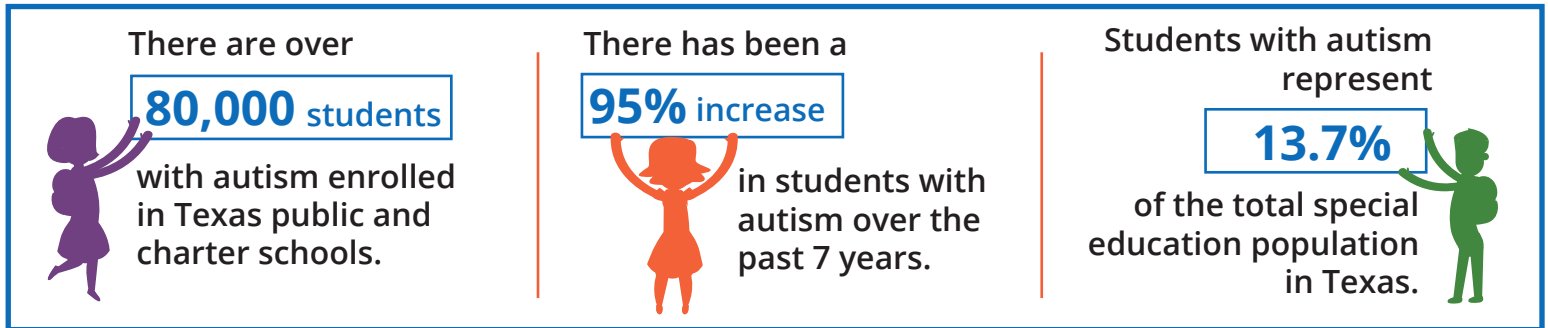


House Bill 21 originated in the 85th legislative session to help address the need for specialized services for students with autism. The bill passed and amended Chapter 29 of the education code to add the Grant Program Providing Services to Student with Autism. Grants were awarded to 10 local education agencies (LEAs) based on a competitive application process. The following summary provides a high level overview of the report. The full video report is available at: [bit.ly/HB21report](http://bit.ly/HB21report).

## Background

Students with autism benefit from specialized supports and services across their school career.



## Grant Information

- ▶ HB 21 awarded grants of up to 1 million dollars per year across two years (2018-2020) to 10 LEAs.
- ▶ Grants were awarded through a competitive application process.
- ▶ Applicants were required to detail how they proposed to:
  - ▶ Serve students with autism and related disabilities ages three to nine years old
  - ▶ Use evidence-based research and practices
  - ▶ Focus on inclusion, student achievement, parent supports, and technology
  - ▶ Be replicable statewide

## Grantees

### LEAs Awarded Grants - Including Shared Service Arrangements (SSA)

<b>Alief ISD</b>	<p><b>Robstown ISD</b> (SSA Members: Aransas County ISD, Bishop CISD, Aransas Pass ISD, Ingleside ISD, Agua Dulce ISD, San Diego ISD, Port Aransas ISD, Benavides ISD, Sinton ISD)</p> <p><b>Hitchcock ISD</b> (SSA Members: Damon ISD, Danbury ISD, Needville ISD)</p> <p><b>Northside ISD</b> (SSA Members: Cotulla ISD, Dilley ISD, Fort Sam Houston ISD, Lackland ISD, Medina Valley ISD, Northside ISD, Pearsall ISD, Randolph Field ISD, San Antonio ISD)</p> <p><b>Richardson ISD</b> (SSA Members: Frisco ISD, Plano ISD, Sherman ISD, Wylie ISD)</p>
<b>Grand Prairie ISD</b>	
<b>Seguin ISD</b>	
<b>Southwest ISD</b>	
<b>Texarcana ISD</b>	
<b>Victoria ISD</b>	

In total, 35 LEAs and 149 campuses received benefits from grant awards over the two-year period.

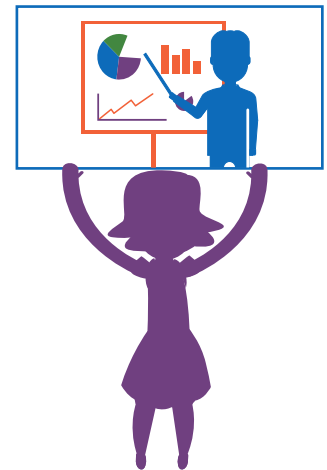
## Consistent Findings

- ▶ Gains in student achievement were reported across the grant programs.
- ▶ There is a need for specialized training for teachers and paraprofessionals who support students with autism.
- ▶ Opportunities to participate in evidence-based practice training with ongoing follow-up coaching made a significant difference in teacher understanding and implementation of evidence-based practices with fidelity.
- ▶ Teachers reported that students made more progress during the grant years than they had in previous years because of changes to instruction.
- ▶ Grantees that incorporated focused training on a few evidence-based interventions with sustained coaching and support reported greater success compared to those using more global approaches.
- ▶ Teachers reported grant funding was extremely helpful in being able to supply their classrooms with resources they felt were necessary (e.g., specialized curriculum, sensory items).

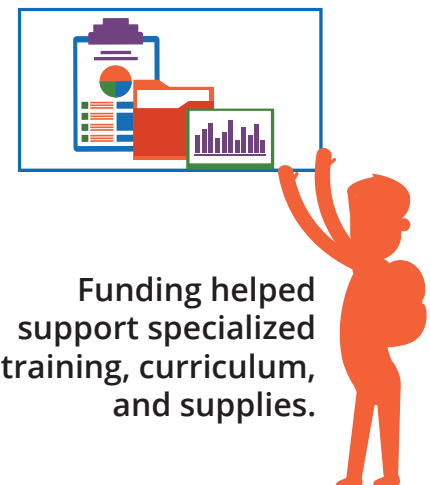
## Key Recommendations

- ▶ Consider funding grant programs that provide for specialized training on evidence-based practices with ongoing coaching.
- ▶ Consider expanding the existing Autism Circuit Academy program already established through the Texas Statewide Leadership for Autism Training (TSLAT) initiative.
- ▶ Consider funding for specialized curriculum and materials for classrooms supporting students with autism.
- ▶ Consider “Grow your own” grant programs for autism specialists and Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBAs) who commit to working in Texas public schools.
- ▶ Consider expanding the age range of students served through this grant program from ages three through nine years old to ages three through twenty-one years old.
- ▶ Consider allowing LEAs to apply for varied amounts of funds based on district size and need.

### Highlights from Grantees:



Training on evidence-based practices with coaching resulted in changes to instruction and student progress.



## Innovation and Outcomes per Grantee

All the grantees were focused on academic and functional progress for students with autism, but they had unique approaches for meeting those goals.

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### Alief ISD

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#### Innovation:

Alief ISD focused on the early childhood special education classrooms where they provided very intensive ABA intervention that mirrored what students might often receive in a private clinic setting.

#### Student Outcomes:

VBMAPP scores **increased by 15%** from the beginning of the year to the middle of the year in their verbal and related skills (students not in the grant classrooms only saw a 2% increase).

Staff demonstrated a **20% increase** in their overall ABA knowledge and skills.

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### Grand Prairie ISD

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#### Innovation:

Grand Prairie utilized vendor support for curriculum and training with a focus on academic and social skills. They partnered with an afterschool program where trained paraprofessionals worked both in classrooms and the afterschool setting to support generalization of social skills. They also partnered with the YMCA for more inclusive opportunities in the community.

#### Student Outcomes:

Performance assessments showed **group gains of 63%** in functional skill development.

Afterschool program resulted in **2 hours** of peer interactions daily (most had no after school peer interactions previously).

**5 staff members** completed the 40 hours of ABA training.

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### Southwest ISD

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#### Innovation:

Southwest ISD provided significant peer supports and modeling by creating classrooms where half of the students did not have a disability. Every student with a disability had a peer partner to learn alongside.

#### Student Outcomes:

87% of students' baseline scores on evaluation were in mid to severe range of symptoms, while end of grant scores **fell to 48%**.

**79% of students increased participation** in the general education settings.

73% of students had limited technology skills needed for inclusive settings, while only **40%** of students still scored in limited range at end of grant.

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## Seguin ISD

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### Innovation:

Seguin provided significant peer supports and modeling by creating classrooms where half of the students did not have a disability. Every student with a disability had a peer partner to learn alongside.

### Student Outcomes:

**85%** of students showed progress towards goals on IEPs. Motor and sensory labs showed students made progress on **4 out of 10** stations. Parents report **98.7% satisfaction** with the project's services for their children.

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## Texarkana ISD

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### Innovation:

Texarkana developed collaborative classrooms with a general and special education teacher, trained on ABA and sensory-based interventions and grew their own Board Certified Behavior Analyst or BCBA- an individual who is an expert on behavior and teaching students with autism. They also used a summer camp program to jumpstart student learning.

### Student Outcomes:

**100%** of students showed progress towards goals on IEPs. **Increased access to general education content** by creating three full day collaborative or co-taught classes. Held **16 different parent meetings** consisting of both trainings and family-fun events.

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## Victoria ISD

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### Innovation:

Victoria ISD had a strong focus on sensory supports. They developed a Mobile Sensory Unit on a bus, added sensory boxes, which contained various items for students to choose for self-regulation to general education classrooms, added sensory paths, and sensory playgrounds. They also provided teacher support from district coaches, which included a new online teacher help ticket system for requesting support quickly.

### Student Outcomes:

Scores on the VBMAPP revealed students **grew by 45 points** on an assessment of their verbal and related skills. Sensory boxes with items for students to use to self-regulate resulted in a **12.9% reduction**. Students moving into a less restrictive environment **increased by 5%**. Parent attendance at trainings and support groups **increased by 18%**.

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## Robstown ISD (SSA)

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### Innovation:

Robstown ISD partnered with 9 small/rural districts. They focused on getting teachers with limited resources the materials and curriculum they needed. They also provided training across all the districts and utilized a vendor to provide ongoing implementation support.

### Student Outcomes:

Students in the Early Childhood Special Education class **progressed by 41%** and students in the life skills class **progressed by 54%**. Students continued to progress during remote learning. The Early Childhood Special Education class **increased by 28%** and students in the life skills class **increased by 7%**.

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## Hitchcock ISD (SSA)

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### Innovation:

Hitchcock ISD and the Greater Gulf Coast Cooperative developed model structured classrooms and provided teachers training along with substantial weekly coaching through both the service center and a vendor. They used fidelity checklists during coaching sessions to help teachers gain mastery of skills. Now they have model classrooms to use for training in years to come.

### Student Outcomes:

Student behavior checklists created and completed by teachers showed **student improvement** in all areas.

Fidelity checklists showed **teachers improved their application** of teaching principles and ABA-based interventions.

**Two students** who were in a more restrictive off campus placements, were able to return to their home campus.

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## Northside ISD (SSA)

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### Innovation:

Northside ISD and their SSA partners, focused on early childhood with an intensive educator training and coaching model. Teachers and paraprofessionals received training on using an ABA intervention, known as verbal behavior, to improve student's language skills. They used grant funded technology for teachers to record their live lessons with students, and expert district coaches watched with teachers to provide feedback. Use of this technology allowed for more coaching and follow up.

### Student Outcomes:

The level of prompting or adult assistance that students needed to complete tasks showed a **13% reduction**.

Teacher fidelity of implementation checks showed **82% rate of implementing** verbal behavior strategies with fidelity.

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## Richardson ISD (SSA)

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### Innovation:

Richardson ISD used a vendor-supported training package to provide intensive training, ongoing coaching, and support around ABA-based interventions. By using a vendor with a strong track record of coaching experience, they were able to grow the coaching skills of their own district experts to carry on coaching in future years. They also used extended school year (ESY) settings as a training site for teachers, where they received extensive coaching.

### Student Outcomes:

Students showed an **increase of 105%** in total skills across all curriculum areas.

Students increased their time in inclusive settings by **88%**. **93% of staff** reported they "felt better prepared to address the learning and behavioral needs of students with autism and other developmental disabilities."

Out of 234 parent training attendees, **99%** reported they "felt better prepared to meet the needs of their child."