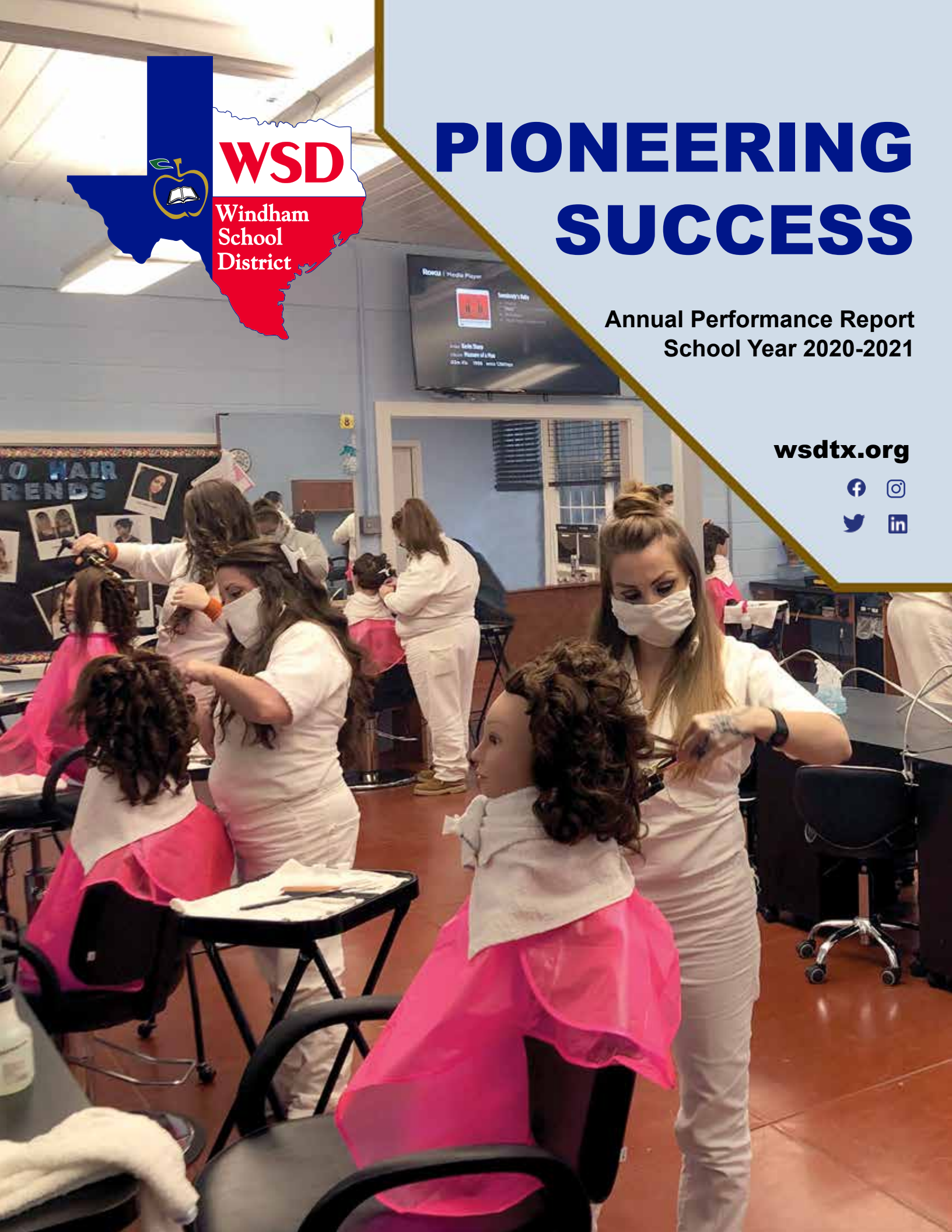




# PIONEERING SUCCESS

Annual Performance Report  
School Year 2020-2021

[wsdtx.org](http://wsdtx.org)





*from the desk of*  
**Kristina J. Hartman, Ed.S.**  
*Windham School District Superintendent*

Founded in 1969, Windham School District (WSD) pioneered the way for correctional education in Texas following the state legislature's establishment of the district to serve individuals incarcerated in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ). More than 50 years later, WSD is still devoted to restoring lives, families and communities through education. Through innovative programming and partnerships, the district is leading the charge of correctional education in both the state and the country. By providing students with academic education, technical training and soft skills, we strive to show students the power of learning so they can reach their full potential and become positive contributors in society.

WSD is committed to providing students with educational pathways that lead to fulfilling careers in our Texas communities. The district identifies high-demand industries and launches new programs to fill workforce gaps, contributing to the success of the industries and boosting the Texas economy. This year, Windham established the first Recreational Vehicle Service Technician and Cosmetology correctional programs in Texas, both of which are among the fastest growing industries in the country. By training students in these growing fields, WSD is preparing students to reenter the workforce, increasing their employability and improving their ability to provide for themselves and their family.

The district reached new milestones in supporting specialized populations including youthful learners, parents and restrictive housing residents. Programs such as family literacy and the district's high schools provide these underserved populations with the opportunities to change their future through education. These unique programs provide specialty instruction directly geared toward serving these students and propelling them to success.

Windham continues to nurture and expand partnerships with employers and state agencies. Through these collaborations, relationships and processes are established to increase educational, restoration and employment opportunities for students. These unprecedented agreements allow the district to develop pipelines to assist students from education to employment.

It is through these innovative services the district is able to empower students and transform lives through education. By spearheading new opportunities and evolving existing programs, the district provides students with high-quality education that will better their future and inspire students to achieve their educational, professional and personal goals.

Respectfully,

**Kristina J. Hartman, Ed.S.**  
*Superintendent, Windham School District*



*from the desk of*  
**Patrick L. O'Daniel**  
*Windham School District Board of Trustees Chairman*

Over the past five decades, Windham School District (WSD) has inspired countless individuals to improve their lives through education. WSD's multifaceted programs provide students with academic, career and technical education, and life skills needed to lead a life of success. A life that is full of gainful employment, positive relationships, and confidence and pride in one's self.

Education is the foundation to effective rehabilitation and permanent reentry into our communities. Understanding this importance, WSD has demonstrated its commitment to empowering students to further their education, better their future and reduce the likelihood that they will return to the criminal justice system. It is because of programming like WSD's that Texas has one of the lowest recidivism rates in the country. Specifically, WSD has proven that those students who completed two or more education programs with the district were 20% less likely to recidivate than those who had not completed programming. In addition to this reduction in recidivism, these same individuals are 20% more likely to obtain employment within one year of release. This is not only vital to the success of our students and Texas communities, but the state saves over \$14 million dollars for each 1% reduction in recidivism.

As shown throughout this report, even in the face of a global pandemic, WSD was able to launch new programs and expand educational services to better support students. WSD educators and administrators worked diligently throughout the ongoing health crisis to not only continue providing vital services, but develop new opportunities for students. The district's relentlessness to provide these resources throughout this challenging year highlights their dedication to improving students' futures.

Correctional education is about more than just teaching students, it is about creating success. The district's unparalleled programming prepares students to thrive in all areas of their lives. By empowering students to advance their education, these individuals are able to better themselves, their families and our Texas communities.

Respectfully,

**Patrick L. O'Daniel**  
*Chairman, Windham School District Board of Trustees*



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## VISION

The vision of the Windham School District is to empower students and transform lives through excellence in education.

## STATUTORY GOALS

Texas Education Code §19.003

The goals of the district in educating its students are to:

- (1) reduce recidivism;
- (2) reduce the cost of confinement or imprisonment;
- (3) increase the success of former inmates in obtaining and maintaining employment; and
- (4) provide an incentive to inmates to behave in positive ways during confinement or imprisonment.

## MISSION

The mission of the Windham School District, in partnership with its stakeholders, is to provide quality educational opportunities.

## WINDHAM STRATEGIC GOALS

Developed by Windham School District (WSD) Strategic Planning Committee, July 2019. The WSD will:

- (1) provide high-level instruction and develop critical thinking through guided curriculum;
- (2) recruit and retain highly qualified teachers and staff;
- (3) improve and promote effective communication;
- (4) integrate and enhance technology; and
- (5) facilitate meaningful employment of students.



## Windham School District provides opportunities for incarcerated students to succeed in education.

The Windham School District (WSD) serves a population of incarcerated students who have not completed their basic education in the past and others who need technical training and soft skills to better equip them for the future.

Difficulties experienced by those who did not complete their education have not disappeared with age or incarceration. As past experiences with academic success are often limited or nonexistent, each educational accomplishment empowers students to transition their lives into success stories.

WSD strives to prepare students through educational achievement, career and technical education, academic instruction and life skills training. The district's ultimate goal is to better equip students to reenter the workforce within their communities.

## Characteristics of the typical academic student entering WSD programs:

- Dropped out of school in 9th or 10th grade
- Functions at the 5th-grade level
- Average age of 33
- Exhibits impulsive behavior
- History of academic challenges
- In need of skills training



# Windham School District provided services to 55,250 students in 2020-2021 School Year (SY21)

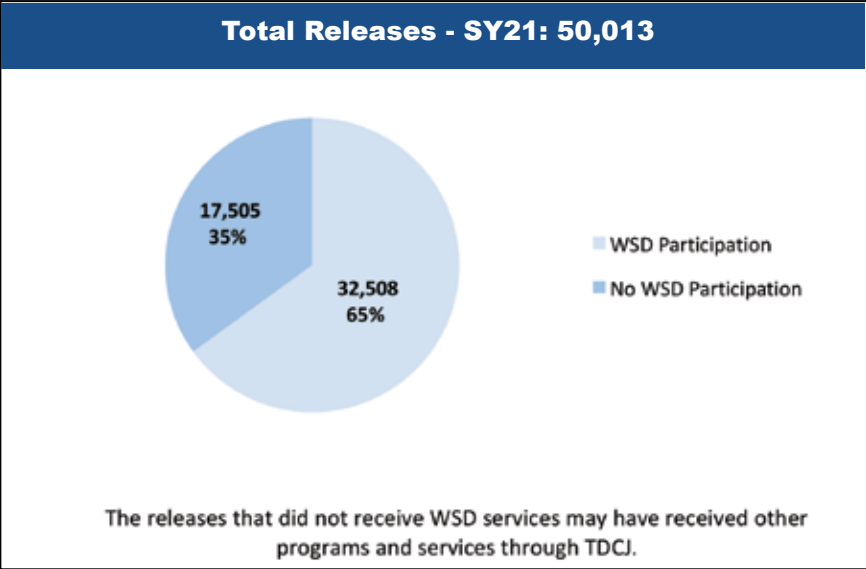
## Highlights of Released Students

(September 2020 - August 2021: SY21)

The Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) released 50,013 individuals during SY21.

- 65 percent of those released participated in one or more educational programs during the history of their incarceration.
- 7,941 earned a High School Equivalency (HSE) certificate\* through the Windham School District (WSD), and 76% of those released received a High School Diploma (HSD) through partnerships with the Mullin Independent School District and the Lometa Independent School District.
- 14,437 of those released completed one or more career and technical education (CTE) course.
- 19,313 completed life skills programming.

\*Note: The HSE certificate is awarded through the Texas Education Agency (TEA) HSE Program.



## Educational Services Provided During SY21

- There were 55,250 students with varying educational backgrounds who received WSD educational services in SY21.
- During the WSD's SY21, TDCJ had an average count of 120,840 incarcerated individuals at the end of each month. Of those, an average of 113,812 were on TDCJ-operated facilities. From this population, WSD served the highest-priority students as resources allowed, based upon their ages, release dates and educational needs.



## A New Future Starts with Evaluation and Placement

To prepare students for reintegration into their communities, Windham School District (WSD) provides students with the knowledge, skills and confidence needed to succeed both professionally and personally. At WSD, prospective students begin their educational journey through an evaluation and placement process to guide students on the best programming to fit their needs.

Certified student advisors and administrators develop the necessary framework to assess each student's academic level and goals to determine an educational plan of action to help them achieve their objectives. WSD staff collect educational history data, coordinate assessments and conduct one-on-one interviews prior to placement in courses. In these interviews, student advisors and prospective students discuss course offerings, career interest, work history, educational background, existing skills and abilities. This individualized assessment allows student advisors to identify the programming and career pathway best suited for each student.

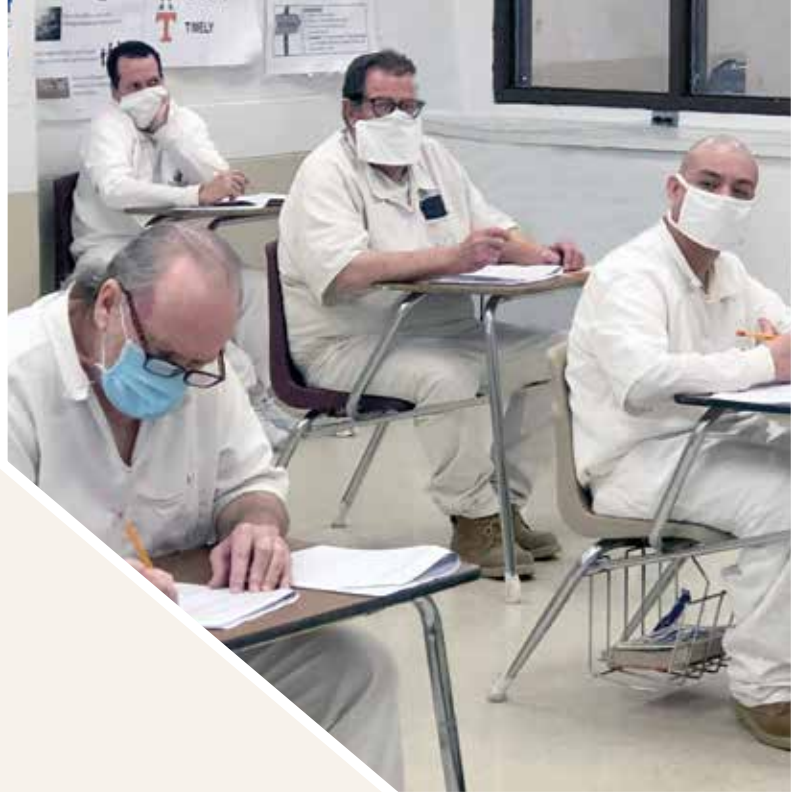
This school year, WSD partnered with the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR) to implement a new process to improve enrollment in course programming based on students' likelihood to receive occupational licenses. Student advisors received training from TDLR on the agency's criminal background

screening process to ensure students enrolled in specific career and technical education (CTE) programming would be eligible to obtain occupational licenses in their trained field upon release to their communities. This new process will increase students' success in receiving their licenses and working in the industry in which they trained.

As part of the evaluation process, students' complete assessments to determine their educational level. The Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) is used to evaluate the educational grade level of each newly incarcerated person. Subsequently, WSD students take the TABE throughout the school year to monitor their academic progress. This school year, WSD used the TABE 11-12 as this assessment aligns with college and career readiness standards.

Information gained during this process is used to create an Individualized Treatment Plan (ITP) for each incarcerated resident. The ITP outlines educational services and prioritizes participation in programs based on age, program availability, projected release date and need for specific educational services. Through this evaluation and placement, WSD ensures students receive the most appropriate educational placement, better preparing them for successful reentry to their communities.





# Students Earn High School Equivalencies, Experience Confidence Boost



The COVID-19 pandemic continued to impact education across the globe in the 2020-2021 school year, as districts pivoted educational models to meet the needs of the students while protecting their campus communities. Thanks to the hard work and dedication of teachers, administrators, support staff and correctional officers, Windham School District (WSD) overcame these challenges. Through innovative course structures, WSD staff were able to continue educating students while meeting recommended social distancing protocols.

The district provided educational services this school year though a hybrid instructional model. In this model, which allotted for social distancing, students attended class every other day and a half on a rotating schedule and completed three hours of distance learning a week. To accommodate more students, the district established a third section of academic programming with attendance on Fridays and 12 hours of distance learning throughout the week.

Because of the modern methods utilized this year, WSD was able to serve 23,368 students with an average initial educational attainment of a 5th grade level. Each year, students are assessed for academic progress using the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE). The district serves students by providing different levels of competency-based instructional programs centered on the individual student's educational level.

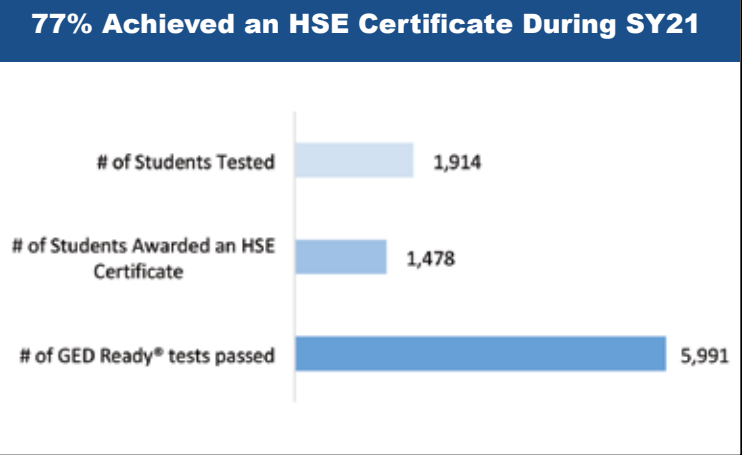
In the 2020-2021 school year, the district purchased and implemented new software and curriculum that better aligns with current adult education standards. The newly acquired academic software includes instructional lessons from grade level 0.5 to 12th grade. Together the software and curriculum will help students successfully obtain their High School Equivalency (HSE).

Through the curriculum, students advance in their academics with the ultimate goal of achieving a HSE certificate or High School Diploma (HSD). This type of programming is the most efficient path for students who are incarcerated for various lengths of time as compared to a traditional K-12 educational

program. The HSD is prioritized for eligible students as this provides different pathways to post-release employment or post-secondary education.

In addition to academics, instruction focuses on skills vital for meaningful employment and societal reintegration. Students who successfully complete the district's HSE program increase their chances of obtaining employment. Additionally, students experience a boost of confidence in their skills and abilities, an attribute most lack prior to attending WSD.

To accommodate the transient nature of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice population, WSD classes are provided in an open-enrollment model. This allows the district to serve as many students as possible without waiting for standard quarters or semesters.



Distinct Academic Participants* = 23,368	
Academic Participants	
Academic I, II, III	22,983
English as a Second Language	385
Title I Students	1,191

*\* Each participant count is by academic program. The total of the distinct counts by specific program may be larger than the distinct count of participants in all of the academic programs combined since a student may be eligible for more than one academic program during the SY.*

Completion of National Reporting System (NRS) Educational Functioning Levels: 2020-2021				
Beginning Educational Functioning Level	Grades within Functioning Level	Number of Students Beginning Level - Reading	Number of Students Beginning Level - Language	Number of Students Beginning Level - Math
Level 1 (0.0 to 1.9)	K & 1st	245	675	349
Level 2 (2.0 to 3.9)	2nd & 3rd	1,456	2,150	1,762
Level 3 (4.0 to 5.9)	4th & 5th	2,792	3,026	3,978
Level 4 (6.0 to 8.9)	6th, 7th & 8th	2,797	1,560	1,336
Level 5 (9.0 to 10.9)	9th & 10th	488	196	28
Level 6 (11.0 to 12.9)	11th & 12th	863	806	793



# WSD Fills Education Need for Diverse Populations

Windham School District (WSD) is dedicated to serving the diverse population of students in Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ). The district offers a wide variety of services to meet the various needs of students to ensure they receive proper education and training. Specifically, the district employs measures to effectively teach students with disabilities, individuals who receive special education services, youth and young adults, and students who are in restrictive housing.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires schools to make available, to all eligible students with disabilities, a free and appropriate education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment appropriate to their individual needs (34 C.F.R. Part 300; 19 T.A.C. Chapters 75, 89) In accordance with IDEA, the district utilizes a strategic approach to identify students within the district who meet eligibility requirements for special education services.

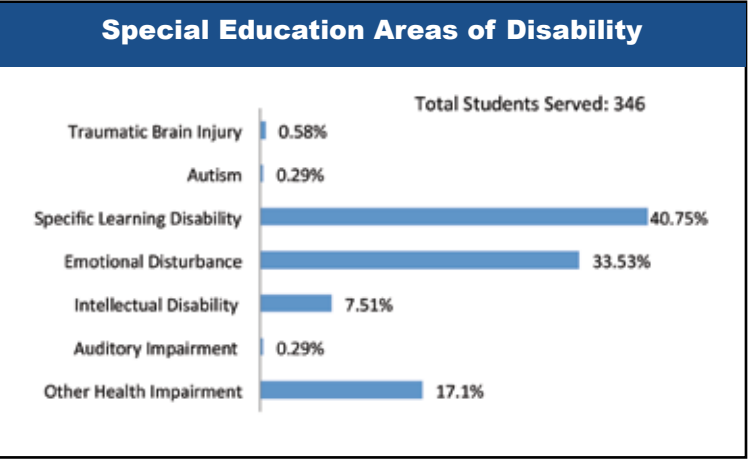
Additionally, the district provides the continuum of instructional services required by 34 C.F.R. 300.115 through the provision of general education classes with direct and indirect special education support, tutoring and speech services.

Targeted instruction is also available for students requiring transition and workforce readiness training.



The district also provides support to students under the age of 22. Funded by Title I, Part D, Subpart 1, WSD provides supplemental curriculum and transitional services to encourage and assist students in participating in educational opportunities and, ultimately, achieving a High School Equivalency (HSE) certificate. The district provides Title 1 courses at designated campuses for this population designed to enhance literacy, leadership and work readiness skills.

In the 2020-2021 school year, WSD launched a program to serve a new population of students. The Finding Understanding Through Using Resources in Education (F.U.T.U.R.E.) program provides educational services to students in restrictive housing. Students in this program have the opportunity to earn a HSE certificate and prepare themselves for future opportunities.



# Matthew Gaines High School Opens Triumphantly

In its inaugural year, Windham School District's (WSD) Matthew Gaines High School opened to success as eligible students passed their End of Course exams and graduated with their High School Diploma (HSD). This new program, which began in October 2020, established a method to address the needs of young learners and improve their quality of life. Located at the Ferguson Campus in Midway, Texas, the program provides academic courses that leads to a HSD, career and technical education (CTE) that results in third-party industry certifications, opportunities to explore careers and postsecondary education, and special education and Title I services for eligible students.

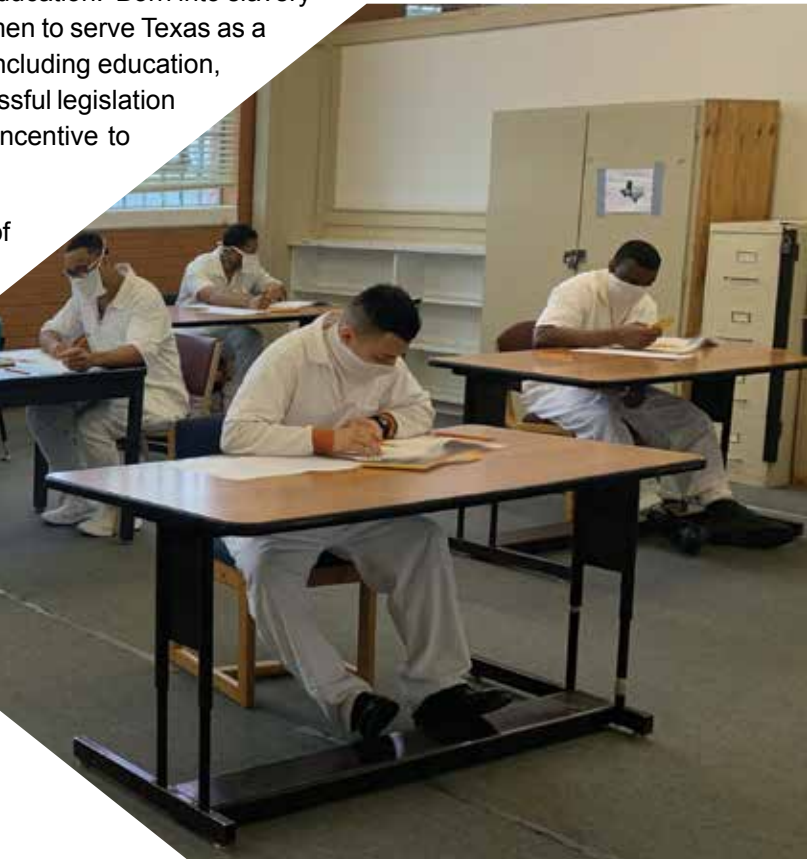
To meet educational requirements set forth by the Texas Education Agency to obtain a HSD, the district employed innovative techniques. Tailoring courses to individual students, WSD implemented computer-based instructional software to provide students with individualized instruction. Additionally, students selected from pre-established CTE courses such as electrical, construction, welding and culinary to meet their elective requirements. Through this model, students will graduate with both their HSD and a third-party certification in their trained occupational field.

Initial enrollment at the Matthew Gaines High School began with 22 male students who were age 26 and under. Eligible students were evaluated based on the number of credits needed to graduate with a HSD, amount of time on sentence, age and custody level. Priority was placed on students most likely to result in an award of a HSD and industry-recognized certification to prepare students for immediate employment or post-secondary education enrollment upon return to their communities.

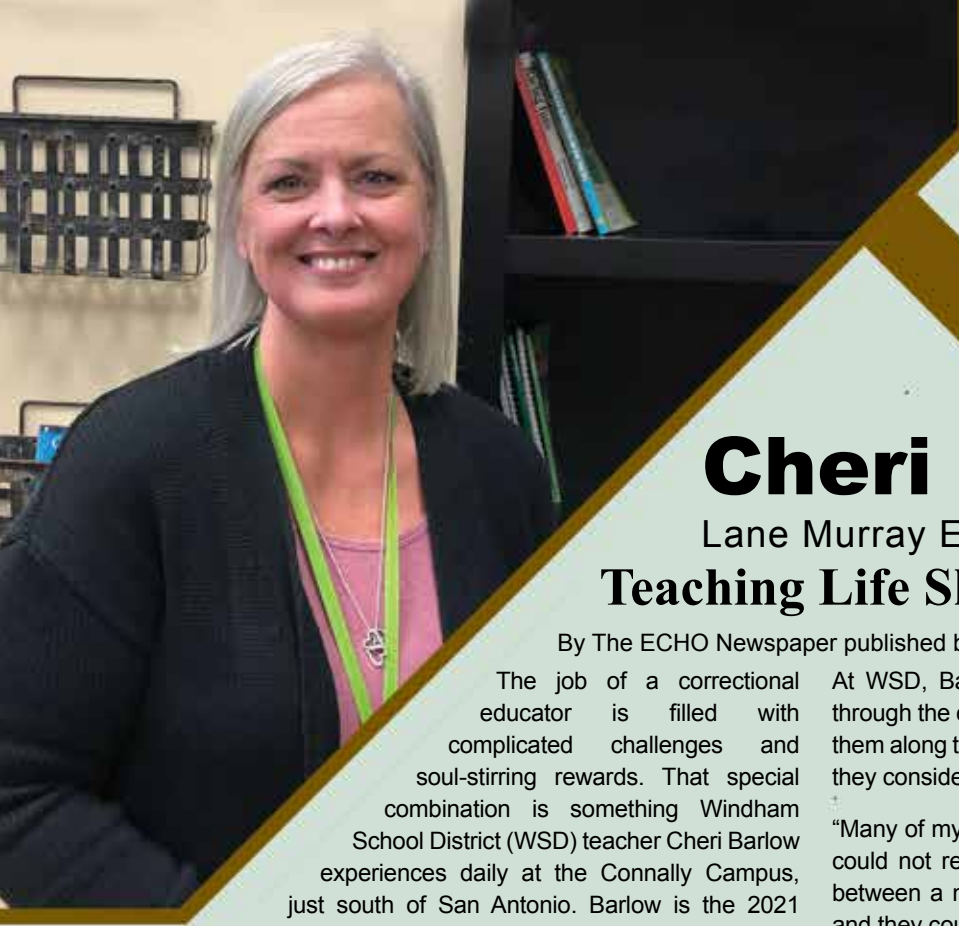
The WSD Board of Trustees approved naming the school after Matthew Gaines, a former slave, community leader, minister and Texas State Senator who made significant contributions to public education. Born into slavery in 1842, Gaines taught himself to read. He was one of four Black men to serve Texas as a state senator during the 19th century and fought for many issues including education, mental health and prison reform. In 1871, Gaines sponsored successful legislation to exempt educational and religious groups from taxation as an incentive to improve communities.

"Because of his service to the Texas state legislature, support of civil rights, work in prison reform, and championing of education, the name Matthew Gaines is a powerful reminder of the result of perseverance and commitment — an expectation that will hold true to the students of Windham's aptly named high school program," WSD Board of Trustees Chairman Patrick L. O'Daniel said.

WSD is expanding the program by establishing a high school at the Woodman Campus, an all-women's facility in Gatesville, Texas. This program is set to launch in the upcoming school year and supplement the current high school program for women that is provided by Mullin Independent School District. High school programs such as these provide students the opportunity to achieve a dream, they perceived to be unattainable. Through this educational accomplishment, students will learn the importance of bettering their future.







# Teacher *of the year*

## Cheri Barlow

### Lane Murray Excellence in Teaching Winner Teaching Life Skills, Inspiring Change

By The ECHO Newspaper published by WSD for TDCJ residents

The job of a correctional educator is filled with complicated challenges and soul-stirring rewards. That special combination is something Windham School District (WSD) teacher Cheri Barlow experiences daily at the Connally Campus, just south of San Antonio. Barlow is the 2021 recipient of Windham School District's (WSD) Lane Murray Excellence in Teaching (LMET) award as well as the district's 2021 Life Skill Instructor of the Year. She helps students prepare for life success through the Changing Habits and Achieving New Goals to Empower Success (CHANGES) program.

"My biggest challenge is getting individuals who still have a lot of time to do to buy in on why they should want to get an education," Barlow said. "They have so much time to serve that they don't feel like they need to get one. I try to emphasize to them that an education is something that no one can take away from you. They cannot take what is in your brain."

The LMET award is the highest honor an educator in WSD can receive. The annual Teacher of the Year award recognizes one teacher in each of three categories (i.e., academics, career and technical education, and life skills) who best exemplify the school district's vision of empowering students and transforming lives through excellence in education. This honor is named after the first WSD superintendent, Dr. Lane Murray—who was also the first female superintendent of a Texas public school system.

"Ms. Barlow embodies Windham's mission to provide quality education by inspiring her students to succeed through creative teaching models and motivating her students to prioritize their education to support success upon release," current WSD Superintendent Kristina Hartman said.

In addition to being an innovative teacher, Barlow also serves as an example and inspiration to her students as a person who discovered her gift and calling later in life. After 15 years of working in corporate America, Barlow realized, while teaching a volunteer class in church, that she not only enjoyed teaching, but also had a real gift for it. After wrestling with the thought of changing careers, she went back to college and earned her degree—then began her new career. She became a seasoned educator by teaching in the public school system for seven years. After a move necessitated a search for a new teaching position in a different school district, a former colleague suggested Barlow consider WSD.

At WSD, Barlow quickly discovered many of her students had fallen through the cracks of the public education system when teachers passed them along to the next grade or handed them to the next teacher because they considered them problem students.

"Many of my students have told me that when they came to prison, they could not read or write English, and they could not tell the difference between a noun and a verb. They could not add or subtract decimals, and they could not read above a third-grade level," Barlow said.

Helping her students pick up where they left off is the challenge of getting and keeping students who have an extended period of incarceration to remain active and engaged. Barlow provided compelling reasons why anyone who comes to prison should want to get an education.

"We have got to break this cycle of generational incarceration. Most of my students have seen their parents or siblings incarcerated," Barlow said, adding a personal testimony from her own family. "I saw it with my sister who was incarcerated three times: her daughter was incarcerated by the time she was 19. When we see that happening and if someone doesn't break those generational chains, then it [the cycle] continues in families and homes. I tell my students, 'If you don't want to do it for yourself, then do it for your children, grandchildren or your spouse.' I tell them that they can be the one responsible for breaking the chain of generational incarceration."

The students in Barlow's classes begin learning even before they enter the classroom. Outside her classroom door is a sign with the letters W.I.I.F.M. printed on it. The students' first test is to guess what the letters mean.

"They come up with some very interesting answers until I finally tell them it stands for (W)hat's (I)n (I)t (F)or (M)e. I tell them every day they should come in here with the attitude of expecting to discover 'What's in it for me? What am I going to learn today? How am I going to grow today? How am I going to prove to myself today that I am not what everybody else says about me?'"

Barlow said the rewards she receives as a correctional educator for Windham far outweigh the challenges.

"My greatest reward is seeing my students graduate. They pushed beyond what they were told their entire life -- that they can't do this or that, or that they are nothing and will never amount to anything. They proved the naysayers wrong," Barlow said.



# Teacher *of the year*

## Ronnie Tanner

### Career & Technical Education Teacher of the Year Windham Students Shift Gears with Award-winning Automotive Instructor

By The ECHO Newspaper published by WSD for TDCJ residents

Behind a tall garage door, an engine revs and the smells of grease, gasoline and rubber weigh heavy in the air. Metal clanks on metal, and every few seconds a pneumatic burst punctuates the noise. When a student's question is heard above the din, the clatter falls into silence so the class can hear the energetic response of their automotive teacher.

These Boyd campus students are benefitting from the expertise and experience of Windham School District (WSD) instructor Ronnie Tanner, the 2021 Career and Technical Education (CTE) Instructor of the Year. Tanner's lengthy career in the automotive industry and his enthusiasm for educating incarcerated individuals has made him a valued correctional educator in Texas.

Tanner understands that every person is in need of a little tune-up—some more than others. Maybe their timing is a bit off, or things in their life aren't firing off in the order they expected. Maybe they're having trouble getting started and just need a jump. A little wear-and-tear is also part of life. Sometimes, however, a person reaches the point of a full breakdown and it takes more than just a little grease to get them rolling again. It could even take a full rebuild, from top to bottom. Whether his students need a rebuild or a tune-up, Tanner is ready to use his experience to help others get back on the road.

"I started working on automobiles and in the independent auto repair industry when I was 17 years old," Tanner said. "At 20 years old, I went to work for Ford Motor Company (FMC), and I spent 10 years with them. During my stay at FMC, my career path led me from line mechanic to electronic engine control technician, and from parts man to parts manager. I then went from that position to service manager, general manager of the dealership, and to part owner in a Ford dealership with FMC — all in 10 years."

Going from long hard days in the back of the shop to being the general manager of the store in only a decade's time was a difficult and rewarding journey. Yet at the age of 35, Tanner no longer felt challenged and made the decision to retire. He sold his share of the dealership and of the NAPA Auto Parts store where he was also part owner.

Tanner's retirement, however, would be short-lived.

After what he calls "90 days of the greatest vacation ever," a woman approached him in church and asked if he would like to come to work for WSD and teach auto repair to incarcerated students. Sensing an

opportunity to pass on his skills to those who might not have had the opportunities he did, Tanner said yes, and generations of WSD students have since benefited from his choice.

"I had seen and covered everything there was to know and understand in auto repair," Tanner said, reflecting on his decision to work inside a prison for the first time. "Everything. And I thought it would be great if I could pass on my life skills to someone else. If I could pass my life skills on to someone who had not had the opportunities that I had had in life, [maybe] I could change a life. Maybe I could change a lot of lives, but if I could change one, it had to be worth it."

After three years of teaching in prison, however, Tanner decided to return to his previous career and instead opened the largest and most modern auto repair facility from Dallas to Houston, which was located in Fairfield, Texas. Yet even there, he continued to aid those who had recently left TDCJ. He employed not only graduates from his own WSD automotive repair programs, but also those who graduated from classes taught by his successors.

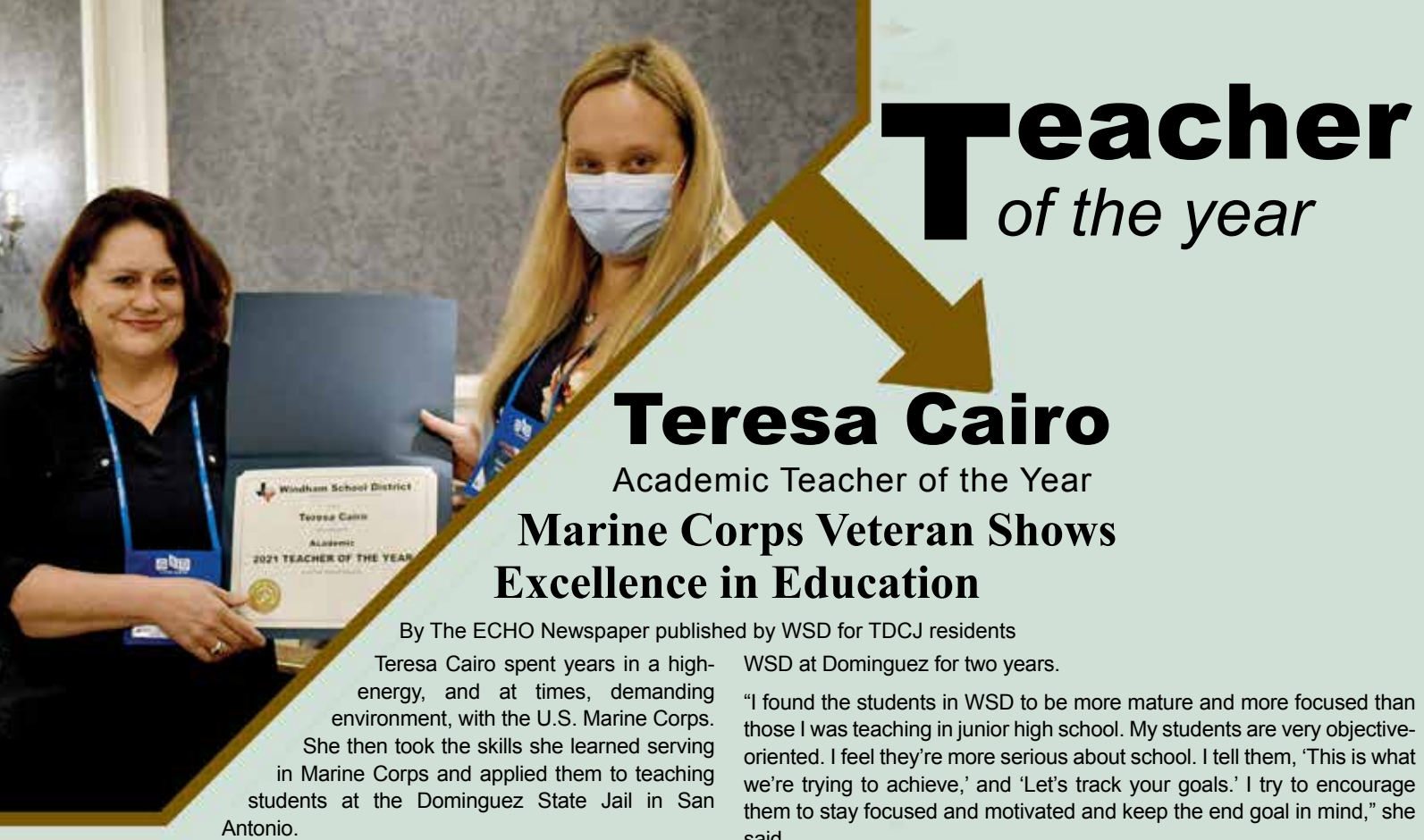
It would be more than two decades until his return to WSD at the Boyd Campus, and in that intervening time, he retired twice more — once from his position as owner/operator of the auto repair facility and once more from a 14-year career in one of the largest independent oil and gas companies in Texas — gaining even more life experience to pass along to others.

It has been three years now since Tanner's return to Windham, and he brings the full scope of his expertise and energy to the classroom every day.

"I absolutely love auto repair. I absolutely love it," he said. "I love passing on every bit of [my] lifetime of knowledge to students who want it. That's what drives me."

With methods and attitudes such as these in his toolbox, it is plain to see why WSD selected him through an extensive multi-tier nomination process for the CTE award, and also named him a runner-up for the Lane Murray Excellence in Teaching Award. The Lane Murray Award is the highest honor that can be bestowed upon a WSD teacher, and it is named for WSD's first superintendent.





## Teresa Cairo

### Academic Teacher of the Year

### Marine Corps Veteran Shows Excellence in Education

By The ECHO Newspaper published by WSD for TDCJ residents

Teresa Cairo spent years in a high-energy, and at times, demanding environment, with the U.S. Marine Corps.

She then took the skills she learned serving in Marine Corps and applied them to teaching students at the Dominguez State Jail in San Antonio.

“I was in the Marine Corps for seven-and-a-half years. This helped me with leadership skills and dealing with different personalities. Knowing how to guide and direct a group of people — that’s a great help. Knowing how to manage people is a big plus,” Cairo said.

“I tell people that teaching in prison is very hard but really rewarding at the same time. When my students earn their High School Equivalency (HSE), it is extremely rewarding to me. It’s not just about getting their HSE, though; it’s about achieving goals and preparing for the future. This isn’t just about them — this affects their families, too. If they earn an HSE, they will be able to earn more money [when they get out] and will be able to better support their families,” Cairo said.

While serving in the military was rewarding, she felt a pull to serve in a different field — as a teacher.

“When I was in the Marines, I reached a point where I had to decide on what to do as a career and with the rest of my life. I’ve always felt a calling to be a teacher — an English teacher — so I used the GI Bill to get my degree in English. After getting my degree, I worked as a proofreader for a company, but that didn’t satisfy me. I felt the need to teach. My passion in life is to empower people to be successful. You can either make a difference or make a buck. I saw teaching as my mission, much like a mission in the Marines, and I use teaching to implement that mission and cultivate that passion. My history in the military and my career as a teacher fit together perfectly,” Cairo said.

Before coming to Windham School District (WSD) and teaching in TDCJ, Cairo taught both sixth and seventh grades, a group she found challenging. This led to a search for alternatives.

“The sixth graders had a really hard time focusing and working, and I was getting a little burned out,” Cairo said. “I asked myself if there was anything different I could do to teach. One of my coworkers was a former correctional officer and asked me if I had ever considered teaching in prison.”

She explored the opportunity and became a correctional educator for

WSD at Dominguez for two years.

“I found the students in WSD to be more mature and more focused than those I was teaching in junior high school. My students are very objective-oriented. I feel they’re more serious about school. I tell them, ‘This is what we’re trying to achieve,’ and ‘Let’s track your goals.’ I try to encourage them to stay focused and motivated and keep the end goal in mind,” she said.

Unfortunately, the distance travelled to her job temporarily created a conflict with family obligations, with Cairo often returning home when family members were already asleep. She left WSD for a brief time until family commitments were met, then returned to the WSD campus where she teaches Literacy I, II and III. These classes involve HSE prep, science, social studies and math instruction for students. Her teaching career now spans 14 years, with seven in TDCJ.

After interacting with students in different WSD classes, Cairo learned her students have often had past negative experiences with education, including public school teachers giving up on them. She was determined to change that negative educational experience to a positive one.

“I saw this as an opportunity to hit the reset button as far as their experience with the education system. Then they start to think, ‘Hey, education really isn’t that scary,’” Cairo said.

“I give them recognition when they test and complete a component of the HSE — I give them a certificate, and we, as a class, recognize them and their achievement. I think this is really important: keep them motivated, excited, and positive about education,” she said, often telling her students, “You need to get out of your own way and start believing that you can do this.”

Cairo goes on to explain, “One of my mottoes is, that it’s just not that serious. When I explain it to them, they go, ‘This is all I have to do?’ And I say, ‘Yes, that’s all you have to do to understand this concept.’ I think that negative self-talk is the biggest obstacle in getting an HSE — they tell themselves that it’s too hard and they think that they just can’t do it.”

Overcoming obstacles is not a new challenge to this outstanding correctional educator. From training for combat in the U.S. Marine Corps to combating illiteracy in the Texas prison system, Teresa Cairo exemplifies how attitude, persistence and perseverance can lead to excellence. Her positive influence on the lives of students and their families is undefeatable, resulting in her being honored as a WSD Teacher of the Year for school year 2021.

## 2021 District Staff of the Year

Windham School District (WSD) is honored to have more than 900 exceptional employees who are committed to transforming the lives of others. This year, the Teacher of the Year program was expanded to include Support Staff, Student Advisor and Principal of the Year. The staff members were selected due to their outstanding dedication and service to the district.

### Principal of the Year – Felicia Johnson, Coffield Campus

During her 17 years at WSD, Johnson has progressed through the ranks of testing specialist, teacher and counselor to the Principal of the Coffield campus. A teacher at heart, Johnson is always encouraging, consoling and empowering her students and staff. Like any educator, Johnson is a lifelong student and believes if you are not learning, you are stagnant. She continuously learns from her staff, colleagues and her students.

With a servant and authentic leadership style, Johnson leads by example. This model, combined with her consistent encouragement, motivates her staff to work harder, teach better and live up to the example set for them. She constantly strives to improve her campus with strategic plans and always includes her team in the preparation and implementation. A recent example is the addition of the culinary arts program at her campus, which has peaked student interest in participating in WSD career and technical education (CTE) programs.

### Support Staff of the Year – Cindy Young, Administrative Assistant, Gist Campus

Described as the “glue to the office,” Cindy Young is known for going above and beyond to help everyone from the principal to students at the Gist Campus. Her meticulous manner and attention to detail ensures the campus stays organized, everyone has the supplies they need and deadlines are met. Young is not only a team player, but one of the biggest cheerleaders of the Gist Campus. She established monthly contests to boost attendance, helped create posters to celebrate student achievements and even ensures gowns are freshly steamed for students’ graduations. Young always has a smile on her face and is never too busy to help her peers.

### Student Advisor of the Year – Daryl McEwen, Middleton Campus

With previous experience as a teacher and now as a student advisor, Daryl McEwen’s knowledge of policy, procedure and all things education is unrivaled. Stationed out of the Middleton Campus, McEwen’s experience, knowledge and willingness to help is so great that he has assisted other campuses, improving their accountability rates and High School Equivalency testing. Known as the “go-to” person for the Middleton campus, he does everything in his power to ensure the campus is running smoothly such as engaging students in motivational interviewing, answering questions from teachers and ensuring students are tested when appropriate. He is positive, encouraging and always makes those around him feel valued.



Felicia Johnson



Cindy Young



Daryl McEwen



# District Receives “Accomplished” Accountability Ranking

Windham School District’s (WSD) accountability system tracks campus and district performance on critical measures and provides administrators and educators with vital data to ensure effective performance. The accountability system evaluates each campus individually and the district as a whole. Most importantly, the accountability system recognizes, values and empowers all stakeholders to achieve predetermined educational goals, including school leadership, teachers, support staff, students and Texas Department of Criminal Justice facility administrative and correctional staff.

The accountability system allows the district to compare campus data, track key campus activities, support campus improvement plans and recognize campuses and campus personnel. Campus employees can monitor their accountability score in real-time using a digital dashboard. The data is displayed in a user-friendly application, which allows campus staff to monitor the status and make adjustments as needed throughout the year. In addition, district administrators use the accountability system to determine and assist in areas in need of improvement while also highlighting the achievements of all faculty, staff and students at the campus level.

WSD used seven metrics to determine accountability ratings in the 2020-2021 school year. All measures are weighted and averaged together to determine the final level for each campus. Consistent with the Texas Education Agency (TEA) K-12 accountability scale and grading system, WSD’s system provides a campus score based on a scale of 0-100.

1. Percent of Attendance
2. Percent of Academic Completion
3. Percent of Career & Technical Education (CTE) Completion
4. Percent of Life Skills Completion
5. Percent of Compliance on WSD Audits
6. Percent of CTE Students Earning Industry Certifications
7. Percent of Students Earning a High School Equivalency (HSE) Certificate

## Windham School District

### 2021 Accountability Report Card

Districtwide

**B**

Accountability Score



Attendance:	16.35	Academic Completion:	7.58	CTE Certificate:	8.36
HSE:	11.57	Industry Certificate:	12.79	Life Skills:	13.37
WSD Audit:	8.97				

# Portrait of Success

## Jaci Wilks

Former Windham Student

### Soaring Into New life with Purpose

By The ECHO Newspaper published by WSD for TDCJ residents

“Prior to going to prison, my life was in crumbles,” said Jaci Wilks, a former resident of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ). “I got divorced, quit my job as a first assistant to an orthopedic surgeon and began selling drugs. I ended up living from hotel room to hotel room because I could only afford to pay one day to the next, and I had no connection with my children.”

Wilks eventually ended up in county jail, and her children’s father was able to gain permission to bring them to the jail for a visit with their mother. She credits a video visit conversation with her youngest daughter for motivating her to make those changes necessary for a positive, productive life.

“My youngest girl was hiding behind her older sister, and I told her, ‘Come here, baby, and say hello to mommy,’” Wilks said, even now choking back the tears. “She said, ‘No mommy; I’m scared.’ When I asked her why she was scared, she said, ‘Because I’m in jail.’ That was an eye-opener for me.”

Realizing that in order to exit prison a different person than the one who entered, Wilks resolved to take advantage of the rehabilitative and education programs offered to her. Participating in a variety of programs provided by TDCJ and Windham School District (WSD) gave her the tools necessary to navigate the prison environment and prepare for reentry into society. She began by signing up with Bridges to Life, a restorative justice program that teaches accountability and responsibility. Another program Wilks credits with helping her to rid herself of faulty thinking errors was Changing Habits and Achieving New Goals to Empower Success (CHANGES), a life skills program offered by WSD.

“The CHANGES program made me realize that I was really going to have to bite the bullet and dig down deep inside of myself to figure out the real issues that I couldn’t deal with. CHANGES helps you remember who you were [before incarceration] and then helps you develop a vision of the person you want to be,” Wilks said.

Wilks was also chosen to be a member of the inaugural cohort of students in the TDCJ/WSD Strength Through Restoration, Independence, Vision and Empowerment (STRIVE) program. This new program offered her opportunities to successfully prepare for future employment and rejoin her community. STRIVE includes training in employment interviews, preparation of resumes, verbal and written communications, professional appearance, work habits and other soft skills required by employers in the freeworld.

After successfully completing the STRIVE program, Wilks was released from prison. She was able to make good on her promise to walk out of prison a different person than the one who entered; however, the world

she reentered was also about to become drastically different. The COVID-19 pandemic would soon affect the entire world, so walking out of prison into the beginning of a global health crisis presented unique challenges. Wilks worked for about 60 days, met her future husband, and thought “life was good.” When the pandemic became widespread in March 2020, shutting down countless businesses and much of the economy, Wilks was laid off from her new job. Never one to simply sit around and see what happens, she quickly took matters into her own hands.

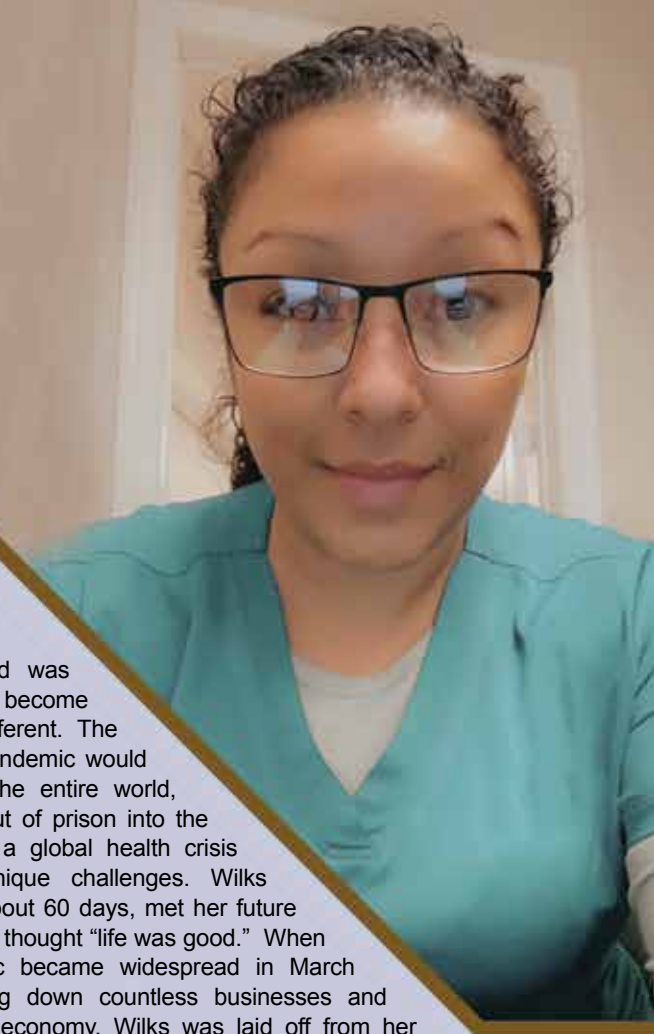
“I decided I was going to print out my résumé and put myself out there,” she said. “I went out to places and introduced myself to give employers a face with the résumé. You have to be willing to hustle. When they say that you have to go get it, that’s a real statement.”

The courses that Wilks participated in during incarceration provided her with the tools she would need to deal with the curveballs life threw at her. One of the things Wilks learned in STRIVE is the importance of setting goals for the things she wanted to accomplish each week during the first year of her release. After being hired and working at Harbor Freight for about a year, Wilks felt that it was time to begin advancing again, so she applied for a position as a clinical coordinator and first assistant for an orthopedic surgeon. She was soon assisting on a number of surgeries and again learning new skills. Today, she is working as a clinical coordinator and surgical assistant for a sports medicine foot and ankle surgeon.

Despite her successful reentry into society, Wilks hasn’t forgotten the women who remain in prison. She proudly received her nametag identifying her as an official volunteer with a ministry that enters the Texas prison system to speak with and encourage incarcerated women.

“I couldn’t wait to get out of there when I was in prison, and now I am willingly going back. Yes, I am still ‘attending’ STRIVE [and speaking to participants]. The message I reiterate to women in TDCJ is this: ‘If you really want to change your life and you really want to live a good life devoid of fear of going to prison, then you have to take this program seriously. And if you want to see what the fruit of taking this class seriously can be, just look at the changes in my life.’”

Wilks’ enthusiasm is high; her positivity is contagious. She remains appreciative of the opportunities she was offered to build a different future, obtain employment, and learn new skills for serving others.







# CTE Programs Provide New Opportunities



Industry training and soft skills are two vital factors to obtaining and maintaining a job. Windham School District's (WSD) career and technical education (CTE) programs provide these services to graduates so they have the necessary skills and experience to succeed in today's workforce. The district uses a dynamic combination of hands-on training, classroom instruction and third-party industry certifications to increase students' employability and decrease recidivism rates. This method has proven successful as students who complete WSD CTE programs are 25.5% less likely to return to incarceration and 16% more likely to obtain a job in their trained field.

Technical training rooted in an academic foundation is necessary for students to compete in the job market. Therefore, WSD follows a research-based Integrated Education and Training model to enroll students in academic and technical training simultaneously. This method increases students' success in the classroom as academics, such as math and science, are integral components to industry trades.

The district offers more than 40 programs with curriculum that provides graduates with a well-rounded education. Specifically, WSD's CTE programming provides:

- Experience in a work-related setting
- Rigorous, competency-based curriculum based on industry standards
- Well-versed teachers with experience in all aspects of their respective trade
- Standardized training
- Safety training
- Soft-skills and career-readiness
- Opportunity to earn third-party, industry-recognized certification and WSD completion certification

Windham's dedicated CTE teachers are committed to students' success. These instructors are all experts in their field with ample work-related and teaching experience. Although technical skills are vital to obtaining a job, soft skills such as problem solving, team work, communication and time management are vital to maintaining employment. Therefore, WSD instructors provide both the technical and soft-skills training necessary for students to excel in the workforce.

Career and Technical Education Certifications	
CTE Certificates Earned (% completions of eligible)	13,541 (88%)
Industry Certificates Earned	19,534



CTE Programs*
<b>Agriculture, Food, &amp; Natural Resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Horticulture/Urban Farming</li><li>• Landscape Design, Construction, and Maintenance</li></ul>
<b>Architecture &amp; Construction</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bricklaying &amp; Masonry</li><li>• Construction Careers</li><li>• Construction Carpentry</li><li>• Construction Fundamentals</li><li>• Construction Technology</li><li>• Computer-Aided Design</li><li>• Electrical Trades</li><li>• Electronic Systems Technician</li><li>• Finish Carpentry</li><li>• Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning &amp; Refrigeration</li><li>• Painting and Decorating</li><li>• Pipefitting</li><li>• Plumbing Trades</li><li>• Welding</li></ul>
<b>Arts, A/V Technology &amp; Communication</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Printing &amp; Imaging Technology</li></ul>
<b>Hospitality and Tourism</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Culinary Arts</li><li>• Customer Service Specialist</li><li>• Hospitality Services</li><li>• Restaurant Management</li><li>• Retail Meat Cutter</li></ul>
<b>Health Science</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Medical Office Support Specialist</li></ul>
<b>Human Services</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cosmetology</li></ul>
<b>Information Technology</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Business Computer Information Systems</li><li>• Business Information Management</li><li>• Exploring Information Technology</li></ul>
<b>Manufacturing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Computerized Numerical Control (CNC) Machining</li></ul>
<b>Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Telecommunications Connectivity — Audio/Video Systems</li><li>• Telecommunications Connectivity — Copper-Based Systems</li><li>• Telecommunications Connectivity — Energy Management</li><li>• Telecommunications Connectivity — Fiber Optic-Based Systems</li><li>• Telecommunications Connectivity — Grounding &amp; Bonding</li><li>• Telecommunications Connectivity — Intro to Telecommunications</li></ul>
<b>Transportation, Distribution &amp; Logistics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Automotive and Diesel Fundamentals</li><li>• Automotive Specialization</li><li>• Diesel Mechanics</li><li>• Small Engine Repair</li><li>• RV Service Technician</li><li>• Truck Driving</li></ul>
<b>Work &amp; Career Readiness</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• OSHA</li><li>• Professional Communications</li></ul>
*Programs may have multiple completion levels

All WSD CTE courses are grounded in the appropriate industry standards. The district meets with professionals in the field to review curriculum and ensure content being taught is relevant to the workforce. For each course, students have the opportunity to earn a WSD completion certification and a third-party industry recognized certification. To receive industry certifications, students must exceed the requirements as set by the experts in the field. Students with these certifications have an advantage over other applicants in the workforce without the certification, as it validates their training and skills. These certifications set the foundation for earning advanced certifications offered by the industries, allowing them to build on their knowledge throughout their careers. Certifications offered at WSD include National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER), Automotive Service Excellence (ASE), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), Serv-Safe, Commercial Driver’s License, North American Technician Excellence (NATE) and many others.

Courses are aligned in career clusters, allowing students to focus on specific programming to achieve their desired career goals. Certified student advisors assist each student in assessing and selecting career clusters that best fit their future. During this time, students discuss their career plans, previous experience and criminal history to ensure students will meet appropriate licensing regulations. Students are then enrolled in the courses to begin their new career path.

To ensure students receive training in high-demand industries, district administrators review job market trends and add programs to assist in improving workforce demands. With this approach, WSD is able to ensure students are able to obtain a job in their field while filling industry needs across the state. This school year, WSD added seven new courses, including:

- Automotive and Diesel Fundamentals
- Business Information Management
- Construction Technology
- Introduction to Construction Careers
- Introduction to Culinary Arts
- Medical Office Support Specialist
- RV Service Technician

In school year 2020-2021, WSD offered programs in numerous career clusters for both women and men. In many of these courses, students were able to earn multiple industry-recognized certifications. By completing programming and earning certifications, many students are able to use their knowledge and training to gain experience working within the Texas Department of Criminal Justice. This work experience adds to their resume and increases their employability upon return to their communities.

# Urban Farming Program Produces Fresh Herbs, Sets Standards for Correctional Education

Agriculture is one of the largest industries in the United States, with 22.2 million jobs in the agriculture and food sector in 2019. Recognizing the importance of this growing field, Windham School District (WSD) established an Urban Farming program to teach students the necessary skills to obtain future employment and meet increasing demands.

The Urban Farming program teaches students the fundamentals of horticulture, landscaping, aquaponics and hydroponics. In aquaponics and hydroponics, fish and aquatic animals are used to produce nutrients to grow plants without soil. This is vital to producing fresh herbs and produce in a prison system where soil is lacking. Through the hands-on training received in this program, students receive a well-rounded education in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) as well as business and marketing.

In the 2020-2021 School Year, the program has achieved a new milestone, becoming the first program to receive an endorsement from the Aquaponics Association, an international, non-profit organization dedicated to expanding the practice of aquaponics through education, advocacy and connection.

Through this partnership, WSD and the Aquaponics Association will collaborate to enhance WSD’s Urban Farming program, revamp programming curriculum and ensure national standards are met. In addition, the Aquaponics Association will provide a third party, industry-recognized certificate to students who complete the program.

“The district’s Urban Farming program began last year and it’s amazing to see how much it has grown in this short amount of time,” WSD Superintendent Kristina Hartman said. “Our team works hard to continuously improve the program and develop innovative curriculum for our students. This new endorsement is a testament to the strength of the program and will be valuable in providing our students with an exceptional education and future employment opportunities.”

The Aquaponics Association plans to use the inaugural endorsement with WSD as a pilot program to help establish American Correctional Association standards for creating aquaponics programs in other state prison facilities and education systems.

“WSD’s innovative integration of aquaponics into Texas prison facilities and their educational programs shows the power of aquaponics,” said Aquaponics Association Chairman Brian Filipowich. “Everyone needs to eat, but not everyone has access to arable soil. Through their system, WSD has shown the potential of using aquaponics systems to successfully grow organic food in any environment.”

Upon completion of the program, students will graduate with a Aquaponics Association Certificate, Servesafe Food Handler Certification, Texas Certified Landscape Associate (TCLA) Certification, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Certificate and Windham Urban Farming Certificate. With their education, skills and certificates earned in the Urban Farming program, students will be able to obtain employment in a variety of fields upon release such as landscaping, culinary, plumbing and business.







## RV Technician Program Drives Success, Fills Workforce Demand

The coronavirus pandemic caused everyone to rethink their vacations. As people moved away from planes and cruises, social-distancing alternatives such as road trips in RVs increased. In turn, this growing popularity further increased an already growing need for service technicians to maintain and repair these vehicles. The need for more RV technicians is so great that in 2020, RV technician was the third-fastest growing job in the United States.

Windham School District (WSD), which is dedicated to serving incarcerated students inside Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ), recognized this workforce demand by establishing a new RV Service Technician program through a partnership with the RV Technical Institute (RVTI). This partnership brings together RVTI's gold standard RV technician curriculum with the proven track record of WSD to train incarcerated students for new career opportunities.

Through courses such as the RV Service Technician program, WSD strives to prepare students with the necessary education and skills to successfully reenter the workforce within their communities, reducing the likelihood the student will continue their criminal behavior.

The first-of-its-kind, WSD piloted the RV Service Technician program at the Woodman Campus, an all-women's facility in Gatesville, Texas, with the goal of expanding to additional campuses in the future. In School Year 2020-2021, the first cohort of students, all within approximately one year of being released to their Texas communities, graduated with the RV Technician Level One certificate. This was the first RVTI cohort of all women to graduate and the first cohort in a correctional setting to graduate in the country.

Upon reentry into their communities, the students will have the necessary skills and knowledge to obtain employment and succeed as RV technicians.

"RV technician is a growing field with employment opportunities across Texas. Upon rejoining their communities, our students will have the necessary skills and education to fill these vacant positions, and contribute to the success of the industry," WSD Superintendent Kristina J. Hartman said.

Through the partnership between RVTI and WSD, RVTI provides WSD with curriculum, training and paths to employment for students. The curriculum teaches students the skills to conduct a pre-delivery inspection of RVs with detailed knowledge about the body, appliances, chassis, generator, electrical, propane and water systems of the vehicles.

"We are very excited to be partnering with Windham on this pilot program. The opportunities are endless for people entering the RV technician field. With the RVTI training and certification, graduates of this program will be able to build a career anywhere in Texas. Based on the success of this pilot group, we look forward to expanding the programs into more locations through our partnership with Windham," RVTI Executive Director Curtis A. Hemmeler said.



## Cosmetology Program Launches in Style

Windham School District (WSD) is giving students a chance to create beautiful lives for themselves through its new cosmetology program. The district started the new program at Mountain View, an all-women's campus in Gatesville, Texas to prepare students for a gainful career in cosmetology upon release to their communities. When they return home, these former students will be able to transform their future by transforming others' appearances.

At the beginning of the program, students receive their cosmetology permit from the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation. This permit allows students to practice and earn hours toward getting their cosmetology license. Students must complete a minimum of 1,000 hours in the classroom and pass a written and practicum test to graduate the program.

The program consists of three components focused on hair, skin and nails. Students learn skills ranging from cutting and coloring hair, performing facials and manicuring nails. Additionally, students received training in business skills, salon management, professional development, health and safety, and legal components relating to cosmetology.



These business management skills are essential as it provides students with the knowledge to successfully rent their own booth or open their own salon upon release to their communities. Once these students reenter their communities, they can apply for their cosmetology license and then proceed to work in the field.

All students who complete the program must be within five years of release. Students who release shortly after graduating will be able to immediately apply for a license and begin their career in the industry.

Cosmetology is one of the fastest growing fields in the country. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics predicted the cosmetology industry will grow 19 percent from 2020 to 2030, which is significantly faster than the average for all occupations. Windham's new program will add to this growing workforce while providing students an opportunity to earn gainful employment.







## Apprenticeship and OJT Provide Workforce Experience

In addition to providing hands-on training and classroom instruction, Windham School District (WSD) offers eligible students opportunities to earn job experience through a partnership with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ). Together, WSD and TDCJ provide work-based training opportunities through Work Certification, On-the-Job Training (OJT) and Apprenticeship programs to eligible students. With three different programs to choose from, students have myriad opportunities for gaining work experience in their desired field. These programs provide students with the job training, certifications and experience they need to excel in the workforce upon reentry to their communities.



The OJT program, coordinated between WSD and TDCJ, combines work experience and standardized training in approved Dictionary of Occupational Titles (DOT) jobs. In this program, trainees work in these jobs for a minimum of six months under the supervision of a TDCJ employee. During their OJT experience, students learn about trade skills, workplace proficiencies, job expectations and positive workplace culture. Once the training requirements are completed, students earn an OJT certificate. Many students in the OJT program have the potential to transition into an Apprenticeship program.

WSD coordinates with the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) to offer registered Apprenticeship programs. These programs prepare individuals for occupations in skilled trades and crafts through technical instruction about theoretical and practical aspects of the occupation and relevant on-the-job learning. The program adheres to strict DOL standards and students must meet the required hours of training and hands-on experience to finish the program. Upon satisfactory completion, the participant is awarded a nationally-recognized Certificate of Completion of Apprenticeship through the DOL. Students who are released before completing the Apprentice program are able to transfer their hours to their future workplace to continue earning hours to complete the DOL Apprenticeship program.

The district and TDCJ expanded the program to allow for more robust apprenticeship opportunities. In the 2020-2021 school year, Windham had 26 occupations in the apprenticeship program, located throughout the state, registered with the DOL. Additionally, WSD had 464 registered apprentices.

TDCJ's Work Certification Program provides incarcerated workers an opportunity to earn a certificate for diligently performing a part- or full-time job assignment. Workers who complete essential job functions and maintain positive work habits for six months receive a certificate highlighting their achievement.

Geared toward providing invaluable work experience, these programs also help students develop healthy work habits, increase their confidence in the workplace, and build toward a future career. With programs such as these implemented, WSD and TDCJ have noticed ample career progression and recidivism decline among those participants who return to their communities. These released workers are then adding to the workforce, boosting the Texas economy and decreasing the workforce gap.



## Portrait of Success

### Shannon Teague Former Windham Student Defying a Dark Past

By The ECHO Newspaper published by WSD for TDCJ residents

"It was in late 2015 while sitting in the HVAC class that I realized, 'Wow, this is it. The more you learn, the more you earn and the better off you'll be.' When we get certifications, we enable ourselves to go out there and earn an honest paycheck. So, no matter how many times you've been down, don't give up on yourself because change is always just a moment away," said Shannon Teague, a former student of Windham School District (WSD).

Four years ago, Teague re-entered society on parole with several assets. He obtained a High School Equivalency (HSE) certificate from WSD and then went on to complete the Cognitive Intervention Program. Teague then worked hard to get a certification from WSD's career and technical education (CTE) program in heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC). These efforts to prepare himself for a successful future were then combined with his determination to make something of himself.

"It all begins with not giving up on yourself and believing in you. Then you need to remember that no matter how much progress you make, there's always something that you can work on to get even better," he said.

Now gainfully employed as an HVAC installer, Teague is also active in Christian ministry and lives a clean life free of alcohol and drugs. He has very simple advice for starting and continuing the process of positive change: in order to be effective, changes have to be made in every area of one's life.

"One of the reasons I kept coming back to prison is because I would get out and go back to the same old friends and the same old places. When you get out, you've got to make everything brand new: new job, new car, new friends, new places, new clothes, everything. You've got to surround yourself with positive people," he said.

Teague's turning point came when the pressures of his internal and external conditions backed him into a corner.

"I was on the Ellis Unit when I had a moment with God. I said to Him: 'Look, you're gonna' have to help me out with this; I can't do it on my own.' And God answered. He told me that I needed to get in school so I could trade that money I was making hustling on the streets for an honest wage. That's when I enrolled in the Windham HVAC class," Teague said.

Teague took neither his faith nor his shot at education for granted. Instead, he applied himself to both with great enthusiasm and focus.

"I slept with my Bible and that HVAC textbook. Between those two books, I was able to get back out here and do it right," Teague said.

Teague's journey of self-transformation shifted into high gear when he became a part of the ministry known as Forgiven Felons.

"The people who were my support network on the outside continuously encouraged and inspired me to change while I was still in prison. So now I had not only my dad and stepmom, but also men like Jay Dan Gumm, the owner of Forgiven Felons and the host of the "Background Check" podcast, who accepted me into the Forgiven Felons halfway house program. Whether you're on the inside or the outside, you've got to have that group of positive people around you," he said.

Teague's time with Forgiven Felons was certainly beneficial, but was not without its unique brand of challenges and tests.

"I stayed with Forgiven Felons for three and a half years, which allowed me to save up \$50,000," Teague said. "After about six months, I found myself in a leadership position. Jay was really pushing me to evolve in that capacity."

As Forgiven Felons halfway house manager, Teague faced a significant period of adjustment from prison to a more mainstream mentality. An example is his coming to recognize the difference between what prison calls "snitching," versus enforcing legitimate accountability measures. This realization allowed him to admit an error that occurred early in his time as house manager, when Teague failed to report a resident who was violating the house rule regarding substance use.

"Through my time as a house manager at Forgiven Felons, I had mentors who pushed me to grow. This caused me to mature in the ways of leadership. I began to hold others to a higher standard of accountability and at the same time allowed others to hold me accountable," Teague said.

Like many other former residents of TDCJ, Teague has certainly learned hard lessons from living in the shadows of vice and the corridors of state penitentiaries. He observes, however, that former residents of TDCJ who make good on redemption have a common thread of spiritual light in their narrative.

"All of the successful ex-felons I've seen have one thing in common: they all have a relationship with God. That's how I got my current job working for Freedom Heating and Air, which is owned by an ex-felon named Hector Gomez, whom I met through a church gathering. I was laid-off from my previous job on a Friday, and Hector hired me the following Monday morning,"

It would have been fair to assume that because of his background, Teague would have great difficulty making a fresh start. Yet it is clear that Teague is living his life as a success story.







# Life Skills Programs CHANGE Lives



Windham School District (WSD) aspires to develop well-rounded students who have the academic, technical training and social skills needed to thrive in our Texas communities. Therefore, part of WSD's multi-faceted curriculum aims to change students' criminal behavior through life skills courses. These programs are designed to help students improve thinking patterns, enhance cognitive skills, develop social skills necessary for all aspects of life and promote positive, healthy mindsets and attitudes. By transforming thinking processes, students behave more responsibly, improve their relationships with loved ones and retain better jobs. WSD offers three life skills programs, with at least one program offered at all campuses.

## Changing Habits and Achieving New Goals to Empower Success (CHANGES)

CHANGES is a 180-hour life skills program for students who are within two years of projected release. The program is designed to help individuals develop basic life skills and social values needed for successful transition back into society. CHANGES addresses personal development, healthy relationships, living responsibly, drug education, psychological development, health education and resources for release. Additionally, the program prepares students to obtain employment by completing resumes and mock interviews. In this module, students are able to complete a resume using pre-established templates and participate in practice interview sessions. This allows them to perfect their resume and interview skills to increase their chances of finding gainful employment.

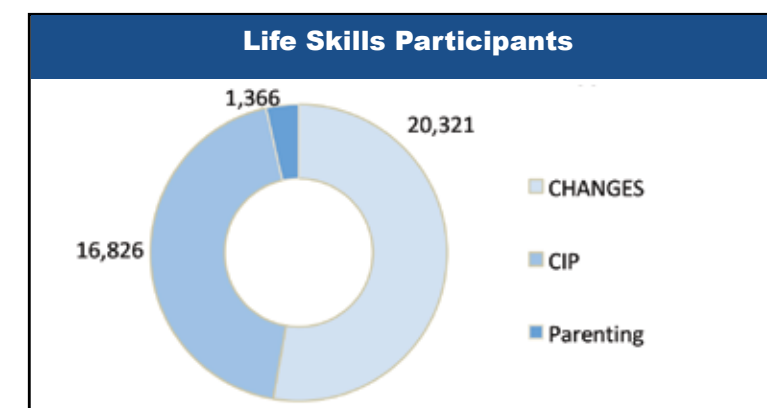
## Cognitive Intervention Program (CIP)

CIP is a 150-hour program that teaches students to examine and change thinking that leads to criminal behavior. The course shows students how to meet their own needs without trespassing on the rights of others. Through CIP, students learn appropriate thinking skills using instruction, role play and exercises in interpersonal problem solving. Former students often cite the importance of the program in allowing them to experience self-worth, increase self-esteem and become productive family members, citizens and employees.

## Parenting

The communication-based, interactive parenting program is designed to help students develop healthy family relationships. The course focuses on parenting across different age groups including lessons on choices and consequences as well as discipline versus punishment. Although geared toward family relationships, the tools and skills learned in the program are applicable to all relationships including peers, co-workers and employers.

WSD life skills courses are essential to enriching the future of our students. With the knowledge and skills gained in these programs, students are able to successfully reintegrate into their families, communities and the workforce.



Life Skills	
Program	% Complete of Those Eligible
CHANGES	78%
CIP	80%





# Family Literacy Program Aims to Reduce Generational Incarceration

Windham School District’s (WSD) Family Literacy Program is focused on breaking the cycle of generational incarceration by providing incarcerated parents in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) opportunities to become active partners in their children’s lives and education.

In generational incarceration, immediate family members are imprisoned during a child’s upbringing and the child later becomes incarcerated. To learn more about the impact of generational incarceration on WSD students, the district surveyed approximately 10,000 currently enrolled students. The results showed a concerning pattern.

More than half of WSD students surveyed indicated that at least one of their immediate family members was incarcerated while they were growing up and attending school. Additionally, students were asked how many children they have and the total response showed students have nearly 13,000 children at home.

WSD aims to reduce these numbers through the Family Literacy Program, which teaches incarcerated parents how to help their children succeed academically.

“The Family Literacy Program is designed to mitigate the negative effects that children may have related to difficulty in school with academic and behavior if their parents are incarcerated,” WSD Superintendent Kristina Hartman said.

During the program, students take parenting classes, learn about educational benchmarks in various grade levels and develop skills to support their children. Specifically, the curriculum teaches parents how to read to their children while reinforcing recall and retention of materials, review and grade their children’s homework, how to give positive reinforcement and how to share stories and life lessons. In addition to parenting skills, the incarcerated parent will learn financial literacy and pre-employment skills.

A unique aspect to the program is the ability for incarcerated parents to participate in parent-teacher conferences and other facilitated interactions with their children.

“WSD is working with Texas independent school districts to facilitate parent/teacher conference participation by the incarcerated parent,”

Hartman said. “We want the parents to know how to advocate appropriately for their child during the conference, which requires preparing the incarcerated parent for engaging with the teachers of their children.”

Texas Education Agency Commissioner Mike Morath touted the new program.

“The Windham School District’s Family Literacy Program gives parents and families facing a very unique set of circumstances the ability to become effective, supportive and active partners in the education of their children,” Morath said. “This type of parental participation is incredibly important, and the positive impact it will make on the children in these situations cannot be overstated.”

Program participant Justin Williams is optimistic about this opportunity to support his children.

“I am excited that this program will not only allow me to re-establish a relationship with my children but also afford me the ability to follow their scholastic progress and achievements,” Williams said. “By allowing me to interact with my children, teachers, coaches and mother, I will be able to help guide them against failures and monitor their behavior.”

The program is available at seven campuses: Hilltop, Wynne, Briscoe, Stringfellow, Clements, Coffield and Sanchez. The Family Literacy Program is one component to successfully preparing incarcerated parents for reentry into their communities. In order to qualify for participation in the program, students must also be concurrently enrolled in WSD academic, career and technical education, or life skills programs.

Program participant and mother Amber Garcia expressed the importance of education and the Family Literacy Program.

“I want to learn something new everyday whether it’s through life, education or experience so I can grow wiser. I want to be a role model for my children so they know they can succeed at whatever they set their minds to. There’s no limit to learning,” she said.

WSD believes the Family Literacy Program will be vital in reducing generational incarceration by positively impacting the future of the incarcerated parent and their children.

# Portrait of Success

## Avaristo Garcia

Former Windham Student

### Born for a Purpose

By The ECHO Newspaper published by WSD for TDCJ residents

“If there was no purpose for you in this life, on this earth, you would have never been born. You were born for a reason; you were born for a purpose.”

This is the philosophy Avaristo Garcia uses to motivate listeners whenever he is doing prison ministry - which is typically every week. Audiences of incarcerated men and women can easily relate to Garcia because he is a former resident of Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) and a graduate of the Windham School District (WSD). Acknowledging the importance of education is one of the pillars of Garcia’s personal success formula.

“Without education, how will you make it in life? How will you get a job? How will you even know how to fill out an application without an education? How could you apply problem-solving skills if you have no background in mathematics? We have to understand that if we want a legitimate job in today’s world, we have to have some type of education. Even if you plan to work for yourself, you must have an education because you need the tools necessary to know how to operate it,” Garcia said.

But Garcia’s own success did not come quickly or easily. He freely admits to his past struggle with recidivism.

“Altogether I’ve got about 19 years served if you count state school, Texas Youth Commission (TYC), juvenile jail and three trips to TDCJ. I served a total of five years on my last sentence. When I went to TDCJ for the first time, I was only 18 years old. I got out that following year in 1995 and lasted just 10 days before going right back to prison,” he said.

Yet, during that initial trip to prison, Garcia picked up something that would carry him for the rest of his life.

“I got my GED while I was on the T. R. Havins Unit back in 1994,” Garcia said.

His reasons for doing so had less to do with seeking an education and more to do with evading the hard physical labor that was so common at that time. The result of Garcia’s maneuvering was that he unintentionally stumbled upon a haven different from what he expected.

“Leaving the block and going to class turned out to be my only sense of peace. Those teachers were 100% supportive of my efforts to get my GED and patient as could be. I had dropped out in sixth grade, so when I enrolled at Windham I couldn’t tell you the answer to five times five, but they worked with me until I got it together. I particularly remember a teacher named Ms. Rose. She was very patient with me,” Garcia said.

A primary objective for Garcia these days is to not only remember the nurturing he received from people like Ms. Rose, but paying it forward.

“I was volunteering in the Ad Seg (Administrative Segregation) housing

area on the Coffield Unit when I ran across a young man in his mid-20s. I asked him why was he in Seg, and he said, ‘Well, there ain’t nothin’ to live for. ... Then I asked him why hadn’t he enrolled in school or pursued a trade. I also informed him that TDCJ will not rehabilitate him--they will only provide some of the tools. ... He was shocked. He said no one had ever told him to put in an I-60 for school or a trade and to try and better himself. He was just so lost before we had that conversation. When I looked at him, I saw a version of my younger self with no direction. I would be in his same shoes right now if I hadn’t had certain opportunities,” Garcia said.

Garcia is so serious about his calling that he’s willing to counsel unannounced visitors in the middle of the night.

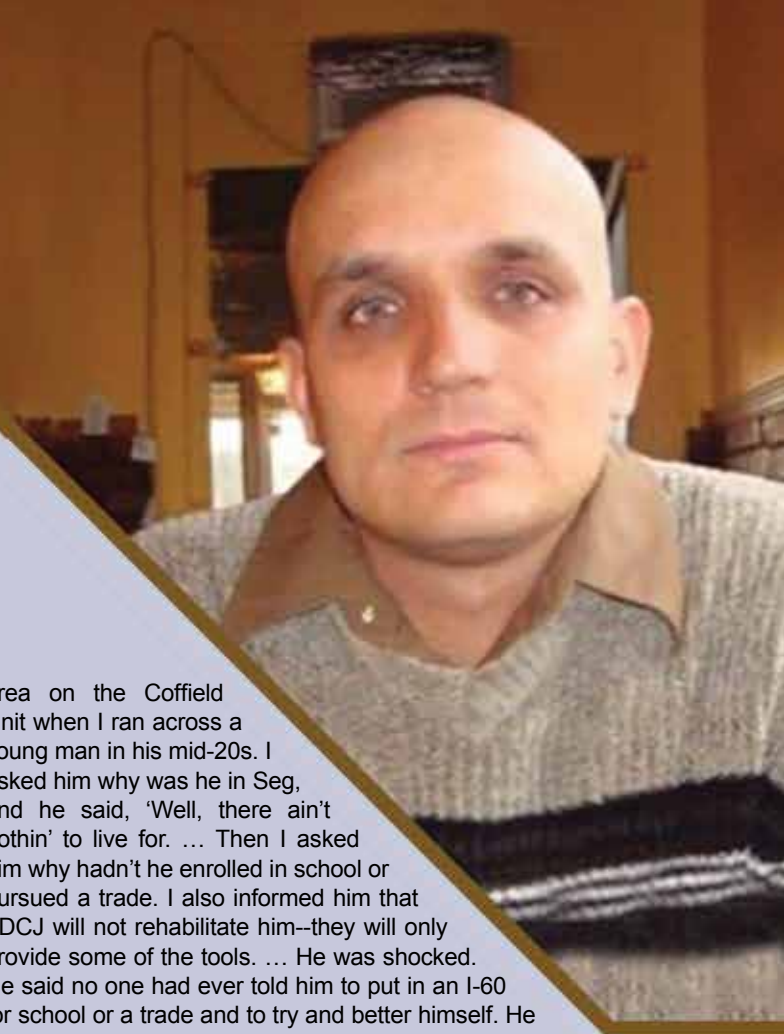
“I’m mentoring this young dude—he’s been in and out of prisons all of his life. He showed up on my front porch one night all strung out, tatted up from head-to-toe. I stood out on the porch talking with him and I spoke to him with love and compassion. He ended up telling me the same thing as the youngster on Coffield: ‘Wow. No one’s ever talked to me like that before.’ That was my same response to Ms. Rose. No one had ever talked to me or believed in me the way she did,” Garcia said.

The elements for making the life-changing shift from prisoner to productive citizen are readily available, according to Garcia. He encourages everyone to use the tools that TDCJ and WSD offer to participants.

“Reentry is something offered now, along with the CHANGES program,” he said. “These are classes that help residents transition to life on the outside. You know, for someone who dropped out in the sixth grade, never worked and got his GED in prison, I make almost \$30 an hour. I work for a company full-time as an electrician, and I’m also an independent contractor with my own business: ACS Commercial Services, based in Houston.”

In summing up his understanding of what it takes to be successful, Garcia reflects on his past perspectives, contrasting them with his new way of seeing the world.

“Way back when I was 18, the word education meant nothing to me; now I realize it’s very important. People perish for lack of knowledge, and you can’t get knowledge unless you get an education. Education is a survival tool,” Garcia said.







# Professional Development Nurtures Educators

With the availability of COVID-19 tests, Windham School District (WSD) was able to safely begin offering in-person, professional development opportunities during the 2021 school year. After the previous year of fully remote training, staff were pleased to receive updates regarding process improvements, curriculum and best practices and were happy to see each other face-to-face. This year, the district hosted two conferences and multiple professional development opportunities across the state.



The Career and Technical Education (CTE) Conference held in San Antonio, Texas focused on “Career Pathways: Explore, Achieve and Succeed.” All CTE teachers and principals were in attendance. During the CTE professional development, staff participated in breakout sessions that covered topics carefully chosen with the purpose of providing them with the information they need to grow in their professions as educators and leaders. Topics included: Student Career Exploration, Technology in the Classroom, Supporting Youthful Learners, Achievement Reporting and Money Matters.

WSD also hosted the annual Correctional Education Association’s (CEA) International Conference. Approximately 200 Windham educators and administrators attended the conference along with education directors, instructors, support staff and vendors from across the country to discuss innovative ideas and best practices in correctional education so participants can better help students successfully reintegrate into their communities. The district was well represented throughout the conference as district staff presented on popular topics such as family literacy, accountability and career pathways. The presentations showcased some of Windham’s innovative programs and inspired other participants.

The district worked with numerous vendors and agencies to host additional trainings for teachers, principals and student advisors. The district collaborated with curriculum experts for professional development to provide teachers the opportunity to review, ask questions and plan for the newly implemented curriculum and instructional software. It also offered a chance for academic teachers across the district to collaborate with one another and grow together as educators. Additionally, WSD invited the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR) to present to student advisors about the state licensing application process and enrolling students, who will be able to successfully obtain state occupational licenses, in appropriate courses. This presentation was part of the collaboration between TDLR, WSD, Texas Department of Criminal Justice and Texas Workforce Commission.



By providing staff with professional development opportunities, employees leave the events ready to apply their knowledge and grow in their profession, resulting in enhanced teaching and support for our students.

# Department Resources Bolster Student Success

The administration staff at the Windham School District (WSD) works diligently behind the scenes to help campuses across the state. These key staff members provide the necessary support and resources for educators to help students reach their full potential. The districts’ divisions of Instruction and Operations collaborate consistently to ensure district success. Additionally, the district partners with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) and other state agencies and external partners to create new opportunities for our students.

## Assessment, Advisement and Records (AAR)

AAR is responsible for all assessments and is the custodian for student records for the district. The department supports campus staff in their testing processes, including intake assessments for all newly incarcerated individuals, annual assessments for WSD students and testing for all High School Equivalency (HSE) certificates. All WSD campuses are approved as secure testing sites and meet the guidelines and standards set by the Texas Education Agency (TEA), Pearson VUE and GED Testing Service. Additionally, all HSE testing staff are certified Pearson VUE testing administrators, which is required for our students to complete their HSE exam.

The department maintains all educational records for all current and former residents incarcerated in TDCJ. AAR works with education agencies across the state to verify educational records and achievements of students. Staff members also respond to records requests from current and former students, as well as subpoenas received from the legal community.

AAR provides training to campus staff on educational transfers for the district. Educational transfers are screened utilizing specific enrollment criteria and requirements to identify the best candidates for transfer. The district partners with TDCJ’s State Classification Committee to solidify these transfers.

## Library Services

Managed by WSD staff, libraries in TDCJ are open to the entire incarcerated population. Through the library, patrons are able to prepare themselves for successful return to their communities. In school year 2020-2021, WSD operated 86 libraries in TDCJ facilities across the state.

WSD Library Information for SY21	
Libraries Maintained*	86
Books Circulated	1,017,969
New Books Received	39,760
Books Cataloged	63,997
Books Distributed to Libraries	56,667
* Does not include libraries maintained by private facilities	

Libraries throughout the district are stocked with a variety of books, reference collections and materials for patrons to review. In addition to recreational reading, the libraries have a growing collection of supplementary materials for career and technical education (CTE) training and academic courses. Library staff also secure current information regarding business, employment and job market trends.

Library Services is constantly improving the library to encourage more patrons and improve literacy on campuses. For example, the district has implemented digital catalog kiosks at every campus. With this system, patrons can electronically search for books available in the library.





# Volunteers

Volunteers are essential to the success of the district and our students. With their unique skills and experiences, volunteers assist the district in cultivating a culture of learning. During the 2020-2021 school year, the district had 501 approved volunteers.

These outstanding individuals provide students with additional help and support to achieve their education goals and successfully reenter their communities. Volunteers motivate students by talking with them, presenting in classrooms and speaking at graduations. Academically, volunteers tutor students and serve on district committees to offer insight into employment trends, hiring practices and workplace skills.

From state legislators and community members to former students, volunteers inspire students to change their lives by:

- Providing academic and language tutoring
- Offering assistance with specific activities and programs
- Promoting personal growth and development
- Serving as positive role models of citizenship and service

# Volunteer of the Year

For three years, Carolyn Moore, a board-certified music therapist and an Assistant Professor of Music Therapy at Sam Houston State University (SHSU), has taught WSD students to play instruments, compose songs and provide feedback to their peers. Due to Moore’s dedication to serving her students, she was honored with the 2020-2021 Judy Burd Award, named after former WSD employee and volunteer program coordinator.

Each week, Moore and her music therapy students from SHSU facilitate group music sessions at TDCJ’s Ellis Facility in Huntsville, Texas. Through the program, students not only gain musical experience, but they improve communication skills, develop rapport-building abilities, and learn how to have effective therapeutic relationships. By developing these skills, students are better prepared for release and future employment opportunities.

# Recreation and Wellness

In a pandemic, activities and wellness programs are vital to healthy living. The Recreation and Wellness department was at the core of the district's health program in the 2020-2021 school year. From COVID testing to fitness challenges, the department ensured district employees and residents prioritized their physical and mental health and wellbeing throughout the year. One of the department’s most important jobs throughout the year

involved managing and reporting COVID-19 testing for staff. The department served on the front-line protecting staff from the virus through administering testing to ensure safety among our district community. Additionally, the department worked to certify other staff members outside of the department to complete the rapid tests as needed to improve testing efficiencies.

To ensure staff stay physically and mentally healthy, the department implemented numerous physical challenges to get staff active across the district. In the 2020-2021 school year, staff participated in Walk Across Texas and Get Fit Texas challenges. For Walk Across Texas, each team was encouraged to walk 832 miles over eight weeks. Staff embraced the challenge and 89 teams participated, walking a cumulative 92,133.91 miles. WSD finished second-place in the Get Fit Texas challenge, with approximately 60% of full-time employees participating. This challenge between state entities encouraged staff to complete 150 minutes of physical activity each week or 30 minutes a day, five days a week. Additionally, this program sent staff weekly health and wellness messages to encourage them to become physically active.

On the campuses, Recreation and Wellness Coordinators conducted intramural activities and challenges. These challenges promoted healthy behaviors to residents and inspired them to become more active.

# Campus Leadership

WSD was divided into 10 geographical regions across Texas. Regional Principals managed each area, supporting campus staff and principals. At WSD, principals are responsible for overseeing and implementing educational programs for their campus. Most principals oversee two or more campuses.

In addition to leading campus staff, principals establish a campus improvement plan to meet the needs of their students, create professional development to train staff appropriately, evaluate classroom instruction and administer mandated school activities. Additionally, principals coordinate the campus schedule and activities with TDCJ unit administration.

# Business Services

The Business Services Department provides financial support to the district by facilitating financial planning, management and reporting. Specifically, the department oversees transactions relating to accounting, accounts payable, budget, payroll, purchasing, the Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) Program and warehousing.

# Financial Data

The district is funded through state appropriations to the Texas Education Agency (TEA) Foundation School Program, and the district must earn these funds according to formulas set by law. These formulas are based on student attendance hours for the best 180 of 210 school days in each year of the biennium. In the 2020-2021 school year, WSD spent \$4.96 per contact hour, \$967.33 per participant, of state-appropriated money from the TEA.

Other sources of WSD revenue include local (interest income) and other funds. Federal grant pass-through funds are provided through grants such as the Elementary and Secondary Education Act Title I-Part D-Subpart 1, Title II-Part A, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA-B), the Carl D. Perkins and the Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) grant. WSD also receives reimbursement through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with TDCJ for providing administrative oversight of the Radio and Television services, Library Services, Recreation and Wellness, and The ECHO newspaper.

# Human Resources

The Human Resources Department strives to enhance work experiences for district employees. Staff members develop innovative strategies to improve existing and create new methods for recruitment, talent management, employee selections, position classification, compensation and benefits, and employee relations.

Biennium Budget	86th Legislature 2020-2021	87th Legislature 2022-2023
WSD Appropriation from General Revenue (Gr) within the TEA Budget	\$108,518,518	\$115,494,792

Staff	SY21 - Public School*	SY21- WSD
Teachers	49.6%	56.5%
Central Administration	1.2%	1.5%
All Other	49.2%	42%

Teaching Staff	SY21 - Public School*	SY21- WSD
Average Teacher Experience	11.2 years	14.2 years
Average Salary for 14 Years of Experience	\$320.32/day	\$266.40/day
Days Per Contract	187	220

*\*2021 Texas Academic Performance Report prepared by the Texas Education Agency (TEA).*

Funding for Fiscal Year 2021		
WSD Contact Hour Rates		
Academic Education		\$4.47826
Career and Technical Education		\$3.67445
Fiscal Year 2021 Cost Per Contact Hour		
WSD (State)	Federal Grant Pass-Through	Total
\$4.96	\$0.31	\$5.27
Contact Hours		
2020-2021		
Best 180 Days		10,748,944
Cost Per Participant - Fiscal Year 2021		
PROGRAM	AMOUNT	
WSD (State and Federal Funding)	\$1,028.32	

Funding for Fiscal Year 2021	
Revenues - Fiscal Year 2021	
TYPE	AMOUNT
Local (Interest Income)	\$26,067
Windham School District State (Foundation School Program)	\$53,017,761
Instructional Material Allotment (IMA)	\$572,801
Federal Grant Pass-Through Funds	\$3,364,394
Contract	\$4,912,504
Other	\$226,155
Operating Transfer-In	\$269,254
TOTAL REVENUE	\$62,388,936
Expenditures - Fiscal Year 2021	
Windham School District State (Foundation School Program)	\$52,794,931
Instructional Material Allotment (IMA)	\$567,779
Federal Grant Pass-Through Funds	\$3,364,394
Contract (Recreation & The ECHO)	\$4,912,504
TOTAL Expenditures	\$61,639,608



Human Resources Cont.

The department collaborates with existing administrators and campus staff to recruit new employees. Recruitment methods included partnering with LinkedIn, Military.com, Diversity.com, and Monster.com.

In the 2020-2021 school year, the department supported 1,066.9 budgeted positions. Long-tenured employees make up a large portion of the district. The WSD superintendent and all principals, student advisors, teachers, librarians and diagnosticians are certified by the Texas State Board for Educator Certification. WSD teachers average 14 years of experience.

Communications

The Communications department serves the district by creating and managing communications with internal and external stakeholders. Staff oversee the publishing of the monthly WSD newsletter, Annual Performance Report (APR), news releases, social media, website and media requests. Additionally, staff develop presentations for state and national conferences. The department promotes the district to stakeholders through positive public relations by sharing newsworthy information about the district and its successes.

WSD’s Communications department oversees The ECHO, a newspaper for the TDCJ population. Residents inside TDCJ receive a copy of each issue. Supervised by the Managing Editor, all content and designs are created by TDCJ residents. The ECHO is published 10 times a year and is managed by WSD through a MOU with TDCJ.



Information Technology (IT)

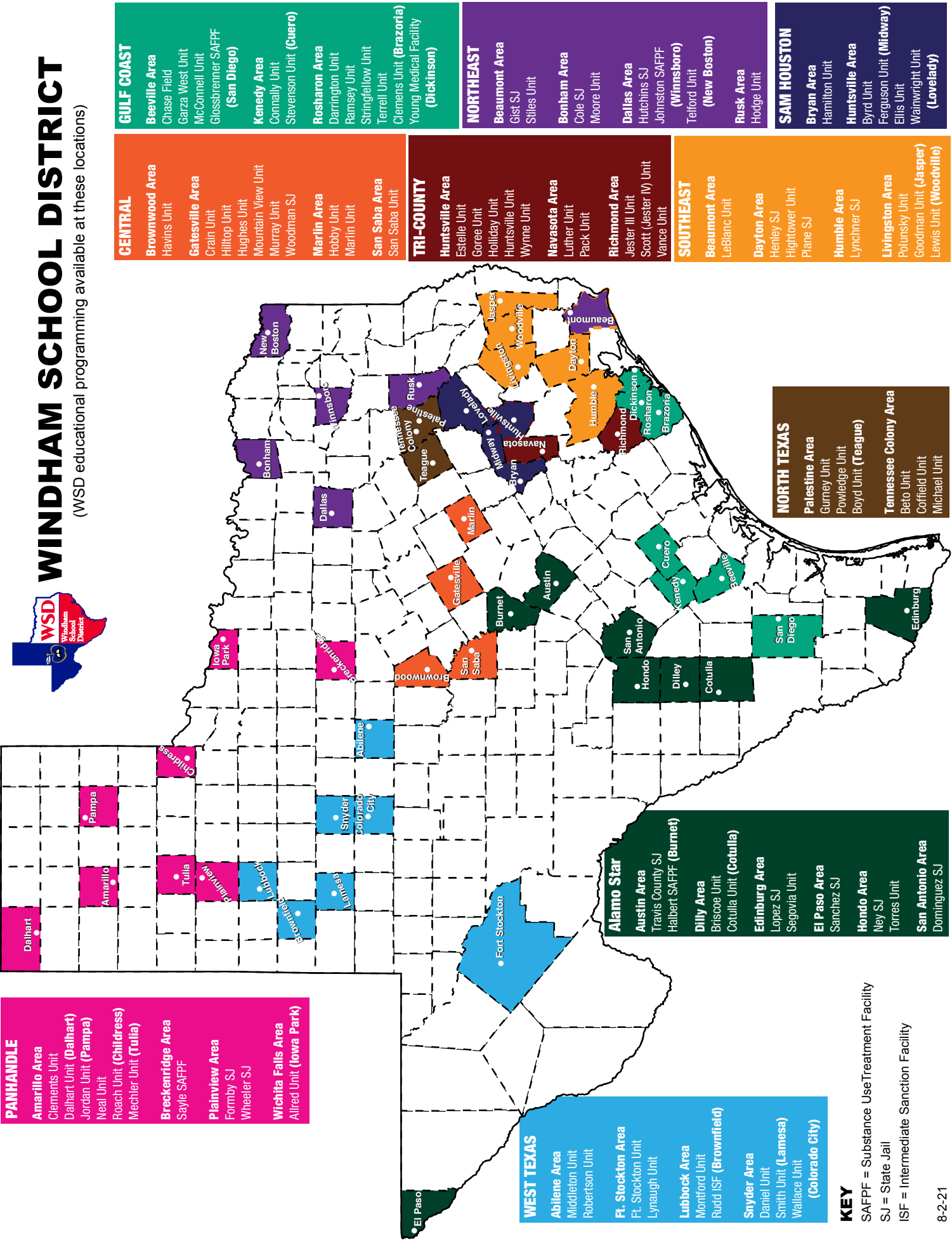
In the 21st century, technology is a huge component of education. The district’s IT department is responsible for managing technology solutions for the classroom and support services. Given the correctional education environment, the department focuses on ensuring all systems are secure and reliable.

In the 2020-2021 School Year, the district secured \$3.25 million in Board-approved committed funds to begin a three-year technology plan to expand technology and technical infrastructure for student instruction. The plan started with pilot sites and will expand to other campuses. This plan will enhance student computer lab functionality by establishing online access for specific sites, increasing laptops for teachers and providing devices for interactive activities for the Family Literacy program. The IT department started a process to replace technology components, such as servers, thin clients and network switches, at 21 campuses. The items replaced at these campuses will be repurposed in other educational areas.

The department consists of three functional areas to support the district and its students. The Help Desk and Network Specialists staff, located in Huntsville and at six area offices, support our district employees and maintain all IT equipment for personnel and the campus computer labs across the state. The Infrastructure and Network team administers database, security, system and network resources. The Application Development group continues to create, maintain and improve applications for WSD personnel, as well as database conversions, user-friendly reports and dashboards to support the WSD in meeting its mission.

Operational Support

The Operational Support department assists the district by analyzing, tracking, evaluating and monitoring initiatives that support student achievement. Specifically, the department manages student attendance accounting, achievement reporting, and program evaluation. The department also has direct oversight of compliance and operational reviews, coordination of Individualized Treatment Plan (ITP) guidelines and the Radio and Television Department. The department conducts reports and analyzes data for external agencies such as private prisons, parole, the American Correctional Association (ACA), Texas Education Agency (TEA) and the Texas Workforce Investment Council (TWIC).





***“Windham School District is committed to rebuilding lives, families and communities through excellence in education.”***

**~ Kristina J. Hartman, Ed.S.**  
*Superintendent, Windham School District*

