



# REMOTE HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION FUNDING

Dr. Linda Webb, Principal  
Gonzalo Garza Independence High School  
[Linda.webb@austinisd.org](mailto:Linda.webb@austinisd.org)  
(512) 414-8618



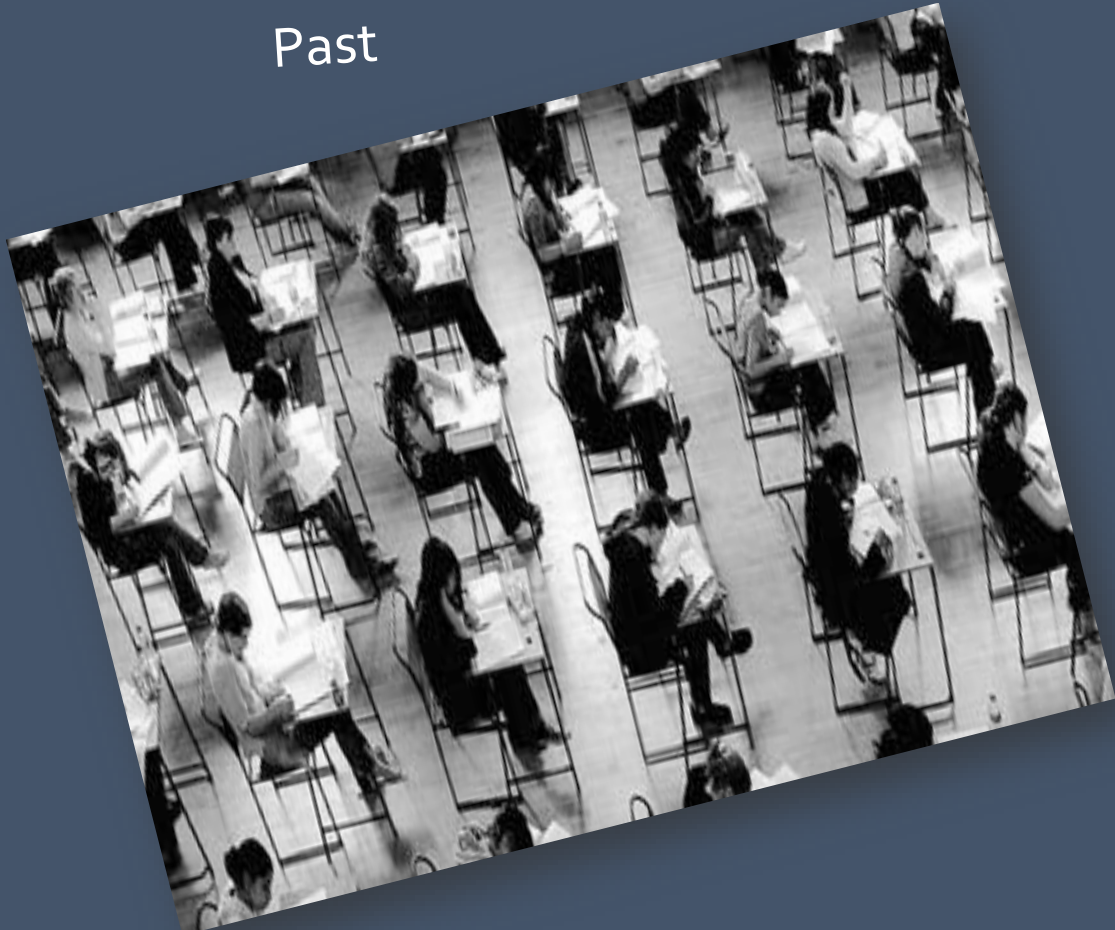
# GONZALO GARZA INDEPENDENCE HIGH SCHOOL

## AUSTIN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

- **Established in 1998 to help students at risk of dropping out of school successfully complete a high school diploma and be prepared for college or the workforce with a self-paced curriculum**
- **Provides a Solution-Focused approach to improve outcomes for at-risk students**
  - 2012 - U.S. Department of Education study identified the Solution-Focused Alternatives for Education (SAFED) at Gonzalo Garza Independence High School (GGIHS) as 1 of only 43 programs exemplifying potential best practices and effectiveness in improving outcomes
  - Improves student outcomes and statistically lowers the likelihood of dropping out
- **Provides a self-paced curriculum created by teachers (made available in an online format in 2011)**

# AUSTIN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT STRATEGIC PLAN MISSION "REINVENTING THE URBAN SCHOOL EXPERIENCE"

Past



Future

Changing Student Expectations

- Collaboration: Students working together on a project.
- Connection: A group of students in front of a sign that says "Eyes on the Goal".
- Creativity: Students using a computer and a projector.
- Communication: A group of students in a discussion.
- Critical Thinking: A student using a handheld device.
- Cultural Proficiency: Hands holding a globe of the Earth.





# GONZALO GARZA INDEPENDENCE HIGH SCHOOL

## AUSTIN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

- **GGIHS attempted to provide Garza Homebound Remote for students unable to attend school due to physical ailments or medical treatments**
- **Authorized in section 12.3.3, Remote Homebound Instruction—Regular Education Students, of the Student Attendance Handbook**
  - Designed to serve students with medical conditions precluding them from attending school (i.e., physical ailments such as depression, and medical treatments such as chemotherapy, etc.)
  - Allows students to access online coursework supervised by classroom teachers and requires them to physically attend class only when they are medically able to do so
- **Waiver for GGIHS approved by Texas Education Agency (ID: 30318)**
- **Denial of Average Daily Attendance (ADA) for Austin ISD available from Garza Homebound Remote under Section 12.3.3**
  - TEA's Office of Financial Compliance advised Austin ISD staff that FSP funding could not be claimed unless the technology allowed for real-time, two-way interaction between a student and teacher who are in different physical locations (i.e., interactive video conferencing or a robot that allows for virtual interaction between student and teacher).

**This requirement appears counter to the intent and purpose of Remote Homebound Instruction**



# GONZALO GARZA INDEPENDENCE HIGH SCHOOL

## AUSTIN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

- **Currently provides Garza Online for Austin ISD students WITHOUT state funding**
  - Approximately 3,000 credits have been earned by students from the 2012-2013 school year to the present
  - Currently 800 students are enrolled as of 5/31/2018 for the summer
  - Allows students across the district to access courses for credit recovery/catch-up with facilitator help through online self-paced curriculum
  - Provides access to coursework not provided at their home campuses
    - Middle school students can enroll in Garza Online to take advanced math courses not available at their home campus
    - Students who do not have room in their schedules (e.g., band elective takes multiple blocks) to take specialized courses, such as computer science, can do so with the guidance of a facilitator through Garza Online
  - Provides students with the opportunity to accelerate
    - Allows students flexibility to take off-campus community college courses
    - Allows early graduates to benefit from scholarships and grants
    - Allows students to take courses with limited offerings throughout the year (i.e., courses offered every other semester, etc.)

# PROBLEMS WITH FUNDING STIPULATIONS

- **Waiver denial negates the combination of computerized instruction with teacher feedback (a physical person), which occurs frequently and with individualized consideration of each student.**
- **Even with changes allowing Drop Out Recovery programs through Optional Flexible School Day Program to conduct online courses for children labeled “at-risk”, this leaves out a significant number of students:**
  - Students with psychological disorders are not considered “at-risk”, yet many cannot leave their homes to attend school
  - Funding under Drop Out Recovery programs only allowed after student has been retained due to absences/lack of credit acquisition (when student is considered at-risk)
- **In order to maintain Alternative Education status, 75% of students must be considered at-risk**
  - Because GGIHS provides an environment to adapt to and meet students’ needs, every year GGIHS’s brick and mortar “at-risk” numbers decrease, putting us at risk of losing our Alternative Education status



# RECOMMENDATIONS

## ***Recommendation: Create a method for funding schools that serve students with high needs but not labeled "at-risk"***

- Many of these students transfer to GGIHS because they are not successful in traditional school environments for issues not considered a part of the at-risk category. These conditions and issues, however, make them at-risk for dropping out.
- Students who are successful at GGIHS and are removed from the category of "at-risk," even if their return to other campuses would make them at risk of dropping out again. However, this lowers our at-risk numbers and puts our campus in a position to lose our Alternative Education status
- Students dealing with psychological disorders are not labeled "at-risk", though their conditions often make them miss school or drop out altogether
- **The cycle of labeling at-risk/non at-risk would be repeated if online courses are only funded for at-risk students.**

## ***Recommendation: Approve funding for brick and mortar schools offering integrated digital instruction***

- Assists more students in successfully completing high school with true instruction not just delivered through a banked program
- Assists schools in providing greater remote human interaction to students not physically present in a classroom allowing schools to serve more students in need
- Assists in closing learning gaps for students who were out on Homebound and are returning to campus

## ***Recommendation: Approve funding appropriated for the approved waiver (ID: 30318)***

- GGIHS can continue to serve our most needy students through a combination of self-paced brick and mortar school and integrated digital instruction



## Awards & Recognitions

- Best Public School Model, The Austin Chronicle
- Best Program Model - CSI Garza, The Austin Chronicle
- Garza National Model To Provide Internet Access To Students Without Technology At Home, AMD (Advanced Micro Devices Corporation)
- The World Congress Informational Technology (WCIT) recognized Garza as their American Model School.
- Recognition for Victoria Baldwin on the Harvard Graduate School of Education Principal's Center, Austin Independent School District Board
- National Advisory Board, Harvard Graduate School of Education Principal's Center
- The American Youth Policy Forum for Youth Development and Policy Research, Washington DC, recognized Garza as an exemplary school.
- Program of the month for January, AED Center for Youth Development and Policy Research
- Top 100 Wired School, Family PC Magazine
- Model School, Vera Institute of Justice New York
- School Safety Report Recognition, US Department of Education and Department of Justice

## Publications

- *Solution Focused Brief Therapy in Alternative Schools: Ensuring Student Success and Preventing Dropout*, Franklin et al. 2018
- Texas Monthly, July 2004, "One School Left Behind" by Gary Cartwright
- "Solution Focused Accountability Schools for the Twenty First Century: A training manual for Garza Independence High School" developed by Dr. Cynthia Franklin, The University of Texas School of Social Work
- "Solution-focused Alternatives for Education: An Evaluation of Gonzalo Garza Independence High School," Principal Investigators: Doctors Cynthia Franklin and Calvin L. Street, The University of Texas at Austin School of Social Work
- Community College Times, June 21, 2005, "One-on-One Connection Eases Entry for High School Students to Community College"
- Austin Family, August 2005, "Youth Speak Out, Garza Students Make the Grade," by Monica Davis
- "Whatever It Takes: How Twelve Communities Are Reconnecting Out-of-School Youth," Martin & Halperin, American Youth Policy Forum, 2006
- Texas School Business Journal, September 2006, "In The Spotlight Austin ISD Principal Vicki Baldwin Empowers Students To Aim For The Stars"



For more information about GGIHS

<http://garzaindependenceshs.weebly.com/>