHCY) continuation sub-grant. Over \$9 million was distributed to 74 subgrantees, including 70 local education agencies (LEAs), and 4 regional education service centers (ESCs), serving a total 119 LEAs and increasing local supports for students experiencing homelessness in Texas public schools.
- **ESC Capacity Building Grants** - TEHCY ESC Capacity grants of \$40,000 were awarded to all twenty ESCs to strengthen statewide, regional, and local support and infrastructure to serve students experiencing homelessness in Texas schools. ESC grantees assist the agency with technical assistance, professional development, community collaboration, and dissemination of program materials to support implementation of best practices and strategies for identification, enrollment, academic progress monitoring, and services for all Texas students experiencing homelessness.
- **Technical Assistance Center** - TEHCY Technical Assistance, Professional Development, and Support Grant was awarded to ESC Region 13 to assist TEA with administration and implementation of the TEHCY program, including providing statewide technical assistance, creating, and implementing professional development materials, and supporting priority agency initiatives in coordination with TEA program staff.
- **Statewide Summit** - TEHCY Program Summit Grant was awarded to **Texas Network for Youth Services (TNOYS)**. TNOYS will assist TEA with development and implementation the TEHCY Program

<sup>4</sup> Chapter 89. Adaptations for Special Populations. Subchapter FF. Commissioner’s Rules Concerning Transition Assistance for Highly Mobile Students Who Are Homeless or in Substitute Care

<sup>5</sup> Students in substitute care or “foster care” are students in the managing conservatorship of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services.



Summit. The two-and-a-half-day summit will provide a variety of professional development tracks for TEHCY Subgrantees, LEAs, ESCs, and stakeholders with best practices and innovative program models to increase the identification, enrollment, and to address the unique educational needs of students experiencing homelessness. The goal of the grant is to increase the TEHCY Summit attendance from 200 to 500 participants (150% increase). Due to COVID-19, the summit occurred on a virtual platform on August 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

For more information regarding [Texas Education for Homeless Children and Youth \(TEHCY\) Program](#), visit the agency’s website.

### **Military-Connected Youth**

Texas has the second highest identified military connected student population in the United States. A total of 144,683 military-connected students were enrolled in Texas public schools for the 2020-2021 school year. See the table below for graduation and dropout rates for military-connected students.

**Table 7. Grade 9 Four-Year Longitudinal Graduation and Dropout Rates for Military-Connected Students, Class of 2018, 2019, 2020**

Year	Graduation Rate	Dropout Rate
2020	95.3%	2.2%
2019	95.4%	2.2%
2018	95.8%	2.2%

- A military-connected student is a dependent of a current or former member of the U.S. military service in the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, or Coast Guard on active duty; a current or former member of the Texas National Guard; a current or former member of the reserve force in the U.S. military; or a member in the U.S. military or reserve force who has fallen in the line of duty.
- TEA awards the Purple Star Campus designation, a special honor created by the 86<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature through SB 1557, for each school year beginning in 2020-21. The Purple Star Campus Designation recognizes Texas district and charter schools that show their support and commitment to meeting the unique needs of military-connected students and their families. Selected schools have their designation featured on the Txschools.gov webpage. As of August 2021, a total of 161 campuses have received the designation.
- TEA continues to increase the awareness across the state regarding the military student identifier and the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children to ensure military-connected students are properly served in Texas public schools. Visit TEA’s [Military Connected Child Education Program](#) webpage for more information.

### **Local Education Agency (LEA) Self-Assessment**

TEA is in the process of developing a local education agency self-assessment, that can be used by LEAs to assess the effectiveness of their services and supports for students in foster care, students experiencing homelessness and students who are military connected. This is in alignment with changes to TEA’s Results Driven Accountability system that reports annually on the performance of LEAs, and integrates highly mobile student groups (foster care, homeless, military-connected) as a required group in the 21-22 school year.

### **Pregnancy Related Services Program**

TEA provides a Pregnancy Related Services (PRS) program with State Compensatory Education funds, for at-risk students who are pregnant or parenting [Texas Education Code \(TEC\) 19 §29.081\(d\)](#). A total of 5,271 students received PRS related services in 2019-2020 school year. Pregnancy Related Services are support services, including Compensatory Education Home Instruction (CEHI), that a pregnant student receives during the pregnancy, prenatal, and postpartum periods. Districts may choose whether to offer a PRS program. If a district chooses to offer a PRS program, it must offer CEHI services as part of that program, as they are mandatory. The programs are designed to help students adjust academically, mentally, physically

and stay in school.

- In 2019, the 86<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature passed HB 3, requiring the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) to include pregnancy as a reason a student withdraws from or otherwise no longer attends public school (TEC § 48.009). In the Class of 2020, 34 students dropped out of school for reasons related to pregnancy.
- The TEA Financial Compliance Department has developed resources for LEAs to ensure detailed required documentation is completed properly and accessible for audit purposes. These resources can be found on the [TEA Pregnancy Related Services \(PRS\) webpage](#).
- The rules for operation of a PRS program can be found in the Texas Administrative Code (TAC): 19 TAC § 129.1025 and the [Student Attendance Accounting Handbook 2019-2020 Version 2, Section 9 Pregnancy Related Services \(PRS\)](#).

### **Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting and Human Trafficking Prevention**

TEA implemented a Statewide Human Trafficking Prevention and Awareness Workgroup. The cross-agency workgroup addresses the development of policy guidance, resources, tools, and training to support LEAs with implementation of human trafficking prevention and related requirements. The group is comprised of both internal and external agency partners, including the Office of the Governor, Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, Texas School Safety Center, Texas Association of School Boards, Education Service Center (ESC) Region 12, Crime Stoppers of Houston, Children’s Advocacy Center’s of Texas, TEA Title IV School Safety Initiative (ESC 14), TEA College, Advising and Student Supports Division, TEA Curriculum Division, TEA Safe and Support School Program, TEA Educators Investigations, and TEA Special Populations Division.

As a part of the work-group TEA developed and launched a webinar series in the 2020-21 school year and provided nine presentations featuring state and national leaders concerning Human Trafficking Awareness and Prevention for Texas schools. Additionally, the workgroup supported TEA in the development of promotional materials, check-list tools, website updates, and guidance concerning human trafficking reporting in Texas schools.

TEA worked closely with the Children’s Advocacy Center’s to develop a Child Abuse and Mandatory Reporting [Toolkit](#). The toolkit has resources in both English and Spanish and includes updated mandatory reporting posters (schools required to post), and guidance materials for school staff and administrators concerning child abuse and mandatory reporting.

For more information about child abuse and neglect, human trafficking prevention, and educator mandatory reporting training requirements visit [TEA’s Child Abuse Prevention](#) and [Human Trafficking Prevention](#) webpages.

### **Accelerated Learning Opportunities**

The 87th Texas Legislature passed HB 4545, which sets the minimum requirements for all students who did not perform satisfactorily to receive supplemental accelerated instruction. At-risk students can benefit greatly from these academic supports, designed to foster student engagement, personalized learning and academic progress. These new requirements include:

- Students are not required to be retained in grades 5 & 8 for not meeting STAAR requirements. There is only one reading and math assessment opportunity, therefore students are not required to take multiple test re-takes.
- Accelerated Learning Committees must be in place for students who did not perform satisfactorily on the STAAR for grades 3,5, 8. The Accelerated Learning Committee will develop an Accelerated Learning Plan in collaboration with the principal/designee, parent/guardian, and the teacher of the subject of an assessment in which the student failed to pass.
- When a student does not pass a STAAR assessment (any subject) in grades 3 – 8 or EOC, the school district must provide supplemental accelerated instruction/tutoring in the failed subject area during the following school year.

- The supplemental instruction may be embedded during the school day, or occur before or after school, for a minimum of 30 hours per subject area in which the student did not pass.
- Small group instruction must be provided in a ratio of one instructor/tutor per three students, unless the parents/guardians of the students in the group provide consent for a larger ratio.

See [TEA Accelerated Learning Resources page](#) for more information.

### **Mental and Behavioral Health Supports**

An estimated one in five students struggles with a mental or behavioral health challenge. TEA is implementing new laws and developing resources to support schools in addressing students' mental and behavioral health needs.

### **Update Best Practices List**

- TEC § 38.351 requires TEA to develop and annually update a list of recommended best practice-based programs and research-based practices for school mental health, in coordination with the Texas Health and Human Services Commission and Education Service Centers (ESCs).
- TEA updated its comprehensive mental and behavioral health [webpage](#) to reflect new requirements identified by the 86<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature, and is planning updates as a result of 87<sup>th</sup> Regular Session.
- The website hosts hundreds of resources for schools on eleven statutory components, including: early mental health prevention and intervention; mental health promotion; substance abuse prevention and intervention; suicide prevention/intervention/postvention; grief-informed and trauma-informed practices; building skills related to managing emotions, establishing and maintaining positive relationships and responsible decision making; positive behavior interventions and supports; safe and supportive school climate; positive school climate; and positive youth development.

### **86<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature Law Implementation Update (SB 11, HB 18, HB 906)**

- TEA developed and facilitated a rubric to inventory regional and statewide mental health resources with several state agencies, ESCs, and stakeholders, as required by SB 11. The agency used the rubric to help inform a Statewide Plan for Student Mental Health.
- TEA developed the first TEA State Plan for Student Mental Health, required by SB 11, which is posted on the TEA Website.
- TEA also supports HB 906 and has appointed a Collaborative School Mental Health Task Force which the agency supports in its charge to study and evaluate school-based mental health services and training. This includes three Institutions of Higher Education volunteering time to support data collection and analysis for the Task Force, which will provide legislative reports per statute. The first report was submitted to the Legislature as required in 2020, and is posted on the TEA Website.

### **Increased Coordination with Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC)**

- Collaboratively updated TEA's Mental and Behavioral Health Best Practice List.
- Developed guidance on coordinating resources to support student mental health, and integrated resources into a new School Mental Health Toolkit to be published in Fall 2021.
- TEA participates in collaborative committees and workgroups, such as HHSC's Statewide Mental and Behavioral Health Coordinating Council and the United Services for All Children Advisory (USAC).
- Collaborating to implement Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration, Project AWARE Texas (see below).

### **Project AWARE (Advancing Wellness and Resiliency in Education) Texas**

- TEA wrote a federal grant to the SAMHSA following Hurricane Harvey and was awarded a five-year grant for approximately 10 million dollars (2019-20 to 2024-25). This competitive grant award provides funding for mental health professionals in 5 school districts impacted by Hurricane Harvey and three education service centers.

- The project works with TEA, Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), and stakeholders to pilot evidence-based practices and tools developed by the Hurricane Harvey Task Force on School Mental Health.
- Partners in the project include HHSC, Office of Mental Health Coordination, and Texas Institute for Excellence in Mental Health at the University of Texas at Austin.
- Project AWARE Texas and the TEA mental and behavioral health manager support the Safe and Supportive School Program (SSSP) under SB 11. This includes collaborating with the SSSP program manager, the Texas School Safety Center, collaborating on rulemaking, identifying best practice resources, developing training, and supporting interagency coordination for school mental health for a comprehensive approach to school safety.

**Project Restore**

- TEA received CARES Act funding in 2020 to provide mental and behavioral health supports for students across the state in response to COVID-19.
- The Special Populations team created a free series of high-quality, online trauma-informed trainings available to educators. The series is comprised of six videos. Educators can earn CPE certificates for each video completed.
- As of August 2021, over 26,000 educators have completed the series and earned CPE certificates. The series overall has received over 288,000 views, and the Project Restore website is one of the most accessed TEA websites.

**Amachi Texas (Mentoring)**

Amachi Texas is authorized by the General Appropriations Act, Article III, Rider 49, 87th Texas Legislature, 2021. Amachi Texas provides one-to-one mentoring for youth ages 6–14 whose parents or family members are incarcerated, on probation, or recently released from the prison system. The youth that are served are referred through partnerships such as agreements with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, prison fellowship and re-entry programs across Texas. The youth are engaged in both school-based and community-based mentoring relationships with trained volunteers. Ongoing supervision, support, and training for volunteers are provided to support retention of mentors. Services include match-support and group activities for the volunteers, families, and students served.

Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) Lone Star is directed by statute to implement the Amachi mentoring program statewide. BBBS Lone Star subcontracts with eight BBBS agencies throughout Texas to provide mentoring for children of incarcerated adults.

**Monitoring, Tracking, and Effectiveness**

Progress reports are provided to TEA quarterly. BBBS Lone Star reports outcomes to the Texas Education Program annually. TEA has assigned a program specialist to monitor quarterly data reports and the final annual report of program outcomes. TEA program staff convenes meetings with BBBS leadership during the school year in order to provide guidance and to ensure the program is on track to accomplish goals.

Available performance outcomes, outputs, and efficiencies for Fiscal Years 2015–2019 are listed below:

**Table 8. Amachi Texas Mentoring**

<b>Descriptions</b>	<b>FY 2016</b>	<b>FY 2017</b>	<b>FY 2018</b>	<b>FY 2019</b>	<b>FY 2020</b>
Total number of matches/students served during the grant year	1,425	1,405	1,332	1,141	1,313
Total number of matches still open at the end of the grant period	956	968	824	692	943
Percentage of matches eligible for six months sustainability that were sustained for six months	89%	83%	90%	86%	92%

<b>Descriptions</b>	<b>FY 2016</b>	<b>FY 2017</b>	<b>FY 2018</b>	<b>FY 2019</b>	<b>FY 2020</b>
Percentage of matches eligible for twelve months sustainability that were sustained for twelve months	58%	65%	59%	58%	62%
Percentage of students who were mentored for at least six months that were referred to the juvenile justice system	0.9%	1.4%	1.2%	1.8%	1.2%
Number and percentage of students who were mentored for at least six months who were referred to a disciplinary alternative placement (AEP) at school	3.4%	2.8%	3.0%	2.3%	2.7%
Percentage of mentored students who were promoted to the next grade level	97.6%	98.8%	99.2%	97.4%	98%
Percentage of students who demonstrated increased self-confidence on the Youth Outcome Survey (YOS)	81%	85%	84%	92%	90%
Percentage of mentored students who demonstrated an improvement in relationships on the Youth Outcome Survey (YOS)	89.4%	90%	92%	92%	87.5%

### **Communities in Schools (CIS)**

The CIS program is governed by Texas Education Code §33.151-159; 19 Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 89, Subchapter EE; and the General Appropriations Act, Article III, Rider 22, 87th Texas Legislature, 2021. CIS is a collection of affiliated non-profit corporations that place full-time staff within each school to deliver a wide range of services to students most at-risk of dropping out. Campus-based programming can include crisis intervention, individual counseling, support groups, life skills, tutoring, mentoring, parent engagement, and enrichment activities – all targeted to meet the individual needs of students so they can fully engage in learning and be academically successful. CIS begins work on a campus by performing a needs assessment to determine how best to help the school in supporting the student population. Tier I, or schoolwide services, are given to address the needs of the full campus population while Tier II and Tier III services offer group and individual services targeted to individual student needs. CIS engages the community and other service providers to support the work on a campus.

### **Monitoring, Tracking, and Effectiveness**

To administer the program, TEA manages a set of policies, requirements, and a CIS student-level database. The agency provides technical support to and coordination of the CIS programs. TEA continuously monitors student data and reports performance outcomes to the legislature and other stakeholders on a quarterly basis.

Available performance outcomes, outputs, and efficiencies for Fiscal Years 2016-2020 are listed below:

**Table 9. Communities in Schools (CIS) in Texas**

<b>Descriptions</b>	<b>FY 2016</b>	<b>FY 2017</b>	<b>FY 2018</b>	<b>FY 2019</b>	<b>FY 2020</b>
CIS of Texas local programs (grantees)	28	28	28	28	28
Campuses served	942	939	913	967	1,186
School districts	146	139	142	139	175
Case managed students served	93,529	87,932	86,435	88,644	105,892
Average state and local expenditure per case	\$674	\$842	\$829	\$884	\$898

Stayed in school (7-12 <sup>th</sup> Grade)	99%	98%	98%	99%	99%
Promoted to the next grade (K-11 <sup>th</sup> )	95%	95%	96%	96%	98%
Eligible seniors graduated	95%	94%	94%	95%	95%
Targeted for academics, improved	89%	89%	90%	90%	89%
Targeted for attendance, improved	77%	75%	74%	77%	82%
Targeted for behavior, improved	92%	91%	93%	86%	82%
General Revenue	\$15,521,816	\$15,521,817	\$15,521,817	\$15,521,815	\$30,521,817
TANF	\$4,842,342	\$3,898,450	\$3,898,450	\$3,898,450	\$3,898,450
TANF Admin	---	\$943,892	\$943,892	\$943,892	\$943,892
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$20,364,158</b>	<b>\$20,364,159</b>	<b>\$20,364,159</b>	<b>\$20,364,157</b>	<b>\$35,364,159</b>

### Texas Academic Innovation and Mentoring (AIM)

For the 2020-2021 biennium, this prevention program was funded by the General Appropriations Act, Article III, Rider 51, 87th Texas Legislature, 2021. The purpose of Texas Academic Innovation and Mentoring (AIM) is to expand a statewide, after-school and summer program designed to close the student achievement gap between minority and low-income students and English Learners who are at risk of dropping out of school and their counterparts. The program enables targeted students in low performing schools at 69 sites across Texas to enroll in after-school and summer recreational programs that effectively address student achievement gaps through a combination of skills gap remediation and at-risk prevention services. One half of the service sites are along the Texas-Mexico border. While traditional Boys & Girls Clubs (BGC) programming addresses comprehensive prevention needs, the Texas AIM partner, Sylvan Learning Center, provides evidence-based curriculum through certified teachers with assistance provided by BGC staff. Through joint delivery of the program, children receive seamless services from two strong partners. Additionally, the staff development that BGC receives from the Sylvan partnership enables growth and capacity building for the BGC.

### Monitoring, Tracking, and Effectiveness

The BGC and Sylvan Learning Center collect and monitor student data. Student level data is used during the school year to identify the academic needs of each individual student and to inform the provision of services for each student. The TEA program manager develops a progress report in order to manage program performance. The summary performance data is reported to TEA at scheduled points during the year and is reported to TEA in a final performance report at the end of the school year.

Available performance outcomes, outputs, and efficiencies for Fiscal Years 2016-2020 are listed below:

**Table 10. Texas Academic Innovation and Mentoring**

	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020
Percentage of Texas AIM youth that advance an academic level*	85%	78%	85%	84%	76%
Number of youth served annually	3,011	3,186	3,226	3,175	2,674
Average monthly cost per youth served	\$55	\$55	\$55	\$55	\$55
Percentage of English Learners served	29%	29%	21%	30%	34%

Percentage of Texas AIM youth who received a "C" or better for a subject in which they received services	91%	87%	92%	85%	89%
Percentage of Texas AIM youth that passed the STAAR Test**	85%	75%	69%	64%	**

\*An academic level is defined as an increase in Growth Scale Value from pre-assessment to post

\*\*2019-2020 STAAR assessment waived

### **Nita M. Lowey 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers: Texas Afterschool Centers on Education (Texas ACE)**

This federally funded program is authorized by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Title IV, Part B, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015. The Texas 21st Century Community Learning Centers program (also known as Texas Afterschool Centers on Education, or Texas ACE) assists students, particularly students who attend low-performing schools, in meeting challenging academic standards by providing them with academic enrichment and a broad array of additional programs and activities during non-school hours and periods when school is not in session (e.g., after school and summer). The activities provided reinforce and complement the regular academic programs of the schools attended by the students and target the students' academic and other needs. This federal formula grant is awarded to the Texas Education Agency, which competitively awards grants to eligible entities and supports those entities in implementing high-quality programs in communities across the state.

#### **Monitoring, Tracking, and Effectiveness**

All Texas ACE programs operate under a set of guidelines that consists of federal statutory requirements and program-specific requirements and a Texas ACE Blueprint that integrates requirements with state priorities, evidence-based research, and best practices to form a continuum of performance. When implemented with fidelity, optimized Texas ACE programs are designed to improve student performance on state assessments, core course grades, on-time grade level advancement, school day attendance, discipline referrals, high school graduation rates, and high school career competencies. The state office provides resources and supports to all Texas ACE grantees including robust in-person and virtual training opportunities, individualized technical assistance, data collection and reporting tools, local program evaluation support, program implementation monitoring, and online resources.

The Fiscal Year data reported in the following table is for the fall, spring, and summer program terms.

**Table 11. Texas Afterschool Centers on Education (Texas ACE)**

	<b>FY 2016 (76 Programs)</b>	<b>FY 2017 (66 Programs)</b>	<b>FY 2018 (66 Programs)</b>	<b>FY 2019 (83 Programs)</b>	<b>FY2020 (83 Programs)</b>
Total Students	<b>120,617</b>	<b>111,380</b>	<b>108,902</b>	<b>129,884</b>	<b>124,395</b>
Total Regular Students *	45,101	68,640	71,506	80,332	69,997
Total Non-Regular Students	42,193	42,740	37,396	49,552	54,398
Limited English Proficiency Youth	20%	21%	20%	24%	25%
Economically Disadvantaged	66%	71%	71%	76%	80%
Special Needs	7%	7%	7%	8%	9%
At Risk	51%	55%	56%	58%	57%
Migrant	9%	9%	1%	1%	1%
ESL	1%	1%	9%	11%	9%

\* Regular students are those served for 30 days or more during the year. For programs that started in Fiscal Year 2017 and later, regular students are those served for 45 days or more.

## **Texas Military Department**

### **TEXAS CHALLENGE ACADEMY (TCA)**

The Texas ChalleNGe Academy (TCA) is an evidence-based program designed to provide opportunities to adolescents who have dropped out of school but demonstrate a desire to improve their potential for successful and productive lives. A voluntary, preventive program, the National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Program (NGYCP) helps young people improve their life skills, education levels, and employment potential. Sixteen-to-18-year-old male and female high school dropouts are eligible to apply for the 17-month program, which includes a five-month residential phase followed by a 12-month mentoring phase. TCA was created in 1994 as an AmeriCorps Program and transitioned to a National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Program (Seaborne ChalleNGe Corps) in 1999. Hurricane Ike's landfall on Galveston Island in 2008 forced the program to relocate to Sheffield, Texas. Texas opened a second campus in Eagle Lake, which began serving students in July 2015. In December 2018, after recommendations from the Sunset Commission, Texas closed the campus in Sheffield and consolidated resources into the Eagle Lake campus. Authorized and funded through the Department of Defense, the National Guard Bureau is responsible for management and oversight of the 42 ChalleNGe academies that have graduated more than 179,000 participants to date. Led by professionals who emphasize structure, discipline, education and life skills, the Youth ChalleNGe Program provides those who drop out of school the chance to grow into productive and accomplished young adults.

### **Monitoring, Tracking, and Effectiveness**

Independent evaluations have found the Youth ChalleNGe program to be effective. MDRC, a social policy research organization, concluded a multi-year evaluation of the Youth ChalleNGe Program and found it significantly improves the educational attainment, employability and income earning potential of those who participate in the program.<sup>3</sup> A RAND Corporation cost-benefit analysis found the Youth ChalleNGe Program generates \$2.66 in benefits for every dollar expended on the program, a return on investment of 166 percent.<sup>4</sup> This rate of return is substantially above that for other rigorously evaluated social programs that target disadvantaged youth. Recently, Promising Practices Network identified the ChalleNGe Program as a "proven" program.<sup>5</sup> The Texas ChalleNGe Academy has graduated 896 students in the past five years with an average high school completion rate of 65.9%. The average academic growth rate was two years, with an average of five academic credits recovered during the 22-week residential phase. Available performance outcomes, outputs, and efficiencies for Fiscal Years 2016-2020 are listed below:

**Table 11. Texas Challenge Academy**

	<b>FY 2016</b>	<b>FY 2017</b>	<b>FY 2018</b>	<b>FY 2019</b>	<b>FY2020</b>
Enrolled	403	358	214	218	172
Graduated	265	241	183	91**	116
Retention %	65.8%	67.3%	85.5%	67%**	61%
HS Completion	157	167	126	63**	73
HS Completion %	59.2%	69.3%	68.9%	69.2%**	62.9%
TABE Math Growth (years)	2.0*	2.0*	1.7*	1.8**	1.7
TABE Reading Growth (years)	2.0*	2.0*	1.6*	1.7**	1.7
AVG # of Credits per student	5.5	5	4.5	4.4**	4.6

\* Grade equivalent reporting changed to reporting the total combined growth. TABE is not a fair representation of academic growth based on student interest at time of post-test.

\*\* Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, 92 students were sent home on 24 March 2020 and the class was cancelled. 12 students were able to finish all program requirements (through DL) with 8 receiving their high school diploma and recovering 80 credits. FY2020 was still categorized as a COVID impacted year with enrollment numbers reduced to allow for implementation of CDC protocols.

<sup>3</sup>MDRC. (2011). *Staying on Course: Three-Year Results of the National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Evaluation*

<sup>4</sup>RAND Corporation. (2012). *A Cost-Benefit Analysis of the National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Program*.

<sup>5</sup><http://www.promisingpractices.net/program.asp?programid=275>



# SECTION 4: Dropout and Delinquency Prevention and Intervention Coordination Activities of Rider 17.05 Workgroup

In the previous year, workgroup member agencies have engaged in the following activities:

- Provided delinquency, dropout prevention, and intervention programs funded by participating agencies, including the populations and locations served and evidence of the program effectiveness. (See Appendix A)
- DFPS hosted the annual Partners in Prevention Conference virtually in October 2020 and in-person in Austin, Texas in November 2019. This conference creates an opportunity for contractors, community partners, and other professionals in the field from across Texas to network and to acquire comprehensive information on the prevention of child abuse and neglect and related problem behaviors such as family violence, substance abuse, and juvenile delinquency.
- Informed the convening of an Education Summit titled Advancing Behavioral Health Collaborations for Student Success held in November 2019. This summit is a professional development for staff who work with school aged children and youth, including staff from the agencies.
- Shared information and updates on agency and legislative activities which stand to impact various prevention/intervention efforts, including:
  - TEA efforts to strengthen support for special student populations, including students who are disabled, English learners, homeless, in foster care, displaced, trafficked, migrant, pregnant and/or parenting, military connected, have mental health or behavioral health challenges, are highly-mobile, or are at-risk.
    - The TEA Special Populations Department and Highly Mobile and At-Risk Students Division focuses on implementing strategic priorities for these populations.
  - 87<sup>th</sup> Legislative activities that support dropout or delinquency prevention/early intervention, such as:
    - Dissemination of information to schools on new resources available for training in trauma-informed practices, safe and supportive schools.
    - Technical assistance support to schools and grantee programs by DFPS, TEA, Texas Military Department, and TJJD regarding program implementation shifts necessary due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
    - TEA, DFPS, TJJD and HHSC provided training for twenty education service centers (ESCs) on state resources available from each agency. This information was used by ESCs to help them identify regional resources to support school mental and behavioral health on the rubric template, pursuant to SB 11, 86R.
    - Through Rider 29 (previously the Rider 39 Improved Outcomes Pilot Program in the 86<sup>th</sup> Legislative session) DFPS-PEI was charged with improving outcomes for children at the highest risk of re-entry into the child protective services system. DFPS contracted with a grantee in Travis County and began work in November 2019, using evidenced-based programs to that target the reduction of a child's interaction with the juvenile justice system, the reduction of teen pregnancy, and the increase of graduation rates.
    - Dissemination of information to community youth service providers on the range of programs and services available across systems.

## SECTION 5: Key Considerations and Next Steps in Coordinating Services

### CONSIDERATION 1: Addressing dropout prevention, truancy, and juvenile delinquency prevention during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the 2019-2020 school year, districts and campuses identified 2.7 million students as “at-risk.” As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, many students, including those not previously identified as at-risk, experienced academic disruptions ultimately leading to disengagement and becoming uncontactable. Students also encountered challenges relating to food and housing insecurities, child abuse and neglect, mental health challenges and crisis which are all risk factors and indicators for truancy and dropping out of school.

In order to inform policy makers and support best practices, TEA required Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to submit a crisis code indicator to track online student engagement for the 2020-2021 school year. For each student enrolled on the last day of school in the 2019-2020 school year, each LEA reported a code representing the varying degree to which the students were engaged (e.g. completing assignments) and contactable (e.g. responsive to teacher outreach). The codes tracked students in four specific ways: 1) Fully Engaged 2) Engagement Recovered 3) No or Lost Engagement or 4) No or Lost Contact. The LEA also reported change over time in the student’s pattern of engagement and contact.

Similarly, DFPS, Texas Military Department, and TJJD had to adjust program implementation in 2020 to accommodate necessary and required safety measures for participating youth and program staff. Despite measures taken, all department program enrollments were impacted significantly by the pandemic. For example, Texas Military Department saw fewer program graduations due to COVID-19. If a youth contracted COVID-19, they were sent home to quarantine, and few in this situation returned to complete the program. TJJD saw fewer referrals into their program. DFPS programs experienced fewer enrollments and a lower client retention rate. DFPS grantees also reported the loss of key personnel during the pandemic, as well as local staffing shortage to fill such positions.

TEA and DFPS have utilized their webpages to provide schools/grantees and families with supports, information, and linkage to local support. The following are links to those webpages:

- 1) TEA’s COVID-19 Support for Special Populations: <https://tea.texas.gov/texas-schools/health-safety-discipline/covid/covid-19-support-special-populations>;
- 2) TEA’s Engaging Highly Mobile and At-Risk Students Guide: <https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/covid/SY-20-21-HighlyMobile-At-Risk-Guidance.pdf>
- 3) DFPS-PEI’s Get Parenting Tips page contains articles regarding parent support in relation to COVID and linkage to local parenting supports: <http://getparentingtips.com/default.asp>.

To address this consideration, the workgroup will:

- Utilize available data, to include crisis code data, and continue to identify additional coordination activities to increase awareness of community-based resources available to schools.
- Provide schools and program personnel with implementation technical assistance.
- Share any workgroup recommendations resulting from the impact of COVID-19 with leadership of each agency.
- Determine strategies collaboratively to address truancy and dropout prevention impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- TEA and DFPS will continue to provide schools/grantees and the public with additional resources, including timely information and local resources through agency websites.

### CONSIDERATION 2: Addressing Learning Loss in the time of COVID-19.

In the 2020-2021 school year, districts and campuses identified 2.6 million students as “at-risk.” As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, many students, including those not previously identified as at-risk, experienced

academic disruptions ultimately leading to disengagement and becoming uncontactable.

Students also encountered challenges relating to food and housing insecurities, child abuse and neglect, mental health challenges and crisis which are all risk factors and indicators for truancy and dropping out of school.

As the 2021-2022 school year approaches, districts and campuses across Texas must use data to strategically plan innovative outreach efforts and provide resources and supports for the thousands of students who have experienced tremendous academic loss due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The chart below provides information in comparing STAAR scores from 2019 to 2021 for reading and math for non-economically disadvantaged students vs. economically disadvantaged students. Across the board there is a decline of STAAR Scores for both groups.

**Table. Percent Change in STAAR Scores from 2019 to 2021:**

District in Person Rate	Reading		Math	
	Non-Eco Dis	Eco Dis	Non-Eco Dis	Eco Dis
<25%	-6%	-11%	-19%	-2%
>75%	-2%	-2%	-6%	-11%

\*\* [TEA 2021 STAAR Analysis](#)

New accelerated learning and tutoring requirements are critical for helping students to improve and address the needs and gaps that exist.

The coordination workgroup recognizes there may be policies or additional strategies that the state could implement based on the data collected to increase effective coordination between school districts and state sponsored community intervention and prevention programs to address the needs and gaps that exist.

Schools, students, and the community will need resources and practical strategies to address student support, engagement, truancy, dropout prevention and intervention, and academic achievement for at-risk learners. Addressing the learning loss and unique needs and gaps that exist is paramount.

To address this consideration, the workgroup will:

- Utilize available data, to identify additional coordination activities to increase awareness of community-based resources available to schools to aid with learning loss.
- Determine strategies collaboratively to address truancy and dropout prevention for at-risk learners adversely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- TEA’s Highly Mobile and At-Risk Students Division will continue to provide additional resource information for schools on its website and through interagency training, coordination, and technical assistance
- TEA will continue to provide school mental health information for schools, state agencies and community stakeholders, which include prevention strategies that can assist at-risk students. Mental health resources will continue to be available on the TEA website.
- TEA will communicate with stakeholders as new resources and tools are published. TEA will continue to participate in training and cross-agency collaboration to promote student mental health.

### CONSIDERATION 3: Mental and behavioral health supports help families remain stable.

TEA developed training materials to expand the states infrastructure on mental and behavioral health, and these resources are available on the [TEA Mental Health and Behavioral Health Webpage](#) to all agencies to assist with addressing multiple components of school mental and behavioral health. TEA previously

developed mental and behavioral health resources for schools to implement during COVID-19 to support schools with engaging students remotely and addressing mental health needs. These resources are posted on TEA's COVID-19 Webpage under General Support at: <https://tea.texas.gov/texas-schools/health-safety-discipline/covid/covid-19-support-general-support>

The DFPS Family and Youth Success (FAYS) Program addresses family conflict and everyday struggles while promoting strong families and youth resilience. FAYS offers one-on-one coaching or counseling with a trained professional and group-based learning for youth and parents. FAYS programs also operate a 24-hour hotline for families having urgent needs. The FAYS program is operational in every Texas county. Services are available to children and youth ages 6-17 years old, and their families.

To address this consideration, the workgroup will:

- TEA provides information and training to schools on mental and behavioral health through Webinars, professional learning communities with ESCs, at conferences and ongoing technical assistance to schools.
- TEA will continue to develop additional resources to support positive behavior interventions, such as trauma-informed practices, multi-tiered systems of support, and restorative discipline practices for at-risk students through its Special Populations Department and will engage the workgroup in this process.

DFPS will continue to oversee the FAYS program and provide counseling services to youth their families across Texas.

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<sup>6</sup>Wagner, M. (1995). "Outcomes for youths with Serious Emotional Disturbance in Secondary School and Early Adulthood." *Critical Issues for Children and Youths*. 5(2).

<sup>7</sup>Texas Juvenile Justice Department. TJJJ Commitment Profiles for FY 2014. Data distributed to Regionalization Task Force Members. Sept. 2015.

<sup>8</sup>Texas Juvenile Justice Dept. TJJJ Commitment Profiles for FY 2014. Data distributed to Regionalization Task Force Members. Sept. 2015.

# APPENDIX A: Detailed Information of Workgroup Agency Delinquency and Dropout Prevention and Intervention Services

## Department of Family and Protective Services

### **Statewide Youth Services Network (SYSN)**

All data for the following grantees is pulled from DFPS Contracts for Prevention and Early Intervention.

Total Funds Fiscal Year 2020: **\$1,667,076**

Brief Description of Program: PEI funds allow state-level grantees to identify areas of high need and vulnerability, and target specific support to local communities; therefore, the level and extent of services by county varies. Services offered by providers include community and school-based mentoring, youth leadership development, and youth skills.

Texas Alliance of Boys and Girls Club: Providers deliver evidence-based programs such as Boys & Girls Club Experience, SMART Moves youth-based curriculum, and youth leadership development that proactively increase protective factors in youth including involvement with positive peer groups, involvement with school and community, and presence of caring adults other than parents in the youth's life.

Number of Youth Served Fiscal Year 2020: 3,550

Counties Served: Anderson, Angelina, Archer, Armstrong, Atascosa, Austin, Bailey, Bandera, Bastrop, Baylor, Bee, Bell, Bexar, Borden, Bosque, Bowie, Brazoria, Brazos Briscoe, Brooks, Brown, Burnet, Caldwell, Callahan, Cameron, Camp, Carson, Cass, Castro, Chambers, Cherokee, Childress, Clay, Cochran, Coke, Coleman, Collin, Collingsworth, Colorado, Comal, Comanche, Concho, Cooke, Coryell, Cottle, Culberson, Crosby, Dallam, Dallas, Dawson, Deaf Smith, Delta, Denton, Dickens, Dimmit, Donley, Duval, Eastland, Ector, Edwards, El Paso, Ellis, Erath, Falls, Fannin, Fayette, Floyd, Fort Bend, Franklin, Freestone, Frio, Gaines, Garza, Gray, Grayson, Gregg, Grimes, Guadalupe, Hale, Hall, Hansford, Hardeman, Hardin, Harris, Harrison, Hartley, Hays, Hemphill, Henderson, Hidalgo, Hill, Hockley, Hood, Hopkins, Houston, Hudspeth, Hunt, Hutchinson, Jack, Jackson, Jasper, Jefferson, Jim Wells, Jim Hogg, Johnson, Jones, Karnes, Kaufman, Kendall, Kenedy, Kerr, Kimble, King, Kinney, Kleberg, La Salle, Lamar, Lamb, Lampasas, Lavaca, Leon, Liberty, Lipscomb, Live Oak, Lubbock, Lynn, Marion, Mason, Matagorda, Maverick, McLennan, Medina, Menard, Midland, Montague, Montgomery, Moore, Morris, Motley, Nacogdoches, Navarro, Newton, Nolan, Nueces, Ochiltree, Oldham, Orange, Palo Pinto, Panola, Parker, Parmer, Polk, Potter, Rains, Randall, Real, Red River, Roberts, Robertson, Rockwall, Runnels, Rusk, Sabine, San Augustine, San Jacinto, San Patricio, Shelby, Sherman, Smith, Somervell, Starr, Swisher Tarrant, Taylor, Terry, Titus, Tom Green, Travis, Trinity, Tyler, Upshur, Uvalde, Van Verde, Van Zandt, Victoria, Walker, Waller, Washington, Webb, Wharton, Wheeler, Wichita, Willacy, Williamson, Wilson, Wise, Wood, Yoakum, Zapata, and Zavala.

Eligibility Requirements: Youth ages 6 through 18 years, and target ages 10 through 17 years.

Data Elements Collected: Demographic Information, risk factors, services provided, average monthly served, and attendance.

Evidence of Effectiveness:

*Big Brothers, Big Sisters Lonestar:* Use of evidence-based programs. Use of Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) Strength of Relationship Survey measuring happiness, closeness, and coping. Also uses the BBBS Youth Outcome Pre-Post Survey measuring dimensions of the mentoring relationship (social competence, scholastic competency, social acceptance, educational expectations, grades, truancy, attitudes towards risk, parental trust, and presence of special adult). These measures have been found to be reliable and valid based on previous youth development research.

*Texas Alliance of Boys and Girls Club:* Use of evidence-based programs. Programs include Boys & Girls Club Experience, SMART Moves youth-based curriculum, and youth leadership development.

## **Community Youth Development (CYD)**

All data for the following grantees is pulled from DFPS Contracts for Prevention and Early Intervention.

*Total Funds Fiscal Year 2020:* \$7,915,820

*Brief Description of Program:* Communities prioritize and fund specific prevention services according to local needs. Approaches used by communities to prevent delinquency have included mentoring, youth employment programs, career preparation, academic support, life skills classes, youth-based curriculum, family-based curriculum, youth leadership development, and recreational activities.

*Number of Youth Served Fiscal Year 2020:* 15,580

*Counties Served:* Bexar, Cameron, Dallas, El Paso, Galveston, Harris, Hidalgo, Lubbock, McLennan, Nueces, Potter, Tarrant, Travis, Webb, Willacy

*Zip Code:* 75216, 75217, 76106, 76164, 76707, 77081, 77506, 77550, 78046, 78207, 78415, 78501, 78520, 78577, 78569, 78580, 78744, 79107, 79403, 79404, 79415, 79924

*Eligibility Requirements:* Youth through age 17 years who reside in or attend school in the targeted zip code. Target ages are 10 through 17 years. Youth who have a CPS case or whose legal case is pre-adjudicated, informally adjudicated, or deferred adjudication are eligible. However, youth cannot have been on or currently be on probation.

*Data Elements Collected:* Demographic Information, risk factors, juvenile probation status, services provided, average monthly served, CYD Pilot Survey, and attendance.

*Evidence of Effectiveness:* The Program Experience Survey (PES) gauges CYD program participant's experience and the degree to which they feel the programs benefited them. Responses indicate client satisfaction with services and programs are shown to have an impact on individual, family, and community functioning.

## **Family and Youth Success (FAYS)**

All data for the following grantees is pulled from DFPS Contracts for Prevention and Early Intervention.

*Total Funds Fiscal Year 2020:* \$24,708,586

*Brief Description of Program:* The FAYS program (formerly STAR) addresses family conflict and everyday struggles while promoting strong families and youth resilience. Every FAYS provider offers one-on-one coaching or counseling with a trained professional as well as family coaching or counseling. FAYS providers also offer group-based learning for youth and parents and each provider operates a 24-hour hotline for families

*Number of Youth Served Fiscal Year 2020:* 20,343

*Counties Served:* All Texas Counties

*Eligibility Requirements:* Families with youth under 18 years old who are dealing with family conflict or every day struggles. In some areas of the state FAYS only provides services to families with children 6-17 years of age.

*Data Elements Collected:* Demographic Information, risk factors, services provided, and average monthly served.

*Evidence of Effectiveness:* Through the data collected for this program, DFPS tracks whether children remain safe during services, within 1 year and within 3 years after discharge. This is a measure of the percent of adult caregivers who do not abuse or neglect their children while receiving PEI services. Other data tracked includes percentage of youth not referred to juvenile probation; and the increase in protective

factors, such as family functioning and resiliency, social supports, and nurturing/attachment.

## Texas Military Department

### **Texas ChalleNGe Academy (TCA)**

The mission of the Texas ChalleNGe Academy (TCA) is to reclaim the potential of at-risk teens through mentoring, education, training and volunteer service. The program is a seventeen-and-a-half-month voluntary program for 16-18-year-old high school dropouts or those at risk of dropping out. Youth who volunteer to attend the program learn about TCA from various sources including school counselors, advertising campaigns, juvenile case workers, juvenile justice sources and word of mouth from previous attendees. The initial portion of the program is a 22-week residential phase with a quasi-military (learn to adhere to military courtesies, discipline and a regimented schedule) approach. During this phase, the cadets complete the eight core components (academic excellence, responsible citizenship, leadership/followership, service to community, jobs skills, life coping skills, health and hygiene, and physical fitness). All the youth are given the opportunity to earn a high school diploma and/or GED or earn credits to return to their home high school. During the residential phase, each youth is paired with an adult mentor of their choosing who will assist them during the entire 12-month post residential phase to ensure they stay on track with their "Post Residential Action Plan" that they developed during the residential phase. All cadets will complete a minimum of 40 hours of community service projects during the residential phase. While the academic opportunities are a vital part of the residential phase, the benefits of the non-cognitive skills developed through the other core components and the discipline and structure of the military training model has shown to greatly enhance the young person's chances for future success. The program is provided at no cost to the youth or their family and is funded by a combination of federal and state funds (75% federal, 25% state). The Eagle Lake campus is one of the 42 National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Programs which are located in 32 states, Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia. The National Guard Youth Program has been operating nationally since 1993 and for twenty-one years in Texas.

**Total Funds Fiscal Year 2020:** \$4.1 million (\$3.1 million federal and \$1.03 million state)

**Brief Description of Program:** The mission of the Texas ChalleNGe Academy (TCA) is to reclaim the potential of at-risk teens through mentoring, education, training and volunteer service. The program is a seventeen-and-a-half-month voluntary program for 16-18 year old high school dropouts or those at risk of dropping out.

**Number of Youth Served Fiscal Year 2020:** 116 graduates Due to the COVID pandemic, TCA reduced the number of students enrolled in the program to allow for social distancing on campus.

**Program Locations:** Eagle Lake campus serving youth statewide (Program has four recruiters to select students from all over the state)

**Eligibility Requirement:** 16-18 years old, citizen of Texas/US, not currently on parole/probation for other than "juvenile offenses", no felony convictions or pending charges, drug free at admission, drop out or at-risk of dropping out

**Data Elements Collected:** Number of graduates, percent completing HSD/GED or credit recovery, percent completing post residential phase, hours of community service

**Evidence of Effectiveness:** Independent study by MRDC<sup>10</sup>. A recent RAND Corporation cost-benefit analysis found the Youth ChalleNGe Program generates \$2.66 in benefits for every dollar expended on the program, a return on investment of 166%.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>10</sup>MDRC. (2011). *Staying on Course: Three-Year Results of the National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Evaluation*

<sup>11</sup>RAND Corporation. (2012). *A Cost-Benefit Analysis of the National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Program*.



## Texas Education Agency

### **Academic Innovation and Mentoring (AIM)**

*Total Funds Fiscal Year 2020:* \$2,250,000

*Brief Description of Program:* Academic Innovation and Mentoring (AIM) is designed to close the gaps in the student achievement among minority and low-income students and English Learners who are at risk of dropping out. Texas AIM is an innovative partnership between Texas Alliance of Boys and Girls Clubs (BGC) and the Sylvan Learning Centers. Support services for students include: after-school academic instruction and tutoring, assigned adult advocates, parent engagement activities, character and leadership development in problem-solving and decision-making, fine arts activities, sports, fitness, recreation, and health and life skills. Texas AIM supports a data system to assess needs, plan services, and monitor student performance and engagement.

*Number of Youth Served Fiscal Year 2020:* 2,674

*Program Locations:* 69

*Eligibility Requirements:* Eligibility for funding is limited to the Texas Boys and Girls Club, as specified in the General Appropriations Act, Article III.

*Data Elements Collected:* Percentage of students served who advanced an academic level in a math or reading assessment and number of discipline referrals.

*Evidence of Effectiveness:* Data elements reported in the Fiscal Year 2020 final report from Texas AIM include: average monthly cost per student (\$55), percentage of students who advanced an academic level in a math or reading assessment (76%), and percentage of youth receiving a C or better in a subject for which they received services (89%). The STAAR state assessment requirement was waived for the 2019-2020 school year; therefore, a percentage of students that passed the STAAR state assessment was not reported for Fiscal Year 2020.

### **Amachi**

*Total Funds Fiscal Year 2020:* \$2,000,000

*Brief Description of Program:* The purpose of Amachi is to provide one-to-one mentoring for youth ages 6-18 whose parents or family members are incarcerated in or recently released from the prison system. Youth are engaged in mentoring relationships established primarily through partnerships with school districts, faith-based organizations, non-profit partnerships, the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, Prison Fellowship, and re-entry programs across Texas.

*Number of Youth Served Fiscal Year 2020:* 1,313

*Program Locations:* Dallas-Fort Worth metropolitan area, Houston metropolitan area, the central Texas region, El Paso, the Gulf Coast region, Hereford, Lubbock, the Texas panhandle region, and the south Texas region.

*Eligibility Requirements:* Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) Lone Star implements the Amachi mentoring program and subcontracts with eight BBBS programs throughout Texas to provide mentoring for children of incarcerated adults.

*Data Elements Collected:* Data is maintained by BBBS Lone Star. Progress reports are provided to TEA quarterly. BBBS Lone Star reports outcomes to TEA annually.

*Evidence of Effectiveness:* During the 2019-2020 school year (Fiscal Year 2020) 1,313 students had a mentor and were served. Of these, 92% of matches that were active during the school year were sustained for at least six months. 98% of mentored students were promoted to the next grade level. 90% of all matches reported improvement in at least one of the four areas of personal and social well-being designed to measure self-confidence. 87.5% reported improvement in at least one category of improved relationships.

1.2% of the students were referred to the juvenile justice system and 2.7% of students were reported as referred to an alternative education program.

### **21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers (21<sup>st</sup> CCLC)**

Total Funds Fiscal Year 2020: \$113,835,207

Brief Description of Program: The purpose of the 21st CCLC program is to assist students to meet the challenging state academic standards by providing them with academic enrichment activities and a broad array of other programs and activities during non-school hours or periods when school is not in session (such as before and after school, or during summer recess). The activities provided reinforce and complement the regular academic programs of the schools attended by the students and are targeted to the students' academic needs. The Texas 21st CCLC program operates as the Texas Afterschool Centers on Education (ACE), or Texas ACE.

Number of Youth Served Fiscal Year 2020: 124,395 students were served during the program year that coincides with Fiscal Year 2020.

Program Locations: Eighty-three grantees operated 603 community learning centers in 141 school districts.

Eligibility Requirements: Eligible entities include a local educational agency (independent school district, open-enrollment charter school, and regional education service center), community-based organization, Indian tribe or tribal organization (as such terms are defined in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Act (25 U.S.C. 450b)), another public or private entity, or a consortium of two or more such agencies, organizations, or entities. Competitively funded grant programs must target students that primarily attend schools eligible for school wide programs under the ESEA, Section 1114 and the families of such students.

Data Elements Collected: Program attendance, student activity participation, center activity schedule, family activity schedule, family activity attendance, staffing, and student identifiers to link to state-collected data for outcomes for required federal reporting and local program evaluation.

Evidence of Effectiveness:<sup>6</sup>

- Regular participation in the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program (60-days+) was consistently associated with higher state assessment scores in mathematics.
- Regular participation in the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC (60-days or more) by high school students was associated with higher GPAs; more credits earned and increased grade promotion. These high school participants had an average of a 72 percent greater likelihood of being promoted to the next grade level, a 17% reduction on average statewide in school-day absences, and a 14% reduction on average statewide in disciplinary incidents during the school day.
- Higher quality programs boasted a longer duration of student attendance, fewer school-day disciplinary referrals, increased likelihood of grade promotion, and an increase in reading assessment scores.

### **Communities in Schools (CIS)**

Total Funds Fiscal Year 2020: \$35,364,159

Brief Description of Program: The mission of Communities in Schools (CIS) is to surround students with a community of support, empowering them to stay in school and achieve in life. CIS staff work full time on school campuses and partner with educators, students, and parents to identify students who are at-risk of dropping out of school. CIS staff provide intensive case management services and an array of campus-based programming including: crisis intervention, individual counseling, support groups, life skills training,

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<sup>6</sup> American Institutes for Research. "Texas 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers: 2014-15 Evaluation Report." Prepared for the Texas Education Agency. May 2016.

tutoring, mentoring, parent engagement, and enrichment activities – all targeted to meet the individual needs of students and remove barriers to learning so they can fully engage in school and be academically successful. CIS monitors student level data and tracks educational outcomes. The CIS program model has six components: academic enhancement and support, college and career awareness, enrichment activities, health and human services, parental and family engagement, and supportive guidance and counseling.

*Number of Youth Served Fiscal Year 2020:* 105,892 students received intensive case management services.

*Program Locations:* 175 districts, 1,186 campuses

*Eligibility Requirements:* Eligible grantees include 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations.

*Data Elements Collected:* Demographic information, attendance, disciplinary actions, grades, state assessment scores, partner organizations, end of year student outcomes (promoted, retained, graduated, dropped out, etc.), targeted need(s), and services provided.

*Evidence of Effectiveness:* During Fiscal Year 2020, 28 CIS programs served up to 1,051,605 students on 1,186 campuses in 175 school districts. Of those, 105,892 were provided individual case management services. Reported outcomes included: 99% stayed in school (grades 7-12); 98% were promoted to the next grade (grades K-11); 95% of students that were eligible to graduate graduated; 89% of students that were targeted for academic intervention showed improvement; 82% of students that were targeted for attendance intervention showed improvement; and 82% of students that were targeted for behavior intervention showed improvement.

## Texas Juvenile Justice Department

### **Grant S. Prevention and Early Intervention Services**

#### **Bastrop County Juvenile Probation Department**

Total Funds FY 2020: \$35,760

Brief Description of Program: The Cen-Tex Regional Services Department partners with school districts to provide drug awareness education to students who are at-risk for using illegal and/or prescription drugs. The program provides parenting skills and education to adults whose children, ages 6-17 years of age, are at increased risk of entering the juvenile justice system and uses the “Breaking the Cycle” Program.

Counties Served: Bastrop, Lee, Washington

Number of Youth Served FY 2020: 10

Eligibility Requirements: Children between the ages of 6 and 17 years of age and are at risk of entering the juvenile justice system

Data Elements Collected: Program length, demographic information, ability to match with juvenile referrals, school attendance rates, graduation rates, and discipline referrals

Evidence of Effectiveness: Of the 10 youth that participated in the program, no youth successfully completed the program due to the program being put on hold due to COVID-19. However, no youth were referred to the probation department while participating in the program.

#### **Bexar County Juvenile Probation Department**

Total Funds Fiscal Year 2020: \$503,219

Brief Description of Program: School based truancy prevention and early intervention program in partnership with Communities In Schools, Southwest Key and the North East Independent School District (ISD). The project targets children and youth who are at increased risk of delinquency, truancy, dropping out of school or referral to the juvenile justice system. The Project Connect Program, administered by Southwest Key, is designed to benefit the targeted students in their service area by increasing school attendance and decreasing substance abuse, with the objective of diverting these students from the juvenile justice system. A portion of the funds is used to purchase school uniforms and bus passes.

Counties Served: Bexar

Number of Youth Served Fiscal Year 2020: 382

Eligibility Requirements: The program targets children, adolescents and youth (ages 4 through 17) not currently under juvenile justice supervision who are at an increased risk of delinquency, truancy, dropping out of school or referral to the juvenile justice system, and who are students at schools within the two targeted “elementary-middle-high school corridors” within the “Roosevelt cluster”, in the NEISD. The Walzem-Krueger-Roosevelt High School Corridor refers to Walzem Elementary School, which feeds into Krueger Middle School, which feeds into Roosevelt High School. The Montgomery-White-Roosevelt Corridor refers to Montgomery Elementary School, which feeds into Ed White Middle School, which feeds into Roosevelt High School.

Data Elements Collected: Program length, demographic information, ability to match with juvenile referrals, school attendance rates, graduation rates, and discipline referrals

Evidence of Effectiveness: Of the 426 youth that participated in the various programs only 13 were referred to the probation department.

#### **Burnet County Juvenile Probation Department**

Total Funds Fiscal Year 2020: \$6,482

Brief Description of Program: Uses trained facilitators to deliver Curriculum Based Support Group

program, a research-based curriculum, which reduces anti-social attitudes and rebellious behavior through small group character-building classes.

Counties Served: Blanco, Burnet, Gillespie, Llano, and San Saba

Number of Youth Served Fiscal Year 2020: 43

Eligibility Requirements: Participants are fourth and fifth grade at-risk youth in certain elementary schools

Data Elements Collected: Program length, demographic information, ability to match with juvenile referrals, school attendance rates, graduation rates, and discipline referrals

Evidence of Effectiveness: 27 of 43 students completed the program successfully. Seven (7) clients did not complete the program due to COVID-19. No students were referred to the probation department while participating in the program.

### **Cameron County Juvenile Probation Department**

Total Funds Fiscal Year 2020: \$112,567

Brief Description of Program: The prevention and intervention program provides services at the Harlingen Outreach Center. The purpose is to provide safe and structured afterschool activities, including mentoring, tutoring, educational opportunities and social activities, with a focus on increasing school attendance and academic achievement: after school and summer programs with an educational curriculum, social activities, recreational activities, tutoring, mentoring, arts and crafts, and presentations from different agencies in our community.

Counties Served: Cameron

Number of Youth Served Fiscal Year 2020: 31

Eligibility Requirements: High-risk youth, ages 6-17, with a special emphasis on siblings of youth already involved in the juvenile justice system and families with CPS involvement

Data Elements Collected: Program length, demographic information, ability to match with juvenile referrals, school attendance rates, graduation rates, and discipline referrals

Evidence of Effectiveness: All 31 students that participated completed the program successfully. No program participants were referred to the probation department.

### **Ector County Juvenile Probation Department**

Total Funds FY 2020: \$77,690

Brief Description of Program: A full-time intervention officer acts as an advocate for youth and works with other agencies to identify specific needs that will allow youth to remain in or return to his or her home campus. Services include home visits to assist in behavior management, school visits to assist with behavior, attendance, anger management, coping skills, social skills, substance abuse prevention and individual counseling.

Counties Served: Ector

Number of Youth Served Fiscal Year 2020: 44

Eligibility Requirements: Ector ISD students ages 6-17 years of age who have been or are at risk of being suspended to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP) and/or expelled.

Data Elements Collected: Program length, demographic information, ability to match with juvenile referrals, school attendance rates, graduation rates, and discipline referrals; our goals were 75% of students would not be expelled from home campus during/post services, 80% of students would increase attendance, 75% would increase grades, and 90% would complete services.

Evidence of Effectiveness: Of the 44 students receiving services in FY 20, 41 successfully completed the program. Of the 44 that completed the program, 41 had fewer school discipline reports and

increased/improved their attendance, and only 2 youth were referred to the probation department for a law violation.

### **Ellis County Juvenile Probation Department**

Total Funds Fiscal Year 2020: \$144,000

Brief Description of Program: Contracts with Ennis Boys & Girls Club who provide an evidence-based afterschool mentoring program and life skills curriculum; youth are referred to the program by the Truancy Court, Municipal Court, school counselors, social agencies and parents.

Counties Served: Ellis

Number of Youth Served Fiscal Year 2020: 811

Eligibility Requirements: Youth between the ages of 6 to 17, with special attention on younger children, who are at risk for juvenile justice system involvement

Data Elements Collected: Program length, demographic information, ability to match with juvenile referrals, school attendance rates, graduation rates, and discipline referrals

Evidence of Effectiveness: Of the 811 youth served, 315 completed the program successfully. None of the 811 youth that participated in the program were referred to the probation department.

### **El Paso County Juvenile Probation Department**

Total Funds Fiscal Year 2020: \$129,946

Brief Description of Program: The El Paso Probation department provides prevention programs through several organizations to improve successful outcomes for at-risk youth. The Big Brothers, Big Sisters program provides mentoring, positive enrichment activities, bullying prevention and parenting education services. The CIS program provides a restorative discipline circles to at-risk youth. El Paso JPD elected to partner with Communities in Schools (CIS) since the CIS offered one of the few models in the United States proven to keep students in school. In addition, it is the only dropout prevention program with scientifically based evidence to improve graduation rates.

Counties Served: El Paso

Number of Youth Served Fiscal Year 2020: 69

Eligibility Requirements: At-risk youth ages 6-17 who are not involved with the juvenile justice system

Data Elements Collected: Program length, demographic information, ability to match with juvenile referrals, school attendance rates, graduation rates, and discipline referrals

Evidence of Effectiveness: 68 of 124 students completed the program successfully, only 3 were referred to juvenile probation while participating in the program. Below are specific program outcomes:

#### *Big Brothers Big Sisters:*

- Number of youth carried over from previous fiscal year: 28
- Total number of youth began services this fiscal year: 18
- Total number of youth served: 46
- Total number of youth whose files were closed successfully: 46
- Total number of youth whose files were closed unsuccessfully: 0

#### *CIS- Restorative Discipline Circles for At-Risk Youth*

- Number of youth who began services this fiscal year: 0
- Total number of youth served: 23
- Total number of youth whose files were closed: 25 (2 youth left the state during the program)

- Number of youth with at least a 15% increase in attendance: 25
- Number of youth with fewer school discipline reports while in the program: 23
- Number of youth promoted to the next grade level: 23
- Number of youth referred to probation while in the program: 0

**Fort Bend County Juvenile Probation Department**

Total Funds Fiscal Year 2020: \$61,688

Brief Description of Program: Provides juvenile probation officer to work with specialized truancy magistrate to administer intensive proactive case management for students referred for truancy; and implements a "Partners in Parenting" program, a collaboration between the Lamar Consolidated School District identified high-need elementary schools and middle schools, the Justice of the Peace Court for this area, and the Fort Bend County Juvenile Probation Department.

Counties Served: Fort Bend

Number of Youth Served Fiscal Year 2020: 193

Eligibility Requirements: Students on five campuses selected by Lamar Consolidated ISD as high-risk schools for poor attendance, low grades and discipline issues

Data Elements Collected: Program length, demographic information, ability to match with juvenile referrals, school attendance rates, graduation rates, and discipline referrals

Evidence of Effectiveness: Of the 193 youth served during FY 2020:

- Number of youth who exhibited improved attendance: 154
- Number of youth who had fewer school discipline reports: 67
- Number of youth who successfully completed the program: 159
- Number of youth who were referred to the program department while in the program: 4

**Guadalupe County Juvenile Probation Department**

Total Funds Fiscal Year 2020: \$94,560

Brief Description of Program: The prevention program R.I.S.E. (Respect, Invest, Strive, Engagement) provides prevention and educational services to address the needs of at-risk youth and their families along with local community agencies in Guadalupe County. The goal of the program is assist and educate youth and their families in developing essential life skills that will help them learn strategies and techniques for effective communication and coping skills in order to help reduce potential involvement in the juvenile justice system.

Counties Served: Guadalupe

Number of Youth Served Fiscal Year 2020: 88

Eligibility Requirements: At-risk male and female adolescent's ages six (6) to seventeen (17) who have not been previously referred to our department but have been identified as being at-risk for one or more at risk behaviors

Data Elements Collected: Program length, demographic information, ability to match with juvenile referrals, school attendance rates, graduation rates, and discipline referrals

Evidence of Effectiveness: The population served and outcomes were as follows:

**Total number of clients served:**

- Number of youth who began services this fiscal year: 63
- Total number of youth served: 88

### **Output performance measures**

The program was closed on March 23, 2020 due to COVID-19. As a result, all operations were suspended and no youth were successfully discharged. Of the 88 youth served, only 3 were referred to the probation department while participating in the program.

#### **Hale County Juvenile Probation Department**

Total Funds Fiscal Year 2020: \$118,810

Brief Description of Program: Hale County Probation Department provides the Rainbow Days program. The county employs two full-time coordinators and one part time coordinator to provide the Curriculum Based Support Group Program to serve Hale and Swisher Counties. Participating students are between the ages of 6 and 17 years. The program candidates are identified by principals, counselors, parents, and the youth themselves. The objective of the Rainbow Days program is to deter the youth from entering the juvenile justice system and to encourage the youth to stay in school.

Counties Served: Hale, Swisher

Number of Youth Served Fiscal Year 2020: 87

Eligibility Requirements: Students between the ages of 6 to 17 years who are at-risk for juvenile justice involvement

Data Elements Collected: Program length, demographic information, ability to match with juvenile referrals, program completion rate

Evidence of Effectiveness: All 87 youth successfully completed the program. Only one of the program participants was referred to the probation department while enrolled in the program.

#### **Hill County Juvenile Probation Department**

Total Funds FY 2020: \$9,382

Brief Description of Program: The program employs a certified peace officer that investigates truancy referrals and is a participant on each school district's truancy prevention plan (26 campuses in 11 districts); the officer is a liaison between the juvenile justice community and the school districts.

Counties Served: Hill

Number of Youth Served FY 2020: 329

Eligibility Requirements: All students in Hill County schools

Data Elements Collected: Program length, demographic information, ability to match with juvenile referrals, school attendance rates, graduation rates, and discipline referrals

Evidence of Effectiveness: The program received 249 referrals and all referrals were investigated. Out of the 249 referrals, 238 did not have any further court action for continued absences.

#### **Total number of clients served:**

- Number of youth carried over from previous fiscal year: 0
- Number of youth who began services this fiscal year: 329
- Total number of youth served: 329
- Total number of youth whose files were closed: 329

#### **Output performance measures:**

- Number of youth that completed the program: 329

The program tracks school attendance, which is defined as no additional referrals made to the Juvenile Resource Officer due to continued school absences that would constitute filing a complaint/case and referring to the Truancy Court.



- Number of youth with improved attendance while in the program: 295
- Number of youth referred to the department while in the program: 1

**Jackson County Juvenile Probation Department**

**Total Funds Fiscal Year 2020: \$29,166**

Brief Description of Program: The Jackson County Probation Department contracted with the *Turn Around Program* to provide services. The goals of this program are to improve academic performance, develop computer skills, improve classroom participation; improve and develop social skills, provide pathways to higher education and vocation training; and avoid entry into the juvenile justice system.

Counties Served: Jackson

Number of Youth Served Fiscal Year 2020: 52

Eligibility Requirements: Youth aged 6 to 17 years who are considered at-risk by the schools, due to functioning below grade level who are at-risk for failing a state assessment in one or more areas

Data Elements Collected: Program length, demographic information, ability to match with juvenile referrals, school attendance rates, graduation rates, and discipline referrals

Evidence of Effectiveness: The population information and outcomes were as follows:

**Total number of clients served:**

- Number of youth carried over from previous fiscal year: 35
- Number of youth who began services this fiscal year: 40
- Total number of youth served: 52
- Total number of youth whose files were closed: 35

**Output performance measures:**

- Number of youth that completed the program successfully: not reported
- Number of youth referred to the probation department: not reported

**Kleberg County Juvenile Probation Department**

**Total Funds Fiscal Year 2020: \$240**

Brief Description of Program: Prevention/Intervention program. Services are provided to individuals that are first offenders, or referred by school or family member and include chemical dependency, anger management, and individual/family counseling. Additionally, for youth aged 15 to 17, local businesses were solicited to provide internship or apprenticeship opportunities.

Counties Served: Kleberg

Number of Youth Served Fiscal Year 2020: 2

Eligibility Requirements: Youth 10 to 17 years old who exhibit at-risk behaviors and are referred to the program/ probation department by a parent, school, or other agency

Data Elements Collected: Program length, demographic information, ability to match with juvenile referrals, school attendance rates, graduation rates, and discipline referrals

Evidence of Effectiveness: The population information and outcomes were as follows:

**Total number of clients served:**

- Number of youth carried over from previous fiscal year: 0
- Number of youth who began services this fiscal year: 2
- Total number of youth served: 2

- Total number of youth whose files were closed: 1

***Output performance measure:***

- Number of youth that completed the program: 1
- Number of youth referred to probation: 0

**Randall County Juvenile Probation Department**

Total Funds FY 2020: \$9,440

Brief Description of Program: Contracts with Texas AgriLife Extension Service for Randall County to work with selected youth on a 4-H swine project. 4-H swine projects require approximately 300 hours of work training, cleaning out pens, feeding, walking and preparing swine for show. Youth and their families attend periodic training sessions, combining information related to livestock management and character development

Counties Served: Randall

Number of Youth Served FY 2020: 8

Eligibility Requirements: Youth in middle school, ages 12-14, who have been identified by the school district as having one or more risk factors for delinquency who are selected from referrals. At-Risk Students in Randall County are identified by Canyon and Amarillo Independent School Districts as having one or more risk factors for truancy, delinquency, dropping out of school or referral to the juvenile justice system (including but not limited to youth who are in single parent homes, who have one or both parents with no contact, learning challenges, limited resources such as participation in free or reduced lunch program, or any other indicators that might limit their ability to succeed in the educational system.

Data Elements Collected: Program length, demographic information, ability to match with juvenile referrals, school attendance rates, graduation rates, and discipline referrals

Evidence of Effectiveness:

Eight of eight students completed the program successfully.

***Program specific outcome performance measures:***

The program tracks school attendance, with requiring students to follow 'No pass/ No play' rules.

- Number of youth with improved attendance while in the program: 8
- Number of youth with fewer school discipline reports while in the program: 8
- Number of youth who passed one or more areas of the STAAR this fiscal year: 8
- Number of youth who promoted to next grade level, this fiscal year: 8
- Number of youth referred to probation department while in the program: 0

**Tarrant County Juvenile Probation Department**

Total Funds FY 2020: \$61,225

Brief Description of Program: The Youth Advocate Programs, Inc. (YAP) offers intense case management, individualized intervention through the YAP mentoring program. YAP Advocates are trained mentors who deliver the services themselves and link youth and their families with other services. This program provides approximately two to six hours of mentoring services per week for approximately four months to each identified youth.

Counties Served: Tarrant

Number of Youth Served FY 2020: 18

Eligibility Requirements: Youth (ages 6-17 years) who have siblings who are under supervision of the

probation department

Data Elements Collected: Program length, demographic information, ability to match with juvenile referrals, school attendance rates, grade promotion, graduation rates, and discipline referrals

Evidence of Effectiveness: Population information and outcome measures are as follows:

**Total number of clients served:**

- Number of youth carried over from previous fiscal year: 12
- Number of youth who began services this fiscal year: 6
- Total number of youth served: 18
- Total number of youth whose files were closed: 18
- Number of youth that completed the program: 17
- Number of youth referred to probation department while in the program: 1

**Program specific outcome performance measures:**

- Number of youth with improved attendance: 16
- Number of youth with fewer school discipline reports: 16
- Number of youth that promoted to the next grade level: 17
- Number of youth referred to probation department while in the program: 1

**Tom Green County Juvenile Probation Department**

Total Funds FY 2020: \$88,998

Brief Description of Program: Contracts with Youth Advocate Programs, Inc. (YAP) to provide advocate mentors who work intensively with the youth (up to 15 hours per week) and then taper services to fewer hours as the youth progress in the program. Services include: Completion of an anger management program (PATTS), character building, individualized parenting and family skills training, tutoring, behavioral and social development activities, and work supported/employment training. The length of stay for each youth range three to six months. The principles reflect the agency's ongoing commitment to family-focused programming that empowers youth and families to lead healthy, safe and productive lives.

Counties Served: Tom Green

Number of Youth Served FY 2020: 14

Eligibility Requirements: High-risk youth ages 6-13 who are not involved with the juvenile justice system and referred from selected school districts

Data Elements Collected: Program length, demographic information, ability to match with juvenile referrals, school attendance rates, graduation rates, and discipline referrals

Evidence of Effectiveness:

**Total number of clients served:**

- Number of youth carried over from previous fiscal year: 8
- Number of youth who began services this fiscal year: 6
- Total number of youth served: 14
- Total number of youth whose files were closed: 14

**Program specific outcome performance measures:**

School attendance is defined as fewer truant events and late arrivals.

- Number of youth with improved attendance while in the program: 13
- Number of youth with fewer school discipline reports while in the program: 13
- Number of youth who passed one or more areas of the STAAR this FY: N/A
- Number of youth who promoted to next grade level, this FY: 13
- Number of youth referred to probation department while in the program: 0

**Travis County Juvenile Probation Department**

Total Funds FY 2020: \$98,132

Brief Description of Program: CARY PeaceRox Program - CARY’s overarching goal is to stop the school to prison pipeline. This is accomplished by targeting the highest-needs students in the school discipline system, those that have already been identified to have aggressive and disruptive behaviors. Students work with a CARY mental health professional for a year, focusing on pro-social groups and individual counseling sessions. The objective of every student that successfully completes a year in the CARY program is to see a reduction in discipline incidents, and an improvement in grades and attendance.

Counties Served: Travis

Number of Youth Served FY 2020: 53

Eligibility Requirements: Youth between the ages of 11 and 15 who are truant, running away, experiencing behavioral problems at school, or experiencing conflict with family members

Data Elements Collected: Program length, demographic information, ability to match with juvenile referrals, school attendance rates, graduation rates, discipline referrals, community referrals, and family involvement/ participation

Evidence of Effectiveness: Population information and outcome measures are as follows:

**Total number of clients served:**

- Number of youth carried over from previous fiscal year: 0
- Number of youth who began services this fiscal year: 68
- Total number of youth served: 68
- Total number of youth whose files were closed: 5

**Program Outcomes:**

Thirty-five of 53 youth successfully completed the program. The students that started in fall 2019 finished in spring 2020. The students that started in spring 2020 will not finish until the end of fall 2020. Only two youth were referred to the probation department while in the program.

**Val Verde County Juvenile Probation Department**

Total Funds FY 2020: \$61,440

Brief Description of Program: Youth and Family empowerment Program is designed to help youth having problems with discipline to improve attendance, reduce truancy, increase academics, and prevent juvenile justice involvement. The goals are to prevent high-risk youth from entering the juvenile justice system. The program provides substance abuse screenings, individual counseling, group education, case management series, life skills training and education, cultural and social activities, and tutoring services.

Counties Served: Val Verde

Number of Youth Served FY 2020: 19

Eligibility Requirements: Youth between the ages of 7-17 who exhibit at-risk behaviors or

attitudes associated with delinquency, who are not on or have ever been on formal or informal juvenile community supervision or be awaiting adjudication

Data Elements Collected: Program length, demographic information, ability to match with juvenile referrals, school attendance rates, school discipline referrals, STAAR performance, and family involvement/participation

Evidence of Effectiveness: Successful completion is defined as attendance in at least 75% of all scheduled activities. Population information and outcome measures are as follows:

**Output performance measures:**

- Number of youth carried over from previous fiscal year: 5
- Number of youth who began services this fiscal year: 12
- Number of youth served: 19
- Total number of youth whose files were closed: 50
- Total number of youth that completed the program: 0
- Number of youth with fewer discipline reports: 0
- Number of youth that passed one or more areas of the STARR: 19
- Number of youth that promoted to the next grade level: 19
- Number of youth referred to the probation department: 0

**Van Zandt County Juvenile Probation Department**

Total Funds FY 2020: \$48,557

Brief Description of Program: The “Just Kids Hands on Pets Education” program is a canine program designed to teach developmentally appropriate discipline, responsibility, compassion for life, motivational problem-solving, self-esteem and nurturing. Special needs youth may also attend a six-week program provided by licensed counselors.

Counties Served: Van Zandt

Number of Youth Served FY 2020: 76

Eligibility Requirements: Children and youth ages 6-17 who are at increased risk of involvement with the juvenile justice system. Referrals come from local school districts, local law enforcement, Child Advocacy Centers, adult probation, child protective services, and local municipal courts

Data Elements Collected: Program length, demographic information, ability to match with juvenile referrals, school attendance rates, graduation rates, and discipline referrals

Evidence of Effectiveness: All participants (76) completed the program successfully, and only 2 youth were referred to probation after finishing the program

**Webb County Juvenile Probation Department**

Total Funds FY 2020: \$86,045

Brief Description of Program: Contracts with Southwest Key to provide the Family Keys Model (intensive home-based case management services) to youth between the ages of 11 and 13 who are truant, running away, experiencing behavioral problems at school, or experiencing conflict with family members.

Counties Served: Webb

Number of Youth Served FY 2020: 33

Eligibility Requirements: Youth between the ages of 6 and 17 years of age at increased risk of involvement in the juvenile justice system

Data Elements Collected: Program length, demographic information, juvenile referral rates, school attendance rates, graduation rates, and discipline referrals, parent participation

Evidence of Effectiveness: Population information and outcome measures are as follows:

**Student Specific Performance and Outcomes:**

- 17 of 23 youth completed the program successfully.
- 10 youth demonstrated improved attendance.
- 7 demonstrated fewer discipline reports.
- No youth were referred to the probation department while participating in the program.

**Wharton County Juvenile Probation Department**

Total Funds FY 2020: \$145,416

Brief Description of Program: The Pilgrim Rest After School Activities Program (Pilgrim Rest ASAP) targets youth that are functioning below grade level and at risk of failing the state assessment test in one or more areas, and at risk for entry into the juvenile justice system. The program provides tutoring, computer access, recreation, and food. The second program offered is the *Yes WE Can* (YWC) from a service provider called “Just Do IT Now”. The program goals include improving academic competence, practicing satisfactory attendance, expand social skills, prepare for further education, secure a high school diploma, connect with services and avoid entry into the juvenile justice system.

Counties Served: Wharton

Number of Youth Served FY 2020: 262

Eligibility Requirements: Youth between the ages of 6 to 17 who are at increased risk of involvement with the juvenile justice system

Data Elements Collected: Program length, demographic information, juvenile referral rates

Evidence of Effectiveness: Students remain enrolled in the program until they finish high school, therefore program completion numbers are not yet available. However, this fiscal year only 3 youth enrolled in the program were referred to the probation department.

**Willacy County Juvenile Probation Department**

Total Funds FY 2020: \$3,239

Brief Description of Program: The department contracts with a licensed counselor to provide youth and families with Strengthening Families program (14 sessions), an evidence-based family skills training designed to increase resiliency and minimize risk factors for behavioral, emotional, academic, and social problems. Additionally, families can receive up to five additional individual family sessions to support continued success.

Counties Served: Willacy

Number of Youth Served FY 2020: 12

Eligibility Requirements: At-risk children and youth between the ages of six years through seventeen years of age who are not currently under the supervision of the juvenile justice system

Data Elements Collected: Program length, demographic information, ability to match with juvenile referrals

Evidence of Effectiveness: Four (4) of twelve (12) program participants were closed successfully; no youth was referred to the probation department while in the program. Services were not rendered after mid-March 2020 due to COVID-19.

**Williamson County Juvenile Probation Department**

Total Funds FY 2020: \$56,410

Brief Description of Program: Grant funds supported three unique Prevention Programs: The Georgetown Project (TGP) (also received other donations), The Catalyst Collective's After School Mentoring Program, and The Ride on Center for Kids (ROCK) Camp - True Grit Camp. The Georgetown Project works with the youth development community of Georgetown, both through leadership of the TGP Collaborative for Children and Youth and through the direct programs and services.

The Catalyst Collective is a mobile community committed to helping individuals develop personally, professionally, and emotionally. The Catalyst Collective program is the Hopewell After-Hours program, a mobile teen center that focuses on the holistic development of students by creating environments in schools where teens can explore their talents and passions, connect with mentors, deepen friendships and establish a stronger sense of identity, purpose and belonging. True Grit Equine Leadership Program teaches: horse care and management, respecting yourself and others, good sportsmanship/the value of helping others, leadership and trust, and celebrating accomplishments and independence.

Counties Served: Williamson

Number of Youth Served FY 2020: 260

Eligibility Requirements: At-risk children, youth, and adolescents, ages 6 through 17.

Data Elements Collected: Program length, demographic information, ability to match with juvenile referrals, school attendance rates, graduation rates, and discipline referrals.

Evidence of Effectiveness: Effectiveness is described below:

#### **The Georgetown Project**

Total number of persons served: 260 unduplicated youth; 892 unduplicated adults; 35,000 households received Developmental Relationships and LOA ads; 3,300 contacts received Bridges Buzz monthly parenting newsletters

No data was provided regarding The Catalyst Collective's After School Mentoring Program or the Ride on Center for Kids (ROCK) Camp - True Grit Camp.

#### **Winkler County Juvenile Probation Department**

Total Funds FY 2020: \$11,718

Brief Description of Program: Winkler County Recreation Center (WCRC) provides an informal out-of-school-time program for juveniles. WCRC provides a consistent safe place for youth to spend time building relationships while enjoying recreational activities.

Counties Served: Winkler

Number of Youth Served FY 2020: 35 (Enrolled)

Eligibility Requirements: Youth at risk for referrals to the juvenile probation department and truancy.

Data Elements Collected: Program completion, demographic information, ability to match with juvenile referrals, school attendance rates, school discipline reports, promotion to next grade level

Evidence of Effectiveness: The program was discontinued on 10/28/2019 before any youth could complete the program.

#### **Zapata County Juvenile Probation Department**

Total Funds FY 2020: \$100,454

Brief Description of Program: Zapata County has two programs *Serving Kids in Life Situations (SKILS+)* and *Futures*. SKILS+ focuses on after-school mentoring and academic enrichment. It employs research from the resiliency studies, which connect the use of mentors to model positive role relationships and to improve the youth's academic success and self-esteem (for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders). The SKILS+ program offers

an 8-week summer program. *Futures* is a project which attempts to divert youth from the juvenile justice system by offering them structured courses in which they can investigate potential vocational interests and also attain real-life skills. The courses include introductory and intermediate welding, culinary and nutrition (“Survival Cooking”), home maintenance and repair (HMR), and other classes are prepared and offered as need arises.

Counties Served: Zapata

Number of Youth Served FY 2020: 168

Eligibility Requirements: Youth who are at risk of involvement with the juvenile justice system and who are between 10-16 years.

Data Elements Collected: Program length, program completion, demographic information, ability to match with juvenile referrals, school attendance rates, graduation rates, and discipline referrals.

Evidence of Effectiveness: All 72 youth that participated completed the *SKILLS+* program successfully. All 96 youth that participated completed the *Futures* program completed successfully. No youth were referred to the probation department while in the program.

### **Grant T. School Attendance Improvement Project**

#### **Comal County Juvenile Probation Department**

Total Funds FY 2020: \$52,558

Brief Description of Program: The Student and Family Empowerment Program is now a year round program staffed by a Prevention Services Coordinator who evaluates student needs and provides community referrals and case management services to ensure the child and their family access the community or probation department programs to meet their needs; probation department programs include True Color skills groups, ropes courses, crisis counseling and contracted services for equine therapy.

Number of Youth Served FY 2020: 113

Counties Served: Comal

Eligibility Requirements: Children ages 6-14 with school attendance problems who are unsupported by youth-serving agencies, churches, non-profit organizations, civic groups or neighborhood programs

Data Elements Collected: Program length, program completion, demographic information, ability to match with juvenile referrals, school attendance rates, graduation rates, and discipline referrals

Evidence of Effectiveness: 55 of 113 youth served completed the program successfully, (47 youth that were referred failed to engage likely due to COVID-19); 32 youth had improved school attendance while in the program; 10 had fewer school discipline reports; only 1 youth was referred to the probation department while in the program. Please note: the program was closed in Mid-March 2020 due to COVID-19 shutdowns. All data collected occurred prior to the program closure.

#### **El Paso County Juvenile Probation Department**

Total Funds FY 2020: \$38,880

Brief Description of Program: Making Improvement by Targeting Attendance (MIT) operates in partnership with the Communities in Schools program at Riverside Middle School. MIT provides program orientation, assessment, intensive home-based services (service coordination, home visits, case management), supportive guidance for youth and their parents (skills building); facilitation of educational modules to select youth and families; and provides parenting classes and other community engagement activities.

Counties Served: El Paso

Number of Youth Served FY 2020: 23



Eligibility Requirements: Middle school youth ages 12-15 attending Riverside Middle School and their caregivers/parents. Youth must not be currently under the jurisdiction of the juvenile probation department, have any pending formal referrals, nor be under active juvenile justice supervision. Eligible youth must have demonstrated a history of low attendance and meet at least two individual and/or familial risk factors cited in the OJJDP's database on Truancy Reduction Programs. This program provides

Data Elements Collected: Program length, program completion, demographic information, ability to match with juvenile referrals, school attendance rates, graduation rates, and discipline referrals

Evidence of Effectiveness: 23 of 25 students successfully completed the program (2 moved out of state), 25 students had improved attendance, 23 had fewer school discipline reports, 23 were promoted to the next grade level. No youth were referred to the probation department while participating in the program.

### **Karnes-Wilson County Juvenile Probation Department**

Total Funds FY 2020: \$113,414

Brief Description of Program: School Attendance Specialists provide intensive attendance improvement and truancy reduction services, including in-school and in-home services, individual attendance plans for each participant and identification of the root causes of truancy for each student. The program also works with the Karnes County Community Coalition, which includes mental health specialists, substance abuse prevention services, teen court, Positive Action Curriculum, and counseling services for youth and families who need additional support. Youth referred to the Attendance Improvement Program are monitored on a weekly basis for a minimum of 30 days and referrals are made to appropriate services based on identified needs.

Counties Served: Karnes, Wilson

Number of Youth Served FY 2020: 683

Eligibility Requirements: Students with histories of unexcused absences from the Floresville ISD, Karnes City ISD, and Kenedy ISD

Data Elements Collected: Program length, program completion, demographic information, ability to match with juvenile referrals, school attendance rates, graduation rates, and discipline referrals

Evidence of Effectiveness: Of the six hundred eighty-three (683) students served, only three (3) were referred to the probation department. One hundred seventeen (117) students showed no improvement in attendance. Of these 117 students, 78 students remained at 90% or better attendance at the end of service period. Sixty-two (62) students failed to comply with the program and nineteen (19) did not complete the program. Four hundred eighty-five (485) of six hundred eighty-three (683) students showed attendance gains in the service period.

### **Tarrant County Juvenile Probation Department**

Total Funds FY 2020: \$190,180

Brief Description of Program: The Arlington Independent School District (AISD) "Attendance Improvement Project" (AIP) reflects a collaborative effort between Tarrant County Juvenile Services (TCJS), AISD, and several community-based organizations that have a history of providing effective evidence-based models of intervention for youth and families. This program addresses chronic absences and school tardiness in a more systematic fashion prior to a truancy violation. Provides the youth and family with case management, assessment, mediation, and referral to the most appropriate community-based interventions, including trauma-informed mental health intervention as indicated.

Counties Served: Tarrant

Number of Youth Served FY 2020: 252

Eligibility Requirements: Youth who are found to be chronically absent from the 1st to 8th grade

Data Elements Collected: Program length, program completion, demographic information, match with

juvenile referrals, school attendance rates, grade promotion, graduation rates, and discipline referrals, and truancy and probation department referrals since program inception

Evidence of Effectiveness: Tarrant county results for Grant T are both for the year and since program inception. Output performance measures: (number of youth that completed the program):

- a. Due to district closures, students eligible were carried over into the 2020-2021 school year. AISD was informed that this grant was discontinued and therefore students who were to be carried over were exited with Depletion of Funds/Closure as an outcome
- b. To date, 78 students have been referred to Tarrant County Juvenile Services for a delinquent offense at any time since beginning the program. This equates to a 6.2% referral rate.
- c. The AIP discharged 252 clients from the program in FY20. The average length of program for all participants was 263 days, with a range 8-727 days. The average length of program for successful participants was 178 days, with a range of 126-254 days. Completion status for FY20 is presented in the table below:

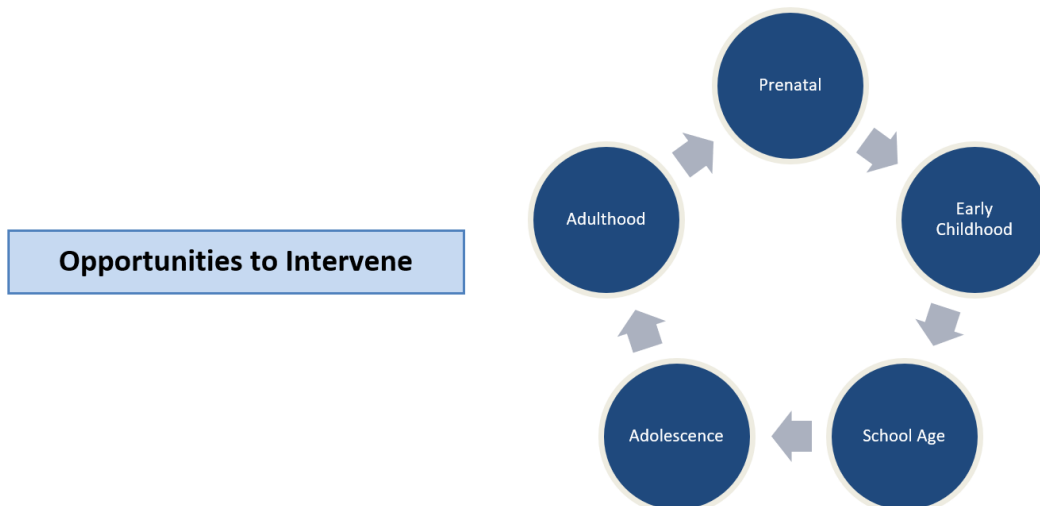
<b>Completion Status</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Successful	4	1.6%
Unsuccessful	5	2.0%
Other	243	96.4%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>252</b>	

# APPENDIX B: Delinquency and Dropout Prevention Practices: Pursuing a Developmental Continuum of Services

The earlier prevention efforts can begin, the better, as many risk factors and predictors of dropout and delinquency begin before kindergarten. Resiliency develops over time, building upon protective factors, such as relationships established in early childhood, and evolving as a child grows into school age and adolescence.

Just as preventative measures like vaccines often need to be repeated as a child grows older to extend protection from illnesses, so too do youth often require “booster shots” to extend the protective buffers established earlier in their development and to protect against new risk factors that emerge as they grow older. An intervention that provided protections during elementary school may lose its impact during middle school, for example, when another intervention may be needed to address evolving developmental needs and risk factors. A continuum of effective interventions has been identified that range from prevention programs targeting early childhood through individualized interventions that prevent justice involved youth from recidivism. Common strategies among them include:

- **Prenatal:** Interventions that provide prenatal care to expectant mothers as well as prevent expectant mothers’ exposure to alcohol, drug use, smoking, and stress have the potential to prevent many subsequent problems for a child.
- **Early childhood:** Individual and family interventions in the preschool period, such as home visits, parent training, and quality education and childcare services, are used to improve life-course outcomes.
- **School age:** Once children become of school age, they are faced with peer pressure and school risk factors. Many prevention efforts at this next developmental stage are universal school or classroom interventions focused on encouraging positive behavior social and emotional skill building. Other efforts include targeted programs for at-risk or high-need students and their families, providing smaller classroom communities, family training courses, and afterschool enrichment activities.
- **Adolescence:** Adolescent prevention programs focus on bonding students with their school and community, and span across the middle and high school years. By enhancing school climate, belonging and academic achievement through activities like service learning, positive youth development, career development, mentoring, tutoring, and counseling. These programs are designed to reduce risky behavior and keep students in school.
- **Delinquent youth:** Therapeutic models for delinquent youth have been found effective for reducing recidivism rates and strengthening relationships within families.



# Appendix C: Dropout and Delinquency Prevention Resources

Several resources exist to assist the state, communities, and service providers in identifying and selecting programs and practices with demonstrated effectiveness in preventing dropout and delinquency:

- **Get Parenting Tips.** [GetParentingTips.com](http://GetParentingTips.com) provides resources including a video library, parenting articles, tip sheets, and community resources for parents of children 0-17. This effort is provided by DFPS.
- **Prevention and Early Intervention, DFPS.** The Prevention and Early Intervention page provides information to PEI programs and links to prevention resources. [http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/prevention\\_and\\_early\\_intervention/](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/prevention_and_early_intervention/)
- **The National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations (NCPMI)**, previously known as **The Center for Evidence-Based Practice: Young Children with Challenging Behavior**, is funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs. Their goal is to raise the awareness and implementation of positive, evidence-based practices and to assist states and programs in their implementation of sustainable systems for the implementation of the Pyramid Model for Supporting Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children (birth – five). <https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/>
- **Center for Disease Control (CDC).** This organization provides information and resources on a wide variety of topics, supporting health, and educational outcomes. The website provides resources about school connectedness, health and academics, and other adolescent related topics for school personnel and families to increase protective factors helpful for school success and health outcomes, including a list of resources which can be found at: <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/index.htm>, with school connectedness at the following webpage: [https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/protective/school\\_connectedness.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/protective/school_connectedness.htm), and health and academics at: [https://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/health\\_and\\_academics/index.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/health_and_academics/index.htm). Information regarding Adverse Childhood Outcomes (ACEs) can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy/index.html>.
- **Effective Social and Emotional Learning Programs.** The CASEL Guide shares best-practice guidelines for district and school teams on how to select and implement SEL programs. <https://casel.org/guide/>
- **The Institute of Education Sciences: What Works Clearinghouse.** This resource provides information about research, practice guides and intervention reports for dropout prevention and evidenced-based decision-making. <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/>
- **Effective Strategies for Dropout Prevention.** The National Dropout Prevention Center/Network provides research and resources on effective strategies for dropout prevention. <http://dropoutprevention.org/effective-strategies/>
- **Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's Model Programs Guide (MPG)** is designed to assist practitioners and communities in implementing evidence-based prevention and intervention programs that cover the entire continuum of youth services from prevention through sanctions to reentry. <https://www.ojjdp.gov/mpg/> **Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP).** OJJDP provides resources for effective and promising model intervention programs.
- **CrimeSolutions.gov.** The National Institute of Justice provides a library on effective and promising delinquency prevention programs. <https://www.crimesolutions.gov/TopicDetails.aspx?ID=62#practice>

- **Juvenile Justice Evidence-Based Practices.** This resource hub provides recent research on key issues, model policies, and reform trends relating to evidence-based practices. <https://jje.org/hub/evidence-based-practices/>
- **What Works and What Does Not? Benefit-Cost Findings on Prevention Programs from Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP).** Lee, S., Aos, S., & Pennucci, A. (2015). *What works and what does not? Benefit-cost findings from WSIPP.* (Document Number 15-02-4101). Olympia: Washington State Institute for Public Policy. [http://www.wsipp.wa.gov/ReportFile/1602/Wsipp\\_What-Works-and-What-Does-Not-Benefit-Cost-Findings-from-WSIPP\\_Report.pdf](http://www.wsipp.wa.gov/ReportFile/1602/Wsipp_What-Works-and-What-Does-Not-Benefit-Cost-Findings-from-WSIPP_Report.pdf)
- **Blueprints for Healthy Youth Development.** A project of the Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence at the University of Colorado, serves as a resource for governments, foundations, businesses, and other organizations trying to make informed judgments about investments in evidence-based prevention and intervention programs that are effective in reducing antisocial behavior and promoting a healthy course of youth development. <https://www.blueprintsprograms.org/>
- **SAMHSA’s National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices (NREPP).** NREPP is an evidence-based repository and review system designed to provide the public with reliable information on mental health and substance abuse interventions. <https://www.samhsa.gov/ebp-resource-center>
- **The National Child Traumatic Stress Network.** This organization provides information and resources on a variety of policy and program topics related to the impact of trauma on children, including the impact of trauma on learning. <https://www.nctsn.org/resources>