

# ELEVATING EXPECTATIONS



Annual Performance Report  
School Year 2022-2023

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*from the desk of*

## **Kristina J. Hartman, Ed.S.**

*Windham School District Superintendent*

Windham School District (Windham) remains committed to delivering outstanding educational opportunities to students within the Texas Department of Criminal Justice. Established in 1969, and presently offering an array of programs from life skills courses to high school equivalency (HSE) and diploma tracks, along with dual credit courses and career and technical education (CTE) training, Windham transcends traditional education practices. The district's emphasis extends beyond academics, equipping its students with indispensable skills and knowledge crucial for reentry into Texas communities.

The district works with industry partners to ensure that CTE curriculum frameworks align seamlessly with current standards and operating procedures, actively contributing to the developing workforce. With the reinstatement of Federal

Pell Grants available for eligible students in state prisons, Windham collaborates with colleges to provide students with guidance as they explore potential postsecondary opportunities and career paths.

The annual performance report theme, *Elevating Expectations*, communicates the hard work and innovative practices put forth by the district's administrators, staff and students. During the year, Windham launched the student ambassador initiative, offering students the opportunity to interact with classroom guests by leading conversations, tours and events and providing practice in communication skills needed for confidence in the workforce. As part of a broader effort to enhance communication among the district, The ECHO, a newspaper created by residents for residents, has undergone a digital transformation. The publication is now accessible digitally through resident tablets, in print and can also be found on Windham's recently renovated website.

The district was awarded a combined total of \$845,699 across three Jobs and Education for Texans grants, distributed by the Texas Workforce Commission. These funds were utilized to acquire necessary equipment to enhance high-demand CTE programs provided by Windham: Heavy Equipment Operating, Truck Driving and Production Technician. Windham expresses extreme gratitude for the steadfast support from its stakeholders, including the Texas Legislature, and all those involved in fostering these positive advancements.

Windham's classroom success was driven by the efforts of our educators, learners and assessment staff, who went above and beyond to utilize dynamic and interactive strategies. Windham achieved notable milestones in academic success, with a 94% increase in the number of HSE certificates earned and an 83% increase in the number of high school diplomas awarded.

Windham is dedicated to offering students robust program opportunities leading to success in our communities through education and training. This commitment is supported by cultivating and sustaining fruitful partnerships with Texas businesses, associations, agencies and entities. The persistent partnership between Windham staff, students and the community will undoubtedly contribute to the ongoing success and growth of the district, reinforcing its position as a beacon of educational achievement and innovation.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kristina Hartman', written over a light blue horizontal line.

**Kristina J. Hartman, Ed.S.**

*Superintendent, Windham School District*

*from the desk of*

## **ERIC J.R. NICHOLS**

*Windham School District Board of Trustees Chairman*

The Windham School District (Windham) provides a wide variety of programs that encourage students to pursue educational pathways that specifically align their goals and aspirations with the occupational outlook and job market needs in Texas. Through Windham programming, students secure the vital resources essential for achieving professional success and pride in their accomplishments. Windham places a key emphasis on ensuring students are prepared for successful reentry. By focusing on college and career readiness, the district's student advisors connect program participants with their desired future path through development of career pathways that lead to employment and in some cases to postsecondary education.



This multifaceted approach underscores the district's commitment to creating a well-rounded and supportive environment for student success. Through integration of academic and life skills courses, students also enhance their practical skills with essential knowledge, including reaching functional literacy, earning a high school diploma or equivalency certificate, and soft skills. Guided by Superintendent Kristina J. Hartman, Ed.S., Windham focuses on establishing and maintaining powerful partnerships with industry professionals to implement the latest standards and trends, thus providing crucial insight for enhancing district Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs and supporting the Texas workforce with well-prepared graduates who have both the technical and communication skills to be successful in initial employment endeavors and advancement. Consistent monitoring and program development ensures that the industry-based certifications earned by Windham graduates directly align with the labor market needs. Furthermore, partnerships with employers are forged not only to gain firsthand insights into job interview strategies and techniques, but also to address high-demand industry shortages by equipping students with the necessary skills to gain good-paying and stable employment.

In addition to engaging with industry professionals, Windham actively seeks partnerships with key entities. These collaborations include postsecondary education institutions, aiming to establish prior learning agreements and dual credit opportunities, and community-based organizations, providing support to the Family Literacy program and encouraging students through classroom visits and guest speaker opportunities. The district is dedicated to fostering collaboration with stakeholders in partnership with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, aligning their efforts towards a common goal: the success of students in preparing themselves for reentry into Texas communities.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "E. Nichols", written over a light blue horizontal line.

**Eric J.R. Nichols**

*Chairman, Windham School District Board of Trustees*

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## VISION

The vision of 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 [students] in obtaining and maintaining employment; and
- (4) provide an incentive to [students] 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 Strategic Planning Committee, July 2019, Windham 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.

# Charting the Course to Career Pathways

Windham School District (Windham) recognizes the significance of combining hands-on training with academic education to ensure individuals are well-prepared for a prosperous career. By utilizing a thorough assessment and advisement process, students are placed in Windham classes that align with their desired career pathway, preparing them for a fulfilling future.

Each campus has a student advisor that is dedicated to helping students identify and build their educational foundations. This is achieved by adhering to a specific set of procedures, which includes acquiring educational records, arranging interviews and conducting assessments. Through assessments, including the Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE®) and student interviews, student advisors discuss interests and employment history, which results in the development of career pathways. The Individualized Treatment Plan (ITP) is customized to the student's goals and educational requirements, offering recommendations for programs and classes based on a variety of factors including age, program availability, projected reentry date and educational service needs. Students also utilize the TABE® throughout the school year to track their academic progress and determine readiness to take the General Education Development (GED®) exam to earn their high school equivalency (HSE) certificate.

All Windham campuses are approved testing sites and meet the guidelines established by the Texas Education Agency (TEA), Pearson Virtual University Enterprises and GED® Testing Service.

Through this comprehensive assessment and evaluation process, Windham can accurately place students in the essential programs that support successful integration into their communities and align with their career pathway goals.



# Cultivating Successful Integration with Windham's Comprehensive Programs

During the 2022-2023 school year (SY23), Windham extended its services to a diverse population of adult and youthful learners, spanning 85 campuses throughout the state of Texas. The dedicated staff at Windham are committed to empowering students by celebrating their educational milestones, aiming to boost self-esteem and fostering success.

Windham's vision is focused on preparing students through a comprehensive approach, encompassing educational

achievements, career and technical education (CTE), academic instruction and life skills training. The overarching objective of the district is to enhance students' readiness for postsecondary education and successful integration into the workforce within their respective communities.

Characteristics of the typical academic student entering Windham programs:

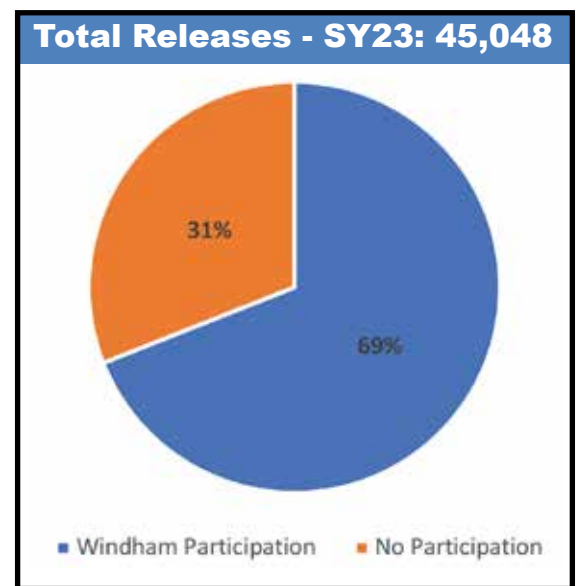
- Dropped out of school in ninth grade
- Fifth grade reading level
- Average age of 32
- Cognitive behavioral needs
- History of academic challenges
- Requires workforce training



## Windham School District Students Reentering Communities in SY23

During SY23, 45,048 individuals returned to their communities from the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ). Of these individuals, 31,187 participated in Windham programming. The following statistics highlight the educational accomplishments of those individuals during SY23:

- 69% participated in educational programming during the history of their incarceration;
- 7,695 earned an HSE certificate;
- 12,968 completed CTE training; and
- 16,398 completed life skills courses.



The releasees that did not receive services may have received other programs and services through TDCJ.

## Educational Services Provided During SY23

- 47,462 students with varying educational backgrounds engaged in Windham educational services in SY23.
- During SY23, TDCJ had an average population of 126,137 residents at the end of each month. Of those, an average of 117,961 were on TDCJ-operated facilities. From this population, Windham served the highest-priority students as resources allowed, based on their ages, community reentry dates and educational needs.

# Empowering Exceptional Learners

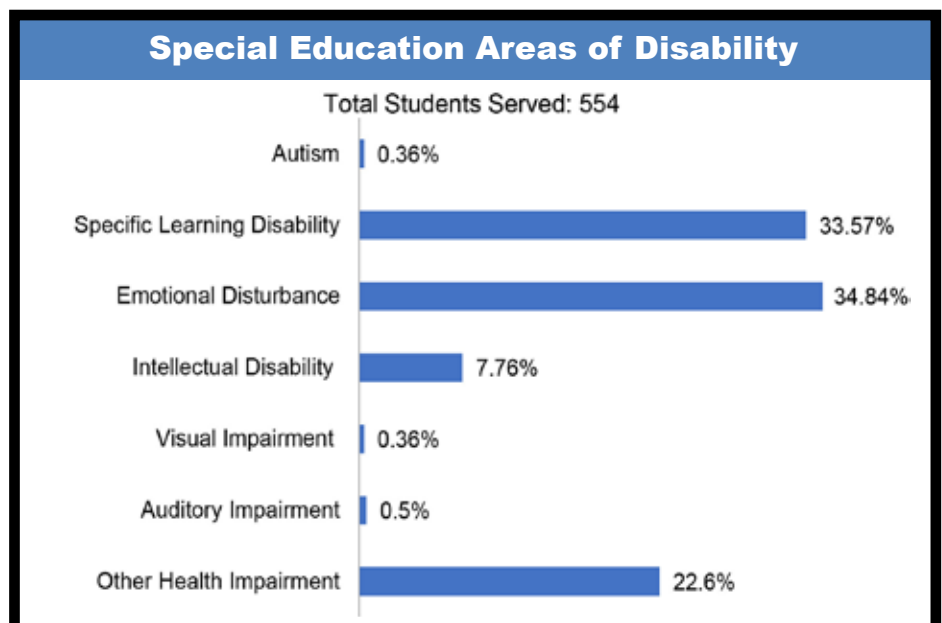
Windham's devotion to serving a diverse student population within TDCJ is evident in the array of instructional strategies and services offered throughout the district. Windham provides a comprehensive range of options to address the varied individual needs of students, ensuring they receive education and training that is both relevant and meaningful.

Windham utilizes various Child Find methods to identify students within the district who meet eligibility requirements for special education services. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) enables all students with a disability the right to receive a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) according to 34 C.F.R. Part 300; 19 T.A.C. Chapters 75, 89.

Windham receives federal funding through TEA under Title I, Part D, Subpart 1 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, and Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA-B), which provides supplemental support to eligible students under the age of 22. The support helps students participate in educational opportunities with the goal of earning an HSE certificate or high school diploma.

The district delivers a range of instructional, transitional and social-emotional services by incorporating inclusion support within general education classes. Accommodations are offered through direct and indirect support, tutoring and supplementary services.

The Special Education and Federal Programs department is actively enhancing educational and transitional services for young learners and students in restrictive housing. Additionally, Windham is seeking opportunities to offer social-emotional lessons for youthful learners that will incorporate a fitness component. Establishing partnerships with external agencies and groups ensures sustainable resources are available to remove obstacles for successful reentry.





# Windham School District's 2030 Plan:

## *Advancing Our Vision to Better Serve Our Students, Their Families and Our Texas Communities*

The vision of the Windham School District is to empower students and transform lives through excellence in education. With new programs and collaborative partnerships, Windham's 2030 Plan positions the district for the future. Through unwavering dedication to the mission, staff and students, the potential is limitless.



*Scan for 2030 Plan Video*

### **2030 Plan Core Targets:**

- Career and Community
- Educational Programs
- Communication and Culture
- Technology Advancements

### **CAREER AND COMMUNITY**

College and career readiness focuses on empowering individuals with the educational foundation, CTE skills and personal development necessary for successful integration into the workforce and society. Windham will introduce a comprehensive college and career readiness curriculum across all programs including an annual college and career day. This initiative will help to ensure that enrolled students are well-prepared and positioned for success in their educational and professional pursuits.

Windham remains dedicated to cultivating partnerships with employers, agencies and community organizations with the goal of boosting the employment rate in the field of training of eligible students and graduates to 95%, prior to their return to Texas communities. Collaborating closely with TDCJ's Reentry and Integration Division, Windham will facilitate the use of technology for important aspects including resume creation, job applications and interviews.

During the 88th Legislative Session, House Bill 3743 was passed, enabling graduates of regulated trade programs to apply for occupational licenses through the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR), prior to reentry. This significant development will decrease the time it takes to attain licenses, ultimately, helping district alumni obtain employment in their fields of training sooner. As part of Windham's 2030 Plan, the College and Career Readiness department will work diligently to achieve a 90% success rate in students obtaining occupational licenses prior to reentering their communities.

To bolster support during the job search and reentry process, Windham is taking proactive measures. The district aims to provide students with a designated email address, promoting effective communication and digital literacy.



Exciting developments are on the horizon, including the creation of an online forum where Windham alumni can share successes, discuss challenges and offer suggestions. Windham is also preparing to host in-person and virtual annual alumni events, fostering connections and community. Additionally, a dedicated social media group will be established, providing a digital space for ongoing engagement. These initiatives enhance communication, networking and support for Windham's extended community.



## COMMUNICATION AND CULTURE

Communication and culture play pivotal roles in shaping the learning environment, fostering rehabilitation and preparing individuals for successful integration. Windham is dedicated to enhancing student satisfaction through expanded family engagement, including virtual participation in graduations for families and friends.

To continue meeting staff needs, Windham expanded in-person and virtual professional development opportunities, employing digital media to efficiently communicate district updates. Additionally, Windham is actively developing a leadership academy to foster the growth and career advancement of its dedicated staff. These actions demonstrate Windham's commitment to promoting a positive and supportive educational environment for both students and staff.

## EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Educational programs in the correctional setting play a crucial role in promoting rehabilitation, fostering personal and professional growth and reducing recidivism. By implementing extensive and comprehensive programs, Windham aims to expand the provision of educational services, increasing student capacity by 25%. Through implementing CTE programs with stackable credentials at each campus, Windham will ensure the highest level of success for students. District leadership will collaborate with experts to track industry trends and workforce demands. Windham will actively support the placement of graduates into apprenticeship, employment and postsecondary education programs.

## TECHNOLOGY ADVANCEMENTS

Technology advancements in correctional settings brings several benefits, impacting various aspects of student growth, staff efficiency and overall campus performance. Windham's 2030 Plan seamlessly integrates and elevates technology across campuses, ensuring that both staff and students are equipped with the necessary technology and resources to propel them confidently into the future. Classrooms will feature a range of enhancements, including secure internet connectivity, interactive whiteboards, digital attendance and virtual and augmented reality programs. Students will be able to interact with guest speakers through remote technology and be able to engage in virtual field trips and industry visits. Through an online portal, Windham alumni will be able to obtain secure access to their educational records, certifications and portfolio materials. Technology enhancements exemplify Windham's commitment to progression of education in corrections.





*Academics:*

# TAILORED LEARNING FOR BRIGHT, PRODUCTIVE FUTURES



Windham Academic programs provide men and women the opportunity to complete essential courses, leading to their HSE certificates or diplomas and opening doors to new possibilities. Throughout the SY23, Windham served approximately 19,000 students in academic programs. Through TABE®, students' Educational Functioning Levels are identified and monitored to reflect instructional gains or need for remediation.





The TABE® is utilized to assess student levels by testing students in Math, Reading and Language to determine readiness to progress into GED® testing. TABE® is a comprehensive academic assessment used on Windham campuses throughout the state. TABE® allows teachers to determine areas of excellence as well as needed growth. The information provided by TABE® results allow teachers to develop academic education plans for each student to close learning gaps, improving the GED® testing experience.

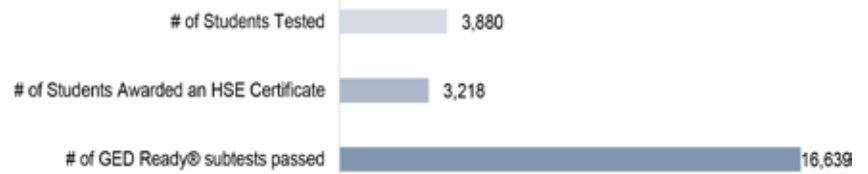
The instructional model encompasses a blend of whole-class, small-group and individualized instruction. Windham supplies academic teachers with resources to enhance students' classroom experience. The district provides professional development to maintain and enhance instructional strategies and techniques, as well as elevate networking and collaboration opportunities.

### Distinct Academic Participants\* = 18,726

Academic I, II, III	18,433
English as a Second Language	306
Title I Students	1,392

*\* 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.*

### 83% Earned an HSE Certificate During SY23



### National Reporting System (NRS)

#### Educational Functioning Levels: 2022-2023

Beginning Educational Functioning Level	Grades within Functioning Level	Number of Students Beginning - Reading	Number of Students Beginning - Language	Number of Students Beginning - Math
Level 1 (0.0 to 1.9)	K & 1st	284	612	348
Level 2 (2.0 to 3.9)	2nd & 3rd	1,733	2,675	2,085
Level 3 (4.0 to 5.9)	4th & 5th	3,202	2,887	4,311
Level 4 (6.0 to 8.9)	6th, 7th & 8th	2,677	905	1,376
Level 5 (9.0 to 10.9)	9th & 10th	462	108	22
Level 6 (11.0 to 12.9)	11th & 12th	1,903	1,874	1,871







# ADVANCING THE BENCHMARK OF SUCCESS

## Hayden Harris

### *Windham Alumnus*

Living in a cycle of instant gratification and self-centered pursuits, Hayden Harris, Windham School District (Windham) alumnus, found himself within the clutches of addiction and the shadows of juvenile detention centers, consistently escaping the full weight of his actions. When the familiar pattern of leniency shattered, Harris was forced to face the bleak reality before him within the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.

Recognizing the need to showcase his commitment to change, Harris made the decision to enroll in Windham programming, choosing to pursue certifications within Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC).

"While looking for the available classes, I didn't exactly know what I wanted to do," Harris said. "I just thought, 'If I were to stick with it, which one do I feel I would have the most success in?' I chose HVAC. Once I started the class, I became invested. I felt accomplished because I was actually showing initiative and sticking to the program."

While participating in the HVAC program at Windham's Robertson campus, Harris emphasized the crucial role played by his instructor, Shane Pritchard, who exhibited a genuine dedication to the success and advancement of his students. Despite grappling with occasional frustration over the curriculum, Harris acknowledged that his committed instructor consistently believed in his capabilities, even during moments when Harris lacked belief in himself.

"You're speaking about electricity, pressure and refrigerants, and to somebody that has never done it before, it can be extremely overwhelming and easy to lose motivation," Harris said. "Mr. Pritchard gets it, he sees that in his students, and he takes the time to ask and answer questions individually, no matter how many times he has to repeat, explain or demonstrate the lesson."

Before reentering his community, the concept of employment seemed distant and unfamiliar. Without any job experience and previously defined skill set, Harris found himself at a crossroads. However, a turning point emerged when an opportunity to display his HVAC knowledge presented itself, leading him to become a lead service technician for a successful HVAC company in Abilene, Texas.

"I felt good moving forward having my HVAC certifications and being able to say that I knew how to do this trade," Harris said. "That got me to the first point in my life where I was proud of myself for completing something, and I felt good about the direction I was heading because HVAC was opening doors for me."

Reflecting on his own journey, Harris capitalized on the invaluable role of education within corrections, encouraging current students to seize the opportunity for personal growth.

"I would advise [them] to invest in themselves while they can," Harris said. "The curriculum and instructors are there to help you."

Following the dedicated pursuit of his HVAC certifications and the subsequent establishment of a thriving career, Harris has not only reached significant professional milestones, but has also surpassed personal goals that he once deemed beyond his grasp.

"Through my HVAC certifications and my career, I set goals for myself like purchasing a vehicle, purchasing a house and building good credit," Harris said. "I was able to successfully accomplish all of those things to provide for myself, my family and my 11-month-old daughter."

# Building Bonds Through Books: Strengthening Family Connections

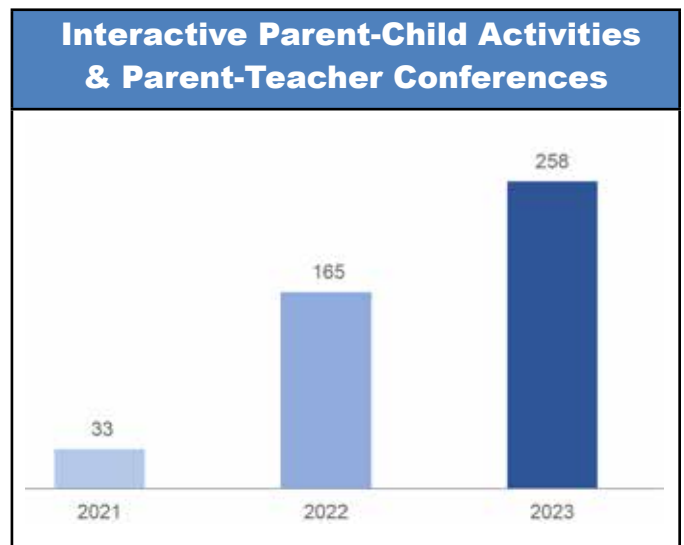
Dedicated to breaking the cycle of generational incarceration, the Family Literacy program offered by Windham empowers parents within TDCJ to engage as effective, supportive and involved collaborators in their children's education.

In the 2022-2023 school year, Windham secured funding to transition the Family Literacy program from a pilot to a permanent program for the 2023-2024 school year. This support ensures accessibility for eligible residents, aiming to actively engage them in their children's education. The overarching objective of this program is to diminish generational incarceration by empowering affected children through education.

Throughout the school year, the Family Literacy program focused on improving the skills of program coordinators through professional development and collaboration with school districts and regional education service centers (ESC) to access resources to better serve families. District family literacy coordinators attended training organized by ESC 16 for individuals supporting parent-child interactions. Attendees from across the state gathered to share strategies regarding effective communication and proactive interactions within families.

Additionally, coordinators engaged in an annual workshop to brainstorm ways to improve services and identify instructional resources. Windham showcased its Family Literacy pilot at various conferences organized by: National Center for Families Learning, Texas Alliance of Black School Educators, TEA and ESC 16.

Windham introduced an additional aspect to the Family Literacy program in the 2022-2023 school year, facilitating Family Literacy Day events across five campuses. These events featured literacy-focused games and activities, creating memorable experiences for children in the program. Participants engaged in meaningful conversations with caregivers, highlighting the importance of their role, significance of education and generating positive momentum moving forward. Caregivers joined focus groups facilitated by Windham staff, offering invaluable input on the program's impact. Feedback included interest in reading among children, excitement for parent-child interactions and an increased sense of accountability.







*High School Program:*

# THE FOUNDATION OF EDUCATIONAL JOURNEYS



In school year 2022-2023, Windham achieved significant progress in advancing its high school program, operating at both the Matthew Gaines campus in Midway, Texas, and the Jovita González de Mireles (Mireles) campus in Gatesville, Texas. High school plays a pivotal role in reigniting the educational journeys of young students and expanding opportunities for growth both inside and outside the classroom. With a focus on fostering positive educational experiences, Windham's high school program provides a spectrum of academic courses leading to a high school diploma, CTE certificates, industry-based certifications, dual credit and pathways for enrollment in postsecondary education programs.





To be eligible for the high school program, students undergo screening based on criteria such as age, length of sentence, custody level and prior credits earned. Both campuses extend Title I and special education services to eligible students. Windham provides a standard high school program that includes dual enrollment options through partnerships with Lee College and Central Texas College, enabling students to concurrently earn high school and college credits.

The school year runs year-round from August to July, at both high school campuses. Throughout the 2022-2023 school year, a total of 90 men were enrolled at Matthew Gaines High School, with 28 graduating and earning their high school diploma; 44 women were enrolled at Mireles High School, resulting in high school diplomas for eight women.

Windham's high school educators are certified by the State Board of Educator Certification in their respective subject areas. The program has taken a pioneering step within the district by incorporating online access through Cradlepoint to enrich the curriculum. Classrooms are equipped with laptops, allowing students to engage with online courses, introducing them to a contemporary form of education and amplifying their success with the curriculum.

The advancement of the high school program represents Windham's commitment to offering students an opportunity to achieve an educational milestone that many considered unattainable. Through the program, students not only accomplish academic goals, but also cultivate a sense of self-confidence, empowering them to pursue further education in career and technical fields and postsecondary programs. This newfound confidence positions them for success upon integration into their communities.





# ADVANCING THE BENCHMARK OF SUCCESS

## Graci Earhart

*Windham Alumna*

For Graci Earhart, prison was a defining time in her life, yet it is not what defines her. During her incarceration at the Hilltop Unit in the early 2000s, Earhart recognized an opportunity to rewrite the narrative of her life. Instead of complaining about her circumstances, she looked for Windham School District (Windham) programs in which she could enroll.

"I saw a poster announcing the creation of a new computer class, and the other classes had waiting lists," Earhart said, describing one of the determining factors that directed her choice of signing up for Windham's Business Information Management (BIM) class. "Plus, I thought it sounded like it would be something interesting to learn."

Today, Earhart works at Mission Waco, where she assists those experiencing homelessness by utilizing the technical and interpersonal skills she learned in BIM. The most rewarding part of her job is being able to conduct internet job searches and assist people with obtaining paperwork for identification purposes and employment.

"That one Windham class [BIM] has opened a lot of doors for me," Earhart said. "Learning the skills necessary to be able to do this type of work was important, but it also taught me people skills and how to ask the right questions."

Part of controlling the narrative of her life was putting the past behind her. She views this as an important aspect of the reentry process, but she sees many former residents neglecting it.

"I am grateful to have received another chance and to be able to put that part of my life behind me," Earhart said. "I see women who are out of prison, yet that is still their identity. I try to help them see that they need to put that part of their life behind them and move forward."

Earhart admits that before her conviction and subsequent incarceration in the early 2000s, she preferred to work alone, and she rarely asked for help.

"One of the hardest things for me to learn was that it is okay to ask for help," Earhart said. "I was always of the mindset that I could figure things out on my own. After going through the BIM class, I see how important a strong support group is in being successful."

Earhart credits Windham BIM instructor Pam Patterson with showing her how to work with others. Although she did not like doing it at the time, she now recognizes the importance of that job skill.

"In Ms. Patterson's class, you had to work in teams, brainstorm together and come up with solutions to problems together. She knew that those were the skills a person must have in today's workplace," Earhart said.

The BIM class teaches students how to use the programs that are most in demand in most business settings. When Earhart was taking the class years ago, one of the software applications she learned how to use was PageMaker, a professional graphic design product. Earhart now recalls that volunteers and working professionals sometimes visited the class to discuss popular business products, such as this software.

Following her reentry in 2005, she was talking to a friend at a local church who mentioned they were looking for a secretary. They wanted someone who knew how to use the PageMaker software.

"They were having such a difficult time finding someone who knew how to use that program," Earhart said. "That was just one of those 'I will never use this stuff' moments that helped me get a job."

Earhart's successful reentry into society did not just happen, and she has a very important message for all Texas Department of Criminal Justice residents who believe their lives ended when they came to prison. Earhart said, "Incarceration doesn't have to be a hurdle, unless you make it one."



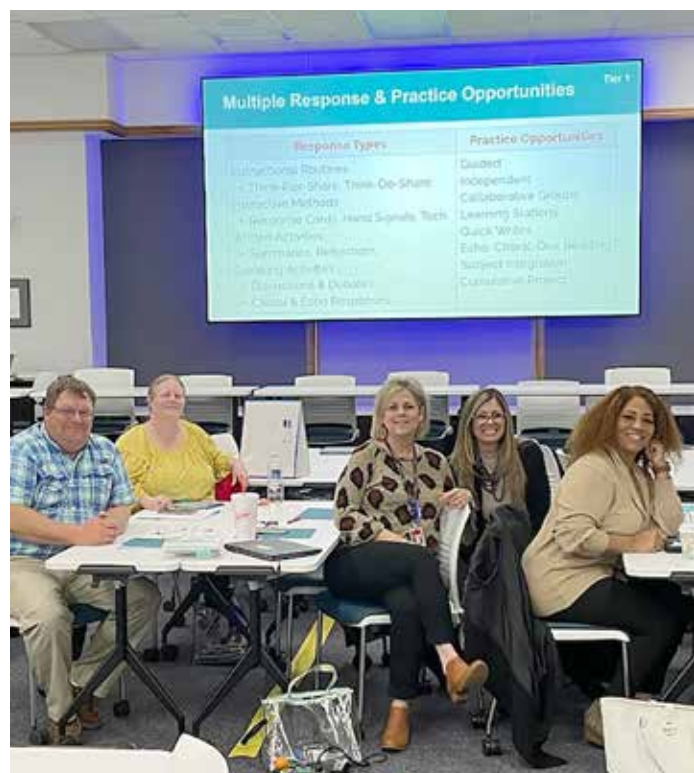
# Professional Development Fuels Educator Success

Windham recognizes the value in providing quality, thorough professional development (PD) opportunities to support staff growth. During the 2022-2023 school year, the PD department facilitated events centered around focused staff needs to enhance growth.

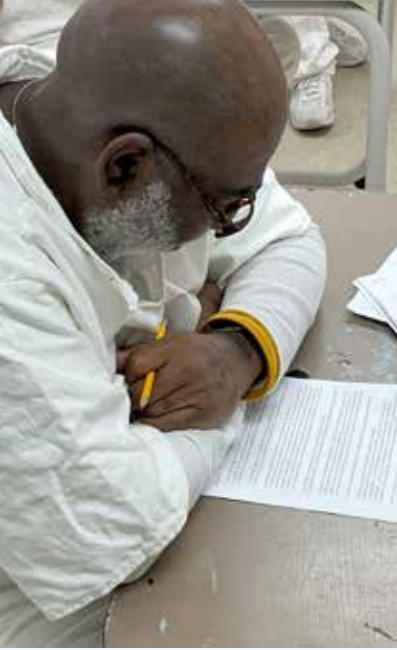
In September 2022, the first PD event of the school year was hosted for English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers. The event was held in Waco, Texas, at ESC 12. ESL teachers were provided with the opportunity to preview Aztec software for implementation in the ESL classrooms and share best teaching practices. Teachers were given updated classroom materials and resources, setting a foundation for future curriculum development.

In May 2023, a PD opportunity was provided for all Windham academic teachers. Opening the event, Keynote Speaker Dr. Manny Scott shared his passion for teaching and education, while reminding teachers of the valuable role they hold in the classroom. Mahalia Baldini, Adult Education and Literacy State Director with the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), provided an update on the dynamic partnership between Windham and TWC. Breakout sessions were facilitated by education specialists within the PD department, as well as representatives from various district partners and the Texas Center for Advancement of Literacy and Learning. Members of Windham's academic instructional staff were also invited as presenters to share best practices and network with their colleagues. A survey following the event indicated the PD proved beneficial, and suggestions were provided for future events.

Throughout the school year, nine trade-specific PD events were organized to strengthen staff skills and expand knowledge. These events included training for the following trade instructors: Automotive; Construction; Cosmetology; Culinary; Electrical; Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration; Truck Driving; Urban Farming; and Welding. By organizing PD events by trade, this allows the agenda to focus on topics that are directly related to the respective industry field, promoting individualized instruction that instructors can take back to the classroom.







*Life Skills:*

# FOSTERING A GROWTH MINDSET THROUGH FORWARD THINKING



To equip students for a productive introduction to their Texas communities, Windham provides crucial life skills courses designed to enhance both their educational and personal perspectives. The district delivers a comprehensive curriculum encompassing academic studies, technical training and essential life skills to effectively address and reshape unproductive thought patterns. Through these transformative courses, students are primed for employment and can cultivate healthier relationships with their families, fostering positive community engagement.



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

CHANGES is a 180-210 hour program offered to men and women at over 70 campuses across the district, geared toward students within two years of potential reentry. Throughout the duration of the course, students are introduced to soft skills and necessary characteristics needed to productively navigate their communities and the workforce. The CHANGES curriculum consists of in-depth, paramount concepts including personal development, healthy relationships, living responsibly, drug education, psychological development, health education and resources for reentry. These concepts are essential to developing a healthy cognitive mindset, resulting in increased growth for the students, their families and communities. In addition, the CHANGES program prepares students to enter the workforce by developing resumes and completing mock interviews.

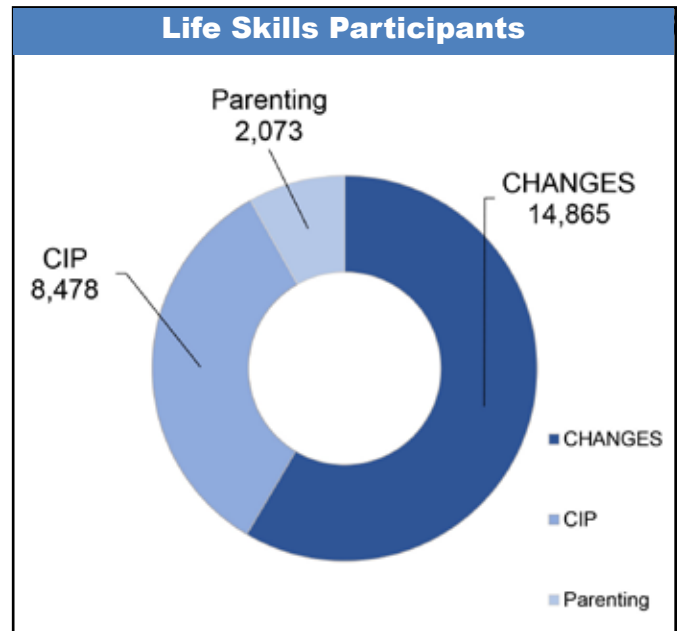
### Cognitive Intervention Program (CIP)

CIP is a 150-hour program addressing thought patterns. The primary objective of this program is to illustrate the interconnectedness of thoughts, attitudes and beliefs with behavior and impulse regulation. Through instructional methods, role-playing and group exercises, CIP curriculum guides students in understanding how to fulfill their own needs while respecting the rights of others. Skills acquired in the CIP not only boost students' self-esteem but also empower them with the confidence to become valuable members of their families and communities.

### Parenting

The Parenting program, spanning 70-90 hours, focuses on fostering effective parenting skills through the utilization of the Prep to Parent® curriculum. Employing a communication-based and interactive educational model, this program is crafted to nurture and enhance healthy family relationships. It covers essential aspects such as relationship needs, discipline, well-being, healthy communication skills, and household management. Participants actively engage in an introspective process aimed at promoting positive personal change.

Life Skills	
Program	% Complete of Those Eligible
CHANGES	76%
CIP	80%
Parenting	89%







*Dr. Lane Murray Excellence  
in Teaching Award*  
**TEACHER of the YEAR**  
**ELIZABETH  
CASTEEN**

In the midst of a fulfilling career as a teacher and school counselor, Elizabeth Casteen found herself at a crossroads, ready to embrace change.

“I had a coworker explain to me what Windham was and I started doing some research,” Casteen said. “I had a very calm peace about it from the very beginning, and I felt that it was a big sign that this is the right direction for me to go.”

Her background has since been instrumental in guiding CHANGES students at Windham’s Allred campus through the intricacies of life skills. Through her compassionate approach, she instills in her students the belief that growth is not only possible, but essential, motivating them to overcome obstacles while thriving personally and academically.

These qualities, among many others, are what set her apart when being named Windham’s 2023-2024 Dr. Lane Murray Excellence in Teaching Award recipient, the highest honor Windham teachers can achieve within the district. This accolade signifies the exceptional contributions being made toward the educational journey of students within TDCJ. Casteen’s dedication to her students and classroom was a contributing factor to her selection as the district’s 2023-2024 Life Skills Teacher of the Year.

Casteen said her teaching style is a blend of communication and collaboration, where discussions flourish and ideas are freely shared. She doesn’t just instruct; she facilitates, encouraging her students to express their thoughts while equipping them with the capability to reconsider their perspectives.

“I like to be the vessel,” Casteen said. “I don’t want my students to just take what I say and label it as right or wrong. I want to use my background and persuasive instruction to challenge them to think in a way they may have never considered.”

Casteen’s dedication to growth through education is notable, as she said she constantly incorporates real-world examples into her instruction, illustrating to her students the importance of taking their environment into consideration when faced with making decisions. Her approach nurtures confidence within her students, letting them know they are not alone in their transformative journey.

“I am a big supporter of positive reinforcement,” Casteen said. “Wherever they’re at in their journey, any bit of improvement, I’m going to celebrate that.”

In the heart of her classroom, Casteen has discovered an unexpected source of wisdom in Dr. Seuss’ timeless tale, “Oh, the Places You’ll Go.” As each of her classes prepare to graduate, she reads them the children’s classic to uncover the profound truth behind the author’s words — that the resilience within them could conquer any obstacle.

“Sometimes I will point out the very obvious connections, but I don’t always,” Casteen said. “I want to see if they will point it out, and a lot of times they do. They’ll say, ‘Hey, we’re about to go out into the world and we may feel alone.’ I let them know that yes, they may feel alone, but it’s okay. Dr. Seuss knew that, and he says it’s okay.”

For Casteen, education is not just about imparting knowledge; it’s about kindling the spark of inspiration within each student. She has become a guiding light, encouraging her students to navigate the complexities of life with wisdom and confidence in themselves.

To depart each day, Casteen ends by giving her students the simple reminder to “make good choices.” By doing so, she plants the seed of hope, self-discipline and motivation to move forward with success.

“I tell them to make good choices every single day before walking out of the room,” Casteen said. “When they come and tell me about the good choices that they made when they had an opportunity to make a bad one, that is my favorite part.”



*Academic*

**TEACHER of the YEAR**

**NICOLE  
THOMPSON**



With an illustrious career in education spanning over 30 years, Nicole Thompson, Windham's 2023-2024 Academic Teacher of the Year, has devoted her time to developing her students' minds for brighter futures.

Her influence among the Paducah, Texas, school system extended far beyond the classroom, encompassing diverse roles that showcased her unwavering dedication to her career and her students. From teaching math for grades 9-12, to serving as a statistician for the high school basketball team and more, Thompson has worn many hats, enriching the educational experience for all.

Following so many years working within the public school system in rural Texas, Thompson felt it was time for a career change. Upon the influence of the local Windham staff, she established roots as an academic teacher at the Roach campus, located in Childress.

"For a couple of years, I just thought and prayed about it," Thompson said. "I thought that I needed to branch out, I needed to try new things. [Windham] hired me and I just can't tell you how gratifying and rewarding working for Windham truly is."

Thompson stands as a testament to the transformative power of education, especially for at-risk students. Having previously served at a Title I school, Thompson honed her skills in nurturing the potential of every individual, regardless of their background.

"I believe that the students I work with just need support," Thompson said. "They need guidance, and for someone to just say, 'You can do this. You're smart.' Some of them have never been told that they can succeed."

Having to adapt to the reality of education in corrections, Thompson has evolved her teaching and leadership style to cater to the diverse needs of all of her students. After feeling overwhelmed stepping into the Windham classroom for the first time, Thompson said she found herself transitioning from the initial task of teaching a single lesson to all students, to employing a personalized, group-based strategy. She found that this arrangement allowed for focused, intensive small group instruction, ensuring that each student receives the support and guidance they may require.

Although her job may be to equip students with the knowledge and resources they need to successfully earn their HSE certificate, Thompson also helps to instill confidence and boost self-esteem among everyone, with unwavering kindness and compassion. In return, she said her students have taught her resiliency, and the power to be positive among negative situations.

"I hope they depart from my classroom with some confidence in themselves," Thompson said. "A lot of it is they just need support. They need kindness. They need compassion. [These students] are so positive. It is just flabbergasting. They have such hardworking attitudes, it is their goal to earn their HSE, and they just live and breathe it."

Thompson has found a way to leave an unforgettable mark on her students as they move forward with their educational goals. "I would love to give them all a graduation gift but since I can't do that, I always sing for them during the graduation ceremony," Thompson said. "Some of the students, when they join my class, will tell me that they hear that I sing. They always ask me to sing something for them. I tell them, 'Oh no, you have to earn your HSE and go to graduation to hear me sing.'"

Thompson's ability to create a unique classroom experience, while adapting her methods to meet individual student needs is inspiring and are among the many reasons she was chosen as Windham's 2023-2024 Academic Teacher of the Year.



## *Career and Technical Education*

# **TEACHER of the YEAR**

## **STEPHEN FREDRICKS**

Stephen Fredricks, Windham's 2023-2024 CTE Teacher of the Year, began his career fresh out of college, working his way up the construction industry ranks. Following the upheaval of the 2008 economic crisis, he found himself shifting towards a new career path. Fredricks transitioned from the construction site to TDCJ, with over 13 years working in maintenance. Today, in his third year as a

Windham Construction Technology instructor at the Estelle campus, his journey exemplifies his commitment to making a difference in the lives of others.

"Sometimes God changes your path and puts you right where you're supposed to be," Fredricks said. "I'm here right now." For him, teaching extends far beyond the confines of textbooks and curricula. He believes in the value of real world context, bridging the gap between instruction and reality. "My favorite part about what I teach is not just the construction, not the hammers or saws," Fredricks said. "It is talking about how to go about job interviews and how they need to handle themselves when they're at work every day."

Guiding his students toward a path of success, regardless of the career they may choose, Fredricks said he empowers his students to navigate the challenges of life in every aspect. "I have curriculum to teach, and I do my very best with that," Fredricks said. "My job is to help these students be successful I have to teach them to have the motivation not to let past habits creep back into their life again. We learn skills to use on the job site, while applying them to real-world scenarios."

Fredricks said he believes in the power of equipping his students with the essential skills and mindset needed to reshape their narrative. Each day, he presents his students with thought-provoking quotes, ranging from motivational to introspective. Students are then tasked with interpreting the quote in their own words.

"We talk about our quote of the day for about 15 minutes and I randomly pick someone to stand up, look me in the eye and tell me what they think the quote means. We go around until everyone has had an opportunity to speak," Fredricks said. "I want them to be able to walk out and have all of the tools they need in their utility belt to make new reputations for themselves."

To Fredricks, the most invaluable reward is not a paycheck, but the moment when the light of understanding flickers to life in his students' eyes. He said he holds his students to high standards, not out of sternness, but out of genuine care, sculpting boundaries to foster growth.

"Once they realize that I'm holding them to this certain standard, all of a sudden, a switch flips and they respect me," Fredricks said. "They start buying into what I'm telling them. You can't sign a paycheck big enough for that." Fredricks' mission extends far beyond the classroom. For him, his ultimate goal is to illuminate a future of promise and redemption for his students.

"I had a student, following his reentry, contact me to say thank you." He told a story about his prison experience and the transformation that occurred in his life. Epitomizing the essence of a truly dedicated educator, Fredricks fosters not just excellence within the construction field, but lifelong wisdom and resilience in the face of the real world.

"I am a two-time cancer survivor," Fredricks said. "If I die tomorrow, and you took my wife and two boys out of the equation, in the last three years of working with Windham I have done something with my life."



# STAFF of the YEAR

## TERESA KOONSMAN

### *Student Advisor of the Year*

Following a career in public education spanning two decades, Teresa Koonsman has dedicated the last four and a half years to serving students at Windham's Sayle campus, where she currently holds the role of student advisor. Koonsman proudly identifies as a strong advocate for both her students and colleagues, diligently fostering a collaborative, positive and motivating environment. Known for her selfless and honorable personality, she consistently prioritizes the well-being of others, exemplifying leadership by going above and beyond to ensure tasks are completed successfully. She works diligently to ensure all of her students are well prepared for success and maintain an educational pathway that accurately aligns with their career goals. Her journey stands as a testament to perseverance and tenacity, making her a shining beacon of support for both students and staff alike.



## KIMBERLEY TREDWAY

### *Support Staff of the Year*

Kimberley Tredway has dedicated the past 11 years to serving as the administrative assistant at the Clements campus. Recognizing the pivotal role she plays in the day-to-day operations, Tredway is known for her consistently helpful demeanor and willingness to provide a listening ear, contributing to the development of effective problem-solving strategies. Emphasizing the importance of clear communication, Tredway is committed to ensuring tasks are executed with utmost proficiency. Tredway takes great pride in working alongside her colleagues at the Clements campus, where a cohesive effort is made to attain shared aspirations. In her current role, Tredway draws immense inspiration from organizing graduation ceremonies and witnessing students achieve their long-awaited goals. She stands as a valuable asset to the Clements campus and the district at large, showcasing exemplary teamwork in every facet and circumstance.



## BRIAN ROBINSON

### *Volunteer of the Year*

A seasoned professional with over 30 years in industrial construction, Brian Robinson's transformative journey into volunteering with Windham ignited his commitment to making a difference.

Robinson has spoken with hundreds of students within TDCJ, emphasizing opportunities within the construction industry and engaging with individuals to impart hope for a brighter future. His essential qualities as a volunteer include empathy, patience and a steadfast commitment to simply listening — a testament to the impact a compassionate presence can have on those searching for inspiration.

Through his volunteer work, Robinson has become a beacon of hope for the district and its students, leading him to receive Windham's Judy Burd Award during the Governor's 2023 Criminal Justice Volunteer Service Awards. The accolade is named in honor of Judy Burd, a curriculum specialist renowned for creating the nationally recognized pre-release program. By sharing his experiences and demonstrating that there is a promising future beyond incarceration, Robinson believes he has made a meaningful impact on those who have heard his message.

In the process, volunteering has become a catalyst for Robinson's personal growth and development. It has heightened his awareness of how he interacts with others, fostering a deeper sense of compassion for those facing challenges.





# ADVANCING THE BENCHMARK OF SUCCESS

## David Ernst

### *Windham Alumnus*

David Ernst's experiences within Windham programming, propelled by the desire to embrace change, encompassed newfound responsibilities and a broader perspective. Formerly driven by the pursuit of money, while navigating the world around him, he underwent a profound transformation upon entering TDCJ.

"My priorities were to get money the wrong way," Ernst said. "My priorities now are paying my bills and my sobriety. I'm a supervisor at my job now, so I have a lot more responsibilities. I'm not [just] depending on myself; I have other people that are dependent on me now."

Completing Windham's Cognitive Intervention Program (CIP), OSHA-10, Construction Fundamentals and earning his High School Equivalency (HSE) certificate, Ernst acquired the essential skills that support his success in his current role as a supervisor at a low voltage system company. In this capacity, he contributes to vital services, such as installing access points for internet connectivity and power of ethernet.

"I got my HSE. I finally started applying myself," Ernst said. "There was a moment that clicked for me. I knew once I got my HSE, I would be able to go to college if I wanted to. At least I would be able to check that box."

In the wake of a transformative reentry to his community, Ernst took pivotal steps marked by a commitment to personal growth and professional development.

"My employers knew I was experienced because we are on job sites all of the time; we're going to have hard hats and other personal protective equipment," Ernst said. "OSHA-10 was a big class for me to have taken, because when people hear that you've taken that course, they know you're trained in workplace safety."

Embracing his experience in CIP, Ernst continues to rely on the invaluable resources he has gained. He upholds the practices of journaling, serving as a reflective tool to scrutinize past actions and foster transformative changes in thought processes.

"Having all of these resources now, it is a great feeling," Ernst said. "I have so many opportunities coming my way. Being able to just wake up every day and look forward to the day instead of not, is a great feeling."

Ernst said he feels that success is no longer elusive; instead, it has become a tangible reality, reinforcing the profound impact that educational initiatives can have in shaping a positive and promising future.

"If you're not participating in those programs, you could be doing nothing with your time, nothing to change your way of thinking," Ernst said. "[Windham] teaches you the tools that you're going to need to apply them to a life outside of TDCJ. If you take those courses and take them seriously, applying yourself, then the opportunities will come."

A testament to the transformative power of personal change, Ernst encourages individuals to reshape their futures through unwavering determination and steadfast commitment to self-improvement.

"I was a product of someone that didn't want to change, and I decided to reverse that," Ernst said. "The change works. So, my best advice would be to not listen to others, listen to yourself and don't be afraid to make those changes."

Ernst's tale of resilience is not just a personal victory, but a beacon of hope for those seeking inspiration on the path to redemption and achievement through education.



# Correctional Education Association Accreditation and Educational Excellence

The Correctional Education Association (CEA) is a professional association of educators and administrators working in adult and juvenile correctional settings all over the world. CEA provides critical training, cutting-edge research and valuable networking opportunities to deliver effective, life-changing education and training to students. Windham recently began the CEA accreditation process, which includes extensive documentation and auditing processes. There are many benefits to being a CEA accredited district, such as completion of comprehensive program assessments by experts. Staff morale is improved through recognition of professional efforts and application of enhanced accountability. District staff are also able to enhance their understanding of policies and procedures, contributing to improved outcomes.

CEA accreditation is an example of Windham's commitment to excellence in education in corrections. Pre-audit and post-audit assessments are utilized to provide campuses the opportunity to reflect on program strengths and weaknesses, offering chances to mitigate any potential gaps through collaboration.

The district is extremely grateful for the support of TDCJ as campuses prepare and complete audits. CEA has a memorandum of understanding with the American Correctional Association (ACA) permitting audits for CEA accreditation to be accepted and applied to ACA audits. During the 2022-2023 school year, the Wynne and Roach campuses were granted CEA accreditation. Windham is excited to continue earning CEA accreditation for additional campuses and improving district processes, policies and programs for all staff and students.







*Career and Technical Education:*

# PAVING THE PATH TO CAREER SUCCESS



Elevating expectations guides the Windham mission, supported by over 40 CTE programs. These programs provide students with the tools to effectively navigate workplaces and industries, using curricula aligned with industry standards and the instruction by experienced educators. Safety training and standardized testing further enhance students' preparation for workforce demands.

Certifications	
CTE Certificates Earned (% completions of eligible)	12,110 (87%)
Industry Certificates Earned	16,861






Windham's CTE teachers actively cultivate essential soft skills such as problem-solving, effective communication and time management, setting high expectations for students' job performance. This emphasis on a well-rounded skill set reinforces the district's commitment to developing technical proficiency and the qualities that contribute to overall professional success.

Through ongoing partnerships with industry leaders, Windham ensures curriculum remains relevant and aligned with the present-day workforce. This commitment is evident in the district's proactive approach to staying updated with job market trends. The addition of three new programs - Heavy Equipment, Certified Production Technician and Truck Driving - supported by the Jobs and Education for Texans grant exemplifies Windham's dedication to meeting the evolving needs of the workforce.

Windham's CTE programs each afford the opportunity to earn an industry-based certification or license, which allows students to be competitive in the job market. The certifications and licenses offered, including National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER), Certified Logistics Technician 4.0, ServSafe® food manager, commercial driver's license and others, validate the district's commitment to elevating skills and training and empower graduates with recognized qualifications, enhancing their employability.

Windham's CTE courses prepare students for immediate entry into the workforce and also open doors to higher education opportunities. This dual focus allows students to continue enhancing their knowledge and further elevating their careers.



CTE Programs*	
<b>Agriculture, Food &amp; Natural Resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Horticulture/Urban Farming</li> <li>• Landscape Design, Construction &amp; Maintenance</li> </ul>	<b>Manufacturing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Computerized Numerical Control (CNC) Machining</li> <li>• Production Technician</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>• Pipefitting</li> <li>• Plumbing Trades</li> <li>• Welding</li> </ul>	<b>Science, Technology, Engineering &amp; 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>Arts, A/V Technology &amp; Communication</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Printing &amp; Imaging Technology</li> </ul>	<b>Transportation, Distribution &amp; Logistics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Automotive &amp; Diesel Fundamentals</li> <li>• Automotive Specialization</li> <li>• Diesel Mechanics</li> <li>• Heavy Equipment Operator</li> <li>• Small Engine Repair</li> <li>• RV Service Technician</li> <li>• Truck Driving</li> </ul>
<b>Hospitality &amp; Tourism</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Culinary Arts</li> <li>• Customer Service Specialist</li> <li>• Hospitality &amp; Tourism</li> <li>• Restaurant Management</li> </ul>	<b>Work &amp; Career Readiness</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Career Exploration</li> <li>• Career Preparation</li> <li>• OSHA</li> <li>• Professional Communications</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 Information Management</li> </ul>	



# Forging the Workforce of Tomorrow

In collaboration with TDCJ, Windham creates practical exposure and hands-on training opportunities through Apprenticeship, On-the-Job Training (OJT) and Work Certificate programs. This empowers students to gain applicable job experience and certifications, equipping them with the skills needed to thrive in the workforce.

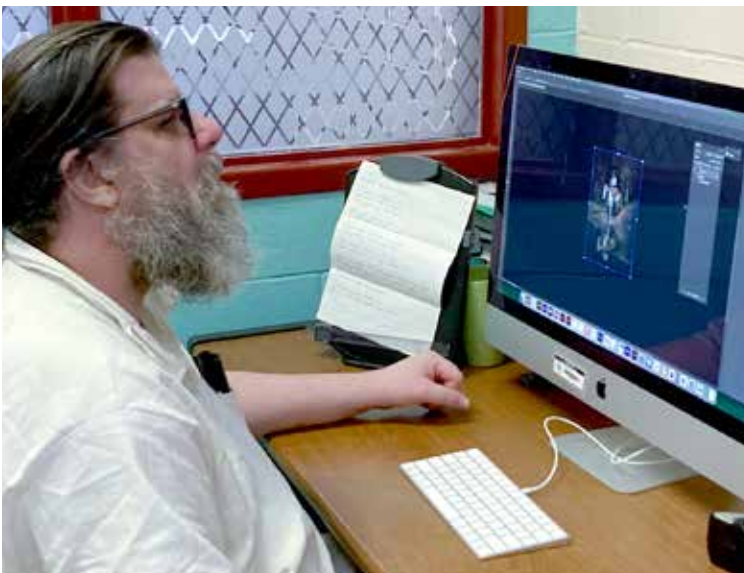
In alignment with the United States Department of Labor (DOL) requirements, Windham offers registered Apprenticeship programs to prepare students for skilled trade industries with relevant on-the-job learning, technical instruction and theoretical and practical curriculum based on the occupation. Students are required to meet the established number of training hours and skill-related experience for program completion. Upon completion of Apprenticeship programs, students are awarded a nationally recognized Certificate of Completion of Apprenticeship through the DOL.

Throughout the 2022-2023 school year, Windham's Apprenticeship program collaborated with TDCJ to identify students that have earned an industry-based certification through CTE programs. Once identified, these graduates were given the opportunity to participate in the Apprenticeship program to acquire firsthand job experience in their field of training. The Apprenticeship program enrollment increased across the district, with more than 800 registered apprentices throughout the school year.

The OJT program enables students to engage in approved Dictionary of Occupational Titles (DOT) positions for a minimum of six months, overseen by an experienced TDCJ staff member in the field of training. Throughout their participation in the OJT program, students gain a deeper understanding of job requirements, industry norms and practical skills relevant to their chosen career paths. Upon fulfilling all program requirements, students receive their OJT certificates, which boosts their prospect of securing employment when they rejoin their communities.

TDCJ's Work Certification Program offers participants the chance to obtain a certificate, once they fulfill the specified criteria. To earn this certificate, participants must successfully carry out crucial job responsibilities and remain in their positions for at least six months, demonstrating their dedication and accomplishments. These programs play a vital role in equipping students with the expertise and practical job experience needed to enhance their readiness for a career.

Apprenticeship Registered Occupations
Assembly Technician
Automobile Body Repairer
Automobile Technician Specialist
Baker
Boiler Operator
Cabinetmaker
Carpenter
Computer-Peripheral-Equipment
Cook
Diesel Mechanic
Drafter, Civil
Drafter, Mechanical
Electrician
Furniture Upholsterer
Graphic Designer
Heating & Air Conditioner Install/Service
Horticulturist
Maintenance Mechanic
Maintenance Repairer, Build
Mechanic, Industrial Truck
Metal Fabricator
Plumber
Sewing Machine Repairer
Sheet Metal Worker
Truck Driver, Heavy
Welder, Combination



# Dedication to Achieving Results Through Accountability

Windham's accountability system assists district personnel in effectively monitoring campus outcomes. This system tracks critical activities and supplies campus leadership with essential information, ensuring program success. Campus employees monitor their accountability scores using a digital dashboard, which displays statistical data throughout the year. Furthermore, district administrators utilize the accountability system to identify and address areas that require improvement, and recognize the accomplishments of faculty, staff and students. Ultimately, the system evaluates campus programs and assesses the district's overall performance.

For the 2022-2023 school year, Windham employed eight weighted metrics to determine accountability ratings. This approach aligns with TEA guidelines.

1. Percent of Attendance
2. Percent of Academic Completion
3. Percent of CTE Completion
4. Percent of Life Skills Completion
5. Percent of Compliance on Windham Audits
6. Percent of CTE Students Earning Industry Certifications
7. Percent of Students Earning an HSE Certificate or High School Diploma
8. Percent of Students Enrolled Based on Campus Capacity

## Windham School District

### 2023 Accountability Report Card



# District Wide B

## Accountability Score

Attendance:	13.15	Academic Completion:	9.12	CTE Certificate:	8.23
HSE:	12.45	Industry Certificate:	9.33	Life Skills:	7.38
Windham Audit:	8.34	Enrollment/Capacity:	15		

# Elevating Education Through Technology

## Academic Laptops

In the 2022-2023 school year, the Division of Instruction continued its support of an academic teacher laptop initiative, which began in 2021. Training was conducted during the Windham Academic Teacher Conference, where all Literacy, Title 1 and ESL teachers were provided updates and instructed on best practices. Additionally, a plan was established to collect devices from campuses and reimage them for new teachers. Throughout the year, 25 newly hired teachers were trained on how to best utilize their laptops to maximize student learning.

## Augmented Reality

Following the 2021-2022 pilot of devices that harness the power of augmented reality, 60 devices were deployed to Title 1 classrooms. Augmented reality places students in the position to manipulate three dimensional composite images in a highly interactive manner to supplement classroom instruction, as well as provide programs and academic content across multiple Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics subject areas. Due to the favorable response from teachers and students to the augmented reality laptops and content, licenses are being renewed for the upcoming school year. The program is slated to expand into career and technical education courses with support from the Information Technology (IT) department and Division of Instruction.

## Interactive Whiteboards

The 2022-2023 school year saw the addition of interactive displays into six academic classrooms across the district. These devices allow interactivity with simulations and software by enabling touchscreen on a 65-inch display. These devices have standalone functionality, hosting an Android-based operating system, or can be connected to an external computer where students interact with pre-loaded simulations and activities. Student and teacher responses to the devices have been positive.



## Virtual Reality Headsets

Windham's IT department and Division of Instruction continued their efforts to bring a virtual reality experience to students enrolled in life skills classes. Modules consist of experiences that residents will encounter upon reentry, such as navigating self-check-out at the grocery store. The scenario has been fully developed and content has been migrated to new headsets, with implementation slated for the 2023-2024 school year.







# ADVANCING THE BENCHMARK OF SUCCESS

## Nicole Ortiz

*Windham Alumna*

Battling the clutches of addiction and navigating a tumultuous life, Nicole Ortiz, Windham School District (Windham) alumna, found herself entangled within the Texas Department of Criminal Justice on multiple occasions. Over the course of several years, her struggle continued to mold itself to the perilous lifestyle she unwittingly embraced.

It wasn't until a collision of loss and stark reality compelled her to recognize the pressing need for transformation. As a turning point, she decided to enroll in Windham's Truck Driving program located at the Hilltop campus in Gatesville, Texas. It was here that her instructor, Mr. Arthur Brady, provided profound words that would serve as the catalyst for a transformative journey that would redefine the trajectory of her life.

"I will never forget Mr. Brady's words," Ortiz said. "He said, 'This is something that can change your life forever. You will never have to come back to prison.' His words of wisdom and the things he taught me, I still use to this day. I will probably think about those words for the rest of my life."

Ortiz embraced her new reality by immersing herself within the curriculum. Diving headfirst into every facet of the industry, from meticulously inspecting the truck, to ensuring the precision of every pre-trip detail, the prospect of earning her Commercial Driver's License (CDL) instilled a newfound sense of confidence for Ortiz.

"Before I went to take my CDL test, I thought I was going to have a nervous breakdown," Ortiz said. "But I went in, remembered everything I had been taught and I passed it all. I couldn't believe it, I remember saying 'Wow, I did this.'"

In addition to her remarkable achievement, Ortiz seized the opportunity to engage in the Women's Storybook Project of Texas program, affording her the chance to forge a significant connection with her son through a shared love of literature. "Getting to participate was very meaningful for me," Ortiz said. "I was putting in the kind of effort for my son that I hadn't had before, being in and out of his life the way I was. Even though I was in prison, I had the opportunity to connect with him."

Today, Ortiz commands the wheel of a cement truck at Strong Ready Mix in Abilene, where her employer has not only afforded her the opportunity to exhibit her profound efficiency she acquired during her time in the district's Truck Driving program, but also to consistently apply and uphold those learned skills. "When I went in to interview, I told my bosses everything," Ortiz said. "Even with me just being released from prison, they didn't blink twice. They hired me on the spot and said, 'Let's see what you've got.'"

Ortiz stands as one of the few women in her trade within the area. Embracing this unique position, she views it as a chance to demonstrate that even in a predominately male field, she can confidently assert herself and compete at the highest level.

"To be honest, at first I didn't think I could do this, what I'm doing today," Ortiz said. "But this has been life changing for me. It has given me confidence that I did not have before. The men around me, they all tell me what a hard worker I am and how dedicated I am to my job. Just being able to work out here and know that they have my back, everybody I work with is so down to earth."

The experiences facilitated by Windham have fundamentally altered Ortiz's perspective on life, prompting her to reevaluate her priorities moving forward. Now, her focus extends to not only securing a stable future for her son, but also cultivating a family life that they can collectively take pride in.

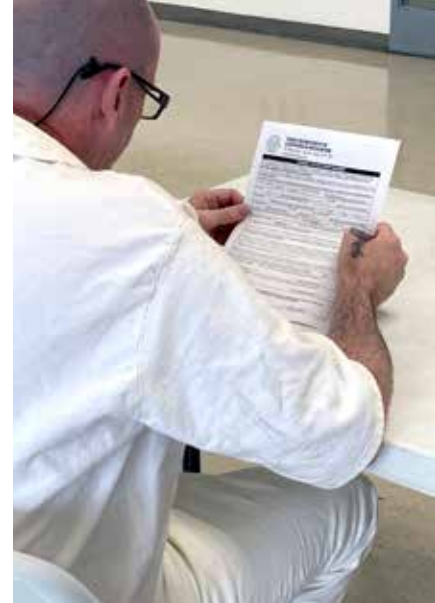
"I didn't think I could ever become the person I am today," Ortiz said. "I've always just wanted the chance to be my son's mom, to provide for him with a job that I earned. I'm very thankful to have the life that I have today. I'm thankful for Windham, for the programs they provide, because like Mr. Brady said, I'll never have to go back to prison."

# Navigating the Path to College and Career Readiness

The College and Career Readiness department is a new addition to Windham, with a primary mission of assisting Windham students and former students in preparing for successful reentry into their communities by focusing on three key areas: Occupational Licensing, Postsecondary Pathways and Career Readiness. Notably, House Bill 3743 from the 88th Legislative Session removed barriers for timely obtainment of licensure through TDLR. This legislation demonstrates a commitment to providing residents an increased chance at securing gainful employment upon their reentry.

Furthermore, the College and Career Readiness department plays a critical role in fostering college partnerships to include establishing prior learning agreements. This will allow graduates of Windham programs to advance their education and training in the field, by having earned credit for completion of Windham courses. The department is dedicated to ensuring students are informed about employment and postsecondary education programs available to them. Engaging with community, industry, regulatory and agency partners to identify career opportunities for students establishes a strong network of support for successful reentry. Additionally, the department offers support in developing and implementing college and career readiness standards.

In collaboration with TDCJ, the department will facilitate in-person and virtual interviews between employers, students and graduates, to secure meaningful employment in their field of training. The College and Career Readiness department will have a pivotal role in helping Windham students achieve a brighter future through education and career readiness, fostering hope and opportunities for successful integration into society.





# Boosting Confidence Through Innovative Student Opportunities

Opportunities for student success do not conclude upon program completion. Through the Student Ambassador and Peer Tutor programs, students are able to build confidence, refine skills necessary for successful employment and assist their peers in their educational journeys.

The Student Ambassador program came to fruition from employer feedback received at TDCJ and Windham Skills Demonstration and Career Expos, which are beneficial to students and employers. Attendees can see and speak with skilled, qualified students who will soon be seeking employment. The Skills Demonstration events also allow students to practice interaction and conversation with outside stakeholders.

Following these interactive opportunities, employers provided insightful feedback to Windham. They were impressed with the students' skill set and knowledge but expressed that students lacked confidence when speaking with them. The industry experts suggested focusing on skills such as a firm handshake, maintaining eye contact and speaking

with purpose. Through the Student Ambassador program, each class has at least one designated student ambassador. When an external stakeholder or a tour comes through the classroom, the student ambassador is responsible for greeting the visitor, introducing themselves and the teacher and delivering the class purpose and daily objective. Through the Student Ambassador program, students are able to practice the skills suggested by the employers in order to support them in their endeavors of maintaining successful employment.

Windham also provides a Peer Tutor program, which presents an opportunity for both the tutor and classmates to thrive. The Peer Tutor program is available at all Windham campuses and was implemented with the goal of increasing individualized instruction and outcomes. Residents interested in becoming peer tutors must meet established guidelines, including holding a high school diploma or high school equivalency certificate. Upon approval, the resident tutor assists the Windham teacher with facilitating small group instruction and providing additional one-on-one support to students. Through the Peer Tutor program, the tutor is able to feel a sense of purpose, while assisting their peers achieve educational success.





# Enhancing Student Success Through Department Support



## Campus Leadership

Windham's 85 campuses are organized into six regions supported by diligent, unwavering leadership. Each campus is assigned a principal to direct day-to-day operations, guide and support staff and ensure programs and students are excelling. Leading the campus principals are six regional principals, each dedicated to enhancing their campuses with support from district administration.

## Assessment, Advisement and Records (AA&R)

The AA&R department provides training and support to the district and assists residents in understanding options available on each campus. Student advisors play a significant role in identifying career pathways, which are crucial to the success of students integrating into society.

Serving as the custodian of Windham educational records, the AA&R department responds to record requests and also obtains records to verify educational histories of residents. The Windham website contains a records request form for community-based inquiries.

## Operational Support

The Operational Support department plays a critical role in monitoring and evaluating the academic performance of students in the district. The department is responsible for administering program evaluation initiatives, monitoring compliance standards, and coordinating an ITP for each student. The department administers program evaluation initiatives related to student enrollment, attendance and achievement reporting. This ensures that all students meet the district's academic standards and are progressing

towards their educational goals. The Operational Support department collaborates with external entities such as TDCJ, CEA, ACA, TEA and the Texas Workforce Investment Council to analyze data and reports to assess the ongoing performance of the district.

## Communications

The Communications department plays a crucial role in Windham by creating and advancing communication throughout the district across multiple platforms. Communications department staff handle various tasks including producing and distributing the district's monthly newsletter, Annual Performance Report, press releases, managing and enhancing social media, handling media requests, coordinating website content and creating visual materials including brochures and infographics. The department also collaborates with district alumni, offering them a platform to share their success stories in articles, interviews and panels. The department enhances the district's image among stakeholders through positive public relations, disseminating noteworthy information about the district, drafting presentations and highlighting Windham's achievements.

Windham's Communications department also oversees The ECHO, the newspaper that is written by, and distributed to, all TDCJ residents, as well as community subscribers. The ECHO is supervised by a managing editor, published 10 times a year and is regulated by the district through a memorandum of understanding with TDCJ. The ECHO is also published in a modern, magazine-like format and is available for reading on all resident tablets and the Windham website.



*Scan to view The ECHO*

## Library Services

The library provides a space for patrons to expand their interests and knowledge through literature. During the 2022-2023 school year, Windham operated 85 libraries within TDCJ facilities across the state. In order to expedite the checkout process, the district piloted a digital catalog program.

## Library Services cont'd.

Throughout the school year, the Library Services team completed the beta and field-testing stages to identify necessary program adjustments. The new check-out system is expected to be fully implemented during the 2023-2024 school year.

### Windham Library Information for SY23

Libraries Maintained*	85
Books Circulated	924,965
Books Cataloged	33,663
Books Distributed to Libraries	44,453
Books Purchased	9,919
Donated Books Cataloged (for library collections)	23,769
Donated Books Not Cataloged (for housing areas)	5,619
Deleted Books	22,058
Patrons Served	687,361

\* Does not include libraries maintained by private facilities

Throughout the 2022-2023 school year, Library Services purchased 9,919 books to expand the campus library inventories. A total of 33,757 books, new and donated, were cataloged, and 39,307 cataloged and donated books were distributed to the campus libraries. A total of 924,965 books were circulated among the district's libraries, serving over 687,361 patrons on their educational journeys through literature.

## Volunteers

Windham is grateful to have dedicated, hard-working individuals who selflessly offer their time to support district endeavors. District volunteers are equipped with an array of strengths, experiences and skills that are beneficial and support a thriving educational environment. The Windham Volunteer Committee revamped recruitment and tracking methods, which resulted in updated processes for campus-level recording of volunteer hours.

During the 2022-2023 school year, Windham approved 79 new volunteers. Windham's committed volunteers completed a total of 372 hours of service across the district. Additionally, subject experts donated 112 hours to serve as special volunteers for the district.

From former students to community members to state legislators, volunteers motivate staff and students by:

- aiding in program activities;
- encouraging personal growth and development; and
- serving as positive role models of citizenship and service.

## Information Technology (IT)

Windham's IT department supports the delivery of secure technological solutions by creating, implementing and managing services that align with the district's mission. The IT department strives to equip students and staff with the necessary tools and resources to facilitate successful educational progress. Implementation of technology, due to infrastructure, creates ongoing opportunities for improvement that are routinely recognized by staff.

Within the IT department are three functional areas to support the district and students:

- Help desk and network specialists;
- Infrastructure and network administrators; and
- Application development.





The help desk and network specialist staff support district employees and maintain IT equipment for personnel and computer labs across the state. The infrastructure and network team administers virtual and physical servers, switches, routers and other network devices. IT maintains endpoint security, email filtering and archiving, as well as complete equipment upgrades. The application development group continues to create and improve web and desktop-based applications for district personnel, as well as create user-friendly reports and dashboards to support Windham in meeting its mission.

Throughout the 2022-2023 school year, the IT department successfully accomplished numerous projects promoting district growth, including installation of 28 servers across the state to support Computer-Aided Instruction labs and antennas to boost internet connection signal strength at the high schools. The IT team also configured terminal servers with upgrades, added storage and created virtual servers for district staff to use. In addition, the IT team installed antivirus tools to detect and prevent threats effectively for enhanced device security.

## **Recreation and Wellness**

The mission of Windham's Recreation and Wellness department is to improve the health and well-being of both staff and residents by increasing self-awareness, education and promoting healthy activities that encourage long-term lifestyle changes.

During the 2022-2023 school year, the Recreation and Wellness department engaged in comradery, collaboration and self-determination through challenges for staff including; Get Fit Texas, Walk Across Texas and 10-10,000. The department also set out to elevate individual expectations in one's well-being journey by providing presentations and guided classes on the eight dimensions of wellness for residents: Environmental, Emotional, Financial, Intellectual, Occupational, Physical and Social.

Windham staff showed commitment to elevating expectations by accomplishing a third-place finish in the Get Fit Texas Challenge and completing the Walk Across Texas Challenge with a cumulative 85,403.13 miles walked. The 10-10,000 Challenge was a new experience for the district and challenged participants to gradually progress through four stages over a span of 100 days toward an independent, sustainable and healthy lifestyle. These challenges allowed Windham staff to utilize resources from the Texas Department of State Health Services and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension to earn administrative leave.

Residents were encouraged and afforded new opportunities to elevate and grow their mindsets towards a holistic well-being through wellness presentations and demonstrations. They were invited to define what their own personal wellness wheel meant to them across each dimension of wellness. Additionally, residents were challenged to evaluate their nutritional choices when utilizing the unit commissary to enhance their intellectual wellness, and other dimensional values.

By continuing to develop and increase opportunities for staff and residents, the Recreation and Wellness department aims to improve health and wellness outcomes across the district.



## **Human Resources (HR)**

The HR department manages the employee experience for district staff. By working to incorporate innovative strategies, HR team members are able to implement updated techniques in the areas of recruitment, talent management, employee selections, position classification, compensation, benefits and employee relations.

By collaborating with administrators, campus staff and the Communications department, HR works to attract qualified candidates for open positions. Current recruiting efforts include partnering with Education Service Centers across the state, utilizing job boards through the Texas Workforce Commission, attending job fairs and utilizing multiple social media platforms to expand outreach throughout the state.

In the 2022-2023 school year, the department supported 1,094.5 budgeted full-time equivalent positions. The Windham superintendent and principals, student advisors, teachers and diagnosticians are certified by the Texas State Board for Educator Certification. Windham teachers average 14 years of experience.

Funding for Fiscal Year 2023		
Windham Contact Hour Rates		
Academic Education		\$4.69807
Career and Technical Education		\$3.87648
Fiscal Year 2023 Cost Per Contact Hour		
Windham (State)	Federal Grant Pass-Through	Total
\$7.08	\$0.52	\$7.60
Contact Hours 2022-2023		
Best 180 Days		8,055,125
Cost Per Participant - Fiscal Year 2023		
PROGRAM		AMOUNT
Windham (State and Federal Funding)		\$1,288.83

Funding for Fiscal Year 2023	
Revenues - Fiscal Year 2023	
TYPE	AMOUNT
Local (Interest Income)	\$1,206,653
Windham School District State (Foundation School Program)	\$58,107,062
Instructional Material Allotment (IMA)	\$1,139,860
Federal Grant Pass-Through Funds	\$3,375,888
State Grant Pass-Through Funds	\$773,689
Contract	\$5,279,891
Other	\$185,296
Operating Transfer-In	\$311,444
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$70,379,783</b>
Expenditures - Fiscal Year 2023	
Windham School District State (Foundation School Program)	\$55,881,215
Instructional Material Allotment (IMA)	\$1,139,860
Federal Grant Pass-Through Funds	\$3,375,888
State Grant Pass-Through Funds	\$773,689
Contract (Recreation and The ECHO)	\$5,279,891
<b>TOTAL Expenditures</b>	<b>\$66,450,543</b>

Biennial Budget	87th Legislature 2022-2023	88th Legislature 2024-2025
Windham Appropriation from General Revenue (GR) within the TEA Budget	\$115,494,752	\$133,314,005

Staff	SY23 Public School*	SY23 Windham
Teachers	48.7%	52.3%
Central Administration	1.2%	1.5%
All Other	50.1%	46.2%

Teaching Staff	SY23 Public School*	SY23 Windham
Average Teacher Experience	11 years	14 years
Average Salary	\$324.00/day	\$293.07/day
Days Per Contract	187	220

\*2022 Texas Academic Performance Report prepared by TEA.

## Business Services

The Business Services department is dedicated to enhancing district operations by practicing sound financial management and ensuring fiscal responsibility by adhering to all relevant laws, regulations, and internal policies and procedures. Business Services supports the district by facilitating financial planning, management and reporting while offering essential services and support.

The department's specific areas of responsibility encompass accounting, accounts payable, asset and fleet management, budgeting, payroll processing, purchasing and warehouse operations.

Additionally, the department offers training in these areas, fostering a collaborative partnership between Business Services and district staff. This ensures that staff members are well-equipped with the tools and resources necessary to make informed and sound financial decisions.

## Financial Data

The district is funded through state appropriations to the TEA Foundation School Fund within Article III, Strategy B.2.4. of the General Appropriations Act. As outlined in the Act, the TEA allocates funds based on student contact hours for the best 180 of 210 school days in each year of the biennium. In the 2022-2023 school year, Windham spent \$7.08 per contact hour, \$1,201.40 per participant, of state-appropriated money from the TEA.

Other sources of Windham revenue include local interest and miscellaneous income. Federal 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), Individuals with Disabilities Education Act – American Rescue Plan (IDEA-B ARP), Integrated Education and Training, and the Carl D. Perkins grant. A state pass-through Jobs and Education for Texans grant was also awarded for the 2022-2023 school year from the Texas Workforce Commission. Windham also receives reimbursement through a contract with TDCJ for providing administrative oversight of the Radio and Television program, Library Services, Recreation and Wellness and The ECHO newspaper.





# WINDHAM SCHOOL DISTRICT

**Panhandle**  
Abilene  
Middleton  
Robertson  
Amarillo  
Clements  
Brockenridge  
Sayle SAFPF  
Childress  
Roach  
Colorado City  
Wallace  
Dalhart  
Dallhart  
Iowa Park  
Allred  
Lamesa  
Smith  
Lubbock  
Montford  
Pampa  
Jordan  
Plainview  
Fomby SJ  
Wheeler SJ  
Snyder  
Daniel  
Tulia  
Mechler

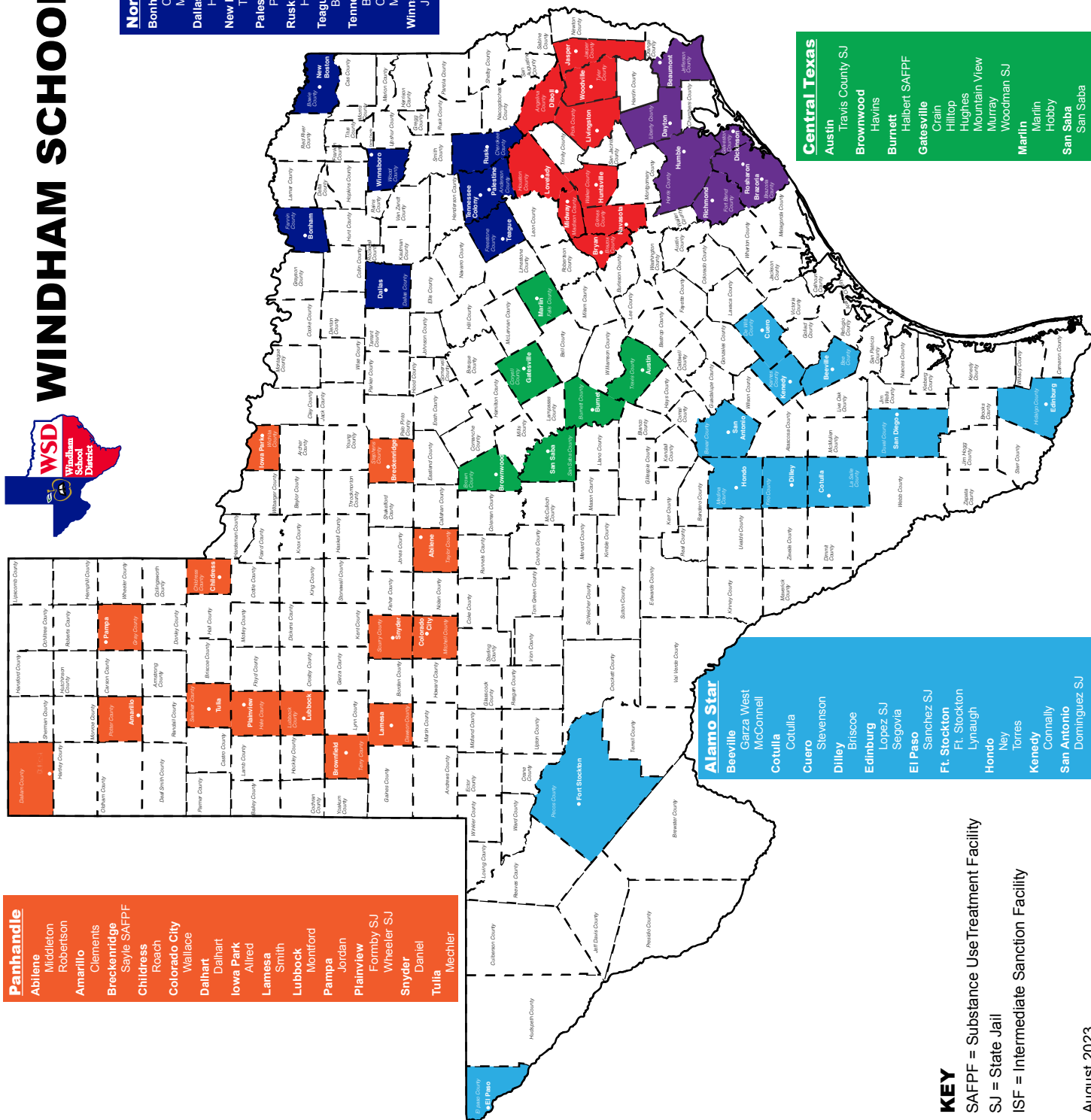
**North Texas**  
Bonham  
Cole SJ  
Moore  
Dallas  
Hutchins SJ  
New Boston  
Telford  
Palestine  
Powledge  
Rusk  
Hodge  
Teague  
Boyd  
Tennessee Colony  
Beto  
Corfield  
Michael  
Winnboro  
Johnston SAFPF

**East Texas**  
Bryan  
Hamilton  
Diboll  
Duncan  
Huntsville  
Byrd  
Ellis  
Estelle  
Goree  
Holiday  
Huntsville  
Wynne  
Jasper  
Goodman ISF  
Livingston  
Polinsky  
Lovelady  
Wainwright  
Navasota  
Luther  
Pack  
Midway  
Ferguson  
Woodville  
Lewis

**Gulf Coast**  
Beaumont  
Gist SJ  
Siles  
LeBlanc  
Brazoria  
Clements  
Dayton  
Henley SJ  
Hightower  
Plane SJ  
Dickinson  
Young Medical Facility  
Humble  
Lynchner SJ  
Richmond  
Jester 3  
Scott  
Vance  
Rosharon  
Memorial  
Ramsey  
Stinglew  
Terrell

**Central Texas**  
Austin  
Travis County SJ  
Brownwood  
Havins  
Burnett  
Halbert SAFPF  
Gatesville  
Crain  
Hilltop  
Hughes  
Mountain View  
Murray  
Woodman SJ  
Martin  
Marin  
Hobby  
San Saba  
San Saba

**Alamo Star**  
Beville  
Garza West  
McConnell  
Cotulla  
Cotulla  
Cuervo  
Stevenson  
Dilley  
Briscoe  
Edinburg  
Lopez SJ  
Segovia  
El Paso  
Sanchez SJ  
Ft. Stockton  
Lynagh  
Hondo  
Torres  
Kenedy  
Conally  
San Antonio  
Dominguez SJ  
San Diego  
Glossbrenner SAFPF



## KEY

SAFPF = Substance Use Treatment Facility

SJ = State Jail

ISF = Intermediate Sanction Facility

August 2023



*“Through robust programming and invaluable educational opportunities, Windham School District raises the standard for education in corrections, equipping students with resources, tools and knowledge to support them as they pursue personal and professional goals.”*

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



**wsdtx.org**

