



January 2015

Introduction

This report is in response to the General Appropriations Act, S.B. 1, Article III – 17, Rider 55 from the Eighty-third Legislature. Rider 55 stipulates that the Windham School District (WSD) shall expend funds for the following activities and produce a final report for the Eighty-fourth Legislature:

- a. a pilot in computer adaptive intensive math and reading intervention programs that address individual needs and develop skills from elementary levels through high school;
- b. a pilot in virtual learning options that allow a student to earn a high school diploma, high school equivalent certification, certification and/or college credit.

Part A – Pilot Program: Math and Reading Intervention Programs

The WSD piloted a computer adaptive intensive math and reading intervention program in the Title I classrooms on ten campuses throughout the district for students that are 21 years of age or younger. Fraction Nation, from Scholastic, was chosen by the WSD to target fractions and decimals – two of the most difficult concepts to teach and learn. Designed to develop the critical foundations of fraction fluency – conceptual understanding and procedural knowledge – Fraction Nation delivers fraction fluency through explicit instruction, extensive practice, and ongoing assessments. Fraction Nation guides students on a journey through 64 carefully crafted lessons to build a strong foundation in fractions and decimals. It is research-based instruction delivered through adaptive technology to target each student’s individual needs. The lessons align with What Works Clearinghouse recommendations for fraction instruction. The program creates actionable reports to help teachers with placement and progress monitoring.

The reading intervention program chosen by the WSD was READ 180. READ 180, also from Scholastic, is a comprehensive system of curriculum, instruction, assessment, and professional development proven to raise reading achievement for struggling readers in grades four through twelve and beyond. Designed for any student reading two or more years below grade-level, READ 180 leverages adaptive technology to individualize instruction for students and provides powerful data to teachers for differentiation.

The WSD collected data to evaluate the effectiveness of the pilot program. The following are the results from *Using Decision Trees to Re-evaluate the Impact of Title 1 Programs in the Windham School District* as published by the Institute for Measurement, Methodology, Analysis & Policy (IMMAP) with Texas Tech University.

- Title 1 hours were significantly related to grade-level gains on the Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE) for our age 21 and younger students
- Reading grade-level gains ranged from 1.4 to 3.2 depending on program exposure
- Math grade-level gains ranged from 1.5 to 4.0 depending on program exposure

- Composite grade-level gains ranged from 1.5 to 3.9 depending on program exposure
- Female ID students demonstrated a higher grade-level gain in math than male ID students
- For young minority students (American Indian / Black / Hispanic), adding Vocational hours with Title 1 increases GED receipt to 84%
- For Majority students (White / Asian), adding Vocational hours with Title 1 increases GED receipt to 75%
- Minority students with Title 1 and computer lab hours demonstrated an increase in GED receipt from approximately 1.5% to 12%, an 8-fold increase
- Majority ID/SAFP students with Title 1 and computer lab hours demonstrated about a 5-fold increase in GED receipt (from 6.8% to 35.7%)

In conclusion, the WSD pilot of both the intensive math and reading intervention programs within the Title 1 program resulted in significantly positive return on investment. Due to the significant increase in both math and reading scores and the positive response from these younger students we plan on continuing these programs.

The following report can be viewed in its entirety at www.wsdtx.org.

- *Using Decision Trees to Re-evaluate the Impact of Title 1 Programs in the Windham School District*

Part B – Pilot Program: Virtual Learning

A pilot in virtual learning was researched and options identified to provide programming which culminates in a high school diploma or industry certification. College credit programming is currently operated with oversight from Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ). Meetings were held with vendors representing companies which offer virtual high school credits and diplomas. It was determined, through these meetings, that internet connectivity for the student would be essential with these options, and with at least one vendor the high school credential did not meet Texas standards for graduation. These options were determined to not be a viable option for a pilot. The Texas Virtual School Network (TVSN) was contacted and possible courses identified which could be offered to students seeking credits for academic and vocational programming. Again, the options through TVSN required internet connection which could not be verified secure. Additionally, the TVSN option required transfer of foundation funds to provider districts, derived through formula funding of ADA, which is not possible with Windham's funding mechanism.

Ultimately, to comply with the pilot program, a partnership was established with Mullin ISD, a Texas public school, to provide high school programming for female students at the San Saba Unit of TDCJ. With this partnership, Mullin ISD provides certified teachers at the campus and Windham provides computer tutorial software, supplies and equipment. In this program, students are identified based on appropriate age (under 27) and sentence time remaining to complete the program. All required Texas assessments for graduation are supported as well as specialized instructional support for the learner including special educational needs for those 21 and under. The pilot program is successful with 27 students receiving a Texas High School Diploma in 2013-14. The program is being continued, with 32 students graduating in December 2014. This program is anticipated to expand to additional male units for the 2014-15 school year.