

ASSESSMENTS OF STUDENTS' PROGRESS

Various assessments were used to gauge students' progress during the course of the year, according to subject content, grade level, and campus tutoring provider. At Lanier, Catapult Systems used the Stanford Diagnostic Mathematics (SDM) for Algebra I tutoring. At Travis and Eastside, Sylvan Learning used the California Achievement Test (CAT) math assessments were used in the middle schools for 4th grade math. At 1st grade, staff used the Diagnostic Reading Assessment (DRA) and (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) (DIBELS) as benchmarks and tests to assess and diagnose students' areas of need.

TEACHER, STUDENT, AND TUTOR SURVEYS

At the end of the 2011-2012 school year, teachers, students, and tutors at the HDT campuses were invited to complete surveys about their experiences and opinions of the program. The surveys were administered electronically. Forty teachers, 163 tutors, and 1,790 students completed surveys. Summaries of survey results are included in the respective sections of this report.

DATA LIMITATIONS

A comparison of outcomes across schools, grade levels, and subject areas could not be completed in 2011-2012. Generally, students were tested several times throughout the school year using various assessments, according to content and grade level. Although the assessments differed, the middle and high schools did administer pre-post program assessments. At the elementary level, the campuses were to administer the DRA and DIBELS as benchmarks and tests to assess and diagnose students' areas of need.

group of respondents (15%) indicated they did not know the program, many students cited the personal, daily interactions with their tutors as important to them.

At Travis, 31 (89%) tutors responded to the survey. Overall, responses to items related to training and support were positive. Most tutors (90%) responded positively to items regarding program implementation. Nearly all respondents (96%) agreed that they were supported in their tutoring work. All agreed they were trained to use effective instructional strategies, and 97% agreed they received useful feedback. A smaller proportion (71%) of the tutors agreed they had regular communication with teachers regarding their students' progress.

Tutors' open-ended comments were generally positive. Several tutors said that seeing their students progress through the school year was a source of professional satisfaction and that the low tutor-

Twenty Eastside tutors also responded to the survey. Overall, responses to items related to training and support were positive. However, 35% of respondents disagreed that they had been trained to effectively manage student behaviors. Most tutors responded positively regarding program implementation and agreed they were trained to use effective instructional strategies, but less often that they had regular communication with teachers regarding their students' progress. In open-ended comments, many tutors made positive remarks about the program, especially about satisfaction they enjoyed in seeing their students' improvements. Several tutors remarked on the difficulties of following separate curricula. Some said they did not feel connected to the school, and voiced that they felt not all teachers were "onboard" with HDT. Others remarked that they had seen improvement in the students with whom they worked, both academically and socially.

Lanier High School Overview

Following two days of orientation and training, Carolina State began working with students on November 1, using 35 tutors, a site supervisor, and a program manager to implement a program with a 2:1 student-tutor ratio. All tutors were required to possess at least a bachelor's degree.

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Lanier Survey Results

At Lanier, teachers' survey responses were generally, though not uniformly, positive

In open-ended comments, tutors identified the management of students, tutor turnover, and lack of teacher support as challenges. Others remarked that they had seen improvement in the students with whom they worked, both academically and socially. Several tutors cited lack of support from classroom teachers as a difficulty.

MIDDLE SCHOOL SUMMARY

Middle School Overview

Through a request for proposal process, Burnet administrators selected Princeton Review to provide math tutoring services following the 2010-2011 school year. The following is a summary of the process.

greatest change in percentage of students meeting criterion and in the average criterion score from beginning to the end of the school year. Although Burnet had the lowest average EOY score, this school had a greater

In their open-ended comments, most teachers were generally positive and stated that many students benefited from tutoring. However, several stated the program had been hastily implemented but showed promise.

At Burnet, 78% of students completed the tutoring survey. Students responded most favorably to the statements "My tutor helped me to become better at math" and "I feel like my tutor cares about how I do in math." A diverse range of responses was given.

Seventy-three percent of the tutors at Martin responded to the survey. A majority of respondents agreed the instructional materials were appropriate for their students, were easy to understand and use, and met the needs of students. Respondents indicated they had not been trained effectively to manage student behaviors or use effective instructional strategies, and they had not been included in relevant training opportunities at the school. They also disagreed that they were well supported or received helpful feedback from their supervisor. However, most tutors indicated their students were grouped appropriately according to academic needs. In open comments, tutors expressed frustration with student behaviors and remarked they had not been made to feel a part of the campus team.

Mendez Middle School

On the teacher survey, Mendez middle teacher responses were mixed on many items. Most teachers agreed that the student-teacher ratio and the amount of time that students spent in tutoring were “just about right.” Teachers’ responses were evenly divided with respect to effectiveness of tutoring instruction in supporting classroom instruction. However, 75% of teachers agreed that tutoring helped their students understand. In open comments, teachers identified the lack of program management and supervision of tutors as a problem at the school. One teacher suggested tutors be given time each day to meet and plan with teachers.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SUMMARY

Third grade reading tutoring was implemented with two hours of district tutors. Allan and Govalle shared six tutors, and Langford and Widen shared 22. Typically, tutors worked for three 45 minute blocks at one campus in the morning, then they moved to the second campus for three blocks in the afternoon. Tutoring training and orientation was initiated by staff from central office, including staff from the school office, curriculum and instruction office, and RTI office. In December, an instructional reading specialist was hired to manage tutoring work across all four sites.

Third Grade Reading Assessment Results

DRA results were mixed among the HDT schools (Table 5). Overall, the same percentage of tested students scored at or above grade both the beginning and the end of the year. The greatest increase in the percentage of students meeting grade expectation in reading at the end of the year occurred at Govalle, however only 8% of participants tested at Govalle at the end of the year.

Table 5: Summary of Diagnostic Reading Assessment (DRA) Results for Reading, 2011-2012

Campus	Grade 3 at beginning of year			Grade 3 at end of year			Change
	Fall 2011 enrollment	% tested	% on grade level	Spring 2012 enrollment	% tested	% on grade level	

Source: District DRA results (PRADRAEDL), 2012

DRA results should be considered with caution as the EOY scores may not represent all HDT participants in the grade. Because each administration of the DRA described testing window,

In opened comments, several tutors stated that they enjoyed and felt the program had good potential to raise students' reading levels. However, some stated the work was initially poorly organized and needed stronger management. One tutor observed that although students by ability level had a good initial strategy, as students progressed at different rates, no re had taken place.

PRINCIPAL FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY

In March, principals and other staff from the 10 HDT campuses were invited to participate in a focus group to discuss the year progress of the program. All campuses were represented in the conversation. The following information emerged from this conversation with principals and other school staff supporting HDT at their respective schools.

General Observation: The program was well implemented and supported by school staff. Principals reported that the program had a positive impact on student reading levels and that the program was well organized and managed. Principals also reported that the program was well received by students and staff.

In-House District Tutor Model

- x School staff reported delays in hiring and training tutors due to campus and central office administrative changes. An in-house facilitator was hired to assist with tutor hiring, training, deployment, and monitoring for elementary schools. AISD contracted a mid ESC XIII to provide similar services for Martin and Mendez. However, the ESC staffer assigned to AISD left the position within a few weeks and was not replaced.
- x School staff were concerned that the district tutor position did not offer enough salary compensation or benefits to attract and retain highly qualified tutors.
- x Staff from schools providing in-house tutoring programs expressed frustration at the administrative time and effort required to implement the model. They reported problems with tutor attendance, lack of buy-in, and initiative, resulting in the need for ongoing training, daily scrambling to cover tutoring absences, and deleterious effects on student relationships.

External Tutor Model

- x Staff from schools with externally supported models reported that they were highly satisfied with the services provided and believed their programs were running smoothly and effectively. Staff at those schools reported that having a turnkey program alleviated the amount of time principal and other school staff would spend on implementation, staffing, and training.
- x Staff from some schools identified alignment issues between classroom curriculum, and curriculum and materials used by external HDT providers.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on discussions with staff and survey results, the HDT initiative appears popular with many teachers and campus administrators, as well as with students. Survey responses and comments from students attest to the importance of personalized instruction and supporting relationships in the classroom. Many students cited the positive influences of and relationships with their tutors.

The effects of the program in raising academic achievement are less clear. With the advent of the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) in 2012, valid district benchmark tests were unavailable, rendering identification of appropriate assessments somewhat difficult. None of the assessments used at the HDT campuses are aligned directly with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS).

- x Improve program management. Teachers, tutors, and campus administrators identified deficiencies in program management as a cause for concern, particularly in the HDT elementary schools. Some principals and campus staff cited training and management of tutors as an additional administrative burden. In addition, measures should be taken to ensure that all students are assessed according to schedule, and that data are accessible through the district assessment system.
- x Create flexibility to address campus tutoring. Several principals asserted that they would like to have greater flexibility with their schools' tutoring programs, including the ability to assign tutors to students in lower grades, provide more intensive work for high-need students.
- x Support teacher-tutor interaction. Both teachers and tutors cited better opportunities for interaction and planning as an area of need. Respondents in both groups at some schools suggested reviewing the tutoring curriculum to ensure alignment with classroom instruction. Survey comments from both groups suggest that roles, responsibilities of tutors at some schools need further clarification.
- x Manage student behaviors. Tutors identified students' behaviors as the greatest challenges to their work. Program administrators and principals should consider ways to include tutoring staff in future training sessions with campus child study teams.
- x Sustain the program. Currently, the HDT program is supported by a mix of local and grant funds. Tutoring at Lanier, Travis.